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All In: Community Conversations; *Lady Day at Emerson's
Bar and Grill*

Watch *Lady Day* All in Panel Discussion [Here](#)

RALEIGH, N.C. – North Carolina Theatre, the region's premiere nonprofit professional theatre, presents season 2, episode 2 of "All In: Community Conversations; *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill*," This episode of *All In: Community Conversations*, presented by PNC and hosted by North Carolina Theatre President and CEO Elizabeth Doran, features a unique and exciting conversation with Billie Holiday's accompanist and friend, Corky Hale Stoller, interviewed by local performing artist Yolanda Rabun. The episode also includes some historical exploration by Shaw University alumnus and WCLK Atlanta program director David Linton and a few words from *Lady Day* Director Jarvis Antonio Green.

Begun during the COVID-19 shutdown in 2020 when live performances were not possible, North Carolina Theatre continues the digital series, *All In: Community Conversations*, as a digital version of its previously in-person post-show discussions. By moving the series to a digital platform, North Carolina Theatre seeks to engage audiences near and far, before or after every show, in meaningful conversation about the themes of the Theatre's live productions. *All In* allows North Carolina Theatre to (virtually) examine universal themes of its mainstage productions through the specific lens of community, diversity, equity, and inclusion.

This episode of *All In: Community Conversations* corresponds with North Carolina Theatre's live, on-stage production of *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill*, written by Lanie Robertson. Performances

began on November 5 and continue through November 14 at A.J. Fletcher Opera Theater at Duke Energy Center for the Performing Arts in downtown Raleigh.

In 2017, North Carolina Theatre's Board of Directors and President and CEO, Elizabeth Doran, established *All In*, a baseline and action-oriented diversity initiative focused on serving the cultural needs of a growing and diverse Triangle-area population. With support from PNC, along with Blue Cross Blue Shield, Duke Energy and more, the All-In vision led to the hiring in 2018 of Producing Artistic Director, Eric Woodall who has championed inclusivity in mainstage work, and led to the evolution of the theatre's youth and community programming. The goal of *All In* is to help people leverage NC Theatre's cultural assets toward successful outcomes for their communities. Additionally, by 2030, it is NC Theatre's goal to mirror the demography of North Carolina on its stages, in its audiences, and on its board, staff, teachers, students and partnerships. Accessibility is measured in diversity of ability, age, ethnicity, gender/sexual orientation, and socio-economic status, with a focus on communities that are often underrepresented in the arts.

Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill opened Friday, November 5 and runs through Sunday, November 14 in A.J. Fletcher Opera Theater at Duke Energy Center for the Performing Arts. Tickets are available at www.nctheatre.com

Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill is presented through special arrangement with Samuel French, Inc. a Concord Theatricals Company.

In September 2021, PNC Foundation renewed its support of *All In* with a grant award of \$40,000. PNC's contribution to North Carolina Theatre is the largest to date, with additional support from Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina, ABB, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the City of Raleigh based on recommendations of the Raleigh Arts Commission.

About North Carolina Theatre

Established in 1984, North Carolina Theatre is Raleigh's premier non-profit professional regional theatre. With its successful formula of producing top quality musicals with top national performers and local talent, North Carolina Theatre has been instrumental in the revitalization of downtown Raleigh over the years. Through its Conservatory, it has provided exceptional arts training to hundreds of local youths. By offering broad access to live theatre, while strengthening economic growth, the organization continues to fortify the cultural vitality of the region. North Carolina Theatre is funded in part by the City of Raleigh based on recommendations of the Raleigh Arts Commission.

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Bios:

Corky Hale has performed at the White House with Tony Bennett, soloed with Barbra Streisand at the Hollywood Bowl and Central Park, with Bjork on her MTV special, and with George Michael at Royal Albert Hall. Generally considered to be the most accomplished jazz harpist in the world—as well as singer and pianist—she has played and/or recorded with Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald, Peggy Lee, Nat King Cole, June Christy, Anita O'Day, Roberta Flack, Melissa Manchester, Judy Collins, Mel Torme, Chet Baker, Joe Williams, Benny Carter, and numerous others. She made her Carnegie Hall debut in 2007 as pianist with the New York Pops Orchestra and was among the stars at the 2011 Mary Lou Williams

Festival at the Kennedy Center She is the only woman to have played for Billie Holiday and she performs an annual Billie Holiday Birthday Concert at the Catalina Jazz Club in Hollywood.

David Linton Currently, Program Director of Atlanta's Jazz Station WCLK-FM licensed to Clark Atlanta University. David has been successful in both radio broadcasting in North Carolina as General Manager/Program Director of Shaw University's WSHA-FM when it was the first and only FM station serving all of Raleigh/Durham with an emphasis on the African American community. He launched WRVS/Elizabeth City, N.C owned by Elizabeth City State University which was the first non-commercial radio station in Northeastern N.C. His career in the music industry as a senior marketing and promotions executive help to propel the careers of some the world's biggest artists in all of music. He worked for such illustrious labels as Warner Bros, Island, Arista and Capitol and it all started here in Raleigh, N.C

Yolanda Rabun is A North Carolina resident for over 25 years, Yolanda Rabun is a recording artist, AEA actor, and theatre producer. She has headlined national jazz festivals, toured jazz clubs, and most recently opened for Stephanie Mills at the Durham Performing Arts Center (DPAC) and Sheila E at the Red Hat Amphitheater. Yolanda has accolades for **Best Lead Actress** (*Archy and Mehitabel, Member of the Wedding, Nina*) and **Best Ensemble** (*Twelfth Night, Crowns, I Love My Hair*). Recent appearances with North Carolina Theatre, Theatre Raleigh, and Playmakers Repertory Company include *Beehive: the 60s Musical, Newsies, Smokey Joe's Café, Mary Poppins, Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story, The Drowsy Chaperone, Howard L. Craft's one-woman play, No Fear and Blues Long Gone: Nina Simone and Neither One of Us: Yolanda Sings Gladys*. As a wife, mother, corporate executive, corporate lawyer, singer-songwriter and publisher, motivational speaker, political scientist, a community activist for youth, touring performance artist, and music entrepreneur, Yolanda lives at the speed of passion and challenges everyone to hold on to your dreams! www.yolandarabun.com