

# BECOMING BILLIE HOLIDAY



## *Celebrating Lady Day's 100<sup>th</sup> – 2015*

Poet Carole Boston Weatherford channels her muse in a mesmerizing mix of poetry, music and multimedia.

Add a blues poetry workshop or a one book/one poem read.

Based on the award-winning book, *Becoming Billie Holiday*, this one-woman production conjures an icon and an era. The story traces Billie's rise from childhood poverty to jazz royalty. Born Eleanora, she was neglected by her parents, raped by a neighbor and sent to reform school. She scrubbed marble steps, drank bootleg liquor, soaked up jazz and blues in a brothel and found her voice—all before age 12. During the Harlem Renaissance, the teenager's career began. By age 25, she had done films, fronted top bands and recorded the protest

hymn "Strange Fruit." Sadly, a 1939 *Time Magazine* review dismissed both her and the song that became her signature. This show imagines young Billie's response to that critic. **Bookings:** [caressemichele@hotmail.com](mailto:caressemichele@hotmail.com)

## Author & Poet Carole Boston Weatherford



- *New York Times* bestselling author of 40 books, including: *Moses*, *Freedom on the Menu*, *Before John Was a Jazz Giant: A Song of John Coltrane*, *The Sound that Jazz Makes*, *Remember the Bridge* and *Birmingham, 1963*
- Honors: NAACP Image Award, Coretta Scott King Award, Caldecott Honor, Jefferson Cup & more
- Fayetteville State University professor

## The Book



**Coretta Scott King Author Honor**  
**Pulitzer Prize material...**—[allaboutjazz.com](http://allaboutjazz.com)  
**Captivating...**—*School Library Journal* Best Book of the Year, starred review  
**A remarkable tribute...**—*Kirkus Reviews* Best Book of the Year, starred review  
**Intoxicating...**—VOYA Poetry Pick  
**[T]ender, precise writing, a hard tale tastefully told...**  
—*Montserrat Review*

## MULTIMEDIA LINKS

[Becoming Billie Holiday WBGO-FM podcast](#)  
[Alabama Book Festival video interview](#)  
[Reading Rockets video interview](#)  
[AllAboutJazz.com review](#)  
[Montserrat Review](#)

[Becoming Billie Holiday book trailer](#)  
[Book Page](#)  
[Publisher's website](#)  
[Reading Guide](#)  
[Author website](#)