



MEDIA RELEASE
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SYRACUSE STAGE ADDS TWO MUSICALS TO 50TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON

Once and Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill complete the 2023/2024 season



Syracuse, New York — Syracuse Stage today announced two musicals that will complete the lineup for the organization's [50th anniversary season](#). Audiences are immersed in the soulful music of Billie Holiday with *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill*, Oct. 18 – Nov. 5. Closing the season is the much anticipated *Once*, running May 1 – 19, 2024. Previously announced, the remainder of the season includes *What the Constitution Means to Me*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Clyde's* and *Agatha Christie's Murder on the Orient Express*.

"These two exciting additions to our 50th season lineup reflect our desire to encourage everyone to make Syracuse Stage a part of their life in the coming year," said Bob Hupp, artistic director, Syracuse Stage. "In our intimate space, we create these productions especially for our Central New York audience, and we can't wait to get the new season underway."

With a book by the brilliant Irish playwright **Enda Walsh**, it is no surprise that Syracuse Stage audiences have been asking for *Once* since it was originally announced as part of the 2019/2020 season that was cut short.

The Broadway musical adaptation of the indie film was nominated for 11 Tony Awards and won eight including Best Musical, Best Actor and Best Book in 2012. A year later it also won the Grammy Award for Best Musical Theatre Album. With **music and lyrics by Glen Hansard and Markéta Irglová**, *Once* is the story of a jaded Irish busker on the verge of abandoning his songs and a young Czech émigré who rekindles his passion for music and his desire for life and love. Their story springs to life on stage with the spirit and energy of a lively pub music session as the performers serve as cast and band. **Directed by Syracuse Stage Associate Artistic Director Melissa Crespo**, *Once* is a warmly affecting show that understands the power of music to move the human heart.

"It's been years in the making, but our most-requested musical will finally be part of our new season. *Once* is one of my personal favorites and I can't wait to see it on our stage next spring," added Hupp.

In the second slot ***Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill*, by Lanie Robertson, musical arrangements by Danny Holgate and directed by Jade King Carroll**, chronicles Billie Holiday's life story through the songs that made her famous. It premiered in 1984 in Atlanta and was followed by a successful Off-Broadway run, which won the Outer Critics Circle Award for Best Off-Broadway Book. *Lady Day's* Broadway debut came in 2014, starring Audra McDonald and won her the Tony Award for Best Actress. The production was then relocated to New Orleans where it was filmed and made into a movie for HBO. McDonald returned to the role in London's West End in 2016.

Lady Day takes audiences to 1959 in a small, seedy bar in Philadelphia. Holiday puts on a show that unbeknownst to the audience, will leave them witness to one of the last performances of her life. One of the greatest jazz and blues singers of all-time shares her loves and losses through her poignant voice and moving songs, including: "Strange Fruit," "God Bless the Child," "When a Woman Loves a Man" and "Ain't Nobody's Business if I Do." *Lady Day* replaces the previously announced *Thunder Knocking on the Door*.

All evening performances begin at 7:30pm while all matinee performances begin at 2pm. Tickets for all shows start at \$25 with discounts available for groups of 10 or more. Subscriptions are on sale now and can be purchased by visiting **SyracuseStage.org**, by calling **315.443.3275** or by visiting the **Syracuse Stage Box Office at 820 E. Genesee Street**. Single tickets go on sale in July.

Syracuse Stage also offers a variety of performances designed to create access for all and enhance the theatre-going experience. **Pay-What-You-Will** performances for *Lady Day* and *Once* are on Oct. 18 – 21 and May 1 - 5 respectively. **Open-captioned performances** are scheduled for Oct. 25 and Nov. 4 and 5 for *Lady Day* and May 8, 18 and 19 for *Once*. **Audio-described performances** are on Nov. 4 and May 18; **American Sign Language** translation is offered at performances on Oct. 28 and May 11. **Sensory Friendly** performances are available for both productions on Oct. 31 and May 14.

Audiences can gain deeper knowledge about the productions with **Prologue conversations**, three pre-show discussions that take place one-hour before curtain, on Oct. 22, 28 and Nov. 2 for *Lady Day* and May 5, 11 and 16 for *Once*. The **Post-show Talkbacks** will take place on Oct. 29 and May 5 following the 7:30 performance.

The **Slutzker Family Foundation** is the Presenting Sponsor for the 50th Anniversary Season. Additional season support comes from the **Dorothy and Marshall M. Reisman Foundation**.

SHOW DETAILS

What the Constitution Means to Me

By Heidi Schreck

Directed by Melissa Crespo

Sept. 13 – Oct. 1

Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill

By Lanie Robertson

Musical arrangements by Danny Holgate

Directed by Jade King Carroll

Oct. 18 – Nov. 5

A Christmas Carol

By Charles Dickens

Adapted by Richard Helleesen and David DeBerry

Music orchestration by Gregg Coffin

Directed by Melissa Rain Anderson

Featuring 2 Ring Circus

Co-produced with the Syracuse University Department of Drama

Nov. 24 – Dec. 31

Clyde's

By Lynn Nottage

Directed by Chip Miller

Co-produced with Portland Center Stage

Jan. 31 – Feb. 18

Agatha Christie's Murder on the Orient Express

By Agatha Christie

Adapted by Ken Ludwig

Directed by Robert Hupp

March 13 - 31

Once

Book by Enda Walsh

Music and Lyrics by Glen Hansard and Markéta Irglová

Based on the motion picture written and directed by John Carney

Directed by Melissa Crespo

May 1 – 19

About Syracuse Stage:

Founded in 1974, Syracuse Stage is the non-profit, professional theatre company in residence at Syracuse University. It is nationally recognized for creating stimulating theatrical work that engages Central New York audiences and significantly contributes to the artistic life of Syracuse University, where it is a vital partner in achieving the educational mission of the University's Department of

Drama. Stage's mission is to tell stories that engage, entertain, and inspire people to see life beyond their own experience. Each season, 70,000 patrons enjoy an adventurous mix of new plays, and bold interpretations of classics and musicals, featuring the finest theatre artists. In addition, Stage maintains a vital educational outreach program that annually serves more than 15,000 students from 14 counties. Syracuse Stage is a constituent of the Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for American theatre, and a member of the Arts and Cultural Leadership Alliance (ACLA), the University Hill Corporation and the East Genesee Regent Association. Syracuse Stage is a member of The League of Resident Theatres (LORT), the largest professional theatre association in the country.

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Syracuse Stage | Artistic Director: Robert M. Hupp | Managing Director: Jill A. Anderson
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