

Lady sings the blues

(from the autobiography of Billie Holiday)



Adaptation \ Aida Talliente
Musical direction \
Simone Serafini

the band:
trumpet \ Mirko Cisilino
sax alto \
Simone Bastianutti
sax tenor and clarinet \
Filippo Orefice
trombone \
Maurizio Cepparo
guitar \ Luca Dal Sacco
piano \ Francesco De Luisa
bass \ Alexia Rosso
drums \
Alessandro Mansutti

light design \ Luigi Biondi

A woman. A group of musicians sitting next to her. Old microphones, old records scattered, stacked chairs, glasses here and there. A neon light sign comes down from above: "ON AIR". We are in an intimate place: the room of an old radio from the 50s. From shadow and silence the sounds of a disc: "Strange Fruit" and the first confused words of a female voice. A hoarse voice, broken. She speaks, the woman. "My biggest dream is...", so the woman begins her story, as it was the last interview, the last "song" of her life. And after this brief start, it's the band's music to rip the silence and to accompany us in the suburbs of Baltimore, in New York's jazz clubs, in the cities in America, from coast to coast, during the troubled years of racial violence. It's into this world that Billie Holiday's voice was born: a voice that more than any other has been able to tell every kind of lived experience with sincerity. A voice so wonderfully human and full of confidence, which becomes the cry of a stray dog, the cry of love and hunger, the cry of every scar that marks the body and the heart, the cry of the many roads traveled. Cry and Song, divided by a very thin line: it is in this line that her blues originates, fragile and beautiful.

Critics

Theater-song or recital with sound. It is difficult, and perhaps unnecessary, to harness the originality of the show "The Lady Sings the Blues," in a category, a show that combines the broken monologue of Aida Talliente, always amazing, and the live blues of the eight-man band, led by Simone Serafini.

But there is a glue between the narration and the music that echoes it and it is the tribute, at distance, alienated in its own way, that young white artists of the millennium bestow to the life and the wonders of a US-queen of "Black" song, Billie Holiday, and Lady Day by definition. Born in Baltimore in 1915, she redeemed, with the art of a quiet voice tinged with tormented silence, the mess of a miserable life, marked by violence, poverty, sentimental storms and consumption due to drugs, until the last stop of an early death at 44. It is from this tribulation that everything seems to arise, in a scene that mimics the darkness of Night-Clubs in the 30s, between lighted bulbs, stuff for the band and smoky air. On the side, on a perch, mouth almost kissing the microphone, the hair softened by the inevitable white gardenia, the actress dresses in black recounts and sometimes impersonates the stages of a personal way of the cross that is gradually expanded to a metaphor for the secular suffering of an entire people, de facto enslaved even after being freed by law. And so here it closes with the words of Strange fruit, the "black Marseillaise" with which the Lady of blues moved from the themes of love and hunger to the complaint of a pain that wasn't only hers. Thunderous applause from the large audience, while meanwhile in Georgia a dead man, perhaps innocent, is about to be executed. \ **Angela Felice**

From "Lady Sings The Blues",
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