



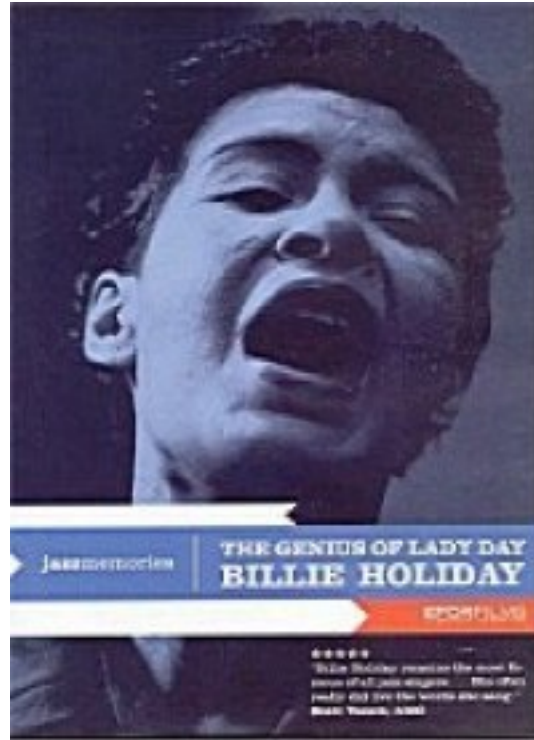
DVD: The Genius Of Lady Day Billie Holiday (Eforfilms)

Reviewed by [Ron Saranich](#)



[Back to REVIEWS](#)

[Back to FEATURES](#)



A wonderfully conceived visual tribute to perhaps the greatest jazz vocalists of all time, The Genius Of Lady Day does Billie Holiday justice. In a little over one hour, this DVD traces Holiday's difficult childhood and troubled adulthood, all the while showing fabulous clips of Billie and her musical

legacy. Included are performances by Holiday with Teddy Wilson, Benny Goodman, Count Basie, Louis Armstrong, Mal Waldron and others.

Considered the first vocalist to conceive of and use her voice as a musical instrument, Holiday influenced an entire generation of jazz singers. The great Frank Sinatra once said "It is Billie Holiday... who was and still remains the greatest single influence on me." High words of praise indeed!

This DVD, spanning Holiday's entire career, captures the emotional intensity she brought to each of her musical performances. From her first innocent recordings with Benny Goodman at age 18 through her final days as a

fading, drug-addled, tragic figure, it's all here. Except for a glaring omission. Holiday and the great Lester Young forged a musical bond that has never been surpassed. Young, in fact, was the person who first called Holiday "Lady Day." My one complaint with Eforfilms' effort is their decision not to include more of this special relationship and the glorious music Holiday and Young created together. Other than that, The Genius Of Lady Day is a worthy paean to the inimitable Billie Holiday and a musical DVD that belongs in your collection.

© 2005 - Ron Saranich