

Lady Day is By Far one of the Top Productions Ever Experienced at ZACH



CHANEL plays Lady Day at Zach Scott Theatre. PHOTO CREDIT: Kirk Tuck

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member of the Gospel group TRIN-I-TEE 5:7. Her standout voice caught our attention and touched our hearts. Then watching her transition as a solo artist followed by her theatrical debut right here in Austin at ZACH Theatre was sincerely music to our ears! CHANEL has without question found her place on the stage and her confidence is best seen in Lady Day. She pours of herself in the voice and

spirit of Billie Holiday, delivering the essence of the music giant while coming from a place of her own sophistication and style. "I got to sing the way I feel. I let the song find me. I am who I am because of who I've been. Music is light. I like the light," said Lady Day. This is by far one of the top productions ever experienced at ZACH. When you feel they've reached the pinnacle of stage performances, somehow they manage to raise the bar.

CHANEL's astounding vocals are accompanied by Kris KeyZ on the piano, Harrell Williams, Jr. killing the drums and Lannie Hilboldt and Glenn Schuetz as master bass players. The combined talent of the group led to an almost uncontrollable standing ovation at the night's conclusion. The chemistry between the cast is contagious and if you love music, this is the performance of the season to attend! For tickets, visit www.zachtheatre.org.

Meet Mr. Roscoe Overton, Sr., A diligent Force for Bilingual Education for all

By Angela PackZia



Roscoe Overton, Sr.

AUSTIN, TX - During our first meeting, Mr. Overton explained to me how he has learned to redefine himself many times throughout the various stages in his life. Mr. Roscoe Overton, Sr. is from a well known and well respected African American family with a long lineage in Austin, TX. Even an elementary school in North East Austin, Overton Elementary, bears the family name. The school is named after an important brother, Volma R. Overton, a civil rights activist and former president of the NAACP's Austin Chapter who led the legal effort to end school segregation in Austin, TX. Today, Roscoe continues the fight for access to quality early childhood and elementary education by promoting bilingual and multicultural education.

Holding a BA degree in Graphic Design and Printing from TSU, Houston and a MA in School Administration from TSU, Nashville, Roscoe has served in the military, worked for private graphics and printing companies, served as Administrator of the non-medical staff at the University of Tennessee's Medical School and as an Investigator for the Tennessee Department of Commerce and Insurance. Roscoe retired from his career as an Investigator and with his wife, Johnnie, resettled back to Austin, Texas. Roscoe's intention after retiring was to enjoy his free time by pursuing his love for golf. However, to help adjust to Austin's current culture after years of being away and inspired by the fact that his wife is an educator, Roscoe decided to substitute teach. It was during his experience as a substitute teacher that Roscoe realized the power of bilingual education as a bridge to bring diverse communities together.

In 2007, Roscoe, came out of retirement to redefine himself once again as the Founder and Executive Director of The Overton Group, a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting bilingual education for all

with special emphasis in serving the African American community. The mission is similar to that of Think Bilingual Austin in that it recognizes that bilingualism and multiculturalism is a strong uniting factor in bringing diverse communities together. **The Overton Group's initial focus was to develop a strong Spanish curriculum to serve predominant African American Pre-K Daycare Centers.** Roscoe's dedication and commitment to The Overton Group is second to none and his commitment has been paying off. Not being a bilingual educator himself, Roscoe procured funds to hire professional staff to develop a strong curriculum to teach Spanish to preschoolers and lower elementary age students. **The curriculum developed is titled the Hilo (™) Curriculum. The word hilo in Spanish means thread and it also serves as an acronym for "Harmonious Intervention through Language Opportunities."**

The Hilo (™) curriculum centers around its main character, a little boy named Tito. Tito is an Afro-latino boy and is represented in the classroom as both a doll and in pictures throughout the Spanish curriculum; he represents a child who is helping other children learn his native language. Today the Hilo (™) curriculum is used in both private and public schools and its success has been proven. Independent research by AISD, Department of Research and Evaluation showed progress of children at two different schools who adopted the Hilo (™) curriculum for their preschool program.

The data found that the Spanish language differentiation between native Spanish speakers and non-native Spanish speakers narrowed significantly in both schools by the third semester. *See graphs below.*

Despite this early success in developing a strong curriculum, Roscoe has not given up on one of his key objectives, which is **to increase access to bilingual education for the underserved African American communities.** Roscoe realizes that to be successful, **parent support and activism for dual language learning in public schools in the African American community is crucial.** For Roscoe, his mission includes not only developing strong curriculum but also **reaching out to the hearts and minds of the parents in this community. By first appealing to the emotions of joy and pride that parents experience in seeing their children speak more than one language, Roscoe hopes that he can then reach out even more to these parents by increasing their understanding on the multitude of benefits these children gain by being bilingual.** The Hilo (™) curriculum for preschools was an important start and stepping stone. Roscoe continues his outreach to local churches, Parent Support Specialists, leaders in the Dual Language Department at Austin ISD, local PTA groups and many other organizations that support or promote bilingual or dual language education.

For this summer, **Roscoe is organizing a free language, music and movement based program for economically disadvantaged children in North East Austin in grades preschool to second grade.** To help pay for this **World Language Festival,** Roscoe turns to one of his favorite pastime sports, golf. **On April 21, Roscoe's group will host a golf tournament fundraiser at Morris Williams Golf Course to help pay for this summer program.**

WHAT WAS BILLIE HOLIDAY'S GIVEN NAME AT BIRTH?

Fagan

Eleanora

THIS IS AUSTIN.
THIS IS OUR SCHOOL DISTRICT.

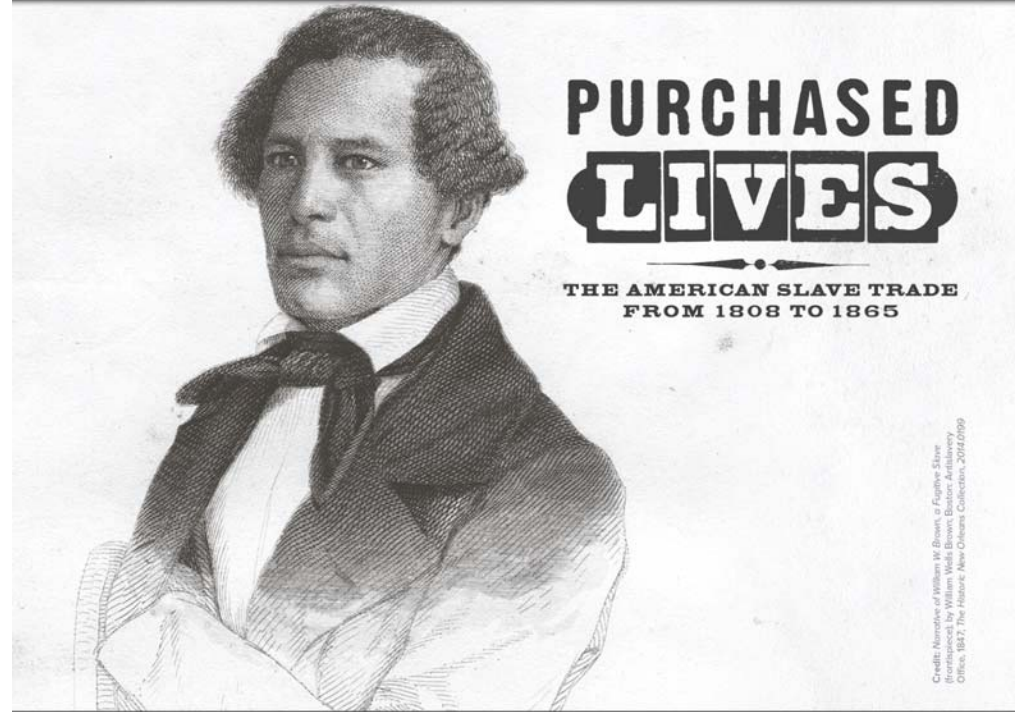


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