

# 1943: A Requiem



**Saturday, August 13, 2011  
Cleveland State University**



# Dedication



**Serenidade (Serenity)**

Photo: Nathaniel Rhodes

The cover photo of dancer Shenee King reminds me of so many people from the African American past (and present), including those amazing women in “Daughters of the Dust,” the award-winning feature film by Julie Dash, and the members of Brazil’s *Irmandade de Boa Morte* (Sisterhood of the Good Death). In a larger sense, however, the image also seems to embody the spirit of serenity and Sankofa, because, like the bird in the traditions of Africa’s Akan peoples, the model looks backward while facing forward. This program is dedicated to everyone who is willing to look backward while facing forward and learning from the past.

— RNW

## Acknowledgments

**Grateful acknowledgment is hereby given to the following:**

**The Office of the Vice President for Institutional Diversity**

**The STARS Program**

For its support of the undergraduate research assistantships for Audrianna Rodriguez, Dominique Brookes, and Annette Rudolph

**The Department of History**

For its support of the graduate assistantship for Austin Stewart

**Conference Services**

**University Marketing**

**Duplicating**

**The 2011 Cleveland Chautauqua Planning Committee**

**and**

**The Initiative for the Study of Religion and Spirituality in the History of Africa and the Diaspora (RASHAD)**

# 1943: A Requiem

## presented as part of Staging African American History and Culture (A Cleveland Chautauqua Project)

Welcome to “1943: A Requiem.” This evening’s activities are part of the second annual Cleveland Chautauqua series. The Chautauqua theme for 2011 is “Engaged Learning in Times of War and Peace,” and program content focusing on the World War II era and beyond is central to our first Staging African American History and Culture project. This staged reading of a new work inspired by the life and times of Lena Horne is also part of a larger program focusing on the life, art, and legacy of writer Zora Neale Hurston, winner of the Anisfield-Wolf Book Award in 1943.

Some writers refer to the 1940s as the era of the Chicago Renaissance, but I am convinced that African American culture flourished in all parts of the country in this decade. In addition to Hurston’s achievements in literature during the 1940s, for example, Duke Ellington conducted and toured with his big band, Lena Horne graced the silver screen in “Stormy Weather” and other films, and Billy Strayhorn composed and performed some of his greatest works, including “Take the A Train,” which became the theme song for Ellington’s band.

Even as these artists shared their incredible gifts with larger and more diverse audiences, African American war-time migration helped fuel the social and economic transformation of cities in the North and the West, and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) remained in the forefront of the struggle for Civil Rights. The words and the music for “1943” were selected with a view toward helping members of the audience gain a better understanding of the significance of these and other historical events.

All activities for Staging African American History and Culture are designed to enhance student learning, through co-curricular programs, performing arts activities, lectures, faculty and student research projects, and related publications. With that in mind, I spent part of the spring semester of 2011 working with four student research assistants: Austin Stewart, Audianna Rodriguez, Dominique Brookes, and Annette Rudolph. Using the collections in Cleveland State University’s Michael Schwartz Library and Yale University’s Beinecke Library, these students identified books, scholarly articles, documentary films, photographs, and other materials related to RASHAD’s on-going research and programming activities. Selected titles from their master bibliography are included in this program booklet, and I hope that you will use this information to learn more about the themes that playwright Nathaniel Rhodes explores in “1943.”

You are also invited to join us in celebrating the 75th anniversary of the publication of Zora Neale Hurston’s greatest novel, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, during the upcoming academic year. Our colleagues at Cleveland Public Library have already agreed to help launch the official celebration with a Hurston birthday party in January 2012, and RASHAD is planning a fall 2012 academic conference and a special Hurston-related issue of *The Journal of Traditions and Beliefs*. For periodic program updates, please visit the Cleveland Chautauqua Blog at <http://rwilliams.csuelearning.org/>.

Thanks, always, for your support!

*Regennia*

Dr. Regennia N. Williams  
Associate Professor of History, Cleveland State University  
Founder and Director of the Initiative for the Study of Religion and Spirituality in the  
History of Africa and the Diaspora (RASHAD)

# **Nathaniel Rhodes** **Playwright / Director**

## **The Cast**

Jessie C. Sims (Lillian Bramley)

Robin Bradley (Lizzie Mae)

Wilhelmenia Glenn (Ernestine)

Theresa Ann Scott (Mama T)

Christopher B. Batiste, Jr. (Pvt. C. Baptiste)

Nathaniel Rhodes (Nathan)

Shenee King (African Dancer)

## **The Band**

Christopher Burge, Saxophone

Jovan Johnson, Trombone

Jacob Wynne, Trumpet

Elijah Gilmore, Drums

Kevin S. Muhammed, Bass

Jacob Bergson, Piano

\*\*\*\*\*

Dr. Dave Moody, Guest Speaker

Mario Jackson, Stage Manager

Crazy Marvin, Special Guest

# Duke Ellington

Selected Titles from the Bibliography Compiled by Dominique Brookes and Regennia N. Williams

Bankston, John. *The Life and Times of Duke Ellington*. Hockessin, Delaware: Mitchell Lane Publishers. 2005.

Ellington, Edward. *Music is My Mistress*. Garden City, New York: Double Day & Company Inc, 1973.

Ellington, Mercer and Stanley Dance. *Duke Ellington in Person*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1978.

Ford, Carin. *Duke Ellington: "I Live with Music."* Berkeley, Heights, NJ: Enslow Publishers, Inc, 2008.

Howland, John. *Ellington Uptown*. Ann Harbor: University of Michigan Press, 2009.

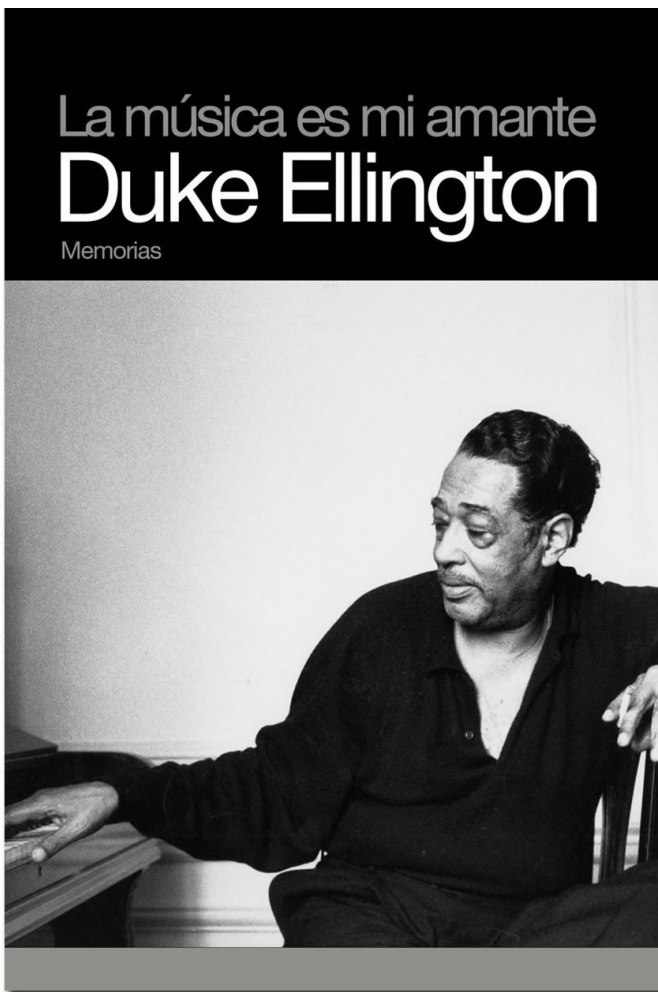
Lawrence, A.H. *Duke Ellington and His World*. New York: Routledge, 2001.

Perlis, Vivian and Libby Van Cleve. *Composers' Voices from Ives to Ellington: An Oral History of American Music*. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2005.

Steed, Janna Tull. *Duke Ellington: A Spiritual Biography*. New York City, New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1999.

Tucker, Mark (Editor). *The Duke Ellington Reader*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993.

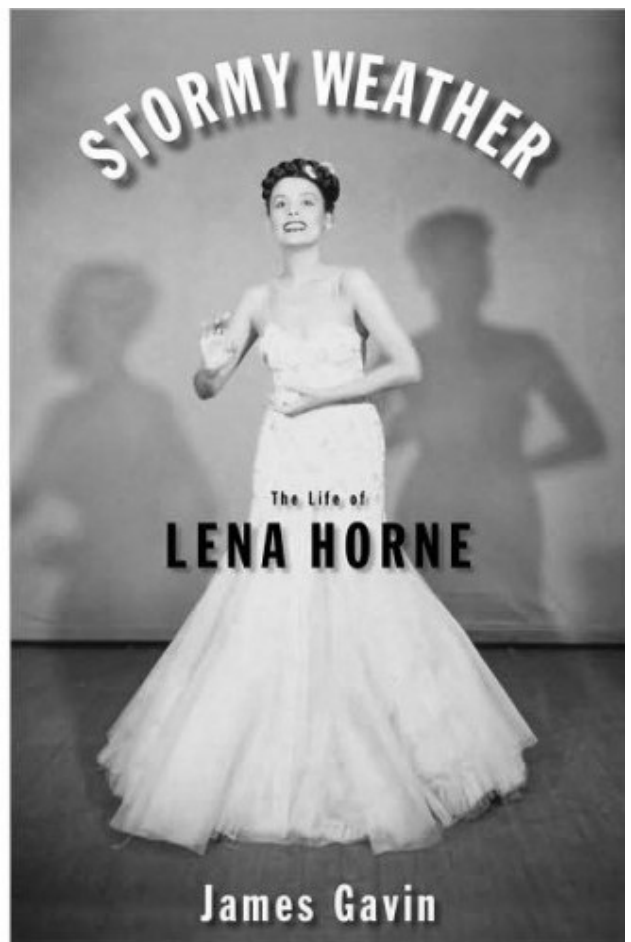
Vail, Ken. *Duke's Diary: The Life of Duke Ellington*. Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, 2002.



# Lena Horne

Selected Titles from the Bibliography Compiled by Audrianna Rodriguez

- Bogle, Donald. *Bright Boulevards, Bold Dreams: The Story of Black Hollywood*. New York: Random House, 2005.
- Bogle, Donald. *Brown Sugar: Over 100 Years of America's Black Female Superstars*. New York: The Continuum International Publishing Company, 1980.
- Buckley, Gail. *The Hornes: An American Family*. New York: Random House, 1986.
- Dobrin, Arnold. *Voices of Joy, Voices of Freedom: Ethel Waters, Sammy Davis, Jr., Marian Anderson, Paul Robeson, Lena Horne*. New York: Coward McCann, 1972.
- Dreher, Kwakiut. *Dancing on the White Page: Black Women Entertainers Writing Autobiography*. Albany, New York: State University Of New York, 2008.
- Gavin, James. *Stormy Weather: The Life of Lena Horne*. New York: Atria Books, 2009.
- Haskins, James. *Lena Horne*. New York: Coward- McCann, 1983.
- Horne, Lena , and Richard Schickle. *Lena*. Garden City, N.Y : Doubleday, 1965.
- Regester, Charlene. *African American Actresses: The Struggle for Visibility, 1900--1960*. Bloomington IN: Indiana University Press, 2010.
- Palmer, Leslie, and Nathan Irvin Huggins. *Lena Horne: Entertainer (Black Americans of Achievement)*. New York: Chelsea House Pub, 1989.



# Billy Strayhorn

Selected Titles from the Bibliography Compiled by Austin Stewart

*\*Identifying primary and secondary sources related to the life of Billy Strayhorn, a native Ohioan and Duke Ellington's composing and arranging companion, is especially challenging, because Strayhorn was a very private person, and he was often overshadowed by Ellington. Austin Stewart's bibliography includes information on articles and books about Strayhorn's work before and during his years with the Duke Ellington Orchestra.*

— RNW

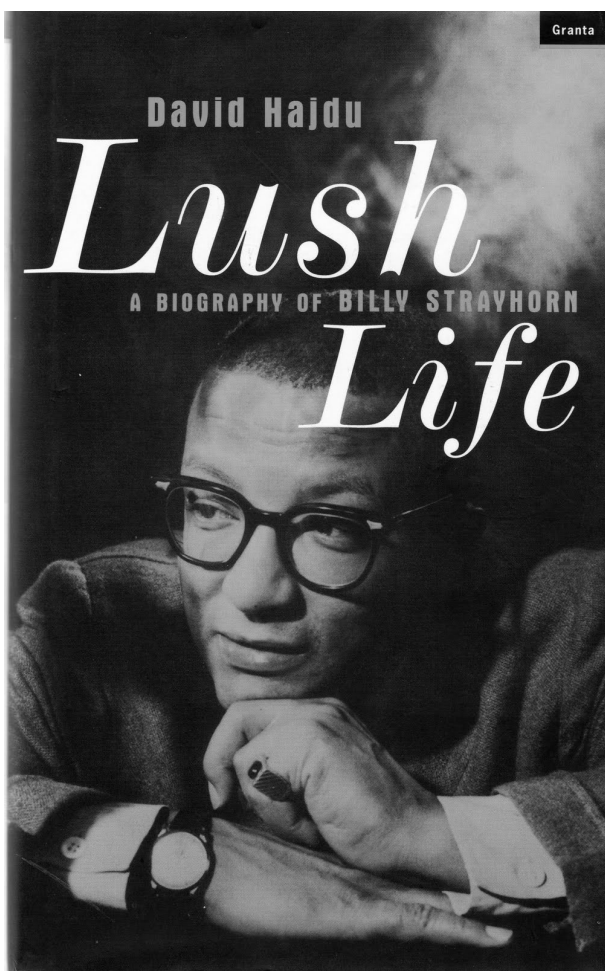
Blumfield, Larry. "Billy Strayhorn, Out of Ellington's Shadow,..." *Wall Street Journal*, New York, Feb. 6, 2007, eastern edition.

Carner, Gary. "Introduction: [Literature of Jazz]." *Black American Literature Forum*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (Autumn, 1991): 441-448.

Coss, Bill. "Ellington and Strayhorn, Inc." *Down Beat*, June 7, 1962.

Dance, Stanley. *The World of Duke Ellington*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1970.

Either, Scott. "In Ellington's Shadow: The Life of Billy Strayhorn." *Humanities*, Vol. 27., No. 6 (Nov/Dec, 2006): 15-19.



Feather, Leonard. *The Jazz Years: Earwitness to an Era*. New York: Da Capo, 1987.

Gleason, Ralph J. *Celebrating the Duke: and Louis, Bessie, Billie, Bird, Carmen, Miles, Dizzy, and Other Heroes*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1975.

Hajdu, David. *Lush Life: A Biography of Billy Strayhorn*. New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1996.

Hentoff, Nat. *Hear Me Talkin' To Ya: The Story of Jazz as Told by the Men Who Made It*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1955.

Johnson, C Denise. "At Last, Spotlight Shines on Strayhorn," *New Pittsburgh Courier*, Vol. 98, Issue 5 (Jan. 31-Feb. 6, 2007).

Lawrence, A. H. *Duke Ellington and His World: A Biography*. New York: Routledge, 2001.



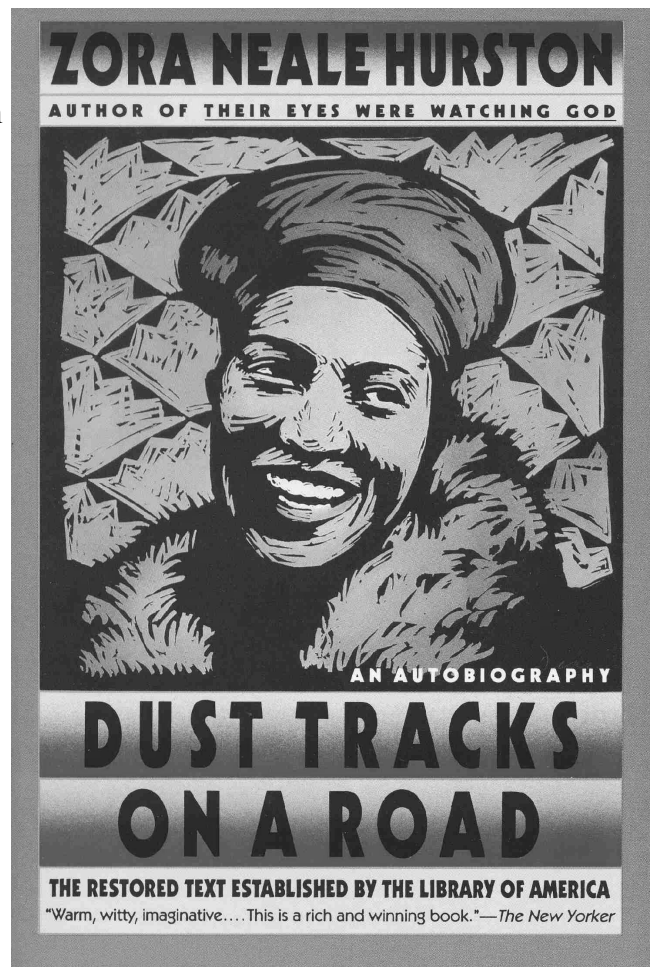
# Zora Neale Hurston

## Selected Titles from the Bibliography Compiled by Annette Rudolph

\*Annette Rudolph's bibliography consists of scholarly articles that are contained in databases owned by the Michael Schwartz Library at Cleveland State University. In recent years, Harper Perennial has re-released most of Hurston's book-length publications. For information on those books, please visit the official Zora Neale Hurston website at [www.zoranealehurston.com](http://www.zoranealehurston.com).

— RNW

- Frydman, Jason. "Zora Neale Hurston, Biographical Criticism, and African Diasporic Vernacular Culture." *MELUS*. 99-118. MELUS, 2009. *Academic Search Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 5 Mar. 2011.
- Heard, Matthew. "Dancing is Dancing No Matter Who is Doing It": Zora Neale Hurston, Literacy, and Contemporary Writing Pedagogy." *College Literature*. 129-155. *College Literature*, 2007. *Academic Search Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 5 Mar. 2011.
- Hood, Judy. "Born With a Skillet in Her Hands." *Southern Quarterly* 44.2 (2007): 74-87. *Academic Search Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 5 Mar. 2011.
- Love, Theresa R. "Zora Neale Hurston's America." *Papers on Language & Literature* 12.4 (1976): 422. *Academic Search Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 5 Mar. 2011.
- O'Connor, Maryn. "Zora Neale Hurston and Talking between Cultures." *Canadian Review of American Studies* 23.1 (1992): 141. *Academic Search Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 5 Mar. 2011.
- Torre, Maria Elena, et al. "Dear Zora: A Letter to Zora Neale Hurston 50 Years After Brown." *Teachers College Record* 107.3 (2005): 496-528. *Academic Search Complete*. EBSCO. Web. 5 Mar. 2011.



Cleveland State University  
*engaged learning*

**FACULTY &  
STAFF APPEAL**

# **Thank You for Supporting RASHAD!**

Your gift to RASHAD provides funding for programs and our endowed scholarship and fellowship fund at Cleveland State University.

For more information on how you can direct your tax-deductible contribution to the **RASHAD Endowment** or the operating fund for **RASHAD: Initiative for the Study of Religion and Spirituality**,

please visit  
[www.csuohio.edu/offices/advancement/](http://www.csuohio.edu/offices/advancement/)  
(University Advancement),

write to

**IT'S  
ALL  
ABOUT  
THE  
STUDENTS**





# Watching God and Reading Hurston

An International Interdisciplinary  
Academic Conference

September 19-22, 2012  
Cleveland State University  
Cleveland, Ohio, USA

*\*Sponsorship Opportunities Available.*  
For more information, visit  
[www.ClevelandMemory.org/pray/](http://www.ClevelandMemory.org/pray/).