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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**CATALINA  
Bar & Grill**

***“A BIRTHDAY TRIBUTE TO BILLIE HOLIDAY”***  
**STARRING CORKY HALE & FREDA PAYNE**  
**WITH SPECIAL GUEST TRICIA TAHARA**



**Singer BILLIE HOLIDAY with Pianist CORKY HALE**



**CORKY HALE**



**FREDA PAYNE**



**TRICIA TAHARA**

**ONE NIGHT ONLY!!! WEDNESDAY, APRIL 25, 2012 at 8:30 P.M.**

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**Catalina Bar & Grill To Present “A Birthday Tribute To Billie Holiday” Starring Corky Hale & Freda Payne, with Special Guest, Tricia Tahara – Page 2 of 8**

Los Angeles, CA – Catalina Bar & Grill will present “A Birthday Tribute To Billie Holiday” starring Billie Holiday’s pianist Corky Hale and singer Freda Payne, with Special Guest, singer Tricia Tahara for One Night Only!!! The performance will be presented on Wednesday, April 25, 2012 at 8:30 p.m. at Catalina Bar & Grill; 6725 West Sunset Boulevard (just east of North Highland Avenue); Los Angeles, CA 90028. There is \$20 Cover Charge. Valet Parking is available.

Corky Hale, who was once Billie Holiday’s pianist, along with Freda Payne and Tricia Tahara will perform a tribute program in honor of the late American Jazz singer, Billie Holiday’s 97<sup>th</sup> Birthday. The program will include signature songs Billie Holiday was strongly affiliated with, including: “Them There Eyes,” “My Man,” “Billie’s Blues,” “God Bless The Child,” “Strange Fruit,” “Lady Sings The Blues” and “Don’t Talk About Me When I’m Gone,” among others.

Reservations for the show and dinner can be made by calling Catalina Bar & Grill at 323-466-2210 or online at [www.ticketweb.com](http://www.ticketweb.com). For further information about the performance, please visit the website [www.catalinajazzclub.com](http://www.catalinajazzclub.com). For further information about Corky Hale, please visit [www.corkyhale.com](http://www.corkyhale.com).

**About The Performing Artists For “A Birthday Tribute To Billie Holiday”:**

**Corky Hale** (Pianist and Vocalist) was born in a small mid-western farm town and started taking piano lessons at age three. At age seven, while vacationing with her family in Florida, Hale was heard in the lobby of her hotel picking out tunes on the piano by House bandleader, Horace Heidt. Heidt had a little band jacket made for her and featured her for the next few weeks in the evening show. She began studying piano at Chicago Conservatory at the age of seven, and harp at the age of eight.

She has performed at The White House with Tony Bennett, soloed with Barbra Streisand in Central Park and at the Hollywood Bowl, and performed with Björk on her MTV Special in London. Hale has also appeared with George Michael at London’s Royal Albert Hall and Washington, D.C.’s RFK Stadium. She has played harp for Liberace (on his television show and at Madison Square Garden) and Judy Collins, piano for Billie Holiday, Mel Tormé and Peggy Lee, and sung with the bands of Harry James, Ray Anthony and Jerry Gray.

Hale’s harp, piano and vocals can be heard on her three albums “**CORKY!**,” “**Have Yourself A Jazzy Little Christmas;**” and her current CD “**Corky Hale and Friends...I’m Glad There Is You.**” Corky Hale’s CDs are available at [www.cdbaby.com](http://www.cdbaby.com) and [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com).

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Her sold-out performances at the Oak Room at the Algonquin in New York, Davenport’s in Chicago, the Cinegrill and Herb Alpert’s Vibrato Grill Jazz...etc. in Los Angeles, the Plush Room in San Francisco, and Pizza On The Park in London have led *Los Angeles Times*’ jazz reviewer Don Heckman to observe that Hale is “more than a triple threat,” and the *San Francisco Examiner*’s Philip Ellwood noted her performances are “of cyclonic proportions.” She has also been seen and heard on “*The Tonight Show With Johnny Carson.*”

Hale produced “*Give ‘em Hell Harry,*” starring Jason Alexander at the Tiffany Theatre in Los Angeles in 1992. Since 2000 Hale has frequently produced and performed her star-studded show “*Corky Hale and Friends: From Tin Pan Alley to Beverly Hills,*” at the Beverly Hills Civic Center. In March 2003 her “*Salute To Hollywood Songwriters*” opened the newly restored Ferry Building at a Gala for San Francisco’s “*Raising Hope*” charity, and in 2002 this show opened the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season of the 1,000-seat La Mirada Theatre. In that same year Hale’s musical “*Boulevard of Broken Dreams*” broke Box Office records at the Coconut Grove Playhouse in Florida. She also produced 1998’s “*Lullaby Of Broadway*” at the Tiffany Theatre in West Hollywood, voted one of the “10 Best Shows” of the year by the *Los Angeles Times*. Later a concert version of the show starring Sally Kellerman was presented at the University of Judaism. She is currently preparing a new version of the production, re-titled “*I Only Have Eyes For You.*”

On November 22, 2007, Corky Hale made her debut at Carnegie Hall as a Piano Soloist with the New York Pops Orchestra, under the baton of Guest Conductor, Barry Levitt. In 2008 she appeared at the Metropolitan Room in New York and produced a Tribute to Sammy Cahn at the Wilshire Theatre Beverly Hills. In 2009 she appeared at Herb Alpert’s Vibrato Grill Jazz...etc. in Los Angeles, selling it out for the third time. Also in 2009, she also appeared as a performer on the Inaugural Playboy Jazz Cruise of the Caribbean.

In December 2008 – January 2009, she produced a Sold Out, Standing Room Only Revival of Leiber & Stoller’s *Smokey Joe’s Café* at El Portal Theatre in North Hollywood, which received rave reviews, including a Critics Choice in the *Los Angeles Times*. The same production was also nominated for 10 Ovation Awards in 2009, receiving the most nominations of any single theatrical show produced in Los Angeles during that year. Currently discussions are underway for another National Tour of the Revival of the show. In 2010, Corky Hale served as one of the financial backers of Academy Award® nominated documentary film, “*The Most Dangerous Man In America – Daniel Ellsberg and The Pentagon Papers.*” Hale also appeared at Catalina Bar & Grill and the Hillcrest Country Club in Los Angeles in 2010.

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2011 appearances included: the 22<sup>nd</sup> New York Cabaret Convention at Lincoln Center; the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Mary Lou Williams Women in Jazz Festival at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts; the Knickerbocker Bar & Grill in New York; Midtown Jazz at Midday at St. Peter’s Church in New York; Catalina Bar & Grill in Los Angeles, CA, and the Barbara Morrison Performing Arts Center in Los Angeles, CA.

In addition to her musical accomplishments, Hale jokingly considers herself the ultimate cook-housewife. She has been happily married since 1970 for 41 years to songwriter Mike Stoller of the team Leiber & Stoller, whose show *Smokey Joe’s Café* still holds the record as the longest running musical revue in Broadway history. She and her husband built the state-of-the-art Dorothy Hecht Health Center in partnership with Planned Parenthood Los Angeles, which serves 2,000 women monthly. She and her husband are currently building another health center in South Los Angeles. In 2011 Hale was honored as the Champion of Choice by NARAL Pro-Choice America (National Abortion Rights Action League) for her lifelong advocacy for women’s reproductive rights.

Hale serves on the national advisory board of NARAL, the national advisory board of Planned Parenthood and the California board of the Women’s Reproductive Rights Assistance Project (WRRAP). She and her husband are strong advocates of the Southern Poverty Law Center and serve on the board of the National Coalition to Ban Gun Violence. In 2012, besides appearing at Catalina Bar & Grill in “A Birthday Tribute To Billie Holiday,” she will be appearing with her husband, Mike Stoller, as the Inaugural Guests in the new “In Conversation” Speaker Series at the Museum at Eldridge Street in Manhattan, NY, in celebration of the museum’s home, the historic 1887 Eldridge Street Synagogue. To learn more about Corky Hale, please visit [www.corkyhale.com](http://www.corkyhale.com).

**Freda Payne** (Vocalist) grew up in Detroit, MI. Payne’s dream was to express herself by means of the playing the piano. At the age of 12, under the direction of piano teacher Ruth Johnson, dance instructor Beatrice Summers and mentor Mack Ferguson, Payne received the kind of guidance that would prove to be the foundation of what would follow. At the age of 13, Payne performed her first studio recordings (United Sound Studios in Detroit), “*Father Dear*,” “*The Moon Rock*” and “*Applications of Love*” – written and produced by impresario and Motown Recording Company founder, Berry Gordy, Jr. From those early recordings to her 1970 mega-hit “*Band of Gold*,” written and produced by Holland, Dozier, Holland, for Invictus, to her latest project titled “*On The Inside*,” Payne has sculptured a noteworthy musical legacy.

She was hired (her first paying gig) by the legendary Pearl Bailey as one of her premiere background singers when she was 17 years of age. Payne’s “*Band of Gold*” reached gold status and launched to #3 for six consecutive weeks on U.S. *Billboard’s* pop  
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chart, and rocketed to #1 in Great Britain. “*Bring the Boys Home*” was another golden smash hit and received tremendous worldwide acceptance, along with the ever popular “*Deeper and Deeper*,” “*You Brought The Joy*” and “*Cherish What Is Dear To You*.”

In theatrical productions Payne has appeared in “*Sophisticated Ladies*,” “*Ain’t Misbehavin’*,” “*Blues in the Night*,” “*Jelly’s Last Jam*,” Donald Welch’s “*A Change Is Gonna Come*” and in “*Ella Fitzgerald: First Lady of Song*,” which opened to rave reviews at the Crossroads Theatre in New Brunswick, N.J. Her film credits include: “*Nutty Professor II: The Klumps*,” “*Rag Doll*,” “*Rhapsody*,” “*Book of Numbers*” and “*Reptilian*.” Her television appearances include: “*American Idol*,” “*The Tonight Show*,” “*Soul Train*,” “*Merv Griffin*,” “*Dick Cavett*,” and “*David Frost*.” To learn more about Freda Payne, please visit, [www.fredapayne.com](http://www.fredapayne.com).

**Tricia Tahara** (Vocalist) is a Los Angeles resident and Savant Records recording artist. She was raised in Detroit, MI on an eclectic mixture of rock, pop, opera, and Broadway show tunes. She honed her classical technique at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, developed her jazz chops at the Berklee College of Music, and hit the road with rock and funk bands that took her literally around the world.

Tahara then teamed up with fellow Berklee alum Wallace Roney and an all-star jazz band for her debut album, *Secrets*, which prompted the *London Times*’ Chris Parker to call her, “one of the purest, most affecting voices to emerge in recent years...combining the smooth jazz sophistication of Carmen Lundy with the tempered-steel soulfulness of Anita Baker or Randy Crawford,” and, “a skilled and thoughtful lyricist, adding unusually cogent words to Wayne Shorter’s ‘*Footprints*’ and Herbie Hancock’s ‘*Butterfly*.’”

*All About Jazz*’s Stanley Péan proclaimed Tahara, “one of the jazz scene’s best kept secrets,” calling *Secrets*, “well worth hearing, notably for ‘*L’Altra Notte In Fondo Al Mare*’ (an aria from Boito’s *Mephistopheles*), where freebop meets opera with astonishing results.” And the publication *Bird Lives* declared, “*Secrets* is anything but a typical jazz vocalist’s debut recording. Tricia uses her voice like an instrument, becoming part of the band, and her distinctive, assured musicality is evident on every track.” In 2007 she made her Carnegie Hall debut in a program dedicated to Rock ‘n Roll legends, Leiber & Stoller.

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**About Billie Holiday:**

**Billie Holiday** was born 97 years ago on April 7, 1915. Her birth name was Eleanora Fagan. She grew up surrounded by Jazz music in Baltimore, MD in the 1920s. As a teenager she began singing in after-hours Jazz clubs. Holiday eventually moved to New York in 1928 with her mother, Sadie Fagan. She applied for a job as a dancer at Jerry Preston’s Log Cabin, a nightclub, which she didn’t get. The pianist who played for her audition asked her if she could sing. She brazenly told him she could, and began singing the songs, “*Travlin’ All Alone*” and “*Body and Soul.*” As a result, he was hired to sing for \$2 a night for six nights a week working from midnight until 3:00 p.m. the next day.

She later performed in some obscure Harlem nightclubs. Holiday took her professional name from her father Clarence Holiday, a guitarist who played with Fletcher Henderson’s band in the 1920s and from a favorite movie actress of her childhood, Billie Dove.

By the age of 18, Holiday was discovered by music producer, John Hammond, who cut her first record as part of a studio group led by Benny Goodman. Her first recording, “*Your Mother’s Son-in-Law,*” was made in 1933.

By 1935, Holiday’s career blossomed as she recorded four sides which went on to become the hit songs, “*What a Little Moonlight Can Do*” and “*Miss Brown To You,*” leading to a recording contract of her own. During the course of her career, her recordings often included musicians from the Count Basie Band. She continued to record a number of master tracks until 1942 that would ultimately become important foundations for American Jazz music.

In 1936 Holiday began working with Jazz tenor saxophonist and clarinetist, Lester Young, who dubbed her, “*Lady Day,*” her now famous nickname. Holiday became the first black woman to work with a white orchestra while performing with the bands of Count Basie in 1937 and Artie Shaw in 1938.

While Holiday was working for Columbia Records in the 1930s she was introduced to the emotional poem, “*Strange Fruit,*” about the lynching of two black men. The poem was written by Abel Meeropol, a Jewish high-school teacher from the Bronx, who published it under the pen name of Lewis Allan. In her autobiography, “*Lady Sings the Blues,*” Holiday advised that she, along with Lewis Allan, and her accompanist Sonny White, and arranger Danny Mendelsohn, set the poem to music. Although Columbia Records wouldn’t record the song due to its subject matter, Holiday recorded the song in two major sessions at Commodore, one in 1939 and one in 1944. In time, it became Holiday’s biggest selling record.

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Despite some run ins with the law on drug related issues during her career, Holiday appeared in the film “*New Orleans*” in 1946 and was featured in a Broadway revue for a short time. In 1954 she toured Europe and was featured on the popular television program, “*The Sound of Jazz*” in 1958.

Although Holiday never had any professional music training or read music, her natural talent propelled her career forward as she performed at various clubs, working for tips in the early days. Corky Hale played piano for Billie Holiday later in her career while Hale was working with the Jerry Gray Band in Las Vegas. Hale also recorded with Holiday on “*The Ultimate Billie Holiday Collection.*”

From 1952 to 1959, Holiday recorded about 100 recordings on the Verve label. She made her final studio recording for the MGM label in March of 1959. Holiday’s dramatic abilities, phrasing and diction were hallmarks of her singing style. The white gardenias she wore in her hair, became her trademark, along with snapping her fingers lazily with the rhythm of the music, while cocking her head back on a jaunty angle as she sang. Holiday wrote in her book, “*Lady Sings The Blues,*” that “singing songs like “*The Man I Love*” or “*Porgy*” is no more work than sitting down and eating Chinese roast duck, and I love roast duck. I’ve lived songs like that.”

Billie Holiday died on July 17, 1959 in Metropolitan Hospital in New York at the age of 44 of congestion of the lungs complicated by heart failure. Today, Billie Holiday is musical legend remembered for her soulful, emotive voice and indelible song interpretations, which have cemented her reputation in musical history as one of the greatest Jazz voices of all time

**(NOTE: A Music Calendar Listing for this event follows on the next page.)**

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Music Calendar Listing:



Presents

**“A BIRTHDAY TRIBUTE TO BILLIE HOLIDAY”  
STARRING CORKY HALE & FREDA PAYNE  
WITH SPECIAL GUEST TRICIA TAHARA**

**ONE NIGHT ONLY!!! WEDNESDAY, APRIL 25, 2012 at 8:30 P.M.**

**WHO:** Catalina Bar & Grill will present “A Birthday Tribute To Billie Holiday” starring Billie Holiday’s pianist, Corky Hale and singer Freda Payne, with Special Guest, singer Tricia Tahara for One Night Only!!!

**WHAT:** Corky Hale, who was once Billie Holiday’s pianist, along with Freda Payne and Tricia Tahara will perform a tribute program in honor of the late American Jazz singer, Billie Holiday’s 97<sup>th</sup> Birthday. The program will include signature songs Billie Holiday was strongly affiliated with, including: “Them There Eyes,” “My Man,” “Billie’s Blues,” “God Bless The Child,” “Strange Fruit,” “Lady Sings The Blues” and “Don’t Talk About Me When I’m Gone,” among others.

**WHERE:** Catalina Bar & Grill; 6725 West Sunset Boulevard (just east of North Highland Avenue); Los Angeles, CA 90028.

**WHEN:** Wednesday, April 25, 2012 at 8:30 p.m.

**HOW:** There is \$20 Cover Charge. Valet Parking is available. Reservations for the show and dinner can be made by calling Catalina Bar & Grill at 323-466-2210 or online at [www.ticketweb.com](http://www.ticketweb.com). For further information about the performance, please visit the website [www.catalinajazzclub.com](http://www.catalinajazzclub.com). For further information about Corky Hale, please visit [www.corkyhale.com](http://www.corkyhale.com).

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