

Basic Detail Report



Billie in Berlin

Date

January 1954

Medium

Gelatin silver print on ektalure paper

Description

Photograph of Billie Holiday looking left with a cigarette in her mouth as someone lights it, taken at a jazz concert in Berlin, Germany by photographer Leigh A. Wiener in 1954.

Wiener recalls the day the photo was taken: "'Jazz Club - USA' was touring Germany. It was a bitter cold night in Berlin, but inside the large hall, things were warming up. Buddy DeFranco opened the show with 'I'll Remember April' with a ten minute solo by his drummer, Bobby White. Then came Red Norvo doing 'Dancing on the Ceiling.' Now, it was Billie's turn. Like the audience, I had really come for Billie Holiday. Out she came and went right to it...'My Man,'...'Billie's Blues,'...'Tenderly'... 'Be right back,' she told the audience as she headed backstage for a break. A friend greeted her with a beer. Another lit her cigarette. Suddenly she noticed me with three cameras around my neck. 'Want a beer, kid?' 'I'd rather have more Billie Holiday,' I replied. 'You can have both,' she said as she handed me a cold beer. 'Anything special?' she said. 'I've always loved your "Love Come Back to Me,"' I answered. I didn't think she heard me as she turned to some backstage friends. To a loud ovation, Billie Holiday was back on stage. She must have heard because her first song was 'Lover Come Back to Me.'"

Dimensions

16 x 20 in. (40.6 x 50.8 cm)