

WRITER AND ACTRESS ANN C. PERRY *presents*

LIVE RICH DIE POOR

Zora Awakening





About The Show

Watch as Ann C. Perry plays 18 characters from Zora's life including the icon, Zora herself.

Live Rich Die Poor explores a fictional twist on Alice Walker's discovery of Zora Neale Hurston's unmarked grave in 1973. In

this re-imagined tale, Walker's efforts to honor Hurston inadvertently awaken her spirit, leading to Zora's realization that she no longer remembers her remarkable life or legacy.

This thought-provoking show offers a fresh perspective on the vulnerabilities and complexities of Hurston's journey, inspiring us to reflect on if we are living fully and denying the grave our gifts.

Who Is Zora?

Zora Neale Hurston

Zora Neale Hurston was a writer, folklorist, and anthropologist whose bold voice helped shape the Harlem Renaissance. Born in 1891 and raised in Eatonville, Florida, the first incorporated all-Black town in the United States, she grew up immersed in a community rich with culture and tradition. After overcoming early struggles, she went on to study at Howard University and Barnard College, training as an anthropologist while developing her gift for storytelling. That background fueled a literary career that blended scholarship and artistry in powerful ways.

Her works, including *Jonah's Gourd Vine*, *Mules and Men*, *Tell My Horse*, and the celebrated *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, captured the beauty, humor, and resilience of Black life while preserving folklore and oral traditions. Though she died in 1960 largely unrecognized, her legacy was revived in the 1970s and is now celebrated around the world. Today, Zora Neale Hurston is remembered as a fearless storyteller and cultural pioneer whose influence continues to inspire new generations.



A portrait of Ann C. Perry, a Black woman with dark hair, smiling and wearing a black jacket over a blue top. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

More About Ann

Ann C. Perry is an award-winning playwright, actor, and creative producer whose work turns stories into cultural movements. She won the 2023 Ostrander Award for Outstanding Original Script with *Live Rich Die Poor*, a one-woman play on the life and legacy of Zora Neale Hurston, where she embodies 18 characters from Hurston's world.

Based in Memphis and a Theatre graduate of the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, Ann creates across theatre, fiction, children's literature, and screenwriting. She continues to expand *Live Rich Die Poor* through performances, branded experiences, and educational initiatives.



What People Are Saying About The Show

"Ann Perry delivers a virtuoso performance. The show is fresh, vital, and relevant. This show does not beg to be seen, it demands to be seen."

Antonio Horne
Associate Professor, Hendrix College

"Ann C. Perry masterfully glides from character to character creating the population of Zora's world. The stage feels inhabited with many thanks to Wallace's agility and specificity, which allows her story-telling to soar with clarity."

Stephanie Shine, General Manager
Tennessee Shakespeare

"Tears streamed as I was encouraged to decide if I lived rich...because I have had the nerve to go my own way. Thank you for being a beacon of freedom."

Jenita Nakamura
The Memphis Orpheum

What People Are Saying About The Show

“This was an evocative and transformative experience. Ann captures beautifully the complicated artist and the audience leaves with a better understanding of this icon of American Literary history. Zora Neale Hurston would have been proud.”

Amina Dafalla
Theatre Goer

“Ann brings the vibrant characters of Zora’s world to life. The language and life of Zora Neale Hurston are resurrected with vibrancy, clarity, and humor.”

Taylor St. John
The Memphis Orpheum

“Marvelous! A rich tapestry that made me want to go read all of her books. Funny and moving all at once. A complex character creatively staged.”

Irene Crist
Theatre Director



Articles About the Show

Click the icons to read what they wrote about “*Live Rich Die Poor*” and Ann C. Perry.

CHOOSE
901

Daily
Memphian
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A woman with dark skin and curly hair is seated on a wooden chair. She is wearing a dark-colored short-sleeved top and a patterned scarf. Her hands are resting on the chair's seat and backrest. The entire image is covered with a semi-transparent red filter. The text 'Partnership Opportunities' is written in a white, italicized serif font across the lower portion of the image.

Partnership Opportunities

LIVE RICH, DIE POOR *FUNDRAISING* *CAMPAIGN*

**35 PEOPLE TO GIVE \$1,000
—OR—
70 PEOPLE TO GIVE \$500**

**1 TO 2 TITLE SPONSORS TO
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2 AT \$17,500.**

YOUR GIFT WILL DIRECTLY FUND

A PROFESSIONAL SET DESIGNER WHO CAN BUILD THE BEAUTY OF ZORA'S DIFFERENT WORLDS. (\$2,500)

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ENHANCED SOUND AND LIGHTING TO MAKE EVERY QUOTE, WHISPER, AND SPIRITUAL MOMENT SOAR. (\$3,500)

MARKETING AND OUTREACH TO ENSURE HER STORY REACHES THE HEARTS IT'S MEANT TO. (\$5,000)

TWO UNDERSTUDIES TO ENSURE THE SHOW WILL GO ON. (\$2,000)

A NEW DIRECTOR TO BRING A BEAUTIFUL NEW VISION TO LIFE FIT FOR ANY STAGE IN THE WORLD. (\$5,000)

ADMIN/SOCIAL MEDIA PERSONNEL TO HELP MANAGE CONSISTENCY IN POSTING, ARRANGING EVENTS, AND CORRESPONDENCE. (\$4,000)

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Thank You!

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