

ONE: Series performers unite for holiday performance at the Averitt

By Angye Morrison

Courtesy of The Statesboro Herald

The ONE: Series has become a tradition in the Boro, bringing some of the area's most talented artists to the stage. During this holiday season, the artists that audiences have gotten to know during their solo performances will come together for a special holiday show.

Shaunta Ellis, Nora Franklin, Vivian Summers, Brandi Harvey, Eddie Frazier, Dr. Michael Braz, Donald Chavers and Robin Holmes-Lanier will perform on the Emma Kelly stage at the Averitt Center this month to ring in some holiday cheer. The show will feature each artist performing, but no interviews to get to know the artists, like during the earlier individual performances.

A veteran to the stage and well-known in the area, Ellis is known for her larger-than-life voice. She performed in February 2019 in the ONE: Series, and performed gospel and inspirational music.

Franklin says she considers herself to be an actor who sings — not the other way around. She enjoys choosing songs that bring out her acting chops, and she always sets the same goal for her performances: she wants the audience to “have a good time, to be entertained.”

Summers made sure her ONE performance was uplifting, saying that the audience could expect to get lost in the music and yet have a great time. “When I can't find the words to say how or what I'm feeling, music has a way of doing just that...that's the beauty of it,” she said.

Known as “The Sound of Downtown,” Harvey is well known to music lovers in the Boro, and performs regularly all over the area. She released a solo album in 2019, and her ONE performance featured her original songs.

Frazier is no stranger to the stages in the Boro, and is most well-known for his work as the drama teacher at Statesboro High School. His sold-out performance in the ONE: Series featured some of his favorite songs. He showcased some of his former and current students as part of his special night.

An internationally known performer, music educator and composer, Braz has used his skills to educate and entertain for more than 50 years. His ONE performance was a night of music he chose to be both serious and whimsical.

Chavers brought his own brand of personal enthusiasm and positivity to the stage as he performed gospel and inspirational songs. He said, “I want to tell a story; the story of how every song has a way of allowing you to be vulnerable and open.”

Holmes-Lanier sang of faith, hope and community in her performance. As a singer/songwriter, she has always had a passion and love for music, and she says audiences can always expect to hear "a few high notes."

In this holiday show, each artist will perform a secular and a religious Christmas song. The show was coordinated by Mical Whitaker and Ressie Fuller, with Robert Cottle as the musical director.

"I could go on and on about this show and the wonderful cornucopia of talent," said Whitaker. "A director's dream cast at my favorite time of year. A live band, some gospel, some Broadway, Braz's piano, familiar Christmas melodies. What could be better?"

The curtain is set to go up for ONE: Holiday, sponsored by Brinson, Williams & Grooms Insurance and Savannah Car Rentals of Statesboro, on Dec. 11 at 7:30 p.m., and on Dec. 12 at 3 p.m. Tickets are \$20, with student tickets set at \$15. There are discounts for military, first-responders, and city of Statesboro and Bulloch County employees. Purchase tickets at the box office, online at averittcenterforthearts.org, or call 912-212-2787.