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**NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSIC PARTNERS WITH  
NASHVILLE BALLET FOR SHAKESPEAREAN PERFORMANCE AND PANEL**  
Grammy Award Winner Rhiannon Giddens Scores Show On Shakespeare's "Dark Lady"

**NASHVILLE, Tenn. (Jan. 7, 2019)** – The National Museum of African American Music (NMAAM) has partnered with the Nashville Ballet to present a panel discussion and rehearsal viewing of “Lucy Negro Redux” at the Nashville Ballet on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Monday Jan. 21, from 5–7 p.m.

The ballet is based on the book “Lucy Negro, Redux” by Nashville poet Caroline Randall Williams and tells the story of the “Dark Lady,” a mysterious and anonymous woman referenced in William Shakespeare’s sonnets 127–154. A woman, Lucy Negro, was cited as inspiration for the character after a Shakespearean scholar identified her as an associate to an acting company owner who staged Shakespeare’s plays.

A panel discussion following the rehearsal viewing will feature NMAAM curator Dr. Steven Lewis, Nashville Ballet artistic director and show composer Paul Vasterling, co-composer Francesco Turrisi, and Grammy award-winning lead singer of country and blues band Carolina Chocolate Drops Rhiannon Giddens as panelists. WMOT senior producer Craig Havighurst will serve as the panel moderator. Panelists will discuss themes from the performance, including equity, beauty and otherness.

“The story of Lucy Negro raises important questions about the societal constructs around race and beauty,” said Dionne Lucas, NMAAM director of marketing and communications, and Nashville Ballet board chairwoman for “Lucy Negro, Redux.” “NMAAM is excited for the opportunity to frame her story for a larger discussion about the portrayal of African American women in both art and real life.”

The ballet will feature an original score by Giddens, including a combination of bluegrass, jazz and Elizabethan influences. Giddens also plans to donate an artifact for display at NMAAM once it opens in late 2019 as a part of the Fifth + Broadway development in downtown Nashville.

The official ballet performance will show at the Tennessee Performing Arts Center from Feb. 8–10.

**About NMAAM**

The National Museum of African American Music, set to open in 2019, will be the only museum dedicated solely to educating, preserving and celebrating the influence African Americans have



had on music. Based in Nashville, Tenn., as a part of the Fifth + Broadway development, the museum will share the story of the American soundtrack by integrating history and interactive technology to bring musical heroes of the past into the present. For more information, please visit [www.nmaam.org](http://www.nmaam.org).