



THE KIMMEL CENTER
ACADEMY OF MUSIC
MERRIAM THEATER

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Philadelphia Drag Icon @TheMarthaMan returns to @KimmelCenter for her Perelman concert debut on 12/12 to celebrate the release of her first album based on her acclaimed show, #LashedButNotLeashed More info @kimmelcenter.org

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**THE KIMMEL CENTER CULTURAL CAMPUS PRESENTS
DRAG ICON MARTHA GRAHAM CRACKER IN
LASHED BUT NOT LEASHED
A ONE-NIGHT ONLY
PERFORMANCE & ALBUM RELEASE
IN THE PERELMAN THEATER
DECEMBER 12, 2019**

**11-song musical odyssey written
during the 2015 Kimmel Center Cultural Campus Theater Residency**

Album is executive produced by the Kimmel Center Cultural Campus

"Rollicking alt-cabaret shenanigans" –Time Out New York

*"Witty, silly, bitchy and soulful... when she sings, you are completely rocked."
-The Philadelphia Inquirer*

"Colorful and hilariously over-the-top drag queen extraordinaire" - Metro

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (Philadelphia, PA, November 6, 2019) – On Thursday, December 12, 2019 at 8:00 p.m., the Kimmel Center Cultural Campus will proudly present **Martha Graham Cracker** in her smash hit show, *Lashed But Not Leashed*. *Lashed But Not Leashed* is an original 11-song musical that was born as part of the Kimmel Center Theater Residency program. *Lashed But Not Leashed* premiered in the Kimmel’s intimate SEI Innovation Studio in 2017 and has toured to sold-out houses at Joe’s Pub (New York) and the Guthrie Theatre (Minneapolis). But on December 12, for one night only, the show will move upstairs to the grandeur of the Perelman Theater – and all of the original songs will be available that night as Martha’s very first album, *Lashed But Not Leashed*, is unveiled **for the first time**.

“Each June, new Theater Residency artists produce new works that challenge their own imaginations and reveal parts of themselves to Philadelphia audiences,” said Anne Ewers, President and CEO of the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts. “In this performance, we’ll be let in on the story of *Lashed But Not Leashed* and revel in the lush and lovelorn songs that make up Martha’s first-ever album. The Kimmel Center Cultural Campus is proud to serve as the Executive Producer of the album.”

Lashed But Not Leashed is an 11-song musical odyssey into the hairy heart of Martha Graham Cracker, as the audience witnesses what may be her last performance. As she stares into the abyss of the current state of the world, she finds herself moved to abandon that fickle mistress called show biz in order to heed a much more urgent calling: she must become a librarian.

According to Dito van Reigersberg, the man behind Martha: “I really had the good fortune of participating in the Residency Program with three incredible songwriting collaborators. The Dream Team, as I call them adoringly, came together in a tiny practice room and began by sharing our favorite albums—in a wide array of styles, from Joni Mitchell folk to 70’s Aretha to Jobim. We knew we wanted to focus on three-part harmony so we learned a Dolly Parton song from the album *Trio* as a kind of warm-up to songwriting. Then we dove in and the tunes all began to flow. After we did an in-progress showing of our tunes, Ethan Lipton (another Residency participant) said some encouraging words and assured me that there was a show there; he then helped me to structure the order and logic of the show and to write the text to act as glue between the songs.”

Martha disagrees. “Dito makes this sound so easy. It wasn’t. There were tears and songs that ended up in the trash can, and long existential walks as we tried to crack the puzzles of some of these songs. But I will agree that the residency came at just the right time for me, and afforded me the chance to finally put pen to paper to craft songs that are tailor-made to me and to the times we find ourselves living in now. Normally I am a cover girl and I sing versions of well-known pop songs, so this was an unprecedented chance for me to write about myself in a more intimate and specific way, revealing more of both my uproarious, silly self and my more thoughtful, moody self. I am endlessly grateful for this chance to expose myself in front of such a large crowd – I still don’t believe they’d have me perform in such a classy venue. Do you think the Kimmel made a mistake?”

The show was created during the Kimmel Center Cultural Campus’ 2015 Theater Residency Program, an incubator program for new works of music and cabaret run in partnership with Joe’s Pub at the Public Theater in New York. *Lashed* had its world premiere in the SEI Innovation Studio in March 2017; Martha and her band then took the show to Joe’s Pub as part of the Under The Radar Festival in January 2018, and traveled to Minneapolis to perform at the Guthrie Theatre in February 2019, before returning to perform it again at the Kimmel Center Cultural Campus in March 2019.

Now, due to popular demand, they have recorded the music and will celebrate its release with a can’t-miss, one-night-only performance, with songs that range in style from throbbing funk anthem to close-harmony

country, from quiet hymn to soaring ballad, and from flirtatious patter song to angry driving rock 'n' roll – all the sounds of Martha's heart.

The Kimmel Center Cultural Campus is proud to be the Executive Producer of the *Lashed But Not Leashed* album.

Dito van Reigersberg as Martha Graham Cracker

Songs written by the Dream Team: Vince Federici, Eliza Hardy Jones, Dito van Reigersberg, and David Sweeny

The Kimmel Center Cultural Campus has proudly produced various full-length works born out of its Theater Residency, a 2-week annual intensive inviting artists to gather and create new works on the Kimmel Center Cultural Campus. Entering its seventh season in June 2020, these works have included: Mary Tuonomen's *Hello Sadness!*; Jamie Leonhart's *Estuary*; Ethan Lipton's *The Outer Space*, which then played at The Public Theater in New York City; Deb Margolin's *8 Stops*; Dito Van Reigersberg as Martha Graham Cracker in *Lashed But Not Leashed*; Courtnee Roze's *The Culture*; Martha Stuckey's *Due to the Sensitive Nature*; Daniel Alexander Jones' *BLACK LIGHT* (presented in September 2019 at American Repertory Theater); David Sweeny's Johnny Showcase alter-ego in *The Johnny Shortcake Show*; and Molly Pope's *Polly Mope*. Upcoming Theater Residency performances on the Kimmel Center Cultural Campus this season include James' and Jerome's *The Conversationalists* (November 7 – 8, 2019, SEI Innovation Studio) and M'Balía Singley's *Turn* (February 26 – 29, 2020, SEI Innovation Studio).

Other featured upcoming performances at the Kimmel Center Cultural Campus include: **Sasha Velour's *Smoke & Mirrors*** (November 12, 2019, Merriam Theater), **An Evening with Sutton Foster** (November 22, 2019, Merriam Theater), **Rachael & Vilray** (December 13, 2019, Perelman Theater) and **Kristin Chenoweth: *The Art of Elegance*** (March 13, 2020, Verizon Hall).

MARTHA GRAHAM CRACKER

In

LASHED BUT NOT LEASHED

The Album Release Show!

With Dito van Reigersberg as Martha Graham Cracker

With collaborating songcrafters and performers: Vince Federici, Eliza Hardy Jones, and David Sweeny

Kimmel Center Cultural Campus' Perelman Theater

December 12, 2019, 8:00 p.m.

Tickets

Tickets are on sale now starting at \$30.00. Tickets can be purchased by calling 215-893-1999, online at www.kimmelcenter.org, or at the Kimmel Center Box Office. Group sales are available for groups of 10 or more and can be purchased by calling 215-790-5883. See www.kimmelcenter.org for more information.

The Kimmel Center Cultural Campus

Located in the heart of Center City, Philadelphia, our mission is to engage the region's diverse communities with art through performance and education. Our Cultural Campus serves more than 1 million guests per year and includes the **Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts**, the **Academy of Music**, and the **Merriam Theater**-representing more than 160 years of rich history for the performing arts along Philadelphia's Avenue of the Arts. We are home to eight esteemed Resident Companies: **The Philadelphia Orchestra**, **Opera Philadelphia**,

Pennsylvania Ballet, The Philly POPS, PHILADANCO, The Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, The Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, and Curtis Institute of Music. With nearly 9,000 seats per night, we are the region's most impactful performing arts center, and the second largest in the country. Our Cultural Campus serves as a preeminent and inclusive place to enjoy exceptional experiences that reflect the spirit of our region by cultivating a creative and socially-responsible environment where our community shares experiences that are delivered with pride, integrity, and respect. As a 501 c 3 nonprofit organization, we collaborate on, present, and produce a broad range of relevant and meaningful events, we serve as an active gathering space for social and community events, we educate the region's young people through access to quality arts experiences, and we provide support to artists in the creation of new work. TD Bank, America's Most Convenient Bank, is our proud sponsor of the Kimmel Center's 2019-2020 Season. American Airlines is the official airline of Broadway Philadelphia. For additional information, visit www.kimmelcenter.org.

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For photography, please visit www.kcpress.smugmug.com

<https://www.marthagrahamcrackercabaret.com>