



THE KIMMEL CENTER
ACADEMY OF MUSIC
MERRIAM THEATER

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Drag icon @Sasha_Velour's revolutionary show "Smoke & Mirrors" will be at the @KimmelCenter on 11/12. The effortless blend of drag, visual art, and magic is a can't-miss! More info @ kimmelcenter.org

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**KIMMEL CENTER CULTURAL CAMPUS PRESENTS
CRITICALLY-ACCLAIMED DRAG THEATRE SHOW SPECTACULAR
SASHA VELOUR'S *SMOKE & MIRRORS*,
COMING TO THE MERRIAM THEATER
NOVEMBER 12, 2019**

**"*Smoke & Mirrors* is a spellbinding tour de force."
- *Forbes***

**"The intensely personal [*Smoke & Mirrors*] shows what a top-of-her-game queen Velour really is,
both as an artist and as a storyteller."
- *Paper Magazine***

**"[Velour's] most spectacular stage gambit yet."
- *Time Out New York***

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (Philadelphia, PA, October 9, 2019) – Sasha Velour's *Smoke & Mirrors*, the critically-acclaimed one-queen show by global drag superstar and theatre producer, Sasha Velour, will come to the Kimmel Center Cultural Campus' Merriam Theater on November 12, 2019 at 8:00 p.m., as part of the show's 23-city North American tour. This is Velour's first solo tour, following her win of *RuPaul's Drag Race* Season 9, and sold-out engagements of *Smoke & Mirrors* in New York City, Los Angeles, London, Australia, and New Zealand this year.

“Sasha Velour is a drag superstar, as well as an astonishing talent in the visual arts,” said Anne Ewers, President and CEO of the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts. “*Smoke & Mirrors* invites audiences to experience the depths of Velour that have yet to be explored in the public eye. The first-hand account of Velour’s life is extremely personal and every detail is flawlessly executed. This production is stunning, yet the true beauty lies in the way it spurs discussion about real issues. We are honored to host it on the Kimmel Center Cultural Campus to serve as a catalyst for relevant conversations in our community.”

At over 90 minutes, *Smoke & Mirrors* introduces audiences to a whole new side of Velour’s artistry. Its 13 dazzling and genre busting lip-synch performances are all directed, produced, and choreographed by the queen herself. *Smoke & Mirrors* has been widely praised as an astounding combination of drag, live theatre, visual art, magic, and personal storytelling.

Viewers will be on the edge of their seats as Velour explodes into rose petals, vanishes in a poof of smoke, saws herself in half, conjures a rainstorm and even transforms into a tree in front of their eyes...but the real magic is the way these illusions and deceptions serve to unmask deeper truths, sparking fresh analysis of gender, fame, family, loss, and the importance of dreaming big and living life over-the-top.

In an exclusive statement to *Entertainment Weekly*, Velour says, “I am literally and figuratively shaking with excitement to embark on my first solo theater tour with *Smoke & Mirrors*! This production has been years in the making, and is without a doubt the most personal and honest I have ever been on stage. I hope *Smoke & Mirrors* can be a new introduction of myself...as not only a crown-wearing drag queen, but also a real person--with a very specific taste in colors! [laughs].”

On speaking about audience reactions to the show, Velour adds, “What really makes me proud of this show is when people tell me that *Smoke & Mirrors* inspired them to start painting again, to write their first novel, or to send in an application to their dream job. Some have even said it made them feel a sense of community, or helped them deal with grief or depression. *Smoke & Mirrors* is about ‘illusions’, sure, but sometimes illusions are just tools to understand and cope with reality, to uncover the truth of who we are, or to bring some of our dreams into the spotlight.”

Smoke & Mirrors has garnered support and praise from celebrities and artists who’ve attended the show including Troye Sivan, Hari Nef, Hannah Hart, Anthony Rapp, Chella Man, Allie X, Dorian Electra, Alok Vaid Menon, Lypsinka, Patricia Field, and more, plus *RuPaul’s Drag Race* alum Peppermint, Nina West, Bob the Drag Queen, Brooke Lynn Hytes, Farrah Moan, Scarlet Envy, LaGanja Estranja, Milk, Ongina, Alexis Michelle, Naomi Smalls, and Kim Chi.

Sasha Velour’s *Smoke & Mirrors* features the music of Annie Lennox, Whitney Houston, Shirley Bassey, Judy Garland, Celine Dion, Sia, Nina Simone, Le Tigre, and more.

Smoke & Mirrors is created and directed by Sasha Velour and House of Velour. This tour has been produced in association with Right Angle Entertainment, and is booked and arranged by WME, where Velour is represented in all areas.

Along with *Smoke & Mirrors*, it’s also been announced that Velour will Executive Produce an 8-part docu-series titled *Nightgowns*, adapted from her long-running all-inclusive drag revue of the same name for new streaming platform Quibi, set to premiere in 2020. This spring, Velour made a cameo on the final season of Comedy Central’s *Broad City* and landed a prominent guest star role in *The Bold Type* on Freeform. In June, Velour released a 50-page comic book about the Stonewall Riots in honour of its 50-year anniversary called *Three Dollar Riot*, and collaborated with Lyft for their World Pride campaign.

Other featured upcoming performances at the Kimmel Center Cultural Campus include: **Bianca Del Rio: *It's Jester Joke*** (October 2, 2019, Merriam Theater), **Judy Collins: *Love Letters to Stephen Sondheim*** (October 17, 2019, Merriam Theater), **Mandy Patinkin in Concert: *Diaries with Adam Ben-David on Piano*** (October 30, 2019, Verizon Hall), ***The Conversationalists*** (November 7 – 9, 2019, SEI Innovation Studio), ***Comedy Bang! Bang! Live!*** (November 11, 2019, Merriam Theater), and ***An Evening with Sutton Foster*** (November 22, 2019, Merriam Theater).

SASHA VELOUR: *SMOKE & MIRRORS*

Kimmel Center Cultural Campus' Merriam Theater

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

Tickets

Tickets are on sale now starting at \$25.00. 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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