

MARTHA GRAHAM CRACKER Dec 18 – Dec 19, 2009: Philly's Drag Queen-King Returns to DC!

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Washington, DC – GALA Hispanic Theatre will sparkle again with the return of MARTHA GRAHAM CRACKER, a sultry and dazzling drag cabaret of song, sass and laughter that will entertain and lift your holiday spirits. Her performances at GALA in 2008 wowed DC audiences and had critics raving about “this superb star of the cabaret stage.” Featuring Dito van Reigersberg as Martha Graham Cracker, the cabaret evening will also include Victor Fiorillo on keys, Rich Hill on guitar, Andrew Nelson on bass, and Ned Sonstein on drums. Christie Parker aka “Hot ‘n’ Crusty” will sing on backup vox.

MARTHA GRAHAM CRACKER, part of GALA's ArteAmerica series in collaboration with the Washington Performing Arts Society, will be presented on Friday, December 18 and Saturday, December 19 at 8 pm at the GALA Theatre, 3333 14th Street, NW. FOR TICKETS, CALL 202-234-74714 or (800) 494-8497 or visit www.galatheatre.org. Parking is available at a discount in the Giant parking garage on Park Road, NW.

“Martha Graham Cracker,” states van Reigersberg, “was born in my kitchen when I lived in the East Village and I was in acting school and studying at the Martha Graham School of Dance. While at the dance school I heard stories of that tempestuous genius and her bizarre ego fits. So I named my alter ego for someone bigger than life and first appeared as a guest singer with the band The Brothers Sugarillo in Philly. Later Martha launched her solo career and now appears at L'Etage in the wonderful City of Brotherly Love.” “I am pleased,” adds van Reigersberg, “to bring Martha and her stunning outfits back to Washington at GALA. I will be singing my extraordinary re-interpretations of classic songs, such as a funk-filled “Don't Cry for Me Argentina,” David Bowie hits, Dolly Parton standards, and much more for all those gorgeous people in DC!”

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Dito van Reigersberg grew up in Washington, DC, raised on productions at GALA Hispanic Theatre, The Shakespeare Theatre, and Arena Stage. He co-founded and is a co-artistic director of Pig Iron Theatre Company, a physical theatre company based in Philadelphia, and has performed in almost all of Pig Iron's 21 original creations to date, including the OBIE-Award-winning Hell Meets Henry Halfway. With Pig Iron he has toured to Brazil, Sweden, Romania, England, Germany, Peru, Poland, Ireland, Lithuania, the Ukraine and Italy. He has been honored with two Barrymore Awards (Best Choreography and Best Ensemble in a Musical), a Total Theatre Award for his one-man show Poet in New York, and was named a Pew Fellow in Performance Art in 2002 with Dan Rothenberg and Quinn Bauriedel. He studied at the Neighborhood Playhouse and the Martha Graham School of Contemporary Dance, and is a graduate of Swarthmore College. He was nominated for a Barrymore Award for Leading Actor in a Musical for Azuka Theatre's production of Hedwig and the Angry Inch.

Van Reigersberg will also conduct a workshop and bilingual theater movement session called "Creating standing: a physical approach to the art of new creations," which will take place on Saturday, December 13th from 2 to 4 pm. This workshop is an introduction to spatial language of bodies and faces young and old. Participants will have the opportunity to develop short pieces with themes related to the stories, myths and legends about what family means, either in its traditional or nontraditional form. For more information on the workshop, please call (202) 234-7174. Suggested donation \$10.

Victor Fiorillo has been collaborating with Dito van Reigersberg for nine years, working together for the first time when Martha appeared with the Brothers Sugarillo. They will celebrate their fourth anniversary of playing monthly at Philadelphia's L'Etage in Martha Graham Cracker Cabaret.

Bassist Andrew Nelson performs, arranges and writes music for musical theater, cabaret, jazz and rock bands. He has appeared on several regional theatre cast recordings as well as albums from his own bands and other Philadelphia-area artists.

Ned Sonstein is a multi-instrumentalist (guitar, bass, keys) and sings back-up for Martha. Some of his musical credits include bassist for The Peek-a-Boo Revue for Burlesque Troop (winner Miss Exotic World 08'; drums/vox for Hedwig and the Angry Inch for Azuka Theater Co.; and drums/keys/vox for Helen Back and The Str8 Razors (rock band).

TICKET INFORMATION

Martha Graham Cracker is on stage at GALA Theatre, 3333 14th Street, NW. Performances are December 18 and December 19, 2008 at 8 pm. Regular tickets are \$25 and \$18 for students. Limited cabaret seating on stage is available for \$30 per ticket. Group rates are also available.

This engagement of Dito Van Reigersberg is a DC Performing Arts Presenters Initiative project, which is made possible through funding by the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts Regional Touring Program.

This presentation of Martha Graham Cracker is one a series of programs designed by the National Performance Network (NPN). NPN is an independent organization begun by Dance Theater Workshop and comprising arts organizations and 27 states. NPN is made possible through major funding from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, Ford foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts (a federal agency) and the Nathan Cummings Foundation. For further information, visit the NPN website at www.npnweb.org.

GALA is celebrating its 34th season of presenting the range of Hispanic theatre, music, dance, spoken word, poetry and the visual arts from Latin America, Spain, the Caribbean, and the United States. GALA is supported in part by the D.C. Commission on the Arts and Humanities, the National Endowment for the Arts, the D.C. Mayor's office on Latino Affairs, private foundations, corporations and individuals. GALA is a member of Theater Communications Group, the National Association of Latino Arts and Culture, the National Performance Network, the Association of Performing Arts Presenters, the League of Washington Theaters, the Cultural Alliance of Greater Washington, and the Latino Federation of Greater Washington. GALA is an acronym (Grupo de Artistas Latin Americanos) and should be written in all capital letters. The name of our venue is GALA Theatre. Please refrain from using any other terms.

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WHERE :

CONTACT:

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