



Sasha Velour

TRAVESTY

Wednesday
October 7, 2026
7:30pm

Tryon Festival Theatre



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ANONYMOUS

TRAVESTY

A Drag Opera

By Sasha Velour

500 years of queer history, as told by the ghosts of an abandoned theater. *Travesty* weaves together theater, lip-sync, and multimedia performance art in a fantastical tribute to the generations of “travesties” who came before us.

Accompanied by a diverse musical soundtrack, unforgettable reveals, and some of the most show-stopping costumes found on stage, *Travesty* invites the audience to take part in the recurring cycle of existence, resistance, and fantasy in the face of oppression that IS drag.

Travesty is a testament to the idea of a sacred space and the power of connection through art, all set against the backdrop of a single spot that has endured and survived some of humanity's most extreme.

“[*Travesty*] transcends genre. Beyond its status as a top-tier drag show, it is point blank one of the most outstanding performances presently on stage.”

- BroadwayWorld

“*Travesty* was not just a drag show, it was a queer seance, a visual rebellion, and a love letter to the ghosts history tried to erase.”

- Queerland Media

PRODUCTION DESIGN

House of Velour

SOUND DESIGN

Palmer Hefferan

COSTUMES

Gloria Swansong
Diego Montoya
Andres Caballero
Jazzmint Dash
Pierretta Viktori
MistyCouture, Corsetry
Robert Sorrell, Jewelry
Donna Touch, Fans

WIGS

John Novotny
Brian Gonzalez
Zenobia Teague

STAGE MANAGER

Johnny Velour

WARDROBE MANAGER

Monica Lynch

TOUR TECHNICIANS

Levi Manners, Sound
Mark Costello, Video
Amy Hill, Lighting
Fe Miranda, Deck

STAGE CREW

Nicole Lutz
Fe Miranda

COMPANY MANAGER

Nicole Lutz

POSTER ART

Franz Szony, Photographer

DRAMATURGY

Amanda Culp
Sonia Fernandez

SOUND TEAM

Jeffrey Salerno
Levi Manners

LIGHTING/VIDEO TEAM

Cosette "Ettie" Pin
Scott Monnin
Sean Preston

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Cosette "Ettie" Pin
Vinicius Tartaro
Stephen Maneri

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Andrew Bellamo
Jeremy Klemundt, Casts

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Monica Lynch, Reina NoBuena,
Sally Shaw, Johnny Velour,
Andrew Vitovich, Zoe Ziegfeld

FILMING LOCATIONS

Buttertree Studios, NJ
Bizarre Bushwick, NY
House of Velour, NY

WORKSHOP TEAM

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Cosette "Ettie" Pin
Johnny Velour
Zoe Ziegfeld

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Woolly Mammoth Theatre
Company
Reggie D. White, Artistic
Director
Kimberly E. Douglas, Managing
Director

PROGRAM

AUTHOR'S NOTE

In 2024, I was walking down 42nd street, headed to a workshop for *The Big Reveal*, a book I had written on the art of drag, and was trying to turn into a play. I had terrible writers block—couldn't figure out how to tie all the different stories together, couldn't find the hook. But there I was, bundled up in a giant coat—it was February or something—and my eyes wandered to a hideously romanesque terracotta theater facade—half-destroyed, half-obscured in cinema neon: “The AMC Empire.” Something about the way it looked just brought me joy. I love a building in drag.

Turns out the theater was built in 1912 as the “Eltinge,” after Julian Eltinge, the first famous drag queen of the world, and the highest paid star on Broadway in 1910. As it turned out, Eltinge had never performed there—she was at the much more prestigious “Liberty” around the corner—but it was still built in her honor, by her manager, in tribute to his most successful client.

By the 30s, the theater was almost empty and Eltinge was out of work. Like many drag stars of the “Pansy Craze,” the times had changed, and the economic toll of the depression combined with increased conservatism brought a swift end to all the gay parties that had been. That sort of shift in culture has happened many times before, and seems to be happening now.

The theater was sold to a movie theater in the 50s. The new owners chiseled Eltinge's name off the building and renamed it “The Empire.” In the 90s, the building was moved 100 feet down the block, and combined into one structure with the “Liberty,” the theater Eltinge actually played, which (ironically for its name) was then

completely imprisoned inside the block and abandoned, except when it briefly became a gay bar (I saw a Drag Race Pride show there in 2015!). Today, all that's left of either theater is the one facade.

But the story that facade tells says more about the history of drag than any play I could write. Queer existence isn't just in our minds, it is written into the architecture of the world around us. Nature, acceptance, commodification, erasure, survival. It's all there, in our culture, our language, the very spaces we stand in.

I dreamed of a drag show starring all the queer ghosts of a single such space, calling out to the present with a message of resilience and strength.

Queer spaces are spiritual, sacred spaces. The gay bar in my hometown was called C-Street, an unassuming 19th-century building, practically underneath the train tracks that divided the two towns of Champaign and Urbana, Illinois. It had been converted to a gay club in the 1970s. There was a stage, chandeliers, mirrors, red leather seats—everything a queen could want. It was the most important stage in the world to me then.

Once a month they hosted an open drag contest...It was the first time I ever tried it. Miss Ceduction Carrington had one rule: “No ballads.” So I did a striptease. Wearing a winter coat and gloves. That memory is sacred to me.

The bar closed down a few years ago. A developer gutted everything but the brick facade. It just sat hollow like that for months. Until one night, in the middle of winter, the whole thing just...crumbled to the ground. I think it just really didn't want to become condos.

If only I could have one last crawl on that wooden dance floor begging for tips. One last cigarette on the picnic table out the back. One last \$3 gin and tonic.

I have a hard time letting go. But that is why we tell stories, to hold on to those moments of magic. And use them to find connection...

The story of "Travesty" is the story of all such places. And the ancestors that have twirled there!

PROFILES

SASHA VELOUR

(writer, director)

Sasha Velour is the creator and host of “NightGowns,” running for over 10 years in New York City—considered one of the best drag shows of all time.

Her first one-person show, “Smoke & Mirrors” (2019-2022), toured to 90 theaters around the world, including the Folies Bergère and the London Palladium. Her second, “The Big Reveal” (2023-2025) toured to 63 theaters, with hit runs at Steppenwolf, La Mama, and Berkeley Rep. Critics wrote: “Velour is an artist, through and through, and [The Big Reveal] feels the beginning of a larger and genre-bending body of work.” (*SFist*) And “[The Big Reveal] redraws the boundaries of drag and theater.” (*SF Chronicle*)

Her namesake production company, House of Velour, has produced live shows and video for HBO, Quibi, NY Fashion Week, MAC Cosmetics, Audible, Lyft, Absolut Vodka, LaJolla Playhouse, and more. House of Velour has been praised as “disrupting the business of drag” (*Fast Company*) for its artist-driven, transparent, and multi-disciplinary approach.

In 2023, Velour released a best-selling book, *The Big Reveal: An Illustrated Manifesto of Drag*, which explores the untold history of drag, interwoven with stories from her life as a young queen (Harper, 2023). The *LA Review of Books* raved, “Already known as a top-notch drag queen, illustrator, and performer, Velour has now proven with ‘The Big Reveal’ that she is also an exemplary historian and theorist. Just as Velour works in her book to celebrate historically significant drag performers, ‘The Big Reveal’ will surely canonize her as not only one of the best drag queens of her generation but also one of the definitive voices on the history and art of drag.”

In 2017, Velour gained international attention when she competed on and won the 9th season of *RuPaul’s Drag Race*, the same year the competition won its first Emmy. Her finale lip-sync to “So Emotional” (Whitney Houston) increased streams of the song by 500%.

In 2020, she executive-produced her own limited TV series, an adaptation of *NightGowns* directed by Sophie Muller and co-produced by The Documentary Group, which received a RealScreen Award and was hailed as one of “the most life-affirming shows you could find on any platform” (*The New York Times*). In 2023, Sasha joined the cast of HBO’s Emmy and Peabody Award-winning *We’re Here*, which was nominated for two Critics Choice Real TV Awards, Best Ensemble Cast and Best Structured Unscripted Series (won). In 2025, she served as a head judge on *King of Drag*, the first televised Drag King competition in history.

As an illustrator and designer, Sasha has produced several comic books, and an anthology about drag called *Velour* (2013-2018). She drew the Google Doodle for Marlene Dietrich in 2018, and created a self-portrait for the cover of *The New Yorker* in 2023.

Velour is the only child of Mark D. Steinberg, a professor and writer of *History* (aka “Papa Velour”) and Jane T. Hedges, a copyeditor who passed of cancer in 2015. She is an alumnus of Vassar College, holds an MFA from The Center for Cartoon Studies, and was a Fulbright scholar in Moscow. Velour currently resides in Brooklyn, NY, with her partner Johnny and their beloved Italian Greyhound, Vanya.

PROFILES

HOUSE OF VELOUR (production design)

Sasha Velour's namesake production company (co-founded with partner Johnny Velour) has produced live shows and video design for HBO, Quibi, NY Fashion Week, MAC Cosmetics, Audible, Lyft, Absolut Vodka, LaJolla Playhouse, and more. They have produced the domestic and international tours of Sasha Velour's *The Big Reveal* and *Travesty*. House of Velour has been praised as "disrupting the business of drag" (*Fast Company*) with its artist-driven, transparent, and multi-disciplinary approach.

PALMER HEFFERAN (sound design)

John Proctor is the Villain (Broadway, Tony-nominated), *Teeth* (Off-Broadway), *Grounded* (Metropolitan Opera), *Velour: A Drag Spectacular* (La Jolla Playhouse)

WOOLLY MAMMOTH THEATER COMPANY (premiere)

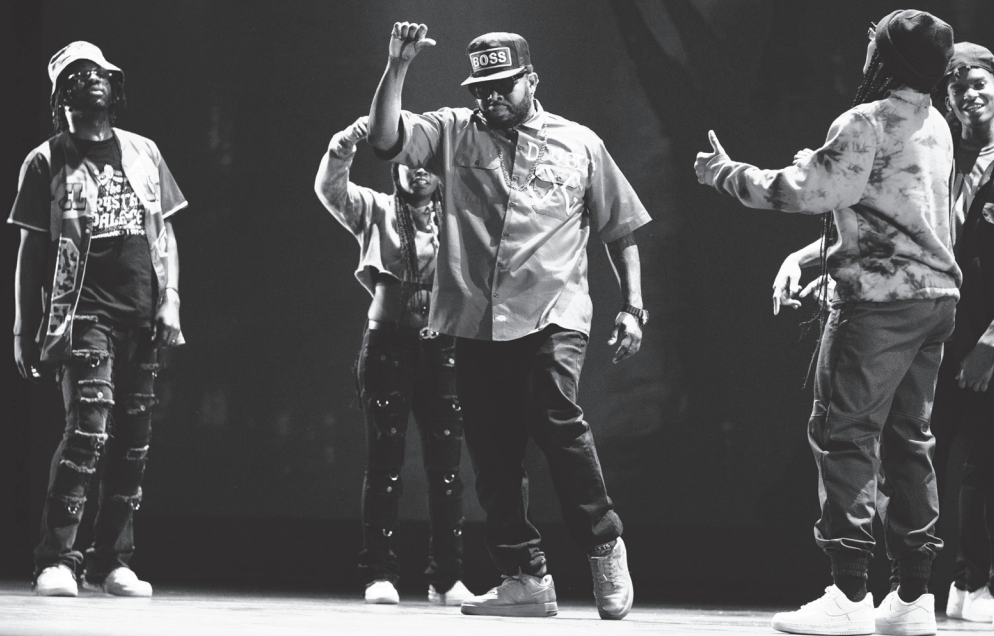
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As a land-grant institution, the University of Illinois has a particular responsibility to acknowledge the peoples of these lands, as well as the histories of dispossession that have allowed for the growth of this institution. We are also obligated to reflect on and actively address these histories and the role that this university has played in shaping them. This acknowledgement and the centering of Native peoples is a start as we move forward.

Krannert Center affirms the commitment by the university to move beyond these statements, toward building deeper relationships and taking actions that uphold and preserve Indigenous rights and cultural equity.

As we gather to experience this performance, we have an opportunity to reflect on the ways that systems of oppression have shaped our society. We can work together to create systems that support human dignity, establish equity, strengthen cross-cultural relationships, and draw upon the creative capacity of all people that make up this community, state, nation, and world.



Come together through the arts.



Krannert Center is a place of connection—a space where the performing arts bring people together, spark dialogue, and create shared experiences that resonate far beyond the stage. Through music, movement, and storytelling, we find common ground, deepen understanding, and celebrate the richness of human expression.

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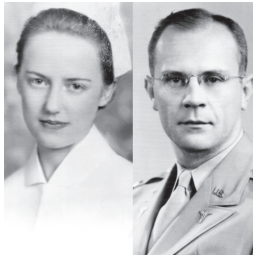
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ANONYMOUS
July 2025

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ANONYMOUS
November 2006



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(1937-2022)
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MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Craig Miles, Assistant Director for Marketing and
Communications
Sean Kutzko, Assistant Communication Director
Nicholas Mulvaney, Art Director
Amanda Mabry-Flynn, Marketing Communications
Associate

PRODUCTION

Terri Anne Ciofalo, Director of Production

Audio Department

Rick Scholwin, Audio Director

Alec LaBau, Associate Audio Director and Video
Director

Tyler Knowles, Assistant Audio Director, Live Stream
Engineer

Costume Shop

Andrea Bouck, Costume Director

Richard Gregg, Costume Rentals Director and Associate
Costume Shop Director

Paige Stewart-Rankins, Hair and Makeup Supervisor

Julianna Steitz, First Hand

April McKinnis, EB McTigue, Cutters/Drapers

Kari Little-McKinney, Theatrical Stitcher

Lighting Department

Lisa Kidd, Lighting Director

David Krupla, Associate Lighting Director

Nicole Rataj, Assistant Lighting Director

Properties Department

Adriane Binky Donley, Properties Director

Kira Lyon, Assistant Properties Director

Scene Shop

Ryan Schultz, Technical Director

Tatsuya Ito, Associate Technical Director

Bill Kephart, Office Administrator

Bobby Reynolds, Assistant Technical Director

Rebecca Russell, Assistant Technical Director for Events

Anna Atkinson, Theatrical Scene Shop Assistant

Kayley Woolums, Theatrical Scene Shop Assistant

Joe Reichlin, Stagehand

Ticketing and Patron Services

Whitney Havice, Ticketing and Patron Services Director

Ann-Marie Dittmann, Patron Services Assistant Director

Ty Mingo, Assistant Ticket Services Director

Jon Proctor, Ticket Sales Supervisor

Noah Larson, Ticket Sales Supervisor

Adrian Rochelle, Front of House Performance
Supervisor

PERFORMING ARTS BUSINESS SERVICE CENTER

Jenell Hardy, Director of Business Services

Macauley Allen, Business Services Specialist

Debbie Delaney, Accounting Staff



Productions at Krannert Center
are supported by the skilled
stagehands of IATSE Local 482.

WE'RE SO GLAD YOU'RE AT THE CENTER

We work to create the best possible setting for the experiences you seek and find here.

Necessaries

Restrooms are located in the foyers of Foellinger Great Hall, Tryon Festival Theatre, and Colwell Playhouse; the east entrances on the Lobby level; and gender-neutral restrooms can be found in each elevator lobby on Level 1 and Level 3. Lobby restrooms and one restroom in each elevator lobby are fully accessible and contain baby-changing stations.

Ushers will be happy to provide you cough drops or disposable foam earplugs if the place starts rockin'.

If you or a companion needs medical assistance, contact an usher or other staff member. Please call 911 in case of an emergency.

Please take a moment before the performance to note the exits nearest to you. If it becomes necessary to evacuate the theatre, please remain calm, follow the instructions of the house staff, and exit in an orderly fashion to the appropriate safe meeting location which will be announced to you.

Large bags and backpacks, or any other item deemed to be dangerous or to pose an obstruction will not be able to enter the theatres. Please approach the Patron Services counter for assistance with these items.

Please note that food and drink are not allowed in the theatres, except bottled water.

Phones and Devices

The use of cell phones, cameras, and recording devices during performances is prohibited unless otherwise announced from the stage.

Late Arrivals

As a courtesy to performers and audience members, latecomers will be seated only at times selected in advance by the artist. Should you find that you've arrived late to a performance, our Patron Services staff will keep you informed about the earliest seating opportunity.

Lost Items

If you are in need of Lost and Found, please visit the Patron Services counter. We will do our best to reunite object and owner!

Ticket Returns

If you find you can't attend a performance, please contact the Ticket Office in advance, preferably by 6pm the day before the performance (kran-tix@illinois.edu or 217.333.6280). We never charge a handling fee on ticket transactions.

Accessibility

Krannert Center for the Performing Arts is committed to making experiences accessible for all patrons, and we are delighted to provide a number of services to assist you. Krannert Center is equipped with an assisted listening system, wheelchair-accessible and no-step/few-step seating, and large-print programs, Braille programs, and American Sign Language interpreters are available with three weeks' advance notice.

For assistance regarding your visit please contact patronservices@krannertcenter.illinois.edu or 217.333.9716 or visit go.KrannertCenter.com/Accessibility.

Para ayuda en relación con su visita, favor de enviar un email a:

Pour vous aider dans votre visite, prière de nous envoyer un courriel à:

欢迎! 如若您对您的造访需要帮助, 请发送电子邮件至:

स्वागत हे! अगर आपको अपने रहने के लिए मदद चाहिए, ईमेल कीजिए:

환영합니다! 방문에 관해 도움이 필요하실 때에는 ...
에게 이메일로 문의하시기 바랍니다:

PATRONSERVICES@KRANNERTCENTER.ILLINOIS.EDU
217.333.9716



COME BE MOVED.

Art at Krannert Center isn't something you just watch—it's something you feel.

COME ON IN.
WE'LL SAVE A SEAT FOR YOU.



 krannert center

SUN NOV 1 AT 3:00PM

A black and white photograph of Michael Yeung, a man with glasses, wearing a light-colored jacket over a white t-shirt and dark pants. He is sitting on a white surface, leaning forward with his hands resting on his knees. To his left are several wooden percussion instruments, including a stack of three wooden blocks and a wooden shaker. The background is dark.

MICHAEL YEUNG

PERCUSSION

 krannert center