

TICKETS ON SALE MONDAY JULY 18 FOR MIDNIGHT COMPANY'S
WORLD PREMIERE OF "ST. LOUIS WOMAN"

The Midnight Company will present the World Premiere of ST. LOUIS WOMAN, a play with music starring LAKA, written and directed by Midnight's Artistic Director, Joe Hanrahan. ST. LOUIS WOMAN will run October 6 - 22 at the .ZACK theatre, with performances Thursdays/Fridays and Saturdays at 8pm, and Sunday matinees October 9 and 16 at 2pm. Tickets are \$30 for Fridays/Saturdays and Sundays, and \$20 for Thursdays, and GO ON SALE MONDAY, JULY 18 at [MetroTix.com](https://www.metrotix.com).

ST. LOUIS WOMAN will honor the enduring legacy of some of the amazing women in St. Louis who brought this city to the world with their timeless music, dance and poetry. LAKA will portray such legendary artists as Josephine Baker, Tina Turner and Katherine Dunham (and present the poetry of Maya Angelou, the stylings of chart-toppers Fontella Bass and Ann Peebles, and the Gospel songs of the legendary Willie Mae Ford Smith.) These women were born in St. Louis, came here when young (to typically join Gospel choirs), or, in Dunham's case, moved here during the height of their careers to continue their work.

The play will establish their St. Louis roots and tell their stories, as LAKA revisits their great songs, dance and poetry, and their fascinating lives. These women who grew up in St. Louis faced some tough times over the years, and ST. LOUIS WOMEN will celebrate what they achieved despite, or sometimes because of, the challenges they faced.

LAKA is a singer-songwriter who prides herself in performing a multitude of genres. She recently released her third single, a country-folk song titled "Keep it to Myself", written by Mike Lipel. Laka debuted her first cabaret show at the Blue Strawberry in October of 2020 titled "The Music in Me", her life story through music and went on to perform the show earlier this year in New York City at the venue, Don't Tell Mama. She noticed that the life stories she told in between songs connected her audience more to the songs. Laka continued to branch out this year with appearances in Las Vegas, Naples, Florida, and Nashville.

The ST. LOUIS WOMAN band will be led by Music Director Corey Patterson with Gabriel Bonfili on percussion.

The support team for the show will include Costume Designer Liz Henning (Liz has costumed many Midnight shows, and she was nominated for Outstanding Costumes by the St. Louis Theatre Critic Circle for Midnight's 2021 show TINSEL TOWN). Liz will also stage manage. Choreography will be by Ashley Tate. Ashley is the Artistic Director of Ashleyliane Dance Company, and she recently accepted a position as Associate Professor-Dance at University of North Carolina/Charlotte, but she will continue to work in St. Louis with her company and other projects. Kevin Bowman will handle Production Design, with Tony Anselmo designing the Lights. Michael Musgrave-Perkins will design Video Projections. And Bruce Bramoweth will serve as Music Consultant.

Joe Hanrahan is Midnight's Artistic Director, and for them, he's written LIFE AFTER DEATH, THE BALLAD OF JESSIE JAMES, DRACULA (adaptation), THE EVEREST GAME, MY VIOLIN MY VOICE, NOW PLAYING THIRD BASE FOR THE ST. LOUIS CARDINALS...BOND, JAMES BOND (nominated Outstanding New Play St. Louis Theatre Critic Circle 2021) and TINSEL TOWN (Winner Outstanding New Play by the Circle, 2021). His scripts have also been performed in Kansas, Brooklyn, NY, and in St. Louis. As a director, he's directed several Midnight shows, and filled the same role for The Black Rep (THE BROWNSVILLE RAID and NO CHILD), SATE (CUDDLES), R-S Theatrics (THE FLICK), Clayton Community Theatre (A VIEW FROM

THE BRIDGE, Winner Outstanding Director, Arts for Life), and Webster Groves Theatre Guild (BUS TOP and THE UNDERPANTS.) He most recently directed RODNEY'S WIFE for Midnight.

Hanrahan said "When I first heard LAKA sing, I was amazed. One of the best voices I'd ever heard, she could sing literally anything, and anything she sang moved me. When we met, she was interested in expanding the range of her talents, maybe doing something more theatrical. So the concept for ST. LOUIS WOMAN was born. And as I've gotten to know her, her intelligence, determination and work ethic has helped carve the path for this show. This is a unique opportunity to present some of the great art and tremendous people who carved out their exceptional careers in St. Louis."

And LAKA said, "After seeing one of Joe Hanrahan's one-man plays, I thought how neat it is for one person to be able to captivate an audience with acting alone. Because of my cabaret shows, I thought I could learn from him to be better at what I do. When Joe introduced the idea behind St. Louis Woman I was immediately drawn to it. St. Louis has a rich music history, being an epicenter during the height of jazz, blues, and rock'n roll. I think we sometimes forget the prominence that our beautiful city once held and how many greats called this area home. During the preparation for this play, I've become ever more connected to these artists and this city that I call home. Their stories are inspiring, motivating, and courageous. I'm honored and humbled to pay tribute and increase awareness of these women's role in St. Louis history. The current arts scene in the city is continuing to resurge and remembering the past will certainly help forge our future."

(photo Todd Davis)

For more information, visit MidnightCompany.com and LakaSoul.com