**Artist Bio Amy Raasch**

For musician and media installation artist Amy Raasch, thoughts and feelings always grow tendrils, spiraling outward from core concepts into wildly eclectic albums, plays, films, apps, and theatrical monologues. Amy’s latest project, *Girls Get Cold*, explores disconnectedness in the era of connection. It includes an album of quirky electro-pop, theatrical storytelling, and videos rife with whimsical cultural references and societal, personal, and sexual commentary.

“If I took one away, it would be like losing a limb,” the Los Angeles-based artist says of her fluid creativity. “Even two notes can enliven the soul like nothing else. Writing theatrical monologues from a character perspective tricks me into my subconscious and it gets wild from there. Live performance is like flying and falling at the same time and where I learn what’s important to the audience. All of these come from the same raw materials and address the same demons, questions, and themes. It depends on the free radicals hanging around my mind whether they coalesce into songs, films, monologues, or a mashup of all three.”

As a musician, Amy has garnered favorable comparisons to Imogen Heap, Laurie Anderson, Suzanne Vega, and Portishead. At its core, her music is singular for its classic folk-pop songcraft, bold production treatments, well-developed concepts and narratives, and the humor and heartbreak inherent in her lyrics. For Amy, it’s never just about an album—frequently music releases take on more epic proportions. *Music Connection Magazine* has called her "One of the top unsigned artists in Los Angeles." She’s even won the esteemed G.I.N.A. Singer/Songwriter Contest.

Amy also has a background in acting, and has appeared in several productions for theater and feature film. On many levels, her most transformative role was as a folksinger in writer/director Stephen Chbosky’s (*The Perks Of Being A Wallflower*) comedy, t*he four corners of nowhere*. Besides the career highlight of earning an official feature selection at Sundance, her role as a folksinger awakened her dormant musical gifts. Up until then, Amy’s musicality had been contained within her adolescent schooling in classical flute. While filming, inspired by her role and wanting to portray it more authentically, she started playing guitar, singing, and writing songs, and contributed music to the movie. From those formative moments, music has taken dominance over acting, though she frequently uses her talents for the theatrical in service of her wildly imaginative muse. She recently released an episodic collection of live video performances of songs-in-progress called “52 Songs in 52 Weeks.”

*Girls Get Cold* trades in fascinating layers. The title evokes both sadness and sexiness; the album’s production is an amalgam of earthy organic instrumentation and adventurous otherworldly electronic textures; plots and subplots rub up against each other; and the album comes to life with a clutch of videos and other media installations.

 “Everything I do begins with a question,” the Los Angeles-based artist reveals. “The fundamental concept I wrestle with here is loneliness and the longing for connection amidst an era when we’re supposedly more connected than ever. But what becomes of touch in the age of the touchscreen?

Amy also explores expression and repression, dominance and submission, sexuality and faith, boundaries in relationships, feminism, and life in the digital age, among other themes and hypotheses. Her imagery is both harrowing and humorous (a huge Omniscient Cat meowing from the sky?!), and her lyrics are brainy, poetic, and emotionally visceral. Creative touchstones include Shakespeare, Carl Jung, kitschy 1960s television shows, and YouTube cat video sensations.

“Animals metaphorically allow me a way to deal with the world after a sucker punch to the heart,” she confides – a methodology she employs to mesmerizing effect in her wildly entertaining new solo multimedia show, “The Animal Monologues,” which premiered in Los Angeles at the Son of Semele Solo Creation Festival last summer. “All art is about how we go on. Animals naturally excel at that. Instead of falling down and giving up, we can take a cue from their courage, resilience, and learn to transform our struggles through creating beauty, humor, and wonder.”

The stately title track of “Girls Get Cold” opens the album and its arrangement unfolds delicately with sublime ambience. Here, Amy introduces one of the album’s central themes: boundaries in relationships: “It’s about releasing the power and control dynamic in a relationship, and being able to say ‘you can take me apart, let me go, but you can’t destroy me.’” The elegance of “Weight Of A Man” makes its dichotomous messaging that much more impactful. With bare piano and vocals, Amy contrasts the warmth and sensuality of having your lover’s body on top of yours with the often-shackling demands of relationships.

Tracks like “Straight Boys” and “Kitty Decides” lighten the mood with jaunty musicality and hilariously sinister theatricality. “Straight Boys” is infectiously catchy with springy piano and a playful quandary. A spare yet instantly appealing track, the tune examines unconsciously habituated sexual politics with cheeky humor. “We’re in an unprecedented moment, where men and women alike have a unique opportunity to re-examine entrenched assumptions about how we relate to each other, and make a change. I’m excited to be part of the cultural reset.” “Kitty Decides” is a revelation in absurdist humor and puckishly inventive, retro-futuristic electro-pop.

The album’s ambitious and intrepid production aesthetic belies its charmingly ramshackle tracking methodology. Amy and producer David Poe (Regina Specktor, Kraig Jarret Johnson, Grace Kelly) recorded the album in her Venice Beach apartment, building evocative soundscapes from a messed up piano, an old flute, a dirty electric guitar, and by hitting her radiator with a belt of nails. “That was cathartic,” she says, laughing good-naturedly. “I had to repaint.”

When friends were in town, they lent their many talents on the album. Non-apartment contributions came via Jebin Bruni (Aimee Mann, Me’Shell Ndegeocello) on keyboards, John “Scrapper” Sneider (Curtis Stigers, Angela McCluskey) on trumpet, Louis Schwadron (Sky White Tiger, Polyphonic Spree) on french horn, Victor Indrizzo (Rufus Wainwright, Avril Lavigne) on drums and Doug Yowell (Joe Jackson, Duncan Sheik) on percussion.

Amy has created two stunning videos for the album tracks: “Kitty Decides” and the soulfully spectral “Breathe My Breath.” The video for “Kitty Decides” unpacks the international obsession with the online feline with panache and campy cultural references from 1960s B-movies and television shows like *Batman* and the original *Star Trek*. In this vibrant visual panoply, Amy examines the aloofness, self-absorption, and fantasy world that cat fanatics ascribe to their felines. As a cat listlessly flips through channels on a remote control, images range from performance footage of Amy in full, classic Catwoman regalia to modern YouTube cat video classics to a highly stylized, 1960s trailer home in a desert reminiscent of a Russ Meyer flick. 100% of proceeds from the video benefit animal rescue efforts. The breathtakingly animated *Cat Bird Coyote* serves as an artfully bold music video for the musique concrète-style track, “Breathe My Breath,” but is also a standalone short film that has been selected for seven film festivals. It won Best Animation in the Big Apple Film Festival and Los Angeles Independent Film Festival. It’s a stunning video that ponders the circle of life, themes of control in love, and how we often live in prisons of our own making.

If there is one thing the process of creating *Girls Get Cold* taught Amy, she says it’s: “To listen to myself and be as weird as I want to be -- to create without judgment. Each of us has a thing that only we can say. Our job is to find it and say it.”

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