

## A Mount Productions' Short: *'Incubus'*

Written & Directed By: Ellis Carmichael-Willins

"Kacey, a woman consumed by her thoughts and loneliness, begins to experience a sense that she's being watched.

No matter where she turns, invasive eyes stare back, corrupting her mind and driving her to the brink of destruction. Will Kacey over-power the darkness growing inside her? Or will she be seduced by the shadows that threaten to uproot her life as she knows it?"

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View the original teaser on our [YouTube channel](#), with more to come this summer!

### *What's in this issue:*

WATCH: *'Incubus'* Teaser

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Artist of the Month:  
Laura Dellis!

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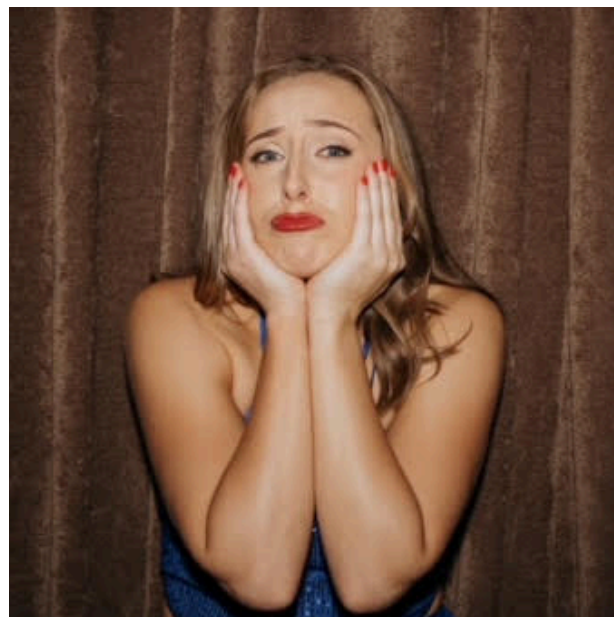
GoFundMe Link and Story!

# MtP's Artist of the Month: Laura Dellis!



Laura Dellis (she/her) is a powerhouse comedian and performance artist hailing from Woodbury, Minnesota. Growing up in a family of performers, Laura knew from a young age that she wanted to sing, dance, and entertain audiences. "The Twin Cities has a lot of really great theater; It has the Guthrie, it has the Ordway, it has Theater Latté Da, so I would go see theater all the time." Laura's father was adamant they go see these productions throughout Laura's time growing up. "I would just take it all in, and it instantly was like 'This is it.' This is what I want to do, I would sing all the time." She expresses gratitude for being able to have those experiences with her family.

With a background in video production, Laura's father often included her to be an extra pair of hands and ears on set. Laura says, "I was always helping him growing up. I would grip, and hold the mics, and just watch this world that wasn't acting, but I was still part of some sort of production." This experience was unique and offered Laura the opportunity to learn firsthand how to operate in a collaborative and efficient work environment. "I learned about having a good work ethic in those situations and being prepared, and being a step ahead of what people were thinking."



Although beneficial, Laura expresses how these experiences at a young age resulted in a habit of people-pleasing. "And that's another thing too; Didn't want my parents to get mad at me, goody two shoes the entire way, did not drink, did not smoke, barely went to parties, super high social anxiety, which people thought was weird because I was so silly and always making jokes."

With a strong sense of imagination and a clear vision of her future, the expectations Laura placed on herself became debilitating. Often, Laura would skip chances to socialize with classmates or castmates. "If I go to these parties, people are gonna spend more time with me, and then they're not gonna wanna hang out with me once they realize who I am. That was always the thing. If people just see me at school or rehearsal, and then I leave, then I'm just this shadow of mystery. They can't really know me." Laura realized this mentality and has since made strides to counteract those negative thoughts.



Dellis pictured alongside iO Improv castmates



Laura performing in Halfway to Fifty 2

Authenticity is a huge component to Laura's craft. The majority of her shows are story-based with comic, musical elements throughout. "There's a lot of stories and whatnot that I forget about, or I'm journaling and I'll remember something that happened to me this week, and I'll go, 'There's something to that.'" Labeling these as "Laura Moments," she goes on to say, "Now, stand-up comedy and just comedy in general, while grounded in truth, is exaggerated. That's the magic of it, I expand on something to the point where it gets extreme which is what makes it funny."

Laura's one woman show, *Halfway to Fifty*, is not your average cabaret show. "It's not just cabaret, there's just so many other elements to it, which kind of makes it hard to explain, but it is me. And it becomes more and more authentically me every time I do it, which is cool." With two successful years under her belt, Laura is currently preparing for year three. "Going into year three of [Halfway to Fifty] and I have a producer now, I have an amazing music director, Mickey York, I have an amazing lighting and sound guy, Eric, and they will be with me until the end of time." She laughs. Laura explains how the idea came to be and describes the support of friends and family during the rough beginnings of auditioning and networking. "It was my birthday, I was with my parents back home in Minnesota, and I just remember feeling so sad because it just wasn't happening, and I kept finding these little nuggets, and "Good job, Laura"'s but nothing was landing."

*"I always used to say 'I'm gonna do a one woman show one day.'"*

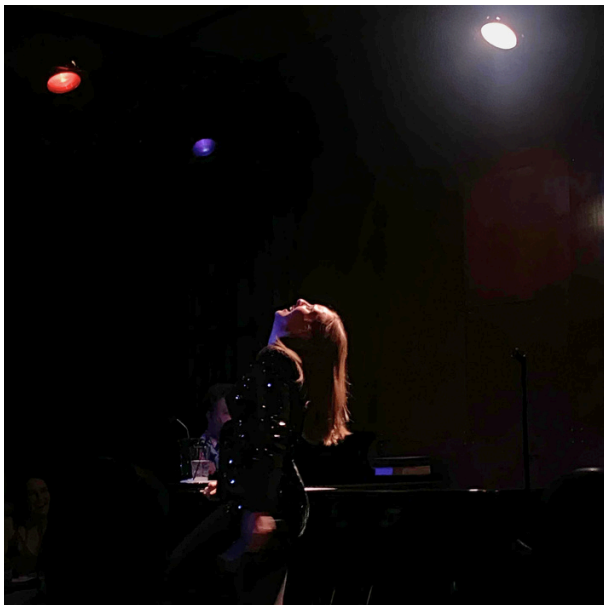
As establishments opened up post-quarantine, Laura began working at Davenport Piano Bar. She saw a variety of acts come through and became inspired by the idea of curating a show specifically for her and what she has to offer. "The first time I did [Halfway to Fifty] I was nauseous for an entire month leading up to it. And everyone was telling me how excited they were which made it, like, so much worse." In response to the pressure, Laura describes rehearsing "ad nauseam" in order to achieve her own personal expectations. After the performance, Laura says, "I was shaking and I just felt the energy that was given to me that something important just happened, and I should do more of it because it would be my way in."

Now, three years later, Laura's one woman show 'Halfway to Fifty' has been nominated for a BroadwayWorld award for "Best Solo Performance," and her individual performance in that show received a nomination for Best Comedian (non-standup) from the Chicago Reader. "I was like, 'Who nominated me for this?'" Laura says laughing. As seriously as she takes her craft, Dellis also understands the absurdity of what she does, and often struggles to understand how and why people respond so positively. "The fanbase has just grown the more I do it," she says, "it was nice to be able to tell my mentors, and friends that I'd been nominated or won, and it was more affirmation that it was something."

Laura's beginnings in musical theater, combined with her natural comedic timing, have only pushed her farther towards creating something entirely unique. The confines of a genre can only allow an artist to explore so much before experiencing a feeling of restlessness. "I still love musical theater and acting, I'm still doing those things, but I just needed something more. I can't just be waiting around, twiddling my thumbs and waiting for someone to give me an audition slot." Luckily, the timing was perfect, as Laura had begun cultivating a community within the Chicago improv and stand-up scene. "I realized I didn't have to have anything planned, I didn't have to do anything, I just had to rely on what I felt like was my biggest asset which was this comedic timing." Laura embraced this path of comedy and combined it with her passion for music to create something personal to her voice. She admits, "I couldn't have done it right out of school, I needed to go through the process of getting to that point confidence wise, which is funny because I'm still not confident and I'm fighting that demon constantly."



*“I needed to go through this journey of rejection and realizing what I had to offer.”*



This year, *Halfway to Fifty 3* is set for June 29th, at Davenport Piano Bar at 8pm. You can also catch Laura performing with *Motorcycle Rocketship* sketch show at The Annoyance on Belmont with new sketches every month. This summer, she will also be performing in the sketch comedy show, *Late Night Sketch Binge* at The Second City. She is dipping her toes into stand up and has recently performed at Zanies and iO and plans to continue honing in on her stand-up career. Be sure to follow Laura on social media – @ldells – and visit her website ([lauradellis.com](http://lauradellis.com)) to see all her current projects and happenings!

# Support our Mission: Donate to our GoFundMe!

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Creating a film requires a significant amount of time, effort, and passion. As a startup, we are funding our projects independently. While some may view this as a substantial risk, it's a risk we are willing to embrace to fulfill our mission.

Adapting the film industry to align with the changing world is crucial for us, and we are fully committed to it. We invite you to take a chance on us, to support us in our creative endeavors. There are countless untold stories waiting to be shared, and Mount Productions aims to empower artists to bring their visions to life by providing them with resources and fellow artists who share a similar vision.

The money raised from this GoFundMe will not only go towards our start-up costs, but will also aid in the telling of numerous LGBTQ stories that would otherwise go unheard.

LINK: <https://gofund.me/06647465>

VIDEO: [https://youtu.be/akyV64y8\\_BA](https://youtu.be/akyV64y8_BA)



## Artist of the Month: We want *YOU!*

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Mount Productions highlights multi-disciplinary artists who are making waves in the creative scene here in Chicago.

As Artist of the Month, you'll be promoted on our social media and have a written interview in that month's newsletter.

All applications will be considered for future months, so no need to apply more than once. We look forward to meeting and learning more about you!

**Contact us at [mountproductioninfo@gmail.com](mailto:mountproductioninfo@gmail.com)**

