

MARTIN GRAFF

THE FACE ZONE

Images, Words, & Music
By Martin Graff



[@thefacezone](https://www.instagram.com/thefacezone)



[@thefacezone](https://www.facebook.com/thefacezone)



[@MartinGraff](https://www.youtube.com/MartinGraff)

Spoken Word with Matching Art and Piano to Trip Your Imagination...

Marty@TheFaceZone.com

240-215-7538

thefacezone.com

tripsforpiano.com

BIO



Martin Graff is an artist, author, musician, and extreme-chin-beard enthusiast in Arlington, Virginia who crafts poetic vignettes with matching art on every topic from the stigma of liking scrapple to the meaning of life in a series called *The Face Zone: Surreal Daydreams to Trip Your Imagination...* Marty's live spoken-word show adds original piano compositions from his album *Trips for Piano* to heighten the experience.

"It started in childhood. To amuse the five-year-old me, my father drew a face on the inside bottom of a large water thermos that he used for tennis. When you looked into the empty container, you could see a deep, swollen, horizontal slit at the end where the halves of the plastic mold came together. With a long pencil, Dad drew two black circles above the slit, now a 'mouth,' and my imagination was triggered: the resulting expression was weird, cute, and mildly foreboding all at once. That simple, neutral water bottle became a sentient oddity for which to compose a fantastical backstory. I've been at it ever since, finding unexpected narratives and messages in the ordinary details around me."

Graff's affecting commentary, original humor, whimsical artwork, and absorbing piano offer a uniquely engaging respite that cuts through the noise of our information-age lives with concise, essential truths certain to entertain as they set mind in motion.

THE FACE ZONE



Keys have always captured my imagination because they open worlds.

A world of wonder as the lid of a treasure chest releases with a baritone creak.

A secret world, finally accessed by the inheritor of an eccentric relative's safe deposit box.

A world of memories when I come across the key to a house (and marriage) long since demolished.

A freer world the moment iron bars slide sideways to discharge an inmate.

Most of the time they admit us into routine living: turning deadbolts of front doors, starting cars, and protecting valuables in gym lockers.

People are lockboxes too, denying or permitting entry depending on the solicitation.

Waiting for that uniquely inspiring teacher to move our potential.

For that singular love to unwind our individual complication.

For that particular chemical to trigger addiction.

For that one insult to unleash our fury, then our fists, then our firearms.

And at long last, for that unifying cause, compelling us to let loose our collective best impulses before Karma changes the locks, and humanity is shut out altogether.

VIDEOS



Slumberland

Another chance to kill our nightmares and give life to our dreams...



The Ballet

Our lives are a choreography through the abrasion of time...



Window Rain

Window Rain: A ballet on glass...



Flowers Open

The promise of beauty slowly unfolding...

INTERVIEWS




QUINTESSENTIAL LISTENING : POETRY ONLINE RADIO A DIFFERENT KIND OF POETRY PODCAST

Dr. Anthony Michael Ingram hosts Marty for a full set of spoken word, piano, and conversation on the nature, purpose, and power of poetry.

 [Listen here](#)



Marty explains the origins of *Trips for Piano*, its connection to his illustrated spoken-word project *The Face Zone*, and shares pieces from his 2021 piano album.

 [Listen here](#)




Host Dewey Smith talks with Marty about the arts, the U.S. education system, American culture, and his time living in China.

 [Listen here](#)



Marty answers questions, shares original spoken word and piano.

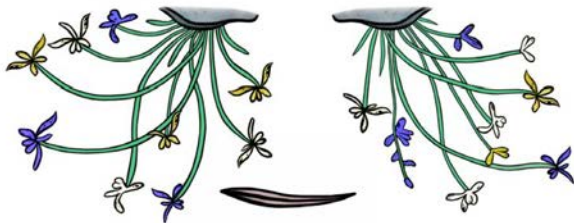
 [Listen here](#)



Fringe Review: 'The Face Zone,' Martin Graff, Capital Fringe

mdtheatre.com/2019/07/fringe-review-the-face-zone-martin-graff-capital-fringe/

Posted by Mary Ann Johnson on July 14, 2019



'The Face Zone,' written, presented and directed by Martin Graff. (Photo courtesy of Capital Fringe.)

'The Face Zone,' written, presented and directed by Martin Graff. (Photo courtesy of Capital Fringe.)

Martin Graff is an illustrator, author and composer who has created this heartfelt work based on his travels and life and musings about how humans connect with one another. He uses his own life to riff on how we interact with the world and how our perceptions change.

'The Face Zone' is an earnest, humorous look at one man's travels to a wider world.

Using a keyboard, simple, barely-delineated sketches and a soothing voice to tantalize the audience with faces and pictures representing his different thoughts, he guides the audience through a series of vignettes ranging from an idyllic hour spent on a deserted beach in Hong Kong to how his beard helped him connect with school children he was teaching to working in an office in Asia and how food choices can be a minefield of preconceived ideas about society.

Through his musings, he comes to the realization that so much of our personal values and beliefs are a product of the larger society—an idea that has been explored before—but in his hands, he underscores the importance of looking within to find out why we react as we do in different settings, and then urges the audience to make the jump to giving that grace to all we meet.

In this deeply personal study of his on-going journey, Graff offers a path to recognizing how our internal monologues affect our perceptions, and how to step back and ask, why? Is it valid? Is it relevant? Is it keeping us from fully experiencing our lives?

His compositions are soothing and serve as a means to give the audience a chance to reflect on his vignettes. The illustrations are cunningly child-like, meant to serve as a stepping-off point to go deeper without using color and line and scale as an unconscious means to set limits on how far one is willing to explore.

"The Face Zone" is an earnest, humorous look at one man's travels to a wider world. He strives to treat all he meets gently and to be forgiving of each other as we strive to make connections and move liquidly through the greater world.

Running Time: 45 minutes with no intermission.

"The Face Zone" is at Crocodile, Saint Augustine's Episcopal Church, Washington, DC, and shows are July 17, July 26 and July 27.

About Mary Ann Johnson

Ms. Johnson has worked in theatre for 10 years as a house manager; and has also volunteered as an usher at numerous theatres in the Washington metropolitan region. She has a long-standing affinity for theatre, going back to seeing the original Man of La Mancha as a child.

A DRAMATIC CRESCENDO OF ENVELOPING SONORITY: VIRGINIA-BASED COMPOSER/PIANIST MARTIN GRAFF TAKES US PLACES BEYOND OUR CURRENT MINDSETS WITH 'SONARE'

Posted on [13 September 2021](#)



ABOUT US

Since 2012, we have grown into one of the most respected artist and repertoire (A&R) blogs. We help music industry professionals discover new independent music from across the world.

Our readership includes record labels, publishers, management companies, radio stations, pr and sync companies from across the world who use our website as a resource to discover and sign acts.

We are always on the look out for the next big hit so please submit your music via our website.

Taken off his recent eight-track album called *Trips for Piano*, Martin Graff brings us much enlightened peace for our worried souls with a song that will have you feeling purified again with “Sonare.”

Martin Graff is a mightily skilled composer-pianist, illustrator, writer, and spoken-word performer, who is based in safe and flourishing Arlington, Virginia. With one of the most impressive chin-beards you will ever see, he uses these superpowers to make the type of music you can just sit back with and let it lather a web of pureness all over your willing body.

“At four, my family inherited an old, anonymous piano, and I surged with an uncontainable energy to climb onto the bench and dig my hands into those eight-eight bits of clay, instinctively molding them into little aural landscapes. Crude and square at first; at last, faceted gems after a lifetime of practice, polish, and love.” —Martin Graff

With a calming ambiance and featuring a wizard-like level of genius proportions—which certainly has you dazzled and perhaps a tad flustered at times—his remarkable style is truly translucent as he picks up your bad mood to flip it around and brings you back into a much happier space in the world, where you may feel so much more satisfied with life.

“Making this music is the opposite of death, like the centrifugal force around the sharpest bend of the greatest roller coaster. A re-harmonizing of my most tumultuous internal cacophonies and maybe yours. So, listen up as I bang on this gong from the Gods! As the resonance of these radiant compositions fill your ear and make their way to your heart.” —Martin Graff

“Sonare,” from the multi-skilled Virginia-based composer-pianist Martin Graff, is a lovely piece of art from a highly skilled artist who brings so much joy to many. His excellent technique is truly incredible and sadly underrated, as he plays with a true love for what he does. This is a song which will sooth many a soul and bring you back to a place in time where you feel most content. The true aim of music is to bring us together and heal the wounds of the past, after all. See this new video and score on [YouTube](#) and see more on the [IG](#) music page.

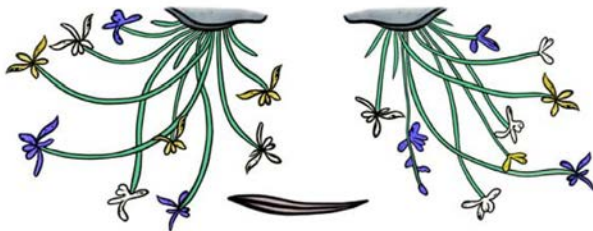
Reviewed by Llewelyn Screen

<https://www.anrfactory.com/a-dramatic-crescendo-of-enveloping-sonority-virginia-based-composer-pianist-martin-graff-takes-us-places-beyond-our-current-mindsets-with-sonare/>

Capital Fringe Review: The Face Zone, Surreal Daydreams to Trip Your Imagination

July 10, 2019 by Kate Gorman

Upbeat and whimsical, *The Face Zone* meanders between philosophical musings and autobiographical tales in a Sark-esque combination of drawings and poetry. Bopping from thought to thought, Martin Graff's one-man show is like going to a jam-packed party where you brush up against a lot of eclectic folks, but you don't get fully introduced to any of them.



Graff showcases his range of artistic endeavors in *The Face Zone*, which include poetry, drawing, and music. He combines his spoken word performance with projections of his visual art, and frames these segments by playing his piano compositions.

★★★★★ *The Face Zone* closes July 27, 2019

The show is like an illustrated book of his freewheeling psyche and, as its affable author, Graff flips through the pages and points out his favorite parts. His poetry encompasses a range of topics from the stress of hunting for parking spaces in strip malls and a meditative moment on a beach near Hong Kong to his formidable chin beard giving him cred at a tough biker gathering. Graff offers up an abundance of ideas in his reveries on living and uses his fanciful drawings as the jumping-off point for each new stream of thoughts.

While each artistic dimension of the show has compelling facets, I would have liked to see a fuller interlacing of the words, images, and music. The moments in the performance when Graff's images and poetry play off each other in humorous or clever ways demonstrates what he can do, but also draws attention to the times when there is less of a strong connection between the two. The piano interludes help to give the show structure, but since they are distinctly separate from the poetry and image sections, they end up feeling tonally detached.

Graff keeps the pacing moving, so even if one poem doesn't quite connect, he is soon on to a new one. The show is brief, but the length works with this collection of short poems. Even with the sometimes heady subject matter, Graff's peppering of humorous observations and quirky bits throughout the show keeps things fizzing.

The Face Zone is a fanciful show that takes you on a whirlwind tour through Graff's perspectives on the meaning of life. His world seems crammed with a kaleidoscopic swirl of thoughts, feelings, and experiences that are interesting to get a peek into, even if a peek is all you get.

[More CapitalFringe here](#)



About Kate Gorman

Kate Gorman is a writer and artist working in immersive audio and fabric installations. She is a resident in the 202Creates Spring 2018 Class and was awarded a DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities individual fellowship for 2018.



Sunday, May 15, 2016

The Face Zone, Live at Artomatic 2016,

Featuring Martin Graff

By Steve Loya

A couple of years ago I had the good fortune of finding out about local visual and performance artist, word-smith, musician, and teacher, Martin Graff, and his extraordinary ongoing project known as The Face Zone. It was at a cartoonists and comics art exhibit in downtown Frederick, Maryland that I noticed a wall full of curious little minimalistic illustrations of strange and interesting faces, accompanied by some words. The cartoonish faces depicted things like melting cheese on a pizza and titles like "Melting Cheese Pain," paired with thoughtful musings on the dark side of personification. The words and images were brilliant and unique observations on everyday life, in some ways like a punk rock Jerry Seinfeld with a Banksy-like sensibility.

Soon after, Marty, as most folks know him, had a big exhibit of his work again in downtown Frederick, and I ended up purchasing his self-published Face Zone book, which compiled many of his words and illustrations. Marty describes his Face Zone series as "short visual meditations on what makes the world go round. Existential musings with a surreal twist and a dark sense of humor sure to trip your imagination..."

Last night, Frederick Artomatic hosted one of Marty's live Face Zone events, taking those short, visual meditations one step further into the realm of spoken-word and performance art. As someone who has struggled personally with speaking in front of one's peers, it always amazes me when someone seems to effortlessly get up in front of an audience of people to talk, act, sing, or dance. I'm even more amazed when someone can remember their lines or the words they want to express to an audience without forgetting. While Marty's performance, based on his illustrated and written Face Zone material, seemed like second-nature for him, there's no doubt the amount of time, energy, and preparation condensed into a single half-an-hour show was anything but effortless.

Seeing and hearing Marty expand and further elaborate upon the words and images in his book added yet another crucial dimension to The Face Zone experience and, according to Marty, is ultimately the core of what he does now the book more or less a companion to his spoken-word shows. As someone who experienced both the art exhibits and book aspect of The Face Zone first, I found the spoken-word performance to delve much deeper and further into these musings on subject matter ranging from the relativity of the food we eat ("Today's Special") to haunting childhood memories of how choking on a single lemon drop soured a young boy's perception of the ocean off the Jersey shore ("Tinkles in The Sea"). One of my personal favorites was Marty's take on the absurdity of commercial advertising, with its irrational fairy-tale promises and the less-than-satisfying results ("Jolly Hot Peanuts"), which he began last night's performance with. However, despite the dark humor and keenly cynical observations of The Face Zone live, there was a glowingly optimistic underlying message of hope and a love of life at the very core of it all.

The ability to hold an audience captive for extended periods of time as a one-man spoken word act is by no means an easy task, and in some ways Marty's musings and highly engaging observations on the world in which we live, relayed through the medium of speech and told through the lens of personal experience, reminded me of some of the best performances from Henry Rollins, who I've seen speak live on several occasions over the past two decades. Word has it there may even be a musical element added to The Face Zone live experience in the not-too-distant future. Whatever the case, don't hesitate to witness Marty's live act if he comes to a venue near you. In the meantime, TED Talks should seriously consider inviting Marty to do his thing for them someday soon!



FEATURED APPEARANCES

THE DELAPLAINE ARTS CENTER

40 S. Carroll St., Frederick, MD 21701

April 8, 2024

Bill Watson, Vice President of The Frederick Arts Association booked me to perform a feature set of spoken word with projected artwork from my book series The Face Zone along with pieces from my album Trips for Piano. Following the performance, I gave a talk on my creative process and took audience questions.

FRANKLIN PARK ARTS CENTER

36441 Blueridge View Ln, Purcellville, VA 20132

October 18, 2023

Managing Director Elizabeth Bracey booked me as the featured performer for the Music for Dessert Concert Series, for which I performed Trips for Piano in its entirety.

"INTRODUCING" PODCAST

May 2, 2023

Host Krystal Glenn featured me as her featured guest via YouTube livestream. Over the course of an hour, I read my poems, shared piano pieces, and responded to interview questions from

the host.

FHV COMMUNITY CENTER

Village of Friendship Heights, 4433 South Park Avenue, Chevy Chase, MD 20815

March 18, 2023

Program director Anne O'Neil booked me as a featured act where I performed a full set of poetry and music from The Face Zone and Trips for Piano.

TAKOMA RADIO WOWD 94.3 FM

June 9, 2022

Deejay Madonna Tyler-LeBlanc booked me as the featured guest on her bi-weekly program Musical Remedies with the Night Nurse, which focuses on local artists and music as a healing, communal element. I was interviewed and presented musical selections from Trips for Piano as well as poetry from my illustrated book series The Face Zone.



THE WOOLLY MAMMOTH THEATRE

641 D St. NW, Washington, DC 20004

May 16, 2022

Dwayne Lawson-Brown hosted me as that evening's headliner, where I performed a full set of poetry and music from *The Face Zone* and *Trips for Piano*.

BUSBOYS & POETS SHIRLINGTON

4251 S. Campbell Ave., Arlington, VA 22206

May 2, 2022

Alexandria Poet Laureate Kanikki Jakarta hosted me as that evening's featured act, where I performed a full set of material from *The Face Zone* and *Trips for Piano*.

THE ATHENAEUM

201 Prince St., Alexandria, VA 22314

March 24, 2022

Veronica Szalus, Executive Director of the Northern Virginia Fine Arts Association, booked me as the featured performer as part of their ongoing poetry series at the gallery.

BLOG TALK RADIO

August 11, 2021

Host Dr. Anthony Michael Ingram had me as his featured guest on *Quintessential Listening: Online Poetry Radio*, where I performed a full set of my poetry and piano pieces, and responded to interview questions from the host and call-in listeners.

WORDS AND MUSIC ON INSTAGRAM LIVE

May 17, 2021

Host Kiana Balacich featured me as her guest @ *PoetConnection* where I read my work, shared my music, and answered interview questions about the themes in my poems as well as my artistic origin story.

HEAL-N-HELP ON ZOOM

April 30, 2021

Host Kelly Myerson featured me as part of a fundraiser for *Fighting Pretty*, a women's cancer organization.

WEST POTOMAC HIGH SCHOOL

Springbank Auditorium, 6500 Quander Rd., Alexandria, VA 22307

January 27, 2020

Host and principal Tanganyika Millard hired me to perform a solo set of spoken word and piano for the teachers of West Potomac as a "spiritual professional development" to uplift and inspire the staff toward the remainder of the school year.

CAPITAL FRINGE FESTIVAL 2019

Saint Augustine's Episcopal Church, 555 Water St. SW, Washington, DC 20024

July 9, 13, 17, 26, and 27, 2019

Producer Lee Cromwell put me on the roster of solo performing artists for the festival as well as the *Press Preview* event at *Market Square*, for which only a limited number of artists were featured.

MIDDLETOWN HIGH SCHOOL

200 Schoolhouse Dr., Middletown, MD 21769

April 17, 2019

Media Specialist Lindsey Weaver hired me to perform spoken word and piano for high-school students as part of their elective time to support interest in literacy and the arts.



BUSBOYS & POETS

450 K St. NW, Washington, DC 20001

December 26, 2018

Dwayne Lawson-Brown hosted me as that evening's feature, where I performed a full set of material from The Face Zone with a closing piano piece from Trips for Piano.

FREDERICK COMMUNITY COLLEGE

7932 Opossumtown Pike, Frederick, MD 21702

July 5, 2018

Art instructor Laura Kline invited me to perform a set of speaking with projected art and piano for her Introduction to the Creative Arts students.

THE BIER BARON SHOWROOM & COMEDY LOFT

1523 22nd St. NW, Washington, DC 20037

May 16, 2018

Events manager James Gaghan hired me as that evening's featured performer, where I did material from The Face Zone and Trips for Piano.

SKYSTAGE

59 S. Carroll St., Frederick, MD 21701

April 12, 2018

Program Coordinator Maura Kenny Parrott hosted me as the featured act for Literature Night, for which I did a set of spoken word with projected art from The Face Zone.

JACKIE'S POPUP GALLERY

1 Church St., Lambertville, NJ 08530

June 30, 2017

Gallery owner Jaclyn Polin invited me to do a feature set of my spoken word with projected art and piano for gathered patrons.

ARTOMATIC CRYSTAL CITY

1800 S. Bell St., Arlington, VA 22202

April 15, 2017

AOM President Veronica Szalus directed the event, where I was one of the evening's featured acts.

ARTOMATIC FREDERICK

115 E. Church St., Frederick, MD

May 14, 2016

AOM directors Jennifer Finley and Steve Dobbin invited me on as an event lead and also hosted me on the main stage for a full set of spoken word with projected art from my ongoing project The Face Zone.

505 NORTH GALLERY & STUDIO

505 N. Market St., Frederick, MD 21701

April 30, 2016

Gallery owner Kelly Phebus featured my live act at a reception in support of a hanging art show in which my illustrations and writing were on exhibit.

THE ARTIST ANGLE

124 S. Carroll St., Frederick, MD 21701

April 11 and 16, 2015

Gallery owner Jennifer Finley featured my live act at two receptions in support of a hanging art show of my illustrations and writings.

THE GRIFFIN ART CENTER

437 N. Market St., Frederick, MD 21701

January 17, 2015

Gallery owner Alice Hoxie and resident artist Johan Lowie featured my live act at a reception to support an art exhibit of my drawings and



REFERENCES

Dwayne Lawson-Brown
Host: Spit Dat DC, Busboys & Poets,
Poets Reading Poetry Podcast

July 17, 2021

This letter is in support of Martin "Marty" Graff as a feature performer. I've had the pleasure of hosting Marty in a few spaces including Spit Dat DC and Busboys and Poets 450K, and every step of the process was a joy.

Marty's work is refreshing. As someone who attends many events (mostly in a hosting capacity) the artists' styles begin to blend into an amorphous blob of monotony. Marty breaks that mix in whichever format he shows up: whether that's sharing poetry a cappella while passing around copies of his illustrated poetry book *The Face Zone* for the audience to see the corresponding illustration for each poem; or speaking while projecting the visuals on stage and adding intermittent piano to punctuate

the set. When booking Marty, you are booking someone with a breadth of abilities, each used to captivate a crowd.

I full-heartedly support Martin Graff's application to perform and look forward to witnessing him shine on those stages again.

Dwayne Lawson-Brown
Host: Spit Dat DC, Busboys & Poets, Poets
Reading Poetry Podcast
Dwayne@CrochetKingpin.com
202-569-3622



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July 12, 2022

To the Event Coordinator:

I have been asked to compose a reference letter for Martin Graff in support of his future performance engagements, and I am happy to do so.

I first met Marty in Crystal City, Virginia during Artomatic 2017, a large-scale arts event for which I have been president and advisor from 2007 to 2013 and event director in 2017. Marty had both a gallery exhibit of original illustrations from his stage show, *The Face Zone*, as well as a feature performance of that show on one of our live stages, both of which were well attended and well received by event-goers. More recently, in March of 2022, I had the honor of working with Marty for his featured performance at The Athenaeum in Alexandria, Virginia, which was also well attended and quite moving for the audience.

In both instances, Marty took passionate initiative to make sure that the show's logistics, promotional materials, and content were diligently prepared in advance. His communications leading up to the event were timely, detailed, and clear. Most importantly, the quality of the show was commensurate with Marty's proceeding professionalism. I appreciated the nature of Marty's show because he engaged the audience with exceptional storytelling, delightful music, and timely poetry.

Marty possesses a unique blend of outstanding artistic ability and project management skills. He is focused, highly motivated, and a stickler for perfection. I highly encourage anyone who is looking for a unique and impactful act to work with Martin Graff. The experience is as professional as it is affecting.

Thanks for your consideration,

Veronica Szalus
Executive Director
Athenaeum | Northern Virginia Fine Arts Association

Veronica Szalus
Executive Director
Athenaeum | Northern Virginia Fine Arts Association



To whom it may concern:

It is with pleasure that I write this reference letter for Martin Graff. During the pandemic, many artistic outlets pivoted to an online platform. Mr. Graff joined me for several of my online presentations and blew attendees away with his graphics and poetry. It is for this reason that I featured him in the spring of 2022. His eagerness and enthusiasm to bring his work to my in-person platform at Busboys and Poets in Virginia was refreshing. When providing him the structure of the show and time limit, he was very detailed and respectful of the time allotted. He brought a very unique presentation of visual, musical, and vocal art. The audience was well tuned-in and interested in purchasing products and becoming a fan of his works. He was professional and well-prepared.

You would do yourself a disservice in not adding Martin Graff to your programming.

I will be happy to provide any other information that you may need to make an informed decision.

Best Regards,

Ka'Nikki Jakarta, Inaugural Poet In Residence for The Northern Virginia Fine Arts Association

The First African American Poet Laureate of Alexandria, Virginia

Busboys and Poets Venue Captain – Virginia

Email: kanikkij@gmail.com

Direct: [703-593-8505](tel:703-593-8505)

Dr. Michael Anthony Ingram
Founder and Executive Director of the DC Poetry Project, Inc.
Host of Quintessential Listening: Poetry Online Radio
2420 16th St. NW #405
Washington, DC 20009
202-540-0327
maingram@gmx.com

August 14, 2021

To Whom it May Concern:

I am very pleased to write a character reference for Martin Graff. Martin is professional, capable, dedicated, creative, and personable. Since the beginning of our association, he has shown that he can make decisions quickly and effectively. He is a motivated leader and encourages others to achieve their personal goals and perform their best work. Martin is also a well-known spoken word poetry artist and musician. He is passionate about using his many platforms to speak out against the many "isms" that cause social divisions. Martin possesses the traits and talents necessary to take on any endeavor, and he would be an excellent choice for hire in a variety of venues. I highly recommend Martin Graff without any reservations. If you have any questions or would like further clarification, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dr. Michael Anthony Ingram".

Dr. Michael Anthony Ingram

9/15/2021

Christopher Madden

Vice President, Frederick County Art Association

SUBJECT Referral, Martin Graff

On September 13, 2021 the Frederick County Art Association had the pleasure of having Martin Graff deliver his multi-media performance of "The Face Zone." As Vice President in charge of hiring monthly speakers for our members meetings I had approached Martin months ago requesting his services for our September meeting. I have known Martin for years as a friend and fellow Artist in the Washington DC region.

His show was well attended and enthusiastically received. His show combines music, visual art and the spoken word in a manner that dynamically illustrates that the most effective Art is influenced by all of culture among us. Martin's show really engages the audience- his charisma effuses his keyboard and his oratory equally while his graphics beautifully tie both together.

I highly recommend Martin Graff and his creative performances to venues and audiences lucky enough to acquire his talent.

Christopher Madden

Christopher-Madden.com

(301)695-3932

FROM THE DESK OF

Kelly Myerson
Author, Poet, Speaker

July 28, 2021

When I first met Marty, we were both attending a virtual poetry event in the midst of the pandemic. His performance was well-rehearsed, hysterical, and poignant. Marty didn't just recite his poem—he invited us into his world with imagery and music. He shines as a poet, artist, and musician!

My friend and poet, Kiana Balacich, and I dreamed up a virtual poetry event called heal-n-help: Poetry LIVE. Our goal was to both allow poets to shine and raise funds for charity. We asked Marty to join the featured poet lineup in April this year.

What impressed me most about Marty was his prompt follow through. We asked the poets to provide bios, pictures, and support the event with their own donations. Marty was one of the first to respond. He was punctual, focused, and brought his highest performance quality to the event.

I highly recommend Marty to be a featured performer. He is truly one of a kind. Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions regarding Marty.

Sincerely yours,


Kelly Myerson

Co-creator heal-n-help: Poetry LIVE

July 26, 2021

I am writing to recommend Martin Graff as a live **feature** performer. I am Kiana Balacich, New York City-based educator, poet, and musician who serves the poetry community as live host of poetry shows "Words and Music" for @PoetConnection on Instagram and "Heal and Help" live poetry fundraiser with poets Vania Verses and Kelly Myerson. I first crossed paths with Martin Graff at KaNikki Jakarta and Laura DiFranco's Open Mic.

Martin utilizes music, imagination, and wit to deliver artistic performances. He incorporates original illustrations into his performance to engage the audience's visual faculties as he shares his spoken word. Martin performed as a featured poet at the April 2021 "Heal and Help" live poetry fundraiser, hosted by Vania Verses, Kelly Myerson, and myself. Martin performed original music on piano from his new album ***Trips for Piano***. In addition, Martin shared spoken word that featured corresponding illustrations. Audience members said they appreciated the soothing melodies of the music and the humor of the spoken word. In total, audience members donated over \$600 to support the non-profit organization Fighting Pretty. In May 2021, Martin performed as a featured poet on @PoetConnection's Instagram Live "Words and Music." The audience enjoyed Martin's music, poetry, and illustrations. The audience members participated in our Q and A session, and it was evident that they enjoyed the unique vibe of Martin's art.

Kind Regards,

Kiana Balacich

Instagram: @kmusic1318 & @poetconnection

Gmail: kianabpoetry@gmail.com


August 12, 2021

I am very excited to offer this letter of recommendation for Mr. Martin Graff aka The Face Zone. I hired Mr. Graff to perform his show for my faculty and staff in 2019-2020 after seeing and being moved by his show at that summer's Capital Fringe Festival.

The thoughtfulness and intentionality of the material presented at Fringe sparked an excitement in me as it closely aligned with my goals of self reflection, self care, laughter, and love. Educators often find themselves in a state of taking care of everyone else. The job that they do can often feel thankless and I wanted to provide them with a time of respite, joy, and entertaining fun. The Face Zone provided just that.

Marty was very caring and professional as we meet several times prior to hiring him to discuss my goals for my staff/school and how his show would support those goals. He provided several examples of his work and followed through on all deliverables in a timely manner. The show was professional in the way of sound, lighting, and AV. In the end, the show was well received and complimented by my staff; the mission was accomplished. I would happily hire Mr. Graff in the future.

Sincerely,



Tanganyika H. Millard
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