

Thursday
JAN 16
7:30 pm

Pavilion

Crys Matthews

Rising folk star and voice for social justice



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Landmark National Bank is pleased to partner with the Lied Center of Kansas to present the Folk Series.

There will be no intermission during this performance.

A troubadour of truth, Nashville resident Crys Matthews is among the brightest stars of the new generation of social-justice music makers. An award-winning, prolific lyricist and composer, Matthews blends country, Americana, folk, blues and bluegrass into a bold, complex performance steeped in traditional melodies punctuated by honest, original lyrics. She is made for these times.

Of Matthews, ASCAP VP & Creative Director Eric Philbrook says, "By wrapping honest emotions around her socially conscious messages and dynamically delivering them with a warm heart and a strong voice, she lifts our spirits just when we need it most in these troubled times." Justin Hiltner of *Bluegrass Situation* adds, her gift is a "reminder of what beauty can occur when we bridge those divides." In her own words, Matthews says her mission is: "to amplify the voices of the unheard, to shed light on the unseen, and to be a steadfast reminder that hope and love are the truest pathways to equity and justice." Her new album is an embodiment of and a testament to that mission.

When Matthews attended a panel at Folk Alliance International in February 2024, she heard a Scottish Folk artist inquire as to how many record labels pursue what the artist referred to as "music from my tradition," four words that intrigued Matthews. "I loved the idea of that. It seems like the best way to talk about music: what is your tradition, who are your people, what is the fabric of you?"

A daughter of the South by way of Nashville now and North Carolina forever, and the self-proclaimed poster child of intersectionality, Matthews is boldly answering those questions on her new album aptly titled *Reclamation*.

Recorded in Nashville, TN, at Sound Emporium Studios, *Reclamation* was produced by Levi Lowry (co-writer of Zac Brown Band's hit song "Colder Weather"). The project features her partner on- and off-stage, Heather Mae; her friends and fellow singer-songwriters Kyshona, Melody Walker and Chris Housman; and some of the best musicians in Music City, like Megan Coleman, Megan Elizabeth McCormick, Ellen Angelico, Ryan Madora, Jen Gunderman and Michael Majett.

"This album is both sonically and ideologically the fullest representation of who I am as an artist and as a human," she says. A preacher's kid, a Black woman, a butch lesbian and a proud Southerner who sings social-justice music right alongside traditional country and Americana music, Matthews is reclaiming not just the space Black artists have been denied in country and Americana music, not just the space LGBTQ people have been denied in communities of faith, not just the autonomy women have been denied over their own bodies, she is reclaiming the South that raised her.