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# We get the lowdown from Parma Ham

Parma Ham makes his debut at Berlin Berlin on Saturday October 21st alongside a stellar cast of wild performers

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### So tell us a little about yourself, where you come from and how did you come up with the name Parma Ham?

In the daytime I'm a producer for several contemporary art galleries, meaning I put together exhibitions and publications. I'm also an artist, currently working on my show next year which will have several car-sized sculptures entirely made of hair. At the weekend I like to party in the Goth and Techno scenes, and have received a lot of attention for my gravity-defying hair looks.

Those in sub-cultural tribes have always carried nicknames, famously in the Punk scene there was Amyl Nitrate, Beki Bondage and Poly Styrene.. so I called myself Parma Ham. A consumable, sexless, genderless, anonymity that suffered at the hands of human gluttony. It's absurd, it's disgusting, and also not too serious...it makes people smile; it makes people inbox me pictures of the meat when they see it at the store or on a menu. In 2015 Facebook banned anyone with an unusual name, and I was forced to submit identity documents in order to be allowed access to my profile again. It was a particularly difficult time for many LGBTQA's who were in the process of creating new identities for themselves, and this rigid rule ended that kind of experimentation. I spent a week in exile haplessly arguing with Facebook, and in my stubbornness said "f\*ck this", and I legally changed my name to Parma Ham.

### You're going to be performing for the first time at BB at Egg LDN 21st Oct. What's your involvement with the BB family?

I've known some of the Berlin Berlin performers such as Luke Harris and Sir Foxglove as good friends for 6 years. Others such as Gregory Kara or Samantha Togni I just know from being queer and living in London.

### Your look is very Gothic influenced, were you a fan of Dracula and Siouxsie and Banshees?

Being part of Goth as a subculture has been incredible, because it's also my biggest source of inspiration, and I use it like a toolbox to create my looks and my sculpture.

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**Tell us something about your early memories of dressing up and going to the London gay parties. You must have some funny moments?**

About 5 years ago Pete Burns approached me in Soho and cattily said he was doing my look 30 years ago. He wasn't wrong...he is one of my biggest inspirations. We partied all night together - London is great at giving magical moments like that. I also made out with Sharron Needles because she was so fucking hammered.

**In a small sentence what makes a goth?**

It's a loaded question, because some people are really protective over the subculture, while others hate labelling. I don't like saying what Goth is because you can easily ostracise some people, and I don't like to do that. But it is a valid question because it pisses me off when elements are appropriated, by which there have been many pop stars, fashion designers, makeup artists becoming the next "yaaaas goth queen", all the while having absolutely no clue where these aesthetics come from. These hollow representations do Goth as a music and fashion subculture a disservice, and pushes society closer to homogenization.

**What made you explore into the Goth subculture tribe?**

It's a bit cliché, but I really didn't fit-in when I was growing up in my home town. My sexuality, my gender, and my outlook was nothing like my peers, and it's a challenge to find your way with no role models or friends going through the same struggles. Goth provided a group of like minded people to experiment with...we had outlandish outfits, make up, and long hair. When I was in school in the 2000's there were zero visible LGBT people, and the naturally camp guys were bullied mercilessly. Being Goth was an excuse to be feminine and weird looking, while diverting the questions on my gender and sexuality. I came to terms quite early on that being different was a wonderful thing, and wearing all black was an easy way to put up a wall and maintain an 'otherness'.

**Your hair is pretty immense and outrageous. Tell us a little bit about how you come up with different styles and where you get your inspiration?**

I take hairstyles from the 70's and 80's and supersize them. The secret to making hardened punk hair is sugar water. The secret to making huge teased gothic hair is using a crimping iron. I use both methods when I do my hair, and also in my sculptures. Some of my stranger hair styles such as a mohican that goes down my arm, is just from experimenting and having fun.

**Who designs your ouch-fits?**

A lot of the structured leatherette pieces are made by my friend Sade English. I also commission fashion graduates to make me things. I also buy lots of Rick Owens.. it's dark, its romantic, and it's grand. When I am dressed I feel like I rule the underworld.

**What performers on the London club kids scene do you follow?**

I love always and in all ways Chad Curry AKA Dahc Demur. His soul, his performances, his techno sets as a DJ, and his visuals are incredible. His whole life is art, and he never turns it down.

**Lastly! What look have you got lined up for Berlin Berlin at EGG LDN?**

I'll be billing you for the amount of hairspray..

Parma Ham makes his debut at Berlin Berlin on Saturday October 21st alongside a stellar cast of wild performers including Alejandro Gocast, Bitch and Party, Gregory Kara, Kokaine Tyson, Luke Harris, Marnie Scarlet, Princejasonjason, Santi Storm and Von Kuntz. The Berlin Berlin Allstars with Andre Galluzzi, Guido Schneider, Danilo Schneider, Eveline Fink and Seb Blake power up the Main Room with Sisyphos' Fidelity Kastrow, Jonty Skruff and Juli.N More on the Ground Floor. One off party starters Betriebsfeier takeover the Terrace with Coco Berlin, Empro and Smash TV and joined by the BB Residents, Ireen Amnes, Kyle E & Fidel. Catch DJ Taffkanik and his Homostash crew in The Loft and the Kuntskammer cabaret with Lewis G Burton, Kassandra Powell & Guests in the Apothecary.

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