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### KST PRESENTS: Joy KMT/The Tabernacle of Immaculate Perception's residency showing of *Poem 2* is interactive ceremony, performance

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Poet, healer, artist, activist, and lover, **Joy KMT** creates parallel realities that make the mundane magical in *Poem 2*. In collaboration with poet Bekezela Mguni and vocalist April Love, **Joy KMT/The Tabernacle of Immaculate Perception** shares a work-in-progress showing of *Poem 2* on Friday, July 11, 8 p.m. at The Alloy Studios. Admission is pay-what-you-can.

The Tabernacle of Immaculate Perception, founded by Joy, is committed to revealing otherworldly environments of wonder, transformative healing, and social justice through poetry, performance, and audience participation.

Within that framework, Joy created *Poem 2*, which she describes as an interactive poetic shrine ceremony. *Poem 2* takes audiences on a journey through feelings of rage, grief, joy, and love as black women weave a rich tapestry of storytelling through poetry and song.

A highlight of the performance is a real, functioning marketplace, called Numinous: A Full Moon Market. The market provides an opportunity for audiences to examine and experience the deeper concept of human interactions. By using alternative forms of currency, the marketplace strips away the power of money and shifts the focus to personal exchange. Joy hopes this will demonstrate how art shapes how people live.

"Audiences can expect to share things about themselves," Joy says. "It's a place for sacred interactions with each other."

*Poem 2* is the second installment in Joy KMT's groundbreaking series *Testify: A Black Womanhood Series*. The series began with *Poem One: The Law of Immaculate Mirrors*, which explored the transformative relationship that black women experience with themselves and each other. Joy first performed *Poem One* in October 2013 at The New Bohemian in Pittsburgh (watch video [here](#)).

As a black woman in the queer community, Joy often finds inspiration in the stories of other black women. Joy is the producer of *Her Voice: The Stories, Tales, and Myths of Women of Color* and a 2011 MacDowell Fellow. Her poetry has appeared in numerous publications including *Check The Rhyme: An Anthology of Female Emcees and Poets*, *Black Girl Dangerous*, and *The Feminist Wire*.

Bekezela Mguni — a poet, librarian, and co-founder of New Voices Pittsburgh — and songstress April Love collaborated on *The Law of Immaculate Mirrors* and will continue their work with Joy KMT again for this residency.



Photo courtesy of Joy KMT



In addition to the Friday showing, Joy KMT will lead a poetry-based workshop at the Alloy Studios on Wednesday, July 9 from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. The workshop, titled **Tabernacle: Writing Your Own Scripture**, explores the places people hold sacred through poetry and developing a deeper level of consciousness. Registration is \$5 per person, at the door. Participants should expect to leave the workshop with their own version of what a scripture means to them and a renewed vision of the possible. The workshop will be followed by a free artist lunch and discussion from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

*Funding for Poem 2 was provided by the Advancing Black Arts in Pittsburgh Fund, a partnership of the Pittsburgh Foundation and The Heinz Endowments.*

### **East Liberty LIVE!**

This event is part of KST's **East Liberty LIVE!** summer series, sponsored by **PNC** and **Yelp Pittsburgh**.

Kelly Strayhorn Theater presents East Liberty LIVE! — a vibrant series of affordable and accessible summer arts programming. With a variety of dance, music, and film events throughout the summer, East Liberty LIVE! provides creative activities and innovative arts experiences for those who work, play, and live in the East End.

Kelly Strayhorn Theater is a proud partner in presenting **Car Free Fridays** with Bike Pittsburgh. As Pittsburgh's bicycle advocacy organization, Bike Pittsburgh works to transform Pittsburgh's communities into vibrant, healthy places by making them safe and accessible for everyone to bike and walk. Car-free travel empowers people to participate in their surroundings and celebrate life, which is at the heart of East Liberty LIVE! When patrons arrive at KST and The Alloy Studios for a KST Presents event by foot, bike, or transit on Fridays throughout the summer, they receive a voucher for two tickets to a KST Presents event during the 2014–2015 season.

### **About the Kelly Strayhorn Theater**

As the last of nine theaters from the 1950s heyday of East Liberty, the Kelly Strayhorn Theater uses the arts as a catalyst for continuing community revitalization. The theater, in its 12th season, continues to play a key role in the transformation of Pittsburgh's East Liberty neighborhood. An intimate, professionally equipped, 349-seat multiple-use performance venue, the theater demonstrates its commitment to Pittsburgh artists and audiences. The KST is a favorite venue of emerging local artists, regional artists and arts organizations who take risks and present new work. Noted Pittsburghers Gene Kelly and Billy Strayhorn, the namesakes, are among the 80 area artists honored on the theater's Gallery of Stars. The building, opening in 1914, is the former Regent Theatre, which served the East End as a movie house for eight decades.

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