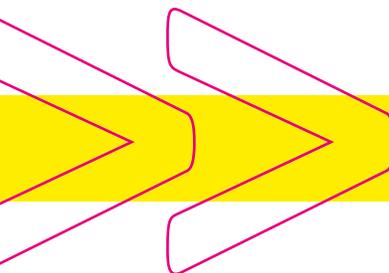




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“Heal a Heart to Touch a Soul” Poetry Slam

KST producing partner Fredric ‘Fu’ Underwood presents “Heal a Heart to Touch a Soul,” a poetry slam celebrating the legacy of his late aunt, Bernadette Turner. Mrs. Turner was a strong and driven voice that represented generations of the Pittsburgh black community. Eric ‘Big Homie’ Fisher and Zenobia Bey host this special poetry slam beginning at 7 p.m. on Friday, May 30, 2014 at Kelly Strayhorn Theater.

Twenty talented local men and women, ages 17–26, share five-minute poems inspired by the theme “Heal a Heart to Touch a Soul.” The theme comes from a line in Mr. Underwood’s poem *Family*, and is a reflection on the process of healing one’s self by touching someone else’s heart and soul.

A Pittsburgh native, Bernadette Turner is remembered as an advocate for the African-American community and the Pittsburgh community at large. Mrs. Turner was the executive director of Addison Behavioral Health, and fought to make the community a safer, drug-free environment. In 2009, she co-founded the African American Leadership Association to provide leadership opportunities to young black professionals. A year later, she was recognized as one of Pittsburgh Magazine and PUMP’s “40 Under 40”—an annual celebration of young leaders in the region.

Two graduating students from Perry Traditional Academy will be named “Most Improved” at the poetry slam on May 30. Each will receive a book scholarship for the college they plan to attend. Mrs. Turner also graduated from Perry Traditional Academy.

During a 10-minute intermission, the Pittsburgh-based Living Spirit Band will play soft jazz music.

Underwood hopes to continue Mrs. Turner’s legacy by creating positive change himself. Growing up in several Pittsburgh neighborhoods, he encountered other youth with many different life experiences and realized how easily a life can be taken away through gun violence. “Complaining doesn’t get the job done,” Underwood recalls his aunt saying. By changing the conversation on how youth have fun, he hopes to open people’s eyes to more safe and empowering avenues of entertainment.

Tickets are \$5 and will be sold at the doors, starting at 6:00 p.m.

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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