

# STRATEGIC PLAN: A Bridge to the Future 2018-2020

**KELLY STRAYHORN THEATER**

CREATING DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES through ART

**History • Art • Community • East Liberty**



# STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2020

## A Bridge to the Future

This plan has been informed by *Imagining A New Future: A Series of Community Conversations* conducted by KST in 2015-2016.





**Dear Friend of KST,**

Our 2017-2018 season celebrates ten years of Kelly Strayhorn Theater's transformation, from sleepy rental venue to dynamic presenter with unique and distinct original programming—and we are proud to celebrate!

In 2008, we set out to enliven the historic theater and the Penn Avenue Business District with new programs. And, we have come a long way!

Today, our charge is clear: we will be the organization that through art brings diverse communities together in mutual respect and enjoyment—creating meaningful understanding and diverse communities.

As a stakeholder, your support and commitment to a diverse and inclusive arts community shines brightly—alive in the careers of performing artists we present; alive in the hearts of audiences enriched by theater, dance, and music; and alive in the cultural life and the vibrancy of our neighborhood.

Your investments are met with thoughtful strategic planning that responds to the needs of our community and our established expectations for sustainability and vitality of the organization. We will continue to bring communities together for shared and valued experiences.

The pages that follow outline the important elements of our strategic plan including IMAGINING A NEW FUTURE, the community process that informed us as we began the process.

We hope that as you review our plans, you'll be inspired to join us in our efforts to thrive as we remain committed to our mission—to be a catalyst for creative expression in ways that bring our uniquely diverse community together.

Thank you for your enthusiastic support and generosity, and for making a difference in your community. As you'll discover in our strategic plan, you've made it possible for the arts and culture to accelerate the transformation of East Liberty.

Sincerely,

**janera solomon**

Executive Director, Kelly Strayhorn Theater

Photo by Jenelle Weatherford

# INTRODUCTION

## STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2020

### A Bridge to the Future



#### Strategic Planning Process

The process included:

- A community visioning process beginning with a creative session with Ken Foster, KST staff, Board and twenty five diverse community stakeholders.
- The establishment of a Strategic Planning Committee comprised of members of the Board of Directors.
- A community visioning phase, we called IMAGINING A NEW FUTURE which included roundtable discussions and community visioning activities to assist us in mapping the current civic and cultural climate.
- Three strategic sessions with staff and the Board of Directors facilitated by KST Board member, Kristine Woolsey, BGC/MAYA.
- A series of meetings with Ms. Solomon, Kristine Woolsey and the Strategic Planning Committee.
- Creation of strategic priorities and action plan by K. Woolsey and Ms. Solomon, presented and approved by the board.

# MUST BE TRUE

What must be true—before the 2017 Board Retreat and Planning session began, participants were asked to individually jot down those things that they believed “must be true” for KST to be successful. Those individual comments were grouped in order to find the themes that underpin any plans generated in the work of the session.

## COMMUNITY

Participants agreed that the work that KST does must be relevant to the surrounding community.

## INCLUSIVE AND DIVERSE

Participants agreed that one of KST’s differentiators is inclusivity and that we have a role to play as a leader in championing diversity.

## SUPPORT STAFF

Participants agreed that the staff must be supported in order to execute well on the work to be done.

## INNOVATION

Participants agreed that KST should continue to build our reputation for innovative programs and practices.

## QUALITY

Participants agreed that KST has become known for its high quality programs and those standards should be continued.

## COLLABORATION AND CONNECTION

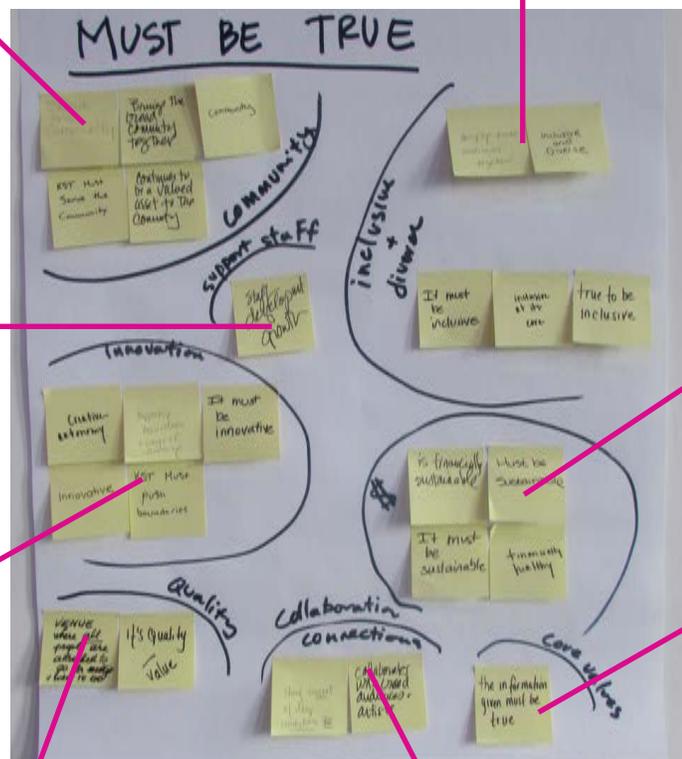
Participants agreed that collaboration and connection with both audiences and artists are a key component of the KST culture.

## FINANCES

Participants agreed that the work cannot be done well without a solid financial base and that this is one of the key challenges for KST right now.

## CORE VALUES

Participants agreed that KST must be an organization with integrity.



# VISION, VALUES, AND MISSION



Kelly Strayhorn Theater is a catalyst for creative expression and active audience engagement. Focusing on the performing and media arts of our time, KST takes a diverse, multidisciplinary, inclusive, and international approach to the presentation and understanding of performance arts. KST programs examine questions that define and inspire us as individuals and communities.

## OUR MISSION SUPPORTS A VISION IN THREE PARTS

### A LEADING PRESENTER

- We are a leader in the presentation of contemporary performance, with emphasis on emerging artists and art forms and uniquely diverse audiences.

### A CATALYST FOR CREATIVE EXPRESSION

- We are a community anchor for creative expression providing valuable support to emerging producers, artists, community organizations and East End families.

### A NEIGHBORHOOD ANCHOR & REGIONAL DESTINATION

- We are dedicated to the sustained growth of East Liberty and Penn Avenue as a uniquely diverse, distinctive arts, culture, and entertainment destination.

# STRATEGIES & YEAR ONE PRIORITIES

## GOAL 1:

Kelly Strayhorn Theater is committed to the discovery and development of a diverse mix of artists, art forms, performances, and audiences from Pittsburgh and the world, creating impactful experiences and launching careers.

## PRIORITIES:

- Clarify curatorial values and engage artists and partners in the process.
- Review our artist incubation programs and evaluate all prototypes, then select a few that work well.
- Develop/assemble curatorial resources (internal and external) from our ten year archive.
- Develop systems that make partnerships better – identify metrics for partnerships.
- Engage community in artistic decisions via community review panels.



Photo of *Ankomst*, a work directed by Thaddeus Phillips for Theater and taken by Peter Lloyd

## GOAL 2:

Kelly Strayhorn Theater is an activist presenting organization committed to bridging cultural, racial, socioeconomic, and other real or perceived barriers. We will be known nationally for “the KST way,” an approach that enables and empowers audiences to engage in community conversations, connecting people one to one through art and creative expression. This is our unique differentiator and value proposition.

## PRIORITIES:

- Along with artists and community partners, tell KST’s ten year story including our impact and legacy to create opportunity for the entire community to collectively celebrate our success.
- Cement “partnership” and “investment” as cornerstones by extracting from current processes best practices; and define methods including guiding principles and procedures for the KST programming and audience engagement partnerships.
- Complete Brand/Experience Clarity Gap Analysis & Customer Journey to improve the KST customer experience.

## Goal 3:

Kelly Strayhorn Theater will be solid financially and structurally. We must be sustainable in order to fulfill our mission, to support today’s programming and our future growth.

- Create a solid real estate strategy and facility plan for KST.
- Grow the number of people from everywhere that believe KST is a priority for giving and make it easier for them to participate.
- Establish three months of cash reserves.
- Create a physical workspace and office environment that supports the work we do.

## Goal 4:

The Kelly Strayhorn Theater as an organization will become a model of structure and systems that attract, retain, nurture, and develop the best talent in our industry.

## PRIORITIES:

- Perform a market survey and salary review and then budget for appropriate compensation packages; and protocol for bonuses and increases.
- Revise onboarding process and ensure it’s followed and works to establish new team members successfully.
- Increase training and mentoring opportunities for all staff.
- Establish team member engagement program that reward team members for both their individual and shared success.
- Refine systems for easy access to information around standard processes and data.

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Francine D. Abraham**

**Deborah Acklin**

President and CEO, WQED Multimedia

**R. Yvonne Campos**

Founder and Senior Consultant, Campos Inc.  
Founder/President, Next Act Fund

**William Frederick**

Founding and Managing Partner, RightPlace Enterprises

**Lisa B. Freeland**

Federal Public Defender for the US Court of Appeals

**Ernie Hogan**

Executive Director, PCRG

**Caitlin E. Green**

Vice President, Senior Marketing Manager, PNC Financial Services, Inc.

**Stacey L. Jarrell**

Counsel, UPMC

**Anne Billiet Lackner**

Co-founder/Owner, The Lackner Group

**Lara S. Martin**

Attorney, Bernstein-Buckley, P.C.

**Kannu Sahni**

Director of Community Affairs, Highmark Health—Allegheny Health Network

**Richard C. Smith**

Program Director, Jewish Healthcare Foundation

**Andréa Stanford**

Assistant County Manager, Allegheny County

**Kristi Woolsey**

Practice Lead, Creative Environments, MAYA Design

**LEADERSHIP TEAM**

Duane Binion

Darrell Kinsel

Elizabeth Lang

Desiree Lee

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