

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

# House Party Returns to Kelly Strayhorn Theater with a Night of Interactive Performance and Celebration

### MEDIA CONTACT

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**EAST LIBERTY, PA** — Kelly Strayhorn Theater is pleased to announce that **House Party**, the organization's annual summer benefit, will come to East Liberty on Saturday, July 22, 2023. House Party celebrates the legacy of KST with a night of entertainment and unforgettable flavor from local artists, including music and dance artists **anna thompson** and **taylor knight** of **slowdanger** with lighting and visual effects artist **Cornelius Henke III**, also known as **ProjectileObjects**, and multimedia queer-oriented video, installation, and performance artist **Scott Andrew**. Funds raised through House Party will **support the KST Presents Fall 2023 season**.

Inspired by the theatrics of **Studio 54** and the iconic fashion of the **Met Gala**, House Party brings the mood with an **immersive atmosphere** and **live performance**. From the **instagram-worthy VIP Reception** to the **rapturous Dance Party**, you can expect a night of cool fantasy in the thick of Summer.

Beginning at 7:00pm, VIP guests will arrive to encounter an installation in the KST lobby of **digital portraits** featuring the **House Party Host Committee** and **KST Board of Directors** created by Scott Andrew. Andrew has been a Pittsburgh resident for seventeen years, where he is a professor of digital

media at University of Pittsburgh and Carnegie Mellon University. Andrew co-founded the group **Fail-Safe**, a reoccurring frame for experimental performance, with artists **Angela Washko** and **Jesse Styles**, which was presented in the Fall 2022 season at KST. Andrew has also created media design and installations for **House Party '22**, last year's **Suite Life**, and the March 2020 Freshworks presentation of **I am a Haunted House** in collaboration with dance artist Jesse Factor.

Moving through the lobby, VIPs will encounter a transformed Theater, with the reception occurring on the main stage and throughout the auditorium. There, attendees will hear from Executive Director **Joseph Hall** and **Board Chair Adam Golden**, enjoy **heavy hors d'oeuvres**, and have exclusive access to an **open bar**. From the stage and the loge seating, VIPs will enjoy a performance from Pittsburgh staple slowdanger. Featuring their **signature blend of electronic music, slithering and undulating movement vocabulary, and sharp eye for riveting and evocative aesthetics**, slowdanger in collaboration with ProjectileObjects will present a short performance on a uniquely installed temporary stage constructed over the theater's orchestra seating.

Presented in the round for VIPs to experience from anywhere in the auditorium, the performance will give patrons a taste of the artists' special brand of movement. slowdanger will be back at KST as a part of the Fall 2023 season, supported by House Party, with a new evening-length work to be announced later this summer. The project currently in development with support from KST was **recently awarded \$101,500** from **New England Foundation for the Arts' National Dance Project program**.

Additionally, VIPs can have their fortune told to them through **tarot card readings** by **Amber Eps a.k.a. Hollyhood** and get custom House Party **temporary tattoos** from artist **Zhen Lee**.

Following the VIP reception guests move to the KST lobby for a **signature dance party with disco vibes!** Dance Party guests can join from **9:00pm - 12:00am to get down and celebrate KST with the East Liberty community**, and will receive one drink ticket after which they can purchase signature House Party cocktails from the KST bar!

"House Party is our summer blow-out party that showcases the work we do to support artists throughout the year," said KST Executive Director Joseph Hall. "We invite you to join us for this once a year spectacular event! We encourage guests to dress to impress and get ready to sweat it out on the dance floor as only one does at KST."

House Party is supported by our **Host Committee: Kenya T. Boswell, Dana Bishop-Root, Anne Chen, Gina & Idris Evans, Sherree Goldstein, David Finegold, Kenya Matthews, Rep. La'Tasha D. Mayes, Khari Mosley, Jessica Gaynelle Moss, Richard Parsakian, Barb Pugh, Hon. Erika Strassburger, Kannu Sahni, Gina Winstead & Donny Donovan**. Thanks to our sponsors **Duolingo, Pittsburgh City**

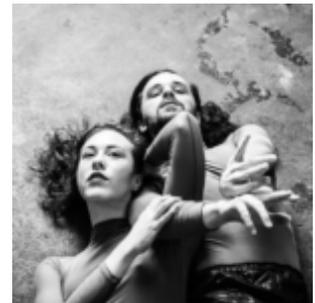
**Paper, UPMC Health Plan, FHL Bank, and Highmark Blue Cross/Blue Shield & Allegheny Health Network** for supporting House Party and KST's Fall '23 Season. You can sponsor KST's next event at [kelly-strayhorn.org/support](https://kelly-strayhorn.org/support)

Join KST for *House Party* on Saturday, July 22. Immersive VIP Reception 7:00pm - 9:00pm and Dance Party 9:00pm - 12:00am at Kelly Strayhorn Theater, 5941 Penn. Ave. Tickets are Pay What Moves You: \$50 - \$250 For full season details, KST COVID policy updates, and tickets, visit [kelly-strayhorn.org](https://kelly-strayhorn.org).

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## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

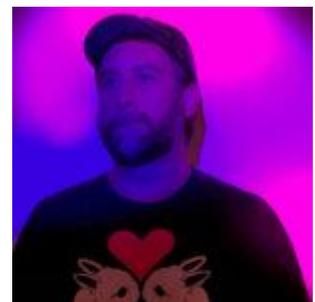
**taylor knight** and **anna thompson** are co-founding artistic directors of the Pittsburgh-based multidisciplinary performance entity **slowdanger**. Founded in 2013, slowdanger uses movement, integrative technology, found material, electronic instrumentation, vocalization, physiological centering, and ontological examination to produce their performance work. The more they engage in this collaborative work, the more they recognize the manifestation of their work as a non-binary entity that is one body amassed of multiple bodies in space. Each work seeks a deeper understanding through the practice of making. This ever evolving process is akin to the construction zone where inspiration was drawn for the name, slowdanger. anna and taylor have worked with Sidra Bell, Francesca Harper, Roderick George, Bill Shannon, MICHİYAYA Dance, Nile Harris, Jasmine Hearn, Maree Remaliajmerrygogo, CorningWorks, Mark C. Thompson, The Pillow Project |Pearlann Porter, Jil Stifel, Shantelle Courvoisier Jackson and more.



**Cornelius Henke III**, also known as **ProjectileObjects**, is a multi-talented creative with a passion for video production and performance art. His work spans various mediums, including music videos, motion graphics, live events, and interactive installations. As a former fellow and artist in residence at the Frank-Ratchye STUDIO for Creative Inquiry at Carnegie Mellon University, Cornelius has had the opportunity to showcase in venues including 9:30 Club, the Guggenheim Museum, and the Carnegie Museum of Art. He has participated in residencies at MANCC, The Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center, The Yard Martha's Vineyard, and Catskill Mountain Foundation. Cornelius is a contributing writer for VIDVOX and a partner at Merging Media, a boutique digital media production company based in Pittsburgh, PA.



**Scott Andrew** is a multimedia queer-oriented video, installation, and performance artist. He creates speculative fantasies that peer into otherworldly portals and voids. He has exhibited at MoMA's PopRally Performance Series (NYC), Ballroom Marfa (Marfa, TX), the Hammer Museum (LA), and the J. Paul Getty Museum (LA), among others. Scott co-curates TQ Live! a yearly LGBTQ+



variety series that has been presented at the Andy Warhol Museum and the Carnegie Museum of Art. Along with Angela Washko and Jesse Stiles, Scott organizes a National Endowment for the Arts funded performance series called **Fail-Safe**, which seeks to provide a supportive space for the presentation and potential failure of performative works-in-progress. Other previous curatorial projects include the drift and the Institute for New Feeling's Felt Book.

**Dr. Amber Epps** a.k.a. **HollyHood** a.k.a. **Amber the Witch** is a hedge witch, psychic, trance medium, root worker, and daughter of Oyá. As co-owner of Arts & Crafts: Botanica & Occult Shop, she and her partners were voted #1 psychics/tarot readers in the 2022 Pittsburgh City Paper's Best of Reder's Poll. Amber is also a curator, advocate, educator, musician, mom, and inter and transdisciplinary artist. She loves cats, tacos, and collard greens.



**Yang Zhen Lee** is a comics and tattoo artist who likes to dabble in many things. Zhen was in Teresa Martuccio's *Pink Potatoes*, and in some City of Play events such as *Emotional Landscapes*, *Intimate Subjects* and *Fantastic Adventure: Greenfield Bridge*. When not rehearsing, Zhen likes playing games, moving through the world in new ways, petting animals, and seeing what art peeps have been making.



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## ABOUT KELLY STRAYHORN THEATER

Named after 20th century entertainment legends **Gene Kelly** and **Billy Strayhorn**, both natives of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, **Kelly Strayhorn Theater** (KST) is reflective of the passion that its namesakes had for the arts. Today, KST carries on their legacy by fostering bold and innovative artistry with a global perspective. **KST celebrates diversity in voice, thought, and expression**, and upholds a firm commitment to inclusion. Furthermore, KST provides a welcome space for dialogue and artistic expression for all who enter.

KST has a dynamic footprint in Pittsburgh, with two venues running along Penn Avenue. **KST's Alloy Studios** is a cultural hub in the heart of Friendship, and the historic **Kelly Strayhorn Theater** is located in the thriving business district of East Liberty. More than 20 years after the founding of the theater, KST continues to use its broad reach to impact the contemporary arts and the community.