

## KST PRESENTS

LOCAL & GLOBAL PERFORMANCE | DANCE

**MEG FOLEY**

**BLOOD BABY: COMMUNION**

**Friday & Saturday, September 22\* - 23**  
**7:30pm**

\*Post Performance Discussion  
with ASL Interpretation





KST PRESENTS  
FALL 2023

# BRAVE ACTIONS BOLD VOICES

**The function of art is to do more than tell it like it is – it's to imagine what is possible.**

## - bell hooks

The KST Presents Fall 2023 season is about celebrating the brave actions and bold voices of the artists, audiences, and communities who call KST home. The season features new offerings from Mutual Aid Residents **Dreams of Hope** and **PearlArts**, a visual art exhibition in the **BOOM Gallery**, two **Freshworks** Performances in Progress, and premieres of **Local and Global Performances** from longtime Pittsburgh favorites and returning faces.

Our **Mutual Aid Residencies** continue to support Dreams of Hope and PearlArts with administrative facilities and space for ongoing classes and events. This fall, Dreams of Hope hosts the **theatriQ** educational workshop series, offering queer creatives ages 13 – 26 a space to learn, discuss, and connect through a plethora of topics pertaining to theater and the performing arts. PearlArts brings together **Soy Sos** and **Ali Berger**, and later Soy Sos, **James Johnson III**, and **Erik Lawrence** for two editions of the music and dance staple, **Synchronized with Soy Sos**. Later in the season, a dance-focused **PearlPRESENTS** will feature SPdp&SS founder **Staycee Pearl** alongside choreographers **Raphael Xavier** and **Chitra Subramanian**.

Curated by **DS Kinsel**, the BOOM Gallery, located in KST's historic 1914 lobby, presents **Eternal Maternal**. Featuring artworks from interdisciplinary artists **Fran Flaherty** and **Meg Foley**, the exhibition centers motherhood both as an active pursuit and a fundamental state of existence, irrespective of and subject to gender. Visit the gallery before performances from the opening on Monday, September 18 and Sunday, December 17 to experience the artists' unique interpretations of the sacred practice.

Our Fall 2023 **Freshworks** Residencies support exciting new performance works in process. On October 6 and 7, **Pria Dahiya** shares a "play-adjacent performance work" **You and Me and The End of the World** that touches on loneliness and coming of age through a pandemic. On December 1 and 2, **Andraya Rand-Mathis** presents dance, music, and drag in **Diving Within**, part of a healing process from grief, heartbreak, and childhood trauma.

KST's **Youth and Family** programs feature a revamped Halloween celebration. Bring the whole crew to join us for **Pumpkin Palooza**, An East Liberty Halloween Adventure! There will be tricks, treats, performances, and crafts from community partners. Tune in August 10 for our complete Fall 2023 offerings from **The Alloy School**.

The KST Presents **Local and Global Performance** series welcomes **Blood Baby** from Detroit/Philadelphia-based artist **Meg Foley**, featuring four works from the series (Primordial, Queer Parent Convening, Communion, and Touch Library). Foley shares the performance Communion on Friday and Saturday, September 22 – 23. Don't miss the Welcome Dinner & Artist Talk on September 18, where Foley will be in conversation with **Fran Flarety**; **The Embodied Imaginary**, a workshop with Foley on September 20; and a **Queer Parent Convening** later that evening. On December 8 and 9, Pittsburgh's own superduo **slowdanger** takes to the KST mainstage with **SUPERCELL**, a new work addressing climate change and media sensitization. Join artists **anna thompson** and **taylor knight** for a Welcome Dinner & Artist Talk on December 4, and their workshop **Demystifying the Box** on December 6.

Finally, the Fall season wouldn't be complete without **Suite Life**, our annual celebration of KST namesakes **Billy Strayhorn** and **Gene Kelly**! Join us on Saturday, November 25 for a VIP reception and eclectic performance celebrating these Pittsburgh legends and artistic champions.

There is so much to be explored in the voices and actions of artists across the KST Presents programs. We hope you will add **your bravery and boldness** to the mix by coming out to share in the work!

**JOSEPH HALL**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



# ABOUT KELLY STRAYHORN THEATER

**Kelly Strayhorn Theater** is a non-profit community performing arts center in East Liberty, with two venues running along historic Penn Avenue. KST's Alloy Studios is a cultural hub in the heart of East Liberty, and the historic Kelly Strayhorn Theater is located in the thriving business district. More than 20 years after its founding, KST is a home for creative experimentation, community dialogue, and collective action rooted in the liberation of Black and queer people.

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LOCAL & GLOBAL PERFORMANCE | DANCE

**MEG FOLEY**

**BLOOD BABY: COMMUNION**

## ABOUT BLOOD BABY: COMMUNION

An interdisciplinary celebration of **queer kinship, radical gender performance, and belonging**, *Blood Baby* offers a fresh and multifaceted exploration of the queer family experience through dance, installation, and community events.

Three related events—**Communion, Primordial, and a Queer Parent Convening** — each embrace distinctive aspects of **the experience of being a human (body)** — parenting queerly, gender dimensions, and queer universes — while centering the perspective of queer parents.

**Communion:** Exploring the relationship between body and language, this participatory event involves shared reading, facilitated embodiment, and dialogue between Foley and the audience. Overlapping geology, gestation, and parenting, *Communion* explores the shape and feeling of language on and against our bodies, demonstrating how language extends, represents, and ruptures our corporeal identities. (60 minutes)

**Primordial:** An otherworldly, sensual video and sound installation by visual artist (and Foley's co-parent) Carmichael Jones, *Primordial's* "rock drag" captures Foley dancing with the landscape, connecting geology, transformation, and queer gestation. (Looped, 35 minutes)

Additionally, a **Queer Parent Convening** invites queer and trans parents to connect and share about their experiences of parenting and family-building in relationship to gender, sexuality, community, and what parenting queerly means to them.

*Blood Baby* is supported by a National Dance Project Award from New England Foundation for the Arts and National Performance Network Creation Fund and Development Fund grants, with additional support provided by Leeway Foundation, Indiana University-Bloomington Arts & Humanities Council, a mini-Roser grant, and a USC Visions & Voices grant.

Additional research support provided by ATLAS Institute B2 Center for Media, Arts & Performance (CU Boulder), Redline Gallery, Kinsey Institute, Velocity Dance Center, ONE Archives at USC, National Center for Choreography Akron, SPACE Gallery, and CounterPulse.

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS

**Meg Foley** is a queer dance artist, educator, and parent who creates performances and somatic-based events as self-affirming practices. She currently researches gay and trans families and how we are formed. Her improvisational practice builds detailed movement vocabularies out of scientifically-engaged research and lived experience. Artistic



collaborations include co-curating **Tender Hotel**, a 24-hour virtual hotel hosting rooms facilitated by 100+ international artists within **Art Station Foundation's** and **CounterPulse's Grand reUnion**, and a **National Center for Choreography Akron Dancing Lab** exploring how artistic and parenting practices overlap with fellow artist parents. She grew up in the DC area, was a creative movement baby who grew up to do a lot of club dancing, studied visual art and dance, and now is a queerdo mama, based in Philadelphia.

**Rabbit aL Friedrich** (they/them) engages with inquiries of **site, material integrity, and environmental impact**. Rabbit has worked at Huntington Botanical Gardens, La Fábrica de Arte Cubano (Havana), Centro Cultural Español Miami, the Movement Center for Art & Social Justice (Kampala, Uganda), in escape rooms, parking lots, an airport, and the chapel of a decommissioned convalescent home. Currently making miniatures in conversation with grief and designing rituals/practices of embodying queer ecologies, they live in Portland, OR, and hold an MFA from California Institute of the Arts.

**Carmichael Jones** works in installation, sculpture, film, photography and performative objects to upend parameters of the encounter and orientation. Their work addresses political concerns of communication and the structure of seeing and being seen and mirrors the bodily aspect of viewing through material and spatial contradictions, emphasizing edges or the periphery and exposing the nuances of encountering to queer the act of art-viewing. Philadelphia-based, they hold an MFA in Sculpture from Cranbrook Academy of Art.

**Valerie Oliveiro** is a dance and performance maker based in the Twin Cities and from Singapore. While they currently engage movement as their primary motor for expression, they also engage in other expressions, such as design, writing, drawing and photography, as generative, complexly relational proposals. Currently, they are a Co-Artistic Director at Red Eye Theater, ensemble member at Lighting Rod (QTBIPOC-led performance organism) and co-run a small performance incubator, MOVO SPACE. A 2023-24 Jerome Hill Artist Fellow, Valerie's current research excavates notions, realities and imaginations of vastness. They maintain a long-term creative practice with Jennifer Monson.

# ABOUT THE ARTISTS

**Sylvan Oswald** is an interdisciplinary artist originally from Philadelphia who creates plays, texts, publications, and video. His work uses metatheatricality and formal irreverence to explore queer and trans identity. Recent projects include the theatrical essay *Trainers* and the performance text *High Winds*, based on the book of the same name he co-authored with graphic designer Jessica Fleischmann. Sylvan's lo-fi semi-improvised web series *Outtakes* starring Becca Blackwell and Zuzanna Szadkowski is hosted at [weareopentv.com](http://weareopentv.com). Honors include a 2019 Guggenheim Fellowship, a Rosati Fellowship from Duke University Libraries, the Thom Thomas award from The Dramatists Guild, a Jerome Fellowship, and residencies at Sundance/Ucross, Macdowell Colony, and Yaddo.

**Michèle Steinwald** is a feminist, DIY, artist-centered, community-driven, cultural organizer. Committed to social justice in the arts, she has researched and facilitated original sessions at conferences and professional gatherings; been an artist mentor for Creative Capital's retreat and Arts Midwest's ArtsLab; managed projects for DanceUSA and NEFA/National Dance Project; and worked as a performance curator. Although Canadian, Steinwald currently works in the US as an independent curator, community organizer, and writer.

# THANK YOU!

We thank the generous individual donors, corporate sponsors, foundations and agencies that provide vital support for our programs and allow us to thrive in our community. This list reflects donations and commitments made between July 1, 2022 and April 15, 2023

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