

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Pittsburgh's Kelly Strayhorn Theater Presents New York Premieres of slowdanger's *SUPERCELL* and STAYCEE PEARL dance project & Soy Sos's *CIRCLES: going in*, on January 11-14 at The Flea Theater, NYC

KELLY STRAYHORN THEATER PRESENTS

KST X NYC

JANUARY 11 - 14, 2024

MEDIA CONTACT

Mingsi Ma, Marketing Specialist
mingsi@kelly-strayhorn.org

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slowdanger *SUPERCELL* photo by Mariah Miranda, STAYCEE PEARL dance Project & Soy Sos, *CIRCLES: going in* photo by Heather Mull

PITTSBURGH, PA — As part of Kelly Strayhorn Theater's (KST) ongoing [Owning Our Future. Thriving Where We Live](#) strategic direction, KST is thrilled to announce the second year of KST X NYC, a special initiative to share new works commissioned and developed in Pittsburgh by KST in collaboration with national partners. This year, KST is proud to announce the **New York City premieres of two new dance works from Pittsburgh-based artists, [slowdanger's *SUPERCELL*](#) and [STAYCEE PEARL dance project & Soy Sos's \(SPdp&SS\)*CIRCLES: going in*](#) from Thursday, January 11 to Sunday, January 14, 2024 in New York City.**

slowdanger's *SUPERCELL*, an evening-length multidisciplinary quintet responding to the climate crisis and media sensationalism, is presented on **Thursday, January 11, 2024, at 6:00 pm** and **Friday, January 12, 2024, at 2:00pm**. **STAYCEE PEARL dance project & Soy Sos's *CIRCLES: going in*** is presented on **Saturday and Sunday, January 13-14, 2024 at 6:00pm**. All performances take place at **The Flea Theater at 20 Thomas St, NYC**. Tickets are Pay What Moves You: \$20 to \$35. You can access tickets for [SUPERCELL](#) and [CIRCLES: going in](#) beginning Monday, December 11.

KST X NYC was first launched in January 2023 as a special presentation of Pittsburgh-based theater artist Adil Mansoor's solo lecture performance, *Amm(i)gone*, at the Performance Project at University Settlement, to open the pathways for Pittsburgh-based talents to thrive through national touring.

“KST X NYC brings KST's vision of ‘Owning Our Future. Thriving Where We Live.’ to a national stage, highlighting the importance of artists and culture in creating a lively community in Pittsburgh,” says **KST’s Executive Director Joseph Hall**.

Co-commissioned by KST, The Theater Offensive (Boston, MA) and the National Performance Network Creation and Development Fund (NPN), Mansoor’s performances launched a US Tour with upcoming presentations at a growing list of institutions including Woolly Mammoth Theater (Washington, DC), and Long Wharf Theater (New Haven, CT). KST hopes to extend the life of slowdanger’s *SUPERCELL* and SPdp&SS’s *CIRCLES: going in*, through these special NYC premiere performances.

KST’s Programming Director, Ben Pryor notes, “In January, The Arts Presenters conference hosts an unprecedented opportunity for national and international exposure and exchange. In bringing these works to New York City during APAP, we are telling KST’s story to our national and international colleagues and creating an opportunity for exposure that most Pittsburgh-based artists don’t get to experience.”

slowdanger’s *SUPERCELL* draws inspiration from the awe-inspiring yet ominous supercells—large storms with deep, persistent updrafts often leading to tornadoes. The terrifying supercells are harbingers of substantial damage. This natural effect is also similar to sensationalist media, instantly amplifying catastrophic events for insatiable public consumption. *SUPERCELL* therefore is informed by the natural effect, finding parallels and addressing environmental collapse and sensationalism in media.

According to **anna thompson and taylor knight of slowdanger**, “KST has been a beacon of support for slowdanger since our inception and has become a cherished home and community for us in Pittsburgh. Their support as development partners for *SUPERCELL* and conviction towards placing Pittsburgh artists on the national stage has been pivotal in our growth.”

CIRCLES: going in, was co-commissioned by KST in collaboration with The Joyce Theater (NYC) and the National Performance Network (New Orleans, LA) via NPN’s Creation and Development Fund. The work premiered at The August Wilson African American Cultural Center (Pittsburgh, PA), and has toured to the Dance Center of Columbia College Chicago (Chicago, IL). It will be presented at Bates College (Lewiston, ME) in February ‘24.

Layering dance and visual arts with pulsing beats and bass lines, *CIRCLES: going in* presents snapshots of popular culture through choreographer Staycee Pearl’s lens as a Black woman. With an ensemble of five dancers, *CIRCLES: going in* is a colorful, unapologetic, and daring path to self-reclamation. Central to the work is an original sound score of hip-hop, house, techno, and ballroom music samples – bringing the joy, spontaneity, and uncensored freedom of self-expression from the club to the stage.

“We first developed our artistic voice and organizational mission during our time as the resident dance company from 2010 to 2013 at KST,” **Staycee Pearl** fondly remembers, “KST’s support has played a huge part in propelling our work onto the national stage.”

Join KST **before and after each performance for light refreshments** in The Flea Theater’s lobby. You’re also invited to a special reception on **Friday, January 12 at 12:30pm** with the artists.

The Flea Theater is ADA-accessible and Kelly Strayhorn Theater is happy to further address any accommodations that will enrich your visit. Please reach out to KST’s Box Office team at 412.363.3000 x213 or boxoffice@kelly-strayhorn.org to let the team know in advance.

For more details about each performance, please visit kelly-strayhorn.org.

slowdanger

SUPERCELL

Thursday, January 11
6:00pm

Friday, January 12
2:00pm



The Flea Theater | 20 Thomas Street, NYC
Pay What Moves You: \$20 – \$35

SUPERCELL is an evening-length multidisciplinary quintet performance responding to climate consciousness, media sensationalism, desensitization, and environmental collapse. The title refers to supercells, large storms of deep, persistent updrafts often resulting in many tornadoes. While supercells are terrifying, ominous, and harbingers of great damage, they are simultaneously breathtaking environmental events when witnessed from afar. The effect is similar to sensationalist media, instantly amplifying catastrophic events for an insatiable public consumption. The work begs the question, how do we cultivate hope during continually uncertain times?

This presentation of *SUPERCELL* is supported by The New England Foundation for the Arts's National Dance Project and America's Cultural Treasures, a program of the Ford Foundation and The Heinz Endowments. *SUPERCELL* is made possible by the New England Foundation for the Arts' National Dance Project, with lead funding from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and the Mellon Foundation. *SUPERCELL* is a National Performance Network (NPN) Creation Fund Project co-commissioned by Kelly Strayhorn Theater, The Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center and NPN. *SUPERCELL* is also supported by the Opportunity Fund, The Pittsburgh Foundation, The PNC Charitable Trusts, and The Heinz Endowments, with additional residency support from NCCAkron, The Space Upstairs and New York University's Tisch School of the Arts Department of Dance.
Photo Credit: Mariah Miranda

CREDITS

Direction by taylor knight and anna thompson

Performance Collaborators: AJ Libert, Christian A. Warner, kira shiina

Process Collaborator: Nile Harris

Scenic Design by ProjectileObjects

Lighting Design by Harbour Edney

Costumes by Mad Recital

Sound Design by slowdanger in collaboration with cast

Choreography/Direction by slowdanger in collaboration with cast

Dramaturgical Support, Collaborating Media Design, and Collaborating Sound Design by Jasmine Hearn

Run Time: 75 minutes, no intermission

slowdanger, taylor knight (they/them) & **anna thompson** (they/them) are co-founding artistic directors of slowdanger, a multidisciplinary performance organism based in Pittsburgh, PA. slowdanger uses a systematic approach to movement, integrative technology, found material, electronic instrumentation, vocalization, physiological centering, and ontological examination to produce their performance work, which utilizes continual practice to delve into circular life patterning including effort, transformation, and death. Through the process of making each piece, slowdanger works with an ever deepening understanding of energy, synergy, action, gender, time, and storytelling. As a queer, non-binary led organization, slowdanger is committed to deconstructing the binaries of how performance and performers are viewed onstage through their performances, workshops and public facing engagements.



STAYCEE PEARL dance project

& Soy Sos

CIRCLES: going in

Saturday & Sunday, January 13 - 14
6:00pm

The Flea Theater | 20 Thomas Street, NYC
Pay What Moves You: \$20 – \$35



Black Joy. Femme. Cycles of Life and Love. *CIRCLES: going in* is a full-length dance work celebrating #BlackGirlMagic #BlackLove #BlackJoy. Layering dance, visual arts, with pulsing beats and bass lines, the work presents snapshots of popular culture through choreographer Staycee Pearl's lens as a Black woman. With an ensemble of five dancers, *CIRCLES: going in* is an unapologetic, and daring path to self-reclamation. Central to the work is an original sound score of hip-hop, house, techno and ballroom music samples mixed live throughout the performance – bringing the joy, spontaneity and uncensored freedom of self-expression from the club to the stage.

This presentation of *CIRCLES: going in* is supported by The New England Foundation for the Arts's National Dance Project and America's Cultural Treasures, a program of the Ford Foundation and The Heinz Endowments. *CIRCLES: going in* is a National Performance Network (NPN) Creation & Development Fund Project co-commissioned by Kelly Strayhorn Theater, The Joyce Theater, and NPN. *CIRCLES: going in* was made possible by the New England Foundation for the Arts' National Dance Project, with lead funding from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Co-commissioning Partners are Kelly Strayhorn Theater, August Wilson African American Cultural Center, and The Joyce Theater. The development of *CIRCLES: going in* is made possible in part by the National Center for Choreography at The University of Akron (NCCAkron). *CIRCLES: going in* is supported in part by The Pittsburgh Foundation's Advancing Black Arts in Pittsburgh Fund, The Heinz Endowments, and The Opportunity Fund.

CREDITS

Choreography: Staycee Pearl

Sound Designer/Engineer: Herman B. Pearl

Music Collaborators: DJ Haram, DOTGOV, Geña, Ixa, Kha'DJ, Kilamanzego, Madame Dolores, Meejah, Queen Jo, Yah Lioness

Visual Collaborations: Bekezela Mguni, Kitoko Chargois, sarah huny young

Lighting Design: Scott Nelson

Costume Design: S. Ruth

Set Design: Rob Hackett

Dancers: LaTrea Derome Rembert, Chandler Bingham, Cameron Waters, Nia Goodman, Joy Holder

Tour Coordinator: Joanna Futral

Exclusive USA Tour Representation: Pentacle, Sandy Garcia

Running Time: 60 minutes, no intermission.

Staycee Pearl, Executive/Co-Artistic Director Staycee Pearl is the co-artistic director of PearlArts Studios and STAYCEE PEARL dance project & Soy Sos, where she creates artful experiences through dance-centered multimedia works in collaboration with her husband and artistic collaborator, Herman Pearl. In 2009, STAYCEE PEARL dance project & Soy Sos (SPdp&SS) debuted at Kelly Strayhorn Theater. Since then the duo has produced several works including *...on being...*, *OCTAVIA*, and *FLOWERZ*, and has recently premiered their National Dance Project supported *CIRCLES: going in*, presented by Kelly Strayhorn Theater and the August Wilson African American Cultural Center. Staycee is passionate about sharing resources and creating opportunities for the arts community by initiating project-generating programs including the Charrette Series, the In The Studio Series, and the PearlDiving Movement Residency.



Herman Pearl, Co-Artistic Director Herman Pearl (Soy Sos) is the head engineer and owner of Tuff Sound Recording, as well as the sound designer and co-artistic director of PearlArts Studios. Through PearlArts, Herman creates soundscapes to serve as a component to contemporary dance. As a sound designer, Herman's repertoire includes a wide variety of projects and collaborators. His work has been featured in various independent films and documentaries, video games, and advertising. He has designed soundscapes for numerous choreographers. He has collaborated with many visual artists to create installations and touring exhibits. He has recorded and produced work for a plethora of recording artists across genres and techniques. Herman has performed, created, and recorded his own music for over 25 years.



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 a home for creative experimentation, community dialogue, and collective action rooted in the liberation of Black and queer people. We welcome our home to all who uplift Black, Indigenous, people of color, and queer voices.

KST is an institutional arts anchor in Pittsburgh's East End that has served the community for more than two decades. Since launching KST Presents programming in '08, KST has been Black-led, fostering radical imagination for Black and queer arts, culture, and community in Pittsburgh by cultivating BIPOC and/or queer artists, entrepreneurs, and arts administrators, developing their careers, and shifting narratives around Black possibility.