



STRATEGIC PLAN 2012–2015

KELLY STRAYHORN THEATER

ADVANCING LIVE ART through STRATEGIC VISION
and COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

STRATEGIC PLAN 2012–2015

KELLY STRAYHORN THEATER

A LEADING PRESENTER

of innovative works in dance, theater, music and live art

A COMMUNITY RESOURCE

for youth education, emerging artist support and community partnership

A NEIGHBORHOOD DESTINATION

accelerating the transformation of East Liberty as a destination for cultural entertainment and business opportunity



Dear Friend of KST,

Our 2012–2013 season celebrates five years of original programming at Kelly Strayhorn Theater—a season made possible through your generous support.

Your past and recent contributions are alive in the Pittsburgh community—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 artistic advancement of our neighborhood children.

As we approach our Centennial Anniversary in 2014, the Kelly Strayhorn Theater is, more than ever before, about you.

Your investments are met with thoughtful strategic planning that responds to the needs of our community and our established expectations for the growth and vitality of the organization.

The pages that follow outline the important elements of our strategic plan through 2015. Please take a moment to review our plans to ensure our long-term sustainability, the delivery of original, progressive programming; support for artists through our residency programs, and the availability of critically important youth arts education.

Thank you for your kindness, 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 to accelerate the transformation of East Liberty.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Janera', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

janera solomon
Executive Director, Kelly Strayhorn Theater

This plan was developed by Kelly Strayhorn Theater's Executive Director and Board of Directors between January 2012 and June 2012 in a process facilitated by Marilyn Coleman Consulting.

DOCUMENT DESIGNED BY

Adam Mistick
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KELLY STRAYHORN THEATER

Strategic Plan 2012–2015



INTRODUCTION

→ A great neighborhood deserves a great theater

In the fall of 2011, Community Theater Project Corporation¹, known as Kelly Strayhorn Theater (KST), engaged Marilyn Coleman Consulting (MCC) to design and facilitate a strategic planning process for the organization. MCC had worked with Kelly Strayhorn Theater in 2008 developing a turnaround business plan for the organization, and has facilitated annual retreats and periodically advised the theater on other management and planning issues.

KST has seen significant success and growth since 2008, building an ambitious range of quality, contemporary programming and garnering accolades as a presenter, producer, and mentor of emerging artists. It also faces the tests that growing mid-sized arts organizations face, including the need to develop predictable and growing sources of revenue and ensure that management capacity is not outpaced by the demands of more ambitious programming.

At the time this strategic planning process began, the Kelly Strayhorn had just completed successful merger negotiations with Pittsburgh Dance Alloy (d.b.a. Dance Alloy). The merger enables KST to expand its footprint in the East End by and offer distinct programming in the Kelly Strayhorn Theater and The Alloy Studios (approximately four blocks away on Penn Avenue), and provides an opportunity to engage

¹ Community Theater Project Corporation (CTPC) is the legal name under which the organization was incorporated as a Pennsylvania nonprofit.

Dance Alloy audiences and stakeholders, including attendees of the Alloy School. The merger also brings challenges to KST. Assuming management of the Alloy facility adds rent, utilities, insurance and maintenance expenses, and required an immediate investment in new computer and phone systems to replace worn-out Alloy systems and connect the KST and Alloy facilities in one integrated system. KST must also navigate expectations of audiences and artists as it refines its mission, programming, and brand.

The scope of work for this strategic planning process was developed after a meeting with Ms. Solomon and Board Chairman Mr. Francisco Escalante, and was subsequently reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors.

Strategic Planning Process

The process included:

- The establishment of a Strategic Planning Committee comprised of members of the Board of Directors, some of whom formerly served on Dance Alloy's Board.
- A research phase that gathered input through facilitated meetings with funders (October 2011) and artists (December 2011); and a staff retreat (February 2012);
- A full-day planning retreat with the Board of Directors (January 2012);
- A series of approximately nine meetings with Ms. Solomon, the Planning Committee, and full Board of Directors (January–June 2011) during which drafts were developed, feedback obtained; and
- Creation of action/work plans by MCC and Ms. Solomon to guide staff work during year one of the plan.



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.

Kelly Strayhorn Theater is a significant cultural treasure and a destination of distinction for innovative works in dance, theater, music, and live art.

Our mission supports a vision in three parts

1. We are a leader in the presentation of contemporary performance, with emphasis on emerging artists and art forms and uniquely diverse audiences.
2. We are dedicated to serving the community in the sustained growth of East Liberty and Penn Avenue as a distinctive arts, culture, dining, and entertainment destination.
3. We are a contributing community partner providing valuable support to emerging producers, artists, community organizations and East End families.

GOALS, STRATEGIES, AND YEAR ONE ACTION STEPS

GOAL 1

Kelly Strayhorn Theater will be known as a premier presenter of a diverse mix of contemporary performances with a keen eye for interesting new work, new art forms and talented emerging artists.

STRATEGY 1 Develop branding, communication and marketing strategies and vehicles (brochures, website, etc.) that clarify and strengthen our brand; improve stakeholders' awareness and understanding of our mission, values, and programming, and the benefits we provide to the community.

Year One Action Steps

- 1A:** Utilize the 5th Season planning process to strengthen KST brand as a comprehensive presenter of theater, music, dance and family programming:
- Identify and engage a consultant to organize the structure, timeliness, accuracy, and branding of our offerings and update content and structure of website.
 - Manage consistent writing and communications that reflect the KST brand and audience engagement.
 - Develop a style guide for consistent communications, including social media, newsletters, media relations, and performance marketing.

STRATEGY 2 Build strong relationships connecting KST programs and artists to national leaders in the field.

Year One Action Steps

- 2A:** Develop a consultative process with leaders in the field to gather recommendations for future residency artists. Pilot and evaluate process.
- 2B:** Repeat **newMoves Contemporary Dance Symposium**—utilize as vehicle for introducing attendees to artists' work, and identifying or nominating future residency artists.
- Upload artists' materials to web prior to symposium for attendees to review prior to arrival.

STRATEGY 3 Create advisory or leadership groups (of presenters and artists) to increase artists' and audiences' engagement and support of KST's mission, vision, and programs.

Year One Action Steps

- 3A:** Review past activities and practices related to cultivation of supporters and advisors and incorporate successful strategies into formal plan for these groups.
- 3B:** Define role of advisory/leadership group as supporters who augment knowledge and connections of board and staff by bringing expertise and resources (in-kind or financial) to KST and/or specific projects.
 - Develop language (and letters/materials) and invite participation.
 - Once up and running, regularly evaluate members of group as potential board candidates.
- 3C:** Define role of Friends of KST as supporters who promote KST to friends and colleagues, assisting with audience development.
 - Develop/document strategies and tactics of Friends of KST, and formally invite people to participate and promote KST.

GOAL 2

Kelly Strayhorn Theater will attract annual audiences to a mix of unique programming reflective of the neighborhood's diversity.

- STRATEGY 1** Refine the mix and location of our programming (mainstage, community, educational, and artists services) to optimize the use of the Kelly Strayhorn Theater and The Alloy Studios spaces and increase participation by arts, community, and business audiences, and partners.

Year One Action Steps

- 1A:** Strengthen Alloy School programming with consistent pricing and increase course registration.
 - Analyze other organizations' offerings and audiences to identify what's missing in the marketplace that we could provide and successfully market.
 - Review and revise pricing and packaging of Alloy School offerings.
- 1B:** Analyze attendance and audience response to KST programs to determine which yield the most positive response and highest attendance.
 - Engage a Fellow or contractor to analyze and synthesize survey responses from past year(s) to identify the most popular programs and other factors that affect attendance.
- 1C:** Develop a CRM database system to capture and allow for easier use of patron information, event records, attendance information, purchase/price point info and donations for use in future decision-making.

- Consult extant CRM systems like PatronManager to identify elements to include in in-house database.
- Design database, transfer data from extant sources to new database.
- Tie system to e-mail list-servs to use for marketing purposes.

STRATEGY 2 Lead the development of collaborative programming and marketing efforts among East End arts and culture organizations and businesses to increase neighborhood branding and business opportunities.

Year One Action Steps

2A: Identify potential partners and explore with them the collaborative hiring of a Fellow, intern or contractor with marketing and project management experience to develop collaborative marketing strategies and projects.

STRATEGY 3 Refine rental strategy to clarify relationships with independent and nonprofit arts producers, and maximize use of our spaces for revenue generation with a special focus on private event rentals.

Year One Action Steps

3A: Review/revise and document policies and procedures for use of spaces by producing partners and private event renters.

- Include a review of pricing that benchmarks pricing structures of other presenters (local and national, e.g., NY Live Arts, Painted Bride, New Hazlett Theater).
- Analyze why renters are moving to NHT.

3B: Develop, design and publish website and brochure information to communicate and promote rental opportunities and policies a procedures

3C: Convene meetings with arts producing partners and special event planners to communicate opportunities and policies.

3D: Design and regularly administer evaluation/feedback survey to monitor uses rental experience.

GOAL 3

Kelly Strayhorn Theater will establish programming risk funds and capital replacement reserves to secure long-term viability of the organization.

STRATEGY 1 Review and refine the business models of our programs to maximize revenue with specific attention to the programming mix and revenue assumptions for fifth anniversary

season of KST Presents and Alloy School Programming.

Year One Action Steps

1A: Beginning with school, analyze revenue and expense assumptions for all programs; compare to actual income and expenses, and adjust projections and pricing to maximize revenue.

- Incorporate learning from analysis of programming mix and audiences (Goal 1, Strategy 1).
- Analyze box office and audience response of KST Presents before announcing 5th Anniversary Season.

STRATEGY 2 Develop a long-range plan for development and maintenance of our facilities that includes an assessment of its position in the East End real estate market.

2A: Establish a facilities advisory group to augment expertise and connections of Board facilities committee.

2B: Select a firm to conduct a feasibility study related to facilities development assess suitability of facilities related to our programming goals, analyze facilities' costs and recommend facilities development and financing strategies that are consistent with KST's potential to develop funds.

2C: Develop an understanding of the East End/East Liberty real estate and development marketplace and its players; position KST.

STRATEGY 3 Develop revenue targets and create fundraising plans for the KST centennial year in 2014, a significant opportunity to move us closer to our capitalization targets to support capital improvements, cash reserves and programming risks.

Year One Action Steps

3A: Identify a fundraising consultant to create a development plan that:

- Maximizes the opportunity of 2014 as the 100th anniversary of both the theater building and Billy Strayhorn's birth.
- Benchmarks similar organizations to determine best plans for capitalization;
- Defines campaigns and funds that should be developed;
- Creates an updated prospect list;
- Assesses potential of current donor database;
- Develops a cultivation process to cultivate prospects and donors up the 'giving pyramid;' that defines roles of staff, Board and other leadership volunteers; and
- Develops "first steps" recommendations for KST fundraising activities for the coming year to increase funding over and above current levels/donors.

GOAL 4

Kelly Strayhorn Theater will have a sustainable staffing structure that matches the organization's growth.

STRATEGY 1 Hire experienced arts management professionals in key senior positions to ensure quality management in critical areas and provide quality supervision and mentoring to junior staff members.

Year One Action Steps

1A: Review and revise current staff positions, roles, and responsibilities to align with strategic goals.

1B: Create a new staffing plan with revised descriptions for new and current positions.

STRATEGY 2 Continue to provide professional development opportunities through a staffing model that pairs experienced arts professionals with emerging leaders in the field to foster creativity, problem-solving, and leadership development among young arts managers.

Year One Action Steps

2A: Review staff retreat notes and past reviews to establish list of professional development needs.

STRATEGY 3 Establish a fellowship program that employs and trains emerging arts managers and production personnel to fulfill [identified] seasonal functions at CTPC and grow the talent pool of skilled management and production personnel.

Year One Action Steps

3A: Research and benchmark fellowship programs.

3B: Prepare pilot fellowship model considering organizational strategic goals and financial constraints.

APPENDIX

Stakeholders

The following foundation executives participated in a facilitated meeting in October 2011

Hilary Brown, PNC Foundation
 Sylvia Fields, Eden Hall Foundation
 Brian Hill, Richard King Mellon Foundation
 Diane Hunt, Allegheny Regional Asset District
 Cheryl Kubelick, Buhl Foundation
 Lisa Kuzma, Richard King Mellon Foundation
 Michael Labriola, PNC Foundation
 Sam Reiman, McCune Foundation
 Janet Sarbaugh, Heinz Endowments
 Laurel Shaw, McCune Foundation
 D'Ann Swanson, Grable Foundation
 Germaine Williams, Pittsburgh Foundation

The following artists participated in a facilitated meeting in December 2011

Kenia Ashby, jazz vocalist
 Gab Cody, playwright
 Maribeth Maxa Fukas, former Dance Alloy company member; costume designer
 Aaron Henderson, video artist
 Heidi Baldt Mathews, Gateway to the Arts, Eclectic Laboratory Chamber Orchestra
 Herman Pearl, sound designer/installation artist
 Staycee Pearl, Staycee Pearl Dance Project, KST Resident Choreographer
 Gwen Ritchie, dance community; teacher at Dance Alloy studios/KST; former Dance Alloy company member; Labco founder and director
 Michael Walsh, dance community; teacher at Dance Alloy studios/KST; former Dance Alloy company member

In addition to these artists, the planning process benefitted from information gathered through interviews with dancers and choreographers gathered during Dance Alloy's 2011 planning process.

Board of Directors

Francisco Escalante : Chair
 Vice President of Development
 110 Gulf Associates, LP

Cabot Earle : Vice Chair
 Chief Administrative Officer, Microbac Laboratories

Sarah Wertheimer : Secretary
 Search Consultant, Dewey & Kaye

Adam Golden : Treasurer
 Relationship Manager, PNC Financial Services

Beth Johnstone Bush
 Voice Instructor/Actress, Point Park University

Richard Citrin
 Principal, Citrin Consultants

Randy Hartssock
 Vice President of Operations, Massaro Corporation

Ernie Hogan
 Executive Director
 Pittsburgh Community Reinvestment Group

J. Nikki Jackson
 Attorney at Law
 Allegheny County Public Defender's Office

Daniel Koller
 Senior Vice President/Senior Wealth Management Advisor,
 Fifth Third Private Bank

Ayana Ledford
 Executive Director - PROGRESS
 Carnegie Mellon University, H. John Heinz III School of Public Policy and Management

Manuel D. Reich
 Medical Director, Value Behavioral Health of PA

Karamagi Rujumba
 Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation

Jami Rutherford
 Director of Professional Services, CombineNet

Michael Stief
 Partner, Jackson Lewis LLP

Mark Taylor
 Executive Director
 The Center for Body.Mind.Movement

DIRECTORS EMERITI

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 Executive Director, Boyd Community Center
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Chad Stacy
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Jamee Todd
 Community Volunteer



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