

## Finances Bump Opera's "Bhutto" Again

An ambitious, long-planned original work has been delayed again by the **Pittsburgh Opera**.

### PITTSBURGH OPERA

That work, reports the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette's* Jeremy Reynolds, is an opera about Pakistan's first family, the Bhuttos.

The Bhuttos trace their ancestry back to the 7th Century CE when the family first appeared in the province called Sindh. But the family's modern history largely begins with the political career of Sir Shah Nawaz Bhutto (1888-1957). The Bhuttos have been active members in Pakistan's power elite ever since, including

two members --- Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (1928-1979) and Benazir Bhutto (1953-2007) serving as prime minister. The opera focuses on Benazir, who was assassinated during a campaign event.

"Bhutto" is being written specifically for the Pittsburgh Opera by New York City-based composer Mohammed Fairouz. At just 33 years-old, Fairouz has already earned recognition for his imaginative work. He wrote his first opera, "Sumeida's Song," at age 22.

Getting financial backing is the biggest hurdle. One of the production partners for "Bhutto" is **Beth Morrison Projects**. Its founder and president told Reynolds that she "was surprised we hit a wall." In his May 12 article, Reynolds

suggests that the opera "did not have the local pull" of the Pittsburgh Opera's first large new production, 2017's "The Summer King."

"The Summer King" told the story of baseball catcher Josh Gibson (1911-1947), who played for two Pittsburgh teams in the Negro League.

It was hoped that a 2018 workshop would elicit considerable investment. It didn't. Nevertheless, efforts to raise the approximately \$1 million continues and the opera may still appear on the Benedum Center stage sometime in the future.

## ACA Butts Heads With Sinclair (Again)

The Pittsburgh-based **ACA Connects** (formerly the American Cable Association) has filed a formal complaint with the **Federal Communications Commission** regarding **Sinclair Broadcast Group**.

Sinclair owns two television stations in Pittsburgh. The company has offered to purchase the 21 regional sports networks (RSNs) once owned by **21st Century Fox** and acquired by the **Walt Disney Company**. Sinclair's plan is to incorporate the RSNs into their



Diamond Sports Group division in a partnership with **Entertainment Media's** Byron Allen.

*Broadcasting+Cable's* Michael Farrell reports that Sinclair is offering \$9.6 billion for the RSNs. "On a conference call with analysts to discuss its first quarter results on May 8, Sinclair CEO Chris Ripley told analysts that non-game programming from the RSNs could be carried by its streaming service STIRR initially, on an authenticated basis."

But the deal's the potential effect on the small and mid-sized cable systems that ACA represents that has the organization's concern.

"ACA Connects opposes Sinclair's proposed purchase of the Disney-Fox regional sports networks (RSNs) for the same reason it opposed Sinclair's failed attempt to buy Tribune's television stations," the association's president, Matthew M. Polka, said in a press release. "If approved, the transaction would allow Sinclair to raise prices to millions of consumers, including those served by ACA Connects members."

The ACA filing is the first step in what is expected to be a complex process that may or may not lead to federal approval.

## Heinz Art Auction's Whopping \$81 Mil

The stunning artwork collected by Pittsburgh philanthropist Doreen "Drue" Heinz (1915-2018) fetched a stunning price at a recent auction: a whopping \$81 million.

The auction was held last month at Christie's in New York City [see <https://www.christies.com/features/The-Drue-Heinz-Collection-9724-3.aspx> - ed.] Christie's is part of the French holding company **Groupe Aramis**.

*Art News'* Judd Tully reports that the standouts include a 1910 work titled "Jeunes filles au chien (Deux des filles d'Alexandre Natanson)" by French artist Pierre Bonnard (1867-1947). The piece was estimated at \$1 million to \$1.5 million --- but went instead for a surprising \$735,000.

On the other hand, the 1919 painting "Lunia Czechowska (a la robe noire)" by French artist Amedeo Modigliani (1884-1920) fared

much better. Estimated to fetch between \$12 million to \$18 million it sold for an impressive \$21.8 million.

Born in the United Kingdom as Doreen Mary English, food industry heir H. J. Heinz II (1908-1987) was her third and final husband. Married for over 30 years, her stepson was Senator John Heinz (1938-1991).

*The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette's* Marylynne Pitz writes that the Heinz's enjoyed a glittering world whose "social circle included Princess Margaret, the late sister of Queen Elizabeth II; British Prime Minister Winston Churchill; authors Antonia Fraser and Truman Capote; pop artist Andy Warhol; and actor Rex Harrison."

But Drue Heinz was much more than the famous wife of a wealthy man. Her many accomplishments included as publisher of the pres-

tigious literary magazine *The Paris Review* for more than a decade. She also co-founded Ecco Press in 1971 with Daniel Halpern (it is now an imprint of Harper-Collins, which is a division of **News Corp.**).

Drue even had a brief acting career. This included a supporting role (using the name Drue Mallory) in the 1950 film "Please believe Me" starring Deborah Kerr (1921-2007).

But today, she is best known for endowing the Drue Heinz Literature Prize, which become a major award for short fiction writing. Among the honorees are Stewart O'Nan the co-author of *A Face in the Crowd*.

Christie's is also auctioning off items from her two townhouses. Information is available at = <https://www.christies.com/the-collection-of-drue-28363.aspx?saletitle=>

## Director Picked For Pittsburgh Film

Vic Armstrong --- who is best known in the movie industry as the stunt double for stars like Christopher Reeve and Harrison Ford --- is set to direct a film later this year in Pittsburgh.

The news of Armstrong's selection was reported by Dave McNary in the May 28 issue of *Variety*.

"Sons of the Cross" will be Armstrong's fourth full-length feature as director. The film's IMBD listing describes it as such: "A New York undercover detective sent to Italy on special assignment is unknowingly thrust into a world of international intrigue which ties some of the world's most powerful men to history's most notorious war criminals."

The project is in pre-production and casting is now underway. More about Vic Armstrong is available at <https://www.vicarmstrong.com/>.



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## Mac Miller's Song Surprise

On May 20, a previously unreleased song by the late Mac Miller appeared online, reports *Billboard's* Michael Saponara.

Pittsburgh rapper, songwriter and record producer Malcom "Mac Miller" McCormick died of an accidental drug overdose in 2018 at the age of 26.

That song is titled "Benji the Dog" and samples the 1972 song "Benji" as well as a line spoken by actor David Schwimmer from the television mini-series "The People vs. O.J. Simpson."

"It remains to be seen if Miller's estate will release a posthumous body of work at some point," writes Saponara. "Producer [Jonathan 'Sap' King] believes that Mac gave his fans a formidable output during his career."

In other news, a fund established in Miller's honor is issuing a grant to the Hope Academy of Music. *The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette's* Bob Batz has details [at https://www.post-gazette.com/a/music/2019/05/17/Mac-Miller-](https://www.post-gazette.com/a/music/2019/05/17/Mac-Miller-)

[Fund-grant-Pittsburgh-rapper-Pittsburgh-Foundation/stories/201905170025](https://www.pittsburgh-foundation.com/stories/201905170025)

You can hear "Benji the Dog" by clicking the YouTube graphic below.



## PGH Blog Wins GLAAD

The local blog Pittsburgh Lesbian Correspondents is among the organizations and individuals being honored with a GLAAD Media Award.



Begun in 1990, the awards are bestowed annually by the non-profit organization **GLAAD** (originally the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation). They honor people, companies and organizations in the media world whose work reflects and/or impacts the lives of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community.

The public art office at the **Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council** (GPAC) has been recommended for a \$150,000 **National Endowment of the Arts** (NEA) grant.

GREATER PITTSBURGH  
ARTS COUNCIL



In mid-May the NEA's acting chairwoman Mary Anne

Carter announced the GPAC office as among the 57 awards being made nation-wide. More than

Pittsburgh Lesbian Correspondents ([www.pghlesbian.com](http://www.pghlesbian.com)) was established in 2005 by local blogger Sue Kerr to provide news and commentary to the area's LGBT population. It has since grown to have a national voice. It is part of **SueCat Social Media LLC**.

The annual awards ceremony aired on the cable channel Logo on May 12.

\$4 million will be distributed as part of the NEA's Our Town program.

In a press release, Sallyann Kluz, director of GPAC's Office of Public Art, called the grant "an incredible honor and recognition of the amazing work that Pittsburgh-area artists and communities are doing."

The grant money will be used to support temporary public art and a creative place-making training program for local community organizations in and the Pittsburgh area, particularly Millvale.



# “We Are Pittsburgh” Debuts

A new public art project honoring accomplished Pittsburghers has been launched.

Called "We Are Pittsburgh," the installation is comprised of 20 artistic banners covering the window bays in the building at 625 Stanwix Street.

A **City of Pittsburgh** press release explains: "The artwork is created using pixilation, triangulation, bursts of color, and abstraction, generating an optical illusion

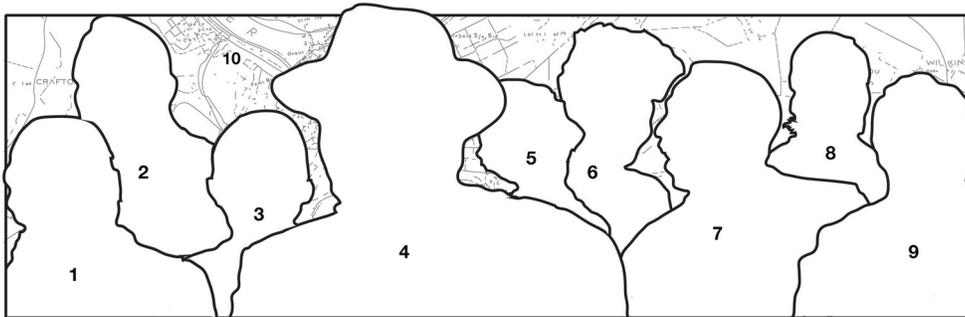
that changes the artwork depending on the distance and viewpoint. The composition emerges in greater clarity when seen through a camera or phone screen, encouraging interactivity through technology."

Designed by artists Joshua Chang and Aaron Ramon, the revolving project currently features images of Native American leader Queen Aliquippa (1700?-1754), industrialist Andrew Carnegie (1835-1919), playwright August Wilson

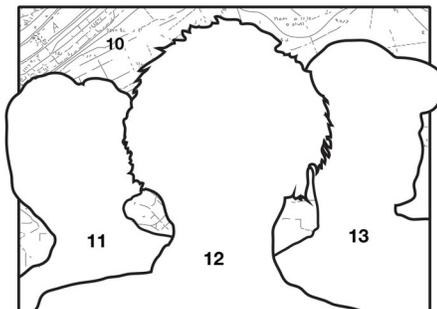
(1945-2005) and nine other Pittsburgh notables.

**[Print out this page and take it with you when visiting the current installation. It provides a key to those individuals represented.—ed.]**

## The Stanwix Art Facade Project



Stanwix Street



Fort Duquesne Boulevard



**City of Pittsburgh**  
Public Art and Civic Design Division,  
Department of City Planning

**Joco Sky LP / Nexus Real Estate**  
**Urban Growth Properties / InterPark**

Artists/Designers of The Stanwix Art Facade Project:  
Joshua Chang & Aaron Ramon

- 1 Thaddeus Mosley**  
Courtesy Anna Rawls
- 2 Asa Philip Randolph**  
Courtesy Library of Congress, John Bottega, Prints & Photograph Division, LC-USZ62-119495
- 3 Gertrude Stein**  
Courtesy Library of Congress, Carl Van Vechten, Van Vechten Collection, LC-USZ62-103678
- 4 August Wilson**  
Estate of Constanza Romero/August Wilson, Courtesy Chris Bennion
- 5 Dakota Staton**  
Joop Van Bilsen, National Archives of the Netherlands, Fotocollectie Anefo, Public Domain
- 6 Mary Lou Williams**  
Courtesy Library of Congress, William P. Gottlieb, William P. Gottlieb Collection, LC-6LB23-0929 DLC
- 7 Art Blakey**  
© 2015 Estate of Art Blakey, © 1995 Mosaic Images, LLC
- 8 Queen Aliquippa**  
Courtesy Senator John Heinz History Center
- 9 Andrew Carnegie**  
Courtesy Library of Congress, Frances Benjamin Johnston, Frances Benjamin Johnston Collection, LC-USZ62-88699
- 10 Antique Map of Pittsburgh**  
Courtesy David Rumsey Map Collection, www.davidrumsey.com
- 11 Rachel Carson**  
Courtesy U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- 12 Andy Warhol**  
Estate of Evelyn Hofer/Masters/Getty Images, © 2019 The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc./Licensed by Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York
- 13 Roberto Clemente**  
Courtesy Duane Rieder/Clemente Museum



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## AEA Harassment Hotline

A hotline has been established by **Actors Equity Association** (AEA) to address workplace harassment.

The national labor union representing more than 51,000 actors and stage managers, including several hundred in the Pittsburgh area.



"This hotline is another outlet for members to anonymously report

any kind of harassment or hostility in the workplace, even if they aren't ready to bring formal charges," said AEA's Kate Shindle in a press release. "In addition to the hotline, of course, Equity members can always contact their business rep anytime for a confidential conversation about any problems they are having at work."

Local AEA members can reach the hotline by calling (833) 550-0030.

## SAG-AFTRA Deal Ratified

On May 8, the members **SAG-AFTRA** ratified two new commercials contracts. Nearly 97% of the vote was in favor.



The new pacts include a boost in wages, an increase in health and pension funding and added protections against sexual harassment.

In other news, the union has revoked the signatory status of six companies. This prohibits SAG-AFTRA members working for them. These include

A press release announced that "the union has determined that **Checks in Motion, Inc., CMC/Forecast, Inc., CMS Productions, Talent Direct, Inc., Talent Solutions** and **Waving Cat** are not legitimate employers of performers working on commercials produced under the union's collective bargaining agreements." These firms may be shell companies. Members who have questions about them should contact Lori Hunt at (323) 549-6722.



## Talent Network Nets "The Voice" Singer

Pittsburgh-based artist booking firm **Talent Network** has signed singer/songwriter Chris Jamison to be part of their roster.

Born and raised in the Pittsburgh suburbs, Jamison was a member of the **Pittsburgh CLO's** academy and mini-stars. He became nationally known as a contestant on the television singing contest series "The Voice." Jamison was on rocker Adam Levine's team and succeeded to the final round where he placed third.

Jamison released a single last summer titled "Faith, Hope, Love" with the proceeds benefiting victims of the **Tree of Life Synagogue** shootings. "A lot of people will say, 'What's wrong with the world?' but they don't have a solution," he told *Billboard's* Gary Graff in August 2018. "The only way to get anywhere and have any progress is to sit down, have a conversation and maybe agree to disagree but still have faith, have hope and give love to every single person."

He records with local studio/label **The Vault**. For more information, visit <https://talentnetworkinc.com/artists/chris-jamison/>

## George Romero Archives Go To Pitt

The archives of Pittsburgh film-making pioneer George A. Romero has been acquired by the **University of Pittsburgh** (Pitt).



According to a press release, "the collection of personal and professional materials from George Romero spans the past 50 years or more. It ranges

from screenplays (both produced and unproduced) along with script notes, props, promotional materials and video (both test shots and produced footage)."

These include the original, annotated "Night of the Living Dead" screenplay, photos from the set of "Dawn of the Dead" and even props such as a foam zombie head.

What is being called The Romero Collection will form the core of

"an international scholarly resource for the research and study of horror and science fiction." Part of the collection will be on display in the Hillman Library after its third floor finishes renovations sometime in 2020.

Read the full Pitt press release at <http://www.news.pitt.edu/news/university-pittsburgh-library-system-acquires-george-romero-collection#hi-res>

## PGH Public Art Podcasts

A series of podcasts has been launched by the **City of Pittsburgh** regarding public art. To hear them, click the graphic link below.



## Images



*This is an official photo of Lonnie G. Bunch III. The respected museum professional has been named as the next leader of the Smithsonian Institution. He will be the first African-American to head the 173-year-old organization. The Senator John Heinz Pittsburgh Regional History Center is a Smithsonian affiliate.*

## CBS Goes To Russia

The Russian division of Norwegian media giant **Amedia AS** has reached a content agreement with **CBS Corporation**.



CBS Corporation owns television and (indirectly) radio stations in Pittsburgh. Amedia AS began in 1948 as a newspaper group called Norsk Arbeiderpresse. The company entered the Russian media market in 2013.

"As part of the agreement," explains a press release, "Amedia TV will license a variety of CBS All Access original programming, with Russian audiences gaining exclusive access to hits like 'The Twilight Zone', narrated by Jordan Peele, along with upcoming series 'Why Women Kill' and Stephen King's 'The Stand'".

The deal also includes some Showtime programming, such as "Black Magic." Amedia will make them available to Russian audiences as pay TV and video-on-demand.

At press time, reports were emerging on MediaPost.com and other national outlets that the first steps to recombining **CBS Corporation** and **Viacom**. Look for more in future issues of *Pittsburgh Applause*.

Long-time KDKA-TV personality Jon Burnett is retiring. He will be signing off for the last time on June 1.

Burnett has been with the **CBS Corporation**-owned station since the early 1980's when he co-hosted the local version of "Evening Magazine" (called "PM Magazine" in some markets).

*The Pittsburgh Tribune-Review's* Paul Guggenheimer published an extensive interview with Burnett in the paper's May 30 edition, which can be read at <https://triblive.com/local/pittsburgh-allegheeny/after-36-years-kdka-tvs-jon-burnett-set-for-final-broadcast/>

## Real Street Art

Street art goes from tags on facades to an actual street, thanks to a project spearheaded by City Councilwoman Erika Strassburger.

Located within the intersection of Ellsworth Avenue and Maryland Avenue in Shadyside is a com-

memoration of the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Uprising. That event sparked the modern gay rights movement. Internationally renowned artist Leonardo Moleiro designed the work.

The **City of Pittsburgh** has released the image below.



CELEBRATE  
FAMILY+FRIENDS  
LOVE+LIFE  
EQUALITY+RESPECT  
**PRIDE**  
**+JOY**



TUE  
18



FRI  
7



THU  
20



FRI  
7



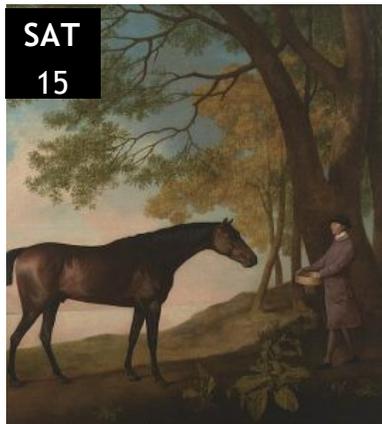
FRI  
21



THU  
13



SUN  
23



SAT  
15



WED  
26

# Opportunities

**Oops!**

**Sorry folks, but Jim ran out of time to gather material!**

In Memoriam

**Charles “Chuck” Kinder**

1942-2019

## New PBT Dancers

Four new dancers have been selected for the pre-professional division at the **Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre's** (PBT) school.



Selected annually in a nationwide audition tour, the students in the division are prepared for professional ballet careers. The intensive training and performance schedule reflects the reality of working in a professional company.

The dancers chosen are Jonathan Bright, of Pittsburgh; Colin

McCaslin of Vineland, New Jersey; Yu-Chieh Chao of Pingtung, Taiwan; and Caitlyn Mendicino of Pittsburgh.

"The Pre-professional Division is where dancers begin making the transition from student to professional. At this stage, dancers are honing their performance skills, cultivating their individuality as artists and testing their technique in company repertoire," the PBT's Terrence Orr said in a press release. "They've stood out on stage in both student and professional performances, and they've proven their passion, not only for their art but for this company."

## PSO Fellowship Winner

Musician and flute instructor Shantanique Moore has been selected by the **Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra** (PSO) as the recipient of a fellowship.

The two-year fellowship is designed to enable a young African American musician the ability to dedicate him or herself to the pursuit of an orchestral career. Its funded with the support of energy firm **EQT**. The selected musician is immersed in the working environment of the symphony and experiences a customized combination of audition preparation and professional guidance.



Moore has performed with the **Detroit Symphony Orchestra**, the **Toledo Symphony** and the **Fort Wayne Philharmonic**. Nevertheless, she explains in a press release that "with the mentorship of the Pittsburgh Symphony musicians, the performance opportunities and mock auditions, I believe this program will benefit me vastly."



## Franco Extends PSO Pact

Andres Franco and the **Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra** (PSO) have agreed to extend his contract.

Franco is currently in his fourth season as Associate Conductor. He has appeared with symphonies across the world, from Bogotá to Boise. Born into a musical family, Andrés Franco began piano studies with his father. He is married to Victoria Luperi, the PSO's associate principal clarinetist.



The PSO has praised Franco for his imaginative contributions to the orchestra's programming. "We are so pleased that Andrés Franco will deepen his relationship with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra where he has made a significant impact with his vivacious style and his deep commitment to engaging audiences of all ages," said the PSO's Melia Tourangeau in a press release.

The new contract keeps him with the PSO through the 2021-2022 season.

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## Carnegie Adds Board; Summer Workshops

Four professionals have been added to the board of the Andy Warhol Museum, which is part of the **Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh**.



These new members are: Nisha Blackwell, founder of sustainable fashion **company Knotzland Bowties**; Jamilka Borges, the executive chef at the catering firm **Independent Hospitality Group**; Heather Tomko, a health & disability research coordinator at the **University of Pittsburgh**; and Jessica Tomko, a graduate admissions profession at **Carnegie Mellon University**.

Meanwhile, two local groups are teaming up with the Carnegie Museum of Art (CMA) for a series of summer workshops and performances organized around the theme of "the senses".

These organizations are the performance troupe **Slowdanger** and **City of Play**.

Slowdanger uses "found material, electronic instrumentation, vocalization, physiological centering, and ontological examination to produce their performance work." Founded in 2009, City of Play "has produced hundreds of creative projects, obscure games and other-worldly experiences that remind people of their innate ability to play."

The program is called "Performers at Play." It invites guests to engage more deeply with art, other visitors, and the building itself through innovative, interactive experiences. Details are available at <https://cmoa.org/programs/performers-at-play/>



## Author & Mentor Chuck Kinder Dies

Novelist and educator Charles "Chuck" Kinder died on May 3. He was 76.

Born in rural West Virginia and a graduate of **West Virginia University**, Chuck Kinder later attended Stanford University through a writing fellowship. It was there that he became close friends with several future literary stars such as Larry McMurtry (author of *Terms of Endearment*)

His novels include *Snakehunter* (1973) and *Honeymooners: A Cautionary Tale* (2001).

But his greatest contribution may

have been during his 1980-2014 tenure at the **University of Pittsburgh**. It was there that he mentored young writers that included Pulitzer Prize winning author Michael Chabon (who based a character in the novel *Wonder Boys* on Kinder).

WESA-FM's Bill O'Driscoll reports that the "Squirrel Hill home Kinder shared with his wife, Diane Cecily, became an informal hub for students and local and visiting writers . . . [their] parties were legendary; guests might include famed writers like Tobias Wolff."

Read O'Driscoll's full story at <https://www.wesa.fm/post/chuck-kinder-famed-author-and-writing-teacher-dies-76>



## Across

1. Brothers' band performing at this year's Three Rivers Arts Festival
7. Guy's counterpart
10. To some TV fans, it's the new black
11. Actor Stephen
12. Choose a direction
14. UFO pilot?
15. Fiery hate
17. Like Windows, briefly
18. She's in her "Prime" at the O'Reilly
22. B.A. and Face's TV group
23. Word used twice in a famous Shakespeare line
24. Department in charge of 17-Across, briefly
25. Famous funny magazine
27. Famous Jupiter moon
28. Chemical symbol for a silvery metal (or maybe a 5¢ piece)
29. See 1-Down
31. Evil "Fantastic Four" doc

1	2	3	4	5	6		7	8	9
10							11		
12							13		
		14					15		
	16						17		
18		19	20	21					
22								23	
24			25		26		27		
28			29			30			
					31				

## Down

1. She's headlining Pride this month (with 29-Across)
2. Elizabethan or Victorian
3. Rescue
4. Type of sweater
5. Common breakfast food
6. Positive parliamentary vote
7. Its "the word" at the Benedum this month.
8. Trendy Pittsburgh clothing company, briefly
9. See 16-Down
13. Picard's empath
16. She's headlining the Pittsburgh International Jazz Festival (with 9-Down)
18. Neighbor of New Hampshire
19. As to, briefly
20. Part of a doorway
21. General Bradley, to pals
23. A type of microphone
26. His big day is June 16
27. Simpson judge
30. Canadian record label founded by Abel "The Weeknd" Testaye

### Last Month's Solution

M	O	N	E	T		P	A	R	K
A	L	I		I	O	N	I	C	
R	E	C	U	T		C	D		
J			X	U			E	N	G
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R	O	W			I			W	H
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E			A	I	L			I	U
	E		G	E	E		Y	E	S
C	L	A	U	D	E		E	S	E