

## IATSE's Strike Vote May Shut Productions

As *Pittsburgh Applause* gets ready to publish --- and as the country tries to re-emerge from the pandemic --- Pittsburgh's film and TV productions may suddenly shut down as part of nationwide strike by crew people.

Members of the **International Association of Theatrical Stage Employees** (IATSE) are voting over the October 1 weekend on authorizing a strike. The union has six locals and hundreds of members in Pittsburgh.



"In some ways," writes *Variety's* Gene Maddaus, "the high demand for content has helped push the situation to the brink. Many production workers are feeling exhausted by long hours . . . the industry has long expected workers to put in 14-hour days during production, if not longer. The shift to streaming and the explosion of demand has only sped up the pace. Before, workers might have expected weeks of downtime between shows. Now they can jump from one show to the next. Workers complain of exhaustion, and of being too tired to drive home safely."

Pittsburgh has been especially busy with **Netflix** practically treating the city as a second home. But the bumpy negotiations between IATSE and the **Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers** (AMPTP) risk this

activity. Discussions stalled after AMPTP declined to modify its offer.

IATSE issued a press release on September 21 stating: "It is incomprehensible that the AMPTP, an ensemble that includes media mega corporations collectively worth trillions of dollars, claims it cannot provide behind-the-scenes crews with basic human necessities like adequate sleep, meal breaks, and living wages. Worse, management does not appear to even recognize our core issues as problems that exist in the first place."

COVID also remains a concern. *TheWrap.com's* Jeremy Fuster reports that the unions and the AMPTP have "quietly agreed . . . weeks ago to extend the COVID safety protocols that have gov-

erned film and TV shoots over the past year through October 30."

In related news, **Apple Inc.** is telling IATSE that its Apple TV+ streaming service is too small to pay crew members more than they are currently receiving. Scott Lehane reports for *NextTV.com* that Apple TV+ has "less than 20 million subscribers . . . in the U.S. and Canada." However, the union doesn't seem to be buying it and Lehane adds with "Apple giving away access to the \$4.99-a-month SVOD away to those who bought iPhones and other Apple gadgets for the first 20 months of Apple TV+'s existence, several well-regarded research firms have pegged Apple TV+ at around 40 million subscribers, many of them on promotion . . . So a figure of 20 million would be considered low."

## Helping Steeltown Student

A graduate of **Steeltown's** film academy has won entry to a major film festival --- and now the organization is trying to raise funds for his trip.



**STEELTOWN**

Aiden Paredes and his film "Rat Lover" have been accepted at the Newport Beach Film Festival. First staged in 1999, the festival presents a multi genre, international range of independent and studio films. It is one of the nation's largest film festi-

vals, attracting over 50,000 people annually. Though normally held in April, the pandemic-delayed 2021 festival will occur October 21 - October 28.

Steeltown is trying to help him finance the trip through donations which can be made through [Kindful](#).





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## GPAC's Restart Effort

An effort has been launched by the **Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council** (GPAC) to encourage the public to return to the local arts and entertainment venues.

That effort is called "Restart the Arts" and its GPAC's program reassure audiences that Pittsburgh's

venues are safe to attend. It's also a way to address the huge economic hit the local A&E industry has suffered. According to **Americans for the Arts**, the industry has lost nearly \$50 million.

Various companies and foundations are supporting the campaign.

James A. Richards (publisher of *Pittsburgh Applause*) has been racing to update [PGHevents](#) ac-



ordingly. "It isn't easy," he explains. "Not only is the public still a bit wary, but pulling together all the necessary event information to publicize is a challenge. Many organizations have lost marketing people to retirement or new jobs. Their successors --- if they have any yet --- don't necessarily realize all of the outlets available to them." It doesn't help that publications like Whirl have shut down.

Nevertheless, many museums seem to be rebounding already. WESA-FM's Bill O'Driscoll reports that both the **Mattress Factory** and the **Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh** have experience attendance beating expectations. [Read his full article.](#)

Key online resources such as [PGHevents](#) and [Artsburg](#) have been active in gathering as much information as possible.

## Locast Down & Out

Shortly after adding Pittsburgh television stations to its service, **Locast** [See [Pittsburgh Applause, August 2021](#) - ed.] has been forced to shut down.

A federal judge issued a ruling on August 31 that effectively gutted the organization's fundamental arguments for existing. Locast claimed that copyright law gave the nonprofit the opening to retransmit television signals at no charge (the organization relied on donations). The major networks filed suit in 2019.

Locast issued an announcement a few days later: "As a non-profit, Locast was designed from the very beginning to operate in accordance with the strict letter of the law, but in response to the court's recent rulings, with which we respectfully disagree, we are hereby suspending operations, effective immediately."

It is unlikely that Locast will ever be revived.



## Honeck Extends His PSO Pact

Manfred Honeck has extended his contract as Music Director of the **Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra** the organization announced on September 24. The six-year extension keeps Honeck in his post through the 2027-2028 season.



Born in Nenzing, Austria on September 17 1958, Manfred Honeck was trained at the **University of Music and Performance** in Vienna. He has been the PSO's music director since 2008.

"Along with his great musical gifts, Manfred brings a deep sense of humanity, with keen sensitivity to the emotional connection between music and people," praised orchestra president Melia Tourangeau in a press release. "He is a true artistic partner whose relationship with the musicians brings out the very best in each other."

Honeck's new contract has him leading the PSO in 10 weeks of programs at Heinz Hall, special projects, recordings and tours.

## Proposed Tax Change To Benefit Artists

Senator Bill Hagerty (R-TN) and Senator Mark Warner (D-VA) have introduced the Performing Artist Tax Parity Act to the U.S. Senate --- which is being heartedly endorsed by **SAG-AFTRA** and other unions.



Should it become law, the act will update the federal Qualified Performing Artist (QPA) tax deduction. QPA allows certain performing artists to deduct the cost of expenses incurred in the course of their employment. The act will raise the deduction threshold, potentially helping more lower and middle-income creative professionals.

A press release issued by Senator Hagerty's office: "The Qualified Performing Artist tax deduction has not been updated since its inception in 1986 and is currently only available to those making less than \$16,000 a year, meaning that very few artists qualify. The Performing Artist Tax Parity Act will update and increase the income ceiling to \$100,000 for individuals and \$200,000 for married joint filers, allowing many more lower and middle-income performing artists to receive tax relief for work-related expenses."

The bill has also been introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives by Reps. Judy Chu (D-CA) and Vern Buchanan (R-FL).

## Mac Miller Mix Tape

Fans of the late rapper (and Pittsburgh native) Mac Miller have reason to rejoice: his popular mix-tape "Faces" will be available starting October 15.

Darlene Aderaju reports for *Billboard* that this "will mark the first time since its original Mother's Day 2014 release that 'Faces' will be available to stream." It will also be sold on vinyl and a new music video for the song "Colors and Stripes" is now online.

The video is very reflective of Malcolm James McCormick's

(1992-2018) life in Pittsburgh. Aderaju quotes director Sam Mason explaining that "I asked Malcolm's family to send me bits and pieces from his childhood, scenes from the town where he grew up, objects, toys from his room, little pieces of his life that I extrapolated outwards and used to inspire the story."

WESA-FM's Margaret Fleming recently posted examples of Miller's hometown references in many of his songs. [Click here to learn about them.](#)

## Light-Up Night Moves

Pittsburgh's iconic Light-Up Night celebration returns after a COVID hiatus and on a new evening: Saturday.



For roughly the first half the event's history, Light-Up Night was held on the first Monday in November. That changed in the 1990's when the **Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership** (PDP) took over production and moved to the Friday before Thanksgiving. Light-Up will now take place on the Saturday before Thanksgiving.

The idea is to make it easier for organizers to stage and the public to attend by holding it on a night less effected by traffic and other concerns. 2021 marks the event's sixtieth anniversary.



Click the image above to see the new video for Mac Miller's "Colors and Stripes."

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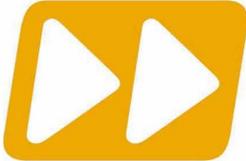
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## Patron's Partnerships

The parent company of Pittsburgh-based Showclix, **Patron Technology**, has announced a pair of interesting new partnerships.



Patron announced on September 21 a deal with event marketing platform **Audience Republic** to "enable thousands of Patron Technology clients to tap into Audience Republic's powerful suite of marketing tools tailor-made for event organizers."

Audience Republic was founded in 2016 by former event promoter Jared Kristensen as an all-in-one event marketing platform designed to propel ticket sales through customer-engagement. A press release explains that "when organizers connect their Showclix account with Audience Republic, all of their past and future events will be automatically synced, along with ticket sales



transactions and attendee data. Organizers can then segment this data to engage with their audience directly via targeted messages and ads, making it easier to ensure the right message hits the right people every time."

The other partnership was announced on September 30 and may be especially relevant as COVID-19 and its variants continue infecting people. This deal is with **CLEARED4**, which is described as "the most trusted health validation platform for COVID-19 and infectious disease safety available today, helping organizations future-proof their operations."

It is designed to help clients make sure that their live events are relatively safe from COVID spread while complying with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996. Commonly known as HIPPA, the act prohibits healthcare providers and healthcare businesses from disclosing private information to anyone other than a patient and the patient's authorized representatives.

"We at Patron Technology are confident that partnering with CLEARED4 will provide our clients with secure, reliable methods for verifying the critical health information that's necessary to keep their live events up and running," said Johnny Sloan in a company press release.

## Lemonius Named PPU Dean

Garfield Lemonius has been appointed dean of the Conservatory of Performing Arts (COPA) at **Point Park University** (PPU), reports On Stage Pittsburgh. He is also now artistic director of the Pittsburgh Playhouse.

According to his online university biography, Lemonius "was a principal dancer

with the **Dallas Black Dance Theatre**,



where he performed works by noted American choreographers, and toured throughout the U.S. and Europe. He has worked with acclaimed choreographers including Robert Battle, Colin Connor, David Parsons, Bruce Wood, Charles "Chuck" Davis, Alonzo King, Donald McKayle, and Kevin Wynn, and has performed solo works by renowned dance icons including Talley Beatty, Asadata Dafora, Jose Limon and Martha Graham."

PPU provost Michael Soto is quoted as describing Lemonius as "a natural bridge-builder, and in his short time at the helm he has fostered partnerships among COPA programs, between the Playhouse and community organizations, the university's schools, and with external partners in the arts and industry."

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## ViacomCBS Streamlines

Notable reorganization plans have been enacted by **ViacomCBS** as part of an effort to streamline operations.. The company owns two television stations and (through its majority stake in **Audacy, Inc.**), four radio stations in Pittsburgh.



Effective immediately, Brian Robbins has been appointed President and CEO of Paramount Pictures in addition to maintaining his current responsibilities leading Nickelodeon. Current CEO Jim Gianopulos is stepping into an advisory role until the end of the year for a smooth transition.

A key goal for elevating Robbins, reports *Broadcasting+Cable's* Jon Lafayette is to create more content for the company's Paramount+ streaming service. "There have been questions about

whether ViacomCBS was big enough to generate enough content to compete in the streaming wars," explains Lafayette. "The company appears to be counting on Robbins to deliver more content that will appeal to younger audiences."

Also: Paramount Television Studios (PTVS) is now part of the premium network group under the leadership of Showtime Networks chief David Nevins. Nicole Clemens will continue to lead PTVS in her capacity as president, reporting directly to Nevins. This brings together the divisions' premium scripted content capabilities..

Meanwhile, in moves that may have a stronger Pittsburgh impact, Ross Dagan has been appointed to a newly created position overseeing the operations and engineering functions involving the company's news division and owned-stations (like KDKA-TV). The company is also rebranding its CBSN streaming service to simply CBS News with a regional identifier. For example, the local component is being renamed CBS News Pittsburgh.



## CMG's Stream Deal

You can stream WPXI-TV's local programs on your smart television set now that **owner Cox Media Group** (CMG) has signed a deal with VUit.



CMG is a former division of **Cox Enterprises** (which still owns a minority stake) whose current majority owner is **Apollo Global Management**. The streaming service VUit was started in September 2020 by media technology company **Syncbak** with a major investment by **Gray Television, Inc.**

"With more viewers streaming," writes Jon Lafayette for *Broadcasting+Cable*, "stations are looking for ways to distribute their content over-the-top to reach both local cord-cutters and audiences outside the reach of their broadcast signals. They're also looking to cash in on the growing stream of ad dollars going to digital media and connected TV."

However, the region's only full-time streaming TV station remains **Channel Pittsburgh**, which was founded and is run by *Pittsburgh Applause* publisher James A. Richards.

## DGA Names New President

Lesli Linka Glatter has been elected president of the **Directors Guild of America** (DGA), the union announced on September 18.



Born in Dallas on July 26, 1953, Lesli Linka Glatter's first film project was the 1984 short, "Tales of Meeting and Parting," which was nominated for an Academy Award. She made her feature directorial debut with the 1995 film "Now and Then." But Glatter is best known for directing episodes of respected television series including "The West Wing" and

"Homeland." She won the DGA Award for her work on the latter.

"I am honored to have been chosen by my peers to serve as president, and am committed to continuing our guild's great legacy of protecting the economic and creative rights of our members --- always with our eye on the future" said Glatter in a SAG press release.

Also elected to senior posts were Betty Thomas, Ron Howard, Barry Jenkins; Seith Mann; Ava DuVernay, Lily Olszewski and Joyce Thomas.

## Google's Pittsburgh Platform

Google Arts & Culture, a non-profit component of **Alphabet, Inc.**, has launch a digital platform for Pittsburgh, reports Lauren Rosenblatt and Joseph Axelrod for the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*.

Visitors who log on to [Pittsburgh Proud & Powerful](#) showcases the city's history and culture. More than a dozen organizations --- including the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust and the Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh --- are participating. [Read the full article here.](#)



## Images



*Pittsburgh native Billy Porter and his "Cinderella" cast discuss re-imagining a classic in a video taped Hollywood Reporter interview. Click the image above to watch it.*

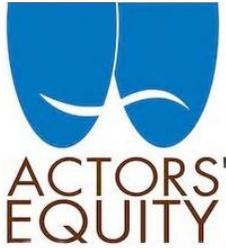
## AEA Investigates Transphobic Claims

Broadway's reopening is being marred by allegations of transphobia, prompting an investigation by **Actors' Equity Association** (AEA).

The union has hundreds of members in the Pittsburgh area, which has multiple Equity stages.

Many of these performers travel to New York City to appear on Broadway.

"Jagged Little Pill" is a rock musical composed by singer/songwriter Alanis Morissette



about a troubled couple trying to maintain the public facade of a perfect family. Issues surrounding relationships, gender identity, addiction, sexual assault and healing. The musical won the Best Book Tony Award and co-star Lauren Patten a Best Performance Tony.

Two original cast members, Celia Rose Gooding and Antonio Cipirano have quit the show. Cipirano announced on Twitter that "I have to acknowledge the harm that many trans + non-binary, and all marginalized folks, on-stage cast members and off have endured."

Much of the situation stems from the character Jo Taylor, which was written as nonbinary but portrayed by a cisgender person,

Lauren Patten. The production has gone back-and-forth over Jo's portrayal. In a public statement, the producers have admitted to mistakes in how Jo is presented and plans to address them.

But the issue for the cast and AEA is the workplace environment. Another cast member, actress Nora Schell, quit Tweeting that she was "intimated, coerced and forced by multiple higher ups to put off critical and necessary surgery to remove growths from my vagina that were making me anemic." This departure prompted the union to announce "a thorough, independent investigation" that includes "identifying and retaining an appropriate attorney to conduct this work." The producers have also announced an internal investigation.

## Theater Blog Rebrands

Local theater blog Pittsburgh in the Round (PitR) is rebranding, editor George Hoover announced on September 30.

The all-volunteer blog is now called On Stage Pittsburgh and can now be found at <http://www.onstagepittsburgh.com/>

"We are making this change for several reasons," Hoover explains in a post. "First, to the general public and search engines, Pittsburgh in the Round doesn't necessarily convey the idea that it is the place to learn about theater and performances. And perhaps most

importantly, the infrastructure and software that supports PitR has become increasingly more and more unreliable. Attempting to fix those issues had great potential to just totally break the thing."

The change officially begins October 1.



Channel  
Pittsburgh



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SAT  
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SUN  
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MON  
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THU  
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THU  
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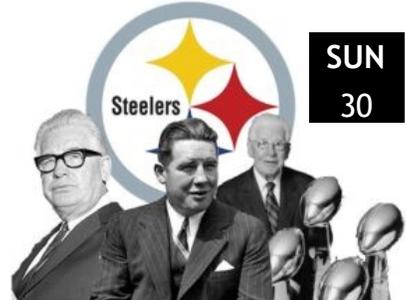


THU  
21

THU  
28



SAT  
9



SUN  
30



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# Opportunities

A new state-funded grant program is about to launch and the **Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council** is holding a series of related workshops. [See the schedule and how to register.](#)

Individuals and companies specializing in web design are being sought by **Actors' Equity Association** to upgrade the union's member portal. [Click here for the RFP.](#)

Several customer support positions, including those than can be done remotely, are available at **Patron Technology's** Showclix division. [Click here for the full list.](#)

Those interested in learning screenwriting are welcome to **Steeltown** for a six-part workshop. The program begins October 26. [Learn more by clicking here.](#)

Time is running out to submit your picture to the **Pennsylvania Resource Council's** annual litter photo contest. The deadline is October 31. [Details here.](#)

Some interesting jobs are available at **Audacy Inc.'s** Pittsburgh radio stations. These include a broadcast producer and a part-time sports host. [Check them out.](#)



## Across

1. "The Song of the Earth" composer
6. Small town in California with a big music festival where Stravinsky once performed
8. Zigs partner?
9. Multiple calf meat?
12. Talent scouting division of a record label, commonly
13. Saldana or Sugg
15. Slang word for a pistol
16. Obtained illegally
18. Phone bug?
20. Tasty Greek cheese
21. "Clara's Song" composer
24. Erikson or Garrett
25. Reuters competitor, initially
27. State between MO and CO
28. Spanish cheers
30. "The Creatures of Prometheus" composer

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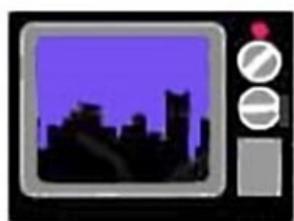
## Down

1. "Don Giovanni" composer
2. Slightly open
3. An old woman from folklore
4. "Don Sanche" composer
5. "La Vaise" composer
7. "Die Feen" composer
10. State between TX and MS
11. Composer Johann, Johann, Josef or Eduard
14. Seep
16. 7Up competitor
17. The word "shelf" has only one
19. Gain in years
22. Conjunction companion of "and" and "but"
23. State between SC and AL
24. Toss
26. 2020 Ariana Grande song
27. Jennings or Burns
29. Stage name of South Korean rapper Ahn Hyo-jin

### Last Month's Solution

B	O	S	T	O	N		S		D
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October, 2021



**Channel  
Pittsburgh**



# FALL PREVIEW

## What's New

- ◆ Additional Classic Movies
- ◆ More Custom-Made TV Series
- ◆ Phat Man Dee & Others on "Pittsburgh Tempo"
- ◆ More Old Time Radio

## Premiere Week

October 4 — October 10

## Halloween Night

Pittsburgh native Jonathan Haze stars in the original "Little Shop of Horrors" with special trivia bubbles created exclusively for Channel Pittsburgh!

