

## Three Theaters May Merge

It came in the form of an email that few expected: Shaunda McDill of the **Pittsburgh Public Theater** (PPT) wrote that “existential challenges” are prompting three local theater companies to consider some sort of combining.



[The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette's Jeremy Reynolds reports](#) that a consulting firm has determined that PPT, **Pittsburgh City Theatre** and **Pittsburgh CLO** “are on the self-reported brink of financial failure in the near or mid-term future based on their own financial reporting and projections.”

McDill's email blamed “shrinking federal arts funding, tightening

demands on philanthropic priorities, and the erosion of traditional subscriber models amid ever-widening entertainment choices.”

The result could mean a partnership in backroom operations (e.g. payroll) or co-productions, but the savings probably wouldn't be enough. A three-way merger appears to be the leading option. However, as [WESA-FM's Bill O'Driscoll points out](#), combining organizations is no guarantee of survival much less success. “Pittsburgh Filmmakers' 2006 merger with the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts (which had briefly gone dark in 2004) was, by many accounts, a rocky ride from the start, and ended with both groups shutting their doors in 2019.”

## Is Sinclair For Sale?

With the future of traditional media in flux, **Sinclair** [has announced](#) “a comprehensive strategic review for its broadcast business.”

Sinclair owns two television stations in Pittsburgh: WPGH and WPNT.



The company announced in early August that “to be a catalyst in the broadcast industry's evolution” Sinclair will “evaluate all value-enhancing opportunities, including acquisitions, strategic partner-

ships, and business combinations.”

This could mean a sale of part or all of the company, [reports CNBC's Lillian Rizzo](#). She writes: “The company and its advisors have already held deep discussions with potential merger partners, according to people close to the matter who could not speak publicly due to the sensitive nature of the talks.”

Sinclair could opt to spin off its Sinclair Ventures segment, [explains Variety's Todd Spangler](#). “The Ventures group represents the company's diversi-

## WQED Denies Report

Despite staff reductions made over the summer, **WQED Multimedia** insists that it isn't going dark.

An unnamed writer at the [South Pittsburgh Reporter](#) claimed that “WQED is in early stages to examine the value of its brand and other assets as part of contingency planning for a potential closure or sale.” The writer sourced anonymous board members.



“At the risk of giving that false report undue attention, I'm writing to confirm that it's entirely baseless,” [said Chief of Staff Sonya Dietz](#). “WQED has never considered closure or a sale, nor evaluated such scenarios.”

In related news, the nonprofit **Public Media Company** is launching a bridge fund to help public radio and television stations in the face of federal cuts. To learn more, click [here](#).

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fied investments in real estate, private equity and technology.”

The review was unanimously authorized by the Sinclair board of directors.

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## A Message For The Next Mayor

Historic patterns suggest that Allegheny County Controller Corey O'Connor will be Pittsburgh's next mayor. But whomever the city ultimately elects, a group led by the **Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council** (GPAC) has identified a set of priorities for the local arts/entertainment community.



These priorities are broken down into short-term, near-term and long-term. GPAC is now "seeking stakeholder feedback on these priorities before presenting them to the mayoral candidates."

Among the priorities is the creation of a Chief of Arts, Entertainment & Recreation "to provide unified leadership and strategic oversight for Pittsburgh's creative and cultural sectors." The person selected will coordinate all of the city's art and entertainment services. The list of recommendations and a link for providing feedback is available by clicking [here](#).

Corey O'Connor is the Democratic nominee and the son of former mayor Robert O'Connor (1994-2006). Retired police officer Tony Moreno is the Republican nominee. The election will be held on November 4.

## Actor Pleads Guilty

Local actor and producer John Mowod has pleaded guilty to stabbing his wife, several media outlets have reported

Mowod has appeared primarily in horror movie such as 1988's "Flesh Eater" and 1996's "SantaClaws." His most prominent project was co-writing and acting in the 2009 family adventure "Amazing Racer". The film starred Eric Roberts, Darryl Hannah and Scott Eastwood.

Allegedly the actor tried to kill his wife in a 2022 incident. "The couple's son told police he heard his mother screaming from inside her bedroom," [reports the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review's Paula Reed Ward](#), "and saw his father over her on the bed with a knife in his hand.:"

The 60-year-old has "been charged with attempted homicide, aggravated assault, possessing an instrument of crime and recklessly endangering another person," [writes Eric Heyl for Patch Pittsburgh](#).

Mowod is scheduled to be sentenced on November 19.

**September 9 ~ 6:00pm**



## AE Goes For Swifties

Less than 24 hours after announcing their engagement, global singing sensation Taylor Swift and football superstar Travis Kelce made another announcement: a deal with Pittsburgh-based **American Eagle Outfitters** (AEO).

AEO and Kelce's Tru Kolors label are launching a lifestyle and sports brand called AE x Tru Kolors by Travis Kelce. It is obviously a project that has been in discrete development for some time as the product line became available in late August.

[Business Insider's Madeline Berg and Jordan Hart](#) report that the line "is set to include 90 pieces, from tees to cashmere sets over two drops. Some items, like the carpenter pants and varsity jacket, are already low in stock on the [retailer's website](#)"

"I've had to keep my excitement about this collab under wraps for nearly a year," Kelce explains in an official statement. "It was an awesome opportunity to team up with an established brand where both sides were excited to truly collaborate on every decision in the design and creative process that brought the 'AE x TK' collection to life."



**JUDY "BANANA" ZARRA  
(1947-2025)**

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PITTSBURGH APPLAUSE  
**DOGE WATCH**



# Paramount Deal Finalized

The acquisition of **Paramount Global** by **Skydance Media** is now complete. But two days before KDKA-TV re-released two reporters in a cost-saving move.



“Today marks Day One of a new Paramount,” [CEO David Ellison posted online](#). “The coming months will be defined by a series of focused efforts to reengineer how our company operates, produces its creative content and goes to market.”

The goal, says Ellison, is “to transform Paramount into a tech-forward company that blends the creative heart of Hollywood with the innovative spirit of Silicon Valley.”

Meanwhile, [Patch Pittsburgh’s Eric Heyl](#) reports that Lindsay Ward and Kym Gable will be leaving KDKA with the expiration of their contracts this month. He also writes that weather forecaster Kristin Emery has announced her retirement.

**MARINO PARASCENZO  
(1930-2025)**

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## Schell Promotes

Two key people at **Schell Games** have been promoted to the company's leadership team, the firm has announced.

Jill Sciuili, who has been with the company since 2012, has been promoted to Vice President of Marketing. The Duquesne University alum has been credited with "strategic initiatives that elevate the studio's brand and game portfolio".

Pete Treichler, who joined Schell 11 years ago, has been promoted to Vice President to Information Technology & Facilities.

"Having each contributed over ten years of dedicated service," company founder Jesse Schell explained in a press release, "Jill and Pete both embody the expertise and commitment that fuel Schell Games' success."



## Cinelease Sold

Private investment firm **Zello Group** has acquired Cinelease, reports [Michael Schneider for Variety](#).

The Los Angeles-based Cinelease has a major branch in Pittsburgh where it rents vehicles and equipment to film and television productions. It was owned by **Herc Rentals**.

Schneider explains that Cinelease "will operate as a standalone . . . company and continue to be run by industry veterans Mark Lamberton, Chris Rogers and Gannon Murphy."

To learn more about Cinelease's new corporate parent by clicking [here](#).



**Channel Pittsburgh**

## City's Changes

Leadership changes at **City Theatre Company** have been announced, reports the blog [On Stage Pittsburgh](#).

Clare Drobot will now be the company's sole artistic director. She had been sharing the position with Monteze Freeland since 2021. Freeland is moving on to Alumni Theater Company.

"Clare is a tireless advocate for playwrights," the blog quotes Board President Barbara Rudiak, "and for ensuring that theater is not only relevant but evolving to meet this changing world."

Drobot is a trained dramaturg who joined City in 2015 to develop new plays.



## Hollywood Theater Opening Date Set

A reopening date has been set for the historic Hollywood Theater in the suburb of Dormont.

The Hollywood is a mini-movie palace that dates back to cinema's Silent Era. It was purchased in 2023 by **Row House Cinema** in the city's Lawrenceville neighborhood. Thus began a two-year renovation "that includes plenty of things that patrons might not notice," [writes Alexis Papalia for the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#), "like fixing the lobby's sloped floor — and plenty that will be

very noticeable" like the domed ceiling with a projected skyline.

"We are essentially the first American theater in four decades to build a brand-new atmospheric movie house," said Row House's Brian Mendelsohn in a press release. "Our relationship with media and screens has changed so much in the last century, but we still believe that a movie screening should be a grand and awe-inspiring experience. This thea-

ter is designed with that goal in mind."

The rechristened Row House Hollywood [officially opens on November 6 with a special screening of the groundbreaking film "Metropolis."](#)



## Kennywood Ends Adult Nights

Kennywood will no longer hold 21+ nights, various local news organizations have reported.



The legendary amusement park first staged this adults-only program last year as a trial balloon. Seen as a success, Kennywood scheduled two nights this year with the apparent expectation of future growth. The program was cancelled after incidents of violence on August 22 and August 29.

“Kennywood has a zero-tolerance policy for this type of behavior,” [the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review’s](#)

[James Engel](#) quotes an official statement. “Anyone displaying unruly or disruptive behavior will be banned from the park.”

Videos of the August 29 incident were posted to social media, according to [KDKA-TV’s Patrick Damp and Chilekasi Adele](#). They quote one patron he wanted to leave Kennywood that night “before it closes . . . because people are getting more crowded, more rambunctious.”

Kennywood, owned by **Herschend**, is one of many to add alcohol-friendly programs. The high profit margins of bar drinks coupled with social media are seen as the driving forces.

Jeff Whiting of the concessions company **Whiting’s Foods**

credited the increased use of Instagram in a [2022 interview with the amusement blog All Ears](#). “Instagrammable drinks up perceived guest value,” he said. “I like to say they’ll come for the food, but they’ll stay for the drinks.”

But, as the Kennywood experience has revealed, problems associated with alcohol abuse do arise.



## Images

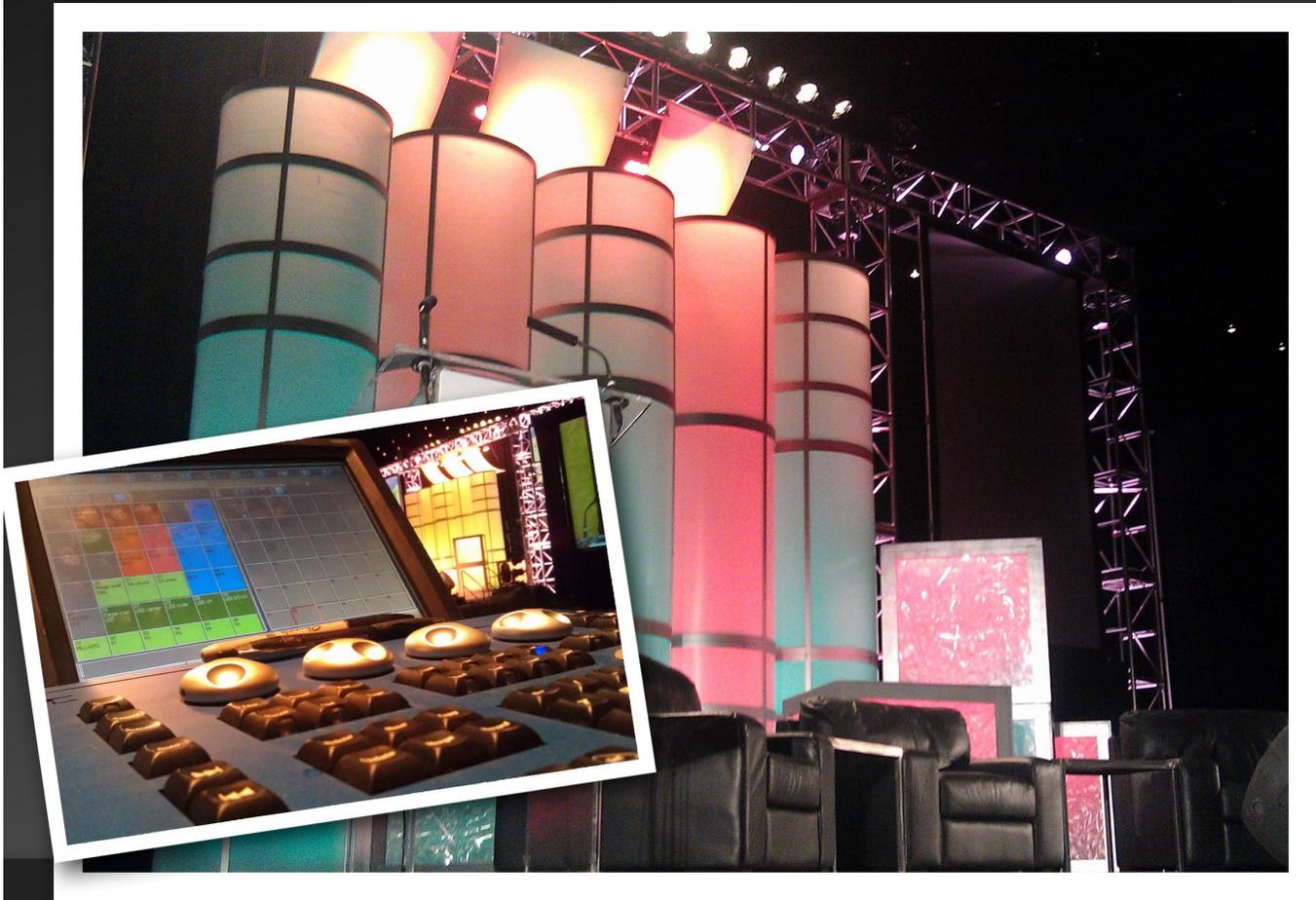


*Local multidisciplinary artist Nathan Cephas is the subject of a new exhibit at the Silver Eye Center for Photography.*



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## Union Oks New Pact

More than 96% of **SAG-AFTRA** members have ratified the new Network Television Code Agreement, the union has announced.



“We’ve locked in meaningful gains for performers across all categories,” says union chief Fran Drescher in the announcement, “while building a foundation for future victories on critical issues like artificial intelligence.”

The agreement includes wage increases, additional money to the

benefit plan and retirement fund, and greater protections for underage performers. [The announcement can be read here.](#)

In other news, members have until September 12 to return their completed ballots for the union’s national elections. The candidates for national president are Sean Astin and Chuck Slavin. The candidates for national secretary-treasurer are Peter Antico and Michelle Hurd. Detailed



Channel  
Pittsburgh

## Handmade Arcade Expanding

With the support of **Contemporary Craft**, the creator support group **Handmade Arcade** (HA) is launching a new program starting in 2026.

That program is called the Modern Craft Market and will focus on contemporary craftspeople. The market “fills a gap in the region’s craft ecosystem,” says HA’s Kelsey Ford in a press release. The same release explains that this new market “will connect shoppers, craft collectors, and retail and industry partners with over 150 of the best contemporary craft makers and artists from around the Pittsburgh and greater Appalachian region.”

The Modern Crat Market will be held at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center on March 27 to March 29, 2026. HA will begin accepting artist applications before the end of September.

Also in 2026, HA is moving its Emerging Craft Market to the En-

ergy Innovation Center (EIC) in the city’s Hill District. EIC is a component of the technology nonprofit **Pittsburgh Gateways Corporation** to develop sustainable energy businesses. While the popular Holiday Market will remain and the Lawrence Convention Center.

## Stadium To Be Enlarged

Plans have been unveiled to expand Highmark Stadium, [reports Colin Williams for Pittsburgh City Paper.](#)

The home base of the **Pittsburgh Riverhounds** soccer team will be tripled in size and be able to host larger festivals and concerts as well as sporting events.

Williams quotes Allegheny County Executive Sara Innarato explaining: “There is real

## PGH Opera Names Artists

Six singers and two others have been selected by the **Pittsburgh Opera** as the company’s next class of resident artists.

## PITTSBURGH OPERA

The program is designed to provide professional development during a two-year period. Singers are chosen from more than 800 applicants who must audition. Those selected use the program to hone their vocal skills, study subjects such as acting and have opportunities to appear in Pittsburgh Opera productions.

In addition to singers, the company’s resident artist program includes a stage director position and a pianist position.

A complete list, including brief bios, is available by clicking [here](#).

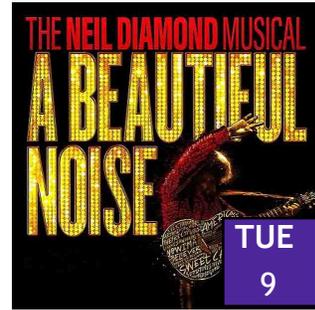
economic impact when we make investments like this. The per person out-of-venue spending would range anywhere from around \$12 for local folks to \$265 for an overnight attendee.” The state has promised \$3 million to support the development.



THU  
4



FRI  
5



TUE  
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SAT  
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MON  
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SUN  
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TUE  
16



SAT  
20



SAT  
20



SAT  
20



FRI  
26



FRI  
26



# Opportunities

Applications are being accepted by the **Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council** for this year's Creative Sector Flex Fund. The program provides \$5,000 grants to arts organizations with average annual revenues between \$10,000 to \$200,000. [Details here.](#)

A seminar on intimacy coordinators and the role they play in film/TV production is being staged by **Women in Film & Media**. [Reserve your place here.](#)

Varies positions are open at the four **Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh**. [Click here for the full list.](#)

Remote positions (i.e. work from home!) are available at **Leap Event Technology**, the parent of Pittsburgh-based ShowClix. [Learn more here.](#)

Forthcoming workshops by **Keylight** include the fundamentals of film production. [See the dates here.](#)



## Libsyn Adds PodRoll

Pittsburgh-based online media company **Liberated Syndication Inc.** (a.k.a. "Libsyn") has reached an agreement with promotion firm **PodRoll**.



Libsyn provides a podcasting platform for creators to host, distribute, monetize and measure their content. PodRoll specializes in a service that "allows podcast episodes to be dynamically inserted into feeds, similar to a cross-promotion, but specifically targeted to individual listeners" (according to the [company website](#)).

"Creators thrive on two currencies --- audience and revenue --- and one fuels the other," said Brendan Monaghan, CEO of Libsyn, in a press release. "By integrating PodRoll into the Libsyn platform, we're helping podcasters find a powerful way to reach new listeners while monetizing in ways that respect the audience experience. This is another step in our commitment to helping creators grow both their reach and their earnings through a unified platform built for every stage of the podcasting journey."

For more information, [click here](#).



## Public Art Picked

The inaugural public art for the forthcoming Arts Landing project has been selected, the **Pittsburgh Cultural Trust** (PCT) has announced.



Works chosen include a series of sculptural benches called "Lifted" by local artist Vanessa German. Another local artist, Darian Johnson, celebrates inclusion and imagination with "Sculptures of Regional Wildlife."

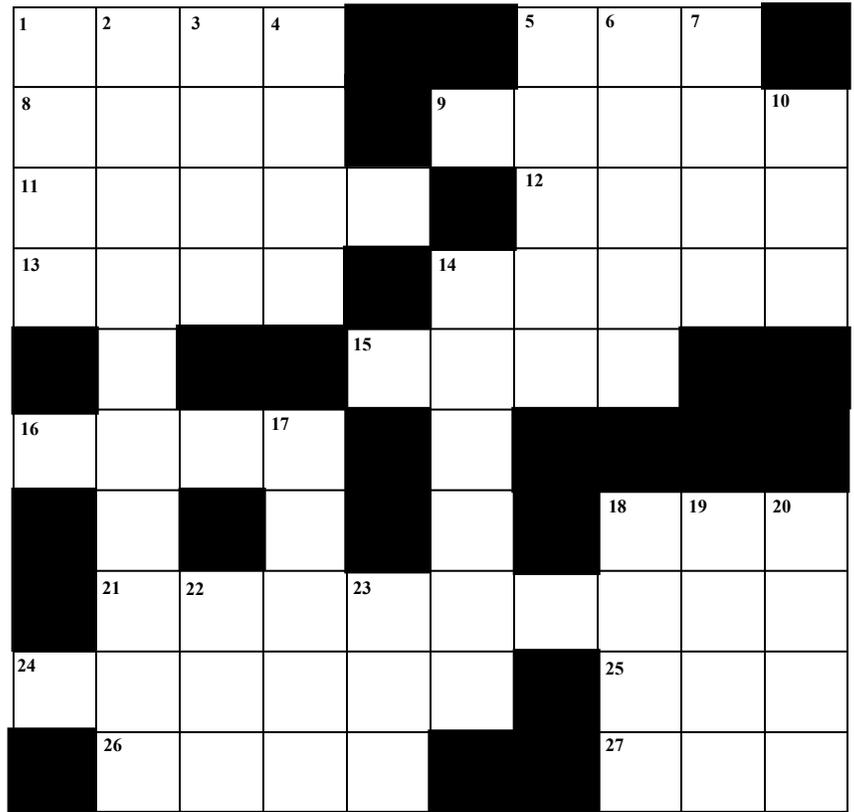
"Public art has the power to spark connections and create a sense of pride in our communities," said PCT's Kendra Whitlock Ingram in a press release. "Created by artists with strong ties to our region, these works will connect visitors more deeply with our city and shape Arts Landing as a distinctly Pittsburgh destination."

Nine artists have been tapped, along with a special exhibition honoring Pittsburgh sculptor Thaddeus Mosley on his hundredth birthday. For more information, click [here](#).



## Across

1. Famous showbiz miser (with 6-Down)
5. Long-time radio and TV network of 1-Across
8. Golf or tennis competition
9. Win wrongly
11. Senator Specter, to pals
12. Synonym for jealousy
13. Cleo's river
14. Senegalese vocalist Omar et al
15. Real-life wife (and fictional girlfriend) of 1-Across
16. Russian pop duo
18. Swiss mountain
21. Best friend and butler of 1-Across
24. Musical instrument associated with 1-Across
25. Many performers have a big one
26. Dutch actress/comedian Luca, to pals
27. Floor cleaning implement



## Down

1. Author and adopted daughter of 1-Across
2. Douglas Sirk's redundantly titled first film
3. Prison room
4. Lower joint
5. "Rah!" or "ole!"
6. See 1-Across
7. Preserve
10. Belonging to TV host Pennington
14. London musician Damian Roach's stage name
17. A child's cry of surrender
18. Tangerine Dream's 1973 album
19. Toy brick brand
20. How 24-Across was often used by 1-Across
22. Tic-tac-toe victory
23. Towel stitching?

### Last Month's Solution

T	R	A	U	M	A		M	A	X
H	A	R	P		G		E	A	R
E		N	O	A	H		E	R	A
P	A	I	N			I	S	P	Y
I	C	E		T	H	E	E		
T	E	S	T		B			W	
T				R	O	B	B	Y	
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