

Writers Guild Calls Strike

Pens are capped. Computer screens are dark. Laptops are closed. The 11,000 members of both branches of the **Writers Guild of American** (WGA) have gone on strike.

A union press release states that

the “decision was made following six weeks of negotiations” with the **Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers** (AMPTP), “but the studios’ responses have been wholly insufficient given the existential crisis writers are facing.”

The AMPTP countered in a statement that its offer “included generous increases in compensation for writers as

well as improvements in streaming residuals.” Streaming and other changes in the media landscape are at the heart of the dispute.

SAG’s press release claims that the “companies’ behavior has created a gig economy inside a union workforce, and their immovable stance in this negotiation has betrayed a commitment to further devaluing the profession of writing. From their refusal to guarantee any level of weekly employment in episodic television, to the creation of a ‘day rate’ in comedy variety, to their stonewalling on free work for screenwriters and on [artificial intelligence] for all writers, they have closed the door on their labor force and opened the door to writing as an entirely freelance profes-

sion. No such deal could ever be contemplated by this membership.”

The strike (which affects members in Pittsburgh) prohibits WGA members from submitting new work or collaborating on existing projects with TV and film producers. Companies must either use the scripts they have as written or shut down production until the strike ends. The late-night talk shows are to be the first affected, such as “The Late Show with Stephen Colbert” which airs on CBS (which, like Pittsburgh’s KDKA-TV, is owned by **Paramount Global**). News programs are unaffected.

Katie Kilkemmy of *The Hollywood Reporter* has covered the dispute in detail which can be read by clicking [here](#).



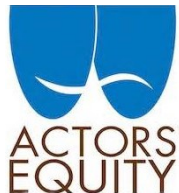
Meanwhile, Equity Members OK Pact

The membership of **Actors’ Equity Association** has ratified a new agreement with the **Broadway League**. The contract covers touring productions, including those coming to Pittsburgh.

“Creating a new, unified touring agreement has been a long-term goal, and it was a massive undertaking,” said union president Kate Shindle in a press release. “Thousands of collective hours --- from the negotiating team,

from Equity staff, from committees, from our members who mobilized to an historic degree -- went into pouring this foundation that we can now build upon. We made some major gains: more competitive salaries, producer-paid housing options across the entire touring landscape, meaningful increases in per diem and some new models for coverage, so that the show can go on without the need for actors and stage managers to work when we’re sick or injured.”

More information is available by clicking [here](#).



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Pittsburgh Studio May Be Sold, Shut

The growing popularity of the Strip District may cost Pittsburgh its primary film production facility, reports KDKA-TV's Christopher DeRose.

In the next two or three years, 31st Street Studios may be replaced by a mixed-use complex of residences and retail. This is because property owner **North River Company** is seeking ways to maximize the land's value and profitability. A sound stage's rent is usually dwarfed by other kinds

of revenue --- consider when businessman Kirk Kerkorian (1917-2015) took over Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM) sold off a huge swath of the storied filmmaker's property for real estate development. (MGM is currently owned by **Amazon**).

Dawn Keezer of the **Pittsburgh Film Office** insists that the local industry will go on, even with loss of such an important facility, telling DeRose that we expect to have other developments coming in to take their place."



Click the image above to watch a video of Christopher DeRose's report.

Warhol Gets Restoration Grant

The Andy Warhol Museum is receiving an important grant from the financial giant **Bank of America Corporation**.



The museum is part of the **Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh**, The bank traces its history to 1784 Massachusetts and today is the nation's second largest banking institution now based in North Carolina. Bank of America has been donating to preservation projects since 2010.

Funds will be used to research and restore Warhol's unusual 1978 work titled "Oxidation." In a museum press release, director Patrick Moore calls the effort "a unique conservation challenge." That is probably because, as Helen

Stoilas of *The Art Newspaper* explains "one of the Pop Artist's under-researched 'piss paintings.' These works were made using a reactive copper acrylic paint, and the artist would then have friends and assistants urinate on the canvas, creating abstract and improvised splash patterns."

The conservation effort will be done openly in a museum gallery so that visitors can see and learn about the process. Read Stoilas' full story by clicking [here](#).



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NBCU Fires CEO Shell

Jeff Shell is out as chief executive of NBCUniversal after a sexual harassment complaint, reports the *Los Angeles Times*.



NBCUniversal is owned by **Comcast Corporation**, which operates Pittsburgh's cable television franchise. An investigation by the law firm **Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher LLP** confirmed a complex and inappropriate relationship between Shell and journalist Hadley Gamble.

Shell's background is available by clicking [here](#). Comcast president Mike Cavanagh is leading NBCUniversal in the interim.

“Dolls” Film Gets Date

A title and release date has been announced for Ethan Coen's Pittsburgh-made film, writes Pamela McClintock for the *Hollywood Reporter*.



“Drive-Away Dolls” is scheduled for release nationally on September 22. The storyline, per IMDB, reads: “The film follows Jamie, an uninhibited free spirit bemoaning yet another breakup with a girlfriend, and her demure friend Marian who desperately needs to loosen up. In search of a fresh start, the two embark on an impromptu road trip to Tallahassee, but things quickly go awry when they cross paths with a group of inept criminals.” The film was shot in the Pittsburgh area in August and Sep-

tember of 2022. It was produced by Working Title Films and is to be distributed by Focus Pictures, both are subunits of **Comcast Corporation**.

McClintock notes that the “comedy caper --- which opens as the fall awards season gets underway --- marks the first time Coen has directed a movie on his own and without his longtime literal brother-in-arms, Joel Coen.” The family collection remains, however: the script was written by Coen's wife, Tricia Cooke.

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(1930 - 2023)

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FRP Launches Program

A project has been announced by **Fred Rogers Productions (FRP)** to encourage greater diversity among children's television writers.



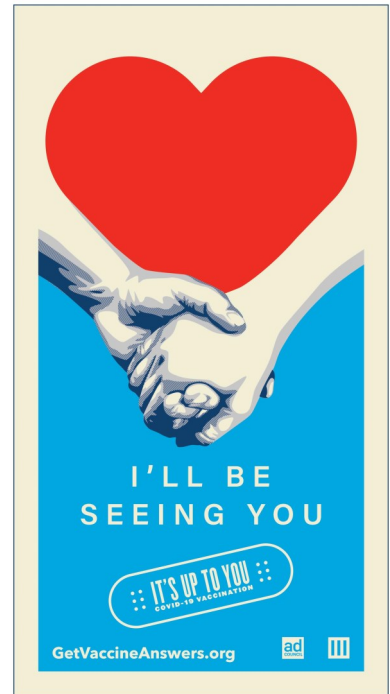
The web site dedicated to the Writers' Neighborhood program as an opportunity for That project is called the Writers' Neighborhood. A dedicated web site explains that it's for "emerging [black, indigenous, (and) people of color] writers focuses on how to build and sustain a career as a freelance writer in children's media. Program participants will learn from the current writers, story editors, head writ-

ers, and producers working on the children's series" FRP currently has in production.

"Really this is about focusing on the broad craft of writing and understanding what it's like to be part of this industry," FRP's Ellen Doherty told Bill O'Driscoll of WESA-FM.

The program is open only to individuals who are 21 years of age, have not had extensive media writing experience and identify with an underrepresented racial group (Asian, Pacific Islander, Black, Hispanic/Latinx, Native American/Indigenous, Middle Eastern/North African or multiracial).

Details are available by clicking [here](#).



National Radio Show Moves To Pittsburgh

A Pittsburgh station is now the flagship for the popular syndicated radio show "Broadway and Friends," reports the web site Radio Insight.

The morning show focuses on the country music scene and its artists. It is hosted by **Audacy** and **Academy of Country Music and Country Music Association Award**-winning personality Jerry Broadway.

What is now called "Broadway and Friends" began 13 years ago on a small Alabama radio station



before moving up to the much bigger St. Louis, Missouri. It is now being produced out of WDSY-FM's studios. The station, branded as Y108, is owned by **Audacy, Inc.**

"Besides already being a Steelers fan," Broadway says in a press release, "I couldn't be more excited to be joining the Y108 team on the ground in Pittsburgh. This show was conceived, designed, and constructed on the simple fact that he who entertains the most wins. Every one of my cast members has a razor-sharp sense of humor and

can take any topic and make it sound interesting and hilarious. I'm truly blessed to be a part of this team and we are excited to get to know the people of Pittsburgh!"

Read the full article by clicking [here](#).



New “Piano Lesson” Movie Gets Cast

Casting is largely in place for another screen version of August Wilson’s Pulitzer Prize winning 1987 play “The Piano Lesson.”

NETFLIX

Set in 1936, it is the story of a Pittsburgh family who are de-

scendants of former slaves and are faced with the difficult decision whether to sell the family’s heirloom piano to purchase property. Charles S. Dutton and Alfre Woodward starred in a 1995 TV movie. The new adaptation is a **Netflix** project.

Former professional football player John David Washington

(son of Academy Award winning actor Denzel Washington) will play the lead. Others in the cast include Samuel L. Jackson, Ray Fisher, Danielle Deadwyler, Michael Potts and Corey Hawkins.

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

Patron Promotion

The parent of Pittsburgh-based ShowClix, **Patron Technology**, has announced the promotion of Lauren Chan Lee.



Lee, who had been the company’s interim Head of Product, has been given the position of Chief Product Officer. In this role, she will be responsible for setting Patron’s product vision and strategy.

Patron’s Michael Marty explains in a press release: “Lauren’s leadership will ensure the investments we are making in user experience, in the deeper integration of our full suite of event technology and marketing products, and in delivering deeper data insights to our clients continue to make us the tech platform that no one in the industry can match.”

Images



Brandon Bell and Jazmine Otwalia in the upcoming Pittsburgh Opera production of “Denis & Katya.”

Photo by David Bachman Photography.

Symphony Names Fellows

Two musicians have been selected by the **Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra** (PSO) to the orchestra's prestigious Paul J. Ross Fellowship program.



The Paul J. Ross Fellowship is a two-year program designed to enable musicians identifying as Black or African American to dedicate themselves to the pursuit of an orchestral career. It is named in honor of violinist Paul J. Ross (1940 - 2000), who, in 1965, was the first African American musician to receive a full-time contract from the PSO.

Appearing with PSO starting this September are trumpeter Joshua Samuel Carr and bassist Drew Collins.

"The Pittsburgh Symphony values diverse perspectives and contributions in the creation and presentation of music," said the PSO's Melia Tourangeau in a press release, adding that the orchestra is committed to "the growth of young Black musicians who are dedicated to pursuing an orchestral career."

Frick's Sounds

History, art and technology come together at the **Frick Pittsburgh**.



In a collaboration with **Duquesne University** and sponsored by **Duquesne Light Company**, the museum has debuted a "sound walk." Visitors encounter sites activated by QR codes that trigger recordings that recreate the sounds of the 1890's. The sounds were produced at the Mary Pappert School of Music.

"One of the goals of the Sound-Walk is to encourage people to think about how sounds shape everyday life," said the university's Dr. Nicole Vilknier in a press release. "As musicians, we believe that music profoundly affects people --- their emotions, well-being, and thinking - and we spend a lot of time interpreting the sounds we make at the Mary Pappert School of Music. But what about all the other sounds that surround us? In this project, students were asked to scrutinize the impact and influence of environmental sounds on the Frick grounds, past and present."

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





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WED
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SAT
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FRI
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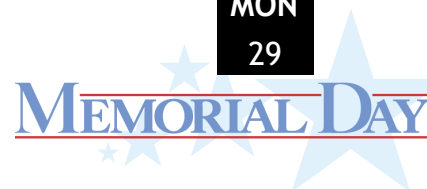
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Opportunities



Jim Richards ran out of time to gather the info for this page.

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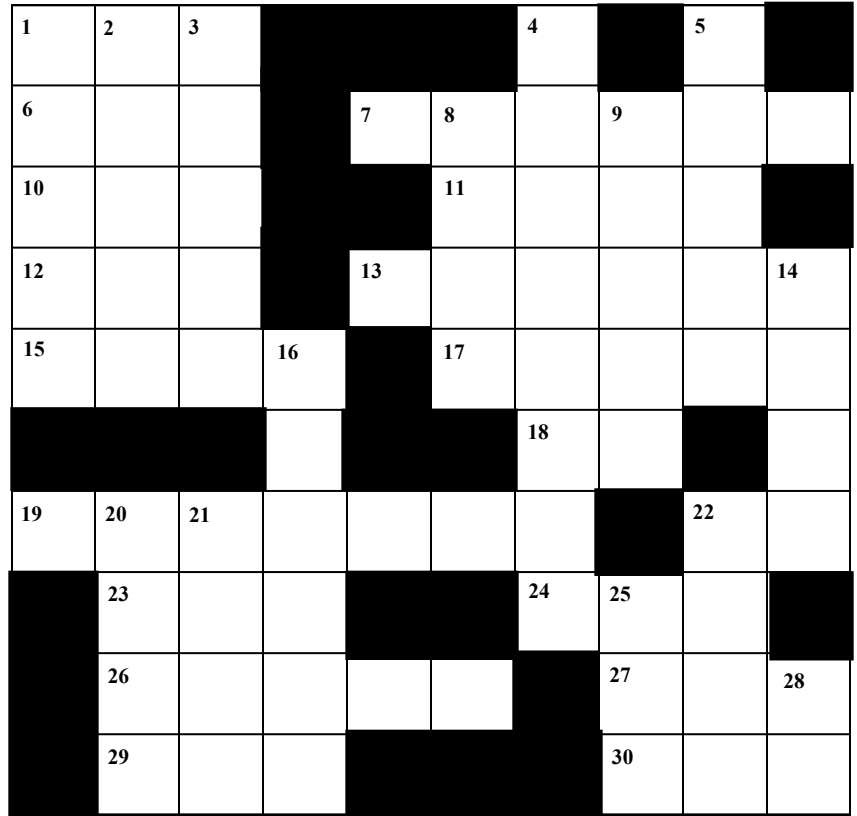


 **ACTORS' EQUITY**
CURRENT DO NOT WORK LIST 

 **Project Casting**

Across

1. The TV network know for its eye logo
6. Painting or sculpture
7. See 30-Across
10. "Facts of Life" star Charlotte
11. Character actor Parley
12. Poetic honor
13. "High Anxiety" co-star Korman, to pals
15. "Wonder Woman" co-star Waggoner, to pals
17. A word that comes before "rule" and after "water" in separate uses
19. See 1-Down
22. The year after JR
23. Honolulu garland
24. "McHale's Navy" co-star Conway, to pals
26. "Mama's Family" star Lawrence, to pals
27. Fluffy neckwear
29. Gator or lemon
30. Designer famous for creating Cher's TV wardrobe (with 7-Across)



Down

1. TV comedy star who just turned 90 and is connected to most of the clues in this puzzle (with 19-Across)
2. TV family with six kids
3. What Pittsburgh was once famous for
4. "GWTW" heroine
5. Popular technology magazine
8. Israeli pianist Elisha
9. "Animal House" actor Bacon, to pals
14. 2023, for example
16. Whiny daughter on 26-Across
20. Small island in Scotland
21. "Veep" actor Scott, to pals
22. Watery cave in Scotland
25. Power plant workers union, initially
28. Milwaukee-based manufacturer, initially

Last Month's Solution

H	O	M	E	W	O	O	D		
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