FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts announces its

2016–2017 BALLET AND CONTEMPORARY DANCE SEASON
Suzanne Farrell, Artistic Advisor for Ballet

Christopher Wheeldon’s Cinderella
Alexei Ratmansky’s The Little Humpbacked Horse
John Neumeier’s The Little Mermaid

Justin Peck and Misty Copeland Curate two programs for Ballet Across America

Michelle Dorrance’s The Blues Project with Toshi Reagon
Elizabeth Streb’s STREB Extreme Action
Damian Woetzel’s DEMO Series
Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater

(WASHINGTON)—Featuring some of the world’s finest ballet and contemporary dance companies performing iconic and contemporary works from choreographers redefining the boundaries of the art, the 2016–2017 ballet and contemporary dance season at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts is one of broad variety and world-class innovation. From traditional classics like Swan Lake and the works of Balanchine, to new choreography and collaborative work like Christopher Wheeldon’s Cinderella, John Neumeier’s The Little Mermaid, Dorrance Dance’s The Blues Project with Toshi Reagon, and the high camp of Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo, the upcoming season encompasses the unique breadth of national and international companies that both ground and expand the meaning of movement.

In April 2017, the Kennedy Center continues the Center-wide initiative to support new work with artist centric programming with the return of its week-long Ballet Across America

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series, last seen in 2013. With two programs curated by major stars of the ballet world, dancer-choreographer Justin Peck and principal dancer Misty Copeland, the series will explore ballet’s new directions illustrating the most exciting, creative work happening across America today. Central to the Kennedy Center’s celebration of the JFK Centennial, guest curators will present works that explore themes of innovation, courage, freedom, justice, and service on top of the series-wide exploration of American ballet.

Returning favorites include Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, and the 16th Annual Local Dance Commissioning Project, which will also be themed on the Center’s celebration of JFK’s Centennial. In addition, Damian Woetzel, the New York City Ballet principal dancer–turned director, choreographer, and producer will bring two programs to the Eisenhower stage with the continuation of his DEMO series, which unites artists from different genres to explore a common theme.

Also this season, the Center’s own The Suzanne Farrell Ballet celebrates its 15th season by returning to the Eisenhower Theater in October with a program by Ms. Farrell’s mentor, George Balanchine, including the revival and company premiere of the rarely seen but well-loved work, Gounod Symphony.

### 2016–2017 Kennedy Center Ballet and Contemporary Dance Season Schedule

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The 2016–2017 Kennedy Center Ballet and Contemporary Dance Season

16TH ANNUAL LOCAL DANCE COMMISSIONING PROJECT, Millennium Stage
September and October 2016
A JFK Centennial Commission

The 2016 Local Dance Commissioning Project will celebrate JFK at 100, marking the centennial of the President’s birth and highlighting the ideals associated with his legacy: courage, freedom, justice, service, and gratitude – activated by creativity and exploration. Locally based choreographers Sarah Beth Oppenheim and Maverick Lemons will each present a new work on the Millennium Stage themed on these ideals. The Local Dance Commissioning Project was created to foster new dance works by local artists and present these artists to the widest possible audience via the Millennium Stage, which is simulcast on the Kennedy Center’s website and archived for future viewing. The project provides funds for each artist to create a new work and a venue to premiere the work, as well as rehearsal space, artistic mentorship, and technical assistance. Each year, a panel of Kennedy Center staff reviews written and visual applications from a pool of dozens of metro-area choreographers in order to award the commission. Further details about each work are below.

Sarah Beth Oppenheim/Heart Stück Bernie
Drawing inspiration from significant events in JFK’s presidency including the Commission on the Status of Women, Civil Rights and the tumultuous social climate, the excitement and science of the race to the moon, and JFK’s July 1963 request to Congress to abolish the quota system of immigration, Sarah Beth Oppenheim and her company Heart Stück Bernie will create a 50-minute work for the Kennedy Center Millennium Stage accompanied by original music and sound score by local musicians Andrew Oppenheim, Daniel Mancini, and Oliver Mertz. With her signature quirky-luscious dance, intimate audience performance art, and dynamic blend of highbrow and lowbrow zeitgeist ingredients, Heart Stück Bernie invites audience members to wield powerful choice, embody creative problem solving, and experience the visceral verve of dance; not unlike the ’60s and President John F. Kennedy’s great call to action when he asked the American people what they could do for their country.
Maverick Lemons
Incorporating the eternal flame as a symbol of hope, Maverick Lemons will create a new work highlighting the strengths of JFK’s character and view of his presidency as an unfinished journey and quest for justice, courage, innovation, peace, and service. Serving a total of 1,036 days in office, Kennedy was often called the “President of a Thousand Days.” With a working title of 1001, the work will be a celebration of JFK’s successes, a comparison to contemporary events and a moment of questioning. What could’ve been had his life not be taken? How does the unfinished journey of his presidency shape history? How can we apply the strength of his successes and the hope he instilled for a better country to current events? In collaboration with three live musicians, this work is intended to be thoughtful, powerful, and, ultimately, uplifting.

DORRANCE DANCE WITH TOSHI REAGON, Eisenhower Theater
October 5 & 6, 2016
The Blues Project
Dorrance Dance will be performing in their first official engagement at the Kennedy Center. Aiming to honor tap dance’s unique and dynamic historical context by pushing the boundaries of the genre, the company will present The Blues Project, a collaboration between recent MacArthur “Genius” grant recipient Michelle Dorrance, world-class choreographer/soloists Derick K. Grant and Dormeshia Sumbry-Edwards, and genre-defying musician Toshi Reagon. Performed with live music by Reagon and her band, BIGLovely, together they present a wholly new marriage of blues and tap grounded in the beauty of the historical past.

DANISH DANCE THEATRE, Eisenhower Theater
October 18 & 19, 2016
Black Diamond
Last seen in 2013 as part of the Kennedy Center’s Nordic Cool festival, Danish Dance Theatre returns to the Center with Black Diamond. Focusing on abstract aesthetic and form complementing his dancers’ organic movements, Artistic Director and choreographer Tim Rushton (MBE) places the strikingly rich scenography and lighting as two of the central elements. Supplementing the American tradition for a more ‘bare bone’ production in contemporary dance, Black Diamond creates a rather conceptual and futuristic universe with the contrasting of darkness and light. Performed to the sounds of composers Alexander Balanescu and Philip Glass, as well as beat king Trentemøller, small pockets of sounds are created—from fragmented and noisy, to tempo-filled electronic beats, to lyrical and romantic tracks.

THE SUZANNE FARRELL BALLET, Eisenhower Theater
October 21–23, 2016
Gounod Symphony (Gounod/Balanchine)
Stars & Stripes (Sousa arr. Kay/Balanchine)
Additional works to be announced at a later date
With the Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra
The Kennedy Center’s own The Suzanne Farrell Ballet celebrates its 15th season with a program of works from legendary choreographer George Balanchine, including the revival and company premiere of the rarely seen but well-loved Balanchine work, Gounod Symphony, as well as the patriotic Stars & Stripes, last seen in full at the Kennedy Center in 2005.
WORLD BALLET WATCH PARTY, Grand Foyer
October 2016 (Date TBD)
In an unprecedented collaboration in 2014, five of the world’s leading ballet companies streamed 23 hours of live, behind-the-scenes footage on YouTube, providing viewers around the world with an inside look at professional ballet companies in the studio, on tour, and in performance. Known as World Ballet Day LIVE, the program is a celebration of dance and offers audiences the opportunity to see what it takes to be one of the world’s top companies and get an inside look at the athleticism and dedication required for a life in ballet. This year, World Ballet Watch Party returns to the Kennedy Center, where the live coverage of the 2016 global celebration is projected onto the Millennium Stage screen and online via worldballetday.com or World Ballet Day LIVE on YouTube. Further details to be announced at a later date.

SAN FRANCISCO BALLET, Opera House
October 26–30, 2016
D.C. Premiere, Cinderella (Prokofiev/Wheeldon)
With the Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra
San Francisco Ballet returns to the Kennedy Center with the D.C. premiere of Christopher Wheeldon’s Cinderella, a co-production with Het Nationale Ballet (Dutch National Ballet). Inspired by the Brothers Grimm and Perrault fairy tales, this visually rich and imaginative full-evening story ballet adaptation features dramatic music by Prokofiev, libretto by Craig Lucas, spectacular sets and costumes by Julian Crouch (renowned for his designs for Metropolitan Opera and the Broadway musical The Addams Family), and ingenious puppetry by Obie Award winner Basil Twist.

DEMO: HEROES, Eisenhower Theater
November 2016 (Date TBD)
Dancer, director, choreographer, and thought leader Damian Woetzel will once again curate and host DEMO, a series of experimental evenings that bring together a range of dancers, musicians, poets, actors, and other artists to explore new work as well as reframe existing work around a common theme. Woetzel is acclaimed for mixing artists in collaborative performances, and in his 2016–2017 DEMO season, he continues that emphasis and provides the platform to celebrate what has come before, while pushing forward into what might be ahead. For this fall, Woetzel brings together a varied collection of performers from across the arts spectrum to pay tribute to their heroes. Programming to be announced at a later date.

STREB EXTREME ACTION, Eisenhower Theater
November 4 & 5, 2016
FORCES
STREB Extreme Action Company appears in their Kennedy Center debut with FORCES. In a unique style dubbed PopAction by founder and 1997 MacArthur “Genius” grant recipient Elizabeth Streb, action engineers intertwine the studies of dance, athletics, boxing, rodeo, the circus, and Hollywood stunt-work. The result is a bristling, machine-like dance theater, which combines daring with strict precision to tell the story of action. Performing alongside a swinging steel beam, falling bowling balls, and a moving floor, the STREB Company presents a tour de force unlike anything you’ve ever seen before.
CINCINNATI BALLET, Opera House  
November 23–27, 2016  
D.C. Premiere, The Nutcracker (Tchaikovsky/Morgan)  
With the Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra  
Cincinnati Ballet makes its full company debut at the Kennedy Center with The Nutcracker, a cherished holiday favorite presentation that has become an annual Cincinnati-area tradition. This bright and colorful production includes elaborate scenery, stage effects, and acrobatics. Premiered in 2011, this sweet adventure features choreography by Artistic Director Victoria Morgan, scenic design by John Ezell, costumes by Carrie Robbins, and lighting by Trad A. Burns.

AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE, Opera House  
January 25–29, 2017  
Swan Lake (Tchaikovsky/Petipa and Ivanov/McKenzie)  
With the Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra  
Set to Tchaikovsky’s glorious score, with choreography by Kevin McKenzie after Marius Petipa and Lev Ivanov, Swan Lake’s romantic tale of ill-fated passion, dreamlike transformation, and ultimate forgiveness is often considered the world’s most beloved ballet. American Ballet Theatre returns for its annual engagement with this classic production, last seen at the Kennedy Center in 2009, featuring lavish costumes and spectacular sets evoking a lakeside Renaissance court.

MARIINSKY BALLET, Opera House  
January 31–February 5, 2017  
D.C. Premiere, The Little Humpbacked Horse (Shchedrin/Ratmansky)  
With the Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra  
With colorful sets and costumes, the Mariinsky Ballet returns to the Kennedy Center for its 15th annual engagement to present choreographer Alexei Ratmansky’s charming and contemporary take on the classic Russian fairy tale of The Little Humpbacked Horse. Using a 1960 score by Russian composer Rodion Shchedrin as the foundation of the ballet, a score dedicated to ballerina Maya Plisetskaya, this full-length production offers a compelling mix of modern concepts and classical ballet, showcasing plenty of personality, humor, and creativity.

ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER, Opera House  
February 7–12, 2017  
Led by Artistic Director Robert Battle, the Company makes its annual Kennedy Center appearance with seven performances in the Opera House, each of which include Ailey’s Revelations, referred to by critics as being “choreographically perfect.” Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater has earned a reputation as one of the finest international ambassadors of American culture, promoting the uniqueness of the African-American cultural experience and the preservation and enrichment of American modern dance. The company has made frequent appearances at the Kennedy Center, dating back to the opening performance in 1971 in the world premiere of Leonard Bernstein’s Mass choreographed by Alvin Ailey. In 2014, Robert Battle accepted The Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation’s highest civilian honor, on behalf of Alvin Ailey, who received the award posthumously. Additional repertoire will be announced at a later date.
LES BALLETS TROCKADERO DE MONTE CARLO, Opera House
March 21 & 22, 2017
Swan Lake Act II: Le Lac Des Cygnes, Esmeralda pas de six
With the Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra
Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo—the all-male dance troupe that dances en pointe—makes a triumphant company debut in the Kennedy Center Opera House accompanied by the full Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra. Presenting a playful, entertaining view of traditional classical ballet in parody form with comedy achieved by incorporating and exaggerating the conventions and incongruities of serious dance, the company will perform traditionally beloved ballet classics in their signature twist such as Swan Lake Act II: Le Lac Des Cygnes, and Esmeralda pas de six. Additional repertoire to be announced at a later date.

HAMBURG BALLET, Opera House
March 28–April 2, 2017
D.C. Premiere, The Little Mermaid (Auerbach/Neumeier)
With the Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra
The Hamburg Ballet returns to the Kennedy Center after an absence of 13 years with Hans Christian Andersen’s epic tale of love and loss, The Little Mermaid. With choreography and sets as well as costumes and light design by company artistic director John Neumeier, this contemporary retelling of the beloved fairy tale, written by Andersen in 1837, is a fantastical and dark tale that contrasts a fanciful underwater world with the complexities of life on dry land. The story of a young woman who risks everything for love, Neumeier’s version masterfully interweaves the story with elements of Andersen’s biography, making the writer a figure in the ballet. Although armed with striking costumes and scenery, inspired in part by traditional Japanese theater, this production is not a children’s fairy tale, instead exploring themes of alienation, loss, and rejection with stunning and sumptuous results.

DEMO: Song & Dance, Eisenhower Theater
April 2017 (Date TBD)
Artists from different genres will come together for a performance examining the intimate interplay between the intertwined pillars of the performing arts: song and dance. Programming to be announced at a later date.

URBAN BUSH WOMEN, Eisenhower Theater
April 7 & 8, 2017
Walking with ‘Trane
Urban Bush Women (UBW) returns to the Kennedy Center for the first time since 2008, bringing their signature style of vivid, strong, and intelligent dance to the Eisenhower Theater. Founded by Jawole Willa Jo Zollar, Urban Bush Women (UBW) weaves contemporary dance, music, and text with the history, culture, and spiritual traditions of the African Diaspora. Walking with ‘Trane is an evening-length piece created by co-choreographers Jawole Willa Jo Zollar and Samantha Speis and dramaturg Talvin Wilks in collaboration with the company. Offering two unique experiences, SIDE A and SIDE B, Walking with ‘Trane is inspired by the musical life and spiritual journey of mid-century jazz musician and composer John Coltrane. It features eye-catching projections, lightning design, and live music played by Grammy Award®–winning jazz pianist George Caldwell. Walking with ‘Trane was previously developed and workshoped at
The Dance Center at Columbia College Chicago prior to its world premiere in September 2015 at Opening Night Performances at Florida State University.

**BALLET ACROSS AMERICA, Opera House**
**April 18–23, 2017**

**Part of the John F. Kennedy Centennial Celebration**
**With the Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra**
The Kennedy Center celebrates innovation and diversity in American ballet with the return of its week-long *Ballet Across America* series, last seen in 2013. Illustrating the most exciting, creative dance happening across America today, this year’s program is curated by major stars of the ballet world: dancer-choreographer Justin Peck and principal dancer Misty Copeland, who will explore ideals central to the Center’s celebration of JFK’s Centennial, presenting works reflecting themes such as innovation, courage, freedom, justice, and service on top of the series-wide exploration of American ballet. With artist centric programming, the hope, excitement, and thrills of dance on today’s stages are seen with featured companies including The Joffrey Ballet with Christopher Wheeldon’s *Fool’s Paradise*, and making their Kennedy Center debuts: Nashville Ballet with *The Ben Folds Project*, L.A. Dance Project with Benjamin Millipied’s *Hearts and Arrows*, Kyle Abraham/Abraham.In.Motion with Abraham’s *The Gettin’*, which includes live music on stage, Complexions Contemporary Ballet, and award-winning choreographer Jeremy McQueen with a brand new work as part of his The Black Iris Project. A gala program with special guest performances will open the week.

**NEW YORK CITY BALLET, Opera House**
**June 6-11, 2017**

**Two Repertory Programs**, to include Washington, D.C. premieres by Justin Peck and Christopher Wheeldon
**And such Balanchine masterpieces as *The Four Temperaments* (Hindemith/Balanchine)**
**And additional works to be announced**
**With the New York City Ballet Orchestra**
Returning to the Kennedy Center for its annual appearance, New York City Ballet brings two repertory programs, which will include Washington, D.C. premieres by Justin Peck and Christopher Wheeldon, and George Balanchine’s *The Four Temperaments*. New York City Ballet is one of the foremost dance companies in the world, with a roster of more than 90 dancers and an unparalleled repertory of modern masterpieces. The Company was founded in 1948 by the legendary choreographer George Balanchine and arts patron Lincoln Kirstein, and quickly became world-renowned for its athletic, contemporary style, and a repertory of original ballets that has forever changed the face of classical dance. Under the direction of Ballet Master in Chief Peter Martins and Executive Director Katherine Brown, NYCB is committed to promoting creative excellence and nurturing a new generation of dancers and choreographers. Additional programming to be announced at a later date.

**NATIONAL DANCE DAY, Millennium Stage**
**July 29, 2017**
National Dance Day, a free all-day event celebrating the art form, takes place at the Kennedy Center for the fourth year in a row. Launched in 2010 by *So You Think You Can Dance* co-creator and Dizzy Feet Foundation co-president Nigel Lythgoe, National Dance Day is an annual
celebration that takes place on the last Saturday in July. This grassroots campaign encourages Americans to embrace dance as a fun and positive way to maintain good health and combat obesity. It was officially recognized in 2010 when Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton introduced a resolution declaring the last Saturday in July to be the country’s official National Dance Day. Programming to be announced at a later date.

ABOUT BALLET AT THE KENNEDY CENTER
Since opening its doors in 1971, the Kennedy Center has presented the world’s leading ballet companies and ballet dancers each season. No other venue in the United States presents as many major international ballet companies annually. In addition to performances, patrons can attend Ballet 360° lectures, and Explore the Arts open rehearsals. The Kennedy Center offers a number of educational and training opportunities for ballet. The Kennedy Center Ballet Class Series offers advanced high school ballet students the unique chance to participate in master classes with teachers from the nationally and internationally renowned ballet companies performing at the Kennedy Center. Since 1993, ballet students from around the country have traveled to the nation’s capital for Exploring Ballet with Suzanne Farrell, a three-week residency for dancers ages 14–18 with at least five years of ballet training. The summer intensive is held annually and accepts both international students and students from across the United States. During the three-week period, students take two ballet technique classes a day with Ms. Farrell, six days a week. Exploring Ballet for Adults, held twice yearly, is a two-hour workshop for adults with little or no previous ballet training. The Suzanne Farrell Ballet, the Center’s own company, has performed annually at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. since 2001, and tours both nationally and internationally. Celebrating its 15th season in 2016–2017, the company has more than 40 ballets in its repertoire, including works by Ms. Farrell’s mentors George Balanchine, Maurice Béjart, and Jerome Robbins.

ABOUT CONTEMPORARY DANCE AT THE KENNEDY CENTER
Contemporary dance has been an integral part of the Kennedy Center since Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater performed at its grand opening in 1971. Each season, the Center presents world-class contemporary dance companies from across the United States and around the globe. Dozens of free contemporary dance performances are offered to the public throughout the year on the Millennium Stage, the Kennedy Center’s free daily performance series and archived on the Center’s website. The Kennedy Center’s Local Dance Commissioning Project supports the local dance community by nurturing the creation of new dance work and presenting that new work to a wide audience via the Millennium Stage. The Center’s Education department offers student performances, workshops for teachers, and pre-professional workshops for students centered around dance. Throughout the season, audiences can take advantage of free post-performance discussions, lectures, open rehearsals and demonstrations through the Kennedy Center’s Explore the Arts program.

TICKET INFORMATION
To receive subscription information by mail, call the Subscription Office at (202) 416-8500. New and renewing subscribers may purchase series subscriptions in May 2016. Groups of 20 or
more may contact Kennedy Center Group Sales at (202) 416-8400. Dates for sales of individual tickets will be announced at a later date.

**MYTIX**
The Kennedy Center’s MyTix program offers patrons 18–30 years old and active duty members of the armed services to join for special discount offers and chances to win free tickets. For more information, visit [www.kennedy-center.org/mytix/](http://www.kennedy-center.org/mytix/).

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