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The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts announces

Yearlong Celebration Marking Centennial of John F. Kennedy’s Birth

As JFK’s “Living Memorial,” Center to offer a wide range of programs reflective of late President’s vision, ideals, and legacy from April 2016–May 2017 alongside forward-looking initiatives reflecting contemporary spirit of America

Yo-Yo Ma to Serve as Artistic Advisor At Large, Advocating and Fostering JFK Ideals through Programming and Public Engagement

Hip Hop becomes a core programming area with Q-Tip Appointed its first Artistic Director of Hip Hop Culture

(WASHINGTON)—The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts today announced an expansive, yearlong initiative marking and honoring the 100th anniversary of the birth of its namesake, the late President John F. Kennedy (JFK), and initiatives reaching far into the future. Under the visionary leadership of Kennedy Center President Deborah F. Rutter, the Kennedy Center is revitalizing and focusing its mission at a pivotal time in its history—seeking to be an institution that explores, challenges, and truly reflects the contemporary spirit of America. Through a range of creative and dynamic programming—from performances to public initiatives to interactive events—the Kennedy Center aims to evolve and transform the institution to
strongly connect with the ideals and legacy imparted by America’s 35th President. Presenting and collaborating with many of today’s leading artists, and working across genres, the Center aims to be a home for classical and contemporary arts. Centennial programs are designed to encourage dialogue and personal creativity, highlight the role of culture and artists in society, bring people together, and connect artists and audiences in more powerful ways—goals long championed by acclaimed cellist and humanitarian Yo-Yo Ma, who begins a three-year relationship with the Center as its newly appointed Artistic Advisor At Large.

“We want to do more than just commemorate a great President on the 100th anniversary of his birth,” commented Kennedy Center President Deborah F. Rutter. “It is important to all of us here at the Center, that we live, breathe, and demonstrate his legacy, and be guided by the essence of his remarkably enduring contributions: idealism, hope, and empowerment. Through our artists and bold, creative initiatives, the Kennedy Center is also blazing a path toward the future. Already we have made huge strides, and this season is designed to encourage our institution to become more and more a true reflection of our rich, diverse culture and the world in which we live.”

“I am an immigrant; one whose first experience of the United States came during John F. Kennedy’s presidency,” stated Yo-Yo Ma. “Many of the ideals his administration represented—championing the arts and sciences, empowering youth through education and service—became mine at that time, and I hold them still. It is an honor and a privilege to be celebrating the centennial of JFK’s birth at this great institution that commemorates him.”

The underpinning of the JFK Centennial is a creative vision inspired and informed by the ideals of John F. Kennedy himself: Courage, Freedom, Justice, Service, and Gratitude—quintessentially American values that represent the aspirational best of the country’s character. These important ideals, infused with creativity, serve as a visionary springboard for a renewed, long-range way of thinking at the Kennedy Center. The Center will champion these ideals through artistic and audience-based initiatives organized around three broad themes. “Celebrating the Man and His Legacy,” “Citizen Artistry,” and “Playing it Forward.”

As part of “Celebrating the Man and his Legacy,” the Center presents IRELAND 100: Celebrating a Century of Irish Arts & Culture, which will feature performance of Tiny Plays (May 24 & 25, 2016), staged readings of short 500+ word plays reflecting Kennedy’s legacy that were submitted by both Irish and American residents as part of a playwriting challenge. Also part
of the IRELAND 100 Festival, on May 26, 2016, the Center presents three documentary film screenings chronicling President Kennedy’s historic visit to Ireland in 1963.

The Centennial celebrations will officially kick off with an evening ceremony and special Millennium Stage performance on May 29, 2016 (Kennedy’s 99th birthday). Centennial events will culminate with an Open House the weekend of May 29, 2017, when the institution will throw open its doors for a free, festival showcasing street arts, Hip Hop, and skate culture, as well as classical and contemporary arts, in spaces inside and outside the building.

“Citizen Artistry,” which embraces the idea of using the arts to bring about positive change in people’s lives, will be explored throughout the season, starting with the third annual Arts Summit on April 25, 2016. Co-curated by Ma and fellow Artistic Advisor At Large Renée Fleming, the Summit brings together thought leaders from across the arts and related fields to engage in conversation focused on the enduring power of President Kennedy’s ideals and the importance of individual participation. Through a series of interactive events, the Kennedy Center will invite the public to respond to President Kennedy’s call, finding their own place and voice at the Center, and actively taking part in the cultural and civic life of their communities, the nation, and the world.

“Playing It Forward” moves the artistic and civic dialogue firmly into the present, with a range of artists whose work across disciplines shapes and reflects our society today. The Center’s yearlong celebration, comprising more than 30 individual events, including special JFK-related, institution-wide commissions, will echo and champion John F. Kennedy, while showing how artists are carrying Kennedy’s timeless ideals forward:

- Hip Hop, the uniquely American culture rooted in innovation and courage and achieving ever-widening global impact, will expand to become a core area of programming at the Center. MC/rapper, record producer, and Hip Hop pioneer Q-Tip joins the Kennedy Center as its first Artistic Director of Hip Hop Culture, with programs starting in the summer of 2016.

- Terence Blanchard will be an Artist in Residence during the 2016–2017 season. With Terence Blanchard All-In, the multi-Grammy Award®-winning artist and educator comments on social justice in contemporary America with Breathless (a nod to Eric Garner’s “I Can’t Breathe” quote) with contemporary electronic group, the E-Collective;
Bud, Not Buddy, his work scored for jazz ensemble and actors; and collaborations with D.C. Public Schools.

- Washington National Opera presents Blanchard’s Champion, an opera about Emile Griffith, the welterweight world champion and closeted gay man whose story addresses violence, gay prejudice, and racism in 21st-century America, as well as Jake Heggie’s Dead Man Walking, the emotional and though-provoking opera based on Sister Helen Prejean’s relationship with a Death Row inmate.

- ¡Que Viva Cesar! Celebrating the legacy of Civil Rights activist and labor leader Cesar Chavez, an intimate look at the man and the myth, will explore the intersection in Chavez and Kennedy’s fight for justice and civil rights.

- (IN)SECURITY or Jack and Niki Do the Cold War Tango, a piece by Company E, will invoke the story of Kennedy’s relationship with Soviet Premier Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev.

- The Center will present tributes to civil rights activists and remarkable artists Abbey Lincoln, Pete Seeger, and Nina Simone.

- In a weeklong National Symphony Orchestra residency, Kennedy Center Artist-in-Residence Joshua Bell performs and collaborates on a host of artistic and educational events.

- JFK-inspired programs will also feature the work of playwrights, choreographers, opera composers and librettists, emerging poets, and international choirs who hail from countries where Kennedy’s Peace Corps have helped to promote peace and diplomacy.

(A complete listing of scheduled JFK Centennial performances and events follows below.
Further projects and programming, including a variety of companion programs inviting public participation, to be announced at a later date.)
JFK-Themed Programs *(Chronological)*

KENNEDY CENTER ARTS SUMMIT
April 25, 2016
Theater Lab
**Co-Hosts: Yo-Yo Ma and Renée Fleming**
*In association with the Aspen Institute Arts Program and Citizen University*

The third consecutive Arts Summit is an annual convening each spring, hosted by the Kennedy Center, and designed to bring together thought leaders from the arts and related fields for provocative conversation and connection. The 2016 Summit, curated by the Center’s new Artistic Advisors At Large, Yo-Yo Ma and Renée Fleming, will focus on Citizen Artistry, the idea of using the arts to influence positive change in people’s lives. This concept will be examined through its application in today’s society, and through the lens of ideals JFK set forth for our country: courage, freedom, justice, service, and gratitude. The program will serve as a blueprint and launching pad for both the Kennedy Center’s celebration of JFK’s 100th birthday in the 2016–2017 season, and for new collaborations and initiatives among participants.

**TINY PLAYS FOR IRELAND AND AMERICA**
*Part of the festival, IRELAND 100: Celebrating a Century of Irish Arts & Culture*

**A Playwriting Challenge, performed by Fishamble: The New Play Company**
May 24 & 25, 2016
Terrace Gallery
*Tiny Plays for Ireland and America* is based on a 2011 playwriting initiative hosted in Ireland by Fishamble: The New Play Company. Fishamble invited Irish citizens to write and submit “tiny plays” reflecting on contemporary life in Ireland, and produced 50 of these plays to great acclaim. During the IRELAND 100 Festival, Fishamble will perform 20 of these Irish tiny plays, along with six new American tiny plays as staged readings, selected from the Kennedy Center’s open call for submissions. The Kennedy Center’s playwriting challenge invited people of all ages from across the United States to write their own tiny play of 500 words or less in celebration of, and reflection on, President John F. Kennedy’s life and legacy.
*A JFK Centennial Commission*

**PRESIDENT KENNEDY IN IRELAND: DOCUMENTARY FILM SCREENINGS**
*Part of the festival, IRELAND 100: Celebrating a Century of Irish Arts & Culture*
May 28, 2016 at 4:00 p.m.
Family Theater
President John F. Kennedy’s visit to Ireland in the summer of 1963 was widely seen as one of the defining moments in modern Irish history. A state less than 50 years old at the time, Ireland welcomed the President like a native son, and as a symbol of the hopes and aspirations of a new era. Three documentary screenings will be presented by Dr. Harvey O’Brien, Member of the Irish Film Institute Board of Directors, and author of *The Real Ireland: The Evolution of Ireland in Documentary Film*. Documentaries slated for screening include *Amharc Eireann Newsreel*, chronicling this watershed moment; *The Columban Fathers Present President Kennedy in Ireland*, a contemporary film celebrating the visit and the links between Irish and U.S. cultures; and *John F. Kennedy in the Island of Dreams*, a 30th anniversary film relating Kennedy’s visit to
the dream of modern Ireland and its reality at a moment when the country was beginning to make an impact on the world stage.

**JFK 100TH OPENING CEREMONY: Celebrating the past to awaken the future**  
*Part of the festival, IRELAND 100: Celebrating a Century of Irish Arts & Culture*  
**May 29, 2016, 6:00 p.m.**  
Kennedy Center Millennium Stage  
For generation and centuries, America has shaped and continues to shape its culture through dance, music, theater, literature, visual arts, science, and technology. We are reminded that the lives and experiences from all segments of American society strengthen our culture. On May 29, President Kennedy’s 99th birthday, the Kennedy Center will feature performances by artists from across genres, culminating with the participation of luminaries and young artists unveiling a special installation commissioned by the Center for the Centennial Celebration of President Kennedy.

**DICK GREGORY: AN EVENING OF COMEDY & JAZZ**  
*Part of the District of Comedy Festival*  
**June 25, 2016 at 7 p.m.**  
Terrace Theater  
Social satirist and comedy legend Dick Gregory headlines a special evening of comedy and jazz that pays homage to a period in the 1960s where comedians and jazz musicians shared the same stage. At venues such as New York City’s Village Gate, Richard Pryor and Redd Foxx routinely opened for Miles Davis and Betty Carter. The evening will highlight a thread shared by both genres: the artist’s unique ability to tell stories. Both comedians and jazz musicians carefully craft their performances, building up to a punchline or the climax of a song to provoke audience reaction.

**BRAVE NEW VOICES YOUTH SUMMIT**  
**July 12–16, 2016**  
Family Theater & Concert Hall  
Part of the Center’s deeper commitment to Hip Hop programming and exploration of the spoken word art form, Brave New Voices is an international festival and collaboration with Youth Speaks, a major youth spoken word organization. The 19th Annual Brave New Voices International Youth Poetry Slam Festival will convene the most outstanding young poets from around the world for five days of workshops, slams, showcases, community service, and civic events.

**LOCAL DANCE COMMISSIONING PROJECT**  
**September and October 2016**  
Millennium Stage  
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. *A JFK Centennial Commission*
COMPANY E: (IN)SECURITY or JACK AND NIKI DO THE COLD WAR TANGO

Dates TBD

Millennium Stages

Using both Millennium Stages simultaneously, Company E presents a work of dance, music, film, narrative, and history to invoke the story of one of the world’s most turbulent times through the relationship of the two men who played crucial roles. The story of President John F. Kennedy and Soviet Premier Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev is one of a world at once on the brink and poised for breakthrough—a story of hope, power, and possibility leavened by the real risk of Armageddon. It is also a depiction of strength and insecurity at a time when the geopolitical tango was inevitably, inseparably danced by two men from the most different backgrounds imaginable. One stage portrays the relationship through Soviet eyes, the other through American eyes. Through metaphorical interpretation, (IN)Security depicts the highs and lows, the moments of crisis, and the attempts at tolerance and understanding that characterized the relationship between two world leaders.

ALL THE WAY LIVE!

*Part of Theater for Young Audiences*

October 12–16, 2016

Family Theater

A world premiere Kennedy Center co-commission with B-Fly Entertainment, All the Way Live! is written and performed by Baye Harrell and Paige Hernandez. Hip Hop performers collaborate on the spot to “remix” everything from folk tales to classical art. The remix unfolds through dance, poetry, improv, and rapping. In this interactive show, history is revived through the lens of Hip Hop in which anything can come to life with a simple beat, a rhythm, and a rhyme. *Part of the Kennedy Center Springboard program. Age 7 and up. A JFK Centennial Commission*

NSO YOUNG PEOPLE’S CONCERTS

October 18–20, 2016; April 25–28, 2017

Concert Hall

Seven days of family-friendly performances will echo President Kennedy’s contributions to space exploration, including a space-themed program reflecting his ambitions of putting a man on the moon. *A JFK Centennial Commission*

¡QUE VIVA CESAR! *Celebrating the legacy of Civil Rights activist and labor leader Cesar Chavez*

October 13, 2016

Eisenhower Theater

The intersection of the work and ideals of Chavez and John F. Kennedy in the fight for civil rights and social justice will be explored in this fascinating and eclectic evening. A mix of spoken word, theater, music, and visual projections of historic photographs will be integrated within a lively panel discussion with those who knew and worked with Chavez. Panelists will include: Delores Huerta, Luis Valdez, Cynthia Telles, Ph.D., Andy Zermeño, Barbara Carrasco, Dan Guerrero, La Santa Cecilia, and original actors from El Teatro Campesino.
TERENCE BLANCHARD featuring THE E-COLLECTIVE: BREATHELESS
October 22, 2016
The Crossroads Club
Through his contemporary electronic group, the E-Collective, and its latest recording, Breathless (Blue Note), trumpeter Terence Blanchard comments on social justice in contemporary America. The CD title acknowledges the Eric Garner “I Can’t Breathe” quote, which has become a rallying cry to protestors worldwide; following Garner’s death in 2014—the result of a chokehold by an NYPD police officer—the incident sparked an international movement against police brutality. Of the recording, The Guardian says, “Blanchard produces consistently diverse contemporary jazz, but also addresses wider issues, sometimes via spoken addresses on civil rights and justice. He aims to do both on this upbeat groove and funk set, and it works a charm… [and] certainly has its thrilling moments.” Connected to the DCPS Residency & Master Classes, and Terence Blanchard’s All-In.

TEACH-IN: REMIXING THE ART OF SOCIAL CHANGE: A HIP HOP APPROACH
November 3–5, 2016
Terrace Gallery
Presented by the D.C. Hip Hop nonprofit called Words, Beats & Life, this Teach-In event is designed to outline the tools and resources necessary to develop curriculum, programs, and work (artistic and scholarly) based on Hip Hop Culture. The Teach-In is intended for participants who wish to move beyond Hip Hop as a purely aesthetic art and use it as a vehicle to build organizations and educate youth, families, and their communities through the arts. The Teach-In will include Top Notch 2016, a 3 vs. 3 b-boy competition that is part of the annual Words, Beats & Life Teach-In, representing another program in the Center’s further investment in Hip Hop Culture.

BUD, NOT BUDDY
January 12–16, 2017
Eisenhower Theater
Composed and performed by Terence Blanchard
Bud, Not Buddy, a world premiere Kennedy Center commission, is an adaptation by Kirsten Greenidge from Christopher Paul Curtis’ Newbery Medal and Coretta Scott King’s award-winning book of the same name, about the 10-year-old Bud who is on his own in Flint, Michigan, and on a mission to find his father. With music composed and performed by five-time Grammy Award®-winning jazz musician Terence Blanchard, Bud, Not Buddy features a 15-18 piece jazz ensemble that accompanies the cast throughout the play, weaving the importance of music even more tightly into Bud’s journey. His mother left behind only one clue: flyers advertising Herman E. Calloway and his band, the Dusky Devastators of the Depression. For age 9 and up. Part of Terence Blanchard All-In.

AMERICAN OPERA INITIATIVE FESTIVAL
Washington National Opera
January 13–15, 2017
Family Theater
To celebrate the fifth season of the American Opera Initiative, WNO’s comprehensive commissioning program to stimulate, enrich, and ensure the future of contemporary American
opera, WNO, for the first time, will host an American Opera Initiative Festival across a three-day weekend. Featuring three 20-minute world premiere operas based on John F. Kennedy, each composer-librettist team workshops their operas throughout the development cycle at the Kennedy Center. Creative teams have the unique experience of witnessing their work performed on a Kennedy Center stage, and join artists and audiences in a post-performance Q&A session. A JFK Centennial Commission.

LET FREEDOM RING CELEBRATION (MLK DAY OBSERVANCE)
January 16, 2017
Concert Hall
In its annual musical tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the Kennedy Center and Georgetown University present the Let Freedom Ring Choir with a featured guest artist. The event will include the presentation of Georgetown’s John Thompson, Jr. Legacy of a Dream Award to emerging local leaders, identifying talent among the city’s most inspirational community leaders who are solving key social issues and re-shaping the city.

NSO: JOHN F. KENNEDY CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION
January 19 & 22, 2017
Concert Hall
Gianandrea Noseda, conductor and NSO music director designate National Symphony Orchestra
One of two subscription concerts in the 2016–2017 welcoming the NSO’s Music Director Designate Gianandrea Noseda, this program includes All-American repertoire featuring Copland’s Lincoln Portrait, Stravinsky’s arrangement of The Star-Spangled Banner, suites from John Williams’s film music for JFK and Lincoln, Inauguration Fanfare by Copland, and Gershwin’s Rhapsody in Blue.

ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER
February 7–12, 2017
Opera House
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.

JOSHUA BELL: FESTIVAL AT THE KENNEDY CENTER
February 12–17, 2017
Concert Hall & other venues
Grammy Award® winner Joshua Bell joins the Kennedy Center and National Symphony Orchestra as a 2016–2017 Artist-in-Residence. Performing and collaborating across artistic and educational mediums, Bell will explore the depths of artistic possibilities examining synergies between music, dance, the culinary arts, literature, education, and technology. Featured events will include an evening with Gourmet Symphony, a collaboration with Brooklyn’s Dance Heginbotham, a recital with literature celebrating John F. Kennedy’s Centennial, and a family concert based on the bestselling children’s book The Man with the Violin.

**DEAD MAN WALKING**
Washington National Opera
February 25–March 11, 2017
Opera House
Music by Jake Heggie; Libretto by Terrence McNally
*Dead Man Walking* is the first of two WNO programs in the 2016–2017 season showcasing compelling stories that grapple with the issues of justice, courage, and freedom. The opera is based on Sister Helen Prejean’s 1993 memoir, which tells of her time working with Death Row inmates at Louisiana State Penitentiary, and of a particular relationship she developed with one of the inmates. *Dead Man Walking* explores the human conflicts posed by society’s demands for vengeance (the death penalty) and the Christian imperative for forgiveness and love. The emotional, lyrical score by Jake Heggie is widely regarded as a modern classic, while Terrence McNally’s balanced libretto has been called one of the most perfect ever written for an American opera. Tied to Kennedy’s strong opposition to the death penalty, this profound work reflects social activism and the fight for human dignity against all odds.

**CHAMPION**
Washington National Opera
March 4–18, 2017
Opera House
Music by Terence Blanchard; Libretto by Michael Cristofer
In *Champion*, five-time Grammy®–winning composer Terence Blanchard uses jazz as the basis for his cinematic, groundbreaking score. Pulitzer Prize winner Michael Cristofer’s libretto deftly tells the story of Emile Griffith, a professional boxer from the U.S. Virgin Islands who threw a fatal punch in the boxing ring in 1962 (during Kennedy’s presidency) after being taunted for his sexuality by his rival. Using a diverse soundscape along with powerful multimedia elements, *Champion* explores issues of freedom, courage, race, sexuality, and self-discovery. *Part of Terence Blanchard All-In.*

**SHIFT: A FESTIVAL OF AMERICAN ORCHESTRAS**
March 28–April 1, 2017
Concert Hall & Various D.C. Venues
Debuting in the spring of 2017, *SHIFT: A Festival of American Orchestras*, is a weeklong spotlight on North American orchestras of all sizes in the nation’s capital. Co-presented by the Kennedy Center and Washington Performing Arts, *SHIFT* celebrates the vitality, unique identity, and artistry of orchestras by creating an immersive and inclusive festival experience. Four orchestras have been selected for the 2017 festival: Boulder Philharmonic (March 28), North Carolina Symphony (March 29), Atlanta Symphony Orchestra (March 31), and the Brooklyn-
based ensemble, The Knights (April 1). In addition to compelling and diverse full-orchestra performances in the Concert Hall, each of the four orchestras will engage in a mini-residency, interacting with the surrounding community through educational and outreach activities, symposia, and community events in venues throughout Washington, D.C. The inaugural SHIFT festival features repertoire by nine living composers, two world premieres, and numerous D.C.-area premieres inspired by themes of nature, Americana, creation and creativity, and choral influences.

**URBAN BUSH WOMEN: WALKING WITH ‘TRANE**

**April 7–8, 2017**

**Eisenhower Theater**

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 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 workshopped at The Dance Center at Columbia College Chicago prior to its world premiere in September 2015 at Opening Night Performances at Florida State University.

**KENNEDY CENTER AMERICAN COLLEGE THEATER FESTIVAL**

**Co-commissioned JFK-themed Plays with Universities around the Country**

**April 18–22, 2017**

**Family Theater, Terrace Gallery & Theater Lab**

“The New American Frontier is the New America”

Modeled on the Big Ten Theatre Consortium shared-commission concept, eight or more higher education institutions will join the Kennedy Center to collectively co-commission a JFK-themed new theatrical work around the concept of “The New American Frontier is the New America.” Participating institutions will have a hand in the development and/or expose their students to the process of developing and working on a new play. Commissioned plays will be large in scale and scope, with substantial roles written for women and students of color. The commissioned playwrights will be asked to write in honor of the legacy of John F. Kennedy on themes of courage, freedom, justice, service, and gratitude.

**PETE SEEGER TRIBUTE CONCERT**

**April 15, 2017**

**Concert Hall**

In collaboration with the Grammy Museum, the Kennedy Center pays tribute to iconic American folk singer-songwriter Pete Seeger in a special performance, part of the JFK Centennial. Best known for his contributions to political activism of the 1960s and 1970s and to the American folk music revival with hits like “Where Have All the Flowers Gone?” and “Turn, Turn, Turn,” Pete Seeger was devoted to such causes as international disarmament, civil rights, and
environmental awareness. Program and artists for this special tribute concert will be announced at a later date.

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

**ABBNEY LINCOLN TRIBUTE**  
May 4, 2017  
**Eisenhower Theater**  
Under the musical direction of Grammy Award®-winning drummer, composer, and producer Terri Lyne Carrington, iconic jazz vocalist Dee Dee Bridgewater headlines a celebration of the life and legacy of Abbey Lincoln (1930–2010). The legendary songstress, civil rights activist, and NEA Jazz Master was beloved for her powerful and unique voice, as well as for pursing her art with integrity and turning music into a genuine celebration of life. This performance highlights President Kennedy’s emphasis on justice, which is symbolized in Abbey Lincoln’s outspoken and endless fight for civil rights in the 1960s. *Part of the Mary Lou Williams Jazz Festival*. Full lineup to be announced at a later date.

**KENNEDY CENTER ARTS SUMMIT**  
May 6, 2017  
**Theater Lab**  
The 2017 Kennedy Center Arts Summit continues to explore stories of Citizen Artistry from across the country through the unique lens of John F. Kennedy’s ideals: courage, freedom, justice, service, and gratitude. During 2016 and 2017, the Center will follow the stories of a select group of Citizen Artist Fellows as they work in their home communities, and in May 2017, a new cohort of Fellows will be welcomed at the event.

**MESHELL NDEGEOCELLO: POUR UNE ÂME SOUVERAINE**  
May 13, 2017  
**The Crossroads Club**
Vocalist and bassist Meshell Ngdegeocello returns to the Kennedy Center following her 2013 star turn in the *Fats Waller Party*, with a tribute performance to singer-songwriter and civil rights activist Nina Simone (1933–2003). With the release of her 2012 album, *Pour une Âme Souveraine: A Dedication to Nina Simone* (Naïve Label), Ngdegeocello brings her songs to life with deep emotionality and swift modern twists, honoring and preserving Simone’s legacy. This performance highlights President Kennedy’s value of courage, characterized through Nina Simone’s fervor for political activism and advocacy during the Civil Rights Era.

**DJ SPOOKY: REBIRTH OF A NATION**  
May 23, 2017  
Eisenhower Theater  
By Paul D. Miller aka DJ Spooky  
Featuring Sound Impact  
Conceived as a reimagining of director D.W. Griffith’s infamously racist 1915 silent film, *The Birth of a Nation*, DJ Spooky’s *Rebirth of a Nation* is a controversial and culturally significant project that examines how “…exploitation and political corruption still haunt the world to this day, but in radically different forms.” Today, more than a century since the release of *The Birth of a Nation*, the project continues to be presented internationally, engaging audiences in themes of civil rights and freedom, seen through the lens of DJ Spooky’s unique art of remixing. Originally commissioned in 2004 by the Lincoln Center Festival, Spoleto Festival USA, Wiener Festwochen, and the Festival d’Automne a Paris, the project has been performed around the globe. The Kennedy Center debut of *Rebirth of a Nation* will feature multiple live video projections and D.C.-based music ensemble Sound Impact.

**NSO CONCERT HONORING JOHN F. KENNEDY**  
May 24, 2017  
Concert Hall  
This focal point of the Center’s tribute to President Kennedy features Yo-Yo Ma and Mason Bates in a Kennedy Center world premiere commission. *A JFK Centennial Commission.*

**KENNEDY CENTER OPEN HOUSE**  
Weekend of May 29, 2017  
Campus-wide  
In celebration of John F. Kennedy’s 100th birthday, the Kennedy Center opens its doors wider than ever with an Open House. This free, transcultural festival will showcase the street arts culture, Hip Hop, and skate culture, as well as classical and contemporary arts. *Programming and center-wide activities to be announced at a later date.*

**/peh-LO-tah/**  
June 5–11, 2017  
Family Theater  
/peh-LO-tah/ is a full-evening performance work linking the sport of soccer (often called “the beautiful game”) to local and global economic hierarchies, fan behaviors, political allegiances, and social practices. /peh-LO-tah/ layers poetic text, movement, visuals, and music into a fresh theatrical form based on Hip-Hop aesthetics. /peh-LO-tah/ features verbally and physically
energetic performances, grounded in personal experience, while embracing social and global
consciousness. Written by Marc Bamuthi Joseph. *For age 10 and up.*

**JFK CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION AND THE SERENADE! FESTIVAL**  
**June 29–July 3, 2017**  
**Millennium Stage**

In conjunction with the Kennedy Center, Classical Movements will produce a grand choral
celebration of President Kennedy’s legacy showcasing choirs from countries where his Peace
Corps have helped to promote peace and diplomacy, as well as select choirs from the United
States. Additionally, Classical Movements will commission composers from the visiting choirs’
countries to create pieces in line with the spirit of President Kennedy’s work promoting
international peace and diplomacy. This will be part of *Serenade! Washington Choral Festival*,
the popular, well-established, annual event currently in its sixth year. *Includes a JFK Centennial
Commission.*

**ABOUT THE JOHN F. KENNEDY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS**

The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts is America’s living memorial to President
Kennedy. Under the leadership of Chairman David M. Rubenstein and President Deborah F.
Rutter, the nine theaters and stages of the nation’s busiest performing arts facility attract
audiences and visitors totaling 3 million people annually; Center-related touring productions,
television, and radio broadcasts welcome 40 million more.

Opening its doors on September 8, 1971, the Center presents the greatest performances of
music, dance, and theater; supports artists in the creation of new work; and serves the nation as a
leader in arts education. With its artistic affiliates, the National Symphony Orchestra and
Washington National Opera, the Center’s achievements as a commissioner, producer, and
nurturer of developing artists have resulted in more than 300 theatrical productions, and dozens
of new ballets, operas, and musical works.

Each year, millions of people nationwide take part in innovative, inclusive, and effective
education programs initiated by the Center, including school- and community-based residencies
and consultancies; age-appropriate performances and events for young people; career
development for young actors, dancers, singers, and instrumentalists; and professional learning
opportunities for teachers, teaching artists, and school administrators. These programs have
become models for communities across the country. The Center’s *Ensuring the Arts for Any
Given Child* program works with selected local school districts and seeks to provide a
comprehensive arts education to children K-8. The Center also has been at the forefront of
making the performing arts accessible to persons with disabilities, highlighted by the work
accomplished with its affiliate, VSA.

As part of the Kennedy Center’s Performing Arts for Everyone outreach program, the
Center stages more than 400 free performances of music, dance, and theater by artists from
throughout the world each year on the Center’s main stages, and every evening at 6 p.m. on the
Millennium Stage. The *Rubenstein Arts Access Program* expands the Center’s efforts to make
the arts accessible to children, to young adults, and to people who have little or limited ability to
attend and enjoy the performing arts, enabling audiences to engage in more ways, at more times,
and in more places than ever before.

For more information about the Kennedy Center, please visit [www.kennedy-center.org](http://www.kennedy-center.org)
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The Millennium Stage is brought to you by Target and the J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation.

The Millennium Stage was created and underwritten by James A. Johnson and Maxine Isaacs to make the performing arts accessible to everyone in fulfillment of the Kennedy Center's mission to its community and the nation.

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