The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts presents

**Voices of Our Nation: Celebrating the Choral Tradition**

June 9–14, 2014

Weeklong festival, in partnership with Chorus America, celebrates choral arts in a variety of unique performances

Highlights include
- A program led by choral superstar Eric Whitacre
- Pop-up performances at Metro stations throughout the region
- A unique sing-along event at the Smithsonian on the National Mall
- and more

(WASHINGTON, D.C.)—The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts presents *Voices of Our Nation: Celebrating the Choral Tradition*, a free weeklong initiative celebrating the rich diversity of choral artistry and featuring dozens of choruses from across the nation, June 9-14, 2014. The series is presented in cooperation with Chorus America, the nation’s leading advocacy, research, and leadership development organization that advances the choral field. As the culmination of the festival, the Kennedy Center and Chorus America are participating in a special event at the Smithsonian to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the national anthem. Most of the events of the festival, part of the Kennedy Center’s *Arts Across America* program, are free. A complete schedule appears below.

**VOICES OF OUR NATION: CITYWIDE OPENING EVENT**, Monday, June 9, 2014, 5 p.m. Throughout the Center and Washington, D.C.

*Voices of Our Nation: Celebrating the Choral Tradition* begins with a unique citywide event that fills the nation’s capital with choral music. From 5 to 8 p.m., dozens of choruses from the D.C. region will sing at sites all across the city. At the same time, many choruses perform at the Kennedy Center, including outside on the plaza, on the Metro shuttles, and at other locations

~ more ~
throughout the facility. The choruses perform a variety of styles from barbershop and madrigals to classical and gospel.

Performances at the Kennedy Center include:
5–5:15 p.m. Capital Hearings—Kennedy Center Plaza
5:20–5:35 p.m. Rock Creek Singers (Gay Men’s Chorus)—Millennium Stage South
5:40–5:55 p.m. 18th Street Singers—Millennium Stage South
6–6:15 p.m. Cantate Chamber Singers—Concert Hall Box Tier
6:20–6:35 p.m. Heritage Signature Chorale—Millennium Stage North
6:40–6:55 p.m. Heart of Maryland—Millennium Stage North
7–7:15 p.m. Zemer Chai Choir—Eisenhower Theater Box Tier
7:20–7:35 p.m. Glorystar Children’s Chorus—Kennedy Center Plaza
7:40–7:55 p.m. Children’s Chorus of Washington—Kennedy Center Plaza

In cooperation with MetroPerforms!, the performing arts component of Metro’s Art in Transit Program, these groups will perform at the following Metro stations:
5:30–6 p.m. MAXX Factor—Navy Yard-Ballpark
5:30–6 p.m. Six Degree Singers—Takoma
5:30–6 p.m. Fairfax Choral Society—L’Enfant Plaza
6–6:30 p.m. Coral Cantigas—King Street-Old Town
6–6:30 p.m. Thomas Circle Singers—Columbia Heights
6–6:30 p.m. Slaveya Vocal Ensemble—Duport Circle, North exit
6–6:30 p.m. Congressional Chorus—Eastern Market

Choirs will also perform at other locations throughout the city; more information will be announced in the coming weeks.

**OF THEE I SING,** Tuesday, June 10, 2014, 6 p.m. Millennium Stage
The nation’s armed forces have a long and distinguished choral tradition. This event presents an evening of choral music performed by the men and women of our armed forces, including the U.S. Air Force Singing Sergeants, U.S. Navy Sea Chanters, and U.S. Army Chorus.

**NEWSacred SONG ANTHOLOGY,** Wednesday, June 11, 2014, 6 p.m. Millennium Stage
Sacred music songwriter Rev. Nolan Williams, Jr. leads his Voices of Inspiration choir and a special assembly of singers from across the nation’s capital in singing signature arrangements of hymns, spirituals, and gospel songs that honor the choral tradition within the gospel community.

**CHORUS AMERICA 2014 CONFERENCE OPENING CONCERT: MADE IN AMERICA**
Wednesday, June 11, 2014, 7:30 p.m. Concert Hall
The Washington Chorus (Julian Wachner, Music Director) and the Choral Arts Society of Washington (Scott Tucker, Artistic Director) collaborate on a special concert with a Washington, D.C. focus featuring hundreds of singers in the combined choruses performing works of American composers, including celebrating the D.C. region’s rich African American musical heritage. The Children’s Chorus of Washington’s Concert Chorus (Joan Gregoryk, Founder and Artistic Director) is a guest ensemble for the concert. The program concludes with a concert version of Leonard Bernstein’s *Mass,* a work commissioned for the opening of the Kennedy Center in 1971. In addition to having a central place in the Kennedy Center’s choral festival, this concert marks the opening of Chorus America’s 2014 Conference, which brings chorus leaders
from across North America to Washington for four days of music, professional development, and networking. Tickets start at $25 and are available at the Kennedy Center Box Office, by calling (202) 467-4600 or (800) 444-1324, or online at www.kennedy-center.org

**NEW VOICES.** Thursday, June 12, 2014, 6 p.m. Millennium Stage
The World Children’s Chorus presents an evening of music showcasing the choral voice of youth.

**FOR BOOMERS AND BEYOND: CELEBRATING THE AGING VOICE**
Friday, June 13, 2014, 4 p.m. Family Theater
Creativity is alive and well at Encore, the nation’s largest choral organization for older adults. Encore celebrates the aging voice by providing a challenging choral environment while being attentive to the mature voice and body. Encore Creativity for Older Adults is dedicated to providing an excellent and accessible artistic environment for older adults, regardless of experience or ability, who seek arts education and performance opportunities under the guidance of a professional artist. This special symposium will include demonstrations of specific breathing exercises and well-designed vocal warm-ups appropriate for the aging voice.

**ERIC WHITACRE AND THE CROSSING.** Friday, June 13, 2014, 6 p.m. Millennium Stage
Join superstar choral composer and conductor Eric Whitacre, poet and lyricist Charles Anthony Silvestri, and The Crossing for a live event and webcast filled with music and inspiration. This hour-long session will feature a presentation by Whitacre about his work with the Virtual Choir, insights by Silvestri about his lyrics for *Sleep*, and a performance by The Crossing, the Philadelphia-based professional chamber choir known as a champion for new music. The event concludes with a performance of the Whitacre/Silvestri collaborations *Sleep* and *Lux Aurumque*. *Sleep* features a multimedia presentation of the art of Anne Horjus as seen in the children’s book based on this choral classic. The performance combines choirs on stage at the Kennedy Center with thousands of additional voices online; webcast technology will virtually link these voices together during this free performance.

**RAISE IT UP! ANTHEM FOR AMERICA with the Smithsonian Institution.**
Saturday, June 14, 2014, 2:30 p.m. National Museum of American History on the National Mall
In celebration of the Star-Spangled Banner’s 200th anniversary, the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History will host *Raise It Up! Anthem for America*, a national sing-a-long event in which Americans across the country will come together and sing their anthem on Flag Day at 4 p.m. Eastern time, creating a moment of national unity. The museum will also feature the reunion of two of America’s most iconic symbols: the flag itself, on view at the museum, and Francis Scott Key’s original manuscript, on loan from the Maryland Historical Society for a short term display from June 14 through July 6. The program will include a massed choir singing “Battle Hymn of the Republic” and “Lift Every Voice and Sing,” both conducted by Francisco J. Nunez; “America the Beautiful” conducted by Eric Whitacre; and special guests to be announced soon. For more information, visit anthemforamerica.si.edu. Arrangements for the mass voice choir, including recruitment and travel, have been made by Classical Movements, the official concert touring company of *Voices of Our Nation.*
VINEYARD SOUND AND ALUMNI, Saturday, June 14, 2014, 6 p.m., Millennium Stage
For 21 years, the Vineyard Sound has been an annual fixture of summer entertainment on the island of Martha’s Vineyard, Massachusetts. Founded in 1992, the all-male vocal group began as a group of ten friends from Connecticut College, Skidmore College, and Wesleyan University who came together with a common love for creating music and exploring the island. The group learned over forty songs in the first few weeks of summer and then spent the duration singing on street corners, performing in restaurants, and holding concerts from Edgartown to Aquinnah. Over the course of three months the founding members created a lasting bond that continues to this day—the experience of singing in the most beautiful place in the Northeast for the most supportive and enthusiastic fans. This concert brings together current and former members for an evening of stellar vocals, inventive and award-winning arrangements, and engaging humor, featuring a diverse repertoire of everything from jazz standards and contemporary pop songs to children’s music and indie rock.

FUNDING CREDITS:

Voices of Our Nation: Celebrating the Choral Tradition, a program of Arts Across America, is made possible through the generosity of the Charles E. Smith Family Foundation.

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.

Additional funding for the Millennium Stage is provided by DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, The Isadore and Bertha Gudelsky Family Foundation, Inc., Jaylee M. Mead†, The Meredith Foundation, The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, Suzy and Bob Pence, Dr. Deborah Rose and Dr. Jan A.J. Stolwijk, U.S. Department of Education, and the Millennium Stage Endowment Fund.

The Millennium Stage Endowment Fund was made possible by James A. Johnson and Maxine Isaacs, Fannie Mae Foundation, James V. Kimsey, Gilbert† and Jaylee† Mead, Mortgage Bankers Association of America and other anonymous gifts to secure the future of the Millennium Stage.

Education and related artistic programs are made possible through the generosity of the National Committee for the Performing Arts and the President’s Advisory Committee on the Arts.

For more information about the Kennedy Center, visit http://www.kennedy-center.org/.

Visit www.facebook.com/KennedyCenter for behind-the-scenes news, special offers, advance notice of events, and other related Kennedy Center Facebook pages.

Follow @kencen and #VoicesDC on Twitter for up-to-the-minute news, offers, and more.
Patrons 30 and under and active-duty members of the military are invited to join the Kennedy Center’s MyTix program for special discount offers and chances to win free tickets. For more information, visit www.kennedy-center.org/mytix. MyTix is part of the Rubenstein Arts Access Program.

###

**PRESS CONTACT**: Michael Solomon (202) 416-8453 masolomon@kennedy-center.org

**TICKETS & INFORMATION**: (202) 467-4600; (800) 444-1324 www.kennedy-center.org

*Please do not publish this contact information*