



## Washington, D.C.'s *John F. Kennedy Center*

The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts (formally called the John F. Kennedy Memorial Center for the Performing Arts, and commonly referred to as the Kennedy Center) is the United States National Cultural Center, located on the Potomac River, adjacent to the Watergate complex in Washington, D.C., named in 1964 as a memorial to President John F. Kennedy. Opened on September 8, 1971, the performing arts center is a multi-dimensional facility: it produces a wide array of performances encompassing the genres of theater, dance, ballet, and orchestral, chamber, jazz, popular, and folk music; offers multimedia performances for adults and children; and is a nexus of performing arts education.

In addition to the approximately 3,500 performances held annually for audiences totaling nearly two million, the center hosts touring productions and television and radio broadcasts that, collectively, are seen by 20 million more. Now in its 45th season, the center presents music, dance and theater and supports artists in the creation of new work. With its artistic affiliate, the National Symphony Orchestra, the center's achievements as a commissioner, producer, and nurturer of developing artists have resulted in over 200 theatrical productions, dozens of new ballets, operas, and musical works.

Authorized by the 1958 National Cultural Center Act of Congress, which requires that its programming be sustained through private funds, the center represents a public-private partnership. Its activities include educational and outreach initiatives, almost entirely funded through ticket sales and gifts from individuals, corporations and private foundations.

The building, designed by architect Edward Durell Stone, was constructed by Philadelphia contractor John McShain, and is administered as a bureau of the Smithsonian Institution. It receives annual federal funding to pay for its maintenance and operation. [[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_F.\\_Kennedy\\_Center\\_for\\_the\\_Performing\\_Arts](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_F._Kennedy_Center_for_the_Performing_Arts)]

