

THE KENNEDY CENTER ANNOUNCES REVISIONS TO KENNEDY CENTER HONORS SELECTION PROCESS

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Washington, DC — David M. Rubenstein, Chairman of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, today announced revisions to the Kennedy Center Honors selection process. The announcement follows a seven-month review by the Kennedy Center board of trustees with input from many members of the cultural community to ensure the Honors program continues to reflect the full range of artistic excellence in the years ahead. The revisions include expanded solicitation of recommendations from the general public and the addition of an advisory committee comprised of artists, former Honorees, and Kennedy Center board members. The process takes effect immediately and will guide the 2013 Kennedy Center Honors selection.

Under the revised selection process, the solicitation of recommendations for Kennedy Center Honorees will be expanded. The Artists Committee, comprised of accomplished individuals in the performing arts and traditionally the source of recommendations to the Kennedy Center board of trustees, will be expanded to assure the broadest representation of outstanding candidates. Additionally, the Kennedy Center website will provide an opportunity for the general public to recommend prospective Honorees. This page is now live and can be accessed [here](#).

From these recommendations, a roster of eligible individuals will be created that will be reviewed by a Special Honors Advisory Committee composed of two former Kennedy Center Honorees, two Artist Committee members, and two members of the Kennedy Center board of trustees. The committee will narrow the roster to 10 to 20 nominees. The Special Honors Advisory Committee is comprised of Kennedy Center board members Cappy McGarr and Elaine Wynn, former Honorees Yo-Yo Ma, and Chita Rivera, and artist committee members Harolyn Blackwell and Damian Woetzel.

From this list of 10 to 20 nominees, the Kennedy Center Chairman, President, and the producers of the Honors will create slates of Honorees. These slates will provide balance and diversity across the various performing arts disciplines and will be submitted to the executive committee of the Kennedy Center board of trustees for discussion and final decision.

The artists committee and the Special Honors Advisory Committees will have fixed terms: members of the artist committee will serve five-year terms and members of the Special Honors Advisory Committee will serve three year terms. The Kennedy Center board of trustees will also establish an Honors committee to provide ongoing oversight to the revised process and to advise the Chairman on all board-related matters of the Kennedy Center Honors. The revised process was unanimously approved by the Kennedy Center board of trustees.

“This revision will broaden input into selecting the Honorees while continuing to ensure the Honors remains the preeminent award for cultural achievement in the United States,” stated Kennedy Center Chairman David M. Rubenstein. “I would like to thank the members of the Kennedy Center’s board as well as the members of the artist advisory panel, and George Stevens, Jr who have dedicated their valuable time to aid us in the Honors review.”

“I applaud the Kennedy Center board for moving so thoughtfully and swiftly with this review,” stated Kennedy Center trustee Giselle Fernandez. “I am proud to be involved with an organization as forward-thinking as the Kennedy Center and hope this review becomes a model for other organizations around the country.” Ms. Fernandez served on the review’s board committee and is a member of the Kennedy Center board’s Executive Committee. She will also participate in the standing board oversight committee for the Kennedy Center Honors.

“We expect the process will enable us to sustain the high standards that have defined the Kennedy Center Honors,” said producers George Stevens, Jr and Michael Stevens. Under the Stevens distinguished leadership, the Honors broadcast was awarded the Emmy for Outstanding Music, Variety or Comedy Special in each of the past four years, a Television Academy record for consecutive wins. The Honors has also

received the George Foster Peabody Award for Significant and Meritorious Achievement. George Stevens, Jr. created the Kennedy Center Honors with Nick Vanoff in 1978.

The Kennedy Center Honors program provides recognition to living individuals who throughout their lifetimes have made significant contributions to American culture through the performing arts. The primary criterion is excellence, and artistic achievement in dance, music, theater, opera, motion pictures, and television is considered. While the Honors are not designated by art form or category of artistic achievement, the selection process has, over time, provided balance among the various artistic disciplines. The program has been broadcast on CBS each of its 35 years.

In addition to the Honors revised selection process, the Kennedy Center is committed to bolstering both its track record on diversity and its relationship with the Hispanic community. To this end, the Center will form a Latino Advisory Committee which will meet quarterly to focus on these key goals.

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