



Press Release

FOR RELEASE:

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The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts
announces a

New Partnership with The Second City to Develop Original Works, Co-Commissions, and Educational Programs

(WASHINGTON)—The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts today announced a new partnership with The Second City, the famed Chicago-based sketch comedy company. The partnership draws on the respective strengths of each organization to extend the creative capacity, reach, and impact of both brands, and will result in new, original productions at the Kennedy Center and beyond.

Elements of the Kennedy Center/The Second City partnership include:

- Producing six original, sketch-style shows, which will be slated for multi-week runs in **the Kennedy Center's Theater Lab** in summers and during the holiday season through at least 2020.
- Co-commissioning and development of new sketch-style and full-length, scripted theater works that have the potential to tour beyond Washington, D.C. and Chicago.
- Engaging Second City alumni in co-commissioning of narrative theater scripts.
- Enhanced offerings within Kennedy Center Education programs for both young audiences and adults. Activities may include hands-on workshops for adults and young people, workshops for educators, and producing performances specifically for young audiences.

The first products of the new Kennedy Center/The Second City partnership will debut in Summer 2018. Details of an all-new summer sketch show, plus dates and registration information for improvisation and stand-up workshops, will be announced as part of the District of Comedy Festival on March 20, and details of the all-new, holiday-themed show will be announced as part of the 2018–2019 Theater season announcement on April 10.

“Washington audiences have an insatiable appetite for smart and witty humor. We can all look forward to the fresh stories and big laughs that will emerge from this new relationship with The Second City,” said Deborah F. Rutter, president of the Kennedy Center. **“From a brand perspective, partnering with The Second City strengthens several Kennedy Center priorities,**

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including our commitment to producing original theater, to elevating comedy as an art form, **and to deepening educational opportunities for both young people and adults.”**

“While the stark reality may be that Washington is already rife with comedians, The Second City is over the moon that the Kennedy Center has elected to enter into this unique partnership, because we now have a creative co-conspirator that is fully invested in collaborating with us through the entire artistic process to develop, shape, and launch thrilling new works,” said CEO and Executive Producer of The Second City Andrew Alexander.

The Second City made its Kennedy Center debut in 1996 in a sketch-style show that featured Steve Carrell, Adam McKay, Tim Meadows, and others. The troupe returned to the Center for the first time in 2016 and has since performed several productions to popular and critical acclaim, including *The Almost Accurate Guide to America*, *Twist Your Dickens*, and *When Life Gives you Clemens*.

About The Second City

Since opening its doors as a small cabaret theater in 1959, The Second City has grown into a comedy empire. In addition to sold-out shows playing nightly on resident stages in Chicago **and Toronto, Second City’s Touring and Theatrical companies perform around the globe,** entertaining 1 million theatergoers a year. Beyond the stage, The Second City Training Center is the largest school of improvisation-based arts on the planet, with locations in Chicago, **Toronto and Los Angeles. In 2016, the Harold Ramis Film launched, becoming the world’s only** film school dedicated entirely to comedy. Second City Works brings award-winning improvisation, comedy and audience-driven techniques to organizations seeking a more empowered, creative, and collaborative business culture, and The Second City’s foray into television and media continues to produce new content and programming, including the Emmy Award-winning series *SCTV*. **Alumni of The Second City include some of the world’s foremost** comedy superstars, including Bill Murray, John Candy, John Belushi, Gilda Radner, Ed Asner, Joan Rivers, Martin Short, Steve Carell, Stephen Colbert, Keegan-Michael Key, Amy Poehler, Tina Fey, and many more.

About the Kennedy Center

The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts is America’s living memorial to President Kennedy. Under the guidance of Chairman [David M. Rubenstein](#), and President [Deborah F. Rutter](#), **the nine theaters and stages of the nation’s busiest performing arts facility attract more** than three million visitors to more than 2,000 performances each year, while Center-related touring productions, television, and radio broadcasts reach 40 million more around the world.

The Center produces and presents performances of music, dance, comedy, 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 has produced more than 300 theatrical productions, and dozens of new ballets, operas, and musical works, in addition to hosting numerous international cultural festivals. **The Center’s Emmy®** and Peabody Award-winning [The Kennedy Center Honors](#) is broadcast annually on CBS and annual [The Kennedy Center Mark Twain Prize for American Humor](#) is broadcast on PBS.

The education programs of the Kennedy Center, including those of its affiliate [VSA](#), the international organization on arts and disability, have become models for communities across the country and have unlocked the door to learning for millions of young people. [Education at the Kennedy Center](#) produces and presents age appropriate performances and educational events, and fosters innovative programming, curriculum, and professional development for students, teachers, and families.

The Center and its affiliates stage more than 400 free performances by artists from throughout the world each year on **the Center's main stages, and every day of the year at 6 p.m. on its Millennium Stages**, which are also streamed live online. The Center also offers reduced and complimentary tickets to young people, active members of the military, and the underserved through its [MyTix program](#) and offers a Specially Priced Tickets program for students, seniors, persons with disabilities, and others with fixed low incomes.

To learn more about the Kennedy Center, visit www.kennedy-center.org.

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