



Press Release

March 28, 2019

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2019–2020 Theater Season video reel, [HERE](#).

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

2019–2020 THEATER SEASON

Plays From Broadway, London, and the Kennedy Center

Premiere of the National Tour of *To Kill a Mockingbird*
Exclusive U.S. Engagement of The Old Vic's *A Monster Calls*
New Kennedy Center Produced Play, *Tiny Beautiful Things*

Hit Broadway Musicals

Come from Away Comes Home to D.C.
Hamilton Returns to the Kennedy Center
Premiere of the National Tour of Lincoln Center Theater's *My Fair Lady*
Plus *Cats*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, and *Once on This Island*

D.C.'s Hottest Ticket, Broadway Center Stage

Footloose, Rachel Bay Jones in *Next to Normal*, and *Bye Bye Birdie*

World Stages

Groundbreaking Work from Canada, Cuba, Palestine, and Scotland

(WASHINGTON)—The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts today announced its 2019–2020 theater season, with more than 15 productions from New York, London, and across the globe, plus original Kennedy Center productions.

The six dramas being produced or presented are all searing portraits of the human condition. Patrick Ness's piercing Carnegie and Greenaway Medal–winning novel, *A Monster Calls*, is brought to the stage by visionary director Sally Cookson in an exclusive U.S. engagement. The

~ more ~

play from London's Old Vic, about a 13-year-old named Conor who is faced with bullying, grief, and a monster at his window, offers dazzling insight into love, loss, and healing. The National Tour of Aaron Sorkin's critically acclaimed Broadway adaptation of ***To Kill a Mockingbird*** will mark its official opening at the Kennedy Center this season before taking Harper Lee's Pulitzer Prize-winning story of racial injustice across the country. Following this season's Kennedy Center production of Evan Linder's *Byhalia, Mississippi*, the Center will again mount a full-scale production of an American drama next season with the Washington, D.C. premiere of Nia Vardalos's stage adaptation of ***Tiny Beautiful Things***. Based on the best-selling book by Cheryl Strayed, this deeply touching and funny play about advice columnist "Dear Sugar" digs into the breadth of human connection and the ties that bind us together.

"With *Tiny Beautiful Things* we are further cementing the Kennedy Center's commitment to self-producing modern American plays," said Jeffrey Finn, Vice President of Theater Producing and Programming. "I am excited for audiences to experience this heartfelt and resonant story with us, in addition to joining us for our starry productions of great shows from the musical theater cannon and presentations of the best of what Broadway and beyond has to offer."

Three of next season's dramas are presented as part of the World Stages series, which continues to bring powerful work from across the globe to the nation's cultural center. Through an ongoing collaboration with the Sundance Institute Theatre program, which has resulted in the presentations of several productions in 2017 and 2019 focusing on acclaimed artists from North Africa and the Middle East, comes ***Grey Rock***, a play written by celebrated Palestinian writer Amir Nizar Zubai, about the inalienable right to dream as seen through the eyes of a man who decides to build a rocket to the moon. From Canada, Cree playwright Cliff Cardinal performs in the U.S. premiere of his daring solo show, ***Huff***, a darkly comic tale of abuse, death, and fantasy in an indigenous community. ***Heroine, A Female Soldier's Story***, a U.S. Premiere by Scottish writer and performer Mary Wells, is a one-woman play about what healing and forgiveness really mean, based on the true story of a lesbian soldier in the U.S. Army.

Curated by Alicia Adams, World Stages will also feature acclaimed director Carlos Diaz and the Havana Lyceum Orchestra, both represented in last season's *Artes de Cuba* festival. They return to the Kennedy Center for the U.S. premiere of ***The Clemency of Titus***, a Cuban adaptation of Mozart's *La Clemenza di Tito*.

“Through the World Stages series, I aim to highlight international visionary artists at the forefront of discourse in the arts arena,” said Alicia Adams, Vice President of International Programming and Dance. “These works dive into topical themes that resonate in contemporary society giving voice to artists that should be heard. This season we share with our audiences, stories of trauma and survival in the military, challenges and dark humor in an indigenous society, and the inalienable right to dream in Palestine.”

This year, the must-see Broadway Center Stage series of musicals in semi-staged concerts featuring some of Broadway’s brightest stars has included sold-out, rapturously received productions of *Little Shop of Horrors* and *The Music Man*, and will continue with *The Who’s Tommy* in April. For the upcoming season of Broadway Center Stage, the Center will present the toe-tapping fan favorite, **Footloose**, Tony Award® winner Rachel Bay Jones in the Pulitzer Prize-winning **Next to Normal**, and **Bye Bye Birdie**, Broadway’s first Tony Award®-winning Best Musical to feature rock ‘n’ roll, directed by Marc Bruni (Broadway Center Stage: *The Music Man*).

The Kennedy Center will host some of Broadway’s biggest hits during the 2019-2020 season. In the fall, Andrew Lloyd Webber’s Tony Award®-winning musical spectacular, **Cats**, kicks off the season before **Come From Away**, a Best Musical winner across North America, makes its eagerly anticipated return to Washington, D.C., having played a pre-Broadway run at Ford’s Theater in 2016. The lush Lincoln Center Theater revival of Lerner & Loewe’s **My Fair Lady** will sweep audiences off their feet in the Opera House as the national tour holds its official opening at the Kennedy Center in December. Spring and summer bring a new 50th anniversary production of Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice’s groundbreaking rock opera, **Jesus Christ Superstar**, and the 2018 Tony Award® winner for Best Revival of a Musical, **Once on This Island**.

Hamilton returns to the Kennedy Center Opera House for 14 weeks in the summer of 2020. This past December, the co-creators of *Hamilton*—writer and actor Lin-Manuel Miranda, director Thomas Kail, choreographer Andy Blankenbuehler, and music director Alex Lacamoire—received a unique Kennedy Center Honors as trailblazing creators of a transformative work that defies category. *For more information on Hamilton, please see the attached FAQ sheet.*

Additional theater programming for the 2019-2020 season will be announced at a later date.

2019–2020 Theater Season Schedule

Performance Dates	Theater	Show
August 31–September 2, 2019	Throughout the Center	<i>Page-to-Stage</i> New Play Festival
September 17–October 6, 2019	Opera House	<i>Cats</i>
October 9–13, 2019	Eisenhower Theater	Broadway Center Stage: <i>Footloose</i>
December 3–31, 2019	Theater Lab	The Second City's <i>Love, Factually</i>
December 10, 2019– January 5, 2020	Eisenhower Theater	<i>Come From Away</i>
December 17, 2019– January 19, 2020	Opera House	<i>My Fair Lady</i>
January 29–February 2, 2020	Eisenhower Theater	Broadway Center Stage: <i>Next to Normal</i>
January 30–February 1, 2020	Terrace Theater	World Stages: <i>Grey Rock</i>
February 6–8, 2020	Family Theater	World Stages: <i>Huff</i>
February 12–14, 2020	Family Theater	World Stages: <i>Heroine, A Female Soldier's Story</i>
February 13–15, 2020	Eisenhower Theater	World Stages: <i>The Clemency of Titus</i>
TBD	Throughout the Center	Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival
April 14–26, 2020	Opera House	<i>Jesus Christ Superstar</i>
April 23–27, 2020	Eisenhower Theater	Broadway Center Stage: <i>Bye Bye Birdie</i>
June 2–28, 2020	Terrace Theater	<i>Tiny Beautiful Things</i>
June 16–September 20, 2020	Opera House	<i>Hamilton</i>
June 23–July 12, 2020	Eisenhower Theater	<i>Once on This Island</i>
July 21–August 9, 2020	Eisenhower Theater	<i>A Monster Calls</i>
August 25–September 27, 2020	Eisenhower Theater	<i>To Kill a Mockingbird</i>
Ongoing	Theater Lab	<i>Shear Madness</i>

Artists and performances are subject to change.

Page-to-Stage New Play Festival

September 1–3, 2019 Throughout the Center

The Kennedy Center celebrates its 18th annual Page-to-Stage New Play Festival over Labor Day weekend. Page-to-Stage is a three-day, Center-wide event that offers free readings and open rehearsals of plays and musicals being developed by playwrights, librettists, and composers for local, regional, and national theater companies.

Cats

September 17–October 6, 2019 in the Opera House

Rediscover *Cats*—the beloved musical with breathtaking music—including once of the most treasured songs in musical theater, “Memory.” Featuring new sound design, direction, and choreography for a new generation—experience *Cats* for the first time as it begins a new life, or let it thrill you all over again! The original score by Andrew Lloyd Webber (*The Phantom of the Opera*, *School of Rock*, *Sunset Boulevard*), original scenic and costume design by John Napier (*Les Misérables*), all-new lighting design by Natasha Katz (*Aladdin*), all-new sound design by Mick Potter, new choreography by Andy Blankenbuehler (*Hamilton*) based on the original choreography by Gillian Lynne (*The Phantom of the Opera*) and direction by Trevor Nunn (*Les Misérables*) make this production a new *Cats* for a new generation!

Broadway Center Stage: Footloose

October 9–13, 2019 in the Eisenhower Theater

To the rockin’ rhythm of the film’s Oscar® and Tony®-nominated top 40 score and augmented with dynamic new songs for the stage musical, *Footloose* celebrates the wisdom of listening to young people and guiding them with a warm heart and an open mind. Music by Tom Snow; lyrics by Dean Pitchford; stage adaptation by Dean Pitchford and Walter Bobbie. Based on the original screenplay by Dean Pitchford; additional music by Eric Carmen, Sammy Hagar, Kenny Loggins, and Jim Steinman.

The Second City’s Love, Actually

December 3–31, 2019 in the Theater Lab

This fast-paced romp from Nancy Hayden, Damon Royster, and Marc Warzecha combines favorite (or despised) characters and stories from the movie *Love, Actually* with an original romantic tale sure to warm the heart. A mashup of parody, original comedy, music, improv, and audience participation, *Love, Actually* is a holiday satire from the twisted minds at The Second City, which gets to the truth of December life, love, and romance.

Come From Away

December 10, 2019–January 5, 2020 in the Eisenhower Theater

This *New York Times* Critic’s Pick takes you into the heart of the remarkable true story of 7,000 stranded passengers and the small town in Newfoundland that welcomed them. Cultures clashed and nerves ran high, but uneasiness turned into trust, music soared into the night, and gratitude grew into enduring friendships. Don’t miss this breathtaking new musical written by Tony® nominees Irene Sankoff and David Hein, and helmed by Tony®-winning Best Director, Christopher Ashley. *Newsweek* cheers, “It takes you to a place you never want to leave!”

My Fair Lady

December 17, 2019–January 19, 2020 in the Opera House

From Lincoln Center Theater and director Bartlett Sher comes “a sumptuous new production of the most perfect musical of all time” (*Entertainment Weekly*), Lerner & Loewe’s *My Fair Lady*. Boasting such classic songs as “I Could Have Danced All Night,” “The Rain in Spain,” and

“Wouldn’t It Be Lovely,” *My Fair Lady* tells the story of Eliza Doolittle, a young Cockney flower seller, and Henry Higgins, a linguistics professor who is determined to transform her into his idea of a “proper lady.” But who is really being transformed?

Broadway Center Stage: *Next to Normal*

January 29–February 2, 2020 in the Eisenhower Theater

Tony Award® winner Rachel Bay Jones (*Dear Evan Hansen*, *Pippin*) stars in this unflinching look at a suburban family struggling with the effects of mental illness. Winner of the 2010 Pulitzer Prize and three 2009 Tony Awards®, including Best Musical Score, *Next to Normal* features book and lyrics by Brian Yorkey and music by Tom Kitt.

World Stages: *Grey Rock (Palestine)*

January 30–February 1, 2020 in the Terrace Theater

Writer and director Amir Nizar Zuabi’s *Grey Rock* is about a Palestinian man who decides to build a rocket to the moon in a shed and the desire to create something extraordinary that the whole world must notice. *Performed in English.*

World Stages: *Huff (Canada)*

February 6–8, 2020 in the Family Theater

U.S. premiere. Nominated for Quebec’s 2016 Critic’s Awards, *Huff* is a daring solo show by award-winning Cree actor and playwright Cliff Cardinal, one of the most exciting new voices in Canadian Theater. In Cardinal’s mesmerizing tale, Wind and his brothers are caught in a torrent of drug abuse and struggling to cope with the death of their mother. Wind’s fantastic dream world bleeds into his haunting reality, as he’s preyed on by the Trickster through the hallways at school, the abandoned motel he loves more than home, and his own fragile psyche. With his signature biting humor and raw, vivid imagery, Cardinal expertly portrays over a dozen characters.

World Stages: *Heroine, A Female Soldier’s Story (Scotland)*

February 12–14, 2020 in the Family Theater

U.S. premiere. This one-woman show written and performed by Mary Wells is based on the true story of a lesbian soldier in the U.S. Army: an outsider who wouldn’t quit. She loved its challenges and thrived within that rigorous world. At the time she enlisted, before “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” was repealed, she was the only woman in her entire company and went on to lead a squad into combat. A survivor of military sexual trauma, she served on the battlefield alongside her assailant. *Heroine* is an incredible human story about one soldier’s experiences and what healing and forgiveness really mean.

World Stages: *The Clemency of Titus (Cuba)*

February 13–15, 2020 in the Eisenhower Theater

U.S. premiere. After stand-out performances at the Kennedy Center’s *Artes de Cuba* festival in 2018, the multi-award-winning Havana Lyceum Orchestra and one of Latin America’s most cutting-edge theater directors, Carlos Diaz join forces for a Cuban adaptation of Mozart’s opera *La Clemenza di Tito*. With Cuban dancers and over 40 musicians performing together, this new production is guaranteed to bring a thrilling, fresh perspective to Mozart’s masterpiece about Rome’s beloved new emperor—and the secret plot to overthrow him at all costs. *In Italian with some Spanish dialogue and English titles.*

Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival

April 2020 TBD throughout the Center

Jesus Christ Superstar

April 14–26, 2020 in the Opera House

Jesus Christ Superstar is an iconic musical phenomenon with a world-wide fan base. In celebration of its 50th anniversary, a new mesmerizing production comes to North America. Originally staged by London's Regent's Park Open Air Theatre and helmed by the acclaimed director Timothy Sheader (*Crazy for You, Into the Woods*) and award-winning choreographer Drew McOnie (*King Kong, Strictly Ballroom*), this production won the 2017 Olivier Award for Best Musical Revival garnering unprecedented reviews and accolades. Appealing to both theater audiences and concert music fans, this production pays tribute to the historic 1971 *Billboard* Album of the Year while creating a modern, theatrical world that is uniquely fresh and inspiring.

Broadway Center Stage: *Bye Bye Birdie*

April 23–27, 2020 in the Eisenhower Theater

A Tony Award®-winning send-up of the early 1960s, small-town America, teenagers, and rock 'n' roll. Teen heartthrob Conrad Birdie has been drafted, so he chooses all-American girl Kim MacAfee for a very public farewell kiss. Featuring a tuneful high-energy score by Charles Strouse and Lee Adams and a book by Michael Stewart, *Bye Bye Birdie* features classic songs such as "Put on a Happy Face," "A Lot of Livin' to Do," and "Kids!"

Tiny Beautiful Things

June 2–28, 2020 in the Terrace Theater

The Kennedy Center shares another original production that captures the strength of human nature. From 2010 to 2012, thousands of people wrote letters asking for advice from an anonymous online columnist named Sugar, who drew from her own life experiences to answer in a candid, often brutally honest exchange. It was later revealed that Sugar was the pseudonym of Cheryl Strayed, a struggling writer. Based on the best-selling book by Strayed (*Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail*) and adapted for the stage by Nia Vardalos (*My Big Fat Greek Wedding*), this "incredibly moving" (*Time Out*) play is about reaching when you're stuck, healing when you're broken, and finding the courage to take on the questions that have no answers.

Hamilton

June 16–September 20, 2020 in the Opera House

Hamilton is the story of America's Founding Father Alexander Hamilton, an immigrant from the West Indies who became George Washington's right-hand man during the Revolutionary War and was the new nation's first Treasury Secretary. Featuring a score that blends Hip Hop, jazz, blues, rap, R&B, and Broadway, *Hamilton* is the story of America then, as told by America now. With book, music, and lyrics by Lin-Manuel Miranda, direction by Thomas Kail, choreography by Andy Blankenbuehler and musical supervision and orchestrations by Alex Lacamoire, *Hamilton* is based on Ron Chernow's biography of Founding Father Alexander Hamilton.

Once on This Island

June 23–July 12, 2020 in the Eisenhower Theater

Winner of the 2018 Tony Award® for Best Revival of a Musical, *Once on This Island* is the sweeping, universal tale of Ti Moune, a fearless peasant girl in search of her place in the world, and ready to risk it all for love. Guided by the mighty island gods, Ti Moune sets out on a remarkable journey to reunite with the man who has captured her heart. The groundbreaking vision of two-time Tony

Award®-nominated director Michael Arden (the Broadway revival of *Spring Awakening*) and acclaimed choreographer Camille A. Brown (NBC's *Jesus Christ Superstar*) conjures up “a place where magic is possible and beauty is apparent for all to see!” (*The Huffington Post*). With a score that bursts with life from Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty, the Tony Award®-winning songwriters of *Anastasia* and *Ragtime*, *Once on This Island* is a timeless testament to theater's unlimited possibilities.

A Monster Calls

July 21–August 9, 2020 in the Eisenhower Theater

Patrick Ness's novel *A Monster Calls* is brought to the stage in a powerful new adaptation by visionary director Sally Cookson. 13-year-old Conor and his mum have managed just fine since his dad moved to America. But now his mum's very sick and she's not getting any better. His grandmother won't stop interfering and the kids at school won't look him in the eye. Then, one night, at seven minutes past midnight, Conor is woken by something at his window. A monster has come walking. It's come to tell Conor tales from when it walked before. And when it's finished, Conor must tell his own story and face his deepest fears.

To Kill a Mockingbird

August 25–September 27, 2020 in the Eisenhower Theater

Harper Lee's Pulitzer Prize-winning American classic *To Kill a Mockingbird* is brought to life as a new play by Aaron Sorkin, directed by Bartlett Sher. Inspired by Lee's own childhood in Alabama, *To Kill a Mockingbird* features one of literature's towering symbols of integrity and righteousness in the character of Atticus Finch, based on Lee's own father. The character of Scout, based on herself, has come to define youthful innocence—and its inevitable loss—for generation after generation of readers around the world.

Shear Madness

Ongoing in the Theater Lab

Shear Madness returns with brand new clues and hilarity. When a famed concert pianist is killed above the Shear Madness hair salon, the audience turns detective to crack the case. Featuring “downright hilarious” (*Huffington Post*) improvisational comedy, no two performances are alike. Was it the shady antiques dealer, the secretive stylist, the sassy salon owner, or the snooty society lady? This interactive, immersive, and irresistible whodunit keeps audiences laughing as they try to outwit the suspects and catch the killer.

Theater for Young Audiences 2019–2020

For the 2019–2020 season, Kennedy Center Theater for Young Audiences (KCTYA) has commissioned three new world premiere works that will inspire, engage, and entertain both young audiences and adults: ***Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus (The Musical)***, based on Kennedy Center Education Artist-in-Residence Mo Willems's best-selling book; ***Kid Prince & Pablo***, a digital age Hip Hop story by Brian Quijada based on Mark Twain's *The Prince and the Pauper*; and ***Dreamer: A South African Journey***, a new play from director and playwright Zoey Martinson, inspired by the real life and music of singer and songwriter Tuelo Minah. KCTYA will also present seven additional works in the 2019–2020 season, including five hailing from the Netherlands.

Ticket Information

Patrons wishing to renew or purchase new subscriptions may do so by calling the Subscription office at (202) 416-8500 or go to www.kennedy-center.org/subscriptions. Pricing and on sale details for single tickets will be made available at a later date.

Panel Discussions and Talk Backs

Explore the Arts educational events including Theater Look-Ins will continue to be held in conjunction with many theater productions as part of the Kennedy Center's ongoing education program.

MyTix

The Kennedy Center's *MyTix* program offers patrons 18–30 years old and active duty members of the armed services to join for special discount offers and chances to win free tickets. For more information, visit www.kennedy-center.org/mytix.

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