



The Nation's Stage: The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts (Stonesong Press Books)

Michael Dolan

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“There is a connection, hard to explain logically but easy to feel, between achievement in public life and progress in the arts. The age of Pericles was also the age of Phidias. The age of Lorenzo de Medici was also the age of Leonardo da Vinci. The age of Elizabeth was also the age of Shakespeare, and the new frontier for which I campaign in public life can also be a new frontier for American art.” —*John F. Kennedy*

When the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts opened in our nation’s capital on September 8, 1971, its mission was to be the “national center for the performing arts.” Forty years later the Center has succeeded in that mission and continues to celebrate it—countless times over—in every state and country around the world, and in the hearts and minds of millions of audience members, performers, and artists. In *The Nation’s Stage*, that history comes alive through a stirring historical and pictorial narrative.

An incubator and springboard for some of the most memorable and important theater, dance, opera, and musical productions of the past four decades, the Center has hosted plays by Tennessee Williams, Arthur Miller, Tom Stoppard, and August Wilson, as well as theater for young people with Debbie Allen; dance by Antony Tudor, Agnes de Mille, Mark Morris, and Jerome Robbins; orchestral scores by Leonard Bernstein, Aaron Copland, Dmitri Shostakovich, and John Cage; and breathtaking performances from the world’s most notable actors, musicians, and dancers.

Every year, millions of Americans and people from around the globe gather at the Center to enjoy the arts. This book, an introduction to the Center’s accomplishments and abilities and a commemorative artifact for those who have enjoyed those gifts over the years, is a historical narrative with hundreds of colorful archival photos that allow past audiences to relive the most magical moments at the Center. Those who’ve never been inside receive a backstage pass to all the glamour and wonder this national treasure has to offer.

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