



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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**EAGLES, CAROLE KING, GEORGE LUCAS,
RITA MORENO, SEIJI OZAWA, AND CICELY TYSON**

TO RECEIVE 38TH ANNUAL KENNEDY CENTER HONORS

**America to Celebrate Honorees' Lifetime Artistic Achievements
Sunday, December 6, 2015**

Gala will be broadcast on CBS on December 29, 2015 at 9:00 p.m., ET/PT

(WASHINGTON)—The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts today announced the selection of six Honorees who will receive the 2015 Kennedy Center Honors. Recipients to be honored at the 38th annual national celebration of the arts are: American rock band the **Eagles**, singer-songwriter **Carole King**, filmmaker **George Lucas**, actress and singer **Rita Moreno**, conductor **Seiji Ozawa**, and actress and Broadway star **Cicely Tyson**.

“The Kennedy Center Honors recognizes the extraordinary and unparalleled talents of individuals whose impact and genius have left an indelible mark on civilization,” stated Kennedy Center Chairman David M. Rubenstein. “Quite simply, our Honorees represent the voices, soundtracks, and stories of our personal lives and memories. The music of the Eagles has endured as the quintessential American rock and roll sound for generations; Carole King’s heartfelt lyrics and tunes are woven throughout the tapestry of American music; George Lucas’ films have enriched our world with stories of epic adventure; Rita Moreno’s iconic spitfire roles are embedded in the heart of American culture; Seiji Ozawa’s artistic leadership as a conductor has set a new standard for orchestras around the world; and Cicely Tyson’s range of strong female roles on stage and screen have broken boundaries for women of color.”

“When I look at this year’s outstanding slate of Honorees, I am struck by a powerful common theme—artists as history-makers, artists who defy both convention and category,” commented Kennedy Center President Deborah F. Rutter. “Each Honoree and their career-spanning achievements exemplify a rare quality of artistic bravery. They have pushed the limits of their gifts as musicians, actors, and storytellers to inspire generations of Americans and those around the world. Their individual paths to excellence are inspirational and their contributions to the fabric of American culture are equally permanent and timeless.”

The annual Honors Gala has become the highlight of the Washington cultural and society calendar, and its broadcast on CBS is a high point of the television season. On Sunday, December 6, in a star-studded celebration on the Kennedy Center Opera House stage, produced by Ricky Kirshner and Glenn Weiss of White Cherry Entertainment, the 2015 Honorees will be saluted by today’s leading performers from New York, Hollywood, and the arts capitals of the world. Seated with the President of the United States and Mrs. Obama, the Honorees will accept the thanks of their peers through performances and tributes.

White Cherry Entertainment is well known for producing the perennial award-winning Tony Awards® for the last 13 consecutive years, and also for producing the Emmy Awards®, NFL Opening Kickoff and Super Bowl Halftime Shows, the Democratic National Convention, Presidential Inaugural Galas, and many others. To date, White Cherry Entertainment has won eight Emmy Awards®, while Kirshner and Weiss have individually received an additional four Emmy Awards®, six Directors Guild Awards, a Peabody Award, and more than 30 Emmy® nominations.

The President and Mrs. Obama will receive the Honorees and members of the Artists Committee who nominate them, along with the Kennedy Center Board of Trustees at the White House prior to the gala performance. The 2015 Kennedy Center Honors Gala concludes with a supper dance in the Grand Foyer. This year's Honors Gala is chaired by Wayne and Catherine Reynolds. Honorary Chairs are Buffy Cafritz and Ann Jordan.

The Kennedy Center Honors medallions will be presented on Saturday, December 5, the night before the gala, at a State Department dinner hosted by Secretary of State John Kerry.

The Honors Gala will be recorded for broadcast on the CBS Network for the 38th consecutive year as a two-hour primetime special on Tuesday, December 29 at 9:00 p.m. (ET/PT).

For the first time ever, the Kennedy Center will launch a contest on social media (#SendMeToHonors) beginning July 15, in which one winner will receive two tickets to attend the 2015 Honors Gala on December 6. Additional details will be announced soon.

Boeing is the Exclusive Underwriter of the 2015 Kennedy Center Honors Gala.

Delta Air Lines, the official airline of the Kennedy Center Honors, will provide transportation for the performers and television crew coming to Washington for the Honors Gala.

The Honors recipients recognized for their lifetime contributions to American culture through the performing arts—whether in music, dance, theater, opera, motion pictures, or television—are selected by the Executive Committee of the Center's Board of Trustees. The primary criterion in the selection process is excellence. The Honors are not designated by art form or category of artistic achievement; the selection process, over the years, has produced balance among the various arts and artistic disciplines.

The Honoree selection process includes solicitation of recommendations from the Kennedy Center Board of Trustees, the artistic community, and the general public. This year's selected Honorees were chosen based on the recommendation of the Center's Special Honors Advisory Committee, which is chaired by trustee Cappy McGarr, and comprised of trustee member Elaine Wynn along with past Honors recipients and distinguished artists Yo-Yo Ma, Chita Rivera, Julie Andrews, and Herbie Hancock; and Harolyn Blackwell and Damian Woetzel.

ABOUT THE HONOREES

Eagles (Glenn Frey, Don Henley, Timothy B. Schmit, and Joe Walsh)

The Eagles are one of the most influential and commercially successful American rock bands of all time. With their profound lyrics, harmonies, and country-tinged melodies, they created a signature Southern California sound. The Eagles have sold more than 120 million albums worldwide, have scored six number one albums and have topped the singles charts five times. The band's *Their Greatest*

Hits 1971–1975 album, with sales in excess of 29 million units, is second only to Michael Jackson’s *Thriller* as the greatest-selling album of all time.

Glenn Frey was born in Detroit, Michigan. Growing up, he studied piano and played in local bands. After moving to Los Angeles, he met Don Henley. After touring together as members of Linda Ronstadt’s backing band, they began writing songs that would appear on their debut album, *Eagles*. Frey and Henley co-wrote most of the band’s best-known songs. Donald Hugh Henley was born in Gilmer, Texas. He studied piano as a child, and began playing the drums in local bands during high school. Joseph Fidler Walsh was born in Wichita, Kansas. He was already a well-known solo artist when he joined the Eagles in 1975. Walsh introduced a grittier, hard rock sound to the group’s signature country style. Timothy Bruce Schmit was born in Oakland, California, and joined the Eagles in 1977, replacing Randy Meisner on bass and vocals.

Although the band was initially only together from 1971–1980, they were enormously popular. As a result of overwhelming public demand for their music and its messages, they reunited in 1994 for an MTV concert special. A live recording of the concert, *Hell Freezes Over*, sold millions of copies, and launched a tour that ended up running through August 1996. The group released a long-awaited studio album, *Long Road Out of Eden*, in 2007 to critical acclaim.

Carole King (singer, songwriter, author)

Pop music as we know it would be far different without the many lasting contributions of Carole King, who is more than a half century into her singular career as a songwriter, performer, and author. Since writing her first number one hit “Will You Love Me Tomorrow” at the tender age of 17, she has arguably become the most celebrated and iconic singer-songwriter of all time. To date, more than 400 of her compositions have been recorded by more than 1,000 artists, resulting in 100 hit singles. The dozens of chart hits King wrote together with former husband Gerry Goffin have become part of music legend, including “Will You Love Me Tomorrow” (Shirelles, 1960), “Take Good Care of My Baby” (Bobby Vee, 1961), “The Loco-Motion” (Little Eva, 1962), “One Fine Day” (The Chiffons, 1963), “Hey Girl” (Freddie Scott, 1963), “I’m Into Something Good” (Herman’s Hermits, 1964), and “Just Once In My Life” (with Phil Spector for The Righteous Brothers, 1965). In 1967, Goffin and King’s “Natural Woman” was immortalized by Aretha Franklin. King’s 1971 solo album, *Tapestry*, took her to the pinnacle. While King was recording *Tapestry*, James Taylor recorded King’s “You’ve Got a Friend,” taking the song all the way to number one. In a first for a female writer/artist, *Tapestry* spawned four Grammy Awards® — Record, Song, and Album of the Year as well as Best Pop Vocal Performance (Female), for King.

In 1987, King was inducted into the Songwriters Hall of Fame, and, a year later, Goffin and King were awarded the National Academy of Songwriters’ Lifetime Achievement Award. In 1990, the duo was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, and in 2002, King was honored with the prestigious Johnny Mercer Award from the Songwriters Hall of Fame. Two years later, Goffin and King received the Trustees Award from The Recording Academy®. The past five years have been among the busiest and most successful of King’s career. King published her memoir, *A Natural Woman*, in 2012, which debuted on the *New York Times* best-seller list. She also won the BMI Icon Award, MusiCares Person of the Year, Grammy Lifetime Achievement and Gershwin Prize. In January 2014, *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical* opened on Broadway, becoming the hit of the season and winning a Grammy® for Best Musical Theater Album and two Tony Awards®. (Editor’s note: The national touring production of *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical* will be presented at the Kennedy Center Opera House, October 6–25, 2015.) In addition to her continuously evolving musical career, King, who has lived on an Idaho

ranch since the early '80s, is actively involved with environmental organizations in support of wilderness preservation.

George Lucas (motion picture director, screenwriter, and producer)

Filmmaker George Lucas' devotion to timeless storytelling and cutting-edge innovation has resulted in some of the most successful and beloved films of all time, including the *Star Wars* saga and the *Indiana Jones* franchise, while also pioneering new digital standards for sophistication in film visuals and sound and inspiring generations of young people to follow their imagination and dreams. Lucas has directed or produced such memorable films as *THX 1138*, *American Graffiti*, *Willow*, and *Tucker: A Man and His Dream*.

He has been honored with the nation's highest award for technological achievement, the National Medal of Technology, presented by the President of the United States for more than three decades of innovation at Industrial Light & Magic. In 2013, Lucas was awarded the National Medal of Arts, the highest award presented to artists and patrons of the arts by the United States Government, bestowed upon him by the President in recognition of lifetime achievement in the creation and production of the arts in the United States. Taking a philanthropic leadership role in applying his technical and storytelling expertise to the classroom, Lucas founded the George Lucas Educational Foundation in 1991 to highlight proven strategies, tools, and resources for creating lifelong learners. Lucas also serves as a board member of The Film Foundation and the USC School of Cinematic Arts Board of Councilors.

Rita Moreno (actress, singer)

Rita Moreno has won all four of the most prestigious awards in show business: the Oscar[®], the Tony[®], two Emmys[®], and a Grammy[®]. Her countless credits span more than six decades, beginning with her Broadway debut at age 13. Moreno has starred on Broadway; London's West End; appeared in more than 40 feature films, and countless television shows; has performed in numerous regional theaters, most recently in her one-woman show, *Life Without Makeup* at the Berkeley Rep. She was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2004 and the National Medal of Arts by President Obama in 2010. In 2013, her first book, *Rita Moreno: A Memoir*, published by Celebra Books instantly became a *New York Times* Bestseller. In January 2014, Rita received the Screen Actors Guild Life Achievement Award. This past June, she served as the 2015 Grand Marshal of the National Puerto Rican Day Parade and in September, Rita will be the voice of Abuelita in the new animated series, *Nina's World*, on NBC-TV's Sprout Network.

Seiji Ozawa (music director, conductor)

Seiji Ozawa is an internationally recognized celebrity and one of the great figures of the classical music world today. Mr. Ozawa served as Music Director of the Boston Symphony for 29 seasons (1973–2002), making history as that orchestra's longest-serving music director; his commitment to the BSO included appearances at the world-renowned Tanglewood festival, where Seiji Ozawa Hall was named in his honor. There he also worked closely with the Fellows of the Tanglewood Music Center, the BSO's acclaimed summer music academy, where Mr. Ozawa himself was a Fellow in 1959. Now BSO Music Director Laureate, Mr. Ozawa is also artistic director and founder of the Saito Kinen Orchestra and the Seiji Ozawa Matsumoto Festival, Japan's pre-eminent music and opera festival. He has established many programs for young musicians, including the Ozawa International Chamber Music Academy in Okushiga and the Seiji Ozawa International Music Academy Switzerland. Mr. Ozawa served as Music Director of the Vienna State Opera from 2002 to 2010. Tremendously popular in

Europe, Mr. Ozawa has conducted many of the continent's orchestras, including the Berlin Philharmonic and Vienna Philharmonic, where he holds an honorary membership.

Born in 1935 in Shenyang, China, Seiji Ozawa later graduated with first prizes in both composition and conducting from Tokyo's Toho School of Music. In 1959, he won first prize at the International Competition of Orchestra Conductors in Besançon, France, drawing the attention of then BSO music director Charles Munch, who invited him to Tanglewood, where he won the Koussevitzky Prize as outstanding student conductor in 1960. While working with Herbert von Karajan in West Berlin, Mr. Ozawa came to the attention of Leonard Bernstein, who appointed him assistant conductor of the New York Philharmonic (1961–1962). He was music director at the Ravinia Festival, Toronto Symphony, and San Francisco Symphony, before being named BSO Music Director in 1973, leaving a legacy of touring, award-winning recordings (more than 140 works of more than 50 composers), television productions (winning two Emmy Awards®), and commissioned works.

Cicely Tyson (stage, film, and television actress)

Actress, advocate, and humanitarian Cicely Tyson is renowned for her portrayals of strong female characters on stage, screen, and television, from her stunning initial stage appearance as Barbara Allen in *Dark of the Moon* to her triumphant 2013 return to Broadway. After a 30-year hiatus from the Broadway stage, Ms. Tyson returned as Mother Carrie Watts in Horton Foote's *The Trip to Bountiful*, earning rave reviews and the triple crown of theater awards: the Tony®, Drama Desk, and Outer Critics Circle awards for Best Actress in a Play. Ms. Tyson will return to the Broadway stage in September 2015 in *The Gin Game* co-starring James Earl Jones. She is best known for her double Emmy® performance (Best Lead Actress in a Drama as well as a special, unprecedented Emmy Award® for Actress of the Year) as Jane in *The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman*. Ms. Tyson was also nominated for an Academy Award® for *Souder* and received her third Emmy Award® for *The Oldest Living Confederate Widow Tells All* and was nominated for her performances in *Roots*, *King, Sweet Justice*, *The Marva Collins Story*, and *A Lesson Before Dying*. Her film credits include *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter*, *Fried Green Tomatoes*, *Because of Winn-Dixie*, *Hoodlum*, *Diary of a Mad Black Woman*, *Madea's Family Reunion*, *Why Did I Get Married Too?*, *The Help*, and *Alex Cross*. Since 1996, Ms. Tyson has served as the guiding force of the Cicely L. Tyson Community School of Performing and Fine Arts in East Orange, New Jersey.

Extended biographies, statements, and photos of the 2015 Kennedy Center Honorees are available to media upon request.

For more information about the Kennedy Center, please visit our [website](#).

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PRESS CONTACTS:

Eileen Andrews
(202) 416-8448
etandrews@kennedy-center.org

Amanda Hunter
(202) 416-8441
ahunter@kennedy-center.org