

FOR RELEASE ON:
Thursday, July 21, 2022 at 8:00 a.m. ET

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The Kennedy Center Announces 45th Class of Honorees

GEORGE CLOONEY, AMY GRANT, GLADYS KNIGHT, TANIA LEÓN, AND U2



**AMERICA TO CELEBRATE HONOREES' LIFETIME ARTISTIC ACHIEVEMENTS
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2022**

Done+Dusted Tapped As Executive Producers

Gala will be broadcast on CBS at a later date

(WASHINGTON)—The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts today announced the selection of five Honorees who will receive the 45th Kennedy Center Honors for lifetime artistic achievements. Recipients to be honored at the annual national celebration of the arts in Washington, D.C. are: acclaimed actor and filmmaker **George Clooney**; contemporary Christian and pop singer-songwriter **Amy Grant**; the legendary singer of soul, Gospel, R&B, and pop **Gladys Knight**; Cuban-born American composer, conductor, and educator **Tania León**; and iconic Irish rock band **U2**, comprised of band members **Bono**, **The Edge**, **Adam Clayton**, and **Larry Mullen Jr.**

The Kennedy Center also announced today that **Done+Dusted**, the award-winning production company and producers of the Center’s Mark Twain Prize since 2018, have been selected as Executive Producers of the 45th annual Kennedy Center Honors.

Kennedy Center Chairman David M. Rubenstein said this about the 2022 Honorees:

“Whether saving humanity, masterminding a heist, or captaining a ship in dangerous seas, actor **George Clooney**’s unique brand of earnest charisma and his complete embodiment of a character has led us to root for him every time; multi-platinum singer-songwriter **Amy Grant** became the first artist to bring contemporary Christian music to the forefront of American culture, then equally thrived after crossing over into mainstream pop with hit after hit, and today is revered as the “Queen of Christian Pop”; in her 55-year music career, legendary singer and America’s beloved “Empress of Soul” **Gladys Knight** went from the Pips of Georgia to Grammy® royalty, showcasing a boundless vocal range and soulfulness that has stood the test of time; a brave, young Cuban refugee turned Pulitzer Prize-winning composer and music ambassador, **Tania León** has blessed America for more than five decades with her astoundingly original compositions and continues to be a major influence on classical music; and one of most influential rock bands of the modern rock era, **U2**, won over America and the world long ago with their iconic anthems, potent lyrics, and powerful messages of social justice and global citizenship—earning a musical legacy that crosses generations, inspires, and unites.”

Deborah F. Rutter, Kennedy Center President, added:

“For nearly a half-century, the Kennedy Center Honors has represented the very best of America’s creative culture. The Honors is often referred to by past recipients as the pinnacle of awards because it recognizes not just one performance, album, or film, but esteems an artist’s cumulative body of work and influence over many decades. This level of distinction is important. Through this holistic viewpoint, each year’s Honorees add another layer to the complex and inspiring collage of artists that together tell the story of our collective contribution to global culture. Now, as the Center completes its yearlong 50th Anniversary celebration, I cannot help but think that the Kennedy Center’s namesake would surely smile at this celebration that brings us closer to his vision of ‘an America which will reward achievement in the arts as we reward achievement in business or statecraft.’”

Throughout its 44-year history, the annual Honors Gala has become the highlight of the Washington cultural and society calendar, and its national broadcast on CBS is a high point of the television season. On Sunday, December 4, in a star-studded celebration on the Kennedy Center Opera House stage, the 45th class of Kennedy Center Honorees will be saluted by today’s leading performers from New York, Hollywood, and the arts capitals of the world. Seated in the Box Tier of the iconic Kennedy Center Opera House, the Honorees will accept the recognition and gratitude of their peers through performances and tributes. The 45th Kennedy Center Honors Gala concludes with a dinner in the Grand Foyer.

The Honors Gala will be recorded for broadcast on the CBS Television Network at a later date for the 45th consecutive year as a two-hour primetime special and will be available to stream live and on demand on Paramount+.

Joining this year’s Honors creative team is **Done+Dusted**, a production company with a reputation for creating and capturing the moments that make headlines and shape culture. The 45th annual Kennedy Center Honors will be

produced by Done+Dusted in association with ROK Productions, represented by Elizabeth Kelly, who will executive produce alongside David Jammy and Ian Stewart. The show will be directed by Alex Rudzinski.

Done+Dusted is a multi-award winning global entertainment group with offices in Los Angeles, London, and Abu Dhabi, the preeminent producer of live television events in the world. D+D has produced the previous three *Mark Twain Prize* shows at the Kennedy Center, and has reimaged and reinvigorated the country's preeminent recognition for humor, resulting in an Emmy®-nominated tent-pole on the Kennedy Center calendar.

Whether it is producing the most watched television event in history (*The London Olympic Opening and Closing Ceremonies*), the Apple TV+ world ratings blockbuster *Mariah Carey's Magical Christmas Special*, the ABC hit series of *Disney Singalongs*, multiple network "roadblocks" including *Stand Up To Cancer* and *Graduate Together*, YouTube Originals' most watched live event ever, *Dear Class of 2020*, the last four Emmy Awards® (including two during the pandemic), or the ABC ratings sensation *Little Mermaid Live*, D+D's work bears the distinct badge of quality, spectacle, and storytelling that makes it, unequivocally "Done+Dusted."

The Exclusive Sponsor of the Kennedy Center Honors is CBS.

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

The Official Airline of the Kennedy Center Honors is Delta Air Lines.

The Kennedy Center Honors Founding Producer is George Stevens, Jr.

The Honors recipients are recognized for their contributions to American culture through the performing arts—whether in music, dance, theater, opera, motion pictures, or television—and are confirmed 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 former Honorees, the artistic community, the Kennedy Center Board of Trustees, 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 David Bohnett and includes past Honors recipients and distinguished artists Julie Andrews, Gloria Estefan, Herbie Hancock, Judith Jamison, Lionel Richie, and John Williams as well as David M. Rubenstein, Deborah F. Rutter, Bryan Lourd, Cappy McGarr, Shonda Rhimes, and Daryl Roth. These individuals play a critical role in the evaluation and selection process, and the Kennedy Center is indebted to them for their involvement.

45TH KENNEDY CENTER HONOREE STATEMENTS

"Growing up in a small town in Kentucky I could never have imagined that someday I'd be the one sitting in the balcony at the Kennedy Center Honors. To be mentioned in the same breath with the rest of these incredible artists is an honor. This is a genuinely exciting surprise for the whole Clooney family."

-George Clooney

"Never in my wildest dreams did I imagine ever receiving this prestigious Kennedy Center Honors. Through the years, I've watched so many of my heroes serenaded by colleagues and fellow artists, always moved by the ability of

music and film to bring us together and to see the best in each other. I cannot wait to celebrate with my fellow honorees, friends, and family. Thank you for widening the circle to include all of us.”

–Amy Grant

“I’m humbled beyond words to be included amongst this prestigious group of individuals, both past and present. You could never have told me as a young girl starting my career that I would be honored on a stage such as this, with artists and humanitarians such as these—it just wouldn’t have seemed possible. It would have been the dream of all dreams. I have been blessed with so much in my life and this certainly stands with those achievements at the top of that list. To be honored as a Kennedy Center Honoree is among the highlights of my career. I stand here with my fans, my family, my friends, my team, and my faith in accepting such an amazing distinction. It is dedicated to all those who paved the path for me to be able to accomplish the wonderful blessings I’ve been able to receive. The Kennedy Center’s commitment to the arts is unparalleled and I am so very grateful for this moment.”

–Gladys Knight

“Little did I imagine when studying in La Habana that life was going to grace me with such a distinction! My first thoughts went to my ancestors: they believed in my dreams, and what we lacked in material wealth, they made up for in spirit, encouragement, and support. My heartfelt thanks go to the many people who have blessed my path by helping my talent to blossom and by giving me the chance to be heard. I am incredibly humbled to join such a prestigious family of artists, and deeply grateful to the Kennedy Center for bestowing me with this incredible honor.”

–Tania León

“In December 1980, we made our first trip across the Atlantic to America. Our first show was at The Ritz in New York City, the second, The Bayou in D.C. We had big dreams then, fueled in part by the commonly held belief at home that America smiles on Ireland. And it turned out to be true, yet again. But even in the wilder thoughts, we never imagined that 40 years on, we would be invited back to receive one of the nation’s greatest honours...It has been a four-decade love affair with the country and its people, its artists, and culture. We consider America to be a home away from home and we are very grateful to the Kennedy Center Honors for welcoming us into this great clan of extraordinary artists.”

–U2 (Bono, The Edge, Adam Clayton, Larry Mullen Jr.)

Kennedy Center Honors Ticket Information:

For ticket inquiries, please visit [kennedy-center.org/honorsinfo](https://www.kennedy-center.org/honorsinfo) or email Honors@kennedy-center.org.

Statements, full bios, and photos of the new class of Kennedy Center Honorees are available to media upon request.

For more information about the Kennedy Center, please visit our [website](https://www.kennedy-center.org).

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PRESS CONTACTS:

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

Kate Fisher (CBS)
khfisher@viacomcbs.com