25/40 CELEBRATION
AT THE KENNEDY CENTER

CELEBRATING THE 25TH ADA AND 40TH VSA ANNIVERSARIES

EVENT GUIDE

SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE
#2540CELEBRATION
WHAT’S INSIDE

ABOUT THE 25/40 CELEBRATION

AMBASSADOR JEAN KENNEDY SMITH

ART EXHIBITS

VSA 40th Anniversary: Championing the Arts
VSA Permanent Art Collection
Focus Forward
Tom Olin: Photographing the Revolution
Disability Pride on Both Sides of the Camera
ADA 25th Anniversary: Championing Disability Rights

PERFORMANCES

25/40 Opening with Josh Blue
A Night of International Young Soloists
Brother Ali
Frankie Lee and Michael Rossetto
TiLT Challenge Screening and Dance Party
Stories Told in American Sign Language
Let’s Read, Let’s Move
Musical Robots and Cyborgs from Room 100: Georgia Tech’s Robotic Musicians and Musical Cyborgs
Michael Cleveland and Flamekeeper
Blessing Offor
National Dance Day: Dance for Everybody
Celebration Concert
Jean Kennedy Smith Series: Disability + Culture

BUILDING MAP

ACCESSIBILITY

Visit us online for more information!

Presenting Sponsor
VOLKSWAGEN
GROUP OF AMERICA

The 2015 25th ADA/40th VSA Anniversary Celebration, a program of Arts Across America, is made possible through the extraordinary generosity of the Charles E. Smith Family Foundation.

Funding for Access and Accommodation Programs at the Kennedy Center is provided by Mike and Julie Connors and the U.S. Department of Education.

Kennedy Center education and related artistic programming is made possible through the generosity of the National Committee for the Performing Arts and the President’s Advisory Committee on the Arts.

Visit us online for more information!

Visit us online for more information!
A cultural celebration like no other.

The Kennedy Center and the Smithsonian Institution are hosting a unique celebration of the arts, culture, and history of the disability community this July to mark two monumental anniversaries that have changed the course of our country’s trajectory in truly profound ways:

The Americans with Disabilities Act was passed 25 years ago—an enormous step forward for civil rights and equal opportunity for people with disabilities. The impact of the ADA can hardly be overstated—it has irreversibly changed the lives of millions of people across the U.S.

VSA embarked on a mission 40 years ago—to champion quality arts and arts education for and with people living with disabilities. In collaboration with members of VSA’s international network of affiliates, cultural organizations, artists and performers, millions of people with disabilities of all ages have had opportunities to participate in and learn through the arts. As VSA’s founder, Ambassador Jean Kennedy Smith said, “If we do not participate in the arts throughout our lives—we will lose not only our culture and civility, but our humanity as well.”

Join us July 16-26 to experience exceptional art that introduces new perspectives, asks good questions, and reframes the ways we see the world. Expect to leave truly enriched—nourished by performances, events, and art that are fun, bold, diverse, and powerful.

Jean Kennedy Smith was nominated by President Clinton to serve as Ambassador to Ireland on March 17, 1993, and was confirmed by the Senate on June 16, 1993. Since 1964, she has been a member of the Board of Trustees of the Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation, which provides grants to promote awareness and advocacy in the field of intellectual disabilities. Ambassador Smith was a member of the Board of Trustees of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts from 1964 to 2012, and now serves as an Honorary Member of the Board of Trustees. She has also served on the Board of the International Rescue Committee and is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.


Ambassador Smith has received a number of honorary degrees, including ones from New York University, Fordham University, The National University of Ireland, and Dublin City University. She has also received various awards, including the Jefferson Award for Outstanding Public Service from the American Institutes for Public Service; the Margaret Mead Humanitarian Award from the Council of Cerebral Palsy Auxiliaries; the 1995 Irish American of the Year Award from Irish American Magazine; the 1997 Rotary One International Award from the Rotary Club of Chicago; the 1997 Terence Cardinal Cooke Humanitarian Award; and in 2011 President Barack Obama awarded her the Medal of Freedom.

Ambassador Smith is a resident of New York State. Her husband, Stephen E. Smith, died in 1990. She has four children.

*All events are free and open to the public unless otherwise noted. Dates, times, and artists are subject to change.*
ART EXHIBITS

July 16 – 26, 2015
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 a.m.

VSA Permanent Art Collection
Terrace Gallery
(Note: This exhibit will close at 9:00 p.m. each night)

Over its forty-year history, VSA has amassed a collection of truly unique visual art. This body of collected work tells a story that follows the vision of VSA’s founder, Ambassador Jean Kennedy Smith and the ways in which VSA’s mission has impacted the lives of the participating artists. Selected pieces will be on display, including works by Dale Chihuly, William Wegman, Robert Rauschenberg, and Hiro Yamagata.

VSA 40th Anniversary: Championing the Arts
Hall of States

Founded 40 years ago by Ambassador Jean Kennedy Smith, VSA set out to ensure that people of all ages living with disabilities could learn through, participate in, and enjoy the arts. In this exhibit, eight people share their perspectives on the impact that the arts have had on their lives.

Focus Forward
Hall of Nations

This exhibition features a selection of artwork by 16 artists who represent the past 13 years of the VSA Emerging Young Artists Program. This program recognizes outstanding young artists with disabilities through a highly competitive annual juried visual arts competition. Focus Forward illustrates how these artists have responded to trends in the art world, forged new paths of artistic expression, been inspired, and achieved success. Curated by Stephanie Moore.

Tom Olin: Photographing the Revolution
Nations Gallery

The disability rights movement was founded through the actions and hard work of thousands of advocates. Long before the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, advocates took to the streets and to the steps of the Supreme Court, as experienced and documented by photographer Tom Olin.

Disability Pride on Both Sides of the Camera
Nations Gallery

In this exhibit, work by photographers Christopher Voelker, Loren Worthington, Larry Roffee, and Mary Lou Mobley bring disability pride to our attention in a series of powerful portraits of people with disabilities by people with disabilities.

ADA 25th Anniversary: Championing Disability Rights
Family Theater Lower Lobby

As one of the chief sponsors of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Senator Edward M. Kennedy ensured that millions of Americans living with disabilities would be protected from discrimination. This exhibit examines the Senator’s contributions to the passage of this legislation, and includes a portrait from the VSA Permanent Art Collection of Senator Kennedy by Andy Warhol. Curated by Carolyn Osolinik.

All exhibits are wheelchair accessible.
Audio Description is available upon request. See Page 13 for details.
PERFORMANCES

July 16 – 26, 2015
See times in individual listings

25/40 Opening with Josh Blue
Millennium Stage South
July 16, 2015 at 5:45 p.m.
Free, no tickets required

Comedians Josh Blue and Shannon DeVido will open the Celebration with stand-up comedy performances. Headliner Josh Blue won the fourth season of NBC’s reality series Last Comic Standing. As a comedian living with cerebral palsy, Blue centers much of his act on his disability. Shannon DeVido is a comedian, actress, and singer, and as a person who uses a wheelchair, DeVido launched the popular web series Stare at Shannon, breaking conventional image of disability through comedy. This performance is being offered in collaboration with the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and will be made available in embassies and consulates around the world via live-streaming.

A Night of International Young Soloists
Millennium Stage South
July 17, 2015 at 6:00 p.m.
Free, no tickets required

Get engaged in the music and enjoy this performance by several VSA International Young Soloists. These performers were selected from among the outstanding classical musicians living with disabilities who have participated in the program over the past 10 years. These musicians – whether they are students or professionals – will draw you in and engage you in their artistry.

Frankie Lee and Michael Rossetto
Millennium Stage South
July 19, 2015 at 6:00 p.m.
Free, no tickets required

Frankie Lee is a songwriter and musician who has released two EPs that both gained critical acclaim and worldwide attention. He is being joined by multi-instrumentalist Michael Rossetto. Look forward to an evening of storytelling in song from one of America’s strongest new voices.

All performances are:

- Large Print
- braille
- Large Print
- braille

Miss a Millennium Stage* performance or can’t make it in person? Performances are broadcast LIVE and archived on the web at:

kennedy-center.org/programs/millennium

*This applies only to performances on the Millennium Stages. Does not apply to the TiLT Dance Party, National Dance Day, or Jean Kennedy Smith Series: Disability + Culture.
TiLT Challenge Screening and Dance Party
Atrium - enter from States Gallery
July 20, 2015 at 7:30 p.m.
Free, limited seating and capacity
The first annual TiLT Challenge invited students, with and without disabilities, to explore the disability experience by telling their own stories, imagining stories from unique perspectives, and magnifying disability stories of justice or injustice using digital media to express their creativity, skill, and talent. TiLT will culminate with a film screening of the selected entries followed by a dance party featuring popular Deaf performers Sean Forbes and DJ Robbie Wilde.

Stories Told in American Sign Language
Millennium Stage South
July 21, 2015 at 6:00 p.m.
Free, no tickets required
Join us for this family-friendly event featuring Deaf storytellers CJ Jones, Evelina Gaina, and Mario Hernandez. These storytellers will enthral children and adults alike with tales told in American Sign Language with voice interpretation.

Let’s Read, Let’s Move
Grand Foyer
July 22, 2015 at 10:30 a.m.
Free
U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan will visit the Kennedy Center for Let’s Read! Let’s Move! as part of a broad initiative to engage youth in summer learning and physical activity. Select guests will read a fun book about dance to 150 to 300 children (ages 3-7) and then Kennedy Center Education Department teaching artists and dancers will lead the children in dance workshops to explore healthy movement through dance.

Michael Cleveland and Flamekeeper
Millennium Stage South
July 23, 2015 at 6:00 p.m.
Free, no tickets required
Michael Cleveland is one of the premier bluegrass fiddlers of his generation and, with nine International Bluegrass Music Association (IBMA) Fiddle Player of the Year awards under his belt, he is one of the most celebrated fiddlers in the history of the music. Cleveland plays with so much fire, drive, and virtuosity that audiences are often left shaking their heads in amazement. Together with his band Flamekeeper (four-time IBMA Instrumental Group winners) Cleveland delivers some of the most powerful, exciting, and authentic bluegrass you can find. Clearly, this fiery fiddler’s story is just beginning and Michael Cleveland and Flamekeeper’s future preserving and innovating the bluegrass tradition has never been brighter.

Musical Robots and Cyborgs from Room 100: Georgia Tech’s Robotic Musicians and Musical Cyborgs
Millennium Stage South
July 22, 2015 at 6:00 p.m.
Free, no tickets required
Shimon, the robotic marimba player, can listen to, understand, collaborate with, surprise, and inspire his human counterparts. Along with a few other robotic musicians and a drummer wearing an assistive robotic drumming prosthesis, Shimon utilizes artificial intelligence and creativity algorithms that push musical experiences and outcomes to uncharted domains.

Up to two (2) wristbands per person will be distributed on a first come, first-served basis beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the States Gallery.
National Dance Day: Dance for Everybody
Kennedy Center Hall of States, Hall of Nations, Millennium Stage North
July 25, 2015 from 4:30 - 7:00 p.m. Free, no tickets required

The Kennedy Center, in partnership with Dizzy Feet Foundation, presents National Dance Day: Dance for Everybody. This free event features performances in many dance styles by artists including Axis Dance Company, one of the world’s most acclaimed physically integrated companies; Antoine Hunter, Deaf African American choreographer; Culture Shock, a D.C. based hip-hop crew; and Evan Ruggiero, one-legged tap dancer, singer, and guitarist. Site-specific performances begin throughout the Kennedy Center’s Grand Foyer at 4:30 p.m. followed by a two-hour event on the Millennium Stage 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Jean Kennedy Smith Series: Disability + Culture
Concert Hall
July 26, 2015 at 8:00 p.m.
By invitation only, tickets required

For this inaugural event, we recognize two monumental anniversaries with one remarkable celebration honoring Ambassador Smith’s dedication to supporting the work and contributions that artists living with disabilities make to the richness and diversity of global culture and the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act on the exact day it was signed into law 25 years ago. The evening will feature tributes, interviews, and performances by artists with disabilities. This event is ticketed and by invitation only.

Blessing Offor
Millennium Stage South
July 24, 2015 at 6:00 p.m.
Free, no tickets required

Blessing Offor is a singer-songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, and a 2010 VSA International Young Soloist Award Recipient. Blessing’s first full-length record, recorded by Sojourn Records, was released in February 2015. He can be recognized from his recent stint as a contestant on the NBC show The Voice, and musical appearances with legendary music acts, such as Tower of Power and the Temptations. Blessing currently splits his time between New York City and Nashville where he writes and records his music. When not playing music, Blessing can be found touring the country as a professional speaker.

Celebration Concert
Millennium Stage North
July 26, 2015 at 6:00 p.m.
Free, no tickets required

Please join us for a celebration on the Millennium Stage for the 25th ADA and 40th VSA anniversaries. This is the not-to-be-missed performance and culmination of eleven days of events and performances featuring artists with disabilities at the Kennedy Center and at the Smithsonian.

Nightly Happy Hour
5:00 - 6:00 p.m. | Grand Foyer
Join us at the Grand Foyer cash bars, near the Millennium Stages, for daily food and drink specials!

Smithsonian Institution
Leaders in the disability rights community, congressional leaders, and members of the disability community will present discussions and exhibits on the grounds of the Smithsonian Institution’s National Museum of American History July 24-26 to mark the 25th Anniversary of the ADA and highlight the ADA’s ongoing legacy in American life.

The Smithsonian Institution’s Festival ADA: 25 Years of Disability Rights will feature a discussion stage with conversations on topics such as the passage of the ADA, developments in accessible technology, employment, and the new generation of disability rights advocates; interactive workshops in theater, dance, and music; a postcard-making activity and a USPS commemorative anniversary postmarking opportunity; and exhibits on community living, service dogs, and communications. Inside the museum, a showcase will capture the significance and legacy of the ADA through the stories of four people. Additional Festival ADA events include documentaries from filmmakers with disabilities; a facilitated conversation on Latinos and the ADA; and actor and performance artist Mat Fraser performing his one-person, original piece, “Cabinet of Curiosities: How Disability Was Kept in a Box.” On Sunday, come at noon for an ADA birthday party and a visit from the legendary ADA25 Legacy Bus!

Visit www.2540celebration.com for details.
The Kennedy Center strives to make its performances and facilities accessible to all our patrons. If you have questions or would like to receive additional information about accessibility at the Kennedy Center, please contact us at (202) 416-8727 or access@kennedy-center.org.

All 25/40 Celebration events and exhibits at the Kennedy Center are wheelchair accessible.

The 25/40 Celebration Guide is available in print, large print, and braille from the information center in the Hall of States.

All 25/40 Celebration Millennium Stage performances are audio described, sign language interpreted and captioned, and accessible seating, assistive listening devices, and braille and large print programs are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Audio describers are available to provide live description of exhibits on a first-come, first-served basis during the following times:

- July 16-17  5:00 - 8:00 p.m.
- July 18-19  12:00 - 8:00 p.m.
- July 20-24  5:00 - 8:00 p.m.
- July 26  12:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Please visit the Visitors Center in the Hall of States to request the service. Electronic audio described guides for select 25/40 Celebration exhibitions at the Kennedy Center are available online.

More information about accessibility at the Kennedy Center is available online at kennedy-center.org/accessibility/services.
David M. Rubenstein, Chairman
Deborah F. Rutter, President
Mario R. Rossero, Vice President for Education

The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts
Office of VSA and Accessibility
2700 F Street NW
Washington, DC 20566

kennedy-center.org/accessibility
(202) 416-8727