



Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Wednesday, May 8, 2019

The Kennedy Center's Israeli Lounge to Undergo Transformation in 2020

Made possible by LetterOne, modern design from architecture firm EYP highlights Israeli spirit, history and culture

(WASHINGTON, D.C.)—The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts announces the selection of design firm EYP to re-envision its Israeli Lounge, the lounge's first renovation in its 48-year history. Following a competition among design and architecture firms from around the world, EYP's winning submission proposed a fresh design that reflects the spirit of modern-day Israel, pays homage to its rich history, and features artwork by contemporary Israeli artists. The project is made possible by a \$1.25 million gift from LetterOne, an international investment firm led by businessman and philanthropist Mikhail Fridman.

The Israeli Lounge was a gift from the people of Israel and a number of Kennedy Center supporters presented during the Center's opening in 1971—one of dozens of gifts from nations around the world in honor of President Kennedy. Located on the box tier level of the Concert Hall Lobby, the Lounge, which accommodates up to 80 guests, serves as a space for patrons and guests to convene, entertain, and connect.

The selection of EYP—a team consisting of Lead Interior Designer Antoinette Ayres; Senior Interior Designer Courtney Janes; and Architectural Designer Belilta Asfaw—marks the conclusion of a juried competition to identify designs that best represent Israeli culture, while reflecting a modern Israel. In reviewing submissions, the Kennedy Center considered each design's celebration of Jewish culture, including philosophy, the arts, science, and religion.

The newly renovated Israeli Lounge will feature a dramatic curved ceiling that echoes the topography of Israel. Gallery walls will feature one of Israel's premier materials, Jerusalem stone, as a warm, neutral backdrop to a curated selection of artwork. Thirteen stone panels will be placed along each wall, symbolic of the 13 tribes of Israel. A tile mosaic wall made from Israeli-American photographer Richard Nowitz's photo of Ha Yehudim Street in Jerusalem's Jewish Quarter will anchor the north wall of the room.

Renovations are anticipated to begin in January 2020 and continue through Spring 2020. During this time, patrons who would typically have access to the Israeli Lounge will relocate to the Bird Room, a similar lounge on the second tier of the Concert Hall. Original artwork in the Israeli Lounge by Nehemiah Azaz and Shraga Weil will be removed, restored, and preserved, before being displayed in another public space at the Kennedy Center.

(more)

The Israeli Lounge renovation is the fourth event space to be renovated in a long-term restoration effort that has included renovation of seven of the Center's nine theaters since 1997. The Israeli Lounge is one of the Kennedy Center's four event lounges named after countries or regions of the world that include the African Room, the Chinese Lounge, and the Russian Lounge.

Since opening its doors in September 1971, the Kennedy Center has accepted gifts from dozens of countries and leaders from around the world. Such gifts include 3,700 tons of Carrara marble from Italy which lines the interior and exterior of the building, 60-foot grand mirrors from Belgium in the Grand Foyer, the 50-foot-wide Lobmeyr crystal chandelier from Austria in the Opera House, the 16 Orrefors crystal chandeliers from Sweden in the Grand Foyer, and six Aubusson tapestries from Australia in the Nations Gallery, as well as dozens of paintings, sculptures, and furnishings which grace the building.

ABOUT EYP

EYP is the leading architecture and engineering firm developing new ideas and design solutions with mission-driven clients in higher education, government, healthcare, and science & technology. Our interdisciplinary Total Impact Design™ approach empowers clients with buildings that profoundly impact human behavior and performance as well as energy and the environment. Dedicated to People, Purpose, and Planet, EYP design liberates human potential to transform performance; actively helps clients advance their mission; and maximizes available resources to advance sustainability. Inspired by our clients, design is how we make a positive impact on the world. eypae.com

ABOUT LETTERONE

LetterOne was founded in 2013 and is an international investment business headquartered in Luxembourg, with offices in London and New York. LetterOne's strategy is to buy and build a new portfolio of successful companies that are leaders in their fields and sectors. It makes long-term investments of its own capital in companies in which its sectoral experience and strategic and geographic expertise will improve performance and help companies grow. It has recruited world-class CEOs, sector investment teams, and Advisory Boards to invest at scale. It buys and build assets, which it can develop over time as platforms of long-term sustainable growth.

ABOUT THE JOHN F. KENNEDY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts is America's living memorial to President John F. Kennedy, attracting millions of visitors each year to more than 2,000 performances, events, and exhibits. With its artistic affiliates, the National Symphony Orchestra and Washington National Opera, the nation's busiest performing arts center is dedicated to providing world-class art, powerful education, and outstanding memorial experiences to the broadest possible constituency. Across all its offerings, the Kennedy Center is committed to increasing accessible, inclusive opportunities for all people to participate in, and learn through the arts, including more than 400 free performances each year and a variety of Specially Priced Ticket programs for students, seniors, persons with disabilities, and others.

For more information about the Kennedy Center visit www.kennedy-center.org.

###

MEDIA CONTACT:

Michelle Pendoley

202-416-8196 | mapendoley@kennedy-center.org