

EXHIBIT 31

of the Kennedy Center, sent a memo to the arts complex's staff, which was obtained by NPR, where he wrote: "We recognize this creates many questions as we plan to temporarily close most of our operations. We will have more information about staffing and operational changes in the coming days." In a public statement posted to X on Sunday two and a half hours after Trump's announcement, Grenell wrote: "I am confident this sets the stage for a stronger, revitalized National Cultural and Entertainment Complex."

We have many questions, which we're currently trying to get answered. NPR reached out to the Kennedy Center for comment, but we have not received any replies as of Wednesday.



PERFORMING ARTS

Here's who's canceled their Kennedy Center performances since Trump took over

On Monday, we asked NPR readers and listeners to tell us what questions are at the front of your minds, and we've received hundreds of thoughtful responses from across the country and abroad. Here are a few of your most-asked questions.

How exactly are these renovations going to be funded, and by whom? Will the public know what's being spent, and on what? How transparent will the construction bidding process be?

Many folks asked questions about the finances of this endeavor: Who's promised to pay for it, how much it will ultimately cost, who stands to benefit from the construction project itself and what kind of public accountability and transparency will be involved.

On Monday at the White House, Trump said that the project will cost around \$200 million. He also said that the complex, which currently holds five separate performance venues and several other gathering spaces, is "dilapidated" and "dangerous" in its current state. An expansion of the Kennedy Center took place during Trump's first term in office. It was completed in 2019 and cost \$250 million, which was raised with private funds.



PERFORMING ARTS

More staff shakeups at the Kennedy Center

Last year, President Trump secured \$257 million for the Kennedy Center from Congress as part of the "One Big Beautiful Bill Act," with the aim of doing capital repairs and covering other expenses. It's not clear if the \$200 million mentioned by the president includes that money or not.

How a project of this potential scope can be accomplished on his stated budget is unclear – and we don't yet know what kind of performance and gathering spaces

are being envisioned for it. On Monday at the White House, President Trump was asked by CBS News if he plans to tear down the existing Kennedy Center complex. He replied: "I'm not ripping it down. I'll be using the steel, so we're using the structure." He also said that he plans to keep some of the center's marble in a new design.

By comparison, the government of Saudi Arabia is currently building a \$1.4 billion opera house complex in Riyadh that is scheduled to open in 2028. The recent renovation of David Geffen Hall, the New York Philharmonic's home in New York's Lincoln Center, cost \$550 million for the single space and took two years to complete before it reopened in 2024.

Who is the architect? Who will review and oversee the plans?

That information has not been made public, nor is it clear who will be overseeing the project. In his Truth Social post Sunday, Trump said that he has conducted a "one year review" with "Contractors, Musical Experts, Art Institutions and other Advisors and Consultants." He did not provide any specifics on who those individuals or organizations are.

The renovation completed in 2019 was overseen by the members of the Kennedy Center board as well as the National Park Service. Last February, Trump fired numerous staff as well as board members who had been appointed by former President Joe Biden. In their place, he appointed a number of close allies as trustees, including Fox News commentator Laura Ingraham and country singer Lee Greenwood. The board then named Trump as the center's new chairman.

What about the existing contracts, for performers already scheduled to come to the Kennedy Center and for employees who work there regularly?

It's unclear as of now who will pay for any compensation of this kind when it comes to existing performance contracts. The same applies to the many union members who work at the Kennedy Center day to day. It's also not clear what will happen to the National Symphony Orchestra (NSO), which is in residence at the Kennedy Center and currently receives about \$10 million of its \$42 million budget from the arts complex. (The NSO has not replied to NPR's requests for comment; on Monday, the *Washington Post* reported that it had obtained an email sent by NSO leadership to its board, musicians and staff saying that the Kennedy Center had agreed to maintain its NSO funding and help the orchestra find alternative venues for the duration of the renovation project.)

On Monday, Kennedy Center Arts Workers United, a group that represents five of the performing and professional unions within the arts complex including the American Federation of Musicians and the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, issued a statement that reads in part: "At this time, no formal notice or briefing has been provided to the unions of arts workers whose labor sustains the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. We only know of public statements issued by President Trump and an internal message to some Kennedy Center employees that reiterated the President's social media remarks. ... Should we receive formal notice of a temporary suspension of Kennedy Center operations that displaces our members, we will enforce our contracts and exercise all our rights under the law. We expect continued fair pay, enforceable worker protections, and accountability for our members in the event they cannot work due to an operational pause."



A tarp covers construction on the building's facade on Dec. 19, 2025, after Trump announced The John F.

**Now, back to our first round of questions:
Wouldn't Congress have to approve this?**

Kennedy Memorial Center for the
Performing Arts would be renamed
The Trump-Kennedy Center.

Jim Watson/AFP via Getty Images



PERFORMING ARTS

The Kennedy Center's history was marked by cooperation and independence — until now

The Kennedy Center's charter stipulates that it is a living memorial to the late President John F. Kennedy and to "preserving, fostering, and transmitting the performing arts traditions of the people of the United States and other countries by producing and presenting music, opera, theater, dance, and other performing arts."

What happens to organizations, performers and unions that currently have open contracts with the Kennedy Center?

These include long-running shows like *Shear Madness*, which is currently booked at the center through October and several unions with Kennedy Center contracts, which range from the musicians of the National Symphony – whose current contract is set to expire next month – to backstage crew and education staffers.

What is President Trump's vision for this complex?

Artistic disciplines such as opera, classical music and dance have historically not been a priority for him; for example, he did not attend any Kennedy Center performances during his first term and the most recent class of Kennedy Center honorees did not include any artists from those fields. Would a "complete rebuilding" hold any space for these performing arts disciplines?

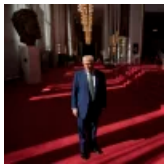
Where will the National Symphony, the Kennedy Center's lynchpin artistic organization in residence, go once they've lost their home?

Their ticket sales have crumbled in the past year; does this closing of their physical space mean that they can extricate themselves from their financial relationship with the Kennedy Center?

Why has the president identified July 4 as the closing date?

That is traditionally the middle of the Kennedy Center's musical theater season – this year's announced lineup includes touring productions of *The Outsiders*, *Moulin Rouge! The Musical* and *Back to the Future: The Musical*, along with children's shows. What will happen to that season?

Why now?



CULTURE

Former Kennedy Center president refutes Trump's critique of 'bad management'

The Kennedy Center was expanded and renovated in 2019. It's an old facility in need of work, but what was not done then that Trump believes is needed now? A source close to the Kennedy Center tells NPR that among the changes that Trump has expressed enthusiasm for is the idea of putting in marble armrests at each seat in the main theater – which, along with being cold and uncomfortable, would drastically change the venue's acoustics, experts say.

What happens to the valuable and treasured artworks and historical artifacts housed at the Kennedy Center?

These range from the famed bust of President Kennedy in its grand foyer to cultural treasures gifted by various African nations in its African Lounge. What will happen to such artworks, cultural touchstones, and archival pieces? As a

private citizen in 1980, Trump demolished two Art Deco friezes at the former Bonwit Teller department store on New York's Fifth Avenue, which the Metropolitan Museum of Art had expressed interest in acquiring. The site would go on to become his Trump Tower. Last October, the entire East Wing of the White House was demolished, despite the concerns of preservationists and historians.

Will the newest iteration of the complex still be tied to President Kennedy's name and legacy?

In a social media post Monday morning, Jack Schlossberg, President Kennedy's grandson who is currently running for a congressional seat in New York's 12th district, indicated that he thinks not. He wrote: "He [Trump] can take the Kennedy Center for himself. He can change the name, shut the doors and demolish the building. He can try to kill JFK. But JFK is kept alive by us now rising up to remove Donald Trump, bring him to justice and restore the freedoms generations fought for."

We'd like to hear from you

This form is now closed.