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\$10 million gift a 'dream' for KenCen

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The Kennedy Center announced yesterday that it had received \$10 million for a new, 10-year performance initiative called the **Catherine B. Reynolds** Series for Artistic Excellence.

The series takes its name from the donor, the **Catherine B. Reynolds Foundation**, and reflects "the largest gift the center has ever received specifically for innovative artistic programming," Kennedy Center Chairman James A. Johnson said.

In the first year of the series, members of the Bolshoi Opera will be added to the visit of the Bolshoi Ballet on opening night in May.

Each year, Kennedy Center President Michael Kaiser will pick and produce a "world-class" production for showcasing. A number of seats for each event will be designated for local schoolchildren, and the Kennedy Center Education Department will produce related educational programming.

Mr. Kaiser called the gift "a programmer's dream." He said he will have sole artistic say over the artistic programming. Mrs. **Reynolds** caused controversy when she donated \$38 million to the Smithsonian Institution for a "Hall of Fame of American Achievers" and was given a strong role in decisions about it.

A McLean resident and arts patron - her **foundation** is underwriting the Henry Moore sculpture show now at the National Gallery of Art - she also was chairwoman of the National Symphony Orchestra Ball last night.

Her gifts join others to the center. Cuban-born arts philanthropist Alberto **B. Vilar** gave \$50 million in February when Mr. Kaiser took over at the Kennedy Center. Roughly \$15 million of that will go to annual visits here of the Kirov Ballet and Kirov Opera, beginning in February. The rest is being spent on a training program in arts management.

Mr. Kaiser said the Kennedy Center has not suffered setbacks in fund raising and ticket sales since the September 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon in Virginia. "Our fund raising in September was the best ever, and we will net more from the NSO Ball and Honors than ever before," he said.

Ticket sales also are holding up, Mr. Kaiser said. "For the Cuban ballet, six of seven performances were sold out," he said.

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