

What Do We Lose?

Just a few weeks ago we learned that the chairperson of The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts was to be replaced by presidential self-appointment. This action sets a new precedent for our nation's cultural center. The precedent is not in the act itself. It is in the implication that presidential power is appropriately used in the censorship of artistic work produced by a free society. The very purpose of art is to help us shape our world through exposure to the experiences, knowledge, perceptions, and viewpoints of other people, cultures, histories and societies. When the government restricts access to the arts, the government controls who we become as individuals and as a country. What is happening at the Kennedy Center is nothing short of a strategy to dumb us down in order to control what you and I think and believe. Fight for freedom to engage in the arts without government control. If the events of the Kennedy Center seem distant from your life, then support the arts in your local community. Go to a show or see an exhibit that may irritate you, buy a book from an independent bookstore, attend a concert outside of your go-to genre. These simple activities protect you from governmental agendas that do not support independence. A loss of independent choice in the arts is a loss of freedom – period.