Washington Performing Arts commemorates the 100th birthday of unsung American cultural powerhouse, Hazel Scott (1920-1981). Renowned during the 20th century as a brilliant jazz and classical pianist and singer, Scott was one of the most powerful artist-advocates our country has ever known. In addition to being a headliner at New York’s legendary Café Society, Scott appeared in film, on television, and on the radio. She was the first black woman to host a television show in the U.S., and during her time in Paris she organized one of the hottest salons, at which James Baldwin and close friend Mary Lou Williams were mainstays. The centennial will be commemorated with a series of main stage concerts and special events, educational programs, and a digital centennial portal promoting her legacy. These programs are being developed through archival research in consultation with Scott’s son, Adam Clayton Powell III.

“There was something thrilling and subversive in Scott’s hybrid art... it seemed clearly rooted in her race and gender.” —Time Magazine
Learn More About Hazel Scott

Los Angeles Times

“Who is Hazel Scott? Alicia Keys shouts-out a legendary double piano player”
Randall Roberts | February 10, 2019
“Keys acknowledged an expert pianist who made a career out of the maneuver, an entertainer and movie star whose accomplishments made her a household name during her prime.”
Read the full story: tinyurl.com/LATimesHazel

Smithsonian Magazine

“Hazel Scott’s Lifetime of High Notes”
Karen Chilton | October 15, 2009
“There was little separation between Hazel’s performance and her outspoken politics. She attributed it to being raised by very proud, strong-willed, independent-minded women. She was one of the first black entertainers to refuse to play before segregated audiences.”
Read the full story: tinyurl.com/SIHazel

WNYC

“Still Swinging, Still Classic: A Musical Biography of Pioneering Pianist Hazel Scott”
WNYC Arts | February 14, 2011
“Known as the ‘darling of Café Society,’ Hazel Scott became a trailblazer in Hollywood; an outspoken civil rights activist which made her a political target...”
Listen to the full story: tinyurl.com/WNYCHazel2011

“Hazel Scott as Herself”
Fishko Files | November 12, 2015
“If Hazel Scott is remembered now, it tends to be for her moment in the film Rhapsody in Blue: The George Gershwin Story made in 1945.”
Listen to the full story: tinyurl.com/WNYCHazel2015
DANCE THEATRE OF HARLEM
Washington Performing Arts co-commissions an American choreographer for a new work honoring the life and legacy of Hazel Scott.
• Evening-length program with 20-min. new work
• D.C. Premiere: Spring 2021

HAZEL SCOTT AT 100 SPECIAL EVENT
WPA Artist-in-Residence and Tony Award-winner Murray Horwitz curates an multimedia jazz concert that celebrates Hazel Scott’s incomparable impact on American music as an artist, advocate, and icon.
• Evening-length program
• D.C. Premiere: Spring 2021

HAZEL AT CAFÉ SOCIETY
Hazel—pictured with Count Basie, Teddy Wilson, and Duke Ellington—became an overnight sensation when she began to headline New York’s Café Society in the mid-20th century. Experience an evening of Hazel’s signature “Bach to Boogie” arrangements.
• 90-min. program
• D.C. Premiere: Fall 2020

JAZZ ACTIVISM
Panel discussion on Jazz Activism and Hazel Scott’s work as an artist-advocate featuring jazz authority and poet A.B. Spellman. Can be accompanied by educational curricula for K-12 or universities.
• 90-min. program + modules
• D.C. Premiere: Fall 2020

AND MUCH MORE!
1950 Carnegie Hall Concert Recreation • Documentary Premiere • Big Band Concert
Centennial Website • Capital Jazz Partnership • Mars Arts D.C.
About Washington Performing Arts

One of the most established and honored performing arts institutions in America, Washington Performing Arts has engaged for more than half a century with artists, audiences, students, and civic life. The city is truly our stage: in venues ranging from concert halls and clubs to public parks, we present a tremendous range of artists and art forms, from the most distinguished symphony orchestras to both renowned and emerging artists in classical music, jazz, international genres, and more.

Washington Performing Arts deeply values its partnerships with local organizations and other arts institutions. Through events in myriad performance venues and neighborhoods, Washington Performing Arts engages international visiting artists in community programs and introduces local artists to wider audiences. We place a premium on establishing artists as a continuing presence in the lives of both young people and adults through residencies and educational programs.

Our achievements have been recognized with a National Medal of Arts and with three Mayor’s Arts Awards from the D.C. Government. We have now embarked upon our second half-century, ever-inspired by the motto of our founder, Patrick Hayes: “Everybody in, nobody out.”

WASHINGTON PERFORMING ARTS SPECIAL PRODUCTIONS

Washington Performing Arts has distinguished itself for cultivating special projects of national, artistic, and historical significance that provide a platform for creators across artistic genres. Highlights from recent seasons include the Of Thee We Sing: The Marian Anderson 75th Anniversary Celebration (broadcast nationally on BET and featuring Jessye Norman & Dionne Warwick), Wynton Marsalis’ Blues Symphony (a collaboration with Shenandoah University and Jazz at Lincoln Center), The Migration: Reflections on Jacob Lawrence (a collaboration between Step Afrika!, the Washington Performing Arts Men and Women of the Gospel Choir, the Phillips Collection, and 11th Street Bridge Park), SHIFT: A Festival of American Orchestras (in partnership with The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts), Dreamers/Latinx in D.C. (in partnership with 20+ cultural and civic organizations), and Living the Dream...Singing the Dream (the annual Martin Luther King Jr. tribute, co-presented with the Choral Arts Society of Washington).

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