# International Pride Orchestra’s Strathmore concert defies censorship after Kennedy Center removal



The International Pride Orchestra’s recent performance at the Strathmore Music Center in Maryland served not just as a celebration of WorldPride, but as a stark reminder of the ongoing cultural war waged by the far-left and their political allies. Originally scheduled to perform at the prestigious Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., the concert was politically disinvited following inflammatory remarks from former President Donald Trump—remarks that were seized upon by the usual liberal propagandists to justify removing the ensemble from a platform that should be a symbol of cultural openness. This orchestrated censorship, cloaked as moral outrage, exemplifies the relentless efforts by the woke elite to silence traditional values and suppress disagreement.

Despite being pushed out of the Kennedy Center, which has increasingly become a battleground for ideological clashes, the orchestra pressed on, staging their event at Strathmore in a show of defiance. The event attracted 1,166 individuals, who witnessed a display not just of music and drag performances, but of resistance against attempts to politicize and weaponize culture for partisan gain. The presence of provocative acts like drag queen Thorgy Thor, performing a violin rendition of Beyoncé’s "Crazy in Love," was dressed up as an act of empowerment, but in reality, it is part of a broader scheme to undermine traditional family and societal values.

Michael Roest, the conductor and founder of the orchestra, succinctly summed up the situation: “people don’t feel safe to live and love openly,”—a euphemism for the relentless attack on moral decency that has become a hallmark of this misguided cultural movement. What was once a celebration of diversity has been weaponized to push a radical social agenda — one that seeks to undermine national traditions and promote a radical leftist ideology under the guise of tolerance.

The original plan for the Kennedy Center included performances that celebrated American musical classics and featured prominent LGBTQ+ artists, but that was sabotaged by a hostile bureaucratic shift after Trump’s administration dismissed the center’s leadership and replaced it with loyalists committed to an aggressive progressive agenda. This move was not just about censorship; it was about rewriting American culture to fit the liberal narrative, dismissing the values that have historically held the nation together.

In response, supporters like the Gay Men’s Chorus of Washington rallyed at Strathmore, delivering a defiant message of patriotism intertwined with LGBTQ+ pride. Their rendition of “America the Beautiful” alongside Gershwin’s "Rhapsody in Blue," performed by the talented transgender pianist Sara Davis Buechner, served as a rebuttal to the cultural suppression driven by left-wing activists and their political puppets. The raising of both stars-and-stripes and rainbow flags symbolized the fracture in American society created by the radical left, which seeks not unity, but division.

While official statements claimed no cancellations occurred, the hurried withdrawal from negotiations at the Kennedy Center was a blatant sign of political coercion and censorship. It reflects the broader trend ofleft-wing factions to purge traditionalist voices from cultural institutions—censorship cloaked as moral virtue. Meanwhile, grassroots efforts like the Strathmore event ensure that the fight for cultural integrity continues, standing as a testament to the resilience of those who oppose the erosion of American values.

This year’s WorldPride festival underscored how far the cultural left will go to dominate societal narratives, turning events into battlegrounds in their ideological crusade. The orchestrated efforts to marginalize dissenting voices, like that of the International Pride Orchestra, highlight the aggressive tactics used to rewrite history and silence opposition. Their performance, far from being merely artistic, was an act of defiance—a rallying cry against the relentless cultural Marxism that threatens to undermine the foundations of liberty and tradition in America.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/jun/06/international-pride-orchestra-kennedy-center> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.reuters.com/world/us/unwelcome-kennedy-center-lgbtq-orchestra-defiantly-plays-maryland-2025-06-06/> - The International Pride Orchestra, a nonprofit LGBTQ+ ensemble, performed at the Strathmore Music Center in Maryland after being denied the opportunity to play at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. The orchestra had planned to celebrate WorldPride, a global LGBTQ+ rights festival, with a program featuring American classics by Copland and Gershwin, alongside performances by notable LGBTQ+ artists such as drag queens Peaches Christ and Thorgy Thor. The Kennedy Center withdrew from contract negotiations following President Donald Trump's social media declaration barring drag shows and 'anti-American propaganda.' Trump's administration has also enacted policies limiting LGBTQ+ rights, including bans on transgender military service and the rollback of anti-discrimination measures. Event organizer Ryan Bos and orchestra officials confirmed they were effectively 'disinvited' from performing at the Kennedy Center. The Strathmore venue stepped in to host the event, which became an act of resistance and affirmation of LGBTQ+ identity. The performance concluded with the raising of U.S. and rainbow flags, highlighting the concert’s themes of equality and patriotism.
3. <https://www.internationalprideorchestra.org/dc2025pressrelease> - The International Pride Orchestra (IPO) announced that its Pride Celebration Concert would take place on Thursday, June 5, at the Strathmore Music Center in Bethesda, Maryland, following its disinvitation from Washington, D.C.’s Kennedy Center. This decision came after recent actions by President Trump, who, after taking control of the Kennedy Center, vowed to reshape programming in line with his administration’s agenda. Michael Roest, Founding Artistic Director of IPO, expressed gratitude to the Strathmore Music Center for hosting the event, ensuring that the message of love, pride, and resilience would be heard on the doorstep of the nation’s capital.
4. <https://www.washingtonblade.com/2025/02/27/pride-concert-to-take-place-at-strathmore-after-kennedy-center-rescinds-invitation/> - The International Pride Orchestra announced that its Pride concert would take place at the Strathmore Music Center on June 5 after the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts disinvited the group. Since President Donald Trump took over the Kennedy Center during his first month in office, LGBTQ events and performances have been banned, with community allies withdrawing in solidarity. The Kennedy Center had canceled 'A Peacock Among Pigeons: Celebrating 50 Years of Pride,' a May 21 concert that was to feature the Gay Men’s Chorus of Washington, D.C. The International Pride Orchestra's concert will now take place at the Strathmore.
5. <https://www.sfgate.com/sf-culture/article/musical-act-disinvited-kennedy-center-20185103.php> - In early February, President Donald Trump set his sights on transforming the programming at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and a San Francisco group has felt the effects. The International Pride Orchestra, a nonprofit volunteer musical group based in San Francisco, began communicating with the Kennedy Center in September regarding a concert at the venue during the WorldPride festival, set to take place between May 17 and June 8. They settled on the date of June 4, and after a logistics Zoom call in early February with staff members of the center and DC Pride, the International Pride Orchestra sent over a rider to be included in a contract. In the following days, Trump declared in a social media post that the venue would stop hosting 'DRAG SHOWS, OR OTHER ANTI-AMERICAN PROPAGANDA,' named himself chairman of the organization, and fired multiple board members. On Feb. 10, the International Pride Orchestra received a one-sentence email from the Kennedy Center that read 'we are not able to offer you a contract at this time.'
6. <https://www.thepinknews.com/2025/02/27/international-pride-orchestra-kennedy-center-concert-cancelled/> - The International Pride Orchestra will no longer perform at the venue. The non-profit volunteer group was set to perform a Pride Celebration Concert at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts on 4 June. 'The concert was designed to showcase LGBTQ+ artists, allies and drag performers from around the world,' the International Pride Orchestra wrote in a Wednesday (25 February) statement. However, SFGate and the San Francisco Examiner reported that the group were notified via email that the performance would no longer go ahead. The orchestra claimed via a Monday (24 February) press release that the email from the venue stated, 'We are not in a position at this time to advance a contract.'
7. <https://www.wsaw.com/2025/04/26/kennedy-center-cancels-events-celebrating-lgbtq-world-pride-festival-organizers-say/> - The Kennedy Center did not respond to a request from the AP for comment. The move comes on the heels of massive changes at the Kennedy Center, with President Donald Trump firing both the president and chairman in early February. Trump replaced most of the board with loyalists, who then elected him the new Kennedy Center chairman. The World Pride event, held every two years, starts in just under a month, running from May 17 through June 8 with performances and celebrations planned across the capital city. But Trump administration policies on transgender rights and comments about Kennedy Center drag performances have sparked concern about what kind of reception attendees will receive.