

For Immediate Release

**CENTER THEATRE GROUP HONORS THE LIFE OF KIRK DOUGLAS  
WITH THE DIMMING OF THE KIRK DOUGLAS THEATRE  
TONIGHT – WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5 AT 7:50 PM**

On Wednesday, February 5 at 7:50 p.m., Center Theatre Group will dim its lights in honor of screen legend and philanthropist Kirk Douglas who passed away today, February 5, 2020.

“Center Theatre Group is saddened by the passing of this truly great man,” Center Theatre Group Artistic Director Michael Ritchie said today. “Kirk Douglas was a star in every way – in his art, his love for his family and country, and his tremendous philanthropy.

“Kirk always said theatre was his first love,” said Ritchie, “and you could see that in his face as he sat front and center on opening nights. As the world mourns the loss of Kirk Douglas, we are especially going to miss him in the audience, and in our lives here at Center Theatre Group so we will borrow a long-standing Broadway tradition and dim the lights at the Kirk Douglas Theatre. It is a small recognition of a man that brightened so many lives and made this theatre possible.”

In 2002 when Kirk and Anne Douglas made their initial \$2.5 million contribution, Center Theatre Group was able to take the crucial first step in realizing a much-needed, mid-sized theatre space. The Culver Theater, a historic 1940s Streamlined Moderne-style movie house was transformed into an intimate 317-seat live theatre venue and named the Kirk Douglas Theatre. The Douglas opened in October 2004 and is now in its 16th season. In 2009, Kirk Douglas took the stage, premiering his autobiographical “Before I Forget” to sold-out audiences at the Kirk Douglas Theatre. More recently, on July 22, 2019, Kirk and Anne Douglas attended and were celebrated at a special one-night-only fundraiser in the Kirk Douglas Theatre where Deborra-lee Furness and Hugh Jackman read “Kirk and Anne: Letters of Love, Laughter, and a Lifetime in Hollywood” for an audience of Center Theatre Group and Motion Picture & Television Fund supporters.

Over the years Kirk and Anne Douglas continued to help make Center Theatre Group's work possible with sizable subsequent support, including a \$10 million grant in 2012.

Their generosity helped ensure that Center Theatre Group remains an indispensable part of Los Angeles, and that the theatre that bears Kirk's name stays at the forefront of Center Theatre Group's efforts to push for new work, new artists and new audiences. The Douglases can proudly point to productions like "Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson," Pulitzer-finalist "Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo" "Dana H.," "Good Grief," "The Nether," "Sleeping Beauty Wakes" and a wide range of other works that had their world premieres at the Kirk Douglas Theatre before moving on to celebrated runs on Broadway or at other theatres throughout the U.S. and U.K.

**Center Theatre Group**, one of the nation's preeminent arts and cultural organizations, is Los Angeles' leading nonprofit theatre company, which, under the leadership of Artistic Director Michael Ritchie, Managing Director Meghan Pressman and Producing Director Douglas C. Baker, programs seasons at the 736-seat Mark Taper Forum and 1600 to 2100-seat Ahmanson Theatre at The Music Center in Downtown Los Angeles, and the 317-seat Kirk Douglas Theatre in Culver City. In addition to presenting and producing the broadest range of theatrical entertainment in the country, Center Theatre Group is one of the nation's leading producers of ambitious new works through commissions and world premiere productions and a leader in interactive community engagement and education programs that reach across generations, demographics and circumstance to serve Los Angeles.

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February 5, 2020