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Celebrate the Holidays At the National Gallery of Art



The grand West Building Rotunda decorated for the holidays. Photo: Rob Shelley, © National Gallery of Art 2005.

Washington, DC – The National Gallery of Art is celebrating the 2006 holiday season with free programs that include caroling, gallery talks, concerts, and a special lecture. Visitors may also consider ice skating or viewing a special holiday Web feature before or after their visit. Gallery Shops offer seasonal items and art-related gifts. The restaurants are serving a selection of holiday favorites from around the world.

Beginning Monday, December 5, hundreds of red and white poinsettias and an abundance of amaryllis plants will be installed in the grand West Building Rotunda and Garden Courts. Twelve Christmas trees adorned with sparkling white lights will give the main floor of the West Building a holiday look, adding to the festive atmosphere.

GALLERY TALKS

The Christmas Story in Art, a 60-minute discussion about paintings in the permanent collection with holiday themes that tell the Christian story of the birth of Jesus, will be led by Gallery lecturer J. Russell Sale on December 1, 4, 10, and 15, at 12 noon; and on December 20 and 21 at 2:00 p.m., beginning in the West Building Rotunda.

HOLIDAY CAROLING IN WEST BUILDING ROTUNDA

Caroling in the West Building Rotunda has become a favorite family activity during the holiday season at the Gallery. Visitors are invited to sing along with guest choirs and ensembles in the West Building Rotunda at 1:30 and 2:30 p.m. on December 9, 10, 16, 17, 23, and 24. Singers and listeners of all ages are welcome.

Groups participating this year include:

December 9

Edison High School Concert Choir, Alexandria, VA

December 10

The 18th Street Singers, Washington, DC

December 16

The DC Boys Choir, Washington, DC

December 17

The Xaverian High School Chorus, Brooklyn, NY

December 23

National Gallery Chamber Players Brass Quintet

December 24

Alpine Singers, Washington, DC

HOLIDAY CONCERTS

Concerts, offered on Sundays in the West Building, West Garden Court, are free to the public. Performances begin at 6:30 p.m. (unless noted otherwise) and end at approximately 8:00 p.m. Audiences are admitted on a first-come, first-seated basis

starting at 6:00 p.m. The Garden Café remains open until 6:00 p.m. and the Sixth Street and Constitution Avenue NW entrance to the West Building remains open until 6:30 p.m. No entry or re-entry is allowed after 6:30. Admission is free.

This year's participants include:

December 17

Nordic Voices Christmas Concert

January 7

National Gallery Orchestra Viennese New Year's concert

Hobart Earle, guest conductor

WEB FEATURE

Visitors to the Gallery's Web site may view a streaming slideshow and listen to audio by Gallery director Earl A. Powell III in a feature that explores *The Adoration of the Magi* (c.1440/1460), a complex and colorful work from Renaissance Florence. Fra Angelico and Fra Filippo Lippi created the masterpiece that tells the story of the three kings bringing gifts to the Christ Child twelve days after his birth. The online slideshow at <http://www.nga.gov/collection/adoration.shtm> (<http://www.nga.gov/collection/adoration.shtm>) also allows the viewer to examine details of the work while listening to an informative narrative.

HOLIDAY SHOPS, RESTAURANTS, AND ICE RINK

The Gallery Shops offer a wide variety of distinctive art-related gifts, such as jewelry, scarves, illustrated books, wrapping paper, and 2007 calendars, including the popular National Gallery of Art engagement and 2006 Advent calendars. Greeting cards inspired by works of such renowned artists as Rembrandt van Rijn, Sandro Botticelli, Andy Warhol, John James Audubon, and others are available, also. A CD of favorite and traditional Christmas carols performed by England's finest abbey, cathedral, college, and chapel choirs is offered exclusively in The Shops. For other gift ideas, browse through The Shops' online offerings at www.nga.gov/shop (<http://www.nga.gov/shop/shop.htm>). You can place your order by e-mailing

mailorder@nga.gov; calling (202) 842-6002 or (800) 697-9350; faxing (202) 789-3047; or mailing your order to:

National Gallery of Art
Gift Shops
200B South Club Drive
Landover, MD 20785

RESTAURANTS

During the month of December, special refreshments—mulled cider, cocoa, and holiday sweets with an international flavor—can be purchased in the Espresso & Gelato Bar in the East Building Concourse and in the Sculpture Garden Pavilion Café. The Espresso and Gelato Bar also will offer exciting holiday flavors of gelato and sorbetto, including apple cider, pumpkin, caramel apple, and peppermint candy cane.

ICE-SKATING RINK

The National Gallery of Art Sculpture Garden Ice-Skating Rink, a popular and affordable recreational destination in Washington, DC, will open for the eighth straight year in mid-November and close in mid-March, weather permitting. For current information, call (202) 289-3360 or visit www.pavilioncafe.com. Additional information is available at www.nga.gov/ginfo/skating.htm (<http://www.nga.gov/ginfo/skating.htm>).

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General Information

The National Gallery of Art and its Sculpture Garden are at all times free to the public. They are located on the National Mall between 3rd and 9th Streets along Constitution Avenue NW and are open Monday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Sunday from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. The Gallery is closed on December 25 and January 1. With the exception of the atrium and library, the galleries in the East Building will be closing gradually beginning in July 2013 and will remain closed for approximately three years for Master Facilities Plan and renovations. For specific updates on gallery closings, visit www.nga.gov/renovation (<http://www.nga.gov/renovation>) .

For information call (202) 737-4215 or the Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) at (202) 842-6176, or visit the Gallery's website at www.nga.gov. Follow the Gallery on Facebook at www.facebook.com/NationalGalleryofArt and on Twitter at twitter.com/ngadc.

Visitors will be asked to present all carried items for inspection upon entering. Checkrooms are free of charge and located at each entrance. Luggage and other oversized bags must be presented at the 4th Street entrances to the East or West Building to permit x-ray screening and must be deposited in the checkrooms at those entrances. For the safety of visitors and the works of art, nothing may be carried into the Gallery on a visitor's back. Any bag or other items that cannot be carried reasonably and safely in some other manner must be left in the checkrooms. Items larger than 17 by 26 inches cannot be accepted by the Gallery or its checkrooms.

For additional press information please call or send inquiries to:

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