

Release Date: November 8, 2010

Celebrate the Holidays with an Array of Offerings at the National Gallery of Art



Guest choirs and ensembles lead holiday caroling in the festively decorated West Building Rotunda. (Shown here: DC Boys Choir performing in 2006.)

With the arrival of the holiday season, the National Gallery of Art presents a wide array of special offerings, including a film program, caroling, gallery talks, and concerts amid festive decorations. All programs are free and open to the public on a first-come, first-served basis. The National Gallery of Art Sculpture Garden ice rink also offers skaters of all ages a memorable setting in which to enjoy the holidays in the nation's capital, while delicious cuisine in the Gallery's cafés rounds out the season's delights.

Rotunda Decorations

Beginning Friday, December 3, hundreds of red poinsettias, white hydrangea, orchids, and 12 Christmas trees adorned with sparkling white lights will fill the Rotunda and Garden Courts, giving the Main Floor of the West Building a celebratory atmosphere for the holidays.

Gallery Talks

The Christmas Story in Art is a 60-minute discussion about paintings in the permanent collection that depict the birth of Jesus. Led by Gallery lecturer J. Russell Sale on

December 1, 8, 15, 19, 23 at 11:00 a.m., this tour meets in the West Building Rotunda. Additional information is available at www.nga.gov/programs/galtalks (<http://www.nga.gov/programs/galtalks>) .

Caroling in the West Building Rotunda

Caroling in Rotunda, surrounded by seasonal blossoms, has become a favorite family activity at the Gallery during the holidays. Visitors are invited to sing along with guest choirs and ensembles at 1:30 and 2:30 p.m. on December 11, 12, 18, and 19. The groups will perform their own music as well as leading the audience in standard Christmas carols. Performances last for 45 minutes and singers and spectators of all ages are welcome. The following groups will lead caroling this year:

December 11: Rock Creek Singers

December 12: Encore Singers

December 18: Thomas Circle Singers

December 19: Sophisticated Ladies from Duke Ellington School for the Performing Arts

Holiday Concerts

Concerts, offered on Sundays in the West Garden Court of the West Building, are free to the public. Performances begin at 6:30 p.m. (unless noted otherwise) and end at approximately 8:00. Audiences are admitted on a first-come, first-seated basis starting at 6:00. The Garden Café, located in the West Building, offers a concert dessert menu from 4:00 to 6:00. The 6th Street and Constitution Avenue NW entrance to the West Building and the 4th Street entrance to the East Building remain open until 6:30. No entry or reentry to either building is permitted after 6:30. For a full concert listing, visit www.nga.gov/programs/music (<http://www.nga.gov/programs/music>) or call (202) 842-6941. This year's offerings include:

Poulenc Trio

Sunday, December 5, 6:30 p.m.

Music by Jakov Jakoulov and other Jewish composers in honor of Hanukkah

West Building, West Garden Court

Ensemble Galilei

Stephen Ackert, narrator

Sunday, December 12, 6:30 p.m.

Traditional Christmas carols and the story of Gallery paintings on Christmas stamps

West Building, West Garden Court

Ciné-Concert: *A Christmas Carol*

Premiere of musical score by Kim Allen Kluge

Saturday, December 18, at 1:00 p.m.

East Building Auditorium

This holiday music and film event features a 1923 adaptation of the Charles Dickens classic accompanied by an ensemble of strings, bells, and voices. Writes composer Kim Allen Kluge, "I was inspired by the ghostlike images caused by the film's deterioration. These luminous effects contribute to Scrooge's transformation." Kluge's score, rooted in Victorian melodies, compliments the otherworldliness of the visuals. (Approximately 45 minutes)

National Gallery of Art Vocal Ensemble and Chamber Players

Sunday, December 19, 6:30 p.m.

Holiday concert

Music by Johann Sebastian Bach

West Building, West Garden Court

Web Feature

Visitors to the Gallery's website can enjoy a streaming slideshow narrated by Gallery director Earl A. Powell III that explores *The Adoration of the Magi* (c. 1440/1460), a complex and colorful masterpiece from Renaissance Florence. Fra Angelico and Fra Filippo Lippi created the painting to tell the story of the three kings bringing gifts to the Christ Child after his birth. The online feature can be found at www.nga.gov/magi (<http://www.nga.gov/magi>) .

Gallery Shops

The Gallery's Holiday Shop offers a large selection of wrapping paper, gift tags, holiday books, and the popular 2011 National Gallery of Art engagement and wall calendars. Boxed greeting cards are available featuring works of art by Giorgione, Luca della Robbia, Agnolo Gaddi, Robert Havell after John James Audubon, and Giovanni Francesco Barbieri from the Gallery's permanent collection. Shoppers will also find a CD titled *Magnificat*, a program of Christmas music, produced specifically for the Gallery.

Continuing another great holiday tradition, the 2010 National Gallery of Art ornament is inspired by *First Knot*, c. 1490/1500, an Italian engraving after Leonardo da Vinci in the Gallery's collection. The five-part design, recreated in 24-karat gold electroplate, seems to have been the basis for a series of complex arabesque knots designed by Leonardo. For collectors of the Gallery's annual ornaments, this one is engraved with "National Gallery of Art" and the year 2010. It is packaged in a gold box and includes information about the design.

The Gallery's other three major permanent shops have myriad holiday gifts for everyone on your list. The West Building Shop offers a wide variety of art reproductions—many ready to hang—as well as elegant jewelry, art-related accessories, and giftware. In the underground Concourse between the East and West Buildings, the Bookstore features Gallery publications and an extensive choice of books on art, architecture, photography, and other subjects related to art. Across from the Bookstore, the Children's Shop has an exciting assortment of gifts to inspire creativity—art supplies, books, games, and toys. For additional ideas, browse the online offerings at shop.nga.gov.

Restaurants

During the month of December, holiday refreshments such as hot cocoa and sweets with an international flair may be purchased at the Espresso and Gelato Bar in the Concourse near the cafeteria. Special flavors of gelato and sorbetto include apple cider, pumpkin, caramel apple, and peppermint candy cane.

Inspired by the masterpieces of French impressionist painting in the exhibition *From Impressionism to Modernism: The Chester Dale Collection*, award-winning Washington-based chef Michel Richard created a menu of signature French dishes for

Garden Café Français. Richard, owner and executive chef of Citronelle and Central Michel Richard, partnered with Restaurant Associates and executive chef David Rogers at the National Gallery of Art for this special menu.

For more information about the various dining options at the Gallery, please visit www.nga.gov/dining (<http://www.nga.gov/dining>) .

Ice Rink

The National Gallery of Art Sculpture Garden's 2010–2011 ice-skating season will begin on Saturday, November 13, and continue through mid-March, weather permitting. Skating classes are designed for all ages. Located on the National Mall between 7th and 9th Streets along Constitution Avenue NW, the ice rink is a favorite destination, attracting thousands of visitors to skate in the nation's capital. The ice rink is managed by Guest Services, Inc.

Skating in the Sculpture Garden, surrounded by the grand architecture of national museums and monuments, is enhanced by views of large-scale sculpture by renowned modern and contemporary artists such as Louise Bourgeois, Alexander Calder, Roy Lichtenstein, Roxy Paine, and others from the Gallery's celebrated collection.

For hours, fees, class information, and more, visit www.nga.gov/skating (<http://www.nga.gov/skating>) .

Holiday Closures

The Gallery and Sculpture Garden are closed on December 25 and January 1.

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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.

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