

National Gallery of Art

NEWS RELEASE

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Images Are Available

JOYS OF 1997 HOLIDAY SEASON AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

Washington, D.C. -- The National Gallery of Art celebrates the 1997 holiday season with the first U.S. exhibition of paintings by Italian Renaissance master Lorenzo Lotto and free holiday programs, including tours of works in the collection depicting "The Christmas Story in Art," holiday caroling, and special holiday and New Year concerts. Beginning December 6, a dramatic display of 400 white and red poinsettia plants and holiday greenery will decorate the West Building's Rotunda and Garden Courts.

Visitors will enjoy brilliantly colored portraits, allegories, and religious paintings in the exhibition Lorenzo Lotto: Rediscovered Master of the Renaissance, on view during the holiday season in the West Building.

The Gallery shops offer a delightful array of distinctive art-related gifts, and the restaurants boast a selection of holiday favorites from around the world. The seasonal festivities are described below. For information, call (202) 737-4215.

FREE GALLERY TALKS:

"The Christmas Story in Art"

December 9, 17, and 18; 12:00 p.m.

West Building Rotunda

A special walking tour of works in the collection is led by Gallery lecturer Philip Leonard, including Giorgione's The Adoration of the Shepherds (c. 1505/1510); Jan van Eyck's The Annunciation (c. 1434/1436); and Piero di Cosimo's The Visitation with Saint Nicholas and Saint Anthony Abbot (c.1490).

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HOLIDAY POSTAGE STAMP: The U.S. Postal Service recently issued a new holiday stamp featuring the National Gallery's Madonna and Child with Saints and Angels (c.1471) by Sano di Pietro; the painting is on view in gallery 8 on the main floor of the West Building.

FREE HOLIDAY CAROLING: "Caroling in the Rotunda"
December 13, 14, 20, and 21; 1:30 and 2:30 p.m.
West Building Rotunda
Visitors are invited to revel in the season by listening or singing along to a host of holiday melodies led by guest ensembles in the Rotunda, decorated in a grand holiday display.

FREE SUNDAY CONCERTS: "The Christmas Concert"
December 21; 7 p.m.
This annual favorite includes familiar choral melodies as well as new music for the holiday season, performed by the Columbia Collegiate Chorale under the direction of James Bingham.

"Gala Viennese New Year Concert"
January 4; 7 p.m.
Ring in the New Year and the first concert of 1998 with the National Gallery Orchestra under the direction of George Manos.

Concertgoers are admitted to the West Garden Court on a first-come first-served basis beginning at 6 p.m. The 6th Street and Constitution Avenue entrance of the West Building remains open until 7 p.m. For recorded information, call (202) 842-6941.

HOLIDAY DINING: Special holiday refreshments, including mulled cider, cocoa, and holiday pastries with an international flavor, can be purchased in the Terrace and Garden Cafés and in the Cascade Espresso Bar during the month of December.

GIFTS FOR THE SEASON: Distinctive gift items for all ages are available in the Gallery Shops, including holiday cards, fine art calendars, ornaments, scarves, jewelry, and books for adults and children. Highlights are featured below. For sales information, call (202) 842-6466. For mail order, call (301) 322-5900 or (800) 697-9350.

Gifts for Children

- "Adrian the Angel Storybook and Doll" is based on a painting by Lorenzo Lotto (\$19.95).
- "My Oxford Picture Box" is an informative CD-ROM featuring quizzes, puzzles, and games about art, designed for ages 5-10 (\$34.95).

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GIFTS FOR THE SEASON:

Holiday Greeting Cards and Advent Calendar

- Boxed set of 20 cards based on Renaissance painting Madonna and Child with Saints and Angels (c. 1471) by Sandro di Pietro is also featured on a holiday stamp recently issued by the U.S. Postal Service (\$12.50).
- The Adoration of the Magi (c.1470) by Benvenuto di Giovanni is a striking painting that has been reproduced in diecut form on both a boxed set of 20 cards (\$14.95) and an advent calendar (\$9.95).
- Boxed set of 5 cards with ornaments; multi-colored hologram effect on 3-dimensional silver cutout with tassel; design is derived from a 16th-century compendium of designs by Peter Flötner (\$15.95).
- Boxed set of 20 cards is based on "In the Beginning," the first page of the Book of Genesis, Bible in Hebrew (\$9.95).

Books

- Visions of Christmas: A Renaissance Nativity invites readers to open panels to reveal early Renaissance triptychs underneath, hardback (\$18.00).
- The Art of Hanukkah celebrates this festival with 48 masterpieces of holiday and ceremonial art, hardback (\$35.00).
- Weekends with the Impressionists: A Collection from the National Gallery of Art, Washington presents a refreshing collection of celebrated paintings by artists including Monet, Renoir, and Cassatt, 40 color illustrations, hardback (\$18.95).

Holiday Ornaments and Glassware

- Ornaments based on collections in the National Gallery of Art are available in sterling silver, 24-kt. gold electroplate, and brass verdigris (\$12.95-\$45.00).
- Colorful glass plates, vases, and decanters manufactured by the Pairpoint Crystal Company Inc., which has specialized in handcrafted museum reproduction glass since 1837, are available (\$8.50-\$65.00).

Jewelry and Scarf

- A selection of jewelry based on paintings in the Lorenzo Lotto exhibition is available (\$25.00-\$80.00).
- Elegant silk twill scarf is based on arabesque patterns derived from a 16th-century compendium of designs by Peter Flötner, 36" square (\$75.00).

The National Gallery of Art is open every day of the year except December 25 and January 1. Admission is free. It is located on Constitution Avenue between Third and Seventh Streets, N.W., and is open Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. For general information, call (202) 737-4215, the Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) at (202) 842-6176, or visit the Gallery's Web site at <http://www.nga.gov>.