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



View of the National Gallery of Art Rotunda decorated with Poinsettia plants and holiday greenery. Photo by Philip A. Charles © National Gallery of Art, Washington

Washington, DC—The National Gallery of Art celebrates the holiday season throughout the month of December with festive decorations and an array of free programs including concerts, caroling, gallery talks, and a film. All programs are free and available to the public on a first-come, first-served basis. The National Gallery of Art Sculpture Garden ice rink offers skaters of all ages an opportunity to enjoy the holiday season on the ice, surrounded by large-scale sculpture, while the Gallery Shops feature art-inspired holiday gift bags and wrapping supplies, seasonal gift cards, holiday books, and gifts for the home and family, including the elegant 2011 National Gallery of Art holiday ornament, recreated in 24-karat gold electroplate.

Rotunda Decorations

Beginning Friday, December 2, hundreds of red poinsettias, white hydrangea, orchids, and 12 Christmas trees adorned with sparkling white lights will fill the Rotunda and Garden Courts, lending the Main Floor of the West Building a festive atmosphere for the season.

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 Eric Denker on December 7, 8, 15, and 22 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 the Rotunda, surrounded by seasonal decorations, 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 10, 11, 17, and 18. 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 10: The Mandoleers

December 11: Alexandria Choral Society

December 17: Annapolis Area Christian Schools

December 18: Central Bucks High School-West Chamber Choir

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. and end at approximately 8:00 (unless noted otherwise). 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 Sixth Street and Constitution Avenue NW entrance to the West Building and the Fourth 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:

The Rose Ensemble

Sunday, December 11, 6:30 p.m.

Early Mediterranean Arab, Christian, and Jewish music

Preceded by a lecture on Sephardic music by Jerome Barry

Lecture at 6:00 p.m.

West Building, West Garden Court

Thomas Mark Fallon, countertenor

Sunday, December 18, 6:30 p.m.

A Countertenor Christmas

West Building, West Garden Court

Film

Films are screened in the East Building Auditorium, located at 4th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue NW. Works are presented in original formats and seating is on a first-come, first-seated basis. Doors open 30 minutes before each show and programs are subject to change. For more information, visit www.nga.gov/film (<http://www.nga.gov/film>) or call (202) 842-6799.

This year's offerings include:

Beauty and the Beast

Saturday, December 24, 2:00 and 4:00 p.m.

Jean Cocteau's treatment of the classic fable *La Belle et la Bête* about a village beauty who must surrender to a beast as sacrifice for her father's error of judgment uses minimal manipulation to achieve, in Cocteau's words, "a realism of the unreal." Set in the 17th century of the story's first telling, the film features sets and costumes that evoke the lighting effects of Vermeer, while the work of cameraman Henri Alekan reinforces the magic. (Jean Cocteau, 1946, 35 mm, subtitles, 96 minutes)

East Building Auditorium

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 <http://www.nga.gov/magi/> (<http://www.nga.gov/magi/>).

Gallery Shops

The Gallery Shops offer a large selection of gift items and holiday books including a sumptuous 800-page volume, *Ars Sacra: Christian Art in the Western World*. A delightful selection of pop-up books devoted to the holidays are available for all ages, including a new wonder in paper engineering, Robert Sabuda's *Chanukah Lights*. Calendar selections include the ever-popular 2012 National Gallery of Art engagement calendar, as well as wall calendars featuring works by Mark Rothko, Claude Monet, and Winslow Homer from the Gallery's permanent collection. Also available are boxed greeting cards featuring works of art by artists found in the collection, including Fra Angelico, Adolf Denh, Andrée Ruellan, Claude Monet, Henri Matisse, Paul Klee, and Andy Warhol, among others.

Continuing another great holiday tradition, the 2011 National Gallery of Art ornament is inspired by a perspective drawing of circular pavement decoration found in Edme-Sébastien Jeaurat's *Traité de Perspective à l'usage des Artistes où l'on démontre Géométriquement toutes les pratiques de cette science* (1750), Mark J. Millard Architectural Collection. The design is recreated in 24-karat gold electroplate. The ornament is engraved with "National Gallery of Art" and the year 2011, making it a perfect item for collectors. It is packaged in a gift box and includes information about the design.

A myriad of holiday gifts are available in each of the four permanent shops this year. The West Building Shop offers art reproductions, many ready to hang, as well as elegant jewelry, art-related accessories, unique gifts, and an assortment of children's products and books. 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. The Children's Shop has an exciting assortment of gifts to inspire creativity—art supplies, kits, books, games, and toys—all of which meet safety requirements established by the Consumer

Product Safety Commission and encourage learning through exploration. The East Building Shop offers a variety of Warhol-related items for the exhibition **Warhol: Headlines**, on view through January 2, 2012, including the exhibition catalogue, poster, note-card set, Peabody Award–winning film on DVD, *Andy Warhol: A Documentary Film*, 2012 Andy Warhol calendars, a wide selection of books for all ages, and a limited-time offering of a Warhol-designed *Velvet Underground & Nico* t-shirt. Additional fun and collectible gift items include Fiesta dinnerware, luxurious silk scarves embellished with designs from Jean-Michel Basquiat, Warhol art reproductions, and a whimsical silver-plated key ring compact that flips open to reveal two mirrors inside. The key ring is engraved with "I'll Be Your Mirror," the title of a song by the Velvet Underground. Browse the online offerings at www.nga.gov/shop (<http://www.nga.gov/shop>).

Restaurants

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

Inspired by Italian masterpieces in the Gallery's renowned permanent collection, as well as by the current exhibition of Italian Renaissance sculpture—**Antico: The Golden Age of Renaissance Bronzes**—award-winning chef Fabio Trabocchi (of Penn Quarter restaurant Fiola) has created a menu of signature Italian dishes for Garden Café Italia. This special menu is presented by Trabocchi in partnership with Restaurant Associates and Executive Chef David Rogers at the National Gallery of Art.

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 2011–2012 ice-skating season will begin on Friday, November 18, and continue through Sunday, March 11, 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.

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.

For additional press information please call or send inquiries to:

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