

# THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## ART INSTITUTE CELEBRATES HOLIDAY SEASON 2006

### WITH FESTIVE EVENTS FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

#### Museum Invites Visitors to Enjoy Extended Holiday Hours

#### 15th Annual "Wreathing of the Lions" Kicks off Chicago Holiday Tradition

The Art Institute of Chicago welcomes all visitors to celebrate the 2006 holiday season with a great selection of festive events—beginning with the **15th Annual "Wreathing of the Lions"** on the day after Thanksgiving, **Friday, November 24**.



Continuing through December, there are special programs with holiday themes, including lectures, gallery walks, and family workshops. The Art Institute will also be offering special extended museum hours for visitors Thanksgiving weekend, November 24–26, and from December 26–31. The museum will be open until 6:30 p.m. during these periods.

Wreathing of the Lions will begin at 10:00 a.m. on the museum's front steps at Michigan Avenue and Adams Street on Friday, November 24. Holiday crowds are invited to enjoy lively performance watch as giant evergreen wreaths—adorned with holiday ribbons—are ceremonially placed on each of the Art Institute's famous bronze lion sculptures. **The first 200 people to arrive and attend the event will receive free admission to the Art Institute.** The museum's very

own **Artie the Lion** will also make an appearance and give out special goody bags! After the museum opens at 10:30 a.m., families with children are invited to visit the Kraft Education Center for family workshops.

**Holiday Choral Series** features local high-school choirs performing favorite holiday tunes. Beginning Monday, December 4, and continuing through Friday, December 8, the performances are held daily from 12:30 to 1:00 p.m. on the museum's Woman's Board Grand Staircase. Concerts are free with museum admission.

**Masterpiece of the Day** returns for this year's holiday celebrations. Each day at noon from **December 23 to December 31**, visitors can take a 30-minute special tour that focuses on a different jewel in the Art Institute's crown. From *American Gothic* to *A Sunday on the Grand Jatte* and from the museum's landmark Aztec coronation stone to the Ando Gallery, these engaging, brief talks give viewers the chance to learn more about their favorite works—and the objects that make the Art Institute's collection world-renowned.

**Family Programs** for the holidays include workshops and gallery walks on selected weekends in December, concluding with the popular "Holly Days" at the end of the month. Weekend programs introduce families to the Art Institute's collection through informal discussions in the galleries, followed by art-making projects that everyone can enjoy. These workshops are intended for specific age levels, and all children must be accompanied by an adult. All family programs—free with museum admission—are held in the Kraft Education Center. **"Holly Days"** begin Wednesday, December 27 (10:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m.), and continue that Thursday through Saturday, December 28–30 (12:30–3:30 p.m.). All programs are held in the Kraft Education Center and feature storytellers, art-making activities, and a Lions Trail game.

For general museum information, please call **(312) 443-3600** or visit online at [www.artic.edu/aic](http://www.artic.edu/aic). For information about specific lectures and family programs, please call the Department of Museum Education at **(312) 443-3680**. Exhibitions and programs are free with suggested museum admission unless otherwise noted. **The Art Institute will be closed Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day.**

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**The Art Institute of Chicago is a museum in Chicago's Grant Park.**

**NEW FALL/WINTER MUSEUM HOURS**

10:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday

10:30 a.m.-8:00 p.m. Thursday. **Ford Free Evenings after 5:00 p.m.**

10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Saturday, Sunday.

Closed Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day.

Please check [www.artic.edu](http://www.artic.edu) before your visit.

**Admission: Adults, \$12.00; children, students, and seniors, \$7.00; children under 12 free. Members always free.** Ford Free Evenings are free to all, except for certain special exhibitions that may require full or extra admission fee. City of Chicago residents with Chicago Public Library cards can borrow a "Check Us Out" card from any library branch for free general admission to the nine members of Museums in the Park, including The Art Institute of Chicago. To reach the Art Institute on the World Wide Web, contact us at: <http://www.artic.edu/aic>

**The Art Institute of Chicago is a museum in Chicago's Grant Park, located across from Millennium Park.**