

THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ART INSTITUTE CELEBRATES HOLIDAY SEASON 2007

WITH FESTIVE EVENTS FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

Museum Invites Visitors to Enjoy Extended Holiday Hours

16th Annual "Wreathing of the Lions" Kicks off Chicago Holiday Tradition

The Art Institute of Chicago welcomes visitors of all ages to celebrate the 2007 holiday season with a full roster of festive events—beginning with the **16th Annual "Wreathing of the Lions"** on the day after Thanksgiving, **Friday, November 23**. Continuing through December, holiday offerings are scheduled throughout the museum, including in the Garden Restaurant and at the Museum Shop.



The Art Institute will remain open until 6:30 p.m. for visitors on Thanksgiving weekend, November 23 and 24, and from December 26–30.

* NOTE: The Art Institute will be closed on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's days.*

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 23. Holiday revelers are invited to enjoy a lively performance by musicians from **Maxwell Street Klezmer Band**, and 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 300 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! After the museum opens at 10:30 a.m., families with children are invited to visit the Kraft Education Center for holiday-themed family workshops.

The Holiday Choral Series features local high school choirs performing favorite holiday tunes. Performances—held on **Tuesday, December 4; Thursday, December 6; and Friday, December 7 (no performance on Wednesday, December 5)**—will be 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 24 to December 31 (except December 25)**, visitors can take a 30-minute special tour that focuses on a different jewel in the Art Institute’s crown. Including Grant Wood’s *American Gothic*, Georges Seurat’s *A Sunday on the Grand Jatte*, and El Greco’s *The Assumption of the Virgin*, 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. **“Holly Days: American Pastimes”** begin Thursday, December 27 (11:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.), and continue through Sunday, December 30. All programs are held in the Kraft Education Center.

Other holiday-related programs and events include:

Museum:

Gallery Talk: “Cold Snap—Winter Scenes”

November 30, 12:00 p.m.

Gallery 100

Gallery Talk: “Highlights of the Art Institute”

December 23–31, 2:00 p.m. (except December 25)

Gallery 100

Voices: “Three Kings and a Star”

December 20, 12:00 p.m.

Fullerton Hall

Gallery Talk: “Feasting and Celebrating”

December 27, 5:30 p.m.

Gallery 100

The Museum Shop:

Annual Holiday Jewelry Trunk Shows

Join the Museum Shop for its third annual Jewelry Extravaganza on November 17 from 12:00–4:00 p.m. Don't miss the great gift ideas that the Shop has just added to its Web site. For all of your holiday shopping needs, visit www.artinstituteshop.org.

The Garden Restaurant at the Art Institute:

A special three course prix-fixe menu will be served throughout the holiday season at the Garden Restaurant. Enjoy tableside service, with a full bar, wine list, and menu that features exquisite cuisine by Executive Chef Brian Williams. Reservations are accepted but not required. Call (312) 553-9675.

For general museum information, please call (312) 443-3600 or visit online at 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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FALL/WINTER HOURS:

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

10:30 a.m.–8:00 p.m. Thursday. Target 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 before your visit.

Admission: Adults, \$12.00; children 12 and over, students, and seniors, \$7.00; children under 12 free; members always free. Target 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.