

CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS
NEWS RELEASE

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Millennium Park's Holiday Tradition Returns!

CAROLING AT CLOUD GATE

**Featuring Sing-Alongs with Chicago Choral Groups
Friday Evenings from November 27 through December 18, 2009 at 6 PM**

Celebrate the holidays in Millennium Park, when **Caroling at Cloud Gate** returns on Friday evenings each week throughout the holiday season. Chicagoans and visitors alike are invited to Cloud Gate to hear the beautiful voices of different Chicago choral groups, including the Apollo Chorus of Chicago, the Chicago Children's Choir, the Old Town School of Folk Music and the Wooten Choral Ensemble and participate in a holiday sing-along.

Caroling at Cloud Gate runs Friday evenings from November 27 through December 18, 2009. The singing will begin at 6pm and run approximately 50 minutes. Admission is free. Caroling at Cloud Gate is supported by the Comer Foundation, with complimentary coffee and hot cider courtesy of Caribou Coffee. After the holiday sing-along, everyone is encouraged to skate at Millennium Park's McCormick Tribune Ice Rink, one of the most popular winter destinations in the city.

"Now in its fourth year, Caroling at Cloud Gate has truly become a cherished winter tradition in Chicago. Each week, we have hundreds of singers gathering in the Park, creating a magical holiday scene in the center of the city," said Lois Weisberg, Commissioner of the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs.

For more information on Millennium Park or on **Caroling at Cloud Gate** visit www.millenniumpark.org or call 312.742.1168. The complete Caroling at Cloud Gate schedule is:

**Friday, November 27
Apollo Chorus of Chicago**

When the Apollo Chorus of Chicago sings, great choral works come alive! Founded in 1872 after the Great Chicago Fire, this powerful 150-voice chorus is one of the city's most exciting and talked-about musical organizations. Each season, Apollo thrills audiences with beautiful music old and new, winning praise for its performances – especially for Handel's Messiah. The Apollo Chorus performs a wide range of masterworks for chorus and orchestra (this season includes Verdi's Requiem) and is under the musical direction Stephen Alltop.

Friday, December 4**Chicago Children's Choir**

The Chicago Children's Choir is a multiracial, multicultural choral music education organization dedicated to shaping the future by making a difference in the lives of children and youth through musical excellence. Today, The Chicago Children's Choir serves more than 3,000 young singers and is America's largest, most comprehensive organization devoted to the musical education of children. By developing musical skills and performing in public, the children acquire poise, increased self-esteem, and an understanding that discipline and hard work bring rewards.

Friday, December 11**Old Town School of Folk Music**

Throughout its 50 year history, the Old Town School of Folk Music has taught and celebrated music through cultural expressions rooted in the traditions of diverse American and global communities. Tonight's event features commentators Eric Zorn and Mary Schmich and Old Town School faculty and students in a special "Caroling at Cloud Gate" edition of Songs of Good Cheer, an annual holiday caroling party now in its 11th year at the Old Town School.

Friday, December 18**The Wooten Choral Ensemble**

The Wooten Choral Ensemble, founded in 1949, is the oldest community choir in the nation. The group boasts more than fifty members and has traveled extensively throughout the country. Its hallmark through the years has been expressing a spiritual message through anthems, hymns, black spirituals and gospel songs. The group has recorded several albums and appeared on many local radio and television programs. This performance will be conducted by Robert E. Wooten, Jr., son of the late founder Dr. Robert E. Wooten, Sr.

Millennium Park is located in the heart of downtown Chicago. It is bordered by Michigan Ave. to the west, Columbus Dr. to the east, Randolph St. to the north and Monroe St. to the south. Convenient parking is located in the Millennium Park Garage (entrance on Columbus at Monroe or Randolph) and at the Grant Park North and East Monroe Garages, all located within a short walking distance to Millennium Park.

Millennium Park, managed and programmed by the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs, is an award-winning center for art, music, architecture and landscape design. The result of a unique partnership between the City of Chicago and the philanthropic community, the 24.5-acre park features the work of world-renowned architects, planners, artists and designers. Among Millennium Park's prominent features are the Frank Gehry-designed Jay Pritzker Pavilion, the most sophisticated outdoor concert venue of its kind in the United States; the interactive Crown Fountain by Jaume Plensa; the contemporary Lurie Garden designed by the team of Gustafson Guthrie Nichol, Piet Oudolf and Robert Israel; and Anish Kapoor's hugely popular Cloud Gate sculpture. Since opening in July 2004, Millennium Park has hosted more than 16 million people, making it one of the most popular destinations in Chicago.

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