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For Immediate Release

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Des Moines Art Center Holiday Program to feature music historian Michael Lasser and Heartland Youth Chorus

DES MOINES, IA (November 2016) On Thursday, December 8, music historian Michael Lasser and the Heartland Youth Chorus will entertain the audience with an evening of interesting historical facts and some of the best loved holiday songs of the season, as well as a few surprises. The event will take place at the Des Moines Art Center, 4700 Grand Avenue, 6:30 pm, Levitt Auditorium. **The event is free and open to the public; reservations required.***

Michael Lasser is a lecturer, writer, broadcaster, critic, and teacher. He is the author of *America's Songs II: Songs from the 1890s to the Post-War Years* (2006), a companion to his and Philip Furia's *America's Songs: The Stories Behind the Songs of Broadway, Hollywood, and Tin Pan Alley*. The songs in these books are the basis for his nationally syndicated public radio program, *Fascinatin' Rhythm*, winner of a 1994 Peabody Award. Lasser is currently finishing a third book, *The City's Clamor and the American Songbook, 1900-1950*.

Founded by Barbara Sletto in 2003, the Heartland Youth Chorus is a performance-based program for youth, emphasizing musical literacy and character development. HYC provides a unique opportunity for children of diverse backgrounds with a particular aptitude in vocal music to explore that interest beyond their school setting. Children in grades one through 12 will be performing the songs including *Silver Bells*, *Santa Clause is Coming to Town*, *I've Got My Love To Keep Me Warm*, *Baby It's Cold Outside*, and other holiday favorites.

*** FREE reservations can be made by visiting desmoinesartcenter.org and clicking on EVENT RESERVATIONS on the homepage.**



Heartland Youth Choir's Chamber Choir takes a break in Central Park during a New York performance tour that included Carnegie Hall.



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Des Moines Art Center

Recognized by international art critics as a world-class museum in the heart of the Midwest, the Des Moines Art Center has amassed an important collection with a major emphasis on contemporary art. The collection's overriding principle is a representation of artists from the 19th century to the present, each through a seminal work. This accounts for an impressive collection that ranges from Edward Hopper's *Automat* to Jasper Johns' *Tennyson*, Henri Matisse's *Woman in White*, Georgia O'Keeffe's *From the Lake No. 1*, Francis Bacon's *Study after Velázquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X*, Bill Viola's *Ascension*, and Cecily Brown's *Half-Bind*.

The Art Center's physical complex marries with the collection for a totally integrated experience. The collection is housed in three major buildings, each designed by a world-renowned architect – Eliel Saarinen, I. M. Pei, and Richard Meier. With the exception of special events, admission to the museum is free.

In September 2009, the John and Mary Pappajohn Sculpture Park opened in Des Moines' Western Gateway Park. Philanthropists John and Mary Pappajohn have provided funding for and donated 28 sculptures by internationally acclaimed contemporary artists to the Des Moines Art Center. The collection of sculptures by such artists as Louise Bourgeois, Deborah Butterfield, Willem de Kooning, Olafur Eliasson, Keith Haring, Ellsworth Kelly, Jaume Plensa, Richard Serra, Joel Shapiro, and Mark di Suvero, is the most significant donation of artwork to the Art Center in a single gift in the museum's history. The Pappajohn Sculpture Park is a collaboration of the Pappajohns, the City of Des Moines, the Des Moines Art Center, and numerous corporate and private donors.

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