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FIRST NIGHT BOSTON 2010 FREE OUTDOOR EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

A complete First Night Boston press kit, with releases broken down by genre, plus a full program guide and high res images, available here: <http://www.firstnight.org/PressRoom/Default.aspx>

(BOSTON) First Night Boston is the country's oldest and largest New Year's arts celebration. On Dec. 31, 2009 from 1 p.m. to midnight, First Night presents a day-long festival of art, music, dance, ice sculpture, fireworks and more. First Night is an alcohol-free event that welcomes revelers of all ages to celebrate community and unity through the arts. First Night 2010 will feature over 1000 artists in 200 exhibitions and performances in over 35 locations in Boston. First Night Boston offers a wide array of FREE outdoor programming this year. A complete schedule, including times and exact locations can be found at www.firstnight.org.

FIREWORKS

There are two fireworks displays at First Night this year. Boston 4 Productions, the organization that produces Boston's world-famous 4th of July celebration, also produces the Boston Family Fireworks at 7 pm on the Boston Common presented by Mayor Thomas M. Menino and The Mugar Foundation. This spectacular 12-minute display takes place in the intimate setting of the Boston Common, providing revelers of all ages with a unique perspective. This year's display marks the 11th year that this annual tradition has taken place for families. (For more information about Boston 4 Productions and The Mugar Foundation, visit www.july4th.org)

The Frank Ward and Cape Dairy Midnight Fireworks is a brilliant 10-minute display over Boston Harbor. Good viewing areas include Rowe's Wharf, Long Wharf, Columbus Park, and Fan Pier, as well as locations in South Boston, Charlestown and East Boston.

METRO BOSTON GRAND PROCESSION

The Grand Procession is the heart of the First Night celebration, and it has been since the beginning in 1976. The elements and some dragons will make a special appearance in the Metro Boston Grand Procession. "Earth, Air, Fire, Water, (and Dragons)," First Night's 34th anniversary Grand Procession, will contain four sections, differentiated by colors, and led by a different piece from the Back Alley Puppet Theatre and Puppeteers Cooperative, whose founders have participated in all 34 First Nights in Boston.

The *Metro Boston* Grand Procession is led by Mayor Menino and First Night Executive Director Geri Guardino, and begins at 5:30 pm in front of the Hynes Convention Center. It proceeds down Boylston St., turning left on Charles, and ending at Charles and Beacon Streets. Over 800 people will march in the Procession.

COUNTDOWNS

We have two outdoor midnight countdowns. Over at Copley Square, WBZ-TV anchors Jack Williams and Lisa Hughes get help ringing in the New Year with live music by Black Taxi on the steps of the Boston Public Library. This multimedia outdoor party with light show will feature a lively countdown that will be broadcast live on WBZ-TV starting at 11 p.m. The party starts at 10 p.m.

The Midnight Countdown on the Boston Common Parkman Bandstand will be the culmination of an evening of rock with local garage rock heroes Jordan Valentine and the Sunday Saints who kick it off at 7:30, followed by alternative rock band The Fatal Flaw from 10 p.m. to midnight.

ICE SCULPTURES

First Night presents six of its signature ice sculptures this year – three on Boston Common, two in Copley Square and one at the New England Aquarium. Work on these pieces continues through December 31 at dusk, when they are illuminated with theatrical lighting.

- **Eric Fontecchio and Alfred Georgs, Brookline Ice**
Copley Square

Eric and Alfred create two monumental ice sculptures on either side of Copley Square, one across from the Boston Public Library stairs, and one by Trinity Church. This year, they create “**Venus**,” inspired by the great work of Botticelli and “**Fisherman**,” an adaptation of Winslow Homer’s classic 19th century painting.

- **Donald Chapelle, Brilliant Ice Sculpture**

Return to Michelangelo’s studio in Florence in 1504, where he completed his most famous work, the Statue of David. Chapelle carves “**Michelangelo Sculpting David**.” Boston Common, Brewers Fountain. Sponsored by State Street Corporation.

At the New England Aquarium, Chapelle carves half a dozen adorable five foot tall “**Penguins**.” Sponsored by the New England Aquarium.

- **Steve Rose, Ice Effects**

Master carver Steve Rose will recreate one of the MFA’s famous 4,000-year-old Egyptian sculptures, the original of which is on view in the family-friendly exhibition, “**The Secrets of Tomb 10A: Egypt 2000 BC**.” (First Night visitors can check it out during the MFA’s free community day on December 31). At the Boston Common Frog Pond. Sponsored by the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

“**First Night Frogs**” celebrates the TADpole Playground at Boston Common, one of the city’s most charming attractions! Adjoining the Frog Pond, the Playground features a state of the art play structure, beautiful commissioned mosaics, and six magnificent play-size bronze frog sculptures by local artist David Phillips. More info at www.tadpoleplayground.org. Sponsored by The Highland Street Foundation.

INSTALLATIONS

Boston Common, Railroad Mall

Park Street Studios” “Beacon to a Better Year”

As humans have for millennia, we look forward with hope to a better year. The “Beacon” is a large-scale installation designed to attract a better, happier vibe for the year 2010, the beginning of a new decade. The three 20-foot sculptures are composed of bamboo armatures skinned with white shrink wrap plastic. All materials will be recycled afterwards including the shrink wrap. During the day the beacon is a stunning white, silver and mirrored machine of good will and hope. At dusk, with theatrical lighting, it transforms into a magical jewel lighting up the night.

Boston Common, Visitor’s Center

Neil Horskey - “Fluxusgment 57: a Bicycle Powered Shadow Puppet Theater”

This installation engages First Night participants in a collaborative performance that is both whimsical and nostalgic. One participant rides an exercise bicycle equipped with a generator light that illuminates a miniature stage. Adjacent to the stage is a diagram of numerous hand positions

for shadow puppets. Using this diagram and their own imagination, another participant performs a shadow puppet play cast upon the stage's back panel.

All First Night outdoor events are free, though supported by sales of the First Night button (artwork by Ekoa Holmes), which is the ticket for admission to all indoor events. Buttons are \$18 (children under 4 admitted free) and are available at Boston-area Shaw's and Star Markets, Tedeschi's, Store 24, Au Bon Pain and dozens of other locations. For a complete list of advance sale locations or to buy buttons online, visit www.firstnight.org. Buttons are available at a special web price of \$15 at www.firstnight.org through Dec. 26. For more information, visit www.firstnight.org.

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