

NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER PRESENTS SPECIAL BENJAMIN FRANKLIN PROGRAMMING

In conjunction with Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a Better World exhibition

Philadelphia, PA (December 6, 2005) - Presented in conjunction with the world premiere of *Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a Better World*, the National Constitution Center is presenting a wide range of live programs about Franklin. Each program centers on a different dimension of Franklin's diverse resume.

The schedule for upcoming Franklin programs is as follows:

Sunday, January 8, 12:00 noon: *Franklin Biographers: A Reunion*

Three of Benjamin Franklin's most prominent, recent biographers will share the stage in this free event to present different aspects of Franklin's life. The participants are:

- **Walter Isaacson:** *Benjamin Franklin: An American Life*
 - **Gordon Wood:** *The Americanization of Benjamin Franklin*
 - **Stacy Schiff:** *A Great Improvisation: Franklin, France, and the Birth of America*
- Another Franklin author, **Jim Lehrer**, who wrote *The Franklin Affair* and is anchor of PBS's NewsHour with Jim Lehrer will moderate. **Richard Beeman**, Professor of History at the University of Pennsylvania and a member of the National Constitution Center Board of Trustees will introduce the program. This program is free, but reservations are required, and can be made by calling 215-409-6700.

Tuesday, March 14, 6:30 p.m.: *From Poor Richard's Almanac to Podcasting: The Next New, New Things in Communications*

Benjamin Franklin, among many other roles, was an innovator in the way we communicate. With every step we take in the invention of communications technology, we amplify the free speech guarantees of the First Amendment—and with each development, we pay tribute to Ben. The National Constitution Center will hold an event, as part of a program funded in part by the Institute for Museum and Library Services, to explore Franklin's legacy in the world of communications: the next new, new things in tools to use the First Amendment. Tickets for this event cost \$12 for members; \$15 for non-members; and \$6 for students. Reservations are required, and can be made by calling 215-409-6700.

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ADD ONE/FRANKLIN PROGRAMS

Thursday, April 6, 6:30 p.m.: *Franklin the Diplomat: From Albany to Paris*

A man of many faces, one of Ben Franklin's talents was as a shrewd negotiator and skillful diplomat. This joint National Constitution Center/Alliance Francaise program is a conversation about Franklin's diplomatic life. The distinguished guests include:

- **Stacy Schiff**, author of the recent book *A Great Improvisation: Franklin, France, and the Birth of America* about Ben's time in Paris.
- **J.A. Leo Lemay**, Professor of Colonial Literature at the University of Delaware. Lemay authored numerous books on Benjamin Franklin, including *The Life of Benjamin Franklin Volumes 1 and 2*, and *The Cannon of Benjamin Franklin, 1722-1776: New Attributions and Reconsiderations*. He also created an online documentary chronicling Franklin's life.
- **Chris Tudda**, a Historian with the U.S. Department of State. He is the author of the recent book *The Truth is Our Weapon: The Rhetorical Diplomacy of Dwight D. Eisenhower and John Foster Dulles*. He is currently writing a study of the relationship between the ideology of American independence, British reconciliation efforts, and the Franco-American alliance, 1773-78.

Richard Beeman, Professor of History at the University of Pennsylvania and a member of the National Constitution Center Board of Trustees will moderate.

Tickets for this event cost \$12 for members; \$15 for non-members; and \$6 for students. Reservations are required, and can be made by calling 215-409-6700.

Other programs in the planning stages focus on Franklin the spy, Franklin's legacy as a journalist, and a comparison between Franklin and Leonardo DaVinci

Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a Better World, a blockbuster exhibition celebrating Franklin's 300th birthday, makes its world premiere at the National Constitution Center from December 15, 2005, through April 30, 2006. Created by the Benjamin Franklin Tercentenary, this exhibition is being hosted locally by CBS 3. Tickets for the exhibition, which also include regular museum admission, are \$14 for adults; \$12 for children ages 4-12, seniors, and college students; and \$8.50 for groups of 20 or more. For advance tickets, call 215.409.6700 or visit www.gophila.com/ben.

Located at 525 Arch Street on Philadelphia's historic Independence Mall, the National Constitution Center is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing public understanding of the U.S. Constitution and its relevance to Americans' daily lives. Opened on July 4, 2003, the museum dramatically tells the story of the Constitution from Revolutionary times to the present through more than 100 interactive, multimedia exhibits, film, photographs, text, sculpture and artifacts, and features a powerful, award-winning theatrical performance, "Freedom Rising". For more information, visit www.constitutioncenter.org.

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