

NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER

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***DIANA: A CELEBRATION* EXHIBITION OPENS TODAY AT THE NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER**

Philadelphia, PA (October 2, 2009) – Since the beginning of American history, our nation has had a complicated relationship with British royalty, and an unending fascination with the government we overthrew in 1776. Known to many as “The People’s Princess,” Princess Diana won the hearts of millions, on both sides of the Atlantic and around the world. Opening today at the National Constitution Center, and running through December 31, 2009, ***Diana: A Celebration*** provides an opportunity for visitors to learn more about the life and work of the Princess of Wales.

Making its East Coast debut, and returning to the United States for the first time since 2007, the award-winning exhibition explores Diana's childhood, her engagement to HRH Prince Charles, their royal wedding, their children, and Diana's life and work as a global humanitarian. *Diana: A Celebration* is on loan from the Althorp Estate, the Spencer Family's 500-year-old ancestral home in England.

“This exhibition is a remarkable tribute to Princess Diana’s life and work,” said National Constitution Center President and CEO Linda E. Johnson. “Because she was admired by millions across the globe, we expect *Diana: A Celebration* to have broad appeal, which will allow the Center to expand its audience and, in turn, introduce more visitors to the remarkable stories of ‘We the People’ celebrated here every day.”

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Covering 10,000 square feet, *Diana: A Celebration* features over 150 artifacts organized into nine galleries: Childhood, Spencer Women, Engagement, Royal Wedding, Tiara Gallery, Style & Fashion, Her Work, Tribute, and Condolences. Highlights include:

- Diana's royal wedding gown, diamond tiara, veil, 25-ft. train, shoes, parasol, and bridesmaid's dress
- 28 dresses, suits, and gowns designed by Versace, Valentino, Chanel, and Azagury, among others, worn by Diana during her public life
- Musical score and handwritten lyrics of the Elton John/Bernie Taupin composition dedicated to Diana and adapted from "Candle in the Wind"
- Original heritage, 17th and 18th century family paintings from the Althorp Estate
- The original, hand-edited text of Charles Spencer's moving tribute to his sister, delivered at Diana's funeral in Westminster Abbey
- Home movies of Diana's childhood, historical artifacts, personal letters, photos, and heirlooms

The myriad of charities and causes Diana championed, including her pioneering efforts with HIV and AIDS patients, the homeless, and the campaign to ban landmines, are also featured in the exhibition. A three-screen video presentation highlights the hundreds of associations that continue to benefit from her patronage and energetic dedication. The world's grief at her untimely death is dealt with sensitively, in a display of books of condolence and space for reflection and remembrance.

To augment the exhibition, the Center's public programming staff in the Annenberg Center for Education and Outreach has developed a variety of family activities about the differences and similarities between the governments of America and Britain, what life is like as a member of the Royal Family, and Diana's civic accomplishments, among other topics.

Also in keeping with the Center's mission to foster discussion and citizen engagement, a series of special programs is planned, exploring the nature of aristocracy and America's fascination with royalty. On October 13, Daily Beast founder and editor Tina Brown will discuss Princess Diana and her dramatic impact on the rise of celebrity culture with moderator Todd S. Purdum of *Vanity Fair*. On November 2, bestselling author Sally Bedell Smith and journalist Vincent Bzdek will discuss American aristocracies in an

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event that includes a tea prior to the program and a private viewing of the exhibition following the program. On December 7, Brown University Professor of History Gordon S. Wood will discuss the Founders' attitudes and beliefs about aristocracy in America with historian Carol Berkin.

In addition, the Center is offering a special iPod audio tour in conjunction with the exhibition. With an introduction from Charles Spencer, Diana's brother, the tour tells the stories behind some of the most incredible artifacts and personal possessions on display in the exhibition, highlighting pieces from various aspects of Diana's life, including her family history, childhood, marriage, humanitarianism, and love of fashion. The *Diana: A Celebration* iPod tour was produced in partnership with Drexel University's School of Education.

Admission to *Diana: A Celebration* is \$23 for adults, \$21 for seniors ages 65 and up, and \$15 for children ages 4-12. Active military personnel and children ages 3 and under are free. Group rates are also available. Admission to the Center's main exhibition, *The Story of We the People*, including the award-winning theater production "Freedom Rising", is included. iPod audio tours cost an additional \$5. For ticket information, call 215.409.6700 or visit www.constitutioncenter.org.

Diana: A Celebration is produced by Arts and Exhibitions International, in association with the Althorp Estate, Cultural Networks International Inc. The exhibition is presented locally by Macy's, and CBS 3 and The CW Philly are the official media partners. CBS 3 (KYW-TV) and The CW Philly 57 (WPSG-TV) are part of CBS Television Stations, a division of CBS Corporation.

The National Constitution Center, located at 525 Arch St. on Philadelphia's Independence Mall, is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing public understanding of the U.S. Constitution and the ideas and values it represents. The Center serves as a museum, an education center, and a forum for debate on constitutional issues. The museum dramatically tells the story of the

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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”. The Center also houses the Annenberg Center for Education and Outreach, which serves as the hub for national constitutional education. Also, as a nonpartisan forum for constitutional discourse, the Center presents – without endorsement – programs that contain diverse viewpoints on a broad range of issues. For more information, call 215.409.6700 or visit www.constitutioncenter.org.

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