

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **HOLIDAY STAMPS FEATURE SPRIGHTLY MUSIC MAKERS: TRANQUIL MADONNA AND CHILD**

WASHINGTON – The warmth, joy, and magic of the holiday season are captured in postage stamps available at New York Post Offices starting Oct. 23, and nationwide Oct. 24. Free and open to the public, the First Day of Issue ceremony is scheduled for 12 noon on Thursday, Oct. 23 at the Postage Stamp Mega Show at the Jacob K. Javits Convention Center, 655 W. 34th Street, New York, NY.

“The tradition of sending holiday greetings to family and friends is enhanced with the issuance of these colorful new stamps that capture the essence of the holiday season,” said John Potter, Postmaster General, U.S. Postal Service.

Four delightful images of lively music makers created by artist Diane Teske Harris, Billings, Mt., brighten the Holiday stamps series. The Madonna and Child stamp is a re-issue of the 2002, 37-cent stamp depicting artist Jan Gossaert's serene oil-on-panel painting “Madonna and Child,” circa 1520, from the Charles H. and Mary F.S. Worcester Collection, The Art Institute of Chicago, reformatted as a double-sided convertible booklet.

The Holiday Music Makers stamps, part of the Holiday stamps series, feature two images of whimsical Santa's and two equally fanciful reindeer. Playing horns, panpipes, and a drum, these lighthearted, colorful music makers bring to mind the many joys of the season.

The Holiday Music Makers stamps will be issued as self-adhesives in sheets of 20, double-sided booklets of 20, and folded vending booklets of 20. In addition, sets of stamped, ready-to-mail postcards on sheets of 20 will be available (featuring five each of the four stamp images) priced at \$9.75 a set.



The Holiday stamps have been extremely popular since the first stamp in the series was issued in 1961. Since 1966, the series has prominently featured renaissance paintings of the Madonna and Child.

Jan Gossaert (circa 1478 to 1532), credited with being one of the first to bring the innovations of the Italian Renaissance to northern Europe, brought home to the Netherlands new painting ideas and a new trend, introducing a greater awareness of anatomy and architectural space with his art. For the next 150 years, it was customary for Flemish painters to visit Italy and adopt an “Italianate” style of painting. Because Gossaert was a transitional figure in Northern Renaissance art, it is hard to classify him as a member of any single school or style of painting, but he has been called a Romanist, Antwerp mannerist, and humanist. Gossaert, whose name is also spelled Gossart, is sometimes referred to as “Mabuse” or “Jan Mabuse,” the result of his occasionally having used the name of his hometown, Maubeuge (now in northern France), when signing his paintings.

Ethel Kessler of Bethesda, Md., is the designer and art director for the Holiday Music Makers stamps, and Richard Sheaff of Scottsdale, Ariz. Is the designer and art director for the Madonna and Child stamp.

To see the Holiday Music Makers or Madonna and Child stamps, visit the Postal Service Web site and open this press release at [www.usps.com/communications/news/stamps/welcome.htm](http://www.usps.com/communications/news/stamps/welcome.htm).

Current U.S. stamps, as well as a free comprehensive catalog, are available by toll-free telephone order at 1 800 STAMP-24. A selection of stamps and other philatelic items are available at the online Postal Store at [www.usps.com/shop](http://www.usps.com/shop). In addition, custom-framed art prints of original stamp are available at [www.postalartgallery.com](http://www.postalartgallery.com).

Since 1775, the U.S. Postal Service has connected friends, families, neighbors and businesses by mail. It is an independent federal agency that visits more than 141 million homes and businesses every day and is the only service provider to deliver to every address in the nation. The Postal Service receives no taxpayer dollars for routine operations, but derives its operating revenues solely from the sale of postage, products and services. With annual revenues of more than \$68.9 billion, it is the world’s leading provider of mailing and delivery services, offering some of the most affordable postage rates in the world. The U.S. Postal Service delivers more than 46 percent of the world’s mail volume — some 202 billion letters, advertisements, periodicals and packages a year — and serves seven million customers each day at its 40,000 retail locations nationwide.

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**TECHNICAL DETAILS**

Issue: *Holiday Music Makers*  
Item Number: 564000  
Denomination & Type of Issue: 37-cent commemorative  
Format: Pane of 20 (4 designs)  
Series: *Holiday*  
Issue Date & City: October 23, 2003, New York, NY 10199  
Designer: Ethel Kessler, Bethesda, MD  
Art Director: Ethel Kessler, Bethesda, MD  
Artist: Diane Teske Harris, Billings, MT  
Typographer: Greg Berger, Bethesda, MD  
Engraver: Southern Graphics  
Modeler: Donald Woo  
Manufacturing Process: Gravure  
Printer: Sennett Security Products (SSP)  
Printed at: American Packaging Corporation, Columbus, WI  
Press Type: Rotomec 5, 3000  
Stamps per Pane: 20  
Print Quantity: 125 million stamps  
Paper Type: Prephosphored, type II  
Adhesive Type: Pressure-sensitive  
Processed at: Unique Binders, Fredericksburg, VA  
Colors: Red, Yellow, Green, Purple  
Stamp Orientation: Vertical  
Image Area (w x h): 0.76 x 1.04 in./19.30 x 26.41 mm  
Overall Size (w x h): 091 x 1.19 in./23.11 x 30.22 mm  
Full Pane Size (w x h): 5.46 x 5.8125 in./138.68 x 131.63 mm  
Plate Size: 320 stamps per revolution  
Plate Numbers: "S" followed by four (4) single digits  
Marginal Markings: "© 2002 USPS" • Price • Plate position diagram  
Plate numbers (4 per pane) • 4 Barcodes on back  
Catalog Item Number(s): 564020 Block of 4 — \$1.48  
564030 Block of 10 — \$3.70  
564040 Full Pane of 20 — \$7.40  
564063 First Day Cover set of 4 — \$3.00  
564093 Full pane w/FDC set of 4 — \$10.40  
564066 Stamped Card — \$9.75

**TECHNICAL DETAILS**

Issue: *Holiday Music Makers*  
Item Number: 672200  
Denomination & Type of Issue: 37-cent commemorative  
Format: Double Sided Convertible Booklet of 20 (4 designs)  
Series: *Holiday*  
Issue Date & City: October 23, 2003, New York, NY 10199  
Designer: Ethel Kessler, Bethesda, MD  
Artist: Diane Teske Harris, Billings, MT  
Art Director: Ethel Kessler, Bethesda, MD  
Typographer: Greg Berger, Bethesda, MD  
Engraver: Southern Graphics  
Modeler: Donald H. Woo  
Manufacturing Process: Gravure  
Printer: Sennett Security Products (SSP)  
Printed at: American Packaging Corporation, Columbus, WI  
Press Type: Rotomek 5, 3000  
Stamps per Book: 20  
Print Quantity: 1.75 billion stamps  
Paper Type: Pre-phosphored, Type II  
Adhesive Type: Pressure-sensitive  
Processed at: Unique Binders, Fredericksburg, VA  
Colors: Red, Yellow, Green, Purple  
Stamp Orientation: Vertical  
Image Area (w x h): 0.76 x 1.04 in./19.30 x 26.67 mm  
Overall Size (w x h): 0.91 x 1.19 in./23.11 x 30.22 mm  
Booklet Size (w x h) : 1.823 x 7.50 in /46.30 x 190.50 mm  
Plate Size: 288 stamps per revolution  
Plate Numbers: "S" followed by four (4) single digits  
Marginal Markings: "© 2002 USPS" • Plate Numbers • "Peel here to fold"  
Catalog Item Number(s): 672240 Convertible Book of 20 — \$7.40  
672263 First Day Cover Set of 4 — \$3.00

**TECHNICAL DETAILS**

Issue: *Holiday Music Makers*  
Item Number: 672300  
Denomination & Type of Issue: 37-cent commemorative  
Format: Vending Booklet of 20 (4 designs)  
Series: *Holiday*  
Issue Date & City: October 23, 2003, New York, NY 10199  
Designer: Ethel Kessler, Bethesda, MD  
Artist: Diane Teske Harris, Billings, MT  
Art Director: Ethel Kessler, Bethesda, MD  
Typographer: Greg Berger, Bethesda, MD  
Engraver: Southern Graphics  
Modeler: Donald H. Woo  
Manufacturing Process: Gravure  
Printer: Sennett Security Products (SSP)  
Printed at: American Packaging Corporation, Columbus, WI  
Press Type: Rotomek 5, 3000  
Stamps per Book: 20  
Print Quantity: 200.99 million stamps  
Paper Type: Pre-phosphored, Type II  
Adhesive Type: Pressure-sensitive  
Processed at: Unique Binders, Fredericksburg, VA  
Colors: Red, Yellow, Green, Purple, Orange  
Stamp Orientation: Vertical  
Image Area (w x h): 0.72 x 0.832 in./18.28 x 21.13 mm  
Overall Size (w x h): 0.87 x 0.982 in./22.09 x 24.94 mm  
Booklet Size (w x h) : 1.740 x 10.375 in /44.19 x 263.52 mm  
Plate Size: 480 stamps per revolution  
Plate Numbers: "S" followed by five (5) single digits  
Marginal Markings: "© 2002 USPS" • Plate Numbers • Price Barcode • USPS logo  
Catalog Item Number(s): 672340 Vending book of 20 — \$7.40

## TECHNICAL DETAILS

Issue: *Holiday Music Makers*  
Item Number: 883400  
Denomination & Type of Issue: 23-cent stamped postal card  
Format: \$9.75 set of 20 stamped cards (4 designs)  
Series: *Holiday*  
Issue Date & City: October 23, 2003, New York, NY 10199  
Designer: Ethel Kessler, Bethesda, MD  
Engraver: N/A  
Art Director: Ethel Kessler, Bethesda, MD  
Typographer: Greg Berger, Bethesda, MD  
Artist: Diane Teske Harris, Billings, MT  
Modeler: Joseph Sheeran  
Manufacturing Process: Offset  
Printer: Sterling Sommer  
Printed at: Tonawanda, NY  
Press Type: Heidelberg  
Cards per sheet: 4  
Print Quantity: 50,000 sets (1 million cards)  
Paper Type: Nonphosphored, Type III, Block ¼ in.Bar  
Adhesive Type: N/A  
Processed at: Sterling Sommer, Tonawanda, NY  
Colors: Black, Cyan, Magenta, Yellow  
Stamp Orientation: Vertical  
Card Size (w x h): 5.5 x 4.25 in./139.7 x 107.95 mm  
Full Pane Size (w x h): 11 x 8.5 x in./279.4 x 215.9 mm  
Plate Size: 32 cards per revolution  
Plate Numbers: N/A  
Marginal Markings: © 2003 USPS  
Catalog Item Number(s): 564066 Stamped Card — \$9.75

## HOW TO ORDER THE FIRST DAY OF ISSUE POSTMARK

Customers have 30 days to obtain the first day of issue postmark by mail. They may purchase the new stamps at their local post office, by telephone at 800-STAMP-24, and at the Postal Store Web site at [www.usps.com/shop](http://www.usps.com/shop). They should affix the stamps to envelopes of their choice, address the envelopes (to themselves or others), and place them in a larger envelope addressed to: HOLIDAY MUSIC MAKERS COMMEMORATIVE STAMP, POSTMASTER, 421 EIGHTH AVE RM 2029B, NEW YORK NY 10199-9991.

After applying the first day of issue postmark, the Postal Service will return the envelopes through the mail. There is no charge for the postmark. All orders must be postmarked by November 22, 2003.

Stamp Fulfillment Services also offers first day covers for new stamp issues and postal stationery items postmarked with the official first day of issue cancellation. Each item has an individual catalog number and is offered in the quarterly *USA Philatelic* catalog. Customers may request a free catalog by writing to: INFORMATION FULFILLMENT, DEPT 6270, US POSTAL SERVICE, PO BOX 219014, KANSAS CITY MO 64121-9014, or by calling 1 800 STAMP-24.

First day covers remain on sale for at least one year after the stamp's issuance.

## TECHNICAL DETAILS

Issue: *Christmas: Jan Gossaert's Madonna and Child*  
Item Number: 672400  
Denomination & Type of Issue: 37-cent Special  
Format: Double Sided Convertible Booklet of 20 (1 design)  
Series: *Christmas*  
Issue Date & City: October 23, 2003, New York, NY 10199  
Artist: Jan Gossaert, painting from the Charles H. and Mary F.S. Worcester collection at The Art Institute of Chicago  
Designer: Richard Sheaff, Scottsdale, AZ 85258  
Engraver: N/A  
Art Director: Richard Sheaff, Scottsdale, AZ 85258  
Typographer: Richard Sheaff, Scottsdale, AZ 85258  
Modeler: Joseph Sheeran  
Manufacturing Process: Offset  
Printer: Ashton Potter USA Ltd. (APU)  
Printed at: Williamsville, NY  
Press Type: Stevens, Varisize Security Press  
Stamps per Booklet: 20  
Print Quantity: 700 million stamps  
Paper Type: Pre-phosphored, Type II  
Adhesive Type: Pressure-sensitive  
Processed at: Ashton Potter USA Ltd. (APU)  
Colors:  
    Outside Cover: Black, Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, PMS 485 (Red), Pantone Green  
    Stamp: Black, Cyan, Magenta, Yellow  
Stamp Orientation: Vertical  
Image Area (w x h): 0.77 x 1.050 in./19.558 x 26.67 mm  
Overall Size (w x h): 0.91 x 1.19 in./23.114 x 30.226 mm  
Booklet Size (w x h) : 2.38 x 5.76 in./60.452 x 146.304 mm  
Plate Size: 540 stamps per revolution  
Plate Numbers: "P" followed by four (4) single digits  
Marginal Markings:  
    Stamp Side: "© 1999 USPS" • Plate Numbers • Peel here to fold •  
    Cover Side: Price • Barcode • "Season Greetings" • Price  
Catalog Item Number(s): 672440 PSA Double Sided Book of 20 — \$7.40  
672461 First Day Cover — \$0.75

## HOW TO ORDER THE FIRST DAY OF ISSUE POSTMARK

Customers have 30 days to obtain the first day of issue postmark by mail. They may purchase the new stamps at their local post office, by telephone at 800-STAMP-24, and at the Postal Store Web site at [www.usps.com/shop](http://www.usps.com/shop). They should affix the stamps to envelopes of their choice, address the envelopes (to themselves or others), and place them in a larger envelope addressed to: CHRISTMAS MADONNA AND CHILD STAMP, POSTMASTER, 421 EIGHTH AVE RM 2029B, NEW YORK NY 10199-9991.

After applying the first day of issue postmark, the Postal Service will return the envelopes through the mail. There is no charge for the postmark. All orders must be postmarked by November 22, 2003.

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