



Glen Echo Park Celebrates Opening Weekend of Historic Carousel with Carousel Day Festival presenting Piscataway Nation Singers & Dancers and other Live Performances

Carousel Rides, Performances, Art Projects, and More!

GLEN ECHO, MD (March 20, 2023) – [Carousel Day](#), an annual tradition at Glen Echo Park and one of the Park’s most popular festivals, will be held this year on [Saturday, April 29, from 11am to 4pm](#). In addition to **free** performances – including headliners **Piscataway Nation Singers & Dancers** in the historic Spanish Ballroom – Carousel Day includes art projects for kids, open art studios and galleries, a parade through Park grounds led by resident performers the **Washington Revels**, and much more. Carousel Day is presented by the Glen Echo Park Partnership for Arts and Culture (the Partnership) and often attracts up to 4,000 people who come to the Park to celebrate the opening of the Dentzel carousel for the season.

The Partnership is honored to include in this year’s program the **Piscataway Nation Singers & Dancers**, who present a colorful, educational, and entertaining “pow wow-style event featuring American Indian Dance, Drum & Song.” At the time of Columbus, as many as 10 million Native Americans lived in North America. A succession of Algonquian peoples ultimately coalesced into the Piscataway Nation of the Chesapeake & Tidewater regions of Maryland. Today, the Piscataway Nation Singers & Dancers carry on the long-standing traditions, culture, and heritage of their indigenous ancestors.

“The Partnership acknowledges the many Indigenous peoples who have known the Potomac Valley and its lands and waters as their homeland for thousands of years,” said Partnership CEO Katey Boerner, “and it is with respect and appreciation that we have the opportunity to present the Piscataway Nation Singers & Dancers at Glen Echo Park.”

Opening the Carousel Day event will be the Washington Revels leading a musical parade through the Park. They will also perform in the Park’s Bumper Car Pavilion and lead a Maypole Dance. The **Washington Conservatory of Music** will present a Musical Instrument Petting Zoo. Visitors can meet musicians demonstrating their instruments, and kids can pick up a Musical Instrument Zoo Scorecard, collect stickers from all the instruments on the card, and be entered to win free music lessons, a ukulele, or free carousel rides!

This year the Partnership celebrates unique ties between art and nature with a special theme: *Fostering creativity and community through the power of the arts and nature*. Carousel Day performers who embody this theme include **Envirodrum** and **Billy B.** Envirodrum’s music underscores the importance of preserving our environment and practicing “the 3R’s: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.” The band uses all recycled products to create percussion-based music. Billy B.’s lively song, dance, and stories have educated and entertained children, educators, and even two American Presidents. He has electrified audiences with his exciting, unique style of combining environmental education and entertainment. A trained educator turned performer, he uses songs and dances to teach children of all ages about the wonders of natural science, ecology, and the environment. “Educators call it kinetic learning. Kids call it fun.”

Also in conjunction with this year’s theme, *Uprooted*, a sculptural installation by environmental artist Stephanie Garon to be unveiled on April 1, will be on display on Carousel Day and for the rest of the year. The work considers humanity’s interruption of nature and is comprised of steel and English ivy, an invasive plant species sourced at Glen Echo Park.

Other Carousel Day performers include **Cantaré**, whose music introduces audiences of all ages to the beautiful songs and rhythms of Latin America in an exciting interactive performance, and **After School Dance Fund**, whose mission is “to establish strong Latin dance clubs inside public schools to strengthen



the social-emotional development of youth by promoting health, exercise, heritage, and unity through Latin dance education.” The group, whose Executive Director will be honored at the Partnership’s [Gala](#) in May, will perform in the Bumper Car Pavilion. A favorite at the Park, The **Culkin School of Traditional Irish Dance** will perform in the Spanish Ballroom. And one of the Park’s two award-winning children’s theaters – **the Puppet Co.** – will present *Jack and the Beanstalk* at 11:30am and 1pm. Tickets may be purchased ahead [here](#).

Art-making projects for kids will feature carousel animal fans, headbands to color, crayon rubbings of the carousel, and more! And on display in the **Partnership Galleries** will be three solo shows: **J. Jordan Bruns’ *Playing with Reality: 15 Years at Glen Echo Park*** in the Park’s Popcorn Gallery, **Tom Doyle’s *Navigations*** in the Stone Tower Gallery, and **Abbey Alpern’s *Out of the Box*** in the Park View Gallery. Other visual arts studios and galleries in the Park will also be open for art viewing and sales, and visitors also may find Resident Artist Jordan Bruns outdoors in the Park painting the carousel.

Of course, the day would not be complete without the star of the Park – the **102-year-old Dentzel carousel**. [Carousel rides](#) are **\$2.00 per ride or \$5.00 for an all-day ticket**. Visitors can also enjoy refreshments from Praline café and cold treats from a Ben & Jerry’s ice cream truck.

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High resolution images are attached. Credit: Glen Echo Park Partnership for Arts and Culture. Carousel Fact Sheet & Timeline is attached.

About the Dentzel Carousel

Installed in 1921 by the Dentzel Carousel Company of Germantown, Pennsylvania, the Glen Echo Park carousel is one of only 135 functioning antique carousels in the country and one of the few still in its original location. Listed on the **National Register of Historic Places**, the carousel is truly a Washington area treasure! Known as a “menagerie carousel” because of the variety of its animals, the Glen Echo Park carousel includes 52 animals: 40 horses, 4 rabbits, 4 ostriches, 1 giraffe, 1 deer, 1 lion and 1 tiger. It also features two circus chariots. With its playful animals and striking ornamentation, the carousel has been an iconic symbol of the Park throughout the site’s amusement park years and into its current phase as an arts and cultural center for the past half-century.

In the summer of 1960, Howard University students led protests at the Park along with local residents. The students rode the carousel and were arrested for doing so in violation of the privately-owned amusement park’s segregation policies. The case went all the way to the United States Supreme Court. Their continued protests under the heat of the summer sun – and the active engagement of community members in the fight – led to the amusement park’s desegregation, opening the venue to everyone for its 1961 season and every year thereafter until the amusement park closed after the 1968 season.

Today, the carousel is the **only remaining historic ride from the amusement park era at Glen Echo Park site**. It is ridden by more than 50,000 people each year – including multi-generations of families visiting the Park. In 2021, the carousel celebrated its 100th Anniversary in the Park. Find information on the Carousel 100th Anniversary Celebration at glenechopark.org/carousel100.

About Glen Echo Park and the Glen Echo Park Partnership for Arts and Culture

Glen Echo Park is a vibrant arts and cultural center presenting festivals, exhibitions, and dances, as well as children’s theater, music programs, nature programs, and art classes to more than 350,000 visitors each year. The Glen Echo Park Partnership for Arts and Culture, a nonprofit organization, oversees these and other activities, including preserving the historic structures in the Park. Glen Echo Park, part of the National Park Service, is located in Glen Echo, Maryland, six miles northwest of Georgetown along the scenic Potomac River palisades. For more information on Glen Echo Park, visit glenechopark.org or follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#).



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