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**CONTACT:**

Kristin Guiter, Director of Public Relations,  
kguiter@corcoran.org, (202) 639-1867

Rachel Cothran, Public Relations Coordinator  
rcothran@corcoran.org, (202) 639-1833

**CORCORAN COLLEGE OF ART + DESIGN COLLABORATES WITH ROYAL DANISH EMBASSY  
AND DANISH SCHOOL OF DESIGN TO PRESENT**

**“COOL CREATIVE CHRISTMAS”**

**Green winter wonderland installation inspired by Hans Christian Anderson’s *The Snow Queen***

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – Masters students from the **Corcoran College of Art + Design** have teamed up with the **Royal Danish Embassy** in Washington, DC to present **Cool Creative Christmas**, an environmentally-focused holiday art installation staged at the Danish Ambassador Mr. Friis Arne Petersen’s Residence.

The installation of 750 glass jars with Solar LED lights, 900 floating flowers and 1000s of paper flowers and snowflakes will be unveiled at a series of private holiday parties on **Tuesday, December 1** and **Wednesday, December 2** and will be on-view at the Danish Ambassador’s Residence through the month of December.

In addition, a sculpture of President Obama by artist Petter Guger, made entirely from *Chicago Tribune* newspapers and on-loan from the President’s campaign headquarters in Chicago, will be on-view.

The Embassy’s annual celebration takes a new green twist this year to highlight COP15, the United Nations Climate Change Conference, hosted in Denmark December 7-18. In keeping with the mission of the conference, the Christmas installation this year is decidedly green. Solar LED lights, soy candles, recycled and seed-infused paper formed into thousands of intricate paper flowers, Cradle to Cradle approved fabrics, non-VOC paint and many more green efforts make up the installation. All recyclable items used for the installation will be recycled and/or reused.



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Organized by Catherine Armour, Corcoran College of Art + Design Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, Corcoran design students Breeze Giannasio, Brittany Watson, and Caryn Cramer, along with Danish design students Louise Havndrup and Tirsdag Kjølner, the team designed the concept by weekly Skype conference calls throughout the fall semester.

The transnational design effort weaves together aspects of Danish national heritage, sustainability issues and a very special Danish story, Hans Christian Andersen's *The Snow Queen*. The installation uses the story of *The Snow Queen* as a parable for environmental challenges, referencing climate change, nature's abundance, and the inexorable power of people working in unison.

This Danish tale centers on the struggle between good and evil and the power of belief in overcoming even the darkest, most corrosive influences in the world. The story opens with an evil "troll" whose magic mirror fails to reflect all the good and beautiful aspects of people while it magnifies all that is bad and ugly. The mirror breaks precipitously and the splinters are blown down to earth embedding into people's hearts and eyes. Young brother and sister Kai and Gerda's idyllic childhood is interrupted when Kai's heart and eyes are pierced by mirror shards and he leaves his family life behind, finding refuge in the stark world of the Snow Queen. Gerda, heartbroken at Kai's disappearance, hunts for him through the countryside, guided by the wisdom of nature, depicted in our installation through roses, snowflakes, reindeer and avian friends. Her epic journey ends as Gerda finds Kai at the Snow Queen's palace, weeps warm tears upon him, melting the mirror splinters and unlocking the captive spell of the Snow Queen. The children dance with joy, returning to their family home, delighted to see that it is summertime and the roses are once again in bloom.

The Danish Ambassador's Residence is an example of Modern Scandinavian design. It was designed by Danish architect Vilhelm Lauritzen in 1947 and officially opened in 1960, becoming the first modern Embassy building in Washington, DC.

## **ABOUT THE CORCORAN**

The Corcoran Gallery of Art, a privately funded institution, was founded in 1869 as Washington's first and largest non-federal museum of art. It is known internationally for its distinguished collection of historical and modern American art as well as contemporary art, photography, European painting, sculpture and the decorative arts. Founded in 1890, the Corcoran College of Art + Design is Washington's only four-year college of art and design offering Bachelor of Fine Art degrees in Photojournalism, Digital Media Design, Fine Art, Graphic Design, Interior Design, and Photography; Associate of Fine Art degrees in Digital Media Design, Fine Art, Graphic Design and Photography; a five-year Bachelor of Fine Arts/Master of Arts degree in Fine Art and Teaching (BFA/MAT); and two-year Master of Arts degrees in Teaching, Interior Design, Exhibition Design, and the History of Decorative Arts. The College's Continuing Education program offers part-time credit and non-credit classes for children and adults. For more information about the Corcoran College of Art + Design, visit [www.corcoran.edu](http://www.corcoran.edu).

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