

THE CHRISTMAS STAMPS OF THE UNITED STATES

By Sebastian Safiano

The Christmas stamps of the United States invite you to visit some of our museums. Many of these stamps are reproductions of works of Art of the most famous artists and you can find the originals in The National Gallery of Art from Washington, or Washington Cathedral, or Art Institute of Chicago, or Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, or North Carolina Museum of Art, etc.

You can see the masterpieces of artists like Raphael, Memling, Sandro Boticelli, Ghirlandaio, Fra Filippo Lippi and many others. By the side of all these works of famous artists from different countries we can also find works of American artists like the *'Winter Sunday in Norway, Maine'* (see Figure 3) by an anonymous painter of the 19th century; John Copley, one of the best known representatives of the American Historic Schools, a stained glass window at Washington's Cathedral (see Figure 12) etc.

It is only in 1962, that the first Christmas stamp of the United States shows up, it is that of a *'Wreath and Candles'*, Scott nr. 1205, and it was of a small size. This was followed in 1963 by a stamp of the *'National Christmas Tree'* in front of the White House, Scott nr. 1240. In 1964 they came out with four Christmas stamps showing season's plants, and only in 1966 the first religious stamp came out showing a painting of the *'Madonna and Child'* by Hans Memling a Flemish artist. The same stamp was reprinted in 1967, but this Christmas stamp was much larger (see Figure 1).

By 1973 we have another change, this time we have two Christmas stamps and not only one. So that each user can use either a Madonna by Raphael (see Figure 7), or a Christmas Tree in needlepoint. Since then the supporters of Santa or of Jesus Christ will find a stamp corresponding to their vision of the Christmas night.

CHRISTMAS MAXIMUM CARDS OF THE UNITED STATES

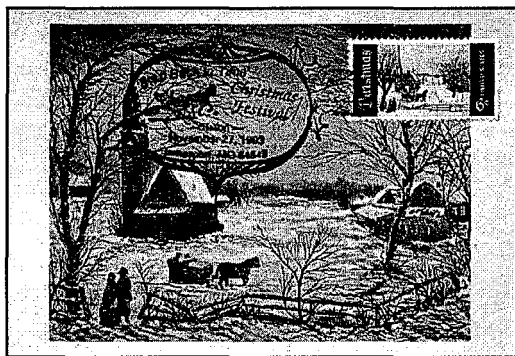
By George Constantourakis

Bellow from Left: (Figure 1) *'MADONNA AND CHILD'* by Hans Memling c. 1430/35 - 1494, National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. Issue: Nov. 6, 1967. For: Christmas 1967. Cancel: First Day, Bethlehem GA. (Figure 2) *'ANGEL GABRIEL'* detail from *'THE ANNUNCIATION'* by Jan Van Eyck c. 1384/1400 - 1441, National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. Issue: Nov. 1, 1968. For: Christmas 1968. Cancel: First Day, Washington D.C. (place kept).



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Clockwise from Left: (Figure 3) 'WINTER SUNDAY IN NORWAY, MAINE' by Paul Lancaster 1931-, Lyzon Galleries, Nashville, Tenn. Issue: Nov. 3, 1969. For: Christmas 1969. Cancel: Nov. 27, 1993, Jamesport MO, special mention & concordant illustration (triple). (Figure 4) 'NATIVITY' by Lorenzo Lotto c. 1480 - 1556, National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. Issue: Nov. 5, 1970. For: Christmas 1970. Cancel: First Day, Washington D.C. (place kept). (Figure 5) 'ADORATION OF THE SHEPHERDS' by Giorgione c. 1478 - 1510, National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. Issue: Nov. 10, 1971. For: Christmas 1971. Cancel: First Day, Washington D.C. (place kept). (Figure 6) 'ANGELS' detail from the 'MARY QUEEN OF HEAVEN' by Master of the St. Lucy Legend active 1480 - 1489, National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. Issue: Nov. 9, 1972. For: Christmas 1972. Cancel: First Day, Washington D.C. (place kept).



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Clockwise from Left: (Figure 7) 'THE SMALL COWPER MADONNA' by Raphael 1483 - 1520, National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. Issue: Nov. 7, 1973. For: Christmas 1973. Cancel: First Day, Washington D.C. (place kept). (Figure 8) 'ANGEL' detail from the 'PERUSSIS ALTARPIECE' anonymous 1480, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY. Issue: Oct, 1974. For: Christmas 1974. Cancel: First Day, New York, NY (place kept). (Figure 9) 'MADONNA AND CHILD' c. 1470 by Domenico Ghirlandaio, National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. Issue: Oct. 14 1975. For: Christmas 1975. Cancel: July 18, 1990, Washington D.C. (place kept). (Figure 10) 'MADONNA AND CHILD WITH CHERUBIM' by Andrea della Robbia 1435 - 1525, National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. Issue: Oct. 18, 1978. For: Christmas 1978. Cancel: First Day, Washington D.C. (place kept).



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Clockwise from Left: (Figure 11) 'THE REST ON THE FLIGHT TO EGYPT' by Gerard David c.1460 - 1523, National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. Issue: Oct. 18, 1979. For: Christmas 1979. Cancel: First Day, Washington D.C. (place kept). (Figure 12) 'MADONNA AND CHILD' from 'EPIPHANY WINDOW' Washington Cathedral, Washington D.C. Issue: Oct. 31, 1980. For: Christmas 1980. Cancel: First Day, Washington D.C. (place kept). (Figure 13) 'MADONNA OF THE GOLDFINCH' c. 1760 by Giovanni B. Tiepolo, National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. Issue: Oct. 28, 1982. For: Christmas 1982. Cancel: First Day, Washington D.C. (place kept). (Figure 14) 'THE NICOLINI-COWPER MADONNA' by Raphael 1483 - 1520, National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. Issue: Oct. 28, 1983. For: Christmas 1983. Cancel: First Day, Washington D.C. (place kept).



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Clockwise from Left: (Figure 15) 'MADONNA AND CHILD' 1440/45 by Fra Filippo Lippi, National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. Issue: Oct. 30, 1984. For: Christmas 1984. Cancel: First Day, Washington D.C. (place kept). (Figure 16) 'MADONNA AND CHILD - GENOA MADONNA' 1450/55 by Luca della Robbia, The Detroit Institute of Arts. Issue: Oct. 30, 1985. For: Christmas 1985. Cancel: First Day, Detroit MI (place kept). (Figure 17) 'MADONNA AND CHILD' c. 1500, by Perugino, National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. Issue: Oct. 24, 1986. For: Christmas 1986. Cancel: First Day, Washington D.C. (place kept), special. (Figure 18) 'MADONNA AND CHILD' by Botticelli, National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. Issue: Oct. 20, 1988. For: Christmas 1988. Cancel: First Day, Washington D.C. (place kept).



NO

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Clockwise from Left: (Figure 19) 'MADONNA AND CHILD' detail from the 'THE DREAM OF ST. CATHERINE OF ALEXANDRIA' c. 1590, National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. Issue: Oct. 19, 1989. For: Christmas 1989. Cancel: First Day, Washington D.C. (place kept). (Figure 20) 'MADONNA AND CHILD' c. 1475 by Antonello da Messina, National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. Issue: Oct. 18, 1990. For: Christmas 1990. Cancel: First Day, Washington D.C. (place kept). (Figure 21) 'MADONNA AND CHILD WITH SAINTS' c. 1490 by Giovanni Bellini, National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. Issue: Oct. 22, 1992. For: Christmas 1992. Cancel: Dec. 28, 1992, Christmas FL. (Figure 22) 'MADONNA AND CHILD IN A LANDSCAPE' c. 1515 by Giovanni Battista Cima, The North Carolina Museum of Art. Issue: Oct. 21, 1993. For: Christmas 1993. Cancel: First Day, Raleigh, NC. (place kept).



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Clockwise from Left: (Figure 23) 'MADONNA AND CHILD' c. 1320/30 by Giotto, National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. Issue: Oct. 19, 1995. For: Christmas 1995. Cancel: First Day, Washington D.C. (place kept). (Figure 24) 'MADONNA AND CHILD' detail from the 'THE ADORATION OF THE SHEPHERDS' 1712 by Paolo de Matteis, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. Issue: Nov. 1, 1996. For: Christmas 1996. Cancel: First Day, Richmond VA (place kept). (Figure 25) 'MADONNA AND CHILD' c. 1425 Florentine, terra cotta, painted & gilded, National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. Issue: Oct. 15, 1998. For: Christmas 1998. Cancel: First Day, Washington D.C. (place kept). (Figure 26) 'MADONNA AND CHILD' c. 1475 by Bartolomeo Vivarini, National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C. Issue: Oct. 20, 1999. For: Christmas 1999. Cancel: First Day, Washington D.C. (place kept).



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Clockwise from Left: (Figure 27) 'CHILD ON HOBBY HORSE'. Issue: Oct. 18, 1978. For: Christmas 1978. Cancel: First Day, Holly MI. (Figure 28) 'CHRISTMAS TREE'. Issue: Oct. 8, 1996. For: Christmas 1996. Cancel: Dec. 7, 1996, Big Spring, Texas, special mention & concordant illustration (triple). (Figure 29) 'SKATERS'. Issue: Oct. 8, 1996. For: Christmas 1996. Cancel: Feb. 16, 2001, Anchorage, Alaska, concordant illustration (triple). (Figure 30) 'DREAMING OF SANTA' (on stamp) 'SANTA AT HIS WORKSHOP' (on card). Issue: Oct. 8, 1996. For: Christmas 1996. Cancel: Dec. 24, 1996, Sacramento CA, concordant mention & illustration (triple).

