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## 2017 NATIONAL CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL LOOKS AHEAD TO SPRING

*Celebrating 90 years since the first Festival*

**Washington, DC** [Nov. 4, 2016] – The National Cherry Blossom Festival, Atsuyuki Oike, Deputy Chief of Mission of The Embassy of Japan, sponsors, and stakeholders joined Thursday evening at the Smithsonian American Art Museum for a preview of the 2017 National Cherry Blossom Festival (March 20-April 16). Speakers at the launch, presented by Guest Services, Inc., announced new and expanded events and kicked off the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first Festival.

The **2017 official artwork** was unveiled (pictured at right). The artwork was created by Naturel, a DC-based artist whose talents have also attracted the eyes and ears of celebrity clients such as Swizz Beatz, Rihanna, Spike Lee, Paul Rosenberg and LeBron James, among many others. The one-of-a-kind artwork is an annual collector's item, and will be featured on the 2017 [poster](#) and official merchandise. For every poster sold, Guest Services will donate \$1 to the Trust for the National Mall's Cherry Tree Endowment Fund.

The Festival also honored Barbara Ehrlich for receiving the 2016 Volunteer of the Year Award from the International Festivals and Events Association. To celebrate Ehrlich's 25 years of volunteering with the Festival, a park cleanup in Southwest DC will be held in her name.

National Cherry Blossom Festival 2017 signature events include:

- Thursday, March 16: Pink Tie Party fundraiser presented by ANA at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center
- Saturday, March 25: Opening Ceremony at the Warner Theatre
- Saturday, April 1: Blossom Kite Festival on the Washington Monument grounds
- Saturday, April 8: National Cherry Blossom Festival Parade<sup>®</sup> presented by Events DC
- Saturday, April 15: Southwest Waterfront Fireworks Festival
- Saturday, March 25 – Sunday, April 9: Tidal Basin Welcome Area and ANA Performance Stage

Working in close collaboration with Festival partners, 2017 premier events include:

- Saturday, March 25: SAAM Cherry Blossom Celebration produced by Smithsonian American Art Museum
- Friday, April 14: Cherry Blast produced by Events DC
- Saturday, April 8: Sakura Matsuri – Japanese Street Festival produced by The Japan-America Society of Washington, DC
- Sunday, April 9: Anacostia River Festival produced by the 11<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge Park



Top sponsors to date were recognized, including Events DC, ANA, DowntownDC Business Improvement District, Trade Center Management Associates (TCMA), Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center, and Harris Teeter.

The National Cherry Blossom Festival is the nation's greatest springtime celebration. The 2017 Festival, March 20 – April 16, includes four weeks of events featuring diverse and creative programming promoting traditional and contemporary arts and culture, natural beauty, and community spirit. Visit [nationalcherryblossomfestival.org](http://nationalcherryblossomfestival.org) or call 877.44.BLOOM for more information and find us on [Facebook](#) (CherryBlossomFestival), [Twitter](#) (@CherryBlossFest), and [Instagram](#) (@CherryBlossFest).

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