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### **FACT SHEET**

#### ***Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a Better World***

- DESCRIPTION:** The *Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a Better World* exhibition presents more than 250 original Franklin artifacts and more than 40 interactive devices, designed in the spirit of Franklin's curiosity, wit and wisdom. Debuting in Philadelphia, the traveling exhibition is the centerpiece of an international celebration to mark the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Franklin's birth on January 17, 1706.
- ORGANIZER:** The Benjamin Franklin Tercentenary is a consortium of five Philadelphia institutions (the **American Philosophical Society**, **The Franklin Institute Science Museum**, the **Library Company of Philadelphia**, the **Philadelphia Museum of Art** and the **University of Pennsylvania**) created in 2000 to mark the 300-year anniversary of Benjamin Franklin's birth.
- VENUE:** **National Constitution Center**, 525 Arch Street, Philadelphia
- DATES:** December 15, 2005, through April 30, 2006, with special events taking place on Franklin's birthday, January 17
- ADMISSION FEES:** Tickets to the exhibition are \$14 for adults; \$12 for children ages 4-12, seniors, college students and active military personnel; and \$8.50 for groups of 20 or more. Admission to the Constitution Center is also included.
- SECTIONS:** The 8,000-square-foot exhibition is divided into six sections, representing different periods of Franklin's life:
- *Character Matters, 1706-1723:* Young Franklin in Boston
  - *B. Franklin Printer, 1723-1748:* Franklin's entrepreneurial and prosperous career as a printer, as well as family life at his Market Street home
  - *Civic Visions, 1731-1751:* Franklin's collaborative approach to community action, including his role in founding many of Philadelphia's key philanthropic, educational and civic institutions
  - *The Search for Useful Knowledge, 1747-1785:* Franklin's many inventions, such as the discovery of the properties of electricity and his concern with practical applications for his scientific discoveries
  - *The World Stage, 1744-1787:* Franklin's political career in colonial Pennsylvania, his years as a colonial agent in London, his diplomacy in France and his role as America's elder statesman
  - *Seeing Franklin, 1787-Today:* Franklin's own assessment of his life and a visual journey, dating back 250 years, of Franklin's image in pop culture
- more-



BEN FRANKLIN 300 PHILADELPHIA, c/o GREATER PHILADELPHIA TOURISM MARKETING CORPORATION  
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Page 2/Exhibition Fact Sheet

**INTERPRETIVE  
ELEMENTS:**

Each section of the exhibition features the following elements:

- **Text panels**, geared to a seventh-grade level. Lively asymmetrical design features mounted original artifacts, period graphics and Franklin's own words.
- **Artifacts**, displayed in a way that puts Franklin's material world in the context of the modern elements of the show. Artifacts include a lightning rod, Franklin's chess set and paper currency printed by Franklin.
- **Video animations**, offering whimsical re-tellings of Franklin's stories. During the "Adams, Franklin and the Window" animation, John Adams expounds on why Franklin insisted on keeping the window open when they were forced to share a bed while on a business trip.
- **Interactives**, engaging electronic, mechanical and hands-on work stations that allow visitors to re-create Franklin's experiments and understand his character. Visitors can typeset their names into a souvenir document and match up Franklin's definitions with his 13 virtues.

**HIGHLIGHTS:**

- **Original copies of five of America's founding documents**, including the *Albany Plan*, the *Declaration of Independence*, the *Treaty of Amity*, the *Treaty of Paris* and the *Constitution*
- **More than 250 priceless original items from 90 lenders**, including many owned by Franklin's family and never before displayed in public
- **More than 40 interactive devices**, featuring special effects, hands-on opportunities and family-centered fun

**TEAM:**

- **Chief curator:** Dr. Page Talbott
- **Exhibition designer:** Staples and Charles Ltd., Virginia
- **Interactives designer:** a More Perfect Union, Massachusetts
- **Fabricators:** Proto Productions, Illinois

**FUNDING:**

Funders include the Pew Charitable Trusts, the John Templeton Foundation, the Annenberg Foundation, the Department of the Interior and the Florence Gould Foundation, among others. In addition, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has granted \$2.3 million to support the Tercentenary and its marketing efforts.

**EXHIBITION  
SCHEDULE:**

- **Philadelphia**, National Constitution Center, December 15, 2005-April 30, 2006
  - **St. Louis**, Missouri Historical Society, June 8-September 4, 2006
  - **Houston**, The Houston Museum of Natural Science, October 11, 2006-January 21, 2007
  - **Denver**, Denver Museum of Nature and Science, March 2-May 28, 2007
- more-



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Page 3/Exhibition Fact Sheet

- **Atlanta**, Atlanta History Center, July 4-October 14, 2007
- **Paris**, Musée Carnavalet and Musée des Arts et Métiers, December 4, 2007-March 30, 2008

**MORE INFO:** [www.benfranklin300.org](http://www.benfranklin300.org) and [www.gophila.com](http://www.gophila.com)

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*Ben Franklin 300 Philadelphia* is a year-long celebration of Benjamin Franklin's 300<sup>th</sup> birthday in Philadelphia and Its Countryside. The celebration is led by the Benjamin Franklin Tercentenary, a non-profit consortium established to reaffirm Franklin's enduring legacy in his 300<sup>th</sup> birthday year with an array of special projects that form the official national celebration. The key component is *Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a Better World*, an interactive exhibition making its world premiere at the **National Constitution Center** in Philadelphia from December 15, 2005, through April 30, 2006. For more information about Tercentenary events, visit [www.benfranklin300.org](http://www.benfranklin300.org).

Greater Philadelphia Tourism Marketing Corporation is the official marketing agency for *Ben Franklin 300 Philadelphia*, working in conjunction with the Tercentenary to expand and promote the year-long Ben Franklin experience in the region. For more information about travel to Philadelphia, visit [www.gophila.com/ben](http://www.gophila.com/ben).

*Note to Editors: For photos of Greater Philadelphia, visit the photo gallery of [www.gophila.com/pressroom](http://www.gophila.com/pressroom).*



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