

EVENTS/CAUSES

Saks to put deep freeze on flagship's facade for holiday light show

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Exterior of Saks Fifth Avenue's New York flagship

By STAFF REPORTS

Department store chain Saks Fifth Avenue is transforming its New York flagship into a "winter palace" for the 2015 holiday season.

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This year's concept takes the world's natural and manmade wonders such as the Roman Colosseum and The Great Barrier Reef and morphs them into wintry fantasies. To unveil its holiday theme, Saks will stage a theatrical light show event outside its flagship location, livestreamed on its Web site and inside its network of department stores across the United States, and now in Canada.

Wintery wonders

Together with its partner MasterCard, Saks will debut its 2015 holiday windows alongside the lightshow event on Nov 23, just in time for Thanksgiving and Black Friday foot traffic.

During the event, 200 choir members from The Oratorio Society of New York and the Cathedral Choristers of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine will sing a "chilling rendition of a favorite holiday carol" as the storefront is illuminated for the first time. The choir's recorded vocal performance will be played throughout the holiday season to accompany Saks' window displays.

In addition, the Saks storefront will be repurposed with three-dimensional elements, including towering light icicles, crystal palace spires and snowy magnolia arches.



Saks' Winter Palace-themed catalog for holiday 2015

Saks' Winter Palace theme will also be shared across its retail portfolio for brand cohesion nationwide. Each department will be themed with icy chandeliers, frosted decor and wintry, exotic fashion.

The light show portion will be the first-of-its-kind for the retailer, as it links a network of lighting and video displays. To put on the show, Saks requires 225,000 individual points of controlled light and employed more than 250 individuals, both internationally and domestically, who worked more than 10,000 hours to produce the holiday spectacle.

Saks' audience is encouraged to be part of the light show during its debut by wearing Xylobands, a bracelet that will interact with the controlled elements of the presentation.

Each year retailers must refresh holiday marketing to be inventive and interesting to keep consumers returning year after year to see their displays. Themes can drastically differ from year-to-year.

For instance, for the 2014 holiday season Saks paid homage to the roaring 20s with Art Deco-themed windows and tie-in with the Rockettes of the Radio City Christmas Spectacular ([see story](#)).

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