

Florence

at the Dawn of the
Renaissance

Painting and Illumination, 1300–1350

EXAMINING THE CONNECTIONS

A combination of art historical research and scientific analysis helps to create a more complex understanding of the workshop practices in 14th century Florence

LOS ANGELES— *Florence at the Dawn of the Renaissance: Painting and Illumination 1300–1350* explores the community of illuminators and panel painters who contributed to the stunning artistic production in Florence on the eve of the Renaissance. The exhibition's genesis was four remarkable works in the Getty's collection: the important and unusual *Chiarito Tabernacle* (1340s) by Pacino di Bonaguida (active about 1303–about 1347) and three leaves from the celebrated *Laudario of Sant'Agnese* (about 1340), a lavish manuscript illuminated by Pacino and a collaborator.

Pacino was a prolific manuscript illuminator and panel painter who produced altarpieces and private devotional paintings, as well as luxury copies of manuscripts, which fed the devotional and intellectual demands of his Florentine patrons. A detailed technical analysis of manuscript leaves and panel paintings from Pacino's workshop was undertaken for the exhibition in order to elucidate elements of fourteenth-century Florentine workshop practice and the artist's technique.

Importantly, the work also addresses the effects of material choices on the aging of Pacino's works: the appearance of many early panel paintings has changed over time because of environmental conditions and restoration; therefore manuscripts, which often maintain



Getty Museum conservator Nancy Turner setting up a *Laudario* leaf—*The Ascension of Christ*, 1340s, tempera and gold leaf on parchment, J. Paul Getty Museum—for examination by Raman spectroscopy. Photo: Karen Trentelman, GCI

-more-



The J. Paul Getty Trust
Communications Department

1200 Getty Center Drive, Suite 403
Los Angeles, CA 90049-1681

Tel 310 440 7360
Fax 310 440 7722

www.getty.edu

their original appearance, may reveal important information about the intended appearance of early paintings, influencing both our understanding of these objects and their conservation. Establishing these links between painting and manuscript illumination, however, requires art-historical insight, conservation observation and evaluation, and a thorough technical investigation of the objects.

The project included materials analysis, comparative visual examination, infrared, UV, and multispectral imaging studies, and art-historical, archival, and collections research, requiring the participation of scientists, conservators, and curators. This diverse team of Getty researchers worked together to develop new questions, to advance scholarship regarding workshop practice, and to disseminate the research to a wide audience at professional conferences, in the exhibition catalogue, and in the exhibition presentation itself. Aspects of the technical analysis are featured in the exhibition, including a presentation of the materials identified, a digital reconstruction of the altered colors in the *Chiarito Tabernacle*, and a discussion of how technical imaging combined with chemical analyses shed light on the characteristic materials and working methods of artists. Throughout the exhibition, this information is made available to the visitor through interactive didactic material, providing a richer context for viewing and studying these beautiful and fascinating objects. This approach reveals a more complex and nuanced picture of this crucial moment in the history of artistic production in a way that would not have been possible without collaborative historical and scientific research.

#

The J. Paul Getty Trust is an international cultural and philanthropic institution devoted to the visual arts that includes the J. Paul Getty Museum, the Getty Research Institute, the Getty Conservation Institute, and the Getty Foundation. The J. Paul Getty Trust and Getty programs serve a varied audience from two locations: the Getty Center in Los Angeles and the Getty Villa in Malibu.

The J. Paul Getty Museum collects in seven distinct areas, including Greek and Roman antiquities, European paintings, drawings, manuscripts, sculpture and decorative arts, and photographs gathered internationally. The Museum's mission is to make the collection meaningful and attractive to a broad audience by presenting and interpreting the works of art through educational programs, special exhibitions, publications, conservation, and research.

The Getty Conservation Institute works internationally to advance conservation practice in the visual arts—broadly interpreted to include objects, collections, architecture, and sites. The Institute serves the conservation community through scientific research, education and training, model field projects, and the dissemination of the results of both its own work and the work of others in the field. In all its endeavors, the GCI focuses on the creation and delivery of knowledge that will benefit the professional conservation community through scientific research, education and training, model field projects, and the dissemination of the results of both its own work and the work of others in the field. In all its endeavors, the GCI focuses on the creation and delivery of knowledge that will benefit the professionals and organizations responsible for the conservation of the world's cultural heritage.

Additional information is available at www.getty.edu.