



DATE: March 19, 2012
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACT
Amy Hood
Getty Communications
(310) 440-6427
ahood@getty.edu

GETTY MUSEUM PRESENTS
DRAMA AND DEVOTION: HEEMSKERCK'S 'ECCE HOMO' ALTARPIECE FROM WARSAW

This remarkable Northern Renaissance altarpiece will be presented outside of Europe for the first time following conservation at the Getty



Ecce Homo, 1544. Maerten van Heemskerck, (Netherlandish, 1498–1574). Oil on panel. Center panel: 74 1/2 x 52 1/4 inches framed; left wing: 72 1/4 x 24 5/8 inches; right wing: 74 1/4 x 25 1/2 inches. Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie

At the J. Paul Getty Museum, Getty Center
June 5, 2012–January 13, 2013

LOS ANGELES—American museum-goers will have the rare opportunity to view a complete triptych by Renaissance master **Maerten van Heemskerck** (1498–1574), one of the most admired Netherlandish painters of the 16th century, when his dramatic *Ecce Homo* altarpiece (1544) is presented at the J. Paul Getty Museum in a focused exhibition from June 5, 2012 through January 13, 2013.

As a result of the Getty Museum's Conservation Partnership Program and with the support of the Museum's Paintings Conservation Council, the *Ecce Homo* triptych came to Los Angeles from the National Museum in Warsaw, Poland for conservation and study.

-more-



Ecce Homo (detail, center panel), 1544. Maerten van Heemskerck (Netherlandish, 1498–1574). Oil on panel. Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie

Drama and Devotion: Heemskerck's 'Ecce Homo'

Altarpiece from Warsaw will be presented at the Getty for six months and helps mark the occasion of the National Museum's 150th anniversary. The Getty Conservation Institute (GCI) collaborated with the Getty Museum on this conservation project, conducting technical analysis of the painting.

"By bringing the *Ecce Homo* altarpiece to Los Angeles we have been able to conserve this important work, study it in depth, and now make it possible for our visitors to experience this striking object firsthand. Conservation and technical analysis can transform our understanding of the original appearance of a work of art like *Ecce Homo* as well as our knowledge of the artist's technique," explained Yvonne Szafran, senior conservator of paintings at the Getty Museum.

Maerten van Heemskerck worked in an innovative style that combined Netherlandish characteristics of verisimilitude with an expressive formal language and use of brilliant color that was influenced by the artist's time in Italy, where he studied both ancient art and the work of his Italian contemporaries such as Michelangelo.

The *Ecce Homo* decorated the family chapel of wealthy sheriff Jan van Drenckwaerdt in the Augustinian church in Dordrecht, the Netherlands, between about 1544 and 1572. The altarpiece, which is more than 6 feet wide when fully opened, features five scenes: the central panel depicts the *Ecce Homo* (in which Pilate presents Christ to the crowd which calls for his crucifixion), a popular subject in Renaissance art; the left interior wing features the patron, Jan van Drenckwaerdt and St. John the Evangelist; Jan's wife, Margaretha de Jonge van Baertwyck and St. Margaret of Antioch appear on the right interior wing; and St. John the Evangelist and St. Margaret of Antioch are painted in grisaille on the left and right exterior panels. The triptych retains its original 16th-century frame, which features an elaborate carved architectural surrounding for the central panel.

Many of Heemskerck's religious paintings were destroyed by Protestant iconoclasts who attacked churches and destroyed objects associated with the Catholic faith across the Netherlands in 1566. The *Ecce Homo* triptych stands out as an important survivor of that tumultuous period.

In the exhibition, visitors will be able to walk around the altarpiece and study both its interior and exterior scenes. Didactic displays, featuring x-rays and infrared images of the painting, will illuminate Heemskerck's working method and reveal the recent technical findings. Viewers will be able to appreciate his virtuoso brushwork, from the creation of robust musculature to the plush fur lining of Jan van Drenckwaerdt's coat and his wife's fashionable sleeves, which epitomize the energy and quickness of his painting style. A digitally created reconstruction of the colors of the central panel will also suggest how Heemskerck's vivid palette has changed over time.



Ecce Homo (detail, left panel), 1544. Maerten van Heemskerck (Netherlandish, 1498–1574). Oil on panel. Muzeum Narodowe w Warszawie

"Through this painting, we have been able to better understand Heemskerck's animated style and confident technique, which made him one of the most famous masters of his time," said Anne Woollett, curator of paintings at the Getty Museum. "The Getty Museum's international conservation collaborations create opportunities for unique visitor experiences such as this."

Drama and Devotion: Heemskerck's 'Ecce Homo' Altarpiece from Warsaw will be accompanied by a richly illustrated publication of the same name written by Anne T. Woollett, curator of paintings at the Getty Museum, Yvonne Szafran, senior conservator of paintings at the Getty Museum, and Alan Phenix, scientist at the Getty Conservation Institute. Both the exhibition and publication are generously supported by the Getty Museum's Paintings Conservation Council.

###

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. To learn more, visit www.getty.edu, or subscribe to the GCI's E-Bulletin by visiting www.getty.edu/subscribe/gci_bulletin/. Additional information is available at www.getty.edu.

Visiting the Getty Center

The Getty Center is open Tuesday through Friday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. It is closed Monday and major holidays. Admission to the Getty Center is always free. Parking is \$15 per car, but reduced to \$10 after 5 p.m. on Saturdays and for evening events throughout the week. No reservation is required for parking or general admission. Reservations are required for event seating and groups of 15 or more. Please call (310) 440-7300 (English or Spanish) for reservations and information. The TTY line for callers who are deaf or hearing impaired is (310) 440-7305. The Getty Center is at 1200 Getty Center Drive, Los Angeles, California.

Additional information is available at www.getty.edu.

Sign up for e-Getty at www.getty.edu/subscribe to receive free monthly highlights of events at the Getty Center and the Getty Villa via e-mail, or visit www.getty.edu for a complete calendar of public programs.