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**THE ROYAL INSTITUTE FOR CULTURAL HERITAGE (KIK-IRPA) PUBLISHES E-BOOK OF
NETHERLANDISH PANEL PAINTINGS AND FRAMES WITH SUPPORT FROM THE GETTY
FOUNDATION**

*Free publication supported by Getty Foundation
as part of its Panel Paintings Initiative*

LOS ANGELES – The Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage in Brussels (KIK-IRPA) and the Getty Foundation announced today the publication of *Frames and Supports in 15th and 16th-century Southern Netherlandish Painting*.

This free e-book, written by scholar Hélène Verougstraete, serves as an important resource for conservators and scholars who study and care for old master paintings on wooden panels. The publication is an updated study based on Verougstraete's 1989 doctoral thesis, which was originally prepared in French with black and white pictures. The new e-book has been fully translated into English and features over 2,000 crisp, full-color illustrations and diagrams presented in a searchable, zoomable interface.

Verougstraete's technical study is unique because it was the first in-depth documentation of Netherlandish panel paintings with "engaged" frames. This practice of fusing together the frame and the wooden painting support was common in the 15th and 16th centuries, though over time these two elements were often separated. Thanks to Verougstraete's research, scholars and conservators have had a valuable record to guide the structural treatment of wooden supports for works of this period and the selection of historically accurate frames to replace those that were removed and lost. However the first edition was published in French with a small print run, both of which have limited its accessibility. The new expanded and translated edition, which is freely accessible to conservators, scholars, and the general public, sheds further light on how artists collaborated with woodworkers to



Pieter Coecke van Aelst, wing with the *Annunciation and Abbot Willem van Brussel*. Courtesy of KIK-IRPA.

create painting supports.

The first section of the book examines in-depth the tools and methods of craftsmen and guilds, including their markings and descriptions and some problems specific to large-scale works. The second section presents a catalogue of works with a description of their main characteristics, classified by place of conservation. A key selection of masters and masterpieces are analyzed in-depth and form a key resource for the field. The book includes an exhaustive study of the frames of Jan van Eyck's *Ghent Altarpiece*, and its diagrams retrace the checkered story of the presentation of this masterpiece in the Vijdt Chapel over the centuries by synthesizing archival and scientific research and historical documentation.

The translation and expansion of the first edition of this book was supported by a grant from the Getty Foundation as part of its [Panel Paintings Initiative](#). This initiative focuses on training the next generation of conservators of paintings on wood panels through treatment of some of the most important works of art in European and North American collections. The training grants awarded to date have allowed participants to work on some of the most highly visible masterpieces in the history of Western art, including Hubert and Jan van Eyck's *Ghent Altarpiece* (1432), Albrecht Dürer's *Adam and Eve* (1507), Pieter Breughel the Elder's *Hunters in the Snow* (1565), Peter Paul Rubens' *Triumph of the Eucharist* series (1626), Giorgio Vasari's *The Last Supper* (1546), and Caravaggio's *David with the Head of Goliath* (1610), to name a few. The new e-book provides a valuable and more accessible set of reference materials for panel paintings conservators and other scholars of early Netherlandish painting.

About the author:

Hélène Verougstraete is professor emerita of the Université catholique de Louvain (UCL) and of its sister university, the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (KULeuven). After an internship in restoration of works of art at the Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage (KIK-IRPA) in Brussels, she devoted her PhD in Art History (1987) to the frames and supports of 15th and 16th century paintings in the southern Netherlands. She went on to teach mediaeval art and the technical examination of easel painting, and directed the Laboratoire d'étude des œuvres d'art (UCL). Between 1975 and 2006 she co-organized with Roger Van Schoute the biennial Symposium for the Study of Underdrawing and Technology in Paintings. With her team at the UCL she prepared the catalogue *Fake or not Fake. Restaurateurs ou Faussaires des Primitifs Flamands (Het verhaal van de restauratie van de Vlaamse Primitieven)* for the exhibition of abusive restorations, especially those of Jef Van der Veken (Bruges, 2004-2005).

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<http://org.kikirpa.be/frames>

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