GETTY FOUNDATION FUNDS INSTITUTE FOR GERMAN, CENTRAL & EASTERN EUROPEAN PANEL PAINTINGS PROFESSIONALS AT STAATLICHE KUNSTSAMMLUNGEN DRESDEN

As Part of the Project, Panel Painting by Bartholomäus Sarburgh Conserved

LOS ANGELES—The Getty Foundation in Los Angeles has provided a major grant to the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden (Dresden State Art Collections) as part of the Getty’s Panel Paintings Initiative. The funding is earmarked for the conservation of a panel painting by Bartholomäus Sarburgh entitled The Madonna of the Burgomaster of Basel Jakob Meyer zum Hasen (copy after Hans Holbein the Younger) along with a 10-day institute introducing best practices in the structural conservation of panel paintings to thirty curators and conservators from Germany and Central and Eastern Europe, beginning October 14 through October 23, 2013.
The Dresden State Art Collections is one of the most renowned and oldest museum institutions in the world, originating from the collections of the Saxon Electors in the 16th century.

"Because of the Getty Foundation partnership, the Dresden State Art Collections is able to bring an important conservation dialogue to light, to augment the skills of conservators, and to help grow the profession as a whole," said Dr. Bernhard Maaz, Director of the Gemäldegalerie at the Dresden State Art Collections. "And of course, we are thrilled that one of our paintings is being conserved and will once again be on view to the public."

Old master paintings on wooden supports, or panels, are among the most significant works of art in American and European museum collections. Years of practice are required for a panel paintings conservator to develop the surgical skills required for intervention, including a deep knowledge of painting conservation techniques and exceptional woodworking expertise.

Today, there are only a handful of experts fully qualified to conserve these paintings, and nearly all will retire within the next decade. The Getty Foundation, Getty Conservation Institute, and J. Paul Getty Museum together designed the Panel Paintings Initiative to ensure that the next generation of conservators is prepared to take their place.

"Based on an assessment of needs in the conservation field, from the beginning, one of the goals of the Panel Paintings Initiative has been to provide access to skills and knowledge in this field for conservators from Central and Eastern Europe. This Institute at the Dresden State Art Collections provides an ideal opportunity to advance this goal, and we are delighted to work together to bring it to fruition," said Deborah Marrow, Director of the Getty Foundation.

The Dresden Institute was inspired by the success of the Getty Foundation-funded Krakow Summer Institute in 2011, which also brought together curators and conservators from Central and Eastern Europe.

"Traditionally, museum conservators in Germany and Eastern and Central Europe have been cautious with intervening in the deterioration of panel paintings. This Institute aims to connect conservation professionals to create a valuable dialogue about conservation practice," said Uta Neidhardt, the Dresden State Art Collections curator leading the project.

Neidhardt was an original participant in the Getty’s Krakow Panel Paintings Workshop in 2011, and sought to extend the reach of that workshop by organizing an Institute at the Dresden State Art Collections.

The Dresden Institute will similarly cover both theoretical and practical topics, including regional panel-making techniques, the history of panel painting restoration, and wood deterioration. The curriculum will make use of local collections in museums and
churches, along with local conservation laboratories. It also will include workshops designed to help participants understand the diverse expertise needed to treat wooden panels and the very real benefits of a collaborative approach involving curators and conservators as equal partners in decision-making.

In addition to the Institute, the project incorporates the treatment of the Sarburgh, an important painting with difficult structural problems, which will serve as a case study for the Institute.

Ray Marchant of Ebury Street Studios in London, one of the lead expert trainers for the Panel Paintings Initiative, is overseeing the structural treatment of the wood panels, along with five trainees from Dresden, Erfurt, Altenburg, and Prague—all at various stages in their careers.

The trainees will present the project during the Institute, and Institute participants will have an opportunity to examine firsthand the completed structural work. The conservation project has taken nearly a year, but is now near completion.

By the end of the Dresden State Art Collections project and Institute, in addition to the conserved painting, it is hoped that a stronger regional network of specialists will be in place who understand the value of collaborative decision making and the benefits of appropriate structural interventions.

The conservation treatment now underway in Dresden is among several training projects already completed as part of the Getty’s Panel Paintings Initiative. Other projects have included the treatment of panels by Peter Paul Rubens from his *Triumph of the Eucharist* series at the Prado Museum, technical examination of panels by Pieter Brueghel the Elder in the collection of the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, conservation of three panels by Hieronymus Bosch at the Noordbrabants Museum in the Netherlands, and conservation of the iconic Ghent Altarpiece, which resulted in an innovative web application (closertovaneyck.kikirpa.be) that provides unprecedented access to this masterpiece, all supported by the Getty Foundation.

For more information about the Getty Foundation’s philanthropic work around the globe, including the Panel Paintings Initiative, visit [www.getty.edu/foundation](http://www.getty.edu/foundation).

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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 Getty Foundation fulfills the philanthropic mission of the Getty Trust by supporting individuals and institutions committed to advancing the greater understanding and preservation of the visual arts in Los Angeles and throughout the world. Through strategic grant initiatives, the Foundation strengthens art history as a global discipline, promotes the interdisciplinary practice of conservation, increases access to museum and archival collections, and develops current and future leaders in the visual arts. It carries out its work in collaboration with the other Getty Programs to ensure that they individually and collectively achieve maximum effect. Additional information is available at [www.getty.edu/foundation](http://www.getty.edu/foundation).

The Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden (Dresden State Art Collections) are among the foremost museums of the world. A total of 14 museums offer a thematic diversity that is exceptional for its kind. The museum originated in the collections of the Saxon electors. To this day, the organizers of the collections consider it their duty to preserve tradition while developing their visions and helping to shape the future. The association of museums Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden (SKD) reports to the Staatsministerium für Wissenschaft und Kunst des Freistaats Sachsen (Saxon State Ministry for Science and the Arts) and has been operating as a state-owned enterprise since 2009.

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