



Press release: Extensive conservation-restoration project Ghent Altarpiece

Ghent (Belgium), 17 January 2012 –The Ghent Altarpiece by the Van Eyck brothers will undergo an extensive conservation-restoration treatment from 2012 to 2017, following the conclusions of the urgent conservation treatment and diagnostic study of 2010. The work will be carried out by the Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage (KIK-IRPA, Brussels) in one of the exhibition halls of the Ghent Museum of Fine Arts.

Only a third of the panels will be removed for restoration at any one time, the rest of the polyptych remaining on view in Ghent's Saint Bavo Cathedral. The public will be able to follow the progress of the restoration at the museum through a glass wall. In the Caermersklooster, a provincial cultural centre in Ghent, large screens will show the restoration as well as live images of the polyptych at the Cathedral. The Caermersklooster will furthermore host exhibitions on different aspects of the restoration and on the altarpiece itself.

The conservation campaign will safeguard this masterpiece of Early Netherlandish painting for future generations. After the treatment, the polyptych will be housed in improved climatic conditions. Financing is provided by the Flemish Government (80%) and by the InBev-Baillet Latour Fund (20%) for a total of 1.4 million euros.

Pictures and information about the Ghent Altarpiece and the Flemish Primitives are available on the website www.vlaamseprimitieven.eu

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