News Release

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Contact: Christine Nichols
KAM Communications & Events
Coordinator
(517) 353-9834
nicho357@msu.edu
www.artmuseum.msu.edu

Kresge Art Museum Acquires Significant 17th Century Dutch Painting

EAST LANSING, MI - Kresge Art Museum is pleased to announce a major new acquisition of a marinescape by Jan van Goyen, one of the greatest 17th century Dutch landscape painters. *An Estuary with Row and Sail Boats*, from the late 1640s, was called a “connoisseur’s gem” by writer Souren Melikian in the International Herald Tribune.

Van Goyen became a master at rendering his native sea and sky in various weather conditions. By 1640, he preferred to represent foul weather as he did in this painting with choppy seas and roiling clouds. Like other Dutch painters at this time, his palette became almost monochrome. With this tonal way of painting restricted to brown, grey and umber with a few highlights of white, he conveys the moisture-laden atmosphere. This painting is a quintessential Dutch view of land and sea. The audacious low horizon, flat land, and vast sky make it feel modern.

Van Goyen's painting takes it place among the growing Dutch 17th century collection of the Kresge Art Museum. Director Susan J. Bandes saw the painting at TEFAF, the international art fair in Maastricht, the Netherlands in March and says, “I had been looking for a painting by van Goyen for several years and this is amongst the most beautiful and exciting examples I have seen on the market. It is in wonderful condition and you can still see the swift impressionistic strokes of paint that quickly capture the fleeting weather conditions. Most of the composition is sky, which prefigures paintings done centuries later.”

One of six Dutch paintings added to the museum collection in the past five years, it represents the interest in naturalism and pride in one’s surroundings typical of paintings at the time. The viewpoint is as if the artist and viewer are drifting inside a boat capturing the fleeting scene. Van Goyen often made drawings as he traversed the rivers and lakes of the Dutch Republic in a small boat. These drawings provided him with a large repertoire of motifs that he later worked up in finished compositions in his studio.

*An Estuary with Row and Sail Boats* will be on display through July 31, 2009, when the museum closes for summer recess. The museum reopens on September 8, 2009.

Kresge Art Museum is located in East Lansing, MI, on the campus of Michigan State University, first floor of the Kresge Art Center at the intersection of Physics and Auditorium Roads between the Alumni Chapel and the MSU Auditorium. Summer museum hours are Tuesday through Friday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday and Sunday, noon to 5 p.m. and closed Mondays. The museum will be closed July 4 and 5, 2009. For additional information, call (517) 355-7631 or visit www.artmuseum.msu.edu.

Caption/Credit for attached image: Jan van Goyen (Dutch, 1596-1656), *An Estuary with Row and Sail Boats*, late 1640s, oil on panel, 14 x 12-3/4 inches, Kresge Art Museum, Michigan State University, MSU purchase, funded by the Emma Grace Holmes Endowment, 2009.20

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