



News Release

December 17, 2003 *** FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

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EXHIBITION: *Pursuits and Pleasures: Baroque Paintings from the Detroit Institute of Arts*

DATES: January 14- March 21, 2004

OPENING Sunday, January 18, 2-5 p.m.
Lecture, 3 p.m. *The European Paintings Collection at the Detroit Institute of Arts*
George Keyes, Chief Curator and Elizabeth and Allan Sheldon Curator of European Paintings, Detroit Institute of Arts
An exploration of the colorful history of collecting this major museum collection.

LOCATION: Kresge Art Museum, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Mich.

Pursuits and Pleasures: Baroque Paintings from the Detroit Institute of Arts

From January 14 through March 21, 2004, a landmark exhibition, *Pursuits and Pleasures: Baroque Paintings from the Detroit Institute of Arts*, will be on view at Kresge Art Museum. This exhibition of thirty-five exceptional Old Master paintings from the DIA features renowned Dutch, Flemish, French, Italian, and British paintings from the 17th and 18th centuries. This exhibition is the largest loan of European Old Master paintings from the DIA to tour the state of Michigan. *Pursuits and Pleasures* is curated by Dr. Susan J. Bandes, Director of the Kresge Art Museum.

The DIA's collection is very rich in works of art from this period. This special exhibition includes paintings by some of the greatest masters of the time such as Claude Gellée (Claude Lorrain), Pieter de Hooch, Willem Kalf, Giovanni Paolo Panini, Salvator Rosa, Jacob Isaaksz van Ruisdael, Jan Steen, Bernardo Strozzi, Michael Sweerts, and Giambattista Tiepolo. It features portraits, genre scenes, landscapes, architectural views, and still lifes that were created for the open market or as private commissions rather than paintings made for public institutions, royalty, or the church.

Pursuits and Pleasures presents these paintings in a new context. Dr. Bandes comments, "Rather than the usual museum presentation organized by nationality and time period, a thematic approach provides comparisons across centuries and cultures that will make one see the paintings anew." She adds, "By showing landscapes painted in Italy beside Italianate landscapes painted by Dutch artists, the viewer can clearly see influences and relationships. Comparing an Italian portrait of a two-year-old child to a British portrait of a young girl leads to questions about how children and childhood have been perceived in centuries past."

The Baroque period spans about 150 years, from 1600-1750. Art from this period reflects an increased interest in the natural world, a sense of immediacy, and a desire to appeal to the senses. These interests are manifested in the use of emotion and drama, the representation of passing time, dynamic expressions, and dramatic contrasts of light and dark.

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This traveling exhibition is possible due to the renovation and expansion project now underway at the DIA, as the building program required the closure of galleries and restricted storage spaces. The paintings chosen for the exhibition are works that are usually on display in the European galleries. "The DIA has been enormously generous in lending some of their most well known Baroque paintings and in cooperating with our four museums to share their riches with the state," says Dr. Bandes.

Pursuits and Pleasures results from a unique collaboration between art museums, government organizations and business sponsors. The museums that worked together to plan this touring exhibition are Kresge Art Museum, Dennon Museum Center, Kalamazoo Institute of Arts, and Muskegon Museum of Art, in cooperation with the Detroit Institute of Arts. Support from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Michigan Humanities Council, and Marshall Fields, The Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs, and locally the MSU Federal Credit Union make this exhibition possible.

Kresge Art Museum will offer a variety of public programs including a lecture series covering Baroque art, theater and music, and show various films about this period. For the full schedule of events and a preview of the exhibition visit www.artmuseum.msu.edu

A free audio tour (one for adults and one for children) and a Family Activity Guide are also available to visitors. A 48-page exhibition catalogue that discusses and illustrates each of the paintings can be purchased in the museum store.

A second exhibition, *Seventeenth and Eighteenth-Century Prints from the Kresge Art Museum Collection*, focusing on the artist as printmaker, will be on display in the museum's Works on Paper Gallery.

Pursuits and Pleasures: Baroque Paintings from the Detroit Institute of Arts will be on view at Kresge Art Museum, MSU, East Lansing January 14- March 21, 2003. It will then travel to the Muskegon Museum of Art, Muskegon, Mich., April 10 – July 4, 2004.

Admission is free to Kresge Art Museum and many of its public programs. The museum is open Monday- Friday 10 a.m.- 5 p.m., Thursday until 8 p.m., Saturday and Sunday noon- 5 p.m. Kresge Art Museum is located on the campus of Michigan State University, in the Kresge Art Center, between the MSU Auditorium and the Alumni Chapel. For additional information please call 517/355-7631 or visit www.artmuseum.msu.edu

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Note to Media: Images of works in this exhibition are available by contacting Julie Thomson, 517/353-9834.