

ILLUMINATING THE RENAISSANCE

THE TRIUMPH OF FLEMISH
MANUSCRIPT PAINTING IN EUROPE

June 17 – September 7, 2003

FROM THE MIDDLE AGES TO THE RENAISSANCE, SUMMER FUN AT THE GETTY CENTER

Experience the Grand Pageantry of the Renaissance, Read Medieval Books with Heroic Tales, and Explore the Strange Natural World of 500-Year-Old Bugs

LOS ANGELES—This summer, plan an exciting trip back in time for the whole family at the Getty Center. Come experience the colorful pageantry of the Renaissance, explore medieval books with tales of dragons and knights, and discover 500-year-old bugs and plants. There's something fun for everyone at the Getty.

Opening in June is the highlight of the summer, the Getty Premiere Presentation *ILLuminating the Renaissance: The Triumph of Flemish Manuscript Painting in Europe*, from June 17 through September 7, 2003. Whether or not your kids love to read, they will be fascinated by the elaborate and beautiful books that were so popular in the Renaissance. Unlike the mass-produced paperbacks of today, these early examples were written, decorated, and bound entirely by hand. They were lavish and luxurious, sometimes filled with gems and precious metals. Flemish artists were among the best manuscript illuminators. They decorated the pages with brilliant paintings filled with scenes of heroic knights on great adventures, beautiful princesses in ornate costumes and jewelry, magnificent court parties, mythical battles, serene devotional moments, and exciting historical tales. Real pieces of gold leaf were used to add color and luster to the works of art.

Especially for families, there will be six discovery stations positioned throughout the exhibitions gallery with fun facts and learning ideas. Informational cards guide kids through the exhibition, prompting them to take a closer look at the illuminated pages to discover the various tricks of the trade Renaissance artists used to catch the eye and tell a story. Flemish artists were masters of a technique called *trompe l'oeil*, French for "fool the eye." They

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could make bees look as though they are about to fly out of a painting, fruits that pop out, and flowers that seem like they were just scattered around the page. The cards also help describe what life was like during the Renaissance. What did people wear then? What sports did they play? What did their houses look like?

Visitors can also have fun confronting the largest book in the exhibition. It was used for group storytelling, and stands at one-and-a-half feet tall and a foot wide. Then they can look for the tiniest book on display, under two by three inches in size, that would fit easily into a pocket.

After examining some of the most prized manuscripts of the Renaissance, kids can learn about the origins of book-making nearly 1000 years ago in *The Making of a Medieval Book*, on view from May 20 through September 28, 2003. Early handmade books were created using time-consuming methods. Colors had to be made using ground minerals and other materials such as saffron and brazilwood. Ink was sometimes made from charred porcelain and burnt cherry pits. And instead of paper, medieval bookmakers used animal skins, called parchment or vellum, that had to be soaked, scraped, stretched and smoothed out before the scribes and artists could add text and paintings. Visitors can touch real parchment in the hands-on display in the exhibition.

To learn more, families can head to ArtAccess, the Getty's interactive multimedia computer system, to watch a video showing the entire book-making process. On Thursdays (July 10, 17, 24, 31 and August 7) and Sundays (July 13, 20, 27 and August 3 and 10), artist Sylvana Barrett will demonstrate how Renaissance artists illuminated manuscripts. This is part of the Getty's regular Artists-At-Work Demonstrations.

Also on view is *Picturing the Natural World*, from June 17 through September 7, 2003. Children will enjoy the surprisingly detailed depiction of the natural world in this display of paintings, drawings, and books made between 1450 and 1800, featuring a wide array of nature studies, both artistic and scientific. Discover a world of bugs, plants, and other fascinating creatures that flourished in the wild over 500 years ago.

Outside the galleries, the fun continues with two Getty Family Festivals on Saturday, June 21 and Saturday, August 2, 2003. The two festivals will bring the Renaissance to life with all its pageantry and finery through music, dance, theater, and interactive workshops.

At the June 21 Festival, a lively and colorful production of the Shakespeare classic *A Midsummer's Night Dream*, specially staged for children, promises to delight. Getty Family Festivals are often given themes that relate to the current exhibitions. Look out for other Getty Family Festivals throughout the year. As always, admission to the Getty Center and the Getty Family Festivals is FREE.

On Saturday June 28, *Musical Superheroes* will delight young and old. This special FREE concert brings to life the enchanting worlds of Renaissance music and dance, and ancient Greek and Roman mythology. The colorfully costumed performers, from the acclaimed early music ensemble *Musica Angelica*, will perform Renaissance tunes and use theatrical props to encourage children to take part in the singing.

For more information about any of the exhibitions or activities listed, please call 310-440-7300 or visit www.getty.edu.

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The J. Paul Getty Trust is an international cultural and philanthropic institution devoted to the visual arts that features the J. Paul Getty Museum, the Getty Research Institute, the Getty Conservation Institute, and the Getty Grant Program. The J. Paul Getty Trust and Getty programs are based at the Getty Center in Los Angeles.

The Getty Villa in Malibu is currently closed for renovation. When it reopens in fall 2005, it will house the Museum's collection of Greek and Roman antiquities and be a center for the study of classical art and culture. Please check the Getty Web site for more information: www.getty.edu.

Visiting the Getty Center:

The Getty Center is open Tuesday through Thursday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Friday and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. It is closed Mondays and major holidays. Admission to the Getty Center is always free. Parking is \$5 per car. Reservations are required for weekday parking before 4 p.m., event seating, and groups of 15 or more. Please call 310-440-7300 (English or Spanish) for reservations and information. The TTY line for callers who are deaf or hearing impaired is 310-440-7305.

Additional information is available on the Getty Web site at www.getty.edu.