

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO TOASTS ART LOVERS AND OENOPHILES

ALIKE WITH A CASE FOR WINE: FROM KING TUT TO TODAY

Hundreds of Objects Trace the History of Wine and its Consumption

The Art Institute of Chicago presents *A Case for Wine: From King Tut to Today*, opening on **July 11, 2009**, in the museum's Regenstein Hall, marking the first time a fine arts museum has explored art through the vine. On view until **September 20, 2009**, this major exhibition features more than 400 objects drawn from the Art Institute's extensive encyclopedic collection, in addition to loans from other cultural institutions and private collections. The Art Institute is the sole venue for *A Case for Wine*.

A Case for Wine explores the cultivation of the grape and its transformation into wine, showcasing not only the making of wine but also the ways it has been stored, poured, and shared throughout centuries, from the barrel to the bottle. Artists from across the world and throughout the ages have also used wine as a source of inspiration for their works, and this exhibition features the fruits of their labors with objects ranging from antiquated wine accoutrements to the work of contemporary painters, sculptors, and photographers.

A Case for Wine spreads out through 10 galleries and offers several exceptional highlights, tracing this beloved beverage's surprisingly significant role as a stimulus and source of artistic



endeavors from ancient through modern times. One of the Art Institute's most famous classical pieces, the "Chicago Painter's Vase"—a Greek *stamnos*, or wine jar, (c.450 B.C.)—is showcased in the exhibition. This piece was purchased for the museum in 1889 during one of its very first European buying expeditions and named, by archaeological convention, for the city in which it is housed. The museum's outstanding collection of 16th- to 19th-century European wine glasses is displayed alongside paintings by Pieter Claesz, Jean Baptiste Siméon Chardin, and Henri Fantin-Latour that incorporate remarkably similar wine glasses.

The intoxicating exhibition also salutes wine-related works of the World's Fairs and includes a recent Art Institute acquisition, Victorian architect William Burges's sideboard, whose polychromatic surface tells the apocryphal story of "Saint Bacchus" who dies by drowning in a barrel of wine. Works by Impressionists, Cubists, and Surrealists offer insight into the wine-infused atmosphere of café life. The work of modern and contemporary artists is featured including German painter Brigitte Riesebrodt's *The Last Supper*. This piece was created from recycled wooden wine barrel staves found near the artist's home in Tuscany. The still-saturated wood suffuses the air with the subtle scent of wine, offering wine enthusiasts a chance to put their well-honed noses to work.

A Case for Wine will be complemented by an array of educational programs. On July 16 at 6:00 pm in Fullerton Hall, Leonard Lesko, chairman emeritus of the department of Egyptology at Brown University, will present *Wine of the Pharaoh*, a lecture that will review winemaking and tasting in Egypt with a focus on wine jars found in King Tut's tomb. Visitors are also invited to join Christopher Monkhouse, Eloise W. Martin Curator of European Decorative Arts and curator for *A Case for Wine*, for an exhibition tour on August 25 at noon. The tour begins in the Modern Wing's Griffin Court.

This exhibition is organized by the Art Institute of Chicago and is curated by Christopher Monkhouse, Eloise W. Martin Curator of European Decorative Arts, with Rebecca J. Williams as research assistant for the project.

IMAGE CREDIT: Charles Frederick Kandler. Wine Jug, 1739/40. Silver. Gift of the Antiquarian Society.

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MUSEUM HOURS

10:30 am–5:00 pm Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday
10:30 am–8:00 pm Thursday
10:00 am–5:00 pm Saturday, Sunday

TARGET FREE THURSDAY EVENINGS AFTER 5:00 pm

SUMMER HOURS (from Memorial Day to Labor Day)

10:30 am–5:00 pm Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday
10:30 am–9:00 pm Thursday, Friday
10:00 am–5:00 pm Saturday, Sunday

TARGET FREE SUMMER EVENINGS THURSDAY AND FRIDAY AFTER 5:00 pm

FREE FEBRUARY 1 TO 28

Closed Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day.

Please check www.artinstituteofchicago.org before your visit.

ADMISSION

Adults \$18.00 Includes all special exhibitions and coat check

Children 14 and over, students, and seniors \$12.00 Includes all special exhibitions and coat check

Chicago residents receive a \$2.00 discount with proof of residency

Children under 14 always free

Members always free

Free Evenings are free to all. City of Chicago residents with Chicago Public Library cards can borrow a "Museum Passport" card from any library branch for free general admission to the nine members of Museums in the Park, including the Art Institute of Chicago.

The Art Institute of Chicago is a museum in Chicago's Grant Park, located across from Millennium Park.

Visitors can enter the museum via the Michigan Avenue entrance or the Millennium Park entrance on Monroe Street.