THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO ANNOUNCES A $10 MILLION COMMITMENT FROM THE GRAINGER FOUNDATION FOR THE CARE AND STUDY OF ART

CHICAGO – Retiring President and Eloise W. Martin Director Douglas Druick announced today that The Grainger Foundation has generously committed to the museum endowment funds of $10 million to realize the long-term vision and ambitions of the Art Institute’s Department of Conservation.

Founded with a single conservator nearly 60 years ago, the Art Institute’s Department of Conservation has now grown to include specialists across all media who help to authenticate, identify, preserve, research, and store our collection, and conservation scientists who focus on materials research of unparalleled intellectual breadth. The department has assumed a central place in all of the museum’s activities, contributing to scholarship on our holdings and informing special exhibitions, publications, and education offerings.

Druick explained the importance and impact of the commitment, "The Art Institute is known for a particular brand of research that depends on close collaboration between curators, conservators, and conservation scientists. We are immensely grateful to The Grainger Foundation for fueling that work, as well as supporting the all-important preservation and stewardship of our collections. The newly established Grainger Fund for Conservation will allow us to attract and retain talent to our program, and to serve as a training ground for emerging talent in the fields of conservation and conservation science."

This commitment represents the single largest gift made in support of the Department of Conservation in the museum’s history, and stands as the most important investment in the care and study of the collection to date. As Martha Tedeschi, Deputy Director for Art and Research, shared, "By focusing on talent, research, and equipment, this enlightened commitment from The Grainger Foundation recognizes what it takes today to lead in the field of Conservation and Conservation Science and insures that the Art Institute will sustain that leadership in the future."
Led by Frank Zuccari in the position of Grainger Executive Director of Conservation, which is supported through an earlier endowment, the Department of Conservation serves collections across the museum in two major conservation areas—objects and paintings—as well as specialized studios for the treatment of works on paper, photographs, books and other printed material, textiles, and frames. Critical to this enterprise are the conservators and scientists who address the immediate needs of vulnerable works of art and collaborate with curators on their research. Zuccari reflected on the generosity and impact of the commitment, noting, “This commitment will benefit the Art Institute collection for many generations to come.”

The Grainger Foundation is an independent, private foundation located in Lake Forest, Illinois, established in 1949 by William Wallace Grainger, founder of W.W. Grainger, Inc., North America’s leading broad line supplier of maintenance, repair and operating products, with operations also in Europe, Asia, and Latin America. Since its creation more than six decades ago, the Foundation has provided substantive support to a broad range of organizations including museums and educational, medical, and human services institutions.

Image: Department of Conservation. Courtesy of the Art Institute of Chicago.

# # #

www.artic.edu  MUSEUM HOURS  Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year’s days
Twitter  Daily: 10:30–5:00  Children under 14 always free
Facebook  Thursdays until 8:00  Members always free

The Art Institute of Chicago gratefully acknowledges the support of the Chicago Park District on behalf of the citizens of Chicago.