

## **Conservation Unveils Des Moines' Finest Large-Scale Old Master Painting**

### **"THE REPENTANT MAGDALENE"**

**FLEMISH, ca. 1680**

**Height 7' x Width 4 1/2' (H. 84 inches x W. 54 inches)**

**The Hoyt Sherman Place  
1501 Woodland Avenue  
Des Moines, IA 50309  
November 16, 2016**

**Galleries open for Viewing at 5:00PM**

**Presentations 6:00PM—Unveiling/Reception—6:45 – 8:00PM**

**Free and Open to the Public**

#### **Contact:**

**Mr. Robert Warren:** Executive Director, The Hoyt Sherman Place-- 515-244-0507 ext 206--  
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**Barry Bauman:** Painting Conservator, River Forest, Illinois—708-771-0382—barryrb7@yahoo.com

### **"THE REPENTANT MAGDALENE"**

**"Hoyt Sherman Place puts finishing touches on a 4 year long Art Restoration Project"**

In 2012, under the guidance and enthusiasm of then Director Carol Pollock, the Hoyt Sherman Place Foundation established an "Adopt a Painting" conservation program to restore 52 paintings acquired by the Des Moines Woman's Club over the past 125 years. This program has continued under the current Executive Director Robert Warren.

To date, 44 paintings from the collection have been conserved by Chicago painting conservator Barry Bauman including works by Thomas Moran, George Inness, and Edwin Lord Weeks. This ongoing, highly-successful, undertaking has now culminated in the conservation of Des Moines' finest large-scale Old Master painting, "The Repentant Magdalene" (Flemish, ca. 1680, unsigned).

#### **Subject Matter**

After the resurrection, writings record that Mary Magdalene retired to a life of self-reflection, asceticism, and repentance for her sins. She is normally depicted in an isolated setting, an outcast living in a grotto or in open wilderness. It is the classic tale of redemption and absolution leading to sainthood through the love of Christ. The phenomena of the beautiful yet penitent Magdalene became the standard in Renaissance traditions. It is this tradition that has influenced Hoyt Sherman's "Repentant Magdalene."

#### **Condition**

The painting was coated with layers of discolored varnish that flattened the three-dimensional quality of the scene and falsified the intended palette. The stretcher was warped causing overall surface cracking and surface waves were extensive. A canvas separation in the lower left quadrant had been poorly repaired in the past resulting in lifting paint and loss. (Image 1: Before Treatment) (

### **Treatment**

Four months of work were required to return the painting to its pristine visual appearance. The cleaning of a painting requires the use of organic solvents to swell and remove discolored films without injury to the paint surface. A background in chemistry is required for these procedures.. The cleaning of the “Repentant Magdalene” was a delicate process due to the painting’s overall instability and scale (84 inches x 54 inches). The cleaning results were spectacular. (Images 2 and 3: Details During Cleaning)

The weakened canvas was then reinforced, lifting paint was reset into place, and the support was restretched onto a new spring-stretcher. These stretchers have the ability to expand and contract under varying environmental conditions offering constant and even canvas tension. Former losses were filled and carefully retouched to match the original to both value and hue. A final non-yellowing varnish completed the treatment. (Image 4: After Treatment/In the Studio. Image 5: After Treatment Detail)

### **Presentations**

In PowerPoint presentations, Robert Warren, Executive Director of the Hoyt Sherman Place, will review the collection’s history and the “Adopt a Painting” program, and Barry Bauman will document the treatment procedures that saved an Iowa masterpiece. The program will take place on November 16, 2016, at the Hoyt Sherman Place Auditorium at TIME. A reception and unveiling will follow the presentations. The program is free and open to the public.

#### **Robert Warren:**

Robert Warren was hired as the new Executive Director at Hoyt Sherman Place in early October 2015. Warren had previously served as the Executive Director of Hartford Performs in Hartford, CT. His decorated career has also included positions such as Director of Education and Community Engagement at the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall in Sarasota FL, Associate Producer at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. and Executive Producer for Creative Vision Entertainment Inc. in Washington, D.C.

#### **Barry Bauman:**

Barry Bauman holds a master’s degree in art history from the University of Chicago and served as associate conservator of paintings for the Art Institute of Chicago. He founded the Chicago Conservation Center in 1983 as a resource facility for the conservation of fine art. In 2004, he sold the company and established Barry Bauman Conservation, offering pro bono conservation services to museums and non-profit organizations. To date, he has treated over 1,500 paintings at no charge for 300 institutions including 44 for the Hoyt Sherman Place. Barry Bauman is an Elected Fellow of the American Institute for Conservation.



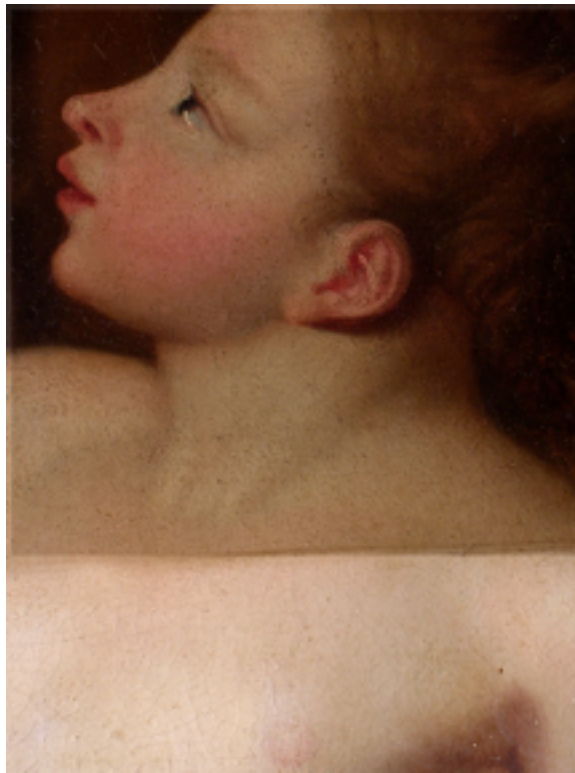
*Image 1*

*Anon. Flemish*

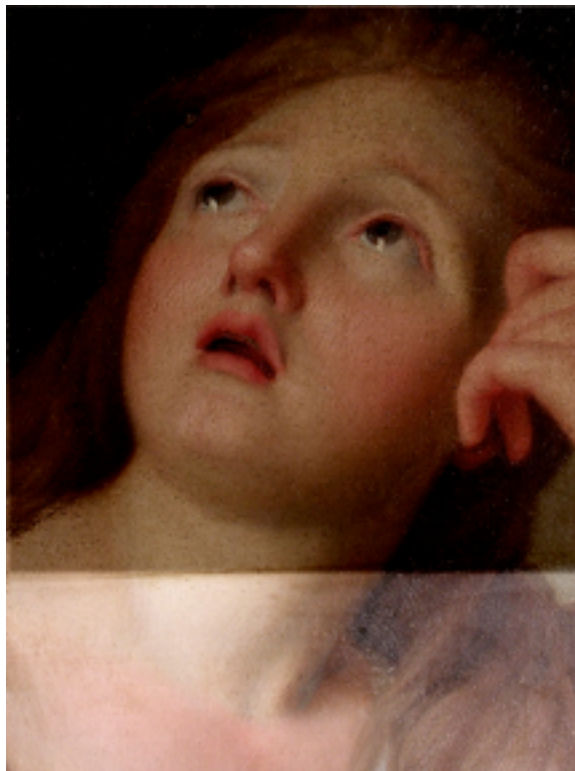
*Height 7' x Width 4 1/2' (H. 84 inches x W. 54 inches)*

*"The Repentant Magdalene" ca. 1680*

*Full View Before Treatment*



*Image 2*



*Image 3*

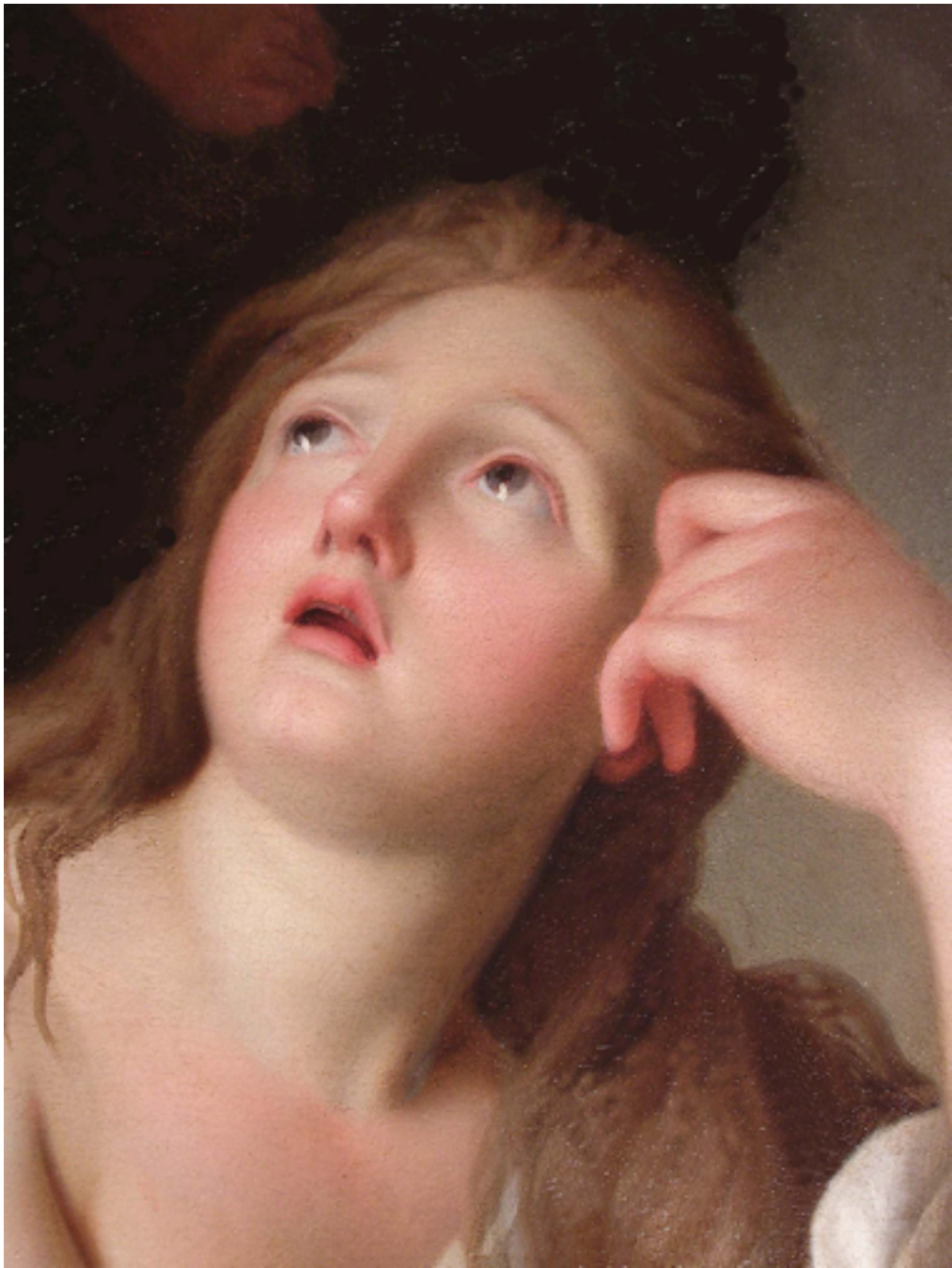
*Details During Cleaning*



*Image 4*

*After Treatment/In the Studio*





*After Treatment Detail*