



**RESTORING AND RETHINKING THE VAN EYCK BROTHERS
OUDENARDE, BRUGES AND GHENT
TUESDAY 5 TO SATURDAY 9 APRIL 2016**

NICHOLAS FRIEND

At the height of Ghent's great medieval commercial ascendancy in the 15c, its leading citizen, Jodocus Vijd, merchant banker and prominent politician, restored a chapel in what is now St Bavo's Cathedral. He commissioned Hubert van Eyck to design the chapel's altarpiece. Unfortunately, Hubert died, leaving the altarpiece to be completed by his younger brother, Jan van Eyck. Dedicated on 6 May 1432, the altarpiece comprises 12 panels, eight of which are hinged shutters. Each wing is painted on either side, giving two distinct views when open and closed. *The Adoration of the Lamb* is one of the greatest works of art of the Middle Ages. By their brilliant use of the medium of oil painting on panel, its creators heralded an artistic revolution. The Altarpiece, the defining monument of the "new realism" of Northern Renaissance art, is regarded as both the foundation of a distinguished tradition, and an exemplary achievement challenging all later artists. In 1495, a visitor named Hieronymus Münzer described it as encompassing the 'whole art of painting.'

The large and complex altarpiece has suffered a varied history over the centuries. Dismantled, stolen, and damaged many times over, it was reassembled, cleaned, and last restored after World War II. In 2012 it was dismantled again for a five-year restoration project led by an international team of art historians, conservators, technicians, and scientists. The project itself has become an exhibit, one taking place in a glass-fronted room inside Ghent's Museum of Fine Arts. The Cathedral, the Museum of Fine Arts and the Provincial Centre for Culture each offer excellent exhibitions illuminating the complete story of the creation and restoration of the masterpiece. Using the most recent advances in technology as well as traditional methods, the conservators have made astounding discoveries as they peel back centuries of accumulated dirt and ancient varnish.

Inscape has arranged private curator and specialist led visits to the restoration workshop itself, and to excellent supplementary exhibitions supporting the restoration. Setting the Van Eyck brothers in the Gothic architectural heritage of three Flemish towns, we see the source of many details in the altarpiece. We also visit the finest Flemish art collections in the world to examine the work of the Van Eycks' talented followers such as Rogier van der Weyden, Hans Memling and Dieric Bouts. Our scholarly excursions will be punctuated throughout the day by delightful meals in the best restaurants in Bruges, and Ghent.

TUESDAY 5 APRIL

- 10:00 Meet Nicholas at St Pancras International at the Eurostar barriers
- 10:58 Train departs for Lille, independent lunch on the train
- 13:26 Arrive Lille for minibus to Oudenarde
- 15:00 Architectural and church walk in Van Eyck's Oudenarde
- 17:00 Depart Oudenarde
- 17:45 Arrive Bruges
- 19:30 Group dinner at De Bottelier

WEDNESDAY 6 APRIL

- 09:30 Architectural walkabout
- 10:45 Coffee at Books and Brunch
- 11:30 Groeninge Museum Session 1: Van Eyck and his Contemporaries
- 13:15 Group lunch at Bistro De Twijfelaar
- 14:45 Groeninge Museum Session 2: Van Eyck's Followers
- 15:45 Day Ends, free time or return to hotel
- 19:30 Optional dinner at Bistro Per Deo

THURSDAY 7 APRIL

- 09:30 Minibus to Ghent
- 10:00 Arrive Ghent
- 10:30 Coffee in Ghent City Museum (STAM) Cafe
- 11:00 Ghent City Museum (STAM) for a specialist visit
- 12:30 Architectural walkabout (Groot Vleeshuis, Sint Jacobskerk)
- 13:00 Group lunch at Seli's Noodlebar
- 14:30 St Bavo's Cathedral to see Ghent Altarpiece
- 16:00 Return to Bruges
- 19:30 Optional dinner at Gruuthuse Hof

FRIDAY 8 APRIL

- 09:30 Minibus to Ghent
- 10:30 Arrive Caermersklooster for coffee
- 11:00 Curatorial visit with Professor Dr Maximiliaan Martens
- 12:30 Leave for MSK (Museum of Fine Arts) by taxis
- 13:00 Group Lunch at Mub'art Restaurant at MSK
- 14:00 MSK for Ghent Altarpiece Restoration Project with Dr Anton Greevestein
- 15:30 Return to Bruges
- 19:30 Group closing dinner at Le Chef et Moi

SATURDAY 9 APRIL

- 09:45 Luggage to lobby please
- 10:15 Memling Collection Museum Bruges Part 1
- 11:15 Coffee at Chocolaterie Suikerbuyc-oldest in Bruges
- 11:45 Memling Collection Museum Bruges Part 2
- 12:45 Group lunch at Gruuthuse Hof
- 14:15 Return to hotel for luggage and minibus
- 14:45 Minibus leaves for Lille
- 16:15 Arrive Lille and check in for Eurostar
- 17:36 Eurostar to London departs
- 18:06 Arrive London



HOTEL OUD HUIS DE PEELLAERT

Hoogstraat 20, 8000 Bruges, Belgium

A former grand, aristocratic, 19th-century mansion in the very heart of historic Bruges, our hotel is part of the small but excellent Swan Hotel Collection, which ensures high standards of service as well as beautifully presented rooms. Two adjoining 19th-century, neoclassical mansions – one formerly the home of the Baron de Peellaert – have been seamlessly combined to create this hotel. The impressive, high-arched lobby is in fact the old carriage entrance. The grand spiral staircase, with griffons supporting the treads, rises through the floors to a stained-glass skylight. The public rooms have chandeliers, oil paintings and antique furniture, and the overall impression is one of refined and stylish elegance, with a discreet mix of the antique with the modern.

COST £1375 Members, £1425 non-Members, £90 single room supplement, £250 deposit, includes four nights accommodation in Bruges, with breakfasts, four lunches with wine, two dinners with wine, all lectures and curatorial tours, all entries, all travel during the tour, all gratuities, VAT.

EUROSTAR Please note that this cost **excludes** Eurostar ticket to and from Lille. It is no longer possible for us to make a group reservation for unknown numbers with Eurostar, as they now hold such bookings for no longer than a week. Please place your tour deposit with us as soon as possible so we may confirm that the trip is going ahead before making your Eurostar booking. Please note that Eurostar prices change on a daily basis. At the time of writing the price of a standard return ticket to Lille at the recommended times is £93.50. Please phone Sara in the Inscape office on 0208 566 7539 if you would like assistance with the reservation.