



Press contacts: Meg Colombo (585) 276-8934 / [mcolombo@mag.rochester.edu](mailto:mcolombo@mag.rochester.edu)  
Patti Giordano (585) 276-8932 / [pgiordano@mag.rochester.edu](mailto:pgiordano@mag.rochester.edu)

## RENAISSANCE TAPESTRY IS BACK ON THE WALL AT MAG AFTER TWO DECADES Federal Funding Made Painstaking Restoration Possible



ROCHESTER, NY, April 5, 2012 — The most important Renaissance tapestry in the Memorial Art Gallery collection goes back on view April 18 for the first time in nearly two decades.

Woven of wool and silk in 16th-century Flanders and measuring 12 by 15 feet, *Trellised Garden with Animals* shows a colonnaded garden with lush foliage and wildlife including lions, birds and fish. But until recently, it was only too obvious that the centuries had taken their toll on the work.

In 2009, thanks to a major grant from the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), the Gallery was at last able to send the tapestry to the Textile Conservation Laboratory at New York City's Cathedral of St. John the Divine. It would remain there for the better part of two years while experts cleaned, conserved, relined, remounted and restored the work to its original vivid colors.

The restoration is part of a concerted effort to preserve the Gallery's tapestry collection. Another Renaissance tapestry, *Battle of the Animals*, is currently being treated under a 2011 IMLS grant.

### About the tapestry

*Trellised Garden with Animals* was woven ca. 1565-1575 by the Brussels workshop of Wilhelm de Pannemaker, a member of an illustrious family of tapestry makers; tapestries from his workshop were commissioned by members of royal and noble families, including Emperor Charles V, King Phillip II of Spain and the Cardinal de Granvella.

The body of the tapestry, which shows a lush garden scene with fantastic animals enclosed in a trellised walk, is of very high quality. But it's the border that is of particular interest. Called a Genesis or Creation border, it illustrates the Old Testament verse Genesis I:28, in which God says upon the creation of Adam and

Eve: “and God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.”

Pannemaker’s first Genesis border was for a tapestry ordered by King Phillip II, but he used variations of it in several other commissions.

The lower border, with its fantastic waterfowl and fish, one of which is ridden by a *putto* figure, represents the sea; the upper border depicts the sky and is filled with a wide variety of birds in flight. The two very creative side borders show the transition from sea to sky—in the lower area are serpents and small animals; in the middle, forested areas with hunters; and at the top, a castle and mountains. Floral wreaths intended to hold the owner’s coat of arms occupies the corners of the upper border.

*Trellised Garden with Animals* was a 1931 gift of Mrs. Granger A. (Elizabeth Watson) Hollister, an original member of the Memorial Art Gallery Board of Managers and sister-in-law of Gallery founder Emily Sibley Watson.

# # #