

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LACMA ACQUIRES RARE RENAISSANCE STATUE

Ahmanson Foundation Funds Important Addition to Museum's Renowned European Sculpture Collection



Buglioni, Santi (Italy, Florence, 1494-1576)
Saint John Capistran, circa 1550
62 3/4 x 32 1/4 x 17 1/4 in. (159.39 x 81.92 x 43.82cm)
Gift of The Ahmanson Foundation
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Los Angeles—The Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) announced today that a major grant from The Ahmanson Foundation has enabled the museum to acquire a rare Renaissance sculpture by Santi Buglioni (1494–1576), *Saint John Capistran*, c. 1550. The nearly life-sized statue, which will be a significant addition to LACMA's renowned collection of European sculpture, is a dramatic, freestanding figure, worked completely in-the-round and made of glazed terra-cotta.

Several full-size glazed terra-cotta statues from the Renaissance are known, but most remain in the churches and sanctuaries in Tuscany for which they were originally commissioned. Although the medium of glazed terra-cotta is familiar to us as earthenware, its adaptation for sculpture was pioneered around 1440 in Florence by Luca della Robbia. The only competitor of the della Robbia workshop was Benedetto Buglioni (1459/60–1521). According to the great Renaissance historian Giorgio Vasari, Buglioni obtained the “secret of glazing clay” from a “woman of the della Robbia household.” Benedetto's nephew, Santi Buglioni, would eventually be the last remaining artist in Italy, Vasari asserted, who could create sculptures in this colorful material.

The dynamic figure acquired by LACMA is thought to represent Saint John Capistran (1420–1456), a fifteenth-century preacher whose exploits culminated in the victorious crusade against the Turks at Belgrade in 1456. He is often represented holding a banner in his left hand with the first three letters of Jesus’s name in Greek, as he does in this sculpture, and wearing a Franciscan habit, which was historically brownish-gray. In LACMA's statue, however, brilliant violet takes the place of the drab neutral.

The new gift from The Ahmanson Foundation follows the foundation's previous grant that enabled the museum to purchase the *Portrait of Jean-Pierre Delahaye* (1815) by the French painter, Jacques-Louis David, over the summer of 2006.

About European Sculpture at LACMA: The collection of European sculpture at LACMA is recognized by experts as one of the best in the United States. Renowned for the remarkable variety of media represented including cork, alabaster, plaster, papier-mâché, porcelain, stoneware, wax, and silver, the collection is particularly strong in polychrome multicolored sculptures. Among the department’s masterpieces are a bronze relief of Neptune and Europa by the eighteenth century Florentine artist Antonio Montauti and the plaster *Monument to Voltaire* by Jean-Antoine Houdon, also a major gift from The Ahmanson Foundation.

About LACMA: In April 2006, Michael Govan became CEO and Wallis Annenberg Director of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA). He is the seventh person to hold the position of Director in the museum’s 41-year history. Established as an independent institution in 1965, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art has assembled a permanent collection that includes approximately 100,000 works of art spanning the history of art from ancient times to the present, making it the premier encyclopedic visual arts museum in the western United States. Located in the heart of one of the most culturally diverse cities in the world, the museum uses its collection and resources to provide a variety of educational and cultural experiences for the people who live in, work in, and visit Los Angeles. LACMA offers an outstanding schedule of special exhibitions, as well as lectures, classes, family activities, film programs, and world-class musical events. The museum offers free admission after 5 pm every day the museum is open and all day on the second Tuesday of each month. LACMA's “Free after Five” program is sponsored by Target.

General Information: LACMA is located at 5905 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles CA, 90036. For more information about LACMA and its programming, call (323) 857-6000 or log on to www.lacma.org.

Museum Hours and Admission: Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday, noon–8 pm; Friday, noon–9 pm; Saturday and Sunday, 11 am–8 pm; closed Wednesday. Adults \$9; students 18+ with ID and senior citizens 62+ \$5; children 17 and under are admitted free. Admission (except to specially ticketed exhibitions) is free the second Tuesday of every month, and every evening after 5 pm.

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