

# LACMA FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**EXHIBITION: RODARTE: FRA ANGELICO COLLECTION**  
**ON VIEW: DECEMBER 17, 2011–FEBRUARY 5, 2012**  
**LOCATION: AHMANSON BUILDING, 3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR**

## **LACMA PRESENTS COLLECTION BY DESIGNERS KATE AND LAURA MULLEAVY OF RODARTE INSPIRED BY FLORENTINE ART**



(IMAGE CAPTIONS ON PAGE 4)

(Los Angeles, November 30, 2011)—The Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) presents the North American debut of *RODARTE: Fra Angelico Collection*, a promised gift to the museum's renowned Costume and Textiles Department. The Spring|Summer 2012 couture collection features a group of extraordinary gowns by acclaimed American designers, Kate and Laura Mulleavy, inspired by frescoes painted by the early Italian Renaissance artist, Fra Angelico (c. 1350–1455). The *Fra Angelico Collection* was unveiled as a site-specific installation at Pitti Immagine in Florence, Italy in June 2011. At LACMA, the Rodarte gowns will be on view in the museum's Italian Renaissance gallery, surrounded by classic Renaissance artworks.

"These gowns are the first works by Rodarte to enter the museum's permanent holdings, and we are pleased to present this outstanding collection," said Sharon S. Takeda, Senior Curator and Head of the Costume and Textiles Department.

"We are so honored that our *Fra Angelico Collection* from Pitti Immagine in Florence has come to LACMA, and to see it installed amongst the museum's masterpieces of the Italian Renaissance is an incomparable experience for us," said Kate and Laura Mulleavy of Rodarte.

### **Fra Angelico Collection at LACMA**

The collection is inspired by Italian art, specifically the Renaissance frescoes in the monastery of San Marco by Fra Angelico in Florence, Italy, as well as the Baroque sculpture, *Ecstasy of Saint Teresa*, by Gian Lorenzo Bernini (1598-1680) in Rome. At LACMA, Rodarte's *Fra Angelico Collection* installation will create a unique and complementary relationship with the Florentine art in LACMA's collection. Silk fabrics are draped and pleated to define form and texture to the *Fra Angelico Collection* gowns in colors that can be seen in the surrounding artworks on display in the museum's Italian Renaissance gallery. One large painting, *Christ on the Cross with Saints Vincent Ferrer, John the Baptist, Mark, and Antoninus* (c. 1491-95), by the Master of the Fiesole Epiphany (active c. 1480-1500), serves as an exquisite reference for the installation of the gowns. Appropriately enough, the painting, a gift of the Ahmanson Foundation, was commissioned by the silk weavers' guild of Florence for their altar in San Marco.

Rodarte's signature dressmaking techniques and sculptural details can be seen in each gown in the *Fra Angelico Collection*. Silk fabrics (including chiffon, crepe, gauze, lamé, organza, satin, and taffeta) are draped and manipulated to give form, texture, and tonal variety to the color palette influenced by Fra Angelico's frescoes. The gowns are customized utilizing a variety of materials such as feathers, SWAROVSKI ELEMENTS, sequins, and hand-molded Easter lilies. Hand-forged gold metallic accessories, such as a headpiece, breastplate, and belts informed by elements in Bernini's sculptures, dramatically complete the look of several gowns.

### **LACMA's Costume and Textiles Collection**

The *Fra Angelico Collection* will enter LACMA's Costume and Textiles Department, which houses over twenty-five thousand objects, representing more than one hundred cultures and two thousand years of human creativity in the textile arts. Particularly well-represented are European textiles, fashionable dress, and accessories including the museum's groundbreaking acquisition of more than 1,000 works that was highlighted in the recent

exhibition *Fashioning Fashion: European Dress in Detail, 1700–1915*, which will be travelling to the Deutsches Historisches Museum in Berlin and the Musée de la Mode et du Textile/Les Arts Décoratifs in Paris.

### **About Rodarte**

Kate and Laura Mulleavy received their bachelor's degrees in liberal arts from UC Berkeley in 2001. Following their graduations, they returned to Los Angeles and launched Rodarte in 2005. In November 2008, Rodarte received the Swiss Textiles Award, becoming the first American designers and the first women to receive the award. Since then, Kate and Laura have won numerous awards and accolades, including the CFDA Womenswear Designer of the Year in 2009, the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Award for Fashion, and the 2010 National Arts Award from Americans for the Arts, becoming the first fashion designers to receive the honor. In 2011, they were nominated for best costume design at the 16th Annual Critics' Choice Movie Awards for their work in *Black Swan*. Earlier this year, Rodarte's first west coast exhibition, *Rodarte: States of Matter*, was on view at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles. Rodarte's works are featured in the permanent collections of the Costume Institute of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, and the Museum at FIT in New York City.

### **Publication—Rodarte, Catherine Opie, Alec Soth**

Kate and Laura Mulleavy collaborated with two of the art world's most highly acclaimed photographers, Catherine Opie and Alec Soth to create the first publication to examine the world of Rodarte, titled *Rodarte, Catherine Opie, Alec Soth*. For the occasion, each photographer has developed an entirely new body of work in collaboration with the designers, examining the many facets of Rodarte's creative spectrum. Published by JRP/Ringier with a text by John Kelsey, Rodarte's first monograph is available for purchase at Art Catalogues at LACMA for \$80.

### **Related Programming**

**The Director's Series: Michael Govan and Rodarte founders Kate and Laura Mulleavy, Presented by the Costume Council**

Wednesday, January 18, 2012 | 7:30 pm

Bing Theater | Tickets: \$15 museum members; \$25 general admission | Tickets 323 857-6010 or purchase online. Free for Costume Council members and \$15 for their guests | One guest per Costume Council

member | Costume Council members RSVP by January 9 to 323 857-6555 or [costumecouncil@lacma.org](mailto:costumecouncil@lacma.org).

Join LACMA CEO and Wallis Annenberg Director Michael Govan as he talks with fashion world superstars, Kate and Laura Mulleavy. Hear how art history and literature have influenced their work since founding Rodarte in Los Angeles in 2005, and in particular, a collection of ten gowns inspired by the work of Renaissance artist Fra Angelico.

#### **Credit**

Promised gift of Rodarte (Kate and Laura Mulleavy), Maria Arena Bell, Susan Casden, Eva Chow, DNA Boutique, Allison Sarofim, Karyn Silver, Christine Suppes, Lizzie Tisch, Dasha Zhukova and an anonymous Donor.

#### **About LACMA**

Since its inception in 1965, LACMA has been devoted to collecting works of art that span both history and geography-and represent Los Angeles's uniquely diverse population. Today, the museum features particularly strong collections of Asian, Latin American, European, and American art, as well as a contemporary museum on its campus. With this expanded space for contemporary art, innovative collaborations with artists, and an ongoing Transformation project, LACMA is creating a truly modern lens through which to view its rich encyclopedic collection.

**Location and Contact:** 5905 Wilshire Boulevard (at Fairfax Avenue), Los Angeles, CA, 90036 | 323 857-6000 | [lacma.org](http://lacma.org)

**Hours:** Monday, Tuesday, Thursday: noon-8 pm; Friday: noon-9 pm; Saturday, Sunday: 11 am-8 pm; closed Wednesday

**General Admission:** Adults: \$15; students 18+ with ID and senior citizens 62+: \$10

**Free General Admission:** Members; children 17 and under; after 5 pm weekdays for L.A. County residents; second Tuesday of every month; Target Free Holiday Mondays

Images: (page 1)

(Left) Rodarte, Lime Silk Georgette and Crinkle Silk Chiffon Pleated Gown with hand molded Easter Lilies, Feathers, and SWAROVSKI ELEMENTS, Promised gift of Rodarte (Kate and Laura Mulleavy), Maria Arena Bell, Susan Casden, Eva Chow, DNA Boutique, Allison Sarofim, Karyn Silver, Christine Suppes, Lizzie Tisch, Dasha Zhukova and an Anonymous Donor, Photo © 2011 Museum Associates/LACMA

(Center) Rodarte, Cantaloupe Pleated Silk, Draped Silk Georgette, and Taffeta Gown with Gold Ray Belt, Promised gift of Rodarte (Kate and Laura Mulleavy), Maria Arena Bell, Susan Casden, Eva Chow, DNA Boutique, Allison Sarofim, Karyn Silver, Christine Suppes, Lizzie Tisch, Dasha Zhukova and an Anonymous Donor, Photo © 2011 Museum Associates/LACMA

(Right) Rodarte, Pale Pink and Bright Pink Silk Georgette and Silk Chiffon Pleated and Draped Gown with hand beaded SWAROVSKI ELEMENTS Tassels with Gold Pleated Metal and Ray Breast Plate, Promised gift of Rodarte (Kate and Laura Mulleavy), Maria Arena Bell, Susan Casden, Eva Chow, DNA Boutique, Allison Sarofim, Karyn Silver, Christine Suppes, Lizzie Tisch, Dasha Zhukova and an Anonymous Donor, Photo © 2011 Museum Associates/LACMA

**Press Contact:** For additional information, contact LACMA Communications at [press@lacma.org](mailto:press@lacma.org) or 323 857-6522.

# # #