



T H E H U N T I N G T O N
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Steve Martin Makes \$1 Million Gift to The Huntington

Actor-writer provides new funding for American Art exhibitions and acquisitions

SAN MARINO, Calif. – Actor-writer Steve Martin has given \$1 million to The Huntington to help support its American art exhibitions program and to help the institution purchase American art. With the new 16,000-square-foot Lois and Robert F. Erburu Gallery, The Huntington has created ample space to substantially expand its American collections.

“I am pleased to help The Huntington promote American art in Los Angeles,” said Martin. “The Huntington has long been a place of serenity and scholarship in Southern California, and I am delighted to be involved with it in this way.”

The gift, to be made over five years, designates three quarters to go toward exhibitions and one quarter for acquisitions. Martin, a collector of American art himself, sponsored last summer’s *Sugaring Off: The Maple Sugar Paintings of Eastman Johnson*, an exhibition that featured paintings by one of the most important painters of 19th century America. The “sugaring off” was the party that took place late in the New England winter when the first flow of maple sap was collected and boiled into maple syrup and sugar. Johnson made a series of oil sketches of the subject in the 1860s and early 1870s, which served as the focal point of the show, one of which was a painting from The Huntington’s collection of American art. Organized by the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute in Williamstown, Mass., the exhibition represented the

first time these works had been considered as a group, and The Huntington was its only West Coast venue.

“The exhibition put important works of American art on view for the public, presenting them in a smart, clear, and beautiful way,” said Martin. “We need more of this type of exhibition in Southern California, and The Huntington is clearly interested in doing just that – bringing significant works of American art to light, contextualizing them, and helping visitors become better acquainted with the artists, the techniques, and the significance of the pieces,” said Martin.

Martin also has loaned paintings from his own collection of American art to The Huntington, including three paintings from the 1920s and ‘30s by American artists Maynard Dixon, Victor Higgins, and Edgar Payne that were on exhibition in 2002 in the Huntington’s Greene and Greene room. In addition, he helped fund the acquisition of a sculpture by John Gregory, who was responsible for the figures on the Huntington mausoleum.

“We are enormously indebted to Steve Martin for contributing to The Huntington in this way,” said Huntington President Steve Koblik. “We are continuing to very actively develop our American art collection, so these new funds are quite timely and significant. But I also must emphasize the significance of this gift for connecting visitors more firmly with the educational mission of the institution – providing them with greater opportunities to learn about American art. Education and research are precisely what The Huntington is about.”

ABOUT THE HUNTINGTON: The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens is a collections-based research and educational institution serving scholars and the general public. More information can be found on the Web at www.huntington.org.

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