

Press release

Christine Albanel, the French minister for culture and communication, announces the State's acquisition of earthenware tiling from Château de Polisy for the National Renaissance Museum at Château d'Ecouen thanks to the AXA Group's patronage.



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This national treasure, with no known equivalent, is remarkable for its size, covering some 28 square meters, its state of conservation, the quality of its design and the variety of its colors. The model is Italian, probably supplied by the architect Sebastiano Serlio, and the production French, by a studio from the Champagne region. Created in 1545, this highly rare piece represents an exceptional testimony to the history of ceramics and the spread of earthenware in France, emblematic of the artistic ties between France and Italy in the middle of the 16th century.

The floor tiling comes from the trophy room at Château de Polisy in Champagne, home to the prestigious Dinteville family, who had been close to the royals since the end of the Middle Ages and were particularly recognized for their patronage. Indeed, leading European Renaissance artists such as Primaticcio, Dominique Florentin and even Hans Holbein the Younger worked at the service of this Burgundy family. The most renowned work to come from the Dinteville family's artistic patronage is without a doubt Hans Holbein the Younger's painting *The Ambassadors*, dated 1533 and today kept at London's National Gallery.

With the acquisition of this remarkable piece, the AXA Group is making it possible to further strengthen a series of works that are particularly representative of European ceramics of the time, exhibited in the National Renaissance Museum at Château d'Ecouen. As the only French establishment dedicated exclusively to the Renaissance, Château d'Ecouen is able, thanks to its outstanding range of collections, to offer a complete vision of European artistic profusion between the 15th and 17th centuries.

The AXA Group's contribution to safeguarding French cultural heritage comes to 29 million euros over the last five years. In this way, AXA has enhanced public collections with various masterpieces, including two sketches by Rosso Fiorentino and Houdon's Vestale (Louvre Museum), as well as the magnificent Dogon statue (Quai Branly Museum), Ingres' portrait of the Duke of Orleans (Louvre Museum), and Nicolas Poussin's Flight into Egypt (Lyon Museum of Fine Arts).

This acquisition has been made possible thanks to the tax provisions of the French law of August 1, 2003 on patronage, associations and foundations, supplementing the provisions of the law of January 4, 2002 governing French museums, creating particularly favorable conditions for works recognized as being of significant heritage interest by the consultative commission on national treasures being incorporated into public collections, thanks to corporate patronage.

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