

NORTH CAROLINA

Museum of Art

NEWS RELEASE

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North Carolina Museum of Art's Friends of Greek Art Honors First Lady Mary Easley, Purchases Greek Ring on Her Behalf

RALEIGH, N.C.—The North Carolina Museum of Art's Friends of Greek Art recognized First Lady Mary P. Easley with the purchase of a classical Greek gold ring, given to the Museum in her honor. The 4th-century ring is the first piece of jewelry acquired by the Museum.



The ring is the third work of art purchased by the Friends of Greet Art, an affiliate membership group of the Museum, since 2003. With Easley's help—she founded the group five years ago—the Friends have raised more than \$400,000 for the Museum's classical art collection. The gift was announced on Tuesday, June 10, at a luncheon for the Friends of Greek Art at the Executive Mansion.

“By giving North Carolinians more Greek art to view and study, we are encouraging an appreciation of Greek culture and a better understanding of the role classical Greece has played in shaping who we are today,” said Easley. “Thanks to Friends of Greek Art and its supporters, these artifacts will continue to inspire Museum visitors for generations to come.”

“We are thrilled to be able to honor Mrs. Easley with such a hallmark gift to the Museum's Greek collection,” said Spiro Macris, president of the Friends of Greek Art. “Mrs. Easley has been instrumental in our success and we are pleased to recognize her invaluable contribution to the growth of the Museum's classical collection.”



The ring, which depicts the winged goddess Nike, is a significant educational acquisition for the Museum's classical collection. “The iconography of the ring is most emphatically about victory,” said Mary Ellen Soles, the Museum's curator of ancient art. “While jewelry is among the smallest works of art to survive from antiquity, this ring has a monumental presence and theme.”

The Museum's classical art collection consists of approximately 100 objects —sculpture, vase painting, and now jewelry—to be on view in the new gallery building, slated to open in spring 2010.

(more)

For more information on the North Carolina Museum of Art, the Museum's classical collection, or the Friends of Greek Art, visit www.ncartmuseum.org or call (919) 839-NCMA (6262).

About the Friends of Greek Art

The Friends of Greek Art is a special-interest membership group devoted to preserving and enhancing the Museum's collection of classical art. The Friends of Greek Art have also contributed to the purchase of two Greek vases, a krater and a lykethos, both from the 5th century B.C. These objects combine to broaden the scope of the Museum's classical collection.

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Note to the Editor: A high resolution image is attached for your use. Complete caption must accompany use of the image.

Caption: Greek, *Intaglio Ring with Scene of Nike and Trophy*, Fourth-Third century B.C., gold, Diam. Of bezel 1 3/8 in., H through band 3/8 in., Purchased by the Friends of Greek Art in honor of Mary Easley, First Lady of North Carolina

The North Carolina Museum of Art's permanent collection spans more than 5,000 years, from ancient Egypt to the present, making the institution one of the premier visual arts museums in the Southeast. The Museum uses its collection to provide educational, aesthetic, intellectual and cultural experiences for the citizens of North Carolina and beyond. The Museum offers a series of changing national touring exhibitions, classes, lectures, family activities, films and concerts.

The North Carolina Museum of Art, Lawrence J. Wheeler, director, is located at 2110 Blue Ridge Road in Raleigh. It is the art museum of the State of North Carolina, Michael F. Easley, governor, and an agency of the Department of Cultural Resources, Lisbeth C. Evans, secretary. Museum hours are Tuesday–Thursday and Saturday, 9 a.m.–5 p.m.; Friday, 9 a.m.–9 p.m.; and Sunday, 10 a.m.–5 p.m. Closed Monday. Admission is free. For information call (919) 839-NCMA (6262) or visit the NCMA's Web site at www.ncartmuseum.org.