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UdL coordinates an exhibition in Gandia to celebrate the 500th anniversary of Saint Francesc de Borja

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■ Professor Ximo Company is responsible for a project that will gather 16th- and 17th-century paintings

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The University of Lleida will design, manage and present an exhibition to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the birth of Sant Francesc de Borja that will take place in 2010 in Gandia, thanks to an agreement signed with its Town Council. The exhibition will display around fifty works by artists like Francisco de Goya, Diego Velázquez, El Greco, Francisco de Zurbarán, Bartolomé Murillo and Joan de Joanes, among others. The Research Group on Art and Culture of the Modern Period, leaded by the Chair in Art History Ximo Company is in charge of the organisation.

According to its organisers, the aim of the exhibition "Sant Francesc de Borja, Grandee of Spain: Art and Spirituality in the Hispanic Culture of the 16th and 17th Centuries " is "to exhibit the extraordinary creative wealth of Spanish plastic arts in that period, while keeping the figure of Sant Francesc de Borja and the scope of his political, social, cultural and spiritual action as a conducting thread".



Galeria Daurada del Palau Ducal de Gandia, s. XVII

The exhibition will be open between October and December 2010 in Gandia and will occupy two different spaces. The "La Marquesa" Gallery will accommodate the most important works coming from big museums, galleries or world-famous private collections. It is conceived as an anthological selection of paintings and sculptures that might also include literary works or decorative arts. The other venue will be Francesc de Borja's

Ducal Palace itself, one of the most outstanding palace houses in mediaeval and modern Spain. The building displays furniture of the period and other elements like original manuscripts by Francesc de Borja. Apart from these, other works will be added in order to draw a better portrait of his dimension as a politician and a Jesuit, as well as an insight into his private life and his family.

■ Scientific studies in the exhibition catalogue

The exhibition catalogue will consist of a volume written by the most remarkable specialists in Sant Francesc de Borja (1510-1572), who was a great-grandson of Pope Alexander VI, 4th Duke of Gandia, Viceroy of Catalonia and third General of the Society of Jesus. Apart from technical studies and information on the paintings, the catalogue will include scientific studies on Francesc de Borja's historical, social, political, cultural and spiritual context.

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The Commissioner of the exhibition and scientific Director of the catalogue Ximo Company is a member of the International Institute of Borgia Studies and Head of the Department of Art History and Social History at UdL. He is also responsible for the Modern Period Art Centre, formed by more than 60 lecturers and renowned specialists from several universities and museums all over the world. This year the Generalitat government awarded him with an ICREA Innovation Prize for his excellence in research.

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