

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
DEPARTMENT OF UNIVERSITY RELATIONS
217 MORRILL HALL, MINNEAPOLIS
OCTOBER 15, 1965

FACT SHEET:

SUBJECT : Bronze statue by Jacques Lipchitz of Daniel Greysolon, Sieur du Luth, 17th Century French explorer, to be unveiled at 3:30 p.m. Friday, Nov. 5, 1965, on the campus of the University of Minnesota, Duluth.

1. THE STATUE
2. THE SCULPTOR
3. THE DONOR AND HIS GIFT
4. DANIEL GREYSOLON, SIEUR DU LUTH

1. THE STATUE

Bronze, nine feet high.

Mounted on 13 foot, Minnesota granite pedestal.

Site---Ordean Court on University of Minnesota, Duluth campus near Tweed Art Gallery. Ordean Court named in memory of the donor of funds for the statue, the late Albert L. Ordean.

Original sketches and models made by Jacques Lipchitz, sculptor, at his studios at Hastings-on-Hudson, N. Y. (1963-64).

Bronze actually cast in Pietrasanta, Italy, during the last year-1964-65.

Statue put aboard West German ship, Clarita Schroder, in early August at Leghorn, Italy, bound for Duluth via the St. Lawrence Seaway, same path French Voyageurs traveled in 1670s.

Ship got to Cleveland and reported it would have to unload statue in Milwaukee because there was not enough cargo for Duluth but ended up unloading in Chicago. Statue was trucked to Minneapolis and eventually reached Duluth Sept. 20, 1965, some 286 years after Sieur du Luth first visited area.

With no pictures of Sieur du Luth available anywhere in the U.S., Canada or France, Lipchitz said "He will have the look of a builder, a man who looks at a place and says, 'This is where I want a city.'"

Lipchitz has presented du Luth in a costume which is a mixture of American Indian and Louis XIV style with plumed hat, Indian jacket, sword, beard, and wearing a peruke (long wig popular with French noblemen). (Two such wigs were found in du Luth's apartment in Montreal.)

When asked what tools he uses in his sculpture, Lipchitz said, "I'll use my teeth, a knife, anything."

2. THE SCULPTOR

Jacques Lipchitz---born in Lithuania on August 22, 1891....lived in France before escaping Paris a few hours ahead of Nazis...arrived in U.S. with \$20 and unable to speak English...sold his first sculpture within seven months for \$300.

Now lives at Hastings-on-Hudson, N.Y. with wife, Yulla, and daughter, Loyla, now 16.

Lipchitz identified with cubism in Paris around 1910 along with friends Picasso and Juan Gris, but did not remain constant to single movement and gradually returned to more natural forms; by 1930, began to leave geometric shapes and turn to more organic ones and symbolic themes.

After arrival in U.S., Lipchitz began period of intense activity and experimentation. Turned from massive, rectangular blocks of early '40s to more curvilinear organization with accent on rounded volumes.

Lipchitz on modern art (May, 1964):

"In America we are all confused and our art shows it. We have no art tradition such as the Europeans have, and nothing to look back upon for guide lines. Art is like love. The act of love is beautiful when it has the ultimate goal of perpetuating the human race. Modern art is pure libido."

He makes no attempt to make his sculptures true to nature. "Copy nature," he said, "and you infringe on the work of our Lord. Interpret nature and you are an artist."

3. THE DONOR AND HIS GIFT

Albert L. Ordean, pioneer Duluth banker, financier, merchant, philanthropist, and civic leader. Born in New Brighton, Pennsylvania, in 1856, he grew up in Ohio, working as a youth in a bank. He went West at an early age and was engaged in banking in both Leadville and Kokomo, Colorado. He came to Duluth in 1882, and died there on September 21, 1928.

Mr. Ordean founded the Merchants National Bank, which later became the First National Bank, with Mr. Ordean as President. This Bank later became the First American National Bank of Duluth, Duluth's largest. Also, he was a Director of the First National Bank of St. Paul.

Empire Builder James J. Hill described Mr. Ordean as "one of the greatest bankers in the Northwest," and, undoubtedly, Mr. Ordean would have described Mr. Hill as one of the greatest of the builders of trans-continental railroads. Mr. Ordean, for many years, was a Director of Mr. Hill's Great Northern Railroad.

Both men played leading parts in the rehabilitation of the nation after the 1907 panic and the failure of certain New York banks. Mr. Ordean had the task of untangling the grain and railroad businesses during the panic.

Mr. Ordean left a substantial part of his estate to civic and charitable projects. His will specifically ordered that a fund be created to provide a "fine, artistic, bronze statue" of Sieur du Luth, to "cause such statue to be made by some sculptor of note" and to provide "a suitable site and for the erection of such statue upon such site." A \$50,000 trust fund was established for this purpose under a Duluth district court order in December 1933, with the First American National Bank of Duluth as trustee.

The trust fund continued to grow through accumulation of interest until March 1963 when a contract with Jacques Lipchitz was drawn by the trustee and the University of Minnesota to create a statue of Sieur du Luth. The contract amount was \$77,000.

Between 1933, when the trust was founded, and 1963, numerous suggestions for a site were proposed to a special committee set up by the trustee. No agreement on the site was reached until April 1956, when it was decided that the statue would be erected on the campus of the University of Minnesota, Duluth, near the entrance to the Tweed Gallery.

Ordean Court, site of the statue, is a European type of courtyard with wide sidewalks, landscaped tree plantings and a stanchioned driveway at the center. The court is bordered by the Humanities building, the Tweed Gallery, the Education building and the site of a future theater building.

4. DANIEL GREYSOLON, SIEUR DU LUTH

Nobleman, soldier, frontier diplomat, explorer, voyageur, friend of the Indians, highly respected citizen of France and Canada, gentleman. Historians picture du Luth in these many ways, apparently based on reports which run reasonably true although spellings, dates and places vary somewhat.

Born about 1634 at Ste. Germaine en Laye, France, du Luth was the son of the noble family of Greysolon. He took his title from one of the family estates of Luth.

As the son of gentry, du Luth became a member of the French Royal Guard, rising eventually to the rank of Foot Captain.

Following early military service, du Luth was attracted by stories of adventure in New France (Canada)--- fur trading, the Indian wars, explorations into vast, unknown tracts of wilderness and lakes to the west of Montreal.

Along with other noblemen, du Luth moved to New France (Montreal), set up a home and became a part of the social whirl, falling in love with the daughter of the prominent family of Bourcher. Their eventual parting may have influenced his decision to sell his home and accept a position offered him by Governor Frontenac to push westward the trading boundaries of France and make friends with Indian tribes so that they would trade their furs with the French and not the British.

Sieur du Luth also had a dream of finding the Pacific Ocean. He made his first trip into the wilderness in 1678 to reopen trade areas and to settle Indian wars.

He spent the winter with the Chippewa at Sault Ste. Marie and persuaded them to end their war with the Sioux.

In the spring of 1679, du Luth held council with the Sioux on the western tip of Lake Superior at Minnesota Point, the site of the city of Duluth. The Sioux agreed to end their fighting.

He sent three men into the western plains to explore, and they returned with samples of salt which du Luth thought might come from part of the great Western ocean. Historians think the salt was from Great Salt Lake in Utah.

In 1680, du Luth set out to find the lake, but at the juncture of the St. Croix and Mississippi rivers (near present sites of St. Paul and Minneapolis), he learned the Sioux were holding three white men prisoner. He rushed to their aid, finding one of them the famous French missionary, Father Louis Hennepin. He claimed Hennepin was his brother, and demanded release of all three and denounced the Sioux for breaking their promise of peace the year before. The Sioux apologized, and du Luth took the prisoners back to Montreal.

Sieur du Luth made two more trips into Minnesota for explorations along the North Shore of Lake Superior to what is now Fort William, Canada, and throughout the Great Lakes region. In his later years, he was given military commands at key forts and engaged in settling thorny Indian problems.

He spent the last 10 years of his life in fairly pleasant retirement in Montreal, but fighting occasional, violent attacks of the gout. He died Feb. 25, 1710, a bachelor.

Of the many kind things said about du Luth, Governor Vaudreuil, in a report to the minister in France, summed it all up by saying, "Captain du Luth died this winter; he was a very honest man."

The great mystery about du Luth is the disappearance of his letters and diaries. No one knows if they were destroyed or are still in some attic or private library. If found, they could reveal the high adventure of one of the greatest voyageurs of early America.

#####