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3D investigation into the bust of Akhenaten in the Louvre Museum

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Purchased in 1905 by G. Bénédite from the Antiquity market, the unprovenanced limestone bust of Akhenaten now kept in the Louvre Museum (under the inventory number E 11076) is world-famous but, in the end, rather poorly studied.
In the context of an international research project entitled RetroColor 3D (funded by the Région Nouvelle Aquitaine, France, and the University of Bordeaux Montaigne, at Archeovision - UMS 3657 of the CNRS), this exceptional piece of sculpture was investigated anew with the help of 3D reconstruction as a methodological tool. Reporting on this transdisciplinary analysis, the paper will explain how this led to a better understanding of the bust’s original function in the creation of royal portraiture during the so-called Amarna period.