

focus ABENGOA



## **The Focus-Abengoa Foundation, in collaboration with the University of Seville and Santa Caridad, is presenting a pioneering project to conserve the heritage contents of the Hospital de la Santa Caridad**

- The project has been carried out by various research teams from the University of Seville and involves educators and intern students in the second and third education cycles.
- The Focus-Abengoa Foundation has made this project possible thanks to its unwavering support for conserving Seville's cultural heritage.

Seville, 13 January 2011. The Focus-Abengoa Foundation, in collaboration with the University of Seville, today presented at the Hospital de la Santa Caridad a new and pioneering project to conserve the heritage contents of the Hospital, which houses one of the most representative Baroque collections in the city of Seville. Since its creation in the 17th century, Santa Caridad has upheld its charitable work as its ultimate priority but no longer has the resources or the specialist staff to maintain its collection.

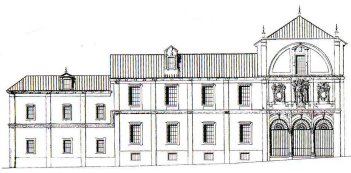
The event was attended by José María Poole, Brother Superior of the Santa Caridad, Anabel Morillo, Director General of the Focus-Abengoa Foundation, and Enrique Valdivieso and María Arjonilla, advisers to the project, as well as important representatives from the University and various cultural organisations in the city.

The conservation project consists of conservation and restoration work involving researchers from various teams, with the support of the University of Seville, the Focus-Abengoa Foundation and the Materials Science Institute of the Spanish Higher Council for Scientific Research (CSIC) in Seville. This interdisciplinary format is capable of providing specialists in conservation-restoration, fine arts, art history, photography, chemistry and information technology.

Thanks to the collaboration of the Focus-Abengoa Foundation, which seeks to return recovered cultural and artistic heritage to society and future generations, among other objectives, and the cooperation of the University of Seville through an agreement with the Faculty of Fine Arts, a large number of 4th and 5th year students specialising in conservation and restoration have been able to participate, under the guidance of the specialists, in the phases involving the topographic inventory, diagnosis of the works and treatment of the selected pieces. In addition, six students carrying out doctorates at the University, specialising in conservation and restoration, and members of the Painting and New Technologies Research Team, M<sup>a</sup> del Mar González, David Trigueros, Mercedes González, Juan José Lupión, Pablo Rodríguez and Teresa Rodríguez, together with Gonzalo Martínez, a doctor in history of art, were assigned to monitor and advise the different workshops.

The technical processes carried out included the following works:

- The *Virgen de la Caridad*, a wood carving by an unknown artist in the early 16th century, assumed to be polychromed and decorated by Valdés Leal in 1671.
- *La visión de Constantino*. Oil painting on canvas by Francisco Herrera the Elder, dated 1614, which is the only piece conserved from a series created by the artist for the Convent of St. Francis.



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- ***San Antonio de Padua con el Niño.*** Fired clay sculpture, polychromed with oil. A previously unseen work signed by Gabriel de Astorga in 1854.
- ***Adoración de los Pastores.*** Oil painting on canvas, unattributed and being researched, catalogued under the Roman school of the last third of the 17th century.

Restoration, conservation and maintenance work is one of the hallmarks of the Focus-Abengoa Foundation, beautifully demonstrated by its headquarters at the Hospital de los Venerables Sacerdotes. Every year it carries out preventative work to avoid any deterioration in its architecture and artistic features, as well as refining its technical and museographic facilities to improve its accessibility, use and enjoyment. Special mention should be made of the restoration work especially carried out for some of its most important exhibitions, such as *From Herrera to Velázquez. The first naturalism in Seville*, organised by the Focus-Abengoa Foundation in 2005, which involved a huge effort to recover Spain's artistic heritage, with special emphasis on the works of art lent by the Archbishopric of Seville for the exhibition.

The Focus-Abengoa Foundation was created in 1982 as a result of the cultural work begun in 1972 by Abengoa with the publication of the works *Temas Sevillanos* (Themes of Seville) and *Iconografía de Sevilla* (Iconography of Seville). A collection of documents, books and engravings on the Kingdom of Seville and by Sevillian authors was created during the same period. This initial cultural work showed Abengoa's directors the importance of the company's involvement in activities that directly benefit society, beyond the firm's core technology work, which led to the creation of the Seville Cultural Fund Foundation. The Hospital de los Venerables, a 17th century monument and the headquarters of the Focus-Abengoa Foundation in Seville, has housed the Diego Velázquez Research Centre, a leading institution for studying and disseminating the Baroque era and the Sevillian period of this universally renowned artist, since the acquisition of Velázquez's Santa Rufina by the Foundation in 2007.

**For more information:**

**Communications Department**

Patricia Malo de Molina Menéndez.

Loreto González Goizueta.

(+34) 95 493 71 11

[communication@abengoa.com](mailto:communication@abengoa.com)