

## The “Murillo and Justino de Neve. The Art of Friendship” exhibition will end in less than four weeks

- It offers an unprecedented opportunity to see *La Inmaculada de los Venerables* in its original setting and frame.
- This series of works has been brought together for the first and only time in the history of the Hospital de los Venerables and is expected to attract more than 35,000 visitors.

Seville, 28 December 2012. The exhibition entitled, “Murillo and Justino de Neve. The art of friendship” on display at the Focus-Abengoa Foundation in conjunction with the Museo Nacional del Prado and the Dulwich Picture Gallery in London, has received more than 35,000 visitors. The exhibition brings together 16 of the later works by Bartolomé Esteban Murillo (1617-1682), which resulted from his relationship with Justino de Neve, canon of Seville Cathedral and an important patron and personal friend of the artist.

The Hospital de los Venerables has special significance in the context of this exhibition, since it was Justino de Neve himself who founded this institution in the 1670s. The four works by Murillo that were housed in the Hospital de los Venerables were painted by the artist in Seville for the city, although they were later plundered with only one remaining in its original setting today.

A significant number of the many visitors to the headquarters of the Focus-Abengoa Foundation has been international tourists, compared to other exhibitions, who have not wanted to miss the chance to see *La Inmaculada de los Venerables* in its original frame and setting. The exhibition has become an exceptional opportunity to see the *Inmaculada de los Venerables* in the altarpiece where it hung until 1813.

The exhibition, which makes a significant contribution to the body of research on the Sevillian painter, was on display at the Museo del Prado in Madrid until 30 June 2012. It can now be seen at the Hospital de los Venerables until 20 January before travelling to London, where it will be on show at the Dulwich Picture Gallery from 6 February until 12 May 2013.

“Murillo and Justino de Neve. The Art of Friendship” comprises a unique selection of works that hung in the church of Santa María la Blanca, Seville cathedral and the Hospital de los Venerables Sacerdotes, featuring nearly 20 pieces including large commissions and portraits as well as allegories and religious works.

The exhibition has a catalogue, which is available for sale from the Focus-Abengoa Foundation shop and which includes six essays by Gabriele Finaldi, Javier Portús, Peter Cherry, Teodoro Falcón, Benito Navarrete and Ignacio Cano. These essays accompany the corresponding fact sheets on the works of the exhibition (by Gabriele Finaldi, Elena Cenalmor and Xavier Bray) and an appendix on the life, family and activities of Justino de Neve.

Various exhibitions dedicated to specific aspects of the artist's work have taken place since the major exhibition on Murillo held in London and Madrid in 1982, such as the exhibition dedicated to the "Murillos" of the Museo del Prado, acquired by Queen Isabel de Farnesio (Focus-Abengoa Foundation, Seville, 1996); his painting of children (Munich, Dulwich and Madrid, 2001), and his works in American collections (Fort Worth, 2002). Furthermore, an important exhibition on Murillo's earlier work was recently held in the fine arts museums in Seville and Bilbao (2009-2010). However, the current exhibition is the one that best captures the creative dynamism of the relationship between Murillo and Justino de Neve, which resulted in a series of works of extraordinary beauty and quality, all painted in the last two decades of the artist's life.

### **Activities related with the exhibition**

In addition to the exhibition in Seville, the Foundation will be hosting other *ad hoc* events such as recitals on the Los Venerables organ, as well as the series of Young Organist Concerts 2012 featuring organ music from Seville at the time of Murillo, as well as conferences and debates, such as the Baroque School entitled "Society and Artistic Patronage in Murillo's Seville", supplemented with an educational visits program for schools, families and the general public, to provide better insight into Seville at the time of Murillo and Justino de Neve, and the art of friendship.

### **Useful details**

#### **"Murillo and Justino de Neve. The Art of Friendship"**

From 9 October 2012 to 20 January 2013.

Hospital de los Venerables, plaza de los Venerables, 8 (Seville)

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#### Opening hours

- Monday to Sunday, from 10.00 am to 1.30 pm and from 4.00 pm to 7.30 pm.

#### Ticket price

- General: €5.50

- Concessions: €2.75 (according to the usual pre-established conditions)

Advanced ticket sales and for more information 902 091 137

### **Justino de Neve**

Justino de Neve (1625-1685) is revealed in this exhibition as the patron of some of the most outstanding and original works by the painter from Seville, such as the large lunettes on the *Founding of Santa Maria Maggiore* – which are unveiled in their full splendour after their restoration and cleaning – and *The Immaculate Conception of the Venerables* (also known as the *Soult Immaculate Conception*) from the Prado Museum, here seen in its original frame which is still on one of the altars of the church of the Hospital de los Venerables Sacerdotes; the allegories of *Spring* and *Summer (Young man with a basket of fruit)*, from the Dulwich Picture Gallery and the National Gallery of Scotland, respectively; and some extremely intricate works on religious themes painted on obsidian, from the Musée du Louvre and the Houston Museum of Fine Arts (Rienzi).

### **The art of friendship**

Justino de Neve was born into a Flemish family in Seville and ordained a priest in 1646. He was appointed Canon of Seville Cathedral in 1658. A cultivated and dynamic man, his friendship with Murillo from at least the early 1660s was instrumental in ensuring that the artist obtained some of his most important commissions: the decoration of the Church of Santa María la Blanca (1664-1665), the decoration of the Chapter Room in the Cathedral (1667-68), and the central panel in the altarpiece of San Antonio (with the *Baptism of Christ*) in the chapel dedicated to the saint (1667-68). Furthermore, Justino de Neve commissioned various works from the painter for his foundation for retired priests, the Hospital de los Venerables Sacerdotes, and had in his own collection some of the most outstanding works by the artist. Murillo painted his portrait in 1665 (National Gallery, London), featured in the exhibition, as a testament to his friendship, adding the inscription “*obsequium desiderio pingebat*” (painted to be given as a gift), and named him executor of his will in 1682.

### **Focus-Abengoa Foundation**

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.

## Exhibit List

### Portraits

1. Don Justino de Neve  
Oil on canvas, 206 x 129.5 cm  
1665

London, The National Gallery. Bought, 1979

2. Self-portrait  
Oil on canvas, 122 x 107 cm  
ca. 1670 - 1673

London, The National Gallery. Bought, 1953

3. The Infant Saint John the Baptist with a Lamb  
Oil on canvas, 165 x 106 cm  
1660 - 1665

London, The National Gallery. Bought, 1840

Santa María la Blanca

4. The Immaculate Conception  
Oil on canvas, 172 x 298 cm  
1665

Paris, Musée du Louvre, Département des Peintures, Collection Soult. Acquired in 1817

5. Faith or The Church Triumphant  
Oil on canvas, 165 x 251 cm  
Oxfordshire, The Faringdon Collection, Buscot Park

6. The Foundation of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome: The Dream of the Patrician and his Wife  
Oil on canvas, 232 x 522 cm  
1662 - 1665

Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado

### Hospital y la Hermandad de los Venerables de Sevilla

7. The Infant Christ Distributing Bread to Pilgrims  
Oil on canvas, 219 x 182 cm  
1678 - 1679

Budapest. Szépmvészeti Museum

8. The Penitent Saint Peter  
Oil on canvas, 212 x 155 cm  
Private collection

9. The Immaculate Conception of the Venerable Ones, or of Soult

Oil on canvas, 274 x 190 cm  
h. 1678  
Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado

Original frame of the work “The Immaculate Conception of the Venerable Ones, or of Soult” (belonging to the Museo Nacional del Prado, P-2809)  
Water gilded and polychromed wood, 349 x 265 x 40 x 25 cm  
17th century  
Focus-Abengoa Foundation. Hospital de los Venerables, Seville

### **Murillo and Seville cathedral**

10. The Baptism of Christ  
Oil on canvas, 283 x 210 cm  
1668  
Seville, Seville cathedral

### **The Justino de Neve collection**

11. Summer (Young Man with a Basket of Fruit)  
Oil on canvas, 102 x 81.5 cm  
ca. 1640 - 1650  
Edinburgh, Scottish National Gallery. Purchased with the assistance of the Art Fund, 1999

12. The Nativity  
Oil on obsidian, 38.1 x 34.1 cm  
ca. 1665-70  
Houston, The Museum of Fine Arts, The Rienzi Collection, gift of Mr. and Mrs. Harris Masterson III

13. Spring (The Flower Girl)  
Oil on canvas, 120.7 x 98.3 cm  
1665 - 1670  
London, Dulwich Picture Gallery

14. The Dream of Saint Joseph (obverse) / Saint Francis of Paola in Prayer (reverse)  
Oil on copper, painted on both sides, 5.8 x 4.8 cm  
ca. 1670 - 1680  
London, private collection

15. Agony in the Garden of Olives  
Oil on obsidian, 35.7 x 26.3 cm  
Paris, Musée du Louvre, Département des Peintures

16. Christ at the Column  
Oil on obsidian, 33.7 x 30.7 cm  
Paris, Museo del Louvre