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## **The Focus-Abengoa Foundation opens the tenth edition of the Baroque School entitled “East and West. Early Globalisation in Baroque Times”**

- Fernando García Gutiérrez, S.J., of the University of Sophia in Tokyo and the University of Seville gave the inaugural lecture on “Japan and the West: culture and art as a meeting place for globalisation”.
- Entry to all the lectures of the School is free while spaces are available.

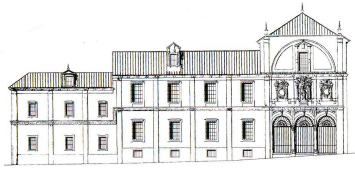
Seville, 18 November 2013. The Focus-Abengoa Foundation today opened the 10th edition of the Baroque School, entitled “East and West. Early Globalisation in Baroque Times”. The School will run until Wednesday 20 November and brings together renowned experts at the Hospital de los Venerables in Seville.

The opening ceremony was attended by Anabel Morillo León, Director General of the Focus-Abengoa Foundation, and Fernando García Gutiérrez, S.J., a lecturer from the University of Sophia in Tokyo and the University of Seville. His extensive knowledge of Japanese history and culture makes him an exceptional choice as director of this new edition and for the School’s inaugural lecture entitled “Japan and the West: Culture and art as a meeting point for globalisation”.

In his talk, the director of this edition highlighted the importance of a multicultural world, explaining how “Cultural divides between the different parts of the world have diminished”. He also recounted how, “Even in the 16th century, the first Jesuits to arrive in Japan tried to make a comparative study of the two cultures in the academies they established in the country”.

The director of the School went on to point out that, “the cultural influences that arrived from Europe were not imposed on Japanese culture. The emphasis was on genuinely assimilating Europe’s aesthetic values without abandoning Japan’s own identity”.

Fernando García Gutiérrez, S.J., a Jesuit with a degree in philosophy and humanities from the University of Barcelona, went to Japan in 1955 where he specialised in the study of oriental art. He lectured in Spanish art and Oriental art at the University of Sophia (Jôchi Daigaku) in Tokyo. Upon returning to Spain he took up a position lecturing in oriental art at the University of Seville and has given courses on this same subject at the universities of Zaragoza, Málaga and Granada. In 1994, Fernando García Gutiérrez, S.J., curated the exhibition “Momoyama: The Golden Age of Japanese Art” organised by the Japanese and Spanish governments in Madrid. He has been responsible for numerous publications about Japanese art and the relationship between Japan and the West. In 1993 his studies and knowledge were recognised by the Emperor of Japan who awarded him the Cross of the Order of the Sacred Treasure (Gold Rays with Rosette). He was also recognised by the Spain-Japan Council Foundation in 2011. He is currently director of the Japanese Mission in Spain and is the diocesan director of historical-artistic heritage of Seville.



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In her speech, Anabel Morillo León highlighted the virtues and qualities of the director of this edition saying, “Few people in the sphere of academia and art related to the oriental world combine such a variety and quantity of skills and aptitudes as Father Fernando García Gutiérrez with regards to east-west relations. It was precisely these virtues and qualities, both academic and scientific, which led the Focus-Abengoa Foundation to ask him to direct this edition of the Baroque School”.

The 10th Baroque School about east and west cultures coincides with the Foundation’s new temporary exhibition entitled, “Nur. Light in Art and Science from the Islamic World”, which is currently on display until February 2014 at the Hospital de los Venerables, the Foundation’s headquarters.

This year the School is once again opening its doors to anyone interested in this subject, in addition to the students registered on the course. Entry to all the lectures is therefore free while spaces are available. The Focus-Abengoa Foundation has also awarded 20 grants to registered students and has reserved a number of places for people over 65 years of age.

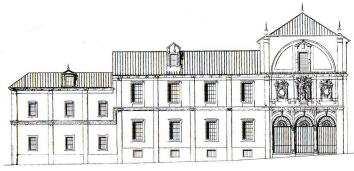
Tuesday 19th will begin at 9.30 am with a talk by the historian Juan Gil, a member of the Spanish Royal Academy and a lecturer at the University of Seville, who will speak on the subject of “The Chinese community in the Philippines”. He will be followed by Eloy Martín Corrales from the Universidad Pompeu Fabra, who will give a lecture on “Istanbul, the west of the east”. After a coffee break the day will resume with a visit to the oriental art collection of the Academia de Santa Isabel de Hungría, led by the director of the School, Fernando García Gutiérrez, a leading national expert on oriental art. On Tuesday afternoon Agustín Udías, a lecturer at Universidad Complutense de Madrid, will give a talk entitled, “Mateo Ricci and the Jesuit astronomers in China”. He will be followed by Elena Barlés, a lecturer from the Department of Art History at the University of Zaragoza, who will look at “The image of Japan through Western texts and engravings in the Modern Age”. A round table discussion featuring various speakers from the School will bring the day to an end.

The Baroque School is an important project that is central to the Foundation’s cultural and educational program, turning the Focus-Abengoa Foundation into a forum for discovery and reflection, articulated through internationally renowned lecturers and researchers. It addresses the Foundation’s main objective to become a leading international centre for studying the Baroque period.

## **Supplementary information**

### **Wednesday 20 November**

The third and final day of the Baroque School 2013 will start at 9.30 am with a talk by the historian Alfredo Morales, lecturer at the University of Seville, entitled “Half of the World: Isfahan, artistic capital of the Safavid dynasty”. He will be followed at 10.30 am by Jan de Hond, curator of Dutch painting at the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, who will give a lecture on “The most fascinating works ever painted. Willem Schellinks (1627-1678). A Flemish painter inspired by Indian miniatures”. After the two lectures on oriental art, students and lecturers will visit the “Nur. Light in art and science from the



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Islamic world” exhibition, guided by Rafael Valencia, an Arabist from the University of Seville.

At 5.00 pm, Diogo Ramada Curto, historian and lecturer at the Universidad Nova de Lisboa, will talk about “Globalisation at the time of the East and West Indies”. The series of lectures will be completed by a talk by Carlos Martínez Shaw, a member of the Royal Academy of History and UNED, who will speak on “Spain and Japan during the Keichō era”.

The tenth edition of the Focus-Abengoa Foundation Baroque School will be brought to an end by José Enrique Ayarra, titular organist of Seville Cathedral and the Foundation, who will give an organ concert in the church where the lectures have taken place. The diplomas for the School will be presented at the end.

All of the lectures offered by the Focus-Abengoa Foundation during its Baroque School 2013 will be broadcast on the internet via the Foundation’s website. Similarly, all of the details and information about the Baroque School and the “Nur. Light in Art and Science from the Islamic world” exhibition can be found on the website [www.focus.abengoa.es](http://www.focus.abengoa.es)

### **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.

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