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The Focus-Abengoa Foundation will restore three paintings by Murillo for the Hermandad de la Santa Caridad

- The paintings form part of the artistic heritage of the Church of Santa Caridad

Seville, 29 September 2014. The Focus-Abengoa Foundation has signed a collaboration agreement with the Hermandad de la Santa Caridad to conserve and recover its artistic heritage. An agreement has been reached with the Faculty of Fine Arts of the University of Seville to carry out the restoration project.

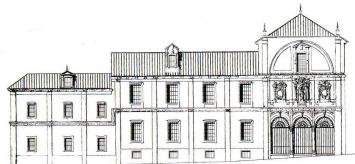
Since it was created in 1982, the Focus-Abengoa Foundation has carried out important works of patronage in the city of Seville. The Hermandad de la Santa Caridad is based in the Hospital de la Caridad, one of the most representative groups of baroque buildings in the city. The religious organisation has been performing important welfare work since it was founded in the 17th century by Miguel de Mañara.

The agreement was presented at the Church of La Caridad by José Luis Olivares, head of the religious brotherhood of Santa Caridad, and Anabel Morillo León, Director General of the Focus-Abengoa Foundation. It was also attended by Enrique Valdivieso, Professor of Art History, and María Arjonilla, a lecturer in the Faculty of Fine Arts of Seville and coordinator of the restoration project. The agreement, which was signed today and will end in 2016, sets out a restoration and research program with different phases for three paintings by Murillo and two of the altarpieces that they form part of. The work will follow the meticulous criteria that apply to actions involving this type of heritage, documenting and diagnosing the pieces, the conservation and restoration work to be performed on them, followed by dissemination and publication of the results.

The works included in this Focus-Abengoa Foundation project are:

1. *La Anunciación* (The Annunciation) by B. E. Murillo. Oil on canvas painting from the Altarpiece of the Annunciation. Nave. Gospel side.
2. Altarpiece of the *Virgen de la Caridad* by Bernardo Simón de Pineda (c. 17th), and oil on board of *Niño Jesús* (Christ Child) by B. E. Murillo, 17th century, located in the upper section of the altarpiece. Ante-chancel. Gospel side.
3. Altarpiece of St Joseph by Bernardo Simón de Pineda (c. 17th), and oil on board of *San Juan Bautista niño* (The Infant St John) by B. E. Murillo, 17th century, located in the upper section of the altarpiece. Ante-chancel. Epistle side.

In 2011, the Focus-Abengoa Foundation signed a similar agreement with the Hermandad de la Santa Caridad to restore the *Virgen de la Caridad*, an anonymous carving, 16th



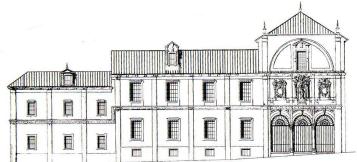
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century; the painting *La visión de Constantino* (Vision of Constantine), Francisco Herrera el Viejo, 1614; *San Antonio de Padua con el Niño* (St Anthony of Padua with the Christ Child), a sculpture by Gabriel de Astorga in 1854; and *La Adoración de los Pastores* (The Adoration of the Shepherds), a painting of the Roman school from the end of the 17th century.

The close relationship between these two institutions, which have shared the same welfare and charitable aims since they were founded and where the same artists worked on their iconographic programs, is once again being strengthened by the signing of this collaboration agreement. Miguel de Mañara in the Church of La Caridad, and Justino de Neve in the Hospital de los Venerables promoted the involvement of artists such as Murillo, Valdés Leál, Pedro Roldán, Francisco de Barahona or Bernardo Simón de Pineda, and many of their original works are still preserved in these buildings. Today, united in conserving and promoting this heritage, they are also establishing a plan of joint institutional, scientific and educational visits.

Restoration, conservation and maintenance are hallmarks of the Focus-Abengoa Foundation, best demonstrated by its headquarters at the Hospital de los Venerables Sacerdotes and its art collections. Preventive conservation actions are carried out every year to stop monuments from deteriorating, from their physical structure through to less significant ornamental features. The Foundation has carried out important recovery work throughout its history, such as restoring more than ten paintings belonging to the Archbispopric of Seville for the exhibition *From Herrera to Velázquez. The First Naturalism in Seville*, or unique projects such as work on the Church of Santa Cruz.

In 2007 the Focus-Abengoa Foundation recovered the *Santa Rufina* painting by Velázquez on behalf of the city, marking the start of a commitment to rescue its heritage. This qualitative step forward gave rise to the creation of the Diego Velázquez Research Centre, considered to be a leading international centre for painting and sculpture from the early 17th century in Seville after it added the *Inmaculada Concepción* (Immaculate Conception) by Velázquez, and the *Santa Catalina de Alejandría* (St Catherine of Alexandria) by Murillo to its collection. The painting *San Pedro penitente de los Venerables* (Penitent St Peter) by Murillo, acquired by Abengoa in the United Kingdom, will be donated to the Foundation to form part of its permanent collection, rescuing a masterpiece for the city that should never have left. The Foundation is currently preparing a major exhibition for 2016 and 2017 dedicated to its two great masters –Velázquez and Murillo– curated by Gabriele Finaldi, Assistant Director of Conservation and Research at the Museo Nacional del Prado, to mark the 75th anniversary of the incorporation of Abengoa and the 25th anniversary of the Focus-Abengoa at its Los Venerables headquarters.



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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. The focus on this crucial era of the Golden Age is complemented with the legacy from Professor Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez, bequeathed to the Foundation in 2011. It comprises his library, photo library, personal archive and art collection and is being catalogued to help create a library specialising in the art and culture of the Baroque period. <http://focus.abengoa.es/>

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