

focus ABENGOA

***The Penitent Saint Peter*, a masterpiece of Murillo, returns to the hands of the Focus-Abengoa Foundation in Seville**

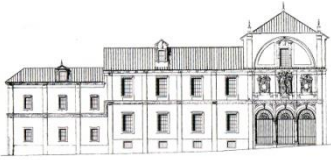
- The piece returns to its place of origin, the Hospital of Los Venerables, and will be exhibited at the Centro Velázquez.
- The piece was rediscovered in the UK and restored by the Museo del Prado, where he has been on exhibit over the past months.
- The Focus-Abengoa Foundation continues to restore and recover the national treasure that is the historic and artistic baroque heritage of the city of Seville.

Seville, February 17, 2016. - The Focus-Abengoa Foundation presented Murillo's masterpiece *The Penitent Saint Peter* today at its headquarters, the Hospital de los Venerables. The impressive work has returned to Seville after more than two centuries and will be on exhibit at the Centro Velázquez.

The painting *The Penitent Saint Peter* has been on exposition over the past months in Madrid's Prado Museum. The Prado was responsible for the restoration of the piece and has worked closely with the Foundation after the painting was recovered in the UK towards the goal of returning it to Seville. The Focus-Abengoa Foundation continues to restore and recover the national treasure that is the historic and artistic baroque heritage of the city of Seville.

It will be exhibited permanently in the Velázquez Centre in the Hospital de los Venerables. The Velázquez Centre aims to recreate the historical and artistic universe in which the Sevillian painter moved from their early years until transfer to the court in 1624 through various works of authors like Murillo or Velázquez.

Additionally, the Focus-Abengoa Foundation is in preparation for a major exhibition for next November honoring the two great Sevillian masters of universal painting, Velázquez and Murillo. The exhibit will be curated by Gabriele Finaldi, director of the National Gallery in London, and will provide a unique opportunity to enjoy the Saint Peter painting, accompanied by other paintings of the two artists.



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History of the painting

The Penitent Saint Peter was owned by Justino de Neve, one of the most intelligent and skilled employers and friends Murillo. In his will (1685), the patron bequeathed the work to the baroque building the Hospital de los Venerables in Seville. The Focus-Abengoa Foundation, along with the Museo del Prado and the Dulwich Picture Gallery, London, organized and exhibit three years ago "Murillo and Justino de Neve. The art of friendship." It was precisely for this exhibition, when the work of Murillo recovered and returned to public view.

In the chapel of the hospital, the altarpiece that was on exhibit from at least 1701 until the work was confiscated by Marshal Soult. The painting remained in his collection until his death in 1851. Since then the work has remained in private collections and it was restored in 2012 when by Gabriele Finaldi rediscovered the piece.

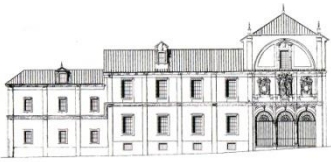
The Penitent Saint Peter mimics a Ribera composition with a theme of repentance of Saint Peter which was very popular in Spain during the Golden Age. It shows Saint Peter with his hands and watering eyes pointed towards the heavens.

The Restoration

When the piece arrived at The Prado Museum it was in good condition, though it was dark, dull and lacking volume. The treatments carried out have been aimed at consolidating the paint-a process which avoids possible landslides in the cracked paint and the elimination of previous corrections that covered the original painting. By removing varnish and over-painting, the work shows the technical and stylistic virtuosity of Murillo at this stage of maturity. Technical and chemical analyses have supported the pattern of intervention, as well as help to understand the technical and creative process of the author.

This restoration has aided us to understand how the painter communicated through the pictorial material.

In parallel the frame was restored, it is not known if it is the original from the altar of the church of the Hospital de los Venerables. However, this is a magnificent piece of the "First Empire" style was probably made when the piece was delivered to France, by Napoleon's army.



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Andalucía Day

The Focus-Abengoa Foundation will open the doors of the Hospital de los Venerables to the public for free on Andalusia Day, February 28. It will provide visitors a unique opportunity to visit the Centro Velázquez and contemplate this work of Murillo.

There will be various special activities planned for the day. Visitors can closely examine at the map of Seville legal convent cartoonist Chiaves Jerome, in the year 1579, taken from the Cabinet of Prints of the Focus-Abengoa Foundation. Also, guided tours of the Hospital of the Venerable where attendees can get a behind the scenes view of headquarters of the Focus-Abengoa Foundation. There will also be a concert on the Baroque organ in chapel, given by Father Jose Enrique Ayarra, organist of the cathedral of Seville and the Focus-Abengoa Foundation. Finally, the foundation will also be conducting small workshops on the Baroque Library Foundation.

The 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. The Foundation employs the educational program Focus Educa to educate the city on the heritage and art of Seville being restored through its work.

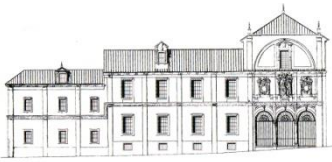
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