

**Faith and Fortune: Art Across the Global Spanish Empire
from the Collection of the Hispanic Society Museum & Library**

Label Copy in Order of Exhibition

INTRODUCTORY TEXT

Between 1492 and 1898, Spain established an empire that spanned vast expanses of the Americas and Southeast Asia. The constant movement of painters, sculptors, printers and other artisans within these territories produced a rich and complex visual culture across the empire.

From the outset, Spain's global expansion was driven by the desire to extract natural resources and to spread the Catholic faith. By looking at art from the Philippines, Latin America, and Spain, we can learn about different histories of colonization and gain a better understanding of the legacies that endure today.

Saint Martin

around 1450-1475

Wood, polychrome and estofado

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Pere Espalargues the Elder

Spanish, active around 1490

Panels from retablo (altar) with Scenes from the Life of the Virgin:

The Visitation and the Nativity of Christ

The Adoration of the Magi & The Presentation in the Temple

The Resurrection

1490

tempera on wood

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

MAKING SPAIN

The Iberian Peninsula is located in southwest Europe, just north of Africa, between the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea. For nearly 800 years, it was home to Christian, Jewish, and Muslim peoples living in various kingdoms. There were periods when these neighbours of

different faiths lived together in harmony, but wars frequently broke out over the boundaries between territories.

Christian kings in the north pushed the Muslim caliphs further and further south, until the monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella claimed the whole peninsula in 1492. That unified nation corresponds to Spain as we know it today. That same year, Ferdinand and Isabella expelled Jewish and Muslim citizens from the Christian country. The art in this gallery reflects centuries of Spain as a multicultural, multifaith land.

Miguel Alcañiz the Elder and Assistants

Spanish, active 1408–1447

Valencian Retablo (altar) (three panels, from the Church of the Knights of Saint John of Jerusalem, Valencia)

around 1422–1430

tempera on wood

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

ABOUT THE HISPANIC SOCIETY OF AMERICA

The Hispanic Society of America was founded in 1904 by American philanthropist Archer Milton Huntington (1870–1955) to establish a free public museum and library for the study of the art and culture of Spain, Portugal, Latin America, and the Philippines. After his first trips to Mexico in 1889, and to Spain in 1892, Huntington began collecting paintings, sculptures, books, and many other objects for his “Spanish Museum” from Spain, Portugal, Latin America, and the Philippines. He opened building in Upper Manhattan to the public in 1908 and continued to add to the collection for the rest of his life.

Today the Hispanic Society collections are unparalleled in their scope and quality outside of Spain, with paintings by El Greco, Velázquez, and Goya, as well as significant holdings in sculpture, decorative arts, rare books, and manuscripts.

MUSLIM CERAMIC MAKERS IN MEDIEVAL SPAIN

In the 1200s, ceramic makers in Muslim-ruled southern Spain established major production centres in Málaga, Murcia, and other cities. Eventually, Christian rulers in Valencia invited Muslim potters to establish new centres in the north. These artists specialized in lusterware: ceramics finished with a metal-based glaze that creates a reflective, shimmering surface.

These lusterware products are densely decorated with intersecting geometrical and floral motifs, and patterns that mimic Arabic script. Such works were in great demand. Christian patrons commissioned lusterware that featured similar decorations alongside Christian coats of arms and religious symbols. After non-Christians were banished from Spain in 1492, some Muslim potters who wanted to remain in the country converted to Christianity.

Tricolour pottery

1-3 Apothecary jars (Albarelo)

left to right:

1435 –1475

Manises, Valencia, Spain

tin-glazed earthenware with cobalt and luster

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

1430 –1470

Manises, Valencia, Spain

tin-glazed earthenware with cobalt and luster

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

around 1390

Manises, Valencia, Spain

tin-glazed earthenware with cobalt and luster

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

4 Plate with coat of arms of the Despujol family of Catalunya

around 1370

Manises, Valencia, Spain

tin-glazed earthenware with cobalt and luster

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

5 Basin with coat of arms of Castilla-León

1425 –1450

Manises, Valencia, Spain

tin-glazed earthenware with cobalt and luster

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

6 Bowl

around 1370

Manises, Valencia, Spain

tin-glazed earthenware with cobalt and luster

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

7 Lusterware plate with coat of arms of Castilla-León

1430 –1470

Manises, Valencia, Spain

tin-glazed earthenware with cobalt and luster

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

8 Lusterware plate with rampant lion

1500 –1525

Manises, Valencia, Spain

tin-glazed earthenware with cobalt and luster

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

9 Plate with rampant lion heraldry

1470 –1500

Manises, Valencia, Spain

tin-glazed earthenware with cobalt and luster

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

10 Lusterware plate with the coat of arms of Aragón-Sicily

1468–1516

Manises, Valencia, Spain

tin-glazed earthenware with luster

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

11 Plate with briony motif

around 1435 –1475

Manises, Valencia, Spain

tin-glazed earthenware with cobalt and luster

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

12 Plate with dragon (Wyvern)

around 1500

Seville, Spain

tin-glazed earthenware (cuerda seca technique)

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

13 Plate with harpy

around 1500

Seville, Spain

tin-glazed earthenware (cuerda seca technique)

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

left:

Dalmatic

1400s–1500s

Valencia, Spain

gold and red silk velvet brocade, applied embroidered orphrey panels with metallic threads, polychrome silk, and applied pearls

Acquired by Archer M. Huntington for The Hispanic Society, 1912

right:

Chasuble with scenes from the Bible

1400s–1500s

Valencia, Spain

gold and red silk velvet brocade, applied embroidered orphrey panels with metallic threads, polychrome silk

Acquired by Archer M. Huntington for The Hispanic Society, 1906

far right:

Cope

1400s–1500s

Valencia, Spain

gold and red silk velvet brocade, applied embroidered panels with metallic threads and polychrome silk

Acquired by Archer M. Huntington for The Hispanic Society, 1912

In the 1400s and 1500s, Spanish cities such as Barcelona, Granada, Toledo, Seville, and Valencia became important centres for silk weaving. The workshops in these regions produced extravagant fabrics using silk that was combined with threads made from precious metals. The red and gold patterns on these clerics' garments reference popular motifs in Middle Eastern art, including pomegranates, leaves, pinecones, thistles, and lotus blossoms.

Artist once known from present-day Catalunya, Spain

Reliquary cross for an altar cross

1300s; base ensemble: around 1375–1450

silver gilt with champlevé and transparent enamel

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Artist in the circle of Willem Vrelant

active Bruges, Belgium, 1454–1481

Black Book of Hours

around 1458

illuminated manuscript on vellum, painted black

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Text by Jacob ben Asher, also called Ba'al ha-Turim

born Cologne, present-day Germany, around 1269 died Toledo, Spain, around 1343

Tur Yoreh de'ah, a Jewish legal text

1487

manuscript

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Artist once known from Toledo, Spain

Tile with the Star of David from the Synagogue of El Tránsito (Toledo, Spain)

1425–1475

tin-glazed earthenware (cuerda seca technique)

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Spanish and Portuguese artists once known

Spain

Hebrew Bible

1450–1497

illuminated manuscript on vellum Presented to The Hispanic Society by Archer M. Huntington, 1933

This ornately decorated Bible was made for Jewish patrons in the second half of the 1400s. Each page of Hebrew text is surrounded by a double border full of real and imagined plants, flowers, and animals.

When King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain cast Jewish inhabitants out of the country in 1492, the owners of this Bible moved to Portugal. They had to move again in 1497, when King Manuel I expelled the Jewish people from his kingdom. This Bible has lived in many countries over many centuries.

PRECIOUS METALS

“Cay curitacho micunqui?” (“Do you eat this gold?”)

—Guayna Capac (Inca)

“Este oro comemos.” (“We eat this gold.”)

—Candia (Spanish)

In 1615, Inca author Guaman Poma recorded an exchange between one of his countrymen and a Spanish colonizer. Guayna Capac, who was astounded by the Spaniards’ seemingly boundless hunger for gold, asked what they did with their bounty. Did they eat it? The Spanish Candia slyly responded in the affirmative: Yes, we eat gold.

In several instances, Spanish navigators looking for spices found precious metals instead. Inspired by myths about cities built of gold, colonizers embarked on new expeditions to travel further and to claim new territories for the Spanish. In 1545, the discovery of a vast deposit of silver in a mountain at Potosí dramatically enriched the Spanish Empire and transformed the global economy.

Door knockers

from present-day Spain

All works cast in iron

top row left to right:

Crab claws

around 1500

Head of a Man

16th century

Bird

around 1500

centre row left to right:

Wolf or dog

1500–1599

Bat head

around 1450–1520

Lizard

1570–1630

bottom row left to right:

Lock and hasp for trunk

1600–1699

Dragon

around 1500

Dragon head (one of a pair)

16th or early 17th century

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

COLUMBUS DIDN'T DISCOVER ANYTHING

Columbus set sail in 1492, travelling west in search of spices in the East Indies. When he arrived in the Caribbean, he mistook those islands for the Indies, and the Taíno people living there for the people of the Indies. He called the Taíno “indios,” and Spaniards used this term for centuries to describe Indigenous people around the world.

In 1493, the Pope issued a papal bull, or formal proclamation, known as Inter Caetera, in which he stated that lands inhabited by non-Christian peoples could be “discovered” and settled by Christian navigators. This papal bull set a precedent for hundreds of years of legal decisions that disenfranchised Indigenous people and supported colonization.

left:

Plate with image of a soldier

around 1600 –1650

Toledo, Spain

tin-glazed earthenware

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

right, object on left:

Vase with handles

1600 –1650

Toledo, Spain

tin-glazed earthenware

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

right, object on right:

Ewer for handwashing (Jarro de Pico)

1600 –1650

Toledo, Spain

tin-glazed earthenware

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

right, upper object:

Salver with bobbin lace decoration

1625–1650

Talavera de la Reina, Spain tin-glazed earthenware

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

right, lower object:

Plate with Jonah and the Whale

around 1600

Talavera de la Reina, Spain tin-glazed earthenware

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

left to right:

Artist once known from Toledo, Spain

Two apothecary jars with arms of the Monastery of San Lorenzo at El Escorial

1580s

tin-glazed earthenware

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Artist once known

from Barcelona, Spain

Pilgrim flask

around 1580

colourless glass with polychrome enamel and gilding

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Spanish artist once known

Goblet

around 1500

cobalt blue glass, enameled in green, rose, and white; gilding On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Spanish jewellery, goldsmiths once known

top clockwise:

Necklace, pendant crucifix

crucifix: 1570–1610; collar: 1600–1650

gold, enamel, engraved sapphire, pearls, and precious and semi-precious stones

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Rosary bead fitted as a pendant, with the Annunciation

around 1520–1550

agate, gold, champlevé, and transparent enamel Bequest of Archer M. Huntington, 1956

Pendant in the form of a centaur

around 1580–1600

gold, champlevé and transparent enamel, sapphires, rubies, and pearls Bequest of Archer M. Huntington, 1956

Column-shaped reliquary pendant

around 1570–1600

rock crystal, gold, champlevé, ronde bosse (or fine cloisonné), transparent enamel, and inscribed black enamel

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Eagle pendant

1600–1630

gold, enamel, emerald, and pearls

Bequest of Archer M. Huntington, 1956

centre:

Pendant with the Virgin and Child

around 1550–1625

gold, cloisonné, champlevé and transparent enamel, coral, and pearls Bequest of Archer M. Huntington, 1956

left to right:

Peruvian artist once known

Hot water kettle in the form of a lion

1700–1799

silver, repoussé, cast, and chased

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Spanish artist once known

Chalice

around 1525–1550

silver gilt, cast, repoussé, and chased

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Disc of Gold Bullion

1622

Panama or Colombia gold

The Thomson Collection at the Art Gallery of Ontario

The Nuestra Señora de Atocha was a galleon, or cargo ship, built in Havana, Cuba. Galleons were used to support trade across the Spanish empire. In September 1622, the Atocha embarked for Spain, loaded with gold, silver, copper, tobacco, indigo, and precious gems from Colombia and Panama. After four days at sea, a hurricane destroyed the ship and others in its fleet, killing many of those aboard. This piece of gold bullion was found when the wreckage of the Atocha was rediscovered in 1985. The marks running around the gold were used by Spanish administrators to indicate weight and value.

Anonymous artist

The Silver Mines at Potosí

around 1585

watercolour on vellum

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Upon recognizing that Potosí Mountain in Bolivia contained enormous quantities of silver, Spanish colonial authorities quickly established an enormous mining operation there to convert the precious metal into currency. Potosí gained notoriety for two reasons: it was known as both the Bank of the World and the Mountain that Eats Men. Indigenous and African enslaved workers performed the manual labour of extracting silver ore from the earth and refining the material, a process that required the use of mercury, a poisonous element that was mined elsewhere. Many aspects of this process involved substances that were toxic to humans and to the environment. Tremendous wealth was born out of tremendous suffering.

Above:

Mayan artist once known

Two mermaid panels

1700–1799

silver, chased, and repoussé

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Below:

Peruvian artist once known

Tray decorated with chinchillas, lions, birds, and flowers

1700–1750

silver gilt

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Cristóbal Becerril

Spanish, around 1539–1585

Processional Monstrance (Custodia)

around 1572–1585

silver gilt, lapis lazuli

Acquired by Archer M. Huntington for the Hispanic Society, 1907

In the 1570s, the bishop of Cuenca, Spain, commissioned celebrated local silversmith Cristóbal Becerril to produce this object for display in religious processions. The gold and silver tower, which is known as a monstrance, enshrines the host, an edible wafer understood to represent the body of Jesus. During this period, Spanish metalworkers were able to make extravagant gold and silver objects as new supplies of these precious metals arrived from the Americas.

Sebastián López de Arteaga

born Seville, present-day Spain, 1610

died Mexico City, present-day Mexico, 1652

Saint Michael Striking Down the Rebellious Angels

around 1650–1652

oil on copper

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

In 1640, Sebastián López de Arteaga, an established painter in Seville, Spain, was invited to Mexico City by the viceroy Diego López Pacheco. López brought with him the latest trend in European painting: intensely dramatic scenes created by building up strong contrasts between light and dark tones. Saint Michael, pictured here, was popular across the Spanish Empire.

CATHOLICISM AND EMPIRE

Following the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, known as “The Catholic Monarchs,” the leaders of the Spanish Empire fought to defend Catholic beliefs against the spread of Protestant reforms to the north and the powerful Muslim Ottoman Empire to the east.

During this same period, Spanish colonizers forced Indigenous people of the Philippines and the Americas to convert to Catholicism under threat of violence and enslavement. While

colonization was primarily motivated by a desire to gain access to gold and silver, the spread of Christianity offered an additional justification for imperial expansion. Spain dispatched paintings, sculptures, and even artists themselves throughout the empire; art, as a visual representation of Catholic ideas, was a powerful tool for religious education.

Alonso Vázquez

born Ronda, Spain, around 1565

died Mexico City, present-day Mexico, around 1608

Saint Sebastian

around 1603 –1607

oil on canvas

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

In 1603, the Spanish king sent Juan de Mendoza y Luna to serve as his deputy, or viceroy, in Mexico. Mendoza brought along a team of staff which included the celebrated local artist Alonso Vázquez. Vázquez remained in Mexico City for the rest of his life, where he greatly influenced the local visual culture through his work and his presence.

Luis de Morales

born Badajoz, Spain, around 1510 died Alcántara (?), Spain, 1586

Virgin with a Yarn Winder

1566–1570

oil on wood

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Luis de Morales

born Badajoz, Spain, around 1510 died Alcántara (?), Spain, 1586

Christ Presented to the People (Ecce Homo)

around 1565–1570

oil on wood

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Juan de Juni

born Joigny, France, around 1507 died Valladolid, Spain, 1577

Female Bust Reliquaries (Saint Martha and Mary Magdalene)

around 1545

polychromed wood and wax

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Artists from all over Europe were drawn to Spain. Among them was sculptor Juan de Juni, born and trained in France, who found great success in central Spain. Juni designed these two sculptures as containers for relics, physical remains of dead saints. The relics were housed behind the wax elements on the women's chests.

El Greco

(Doménikos Theotokópoulos)

born Crete, Greece, 1541 died Toledo, Spain, 1614

Saint Jerome

around 1600

oil on canvas

Presented to The Hispanic Society by Archer M. Huntington, 1914

Pietà

1574–1576

oil on canvas

Presented to The Hispanic Society by Archer M. Huntington, 1914

Doménikos Theotokópoulos was born in 1541 in Crete, which was then part of the Venetian Empire. He learned to paint in Crete, Venice, and Rome before settling in Spain. In the 1570s, he applied to be King Philip II's court painter. When his bid was unsuccessful, the painter relocated to the nearby city of Toledo, where he found great fame—and earned his nickname: El Greco, or The Greek. The Pietà (left) was created during his stay in Rome, and the painting of Saint Jerome (right) is from later in his life, corresponding to his years in Toledo.

ADAPTATION AND ADORATION

In the 1500s and 1600s, Catholics across the Empire commissioned lifelike, colourful sculptures to adorn churches and home altars. This art form was especially beloved because it could conjure the three-dimensional, even human-scale presence of saints on earth. Artisans sometimes used glass eyes, ivory teeth, and human-hair wigs to bolster the sense that these

carved figures were living beings; similarly, worshippers might dress up statues in precious jewellery and clothing. On festival days, the sculptures were carried in a procession through cities and towns, allowing the saints to walk among the living. When Indigenous artists made these works, they often incorporated elements of their own religions, fusing two traditions to make new forms.

Pedro de Mena

born Granada, Spain, 1628 died Málaga, Spain, 1688

Saint Acisclus

around 1680

wood, polychrome, and gold

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Saint Acisclus and his sister Victoria are the patron saints of Cordoba, a city in southern Spain. They were executed for practicing Christianity at a time when it was illegal. This piece was created by Pedro de Mena, a sculptor who was locally renowned for his realistic and evocative carvings of holy figures. Works by his daughter, Andrea de Mena, are in the next gallery.

Ecuadorian artist once known

Saint Michael Archangel

around 1700–1750

wood and polychrome

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Purchased through a grant from the R&B Charitable Foundation for the Beaux-Arts, 2001

For described audio on this work, scan this code.

Peruvian artist once known

Processional Painting: The Nativity (front); The Virgin and Child (back)

around 1620–1650

oil on copper, wrought iron, tin, and gilding

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Artist once known

Saint Francis of Assisi

1600–1699

wood, polychrome, and estofado

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Artist once known

Mater Dolorosa

1600–1699

wood, polychrome, and estofado

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Ecuadorian artist once known

Our Lady of the Apocalypse (Virgin of Quito)

1700–1750

polychromed and gilded wood

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

SANTO NIÑO

One of the central figures in Filipino Catholicism is the Santo Niño, the infant Jesus. The original and most famous statue of Santo Niño was a gift from navigator Ferdinand Magellan when he first arrived on the island of Cebu in 1521.

Today, Catholic Filipinos around the world remain devoted to this figure. Private home altars with statues of the Santo Niño are common.

Artist once known

from present-day Mexico

Statue of Virgin Mary

late 17th century

wood, gesso, and paint

On loan from ROM (Royal Ontario Museum), Toronto, Canada; Gift of Mrs. Rose Torno

In 1531, Juan Diego, an Indigenous man living outside of Mexico City, reported that he had experienced a vision of the Virgin Mary while visiting a site previously dedicated to the Aztec goddess Tonantzin. The Virgin of Guadalupe, shown with her hands in prayer and standing on a crescent moon, quickly became a popular object of local worship.

This statue is made of wood with paint and gold leaf. When it was originally made, the figure wore a human-hair wig and ornate jewellery, both of which are now missing. These added elements made religious sculptures appear more lifelike; such enhancements were common in Spain, the Philippines, and many parts of Latin America.

attributed to Manuel Chili, called Caspicara

born and died Quito, Ecuador, 1723–1796

The Fates of Man

around 1775

polychrome wood, glass, and metal

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

These four sculptures represent the fates that await body and soul after death, according to Catholic doctrine. In the first sculpture, the body decays, with worms eating flesh from bone. The other three illustrate possible outcomes for the soul: chained and burning in hell, waiting for judgment in purgatory, and at rest in heaven. The Indigenous sculptor Manuel Chili was a celebrated artist in Quito, the capital of colonial Ecuador. It is likely that he created these four sculptures.

EUROPEAN EXPLORATION AND MARITIME TRAVEL

In the 1400s, thriving markets for the trade of international goods drove Europeans to develop safer and more efficient routes for sea travel. As part of this process, European technologies of navigation, mapmaking, and shipbuilding evolved and expanded. Maps from this period reflect new understandings of the world beyond Europe. Navigators charted new courses as they travelled by sailing ship, looking for fast and efficient ocean currents and wind patterns. The maps and printed books in this gallery reflect the growth and transmission of this new knowledge.

Caxcan artists once known (images)

Spanish scribe once known (text)

Map of Tequaltiche

1584

watercolour and ink on paper

Bequest of Archer M. Huntington to The Hispanic Society of America, 1956

Between 1577 and 1585, King Philip II of Spain ordered colonial officials to produce information (including a map) about the regions they administered. Hernando de Gallego, the lieutenant mayor of Tequaltiche in western Mexico, forced Indigenous artists to illustrate his map.

The Tequaltiche map is an example of how early visual forms of propaganda were used to justify colonial oppression of Indigenous people. This document, which misrepresents the people of Tequaltiche as naked, cannibalistic savages who were constantly at war, established a stereotype that justified the violent actions of European settlers.

Peruvian artist once known

Map of the Ucayali River

1808–1812

ink and colour on paper

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Giovanni Vespucci

born Florence, present-day Italy, 1486 died after 1527

World Map

1526

ink and colour on four sheets of parchment

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

This world map was produced in Seville, Spain, by Juan Vespucci, who was part of a famed line of navigators: the Americas are named for his uncle Amerigo Vespucci (1454–1512). While maps of this type were often used by Spanish sailors, this example is very ornate and was likely presented to the emperor upon his wedding in 1526. Some areas of this map are quite detailed, but the scant information about North America and Asia reflects the limitations of European knowledge at this time.

Bartolomeo Olives

active Mallorca, Spain, 1538–1585

Portolan Chart of the Mediterranean, Black Sea, and Atlantic (Finisterre to Cape Nun)

1552

ink and colour on parchment

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

In case left:

Victory of Innocence: Sentence of the Chinese Imperial Assemblies for the Innocence of the Chinese Religion

Canton, China printed book

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Like their Spanish counterparts, Jesuit priests from Portugal travelled to Asia with the aim of spreading Catholicism. The Portuguese priest António de Gouveia lived in Goa, Macau, and mainland China throughout his life. Gouveia led the writing and publication of this account of his life and the lives of other Jesuits in Guangzhou, China between 1666 and 1671.

First part of the account written by Father Adriano de las Cortes of the Company of Jesus, on the travel, shipwreck, and captivity that he with others suffered in Chauzhou, in the Chinese Empire

1621–1626

Philippines

illustrated manuscript, ink on paper and rice paper Bequest of Archer M. Huntington, 1956

Adriano de las Cortes, a Spanish Jesuit priest who had settled in the Philippines, was arrested in 1625 with a group of Spaniards who were trying to enter China via Macau. De las Cortes published this account of the experience upon his return to Manila.

Diego de Rueda y Mendoza

active Mexico, 1598

died Manila, Philippines, 1636

José Villanueva

born Gumiel de Izán, Spain, 1734 died China, 1794

The Classic of Mountains and Seas

(Shan hai jing), Natural History Expanded and Published by Doctor Jincio

1787

printed book

Bequest of Archer M. Huntington to The Hispanic Society of America, 1956

In the 1780s, Spanish-born José Villanueva translated the ancient Chinese encyclopedic text *The Classic of Mountains and Seas* (Shan hai jing) into Spanish and printed his version in Manila. Through trade in the Philippines, Spaniards developed a great interest in Chinese cultural and scientific history.

True Account of the Funeral Exequies that the Illustrious City of Manila Celebrated on the Death of His Majesty King Philip III and the Royal Festivities Held on the Happy Succession of His Only Heir and Our King Philip IV

1625

manuscript

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

This book, written in 1625, documents the elaborate rituals conducted in Manila after the death of King Philip III, who was buried in Spain. These were immediately followed with celebrations for the new king, Philip IV, son of the late monarch.

PRINTING AS A TOOL OF COLONIZATION

The printing press played an essential role in colonial expansion in the Americas and in the Philippines. In 1539, Emperor Charles V granted the archbishop of Mexico City permission to bring a printing press from Europe. The first printed texts in the Americas were religious documents that were used in converting Indigenous people to Catholicism.

In 1593, a Dominican priest built a printing press in Manila with the help of a Chinese printer. This press was immediately put to use issuing religious documents, among them a text on Catholic doctrine in Spanish and Tagalog. Colonial authorities also issued books on the Spanish renaming of plants, animals, and people.

in case right:

Battista Agnese

born and died Genoa, Italy, around 1500–1564

World Atlas

around 1550

illuminated manuscript charts on parchment

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Battista Agnese was one of the most celebrated mapmakers of his day and counted Spanish and English kings amongst his patrons. This atlas contains 14 charts of three oceans and several seas.

Spanish author and artist once known

Manual of Nautical and Astronomical Instructions for Use by the Universidad de Mareantes

around 1585

manuscript on paper

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Spanish author once known

Ordinances Made by the University of Seafarers and Pilots of the Route and Navigation of the Indies ...

for the Hospital and Confraternity of Our Lady of Fair Winds

1569

manuscript

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

on wall:

Luis Lagarto de la Vega

born Seville, Spain, around 1556 died present-day Mexico, after 1619

Illuminated capital G from a choir book

around 1600

illustration on parchment

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Even after the printing press arrived in Mexico City in 1539, patrons still found use for lavish, hand-illuminated manuscripts on parchment. Luis Lagarto de la Vega trained in Seville, Spain, then found great commercial success after moving to Mexico.

SPANISH WOMEN AS ARTISTS

While Spain was home to very few professional women artists, key figures emerged in the 1600s. Luisa Roldán and Andrea de Mena learned how to make sculptures in the workshops of their respective fathers, who were themselves established professionals. Luisa Roldán was the first woman to hold the position of court sculptor and the first woman to be admitted to the prestigious Accademia di San Lucca in Rome. Andrea de Mena lived as a nun throughout her adult life and produced sculpture for her convent.

In general, relatively few details about the lives of women artists tend to be preserved in historical archives. For instance, little is known about the life and training of painter María Villamor, and very few works by her survive.

María Villamor

active Spain, around 1700

Virgin and Child (decoration for a headboard)

1702

oil on canvas

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY Gift of Robert C. Graham, Graham Galleries, 1977

Sor Andrea Mena y Bitoria

Spanish, 1654–1734

Jesus Suffering (Ecce Homo) and Virgin of Sorrows (Mater Dolorosa)

1675

wood and polychrome

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

attributed to Luisa Roldán

born Seville, Spain, 1650 died Madrid, Spain, 1704

Head of Saint John the Baptist and Head of Saint Paul

1692–1706

polychromed terracotta

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

attributed to Luisa Roldán

born Seville, Spain, 1650 died Madrid, Spain, 1704

Figure of St. Michael

around 1670 –1704

carved wood with polychrome decoration and gilding

On loan from ROM (Royal Ontario Museum) Toronto, Canada; museum purchase

Juan Carreño de Miranda

born Avilès, Spain, 1614 died Madrid, Spain, 1685

Virgin of the Immaculate Conception

1670

oil on canvas

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Fray Alonso López de Herrera

born Valladolid, Spain, around 1580

died Zacatecas, present-day Mexico, after 1648

Virgin of the Immaculate Conception

1640

oil on copper

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

The Spanish painter and friar Alonso López de Herrera moved to Mexico in 1608 to serve the Archbishop of Mexico City. He painted the vivid scene on the front of this copper panel. The back features engravings of saints and religious symbols. These images served as teaching tools for Catholic missionaries looking to convert colonial subjects.

Diego Velázquez

born Seville, Spain, 1599 died Madrid, Spain, 1660

Portrait of a Little Girl

around 1638 –1642

oil on canvas

The Hispanic Society of America, Partial Gift of Mrs. Collis P. Huntington (née Arabella Duval; subsequently Mrs. Henry E. Huntington), 1909

Velázquez painted this portrait of a girl after he had established himself in the Spanish court. The work is unfinished, and the identity of the girl is unknown. She may be a young relative of the artist. Regardless, this painting is a superb example of Velázquez's talent for creating vivid, life-like portraits of real people.

Diego Velázquez

born Seville, Spain, 1599 died Madrid, Spain, 1660

Gaspar de Guzmán, Count-Duke of Olivares

around 1625–1626

oil on canvas

The Hispanic Society of America, Gift of Mrs. Collis P. Huntington (née Arabella Duval; subsequently Mrs. Henry E. Huntington), in memory of Collis P. Huntington, 1910

Diego Velázquez developed his reputation as one of the greatest painters of all time while working in the Spanish court of King Philip IV. He received artistic training in his home city of Seville before moving to Madrid in 1622. This portrait of the Count-Duke of Olivares is one of the first paintings Velázquez produced after joining Philip's court. The Count-Duke was the king's most trusted advisor, and this imposing likeness conveys the man's authority through his dress and stance.

Antonis Mor

born Utrecht, Netherlands, 1512 –1516

died Antwerp, Spanish Netherlands (now Belgium), around 1576

Fernando Álvarez de Toledo, Third Duke of Alba

1549

oil on wood

Presented to The Hispanic Society by Archer M. Huntington, before 1913

A trusted advisor to two Spanish kings (Charles V and Philip II) throughout the 1500s, Fernando Álvarez de Toledo was also an accomplished military leader. He played a significant role in the country's fight against the rise of Protestant Christianity across Europe, and was part of the imperial administration in Spain's territories in present-day Italy and Belgium.

TRANSLATION AND CONVERSION

Religious authorities in colonial cities across the empire used printing presses to produce tools for the conversion of Indigenous peoples to Catholicism. These included dictionaries in Indigenous languages like Nahuatl and Aymara, as well as translated sermons, guides to confession, and texts on Christian morals and religious rituals.

Clerics carried this literature as they travelled across colonized territories, building churches and monasteries. The books were also sold to the public in Spain.

Artist once known

Iconographic Plan of the Most Noble Mexico City, made in the year 1776

1776

oil on canvas

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

René Gabriel Rabié

French, active in present-day Haiti, 1742–1785

View of the Royal Palace and Plaza Mayor,

Mexico City

1768

ink, and coloured pencil and wash on paper

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Pedro Calvo

Mexican, active 1825

View of the Capital of Mexico

1825

watercolour wash, pen and black ink, and graphite on paper On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Ignacio López Aguado

Mexican, active 1810

View of the Plaza and Cathedral of Mexico as it was the Year of 1796 (after José Joaquín Fabregat, Vista de la Plaza de México, 1797)

1810

paper and dark blue sateen mounted on wood and glass

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Cut-paper art has been made in Mexico for many centuries and the practice continues to flourish today. In the early 1800s, artists in Mexico City were known for producing especially elaborate cut-paper works. Ignacio López Aguado's monumental landscape of Mexico City's cathedral and plaza sits above looping, decorative text; the scene is framed with a meticulous border that suggests fine lace.

Books by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz

As a child in Mexico in the 1600s, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz was an avid reader and scholar. Fluent in Latin, Nahuatl, and Spanish, she studied philosophy and religion, and was greatly admired in the court of the viceroy of Mexico. At 19, Sor Juana entered convent life. There, she maintained an enormous library and wrote extensively about religious and social philosophy as well as music. She also composed romantic poetry in which she clearly expressed her love and desire for women, and these texts were published and promoted by her major patroness, the Vicereine of Mexico.

Works in case left to right:

Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz

born San Miguel Nepantla, present-day Mexico, 1648 died Mexico City, present-day Mexico, 1695

Sacramental Play of the Divine Narcissus, Through Allegories

1690

printed book

Bequest of Martha June Yakeley to The Hispanic Society of America, 2002

Sor Juana wrote three surviving auto sacramentales, plays that were performed during the Catholic festival of Corpus Christi. The Divine Narcissus is the most popular and widely studied of the three.

Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz

born San Miguel Nepantla, present-day Mexico, 1648 died Mexico City, present-day Mexico, 1695

The Castalian Flood of the Only Poet, Tenth Muse, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz

1689

printed book

Gift of Archer M. Huntington to The Hispanic Society of America, before 1909

According to ancient Greek mythology, poets who drank from the Castalian Fountain at Delphi would achieve genius. Sor Juana named her poetry collection after this fountain. Throughout the empire, she was associated with the wisdom of the ancient Greeks and known as the “Tenth Muse” (an addition to the nine Greek goddesses of artistic inspiration).

Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz

born San Miguel Nepantla, present-day Mexico, 1648 died Mexico City, present-day Mexico, 1695

Carols that Were Sung in the Holy Church Cathedral of Mexico on the Matins of the Glorious Prince of the Church, Saint Peter

1677

printed book

Bequest of Archer M. Huntington to The Hispanic Society of America, 1956

Painted nuns' shields

Nun's shields are round paintings worn on the upper chest, over a nun's habit. In colonial Mexico, nuns were prohibited from wearing lavish gold and silver jewellery; they responded by ornamenting their bodies with religious paintings. Each shield is different and reflects the tastes and beliefs of the person who commissioned and wore it.

Works on wall left to right:

Manuel Serna

Mexican, active mid–18th century

Nun's Shield: Immaculate Conception and Saints

around 1750

oil on copper

Gift of Mrs. Robert W. De Forest, to The Hispanic Society of America, 1934

José Páez

Mexican, 1727–1790

Nun's Shield: Annunciation and Saints

1750–1760

oil on copper

Gift of Mrs. Robert W. De Forest, to The Hispanic Society of America, 1934

Mexican artist once known

Nun's Shield: Immaculate Conception with Saints

around 1780

oil on copper

Gift of Mrs. Robert W. De Forest, to The Hispanic Society of America, 1934

Juan Rodríguez

born and died Mexico City, present-day Mexico, 1675–1728

Nun's Shield: Virgin of the Immaculate Conception with Saints

around 1725

watercolour and mixed media on parchment, mounted on cardboard On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

CONVENT LIFE FOR WOMEN

In Spain and across the empire, many women were drawn to the convent, where they found education and an alternative to marriage. Nuns from wealthy families lived privileged lives in the convent, with enslaved servants and access to libraries full of books. While their activities were governed by male spiritual leaders, nuns found freedom as art patrons—and, in some cases, as art makers.

Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (1648–1695) was born in Mexico City and lived a dramatic and controversial life. In her popular writing, she advocated for women's intellectual freedom and right to education.

Mexican artist once known

Rebozo

1775–1800

silk with polychrome embroidery and threads wrapped with silver and gold

The Hispanic Society of America, Gift of Mrs. Robert W. DeForest, 1934

Rebozos are large, rectangular shawls that women in Mexico have worn since the 1500s. The example on display here is made from silk, gold, silver, and linen threads. The geometric and linear patterns are woven on a loom, but the rebozo is finished with fine embroidery: pomegranates, flowers, vines, deer, dogs, and birds, in red, blue, green, and yellow, dance across a white field.

Chinese artist once known

Mantón de Manila

around 1870–1920

silk (ground fabric, polychrome embroidery yarn and floss, macramé fringe)

The Lucrezia Bori Collection; Presented to The Hispanic Society Museum and Library by Jennie Grazzini, 1983

The mantón de Manila—which can be traced back to both the Filipino alampay and the Spanish pañuelo—is a square, embroidered silk shawl that women in the Philippines began to wear while under Spanish colonization. These colourful items of clothing were produced in nearby Canton, China. Over time, mantónes de Manila became popular among women in Latin America and Spain, thanks to Spanish trade across the Pacific.

Francisco Álvarez Barreiro

born Susaño de Sil, Spain, before 1685 died present-day Mexico, after 1730

Chorographic and Hydrographic Map of the Provinces of New Mexico, Sonora, Ostimuri, Sinaloa, Culiacán, New Biscay, Nayarit, New Kingdom of León, New Extremadura or Coahuila, and that of the New Kingdom of Philippines, Province of the Tejas, All of the Number of Those of New Spain

1728

manuscript

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Joan Martines

Mallorcan, active 1556–1591

Atlas of the Mediterranean Sea and Eastern Atlantic

1582

5 illuminated manuscript charts on parchment

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Top left:

Ludovico Bertonio

born Rocca Contrada, present-day Arcevia, Italy, 1557

died Lima, present-day Peru, 1625

Vocabulary of the Aymara Language

1612

manuscript

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Below left:

Otomi or Nahuatl artist once known (images)

Spanish scribe once known (text)

Codex from Otlazpan, near present-day Tepeji, Mexico

1549–1550

watercolour on paper

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

The Codex Otlazpan outlines the demands made by the Spanish imperial powers colonizing the Indigenous peoples of Otlazpan, northwest of Mexico City. The text is composed both of Spanish text and pictographs that conform to Otomí and Nahuatl spoken languages.

Top centre:

Fabián de Aquino

active in present-day Mexico, second half of the 16th century

Sermons, and Devotional and Moral Miscellany in the Mexican Language (Nahuatl)

after 1560

manuscript

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Below right:

Artist once known

Joaquín Antonio de Basarás (author)

active Mexico, 1760s

Origin, Customs, and Present State of Mexicans and Filipinos

1763

illuminated manuscript on paper

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Joaquín Antonio Basarás was born in Bilbao, Spain, and Alonso de Molina and moved to Mexico in the early 1760s to work as a gold and silver merchant. He produced a book describing Indigenous customs that he saw in Mexico and the Philippines, accompanied by a set of watercolours that capture highly detailed views of life in Mexico.

Top right:

Alonso de Monila

born Escalona, Spain, 1511/1512

died Mexico City, present-day Mexico, 1584

Brief Confession Manual in the Mexican Language and Spanish

1565

manuscript

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

GALLEON TRADE ACROSS THE PACIFIC

The Manila Galleon Trade was a shipping route that connected colonial traders in Acapulco, Mexico, and Manila, in the Philippines. Beginning in 1565, Spanish merchant ships made annual journeys from the Americas to Manila, carrying gold, silver, and precious gems. They returned to Mexico bearing porcelain, spices, and textiles from China, by way of Manila. Religious sculpture and paintings were also traded. For the first time, Asia and the Americas had a system to sustain continuous trade.

Affluent collectors in Spain and Latin America used this channel to accumulate Asian luxury goods. Their treasures were widely admired by artists of Mexico, who reconceived the newly imported forms using local materials and techniques.

Artist once known, from present-day Philippines

Manila galleon chest

around 1700

carved narra wood with brass and wrought-iron hardware On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Artist once known

from present-day Chile

Two altar lamps from the Monasterio de las Claristas, Santiago, Chile

around 1675

red-slipped earthenware with painted decoration and glass inserts On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

LACQUERWARE IN THE AMERICAS

Artists in Mexico and Colombia drew inspiration from imported Asian art and adapted their own traditions to create new art forms.

Lacquer refers to clear, shiny, and durable finishes made from a variety of trees, plants, and insects. For centuries, artists in Colombia, Mexico, and Asia have produced elaborate lacquer goods. The lacquerware of colonial Latin America was celebrated for the way its creators adapted European subjects as well as Asian and Indigenous decorative forms.

left to right:

Artist once known from

present-day Olinálá, Mexico

Casket

1750–1799

Mexican lacquer on wood with iron hardware

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Artist once known from present-day Pasto, Colombia

Casket

1625–1650

barniz de Pasto

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Artist once known from present-day Pasto, Colombia

Gourd vase

1600–1699

Lacquer and barniz de Pasto

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Artist once known from present-day Pasto, Colombia

Coffer

around 1650

barniz de Pasto lacquer on wood with silver and gold leaf and silver mounts

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

left to right:

Artist once known from present-day Peribán, Michoacán, Mexico

Trays (Bateas)

around 1650

Mexican lacquer on wood

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Artist once known from present-day Peru

Tray

1750–1799

wood with painted decoration (mopa mopa?)

The Hispanic Society of America, Museum Acquisitions Fund, 2005

Bateas are large decorative trays that evolved from the dishes used to pan for gold in riverbeds. The lacquer artists of Mexico and Colombia produced enormous bateas and used the oversized trays as canvases for their craft. The Indigenous artists who produced these objects are not well known today, but one workshop added a kind of signature: their bateas include a line of greyhounds running around the perimeter of the rim. Many were produced for colonial patrons and feature European imagery: a Greek goddess is at the centre of one of the examples here; the other shows portraits of Spaniards.

left to right:

Works by artists once known

Búcaros de Indias from present-day Tonalá, Jalisco, Mexico

Sculpture of a fish

around 1650

black micaceous clay

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Handled bowl with fish

and other applied decoration

around 1650

black micaceous clay

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Vase with ormolu mounts

around 1650

white-slipped earthenware with gilding and late 17th-century ormolu mounts

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Sculpture of a young turkey or hen

around 1650

black micaceous clay

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Handled bowl with bird and applied decoration

around 1650

black micaceous clay

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Artist once known

from the Los Galgos Workshop

active present-day Pátzcuaro, Mexico

Batea with greyhound decoration

late 18th century

wood, Mexican lacquer, polychromy, and gilding

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Bateas are large decorative trays that evolved from the dishes used to pan for gold in riverbeds. The lacquer artists of Mexico and Colombia produced enormous bateas and used the oversized trays as canvases for their craft. The Indigenous artists who produced these objects are not well known today, but one workshop added a kind of signature: their bateas include a line of greyhounds running around the perimeter of the rim. Many were produced for colonial patrons and feature European imagery: a Greek goddess is at the centre of one of the examples here; the other shows portraits of Spaniards.

Artist once known from

present-day Pasto, Colombia

Portable Writing Desk

around 1684

barniz de Pasto lacquer on wood

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

attributed to Damián Hernández

active Puebla, present-day Mexico, 1607–1653

Jar with handles

around 1660

tin-glazed earthenware with cobalt overglaze

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Chinese blue-and-white porcelain arrived in Mexico as early as 1565. Local potters quickly adopted the style, using cobalt blue on white backgrounds and occasionally painting figures in Chinese dress.

Artist once known from present-day Peribán, Michoacán, Mexico

Fall-front cabinet

around 1650 –1699

Mexican lacquer with polychrome decoration

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Francesco de Zurbarán

born Fuente de Cantos, Spain, 1598 died Madrid, Spain, 1664

Saint Emerentiana

around 1635–1640

oil on canvas

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Zurbarán began his training in Seville and quickly became one of the city's premier artists. In the 1630s, he was invited to Madrid, where he worked alongside Velázquez. Later in life, he exported his large religious paintings to Latin America; there, artists studied his canvases.

Saint Emerentiana was an early convert to Christianity. She was stoned to death and became a martyr. Zurbarán references these details with the rocks and holy books in his subject's hands.

END OF EMPIRE, AGE OF REBELLION

The Spanish Empire dissolved over the course of a century. In the early 1800s, Napoleon Bonaparte appointed his brother to rule Spain after the country easily fell to his troops. In the early decades of the 1800s, independence across Latin America yielded new, self-governing nations free from imperial rule.

By the end of the century, Spain had lost the Spanish-American War and was forced to hand over the Philippines and Puerto Rico to the United States. At this point, there was very little colonial territory left in the Spanish Empire. Cuba and the Philippines would later assert their independence from American rule; Puerto Rico remains under American rule.

José Campeche

born and died San Juan, present-day Puerto Rico, 1751–1809

Saint Dominic of Guzmán

around 1790s

oil on wood

Collection Art Gallery of Ontario; purchase, with funds by exchange from the Ludwig Mond Estate, Miss L. Aileen Larkin, and the Family of W.R. Brock, 2021

José Campeche

born and died San Juan, present-day Puerto Rico, 1751–1809

Doña María Catalina de Urrutia

1788

oil on wood

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Maria Catalina de Urrutia was the daughter of the mayor of Havana, Cuba in the mid-1700s. At 17, she married Colonel Juan Andrés Dabán y Busterino, a Spaniard stationed in Puerto Rico, who later served as governor of the island. In this portrait, Maria presides over a lavish painted and gilded salon in the Governor's Palace in San Juan. Her dress, jewellery, and powdered wig reflect the latest fashions in Spain at that time.

José Campeche, who painted this portrait, was the son of Tomás Campeche, an enslaved artisan and a migrant from the Canary Islands. Despite his humble upbringing, Campeche became the most celebrated painter of his day in Puerto Rico.

Francisco de Goya

born Fuendetodos, Spain, 1746 died Bordeaux, France, 1828

Portrait of Pedro Mocarte

around 1805

oil on canvas

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

This portrait of singer Pedro Mocarte is totally different from Goya's formal portrait of the aristocrat Manuel Lapeña hanging nearby. Free from the trappings of bureaucratic and military authority, this warm, intimate rendering of an aging man conveys a candid sense of the subject's personality. Goya paints Mocarte, who was his good friend, dressed as a bullfighter.

This may reflect a trend of that era, but it could also be an expression of the artist's own passion for bullfights.

Casta Painting

around 1715

oil on canvas

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Colonial authorities believed that African and Indigenous peoples were inferior to Spaniards, and disapproved of European colonizers having children with members of these groups. They established elaborate systems to classify offspring who were born from these relationships categorizing them according to "castas," a term meaning lineage. This practice created a social hierarchy, with Europeans at the top, followed by non-Europeans and those of mixed heritage.

A viceroy of Mexico commissioned the painter Juan Rodríguez Juárez to illustrate this system with a series of captioned works. Throughout the 1700s, artists were hired to produce different versions of casta paintings, many of which were sent to Europe.

RACE: A COLONIAL PSEUDOSCIENCE

As Europeans travelled to the Americas, Africa, and Asia, they encountered cultures they considered to be very different from themselves. They referred to the diverse peoples in the Americas as "indios," mistakenly thinking of various Indigenous groups as one people with common traits.

This was the beginning of the colonial European idea that human beings are divided into different categories, or races. There is no scientific basis for the belief that there are biological distinctions that exist between humans indigenous to different countries or territories.

This socially constructed idea underpinned Europeans' concept of their own innate superiority and allowed them to justify colonizing and enslaving non-Europeans, who, in this framework, were inferior to the colonizers. These incorrect and harmful ideas have a lasting legacy—they can be understood as the roots of systemic racism in today's society.

José Agustín Arrieta

born Santa Ana Chiautempan, present-day Mexico, 1803 died Puebla, Mexico, 1874

El Costeño / The Young Man from the Coast

after 1843

oil on canvas

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

As a young man, Arrieta moved to Puebla to train at the academy of fine arts, and he remained in the city for the rest of his successful career as a painter of scenes of daily life. The title of this work suggests that the young man comes from the Afro-Mexican community that had long thrived on Mexico's gulf coast. Slavery had been fully abolished in Mexico just a few years earlier, in 1837, so it is possible the young man was born to enslaved parents. He holds a basket of typical Mexican fruits, which includes melon, avocado, pineapple, cactus pear, mamey, and mango.

Francisco de Goya

born Fuendetodos, Spain, 1746 died Bordeaux, France, 1828

Don Manuel Lapeña, later Marquis of Bondad Real

1799

oil on canvas

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

A celebrated court artist, Goya made portraits of the most powerful members of Spanish society. These likenesses were not always flattering, and many of his artworks included harsh critiques of Spanish society and customs. Manuel Lapeña was an army colonel and a member of the aristocracy. A few years after he posed for this portrait, Lapeña fought in the Peninsular War against Napoleon's troops.

Sebastián Muñoz

born Navalcarnero, Spain, around 1654 died Madrid, Spain, 1690

Maria Luisa of Orléans, Queen of Spain, Lying in State

1689–1690

oil on canvas

On loan from The Hispanic Society of America, New York, NY

Juan Rodríguez Juárez

born and died Mexico City, present-day Mexico, 1675–1728

DAGUERREOTYPES FROM THE PHILIPPINES

The first photographs made in the Philippines were daguerreotypes, produced in the early 1840s, shortly after the technology was invented. They were commissioned by American industrialists during a period in which foreign merchants were drawn to the islands to capitalize on Spain's weakening colonial influence in the region. The photographer was likely Jules

Alphonse Eugene Itier (1802–1877), who travelled around the world working as a French government official.

These images reflect two places: Manila and the province of Laguna. Both are located on Luzon, the largest and most densely populated of the thousands of islands that comprise the Philippines. This region has long been home to varied cultures, languages, and peoples. In the 1560s, however, Spanish navigators grouped the islands together under a single colonial administration named after their king, Philip II. These photographs are exceptional for their early date, their quality, and their large size.

Ayuntamiento de Manila on Cabildo Street

One of the administrative centres for Spanish colonization of the Philippines was the Ayuntamiento, first built in 1599. The version seen here was built in 1738, following an earthquake. This building was the site where Spanish powers transferred colonial control of the Philippines to the Americans in 1898.

San Fernando from the Gaskills' home

View of a church

People sitting in the Plazuela de San Gabriel, present-day Plaza Cervantes, Manila

This daguerreotype is the only one in this suite that features people. This is likely due to the fact that they were sitting in place long enough for their image to register on the plate. The people are seated in the shade of the plaza's buildings, taking shelter from Manila's strong sun.

Market stalls on Rosario Street and Binondo Church, Chinatown, Manila

Normally, this street would be teeming with people and activity. We don't know whether it was the intention of the photographer to not show people in these environments or if it was due to the nature of the technology: for subjects to appear on the plate, they had to remain still for an extended period of time.

Landing place and floating Bridge of Taguig, at the entrance of Laguna Lake

View of the Marikina River

The Marikina River runs along the outskirts of Manila and was an important transport route under Spanish colonization.

Manila Cathedral

Founded in 1571, the Manila Cathedral was rebuilt several times over centuries due to natural disasters. The version seen here is the fifth reconstruction of the cathedral, and was designed by Italian architect and friar Juan de Ugucioni.

View of Pagsanjan, Laguna Province

Stilt houses on the road leading out of Majayjay to Magdalena, Laguna Province

While many of the daguerreotypes in this suite depict Manila and its surrounding areas, the towns of Majayjay, Magdalena, and Pagsanjan are all over 100 kilometres south of the country's capital.

WHAT IS A DAGUERREOTYPE? WHAT IS A PHILIPPINE DAGUERREOTYPE?

In 1839 in Paris, Louis-Jacques-Mandé Daguerre introduced the first widely used method for producing direct-positive photographs. His “daguerreotype” was made with a highly polished, silver-coated copper plate, which was fumed with iodine vapour to create a light-sensitive surface. After exposure to light in a camera, the plate was developed with hot mercury vapour to reveal the image.

The daguerreotype process was challenging because of the environmental conditions of the Philippines. When these photographs were first produced in the 1840s, makers had to import most of the materials directly from France to the Philippines. The machinery was heavy, and the processes required the physical and technical labour of local assistants. The humidity, light, and heat in the Philippines—and even the characteristics of the water in the region—resulted in daguerreotypes that are unique to the islands where they were made.

View of Chinatown and Binondo Church, Manila

Binondo Church, which was founded by Dominican priests in 1596, is located in Manila's Chinatown neighbourhood—the oldest Chinatown in the world. Prior to Spanish colonial rule, this neighbourhood was a thriving site of Chinese commerce and remains so to this day.

Stilt houses in Tondo, Manila

Casa de Hacienda, Marikina

View from Mr. Sturgis's residence, Bridge of Meisic near Chinatown, Manila

The American Sturgis family traded locally produced sugar and molasses to the Americas for rum distilleries. Several daguerreotypes show the Sturgis residences or surrounding lands, which suggests that the family played a role in the photographer's visit to the Philippines.

View on the Marikina River, near Casa de Hacienda