

Spanish Art, 1600-1700

Spain was a part of the Hapsburg realm, which also included the Dutch provinces and the Holy Roman Empire in central Europe. In the late 16th century, King Philip II began an effort to lead Spain to the forefront of European culture. He imported the talent of the Venetian painter Titian, and during the reigns of Philip III and Philip IV, artists such as Velázquez and Murillo gained renown throughout the continent, trumpeting the refinement and position of the Spanish court. Philip IV rivaled his grandfather, Philip II, commissioning magnificent portraits and decorative cycles from Italian, French, Flemish, as well as Spanish artists of rising stature.

Spanish painting was heavily influenced by northern European and Italian art, and native artists responded to the predilection for naturalistic detail and form while embracing the drama and emotion of the Italian Baroque. Bold contrasts between light and shadow – a technique known as *tenebroso* – created dramatic settings for religious scenes. Artists used strong diagonal compositions and pulled figures to the picture plane to create the illusion that the painted canvas extended into the viewer’s space, facilitating the mystical experience of personal interaction with the divine.



Bartolomé Estabán Murillo

Spanish, 1618-1682, active in Seville

Saint Joseph with the Standing Infant Christ Child, c. 1670-75

Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 349

Though usually depicted with the Virgin Mary, in the 17th century the Christ child was often shown with his father, St. Joseph, who had become the focus of his own cult. Murillo, like Velázquez before him, depicted scenes of everyday life, known as genre paintings, as well as devotional images. He often imbued his paintings of the Holy Family with an informality and intimacy more commonly expressed in genre scenes, perhaps in an attempt to convey the tenderness between father, mother, and child.



Jorge Manuel Theotokopoulos

Spanish, c. 1578-1631, active in Toledo

Saint Martin Dividing His Cloak with the Beggar

Oil on canvas

Gift of Mrs. Thomas N. Metcalf and Richard C. Paine, 1951, SN 656

This painting by El Greco's son repeats the composition of one of his father's most admired works. However, Jorge Manuel has added the obelisk to the right, reflecting his other professional activity as an architect. Stylistic differences between El Greco and his son are evident in this painting. Jorge Manuel does not use the soft brushstrokes of his father; rather, he accentuates the muscularity of the figures through the bold patterning of light and shadow.



Diego Velázquez

Spanish, 1599-1660, active in Seville and Madrid

***Philip IV, King of Spain*, c. 1625-28**

Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 336

Philip IV (1605-1665) ruled Spain and its dominions for over forty years during the 17th century. Much of his reign was spent at war, and it was as a military leader that Velázquez most often portrayed him. Indeed, this is probably the earliest of the artist's military portraits of Philip. Velázquez made several modifications to the composition such as the outline of the monarch's cape and armor and the position of the table. These changes, called *pentimenti*, are easily visible to the naked eye and testify to the young painter's search for an appropriate image for the powerful king.



Francisco de Zurbarán, circle of

Spanish, 1598-1664, active in Seville and Madrid

***Sara*, c. 1630**

Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 343

This representation of Sara (the wife of Abraham) and the adjacent painting of Abigail are from a series representing Old Testament heroines by an artist either very close to Zurbarán or working directly in his workshop. The most recent attributions include Antonio del Castillo y Saavedra and Juan de Valdés Leal. These paintings were at one time in the collection of the Spanish Post-Impressionist painter Ignacio Zuloaga, a now almost forgotten artist who was immensely popular in the early 20th century.



Juan Carreño de Miranda

Spanish, 1614-1685, active in Avilez and Madrid

Portrait of Doña Mariaña of Austria, Queen of Spain as Widow and Regent, c. 1673

Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 338

Mariaña was the second wife of Philip IV; his first wife, Elizabeth of Bourbon, died in 1649. After Philip's death in 1665, Mariaña reigned as Queen Regent until 1675. She is shown wearing the habit of a nun (common dress for royal widows) and seated in the Hall of Mirrors in the Alcázar Palace. In the portrait, Carreño stresses the maturity and resoluteness of the Regent, who was frequently at odds with the nobility, and whose son Charles II was the last Hapsburg monarch of Spain.



Juan de Pareja

Spanish, 1606-1670, active in Seville and Madrid

The Flight into Egypt, 1658

Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 339

Pareja was of Muslim descent, and he became an assistant to Diego Velázquez in the 1630s and accompanied him to Italy in 1649. In Rome, Velázquez painted a portrait of Pareja (Metropolitan Museum, New York) that so astonished the city's leading artists and connoisseurs that Pope Innocent X immediately commissioned Velázquez to paint his portrait (Doria Pamphili Gallery, Rome). Despite his long association with Velázquez, Pareja's style in this painting betrays little of his famous colleague's

influence. Instead, Pareja looked to Italian artists of the 16th century (especially Titian) as models.



El Greco (Domenikos Theotokopoulos), and workshop
Greek, c. 1541-1614, active in Crete, Italy, and Toledo

Saint Paul, c. 1605

Oil on canvas

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Polak, 1963, SN 714

While painting workshops were common in the 17th century, El Greco's workshop in Toledo was particularly large, and many of the works produced during the artist's lifetime include the hand of his son. Jorge Manuel Theotokopoulos, a painting assistant (and an architect), became the head of the workshop following his father's death. Continuing in the style of elongated figures and

almost surreal topographical formations, his work perpetuated the mysterious palette and compositions of his father.



Alonso Cano

Spanish, 1601-1667, active in Seville and Madrid

Saint John the Evangelist's Vision of the Lamb,
1638

Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 345

Cano was a pupil of Francisco Pacheco in Seville, where he became lifelong friends with fellow student Diego Velázquez. In fact, Velázquez and his assistant Juan de Pareja (one of whose paintings also hangs in this gallery) acted as witnesses in the sale of Cano's house in Seville. Cano's life was marked by turmoil – his wife was murdered in 1644, and Cano was suspected of hiring the assassins, although he was later acquitted. He was also active as an architect and sculptor and was responsible for the design of the façade of the Cathedral in Granada.



Alonso Cano

Spanish, 1601-1667, active in Seville and Madrid

***Saint John the Evangelist's Vision of God*, 1638**

Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 344

This painting and *Saint John the Evangelist's Vision of the Lamb* (also displayed in this gallery), showing scenes of Saint John's visions as recounted in the Book of Revelation, were originally part of a large multi-paneled altarpiece in the convent church of Saint Paul in Seville. Other paintings from this now dismantled altarpiece are now in the Louvre, Paris, and the Wallace Collection, London. Cano introduces highly keyed, theatrical colors and bright lighting to accentuate the visionary nature of the subject matter.



Jusepe de Ribera

Spanish, 1590-1652, active in Naples

***Madonna and Child*, 1643**

Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 334

The unusual image of the Madonna and Child perched on a lunar crescent was of a type (called the Immaculate Virgin) meant to promote the doctrine that Mary was free from original sin. Interestingly, the use of the moon to convey the idea of purity persists in sayings such as “chaste as the moon.” The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception was especially important to Catholic artists of the 17th century. This image of the Virgin was derived from the vision of Saint John the Evangelist who, in the New Testament Book of Revelation, described a woman “clothed with the sun, and with the moon under her feet.”



Francisco de Zurbarán, circle of
Spanish, 1598-1664, active in Seville and Madrid

Abigail, c. 1630
Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 342

The Old Testament heroine Abigail became the wife of David after feeding him and his troops during his flight from King Saul. Together, Abigail and David were considered ancestors of Christ, and for this reason she is shown being led by the vision of a chalice. As in Rubens's *Eucharist Series*, various Old Testament characters are seen as prefigurations of Christian concepts, and the bread Abigail holds is a harbinger of the Eucharistic host.



Francisco Camilo
Spanish, c. 1615-1671, active in Madrid

Saint Louis Contemplating Death (Mors Imperator), 1651
Oil on canvas

Museum purchase, 1960, SN 711

Louis was a 13th-century French king who participated in the Crusades. Although he is best known as the patron saint of Paris, he was partly Spanish by birth (his mother was Queen Blanche of Castille). This painting serves as reminder that death comes to all – even to kings. The illusionism of the painting connects the viewer to the saint, and reminds the viewer to follow Louis' example in meditating upon the vanity of earthly existence.



El Greco (Domenikos Theotokopoulos)
Greek, c. 1541-1614, active in Crete, Italy,
and Toledo

Jorge Manuel Theotokopoulos
Spanish, c. 1578-1631, active in Toledo

*The Crucifixion with Mary and Saint
John,*

c. 1603-05
Oil on canvas

Bequest of John Ringling, 1936, SN 333

This may be one of the small copies El Greco made after his major works so that his son, Jorge Manuel, would have a stock of images from which to cull after his death. It is a reduced version of a composition first executed by El Greco around 1580. The artist's bold disregard for natural forms and colors heightens the sense of the mystical, and is reflective of the religious fervor of 17th-century Spain.