

SEVILLE IN THE GAZE: LUQUE CABRERA DONATION

Seville in the Gaze features the latest donation by Francisco Luque Cabrera and represents a tribute and expression of our gratitude for his unstinting generosity to the Museum, exemplified by earlier donations made in 1995, 2015 and 2016. Following Don Francisco's death in 2021, this new donation was made possible thanks to the courtesy of his sisters and heirs.

The donation comprises a multifaceted collection of 195 works—paintings, sculptures, drawings, engravings and medals—ranging from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries. The paintings include Diego López's oils and his drawings of the casino in Montecarlo, while the sculptures feature works by Antonio Illanes. Don Francisco enjoyed a close friendship with both of these artists.

Engravings form the largest section of the donation, with a variety of techniques and artists that enrich the Museum's print collection. A small number were made before 1800, but the majority belong to the nineteenth century. They include a group that offers us the vision of Spain by foreign travellers who popularised the image of Seville in Europe, such as the British artists David Roberts and John Frederick Lewis and their French counterparts Gustave Doré and Nicolas Chapuy. Completing this visual chronicle of the city and interest in its customs, monuments and random locales, some of them now lost, are prints by the Spanish artists Francisco Javier Parcerisa, Antonio Chamán and, in the twentieth century, Francisco Cuadrado.

The donation comprises a complete repertoire of engraving techniques, from intaglio, woodcutting and etching to lithography, widely adopted in the nineteenth century, and related methods such as chromolithography.

The show represents a rare opportunity—due to stringent conservation requirements—to admire works on paper, a medium that has become increasingly important in recent years as a visual testimony of social events and changes in urban appearances, therefore offering a deeper insight into the history of towns and cities than is afforded by what are traditionally considered to be the main artistic media: painting and sculpture.

Painting and sculpture in the Luque Cabrera donation

The work of Diego López exemplifies the endurance in Seville of figurative painting linked to the local tradition. A highly-skilled draughtsman with a colourist style characterised by broad, diluted brushstrokes, he cultivated a wide range of subjects, although the paintings in the donation focus on typical female figures. His drawings of the Montecarlo Casino represent a modern counterpoint to his Sevillian-themed canvases, in general more purist. They illustrate the painter's keen interest in the world around him, and his ability to capture the immediacy of a scene in a few rapidly executed lines.

Antonio Illanes was a leading figure of the twentieth-century Sevillian sculpture scene. The *Head of Christ* bust is a fine example of his religious work. The sculptor is best known for this artistic facet, in many cases associated with Holy Week, but his curiosity led him to explore many different subjects and materials. This is clearly evidenced by his small-format bronzes on profane themes. A

sketch modelled in clay by Antonio Susillo, which belonged to Illanes, completes the sculptures in the donation.

Francisco Luque Cabrera's friendship with Diego López and Antonio Illanes led him to include several of their works in his collection, which is otherwise largely made up of engravings and lithographs. Thanks to their donation, they now join the Museum's collection. A landscape by Rafael Cantarero and two urban vistas of the medina in Tangier by Gallegos Arnosá are the final paintings in the donation.

Prints and their different uses

Engraving evolved through the ages to cater to a diverse range of interests that are exemplified in the collection formed by Luque Cabrera. The need to accompany geographical texts with a complementary image inspired the earliest-known views of Seville. In cases closer to cartography than art, the aim was to capture the topography as rigorously as possible. On other occasions, it was more a question of offering a panoramic view of the city, a type of sixteenth-century skyline. Illustrations intended for the study and dissemination of the main monuments pursued the same rigour as the cartographical versions, reproducing the architecture and ornamentation in great detail.

The two etchings by Matías de Arteaga included in Torre Farfán's account of the canonisation of Saint Ferdinand are associated with book printing. They provide a visual aid to the descriptions of the monumental ephemeral structures built for the event. The one of the catafalque of Philip II, erected in Seville Cathedral in 1598, serves a similar documentary purpose. By contrast, the illustration that replicates one of Murillo's paintings for the Capuchin Monastery, held in this museum, occupies the mid-point between reproductive engraving—intended to copy and publicise pictorial works—and devotional engraving.

These different works made between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries were the forerunners to the boom in printing that occurred in the nineteenth century, when new techniques, and lithography in particular, ushered in significant changes for this art form.

The nineteenth century and changes in the city skyline

Romanticism found its way to Seville in 1833, epitomised by the meeting of two artists: Galician-born Genaro Pérez Villaamil and British-born David Roberts. The former, inspired by the latter's landscape art, composed the collection of urban vistas entitled *España artística y monumental*, published in Paris.

A few years later, still in the turbulent days of 19th-century Spain, Antoine d'Orléans, Duke of Montpensier, saw his dynastic ambitions thwarted and created the so-called "small court" in Seville. The establishment of his residence in the city in 1848 prompted the revival of the local art scene. Thanks to his active patronage, the arts flourished, and that included engraving and photography. The popularity of lithography led to the development of several lithographic establishments in the city, such as the one founded by Carlos Santigosa that published *Costumbres andaluzas*, a collection of prints on daily life in Seville.

In the embrace of modernity, the urban appearance of Seville changed dramatically between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: the old gates in the fortified walls were demolished and, with the Ibero-American Exhibition of 1929 on the horizon, the city opened up to the river. Meanwhile, new illustration techniques such as offset printing and chromolithography revolutionised festival posters and advertising.

The quest for the essence of Seville

With its Moorish past, Spain was a prime destination for Romantic travellers looking for exoticism. Throughout the nineteenth century, Seville attracted mainly British and French artists, such as David Roberts, John Frederick Lewis, Nicolas Chapuy and Gustave Doré, whose sketches captured the city's most picturesque side. Their portfolios, packed with life drawings of the most evocative areas, gave rise to prints that not only reflected the city's rich artistic heritage but also the colourful figures who lived here: rascals, cigarette girls, bandits, and courting couples.

Created with different engraving, woodcutting, etching and lithography techniques, these images represent a foreign—and often distorted—vision of daily life in the city. The landscape artist David Roberts, a key figure in the Sevillian school of Romantic painters, became renowned for eloquent images like *The Golden Tower* and *Entrance to the Hall of Ambassadors*.

The nineteenth century also witnessed the development of image-related disciplines such as cartography and photojournalism. Engravings associated with these disciplines sometimes used photographs as their basis. Alfred Guesdon's bird's eye view of Seville and Ernest Girard's *Good Friday Procession* are cases in point.