

**Promotion of Spanish art and culture in the United Kingdom**

**The Museo del Prado and Auckland Castle Trust are collaborating in the creation of a centre for Spanish art in England**

Yesterday, the Museo del Prado and Auckland Castle Trust signed a collaboration agreement by virtue of which will establish a programme to develop joint activities for the study and research of Spanish art and culture, through the creation of a fellowship programme and a Spanish Art Gallery.

The collaboration of both institutions will help Auckland Castle become a centre of excellence for Spanish History of Art and Culture in the United Kingdom.

The series of “Jacob and his Twelve Sons” by Zurbarán, which has hung for more than 250 years in Auckland Castle, the Palace of the Prince Bishops of Durham, in England, is the central inspiration for the foundation of Auckland Castle Trust, a charitable trust which includes among its projects the creation of an International Institute for Spanish art and culture which will comprise a research centre for Spanish art – the Zurbaran Centre in collaboration with Durham University with a new Professorship – and the Spanish Gallery, where works of art will be shown, and exhibitions and cultural activities developed.

**Madrid, 7<sup>th</sup> October 2016** - José Pedro Pérez Llorca, Chairman of the Royal Board of Trustees of the Museo del Prado, Jonathan Ruffer, Chair of the Trustees of Auckland Castle Trust, Miguel Zugaza, Director of the Museo del Prado, and Christopher Ferguson, Curatorial, Conservation and Exhibitions Director at Auckland Castle Trust, signed a collaboration agreement by virtue of which the Museo del Prado will offer Auckland Castle Trust art historical and technical advice on issues relating to the project for the Centre of Spanish and Latin American Art, and will collaborate in the planning of the exhibition programme for Auckland Castle’s Spanish Gallery.

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PRESS RELEASE

For its part, the Auckland Castle Trust will finance the Museo del Prado-Auckland Castle Fellowship, initially for one year duration but which can be extended up to three years, for the development of projects common to both organisations.

Both organisations will establish a programme, of a minimum of three years duration, to plan and define proposals for small format exhibitions in Auckland Castle which demonstrate the breadth of the collections of the Prado and which contextualise the collections at Auckland; also activities linked to the loans, and activities which can be included in academic programmes, exhibitions, research and publications.

**Auckland Castle**

Auckland Castle is the Palace of the Prince Bishops of Durham situated in the north east of England. For over 250 years it has been the custodian of the set of paintings known as “Jacob and his twelve sons” by Francisco de Zurbarán exhibited in its Long Dining Room.

Auckland Castle Trust is a charitable trust created in 2012 with the aim of securing the future of Zurbarán’s paintings at Auckland, and whose objective is to use its historic, cultural and artistic heritage for the purpose of regeneration, progress and education converting the Bishop’s Palace and its adjoining and connected buildings into a focal attraction for cultural and historical heritage and for tourism.

The project, which will make Auckland Castle a centre of excellence of Spanish history of art and culture in the United Kingdom, also includes the restoration of the Bishop’s Palace, the extension of the Scotland Wing, the Walled Garden, the Welcome Centre and the Centre for Spanish Art and Culture, in collaboration with Durham University, and the Spanish Gallery.

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