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Zurbarán Paintings to Tour US

Meadows Museum and The Frick Collection to exhibit seminal works
by Spanish master



Zurbarán and other works on display in the Long Dining Room at Auckland Castle

- A group of paintings by Spanish master Francisco de Zurbarán (1598–1664), currently housed at Auckland Castle, County Durham, will travel to the US for the first time to be exhibited in Texas and New York
- The works, which depict Jacob and his Twelve Sons, have hung in the former palace of the Prince Bishops of Durham for more than 250 years as a representation of the social, political and religious consideration between the Christian and Jewish communities in the UK
- These important seventeenth-century Spanish paintings will be the subject of an in-depth technical study at the **Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas**
- Following this study they will then be shown for the first time outside of Europe at the **Meadows Museum, Dallas, from 17 September, 2017 to 7 January, 2018**, and **The Frick Collection, New York, from 31 January to 22 April, 2018**
- The study and subsequent US exhibitions of the Zurbarán paintings form part of a wider £70m development plan to transform one of Britain's most important historical sites, Auckland Castle, into a major new art and heritage destination for the UK



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The Auckland Castle Trust is pleased to announce that a series of significant paintings by seventeenth-century Spanish painter Francisco de Zurbarán is to begin a tour of some of the most important institutions in the United States.

Following a period of technical examination at the Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas, this seminal set of paintings will be publicly exhibited for the first time outside Europe, first at the Meadows Museum, Dallas, and then at The Frick Collection, New York.

The depictions of Jacob and his sons, created by the Spanish Golden Age master Francisco de Zurbarán in the 1640s, have hung at Auckland Castle since they were bought by Bishop Richard Trevor in 1756, and have only ever left the Castle on two previous occasions, in 1802 and 1995.

The series was saved for the benefit of the people of the North East, along with Auckland Castle, by Jonathan Ruffer in 2010 and has since inspired a major redevelopment of the historic palace.

Six of the paintings, portraying Joseph, Naphtali, Asher, Dan, Levi and Reuben, have already travelled to Texas, with full-scale reproductions hanging in Auckland Castle's Long Dining Room until the site closes for the start of its restoration works in September 2016.

The remaining paintings, representing Jacob, Simeon, Judah, Zebulun, Issachar, Gad and Arthur Pond's copy of Benjamin, will then cross the Atlantic in October.

While in the United States, the paintings will be the focus of their first in-depth technical study, where infrared reflectography, ultra-violet light, x-radiography and pigment analysis will all be used to shed light on the physical properties of the works and offer a better understanding of Zurbarán's artistic process.

This scientific analysis at the Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth will also allow the Auckland Castle Trust to plan and fundraise for the ongoing conservation and care of *Jacob and his Twelve Sons* after they return to the UK.



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The results of the study, supervised by Claire Barry, Director of Conservation at the Kimbell Art Museum, will be published in partnership with the Centro de Estudios Europa Hispánica (CEEH) and Center for Spain in America (CSA).

This will include an exploration of the series from various historical, religious and artistic perspectives, by contributors from around the world, including Dr. Mark A. Roglán, Director, Meadows Museum; Clare Baron, Curator of Temporary Exhibitions at Auckland Castle; Claire Barry, Director of Conservation, Kimbell Art Museum; Professor John Barton, Oriel and Laing Professor of the Interpretation of Holy Scripture, Emeritus at Oxford University; Dr. Christopher Ferguson, Curatorial, Conservation and Exhibitions Director, Auckland Castle; Dr. Susan Grace Galassi, Senior Curator, The Frick Collection; Alexandra Letvin, PhD Candidate, Johns Hopkins University; Dr. Edward Payne, Senior Curator, Spanish Art, Auckland Castle; and Akemi Herráez Vossbrink, PhD Candidate, University of Cambridge.

The Zurbarán paintings will then be exhibited at the Meadows Museum, Dallas, from 17 September, 2017 to 7 January, 2018 and at The Frick Collection, New York from 31 January to 22 April, 2018.

The series will return to Auckland Castle in May 2018, when the Castle reopens to the public following a multi-million pound refurbishment. This in turn forms part of a wider development programme by the Auckland Castle Trust, which also includes the creation of a new gallery exploring faith in the British Isles from the prehistoric era to the present day, as well as a separate Spanish art gallery and research centre.

Dr. Chris Ferguson, Auckland Castle's Curatorial Director, said:

"We are thrilled to be working with major North American partners such as the Meadows Museum, The Meadows Foundation and The Frick Collection. Through their kind support, this collaborative project will allow us to learn much more about these Spanish artistic gems, and will showcase them to a new audience in the United States.

"This partnership marks one of the first steps in County Durham truly becoming the home of Spanish Art in the United Kingdom. International collaboration is fundamental to our ambitions as a new venue for the appreciation, research, and understanding, of the art and culture of the Hispanic world.



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"We hope that these focused exhibitions of art from Auckland Castle will attract transatlantic visitors to explore North East England over the coming years."

Clare Baron, Auckland Castle's Temporary Exhibitions Curator, said:

"Jacob and his Twelve Sons are a wonderful legacy and represent the pinnacle of Spanish painting in the century known as the 'Golden Age'. More than three centuries after they were created they are not just national but international treasures, and we are very fortunate to have them here in the North East."

"Their departure represents the start of a bright new future for Auckland Castle, as well as a unique opportunity for these master works to be studied. Scientific analysis will make it possible to uncover such elements as under-drawing, changes to the composition, and the materials used."

"We hope this thorough examination will give us insight into Zurbarán's creative process and artistic intentions, and shed new light on what today comprises one of the most significant public collections of his work outside Spain."

Ian Wardropper, Director of The Frick Collection, said:

"It is an exceptional opportunity to collaborate with Auckland Castle and the Meadows Museum on the first North American showing of Francisco de Zurbarán's extraordinary series, Jacob and his Twelve Sons."

"The technical analysis that the works will undergo at the Kimbell Art Museum will greatly enrich our understanding of the Sevillian master's methods, while other catalogue essays commissioned for the show will explore the works in historical, cultural, and religious contexts."

"The sheer visual power and rich narrative content of this series will draw visitors in, and will be beautifully complemented by the Frick's strong holdings in Spanish art which include our paintings by Velázquez and Murillo—Zurbarán's contemporaries—as well as by El Greco and Goya."



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Dr. Mark A. Roglán, The Linda P. and William A. Custard Director of the Meadows Museum, said:

"We conceived of this project as an opportunity to make significant contributions to scholarly research about the treasured Spanish master Francisco de Zurbarán.

"In keeping with the Meadows Museum's commitment to advancing the understanding and appreciation of Spanish art, we are thrilled to take part in presenting this wonderful series of paintings to North American audiences for the very first time.

"In collaboration with our associates at Auckland Castle, The Frick Collection, the Kimbell Art Museum, and other colleagues in Europe and North America, the exhibition and its accompanying publication allow us to closely study this major series of paintings in order to provide new technical analysis and art historical research.

"In Dallas, the Meadows Museum's rich collection of Spanish masters will allow visitors to experience Jacob and his Twelve Sons fully contextualized within the history and aesthetic traditions of Spanish art."

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NOTES TO EDITORS

Francisco de Zurbarán (Spanish, 1598-1664), *Jacob and his Twelve Sons*:

The paintings of *Jacob and his Twelve Sons* were painted by the Spanish master Francisco de Zurbarán between 1640 and 1644.

The iconography of the series is derived from the Book of Genesis, Chapter 49. On his deathbed, Jacob called together his twelve sons, who would become the founders of the Twelve Tribes of Israel, which, essentially, represents the start of the Jewish faith. He bestowed on each a "blessing," which foretold their destinies and those of their tribes. These prophecies provide the basis for the manner in which each figure is represented in Zurbarán's series.

The works are believed to have originally been destined for the New World, where in the seventeenth century it was commonly believed the indigenous inhabitants of the Americas were descended from the dispersal of the so-called 'lost' Tribes of Israel.

They have hung in a specially constructed gallery at Auckland Castle since 1756, when the Bishop of Durham, Richard Trevor, bought the series at auction from the collection of a Jewish merchant named Benjamin Mendez.

The paintings are a powerful and artistically unusual symbol of the Judeo-Christian story and their purchase, soon after parliament had repealed the Jewish Naturalisation Act of 1753, was a major political statement about the principle of religious freedom and the integration of Jewish people into British life, as well as the Jewish roots of Christian heritage.

Bishop Trevor was well known by some of the most powerful figures of European royalty, religion, politics and the military, and would regularly entertain them in the Long Dining Room at Auckland Castle where these powerfully symbolic paintings hung. The paintings' presence at Auckland Castle was, and remains to this day, a profound plea for religious tolerance and social equality.



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Auckland Castle Trust:

The restoration of Auckland Castle and associated projects will create a major new art and heritage destination in the North East and for the UK and an important culture-led social economic regeneration initiative for the area.

The Castle itself is benefitting from £17m worth of investment – which includes £10m of funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) – which will see the regeneration of the State Rooms and the building of a new museum wing to house the Faith Galleries exploring the history of faith in the British Isles from pre-history to the modern day.

As part of the wider Auckland Castle projects, work will begin this autumn on the £10m revival of the seventeenth-century walled garden. Planning permission has also been granted for a new Welcome Building, and an Institute of Spanish Art and Culture is to open in Bishop Auckland Market Place inspired by the Zurbarán masterpieces which hang in the Castle's Long Dining Room. Together these projects will see around £70m of investment in the Castle and its associated developments.

Meadows Museum:

The Meadows Museum is the leading US institution focused on the study and presentation of the art of Spain. In 1962, Dallas businessman and philanthropist Algur H. Meadows donated his private collection of Spanish paintings, as well as funds to start a museum, to Southern Methodist University. The Museum opened to the public in 1965, marking the first step in fulfilling Meadows' vision to create "a small Prado for Texas."

Today, the Meadows is home to one of the largest and most comprehensive collections of Spanish art outside of Spain. The collection spans from the tenth to the twenty-first centuries and includes medieval objects, Renaissance and Baroque sculptures, and major paintings by Golden Age and modern masters. Since 2010 the Museum has been engaged in a multidimensional partnership with the Museo Nacional del Prado in Madrid, which has included the exchange of scholarship, exhibitions, works of art, and other resources.



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The Frick Collection:

Housed in one of New York's last great Gilded Age homes, The Frick Collection provides visitors with an unparalleled opportunity for intimate encounters with one of the world's foremost collections of Western European fine and decorative arts.

The Collection was founded by Henry Clay Frick (1849–1919), who, in his will, bequeathed his home and art collection for the enjoyment of the public. Since first opening in 1935, The Frick Collection has continued to add to its holdings of masterworks from the Renaissance through the early modern period.

The Frick Art Reference Library, which was established nearly a century ago by the founder's daughter, Helen Clay Frick (1888–1984), is one of the world's leading art history libraries, supporting students, scholars, and members of the general public.

Today, The Frick offers a range of exhibitions, concerts, and educational programs throughout the year and continues to provide visitors with indelible arts experiences in a setting of tranquil contemplation.