



**19 November 2018**

## **Press Release**

### **UK's first Spanish Gallery appoints new Curatorial team**

The UK's first gallery dedicated to exploring the arts and culture of the Spanish world has appointed three new experts.

Dr María López-Fanjul y Díez del Corral, Professor Paul Joannides and Morlin Ellis have all joined the Curatorial team at the forthcoming Spanish Gallery, which forms part of The Auckland Project, a multi-million pound heritage and cultural destination being created in Bishop Auckland, North East England.

Centred around the nucleus of Francisco de Zurbarán's masterpieces *Jacob and His Twelve Sons* that have hung in nearby Auckland Castle since 1756, the Spanish Gallery will cement the area's reputation as the country's hub for Spanish Art.

It will complement the extensive collection of Spanish paintings at the Bowes Museum and other sites in the region, including Durham Cathedral, Durham Castle, Raby Castle and Ushaw College.

The gallery will include works from the medieval period through to the present day, with a focus on the Golden Age of Spanish visual art and literature in the 17th century. As well as showcasing artworks from The Auckland Project's own collection, the Spanish Gallery will also include loans from local, national and international partners. Current partners include the National Gallery, London; the Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando, Madrid, the Meadows Museum SMU, Dallas, The Frick Collection, New York; Glasgow Life, Glasgow and Fundación Banco Santander.

Dr María López-Fanjul y Díez del Corral has been appointed as the gallery's Senior Curatorial Advisor and is taking up the role alongside her existing position at the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (Berlin National Museums), where she has been a curator at the Gemäldegalerie and, most recently, at the Bode-Museum.

Maria previously held a curatorial position at the Museo Nacional del Prado, working with the Museum's former Deputy Director Dr. Gabriele Finaldi. She holds a BA, MA and MPhil in Art History (Universidad Complutense de Madrid), MA in Museum & Gallery Management (City, University of London) and a PhD from the Courtauld Institute of Art, with a thesis on collecting drawings in seventeenth-century Spain.



In 2016, Dr. López-Fanjul curated the major exhibition *El Siglo de Oro. The Age of Velázquez* at The Gemäldegalerie in Berlin and Kunsthalle in Munich, which was the first comprehensive exhibition on the Spanish Golden Age mounted in Germany. She has published widely on Spanish painting, drawing and sculpture and their collection in early modern Spain.

Dr. López-Fanjul will be responsible for curating the hang at the Spanish Gallery and will commence work in November 2018, while continuing in her role at the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin.

She succeeds Dr Edward Payne, who is now Assistant Professor (Research): Pemberton Fellowship for the study of Spanish Art at the nearby Zurbarán Centre, run by Durham University in partnership with The Auckland Project, which will offer a direct link between academic study and the gallery's public exhibitions.

Dr. López-Fanjul said of her appointment: *"I couldn't be happier to be joining the Spanish Gallery at an exciting phase in its development. I am very much looking forward to helping turn the Spanish Gallery into an international hub for the exhibition, research and support of Spanish art and culture."*

Curatorial Programme Director at The Auckland Project, Genevieve Adkins, said: *"María comes to this role as a highly qualified and experienced museum curator. She will be a great asset with her knowledge of the Spanish collections, as well as her contacts in Spain and we are delighted to have her joining the team."*

María will be joined by Professor Paul Joannides as Editorial Advisor to the Spanish Gallery. Paul is Emeritus Professor of Art History at the University of Cambridge, where he taught for many years. He has published widely on Italian Renaissance painting, sculpture, drawing and to a lesser extent on Italian architecture; he has also written on French late eighteenth and early nineteenth century painting.

Completing the curatorial team is Morlin Ellis, joining as Curatorial & Research Associate, who will be based permanently in Bishop Auckland. In 2010, at the invitation of her former teacher Professor Nigel Glendinning, she joined the committee of the charity ARTES, which promotes the study of Iberian and Latin American visual culture, and chaired it from 2015-17.

The Spanish Gallery forms part of The Auckland Project visitor destination, which is currently being created in North East England, with an investment of more than £150m to date.

Full details of the display in the gallery will be announced in due course but pieces already confirmed include works by leading Spanish artists, Diego Velázquez, Francisco de Zurbarán and Salvador Dalí.



As well as paintings, visitors will also be able to explore a mixture of artworks from other mediums, including metal work and sculpture, which will set the collection within the broader context of Spanish art.

For more information please visit [www.aucklandproject.org/spanish-gallery](http://www.aucklandproject.org/spanish-gallery)

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### **Notes To Editors**

#### **About The Auckland Project**

The Auckland Project, based in Bishop Auckland, is working with the community and other key partners to help raise aspirations and create opportunities through arts, heritage and a culture of learning.

As part of this long-term ambition, the charity is developing a visitor destination of international significance, including Auckland Castle, once home to the Prince Bishops of Durham, a Spanish Art Gallery, Walled Garden, Deer Park and landmark Auckland Tower welcome centre.

The first of these new attractions, The Mining Art Gallery, opened in Bishop Auckland on October 21, 2017, with the others launching in stages over the next few years.

The Auckland Project's dedicated Engagement Team is also working closely with schools and community groups to deliver a range of life changing programmes for all ages, designed to increase educational attainment, enhance employability, boost community spirit and improve health and wellbeing for current and future generations.

By 2020 the charity aims to create 8,000 opportunities for learning and skills development, including 60 apprenticeships.

To date, approaching £150m has been committed to the Project, including £12.4m thanks to National Lottery players via the Heritage Lottery Fund. A full list of supporters and funders can be found at visit [aucklandproject.org/supporters](http://aucklandproject.org/supporters)

For more information please visit [aucklandproject.org](http://aucklandproject.org) or search Auckland Project on Facebook and Twitter.