



ARCHIVED PRESS RELEASE

from

THE FRICK COLLECTION

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*Unprecedented Gathering of Six Major
Paintings by Velázquez
Offered at The Frick Collection in Conjunction
WITH THE HISPANIC SOCIETY OF AMERICA*

NOVEMBER 16, 1999, THROUGH JANUARY 16, 2000

Marking the four-hundredth anniversary of the birth of **Diego Rodríguez de Silva y Velázquez** (1599 - 1660), The Frick Collection presents together for the first time in New York six of the Spanish master's portraits belonging to public collections in the city. This unprecedented viewing opportunity is the result of a special collaboration between The Hispanic Society of America and The Frick Collection. The Hispanic Society of America has not lent any of its old master paintings to another institution in the past ninety years, but with this exhibition establishes a policy of participating in exhibitions in which it is a full collaborator. Three significant works come to The Frick Collection for this presentation: *Gaspar de Guzman, Count-Duke of Olivares*; *Camillo Astalli, Known as Cardinal Pamphili*; and *Portrait of a Little Girl*. Also on view will be the celebrated painting from The Frick Collection, *King Philip IV of Spain*, one of Velázquez's greatest portraits of a subject so central to his work and life. In recognition of this extraordinary occasion, The Metropolitan Museum of Art lends two remarkable portraits by the master, those of *Juan de Pareja* and *María Teresa, Infanta of Spain*. ***Velázquez in New York Museums*** is organized jointly by The Frick Collection and The Hispanic Society of America and is on view from November 16, 1999, through January 16, 2000.

Velázquez in New York Museums is the only homage to the artist that is being offered by an American museum during 1999, the internationally celebrated year marking the anniversary of his birth. Curating the exhibition is Jonathan Brown, Carroll and Milton Petrie Professor of Fine Arts, The Institute of Fine Arts, New York University. The exhibition has been made possible, in part, through the generosity of the

Fellows of The Frick Collection, Banco Santander Central Hispano, and the endeavors of the Consul General of Spain in New York. Publication of the booklet *Velázquez in New York Museums* has been made possible through the support of Melvin R. Seiden.

Mitchell Coddling, Director of The Hispanic Society of America, announced, "We are pleased to collaborate with The Frick Collection for *Velázquez in New York Museums*. The Hispanic Society is lending its three portraits by the remarkable artist, which have not left the Society's building at Audubon Terrace at Broadway and 155th Street in ninety years. This represents the first loan of any old master painting from the Society's collection since 1910."

Exceptional powers of observation and a vibrant technique make Velázquez the greatest Spanish painter of his century, and this loan presentation in the Frick's Oval Gallery will demonstrate the variety and strength of the Spanish master's work over a lifetime of evolution. Born in Seville, Velázquez was apprenticed at the age of eleven to the painter Francisco Pacheco. In 1623 he was called to Madrid, where he soon painted the first of several portraits of King Philip IV. Velázquez became not only court painter, but also a trusted servant to the King, who ennobled him and made him a knight of the Military Order of Santiago and a gentleman-in-waiting. Velázquez's development as a court portraitist, his principal occupation for nearly thirty-seven years, is epitomized in two of the works in the presentation at The Frick Collection. The portrait *Gaspar de Guzmán, Count-Duke of Olivares*, which represents the nobleman who brought Velázquez to court, was done soon after his appointment as royal painter (1623), while the Frick's *King Philip IV of Spain*, a formal portrait of the artist's patron (1644), shows him as a mature master.

Velázquez's work profited greatly from study of the royal collection, which was rich in paintings of the Venetians, especially Titian, and he probably also drew inspiration from Rubens during the latter's visit to Madrid from 1628 to 1629. Travel also played an important role in the development of Velázquez's oeuvre, although he made only two trips out of his native country, both to Italy, one from 1629 to 1631 and another from 1649 to 1651. The exhibition features two works executed during the latter stay in Rome, the bust-length portrait of *Camillo Astalli, Known as Cardinal Pamphili*, an upstart member of the court of Pope Innocent X, and *Juan de Pareja*, Velázquez's former slave and assistant. It is believed that these works have not been seen together since leaving the artist's studio. Unlike the state portraits, which reveal little about the sitters' personalities, these small-scale paintings are full of expressive energy.

The final component consists of two portraits of young female subjects, one an unidentified young girl and the other a princess. *Portrait of a Little Girl* is one of only a few informal portraits done by Velázquez. While she is thought by some to be his granddaughter, her identity remains a charming mystery. However, the princess, *María Teresa, Infanta of Spain*, is one of the most recognizable of the artist's sitters. The oldest child of the King, she was painted many times by Velázquez to meet the demand for her likeness as the arrangement of her marriage was brokered for political gain.

ILLUSTRATED PUBLICATION AVAILABLE

A booklet fully illustrated in color with contributions by guest curator Jonathan Brown and by Marcus B. Burke, Curator of Paintings at The Hispanic Society of America, accompanies the exhibition. In a rich biographical essay, Jonathan Brown examines the life of the artist, considering the profound effect that his social and artistic ambitions had on the course of his exceptional career. Brown discusses the artist's wish to be a great painter and a gentleman, two roles considered to be mutually exclusive by many in the court, and cites portraits in the exhibition as well as masterpieces in international collections. Marcus B. Burke's essay traces the developing appreciation for the Spanish school of painting outside of that country, beginning with the remarkable fact that a ground-breaking publication in 1883 ascribed only one picture by Velázquez as being in a New York collection at that time. Burke traces the tremendous rise in the artist's reputation among dealers, scholars, and collectors since the second half of the eighteenth century. He notes in particular the popularity of the artist's work in Great Britain and France, and the role this played in influencing American taste. Archer Milton Huntington's special place as an important early collector and force in the study of Spanish culture is discussed, with some focus on the treasures by Velázquez now owned by The Hispanic Society of America. This softcover booklet is available for \$10.00 in the Museum Shop of The Frick Collection, which can be reached at (212) 288-0700.

ABOUT THE HISPANIC SOCIETY OF AMERICA

Archer Milton Huntington founded The Hispanic Society of America in 1904 as a free museum and reference library for the study of the arts and culture of the Iberian Peninsula and of Latin America. Today it is the best combined Spanish library and art collection in the nation, housed in the grand beaux-arts structures built for it on Audubon Terrace on Broadway between 155th and 156th Streets. The permanent display at The Hispanic Society includes masterpieces by the painters El Greco, Velázquez, Zurbarán, Murillo, Goya, Fortuny, and Sorolla. Highlights of the sculpture on view include Roman marbles and a tenth-century Hispano-Islamic ivory box, as well as an extraordinary pair of monumental Renaissance tombs. Decorative arts on view include the largest selection of Spanish ceramics outside of Spain, as well as magnificent examples of Medieval, Renaissance, and Baroque silver, furniture, ironwork, and glassware. The Society also has

assembled an important collection of antiquities, encompassing objects from the bronze age to the Roman period. Hispano-Moresque textiles from the thirteenth through fifteenth centuries, and Christian vestments from the fifteenth through eighteenth centuries, are also part of the collection. The Hispanic Society houses prints that present a survey of graphic arts in Spain from the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries, including nearly all of Goya's prints. The section of photographs contains over 176,000 black & white images of Spain and Latin America from 1850 onwards.

The library of The Hispanic Society contains approximately 275,000 books printed after 1701; 15,000 printed before 1700; and 250 from before 1500. These include copies and first editions of *Tirant lo Blanc*, *Celestina*, and *Don Quixote*. Imprints from the New World also comprise an important part of the library. The collection of over 30,000 manuscripts is the most extensive outside of Spain, with Medieval charters, holograph royal letters, sailing charts, illuminated bibles, and literary manuscripts.

Hispanic Society General Information: (212) 926-2234

Website www.hispanicsociety.org

ALSO ON VIEW THIS FALL AT THE FRICK COLLECTION

CONSTABLE'S SALISBURY CATHEDRAL: TWO VERSIONS REUNITED

September 21 through December 31, 1999

WATTEAU AND HIS WORLD: FRENCH DRAWING FROM 1700 TO 1750

October 20, 1999, through January 9, 2000

ABOUT THE FRICK COLLECTION

The Frick Collection features masterpieces of Western art from the early Renaissance through the late nineteenth century. Important works by Bellini, El Greco, Rembrandt, Titian, Turner, Vermeer, Whistler, and many others are housed in one of the great mansions remaining from the Gilded Age. These paintings are complemented by one of the world's finest collections of Renaissance bronzes and by French sculpture of the eighteenth century, in addition to outstanding furniture and decorative art works from the ateliers of Riesener, Lacroix, Boulle, Carlin, Gouthière, and Sèvres. Each year more than 250,000 visitors from New York, across America, and around the world come to the Collection at 1 East 70th Street, once the residence of Henry Clay Frick (1849-1919). Designed by Thomas Hastings of Carrère and Hastings and constructed in 1913-1914, the building was changed after Mrs. Frick's death in 1931, with alterations and additions made by the architect John Russell Pope. In 1935 the Collection opened to the public. A new Reception Hall, built in 1977, was designed by John Barrington Bayley, Harry van Dyke, and G. Frederick Poehler, as well as two temporary exhibition galleries. The Frick Collection also operates the Frick Art Reference Library at 10 East 71st Street, both a research library and a photoarchive. The Library is one of the world's great repositories for the documentation and study of Western art and has served the international art world for more than seventy-five years.

BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT VISITING THE FRICK COLLECTION

General Information Phones:

Collection (212) 288-0700

Library (212) 288-8700

Website: www.frick.org

E-mail: info@frick.org

Where: The Collection is located at 1 East 70th Street, near Fifth Avenue.

The Library is around the corner at 10 East 71st Street.

Museum Hours: 10am to 6pm Tuesdays through Saturdays, and from 1pm to 6pm Sundays. Closed Mondays, New Year's Day, Independence Day, Thanksgiving, December 24, and December 25. Limited hours (1:00 to 6:00pm) on Lincoln's Birthday, Election Day, and Veterans Day.

Library Hours: 10am to 5pm, Monday through Friday; 9:30am to 1pm on Saturday.

Closed August and on Saturdays in June and July. Please call for holiday closure schedule.

Museum Admission: \$7, general public; \$5, students & senior citizens. See updated "Tour Information."

PLEASE NOTE TO YOUR READERS: Children under ten are not admitted to the Collection, and those under sixteen must be accompanied by an adult.

Library Admission: free.

Subway: #6 local (on Lexington Avenue) to 68th Street station

Bus: M1, M2, M3, and M4 southbound on Fifth Avenue to 72nd Street and northbound on Madison Avenue to 70th Street

Tour Information: now included in the price of admission is an Acoustiguide INFORM® Audio Tour of the permanent collection, provided by Acoustiguide. The tour is offered in five languages: English, French, German, Japanese, and Spanish.

Museum Shop: the shop closes at 5:45pm, and is open otherwise the same days and hours as the Museum.

Group Visits: Please call (212) 288-0700 for details and to make reservations.

Public Programs: A calendar of events is published regularly and is available upon request.

#19 October 14, 1999

For further press information on the exhibition or The Frick Collection, please contact Heidi Rosenau, Communications Officer

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For further information about The Hispanic Society of America, please contact William N. Ambler, Museum Department

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Fax: (212) 690-0743

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