



MEADOWS MUSEUM  
SMU · DALLAS

## MEADOWS MUSEUM ANNOUNCES ACQUISITION OF AN IMPORTANT PORTRAIT BY BARTOLOMÉ GONZÁLEZ Y SERRANO

### **Museum Also Adds Three 18th- and 19th-century Drawings by Major Spanish Artists to its Collection**

DALLAS (SMU)—August 19, 2021— The Meadows Museum, SMU, announced today that it has acquired a rare signed and dated portrait by Bartolomé González y Serrano (1564–1627) titled *Portrait of a Lady* (1621). The portrait is of an unknown woman from the court of either King Philip III or his son, King Philip IV. The painting was made at a pivotal moment in Spanish history, which saw the movement of the imperial capital from Valladolid (Castile) to Madrid and, one year later, the arrival of Diego Velázquez (1599–1660) at court, who would go on to revolutionize the genre of portraiture by re-envisioning the model offered by González y Serrano and his predecessors. It is the first work by González y Serrano to enter the Meadows’s collection, and is one of only a few portraits by the painter outside of Spain. The painting was purchased at auction from Christie’s, London, and was subsequently treated by Claire Barry, Director of Conservation Emerita, Kimbell Art Museum, whose removal of yellowed varnish restored the painting’s vivid colors and delicate details. *Portrait of a Lady* will be on view from August 21st in the museum’s Jake and Nancy Hamon Galleries. All 29 members of the Meadows Museum Advisory Council contributed funds for the painting’s purchase, which was made in honor of Mark A. Roglán, the Linda P. and William A. Custard Director of the Meadows Museum. This year marks Dr. Roglán’s 20th anniversary at the Meadows, and the 15th anniversary of his directorship, during which he has guided the museum’s unprecedented growth.

The Meadows Museum has also announced the acquisition from a Madrid gallery of three drawings by notable Spanish artists Antonio González Velázquez (1723–1794), José Aparicio e Inglada (1770–1838), and Casto Plasencia y Maestro (1846–1890). Despite being instrumental in the development of Spanish painting, works by these cosmopolitan artists rarely appear in collections outside of Europe. The sheets by Aparicio and by Plasencia are the first works by those influential artists to enter the Meadows collection. All three drawings are likely preparatory sketches, in some cases for identified paintings. The Aparicio e Inglada is a preparatory sketch for a painting, while the González Velázquez and the Plasencia y Maestro were also probably made in preparation for larger works, such as frescos. Each sheet represents an important addition to the Meadows’s holdings of works on paper.

“Each of these acquisitions support our mission to offer a more comprehensive view of the history of Spanish art, either by filling gaps—representing important Spanish artists in the collection for the first time—or by complementing works we already have,” said Mark A. Roglán, the Linda P. and William A. Custard Director of the Meadows Museum. “I am particularly

enthusiastic about the acquisition of Bartolomé González's *Portrait of a Lady* (1621), which marks a major addition to our collection of 17th-century paintings and portraiture. This signed and dated portrait by one of King Phillip III's first court painters is undoubtedly among the artist's finest. I am extremely thankful that every member of the Meadows Museum Advisory Council contributed to the acquisition of this work, and that The Meadows Foundation generously matched these funds. I am humbled and grateful that they did so in my honor and reiterate my gratitude for the ongoing support of such an outstanding group of patrons. It was a pleasure, as always, to work with Claire Barry on the painting's restoration; her talent and expertise has brought life back to our unknown lady."

Additional information on each of the new acquisitions follows below.

**Bartolomé González y Serrano (1564–1627)**

***Portrait of a Lady, 1621***

**Oil on canvas**

**47 1/8 x 39 1/4 in. (119.6 x 99.7 cm)**

González y Serrano served as *pintor del rey* (painter to the king) from 1617 until his death in 1627, which spanned the reigns of Philip III and Philip IV of Spain. The artist's tenure therefore coincided with the arrival of Diego Velázquez at court in the newly established capital of Madrid in 1622. The two painters would have known each other, as both worked for the king over the next five years. During his career, González y Serrano painted more than one hundred portraits of members of the royal family, their courtiers, and of the empire's aristocracy, most of which have never left Spain. There are, however, key examples of González y Serrano's work in the collections of The Hermitage (St. Petersburg); The Kunsthistorisches Museum (Vienna); the Galleria degli Uffizi (Florence); and the Hispanic Society of America (New York). *Portrait of a Lady* is a three-quarter length portrait of an unknown noblewoman that is dated 1621. The woman appears in the latest fashions of her time wearing a ruff collar of delicate white lace, a black silk dress with red and gold buttons, and a bejeweled string of pearls. Sartorial details are all rendered with extraordinary precision, demonstrating not only the artist's skill but also the influence of his mentor, Juan Pantoja de la Cruz (1553–1608), who is also represented in the Meadows collection. The same attention to detail is evident in the women's facial features, which are distinctive and include a number of moles recently uncovered by the removal of varnish. *Portrait of a Lady* is an outstanding example of royal portraiture from the early modern period and an important addition to the Meadows collection.

**Antonio González Velázquez (1723–1794)**

***Allegory of the Discovery of America/Various Notes, c. 1763***

**Pen, black and brown ink and wash, and graphite on laid paper [recto]/graphite on laid paper [verso]**

**6 3/8 x 8 1/4 in. (16.2 x 21 cm)**

González Velázquez is best known for his work on the elaborate decorative programs characteristic of 18th-century Spanish royal palaces, where most of his work remains in situ. This newly acquired drawing is a preparatory sketch for the artist's fresco of *Christopher Columbus Offering the New World to the Catholic Kings* (c. 1763–65) at the Queen's Royal Audience Room Royal Palace in Madrid. It features a female allegorical figure, surrounded by symbols of the Spanish empire, presenting a tablet with the inscription "*Cristoval Colon*" (Christopher Columbus). The drawing joins an oil sketch by the artist already in the Meadows collection, *Allegory of the Spanish Monarchy* (c. 1753–64), which was probably also created in preparation for a fresco at Madrid's Royal Palace. González Velázquez is known for major commissions he completed for the Crown as well as the Church, which include works for the Monastery of the Encarnación, the Monastery of the Salesas Reales, and the Convent of San Francisco el Grande.

**José Aparicio e Inglada (1770–1838)**  
***Godoy Presenting Peace to Charles IV, c. 1796***  
**Pen and brown ink wash and charcoal on paper**  
**8 7/8 x 12 7/8 in. (22.5 x 32.7 cm)**

Aparicio is one of Spain's most important Neoclassical painters. At the Meadows, his drawing joins works in various media by his contemporaries, including José de Madrazo, renowned painter and engraver and founding director of the Museo Nacional del Prado. The subject of this drawing is an important historical event; it visualizes as allegory a peace treaty signed between Spain and France in 1795 following the War of the Pyrenees (1793–95). Rather than depicting the mundane signing of a political document, Aparicio instead shows the First Secretary of State, Manuel Godoy, introducing an allegory of peace to the Spanish king, Charles IV. The Spanish diplomat who signed the treaty, Domingo de Yriarte, is likewise portrayed as a classical messenger god rather than as himself. *Godoy Presenting Peace to Charles IV* was created in preparation for a painting of the same subject now in the collection of the Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando in Madrid. This important sketch was only discovered recently, together with another now in a private collection, and represents key art historical evidence of Aparicio's rigorous working of a composition prior to touching brush to canvas. It was this precision and determination that earned the artist a first prize at the aforementioned Academia in 1796 after which Charles IV granted him a full scholarship to train in Paris. Following his residency in the French capital, the painter returned to Spain, where he was appointed court painter to King Ferdinand VII and subsequently became director of the Real Academia de San Fernando. This is the first work by Aparicio to enter the Meadows collection.

**Casto Plasencia y Maestro (1846–1890)**  
***Sketch for an Allegorical Figure (Flora?), c. 1880***  
**Red pencil, charcoal, and white gouache on blue laid paper**  
**17 5/8 x 22 1/4 in. (44.8 x 56.5 cm)**

Plasencia was among the most talented artists active in Spain during the second half of the 19th century. Like many artists of his generation, he had trained in Rome, where he copied parts of Michelangelo's ceiling frescos in the Sistine Chapel. He was therefore not a stranger to the demands of painting on a monumental scale nor to the challenges of shifting between media. One of the painter's most important commissions was the decorative program for the Basilica of San Francisco el Grande in Madrid, which he carried out between 1880 and 1886, around the same time he made this drawing. Rather than a religious subject, however, this example of Plasencia's unpublished sketches is believed to depict the allegorical figure Flora, thanks to the prominent inclusion of a basket of flowers in the composition. Clues evident on the drawing itself support the idea that it was a preparatory drawing for a much larger fresco or painting; red pencil marks are visible close to the paper's edges suggesting the design was transferred to a larger surface. That the figure is foreshortened and depicted as if seen from below also indicates the artist's sophisticated imagining of a space in which the figure would have occupied an elevated position such as a ceiling. This is the first work by Plasencia to enter the Meadows collection.

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Funding for the purchase of the González y Serrano painting was provided by the Meadows Museum Advisory Council: Linda Perryman Evans; Linda P. and William A. Custard; Gwen and Richard Irwin; Cyrena Nolan; Elizabeth Solender and Gary L. Scott; Debi and Peter Miller; Peggy and Carl Sewell; Luba and Richard Barrett; Mary Anne Cree; Pilar and Jay Henry; Barbara and Mike McKenzie; Susan Albritton; Dolores and Larry Barzune, M.D.; Diane and Stuart Bumpas on behalf of the Joe M. and Doris R. Dealey Foundation; Gene and Jerry Jones; The Honorable Janet Kafka and Terry Kafka; George C. Lancaster; Natalie H. and George T. Lee, Jr.; Karen and Walter Levy; Stacey and Nicholas McCord; Jenny and Richard Mullen; Caren Prothro and the Perkins-Prothro Foundation; Julie and George Tobolowsky; Diane and Gregory Warden; Cheryl and Kevin Vogel; Catherine Taylor; Linda and John McFarland; Estelle and Michael Thomas; Bethany and Samuel Holland; President R. Gerald and Gail Turner. Additional funds were provided by Laura Custard Hurt, Amanda W. Dotseth, Bridget Marx, and Claire Barry.

Funding for the purchase of the González Velázquez drawing was provided by Caren Prothro and the Perkins-Prothro Foundation. Funds for the Aparicio and Placencia drawings were provided by Linda P. and William A. Custard and The Honorable Janet Kafka and Terry Kafka, respectively, both in memory of Manuel Roglán Lombarte.

### **About the Meadows Museum**

The Meadows Museum is the leading U.S. 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's 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 10th to the 21st centuries and includes medieval objects, Renaissance and Baroque sculptures, and major paintings by Golden Age and modern masters.

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