

# COLNAGHI

Est. 1760



Francisco de Soria Hurtado

(Viceroyalty of Peru, Cuzco (Peru), 1651 - 1692)

## *Monstrance*

1685

partially silver-gilt; casted, turned, chiselled, fretted and enamelled

inscribed: 'Histo este vixil FrANco. De Soria HurtAdo por orden P° Cortes y de Pablo de Orna Ano de 1685' (This luna was made by FrANco. De Soria HurtAdo commissioned

by P° Cortes And de Pablo de Orna Year 1685)

height: 64 cm.; 25 ¼ in.

sun's diameter: 25.5 cm.; 10 1/8 in.

maximum base width: 21 cm.; 8 ¼ in.

weight: 5.000 kg

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### Provenance

Former Apelles Collection, Chile - England.

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### Exhibited

*Platería del Perú Virreinal (Silver Objects of the Viceregal Peru). 1535-1825*, Banco Bilbao Vizcaya / Banco Continental, Madrid - Lima, 1997, no. 15, pp. 108 and 109;

*The Colonial Andes. Tapestries and Silverwork, 1530-1830*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 2004, cat. 114.

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## Literature

'Aculturation and Innovation in Peruvian Viceregal Silverwork' in E. Phipps, J. Hecht & C. Esteras Martin et. al., *The Colonial Andes. Tapestries and Silverwork, 1530-1830*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, New Haven & London 2004, pp. 59-71, 221, cat. 114.

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The sun (same on both sides) presents a moulded frame from which fifteen rectilinear rays emerge, joined together by small c-shaped links, and ending in vegetalized knobs; the larger ones have cherub heads superimposed on them and the smaller ones an application of leaves. The stem has the shape of a banister with a truncated cone-shaped collar with mouldings, a semi-ovoid vase-shaped node, and, finally, a cylindrical pedestal. The base is square with a truncated cone-shaped neck, a plinth with a convex profile and a cruciform ground plan with the chambranle fretted with ovals; it rests over four legs with cherubs' shapes with a vegetal body doubly scrolled. The embellishments in the stem and base are made up of small casted handles, some with "C" and "S" shape, and others, imitating the icon of a mermaid; all of them are adorned with a string of pearls. Moreover, in the corners of the base, we can find four overlapping palmettes. There are worked motifs applique with *champlevé* enamel in ultramarine blue, honey yellow and green, taking the geometrical shapes as rhombus and ovals, the shape of plants (palmettes) and cherub heads (which are only used in the stem's pedestal) everywhere along the piece. The formal and decorative features of the monstrance adjust perfectly to the type most used by silversmiths in the city of Cuzco during the last three decades of the 17th century, a conclusion that is reaffirmed, also, thanks to the inscription engraved in the inner side of the base and which allows us to classify it with certainty as a work from Cuzco from the year 1685, done by the hands of silversmith Francisco de Soria Hurtado<sup>1</sup>.

We have gathered several information about his personal and artistic biography. He was originally from Granada (Spain)<sup>2</sup>, although we do not know when he went to the Indies and if before embarking he was already a silversmith or if he was trained in the Americas. What we do know is that he lived in the mining city of Potosí (Bolivia) where he married María de Salas around 1653<sup>3</sup>. A few years before that, he had been living in Cuzco where he apparently had returned definitely later on. Thus, we detect that in 1651 he participated with other officials and guilds in the meeting of the two councils of Cuzco (secular and ecclesiastical) celebrated in the Cathedral and in the presence of the Prelate to decide the festivity of the bishopric and its province, and of the city, choosing the Immaculate Conception and Santiago Apostle as patrons of the first and the second. For the convent

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de San Francisco he made a lamp for the chapel of Nuestra Señora de Caspi in 1666, charging 100 silver marks<sup>4</sup> and for Don Francisco Enríquez<sup>5</sup>, chantre of the cathedral, he made two silver-gilt chalices. It is unknown whether any of these three pieces still exist, although we believe that they have disappeared.

In his workshop and under his tutelage he trained two young apprentices in 1664 and 1692: Ambrosio Flores de Espinosa and Joan Pinto, to whom he taught the secrets of business for six years<sup>6</sup>; he also had as “slave and skilled worker” the eighteen-year-old Juan de la Cruz. When he made his will in 1673, he declared that he owned five silverware drawers, five bellows and three anvils, all instruments necessary to work trade as a silversmith.

The reasons for which he was imprisoned in the public jail of Cuzco are unknown. During that time he received a payment from a colleague, *Lorenzo Portillo*, a goldsmith and silversmith, on January 29, 1683<sup>7</sup>. He most probably passed away at the end of the century, because we can't find any other news of him after 1692, at least for the moment. We suppose that he was buried in the crypt of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, in the convent of San Francisco<sup>8</sup>, since that was his wish when he wrote his will in 1673.

For the moment, this monstrance is the only known and preserved work by Francisco de Soria Hurtado, and if we compare it with other contemporary works from the silversmiths of Cuzco, we can see that it is in line with the work of Luis de Lezana (doc. 1665-1713)<sup>9</sup> by having a cruciform base, in the angelomorphic solution of the legs and in the design of the solar luna, although the monstrances carved by this famous silversmith the stem is complex with the sum of several bodies, the number of cast handles and the choosing of a central node of cubical shape, and not a vase as in our specimen.

It is noteworthy that the silversmiths from Cuzco (as many other silversmiths from other parts of viceregal Peru) never, as far as we know, marked their works although it was mandatory. Nonetheless, some of them like Francisco de Soria Hurtado, Luis de Lezana, Gregorio Gallegos (1681-1753)<sup>10</sup> or Ignacio Ûre (1770)<sup>11</sup> did leave a testimony of their authorship through engraved and/or signed inscriptions with which they could perpetuate themselves.

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The fact that the monstrance is epigraphically dated 1685 not only assures us of the time of the execution of the work, but also serves us to mark, with a certain approximation, the typological border between the model (column type stem with a semi-ovoid vase-shaped node) and the one that would later be imposed in the 1690s, where the shaft becomes more complex due to the accumulation of bodies and the acceptance of the use of cubical-shaped main nodes. What is sustained invariably in the stylistics of monstrances in the last third of the 17th century and even sometimes during the first years of the 18th century is the repetitive use of the casted handles with snaky shapes of winged mermaids or simple “S” shaped forms ruffling the silhouette, the base supports taking the shape of little phytomorphic angels wearing bold toupées, the squared design of the base with extrusions in the front and the rear describing thus a cross, or in the rays that make up the luna and in the way they're interlocked by means of a vegetal fretted rounded links network finished up with fleurons. The use of applied embellishments, such as palmettes, runs throughout all of the craft production in Cuzco; there's also a profuse application of enameled items, worked with a champlévé technique, with a semi opaque glassy surface and a polychromic use of color based on ultramarine blue, intense green and honey yellow.

This monstrance made by Francisco de Soria Hurtado is, therefore, a key link and of enormous interest for the understanding and reconstruction of the history of Cuzco silverware in the most active period, that we already qualify as “The Golden Age”, while it confirms the great mastery of this silversmith who can manage with determination and skill the technique, the structural balance and the decorative repertoire, blending with perfection the chromatism between the gilded surfaces of the metal and the polychrome of the enamels. As we mentioned previously, the maker's origin from Granada is not reflected in the monstrance, perhaps because he was already trained in Cuzco as a silversmith, therefore this monstrance is a clear example of the tastes implanted in this Andean city in which his silversmiths reached an extraordinary level of variety and artistic quality. The exceptionality of this work is highlighted also by its excellent state of preservation, since it keeps every single one of the original pieces, of both silver and enamels.

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## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> Dimos a conocer la pieza en el catálogo de la exposición *Platería del Perú Virreinal. 1535-1825*, Banco Bilbao Vizcaya/Banco Continental. Madrid-Lima , 1997, nº 15, pp. 108 y 109.

<sup>2</sup> En Cristina Esteras Martín: "Aportaciones a la historia de la platería cuzqueña en la segunda mitad del siglo XVII". *Anuario de Estudios Americanos*, Sevilla, Tomo XXXVII (1980), pp. 30 y 31; y "Plateros granadinos en Indias". *El Reino de Granada y el Nuevo Mundo. V Congreso Internacional de Historia de América*, Granada, mayo de 1994, p. 356.

<sup>3</sup> Convivió con ella tan sólo un mes y por ello le siguieron pleito de nulidad , retirándole la dote (*Ibidem*). Es muy posible que se trasladara hasta la ciudad del "Cerro Rico" para realizar algún negocio o encargo, pues no es la primera vez que se desplazaron plateros desde el Cuzco hasta Potosí por motivos profesionales.

<sup>4</sup> Aunque la acabó muy bien no se la quisieron aceptar ni pagar y la empeñó a Manuel Martínez Sequeiros (Tomamos esta noticia de su testamento, otorgado el 20 de agosto de 1673, véase Esteras Martín: "Aportaciones a la historia...", ob. cit., p. 738).

<sup>5</sup> Este sacerdote está documentado entre 11658 y 1698 (en Diego de Esquivel y Navia: *Noticias cronológicas de la gran ciudad del Cuzco*. Lima, 1980, II, pp. 114 a 118, 121, 124125, 132, 169 y 171.

<sup>6</sup> Cuzco, Archivo Departamental. Protocolos, Notario Cristóbal de Bustamante, 1692, fol 18.

<sup>7</sup> Cuzco, Archivo Departamental. Protocolos, Notario Juan de Saldaña, 1683, fol. 17. Este platero era hermano de *Luis Portillo*, platero preferido del obispo don Manuel de Mollinedo y Angulo.

<sup>8</sup> Estaba muy ligado a los plateros del Cuzco, pues en él residía la cofradía de San Eloy, patrono de este Gremio, con capilla e imagen del santo.

<sup>9</sup> Sobre todo con la custodia de la iglesia de San Juan, de Gordejuela (Vizcaya, España), con la que coincide no solo en la estructura del pie y viril, sino que en ella la decoración de la chambrana se concibe de igual manera a base de una puntilla de óvalos, forma inusual en el resto de las custodias cuzqueñas contemporáneas. Sobre este platero y su obra artística ver nuestra monografía "Luis de Lezana, platero del Cuzco (1665-1713)", *Boletín del Museo e Instituto "Camón Aznar"*, Zaragoza, XLVIII-IL (1992), pp. 31-60, con 25 fotografías.

<sup>10</sup> Su nombre "Gº GaLLeGOS" lo graba en una custodia de la colección Enrico Poli, de Lima y también lo dispone en la custodia de la catedral del Cuzco que manda labrar el obispo don Pedro Morcillo en 1745 en que anota: "Anno 1745.Fecit D. Gregorius Gallegos" (ver en Cristina Esteras Martín; "La segunda Edad Dorada de la platería cuzqueña (1700-1770): Gregorio Gallegos y sus contemporáneos". Jesús Paniagua Pérez y Nuria Salazar Simarro (Coordinadores). *Ophir en la Indias. Estudios de la plata americana. Siglos XVI-XIX*. Universidad de León (España), 2010, p. 333-334, fig. 1 y pp. 334-335, fig. 3).

<sup>11</sup> Deja su firma en el frontal de la parroquia del pueblo de Zurite, Cuzco (*Ibidem*, p. 346, fig. 10).