

COLNAGHI

Francisco Eduardo Tresguerras  
*Virgen de Guadalupe con Las Aspiraciones*

NON FECIT TALITER OMNINATI

Fris Guerra f. 1

# COLNAGHI

FRANCISCO EDUARDO TRESGUERRAS  
(Celaya 1759-1833)

## *VIRGEN DE GUADALUPE CON LAS ASPIRACIONES*

Oil on copper  
70 x 100 cm; 27 1/2 x 39 3/8 in.

Signed lower centre

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### Provenance

Anonymous sale, La Suite Subastas, Barcelona, 21 November 2021, lot 214.



This charming oil on copper presents the Virgin of Guadalupe accompanied by narrative scenes of her apparitions, one of the most enduring and symbolically charged devotional images of New Spain. The Virgin stands upon the crescent moon, hands joined in prayer, enveloped by a radiant golden mandorla and clad in her traditional rose-coloured tunic and star-strewn blue mantle. Surrounding her, smaller vignettes recount the Marian apparitions granted in December 1531 to the indigenous convert Juan Diego and his uncle Juan Bernardino, events that lie at the heart of Mexican Catholic identity and visual culture.

This work was painted by Francisco Eduardo Tresguerras, a singular figure in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Mexican art. Born in Celaya, Tresguerras pursued his career largely outside the orbit of Mexico City, working instead in Celaya, Querétaro, and San Luis Potosí. Unlike many provincial artists of his generation, he was formally trained and intellectually self-conscious, cultivating an identity as a learned, encyclopaedic artist at a moment when artistic theory and criticism were only sparsely articulated in New Spain. His practice encompassed painting, architecture, engraving, music, poetry, and writing, positioning him as a polymath in the Enlightenment tradition.

Tresguerras's painted work is rooted in a late rococo idiom, characterised by delicacy of modelling, ornamental richness, and refined colour, all of which are evident in the present painting. The luminous copper support enhances the brilliance of the gilding and the saturated hues of the Virgin's garments, while the precise execution reflects a level of technical sophistication that distinguishes his work from the popular retablo tradition.

From 1796 onwards, Tresguerras articulated his artistic ideas in a remarkable autobiographical manuscript, *Ocios literarios y otras piezas apologeticas*, which combines poems, critical reflections, and satirical defences of his own creativity. In these writings he expressed his devotion to what he called 'the sweet art of painting', discussed the transition from Rococo towards Neoclassicism, and aligned himself with contemporary European theoretical and scientific texts. His self-fashioning as a 'total Renaissance artist', encapsulated by the Horatian axiom *ut pictura poesis erit*, reveals both intellectual ambition and a compensatory response to his marginalisation by the Mexico City establishment. Despite seeking recognition from the Academia de San Carlos, he was refused admission as a supernumerary member in 1794, a rejection that sharpened his self-image as an independent and original artistic voice.

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