



Baltasar de Echave y Rioja
Adoration of the Magi, 1659
Oil on canvas, 1925.84

Adoration of the Magi



Baltasar de Echave y Rioja (1632-1682) The present-day region of Mexico and Central America was a Spanish province from 1535 to 1818. During that time, many Spanish artists traveled to New Spain, bringing with them an artistic tradition that would blend with styles utilized by the indigenous community. The artist's grandfather was one such painter, moving from the Basque region of Spain to Mexico. Baltasar de Echave y Rioja and his father would continue building on the family's artistic legacy, though Rioja was primarily under the tutelage of another prominent artist, José Juárez. This painting is largely based on Juárez's version of the *Adoration of the Magi*, 1655.

A product of its time

This artwork is a classical representation of colonial Spanish art, with stylistic similarities to European Baroque paintings, thus demonstrating a blending of styles that was pervasive in Viceregal New Spain. The artist created this artwork in 1659, a time when the Catholic Church permeated the culture of New Spain. The title *Adoration of the Magi* references worship of the Virgin Mary and the Christ Child by the Magi, or three wise men.

Take a closer look

It was common to have prints made of significant paintings and every year thousands of these prints made their way to Viceregal New Spain. Baltasar de Echave y Rioja would have seen many of these and his art shows the impact of works by artists such as Francisco de Zurbarán. Notice the Spanish "skirts" and the blond widow's peak.

Did you know?

The artist never traveled to Spain, but his painting did. *Adoration of the Magi* traveled to Madrid, Spain in October of 2010 in order to be on display in the Palacio Real de Madrid during the exhibition *Painting of the Kingdoms—Shared Identities*. The exhibition focused on paintings from the 16th-18th centuries that demonstrate both European and local influences within the Spanish territories. When the painting traveled to Madrid for the exhibition, the trip took 54 hours and cost the exhibition organizers \$18,450.

On your own

Adoration of the Magi in Art: http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hi/hi_fibinam.htm

Figge Art Museum Mexican Colonial Collection: <http://figgeartmuseum.org/Collections/Mexican-Colonial.aspx>

Art of the Spanish Americas: http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/spam/hd_spam.htm