



## Baroque Seville

Sacred Art in a Century of Crisis

Amanda Wunder

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"Amanda Wunder has brought Baroque Seville to life as never before. There is a sizable amount of literature on the subject, but none that synthesizes and integrates evidence from such an amazing variety of sources. Given the wide scope and the utterly lucid style of writing, this book can and should be read by all who are interested in the projection of faith that emanated from this most colorful of European cities."

—Jonathan Brown, author of *In the Shadow of Velázquez: A Life in Art History*

Baroque art flourished in seventeenth-century Seville during a tumultuous period of economic decline, social conflict, and natural disasters. This volume explores the patronage that fueled this frenzy of religious artistic and architectural activity and the lasting effects it had on the city and its citizens.

Amanda Wunder investigates the great public projects of sacred artwork that were originally conceived as *medios divinos*—divine solutions to the problems that plagued Seville. These commissions included new polychromed wooden sculptures and richly embroidered clothing for venerable old images, gilded altarpieces and monumental paintings for church interiors, elaborate ephemeral decorations and festival books by which to remember them, and the gut renovation or rebuilding of major churches that had stood for hundreds of years. Meant to revive the city spiritually, these works also had a profound real-world impact. Participation in the production of sacred artworks elevated the social standing of the artists who made them and the devout benefactors who commissioned them, and encouraged laypeople to rally around pious causes. Using a diverse range of textual and visual sources, Wunder provides a compelling look at the complex visual world of seventeenth-century Seville and the artistic collaborations that involved all levels of society in the attempt at its revitalization.

Vibrantly detailed and thoroughly researched, *Baroque Seville* is a fascinating account of Seville's hard-won transformation into one of the foremost centers of Baroque art in Spain during a period of crisis.

**Amanda Wunder** is Associate Professor of History at Lehman College and of Art History at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York.

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