



CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION OF THE INTERIOR MURAL
PAINTING OF THE
TEMPLE OF SAN JOSÉ DE GRACIA (ZMHQ),
DELEGATION OF THE HISTORIC
CENTER



Conservation and restoration of the interior mural painting of the

CHURCH OF SAN JOSÉ DE GRACIA

(ZMHQ), Municipal Delegation of the Historic Downtown



CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION OF THE INTERIOR MURAL
PAINTING OF THE
TEMPLE OF SAN JOSÉ DE GRACIA (ZMHQ),
DELEGATION OF THE HISTORIC
CENTER

Currently, the Historic Monuments Zone of Queretaro is recognized as the historical space where multiple cultural expressions emerge, under this context, the immovable Cultural Heritage is given a fundamental value in shaping the identity of the city. The importance of the historic core of the city of Santiago de Queretaro lies in the centennial heritage of a rich and unique mixture of Otomi, Tarascan, Purepecha, Mexica, Chichimeca, Spanish and Mestizo cultures, of its religious architecture and historical relevance; aspects that must prevail and be maintained as part of the history of the foundation and development of the city of Queretaro.

The traditional vision of immovable heritage is based on a partial perspective, the material, of what is the cultural heritage in which the built heritage is inscribed. Recognizing the technical, constructive, aesthetic, artistic, social, religious or functional values of a monument is essential not only for its preservation, but also to identify the needs and resources required for its conservation.

The Templo DE SAN JOSÉ DE GRACIA is located within the first square of the city of Querétaro, surrounded by buildings with baroque characteristics of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The building was originally part of the architectural complex of the Hospital de La Limpia Concepción built around the 18th century¹. When the hospital building was modified, a new temple was also built in the first quarter of the 18th century. By 1863, when the hospital changed its location, the temple was awarded to private individuals and by 1940 it was ceded to the Secretariat of Communications and Public Works, installing there some offices of the National Telegraphs. It is currently dedicated to Catholic worship and is attended by the brotherhood of Diocesan Operative priests ². It is one of the most visited temples in the city, as it offers various religious services, gaining more popularity after the intervention.

The facade is of a single level, formed by the volume of the tower plus four streets, delimited by three buttresses of semicircular section. The nave has four bays, delimited by semicircular arches supported by pilasters, which support groin vaults, and in the presbytery there is a dome with an octagonal drum.

INTERVENTION PROCESS.

The rescue of mural painting on walls, dome and pendentives, as well as the restoration of plaster and lime paint in the annexed chapel and exterior façade of the temple of San José de Gracia has meant an important advance for the resignification of the spaces that compose this complex, improving its state of conservation and reaffirming that the mural painting is decorative with **ICONOGRAPHIC ELEMENTS PRINCIPALLY MARIAN**, which is composed of borders with garlands, framing and streets with floral elements, areas of patterns that resemble tapestries also with plant motifs and monograms of Mary, all with dark outlines and details in gold leaf, which show the quality of the stroke, whose predominant palette are the soft colors, little contrasted that indicate the subtlety of the decoration. The iconographic discourse of the decoration can be understood along with its historical period.

¹ National Catalog File of Historic Monuments. Documentary data No. 220140014173

² National Catalog of Historic Real Estate Monuments. Documentary data No. 220140014095



CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION OF THE INTERIOR MURAL
PAINTING OF THE
TEMPLE OF SAN JOSÉ DE GRACIA (ZMHQ),
DELEGATION OF THE HISTORIC

The intervention process began with preliminary works such as the protection of floors and movable property associated with the buildings, the placement of scaffolding and the delimitation of work areas. Subsequently, work was done to free a significant percentage of the original mural painting, removing patches and inadequate mortar fillings in order to restore these missing areas with the replacement of related mortars (lime-sand), chromatic reintegration and reproduction in areas with large missing areas. In this way it is affirmed that the rescued areas are integrated both visually and in their compositional materials.

RESULTS OF THE INTERVENTION.

It should be noted that the historic monument is of great relevance to Queretaro society, as it is one of the main temples of religious worship within the historic monuments area of Queretaro, and still maintains a tradition for the parishioners as a place for Christian confession before the parents who attend during the day, It is the only place with these mystical characteristics in the entire city, and as a result, after the completion of the work, the rescue of the mural painting that is a symbol of a specific era and that is only found in the center-basement region of the Mexican Republic has been a pleasant surprise and an enormous marvel for visitors to the temple.

It is important to highlight the involvement of students and graduates of the Faculty of Fine Arts of the Autonomous University of Queretaro in the restoration of movable property in this work and in the rescue and care of the city's world heritage, their invaluable knowledge generates a precedent for the consolidation of restoration schools and workshops in Queretaro, inviting the population to become aware of future conservation actions, strengthening the sense of belonging and the rescue of the exceptional universal value of a site inscribed on the world heritage list, of which society is a part.

The project for the conservation and restoration of the interior mural painting of the Temple of San José de Gracia is an exemplary action, both in its execution and in the understanding of the importance of managing a living heritage city, in accordance with instruments such as the Management and Conservation Plan for the Historic Monuments Zone of Querétaro, where the link between local academia, public institutions and religious organizations allows the population to enjoy the building and its surroundings.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

1. National Institute of Anthropology and History, INAH. National Catalog of Historic Monuments.
2. Final report of the Integral Project for the Rescue of the Mural Painting of the Temple of San José de Gracia, Historic Monument Zone of Santiago de Querétaro (2023).
LRBM Alejandra Mata Avila, contractor.
LRBM Luz María Leal Zamorano, project and construction manager.