

## AUTHENTICATION IN ART

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# Painting hanging on wall for 150 years and presumed a fake turns out to be REAL lost masterpiece

The 17th century Spanish portrait was long thought lost but has been discovered hanging in Penrhyn Castle

**AMY COLES TOBY MEYJES** 15:08, 20 NOV 2017



**The painting was kept on a wall for 150 years without anyone realising it was the real masterpiece**(Image: Wales Online WS)

A painting that was long thought to be a fake of little value has been revealed to be a 17th century masterpiece.

The Spanish portrait was kept on a wall in [the National Trust's](#) Penrhyn Castle for nearly 150 years without anyone realising its true value.

Made by Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, it was thought to be one of two copies in existence alongside a lost original.

However, art scholar Benito Navarrete Prieto disagreed after travelling from Seville to North Wales to view the copy, reports the [Guardian](#) . There are less than 12 known Murillo pieces, many of which are worth millions.



**The painting had been at Penrhyn Castle for 150 years** (Image: Daily Post Wales)

The painting has now gone to New York for an exhibition on the artist at the Frick Collection.

Curator, Xavier F Salomon said: "Benito went to Wales and realised how great the painting was and that everyone had been wrong in calling it a copy. The mistake – myself included – is just that no one bothered to go there, and everyone kept repeating that it was a copy. It was hidden in plain sight.

"It's not coming out of a location that's unknown. The house was open to the public.

"I thought 'people have always said it's a copy, it's got to be a copy'.



**The painting by Bartolomé Esteban Murillo was thought to be one of two copies in existence**(Image: Hulton Fine Art Collection)

“Which is, of course, a mistake **art** historians should never make. Go with your gut feeling and you should follow up. I didn’t.”  
After the US exhibit the portrait will move to the London’s National Gallery in February.

The painting was collected in the late 19th century by Baron Penrhyn.

The rediscovered portrait shows historian Don Diego Ortiz de Zúñiga, dressed in black with the insignia of the Order of Santiago and measures 113cm by 94cm.

In July Sotheby's in London sold one of his paintings, showing Christ wearing the crown of thorns, for £2.75m.

