

Ehe national gallery

Room 30

Spain

Ryzhuk Yuriy

- Spanish painting flourished during the 17th century principally in the service of God and King. The evolution of a Catholic Counter-Reformation religiosity is revealed in a variety of powerful, individual styles. Not long after El Greco had portrayed the divine with ethereal idealisations of figures, space and light, Diego Velázquez and Francisco de Zurbarán turned to realism to represent the mystical.

- To make religion more personally relevant, they used naturalistic light to convey divine presence and they depicted the saints as ordinary people, with a vivid physicality and facial expressions. Taste changed after 1650, and Bartolomé Esteban Murillo appealed to popular piety with an ideal style of soft forms and colours, and a sweet and gentle mood.

- At the court of Philip IV, Velázquez transformed his style of earthy realism in order to express the dignity and splendour of the monarchy. He developed an elegant technique of artful brushwork that calls attention to itself and yet conveys compelling actuality when viewed from a distance.



The Adoration of the
Shepherds



Queen Mariana of
Spain in Mourning



Don Adrián Pulido
Pareja



A Peasant Boy
leaning on a Sill