

SCULPTURE

Assumption

This magnificent carving of the Virgin of the Assumption was made by Mauricio de Valdivielso, one of the most important image-makers of academic sculpture in the Basque Country. From 1806, it presided over the main altarpiece of the cathedral designed by the prestigious architect from Alava, Justo Antonio de Olaguibel. Alongside the Gothic carving of the Virgin of Servitude, the image became a devotional reference point for the inhabitants of Vitoria. It presided over the cathedral until the Neoclassical altarpiece it belonged to was dismantled in 1960-1964. It has now returned to the place it once occupied, although without the altar that sheltered it.

The Virgin of the Assumption is being raised towards the divine encounter by four half-clothed angels in awkward positions hovering among some clouds. The Mother of God is depicted in line with common practice: a serene, somewhat childlike face, hair cloaked by a veil and open arms in a welcoming position. She wears a pink tunic and a blue mantle with a golden border finish. She exudes serenity and delicacy in the manner of Mauricio de Valdivielso, known as the “santero of Payueta”. The worshipping angels that crowned the old altarpiece are in the same style and by the same hand. They appear kneeling on a base of clouds in a praying position before the cross that crowned the old altarpiece. The whole ensemble was polychromed by the painter José López de Torre in Neoclassical style.



Author: Mauricio Valdivielso

Date: 1806

Technique: Polychrome stone carving

Measurements: Approx.

Place: Saint Mary's Cathedral (Vitoria-Gasteiz). The main chapel

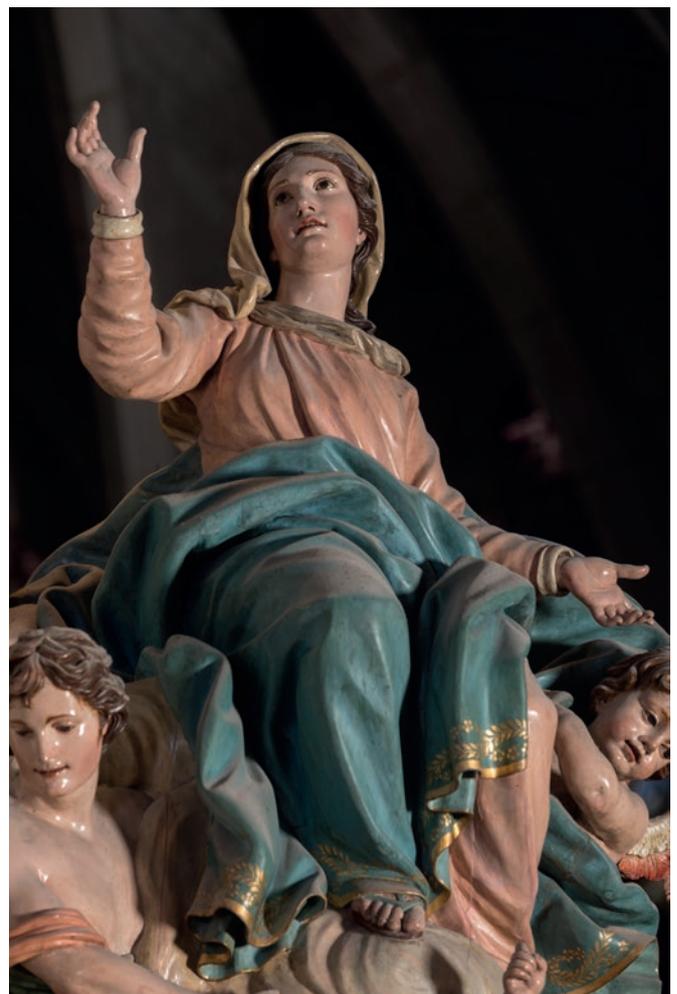


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A Living Treasure

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