

SIRUELA

CHAPEL OF THE HOSPITAL OF SAN FRANCISCO / FRANCISCO DE VARGAS “EL PERULERO” CULTURAL CENTRE - SIRUELA (BADAJOZ)

DESCRIPTION

The Chapel of the Hospital of San Francisco is located in the urban centre of Siruela, forming part of the town’s monumental ensemble alongside other buildings of historical importance, such as the parish church and the manor palace.

It is one of the most significant buildings within the municipality’s civil and religious heritage. Today it has been converted into a cultural space, while maintaining its presence as an architectural landmark within the urban landscape.

HISTORY

The complex was founded in **1590 by Francisco de Vargas**, popularly known as “El Perulero”, an indiano linked to the Americas who allocated his assets to the creation of a hospital under the patronage of Saint Francis of Assisi.

Construction of the building continued until **1617**, the year in which the works were considered completed. Although the hospital originally occupied a larger site, only the chapel is preserved today; it formed the religious core of the charitable complex.

Over time, the building lost its original function and was adapted and reused as a cultural facility. It currently houses the **Francisco de Vargas “El Perulero” Cultural Centre**, where activities such as exhibitions, concerts and theatrical performances are held.

HISTORICAL AND ARTISTIC DESCRIPTION

The chapel has a structure dating from the Modern Age, with particular emphasis on its façade, which follows a classicist composition with neoclassical elements.

The entrance portal is its most representative feature, arranged with granite columns that flank the doorway and give the ensemble a monumental character. Above it is a heraldic coat of arms that reinforces the building’s founding nature.

According to local tradition, the chapel was conceived as a replica of the chapel of the hermitage of Nuestra Señora de Altagracia, reinforcing its connection with the municipality's religious context. The building stands out for its formal balance and the quality of its construction, and is considered one of the buildings of greatest architectural value in Siruela.

NOTABLE FIGURES RELATED TO THE POI

The figure of **Francisco de Vargas**, known as "El Perulero", stands out as the founder of the hospital and the main promoter of the construction of the complex. His career as an indiano and local benefactor makes him one of the most important historical figures in Siruela.

MOVABLE HERITAGE

The main element of interest is the **heraldic coat of arms located above the entrance portal**, linked to the founder of the building.

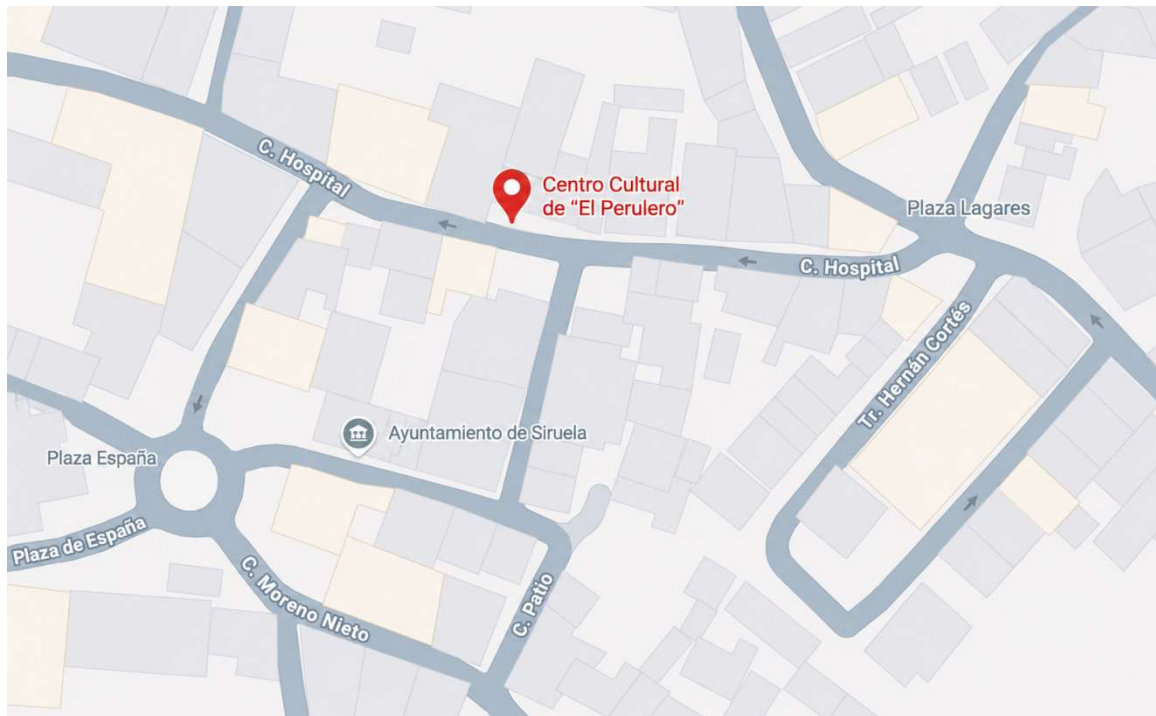
No other movable assets of special relevance preserved inside are documented in the sources consulted.

INTANGIBLE HERITAGE

The building maintains a strong connection with the collective memory of Siruela through the figure of El Perulero, a symbol of patronage and of the historical relationship between the town and the American world.

Its current use as a cultural centre reinforces its role as a meeting place and a driver of social activity, keeping its public function alive while adapting it to contemporary needs.

LOCATION MAP



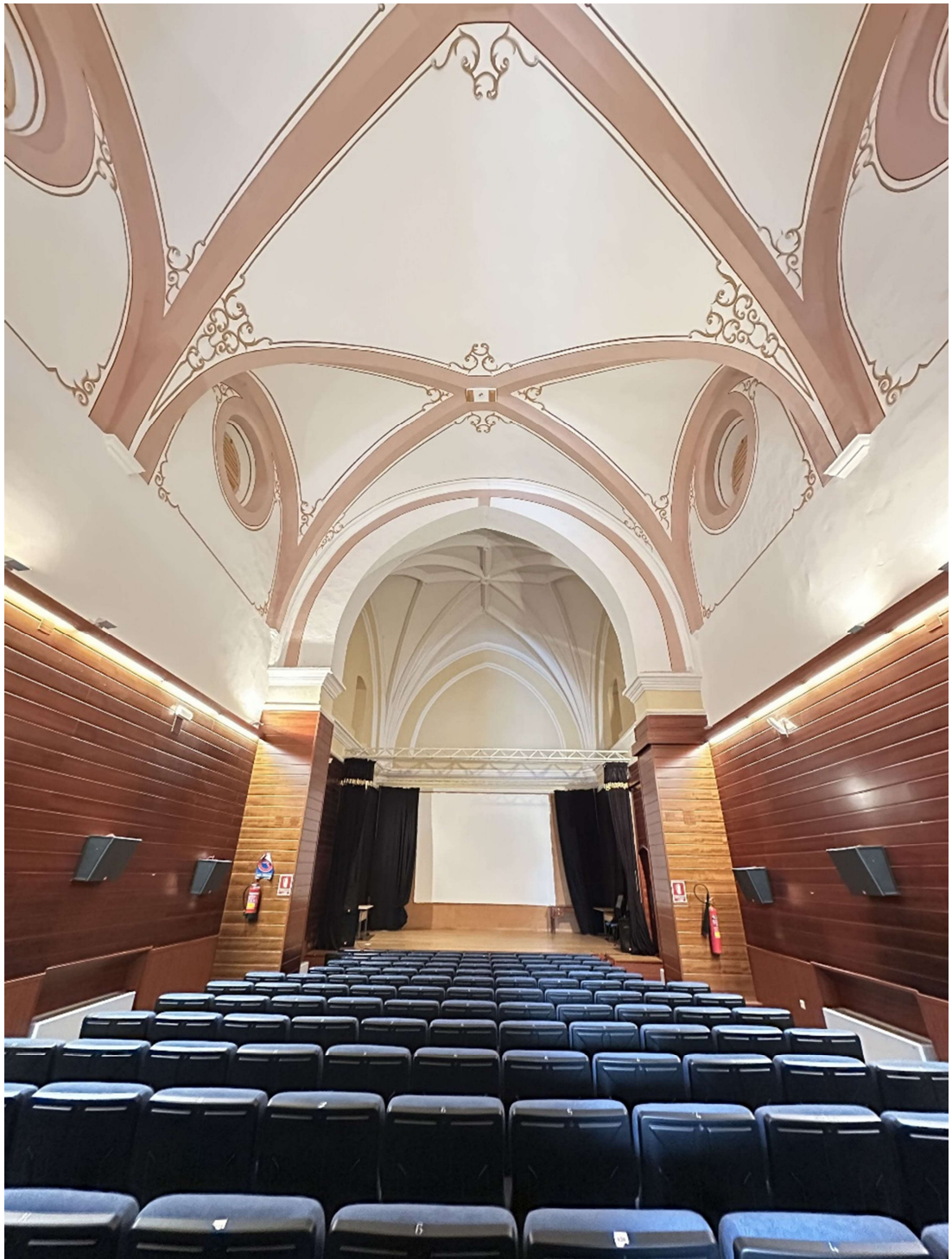
GRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION



Front façade of the former chapel with granite columns.



Entrance doorway to the building and heraldic coat of arms.



Detail of the chapel, which formed the religious core of the charitable complex.



Image of the chapel after restoration.