As part of Spain's conquest and rule of Latin America from the sixteenth through the nineteenth centuries, the Catholic Church dictated the artistic development in Spanish settlements. The merging of Christian imagery with the rich indigenous traditions of the Americas became an essential part of European模具 kaleidoscoping.

Assimilating European practices and beliefs with the diverse faiths of the Americas, images of saints and the Virgin Mary quickly became the dominant subject matter in the Spanish colonies. Brilliant colors, applied gold, extensive pargeting, and severe stylization are the chief characteristics of colonial art during this period. Indigenous populations were encouraged to adopt Christianity, portrayals of Old World saints often incorporated New World landscapes, costumes, and even facial features, creating a unique hybrid of local iconography and European Catholicism. Serving as devotional works, these paintings provide a record of the evolution of the complex faith which persists in Latin America today.

This work represents Saint James the Greater, one of the Twelve Apostles of Jesus. Here he is shown in the armor of a Spanish soldier, as it was believed that he miraculously appeared to fight the Christian army against the Moors during an important battle in 844. James is flanked by heavy drapery swags across which fly small birds. Below the horse’s belly appear small stick figures holding swords or guns which represent the Moorish army.

The Virgin of the Rosary was perhaps the most ancient devotional in the Americas; brought for Spaniards and later for more humble criollos (a Spanish-American of European, typically Spanish ancestry), mestizos (descendant of mixed Indian-European parentage), and indios. Her worship became so popular that her chapel became the most popular in the Spanish Viceroyalties. The custom of embellishing the statues can be traced to Spanish settlements. The mergering of Christian imagery with the rich indigenous traditions of the Americas is the most venerated saint, protective of the Native American people who saw him as a representative of their people.

The Virgin of Guadalupe is the most venerated religious image in Mexican culture. According to tradition, in 1531 the Virgin Mary appeared to an Indian named Juan Diego near Mexico City, instructing him to have the bishop of Mexico build a church at the spot. When presented to the bishop, roses that Juan Diego had asked for in time (this trick took foot) and a miraculous image of the Virgin, clothed in the sun and standing on the moon, were found emblazoned on the garment. This image, preserved in the Basilica of Guadalupe, became the model for countless copies, such as this one.

**Timeline**

1519-21 Hernán Cortés conquers Mexico

1532 Pizarro executes the Inca

1545 First great epidemics in Americas: 800,000 Indians die

1553 University of Mexico opens in Mexico City

1567 Catholic support for the arts & environment of native artists creates Durango School & some of the greatest art treasures

1577 Our Lady of Guadalupe proclaimed patroness of Mexico

1609 African slaves rebel in Tecumseh

1610 First Jesuit missions in Argentina & Brazil

1673 Catholic support for the arts & environment of native artists creates Durango School & some of the greatest art treasures

1767 Expulsion of the Jesuits

1781 Destruction of wealth, power & the status of traditional Indian nobility

1816 French Artistic Mission arrives in Rio de Janeiro

1918 Chilian independence

1919 Emilio Bouchard arms Indians to liberate Venezuela & Columbia

1925 Bolivia achieves independence

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**Our Lady of Guadalupe**

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SANTERO OF NAMBE MOLLENO (NEW MEXICAN, ACTIVE 1805–CA. 1850)

MAJOR SAINT JAMES (SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELLA)
BEFORE 1820, OIL ON BUFFALO HIDE

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