

Iglesia San Jose

San Juan, Puerto Rico, United States

1523-1532

World Monuments Watch List: 2004

SIGNIFICANCE & BACKGROUND

With its extraordinary ribbed vault system and maritime-themed murals, the sixteenth-century Iglesia San José in Old San Juan has been hailed as the oldest surviving and first significant work of architecture in Puerto Rico. The church is also considered one of the earliest extant examples of Gothic-influenced architecture in the New World.



CONDITIONS & THREATS

Iglesia San José has been closed for five years due to structural problems. Falling plaster, water infiltration, rising damp, and differential settlement have caused structural cracks and significant damage to painted finishes. Inappropriate interventions such as filling of voids in the Gothic vaults with cement, removal of original finishes, and the use of incompatible materials, have compounded the structural problems. The church is in dire need of a conditions assessment and long-term conservation plan.

PROPOSED PROJECT

Immediate conservation measures were implemented to address the deterioration of the church from water ingress. Critical structural stabilization measures are scheduled to begin in the Summer 2004. The next phase of work focuses on the conservation of the rapidly deteriorating mural paintings.

BUDGET & REQUEST

Project Budget: \$150,000
Request: \$150,000

