



# Pedro de Mena

## The Spanish Bernini

**Xavier Bray**

**Jose Luis Romero Torres**

<b>ISBN</b>	9789492677914
<b>Publisher</b>	Hannibal Books
<b>Binding</b>	Hardback
<b>Territory</b>	World excluding Benelux, France, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Portugal, Spain, and Italy
<b>Size</b>	300 mm x 230 mm
<b>Pages</b>	244 Pages
<b>Price</b>	£45.00

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Pedro de Mena y Medrano (1628-1688) is the most highly regarded master of Spanish Baroque sculpture, on a par with his contemporaries, the great seventeenth-century painters Velázquez, Zurbarán and Murillo. Mena's contributions to Spanish Baroque sculpture are unsurpassed in both technical skill and expressiveness of his religious subjects. His ability to sculpt the human body was remarkable, and he excelled in creating figures and scenes for contemplation. This first monograph of Pedro de Mena shows incredible details and remarkable images of his hyper-realistic sculptures, full of passion. In addition to text by curator Xavier Bray, *Pedro de Mena* also features important contributions by José Luis Romero Torres, curator of the exhibition *Pedro de Mena*, to be held in Málaga in 2019.

Since 2002, **Xavier Bray** has been assistant curator of 17th- and 18th-century European paintings at the National Gallery, London. He completed his doctoral dissertation, "Royal Religious Commissions as Political Propaganda in Spain under Charles III," at Trinity College, Dublin, in 1999. Between 1998 and 2000, he was assistant curator at the National Gallery, London, where he co-curated exhibitions such as *Orazio Gentileschi at the Court of Charles I* (1998-1999), *A Brush with Nature: The Gere Collection of Landscape Oil Sketches* (1999), and *The Image of Christ: Seeing Salvation* (2000). He was also the curator of a focus exhibition on Goya's *Family of the Infante Don Luis* (2001-2002). From 2000 to 2002 Bray was the curator of paintings at the Museum of Fine Arts in Bilbao, where he organised exhibitions such as *An Intimate Vision - Women Impressionists* (2001-2002) and *Vicente López: Court Painter to Fernando VII* (2002). He returned to the National Gallery, London, in 2002 and was the co-curator of *El Greco* (2004), *Caravaggio* (2005), and *Velázquez* (2006). *The Sacred Made Real: Spanish Painting and Sculpture, 1600-1700* (2009) was the first solo exhibition organised by Bray. **José Luis Romero Torres** is art historian and conservator at the Patrimonio Histórico de la Junta de Andalucía.

