



Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation

El Presidio de Santa Bárbara SHP • Casa de la Guerra
Santa Inés Mission Mills • Jimmy's Oriental Gardens

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Additional photos available upon request

PRESS CONTACT

Christa Clark Jones

Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation

123 East Canon Perdido Street, Santa Barbara, CA

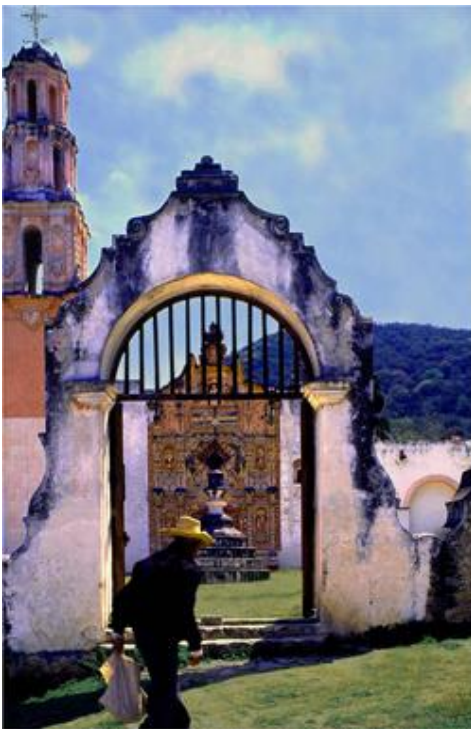
Tel: (805) 966-1279 Fax: (805) 966-9888

E-mail: christa@sbthp.org Website: www.sbthp.org

Blog: sbthp.wordpress.com Facebook: [facebook.com/SBTHP](https://www.facebook.com/SBTHP) Twitter: twitter.com/SBTHP

Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation Presents New Exhibit

Junípero Serra in Mexico: Five Missions in the Sierra Gorda de Querétaro



Entry gate at Misión Señor San Francisco del Valle de Tilaco. By Jeffrey Becom.

(SANTA BARBARA, CA) – The Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation (SBTHP) is pleased to present a **new exhibit** ***Junípero Serra in Mexico: Five Missions in the Sierra Gorda de Querétaro*** at the Casa de la Guerra (15 East De la Guerra Street, Santa Barbara) on display February 2 through April 28, 2013. Enjoy an opening reception on Thursday, March 7 from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., a free First Thursday event.

The year 2013 will be commemorated in Spain, Mexico, and California as the 300th anniversary of the birth of Fray Junípero Serra, founder of the first nine links in the chain of 21 Alta California missions as well as the chapels of California's four presidios – San Diego, Monterey, San Francisco and Santa Barbara. In honor of this anniversary, SBTHP is hosting the traveling exhibition *Junípero Serra in Mexico: Five Missions in the*

Sierra Gorda de Querétaro.

The exhibition is curated by scholar **Julianne Burton-Carvajal, Ph.D.**, who also authored an accompanying publication available at Casa de la Guerra and El Presidio SHP. *Junípero Serra in Mexico* features dramatic images by professional photographer Jeffrey Becom and original pen and ink drawings by local artist **Richard Perry** and reveals Serra's very first missionary project: a group of five mission churches in the **Viceroyalty's most remote and resistant region**. Called by the Spaniards Cerro Gordo and later Sierra Gorda (big peak, big mountain range), it sheltered a mix of indigenous groups who repulsed one missionary effort after another for decades.

In 1750, the same year they arrived in Mexico City from their native island of Mallorca, Serra and his former students Juan Crespí and Francisco Palóu were among the missionary trainees who volunteered to take on that daunting assignment. Fray Francisco Lasuén followed in 1762 and remained for five years.

The five mission churches that Fathers Serra, Crespi and Palóu created along with some 20 other Franciscans in active collaboration with their indigenous converts are a spectacular and fascinating architectural legacy. Unlike any mission churches in Upper California, their façades are “exterior altarpieces,” literal “sermons in stone” made of richly painted and intricately carved stone and stucco. Like the missions of Upper California, the Sierra Gorda complexes were allowed to fall into ruin and have been painstakingly restored through a series of 20th century efforts. The international importance of the Sierra Gorda missions was recognized in 2003 when they were collectively designated a World Heritage Site (Patrimonio de la Humanidad) by UNESCO.



The Archangel Michael at Mission San Miguel Conzá.
Drawing by Richard Perry.

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CALENDAR LISTING



Opening Reception: *Junípero Serra in Mexico: Five Missions in the Sierra Gorda de Querétaro*

Date & Time: Thursday, March 7, 2013 from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Location: Casa de la Guerra, 15 East De la Guerra Street, Santa Barbara

Cost: Free First Thursday event

Description: In honor of the 300th anniversary of the birth of Fray Junípero Serra, the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation is hosting the traveling exhibition *Junípero Serra in Mexico*. Dramatic images by professional photographer Jeffrey Becom and original pen and ink drawings by local artist Richard Perry highlight spectacular but little known missions founded by Serra in the remote reaches of Mexico's Sierra Gorda region.

Exhibit Dates: February 2 - April 28, 2013

Saturday - Sunday, Noon to 4:00 PM

Casa de la Guerra, 15 East De la Guerra Street, Santa Barbara

For more information: Visit www.sbthp.org or call (805) 965-0093

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ABOUT Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation (SBTHP)— For fifty years the Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation (SBTHP) has worked to *protect, preserve, restore, reconstruct, and interpret historic sites in Santa Barbara County*. Founded in 1963 by Dr. Pearl Chase and other concerned community leaders, SBTHP operates El Presidio de Santa Bárbara State Historic Park—Santa Barbara's 18th century birthplace—under a unique agreement with California State Parks and recently purchased the neighboring building that housed Jimmy's Oriental Gardens, providing an opportunity to interpret the history of Santa Barbara's Asian American community in the Presidio Neighborhood. SBTHP owns and operates Casa de la Guerra, the 1820s home of Presidio Comandante José de la Guerra and his family—the restored home is now a museum featuring original furnishings and rotating exhibits. Recently, SBTHP signed an agreement with State Parks to manage and develop the Santa Inés Mission Mills, located near the town of Solvang, as a future California State Park. SBTHP was awarded the 2011 Trustees' Emeritus Award for Excellence in the Stewardship of Historic Sites by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. With the help of continuing education programs and exhibits, SBTHP strives to encourage community involvement and foster an appreciation for Santa Barbara County's distinct history. Learn more at www.sbthp.org.