

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED JUL 14 1976
DATE ENTERED SEP 8 1976

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

CONVENTO DE PORTA COELI *nhc*

AND/OR COMMON

MUSEO DE ARTE RELIGIOSO

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

PLAZA PORTA COELI

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

SAN GERMAN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

PUERTO RICO

__ VICINITY OF
CODE

COUNTY

CODE

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

ACCESSIBLE

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- MUSEUM
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- ENTERTAINMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- GOVERNMENT
- TRANSPORTATION
- INDUSTRIAL
- OTHER:
- MILITARY

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

CATHOLIC CHURCH, DIOCESIS DE PONCE

STREET & NUMBER

OBISPADO DE PONCE

CITY, TOWN

PONCE

STATE

PUERTO RICO

__ VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

REGISTRO DE LA PROPIEDAD

STREET & NUMBER

MUNICIPIO DE SAN GERMAN

CITY, TOWN

SAN GERMAN

STATE

PUERTO RICO

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

PRELIMINARY PUERTO RICO SURVEY

DATE

1974

__FEDERAL STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

INSTITUTO DE CULTURA PUERTORRIQUEÑA

CITY, TOWN

SAN JUAN

STATE

PUERTO RICO

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RUINS Convent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR Church	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Oriented along the usual East-Meast axis, the church of the now disappeared Convent of Porta Coeli consists of a single nave enclosed by stuccoed rubble masonry walls. The roofing of this simple structure consists of rough-hewn wooden trusses (suggestive of the Mudejar style) which rest on the lateral walls assisted at quarter-point span by rough-hewn wooden columns, thereby creating the impression of three small naves in the basilica plan. At the eastern end, a narrower presbyterium than the nave is roofed in the same manner, and still shows an old unaltered marble paving and a significant wooden altar piece (retablo) of a later date than the church.

The nave itself presents five openings on each lateral wall: two doors and three windows in the north; and four windows and a single door at the south. The nave has been re-paved with clay tiles. There is a very small choir balcony.

The principal, galbe-end facade has a single arched doorway at the center, framed by plateresque (spanish renaissance) pilasters which hold up an entablature above which is a rectangular window at choir-balcony height. Centered above the window, at the roof ridge, is a bellfry with one bell in its arched opening. This facade was probably originally duplicated to the north to provide an entry to the convent, but this section, while still partially legible is now in ruins. Each lateral facade shows one similar arched doorway with pilasters.

The convent itself, which was located immediately to the north of the church has long since disappeared, but some ruins still remain an integral part of the structure are the great stairs which lead from the church down to the Plaza de Porta Coeli. On the south side of the building, the topographic difference with the street level is accomplished through a retaining wall that has been restored and consolidated.

In the 1960's the Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña undertook the partial restoration of the building and subsequently converted it into a Museum of Religious Art. The work which was accomplished, however, was insufficient to prevent the continuation of the decay. The walls need further structural consolidation, and there is a very serious problem of termite infection in the wooden structure as well as in the exhibition pieces.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Orinally built by the Dominican Frairs in 1609, the Convent of Porta Coeli, perched on top of a hill with a majestic stairway leading to it, was reconstructed during the XVIIIth century. The building offers the most interesting example of missionary architecture in the Hispanic Caribbean, and as such is of great value. In spite of its extreme simplicity, the church shows serene proportions and careful detailing in its front facade. Its construction technique is an important document of the provincial building methods of colonial times.

Because of its impressive siting and graceful lines, Porta Coeli is probably the most well known and readily identified church in the island.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

De Hostos, Adolfo- DICCIONARIO BIBLIOGRAFICO COMENTADO DE PUERTO RICO, San Juan Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña, 1966.

Torres Oliver, Luis- EL CUATRICENTENARIO DE SAN GERMAN, Municipio de San Germán, 1971.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY One acre

UTM REFERENCES

67° 2' 10" W
18° 5' 4" N

A

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Gustavo F. Araoz, Jr., A.I.A.

Preservation Architect

ORGANIZATION

Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

Convento de Dominicos, Plaza de San Jose

TELEPHONE

(809) 724 2905

CITY OR TOWN

San Juan

STATE

Puerto Rico

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL X

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

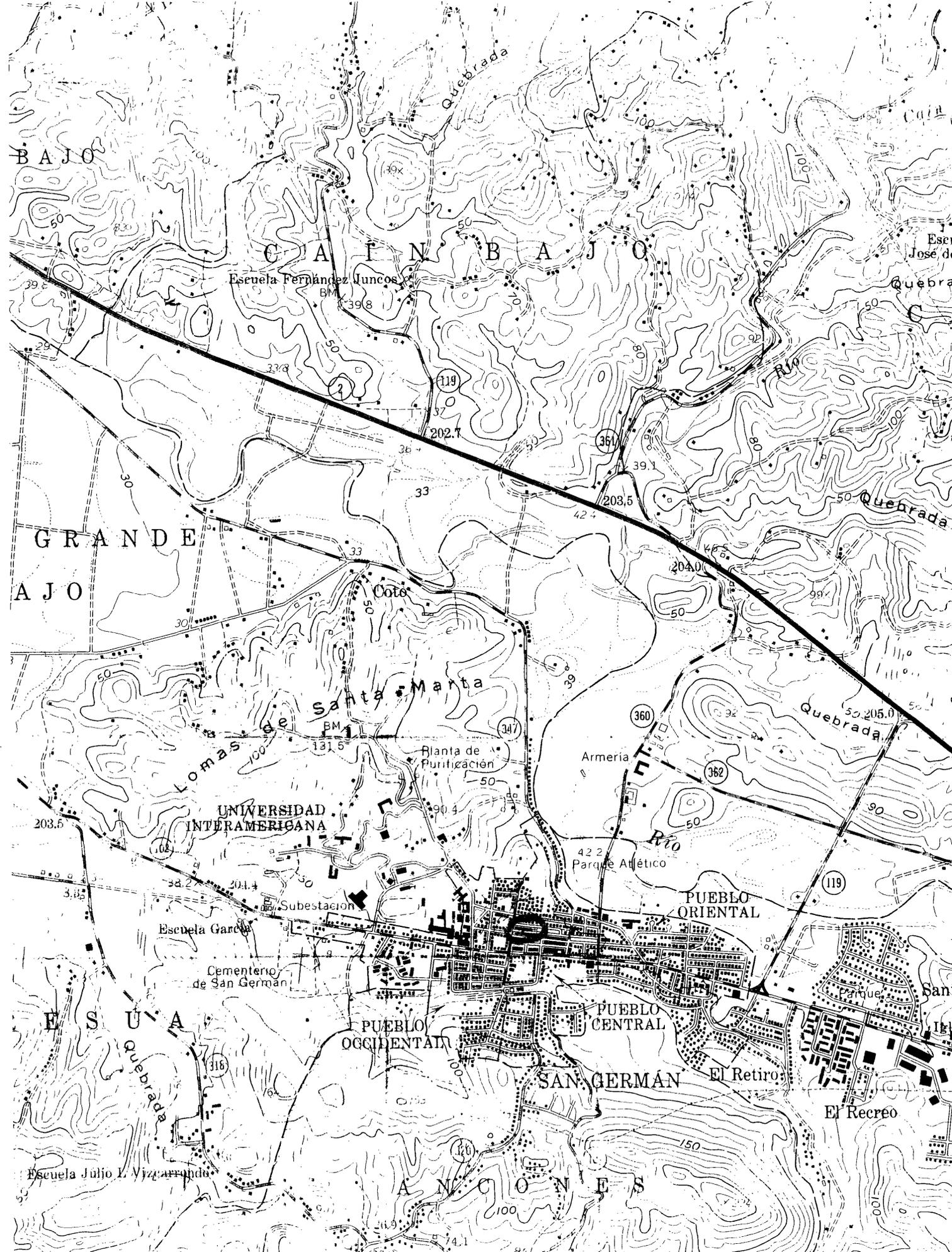
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE



TITLE Director of the Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña

DATE 12 July 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER	
	DATE 9/8/76
ACTING DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION	DATE 4/7/76
ATTEST: Robert B. Rothberg	
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER	
Acting	



BAJO

C A I N B A J O

Esuela Fernández Juncos

GRANDE
AJO

Lomas de Santa Marta

UNIVERSIDAD
INTERAMERICANA

Coto

Planta de Purificación

Armería

Parque Atlético

PUEBLO
ORIENTAL

PUEBLO
OCCIDENTAL

PUEBLO
CENTRAL

SAN GERMAN

El Retiro

El Recreo

ESUA

AÑONNES

Esuela Julio L. Vizcarra