

Fundación Goya in Aragón opens the 'Goya and Italy' exhibit

- 'Goya and Italy' will run from May 31st to September 15th at the Zaragoza Museum and will display over 350 pieces by Goya and many of other artists linked to his time in Rome
- Tickets are available on-line at www.goyaeitalia.es

Introduction

The principal aim of the '**Goya and Italy**' exhibition is to reveal all the grandeur and genius of Goya's creative world and its links to Italy, placing particular emphasis on the Aragonese painter's time in eighteenth-century Rome, an artistic *caput mundi* at the time of his visit in 1770-1771.

In the words of the exhibition's curator, Professor **Joan Sureda**, the boundaries of the exhibition can be more precisely defined as follows "...it should be emphasised that the '**Goya and Italy**' exhibition has certainly not been designed with the intention of 'cataloguing' the artist's works. Rescuing works from oblivion or non-recognition in museums, private collections or the art market and placing them in, or restoring them to the catalogue of works produced during Goya's Roman period does not form part of the exhibition's aims. The goal has been to map the creative world existing in Rome at the time Goya was living in the city; a place dominated by the visual culture of the Roman-Neapolitan *barrocheto* and the French Rococo, the growing taste for archaeological Classicism and the world of dreams and fantastical visions, and at the same time to examine the influence of this world on the Aragonese painter's development up until the end of the eighteenth century".

The Exhibition

This large-scale exhibition will be held from May 31st until September 15th, 2008 at the Zaragoza Museum and will host a representative display of the paintings of Francisco

de Goya and also his drawings and engravings, covering his early years until the end of the eighteenth century. A total of **89** hugely significant and representative works of art will be on display, including pieces such as: *The Family of the Infante Don Luis de Borbón* (Magnani Rocca Foundation, Parma); Self-portrait (Museo del Prado); *The sleep of reason produces monsters* (Museo del Prado); *The dream* (National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin); Portrait of *María Teresa Borbón Godoy, Condesa de Chinchón* (Galleria degli Uffizi); a first edition copy of *Los Caprichos* (Calcografía Nacional), etc.

The work of the Aragonese *maestro* will be accompanied by pieces from such outstanding artists as Anton Raphael Mengs, Johann Heinrich Füssli, Giovanni Battista Piranesi, Angelica Kauffmann, Taddeus Kuntz, Luca Giordano, Corrado Giaquinto, Francisco Bayeu, Jacques-Louis David, Pompeo Batoni, Gianbattista Tiepolo, Angelika Kauffmann, Antonio Canova, Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, Jean-Honoré Fragonard and Gaspare Traversi, as well as many others, making up a grand total of **359 works of art and 118 artists**.

The exhibition space will be specially created for the occasion, arranged into 15 different sections. The various sections are spread over the Zaragoza Museum's two stories, with the display commencing on the upper floor and then moving down to its conclusion on the Museum's ground floor. The intention is to give the visitor an insight into Goya's own world, his viewpoint and his personal and artistic relationships, and to provide both experts and the general public with answers to many of the questions which arise when contemplating the subject of Goya and his stay in Italy.

The organisations taking part in the exhibition include museums, institutions and collections from all over the world, a few of the most prominent being the Museo del Prado (Madrid), the Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando (Madrid); Patrimonio Nacional (Madrid); the Magnani Rocca Foundation (Parma), the Museo di Roma (Rome), the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica-Palazzo Barberini (Rome); the Musei Capitolini (Rome); the Musei Vaticani (Vatican City); the Warsaw National Museum (Poland); the Hermitage (Saint Petersburg) and the Galleria degli Uffizi (Florence), clearly demonstrating the truly international scope of this exhibition.

The exhibition catalogue is to be published by Editorial Turner and is edited by the exhibition curator, Professor Joan Sureda. It will contain essays and studies of works of art by renowned Spanish art historians who specialise in Francisco de Goya, including José Milicua, Manuela M. Mena Marqués, Juan J. Luna and Gonzalo M. Borrás, as well as experts from Italy, Germany and the USA, who will all contribute their insights into Goya's period in Italy and the works on display. As an example, the catalogue will include contributions from Maria Elisa Tittoni (Museo di Roma), Lucia Fornari (Galleria Nazionale di Parma), Steffi Roetgen (Institut für Kunstgeschichte der Universität Munchen), Vernon-Hyde Minor (University of Colorado) and Nicola Spinosa (Museo di Capodimonte, Nápoles).

GOYA 2008

The Goya 2008 Programme, which forms part of the Goya in Aragon Foundation, was launched in 2006 with the aim of developing an overall programme for the various events based on Goya which are to take place in response to the Expo 2008 in the city of Zaragoza. Within this context, the Aragonese Regional Government chose Francisco de Goya as representing the region's cultural riches and as the best way of illustrating Aragon's own contribution to the world's cultural heritage.

Since its creation, the Goya in Aragon Foundation has organised a large number of events linked to this Aragonese artist. There have been international exhibitions and symposia which have served as the opening act prior to the stunning displays which are now just beginning, and the Foundation has achieved its final goal of creating an area dedicated solely to Goya following the extension to the Zaragoza Museum, which will now become the focus of research into the Aragonese artist and the nerve centre from which his work will be disseminated.

'**Goya and Italy**' is one more exhibition in the series of events which commenced in 2006 with the exhibitions entitled "***Goya y el Palacio de Sobraduel***", "***Luis M^a de Borbón y Vallabriga. Francisco de Goya***", and "***La memoria de Goya***". The latter came to a close in April following a hugely successful response from the public and experts alike.

The Goya 2008 Programme concludes this year with a major exhibition entitled '**Goya and the Modern World**', to be held from December 2008 to March 2009, which will cover Goya's influence on contemporary art and culture.

Goya in Italy. The Journey Begins

We know that Goya's journey to Rome took place between May or June 1769 and February or March 1770, when the young painter was twenty-three years old. He set off for Italy "in order to officiate in the great liturgy of Roman art and to live (or survive) in a place of unexpected meetings and the constant merry-go-round of ideas" (Joan Sureda).

It is unquestionably the case that Goya undertook the journey to Italy without any financial assistance with which to support this period of study. Agustín Carderera wrote in 1838 that Goya lived in Rome as "a poor student, full of passion and enthusiasm". Goya himself describes the situation similarly in the report he sent to His Majesty Carlos III in 1779, accompanying an application to be considered for the post of court painter.

Some romantic writers referred to this and dreamed up stories based on the fact, as the exhibition's curator, Joan Sureda, points out, that "once in Rome, Goya was more interested in the goings on and habits of people in the street than in the academic circles attended by the young Spanish and French boarders. In a display of physical strength and agility, as well as bravery and a thirst for the limelight, Goya (who survived by painting scenes of daily life and bull-fights which went not entirely unnoticed, to such a point that they attracted the admiring gaze of the Russian Ambassador) was seen climbing the dome of Saint Peter's right up to the very highest and most inaccessible reaches, sitting himself on the top of the upper frieze of the Cecilia Metella tomb on the Appian Way and even bursting into convents in hot pursuit of novice nuns, which almost saw him hanging from the gallows.

Goya's motives for travelling to Italy have been described by **Juan J. Luna**, curator at the Museo del Prado, in the following way: 'Goya was a young seventeen-year old from the provinces who had, thanks to the strings which his second teacher, Francisco

Bayeu, was able to pull, been able to gain access to the stunning world of the Spanish 'royal collections' and to enjoy close up contact with the successes of the great masters of the past and present... It is highly likely that the multifarious world of the works of the Italian painters, of which there were a great many examples in the royal palaces and various private collections (and to which he was undoubtedly granted access thanks to Bayeu's patronage), was extremely attractive to Goya. These works of art would provide him with the solution to artistic problems which troubled him as they would any other young artist and they beautifully complemented the ideas which he had already built up during his initial apprenticeship in Zaragoza. They would also provide a powerful spur to his intention of travelling to Italy, which he did eventually put into practice in search of new sources of inspiration'.

Initial contacts

The art historian **Raquel Gallego** is of the view that "the person who took on the role of protecting and educating Goya during his period of study in Rome might have been Mengs (i.e. Anton Raphael Mengs, a leading Italian painter of the period). The most plausible explanation is that Goya's journey to Italy was made, at least in part, in the company of this bohemian painter... Mengs undoubtedly played an extremely significant role in supporting Goya during his stay in Rome and he must have gained the Aragonese artist entry to various circles where he could finish his education". Indeed, this particular historian believes that it was Mengs who took Goya to Parma, where they visited the Accademia di Parma, to which he was to submit one of his most famous paintings of the period, *Hannibal the Conqueror, viewing Italy from the Alps for the First Time*, as his entry for a competition held only a few months later. The great Aragonese painter failed to win the competition, although he did receive a degree of praise from the jury.

Ms. Gallego also refers to the important role played by Spaniards in Rome at this period, stating that "The Spanish Palace was one of the nerve centres of cultural life in Rome and was a focal point for all the Spanish artists who came to Rome with the intention of finishing their education". It was a location which offered shelter and which at the same time was full of interesting people whose contacts and networks could enrich the Roman experience of many of these young artists. The reference to the

Palazzo Reggio or the Spanish Palace does not cover solely the building of that name but also the whole surrounding area, which was subject to Spanish jurisdiction to a certain extent throughout the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. In 1678, the ambassador of the day, the Marquis of Carpio, stated that he governed an area within the city which included not only the palace but also 850 houses and 206 workshops housing various trades.

One of the keys to understanding Goya's journey to Italy is the Italian Sketchbook, which was acquired by the Prado Museum in 1993. The book contains Goya's handwritten notes interspersed with sketches of people and even copies of compositions, churches and collections, all recorded during his time in Italy. He probably continued to use the sketchbook during the 1770's for artistic purposes until it gradually became a notebook recording the personal details of his life, arranged, chronologically, such as his marriage and the birth of his children.

Thanks to the Italian Sketchbook we can learn which Italian cities had a particularly strong impact on him during his journey, namely, Rome, Venice, Modena, Bologna, Genoa and Parma, the artists whose work he admired, namely, Titian, Correggio, Guido Reni, Il Guercino, Maratti, Rubens, Raphael, and we can also read about his taste for archaeological remains of Antiquity, as demonstrated in his drawings of the Belvedere Torso and the Farnese Hercules. Other work of great importance is the series of studies and cartoons Goya produced for the painting entitled '*Hannibal the Conqueror, viewing Italy from the Alps for the First Time*' which he entered for the competition organised by the Parma Academy of Fine Arts in 1770. The painting was lost for two hundred years and was found only fifteen years ago.

For further information:

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