

# FEARFUL FOLLY

CLASIFICACIÓN: PRINTS

SERIE: ABSURDITIES (PRINTS Y DRAWINGS, CA.1815-1824)



## DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA

1815 - 1819

DIMENSIONES

245 x 357 mm

TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE

Etching, burnished aquatint and drypoint

RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA

Documented work

FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN

20 Aug 2021 / 05 Jun 2023

INVENTARIO

964 -

## HISTORIA

See *Femenine folly*.

In the Lazaro Galdiano Foundation in Madrid there is a state proof with the burnished aquatint in which the number 13 appears.

There are several proofs prior to the stripe affecting the figure of the ghost. This defect, which appeared around 1848 in a print even prior to the first edition, was burnished to conceal it, without success.

## ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

Armed soldiers run in panic at the imposing sight of a large, swollen ghost. On the right stands a gloomy tree with a twisted, dead trunk which, together with the horizon line,

forms the only landscape in the picture. The tree is a device that makes the viewer aware of the dimensions of the spectre, as it is as large as he is, or even slightly smaller, as the ghost appears hunched over, as if he did not fit into the frame of the picture.

At his feet, a group of French soldiers fall to the ground in terror. In the foreground, next to him, one of the soldiers is trying to get to his feet. Next to him, another kneeling companion has a look of horror on his face and, next to them, what appears to be the captain is running in terror with his sabre drawn, calling for a retreat. In the background, under the tree, a mass is gathered in fear. Only two soldiers can be made out, trying to get away from the ghostly being.

Various interpretations have been made of this scene. Most of them tend to be along the lines of *Disasters* (*Sad presentiments of what is to happen*), relating to the wartime sphere of the War of Independence. Thus, the ghost connects with the spectre of the condemnatory punishment of all armies for the evil they cause. It is also linked to the rebellion of the Spanish people against the Napoleonic army. . Finally, it may be a scarecrow, like the one in *Caprice 52. What a Tailor Can*, with which to frighten the troops and make them flee. In general, it can be said that the phantom embodies all the pain and evil caused by wars.

This print is notable for Goya's use of etching lines to create the forms and volumes. In the apparition, they are arranged in an angular manner to outline the drapery. The dark background of the aquatint reveals a nocturnal scene that accentuates the horror.

The preparatory drawing for the present print, also entitled *Fearful folly*, has survived.

#### CONSERVACIÓN

The plate has a stripe at the top of the figure of the ghost that is reflected in the print.

#### EXPOSICIONES

##### **Etchings by Francisco Goya** Johannesburg Johannesburg 1974

**Grabados de Goya: colección propiedad de la Biblioteca Nacional, que se conserva en su Gabinete de**  
Casa de la Amistad de Moscú Moscow 1979  
exhibition displayed from January 18th to 31st 1979

**Goya. Das Zeitalter der Revolucionen. Kunst um 1800 (1980 – 1981)**  
Hamburger Kunsthalle Hamburg 1980  
cat. 147

**Goya y el espíritu de la Ilustración**  
Museo Nacional del Prado Madrid 1988  
from October 6th to December 18th 1988. Exhibited also at Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, January 18th to March 26th 1989; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Nueva York, May 9th to July 16th 1989, Madrid curator Manuela B. Mena Marqués, scientific directors Alfonso E. Pérez Sánchez and Eleanor A. Sayre

**Ydioma universal: Goya en la Biblioteca Nacional**  
Biblioteca Nacional Madrid 1996  
from September 19th to December 15th 1996  
cat. 297

**Francisco Goya. Sein Leben im spiegel der graphik. Fuendetodos 1746-1828 Bordeaux. 1746-1996**  
Galerie Kornfeld Bern 1996  
from November 21st 1996 to January 1997

**Goya. 250 Aniversario**  
Museo Nacional del Prado Madrid 1996  
consultant editor Juan J. Luna. From March 29th to June 2nd 1996

**Goya grabador**  
Museo del Grabado Español Contemporáneo Marbella 1996  
from March 8th to May 5th 1996

Zaragoza 1996

London 1997

Madrid 1999

**Schlaf der Vernunft. Original**

Bilbao 2012

**radierungen von Francisco de Goya**  
Munich 2000

**Goya et la modernité**  
Pinacothèque de Paris París 2013  
from October 11st 2013 to March 16th 2014  
cat. 202

**Goya: Order and disorder**  
Museum of Fine Arts Boston 2014  
cat. 236

#### BIBLIOGRAFÍA

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pp. 374-375, cat. 249  
1964  
Bruno Cassirer

**Vie et ouvre de Francisco de Goya**  
GASSIER, Pierre y WILSON, Juliet  
p. 325, cat. 1573  
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Office du livre

CARRETE, Juan, MATILLA, José Manuel,  
AULLÓN DE HARO, Pedro, BOZAL, Valeriano,  
GLENDRINNING, Nigel, VEGA, Jesusa y BLAS,  
Javier  
pp. 101 y 109, cat. 2 y 22  
1996  
Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San  
Fernando y Calcografía Nacional

OROPESA, Marisa and RINCÓN GARCÍA,  
Wilfredo  
p. 270  
2013  
Pinacoteca de París

**Catálogo de las estampas de Goya en la Biblioteca Nacional**  
SANTIAGO, Elena M. (coordinadora)  
p. 235, cat. 375-376  
1996  
Ministerio de Educación y Cultura, Biblioteca  
Nacional

**Goya. In the Norton Simon Museum**  
WILSON BAREAU, Juliet  
pp. 204-211  
2016  
Norton Simon Museum

**Goya: Order & Disorder**  
ILCHMAN, Frederick y STEPANEK, Stephanie  
L. (comisarios)  
pp. 337-340  
2014  
Museum of Fine Arts Boston Publications

#### PALABRAS CLAVE

**DISPARATES FANTASMA ESPECTRO SOLDADO SOLDADO FRANCÉS CAPITÁN ÁRBOL**

#### ENLACES EXTERNOS