WITCHES’ SABBATH (EL AQUELARRE)

CLASIFICACIÓN: MURAL

SERIE: BLACK PAINTINGS (WALL PAINTING AND SKETCHES, CA.1820-1823) (4/14)



DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA	Ca. 1820 - 1823
UBICACIÓN	The Prado National Museum. Madrid, Madrid, Spain
DIMENSIONES	140.5 x 435.7 cm
TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE	Oil painting on plaster transferred to canvas
RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA	Undisputed work
TITULAR	El Prado National Museum
FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN	27 Oct 2010 / 13 Nov 2023
INVENTARIO	406 (P00761)

HISTORIA

See *Leocadia*.

ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

This painting was located on the long wall of the left-hand side of the lower floor of the house known as the Quinta del Sordo, opposite *The Pilgrimage to San Isidro*.

The painting shows a witches' gathering in the presence of a devil in the form of a male goat, an idea that Goya had already explored in works produced for the Alameda Palace of the Duke and Duchess of Osuna, as well as in prints from the series *Caprices (Caprichos)* and *Follies (Disparates)*.

The demon presides over the ceremony accompanied by a kind of assistant on his right. On the far right there is a girl awaiting her initiation. The attendants at this hellish gathering form a great mass of figures characterized by deformed gestures and distorted facial expressions conveying the horror and animal instincts that the male goat figure is transmitting to the crowd.

Nordström has attempted to give a symbolic meaning to the painting, linking it with Saturn as the god of melancholy. This relationship is justified by the use of the image of a male goat, the symbol for Capricorn ruled by the planet Saturn.

The composition is focused on the centre of the painting where the crowd of figures is situated, although the work suffered some changes following its removal from the wall. Photographs taken before the paintings were transferred to canvas show that the restorer removed almost a metre and a half of the painting. In the original format the girl sitting down would have been almost in the centre of the composition, and not on

the far side of the painting where she sits today.

Black is the predominant colour in the painting, along with some touches of flesh tones, ochres, greens, and dirty greys used for the clothing. The artist used violent brushstrokes and rapid marks in accordance with the expressionist style of the scene.

CONSERVACIÓN

Apart from the restoration work carried out by Martínez Cubells in 1973, further restoration work was also carried out in 1954 by Pablo y Alarcón for the Prado Museum.

EXPOSICIONES

Pinturas Negras en la Exposición Universal de París
Palacio del Trocadero París 1878
from may 20th to November 10th 1878

Goya. 250 Aniversario
Museo Nacional del Prado Madrid 1996
consultant editor Juan J. Luna. From March 29th to June 2nd 1996
cat. 155

BIBLIOGRAFÍA

Goya, sa vie, son œuvre
YRIARTE, Charles
pp. 140
1867
Henri Plon

Goya. Composiciones y figuras, t.II
BERUETE Y MORET, Aureliano
pp.122-127
1917
Blass

Goya, Saturno y melancolía. Consideraciones sobre el arte de Goya
NORDSTRÖM, Folke
p.254-255
1962
Alquimis & Wiksell

Goya. Las Pinturas Negras
FUSTER, Antonio F.
pp. 127-128
1963
Goya Hispano-Inglesa de Reaseguros, D.L.

Vie et ouvre de Francisco de Goya
GASSIER, Pierre y WILSON, Juliet
p. 328, cat. 1623
1970
Office du livre

GUDIOL RICART, José
vol. I, p. 378, cat. 700
t. I
1970
Polígrafa

Goya
DE SALAS, Xavier
p. 201, cat. 584
1974
Carroggio S.A. de Ediciones

Goya's Black Paintings: Truth and Reason in Light and Liberty
MULLER, Priscilla
pp. 155-167
1984
Hispanic Society of America

Las pinturas negras
ARNAIZ, José Manuel
pp. 94-95
1996
Ediciones Antiquaria, S.A

Goya. Pinturas del Museo del Prado
MORENO DE LAS HERAS, Margarita
pp. 308
1997
Museo Nacional del Prado

Las Pinturas Negras de Goya
JUNQUERA, Paulina
pp. 66-67
2003
Scala Publishers Ltd.

www.museodelprado.es

ENLACES EXTERNOS