FRAY JUAN FERNÁNDEZ DE ROJAS

CLASIFICACIÓN: EASEL PAINTING. PORTRAITS

DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA	Ca. 1815 - 1816
UBICACIÓN	The Royal Academy of History, Madrid, Spain
DIMENSIONES	75 x 54 cm
TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE	Oil on canvas
RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA	Documented work
TITULAR	Royal Academy of History
FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN	31 Dec 1969 / 16 Jun 2023
INVENTARIO	129 (77)

HISTORIA

The details of the commissioning of this portrait are not known, and neither is its exact chronology, with the work being dated according to the painting technique. However, we do have the evidence left by the sitter's niece, Carmen Arteaga Fernández de Reboto, as published in the book by María Rosario Barabino. The sitter's relative speaks of the close relationship between her uncle and the painter, forged by the numerous artistic discussions that the two men had, the artist being aware of the other man's profound knowledge of art. The high esteem in which the artist held Friar Juan resulted in the painting of this portrait,

despite the constant refusals of the monk. This is a portrait in which, in the words of Carmen Arteaga, Goya employed "all of his artistic knowledge, particular in the likeness and the colouring".

Margarita Moreno de las Heras suggests that the work belonged to the sitter and was inherited by his niece, Carmen Arteaga Fernández de Reboto, in Madrid. It later became the property, again by inheritance, of her brother, Santiago de Arteaga. In his will, and with the agreement of Fray Juan himself, it entered the collection of the Royal Academy of History in 1857.

ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

Juan Fernández de Rojas (Colmenar de Oreja, Madrid, 1750-Madrid, 1819) was an intellectual and an expert in philosophy, literature, poetry and theology. He trained at the Poetic School of Salamanca, teaching at the Augustinian school of San Felipe el Real - in the Madrid convent of which he died - and was professor of theology and philosophy in Toledo. An advocate of modern theology, he came under attack from the more conservative quarter of the Church. He became famous for his Christian speeches and his writings: literary criticism and satirical plays. He was a close friend of Goya, advising the painter on art and aesthetics, and the satire practised by both men in their respective fields of literature and painting gave them a shared way of seeing the world.

In this portrait, Goya has focused all of his attention on the facial features of the cleric, paying little attention to his clothing or the background. As such, the black cassock appears as a shapeless mass, dark and flat, like a triangular compositional element on top of which the magnificently executed head rests. The background is of an indeterminate greenish grey colour, and is also flat. The face of Friar Juan Fernández reflects wisdom through his intense gaze. It is executed using short brushstrokes that have been carefully built up to form the features, resulting in what is one of Goya's most attractive portraits from the period.

EXPOSICIONES

Goya. 250 Aniversario
Museo Nacional del Prado Madrid 1996
consultant editor Juan J. Luna. From March 29th to June 2nd 1996
cat. 115

Goya and his times
The Royal Academy of Arts London 1963
cat. 66
cat. 110

Pinturas de Goya
Museo Nacional del Prado Madrid 1928
consultant editor Fernando Álvarez de Sotomayor. From Apri to -May 1928
cat. 31

Goya en las colecciones madrileñas
Museo Nacional del Prado Madrid 1983
consultant editor Enrique Lafuente Ferrari. From April 19th to June 20th 1983
cat. 47

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
cat. 120

Goya en tiempos de guerra
Museo Nacional del Prado Madrid 2008
consultant editor Manuela B. Mena Marqués, from April 14th to July 13th 2008
cat. 162

Goya: The Portraits
London 2015
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Fray Juan Fernández de Rojas: su obra y su significación en el siglo XVIII
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p. 369, cat. 120 y p. 370 (il.)
1988
Museo del Prado

Goya. 250 Aniversario
LUNA, Juan J. (Comisario)
p. 388, cat. 115 y p. 249 (il.)
1996
Museo del Prado

Goya en tiempos de guerra
MENA MARQUÉS, Manuela B.
p. 446, cat. 162 y p. 447 (il.)
2008
Museo Nacional del Prado

BRAY, Xavier
pp. 159-162
2015
National Gallery Company

ENLACES EXTERNOS