

# THE MEADOW OF SAN ISIDRO (LA PRADERA DE SAN ISIDRO) (SKETCH)

CLASIFICACIÓN: EASEL PAINTING. TAPESTRY CARTOONS

SERIE: TAPESTRY CARTOONS:COUNTRY SCENES (PAINTING AND SKETCHES, 1788) (2/6)



## DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA	1788
UBICACIÓN	The Prado National Museum. Madrid, Madrid, Spain
DIMENSIONES	41.9 x 90.8 cm
TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE	Oil on canvas
RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA	Documented work
TITULAR	El Prado National Museum
FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN	17 Dec 2009 / 14 Jun 2023
INVENTARIO	62 (P00750)

## HISTORIA

The tapestry cartoon for which this sketch was made was never in fact painted. It formed part of the series that would have decorated the bedroom of the Infantas, a commission that Goya received towards the end of 1787 (see *Blind Man's Buff*).

The sketch was acquired from the artist by the Duke and Duchess of Osuna in 1798 and it remained in the cabinet that the Duchess had in La Alameda until it was sold at the time of the bankruptcy of the ducal household in 1896, when it was bought for the Prado Museum by the Spanish Ministry of Development, for the sum of 15,000 pesetas. It entered the museum's collection on 5 June 1896.

## ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

Intended to become a tapestry cartoon, this work never got any further than the oil sketch, thereby preventing the creation of what would without a doubt have been the largest canvas ever painted by the artist, as well as one of his greatest. Unfortunately, the death of Charles III in December 1788 interrupted the work on the décor of the palace of El Pardo, which the

royal family stopped using shortly afterwards.

This painting has been highly praised. Arnaiz highlights the complexity of its composition, its rapid, fresh execution and its precise colouring. Camón Aznar says that not even the Venetians of the 18th century were able to create such a delicate overall effect.

On the skyline we can make out the silhouettes of the Segovia bridge, the church of San Francisco el Grande and the Alcázar Nuevo. This is a place very familiar to Goya thanks to the proximity of the Royal Palace and the home of the Duke and Duchess of Osuna. Years later, the artist's own home - the Quinta del Sordo - was also very close to this spot.

The way in which the canvas is composed recalls the work of other artists that Goya may have drawn inspiration from, such as *View of Zaragoza*, by Juan Bautista Martínez del Mazo; *The Royal Couples* by Luis Paret; certain *vedute*, or views, of Madrid painted by Antonio Joli; and the work of the French artist Claude-Joseph Vernet.

The subject matter of religious celebrations attracted the attention of politicians, intellectuals and other artists, as well as painters. In the *sainete*, or short comical play, of the same name by Ramón de la Cruz we find a magnificent literary parallelism to Goya's representation of the fiesta of San Isidro Labrador. In Ramón de la Cruz's work, the distinct social groups are played off against each other, whilst in that of Goya they appear to mingle amicably. The *ilustrados* with whom the artist was on very friendly terms were opposed to celebrations of this kind as they would often degenerate into quarrels in which the authorities were forced to intervene. However, the image that Goya offers us of this particular celebration is an idyllic one.

The sketch for *The Meadow of San Isidro* had given Goya quite a few problems. The artist wrote in a letter to his friend Martín Zapater that he had had to work hard on the difficult matter of the meadow on the saint's day, with all of the hustle and bustle that the work involved. In fact, the sketch presents a great variety of colour and countless figures, leading writers such as Mayer and Beruete to consider that this could not possibly be a sketch for a cartoon that would be transferred to a tapestry. However, if we take into account the dimensions specified by the carpenter Serrano for the stretcher that Goya would have used for the finished cartoon, 348 x 752 cm, there would have been enough space to fit in even all these tiny details. Furthermore, just as with the only cartoon in this series actually to be executed, *Blind Man's Buff*, Goya would have simplified the composition slightly to facilitate the work of the tapestry weavers.

#### CONSERVACIÓN

Restored in 1987. Conserved unlined and on the original stretcher

#### EXPOSICIONES

##### **Exposición y venta de los cuadros, esculturas, grabados y otros objetos artísticos de la Casa Duca**

Palacio de la Industria y de las Artes Madrid  
1896

1896

cat. 66

##### **Les chefs-d'œuvre du Musée du Prado**

Musée d'Art et d'Histoire Geneva 1939

consultant editors Fernando Álvarez de Sotomayor y Pedro Muguruza Otaño. From June to September 1939

cat. 29

##### **El arte europeo en la corte de España durante el siglo XVIII**

Galerie des Beaux-Arts Burdeos 1979

Exhibited also at Grand Palais, París y Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid

cat. 21 (17)

##### **Obras maestras de la pintura española de los siglos XVI al XIX**

Museo Pushkin Moscow 1980

Exhibited also at the State

##### **Goya y el espíritu de la Ilustración**

Museo Nacional del Prado Madrid 1988

from October 6th to December 18th 1988. Exhibited also at

##### **Madrid pintado. La imagen de Madrid a través de la pintura**

Museo Municipal de Madrid Madrid 1992

cat. 51

Hermitage Museum, San  
Petersburgo

cat. 28

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. 16

**Goya. El Capricho y la  
Invención. Cuadros de  
gabinete, bocetos y miniaturas**

Museo Nacional del Prado Madrid 1993

from November 18th 1993 to  
February 15th 1994. Exhibited  
also at the Royal Academy of  
Arts, London, March 18th to  
June 12th 1994 and The Art  
Institute of Chicago, Chicago,  
July 16th to October 16th 1994,  
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Mena Marqués and Juliet  
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cat. 26

**Goya. 250 Aniversario**

Museo Nacional del Prado Madrid 1996

consultant editor Juan J. Luna.  
From March 29th to June 2nd  
1996

cat. 49

**Goya en Madrid. Cartones para  
tapices 1775-1794**

Museo Nacional del Prado Madrid 2014

p. 133

**Goya: Order and disorder**

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