

# NEITHER MORE NOR LESS

CLASIFICACIÓN: PRINTS

SERIE: CAPRICHOS (PRINTS AND DRAWINGS, 1797-1799) (41/85)



## DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA

Ca. 1797 - 1799

DIMENSIONES

200 x 152 mm

TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE

Aguafuerte, aguainta bruñida, punta seca y buril

RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA

Undisputed work

FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN

14 Dec 2010 / 29 May 2024

INVENTARIO

836 225

## INSCRIPCIONES

*Ni más ni menos.* (at the bottom)

41. (in the upper right-hand corner)

## HISTORIA

See *Francisco de Goya y Lucientes, Painter.*

There is known evidence of pre-lettered condition with touches of graphite on the front hooves of the donkey. On the upper part of the print there is an inscription that reads *El Asno* ("The

*Donkey*"), although it has been partially erased so that it is barely legible.

A *preparatory drawing* for this engraving is in the Prado Museum.

#### ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

Seated on a bucket, a monkey acts as a painter, holding a brush in his hand and a palette in the other. He is portraying an ass posing before him, although the ape depicts him in a different way, dressed in a golilla as if he were a magistrate.

Goya uses aquatint throughout the composition except for the donkey's head and the ape's palette. The drypoint is clearly visible on the donkey's nose and the burin on the monkey's back. The painter has left the donkey's head lighter than the rest to emphasise that the monkey's portrait of him does not coincide with the true image of the animal.

In this engraving there is a difference with respect to the drawing that implies some different nuances in the interpretation of the two works. The fact that he is sitting on a bucket on which we can read "Do not die of hunger" leads us to think that in the drawing the object of the mockery is the monkey, while in the engraving the satire is directed at the donkey. This mockery of the donkey is very well explained in the manuscripts on the *Caprices* series of which we are aware, especially the one in the National Library, which states the following: "An animal that is portrayed will not cease to appear to be an animal for that reason, even if it is painted with its gourd and affected gravity".

The monopainter represents his clients as they wish; thus the donkey tries, in the portrait painted by the false painter, to appear to be what he is not. He has therefore asked him to hide his donkey's ears under a wig, although he does not succeed in erasing his own nature.

Edith Helman believes that this Caprice should be related to the fable of *The Painter in Fables in Castilian Verse* by José Agustín Ibáñez de la Rentería (Bilbao, 1751-Lequeitio, 1826). In this text the writer narrates how a painter must accommodate himself to the tastes of his clientele in order not to starve to death, as the inscription on Goya's preparatory drawing reads.

Some specialists have seen in this image a satire of Manuel Godoy (Badajoz, 1767-Paris, 1851), who was portrayed by Antonio Carnicero (Salamanca, 1748-Madrid, 1814) according to his demands.

It is possible that one of the visual sources to which Goya may have had recourse for the engraving we are dealing with here is the painting by David Teniers entitled *The Monkey Painter* (1650, Prado Museum, Madrid) or perhaps he may have been familiar with the painting of the same title by Jean-Baptiste Simeon Chardin (Paris, 1699-Paris, 1779).

This print forms part of the series of "asnerías" that Goya produced between engravings Nos. 37 and 42 of *The Caprices*, in which this animal becomes the mechanism for censuring human stupidity.

#### CONSERVACIÓN

The plate is preserved in the National Chalcography (no. 212).

#### EXPOSICIONES

**Goya. Gemälde  
Zeichnungen. Graphik.  
Tapisserien**  
Kunsthalle Basel Basle 1953  
from January 23th to April 12th  
1953  
cat. 229

**De grafiek van Goya**  
Rijksmuseum Rijksprentenkabinet Amsterdam  
1970  
from November 13th 1970 to  
January 17th 1971  
cat. 34

**Goya dans les collections  
suissees**  
Fundación Pierre Gianadda Martigny 1982  
consultant editor Pierre Gassier.  
From June 12th to August 29th  
1982  
cat. 52

### **Goya. La década de Los Caprichos**

Madrid 1992

organized by Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando sponsored by Fundación Central Hispano, Madrid, consultant editor Nigel Glendinnig. From October 26th 1992 to January 10th 1993

cat. 135

### **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

cat. 47

### **Goya e la tradizione italiana**

Fondazione Magnani Rocca Mamiano di Traversetolo (Parma) 2006

consultant editors Fred Licht and Simona Tosini Pizzetti. From September 9th to December 3th 2006

cat. 41, p.156

### **Francisco de Goya**

Museo d'Arte Moderna Lugano 1996

exhibition celebrated from September 22nd to November 17th.

cat. 41, p.68

### **Goya artista de su tiempo y Goya artista único**

The National Museum of Western Art Tokyo 1999

from December 1st to July 3th 1999

cat. 119

### **Ydioma universal: Goya en la Biblioteca Nacional**

Biblioteca Nacional Madrid 1996

from September 19th to December 15th 1996

cat. 133

### **Goya. La imagen de la mujer**

Museo Nacional del Prado Madrid 2001

from October 30th 2001 to February 10th 2002. Exhibited also at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, March 10th to June 2nd 2002, consultant editor Francisco Calvo Serraller

p.85, fig. 31

### **Goya. Opera grafica**

Pinacoteca del Castello di San Giorgio Legnano 2006

exhibition celebrated from December 16th 2006 to April 1st 2007

p.34

### **Goya et la modernité**

Pinacothèque de Paris Paris 2013

from October 11st 2013 to March 16th 2014

cat. 146

## **BIBLIOGRAFÍA**

### **Goya engravings and lithographs, vol. I y II.**

HARRIS, Tomás

p.113, cat. 76

1964

Bruno Cassirer

### **Vie et ouvre de Francisco de Goya**

GASSIER, Pierre y WILSON, Juliet

p.181, cat. 532

1970

Office du livre

### **Goya, 1746-1828. Biografía, estudio analítico y catálogo de sus pinturas**

GUDIOL, José

p.395, fig. 636

1970

Ediciones Polígrafa s.a.

### **Goya, la década de los caprichos: dibujos y aguafuertes**

WILSON BAREAU, Juliet

pp.225-227, cat. 134-135

1992

Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando

### **Catálogo de las estampas de Goya en la Biblioteca Nacional**

SANTIAGO, Elena M. (coordinadora)

p.95, cat. 130

1996

Ministerio de Educación y Cultura, Biblioteca Nacional

### **El libro de los caprichos: dos siglos de interpretaciones (1799-1999). Catálogo de los dibujos, pruebas de estado, láminas de cobre y estampas de la primera edición**

BLAS BENITO, Javier, MATILLA RODRÍGUEZ,

José Manuel y MEDRANO, José Miguel

pp.230-233

1999

Museo Nacional del Prado

### **Goya. Die Kunst der Freiheit**

TRAEGER, Jörg

p.94, fig. 32

2000

Verlag C. H. Beck

OROPESA, Marisa and RINCÓN GARCÍA, Wilfredo

p. 208

2013

Pinacoteca de París

### **Goya. In the Norton Simon Museum**

WILSON BAREAU, Juliet

pp. 42-75

2016

Norton Simon Museum

## **PALABRAS CLAVE**

**CAPRICCIO ARTISTA MONO-PINTOR**

## ENLACES EXTERNOS