

# SNITCHES

CLASIFICACIÓN: PRINTS

SERIE: CAPRICHOS (PRINTS AND DRAWINGS, 1797-1799) (48/85)



## DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA

Ca. 1797 - 1799

DIMENSIONES

208 x 153 mm

TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE

Etching and burnished aquatint

RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA

Undisputed work

TITULAR

Ailsa Mellon Bruce Collection

FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN

20 Dec 2010 / 29 May 2024

INVENTARIO

836 225

## INSCRIPCIONES

*Soplones.* (at the bottom)

48. (in the upper right-hand corner)

## HISTORIA

See *Francisco de Goya y Lucientes, Painter.*

There is only one known proof of the condition before additional burnishing, which shows a high

level of luminosity. It shows a trace of ink in the left margin and the handwritten number 48 on the imprint of the plate.

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

#### ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

Three witches cover their ears to avoid being blown away by the demonic creature that flies over them with its wings spread out on the back of a cat. This infernal being has spread wings and feline claws. They are also met by the sucking of a pair of buttocks that are directed towards the face of the warlocks. On the right are the heads of two animals, one of which has horns and its jaws open as if it were screeching.

The etching of the print has very well-defined lines, the aquatint is single-tone and was passed through the burnisher before the lettering was engraved.

The Prado manuscript interprets this scene as a pun on the title, which comments on the witches' lack of intelligence: "Los Bruxos soplones son los mas fastid.s detona la Brux.a y los menos yntelig.s en aquel arte. si supieran algo no se meterian à soplones". However, the manuscript of the National Library gives a different reading: "The auricular confession serves only to fill the ears of the friars with filth, obscenities and filth". It is possible, as in other engravings in this series, that the image has a double meaning.

One of the visual sources for this print must have been the *Self-belief celebrated in the city of Logroño on 6 and 7 November 1610* by Leandro Fernández de Moratín (Madrid, 1760-Paris, 1828). In it he mentions the witches who confessed to the devil, although here the term "snitch" can be identified with "informer", thus Goya satirizes those who denounced other people to the Inquisition.

For other specialists, this work could be a criticism of the confessions made to clerics, as the figure in the foreground looks like a monk wearing a habit, which would tie in with the interpretation provided by the manuscript in the National Library.

#### CONSERVACIÓN

The plate is in rather poor condition, with the aquatint lost ( National Chalcography, no. 219).

#### EXPOSICIONES

**Goya. Gemälde  
Zeichnungen. Graphik.  
Tapisserien**  
Kunsthalle Basel Basle 1953  
from January 23th to April 12th  
1953  
cat. 326

**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. 110

**Francisco Goya. Sein  
leben im spiegel der  
graphik. Fuendetodos**

**El arte de Goya**  
Museo de Arte Occidental de Tokio Tokyo 1971  
from 16th 1971 to January 23th  
1972. Exhibited also at the Kyoto  
Municipal Museum of Art, January  
29th to March 15th 1972.  
cat. 74

**Goya**  
Nationalmuseum Stockholm 1994  
consultant editors Juan J. Luna  
and Görel Cavalli-Björkman. From  
October 7th 1994 to January 8th  
1995  
cat. 66

**Goya e la tradizione  
italiana**  
Fondazione Magnani Rocca Mamiano di  
Trevigatale (Berna) 2006

**Goya dans les collections  
suisses**  
Fundación Pierre Gianadda Martigny 1982  
consultant editor Pierre Gassier.  
From June 12th to August 29th  
1982  
cat. 40

**Francisco de Goya**  
Museo d'Arte Moderna Lugano 1996  
exhibition celebrated from  
September 22nd to November  
17th.  
cat. 48, p.75

**Goya. Opera grafica**  
Pinacoteca del Castello di San Giorgio Legnano  
2006

**1746-1828 Bordeaux.  
1746-1996**

Galerie Kornfeld Bern 1996

from November 21st 1996 to  
January 1997

cat. 54

**Goya e Italia**

Museo de Zaragoza Zaragoza 2008

organized by the Fundación Goya  
en Aragón, consultant editor  
Joan Sureda Pons. From June  
1st to September 15th 2008

cat. 332

Traversetolo (Parma) 2006

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

cat. 48, p.157

**Goya et la modernité**

Pinacothèque de Paris Paris 2013

from October 11st 2013 to March  
16th 2014

cat.7

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

p.36

**BIBLIOGRAFÍA**

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

HARRIS, Tomás

p.121, cat. 83

1964

Bruno Cassirer

**Vie et oeuvre de Francisco  
de Goya**

GASSIER, Pierre y WILSON, Juliet

p.182, cat. 547

1970

Office du livre

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

GUDIOL, José

p.396, fig. 647

1970

Ediciones Polígrafa s.a.

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

WILSON BAREAU, Juliet

pp.185-187, cat. 109-110

1992

Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San  
Fernando

**Goya. El capricho y la  
invención. Cuadros de  
gabinete, bocetos y  
miniaturas**

MENA, Manuela B. y WILSON-BAREAU, Juliet  
(comisarias)

pp.213-214, fig. 152

1993

Museo del Prado

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

SANTIAGO, Elena M. (coordinadora)

p.99, cat. 137

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.262-265

1999

Museo Nacional del Prado

OROPESA, Marisa and RINCÓN GARCÍA,  
Wilfredo

p. 65

2013

Pinacoteca de París

**Goya. In the Norton Simon  
Museum**

WILSON BAREAU, Juliet

pp. 42-75

2016

Norton Simon Museum

**PALABRAS CLAVE**

**CRÍTICA CONFESIONES CLERO MONSTRUOS NOCTURNOS CAPRICCIO**

**ENLACES EXTERNOS**