

# WHAT A TAILOR CAN DO!

CLASIFICACIÓN: PRINTS

SERIE: CAPRICHOS (PRINTS AND DRAWINGS, 1797-1799) (52/85)



## DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA

Ca. 1797 - 1799

DIMENSIONES

218 x 151 mm

TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE

Aguafuerte, aguainta bruñida, punta seca y buril

RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA

Undisputed work

FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN

21 Dec 2010 / 29 May 2024

INVENTARIO

836 225

## INSCRIPCIONES

*Lo que puede un Sastre!* (at the bottom)

52. (in the upper right-hand corner)

## HISTORIA

See *Francisco de Goya y Lucientes, Painter*.

In the first printings, the exclamation mark in the title does not appear, which was later corrected.

The proof bears two handwritten numbers, 2 and 52, which could correspond to the hypothetical arrangement that Goya considered for this print.

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

#### ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

A crowd kneels before a rickety tree covered with a monk's habit that looks like a gigantic puppet raising its arms. In the foreground a young girl is shown in adoration, the child behind her seems to be afraid, while others are praying and, in some cases, we see faces expressing withdrawal or indifference. In the sky, in the background, a group of witches can be seen flying.

This print can be read in two ways, in which the unifying element is appearance. On the one hand, it is a criticism of superstition, as can be seen in the manuscripts of Ayala and the National Library. However, the Prado Museum manuscript provides a second guideline for the interpretation of the engraving: "How often a ridiculous bug is suddenly transformed into a phantom that is nothing and appears to be a lot! So much can be the skill of a tailor and the foolishness of those who judge things by what they seem". In short, Goya censures those who rely on appearances without going into depth.

The Aragonese painter tackled this theme once again in engravings 66, *Strange Devotion!* and 67 *This is No Less* from the series *The Disasters of War*, in which he criticised the superciliousness and those who use sacred images to exalt their own image, to obtain a dimension and social projection which they do not really have.

A close analysis of the preparatory drawing for the engraving reveals modifications to the engraving designed to make the message of the print less obvious. Thus the artist concealed the clear reference to the monk by adding a topknot to the hood of the habit, which makes it look like a tied sack. He also sketched the witches flying in the sky that he developed in the print. In this way, the anti-clerical criticism is camouflaged under a scene of witchcraft.

One of the possible visual sources Goya could have drawn on for this image is the painting by Pierre Subleyras (Saint-Gilles-du-Gard, 1699-Rome, 1749) *Charon Passing the Shadows* (ca. 1735, Musée du Louvre, Paris), in which the Frenchman creates the spectral figures by means of an excellent *panneggio* work.

#### CONSERVACIÓN

The plate is in rather poor condition, with the aquatint very worn (National Chalcography, no. 223).

#### EXPOSICIONES

##### **Goya. Gemälde Zeichnungen. Graphik. Tapisserien**

Kunsthalle Basel Basle 1953  
from January 23th to April 12th  
1953  
cat. 238

##### **De grafiek van Goya**

Rijksmuseum Rijksprentenkabinet Amsterdam  
1970  
from November 13th 1970 to  
January 17th 1971  
cat. 38

##### **Goya. Das Zeitalter der Revolutionen. Kunst um 1800 (1980 - 1981)**

Hamburger Kunsthalle Hamburg 1980  
cat. 45

##### **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. 53

##### **Francisco de Goya**

Museo d'Arte Moderna Lugano 1996  
exhibition celebrated from  
September 22nd to November  
17th.  
cat. 52, p.79

##### **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. 58

## 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. 129

## Goya et la modernité

Pinacothèque de Paris Paris 2013

from October 11st 2013 to March  
16th 2014

cat. 160

2022

## 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. 52, p. 158

## Goya: Order and disorder

Museum of Fine Arts Boston 2014

cat. 168

## Goya. Opera grafica

Pinacoteca del Castello di San Giorgio Legnano  
2006

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

p.37

Madrid 2017

## BIBLIOGRAFÍA

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

HARRIS, Tomás

p.125, cat. 87

1964

Bruno Cassirer

### Vie et oeuvre de Francisco de Goya

GASSIER, Pierre y WILSON, Juliet

p.182, cat. 555

1970

Office du livre

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

WILSON BAREAU, Juliet

pp.87-90, cat. 52-54

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)

p.46, fig. 19

1993

Museo del Prado

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

SANTIAGO, Elena M. (coordinadora)

p.101, cat. 141

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.278-281

1999

Museo Nacional del Prado

OROPESA, Marisa and RINCÓN GARCÍA,  
Wilfredo

p. 225

2013

Pinacoteca de París

### Goya: Order & Disorder

ILCHMAN, Frederick y STEPANEK, Stephanie

L. (comisarios)

p. 255

2014

Museum of Fine Arts Boston Publications

### Goya. In the Norton Simon Museum

WILSON BAREAU, Juliet

pp. 42-75

2016

Norton Simon Museum

CALVO RUATA, José Ignacio, BORRÁS

GUALIS, Gonzalo M. and MARTÍNEZ

HERRANZ, Amparo

p. 188

2017

Gobierno de Aragón y Fundación Bancaria

Ibercaja

TORAL OROPESA, María and MARTÍN

MEDINA, Víctor

p. 44

2022

Museo de Bellas Artes de Badajoz y Diputación  
de Badajoz

## PALABRAS CLAVE

### CAPRICCIO MONJES SUPERSTICIÓN CRÍTICA

## ENLACES EXTERNOS