

# SIMPLETON'S FOLLY

CLASIFICACIÓN: PRINTS

SERIE: ABSURDITIES (PRINTS Y DRAWINGS, CA.1815-1824)



## DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA

1815 - 1819

DIMENSIONES

247 x 359 mm

TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE

Aguafuerte, aguatinta bruñida, punta seca y buril

RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA

Documented work

FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN

21 Aug 2021 / 05 Jun 2023

INVENTARIO

964 -

## INSCRIPCIONES

Goya (print, bottom left-hand corner)

## HISTORIA

See *Femenine folly*

There are state proofs before the aquatint in the Library of the University of Paris, in the Kunsthalle in Bremen and in the New York Public Library. In the latter proof, another character appears next to the man.

In the Pereire Collection there is a state proof on which the legend "*Bobalicon*" can be read.

## ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

A large monster dances and plays castanets before a terrified man who hides behind a stiff, almost spectral being hidden under a shroud. The giant, of indeterminate sex, wears men's trousers and an unbuttoned blouse revealing a female-looking torso. Behind him, two ghostly heads appear, one with its mouth open in terror, the other as if petrified by terror.

The meaning of this print is enigmatic, as the name was not given by Goya but comes from a posthumous annotation on a copy from the mid-19th century, so perhaps the Aragonese artist's intention was different.

The man depicted is usually associated with a member of the clergy, as in the preparatory drawing, also entitled *Simpleton's folly*, he wears a kind of habit, and the rigidity of the figure he is holding is reminiscent of a statue or religious image. In the engraving he does not look so much like an ecclesiastic as an ecclesiastic, but he is wearing a kind of cloak over his head. One of the explanations that have been attempted for this print is related to religion and the Church, and even to the aristocracy, as in some proofs an additional figure appears. The castanets are a typically Spanish instrument, so that by wearing them, the giant could symbolise the uprising of the Spanish people against these oppressive classes. Hence the fear of the character hiding behind religion.

A relationship has also been seen with the tradition of Carnival, with the character of the fool, who when he was very old was called *Bobalicon*. In this case we would be faced with the confrontation of two practices, Lent and Carnival.

A dark aquatint was applied to the light etching to create an abstract space in which the ground is barely distinguishable from the horizon line. Thanks to the burnisher, Goya achieved half-tones. He used drypoint on the heads at the back and touches of burin on the one on the right. The lighting is centred on the giantess to show her large wingspan.

The preparatory drawing for the present print, also entitled *Simpleton's folly*, has been preserved.

#### EXPOSICIONES

##### **Goya**

Musée Jacquemart-André Paris 1961  
consultant editor Jean-Gabriel  
Domergue. From December 1961  
to February 1962

1976

##### **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.

Dérez Sánchez and Eleanor A

##### **Etchings by Francisco Goya**

Johannesburgo Johannesburgo 1974

Boston 1974

##### **Grabados de Goya: colección propiedad de la Biblioteca Nacional, que se conserva en su Gabinete de**

Casa de la Amistad de Moscú Moscow 1979  
exhibition displayed from  
January 18th to 31st 1979

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

Hamburger Kunsthalle Hamburg 1980  
cat. 54

##### **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

##### **Goya. 250 Aniversario**

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

FLOREZ SANCHEZ and LUCIANO A.  
Sayre

### **Goya grabador**

Museo del Grabado Español Contemporáneo  
Marbella 1996

from March 8th to May 5th 1996

1999

Zaragoza 1996

London 1997

Madrid 1999

### **Schlaf der Vernunft. Original radierungen von Francisco de Goya**

Munich 2000

Bilbao 2012

### **Goya et la modernité**

Pinacothèque de Paris Paris 2013

from October 11st 2013 to March  
16th 2014

cat. 204

### **Goya: Order and disorder**

Museum of Fine Arts Boston 2014

cat. 237

Agen 2019

cat. 68

2022

### **BIBLIOGRAFÍA**

HARRIS, Tomás  
pp. 378-379, cat. 251  
1964  
Bruno Cassirer

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

GASSIER, Pierre y WILSON, Juliet  
p. 325, cat. 1576  
1970  
Office du livre

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

SANTIAGO, Elena M. (coordinadora)  
p. 236, cat. 378  
1996  
Ministerio de Educación y Cultura, Biblioteca  
Nacional

CARRETE, Juan, MATILLA, José Manuel,  
AULLÓN DE HARO, Pedro, BOZAL, Valeriano,  
GLENDINNING, Nigel, VEGA, Jesusa y BLAS,  
Javier  
pp. 105 y 109, cat. 4 y 24  
1996  
Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San  
Fernando y Calcografía Nacional

Matilla, José Manuel  
pp. 476-477, cat. 176  
2008  
Museo Nacional y Ediciones El Viso

VEGA, Jesusa  
p. 478  
2010  
Consejo Superior de Investigaciones  
Científicas

OROPESA, Marisa and RINCÓN GARCÍA,  
Wilfredo  
p. 271  
2013  
Pinacoteca de París

### **Goya: Order & Disorder**

ILCHMAN, Frederick y STEPANEK, Stephanie  
L. (comisarios)  
pp. 337-340  
2014  
Museum of Fine Arts Boston Publications

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

WILSON BAREAU, Juliet  
pp. 204-211  
2016  
Norton Simon Museum

MOTTIN, Bruno, EFEDAQUE, Adrien and  
WILSON-BAREAU, Juliet  
p. 146  
2019  
Snoeck

TORAL OROPESA, María and MARTÍN  
MEDINA, Víctor  
p. 93  
2022  
Museo de Bellas Artes de Badajoz y Diputación  
de Badajoz

### **PALABRAS CLAVE**

**DISPARATES BOBO BOBALICÓN GIGANTE CASTAÑUELAS**

### **ENLACES EXTERNOS**