

# FEARFUL FOLLY

CLASIFICACIÓN: PRINTS

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



## DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA

1815 - 1819

DIMENSIONES

245 x 357 mm

TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE

Etching, burnished aquatint and drypoint

RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA

Documentated work

FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN

20 Aug 2021 / 05 Jun 2023

INVENTARIO

964 -

## HISTORIA

See *Femenine folly*.

In the Lazaro Galdiano Foundation in Madrid there is a state proof with the burnished aquatint in which the number 13 appears.

There are several proofs prior to the stripe affecting the figure of the ghost. This defect, which appeared around 1848 in a print run prior to the first edition, was burnished to conceal it, without success.

## ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

Armed soldiers run in panic at the imposing sight of a large, swollen ghost. On the right stands a gloomy tree with a twisted, dead trunk which, together with the horizon line,

forms the only landscape in the picture. The tree is a device that makes the viewer aware of the dimensions of the spectre, as it is as large as he is, or even slightly smaller, as the ghost appears hunched over, as if he did not fit into the frame of the picture.

At his feet, a group of French soldiers fall to the ground in terror. In the foreground, next to him, one of the soldiers is trying to get to his feet. Next to him, another kneeling companion has a look of horror on his face and, next to them, what appears to be the captain is running in terror with his sabre drawn, calling for a retreat. In the background, under the tree, a mass is gathered in fear. Only two soldiers can be made out, trying to get away from the ghostly being.

Various interpretations have been made of this scene. Most of them tend to be along the lines of *Disasters* (*Sad presentiments of what is to happen*), relating to the wartime sphere of the War of Independence. Thus, the ghost connects with the spectre of the condemnatory punishment of all armies for the evil they cause. It is also linked to the rebellion of the Spanish people against the Napoleonic army. . Finally, it may be a scarecrow, like the one in *Caprice 52. What a Tailor Can*, with which to frighten the troops and make them flee. In general, it can be said that the phantom embodies all the pain and evil caused by wars.

This print is notable for Goya's use of etching lines to create the forms and volumes. In the apparition, they are arranged in an angular manner to outline the drapery. The dark background of the aquatint reveals a nocturnal scene that accentuates the horror.

The preparatory drawing for the present print, also entitled *Fearful folly*, has survived.

#### CONSERVACIÓN

The plate has a stripe at the top of the figure of the ghost that is reflected in the print.

#### EXPOSICIONES

##### **Goya**

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

##### **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

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

Biblioteca Nacional Madrid 1996  
from September 19th to  
December 15th 1996  
cat. 297

##### **Goya grabador**

Museo del Grabado Español Contemporáneo  
Marbella 1996

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

Johannesburgo Johannesburgo 1974

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

Hamburger Kunsthalle Hamburg 1980  
cat. 147

##### **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

Zaragoza 1996

Boston 1974

##### **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.  
Pérez Sánchez and Eleanor A.  
Sayre

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

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

London 1997

from March 8th to May 5th 1996

Madrid 1999

### **Goya et la modernité**

Pinacothèque de Paris París 2013

from October 11st 2013 to March  
16th 2014

cat. 202

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

Munich 2000

Bilbao 2012

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

Museum of Fine Arts Boston 2014

cat. 236

#### **BIBLIOGRAFÍA**

HARRIS, Tomás  
pp. 374-375, cat. 249  
1964  
Bruno Cassirer

CARRETE, Juan, MATILLA, José Manuel,  
AULLÓN DE HARO, Pedro, BOZAL, Valeriano,  
GLENDINNING, Nigel, VEGA, Jesusa y BLAS,  
Javier  
pp. 101 y 109, cat. 2 y 22  
1996  
Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San  
Fernando y Calcografía Nacional

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

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

### **Vie et oeuvre de Francisco de Goya**

GASSIER, Pierre y WILSON, Juliet  
p. 325, cat. 1573  
1970  
Office du livre

OROPESA, Marisa and RINCÓN GARCÍA,  
Wilfredo  
p. 270  
2013  
Pinacoteca de París

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

SANTIAGO, Elena M. (coordinadora)  
p. 235, cat. 375-376  
1996  
Ministerio de Educación y Cultura, Biblioteca  
Nacional

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

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

#### **PALABRAS CLAVE**

**DISPARATES FANTASMA ESPECTRO SOLDADO SOLDADO FRANCÉS CAPITÁN ÁRBOL**

#### **ENLACES EXTERNOS**