

# GENERAL FOLLY

CLASIFICACIÓN: PRINTS

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



## DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA

1815 - 1819

DIMENSIONES

248 x 359 mm

TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE

Etching and burnished aquatint

RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA

Documented work

FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN

21 Aug 2021 / 05 Jun 2023

INVENTARIO

964 -

## HISTORIA

See *Femenine folly*.

The burnished aquatint state proof of the Mead Art Museum, Amherst (Massachusetts, USA) has manuscript *General Folly*.

## ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

A conglomeration of enigmatic figures huddles together in a dense mass. A number of figures can be distinguished amidst the confusion. On the right of the composition, a woman with a feline face and a broad habit holds a group of kittens on a cushion. She seems to be offering them to another figure in clerical garb with the face of a cat, kneeling in front of her, who reaches out her arms to pick up the litter. Behind is a tangle of agitated bodies, including a snouted head and a woman, held by other figures, who has a baby snatched from her arms

or, perhaps, pounced upon. At the bottom, a bearded old man with the appearance of a prophet sits on the ground reading a book. Next to him a figure in an attack stance confronts a small figure with a rapier that emerges from the dark background. This mysterious little personage is often identified with Napoleon because of the cap he wears and the weapon he carries. Perhaps Goya wanted to interpret the situation in Spain during the Napoleonic invasion. In front of him stands a heroic boy who represents the resistance of the Spanish people against the occupying forces.

*Horror vacui* makes it difficult to find meaning. Some see the decadence of Queen Marie-Louise's court in the figure of the kittens because of her predilection for these animals. The gentleness with which she treats them contrasts with the rudeness with which the baby is handled. There is also a criticism of religious practices, as the litter sits on a cushion covered with a Christian skirt and is offered to a priest or clergyman as if it were to be baptised.

The light is arranged on some parts of the figure as if in patches, but the light on the man reading the book is brighter and clearer, as if trying to focus the viewer's attention on him, perhaps because it holds the key to the meaning of the print, as his

spirituality and tranquillity contrast with the degeneration around him.

The figures emerge from the dark background of the aquatint, some of which almost merge with it. The space is indeterminate. All that can be made out is a floor on which the figures sit, executed with lines of etching.

The preparatory drawing for the present print, also titled *General folly*, it has been preserved

#### EXPOSICIONES

##### **Goya**

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

1976

##### **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. 152

##### **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

##### **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

##### **Goya grabador**

Museo del Grabado Español Contemporáneo

Marbella 1996

from March 8th to May 5th 1996

Zaragoza 1996

London 1997

1999

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. 209

**BIBLIOGRAFÍA**

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pp. 387-388, cat. 256  
1964  
Bruno Cassirer

**Vie et oeuvre de Francisco de  
Goya**

GASSIER, Pierre y WILSON, Juliet  
p. 325, cat. 1583  
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p. 109, cat. 29  
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Fernando y Calcografía Nacional

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OROPESA, Marisa and RINCÓN GARCÍA,  
Wilfredo  
p. 272  
2013  
Pinacoteca de París

**Goya. In the Norton Simon  
Museum**

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

**PALABRAS CLAVE**

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**ENLACES EXTERNOS**