

THE KNIFE GRINDER (EL AFILADOR)

CLASIFICACIÓN: EASEL PAINTING. VARIOUS SUBJECTS



DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA

UBICACIÓN

DIMENSIONES

TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE

RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA

TITULAR

FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN

INVENTARIO

Ca. 1808 - 1812

Szépművészeti Múzeum. Budapest, Budapest,
Hungary

68 x 50.5 cm

Oil on canvas

Documented work

Szépművészeti Múzeum Budapest

25 Apr 2010 / 13 Jun 2023

322 (763)

HISTORIA

See *The Water Carrier*.

ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

The knife grinder is shown in the middle of his task. He is bending over, leaning towards the wheel to place the knife on it, while his right foot rests on the barrow. The movement of the wheel and the heat it gives off as it spins round quickly is expressed in the red brushstrokes

close to the axel. A thin trickle of water pours onto the wheel to counteract this heat. The pose of the figure is reminiscent of the *Belvedere Torso*, which Goya drew in the pages of *the Italian Notebook*. The grinder is aware of the viewer, and his head is raised, looking directly at us, as if we had interrupted him at his work when he is too busy to stop. His face reveals the exhausting nature of his job. He is wearing a white shirt with the sleeves rolled up to the elbows, some undone buttons revealing his bare chest. The setting for this scene is not defined, with a neutral, flat background offering no depth whatsoever.

This work and its companion painting, *The Water Carrier*, have been interpreted as paying tribute to the anonymous heroes of the war against Napoleon. In this case, the knife grinder would be in charge of sharpening the combatants' knives, sometimes the only weapons they had available to them. Goya knew how to reflect the inequality of the two sides, and in his war imagery there are numerous representations of Spanish fighters defending themselves with stones, pieces of wood, and, above all, knives.

EXPOSICIONES

Goya and his times

The Royal Academy of Arts London 1963

cat. 66

cat. 99

Spanyol Mesterk

Szépművészeti Múzeum Budapest 1965

Goya. El Capricho y la Invención. Cuadros de gabinete, bocetos y miniaturas

Museo Nacional del Prado Madrid 1993

from November 18th 1993 to February 15th 1994. Exhibited also at the Royal Academy of Arts, London, March 18th to June 12th 1994 and The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, July 16th to October 16th 1994, consultant editors Manuela B. Mena Marqués and Juliet Wilson-Bareau

cat. 67

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

cat. 92

Goya: Prophet der Moderne

Alte Nationalgalerie Berlin 2005

from July 13th to October 3th 2005. Exhibited also at the Kunsthistorischesmuseum, Vienna, October 18th 2005 to January 8th 2006, consultant editor Manuela B. Mena Marqués

cat. 98

Goya en tiempos de guerra

Museo Nacional del Prado Madrid 2008

consultant editor Manuela B. Mena Marqués, from April 14th to July 13th 2008

cat. 68

Goya e il Mondo Moderno

Palazzo Reale Milan 2010

organized by SEACEX, Palazzo Reale and Fundación Goya en Aragón, consultant editors Valeriano Bozal and Concepción Lomba Serrano. From March 17th to June 27th 2010

cat. 23

Expérience Goya

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cat. 30

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

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Goya en tiempos de guerra

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ENLACES EXTERNOS