THE DUCHESS OF ALBA AND “THE SANCTIMONIOUS” (LA DUQUESA DE ALBA Y “LA BEATA”)

CLASIFICACIÓN: EASEL PAINTING. VARIOUS SUBJECTS



DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA	1795
UBICACIÓN	The Prado National Museum. Madrid, Madrid, Spain
DIMENSIONES	30.7 x 25.4 cm
TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE	Oil on canvas
RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA	Documented work
TITULAR	El Prado National Museum
FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN	21 Jun 2010 / 13 Jun 2023
INVENTARIO	360 (P07020)

INSCRIPCIONES

Goya año 1795 ("Goya, 1795", incised in the lower right-hand corner).

HISTORIA

Luis Berganza, son of Tomás Berganza, the Duchess of Alba's administrator and one of the inheritors in her will, became the new owner of this canvas and its companion piece, *"The Sanctimonious" with Luis de Berganza and María de la Luz*. The work remained the property of this family's descendants until it was sold at Sotheby's in 1985. It was bought by the Spanish state, which acquired the work, by right of first refusal, for the Prado Museum.

ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

When Goya painted this canvas he was fifty years old, and had only recently recovered from the illness which left him deaf. During his convalescence from this illness, spent in Cádiz, Goya made a series of small-scale cabinet paintings. These afforded him an opportunity to express himself freely in an artistic arena outside that of official, academic painting. Once he had returned to Madrid, the artist carried on working along the same lines as in those highly personal paintings produced during his seclusion. This same freedom of expression can be appreciated in the portraits he painted during this period of members of Madrid's aristocracy, among which are this work and its companion piece, *"The Sanctimonious" with Luis de Berganza and María de la Luz*.

The close relationship between Goya and the Duchess of Alba, whom he painted on several occasions, meant that the artist enjoyed access to the private sections of the palace, located in Madrid's Calle del Barquillo. This oil painting, which was made when the duchess was thirty-three years old, captures the moment when she attempts to frighten her elderly maid, Rafaela Luisa Velázquez, with a small red object. The old woman wards her off with the crucifix she holds in her hand. The maid was known as "the Sanctimonious" ("la Beata") thanks to her piety and devotion to prayer, which also seem to have made her the target of many jokes at the palace. In this work, Goya achieves an unusual, intimate portrait of the Duchess of Alba which manages to capture something of her rather irreverent character.

In terms of its style and subject matter, this portrait can be considered a prelude to the so-called *Sanlúcar Album, Album A*, which Goya made in 1796 during his stay in Cádiz. *The Duchess of Alba and "the Sanctimonious"* anticipates some of the stylistic characteristics of those drawings, as well as the importance they give to the human figure and the total absence of any description of the surrounding space.

EXPOSICIONES

De Greco á Picasso. Cinq siècles d'art espagnol
Musée du Petit Palais París 1987
from October 10th 1987 to January 3th 1988
cat. 101

Goya
La Lonja, Torreón Fortea y Museo Pablo Gargallo Zaragoza 1992
consultant editor Julián Gállego
cat. 23

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. 64

Goya
Nationalmuseum Stockholm 1994
consultant editors Juan J. Luna and Görel Cavalli-Björkman. From October 7th 1994 to January 8th 1995
cat. 17

Goya. 250 Aniversario
Museo Nacional del Prado Madrid 1996
consultant editor Juan J. Luna. From March 29th to June 2nd 1996
cat. 86

Goya. La imagen de la mujer
Museo Nacional del Prado Madrid 2001
from October 30th 2001 to February 10th 2002. Exhibitied also at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, March 10th to June 2nd 2002, consultant editor Francisco Calvo Serraller
cat. 33

Goya luces y sombras
CaixaForum Barcelona 2012
consultant editors José Manuel

Madrid 2017

consultant editors José Manuel Matilla and Manuela B. Marqués. From March 16th to June 24th 2012
cat. 15

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GASSIER, Pierre y WILSON, Juliet
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pp. 260, 261 y 262 (il.)
1993
Museo del Prado

Goya. 250 Aniversario
LUNA, Juan J. (Comisario)
pp. 177 (il.), 363 y 364
1996
Museo del Prado

Goya, la imagen de la mujer
CALVO SERRALLER, Francisco (comisario)
pp. 184 y 185 (il.), cat. 33
2001
Museo Nacional del Prado y Fundación Amigos del Museo del Prado

CALVO RUATA, José Ignacio, BORRÁS GUALIS, Gonzalo M. and MARTÍNEZ HERRANZ, Amparo
p. 130
2017
Gobierno de Aragón y Fundación Bancaria Ibercaja

ENLACES EXTERNOS

www.museodelprado.es