# THE CHINCHILLAS

CLASIFICACIÓN: PRINTS

SERIE: CAPRICHOS (PRINTS AND DRAWINGS, 1797-1799) (50/85)




**DATOS GENERALES**

| | |
|---|---|
| CRONOLOGÍA | Ca. 1797 - 1799 |
| DIMENSIONES | 207 x 151 mm |
| TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE | Aguafuerte, aguatinta bruñida y buril |
| RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA | Undisputed work |
| FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN | 20 Aug 2013 / 29 May 2024 |
| INVENTARIO | 836 225 |

**INSCRIPCIONES**

*Los Chinchillas.* (at the bottom)

*50.* (in the upper right-hand corner)

**HISTORIA**

See *Francisco de Goya y Lucientes, Painter*.

Two preparatory drawings for this engraving are preserved *(1)* and *(2)*.

ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

Two men, with gawking faces, appear immobilised and wrapped in stiff heraldic costumes. Their eyes are closed and their ears are covered by two thick padlocks. One of them is lying on the ground with a rosary in his hand, while the other is standing with a sabre. He is wearing a tabard of some sort underneath and something that hangs down to the ground, possibly an executioner's certificate. A strange figure, wearing donkey's ears and a blindfold, serves him a spoonful of food from a cauldron between the two Chinchillas. We cannot tell whether it is a man or a woman as, although his clothes look rather feminine, he has an incipient curly beard.

The Aragonese painter has created intense contrasts of light and shade, so that the Chinchillas are strongly illuminated, as are the hand and the spoon of Ignorance, the latter being decisive in emphasising the disability of the two figures.

In the manuscript of the National Library we find a very specific explanation for this engraving: "The foolish ones, precious as nobles, are always with their executoria at their breast, reclining desidiously, praying like fanatics the rosary and yawning. Ignorance feeds them coarsely and keeps their minds padlocked.

In this picture, Goya lashes out against those who flaunt their noble pride, against the corseted and blind aristocracy that is fed by Ignorance. However, this explanation does not quite justify the meaning of the title, to which Edith Helman seems to have found an answer. The specialist argues that Goya based his work on a popular comedy, *El dómine Lucas,* by José de Cañizares y Suárez (Madrid, 1676-1750). The painter was familiar with Cañizares's literary output as one of his patrons was the Duke of Osuna, for whom the painter produced a series of paintings between 1797 and 1798 to decorate his country house called The Caprice. For one of these works *Flight of Witches*, the Aragonese painter had already been inspired by this work by Cañizares.

In the book, the main character Lucas de Chinchilla and his uncle, Don Pedro de Chinchilla, belonged to a family attached to their aristocratic privileges and noble coats of arms, which made them believe they were superior to others. This work must have been very popular at the time, so that the public must have quickly understood the meaning of the title of this engraving.

CONSERVACIÓN

The aquatint of the plate is somewhat weakened. (the National Chalcography, no. 221).

EXPOSICIONES

**Goya. Gemälde Zeichnungen. Graphik. Tapisserien**
Kunsthalle Basel Basle 1953
from January 23th to April 12th 1953
*cat. 327*

**De grafiek van Goya**
Rijksmuseum Rijksprentenkabinet Amsterdam 1970
from November 13th 1970 to January 17th 1971
*cat. 37*

**Goya. Das Zeitalter der Revolucionen. Kunst um 1800 (1980 – 1981)**
Hamburger Kunsthalle Hamburg 1980
*cat. 36*

**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. 55*

**Goya. La década de Los Caprichos**
Madrid 1992
organized by Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando sponsored by Fundación Central Hispano, Madrid, consultant editor Nigel Glendinnig. From October 26th 1992 to January 10th 1993
*cat. 121*

**Francisco de Goya**
Museo d'Arte Moderna Lugano 1996
exhibition celebrated from September 22nd to November 17th.
*cat. 50, p.77*

**Francisco Goya. Sein leben im spiegel der graphik. Fuendetodos 1746-1828**

**Goya e la tradizione italiana**
Fondazione Magnani Rocca Mamiano di Traversetolo

**Goya. Opera grafica**
Pinacoteca del Castello di San Giorgio Legnano 2006

**Bordeaux. 1746-1996**
Galerie Kornfeld Bern 1996
from November 21st 1996 to January 1997
*cat. 56*

**Goya et la modernité**
Pinacothèque de Paris París 2013
from October 11st 2013 to March 16th 2014
*cat.8*

(Parma) 2006
consultant editors Fred Licht and Simona Tosini Pizzetti. From September 9th to December 3th 2006
*cat. 50, p.158*

exhibition celebrated from December 16th 2006 to April 1st 2007
*p.37*

**BIBLIOGRAFÍA**


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pp.162-167
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1955
Fundación Lázaro Galdiano

**Goya engravings and lithographs, vol. I y II.**
HARRIS, Tomás
p.123, cat. 85
1964
Bruno Cassirer

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GASSIER, Pierre y WILSON, Juliet
p.182, cat. 551
1970
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**Goya, la década de los caprichos: dibujos y aguafuertes**
WILSON BAREAU, Juliet
pp.202-205, cat. 119-121
1992
Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando

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SANTIAGO, Elena M. (coordinadora)
p.100, cat. 139
1996
Ministerio de Educación y Cultura, Biblioteca Nacional

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BLAS BENITO, Javier, MATILLA RODRÍGUEZ, José Manuel y MEDRANO, José Miguel
pp. 270-273
1999
Museo Nacional del Prado

**Goya. Die Kunst der Freiheit**
TRAEGER, Jörg
p.93, fig. 31
2000
Verlag C. H. Beck

OROPESA, Marisa and RINCÓN GARCÍA, Wilfredo
p. 66
2013
Pinacoteca de París

**Goya. In the Norton Simon Museum**
WILSON BAREAU, Juliet
pp. 42-75
2016
Norton Simon Museum


**PALABRAS CLAVE**

**CAPRICCIO DON PEDRO DE CHINCHILLA IGNORANCIA NOBLEZA CLERO CRÍTICA**

**ENLACES EXTERNOS**