

ALLEGORY OF THE CITY OF MADRID (ALEGORÍA DE LA VILLA DE MADRID)

CLASIFICACIÓN: EASEL PAINTING. ALLEGORY, MYTHOLOGY, HISTORY



DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA	1810
UBICACIÓN	Madrid History Museum, Madrid, Spain
DIMENSIONES	260 x 195 cm
TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE	Oil on canvas
RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA	Documented work
TITULAR	Madrid City Hall
FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN	03 Apr 2010 / 14 Jun 2023
INVENTARIO	108 (35.352)

HISTORIA

In 1809 the council of the City of Madrid proposed the commissioning of a portrait of the new French monarch of Spain, Joseph I. Tadeo Bravo de Rivero, who was in charge of the project, commissioned Goya to paint the work in February 1810. According to Bravo de Rivero's reports to authorities, the artist could not accept a fee of less than 15,000 reales, suggesting that this is the amount that he was paid for his work.

The painting has always remained in the possession of the municipal government of Madrid.

ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

As source materials for this royal portrait, Goya had only a print depicting the King's face produced in Rome. The lack of a model led him to design an intelligent composition based on an allegory of the city. A woman of harmonious proportions wearing a crown, a white tunic, and a pinkish mantle leans against a shield carrying the coat of arms of the city of Madrid. She is pointing to a majestic oval where the artist painted the face of Joseph I. Two angels hold the portrait of the monarch, while another two winged figures representing Fame and Victory fly above, accompanied by their respective attributes - a trumpet and a laurel crown. The artist's allegorical scheme is completed by a dog signifying loyalty, which is discreetly hidden behind the woman representing Madrid.

Historical events led to the painting being altered on various occasions in order to adapt it to the political tide of the times. Thus, following Wellington's victory at the Battle of Salamanca, Joseph I fled the city, and Goya hastened to paint over the Frenchman's face with the slogan "Constitución" ("Constitution"). When Napoleon's brother returned in November, Felipe Abas - one of Goya's disciples - eliminated his master's repainting to recover the figure of Joseph Bonaparte, as evidenced by the letter sent by Goya to the Secretary of the city of Madrid informing him of the events. The definitive victory over the French in 1813 led to another change to the oval, where Dionisio Gómez, another of Goya's disciples, wrote the motto "Constitución" once again. The story continued when Ferdinand VII returned to Spain and ordered the abolition of the Cádiz Cortes, which meant that Goya had to substitute the writing with a portrait of Ferdinand "the Desired". The result was not up to scratch, most likely because he commissioned the work to one of his collaborators. In 1826, taking advantage of Goya's absence (he had moved to Bordeaux), the royal portrait was repainted by Vicente López. Ten years after the death of Ferdinand VII, the city of Madrid requested the covering of the portrait with the inscription "Libro de la Constitución" ("Book of the Constitution") until in 1872 it was definitively replaced with the phrase "Dos de mayo" ("Second of May") which we see today. Interestingly, this last lettering is a homage to the day when the Spanish rose up against the French invaders led by Bonaparte, the first occupant of the frequently altered oval.

EXPOSICIONES

Goya 1900

Ministerio de Instrucción Pública and Bellas Artes Madrid 1900

consultant editors Aureliano de Beruete, Alejandro Ferrant, Marqués de Pidal and Ricardo Velázquez. May 1900

cat. 21

Goya

Festival Internacional de Granada, Palacio de Carlos V Granada 1955

consultant editor Enrique Lafuente Ferrari

cat. 108

Exposición histórico-artística del Centenario del Dos de Mayo

Museo Arqueológico Nacional Madrid 1908

cat. 256

Pinturas de Goya

Museo Nacional del Prado Madrid 1928

consultant editor Fernando Álvarez de Sotomayor. From April to -May 1928

cat. 56

De Tiépolo à Goya

Galerie des Beaux-Arts Burdeos 1956

consultant editor Gilberte Martin-Méry. From May 7th to July 31st 1956

cat. 122

Francisco de Goya. IV Centenario de la capitalidad

organized by Ayuntamiento de Madrid and Dirección General de Bellas Artes at the Casón del Buen Retiro Madrid 1961

consultant editor Valentín de Sambricio

cat. I

Goya

Musée Jacquemart-André París 1961

consultant editor Jean-Gabriel Domergue. From December 1961

to February 1962

Goya and his times

The Royal Academy of Arts London 1963

cat. 66

cat. 96

Madrid testimonios de su historia: hasta 1875

Museo Municipal Valencia 1979

from December 1979 to February 1980

cat. I-155

cat. 69

Goya y la Constitución de 1812

Museo Municipal de Madrid Madrid 1982

organized by Madrid Town Hall,
consultant editor José Manuel
Pita Andrade. From December
1982 to January 1983

cat. 3

Goya en las colecciones madrileñas

Museo Nacional del Prado Madrid 1983

consultant editor Enrique
Lafuente Ferrari. From April
19th to June 20th 1983

cat. 37

La alianza de dos monarquías: Wellington en España

Museo Municipal Madrid 1988

organized by Fundación
Hispano-Británica in
collaboration with
Ayuntamiento de Madrid. From
October 19th to December 11th
1988

cat. 1.6.9.

Goya (1746 – 1828)

Galleria Internazionale d'Arte Moderna di
Ca'Pesaro Venecia 1989

consultant editor Antonio
Fortún Paesa. From May 7th to
July 4th 1989

cat. 38

Goya

Nationalmuseum Stockholm 1994

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

cat. 37

Goya. La imagen de la mujer

Museo Nacional del Prado Madrid 2001

from October 30th 2001 to
February 10th 2002. Exhibited
also at the National Gallery of
Art, Washington, March 10th to
June 2nd 2002, consultant
editor Francisco Calvo Serraller

cat. 54

Zaragoza 2021

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DESPARMET FITZ - GERALD, Xavier

vol. I, p. 140, cat. 97

1928-1950

Vie et ouvre de Francisco de Goya

GASSIER, Pierre y WILSON, Juliet

pp. 253, 261, cat. 874

1970

Office du livre

GUDIOL RICART, José

vol. I, p. 343, cat. 555

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1970

Polígrafa

L'opera pittorica completa di Goya

ANGELIS, Rita de

p. 123, cat. 509

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Rizzoli

Diplomatario

GOYA Y LUCIENTES, Francisco de

p. 367, n°s 237-238

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Goya, la imagen de la mujer

CALVO SERRALLER, Francisco (comisario)

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Amigos del Museo del Prado

Goya. Traveler and artist of the Grand Tour (exp. cat.)

GALLEGO GARCÍA, Raquel (comisaria)

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2021

Gobierno de Aragón

ENLACES EXTERNOS