

# THE KNIFE GRINDER (EL AFILADOR)

CLASIFICACIÓN: EASEL PAINTING. VARIOUS SUBJECTS



## DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA

Ca. 1808 - 1812

UBICACIÓN

Szépművészeti Múzeum. Budapest, Budapest,  
Hungary

DIMENSIONES

68 x 50.5 cm

TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE

Oil on canvas

RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA

Documented work

TITULAR

Szépművészeti Múzeum Budapest

FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN

25 Apr 2010 / 13 Jun 2023

INVENTARIO

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**

Szépíróvészeti 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 Kunsthistorischemuseum, 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**

Lille 2021

cat. 30

Agen 2019

cat. 15

#### BIBLIOGRAFÍA

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**Vie et ouvre de Francisco de Goya**

GUDIOL RICART, José  
vol. I, p. 350, cat. 580

DESPARMET FITZ - GERALD, Xavier  
vol. I, p. 273, cat. 248  
1928-1950

### **L'opera pittorica completa di Goya**

ANGELIS, Rita de  
p. 122, cat. 482  
1974  
Rizzoli

### **Goya. El capricho y la invención. Cuadros de gabinete, bocetos y miniaturas**

MENA, Manuela B. y WILSON-BAREAU, Juliet  
(comisarias)  
pp. 308-310, cat. 92 y p. 309 (il.)  
1993  
Museo del Prado

### **Expérience Goya (cat. expo)**

COTENTIN, Régis  
pp.73-74  
2021  
Réunion des Musées Nationaux

GASSIER, Pierre y WILSON, Juliet  
pp. 256, 266, cat. 964 y p. 245 (il.)  
1970  
Office du livre

### **Francisco de Goya, 4 vols.**

CAMÓN AZNAR, José  
vol. III, p. 199 y vol. IV, p. 245 (il.)  
1980-1982  
Caja de Ahorros de Zaragoza, Aragón y Rioja

### **Goya en tiempos de guerra**

MENA MARQUÉS, Manuela B.  
pp. 256-258, cat. 68 y p. 259 (il.)  
2008  
Museo Nacional del Prado

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1970  
Polígrafa

### **Goya y el espíritu de la Ilustración**

PÉREZ SÁNCHEZ, Alfonso E. y SAYRE, Eleanor A. (directores) and MENA, Manuela B. (comisaria)  
pp. 260-263, cat. 68 y p. 262 (il.)  
1988  
Museo del Prado

MOTTIN, Bruno, EFEDAQUE, Adrien and WILSON-BAREAU, Juliet  
p. 109  
2019  
Snoeck

**ENLACES EXTERNOS**