

# THEY SAY YES AND HOLD OUT THEIR HAND TO THE FIRST TO ARRIVE

CLASIFICACIÓN: PRINTS

SERIE: CAPRICHOS (PRINTS AND DRAWINGS, 1797-1799) (2/85)



## DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA

Ca. 1797 - 1799

DIMENSIONES

215 x 150 mm

TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE

Etching and burnished aquatint

RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA

Undisputed work

TITULAR

Ailsa Mellon Bruce Collection

FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN

09 Nov 2010 / 29 May 2024

INVENTARIO

836 225

## INSCRIPCIONES

*Yes pronounce and hand out to the first comer (at the bottom)*

*P.2 (in the upper right corner)*

## HISTORIA

See *Francisco de Goya y Lucientes, Painter*.

#### ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

A young woman, whose face is covered with a black mask on the front and a dog or rat mask on the back, marries a man much older than herself. She offers him one hand, while hiding the other behind her body. Behind her, we see two old women with deformed faces and, in the background of the scene, various figures with exaggerated gestures attending the scene. High in the centre of the picture, although slightly offset towards the background, the painter has depicted a man wearing a hat with a caricatured, almost animal-like face.

The lines of the engraving have a deep bite and in the fine-grained aquatint varnish reserves have been made to obtain a greater contrast between the white of the simian profile of the woman behind the young woman and the girl's chest with the malicious expression of the bridegroom. The use of the burnisher favours the insinuation of the female forms beneath the dress.

Contemporary manuscripts explain this scene; the one in the Prado Museum states that this image represents "the ease with which many women lend themselves to marriage in the hope of living more freely in it", while the one in the National Library notes that "marriages are regularly performed blindly: the brides, trained by their parents, mask themselves and dress up to deceive the first man who arrives. This is a princess with a mask, who is then to be a bitch with her vassals, as indicated by the back of her face imitating a hairstyle: the foolish people applaud these liaisons; and behind comes praying a liar in priestly attire for the happiness of the nation". Finally, Ayala's manuscript states that with this image Goya "reprimands blind marriages, like those of princesses and chambermaids".

For this *Caprice*, Goya must have been inspired by some verses written by his learned friend Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos (Gijón, 1744-Puerto de Vega, Navia, 1811), the so-called satires *A Arnesto*, which were first published in *El censor* (1786). Alcinda, a young woman belonging to high society, marries the first suitor who presents himself to her, possibly with the intention of leaving home. The future husband is encouraged by the economic prosperity that this marriage will bring him. Goya has captured the part of Jovellanos's poem in which he says: "El sí pronuncian y la mano alargan/ Al primero que llega! What a lot of evils/ This damned blindness does not abort! In addition, in the background of the engraving are the characters attending the scene "Al pie del altar, y en el tumulto/ Brindis y vivas de la tornaboda" (At the foot of the altar, and in the tumult/ Toasts and cheers of the wedding). This marriage is celebrated with the imminent threat of infidelity, as Jovellanos points out: "El velo conyugal, y que corriendo/ Con la imprudente frente levantada. Va el adulterio de una casa a otra" (Adultery goes from one house to another). Betrayal is symbolised in the print by the double mask which, on the back, has the face of a dog or rat and alludes to the true character of the young woman who will find complicity in the deception in the woman with the simian face behind her. In Goyaesque iconography, the mask is often an element which, far from concealing, reveals the character's true identity and gives us an idea of her real personality.

The theme of unequal marriages or marriages of convenience is dealt with by Goya in other engravings in *The Caprices*, such as No. 14, *What a Sacrifice*, No. 57, *Filiation*, and No. 75, *There's No One to Untie Us*.

#### CONSERVACIÓN

The aquatint of the plate, which is preserved in the National Chalcography (no. 173), is somewhat weakened.

#### EXPOSICIONES

Goya, Gemälde

De grafiek van Goya

Goya, Das Zeitalter der

**Goya. Gemalde  
Zeichnungen. Graphik.  
Tapisserien**  
Kunsthalle Basel Basle 1953  
from January 23th to April 12th  
1953  
*cat. 194*

**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. 9*

**Francisco Goya. Capricci,  
follie e disastri della  
guerra**  
San Donato Milanese 2000  
Opere grafiche della Fondazione  
Antonio Mazzotta  
*cat.2, p.16*

**Goya. Opera grafica**  
Pinacoteca del Castello di San Giorgio Legnano  
2006  
exhibition celebrated from  
December 16th 2006 to April 1st  
2007  
*p.22*

**Goya: Order and disorder**  
Museum of Fine Arts Boston 2014  
*p. 140*  
  
2022

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lithographs, vol. I y II.**  
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cat. 37, p.72  
1964  
Bruno Cassirer

**Goya. El capricho y la  
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gabinete, bocetos y  
miniaturas**  
MENA, Manuela B. y WILSON-BAREAU, Juliet  
(comisarias)  
pp.45-47, fig. 21  
1993  
Museo del Prado

**Goya, la imagen de la  
mujer**  
CALVO SERRALLER, Francisco (comisario)  
p.90

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

**Francisco de Goya**  
Museo d'Arte Moderna Lugano 1996  
exhibition celebrated from  
September 22nd to November  
17th.  
*cat. 2, p.2*

**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  
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**Goya et la modernité**  
Pinacothèque de Paris Paris 2013  
from October 11st 2013 to March  
16th 2014  
*cat. 130*

Madrid 2017

**Vie et ouvre de Francisco  
de Goya**  
GASSIER, Pierre y WILSON, Juliet  
p.176, cat. 454  
1970  
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de Goya en la Biblioteca  
Nacional**  
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cat. 89, p.74  
1996  
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Nacional

OROPESA, Marisa and RINCÓN GARCÍA,  
Wilfredo  
p. 191  
2013

**Goya. Das Zeitalter der  
Revolutionen. Kunst um  
1800 (1980 - 1981)**  
Hamburger Kunsthalle Hamburg 1980  
*cat. 22*

**Francisco Goya. Sein  
leben im spiegel der  
graphik. Fuendetodos  
1746-1828 Bordeaux.  
1746-1996**  
Galerie Kornfeld Bern 1996  
from November 21st 1996 to  
January 1997  
*cat. 8*

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Fondazione Magnani Rocca Mamiano di  
Traversetolo (Parma) 2006  
consultant editors Fred Licht and  
Simona Tosini Pizzetti. From  
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*cat. 2, p.146*

**Goya en Madrid. Cartones  
para tapices 1775-1794**  
Museo Nacional del Prado Madrid 2014  
*p. 152*

Hamburg 2019  
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p. 244  
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Museum**  
WILSON BAREAU, Juliet  
pp. 42-75  
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TORAL OROPESA, María and MARTÍN  
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2022  
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de Badajoz

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2014  
Museo Nacional del Prado

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GUALIS, Gonzalo M. and MARTÍNEZ  
HERRANZ, Amparo  
p. 172  
2017  
Gobierno de Aragón y Fundación Bancaria  
Ibercaja

#### **PALABRAS CLAVE**

**CAPRICCIO MATRIMONIO DE CONVENIENCIA MÁSCARA CARICATURA**

#### **ENLACES EXTERNOS**