BLIND MAN'S BUFF (LA GALLINA CIEGA)

CLASIFICACIÓN: EASEL PAINTING. TAPESTRY CARTOONS

SERIE: TAPESTRY CARTOONS:COUNTRY SCENES (PAINTING AND SKETCHES, 1788) (1/6)



DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA	1788
UBICACIÓN	The Prado National Museum. Madrid, Madrid, Spain
DIMENSIONES	269 x 350 cm
TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE	Oil on canvas
RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA	Documented work
TITULAR	El Prado National Museum
FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN	20 Dec 2009 / 15 May 2023
INVENTARIO	2 P00753

HISTORIA

Towards the end of 1787 Goya received the commission to make the cartoons that would serve as models for the tapestries to hang in the Infantas' bedroom. In April 1788 the artist sent an invoice that included five stretchers for the sketches for the series, on which he was still working "with much insistence and displeasure" a month later, which we know from the letter he sent to Martín Zapater on 31 May 1788.

Around 1856 or 1857, this cartoon was moved from the Royal Tapestry Factory to the Royal Palace in Madrid. There it remained in the tapestry basements until it was taken to the Prado Museum, into which

collection it entered under orders given on 18 January and 9 February 1870.

ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

In this country scene we see eight people holding hands to form a circle around a ninth figure in the centre that is wearing a blindfold and is holding a wooden spoon. This detail led the cartoon to receive the title *The Wooden Spoon Game* earlier on. It was Cruzada Villaamil who later called it Blind Man's Buff, or, literally, *The Blind Hen*.

This is the only cartoon from the series which was to adorn the Infantas' bedroom that was ever actually painted. The oil sketch of the work, in which several differences can be seen, has also been conserved. Goya simplified the composition in the cartoon in order to facilitate its translation into tapestry. As such, the crowd that appears in the background in the sketch has disappeared in the finished cartoon. He also gave greater dynamism to the group of figures, who take on a more credible rhythm than in the sketch, and changed the perspective. In the sketch the dimensions are squarer and the sky is given a more important role, whereas in the cartoon the dimensions are flattened, concentrating more on the group of figures.

Writers have also seen references to love in this painting. Tomlinson understands the work to be a metaphor for blind love, referring to the blindfold worn by the person trapped by his companions.

The similarities with the cartoon *Dance on the Banks of the Manzanares* are obvious, and this relationship is more than justified since both scenes appear to be set in the same place and both depict activities of leisure and amusement.

EXPOSICIONES

Goya. 250 Aniversario
Museo Nacional del Prado Madrid 1996
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cat. 50

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
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Goya luces y sombras
CaixaForum Barcelona 2012
consultant editors José Manuel Matilla and Manuela B. Marqués. From March 16th to June 24th 2012
cat. 8

Goya en Madrid. Cartones para tapices 1775-1794
Museo Nacional del Prado Madrid 2014
p. 175

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Goya: Order and disorder
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ENLACES EXTERNOS