

# IS THERE NO ONE TO UNTIE US?

CLASIFICACIÓN: PRINTS

SERIE: CAPRICHOS (PRINTS AND DRAWINGS, 1797-1799) (75/85)



## DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA

Ca. 1797 - 1799

DIMENSIONES

218 x 152 mm

TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE

Etching and burnished aquatint

RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA

Undisputed work

FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN

13 Jan 2011 / 29 May 2024

INVENTARIO

836 225

## INSCRIPCIONES

¿No hay quien nos desate? (at the bottom)

75. (in the upper right-hand corner)

## HISTORIA

There is only one known proof prior to the letter with burnished aquatint in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. It has a handwritten title, No se puede desatar! which seems to have replaced an earlier erased one.

There are also other proofs in which the title ends in an exclamation mark instead of the question mark for which it will later be replaced.

Two preparatory drawings of this engraving (1) and (2) are preserved in the Prado Museum.

#### ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

A man and a woman are tied at the waist to the trunk of a dry tree in the middle of a scrubby field. Both struggle to free themselves; the man makes violent efforts by leaning his torso forward and she, with her legs tied at the ankles, moves to the opposite side with her arms raised. Above them flies an enormous owl with a curved beak and eyes with its wings outstretched, resting one of its talons on the woman's face with an anguished gesture.

The artist has used a single aquatint that contrasts with the reserves of varnish with which he has created the whites that illuminate the couple. This contrast will gradually fade with each print run as the aquatint wears away, but the lines drawn with the etching remain intact. The burnisher is also used on the feathers of the owl and on the female figure to achieve half-tones.

The manuscript in the Prado Museum explains this engraving as follows: "A man and a woman tied with ropes and struggling to get free and shouting to be untied in haste? Either I am mistaken or they are two forcibly married".

In this print Goya has created an allegorical image of marriages of convenience, which were very common at the time, depicting the difficulty of breaking the bonds that united the spouses. The owl, a common figure in Goyaesque iconography, alludes to all those forces that hindered the dissolution of marital errors. In Spain at the time, divorce, which had been legalised in France after the French Revolution in 1792, began to be debated. In France, divorce could be granted under seven conditions and was considered a universal right for both men and women.

The theme of arranged and unhappy marriages was also dealt with in *Caprice No. 14, What a Sacrifice!* and in *Folly No. 7, Disorderly Folly*.

#### CONSERVACIÓN

The plate is in poor condition (National Chalcography, no.246).

#### EXPOSICIONES

**Goya. Das Zeitalter der Revolutionen. Kunst um 1800 (1980 – 1981)**

Hamburger Kunsthalle Hamburg 1980  
cat. 41

**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. 24

**Francisco de Goya**

Museo d'Arte Moderna Lugano 1996  
exhibition celebrated from September 22nd to November 17th.  
cat. 75, p.102

**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. 81

**Das Capriccio als Kunstprinzip**

Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, 1996  
from December 8th 1996 to February 16th 1997, exhibited also in Zürich, Kunsthaus, from March 14th marzo 1997 to June 1st 1997 and in Vienna,

**Goya artista de su tiempo y Goya artista único**

The National Museum of Western Art Tokyo 1999  
from December 1st to July 3th 1999  
cat. 123

Kunsthistorisches Museum mi

Palais Harrach, from June 29th  
1997 to September 21st 1997.

cat. G35

**Francisco Goya. Capricci, follie  
e disastri della guerra**

San Donato Milanese 2000

Opere grafiche della Fondazione  
Antonio Mazzotta

p.50, cat. 75

**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. 94

**Goya e la tradizione italiana**

Fondazione Magnani Rocca Mamiano di  
Traversetolo (Parma) 2006

consultant editors Fred Licht  
and Simona Tosini Pizzetti.

From September 9th to  
December 3th 2006

cat. 75, p.164

**Goya. Opera grafica**

Pinacoteca del Castello di San Giorgio  
Legnano 2006

exhibition celebrated from  
December 16th 2006 to April 1st  
2007

p.43

**Goya e Italia**

Museo de Zaragoza Zaragoza 2008

organized by the Fundación  
Goya en Aragón, consultant  
editor Joan Sureda Pons. From  
June 1st to September 15th 2008

cat. 346

**Goya et la modernité**

Pinacothèque de Paris Paris 2013

from October 11st 2013 to March  
16th 2014

cat. 138

**Goya: Order and disorder**

Museum of Fine Arts Boston 2014

cat. 74

Hamburg 2019

cat. 102

2022

**BIBLIOGRAFÍA**

**Goya engravings and  
lithographs, vol. I y II.**

HARRIS, Tomás

p.153, cat. 110

1964

Bruno Cassirer

**Vie et ouvre de Francisco de  
Goya**

GASSIER, Pierre y WILSON, Juliet

p.184, cat. 602

1970

Office du livre

**Goya, la década de los  
caprichos: dibujos y  
aguafuertes**

WILSON BAREAU, Juliet

pp.40-42, cat. 24-25

1992

Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San  
Fernando

**Catálogo de las estampas de  
Goya en la Biblioteca Nacional**

SANTIAGO, Elena M. (coordinadora)

p.114, cat. 167

1996

Ministerio de Educación y Cultura, Biblioteca  
Nacional

**El libro de los caprichos: dos  
siglos de interpretaciones  
(1799-1999). Catálogo de los  
dibujos, pruebas de estado,  
láminas de cobre y estampas  
de la primera edición**

BLAS BENITO, Javier, MATILLA RODRÍGUEZ,

José Manuel y MEDRANO, José Miguel

pp.372-375

1999

Museo Nacional del Prado

OROPESA, Marisa and RINCÓN GARCÍA,  
Wilfredo

p. 199

2013

Pinacoteca de París

**Goya: Order & Disorder**

ILCHMAN, Frederick y STEPANEK, Stephanie  
L. (comisarios)

p. 140

2014

Museum of Fine Arts Boston Publications

**Goya. In the Norton Simon  
Museum**

WILSON BAREAU, Juliet

pp. 42-75

2016

Norton Simon Museum

TACK, Ifee and PISOT, Sandra

p. 311

2019

Hirmer

TORAL OROPESA, María and MARTÍN

MEDINA, Víctor

p. 51

2022

Museo de Bellas Artes de Badajoz y Diputación  
de Badajoz

**PALABRAS CLAVE**

**CAPRICCIO ATADURAS MATRIMONIO DE CONVENIENCIA ALEGORÍA**

**ENLACES EXTERNOS**