

Goya

Francisco José de Goya y Lucientes (1746 – 1828) was a Spanish **romantic** painter and **printmaker**. He is considered the most important Spanish artist of late 18th and early 19th centuries and throughout his long career was a commentator and chronicler of his era. Immensely successful in his lifetime, Goya is often referred to as both the last of the **Old Masters** and the first of the moderns. He was also one of the great contemporary **portraitists**.



01 Self Portrait 1790-95



02 Goya's Birthplace

He was born to a modest family in 1746 in the village of Fuendetodos in Aragon. He studied painting from age 14 under José Luzán y Martínez and moved to Madrid to study with Anton Raphael Mengs. He married Josefa Bayeu in 1773; their life was characterised by an almost constant series of pregnancies and miscarriages, and only one child, a son, survived into adulthood. Goya became a court painter to the Spanish Crown in 1786 and this early portion of his career is marked by portraits of the Spanish aristocracy and royalty, and Rococo style tapestry cartoons designed for the royal palace.



03 The Parasol 1777



04 The Straw Manikin 1791-2

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05 *Yard With Lunatics* 1794

Goya was guarded, and although letters and writings survive, little is known about his thoughts. He suffered a severe and undiagnosed illness in 1793 which left him deaf. Sick and disillusioned, after 1793 his work became progressively darker and pessimistic.



06 *The Family of the Infante Don Luis* 1784



07 *Charles IV of Spain and his Family* 1800-1

In 1799 Goya became Primer Pintor de Cámara, the then-highest rank for a Spanish court painter.

Goya began work on this painting in 1800 and completed it in the summer of 1801. It features life sized depictions of Charles IV of Spain and his family, ostentatiously dressed in fine costume and jewellery. The painting was modelled after Velázquez's *Las Meninas* when setting the royal subjects in a naturalistic and plausible setting.

The royal family is apparently paying a visit to the artist's studio, while Goya can be seen to the left looking outwards towards the viewer. As in "*Las Meninas*," the artist is shown working on a canvas, of which only the rear is visible; however, the atmospheric and warm perspective of the palace interior of Velázquez's work is replaced in the Goya by a sense of, in the words of Gassier, "imminent suffocation" as the royal family are presented by Goya on a "stage facing the public, while in the shadow of the wings the painter, with a grim smile, points and says: 'Look at them and

judge for yourself!

The French writer Theophile Gautier called it a 'picture of the corner grocer who has just won the lottery' and it has sometimes been believed that Goya was in some way satirising his subjects. The idea has been dismissed however by the art critic Robert Hughes ; 'This is nonsense. You didn't manage to keep your job as an official court portraitist if you were satirising the people you were painting. No, this is not a send up. If anything it is an act of flattery. For instance on the left, in the blue suit, is one of the most odious little toads in the entire history of Spanish politics, the future King Ferdinand VII, whom Goya actually manages to make quite regal. God knows how he did it, but he has. This is very much an act of respect, almost verging on an act of flattery."



08 *Duchess of Alba* 1797



09 *La maja desnuda* 1790-1800



10 *La maja vestida* 1800-05

In the late 1790s, commissioned by Godoy, he completed his *La maja desnuda*, a remarkably daring nude for the time and clearly indebted to Diego Velázquez. Manuel Godoy y Álvarez de Faria (1767 – 1851) was Prime Minister of Spain from 1792 to 1797 and from 1801 to 1808.

The identity of the model and why the paintings were created are unknown. Both paintings are first recorded in an inventory of unpopular and unsuccessful art by Prime Minister Manuel de Godoy, Duke of Alcúdia in 1800, when they were hung in a private room reserved for nude paintings, alongside such works as Velázquez's *Rokeby Venus*. Godoy retained the picture for six years before it was discovered by investigators for the Spanish Inquisition in 1808, along with his other "questionable pictures". Godoy and the curator of his collection, Don Francisco de Garivay, were brought before a tribunal and forced to reveal the artists behind the confiscated art works which were "so indecent and prejudicial to the public good."

The controversy was populist and driven by a political motive, following a mob gathering demanding Godoy's removal as Prime Minister. In the fallout, Goya was named and summonsed on a charge of moral depravity. As Godoy had only been found in possession of the painting, Goya was asked to identify why "he did them", and also "at whose request, and what attention guided him." His answers do not survive, but we know that the Director of Confiscations noted that Goya had only followed and emulated Titian's Danaë series and Velázquez's Venus; two painters, and their works, very much admired by the court and church, including their nudes, and the Inquisition has up to that time not found anything objectionable in the latter's Rokeby Venus.

Goya escaped prosecution when the tribunal accepted that he was following in a tradition, and emulating a Velázquez painting which had been favoured by Philip IV of Spain. Ironically, the earlier picture of Venus had been similarly kept out of view by that art-loving king in a private room, "the room where His Majesty retires after eating." In fact, the Inquisition by 1808 was nearing the end of its influence, and while it could draw attention to "dangerous" forms of expression, be they books, plays, or paintings, it was usually unable to fully suppress them.



11 Preparatory studies for the *sleep of reason*

Los caprichos are a set of 80 prints in aquatint and etching, and published as an album in 1799. The prints were an artistic experiment: a medium for Goya's condemnation of the universal follies and foolishness in the Spanish society in which he lived. The criticisms are far-ranging and acidic; he speaks against the predominance of superstition, the ignorance and inabilities of the various members of the ruling class, pedagogical short-comings, marital mistakes and the decline of rationality. Some of the prints have anticlerical themes. Goya described the series as depicting "the innumerable foibles and follies to be found in any civilized society, and from the common prejudices and deceitful practices which custom, ignorance or self-interest have made usual".



12 Caprichio no 42
Those who cannot



13 Caprichio 47
The Sleep of Reason Brings Forth Monsters

Goya imagines himself asleep amidst his drawing tools, his reason dulled by slumber and bedeviled by creatures that prowl in the dark. The work includes owls that may be symbols of folly and bats symbolizing ignorance. The artist's nightmare reflected his view of Spanish society, which he portrayed in the Caprichos as demented, corrupt, and ripe for ridicule.

The full epigraph for capricho No. 43 reads; "Fantasy abandoned by reason produces impossible monsters: united with her (reason), she (fantasy) is the mother of the arts and the origin of their marvels."



14 Portrait of Josefa Bayeu
c1798 or 1814



15 Portrait of the Duke of Wellington
1812-14



16 *The Second of May 1808* 1814

In 1807 Napoleon led the French army into the Peninsular War against Spain. Goya remained in Madrid during which seems to have affected him deeply. Although he did not vocalise his thoughts in public, they can be inferred from his *Disasters of War* series of prints (although published 35 years after his death) and his 1814 paintings *The Second of May 1808* and *The Third of May 1808*. Other works from his mid period include the *Caprichos* and *Los Disparates* etching series, and a wide variety of paintings concerned with insanity, mental asylums, witches, fantastical creatures and religious and political corruption, all of which suggest that he feared for both his country's fate and his own mental and physical health.



17 *The Third of May 1808* 1814

In the work, Goya sought to commemorate Spanish resistance to Napoleon's armies during the occupation of 1808 in the Peninsular War. Along with its companion piece of the same size, *The Second of May 1808* (or *The Charge of the Mamelukes*), it was commissioned by the provisional government of Spain at Goya's suggestion.

The painting's content, presentation, and emotional force secure its status as a groundbreaking, archetypal image of the horrors of war. Drawing on many sources from both high and popular art, *The Third of May 1808* marks a clear break from convention. Diverging from the traditions of Christian art and traditional depictions of war, it has no distinct precedent, and is acknowledged as one of the first paintings of the modern era. According to the art historian Kenneth Clark, *The Third of May 1808* is "the first great picture which can be called revolutionary in every sense of the word, in style, in subject, and in intention".

The Third of May illustrates the French reprisals: before dawn the next day hundreds of Spaniards were rounded up and shot, at a number of locations around Madrid. Civilian Spanish opposition persisted as a feature of the ensuing five-year Peninsular War, the first to be called guerrilla war.

The Third of May 1808 is set in the early hours of the morning following the uprising^[20] and centers on two masses of men: one a rigidly poised firing squad, the other a disorganized group of captives held at gun point. Executioners and victims face each other abruptly across a narrow space; according to Kenneth Clark, "by a stroke of genius [Goya] has contrasted the fierce repetition of the soldiers' attitudes and the steely line of their rifles, with the crumbling irregularity of their target." A square lantern situated on the ground between the two groups throws a dramatic light on the scene. The brightest illumination falls on the huddled victims to the left, whose numbers include a monk or friar in prayer. To the immediate right and at the center of the canvas, other condemned figures stand next in line to be shot. The central figure is the brilliantly lit man kneeling amid the bloodied corpses of those already executed, his arms flung wide in either appeal or defiance. His yellow and white clothing repeats the colors of the lantern. His plain white shirt and sun-burnt face show he is a simple labourer.

On the right side stands the firing squad, engulfed in shadow and painted as a monolithic unit. Seen nearly from behind, their bayonets and their shako headgear form a relentless and immutable column. Most of the faces of the figures cannot be seen, but the face of the man to the right of the main victim, peeping fearfully towards the soldiers, acts as a repoussoir at the back of the central group. Without distracting from the intensity of the foreground drama, a townscape with a steeple looms in the nocturnal distance, probably including the barracks used by the French. In the background between the hillside and the shakos is a crowd with torches: perhaps onlookers, perhaps more soldiers or victims.



18 The Dissasters of War 4 19 The Disasters of War 5
***The women are Courageous And they are Fierce, or And they fight like wild
beasts***

The name by which the series is known today is not Goya's own. His handwritten title on an album of proofs given to a friend reads: Fatal consequences of Spain's bloody war with Bonaparte, and other emphatic caprices. Aside from the titles or captions given to each print, these are Goya's only known words on the series. With these works, he breaks from a number of painterly traditions. He rejects the bombastic heroics of most previous Spanish war art to show the effect of

conflict on individuals. In addition he abandons colour in favour of a more direct truth he found in shadow and shade.



20 The Disasters of War 10
Nor do these



21 The Disasters of War 15
It Cannot be Helped



22 The Disasters of War 18
Bury them and keep quiet



23 The Disasters of War 34
For a clasp knife



24 The Disasters of War 39
Heroic deeds with dead men



25 The Disasters of War 76
The flesh eating vulture



26 *La Tauromachia*



27 *Los Disparates no3 ; Ridiculous folly*



28 *The Giant* 1810



29 *Saturn Devouring His Children* 1819-23

His late period culminates with the Black Paintings of 1819–1823, applied on oil on the plaster walls of his house the Quinta del Sordo (house of the deaf man) where, disillusioned by political and social developments in Spain he lived in near isolation.

After the Napoleonic Wars and the internal turmoil of the changing Spanish government, Goya developed an embittered attitude toward mankind. He had a first-hand and acute awareness of panic, terror, fear and hysteria. He had survived two near-fatal illnesses, and grew increasingly anxious and impatient in fear of relapse. The combination of these factors is thought to have led to his production of the fourteen works known collectively as the Black Paintings.

Using oil paints and working directly on the walls of his dining and sitting rooms, Goya created works with dark, disturbing themes. The paintings were not commissioned and were not meant to leave his home. It is likely that the artist never intended the works for public exhibition: "...these paintings are as close to being hermetically private as any that have ever been produced in the history of Western art."



30 *Judith and Holofernes*
1819-23



31 *The Witches Sabbath*
1819-23

Another of Goya's works from the series is known as Witches' Sabbath or The Great He-Goat (El aquelarre). Ominous and gloomy, this earth-toned illustration depicts the ancient belief that the Sabbath was a meeting of witches supervised by the Devil who took the form of a goat. The goat is painted entirely in black and appears as a silhouette in front of a coven of witches and warlocks. They have sunken eyes and horrifying features, and appear huddled together, leaning towards the devil. Only one girl seems resistant to the crowd. She sits at the far right, dressed in black. Though she does not appear involved in the ritual, she does seem to be captivated by the group's relationship to the Devil.



32 *The Fates* 1819-23



33 *The Dog* 1819-23

The enigmatic depiction of the dog has led to myriad interpretations of Goya's intentions. The painting is often seen a symbolic depiction of man's futile struggle against malevolent forces; the black sloping mass which envelopes the dog is imagined to be quicksand, earth or some other material in which the dog has become buried. Having struggled unsuccessfully to free itself, it can now do nothing but look skywards hoping for a divine intervention that will never come. The vast swathe of "sky" which makes up the bulk of the picture intensifies the feeling of the dog's isolation and the hopelessness of its situation. Others see the dog as cautiously raising its head above the

black mass, afraid of something outside the painting's field of view, or perhaps an image of abandonment, loneliness, and neglect. Robert Hughes says "We do not know what it means, but its pathos moves us on a level below narrative."



34 *The Milkmaid of Bordeaux* 1825-27

Goya eventually abandoned Spain in 1824 to retire to the French city of Bordeaux, accompanied by his much younger maid and companion, Leocadia Weiss, who may or may not have been his lover. There he completed his *La Tauromaquia* series and a number of other, major, canvases. Following a stroke which left him paralyzed on his right side, and suffering failing eyesight and poor access to painting materials, he died and was buried on 16 April 1828 aged 82. His body was later re-interred in Spain.