

# A WAY OF FLYING

CLASIFICACIÓN: PRINTS

SERIE: ABSURDITIES (PRINTS Y DRAWINGS, CA.1815-1824)



## DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA

1815 - 1816

DIMENSIONES

245 x 358 mm

TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE

Aguafuerte, aguatinta y punta seca

RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA

Documented work

FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN

22 Aug 2021 / 05 Jun 2023

INVENTARIO

836 225

## HISTORIA

See *Femenine folly*.

The state proof before the aquatint in the Lazaro Galdiano Foundation in Madrid has the handwritten number 4 in the upper left-hand corner. Another state proof is known to be bound in the album of Juan Agustín Ceán Bermúdez's *Bullfighting* (British Museum, London) with the number 34 and the title *A way of flying* and *Way of Flying and The Winged Man's Way of Being Able to Fly*.

## ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

Men fly on mechanical devices with large bat-like wings, which they operate with their hands and feet by means of ropes. On their skulls they wear a large bird's head, which serves as a prow orientation or simply as a symbol to emulate the freedom of birds. The group is made

up of five flying men. One of them, in the foreground, bends his legs to set the contraption in motion. The rest are distributed in the space with great harmony and proportion.

The characters fly in an immense, boundless night sky, soaring away into mysterious depths and heights. In this way, man is liberated and moves through infinite space with great freedom, an achievement achieved by human effort. Through the use of reason, man has invented an ingenuity that allows him to fly and conquer space where he achieves complete freedom, fulfilling his long-held dream of soaring the skies. Leonardo da Vinci had already envisaged this with mechanical devices very similar to those presented by Goya.

It is thought that this print was never intended by Goya as part of the *Follies* series, as it was bound in an album of *Bullfighting* that the painter gave to Ceán Bermúdez. Furthermore, there are other indications that it was not intended as an integral part of the series. It manifests a positive vision that is not typical of the *Follies*, showing man as responsible for the achievement of flight. This optimism is most evident in the state proofs without aquatint, in which the dark sky is not yet present. It is possible that Goya devised the daytime print, as the *preparatory drawing* for it is. When the aquatint was applied to the San Fernando Royal Academy of Fine Arts edition in 1864, its appearance became much more sombre and in keeping with the spirit of the series, to which it would have been incorporated at a later date. The fact that the manuscript title on the state proofs does not include the word *follie*, as is usual in the series, also seems to exclude the initial belonging of this print to the series.

#### EXPOSICIONES

**Grabados de Goya: colección propiedad de la Biblioteca Nacional, que se conserva en su Gabinete de**  
Casa de la Amistad de Moscú Moscow 1979  
exhibition displayed from January 18th to 31st 1979

**Etchings by Francisco Goya**  
Johannesburg Johannesburg 1974

**Goya. Das Zeitalter der Revolucionen. Kunst um 1800 (1980 – 1981)**  
Hamburger Kunsthalle Hamburg 1980  
cat. 162

**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

**Ydioma universal: Goya en la Biblioteca Nacional**  
Biblioteca Nacional Madrid 1996  
from September 19th to December 15th 1996  
cat. 299

**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

**Goya. 250 Aniversario**  
Museo Nacional del Prado Madrid 1996  
consultant editor Juan J. Luna.  
From March 29th to June 2nd 1996

**Goya grabador**  
Museo del Grabado Español Contemporáneo Marbella 1996  
from March 8th to May 5th 1996

Zaragoza 1996

London 1997

1999

Madrid 1999

**Schlaf der Vernunft. Originalradierungen von Francisco de Goya**  
Munich 2000

**Goya en tiempos de guerra**  
Museo Nacional del Prado Madrid 2008  
consultant editor Manuela B.

Bilbao 2012  
cat. 180

**Goya luces y sombras**  
CaixaForum Barcelona 2012  
consultant editors José Manuel

Mena Marqués, from April 14th  
to July 13th 2008  
cat. 180

**Goya et la modernité**  
Pinacothèque de Paris París 2013  
from October 11st 2013 to March  
16th 2014  
cat. 213

Agen 2019  
cat. 67

Matilla and Manuela B. Marqués.  
From March 16th to June 24th  
2012  
cat. 74

**Goya: Order and disorder**  
Museum of Fine Arts Boston 2014  
cat. 216

Madrid 2017

Madrid 2019  
cat. 157

#### BIBLIOGRAFÍA

HARRIS, Tomás  
p. 395, cat. 260  
1964  
Bruno Cassirer

CARRETE, Juan, MATILLA, José Manuel,  
AULLÓN DE HARO, Pedro, BOZAL, Valeriano,  
GLENDRINNING, Nigel, VEGA, Jesusa y BLAS,  
Javier  
pp. 107 y 111, cat. 13 y 33  
1996  
Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San  
Fernando y Calcografía Nacional

VEGA, Jesusa  
pp. 210-211  
2010  
Consejo Superior de Investigaciones  
Científicas

**Goya. In the Norton Simon  
Museum**  
WILSON BAREAU, Juliet  
pp. 204-211  
2016  
Norton Simon Museum

MATILLA, José Manuel y MENA, Manuela B.  
(comisarios)  
p. 245  
2019  
Museo Nacional del Prado

**Vie et ouvre de Francisco de  
Goya**  
GASSIER, Pierre y WILSON, Juliet  
p. 326, cat. 1591  
1970  
Office du livre

MATILLA, José Manuel  
pp. 136-137, cat. 45  
2000  
Edizioni de Luca

OROPESA, Marisa and RINCÓN GARCÍA,  
Wilfredo  
p. 274  
2013  
Pinacoteca de París

CALVO RUATA, José Ignacio, BORRÁS GUALIS,  
Gonzalo M. and MARTÍNEZ HERRANZ,  
Amparo  
p. 271  
2017  
Gobierno de Aragón y Fundación Bancaria  
Ibercaja

**Catálogo de las estampas de  
Goya en la Biblioteca Nacional**  
SANTIAGO, Elena M. (coordinadora)  
p. 241, cat. 387-388  
1996  
Ministerio de Educación y Cultura, Biblioteca  
Nacional

MATILLA, José Manuel  
pp. 484-485, cat. 180  
2008  
Museo Nacional y Ediciones El Viso

**Goya: Order & Disorder**  
ILCHMAN, Frederick y STEPANEK, Stephanie  
L. (comisarios)  
pp. 310-315  
2014  
Museum of Fine Arts Boston Publications

MOTTIN, Bruno, EFEDAQUE, Adrien and  
WILSON-BAREU, Juliet  
p. 122  
2019  
Snoeck

#### PALABRAS CLAVE

**LEONARDO DA VINCI CABEZA DE PÁJARO ARTILUGIO VOLADOR ALAS DE MURCIÉLAGO ALAS  
VOLAR DISPARATES**

#### ENLACES EXTERNOS