REHEARSAL OF FIRST FLIGHT WITCHES, AND WITH FEAR THEY TRY TO WORK (2ND DREAM).

CLASIFICACIÓN: DRAWINGS

SERIE: CAPRICHOS (PRINTS AND DRAWINGS, 1797-1799) (60B/85)

DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA	Ca. 1796 - 1797
UBICACIÓN	The Prado National Museum. Madrid, Madrid, Spain
DIMENSIONES	230 x 170 mm
TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE	
RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA	Documented work
TITULAR	El Prado National Museum
FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN	06 Sep 2022 / 23 Jun 2023
INVENTARIO	2132 D4202

INSCRIPCIONES

2nd (in pencil; recto, upper centre)

60 (in pencil; recto, lower left-hand corner)

Ensayo de brujas primerizas de primer / buelo, y con temor se prueban p^{a} trabajar (in pencil; recto, lower centre)

36 (verso, upper part)

36 (reverse, left)

36 (in red colour; reverse, left)

Watermark: *H C WEND / & / ZOONEN*

HISTORIA

On the gestation, history and aims of the series known as *Dreams*, a set of preparatory drawings for *The Caprices*, see *Dream 1: Universal Language.*

Line of provenance of the present drawing: Javier Goya; Mariano Goya, 1854; Valentín Carderera, ca. 1861; Mariano Carderera, 1880; Prado Museum, 1886.

ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

Within the series of drawings entitled *Dreams*, the seed of the Caprichos, a group devoted to witchcraft, including the present work, stands out for its number and singular subject matter. They illustrate scenes of which the painter had learned from his friend Leandro Fernández de Moratín (1760-1828), who had been working on the new edition of the *Account of the Trial of the Faith celebrated in Logroño in 1610 since 1797*. A further ten drawings in this series of Dreams deal with love, while other individual drawings depict donkeys, smugglers and monks. A feature common to all of them is the inscription in black pencil of a legend at the bottom, which in eleven cases begins with the word "dream".

Preparatory drawing for the etching of the *Caprice 60. Rehersals.* It heads a set of nine drawings on the subject of witches. Goya used witch themes to criticise the ignorance that presides over human behaviour. The scene has also been associated with shadow theatre and magic, a fashion of the time.

For Matilla, this image represents the initiation of a novice into the ritual of flight, assisted by another more experienced witch, the scene presided over by the shadowy silhouette of a billy goat. With its vague outlines, this magical beast acts as a vision that underlines the character of a fantasy world in which the women have taken flight by grasping, respectively, their hair and an ear. On the illuminated areas of the floor, on both sides of the main stage, the witches' clothes appear, as well as some spindles and spinning wheels, the tools of their honourable and abandoned work.

Matilla shows that various magical and sacrificial objects, such as bones and a dead puppy with its legs tied together, were placed in the shadows cast on the floor by the goat. Also worth noting is the human skull and the pitcher that attracts one of the two cats that gather at the feet of the goat. The posture of the novice, with her feet apart, her right hand as a support and extending the other, recalls the classical sculpture of the *fallen Gladiator*, a frequent model for the figure of Adam in depictions of the Creation or Fall of Man.

In the final engraving, the inexperienced and joyful novice is replaced by a witch who looks at her smiling and luminous teacher with an ambiguous expression, a mixture of debauchery, suspicion and fear, which emphasises not only the enchanting power and promise of life in Paradise, but also implies criticism of those who believe them and allow themselves to be

tempted.

EXPOSICIONES

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. 26

Barcelona 2012
cat. 37

Goya: Order and disorder
Museum of Fine Arts Boston 2014
cat. 165

Madrid 2019
cat. 195

Melbourne 2021

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Goya's Caprichos. Beauty, Reason and Caricature
LÓPEZ-REY, José
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Dibujos de Goya, 2 vols
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MATILLA, José Manuel and MENA, Manuela B.
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2012
Fundación bancaria "la Caixa" y Museo Nacional del Prado

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

PALABRAS CLAVE

PRIMER VUELO BRUJAS SUEÑO

ENLACES EXTERNOS