

FRANCISCO GOYA



Los  
Caprichos

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AUCKLAND CITY ART GALLERY

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COVER: PORTRAIT OF GOYA (1)

## FOREWORD

FRANCISCO GOYA'S great fame rests particularly on the three great series of etchings which he executed during his lifetime. *Los Caprichos* was the first of these. While Goya commented freely and with considerable courage on the social injustices and weaknesses of his own time, his power of invention renders his comments universal and timeless.

We are most grateful to Mr Harold Wright of P. & D. Colnaghis for placing these prints on loan for this exhibition. Dr W. S. Auburn and Mr Ross Fraser have prepared the catalogue.

P. A. T.

## INTRODUCTION

THE LIFESPAN of Francisco Goya covered the eighty years from 1746 to 1828. His life and work are characteristic of this period of violent change from Absolutism and Hierarchy to Republicanism and Democracy. The liberal ideas ushered in by the French Revolution rapidly spread over most of the European countries which had been under the domination of absolute monarchs. Spain, which throughout the long reign of the Hapsburg and Bourbon dynasties had suffered every form of the suppression of free thought, had fallen on evil times. In 1788 a new King, Charles IV, ascended the throne; he succeeded his father, Charles III, who had been a benevolent and enlightened monarch. Under the new regime the real power behind the throne was Queen Maria Luisa. She raised her favourite, Manuel Godoy, a former guardsman, to the rank of Prime Minister at the age of twenty-four and bestowed titles and lucrative offices upon him. Godoy exploited his position to amass a vast personal fortune, whilst the Government was unable to pay the salaries of its officials and the population was starving. Godoy's Government reacted to the flow of liberal ideas from France by increased repression of free thought. The importation of the main works of eighteenth century rationalism, the books of Voltaire, Rousseau, Montesquieu and Gibbon, was prohibited. Suppression of the press had in fact been going on previous to Godoy's Government; by 1791 the publication of all newspapers except the official *Diario de Madrid* and the police list of *Articles lost and found* had been suppressed.

It was in this political atmosphere that *Los Caprichos*, Goya's most famous series of etchings, were conceived. The artist, who was employed by the King and who derived most of his income from commissions for portraits of the Royal entourage, was appointed Pintor de Cámara (Court painter)

plain the significance of these enigmatic cartoons. But perhaps the most authentic key to their meaning and purpose can be found in Goya's own words when he announced the publication of his work in the *Diario de Madrid* of 6 February 1799:

'Convinced that the criticism of errors and vices, though primarily the function of rhetorics and poetry, may also serve as the subject matter for painting, the artist has selected from the extravagances and follies common to all society and from the prejudices and frauds, sanctioned by custom, ignorance or interest, those which seemed most suitable for ridicule and stimulating as images.'

# THE CATALOGUE

*NOTE: In this catalogue the titles of the etchings are given in English translation, the Spanish captions being visible on the borders of the works themselves. The numbers follow the same order as the series and thus can be regarded also as plate numbers. The LD numbers are those of the definitive catalogue by Loys Delteil.*

**1** PORTRAIT OF GOYA

LD 38 IV

**2** THEY GIVE THEIR HAND TO THE FIRST TO ASK IT

LD 39 III

**3** HERE COMES THE BOGEYMAN

LD 40 III

**4** THE SPOILT CHILD

LD 41 IV

**5** BIRDS OF A FEATHER

LD 42 III

**6** NO ONE KNOWS HIMSELF

LD 43 II

**7** STILL HE DOES NOT RECOGNISE HER

LD 44 III

**8** THEY HAVE KIDNAPPED HER

LD 45 IV

**9** TANTALUS

LD 46 III

**10** LOVE AND DEATH

LD 47 IV

**11** AND NOW TO WORK, BOYS

LD 48 IV

**12** HUNTING FOR TEETH

LD 49 III

The teeth of a hanged man were believed to bring luck

**13 IT'S HOT**

*LD 50 IV*

**14 WHAT A SACRIFICE**

*LD 51 III*

A young woman is marrying for money

**15 CUNNING COUNSELS**

*LD 52 III*

**16 GOD FORGIVE HER! THE BEGGAR WAS HER  
MOTHER!**

*LD 53 IV*

**17 SHE IS WELL DRESSED**

*LD 54 IV*

**18 SO THE HOUSE BURNS**

*LD 55 III*

He is too drunk to dress, or to prevent the house  
from burning down

**19 THEY HAVE LEARNT NOTHING. ALL WILL FALL.**

*LD 56 III*

**20 THEY ARE PLUCKED! OUT THEY GO! OTHERS WILL  
COME**

*LD 57 III*

**21 HOW THEY ARE PLUCKED**

*LD 58 III*

**22 POOR THINGS**

*LD 59 III*

**23 THIS DUST . . . !**

*LD 60 II*

Accused, judge, public — all are to blame

**24 THERE IS NO REMEDY**

*LD 61 II*

Those without shame cannot be shamed

**25 HE HAS BROKEN THE JUG**

*LD 62 III*

The wild young rascal receives his punishment

**26 AT LAST THEY HAVE SOMEWHERE TO SIT**

*LD 63 II*



**27 WHICH HAS GIVEN MORE?**

*LD 64 IV*

**28 HUSH**

*LD 65 III*

**29 THIS IS WHAT IT IS TO READ**

*LD 66 II*

He does not waste a moment in his studies

**30 WHAT IS THE USE OF HOARDING AND HIDING IT?**

*LD 67 III*

**31 SHE MAY WELL PRAY FOR HER**

*LD 68 III*

**32 FOR SHE WAS SO SENSITIVE**

*LD 69 III*

It was bound to end thus

**33 TO COUNT PALATINO**

*LD 70 III*

A political subject

**34 SLEEP HAS CLAIMED THEM**

*LD 71 III*

**35 SHE FLAYS HIM**

*LD 72 III*

Barbers such as this will certainly skin him

**36 A BAD NIGHT**

*LD 73 III*

**37 WHICH KNOWS THE MORE — MASTER OR PUPIL?**

*LD 74 III*

A skit on Manuel Godoy

**38 BRAVISSIMO!**

*LD 75 III*

**39 BACK TO HIS ANCESTORS**

*LD 76 II*

A political skit on Manuel Godoy

**40 OF WHAT WILL HE DIE?**

*LD 77 III*

**41 NO MORE AND NO LESS**

*LD 78 III*

Paint me just as I am — for posterity

**42 THEY CAN DO NOTHING ABOUT IT**

*LD 79 III*

The burdens of the people

**43 THE DREAM OF REASON PRODUCES MONSTERS**

*LD 80 III*

A depiction of the artist. The title does not seem to suggest that the owls and bats in the background are the monsters, for the owl carries a pencil for the artist. Therefore these bats and owls are the causes and not the results.

**44 THEY SPIN FINE; EVEN THE DEVIL COULD NOT UNDO IT**

*LD 81 III*

**45 THEY ARE PLUMP**

*LD 82 III*

**46 PENITENCE**

*LD 83 II*

**47 AN OFFERING TO THEIR MASTER**

*LD 84 III*

**48 WIND-BLOWING DEMONS**

*LD 85 III*

Sneaks and tell-tales

**49 PLAYFUL GHOSTS**

*LD 86 II*

**50 CHINCHILLAS**

*LD 87 II*

Useless as chinchilla rats — they hear, know and see nothing

**51 SMARTENING UP**

*LD 88 III*

**52 WHAT A TAILOR CAN DO**

*LD 89 III*

**53 WHAT A GOLDEN BEAK**

*LD 90 III*

**54 AN UGLY RASCAL**

*LD 91 III*

**55 UNTIL DEATH**

*LD 92 II*

**56 UP AND DOWN**

*LD 93 III*

The ups and downs of public life

**57 THE BETROTHAL**

*LD 94 II*

Her suitor is shown her pedigree, but time will reveal her nature

**58 SWALLOW THAT, YOU DOG!**

*LD 95 III*

There is no way of escaping trouble

**- 59 AND STILL THEY DON'T GO**

*LD 96 III*

**60 A TRIAL IN FLYING**

*LD 97 III*

The initiate's first lesson

**61 THEY FLY**

*LD 98 II*

**62 WHO WOULD HAVE BELIEVED IT?**

*LD 99 IV*

**63 SEE HOW SERIOUS THEY ARE**

*LD 100 III*

Witches out riding

**64 BON VOYAGE!**

*LD 101 III*

The witches' night sortie

**65 WHERE IS MOTHER GOING?**

*LD 102 IV*

The dropsical witch mother

**66 THERE THEY GO**

*LD 103 III*

**67 WAIT UNTIL YOU ARE GREASED**

*LD 104 III*

**68 BEAUTIFUL MISTRESS!**

*LD 105 IV*

**69 BLOW!**

*LD 106 II*

A witches' Feast of Innocents

**70 DEVOUT PROFESSION**

*LD 107 II*

Taking the witches' oath

**71 IF DAWN COMES WE WILL AWAY**

*LD 108 III*

**72 YOU CANNOT ESCAPE**

*LD 109 II*

**73 IT IS BETTER TO DO NOTHING**

*LD 110 II*

**74 DON'T CRY SILLY! HE WON'T HURT YOU!**

*LD 111 III*

**75** WILL NOBODY SEPARATE US?

LD 112 III

The unhappily married

**76** 'IS THAT YOU? WELL, I SAY — EH, LISTEN!'

LD 113 II

The loquacious officer — a political skit

**77** ONE AND ANOTHER

LD 114 II

Yesterday the bull — today the picador: life's reversals

**78** HURRY! THEY ARE WAKING!

LD 115 II

**79** NOBODY HAS SEEN US

LD 116 III

**80** NOW'S THE TIME

LD 117 II

It's time we returned to our hiding places

## CHRONOLOGY

1746: Francisco Goya born at Fuendetodos, Aragon. (Father: José, a master gilder; mother: Gracia Lucientes.)

c 1760: Goya enters the workshop of José Luzan, painter, at Saragossa.

1763: Goya, aged seventeen, goes to Madrid to compete for a prize in painting — without success.

1770: Goya travels to Italy; a painting by him is honourably mentioned by a jury at Parma.

1771: Goya, back in Spain, paints the interior of churches in Saragossa.

1772: Goya enters the *atelier* of Francisco Bayeu, painter, at Madrid, whose sister Josefa he marries soon afterwards.

1775: Goya begins to paint designs for the Royal Tapestry Factory of Santa Barbara. He continued this work for seventeen years.

1780: Goya elected member of the Royal Academy of San Fernando.

1780: Goya receives commission for a portrait of the Minister, Count de Floridablanca; this is followed by portraits of members of the royal family and their entourage.

1784: Goya's painting THE SERMON OF SAN BERNARDINO OF SIENA BEFORE KING ALFONSO OF ARAGON is unveiled in the presence of the King.

1788: Goya appointed Pintor de Camara (Court painter) by Charles IV. He becomes a fashionable painter in court circles.

1792: Goya travels to Andalusia.

1793: He becomes seriously ill there. He recovers from a long illness, but remains stone deaf for the rest of his life. This event exerts a powerful influence on Goya's style of painting: it becomes more incisive and mature. His deafness forces him to resign his post in the Academy.

1799: Publication of *Los Caprichos* at Madrid.

1803: Goya offers the plates and the remaining two hundred and forty sets of the *Caprichos* to the King in exchange for the grant of a pension to his son.

1808: War against Napoleon breaks out in Spain.

1808-1815: Goya produces his second famous set of etchings — *Los Desastres de la Guerra*. They portray the horrible effects of war on the civilian population.

1812: Death of Goya's wife.

1814: Return of King Ferdinand VII to Spain. Goya is restored to his former position as Pintor de Camara.

1819: Goya falls ill again.

1823: During a period of the repression of liberals, Goya has to hide himself. He flees the country and obtains permission to settle at Bordeaux, a haven for Spanish political refugees.

1823-1826: Goya creates his final series of etchings, called *Proverbios* or *Disparates* (Proverbs or Follies). Their meaning is even more obscure than that of the *Caprichos*, but they show a further advance in Goya's powers of composition.

1826: Goya returns to Madrid at the age of 80. King Ferdinand grants him a pension. He continues to paint portraits.

1828: Death of Goya at Bordeaux (16 April).