

BLANTON MUSEUM OF ART

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**BLANTON ORGANIZES EXHIBITION OF
PRINTS AND PAINTINGS BY FRANCISCO DE GOYA**

Goya: Mad Reason

June 19 – September 25, 2016



AUSTIN, TX—April 5, 2016—The Blanton Museum of Art at the University of Texas at Austin presents ***Goya: Mad Reason***, an exhibition of nearly 150 prints and paintings by renowned Spanish court painter **Francisco de Goya**. The series of prints comprising *Goya: Mad Reason*—borrowed from Yale University Art Gallery’s distinguished Arthur Ross Collection—illustrate the artist’s mastery of forms and concepts as he grappled with the changing political and intellectual landscape of his native Spain in the early

nineteenth century. Yale chose the Blanton as a partner for its Ross Collection sharing initiative, and the Blanton in turn selected Yale’s superb and affecting Goya prints as a foundation for this exhibition. Select paintings on loan from the Kimbell Art Museum, the Meadows Museum, and the Museum of Fine Arts Houston will further punctuate *Goya: Mad Reason* thematically and visually, offering new and insightful ways of understanding the artist’s prints.

“We are honored to partner with Yale University Art Gallery to bring selections from the renowned Arthur Ross Collection to Austin,” remarked Blanton Director Simone Wicha. “This project has also afforded us the opportunity to borrow paintings from other key institutions across Texas, offering further insight into the remarkable works of Francisco de Goya, an artist whose oeuvre touches on the very fabric of human nature, and whose profound creativity remains an inspiration centuries after his death.”

Among Spain’s most celebrated artists, Francisco de Goya (1746–1828) is sometimes considered the first truly modern artist. Edouard Manet, Pablo Picasso, Salvador Dalí and many other artists from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries looked to Goya’s art for inspiration, and he continues to serve as a touchstone for contemporary artists like Yinka Shonibare and Enrique Chagoya. Goya is known for his penetrating characterization of the human condition, his insightful criticisms of ignorance and oppression, and his unflinching look at the inhumanity of war.

Goya: Mad Reason highlights the artist's treatment of war, bullfighting as a national pastime, and the instability of reason itself. His work makes visible the great transformations and unrest of Europe during his lifetime. Goya's images manifest his hope for social progress as well as his disappointments. Against the traditions and vested interests of the populace, Church, and nobility, Spain's liberal elites—many in Goya's circles—sought and achieved economic and educational reforms from the monarchy throughout the 1700s. Fears of the French Revolution spreading instability, and Napoleon Bonaparte's subsequent 1808 invasion of Spain, halted much of that progress. After the war, the reign of Ferdinand VII led to regression and repression. In 1824, Goya left Spain for a self-imposed exile in Bordeaux, France.

Goya's art belongs to this history, yet it remains relevant for today's viewers due, in part, to the themes explored in his works and his unique visual expression. The works exhibited in *Goya: Mad Reason* also reveal a shifting tension between objectivity, or reason, and irrational emotion. The partitioning of knowledge that flourished in Goya's lifetime, as modern scientific thought grew in opposition to the humanities, underlies this development and persists as a basis of our own worldviews today. *Goya: Mad Reason* explores these issues across the artist's prints and paintings, examining their historical and social power as well as the artist's mastery across the media of painting and printmaking. Highlights of the exhibition include:

- ***Portrait of the Matador Pedro Romero*** (ca. 1795–98): Goya painted Pedro Romero, one of the greatest toreadors of all time, shortly before he retired from the bullring. Goya's study of the works of Diego Velázquez is evident in the skilled brushwork of Romero's costume and muted tones of the painting's background.
- ***La tauromaquia*** [*The Art of Bullfighting*] (1815–16): A series of etchings chronicling Goya's idea of the evolution of bullfighting in Spain, including the practice's history as well as the rituals and styles of bullfighters of the nineteenth century.
- ***Los desastres de la guerra*** [*The Disasters of War*] (1810–ca. 1820): One of Goya's most well-known series, *Los desastres de la guerra* (first published posthumously in 1863) is often viewed as a visual protest against the violence of the 1808 Dos de Mayo Uprising, the subsequent Peninsular War of 1808–14, and the Bourbon Restoration of 1814.
- ***Los disparates*** [*Follies*] (1815–24): *Los Disparates*, also known as *Proverbios* [*Proverbs*], was Goya's last major intaglio print series, and was not published until after the artist's death. The works depict sinister and dream-like scenes, and have been variously related to political issues, the Spanish carnival, and traditional proverbs—though they are far more complex problems than any one solution may answer.



This exhibition is organized by the Blanton Museum of Art.

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About the Blanton Museum of Art

Founded in 1963, the Blanton Museum of Art is one of the foremost university art museums in the country and holds the largest public collection in Central Texas. Recognized for its modern and contemporary American and Latin American art, Italian Renaissance and Baroque paintings, and encyclopedic collection of prints and drawings, the Blanton offers thought-provoking, visually arresting, and personally moving encounters with art.

The museum is located at the intersection of Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Congress Avenue and is open Tuesday through Friday from 10–5, Saturday from 11–5, and Sunday from 1–5. Thursdays are free admission days and every third Thursday the museum is open until 9. Admission Prices: Adults \$9, Kids 12 and under FREE, Seniors (65+) \$7, Youth/College Students (13–21) \$5. Admission is free to members, all current UT ID-holders. For additional information call (512) 471-7324 or visit www.blantonmuseum.org.

Image captions:

Francisco de Goya

Disparate de tontos [or *Toritos*] [*Fools'—or Little Bulls'—Folly*], from *Los disparates* [*Follies*] / *Los Proverbios* [*Proverbs*]

ca. 1816–19 (published 1877)

Etching, aquatint, drypoint (?)

15 15/16 x 12 3/16 in.

Yale University Art Gallery, The Arthur Ross Collection

Francisco de Goya

Portrait of the Matador Pedro Romero

c. 1795–98

Oil on canvas, 33 1/8 x 25 9/16 in.

AP 1966.12

Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas

Francisco de Goya

Ligereza y atrevimiento de Juanito Apiñani en la de Madrid [*The Agility and Audacity of Juanito Apiñani in [the Ring] at Madrid*], plate 20 from *La tauromaquia* [*Art of Bullfighting*]

1815–16

Etching and aquatint

9 5/8 x 14 in.

Yale University Art Gallery, The Arthur Ross Collection