

# MISFORTUNE IN THE BULLRING IN MADRID AND DEATH OF THE MAYOR OF TORREJÓN

CLASIFICACIÓN: PRINTS

SERIE: BULLFIGHTING(PRINTS AND DRAWINGS , 1814-1816) (21/46)



## DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA

1814 - 1816

DIMENSIONES

247 x 353 mm

TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE

RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA

Documented work

FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN

02 Oct 2021 / 22 Jun 2023

INVENTARIO

964 -

## INSCRIPCIONES

21 (print, upper right-hand corner)

## HISTORIA

See *How the ancient Spaniards hunted bulls on horseback in the countryside*

A state proof before aquatint, wash and burnisher is preserved in the Provôt Collection in Paris.

The plate is kept at the National Chalcography (n° 354)

## ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

See *How the ancient Spaniards hunted bulls on horseback in the countryside*

Another of the most characteristic images of bullfighting. It narrates an event which, although its veracity is questioned by some authors, is usually identified with a real event that took place on June 1801 in the Madrid bullring, in which a bull leapt into the arena and carried off several people, killing two of them, one of them the mayor of the nearby town of Torrejón of Ardoz, who in the picture appears skewered, already dead, on the horns of the bull.

The most striking feature of the engraving is its unique point of view, its impossible and absurd perspective, which places the viewer at the same height as the audience. The composition is deliberately asymmetrical and unbalanced in the distribution of the masses, as Goya arranges the chaotic crowd grouped together in only a quarter of the available space, with sketchy, foreshortened figures, leaving the rest of the space almost empty, no doubt with the aim of increasing the sense of anxiety and unease that he intended to convey. Furthermore, the action takes place entirely in the stands of the bullring, without the arena playing a leading role, which breaks with the usual location of composition of bullfighting scenes.

Although it refers to a specific event, Goya omits any detail that would allow us to identify the figures. Among the people crowded together on the right of the scene, we see how some figures flee to the left, while others are almost paralysed with fear, as in the case of a woman in the foreground on the right, whose face is unhinged with fright and who is being held by a man in a hat. There are bodies on the ground, crushed or trampled by the bull. The bull is on the right of the composition, in profile, its head covered by the skewered body of the mayor of Torrejón, from which one of the animal's horns is sticking out.

Count la Viñaza has already drawn attention to an enigmatic figure with his head peeping out from the outside of the barrier, observing the scene with a calm look, who seems to have Goya's physiognomy and could therefore be a self-portrait. Perhaps Goya's intention in this print was to denounce the insecurity of bullrings.

Martínez-Novillo relates this engraving, because of its crude bullfighting drama, to that of the death of Pepe Hillo, entitled *The Unfortunate Death of Pepe Illo in the Bullring in Madrid*, although in that case he changes the scene of a spectator being caught for that of a bullfighter.

Bagüés and Lafuente Ferrari were the first to situate the action depicted on the 15th June 1801, when the fourth bull from a Palaciosrubios (Salamanca) bull-ranch jumped into the bullring in Madrid and fell in the passage of the marshals' exit gate. Mayer and Martínez-Novillo, for their part, also speak of the royal functions of 1789, with historical references to bulls that jumped the barrier.

This print, despite grouping the figures in a very small part of the composition like the one immediately before it, entitled *Lightness and Daringness of Juanito Apiñani in the one in Madrid*, contrasts sharply with it, as that one had a playful sense and this one has a dramatic one.

Goya made a preparatory drawing for the present engraving, although very different, also entitled *Misfortune in the bullring in Madrid and death of the mayor of Torrejón*

## la Biblioteca Nacional

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catalogue Elena Páez Ríos

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Biblioteca Nacional Madrid 1978

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### Goya grabador

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from March 8th to May 5th 1996

### Schlaf der Vernunft. Original radierungen von Francisco de Goya

Munich 2000

### Goya en tiempos de guerra

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consultant editor Manuela B. Mena Marqués, from April 14th to July 13th 2008

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### Goya et la modernité

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Caser-Turner

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Gobierno de Aragón

#### **PALABRAS CLAVE**

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MUERTE MADRID AUTORRETRATO**

#### **ENLACES EXTERNOS**