BOY WITH A BIRD (EL MUCHACHO DEL PÁJARO)

CLASIFICACIÓN: EASEL PAINTING. TAPESTRY CARTOONS

SERIE: TAPESTRY CARTONS: POPULAR SUBJECTS (PAINTING, DRAWING AND SKETCHES, 1778-1780). ANTE-BEDROOM OF THE PRINCES OF ASTURIAS, PALACE OF EL PARDO (8/13)

DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA	1779 - 1780
UBICACIÓN	The Prado National Museum. Madrid, Madrid, Spain
DIMENSIONES	262 x 40 cm
TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE	Oil on canvas
RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA	Documented work
TITULAR	El Prado National Museum
FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN	29 Nov 2009 / 14 Jun 2023
INVENTARIO	31 (P00790)

HISTORIA

See *The Blind Guitarist*.

This cartoon was delivered to the Royal Tapestry Factory on 24 January 1780, along with ten other cartoons, completing the decoration of the antechamber to the bedroom. These eleven tapestry cartoons - almost certain to have been made between 21 July 1779, when the artist delivered A *Stickball Game* and *The Swing*, and this delivery in January 1780 - were executed very rapidly. It is very likely that Goya was aware of the planned suspension of manufacturing work at the factory and was anxious to finish his commissions and receive his wages.

Around 1856 or 1857, the cartoon was moved from the Royal Tapestry Factory of Santa Bárbara to the Royal Palace in Madrid. In 1870, it was taken to the Prado Museum under orders given on 18 January and 9 February.

ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

This narrow corner-piece decorated the north wall of the bedroom antechamber, where it formed a pair with another corner-piece,*Boy and a Tree*.

Out of the whole series, this piece and its companion were the cheapest, costing 500 reales each. The secondary nature of the scenes has meant that little attention has been paid to them, but the effort required of Goya to adapt the composition to such a long, narrow format is well deserving of further mention. To solve this problem, he made clever use of the tree, which he has occupying the entire height of the cartoon. At its foot, a boy plays with a bird.

The hunting of small birds was related to the hunt for love. Some prints and theatrical farces from the period employ the metaphor of the decoy and traps in the seduction of suitors, and this is also what Tomlinson sees here, considering the boy to be a representation of an angelic Cupid.

Nordström, on the other hand, believes that this piece, its companion corner-piece, *The Washerwomen*, and *The Woodcutters* are all related to springtime and impulsiveness.

EXPOSICIONES

Goya. 250 Aniversario
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Goya en Madrid. Cartones para tapices 1775-1794
Museo Nacional del Prado Madrid 2014
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ENLACES EXTERNOS