THE STILTS (LOS ZANCOS)

CLASIFICACIÓN: EASEL PAINTING. TAPESTRY CARTOONS

SERIE: SEVEN CARTOONS FOR TAPESTRIES FOR THE KING'S OFFICE IN THE PALACE OF SAN LORENZO DE EL ESCORIAL (4/7)

DATOS GENERALES

CRONOLOGÍA	1791 - 1792
UBICACIÓN	The Prado National Museum. Madrid, Madrid, Spain
DIMENSIONES	268 x 320 cm
TÉCNICA Y SOPORTE	Oil on canvas
RECONOCIMIENTO DE LA AUTORÍA DE GOYA	Documented work
TITULAR	El Prado National Museum
FICHA: REALIZACIÓN/REVISIÓN	27 Dec 2009 / 14 Jun 2023
INVENTARIO	69 (P00801)

HISTORIA

See *The Wedding*.

ANÁLISIS ARTÍSTICO

In a rural setting, this scene depicts two men walking on stilts, accompanied by two flautists and being watched by the townspeople. This is often considered to be a simple

representation of a feast day. In fact, Cruzada Villaamil believed that this was the only cartoon in which Goya represented a tradition from his native Aragón.

But more complex readings have also been made, such as that put forward by Victor Chan, in which the stilts would represent good luck and the woman looking out of the window on the right-hand side of the composition would be Fortuna, whilst the melancholy-faced spectators would be reflecting upon the changing nature of fortune and fate. Janis Tomlinson believes that the Spanish expression "subirse a los zancos", meaning to walk on stilts, suggests that someone has a haughty, arrogant character. She also points out that those watching the show are an anonymous crowd, implying the distance that the artist has put between himself and them. This could be related to a piece of writing by Jovellanos, published in 1790, which makes reference to spectacles of this kind. The politician was against these forms of entertainment because they only permitted those in attendance to enjoy the show passively. Jovellanos' efforts to discourage the people to shun such spectacles in favour of a more active form of entertainment perhaps led Goya to "subirse a los zancos" and create in his painting a public which appears as a mass of anonymous, homogeneous spectators. The same type of crowd can be found in other works by Goya, both from the same period and later on.

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ENLACES EXTERNOS