



## Meadows Museum Presents Major Survey of Goya Prints

*Exhibition will feature nearly 300 prints,  
Launches Meadows' 50th Anniversary celebration*

**DALLAS (SMU), September 18, 2014** – The Meadows Museum announces its fall exhibition, *Goya: A Lifetime of Graphic Invention*. On view from September 21, 2014, through March 1, 2015, the exhibition will launch the Meadows' 50th anniversary year by presenting the entirety of the Museum's holdings of printed works by Francisco José de Goya y Lucientes (1746-1828): 222 etchings, four lithographs, and three trial proofs.

The exhibition will provide visitors with a rare opportunity to view complete first edition sets of Goya's four great print series—*Los Caprichos* (*The Caprices*, 1799), *Los Desastres de la Guerra* (*The Disasters of War*, 1810-19), *La Tauromaquia* (*Bullfighting*, 1816), and *Los Disparates* (*The Follies*, 1815-23)—as well as the Museum's holdings of Goya's paintings, which will be displayed alongside the prints. Curated by Meadows/Kress/Prado Fellow Alexandra Letvin, *Goya: A Lifetime of Graphic Invention* will also feature the Museum's recent gift of a trial proof from *Los Disparates*, *Disparate Puntual* (*Punctual Folly*), and closely follows the Meadows' acquisition of *Portrait of Mariano Goya* (1827), one of the artist's final paintings, in 2013. The Meadows houses one of the largest public collections of Goya's works in the United States, and the exhibition will enable visitors to experience for the first time the Meadows' extensive Goya holdings at once, further enhancing the Museum's role as a leader in the study and presentation of Spanish art.

"Goya's mastery in prints marked a turning point in the evolution of graphic art and had a profound influence on the work of later artists, such as Manet and Picasso," says Mark A. Roglán, the Linda P. and William A. Custard Director of the Meadows Museum and Centennial Chair in the Meadows School of the Arts. "As the Meadows Museum's collection is one of the largest depositories of Goya's works—including the recent acquisition of a late portrait of his grandson, which was a gift in honor of our anniversary—it seems appropriate to kick off the celebration with an exhibition of his genius."

Goya, widely regarded as one of the most important artists in Western history, represents both the culmination of the Old Master tradition and the beginning of modernity. A witness to decades of political upheaval and social unrest, he began experimenting with printmaking in the late 1770s. The most ambitious endeavor of his early career was a group of 11 etchings (1599-1660) after paintings by Diego Velázquez housed in the Spanish Royal Collection, three of which will be featured in the exhibition alongside other examples of Goya's early prints, including a rare trial proof for an unpublished etching. Shortly thereafter, following an illness that left him permanently deaf, Goya produced 28 drawings titled *Sueños* (*Dreams*), which formed the initial core and inspiration for the artist's first large-scale print series, *Los Caprichos*. These 80 aquatint etchings engage a variety of themes—including the complex relationship between men and women, ignorance, superstitious beliefs, and witchcraft—and offer a view of human weakness and irrationality that is both deeply personal and imbued with critical social commentary.

“Over the course of his career, Goya produced almost 300 etchings and lithographs that reveal his personal vision, tireless invention, and enthusiasm for technical experimentation,” said Roglán. “This exhibition presents his printed *oeuvre* as an integral—indeed, defining—component of his life and career, and invites visitors to experience the Museum’s paintings by Goya in the context of his lifelong engagement with printmaking.”

Following the Napoleonic occupation of Spain and the abdication of Bourbon King Ferdinand VII in 1808, Goya began working on a group of small, compact etchings meditating on the atrocities of war—its causes, manifestations, and consequences—that underscore the senselessness of violence, which ravaged Spain during this decade of turmoil. Published posthumously as *Los Desastres de la Guerra*, these prints take on a documentary character, illustrating the effects of the conflict on individual soldiers and citizens, as well as arresting scenes of starvation, degradation, and humiliation. Concurrent to his work on *Los Desastres*, Goya began developing *La Tauromaquia*, a series of 33 aquatint etchings examining the art of bullfighting, today regarded as Goya’s largest and most technically accomplished printed works. Bullfighting, recognized as a quintessentially Spanish practice, had regained popularity during this time, and *La Tauromaquia* tells the story of the bullfighting tradition and culture from its origins in Spain to the legendary performances of contemporary masters. Etchings on the reverse of seven plates indicate that Goya had initially conceived *La Tauromaquia* in broader terms—*Goya: A Lifetime of Graphic Invention* will include prints of two of these additional designs to offer unique insight into Goya’s editing and selection process prior to publication. Goya revisited the subject of bullfighting a decade later, producing four large-scale lithographs known as the *Bulls of Bordeaux* (1825), which will also be on display.

Goya’s final print series, *Los Disparates*, comprises 22 etchings that depict a range of enigmatic, dreamlike subjects—from the playful to the monstrous—that continue to fascinate scholars and viewers alike. Commonly translated as “The Follies,” these works were created during the last years of the artist’s life and remain without conclusive interpretation. Seeking to match the prints’ thematic ambiguities, Goya’s technical approach pushed the medium of etching to its limits, employing aquatint to manipulate light and shadow to create a sense of haunting otherworldliness. *Los Disparates* was first published by the Royal Academy of San Fernando in Madrid in 1864, and it is unclear as to whether the artist intended these works to be published as a series. While Goya’s intentions may remain unknown, *Goya: A Lifetime of Graphic Invention* will illuminate an under-recognized aspect of Goya’s artistic legacy by showcasing the artist’s ongoing thematic and technical experimentation in the medium of printmaking, which helped to push the techniques of the Old Masters into the modern era.

This exhibition has been organized by the Meadows Museum, SMU. A generous gift from The Meadows Foundation has made this project possible.

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### **About the Meadows Museum**

The Meadows Museum is the leading U.S. institution focused on the study and presentation of the art of Spain. In 1962, Dallas businessman and philanthropist Algur H. Meadows donated his private collection of Spanish paintings, as well as funds to start a museum, to Southern Methodist University. The Museum opened to the public in 1965, marking the first step in fulfilling Meadows’ vision to create a “Prado on the Prairie.”

Today, the Meadows is home to one of the largest and most comprehensive collections of Spanish art outside of Spain. The collection spans from the 10th to the 21st century and includes medieval objects, Renaissance and Baroque sculptures, and major paintings by Golden Age and modern masters. Since 2010 the Museum has been engaged in a multidimensional partnership with the Prado, which has included the exchange of scholarship, exhibitions, works of art, and other resources.

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