

### 3. "PORTRAITS OF CHARLES IV, KING OF SPAIN, AND MARIA LUISA OF PARMA, QUEEN OF SPAIN"

FRANCISCO DE GOYA Y LUCIENTES

10 OCTOBER 2013 – 19 JANUARY 2014

**TO MARK THE VISIT** of the new king and queen to the capital of Andalusia, the workers at Seville's Royal Tobacco Factory commissioned these two portraits by Goya, which were exhibited in a Temple of Fame, built specially for the occasion. They are versions of the royal couple's official portraits, painted by the artist in 1789, soon after Charles IV had ascended the Spanish throne upon the death of Charles III on 14 December 1788. Due to the urgent need for a pictorial representation of the new royal couple, this was a very busy period for the artist, who painted 18 portraits in just one year.

On 25 April 1789, Goya became a painter for the King's chamber. Although he was only named First Chamber Painter in 1799, he was the artist most commonly used by the royal couple: his work ranging from the necessarily conventional early portraits to the painting of the family of Charles IV, his 1800 masterpiece.

The two portraits exhibited here express the urgent need to disseminate the image of the new monarchs. Displaying various insignia symbolising their power, the king and queen repeat the same poses and the same codified models. Charles IV is dressed in velvet, wearing an enormous star of diamonds, from which there hangs the Golden Fleece, and the sash and cross of the Order of Charles III, the red sash of the Order of St. Januarius of Naples, and the blue sash of the Order of the Knights of the Holy Spirit. By his side, and in the background, placed discreetly on a table, are the royal purple cloak trimmed with ermine and the crown, as is also the case in the queen's portrait. Wearing a dark dress and a large headdress of gauze and plumes, Maria Luisa of Parma displays the insignia of the Order of the Starry Cross of Austria, awarded by the empress Maria Theresa.

Goya affords a certain movement to the two portraits through the green curtain painted in the background, highlighting the sheen of the more diaphanous textiles and the jewels with rapid brushstrokes and impastos of white and yellow, painted with a freedom that is reminiscent of Velázquez, an artist greatly appreciated by Goya and the inspiration behind many of his royal portraits.



#### *Carlos IV, King of Spain*

Francisco de Goya y Lucientes (1746-1828)

1789

Oil on canvas

127 x 94 cm

Colección Altadis, S.A.

Archivo General de Indias, Seville

Having become king on the eve of the French Revolution, during a period of great international conflicts, profound social divisions and political cleavages that affected the royal family itself, Charles IV later abdicated in favour of his son Ferdinand VII, after the Revolt of Aranjuez, in 1808. He died in 1819, near Naples, the city where he was born in 1748. His cousin, Maria Luisa of Parma (Parma, 1751-Rome, 1819) became his wife at the age of 14 and, on becoming queen, played a central role in Spanish politics.

The life of Francisco de Goya y Lucientes lasted even longer than that of his king and took place



**Maria Luisa of Parma,  
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during one of the most troubled periods in European history. He was born in the time of the Ancien Regime and his life extended beyond that of Napoleon, which is the same as saying that he was educated in what was still an Italian-inspired late baroque environment, when Corrado Giaquinto was the royal painter, being later exposed to the neo-classical influences of Mengs and *rocaille* decorativism, and finally arriving at the end of his life in the period when romanticism was at its peak.

The contradictions and changes of the time he lived in were clearly expressed in Goya's work or, more precisely, in the work of the vari-

ous «Goyas». In the Goya that produced religious paintings during his time in Saragossa, influenced by Tiepolo and Corrado Giaquinto. In the Goya who, married to the sister of the painter Francisco Bayeu, was summoned to the court and worked incessantly on tapestry cartoons for the Real Fábrica de Tapices de Santa Bárbara, where he discovered open colour and learned how to depict popular customs and chivalrous scenes with a rococo taste. In the Goya of the royal portraits, as well as paintings of the Madrid society of the last few decades of the 18th century, oscillating between commemorative portraiture and the spontaneous emotion of free, unrestrained brushstrokes, enhancing the textures and brightness of his paintings in the style of Velázquez, an artist he had been able to get to know better as a result of his service at court, and had come to admire more and more; a Goya who was capable of giving the subjects he portrayed an enormous expressive and spiritual density, especially when he enjoyed a friendship with them or shared the same ideas. Finally, in the most universal of all the Goyas, «the prophet of modernity», the painter of the disasters of war and of ontological musings about Spanishness, the artist that produced «black» paintings of witches, giants, monsters and desolate and frightening landscapes, engravings of horrors, drawings with the rapid depiction of anecdotal themes: a modern (or, better, a timeless) Goya, admirable in his use of colour, but also capable of understanding the dramatic capacity of black and the absence of colour. There is no doubt that all of these facets came together in his constant research and his awareness of the importance of freedom in creation.

In his famous 1792 address to the San Fernando Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Goya wrote: «I shall give a proof to demonstrate with facts that there are no rules in painting and that the tyranny which obliges everyone, as if they were slaves, to study in the same way or to follow the same method is a great impediment to the young who practise this very difficult art.»

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