



MEADOWS MUSEUM
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**MEADOWS MUSEUM ACQUIRES CHILD PORTRAIT BY FRANCISCO BAYEU,
18TH-CENTURY COURT PAINTER & BROTHER-IN-LAW OF FRANCISCO DE GOYA**

**After Being Held in Private Hands and Out of View for the Previous Eight Decades,
Portrait Marks an Important Addition to the Meadows' Collection**

Dallas, TX—September 23, 2016—Today the Meadows Museum at SMU announced the acquisition of the painting *María Teresa del Castillo* (1767-70), a portrait of a child by Francisco Bayeu y Subías (1734-1795), one of the most important and widely admired Spanish painters of the period. This painting is an important addition to the Meadows Museum's collection, which



has very few such examples of child portraiture. Part of the aristocratic Villagonzalo collection since at least the 19th century and not often seen on public display, the painting is in extraordinary condition—with an unlined canvas on its original stretcher—and required little conservation. It is of such high quality that for many years it was attributed to Bayeu's mentor, the court painter Anton Raphael Mengs (1728-1779); a recent examination of the piece led to both the identification of the girl depicted and a reattribution of the painting to Bayeu. The acquisition is supported by a gift from Barbara McKenzie, a long-time Meadows Museum docent and a member of the Meadows Museum Advisory Council, and her husband Mike.

“Stunningly beautiful in its painterly details, and delightful in depicting the subject with a pastry and a pet, this is an exceptional

portrait by this court painter,” said Mark Roglán, the Linda P. and William A. Custard Director of the Meadows Museum. “The painting is also an important addition to our collection of 18th-century works, greatly complementing our Goya holdings, as well as other artists of the Ancien

Régime. We are grateful to Barbara and Mike McKenzie for their generosity; their support ensures that we remain one of the greatest collections of Spanish art in the world.”

Francisco Bayeu was one of the most gifted portrait artists of the period, known in particular for his accurate depictions of his subjects. However, because *María Teresa del Castillo* was not on public view for the more than eight decades between two exhibition loans in the 1920s and its subsequent offering for sale, only recently could additional research be conducted on its attribution. In 2014, Dr. Arturo Ansón Navarro, a professor of art history at the University of Zaragoza, who has published widely on the art of Goya, Francisco Bayeu, and other 18th-century Spanish painters, completed a study of the painting and reattributed the painting to Bayeu. Subsequent review of the research by Dr. Javier Jordán de Urríes, curator of the Royal Palace in Aranjuez and a specialist in the scholarship of Anton Raphael Mengs and his artistic circle, confirmed this reattribution. Infrareds and X-rays conducted by conservators also provide a better understanding of the artist’s methods.

The title of painting has also undergone a change in light of its reattribution. When on view in the 1925 exhibition at the Sociedad Española de Amigos del Arte in Madrid, and in 1929 at the Museo Nacional del Prado, the portrait was known simply as *The Girl with the Rosquilla*. As part of his study of the painting, Dr. Ansón Navarro discovered an inscription on the canvas’ stretcher, which also dates to the second half of the 18th century. The inscription reads “Exma. Sra D^a M^a Teresa del Castillo,” or “Excelentísima Señora Doña María Teresa del Castillo.” Her name has now become the title of the work.

“The details in this painting are exquisite, reflecting Bayeu’s tremendous skill,” said Nicole Atzbach, curator at the Meadows Museum. “For example, María Teresa del Castillo wears a *robe à la française*, characterized by a funnel-shaped or conical bodice that then becomes voluminous rectangular skirts conceived in a deep blue silk. The back of the sitter’s dress features the floor-length pleats of the sack gown, the late 17th-century dress from which the *robe à la française* is derived. María Teresa’s dress also features a square-cut neckline which, when worn by adult women, would provide ample space to display strands of pearls or a velvet bow. In this case, Bayeu has jettisoned such adult adornments and instead outfitted his young subject with more age-appropriate trappings, including a glazed *rosquilla* (a donut-shaped pastry) in her left hand and a small dog tucked securely under her right arm. The combination of the sophisticated fashion and the child-friendly touches make this painting both beautiful and charming.”

Additional research, including infrared reflectography of the painting recently conducted at the Kimbell Art Museum, shows how the painting itself evolved, from its initial sketched outline to

the final product. The infrared reflectography reveals that Bayeu had initially designed the sitter's skirt to be much wider. The outline of the skirt was subsequently narrowed, to better suit his child subject.

About Francisco Bayeu

Francisco Bayeu y Subías was initially brought to Madrid in 1763 from his native Zaragoza by Anton Raphael Mengs, to assist him with creating frescoes for the ceilings of the recently constructed Palacio Real. For that commission, Bayeu completed three frescoes: *The Surrender of Granada* (1763-64); *Providence Presiding over the Virtues and Faculties of Man* (1764-65); and *The Apotheosis of Hercules* (1768). Mengs considered Bayeu his best disciple and the greatest Spanish painter of the period. Bayeu began teaching painting at the Royal Academy of San Fernando in 1765, and with Mengs' support, he was appointed chamber painter for Charles III in April 1767. In 1788, Bayeu was appointed president of the Academy. He died in 1795. Francisco Bayeu also came from a family of artists: his brothers Ramón and Manuel were both painters, and his sister, Josefa, married Francisco de Goya.

About the Meadows Museum

The Meadows Museum is the leading US 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's vision to create "a small Prado for Texas."

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 centuries 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 Museo Nacional del Prado in Madrid, which has included the exchange of scholarship, exhibitions, works of art, and other resources.

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