

The Wallace Collection - New Exhibition Announcement:

El Greco to Goya - Spanish Masterpieces from The Bowes Museum

27 September 2017 – 7 January 2018

Free admission

wallacecollection.org / [@WallaceMuseum](https://twitter.com/WallaceMuseum) / #ElGrecotoGoya

In September 2017, the Wallace Collection presents *El Greco to Goya - Spanish Masterpieces from The Bowes Museum*: the first London exhibition of Spanish art from The Bowes Museum in County Durham, including works by Goya and El Greco.

This collaborative exhibition between the Wallace Collection and The Bowes Museum celebrates the partnership between these two great museums. Like the Wallace Collection, The Bowes Museum is the product of one family's obsession with collecting great works of art. John Bowes and Richard Wallace – both illegitimate sons of aristocratic fathers – bequeathed collections of international significance to the nation.

The exhibition spans three centuries and explores one of the largest collections of Spanish art in Britain. The majority of these paintings were acquired by John and Joséphine Bowes between 1862 and 1863 from the collection of the Countess de Quinto in Paris, through the art dealer Benjamin Gogué. This collection was largely formed in Spain by the Conde de Quinto after the dissolution of the ecclesiastical institutions – known as the *Desamortización* – carried out by the Spanish government from 1835 to 1837.

On display are El Greco's *The Tears of Saint Peter*, thought to be the artist's earliest interpretation of this subject, Goya's psychologically penetrating *Portrait of Juan Antonio Meléndez Valdés* and disturbing *Interior of a Prison*, plus perhaps less well known but outstanding works such as Antonio de Pereda's, *Tobias Restoring his Father's Sight*. The works chosen explore a period of huge social, religious and political upheaval in Spain, providing a microcosm of the changes in style and subject matter during this period. The paintings complement works by Velázquez and Murillo on permanent display at the Wallace Collection.

The exhibition is accompanied by an extensive education and events programme, including an expansion of our flagship 'Out of the Frame' programme that connects residential care homes, day centres and supported housing units to their local museum, using art as a stimulus for reminiscence and discussion. These sessions bring the museum into the lives of people who often can no longer visit museums and galleries. Over the years we have found that having this type of engagement with art can combat loneliness and isolation and promote health and well-being in older people.

The Wallace Collection's Director, Dr Xavier Bray, says:

"El Greco to Goya is not only an unprecedented opportunity to see Spanish art of extraordinary power and significance in London, but also the beginning of an exciting relationship between the Wallace Collection and The Bowes Museum. Both institutions share a commitment to making great art accessible to wider audiences and we are looking forward to working closely together to develop a long term connection between London and the North East."

The Bowes Museum's Director, Adrian Jenkins, says:

“In 1892, when The Bowes Museum first opened its doors to the public, it had the largest public collection of Spanish paintings in the UK. As we mark 125 years since the creation of the museum, it is highly appropriate that the key works from this collection should be shared with London audiences, in keeping with John and Joséphine Bowes’ belief that great art should be made accessible to all. Neither John nor Joséphine Bowes survived to realise their vision, and they would be delighted to think that the best of their acquisitions would be shown at the Wallace Collection during this anniversary year, recognising that their gift to the people of County Durham is also a gift to the nation.”

ENDS

For further press information please contact Eleanor Nimmo on press@wallacecollection.org / 0207 563 9516

Notes to editors

- *El Greco to Goya: Spanish Masterpieces from The Bowes Museum* is a collaboration between the Wallace Collection and The Bowes Museum.
- Dr Xavier Bray, Director of the Wallace Museum, is an internationally renowned expert in Spanish art. Dr Bray curated *The Sacred Made Real: Spanish Painting and Sculpture 1600-1700* (2009) and *Goya: The Portraits* (2015), both at the National Gallery, which were received with popular and critical acclaim.
- The Wallace Collection is delighted to thank Sir Siegmund Warburg’s Voluntary Settlement, José Luis Colomer and the Centro de Estudios Europa Hispánica (CEEH), and Martin Randall Travel Ltd. for their generous support of this exhibition.

Catalogue

The exhibition will be accompanied by a publication, *El Greco to Goya: Spanish Masterpieces from The Bowes Museum*, produced in collaboration with The Bowes Museum.

Exhibition opening hours

Open to the public: Monday-Sunday 10am -5pm

Social Media

Join the discussion about the exhibition online at:

<https://twitter.com/WallaceMuseum/> www.facebook.com/wallacecollection/
<https://www.instagram.com/wallacemuseum/> #ElGrecotoGoya

About the Wallace Collection

The Wallace Collection is one of the most significant collections of European fine and decorative arts in the world and the greatest bequest of art ever left to the British Nation. The collection encompasses old master oil paintings from the 14th to the late 19th century including works by Titian, Velazquez, Rubens and Van Dyck, princely arms and armour, and one of the finest collections of French 18th -century art in all media.

<http://www.wallacecollection.org/>

About The Bowes Museum

The Bowes Museum was created over 100 years ago by an extraordinary couple, John and Joséphine Bowes. Together they built up the greatest private collection of fine and decorative arts in the North of England and constructed a magnificent building to house them in. The collection contains thousands of objects including furniture, paintings, sculpture, ceramics, textiles and many other items covering an extensive range of European styles and periods.

<http://thebowesmuseum.org.uk/>

Events

A series of events including lectures, seminars, art classes and a concert have been organised in relation to this exhibition. Find out more: wallacecollection.org/whatson

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Domenikos Theotokopoulos El Greco
The Tears of St Peter, 1580-89
© The Bowes Museum



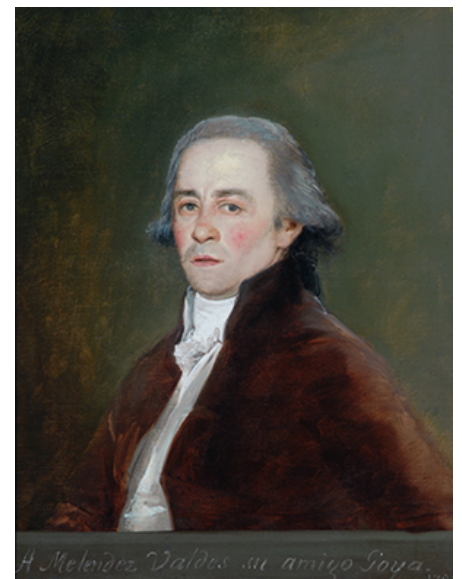
Antonio Pereda y Salgado
Tobias Restoring his Father's Sight, 1652
© The Bowes Museum



Jose Antolinez
The Immaculate Conception, 1650-75
© The Bowes Museum



Francisco Jose de Goya
Interior of a Prison, 1793-94
© The Bowes Museum



Francisco Jose de Goya
Portrait of Juan Antonio Meléndez Valdés
1797
© The Bowes Museum