

"Madrid in the Abelló Collection". From March 1st to April 23rd at the Royal Post Office (C/ del Correo, 1). Open Tuesday to Sunday from 11 am to 8 pm. Organized by the [Ministry of Culture, Tourism & Sports of the Community of Madrid](#). [#MadridEsCultura](#)

[Madrid in the Abelló Collection](#)

From March 1st to April 23rd, the Royal Post Office in Madrid is hosting a special exhibition showcasing the region's image in the Abelló Collection. Featuring 56 drawings and paintings from the 17th to the 20th centuries, it includes works by Francisco de Goya, Santiago Rusiñol, Antonio Joli, and David Roberts. The pieces belong to businessman Juan Abelló and his wife, Anna Gamazo Hohenlohe, making it one of the most important private art collections in Europe.

This exhibition, curated by Ángel Aterido, offers a panoramic view of four centuries, with the centerpiece being the work *Pase de Capa* by Francisco de Goya, a bullfighting scene- most probably Pedro Romero- painted on tinplate and exhibited in Spain for the first time in 30 years. Beyond urban views, the show also features works related to the decorations of different buildings, giving visitors an idea of the variety and richness of the Abelló Collection. Through these visual testimonies of a Madrid that has changed profoundly over the centuries, visitors can gain a deeper appreciation of the region's culture and history.

The symbolism of the location - the headquarters of the Community of Madrid's presidency at the Real Casa de Correos or Royal Post Office building - and the carefully designed museography offer a unique opportunity to open a window into the public's knowledge of the city's past and its surrounding territory. These iconic spaces, many of which are part of World Heritage (including the Paseo del Prado-Parque del Buen Retiro area, Aranjuez, and El Escorial), will be brought to life with the paintings, watercolors, and drawings from the Abelló Collection. The objective is not only to present an exhibition about the history of Madrid but also to use the artworks to interact with the public and explore the areas they represent.

The works of art are grouped into the following sections, according to thematic and geographic criteria:

1. The profile of Madrid and the Manzanares River From the 16th century, before the construction of the great urban landmarks, the first views of the city focused on the profile of the town from the bank of the Manzanares River, highlighting the silhouette of the Alcázar as the royal residence. The Abelló collection has a fairly complete record from this perspective, which goes up to the 19th century.
2. The King in the *Villa*: from Alcázar to the Palace Linking to the previous section, the image of power materialized in the architecture of the main residence of the monarchy was reflected in specific views of the Alcázar of Madrid and, later, of the Royal Palace built by the Bourbons.
3. The Plaza Mayor constitutes the main urban intervention with aspirations of a great capital. Its first commercial function was combined with ceremonial and public events. The images in the Abelló collection document all these activities and, at the same time, are important testimonies of its original appearance, as the current Plaza is the result of its reconstruction after the 1790 fire.

4. The Paseo del Prado, the Buen Retiro Palace, and Alcalá Street The construction of a second royal residence in the East, the Buen Retiro Palace, determined the evolution of Madrid's road network (the major streets connected the Alcázar with this new complex) and constrained the population's extension between these two landmarks. The destruction of the Palace and much of the Buen Retiro gardens in the 19th century gives extraordinary value to the view preserved in the Abelló collection, which also preserves views of the 18th-century transformation of the promenade that flanked it. The Prado then became, along with Alcalá Street, a preferred object for artists who portrayed the city.

Perpendicular to the Paseo del Prado axis runs one of the main entrance roads to the city, presided over by the Gate that bears its name. The Abelló collection has two oils and three drawings that capture with extraordinary meticulousness the appearance of the street in its moment of splendor, as well as a view of the interior of the destroyed bullring that stood next to the Puerta de Alcalá.

5. The Fabric of the Town: Streets, Interiors, and People This section brings together a heterogeneous group of views of streets and palaces; some are unique documents that provide information on noble buildings, gardens, and even an interior of a church, now disappeared or very disfigured. Also, representations of the inhabitants of the urban network between the mid-18th century and the early 20th century.

6. A Territory for the Court: The Natural Surroundings and the Royal Sites In this final section, the works that reflect the privileged natural environment of the Community of Madrid are grouped, the Sierra del Guadarrama, which was looked upon by the landscape painters of the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries, as well as two groups dedicated to two UNESCO World Heritage Sites that emerged as Royal Sites: Aranjuez and El Escorial.

The Abelló collection offers a diverse range of views of streets, palaces, gardens, churches, and the inhabitants of Madrid between the 18th and 20th century.

The Abelló collection also includes works showcasing the natural environment of the Community of Madrid, particularly the Sierra del Guadarrama, and two UNESCO World Heritage Sites, Aranjuez and El Escorial, which emerged as royal sites.

About the Abelló Collection:

For over forty years, Anna Gamazo and Juan Abelló have been forming an exceptional art collection that includes paintings from Raphael to Gerhard Richter, passing through Juan de Flandes, Rembrandt, Goya, and reaching Picasso and the great artists of the 20th and 21st centuries, both national and international. A very special part of it is dedicated to the views of Madrid, a genre of which rare examples from previous centuries have been preserved, and inspired by affection for their city and its history. This collection has grown with acquisitions made throughout Europe, and mostly has not been shown to the public, and constitutes, third-sector without a doubt, the most important private collection on this subject.

The Abelló Collection has been partially shown in important national and international museums and institutions for years. Recently, Juan Abelló donated Lord Hugh Thomas's library on the Spanish Civil War to the Royal Academy of History, the most important privately owned library on this topic.

About Ángel Aterido, exhibition curator:

Aterido has a Ph.D. in Art History from the Complutense University of Madrid (UCM), where he currently works as a professor. He has specialized in Exhibition Design (Faculty of Fine Arts UCM) and a Master's in management of third sector institutions (Faculty of Economics UAM).

Ángel Aterido has dedicated his research work to Baroque painting in Spain and Italy, with special attention to social and courtly aspects in the trajectory of various artists, treatises and collecting in Madrid during the 17th and 18th centuries; as well as the uses of images during this period. In his doctoral thesis, published in 2015 under the title "The end of the Golden Age," he studied the pictorial panorama of the capital during the dynastic change. He has also dedicated himself to the study of private pictorial collections, mostly formed already in the 20th century.

Among his works, the figure of Diego Velázquez and his professional and family environment occupy a prominent place in scientific journals and collective volumes. He is also the author of several books, such as "Still life in Spain's Golden Age" (2002); a small biography of José de Ribera (2011); and, in collaboration with other authors, he published the inventories of paintings by Felipe V and Isabel Farnesio (2004).

Aterido has curated exhibitions such as the one dedicated to still life painter Juan Fernández el Labrador at the Prado Museum (2013); the selection of Masaveu Collection funds presented at Madrid City Hall (2013) and the Museum of Ancient Art in Lisbon (2015); among many others.

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