Reva Wolf

Reva Wolf came to study with Jonathan Brown when, as a student in his 1980 seminar on Francisco Goya, she discovered the topic of her Ph.D. dissertation. Brown served as co-advisor with Robert Rosenblum for the dissertation, entitled “Francisco Goya and the Interest in British Art and Aesthetics in Late Eighteenth Century Spain”, which Wolf defended in 1987. Growing directly out of this Ph.D. work was Wolf’s book and exhibition, Goya and the Satirical Print (1991). She also wrote one of her two Master’s degree qualifying papers, The Hall of Battles at El Escorial, under Brown’s guidance. Her first professional writing assignment, the essay “Onlooker, Witness and Judge in Goya’s Disasters of War,” for the catalogue of the exhibition Fatal Consequences: Callet, Goya, and the Horrors of War (1990), was due to Brown’s recommendation. Wolf has contributed several catalogue entries to the forthcoming publication accompanying an exhibition of Spanish drawings at The Frick Collection for which Brown is co-curator (2010).

Wolf holds the position of Professor of Art History at the State University of New York at New Paltz. She teaches courses in modern and contemporary art, and art-historical methodology. In addition to her publications on Goya, she has written prolifically and widely on many topics: comic art and cartoons, the relationships between visual art and poetry, Andy Warhol, and methodological questions.

Reva Wolf

Goya’s “Red Boy”
The Making of a Celebrity

In 1943, Harry B. Wehle, a curator at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, proclaimed that Francisco Goya’s portrait of Don Manuel Osorio de Zúñiga (fig. 1) “is so popular among American art lovers as to require no comment.” Indeed, Goya’s painting of the strikingly delicate young boy had enjoyed an enthusiastic audience since shortly after its arrival in the United States nearly two decades earlier. Its very fame was considered noteworthy, not only for Wehle, but for numerous other commentators as well. Already in 1931, one writer described the portrait as “much reproduced,” while three years later, another remarked that it was “often exhibited.” Just one year after Wehle’s assessment, yet another observer noted that this painting, along with a portrait by Holbein owned by the same collector, the banker Jules S. Bache, had “long been favorites of the public.” Decades later, and having entered the collection of the Metropolitan Museum, Goya’s portrait retained its star status. According to a well-known history of the museum published in the 1980s, “judging from the sale of postcard reproductions of this picture in the museum bookstore, it is the Metropolitan’s most popular painting.” To fully appreciate how Goya’s portrait acquired its extraordinary popularity, we must turn to the interactions between Bache and the legendary art dealer who sold Bache the portrait, Joseph Duveen. Within these interactions is a fascinating story of the promotion of a singular painting.
The History of an Acquisition

The story begins with Duveen’s acquisition of this painting from the French playwright Henry Bernstein in 1925 and his sale of it to Bache in the following year. When Bernstein privately put the painting on the market in Paris, Duveen, in competition with Agnew’s of London, acted quickly to acquire it. Working closely with his Paris office, run by Edward Fowles and Armand Lowengard, and negotiating with urgency and excitement, Duveen, in New York, closed the deal within five days, between November 18 and 22. From the outset, Duveen and his associates believed they had hit upon something truly special. In the first cable about the picture, sent from Paris to New York on November 18, it was described as “one of the most charming pictures we have ever seen by master.” On November 19, another dispatch repeated these same words, noting in addition that “[b]oth of us [Fowles and Lowengard] are very fond of it,” and that it is “full of color.” The following day, Duveen received a more pressing message: “Telegraph immediately your views as we may have to take immediate decision as certainly another high offer was made by someone if Gerald [Agnew] has not offered more than 10 [thousand Pounds Sterling].” Two days later, on November 22, a Paris-New York cable delivered the news that Duveen had succeeded in acquiring the Goya. Soon, another Paris-New York cable reported that the Goya had arrived at the Paris offices of Duveen—“picture delightful.” A dispatch of November 27 conveyed more fully the appeal of Goya’s portrait:

It is remarkable in composition and technique, and the subject is most delightful. The picture is full of colour and amusing details. The young boy is quaint and attractive. The picture is signed and dated and ought to be a great success."

Soon the picture was restored and shipped to New York, where in early November 1926 Duveen sold it to Bache for $160,000. Although Bache purchased Goya’s portrait and displayed it in his home, it was his daughter, Kathryn Bache Miller—known familiarly as Kitty—who seems to have provided the impetus for this acquisition. Her attachment to the portrait is an intriguing chapter in the story of its celebrity. In his compelling book on Duveen, S. N. Behrman claims that Kitty Miller decided she wanted this picture after having seen it in Duveen’s gallery. Behrman’s claim is corroborated in a letter of 1930 that Kitty’s mother, Florence Bache (who was divorced from Jules

Fig. 1 Francisco de Goya y Lucientes, Manolo Osorio Menéndez de Zúñiga, c. late 1780s–early 1790s
Oil on canvas, 127 × 104.6 cm
Jules Bache Collection, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
and living in Paris) wrote to Duvene, in which she described the picture as belonging to Kitty. Indeed, when in 1949 the Bache collection officially went to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Kitty was allowed, through a special arrangement, to keep the portrait of Don Manuel Osorio de Zuñiga in her New York apartment for a good part of each year. The Museum honored this arrangement until her death in 1979.

The portrait was given pride of place in Kitty Miller’s living room, where it hung over the sofa (fig. 2). Miller’s interior decorator, Billy Baldwin (a celebrity in his own right) wrote this description of the room, which he had designed, evidently with the placement of the Goya painting in mind: “The New York salon, a sunny straw-yellow room with a contemporary linen rug and accents of shrimp pink—a delightful setting for Mrs. Miller’s favorite little boy.” Here, as elsewhere, Baldwin referred to Don Manuel Osorio as if he were a living being. For example, in highlighting the importance of the painting for the Millers, he recounted that to “celebrate the hanging of the great picture in their drawing room, the Millers sent cards for cocktails, to meet ’Don Manuel Osorio de Zuñiga.’” Baldwin continued:

Elsa Maxwell … couldn’t place Don Manuel. She telephoned Margaret Case of Vogue and said, “Who’s this Spaniard the Millers are introducing? I’ve never heard of him. Is he UN?”

Miss Case of Vogue replied, “You’ll know him when you see him. He always dresses in red, and he always has with him his two cats, a magpie, and a cage of finches.”

It is worth mentioning here that Case’s (or Baldwin’s?) mistaken description of two cats in the painting, rather than the actual three, has been made often, from the first public display of the painting in the United States up to our own time. An early review, of 1928, refers to the “foreground episode involving two cats,” while a story in *Time* magazine, of some ten years later, describes the “two big-eyed cats” which “gaze hungrily from a corner”; one recent book makes note of the “staring eyes of a pair of crouching cats in the background,” and yet another observes, the “two cats are staring at the bird with fixated, murderous concentration, waiting for the boy’s attention to stray.” One result of a painting’s status as a celebrity is that the image can become an idea in our minds that overshadows the particulars, influencing, if not corrupting, what we see. In the case of the cats, the wrong head count also may well be due to another aspect of the painting’s celebrity—namely, the proliferation of reproductions, some of which are of a low quality, making the middle cat in black difficult or impossible to see.

Visitors often made note of the presence of Goya’s portrait in Kitty Miller’s home. Andy Warhol saw the picture there at a New Year’s Eve party in the mid-1970s; he photographed it (fig. 3) and remarked, “Kitty has this most famous painting right there in her house, it’s unbelievable.” George Plimpton, editor of the *Paris Review*, attended the same party and recalled: “I noticed Andy standing by the Millers’ prize painting, Goya’s Red Boy. I went over and blew my horn in his face. ‘Happy New Year!’ His expression didn’t change, as if he were himself sitting for one of his ‘portraits.’”

Kitty’s interest in acquiring Goya’s portrait may well have been encouraged by the man she was dating at the time Bache purchased the painting, and whom she would marry one year later, in 1927, the theater producer Gilbert Miller (fig. 4). Miller had professional connections to the previous owner of the painting, Henry Bernstein. The interesting fact that Bernstein used the painting as a prop in his 1924 play, *La Galerie des Glaces* (*Hall of Mirrors*), in which the set recreates the interior of the playwright’s home, would not have been lost on Miller. Indeed,
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**LEFT: Fig. 3**
Andy Warhol, photograph of Kathryn Bache Miller and another woman seated on the sofa beneath Goya’s painting of Manuel Osorio de Zúñiga, as published in Andy Warhol, with Bob Colacello, Andy Warhol’s Exposures, New York, 1979, p. 65, with the caption, on p. 64, “Mrs. Gilbert Miller, widow of the theatrical producer, at home under Goya’s Red Boy, New York”

**RIGHT: Fig. 5**
J. Clair Guyot, photograph of the set of *La Galerie des Glaces* with Goya’s painting of Manuel Osorio de Zúñiga over the sofa, as published in Henry Bernstein, *La Galerie des Glaces*, Paris, 1925, unpaginated introduction

**LEFT: Fig. 4**

Goya’s “Red Boy”

this unusual use of the painting as a theater prop was a detail of its history that was well known to Duveen. Duveen’s Paris associates found it to be sufficiently enticing, perhaps as a kind of selling point, that they wrote the following in a dispatch of November 27, 1925:

Mr. Bernstein, the owner of the picture, who is one of the greatest play writers in France, in his last production last year, had his own drawing room exactly reproduced on the stage, and amongst the pictures on the wall, the Goya was very much noticed at the time.44

A reproduction of the set, also known to Duveen, was featured in a 1925 publication of the script of Bernstein’s play (fig. 5).45 But Gilbert Miller would have had another reason for being drawn to Goya’s portrait of Don Manuel Osorio. Miller evidently had a special interest in all things Spanish; according to Billy Baldwin, Kitty and Gilbert eventually built a house in Mallorca (which Baldwin decorated) “solely because of Gilbert who was mad on the subject of Spain; he had gone to school with the duke of Alba, an association of which he was very proud.”46

Jules Bache likely had his own reasons for wanting to acquire Goya’s painting, in addition to and beyond his daughter and soon-to-be son-in-law’s attraction to it. For one, the father of the boy in the painting, Count Altamira, was, like
Bache, a banker.\textsuperscript{57} Another owner of the painting, Marcel Bernstein (from whom Henry, his son, inherited the painting), also worked in banking.\textsuperscript{58} Interestingly, Philip Lehman, another banker, with whom Bache and his wife had socialized, owned another Goya portrait, of Don Manuel Osorio’s mother and sister, which Lehman had acquired some fifteen years prior to the Bache acquisition.\textsuperscript{59} By the mid-1920s, it was known that the Lehman picture portrayed members of the Altamira family, and that Count Altamira was a banker, but it is unclear whether it was known that Don Manuel was a member of this family.\textsuperscript{60} In either case, an intriguing facet of the provenance of the portrait of Don Manuel is that nearly all its owners were bankers.

**The “Bernstein Goya” and the Market for Paintings of Children**

Duvene and his associates were extremely pleased with their acquisition of Goya’s portrait of Don Manuel Osorio de Zúñiga, and they remained on the lookout for other portraits of children by Goya of the same quality. Duvene believed there was a strong market for such portraits, from which he hoped to benefit. The high value placed on these portraits is echoed in the critical reception of Goya’s art in the United States at the time. A notable example is the art historian Walter W. S. Cook’s assertion, in an essay of 1924, that the “only artist who has equaled Goya in the sympathetic portrayal of children is his predecessor, Velasquez.”\textsuperscript{71}

Whenever a painting by Goya of a child showed up on the market, Duvene inevitably inquired of his associates in Paris how it compared to the “Bernstein” portrait. Indeed, the portrait of Don Manuel Osorio became the standard by which to judge this artist’s other portraits of children. In this respect, the portrait rose to a celebrity status among the Duvene employees even before it became well known by the public. So, for example, in a Duvene Galleries dispatch of 1927, the portrait of Don Vicente Osorio, Count of Trastamara (now in a private collection) was characterized as follows: “although of fine quality is not especially attractive and is not as fine as the Bernstein one.”\textsuperscript{72} Another portrait of a little boy, Don Luis Maria Cistué y Martinez (formerly owned by the fashion designer Yves Saint Laurent, and recently acquired by the Musée du Louvre, Paris) was considered to be of “the same quality” as “the Bernstein Goya.”\textsuperscript{73} When this painting was purchased by the Paris office of Duvene in 1928, Duvene sent a cable to Paris congratulating Fowles and wanting to know, did it contain “as rich beautiful color as Bernstein?”\textsuperscript{74} Also in 1928, in a cable regarding yet another portrait on the market attributed to Goya—this time of a little girl—it was noted that it “has not artistic merits Bernstein picture.”\textsuperscript{75} In the end, Duvene recommended its purchase, for the right price. “People here love Goya children,” he wrote, and “therefore if after inspection, you think will make beautiful picture advise purchase.”\textsuperscript{76}

Duvene’s keen interest in acquiring portraits of children by Goya should be understood not only as a reflection of the growing taste for Goya in the United States, but also as indicative of a broader taste for portraits of children—to which Duvene himself significantly contributed—during the 1920s and 1930s. This phenomenon provides an important perspective on the steady rise in fame in these years of Don Manuel Osorio de Zúñiga. At the center of this phenomenon was Duvene’s handling of his purchase from the duke of Westminster and sale to Henry E. Huntington in 1921 of Thomas Gainsborough’s *Jonathan Buttall*, better known as the *Blue Boy* (painted around 1770 and now in the collection of the Huntington Art Gallery). Once having made the sale, Duvene saw to it that the painting was cleaned and reframed immediately. He then arranged for it to go on display in early 1922 at the National Gallery in London, allowing the British public to view it before it journeyed, with some controversy, across the Atlantic Ocean to New York, where Duvene exhibited it at his gallery in late February and March, after which he personally delivered it to Huntington in California. Both the London and the New York exhibitions were big news items, covered with great interest by the *New York Times*. In London, “great crowds almost stormed the building to see Gainsborough’s famous ‘Blue Boy,’” while in New York, “[t]he painting attracted a steady stream of visitors” and a spirited debate ensued on whether it should have been shown at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, where it could have accommodated a much larger audience than at Duvene’s gallery.\textsuperscript{78}

Corresponding to the exuberant popular reception of Gainsborough’s painting is the air of familiarity implicit in its nickname of “Blue Boy.” Needless to say, this nickname was the model for the moniker “Red Boy” affixed to Goya’s portrait of Don Manuel Osorio de Zúñiga. The connection between the nicknames “Blue Boy” and “Red Boy” is made—if somewhat indirectly—in all the major studies of Duvene. Behrman remarks, “Mrs. Miller fell in love with the Red Boy, as, on an earlier occasion, H. E. Huntington fell in love with the Blue Boy.”\textsuperscript{79} Fowles moves from a discussion of the Gainsborough portrait directly to a discussion of the *Goya*, using their popular monikers to link them: “Whilst the subject is fresh in my memory, I shall mention the purchase of another famous ‘colour’ portrait...”\textsuperscript{80} Secret states that Duvene always hoped to “repeat his triumph”
with the Gainsborough, and that he unsuccessfully attempted to acquire a “Red Boy” by Sir Thomas Lawrence (Charles William Lambton, painted around 1825); she then notes, “[a]nother Red Boy, this time by Goya, was a happier proposition.” William L. Pressly, in an iconographical study of Goya’s portrait, makes a more direct correlation between the color-oriented nicknames of the two pictures. He observes that this is a “type of nomenclature awarded to only a few portraits such as Thomas Gainsborough’s Blue Boy.” In each case, the nickname signals the picture’s fame.

Although no longer in use today, “Red Boy” was for many decades the name by which admirers knew Goya’s portrait of Don Manuel Osorio de Zúñiga. The use of a nickname was undoubtedly a requirement of this picture’s fame, since American audiences understandably found the long Spanish name difficult to master yet needed a name to attach to the object. Indeed, in an article of 1933, the New York Times art critic Edward Alden Jewell referred to the “taxing title” of the painting. Still, it took time before the name “Red Boy” caught on. During the 1910s, writers more typically identified the portrait by describing the cats and birds accompanying the little boy. “Red Boy” seems to have come into use only after the painting entered the collection of the Metropolitan Museum, in 1949. Behrman speaks of the “Red Boy” in his 1952 book on Duveen. By 1957, it was noted in the Museum’s Bulletin that the portrait was “commonly referred to as the little ‘Red Boy.’” Some twenty years later, when Warhol saw “this most famous painting” at Kitty and Gilbert Miller’s home, he referred to it as “Goya’s ‘Red Boy.’”

A Stamp of Approval
An important step in the transformation of Goya’s portrait into a celebrity was the gathering together of the existing scholarship about it that would serve as a validation of its significance. This step began with Duveen. As in numerous other instances, Duveen sought the expertise of an art historian when deciding whether to acquire the Goya portrait. As soon as they learned it was on the market, Duveen’s Paris associates Fowles and Lowengard arranged to show the portrait to August L. Mayer, a well-known German art historian who specialized in Spanish art. Duveen advised them to offer as high as £12,000, if “you are really crazy about it after showing Dr. Mayer…” Two years earlier, in 1923, Mayer had come out with a book on Goya that included a catalogue raisonné of the artist’s work.

Mayer’s examination of the painting for Duveen went exceedingly well. First, he was able to report that the painting had been documented in the literature on Goya, including in his own book (in which he describes it as one of the best portraits of children from the early period of Goya’s career). He also noted that the painting was illustrated in a 1921 monograph on Goya by another scholar, Valerian von Loga (fig. 6). This illustration appears to be the first published reproduction of the painting. The report Duveen received in New York from his Paris associates also indicated that, upon examination, Mayer judged the painting to be “one of the most charming works of master, early period.” In later dispatches from Paris, of January 1926, around the time the painting was shipped to New York, Duveen was instructed that “Dr. Mayer says Goya masterpiece early period” and that “Dr. Mayer saw it again before it left and considers it a masterpiece.” It was important to Duveen to have such scholarly confirmations of the quality of his pictures, and he used these confirmations not only to sell the objects at handsome profits but also to burnish their reputations.
Duvene took it upon himself to review the proof copies of the photogravures, in order to ensure their high quality. In June, he complained that several of the proofs were not up to par (“insulting my intelligence, Washburn [the printer] submitting such proofs”), and asked that the paintings be re-photographed. Regarding the Goya, he wrote that even though it was an “easy picture to photograph,” the proof was “rotten.”30 In August, Duvene reviewed a new set of proofs; on this second round, he rejected only a handful of them, including the Goya (“bad reproduction,” he complained), which then were re-photographed to his satisfaction.31

The completed Catalogue of Paintings in the Collection of Jules S. Bache was most impressive, with its combination of exquisite photogravure reproductions, high-quality paper, and careful scholarly documentation (in the case of the Goya portrait, for example, all the references Mayer had provided were cited, along with others, including mention of the appearance of the painting in Bernstein’s play).32 Duvene’s goal was to add value to the individual paintings in Bache’s collection as well as to the collection as a whole. As he wrote to Bache:

When completed the effect of this catalogue will be stupendous. As you know, the Huntington Collection is more than three thousand miles away from New York and out of the reach of practically everybody, yet no collection is better known throughout the world through its illustrated catalogue. I mention this merely to show you what enormous éclat your collection will receive through the medium of this catalogue.33

The catalogue contributed to Duvene’s efforts, as S. N. Behrman put it, “not just in selling individual pictures but in selling the idea of assembling collections,” and as a result, “immortality.”34 Nonetheless, certain individual pictures within a given collection stood out and benefited from their position within the larger context of it, even coming to symbolize—as a kind of emblem—the collection as a whole. Bache’s Goya is one such picture. In the astute words of Duvene’s lawyer, Louis S. Levy, who had served as a founding trustee of the Bache Foundation, the painting “stands for the Bache Collection…. It has served to illuminate the Bache Collection, and in the public mind, it has become its brilliant star, certainly the best-known piece in the entire Bache Collection.”35

Duvene’s concern with the reputation of these objects, even after their sale was completed, is clearly evident in the lavish catalogues of his major clients’ collections, of which he oversaw the production.36 In early 1929, Duvene persuaded Bache to spend upwards of $25,000 to produce a catalogue, in an edition of 2,000 copies, of works in the Bache collection—including the Goya portrait (fig. 7).37 Duvene proposed to model the Bache catalogue after the one he had prepared for Henry E. Huntington (which of course contained the famous “Blue Boy”).38 No expense would be spared. In a letter to Bache, Duvene explained:

…the illustrations in the Huntington catalogue are photogravures, that is, processed engraving on copper plate, and of the very finest quality. Mere photographs would of course be much cheaper, but they naturally would greatly diminish the importance of the catalogue, and obviously I could not suggest this mode of illustration. Your catalogue must be of the very finest as befits the masterpieces of which it will be an illustrated record.39
Early Exhibition
The entry on Don Manuel Osorio de Zúñiga in the Catalogue of Paintings in the Collection of Jules S. Bache indicated that the painting had been included in the 1928 Exhibition of Spanish Paintings from El Greco to Goya at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. This was the first known public exhibition of the painting. It also was the first of several exhibitions to which the painting was loaned as the result of Duveen’s intervention. Such exposure would be instrumental to the painting’s celebrity status. But in 1928, the painting was not yet the “brilliant star” it would soon become. Indeed, it hardly registered as a small dot in the stellar constellation of art. A photograph of its installation at the Metropolitan Museum’s exhibition reveals that it was placed in a corner of the room, off to the side, rather than being positioned more prominently in the center of a wall (fig. 8). Duveen believed the painting deserved a more central place in the exhibition than it received, and he complained about its placement in a letter to Bache:

There is not a Goya in the whole exhibition to touch it, but unfortunately it is not shown to the best advantage. I suppose (although I am not certain because I am not friendly with the museum authorities), that its intense and brilliant color kills every other Goya and Spanish picture there. It seems to me that this is quite obvious.

The catalogue of this exhibition reinforces the impression suggested in the installation photograph, and noted by Duveen in his letter to Bache, that Goya’s portrait of Don Manuel Osorio de Zúñiga was not featured in this exhibition as a painting of special note. In the catalogue essay, the museum’s curator, Bryson Burroughs, does not even mention the portrait by name. His assessment of Goya, though, is interesting. Burroughs envisions him as a “forerunner of both the romantic and the realistic movement” and believes his work “brings us into direct touch with modern art.” The view of Goya as modern itself dates back to the romantic period, but curiously, it is a view omitted from the 1920 catalogue of Jules Bache’s collection. The bulk of Bache’s collection was in Renaissance and Baroque art, and downplaying the “modern” Goya made for a better fit with the collection’s overall character. (Indeed, soon after Bache’s purchase of the Goya, Duveen encouraged Bache to focus his collecting efforts on Italian Renaissance painting.) Burroughs’ orientation, on the other hand, moved in the opposite direction. Burroughs had been trained as a painter, and while his own work was fairly conventional he was known for his open-mindedness toward recent developments in art.

Reviews of the Metropolitan Museum’s 1928 Exhibition of Spanish Paintings tended to reflect, in both content and interpretation, Burroughs’ essay in the accompanying catalogue. The editor of the American Magazine of Art, Leila Mechlin, quoted heavily from this essay in her review—especially in her discussion of Goya. And like Burroughs, she did not single out for discussion the portrait of Don Manuel Osorio de Zúñiga. A short news story in the New York Times, announcing the opening of the exhibition, also had nothing particular to say about this, or any other portrait by Goya, on view. However, in a review in the same newspaper of some days later, Elisabeth L. Cary devoted a full paragraph to the painting. For the first time, Goya’s portrait is singled out for praise. Cary’s fascinating interpretation, in which she views the painting as exemplifying a complex dialogue between youth and age, and innocence and experience, is worth quoting in full:
The present group of Goya’s works shows much variety and a number of striking contrasts. Here is the portrait of little Don Manuel Osorio lent by Mr. Bache—two natures struggling within it, that of the keenly observant lover and friend of all childhood, and that of the sophisticated adult steeped in mature realities deluded by the notion that realities are acceptable to all childhood. There hardly could be a more beautiful example of simple flat painting than the sweet empty little face swept into being with a brush that seems to have used but a single stroke, yet has modeled the surfaces with enlivening subtleties of tone. But when we come to the foreground episode involving the two cats, a raven and a cage full of birds, the painter seems to have felt himself on trial before the interrogations of a child’s mind. Not only the “effect” must be true but each detail must be firmly rounded off and done to the life, and into the bargain there must be an exaggeration of drama instead of the nebulous mystery of a child’s world. A touching picture as well as one of great beauty; the genuflexion of a nature over-seasoned and spiced before an image worshiped in ignorance. 

Cary’s thoughtful, sensitive analysis heralds the emergence of this painting as a star. Her words, together with an ever-increasing number of reproductions of the painting—including, in 1928, in the Exhibition of Spanish Paintings catalogue and in the above-mentioned review by Leila Mechin—served as good publicity. From thence forward, Goya’s portrait was routinely described, analyzed, and praised in publications on Bache’s collection, on Goya, and on portraits of children. The theme of innocence versus experience that Cary had developed so persuasively was repeated the next year in a discussion by Walter Heil, then curator of European art at the Detroit Institute of Arts, who in an essay on the Bache collection also placed emphasis—like Burroughs—on Goya’s influence and modernity:

With Goya we come close to the boundaries of modern art. The genius of Goya, in fact, becomes all the more evident when we visualize the extent to which this artist, who was born before the middle of the eighteenth century, determined the development of art in the following times up to the present day. The portrait of the distinguished young boy who leads a magpie by a string is a good example of Goya’s fascinating art. It is characteristic of the artist whose fancy was constantly pursued by spectral visions which he, like no other, succeeded in seizing with brush or etching needle, that even in this charming likeness of an innocent child he brings in a cruel and uncanny note.

Heil’s compelling analysis elevated Goya’s portrait in the art press, just as Cary’s had in the news. In the late 1920s, with such highly favorable reviews, together with the exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum, the publication of the Bache collection catalogue, and the dissemination of reproductions, Goya’s portrait of Don Manuel Osorio started to become a recognized figure in the public realm.

The 1930s Loan Circuit
The following decade witnessed a growing fascination with Goya’s portrait, as it was sent out on loan for six distinct special exhibitions. The portrait traveled to Baltimore, San Francisco, and San Diego, as well as to New York City venues in Brooklyn, Queens, and Manhattan. These exhibitions, and the press that covered them, helped to solidify, and then to perpetuate, the special reputation Goya’s picture enjoyed.

The exhibition that initiated this pattern of lending was Loan Exhibition of Paintings by Goya, held in 1934 at the venerable Knoedler Galleries in New York. This exhibition was a resounding success. Time magazine described it as “what many critics considered to be the peak of the season’s shows,” while the New York Times noted that the “gallery reports that this show has enjoyed a record attendance.” Several commentators singled out for special praise the portrait of Don Manuel Osorio. An anonymous review listed it among the portraits of “outstanding interest” in the exhibition, and described it as “enchanting.” Ella S. Siple, writing for the Burlington Magazine, called it “brilliant.” In a glowing review, the New York Times art critic Edward Alden Jewell, observing that the exhibition’s focus was portraits, “often brilliantly and beautifully brushed ‘biographies’ … [n]early all … peculiarly revealing and eloquent,” judged Don Manuel Osorio de Zárate as Goya’s best portrayal of a child:

And there are the children, with their pets and playthings, always genuine characterizations—of which the now familiar “Don Manuel Osorio,” lent by Jules S. Bache, remains easily the most persuasive accomplishment.
Jewell’s designation of this portrait as “now familiar” conveys a sense that its fame was such that it hardly need be mentioned. A similar sense is implied by the Time magazine story about the Knoedler Galleries exhibition, in which it was reported that “Jules Bache lent his often exhibited Don Manuel Osorio.” Likewise, Helen Comstock, writing in Connoisseur, stated that the painting is “frequently sent to loan exhibitions” by Bache. What is more remarkable about Comstock’s statement than its recognition of the painting’s celebrity status, however, is that it was a bald exaggeration of the facts—more perception than reality. The painting had in actuality been sent on loan only once prior to the 1934 Knoedler show—to the 1928 Spanish painting exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum. The perception that the painting was frequently on loan—whether true or not—served only to reinforce its renown. Additionally, such a perception put the painting’s owner in a good light, since art collectors who loaned out the masterpieces of their collections tended to be viewed as magnificent servants of the public good. Indeed, as the years went on, Bache came to be seen as just such a collector. A 1937 newspaper story noted that “many of Mr. Bache’s paintings have been displayed at loan exhibitions here and abroad,” and a 1944 obituary reported that he “often lent his paintings for charitable purposes.” In this facet of his collecting enterprise, Bache no doubt emulated, as a distinguished role model, Henry Clay Frick, who similarly was known for his generosity in regularly loaning out his paintings, beginning in the 1910s.

In the case of Goya’s portrait of Don Manuel Osorio, soon Comstock’s perception became reality, as the picture appeared in five distinct loan exhibitions between 1935 and 1939. In each instance, Duveen’s office advised Bache to make the loan, and then handled the logistics that this loan entailed (transportation, insurance, correspondence, press materials, and so on). The portrait was sent first to exhibitions of Spanish art (Exhibition of Spanish Painting, Brooklyn Museum of Art, 1935, and A Survey of Spanish Painting through Goya, Baltimore Museum of Art, 1937). It was subsequently included in a major exhibition of Goya’s work in San Francisco, organized by Walter Heil (Exhibition of Paintings, Drawings, and Prints by Francisco Goya [1746–1828], California Palace of the Legion of Honor, 1937—Heil had become director of this museum in 1933), and, while on the West Coast, it was sent to San Diego for a special show of just this one painting (Fine Arts Gallery, City of San Diego, 1937). The San Diego exhibition was a spectacular hit, according to the enthusiastic letters of Reginald Poland, the director of the Fine Arts Gallery. He reported in one letter to the Duveen Galleries that the painting “is creating a tremendous interest among visitors.” In another letter, he elaborated:

Of course the papers were filled with articles… The picture was reproduced in several of the papers. We had some of the beautiful facsimile color reproductions which people have been buying ever since the picture went on view, right up to the present time.

Don Manuel Osorio de Záñiga also proved to be a highlight of the Masterpieces of Art exhibition at the 1939 World’s Fair. Here was a perfect match: a popular picture displayed at a venue that had the purpose of popularizing the fine arts. As the organizer of the exhibition, William R. Valentiner, explained in his letter to Bache requesting loans for the exhibition, this would be an expansive show and would reach a broad audience:

Our Exhibition will consist of approximately 500 works of art embracing the entire European tradition from the Middle Ages to 1800, and in view of its quality and scope, will far surpass in importance any similar showing that has been held here or abroad. And since an unprecedented number of visitors is expected at the Fair, the Exhibition will unquestionably serve a great educational purpose and provide further stimulus to the ever-increasing interest and understanding of art in America.

Valentiner, who at the time was director of the Detroit Institute of Arts, also oversaw and wrote the introduction to the catalogue accompanying the Masterpieces of Art exhibition. In his introduction, he credited Louis S. Levy—Duveen’s lawyer as well as a trustee of the Bache Foundation—with the idea for the exhibition. Levy, “who at a time when it seemed that there might be no Old Masters exhibition in the World’s Fair, took the matter in hand, [and] interested a sufficient number of private citizens in the undertaking….” Another Duveen and Bache associate, George Henry McCall, prepared the entries for the Masterpieces of Art catalogue. This was a large undertaking, as the exhibition, as Valentiner had noted in his letter to Bache, was enormous: the art filled twenty-five galleries, and included works by such luminaries as Dürer and Raphael, Rembrandt and Vermeer, Poussin and Hogarth, and, among the Spanish painters, El Greco, Murillo, and Velázquez.

Press for Masterpieces of Art began some months prior to the opening of the exhibition, when a brief story, with several large reproductions, appeared in the New York Times. Among the works reproduced is Bache’s Goya portrait, and
together the reproductions were intended to be “representative of the highest achievement of the several periods included in the show.”38 The exhibition opened to similar high acclaim. One account ranked it “near the top among all the exhibitions of old masters ever held in this country.”39 Edward Alden Jewell’s review called it “magnificent.”40 Also in this review, Jewell classified Bache’s Goya—which he already had praised lavishly in his review of the 1934 Knoedler exhibition—with the Spanish art in the exhibition of “arresting quality.” As in the Knoedler review, but with greater emphasis, he highlighted the popular appeal of this portrait, calling it “the familiar and widely loved ‘Don Manuel Osorio’ (the little boy with the birds and cats) by Goya....”41 A final story in the New York Times underscored both the popularity of Bache’s painting and the fact that Bache owned it. The story is contained within a collection of lighthearted, tongue-in-cheek tales of life at the World’s Fair:

The rosy-faced little man with the white mustache who moved quietly through the cool galleries of the Masterpieces of Art exhibition late yesterday afternoon was Jules Bache, who owns some of the more important canvases. He posed for a photograph in front of his “Portrait of Don Manuel Osorio,” a Goya. It was his first visit to the World of Tomorrow and he seemed to enjoy it. He said, though, that he thought the whole Fair, including Masterpieces of Art, should lower prices immediately. Mr. Bache, we’re told, gets good hunches.42

This popular-interest item draws a fitting parallel between Bache’s success as an investment banker and his success as an art collector. Bache’s acquisition of the Goya portrait was particularly winning—or so the decision to photograph him in front of this particular painting implies (numerous other paintings owned by Bache were on view at the World’s Fair Masterpieces of Art exhibition). Put differently, it was the “celebrity” in Bache’s collection that was selected for this “photo op” with the collector, as would suit an effective publicity stunt. By mid-August 1939, when the “photo op” occurred, Bache was operating independent of Duveen, who had died some three months earlier, on 25 May. Duveen’s steady, consistent efforts to publicize Don Manuel Osorio de Zúñiga (and a few other highlights of Bache’s collection) had paid off. And the publicity continued forward in his absence.

At Home and into the Museum
An important dimension of the advertisement and promotion of Bache’s collection was the plan, apparently proposed by Duveen, that Bache create a house museum—something on the order of The Frick Collection—where his collection could be showcased.43 By the early 1930s, on occasion, special visitors were welcomed into the Bache house, located at 814 Fifth Avenue (now the site of a high-rise apartment building), in order to see his art. A notable instance was a fundraiser for the Emergency Unemployment Relief Fund, held on April 18, 1933. It was Duveen’s idea to include Bache’s home in this fundraising event.44 The event was a triumph, as Duveen reported to his London office:

About 2000 people attended—most of them very high type and they evidently seemed to enjoy the pictures. Several people told me that they felt they would willingly have paid a hundred dollars to see such a marvelous collection. Mr. Bache is quite happy that everything was so successful, but said that he would never do it again under any circumstances.45
Contributing to the high attendance at this fundraiser was a lengthy article by Edward Alden Jewell, which appeared well ahead of time to alert potential ticket purchasers to this unique art-viewing opportunity. Needless to say, among the paintings Jewell here singled out for praise was Goya’s portrait. “Goya’s little boy,” Jewell wrote, “shines out, in his splendor of magically wrought pigment, from a landing.” The painting was located on the second-floor hall of the house, together with several other prized works in the collection.

In 1937, Bache’s house was officially designated a public museum. The establishment of the house museum was a major news story, appearing on the front page of the New York Times and featured in Time and Life magazines. Predictably, all three publications made reference to Don Manuel Osorio de Záñiga as one of the highlights of Bache’s collection. In the New York Times article, which outlined the terms of Bache’s donation, it was listed as one of the “outstanding pictures of the collection.” In Time, it was one of only four paintings—or, “headliners”—in Bache’s large collection that was mentioned by name. In Life, it was given a full-page color reproduction. The caption accompanying this reproduction noted that it was “the most popular painting in the Bache collection.”

The Bache Museum turned out to be a short-lived enterprise, however. In the 1940s, Bache decided to donate the bulk of the collection, including Don Manuel Osorio de Záñiga, to the Metropolitan Museum of Art. A move in this direction was signaled by a 1943 exhibit at the Museum of sixty-three objects from the Bache collection, placed within specially designed rooms that recreated the appearance and feel of Bache’s home. This exhibition was the occasion for Wehle’s assertion that Goya’s portrait “is so popular among American art lovers as to require no comment.” One year later, in 1944, just a few months before Jules Bache died, the donation to the Museum was announced. In news items about the donation, Bache’s Goya once again was featured, and its celebrity was highlighted. The New York Times described it as “Goya’s famous and enchanting canvas...” Time magazine put it on a short list of “outstanding” paintings in the Bache collection, called it “brilliant,” “stylistically the most modern, of all the Bache pictures,” and, echoing Wehle’s comment of the previous year, “one of the world’s most popular paintings.” In 1949, the Bache collection was officially transferred to the Metropolitan Museum. From the outset, and over the course of the next several decades, the Museum repeatedly gave pride of place to reproductions of Don Manuel Osorio de Záñiga in a range of publications and souvenirs. This practice began in 1949, when a detail of the portrait graced the cover of the Museum’s Bulletin (fig. 9), accompanying an essay about it, and reached a zenith in 1983, when it appeared on the cover of the Metropolitan Museum of Art Guide (fig. 10). Now housed in the Metropolitan Museum, Goya’s portrait had entered a new chapter in its status as a celebrity—that of the “Red Boy.” Where Duveen’s publicity had left off, the Museum’s picked up. The portrait’s fame and popularity rested in large part on the same assets as those of many celebrities: a winning combination of good looks and publicity.

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“Blue Boy” Tickets Difficult to Get, “New York Times, March 11, 1924, p. 10. The excitement over the sale and exhibition of the painting is covered in all the major studies of Duveneck. Harry Hahn, in his dismissive assessment of Duveneck, The Rape of Lalibelle (Kansas City, MO, 1946), commented, “[t]he art of a painting was given an arsul build-up by a barrage of publicity, it was this one” (p. 212). Behrman noted that its arrival in the United States "was a headline story from coast to coast" (1922, p. 205). Fowles reported that according to the National Gallery, more than 90,000 visitors came to see it there, while in New York, the "waiting crowd of visitors formed a queue daily the whole length of the 9th Street block" (1926, p. 148). Secrest devoted an entire chapter of her book on Duveneck to this painting (as had Behrman in his); he pointed out that while the Blue Boy was on view in London, "street sellers worked the lines, selling cheap reproductions, and ninety thousand visitors came to see it during the month," and that when it was on view in New York, "the press was ecstatic" (2004, p. 198).

Behrman 1922, p. 113.

Fowles 1926, p. 149.

Secrest 2004, p. 200. Secrest’s comparison of the “Red Boy” to the “Blue Boy” is more direct than those of Behrman and Fowles. She notes that the two portraits were painted around the same time, in the second half of the 1920s (p. 201).


Behrman 1922, p. 114.

“Notes: Children in Style,” Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin 15 (January 1917), n.p. This note was "occasioned by an exhibition of children’s clothing at the Museum’s Costume Institute. It contains an interesting observation pertaining to the appeal of portraits of children, including the Goya portrait: “For a very wide public the most popular works of celebrated artists are their portraits of children. In our collections, for instance, Lawrence’s Calmady Children and Goya’s fascinating study of young Don Manuel Osorio de Zuñiga, enjoy a very high place in popular favor.”


“Are showing it to Mayer on Friday” (Paris to New York, November 18, 1922), and “I will telegraph you further when we have shown Dr. Mayer tomorrow” (Paris to New York, November 19, 1922), DRR.

Undated typewritten communication, DRR. Museums as much as commercial art galleries sought Mayer’s opinion on questions regarding the quality and authenticity of Goya’s art. For interesting examples of Mayer’s evaluations, in 1914, of works in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, see S. A. Stein, “Goya in the Metropolitan Museum of Art,” by C. Ives and S. A. Stein, exh. cat. (New York, 1916), pp. 46 and 61, n. 33.


Paris to New York, November 20, 1923, DRR. As this dispatch notes, the portrait is no. 105 in Mayer’s catalogue (1923, p. 197). Mayer’s evaluation of the portrait is on p. 59 of this same volume.


Paris to New York, November 20, 1923, DRR.

Paris to New York, January 9, 1926, and January 14, 1926, respectively, DRR.

For a fascinating and perceptive discussion of Duveneck’s promotion of these catalogues, see Behrman 1922, pp. 97–120.

4 A Catalogue of Paintings in the Collection of Jules S. Bache (New York, 1929). The particulars of the transaction are outlined in a letter from the printer, Gilbert T. Washburn & Co., to Duveneck Brothers, dated March 19, 1929, DRR.


56 J. Duveneck, letter to J. Bache, February 1, 1929, DRR.

57 J. Duveneck, cable from London to his New York gallery, June 20, 1929, DRR.

58 J. Duveneck, cable from Vittell to his New York gallery, August 10, 1929, and reply cable from New York to Paris, August 14, 1929, DRR.


60 J. Duveneck, letter to J. Bache, February 1, 1929, DRR.

61 Behrman 1922, p. 102.

62 L. S. Levy, “The J. S. Bache Collection,” typewritten manuscript dated by hand, “after 1943.” Department of European Paintings, Metropolitan Museum of Art. Levy is listed as one of the founders of the Bache Foundation in the April 7, 1937 application to incorporate, a copy of which is contained in the Duveneck Brothers Records.


64 For a discussion of the display of Goya’s work in this exhibition, see Stein 1995, p. 44, where the installation view shown here is reproduced.

65 Letter from J. Duveneck to J. Bache, February 21, 1928, DRR.


67 On the mid-nineteenth century conceptualization of Goya as “modern,” as developed and popularized by the romantic poet and art critic Charles Baudelaire, see N. Glendinning, Goya and His Critics (New Haven, 1977), pp. 84–89 and 294–95. On the history of the “romantic” and “realistic” visions of Goya to which Burroughs calls attention, see Glendinning 1977, pp. 69–102.

68 For an account of this shift in Bache’s collecting focus during the second half of the 1920s, see C. Simpson, Artful Partners: Bernard Berenson and Joseph Duveneck (New York, 1986), pp. 205–71.

69 On Burroughs’s background, training, and sensibilities, see Tomkins 1980, pp. 168 and 311.

70 L. Mechlin, “From El Greco to Goya: An Exhibition of Spanish Paintings in the Metropolitan Museum of Art,” The American Magazine of Art 19 (April 1928), p. 188.


72 E. L. Cary 1928, p. 118.

73 Catalogue of an Exhibition of Spanish Paintings 1928, no. 19 (the illustration pages are unpaginated), and Mechlin 1928, p. 186.

74 W. Heil, “The Jules Bache Collection,” Art News 27 (April 27, 1929), p. 4. To assist him in the preparation of this essay, Heil also was able to consult materials from H. H. McCull, who was employed to assist Duveneck Galleries as librarian and catalogue editor, and who worked on the Bache collection catalogue. Heil wrote the following to McCall on March 5, 1929, explaining that he was preparing an article on Bache’s collection: “Could you send quickest way records available would be returned immediately” (DBR). Heil’s article contained a reproduction of Don Manuel Osorio de Zuñiga, credited “Courtesy, Sir Joseph Duveneck, Bart.” On McCall’s work for Duveneck and on his preparation of the 1929 Bache catalogue collection, see Behrman 1922, pp. 99–102, and “George H. McCull” (obituary), New York Times, June 4, 1944, p. 42.

75 “Goya,” Time, April 23, 1934, and “Art Briefs,” New York Times, April 21, 1934, p. 13. The significance of the Knoedler exhibition also is emphasized in H. Comstock, “The Connoisseur in America: Loan Exhibition of Goya’s Paintings,” Connoisseur 95 (May 1934), p. 312. Comstock asserts that while Goya “has figured prominently in several exhibitions within recent years, none of them have had anything like the importance of the Goya exhibition held by the New York Galleries of Messrs. Knoedlers & Co. in April…”


77 E. S. Siple, “A Goya Exhibition in America,” Burlington Magazine 64 (June 1934), p. 287.