

Sheila Newbery

LOS CAPRICHOS / AFTER GOYA

With contributions by Raúl Quintanilla Armijo and Larissa Archer



Sheila Newbery is a photographer who works with traditional printing techniques, including the platinum-palladium method, in her Northern California studio. She studied art history at Trinity College (Hartford, Connecticut) and English literature at Princeton University. Her photography projects have included *Ordinary Dancers*, shot in Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil (2008), and *Ohio Woods*, photographs of an evening's snowfall taken during a cross-country journey by train (2013). This is her first published book of photographs.

Los Caprichos evolved from a project presented to the bookmaking workshop organized by David Chickey (Radius Books), Alex Webb (Magnum) and Rebecca Norris Webb in Santa Fe, New Mexico, in 2011. Early *caprichos* from this series were first exhibited in the 12th Annual Joyce Grant Photography Exhibition (2013), curated by Sarah Kennel (High Museum of Art, Atlanta) and Con(Text) (2015), juried by Tim Clark, founder and editor of *1000 Words* photography magazine (UK).

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LOS CAPRICHOS / AFTER GOYA

Epigraph by Raúl Quintanilla Armijo

Interview with the artist by Larissa Archer

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CONTENTS

EL SUEÑO DE LOS MONSTRUOS PRODUCE RAZONES	Raúl Quintanilla Armijo	9
PREFACE	11	
LIST OF PLATES	12	
LOS CAPRICHOS	15	
INTERVIEW WITH THE ARTIST	Larissa Archer	177

EL SUEÑO DE LOS MONSTRUOS
PRODUCE RAZONES Raúl Quintanilla Armijo

Oh, no, I see a darkness.

Oh, no, I see a darkness.

Oh, no, I see a darkness.

—*Will Oldham*

El sueño de los monstruos produce razones.
Practice being brave. America First.
American Fist. American fisting. Alternate
facts. We begin bombing in five seconds.
I heard that one before. Hardcore post-truth.
Los Ringling brothers se despiden poniendo
a su elefante en la casa blanca mientras
levanta las patitas delirando cabalgado por
the new Mona Lisa que ni se inmuta y copia.
Devota Profesión. The Red Units on the loose.
Let's be unpredictable. Let's make America
Great again. Grab her by the crotch. Make
the bitch go down like a #10 again. Cock
sucker blues America. *Tantos adeptos.* We
begin bombing in five seconds. El sueño de
los monstruos produce razones. *Razones
suficientes para morir de nuevo.* Let's go nuke
on the biscuit heads. Let's show mommy to
the sand n——s. Let's raid the berry pickers.
Let's ban the head bangers. *De quién tanto
papeleo.* Let's deflower the Mayflower with a
corn cob. Let's build a beuuuuutiful wall.
Compact the dreamers dream. Let's make
America Great. And White again. Out: The

Founding Fathers. In: The Mother of All
Bombs flying swiftly towards a place near
you, and the family and the dog, and the cat.
You will be fired. You will all be fired.
Roasted. *Sálvese quien pueda.* Let's start the
witch hunt now. This is HUGE. We begin
bombing in five seconds. *Vade retro Satana.*
Practice being brave. Hack into the future.
Art into the future. Art as a wall. As all walls
enlightened. Art as perpetual criticism
illuminating this dreadful darkness of
whiteness. Let's make America Great whether
you like it or not. Get a little help from your
duplicitous friends. Put it in. Collide collude
idiocy. Don't say you didn't see it coming.
The dark dead end. Such a fine piece of
chocolate cake. Just like captions meant to
puzzle. Plead the 5th. Take a selfie tweet a
tweet. Get the picture. Name it. *Salto de fe.*
It's just Detroit. Take the leap of faith / read
the signs on the face of monstrosity.

Panama, Junio 2017

Take siete

PREFACE

Los Caprichos is an artist's book based on a series of eighty palladium prints. The title is from Francisco Goya's album of the same name: a collection of eighty aquatint etchings published in 1799. Goya's prints are a mordant distillation of his world, loosely modeled on earlier satires, most notably, the *Sueños* (1607–1635) of the Spanish poet Francisco de Quevedo.

Following Quevedo's example, Goya started out thinking of his images as a series of dreams: we know this because he used the word *sueño* in the title of each of his preparatory sketches.* Also, though he ultimately decided to call his prints *caprichos*, he included a group of the earlier dream titles as captions in the final album. The prints are markedly nocturnal in feel; many swerve into nightmare. In the most famous of these,

* See Eleanor Sayre, "Introduction to the Prints and Drawings Series," in *Goya and the Spirit of Enlightenment*, Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1989.

"El sueño de la razón produce monstruos" (The sleep of reason produces monsters)—the album's original frontispiece—the artist shows himself actually dreaming, surrounded by a frightening tumult of night creatures. Their frenzied wing-flapping and moon-eyed intensity is a signal that in the twilight universe we're about to enter, anything can happen. *Take a look*, he seems to tell us, *and keep your wits about you*.

You could say that the terrain of dreams is my point of departure, too, yet these *caprichos* plumb a different sort of dreamscape, no less tinged with nightmare. The photographs, all stills shot from moving "footage" found in online videos, freely adapt Goya's subject matter, even as my captions sometimes quote his captions directly. The whole relies on some of the same devices that Goya put to use: the tension of words paired with images, the mixing of "high" and "low," and the freedom to wander among (and borrow from) art history's multitude of slyly tilting mirrors.

LIST OF PLATES

- 01 Be careful going down
Tenga cuidado al bajar
- 02 In good hands
En buenas manos
- 03 He scares the babysitters
*Asusta a las niñeras**
- 04 So well trained
Tan bien entrenado
- 05 There is much to suck
*Mucho hay que chupar**
- 06 So many followers
Tantos adeptos
- 07 Sink or swim
O te hundes o te sales a flote
- 08 More prisoners
Más prisioneros
- 09 Are you ready to learn new skills?
¿Está dispuesto a adquirir habilidades nuevas?
- 10 He's just a little boy!
¡Es solo un niño!
- 11 Love and death
*El amor y la muerte**
- 12 Test of obedience
Prueba de obediencia
- 13 Whose is all this paperwork?
¿De quién este papeleo?
- 14 The lucky one
La afortunada
- 15 A bad night
*Mala noche**

* Asterisks indicate a direct quotation from Goya's 1799 album. Philip Hofer's edition of *Los Caprichos* (Dover, 1969) is still an excellent introduction to the original series.

16	Correction <i>Corrección*</i>	33	No necesitan manos <i>No hands needed</i>
17	Because he broke the rules <i>Porque rompió las reglas</i>	34	Until death <i>Hasta la muerte*</i>
18	Trickle down <i>Riego por goteo</i>	35	Cured (again) <i>Curado (de nuevo)</i>
19	Stronger than an ox <i>Más fuerte que un buey</i>	36	Hands together <i>Las manos juntas</i>
20	So eloquent! <i>¡Qué boca de oro!*</i>	37	Through thick and thin <i>En las buenas y en las malas</i>
21	Just as you wish <i>A pedir de boca</i>	38	It's very big <i>Es muy grande</i>
22	If I were a rich girl <i>Si fuera una chica rica</i>	39	No more no less <i>Ni más ni menos*</i>
23	The plucking <i>El desplume</i>	40	A bid from the rafters <i>Una puja de las vigas</i>
24	Un genio sin duda <i>A genius no doubt</i>	41	The cleaning <i>La limpieza</i>
25	Out hunting for teeth <i>A caza de dientes*</i>	42	Pretty teacher <i>Linda maestra*</i>
26	Look what a surgeon can do <i>Lo que pueda un cirujano</i>	43	For your safety <i>Para su seguridad</i>
27	The game is rigged <i>El resultado está amañado</i>	44	Zzzzzz <i>Zzzzz</i>
28	Bon voyage <i>Buen viaje*</i>	45	Learn to swallow <i>Aprenda a tragar</i>
29	Whatever he says <i>Diga lo que diga</i>	46	She hides the seams <i>Oculto las costuras</i>
30	Interrogation <i>Interrogatorio</i>	47	Sleep overcomes them <i>Las rinde el sueño*</i>
31	God help them <i>Dios los ayude</i>	48	Place your bets <i>Hagan sus apuestas</i>
32	Anda suelto <i>He's on the loose</i>	49	Leap of faith <i>Salto de fe</i>

- 50 Take a peek!
¡Eche un vistazo!
- 51 Two of a kind
*Tal para cual**
- 52 He's blowing off steam
Se desahoga
- 53 Under the spell
Bajo el hechizo
- 54 Devout profession
*Devota profesión**
- 55 Experiments
*Ensayos**
- 56 They congratulate each other
Se felicitan entre ellos
- 57 The critique
La crítica
- 58 Calling to the demons
Llamando a los demonios
- 59 The speculators
Los especuladores
- 60 Nothing could be done about it
*No hubo remedio**
- 61 Open wide
Abra bien
- 62 Where is Mama going?
*¿Donde va mamá?**
- 63 Unexpected kiss
Beso inesperado
- 64 What one does to another
*Unos á otros**
- 65 Homage to the master
*Obsequio al maestro**
- 66 Everyone for himself
Sálvase quien pueda
- 67 Has his time come?
¿Le ha llegado la hora?
- 68 You cannot escape
*No te escaparás**
- 69 What's going on out there?
¿Qué está pasando ahí afuera?
- 70 And you believed them!
¡Y tu los creíste!
- 71 Won't they stop that racket?
¿No pararán ese aullido?
- 72 On the prowl
A hurtadillas
- 73 No one has seen us
*Nadie nos ha visto**
- 74 What a party!
¡Qué fiesta!
- 75 He found the button
Encontró el botón
- 76 Hurrah!
¡Viva!
- 77 Well, it's already over
Bueno, ya acabó
- 78 There's no need to panic
No hay motivo para el pánico
- 79 Don't mess with witches
No te metas con las brujas
- 80 It is time
*Ya es hora**

LOS CAPRICHOS

01 Be careful going down



Tenga cuidado al bajar

02 In good hands



En buenas manos

03 He scares the babysitters



Asusta a las niñas

04 So well trained



Tan bien entrenado

05 There is much to suck



Mucho hay que chupar

06 So many followers



Tantos adeptos

Raúl Quintanilla Armijo is an artist and critic based in Managua, Nicaragua. His work was included in the 56th Venice Biennale (2015) and in David Craven’s landmark study, *Art and Revolution in Latin America, 1910–1990* (Yale University Press, 2006). He is a founding editor of *Artefacto* (1990–2002) and a founding member of the Malagana Collective and editor of its magazine. He is a current member of the Mácula Collective and of the Somoto Blues Band. A solo exhibition of his work, *No tiene nombre* (Unspeakable), was held at the Museo de Arte y Diseño Contemporáneo in San José, Costa Rica in 2018.

Larissa Archer is a writer, critic and performing artist based in San Francisco and New York. She has contributed essays and interviews to *Frieze*, *Hyperallergic*, *SF Weekly*, *Huffington Post*, *The Rumpus* and *Art Practical*, among others. Her interviews of writers, artists and performing artists have ranged widely in subject matter—from Shostakovich (interview with Wendy Lesser) to striptease (Dita von Teese), and she has written evocatively about the experience of *being* photographed by Todd Hido in her essay, “I Modeled for Todd Hido,” published in the online journal *Vantage*.

“Where Goya wavered about the power of reason over his wild world of dreams...these *Caprichos* entangle us in a post-internet reality: their dark allure draws us in. From this shimmering ether, they seem to say, there is no escape.” —LARISSA ARCHER



Los Caprichos is an artist's book of palladium prints inspired by Francisco Goya's album of the same name, a series of eighty aquatint etchings he offered for sale directly to the Madrid public in 1799. Goya conceived of his images as a series of *suenos*—dreams—through which he could explore the foibles of his world with barbed impunity. This collection takes up the artist's mordant spirit with a photographic (and digital) twist: Newbery turns the lens on the phosphorescent dreamscapes that flow through our sundry *devices*, drawing pointed connections between our photographic life, miniaturized and ubiquitous, and its deeper roots in Western printmaking.

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