



The Arts Society South West  
SPECIAL INTEREST DAY  
Monday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2022  
Buckfast Abbey Conference Centre  
Buckfastleigh, Devon TQ11 0EG

## The Great Magicians of Spanish Art: Velázquez, Goya & Picasso

*Presented by*  
**Douglas Skeggs**

Over the centuries, Spain has been home to many important artists, but there are three who stand out above the others, artists who changed our perception of the world, who influenced generations to come, artists who were quite different to each other in their style, vision and personality and yet, strangely, had a great deal in common. These are the Great Magicians; **Velázquez, Goya & Picasso**. This Special Interest Day looks at the life and works of each of these three artists.

**Douglas Skeggs** read Fine Art at Magdalene College Cambridge and has been a lecturer on paintings since 1980. He is presently a regular lecturer at The Study Centre and Christie's course The History of Art Studies amongst others. He has taken numerous tours around Europe, he helped to set up Abercrombie & Kent's Private Label Tours and is presently cultural adviser to Ultimate Travel. He has also written and presented various TV documentaries, notably the Omnibus programme on Whistler.

**Timings:** 10.00 for a 10.30 start (Close 3.15 - 3.30pm)

**Cost:** £43, including coffee on arrival & a 2 course buffet lunch

**For more information or a booking form please contact:**

Sarah Merchant at [sarah.swstudydays@gmail.com](mailto:sarah.swstudydays@gmail.com)

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Non members are most welcome to attend.

### Lecture 1 Velázquez: “The Great Magician of Art”

Although not always acknowledged nowadays, this 17th century Spanish artist is one of the most influential painters in the history of art. Born in Seville in 1599, where he made his name producing penetratingly observed scenes of everyday life, he moved up to Madrid where his portraiture was so successful that by the age of twenty-four he was the only artist permitted to paint the king of Spain. After his death, the cool elegance of his style, his ability to discover a sense of dignity and humanity in even the simplest of subjects, coupled with his breathtakingly daring treatment of the paint was widely admired by generations of artists from Whistler to Picasso, who famously described him as “The Great Magician of Art”.

### Lecture 2. Goya: Art on the Edge of Darkness

Born in southern Spain in 1746, Goya’s early career was unremarkable. Failing to get into the San Fernando Academy in Madrid he travelled to Italy and then made a living for himself producing portraits and tapestry cartoons for the Spanish Royal Palaces. Then, in his mid forties, he was struck down by a sudden and violent illness and from that moment his art began to change. From a painter of simple portraits and gentle, satirical scenes of rural life he began to produce dark and turbulent images, fused together from the nightmares of his imagination and the horrors that he witnessed in the Peninsular War into some of the most haunting and disturbing images of western art.

### Lecture 3. Picasso: “Art is a Lie through which we understand the Truth”

Picasso is one of the most famous and controversial figures of the 20th century. Even today his work triggers mixed and often violent reactions from art lovers. This lecture aims to calm those fears. It follows his early career from his childhood in Spain, where his unique talent was first recognized, to the garrets and back streets of Paris where the poetic and wistful images of the Blue Period were transformed into the daring experiments with form and structure that became known as Cubism. It examines the ideas and hopes that he nurtured, the friends and influences he met along the way, the technical problems he overcame and the single minded determination that enabled him to break every rule of painting, alter the course of modern art and yet remain a classical painter in the long tradition of western art.