



Goya Region harnesses artist to reverse decline

Sam Jones
Madrid

Two hundred years after he covered the walls of his house near Madrid with febrile visions of Saturn devouring his son, a witches' sabbath and a slowly drowning dog, Francisco de Goya has been summoned home to help reverse the fortunes of the Spanish region where he was born in 1746.

The painter, printmaker and chronicler of war, cruelty and reason's slumbers, studied in Italy and painted for the court in Madrid before dying in Bordeaux in 1828. But he was born in Fuendetodos, a small town 27 miles south of Zaragoza in the north-eastern Spanish region of Aragón.

Today, Fuendetodos and the 14 other towns and villages that make up the Campo de Belchite are



PHOTOGRAPHS: TERRITORIO GOYA; CHRISTOPHEL FINE ART/UIG VIA GETTY



▼ The plan for the installation that will mark the 275th anniversary of Goya's birth

▼ An artist's impression of the reconstructed Quinto del Sordo



▼ A photograph by Isabel Muñoz inspired by Goya's painting *Saturno devorando a su hijo*, or *Saturn Devouring his Son* (left)



▲ Jean Laurent's photograph of one of Goya's Black Paintings, taken in the Quinto del Sordo in 1874

to empower the towns and villages in the Belchite region."

Last year, Spain's socialist-led government acknowledged the problem of *la España vaciada* - the hollowed-out Spain - by creating a ministry for what it termed "the demographic challenge".

About 90% of Spain's population - approximately 42 million people - are squeezed into 1,500 towns and cities that occupy 30% of the land.

Not many corners of *la España vaciada* have a cultural figure as titanic as Goya. By the end of the year, Territorio Goya hopes to have two cultural projects under way to mark the 275th anniversary of the artist's birth, and the second centenary of the *Pinturas Negras* (Black Paintings) that he applied to the walls of the now demolished Quinto del Sordo near Madrid.

The first is a reconstruction of the two floors of the Quinto del Sordo, with full-scale images of the Black Paintings that were photographed in 1874 before being stripped out, transferred to canvas, and ending up the Prado in Madrid.

"We're hoping to produce a visceral, organic impact in visitors; a shock," says Martínez Calzón.

The second has involved commissioning 15 artists to reinterpret the Black Paintings so one can be exhibited in each of the 15 towns and villages in the region.

While Martínez Calzón wants to see many more visitors making the pilgrimage to Fuendetodos, the project is also about ensuring that Goya finally receives his dues.

"The idea is to look after the person that Goya was because of what he meant to Spain and to the world," he says.

invoking Goya's name and legacy as they try to cling to the map.

The Territorio Goya association - a group of artists, curators, academics, residents, culture and tourism experts, and specialists in depopulation - is attempting to stem the decline of a region with just 4.8 inhabitants per square kilometre and an annual per capita income of about €8,600 (£7,300).

"By using the name of Goya, who was born in this little town near Zaragoza, we're trying to do something a little bit like what Stratford-upon-Avon has done with William Shakespeare, or what Eisenach has done with Bach, or what Figueres has done with Salvador Dalí," says Julio Martínez Calzón, Territorio Goya's president.

"Goya has a profound human, cultural and social pull because of the circumstances in which he created his works and because of his own capacity to reach people all over the world. We want to use that

Disgraced tycoon Tapie and wife attacked in burglary near Paris

Agence France-Presse
Paris

The former French minister and scandal-ridden former owner of Adidas Bernard Tapie and his wife were attacked during a burglary of their home, police said yesterday.

Four men broke into their house in Combs-la-Ville near Paris around 00.30 am (22.30 GMT on Saturday). They were beaten and tied up with electrical cords. Dominique Tapie managed to free herself and reach a neighbour to call the police. She was taken to hospital with minor injuries having been struck in the face.

The burglars had "pulled her by the hair because they wanted to know where the treasure was," the mayor of Combs-la-Ville, Guy Geoffroy, told AFP. "But of course there was no treasure, and the fact that they didn't find any only made the violence worse."

Her husband, who is 78, was hit on the head with a club, the prosecutor Beatrice Angelelli told AFP, but declined to be taken to hospital. "He is shattered, very tired," said his grandson, Rodolphe. "He was sitting on a chair when he was hit."

The burglars broke into the couple's home, a vast estate known as the Moulin de Breuil, through a first-floor window, undetected by the guards.

They made off with two watches, including a Rolex, earrings, bracelets and a ring, according to a source.

Tapie was a Socialist minister who rose from humble beginnings to build a sporting and media empire, but later ran into a string of legal problems.

He made a fortune early in his career by taking over failing companies, stripping their assets and selling them for profit during the years of

financial deregulation in France. He often flaunted his wealth, including by buying a 72-metre yacht and a football club, Olympique de Marseille. He was briefly minister for urban affairs in François Mitterrand's government in 1992.

Tapie was found guilty of corruption, tax fraud and misuse of corporate assets in a series of cases, jailed for five months and was released in 1997.

Police are treating the burglary as a violent robbery and kidnapping, a source told AFP.