

The Village

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Maria

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“You have to work and think about why you are doing what you’re doing. Play is the only way to mastery.” - Francisco de Goya y Lucientes

In 1931, while The Village on Echo Park Avenue was being built, Andrew Mellon, U.S. Secretary of the Treasury from 1921 to 1932, bought *The Marquesa de Pontejos* by Francisco de Goya y Lucientes. The painting was commissioned in 1783 as a formal portrait of María Ana de Pontejos y Sandoval. One can imagine that the almost doll-like appearance of the figure and the pastoral Gainsboroughesque landscape were acutely designed to please Goya's patron. The painting remained in Sandoval's family until it was sold through M. Knoedler & Co. to Mellon. It is perhaps the portrait's lack of discreet subversion, characteristic of Goya's later high society paintings, which made it approachable and appealing to Mellon. He was the catalyst and main donor of the National Gallery in Washington, D.C. When he died in 1937, his collection was transferred to the museum where the painting remains today.