

Honoré Daumier

Mirror of Society

6.2. – 25.5.2026

The political circumstances are unstable, a nefarious clique abuses its power, the economy is in crisis, and the social situation is growing ever more complex and confused. Descriptions of how things were in post-revolutionary France during the 19th century can seem oddly contemporary, and the same holds true for the timelessly topical art of the great Honoré Daumier.

With a sharp quill and incorruptible Daumier holds up a mirror to his era, denounces abuses of power and social injustices. In his merciless radicality, he often came in conflict with censors and once even went to prison for the sake of art's freedom. As a sharp observer, Daumier also depicted the everyday lives of people in the modern city.

It was in 1936, against the backdrop of fascism's rise, that the ALBERTINA Museum gave its first major Daumier exhibition—whose curator Ernst Kris was driven into exile later on. Now, 90 years later, the ALBERTINA Museum—with support from works on loan from the Städelischen Museumsverein—is presenting this French artist in a new light. Alongside a large number of lithographs and drawings, several of his famous paintings and sculptures will also be on exhibit as well as a filmic compilation of Daumier's works with music by no lesser personages than Paul and Linda McCartney.