



IMPRESSIONS OF PARIS

LAUTREC, DEGAS, DAUMIER

Education resource for secondary and senior secondary students

INTRODUCTION

This education resource is designed to assist teachers and students in exploring the National Gallery of Australia's exhibition *Impressions of Paris: Lautrec, Degas, Daumier*. Activities and inquiry questions are suited to Visual Arts and History subjects in the Australian Curriculum, especially Years 9 and 10. The Year 9 history focus on *The Making of the Modern World* from 1750 to 1918 is particularly relevant.

Impressions of Paris examines the major contribution to French art made by three key figures: Honoré-Victorin Daumier (1808–1879), Edgar Degas (1834–1917) and Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec (1864–1901). A generation apart, each was a consummate draughtsman whose innovative compositions and enthusiasm for modern subject matter played a significant role in artistic developments in France over the nineteenth century.

The works of art can be used as primary sources to evidence events and attitudes during a period of rapid change. Making and responding activities for Visual Arts students cover the changing role of the artist and the art world, and provide opportunities to explore making options directly inspired by works of art in the exhibition. Secondary and Senior Secondary students of History, English, Civics and Citizenship, French, Drama and Media Studies will also find questions and activities relevant to their curriculum content.

This resource is divided thematically into eight sections, each of which includes a key image and supplementary images with questions and activities for the different subject areas. The themes are: Historical context, The art of politics, The Salon: inspiration, aspiration, desperation, Innovation, The art of performance, Women in society, Modern life and Literary influences.

More images and information are available on the National Gallery of Australia's website at nga.gov.au/Impressions.

The resource is useful for either pre-visit preparation or post-visit activities to consolidate a research focus.

For Visual Arts students other National Gallery of Australia online resources will be useful, in particular the websites for *Degas: Master of French Art* (nga.gov.au/Exhibition/Degas) and *Toulouse-Lautrec: Paris and the Moulin Rouge* (nga.gov.au/Exhibition/Toulouse).



Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec *The jockey [Le jockey]* 1899, crayon, brush and spatter lithograph, printed in six colours
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

1. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Background

Paris is the quintessential city of the late nineteenth century, capturing the imagination of artists and writers, city dwellers and travellers. It was not the most powerful or prosperous city in Europe, but rather a place of excitement and possibility—the creative hub of Europe. The urban environment of Paris became synonymous with frenetic activity where social boundaries were dismantled and residents of all social classes and tourists rubbed shoulders with one another.

The cityscape of Paris was invigorated from 1853 as a result of a large urban renewal project commissioned by Napoleon III and designed by Baron George Eugène Haussmann. In the Paris of old, with its narrow streets and densely populated quarters, barricades could be built at a moment's notice and potentially threaten the Second Empire. Haussmann's scheme resulted in the destruction of many inner city streets, with grand boulevards taking their place.

The woods on the outskirts of Paris, known as the Bois de Boulogne, had fallen into neglect and were also redesigned by Haussmann in the manner of London's Hyde Park. Within the woods the principal racecourse of Paris, The Hippodrome de Longchamp, was established creating a popular venue for French high society. Parisians embraced their leisure time at these locations and others such as the democratic and open-air café concert made popular during the Exposition Universelle of 1867. Charles Garnier's Paris Opera House was completed in 1874 and could accommodate 2100 people, providing yet another social venue to inspire artists of the day.

One place to escape Haussmann's vision was Montmartre, the medieval town on a hill overlooking Paris where a melting pot of characters created a diverse social milieu, enticing many artists to live and visit. It was here that the Moulin Rouge, the most prominent dance hall of Paris, opened in 1889. In the same year the Exposition Universelle coincided with the centenary of the Revolution, signalling the city's path to modernity with the triumphant completion of the Eiffel Tower. Parisians could even swim at the refurbished Deligny baths where Daumier so humorously captured the fraught process of bathing with what seemed to be the entire populace.

This was the political and social setting that inspired Honoré-Victorin Daumier, Edgar Degas and Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec to create some of their most memorable art; visual responses that have become synonymous with the progressive atmosphere of Paris from the mid nineteenth century to the beginning of the next.



Com. d'après un tableau de M. Delacroix

Lith. de Daumier

ENFONCÉ LAFAYETTE ! ATTIRAPPE, MON VIEUX !

Honoré Daumier Lafayette buried! ... take that, old fellow! Enfoncé Lafayette! ... attrape mon vieux! Association mensuelle, May 1834 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

Activities:

- Write a summary of historical events to explain Daumier's lithograph *Lafayette buried! ... take that, old fellow!* [*Enfoncé Lafayette! ... attrape, mon vieux!*] 1834. In your answer comment on the location of this scene and its significance.
- Develop a timeline for Paris from the birth of Daumier to the death of Lautrec. Illustrate your timeline using works from each of the three artists to highlight key events. Create a parallel version of major events in Melbourne, the Australian city often referred to as the Paris of the South. What significant event occurred in Australia in the year of Lautrec's death?
- Compare the Sydney Harbour Bridge project and destruction of The Rocks with Haussmann's redesign of Paris satirically captured in Daumier's lithograph *Remember our marriage chamber, Adelaide ...* [*Voilà pourtant notre chambre nuptiale, Adelaide ...*] 1853. What were some of the social and health considerations during the construction periods for both projects? How did Australian artists record the Harbour Bridge project?
- Research the Exposition Universelles of 1855, 1867, 1878, 1889 and 1900. How did each of these projects affect the prosperity of Paris from a commercial and industrial perspective?
- Lautrec cleverly captures the physical effort of both horse and rider in his lithograph *The jockey* [*Le jockey*] 1899. Discuss the technique of foreshortening that Lautrec has used here. You might also like to research the painting titled *The Lamentation of Christ* c 1480 by Andrea Mantegna to learn more. Practice drawing a figure or animal using this technique. What important landmark in Paris that has relevance for the artist can be seen in the distance from this position on the racetrack?



H.D.

Le passé. Le présent. L'avenir.

On a dit qu'il y a de la vie dans la mort.

L. de Buzanville, pour l'éditeur.

Honoré Daumier *The past, the present, the future* [*Le passé, le présent, l'avenir*] *La Caricature*, 9 January 1834
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

2. THE ART OF POLITICS

Background

Daumier was working for the press, the powerful new force in nineteenth century cultural life in Paris, at a time when the political climate was volatile. The range of his commentary is vast and spans the period of King Louis-Philippe's July Monarchy and the Second Empire. In contrast Degas' career begins in the Second Empire and Lautrec's in the Third Republic.

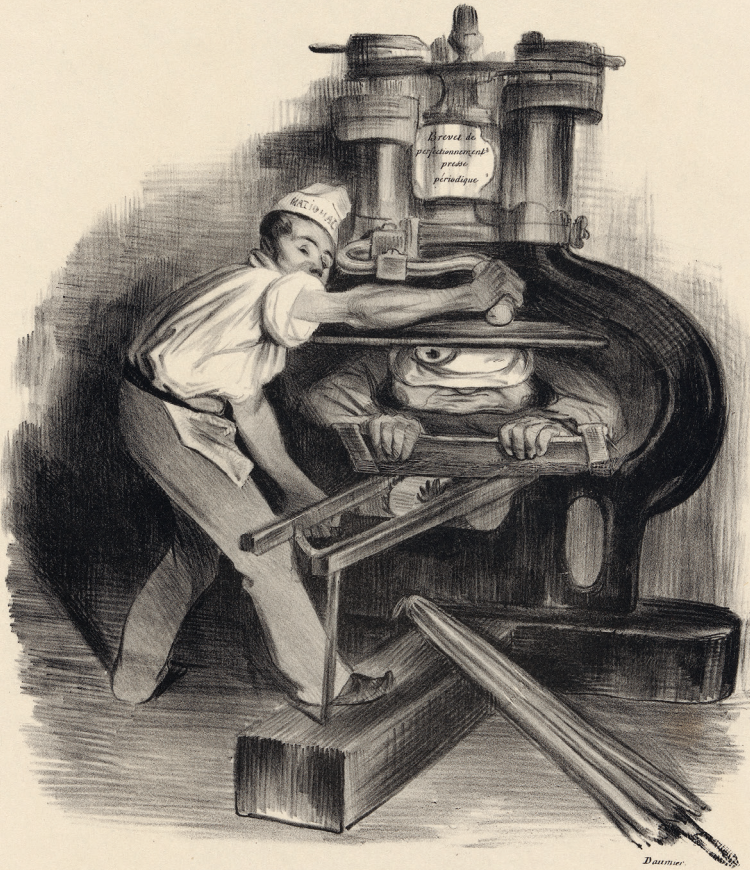
Daumier was a gifted caricaturist and satirist renowned for lampooning the government and French bourgeois society. From the 1830s he contributed lithographic caricatures to the weekly journal *La Caricature* and the daily newspaper *Le Charivari*. During his artistic career Daumier experienced both freedom of the press and heavy-handed censorship. His caricatures mocking King Louis-Philippe were judged to be subversive so the publisher, Charles Philipon, closed down *La Caricature* and modified the approach of *Le Charivari*. As his work came under closer scrutiny, Daumier focused his attention on the foibles of those in French society who supported the King and his government.

King Louis-Philippe had become increasingly unpopular during his reign, having failed to support the bourgeoisie's suffrage demands, and finally abdicated in February 1848. A second French Republic under a provisional government was established along with universal male suffrage. Daumier was a lifelong Republican and after the 1848 revolution and the end of the Second Empire, his caricatures once more became political.

By the June 1848 elections the Republicans had split and by the end of the year Louis Napoléon Bonaparte was elected as President. On 2 December 1851 Napoléon staged a coup and the Second Republic came to an end.

Activities

- In one of his pro-Republic caricatures Daumier captured a woman entering government chambers through a light-filled doorway while corrupt politicians seek to leave the rooms. Who does this figure represent and how relevant is her presence in France today?
- In 1830 Daumier joined a talented group of artists brought together by Charles Philipon, the entrepreneurial journalist, lithographer and publisher. How can you tell that the artists involved in these publications supported an anti-monarchist Republican cause? Use three of Daumier's caricatures as evidence to support your answer.



Ah! tu veux te frotter à la presse!!

L. de Baugé, rue Furstemberg.

chez Aubert, galerie nationale des arts.

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Honoré Daumier *Ah! you'd meddle with the press would you!! [Ah! Tu veux te frotter à la presse!!]* *La Caricature*, 3 October 1833
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

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- Study Daumier's prints in the *Impressions of Paris* exhibition and list the characteristics that determine whether an image is a caricature or portrait. In your answer define the term 'physiognomy'.
- How did technical developments in lithography affect communication about political events and what was the resulting impact on French society? How is this change expressed in the lithograph *Ah! you'd meddle with the press would you!!* [*Ah! tu veux te frotter à la presse!!*] 1833?
- In the French language *poire* [pear] is also slang for 'fat-face' or 'mug'. Daumier's image of Louis-Philippe came to signify the paunchy, heavily jowled King. Study this caricature and the controversy surrounding its publication and develop a caricature of another key player from the period to rival Daumier's *The past, the present, the future* [*Le passé, le présent, l'avenir*] 1834.
- Study Daumier's caricatures of King Louis-Philippe. What aspects of the King's physiognomy has the artist focused on in his prints? Consider a contemporary political figure in national or international politics and develop a caricature with text to reflect a controversial incident in their political career.
- By viewing Daumier's prints and discussing French politics of the period determine who you think subscribed to the weekly *La Caricature* and the daily *Le Charivari*. How does the title of each image affect our understanding of Daumier's rationale for its production? Consider the effect of audience then and now and discuss whether you think Daumier's caricatures have stood the test of time.
- As a class discuss contemporary history and identify situations where freedom of the press and censorship have played a role in political events.
- View political cartoons on the Museum of Australian Democracy's *Behind the lines* exhibition website (behindthelines.moadoph.gov.au/2014) or current ones from newspaper websites. Choose three cartoons to compare and contrast to the examples of Daumier's work in the *Impressions of Paris* exhibition. Discuss who is represented, how they are depicted and the relevant events.
- Collect a variety of discarded daily newspapers. Place some pages in the sun for various lengths of time so that fading and discolouration are different with each sheet. Develop a collage using your recycled paper with images and text to create a political message.

FANTASIES.



M. Martinet, 119, 23, boulevard de la Vierge.

Johnstonson's Lith. & Engraving, Perth.

Honoré Daumier Battle between the schools - Idealism versus Realism [Combat des écoles - l'idéalisme et le réalisme] Le Charivari, 24 April 1855 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

3. THE SALON: INSPIRATION, ASPIRATION, DESPERATION

Background

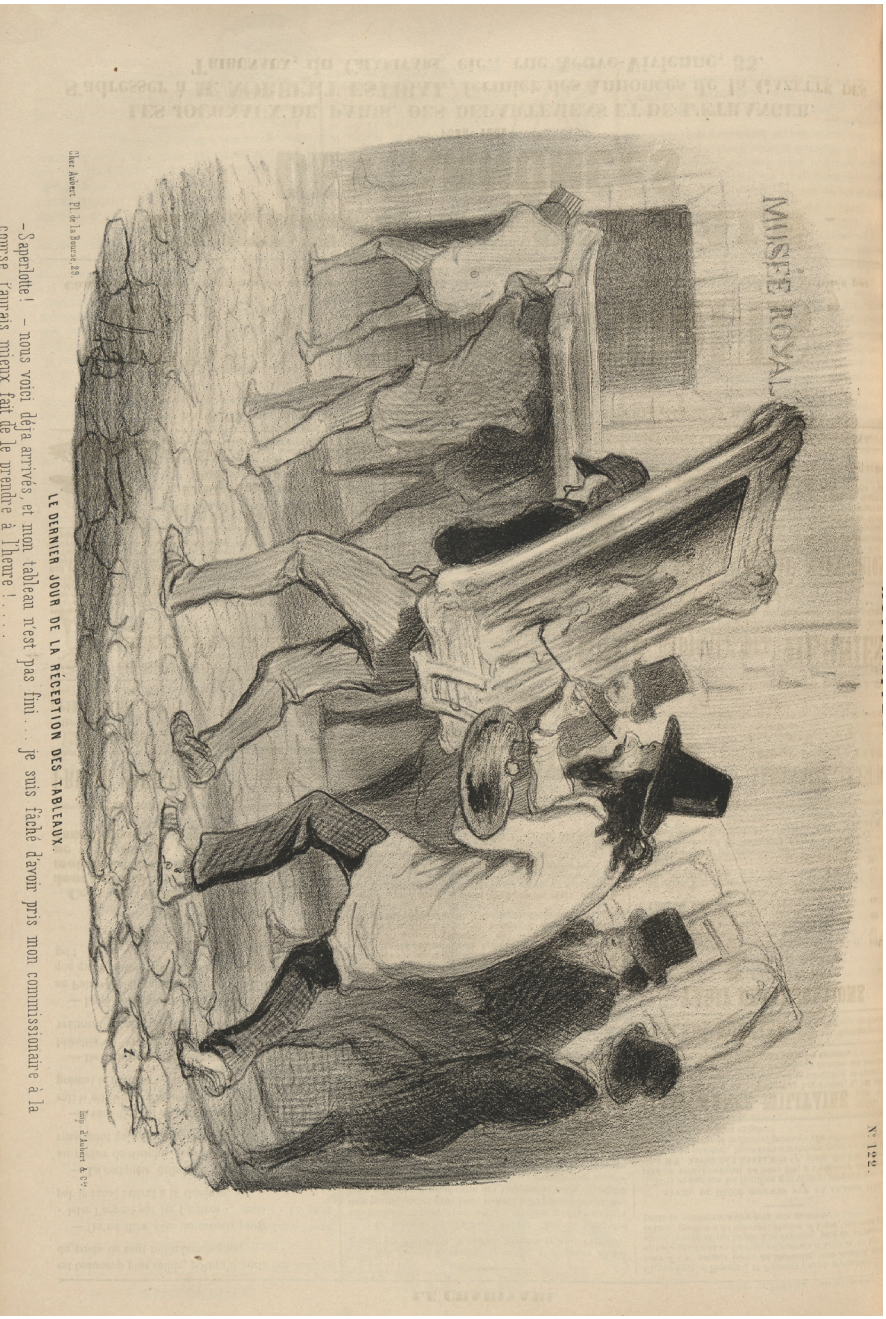
By the mid nineteenth century there was growing dissatisfaction in the art world with the government-sponsored Salon exhibitions. The process of selection was rigid and the styles and themes of the art chosen often lacked relevance to the age. Yet the Salon exhibitions were a key source of patronage for the artists, as well as an important social occasion to establish a name professionally.

Salon success and the resulting state or official patronage changed the fortunes of many artists, and the desire for recognition reinforced a fastidious Academic style and perpetuated the choice of traditional subjects. This situation resulted in regular protests from artists and the public about the rejected paintings, culminating in the Napoleon III initiative, the Salon des Refusés, in 1863. This exhibition included works by James McNeill Whistler, Camille Pissarro, Henri Fantin-Latour and Edouard Manet.

As a result of growing criticism, the French government relinquished control of the Salon in 1881 making way for new incarnations. Art dealership, private galleries and art criticism prospered with artists seeking alternative non-traditional sources of patronage and venues for exhibiting their work, most notably the eight Impressionist exhibitions held from 1874 to 1886. These changes resulted in the emergence of a profusion of artistic styles and subjects in keeping with contemporary cultural developments.

Activities

- What can you tell about the changes underway in the display of art and the role of the artist in French society of the mid to late nineteenth century from studying Daumier's prints of artists and the Salon? In particular discuss Daumier's *Battle between the schools—Idealism versus Realism* [*Combat des Écoles—L'Idéalisme et Le Réalisme*] 1855. What do these terms mean and why does Daumier highlight the different approaches?
- In *The comedian of the group* [*Le plus farceur de la société*] 1847 Daumier anticipates a famous painting by Edouard Manet titled *Luncheon on the grass* [*Le déjeuner sur l'herbe*] 1863. Research Manet's painting to discover how it was received when first shown at the Salon des Refusés in 1863.
- Discuss features of contemporary life that you observe in the city or town where you live. If possible, visit a busy area and observe the many activities on view. Do not take a sketchbook with you, rely on your visual memory to record what you see. Return to the classroom and sketch from memory people undertaking a variety of activities that you



LE DERNIER JOUR DE LA RÉCEPTION DES TABLEAUX.

—Saperlotte! — nous voici déjà arrivés, et mon tableau n'est pas fini... je suis fâché d'avoir pris mon commissaire à la course, j'aurais mieux fait de le prendre à l'heure! — Le Charivari, 20 February 1846 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

Honoré Daumier THE LAST DAY FOR SUBMITTING A PAINTING. 'Dati' We're here already and my picture isn't finished! How annoying that I hired the porter for the distance and not by the hour! [LE DERNIER JOUR DE LA RÉCEPTION DES TABLEAUX; Saperlotte! — nous voici déjà arrivés, et mon tableau n'est pas fini... je suis fâché d'avoir pris mon commissaire à la course, j'aurais mieux fait de le prendre à l'heure!] Le Charivari, 20 February 1846 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

observed. Display your drawings as a group in the classroom to capture the diverse and individual responses to this experience.

- Skilled draughtsmanship was a key feature of the work of the three artists included in this exhibition. Degas in particular admired the Neo-classical artist, Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, who at their first meeting advised the young artist to 'study line ... draw lots of lines'. Look closely at Degas' works in the *Impressions of Paris* exhibition and choose one to discuss in terms of line (250 words).
- Degas was closely involved in the development and delivery of the Impressionist exhibitions in Paris from 1874 until 1886. Research the eight exhibitions and highlight the key artists involved in each, some of the controversies that occurred, works of art that challenged the viewing public and significant turning points.
- What avenues exist for artists to display their work today? Research the state and local government supported galleries in your area as well as artist-run spaces. In what other places can emerging artists now display their work that did not exist previously?
- Do you think the arts establishment still has a significant role in determining the success of an artist today? If so, why? Give examples!
- The appearance of Degas' *Little dancer aged fourteen* in the Impressionist exhibition of 1881 caused a sensation in the art world. Research the sculpture, including the original model built of wax, at nga.gov.au/Exhibition/Degas. Under the 'Gallery' heading choose theme 04 'The ballet and theatre' and progress to image no 23.
- Be inspired by Degas' use of everyday materials including wax and build a sculpture of a figure following completion of a series of preparatory drawings of figures in motion seen from different viewpoints. Study Daumier's print *Exhibited amid the Painting section, Sculpture puts a bad face upon it* [*Triste contenance de la Sculpture placée au milieu de la Peinture*] 1857 to understand the battle between sculpture and painting in the Salon in the lead up to the display of Degas' controversial sculpture.



Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec *Passenger from number 54 – on a cruise* [La Passagère du 54 – promenade en yacht] 1896
brush, crayon and spatter lithograph, printed in seven colours National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

4. INNOVATION

Background

By the mid nineteenth century the technique of lithography had fallen out of favour with many artists. The process had come to be associated with cheap, poor quality, mass-produced prints, and many artists turned to etching instead.

In contrast, Daumier embraced the process and from the early 1830s contributed lithographs to the weekly journal *La Caricature* and the daily newspaper *Le Charivari*. Many of these caricatures reveal his mastery in portraying the human figure and his skill in depicting space and movement.

Daumier's consummate draughtsmanship allowed him to explore the technique of lithography with over 4000 lithographs executed during his lifetime. The artist's experimentation with the medium inspired Degas to continue this legacy of inventiveness in his own practice. Degas acquired over 1800 of Daumier's prints for his private collection and reference. These prints provided a repertoire of Daumier's subjects, viewpoints and lighting effects for Degas to ponder, distil and inform his own work. Lautrec further broadened the subject of contemporary life and introduced more radical compositions, bold colour, simplified style and insightful characterisation, and in turn became a notable precursor to later developments in twentieth century art.

Degas began making monotypes in the mid 1870s and enjoyed experimenting with the process to create innovative images. He used two techniques: one subtractive method, which involved covering a copper plate with ink or paint, then creating the image in the ink by wiping with a rag, brush or other implement, even the fingers. The other production approach was an additive process where the image was created by drawing or brushing ink or paint directly onto a clean plate. With both methods the paper support was then moistened and placed over the plate, then pressure was applied in a printing press.

Activities

- Why do you think the exhibition has been called *Impressions of Paris*?
- List four features of the lithographic process that made it an attractive option for artists.
- How did Degas' experimentation with the monotype process affect the rest of his creative practice?
- Listen to the audio tour entry on *Pauline and Virginie Cardinal chatting with some admirers 1876–77* at nga.gov.au/Exhibition/Degas. Under the 'Gallery' heading highlight theme 03 'Painterly prints' and progress to image no 6. Determine whether the artist has used the subtractive or additive monotype process to make this print.



Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec *The box with the golden mask* [La loge au mascaron doré] 1893 crayon, brush, spatter lithograph with scraper, printed in five colours The Poynton Bequest 2010 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

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- Research the history of Japanese prints in France. List some of the features of Japanese prints that were incorporated in the art of Degas and his contemporaries.
- *The box with the golden mask* [*La loge au mascaron doré*] 1893 by Lautrec was commissioned by André Antoine for the cover of the theatre program for the play *Le Missionnaire*, which opened in 1894. Discuss the innovations that Lautrec has made in this lithograph and note whether Daumier and Degas may have inspired its composition.
- What role do you think developments in photography played in influencing the way artists in the late nineteenth century approached composition? Study some of Degas' photographs at nga.gov.au/Exhibition/Degas. Under the 'Gallery' heading choose theme 05 'The painter photographer' and listen specifically to entry 14 *Nude (drying herself)* 1895–96. Compare this composition to the lithograph *After the bath III* [*Après le bain III*] 1891–92 in the *Impressions of Paris* exhibition to discover connections between the two.
- Lautrec was a master lithographer and used seven colours in the print *Passenger from number 54—on a cruise* [*La passagère du 54—promenade en yacht*] 1896. If facilities at your school allow (if not use another printing technique), plan a composition where you focus on the side or rear view of a figure inspired by works of art in the exhibition. Use at least four separate colour plates to develop your print and experiment with techniques to provide texture to the figure's clothing and other aspects of your composition.
- If possible, practice copying the form of a Classical Greek or Roman sculpture if plaster versions in manageable sizes are available to you. As you develop your skill start to refine your lines so that you have at least five versions based on the same sculpture. Your first drawing should be intricately detailed and your final drawing a minimal interpretation with the remaining three versions a constant distillation of earlier attempts.
- Complete the same process as above using an iPad app such as sketchclub. Try and overlay your drawings to create a sense of depth and textural effects.
- As a class activity research the papermaking process in Japan and France and then make your own paper using the most suitable process for your classroom environment. Once you have made enough paper for everyone in the class practice drawing a figure in an everyday pose using a combination of pastel and black chalk. Talk about the qualities of the paper and how it enables you to achieve textural effects.
- In 1906 when reflecting on his life's work Degas said: 'If I could live my life over again I should do nothing but black and white'. Discuss this statement as a class after completing some of the drawing tasks in this section.



Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec *Eldorado: Aristide Bruant* 1892 brush and spatter lithograph, printed in five colours
Acquired through the National Gallery of Australia Foundation 2010 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

5. THE ART OF PERFORMANCE

Background

From the 1850s Daumier's caricatures reflect his growing interest in the theatre as a subject. His inventive compositions highlight radical spatial arrangements with the stage viewed from the orchestra pit, from the audience, or behind the scenes. Degas and Lautrec continued to investigate the theatre and performance in their art, stimulated in part by the new entertainment venues opening in Paris in the late nineteenth century.

While Degas focuses more on anonymous depictions of dancers at the ballet, as with the drawing *Dancer in fourth position* [*Danseuse en quatrième position*] c 1885, Lautrec highlights distinctive personal characteristics of individual performers. These included the singer-songwriter Aristide Bruant; La Goulue, the dancer of the lewd *chahut*, who shocked and intrigued crowds at the Moulin Rouge; Yvette Guilbert, who sang haunting songs of the desperate people; and Jane Avril, with her ethereal dynamic dancing.

These artists performed in venues where distinctions were blurred between the entertainer and spectator, working-class and aristocrat, and high and low art. Lautrec's subjects were the inhabitants of the Parisian demi-monde and the settings were the cabarets artistiques, the café-concerts and the dance halls of Montmartre where the artist found acceptance and inspiration.

Activities

- Lautrec developed the poster from merely an instrument of advertising to an art form in its own right. Develop a print of a contemporary performer including text inspired by the posters of Lautrec. Choose a limited palette of three colours, be meticulous with the registration of each layer of colour and think about the effect of negative space. Experiment with a spatter technique using a toothbrush dipped in paint. If this process isn't possible, develop a collage using fine tissue paper inspired by one of Toulouse-Lautrec's major theatre posters. Limit your palette to four colours and overlay text to advertise a celebrity and venue of the period or a contemporary performer you enjoy.
- Collaborate with your school's Performing Arts Department to develop posters using the monotype technique to advertise a major school production. Spend time with the performing arts students discussing Lautrec's innovative theatre posters and learn about their production including key characters, setting etc. Once your monotypes are completed add textural effects inspired by Lautrec's spatter technique and use of brush and crayon highlights. Your teachers may wish to choose one of your designs to advertise the upcoming performance.



Edgar Degas *Dancer in fourth position* [*Danseuse en quatrième position*] c 1885 black chalk and pastel
Gift of Margaret Hannah Olley AC 2008 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

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- Daumier, Degas and Lautrec were all masters of composition, especially their creative use of various viewpoints. Study Daumier's *The dancer who prides himself on perpetuating the finest traditions of Auguste Vestris* [*Le danseur que se pique d'avoir conservé les belles traditions de Vestris*] 1857, Degas' *Mlle Bécot at the Café des Ambassadeurs* [*Mlle Bécot au Café des Ambassadeurs*] 1877–78 and Lautrec's *Divan Japonais* 1893 to help you understand the connections between the three artists. Write a visual analysis of each work of art focusing on composition only. Devise your own charcoal drawing of a stage performance you have experienced using these three works from the exhibition as your inspiration.
- Research the life of one of the performers found in Lautrec's theatre posters. Then write a dialogue between the artist, performer and venue owner/promoter to highlight the purpose of the poster, how it will be displayed and distributed in Paris, and the key elements that Lautrec will highlight about the performance.



Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec *Moulin Rouge: La Goulue*
1891

brush and spatter lithograph, printed in four colours
Acquired through the National Gallery of Australia
Foundation and the Poynton Bequest 2010
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

LES DIVORCEUSES.



Chez Aubert, Pl. de la Bourse.

Imp. Aubert & Co.

— Citoyennes on fait courir le bruit que le divorce est sur le point de nous être refusé
constituons - nous ici en permanence et déclarons que la patrie est en danger!

Honoré Daumier 'Citizenesses! A rumour is being spread that they're about to take away our right to divorce! Let us sit here in permanent session and declare a national emergency!' *Le Charivari*, 4 August 1848 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

6. WOMEN IN SOCIETY

Background

For Daumier, assertive women were not seekers of liberty and equality; rather they represented an aspect of self-obsessed bourgeois behaviour. In the series *Blue stockings* [*Le Bas-bleus*] 1844 educated women seem to be oblivious to the predicament of a child upturned in a bucket, or to fellow readers in a library. Women rallying for their right to divorce and justice are seen as formidable figures in the full fury of their quest, or in celebratory mode toasting their emancipation.

In contrast to Daumier's representations of women, both Degas and Lautrec provide sensitive insights into the world of less fortunate women living on the fringe of Parisian society. Following Degas' lead Lautrec chose to focus on the lives of prostitutes and performers. He found these women to be uninhibited models, with one establishment becoming the subject of his *Elles* suite of colour lithographs (1896). Here Lautrec exhibits empathy and tenderness as his subjects are revealed in intimate portrayals going about their daily routines such as bathing, dressing and breakfasting.

Lautrec was influenced by the formal qualities of Japanese woodblock prints known as *ukiyo-e*. A major exhibition of Japanese prints was held at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in 1890 inspiring many artists of the day, including Degas who purchased examples for his collection.

Activities

- Study a number of the caricatures in Daumier's *Blue stockings* [*Les Bas-bleus*] series and discuss the artist's impression of the changing role of women in French society in the mid nineteenth century. Write a paragraph about modern life in French society from the perspective of one of the women in these prints.
- Why were the images of women in the *Impressions of Paris* exhibition so unconventional at the time?
- Degas was a keen observer of everyday life and spent many hours documenting the leisure and working activities of the French, focusing primarily on women's roles within these pursuits. Compare Daumier's depictions of women in his *Blue stockings* [*Les Bas-bleus*] series and Degas' focus in later years on working women at nga.gov.au/Exhibition/Degas. Under the 'Gallery' heading choose theme 06 'Working women' and view images of women ironing and visiting the Louvre. How do these images represent the changing role of women in French society? Search for images of women in Australian society of the same period and comment on the similarities and differences in their experiences.



Edgar Degas *In the salon* [Au salon] 1876–77 monotype in black National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

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- Research the suffrage movement and discover when voting rights were extended to women in France and other European nations. Include these dates on a timeline along with the Australian and New Zealand experience of similar events and achievements.



Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec from *Elles* (portfolio including lithographic cover, lithographic frontispiece and 10 colour lithographs, published by Gustave Pellet, Paris, 1896) *Woman with a tub – the tub* [*Femme au tub – le tub*] 1896 crayon, brush and spatter lithograph, printed in five colours National Gallery of Australia, Canberra



Paris, chez M. Goussier, Palais National, sous le Vestibule.

Paris, chez M. Goussier, Palais National, sous le Vestibule.

IMPRESSIONS DE VOYAGE EN CHEMIN DE FER.
— Voilà déjà plus de huit jours qu'il n'est pas arrivé d'accident sur cette ligne..... ça ne peut pas durer
longtemps comme ça..... je suis fâché d'avoir pris ce train de plaisir !.....

Honoré Daumier IMPRESSIONS OF TRAVELLING BY TRAIN: "There hasn't been an accident on this line for more than a week. It can't go on much longer. Rather I wish I hadn't come on this excursion train!" Le Charivari, 9 November 1855 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

7. MODERN LIFE

Background

The three artists represented in the *Impressions of Paris* exhibition embraced the cultural and technical developments occurring at a time of rapid change in Paris. By the end of the nineteenth century the city was considered the premier capital of Europe.

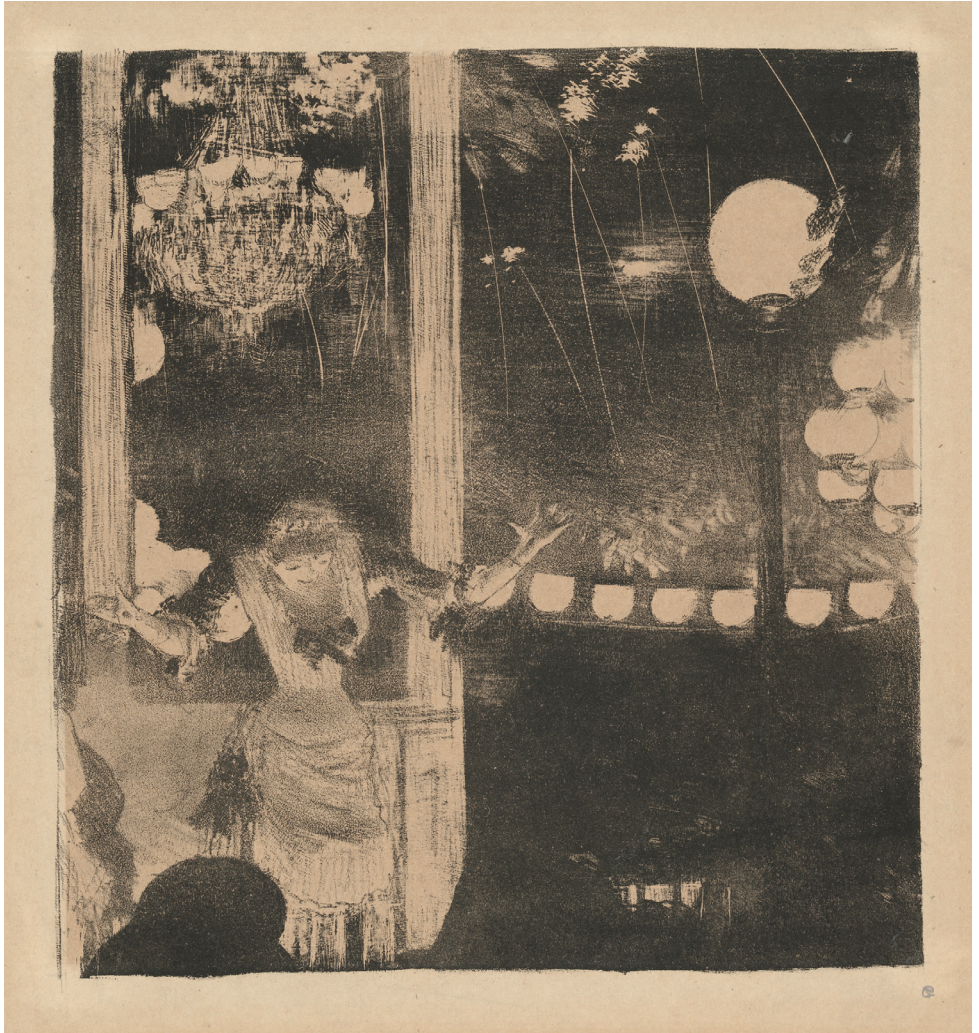
The advent of the steam train was an important achievement in France's social history and a topic Daumier could not resist. Established in 1827 as a method of coal transportation, the passenger train evolved in the 1830s for Paris and its surrounds, and by 1842 there was 569 kilometres of track.

Daumier's characters often sought respite from the intensity of the urban experience by visiting the French countryside, squashed into train carriages with different social types and classes randomly brought together. In his series *The pastorals* [*Pastorales*] 1845 city dwellers visit the country with various degrees of success, often underprepared and overdressed for the experience. Visits to the court of Versailles or the racetrack became possible for the more adventurous.

As more leisure time became available Parisians braved the elements boating on the River Seine, again with varying success. They bathed together, promenaded in the more elegant streetscape of the redesigned city and enjoyed the many performances on offer for all social classes.

Activities

- Discuss the term 'modern life'. What did this term mean in the late nineteenth century and is it still relevant today?
- Research the development of street and public lighting in Paris from the mid nineteenth century to understand how these changes influenced artists' images of modern life.
- Research the Exposition Universelles of 1889. What buildings were constructed and what exhibitions were on view for the visiting public? How did this celebration of modernity affirm that Paris was a leading example of urban transformation?
- Set up a variety of atmospheric effects in your classroom by partially or fully blocking out natural light and introducing a range of artificial light sources. Using a variety of graphite pencils draw a number of subject types capturing the atmospheric effects of artificial light. You may also like to reverse the process by drawing with white pencils on black paper. Compare your drawings and discuss how these lighting effects change the mood of your drawings. How did Daumier, Degas and Lautrec use innovative techniques to indicate the effects of artificial lighting?



Edgar Degas *Mlle Bécât at the Café des Ambassadeurs* [*Mlle Bécât au Café des Ambassadeurs*] 1877–78 lithograph
The Poynton Bequest 2005 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

IMPRESSIONS OF PARIS

LAUTREC, DEGAS, DAUMIER

- Research the redevelopment of Paris in the mid nineteenth century by Baron Haussmann. Study Daumier's prints and highlight a number of ways that these changes affected the way inhabitants used the city. How does Daumier use humour to highlight some of the more negative aspects of these changes?
- Research the development of the Metro and steam locomotive in Paris. Can you ascertain if there were any problems with the transport system from viewing Daumier's prints relating to train travel?
- Identify a topical issue in your state or local area such as transport or industry and develop a series of drawings or prints that respond to the complexities of opinion surrounding this issue. Have some fun developing a title for the series and each of your images inspired by Daumier's satirical tone.
- Study works in Daumier's series *The pastorals* [*Pastorales*]. How does the artist portray urban dwellers during their escapades to the countryside and why do you think this was so?
- Research the design and construction of the Eiffel Tower and the response of Parisians to this new structure in their city. How was the Eiffel Tower symbolic of a wider shift in Parisian society as the city embraced modernity? How has the Eiffel Tower developed as an icon of the Industrial Age and more particularly French society? Can you identify an Australian icon that created the same passion and controversy in the twentieth or twenty-first centuries?



Honoré Daumier *The public baths, cheap rate* [*Les bains à quatre sous*]
Le Charivari, 29 June 1858 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra



Edgar Degas *The famous Good Friday dinner [Le fameux dîner du Vendredi]* 1876–77 monotype in black
The Poynton Bequest 2006 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

8. LITERARY INFLUENCES

Background

The features of a new urban world were acutely felt and expressed in art and literature in Paris. The city became a symbol of progress and prosperity as the nineteenth century unfolded, even though this was counterpointed by frequent political instability. Contrasting worlds coexisted: wealth and poverty, high and low art, opportunity and destitution, development and demolition, and urban and rural domains.

Frustrated by the limitations of the Salon and the uncertain state of French art, the poet and critic Charles Baudelaire, in an essay published in 1863, *The painter of modern life* [*Le Peintre de la Vie Moderne*] urged artists to adopt themes of modern life. He scrutinised Daumier's art and drew an analogy with Honoré Balzac's writings in *The human comedy* [*La Comédie humaine*]. On Daumier, Baudelaire wrote:

By no one as by Daumier has the bourgeois been known and loved (after the fashion of artists)—the bourgeois, that last vestige of the Middle Ages, that Gothic ruin that dies so hard, that type at once so commonplace and so eccentric. Daumier has lived in intimacy with him, he has spied him all day and night ...

In 1980 the National Gallery of Australia acquired issues of *Le Charivari* spanning the years 1843 to 1859. The newspapers were presented as a single sheet folded in half to make four printed sides. Each issue had been folded again into quarters prior to binding. Preparing the chosen prints for exhibition required their separation from the book. Normally this would be unethical practice, but because the newspapers were daily publications it was not deemed inappropriate to liberate them from their binding.

This acquisition allows audiences in Canberra and throughout Australia to discover or reacquaint themselves with Daumier, an artist revered for his creative finesse and witty commentary in his time, who still encourages us to critique our world today.

Activities

- On reading Honoré Balzac's *The human comedy* [*La Comédie humaine*], a series of stories about French society, Oscar Wilde commented: 'What a panorama of passions, what a pell-mell of men and women.' How do you think this quote could also apply to Daumier?
- As his own health deteriorated Lautrec became obsessed with physical decline, reinforced by his reading of Oscar Wilde's *The picture of Dorian Gray* 1891. His depiction of *The seated clown (Mademoiselle Cha-u-ka-o)* 1896 waiting to perform at a masked ball also has parallels with Emile Zola's character Nana. Cha-u-ka-o gained notoriety as a performer and gymnast, and her physical decline was captured by the artist with great sensitivity,



Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec *La Goulue* 1894 brush, crayon and spatter lithograph with scraper, printed in black
Felix Man Collection, Special Government Grant 1972 National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

her forlorn expression indicting a weariness and lack of enthusiasm for her role. Research Zola's or Wilde's work and discuss their historical context and links to the Impressions of Paris exhibition.

- Daumier rarely wrote the captions for his caricatures. Philipon or other writers would compose the satirical lines on receipt of Daumier's images. For Daumier, 'One does not draw a word, one draws a gesture, an expression'. Discuss as a class the combination of text and image that make Daumier's work in this exhibition so powerful. Think about the weighting of both elements and practice drawing simple sketches that you pass onto another classmate for them to write the accompanying caption.
- Design and produce a black-and-white newspaper publication for your school where students supply all the content including drawings, caricatures and photographs. Make the content as topical as possible including current events in your school, region and further afield.
- A series of Degas' monotypes was inspired by the short stories written by his friend Ludovic Halévy, a popular writer about life in contemporary Paris. Halévy satirised the lives of the upper and lower echelons of French society including The Cardinal family, prominent subjects in Degas' *The famous Good Friday dinner* [*Le fameux dîner du vendredi*] and *Pauline and Virginie Cardinal chatting with some admirers* [*Pauline et Virginie Cardinal bavardant avec des admirateurs*] (both 1876–77). Write a visual analysis of these two monotypes indicating Degas' innovative approach to composition.
- Research the subject of the 'flâneur' or 'dandy' in literature of the period and look for examples of this stereotypical character in the work of Daumier, Degas and Lautrec in this exhibition or recent National Gallery of Australia exhibitions. What is a similar character called in society today?
- Discuss ethical considerations that may have been considered when National Gallery of Australia staff decided to release issues of *Le Charivari* from their book form so that Daumier's work could be framed for this exhibition. When you debate this topic consider how various institutions such as libraries and galleries may decide on different approaches, think about conservation considerations and also whether the ephemeral nature of newspapers may have affected the team's final decision.