



Daumier lithographs : the human comedy : Elvehjem Museum of Art, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 27 April-23 June 1985.

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DAUMIER

L I T H O G R A P H S

The Human Comedy



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The Human Comedy

Introduction and Catalogue by
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Assisted by
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Elvehjem Museum of Art
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Foreword

The immensity of Daumier's graphic oeuvre is truly astounding. In the course of his lifetime, he produced over four thousand lithographs, one thousand wood engravings and an estimated one thousand drawings. In addition, he produced about three hundred paintings and a variety of clay sculptures which were originally done for study of light and shadow effects on caricatured heads and bodies but which since then have been cast in bronze as works of art in themselves. Past catalogues, both in English and in French, have emphasized either the artist's life and/or the events of his times as reflected in his political cartoons. It is the intention of this exhibition and catalogue to emphasize, instead, Daumier's genius for expressing human emotion through gesture and physiognomy, and his brilliance in handling the lithographic crayon. To this end, some fifty prints have been selected from the Elvehjem's collection of Daumier lithographs which focus on what Balzac called the "Human Comedy," the theatre of daily life in which everyone has a walk-on role.

The Elvehjem Museum of Art is very grateful to Robert N. Beetem, Professor of Art History at the University of Wisconsin-Madison for selecting the exhibition and writing the catalogue. University museums depend in great part on the generous and extraordinary efforts of the faculty for curatorial support. Professor Beetem, in addition to his regular teaching, has carefully studied the Elvehjem's collection of Daumier lithographs, creating both this exhibition and identifying other thematic ideas inherent in the collection for future exhibition and publication. It is this kind of curatorial attention that makes a museum's collection available to the student and the general public in a meaningful way. The Elvehjem also acknowledges the efforts of Margaret Mortensen, a graduate student of Art History at the University of Wisconsin who assisted Professor Beetem in the curatorial aspects of this project and the combined efforts of the entire museum staff, especially Stephen C. McGough, who diligently attended to the myriad details involved in the organization of an exhibition.

The Elvehjem's special gratitude, however, has to be reserved for Helen Wurdemann who collected and donated the wonderful collection of Daumier prints to the museum and made this exhibition possible. It is through Ms. Wurdemann's generosity that the Elvehjem has over five hundred Daumier prints from which this exhibition was selected and from which many other exciting and educational exhibitions and museum projects will be forthcoming. It is truly a rare individual who is willing to share such a private treasure with others. Ms. Wurdemann, thank you.

Russell Panczenko
Director

Honoré Daumier's (1808-1879) lithographs provide such an excellent commentary on the events of his time that they are often associated with history to the extent that they are sometimes overwhelmed by it. Visitors to an exhibition may read the captions, find their thoughts moving back to those events of the past and overlook the richness of these prints as works of art. In this exhibition it is our intention to emphasize the presence of the prints themselves, both as expressions of human character (in action, gesture, and physiognomy) and as remarkably beautiful works of art, in which the richness of velvety blacks, varied grays, and white highlights might even be called "color." With this purpose in mind we have included fewer than fifty prints, most of which have little to do with political matter that could necessitate lengthy explanations of the historical context (even though most of them come from 1847 and might reveal to scholarly study hidden meanings that are symptomatic of the coming Revolution of 1848). The catalogue notes have been written with the general visitor in mind, although some points may be of interest to those who are already familiar with the subject and the period.

Our exhibition begins with seventeen prints from the series, *Les Bons Bourgeois*, all from 1847, because these works include some of the finest examples of the formal qualities mentioned above. Occasionally we have interrupted this series with comparative works from other series which provide parallels, such as the example of the lovelorn Tele-machus from the *Histoire Ancienne* series (cat. no. 6) which follows two prints from the main series dealing with love, or the print from the *Robert Macaire* series (cat. no. 11) which exhibits a costume version of some of the histrionic gestures even more dramatically expressed by the outraged bourgeois in his apartment (cat. no. 10). Several of the comparisons deal with rain or snow, both to show how Daumier achieves such effects in different prints and to call the visitor's attention to his masterful expression of human reactions to discomfort. The last three sections of the exhibition and the catalogue constitute brief pictorial essays on the themes of Education (cat. nos. 29-33), Drinking or Alcoholism (cat. nos. 34-37) and Bathing or Swimming (cat. nos. 38-47).

By keeping the exhibition relatively small we hope to encourage visitors to look closely at the remarkable textural effects, such as the rendering of the wheatfield in cat. no. 4 (detail, fig. 1) which combines the most delicate passage of crayon work on the rough litho stone with finely incised white lines of the individual stems of wheat, and the more broadly scraped-out areas of the spikes (some of these areas are worth studying with a magnifying glass). Daumier's care is all the more remarkable considering that these were primarily done for newspapers (although the paper itself was then of much higher quality than our wood pulp paper).

With equal care Daumier controls the textures of his crosshatched grays, as in the bathroom cabinet in cat. no. 12 (detail, fig. 2), with the subtle shadow on the wall, cast by the pitcher. Also striking is the use of incised white line to accent the form of the father in no. 22 (detail, fig. 3) as well as to suggest the driving rain seen against the gray textures of the narrow street behind; in the rest of the print Daumier combines gray crayon strokes with the white line work to convey atmosphere as well as would a painter. Moreover, the viewer takes pleasure in the economy of means and the simple beauty of the technique. Similarly, the chiaroscuro (or light-dark, "clair-obscur") in cat. no. 24 (detail, fig. 4) is achieved through the contrast between the dense blacks in the hat (lightened

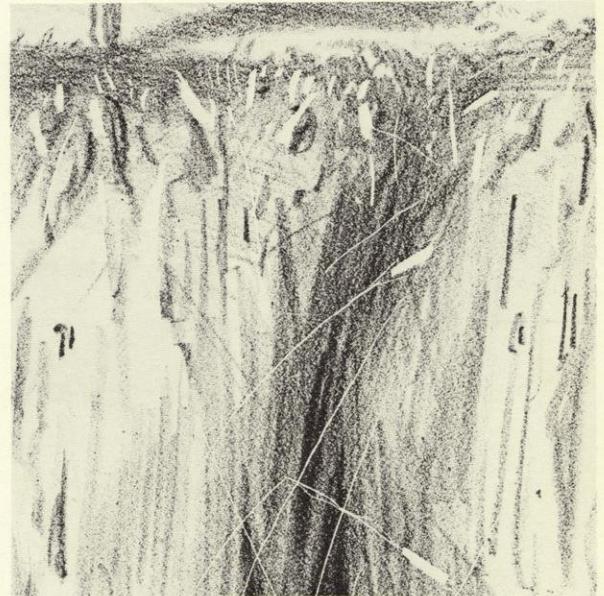


Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3



Fig. 4

with a few scratches) and the shoulder of the coat, and the pure white of the paper that seems even brighter in the candle flame, scratched out of the light gray tone of the wall area. Here, as in cat. no. 22, Daumier achieves spatial effect with his range of tones comparable to the layers of glazes in a Rembrandt painting (whose influence can be detected in Daumier's paintings). All of these effects contribute to the expression of character, as in the wonderful drawing of the guilty look on the man's face.

These effects are worth studying because they are not always admitted, even by those who love Daumier. Henry James, in the sensitive essay of 1890, twice describes Daumier's achieving his effects with "a few broad strokes." This may be true in some of the later works, when Daumier's sight was failing, and even in some of the earlier works, perhaps when pressed for time (as in our cat. no. 11), but it is not true in the works just described, or in the careful study of the infuriated man who tries to get his bulk into a suit he has outgrown, raging at his tailor, suspenders flying like the garments of a baroque saint being transported to heaven (cat. no. 10), or in the quieter, but no less expressive, figure of the guardsman fighting sleep next to his inert companion (cat. no. 8). Yet James does characterize Daumier's genius perhaps better than most writers who do not possess his power with language: "whatever he touches—the nude, in the swimming-baths on the Seine [see our cat. nos. 38-47], the intimations of landscape when his petits rentiers go into the suburbs for a Sunday [see cat. nos. 4, 5, 21]—acquires relief and character." For James, Art itself becomes "an embalmer, a magician," which "puts method and power and the strange, real mingled air of things into Daumier's black sketchiness, so full of the technical *gras*, the 'fat' which French critics commend and we have no word to express." (His uncommon use of *gras* may allude to the richness of Daumier's crayon strokes, especially the blacks, which give a painterly quality to his drawings—see the discussion of lithography following this introduction.) Possibly the most memorable passage in James' essay is his reminiscence of his boyhood encounter with Daumier's prints: "They used to impress me in Paris, as a child, with their abnormal blackness as well as with their grotesque, magnifying movement, and there was something in them that rather scared a very immature admirer." His fear was perhaps his own awakening appreciation of the esthetic power of Daumier's work—the vital presence of the characters in the prints, and the impact of the lines themselves. These images are surely much more than cartoons to make us laugh; at times they may do that, but they also make us think, reflect, and feel, both the emotions of the characters they depict and the creative experience of the artist, himself, with their extraordinary forms and textures.

Throughout Daumier's grotesque characters there is something more than satire; there is a kind of portrait of the human condition. His drawing style differs from the cruelty of Hogarth or Goya as much as his soft litho crayon strokes differ from their acid-bitten lines. The *Bon Bourgeois* is a more apt title than its English equivalent (the "proper" or "worthy" middle class), because of the evident affection he brings to his characters, even though "bon" is used in an ironic sense. At his funeral in February of 1879, the artist and caricaturist Forain, whose own work was often bitter, said: "He was quite different from us; he was generous."

(The following list is intended only as a beginning for the interested reader. Full bibliographies may be found in most of the books below.)



For Further Reading

General Studies of Daumier in English:

Larkin, Oliver W. *Daumier: Man of his Time*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966.

Vincent, Howard P. *Daumier and his World*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1968.

Passeron, Roger. *Daumier*. New York: Rizzoli, 1981 (translated by Helga Harrison from *Daumier: Témoin de son Temps*, Fribourg, 1979). This is the largest and best illustrated of these general studies.

Specialized Studies and Essays:

James, Henry. "Honoré Daumier" Essay, originally published under the title, "Daumier, Caricaturist" in the *Century Magazine*, January, 1890, and reprinted, with emendations, in *Picture and Text*, 1893. The later version was reprinted in John Sweeney's edition of James' writings on art, *The Painter's Eye: Notes and Essays on the Pictorial Arts by Henry James*. London: Hart-Davis, 1956. The 1890 version was reprinted in London in 1954.

Clark, Timothy J. *The Absolute Bourgeois: Artists and Politics in France, 1848-1851*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1973. Chapter 4: "Daumier." An excellent study of the political background; Clark's title comes from the Henry James essay on Daumier ("He has no wide horizon; the absolute bourgeois hems him in, and he is a bourgeois himself without poetic ironies, to whom a big cracked mirror is given.")

Wechsler, Judith. *A Human Comedy: Physiognomy and Caricature in 19th Century Paris*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982. A fascinating study involving gesture and mime in the theatre of the time and theories of expression as well as history of the period, with analysis of illustrations by Daumier and his contemporaries.



Guide to the Catalogue

Complete dates (month, day, year) refer to the issue of *Le Charivari* in which a print appeared, with the exception of one print (cat. no. 47) which also appeared in *La Caricature*. Concluding each entry we give two reference numbers. The first, preceded by "D.", refers to the catalogue number assigned to each lithograph by Loys Delteil in volumes 20-29 of his *Le Peintre-graveur illustré*. These volumes appeared in 1925-30 and list all of Daumier's nearly 4000 lithographs, giving publication information useful for scholars and collectors, but they offer no commentaries; indeed, there would have been no room, and Delteil's efforts were an immense, pioneering task. The second number is the Elvehjem Museum of Art accession number.

Le Charivari was the often-satirical newspaper in which most of our prints were published. The name (in English-speaking countries called "shivaree" or variants thereof) comes from a folk custom of "serenading" unpopular citizens (in some cultures, newly-weds or married couples given to domestic quarreling) by banging on pots and pans.

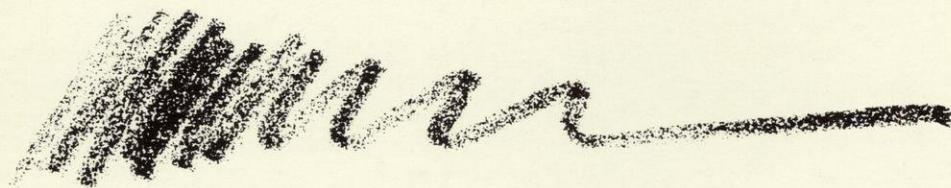
Lithography is a technique of printing from the surface of a heavy, lightly textured limestone on which a drawing has been made in greasy ink or a grease crayon. The drawing must be lightly etched with an acid solution and the stone moistened before inking and printing. The greasy ink adheres to the areas of the drawing but is repelled from the wet stone. The effect is similar to a crayon or ink drawing, but richer blacks and more vivid textures are possible, and such special effects as the scratched-out white lines discussed above are possible. Because of the ease of execution and the indefinite number of impressions (compared to the limited output of traditional print media such as etching and engraving), lithography became popular in the nineteenth century soon after its invention by the German, Senefelder. Moreover, it seemed well suited to the freer styles and forms of nineteenth-century art. Daumier's lithos had to be printed separately from the typeset areas in *Le Charivari* or *La Caricature*.

The ellipses which occur in the captions on the prints themselves are sometimes used for dramatic pauses (as in cat. no. 11), and sometimes for change of speaker (as in cat. nos. 11 and 21). They do not indicate that text has been omitted.

Comments on the individual works necessarily vary in length and emphasis. For some of the prints meanings are obvious and comments are unnecessary; for others context or background is not known. Where we could explain the circumstances of the action shown in the print, or direct the viewer's attention to certain aspects of the picture, we have done so.

We have tried to arrive at the best translation for each caption, attempting throughout to write comprehensible modern English, although sometimes retaining the flavor of Daumier's time. However, since the irony of many of the captions can only be expressed by a pun in the original French, occasionally it has been necessary to recast the sentence to retain something of that irony. Note that Daumier at times makes deliberate errors in French to indicate the speech of a child (cat. no. 13) or a drunk (cat. no. 37). For some of the captions we have benefited from the advice of friends in the Department of French and Italian at this university, but since there has not been time for thorough study of all the translations, they prefer to remain anonymous. We are nonetheless grateful.

All of these lithographs published in *Le Charivari* fit within a page size of about 36 cm. high by 24 cm. wide ($14 \frac{1}{8}'' \times 9 \frac{7}{16}''$). The images with their captions average about 30 cm. by 21 cm. ($11 \frac{13}{16}'' \times 8 \frac{1}{4}''$). Due to the vagaries of deciding where to begin measuring images which do not have a clearly defined border, we have not attempted precise measurements.





1 *Inconvénient de quitter un instant un convoi de chemin de fer sous n'importe quel prétexte.*

Drawback of leaving a train for a moment under any pretext whatsoever.

From *Les Bons Bourgeois*, pl. 29 of 82 plates published in *Le Charivari* from May, 1846 until June, 1849; all of the prints from this series in our exhibition were published in 1847. This is one of many prints by Daumier on the difficulties of the railroad, which was important in the French consciousness during 1847, when the system was expanding. Here the two men have left the train at a rest stop to admire the view, and it rushes off without them. Note the subtle power of Daumier's drawing of their windswept clothing, the blowing hat and the trees on the distant hill, all of which establish a strong right-to-left movement, countering the opposing movement of the train in the distance.



2 *Quand en société vous voudrez bien recevoir un énorme coup de poing, placez-vous comme ceci! /Pardon, M. le professeur, mais j'aimerais mieux me placer de manière à ne pas le recevoir du tout . . . /Ça serait contre toutes les règles de l'art . . . et alors vous n'auriez pas le droit de le rendre! . . .*

When in public you would like to be able to take an enormous punch, place yourself like this! /Excuse me, professor, but I would prefer to place myself so as not to take one at all . . . / That would be against all the rules of the art . . . and you would not have the right to return one!

From *Les Bons Bourgeois*, pl 31. The point of the joke seems to be the gulf between the social obligation to follow the rules of the manly art of self-defense and the portly gentleman's wish to avoid getting hit at all.



3 *Pour une belle vue, v'là une belle vue' . . . J'découvre tout Paris . . . tiens, j'vois ma maison . . . tiens j'vois ma femme . . . tiens j'vois son cousin qui arrive la retrouver dans le jardin . . . ah! sacrishi . . . ah! sacrishi, v'là qu'j'en vois trop . . .*

Now if you want a good view, there's a really fine one . . . I can make out all of Paris . . . well, now I see my house . . . now I see my wife . . . now I see her cousin coming to join her in the garden . . . oh! damn . . . oh! damn! now I see too much . . .

Pl. 32 of *Les Bons Bourgeois* (1847). The vista of Paris as landscape calls to mind the Impressionists' interest in high viewpoints in their works of the 1870s and 1880s; often in his landscape backgrounds Daumier anticipates Impressionist space and technique.

D. 1508; EMA 1977.383



4 *Un chapeau... deux chapeaux... les malheureux seraient-ils allés se suicider dans les blés?*

One hat, two hats... the poor wretches—have they gone to commit suicide in the wheatfield?

Pl. 34 of *Les Bons Bourgeois* (1847). Daumier's narrow-minded city-dweller cannot conceive that the couple might have gone into the field for another purpose (see cat. no. 5). Here again one is struck by Daumier's affinity with the Impressionists, in his ability to suggest the nature of the wheat, even the color, using the litho crayon and the technique of scratching white lines through the black crayon marks into the stone, an effect that is particularly satisfying in lithography. (This print was published in *Le Charivari* on February 4, 1847, demonstrating that the seasons depicted in the prints were not necessarily meant to match the current season when the print was published.)



5 *Une idylle dans les blés*

An idyll in the wheatfield

Pl. 72 of *Les Bons Bourgeois* (1847). See comment on cat. no. 4; this print was published on September 6 in *Le Charivari*.

D. 1548; EMA 1977.398



6 TÉLÉMAQUE RAVAGÉ PAR L'AMOUR

En dépit de Mentor qui le grognait sans cesse / Il butinait chaque matin / Les plus brillantes fleurs pour sa tendre maîtresse, / Fleurs dont la piquante drôlesse / Ornait sa gorge de satin./Cigarette par Mr. Alfred de Musset.

TELEMACHUS RAVAGED BY LOVE

In spite of Mentor who grumbled at him ceaselessly, he gathered each morning the most brilliant flowers for his tender mistress, flowers with which the lively hussy adorned her satin bosom.

From the series, *Histoire ancienne*, published 1841-43, pl. 27 of 50 plates. This print published in *Le Charivari*, October 9, 1842. This series was meant both to ridicule the affectations of much classical art, literature and theatre, and also to show that human problems today, like the lovesick youth here and his unsympathetic mentor, are no different from the ancients (and possibly also to show that classical subjects could be more lively if the human element is emphasized). See also cat. nos. 17, 23, and 25. The signature line, "Cigarette par Mr. Alfred de Musset," must refer to a pun, the meaning of which is now lost.



7 *Un château en Espagne*

A castle in Spain

Pl. 36 of *Les Bons Bourgeois* (1847). Continuing the theme of love from our preceding four prints, we find here a couple, no longer young, dreaming of the house they will probably never build. As the husband draws in the earth with his cane, the wife looks ahead with a resigned expression. Daumier's city people often take on a peculiar poignant quality in the countryside, as though they don't quite fit in. (Compare the short film by Jean Renoir, *A Day in the Country*.) Note the strong drawing, the textures in the clothing, how the man's trousers reveal the weight of his body, and the contrast between these rich blacks and the silvery grays of the landscape.



8 *une soirée au corps de garde*

An evening in the quarters of the National Guard

Pl. 44 of *Les Bons Bourgeois* (1847). The citizen militia created by Lafayette (see Larkin, p. 44) was often the subject of Daumier's satire (see also cat. no. 20), when his favorite petits bourgeois shopkeepers and clerks escaped the tedium of their daily routines only to find that guard duty could be equally tedious. Yet in this dull subject, Daumier has achieved one of his finest expressions of human gesture and emotion—the tension of the standing figure who yawns and stretches his muscles, fighting sleep, contrasted with the perfect expression of lassitude in his sleeping comrade, his facial muscles slack as his jaw drops on his chest. The print is rich in the value contrasts of the white cartridge belts against the crosshatched crayon lines on the dark jackets and the subtly rendered background space, from the darker left side to the illuminated area around the stove that suggests the warm, soporific atmosphere, and the strongly drawn accents of the heap of wood before the stove.



9 *Au nouvel an, visite obligée à la tante Rabourdin*

On New Year's Day, the obligatory visit to Aunt Rabourdin

Pl. 46 of *Les Bons Bourgeois* (1847). More freely sketched than the preceding, the print shows a lighter satire (only the small boy is satirically expressive), the feeling being closer to a traditional genre scene of family life. Yet even with this light touch, Daumier conveys the personality of the aunt through her self-satisfied expression (the raised eyebrows and pursed lips) as she receives the kiss from her devoted relative.

D. 1522; EMA 1977.388



10 *Brigand de tailleur... quel mauvais drap il me donne... voilà encore un habit qui a rétréci!* . . .

Robber of a tailor! . . . what cheap material he gives me . . . here's another garment which has shrunk! . . .

Pl. 47 of *Les Bons Bourgeois* (1847). Even more brilliantly drawn and composed than the print of the sleepy guardsmen (cat. no. 8), this lithograph shows Daumier's genius at exaggeration of the human form while still maintaining believable anatomy. The expressive power of the flying suspenders (evidently the buttons have just popped), the physical thrust of the outraged citizen just balanced by the wife's movement to the left as she drags off his jacket, his swollen face beneath the banal family portrait above—all of these elements combined within the brilliant vertical sweep of crayon lines, dark at the left, lighter at the right in a light-dark pattern similar to the guardsmen print, recall the ultimate source of Daumier's art in seventeenth-century Baroque works.



11 FARCE DRAMATIQUE

Doucement! Doucement! . . . ne levez pas le rideau, je ne joue pas . . . (Le Directeur accourant effrayé) Vous plaisantez, mon cher Macaire, vous plaisantez, n'est-ce pas? Pas du tout, pas du tout! . . . Je ne jouerai pas . . . Vous ne jouerez pas un semblable tour au théâtre, à l'auteur, à vos pauvres camarades . . . Brrrt! Vous ne tenez pas vos engagements, je romps le mien, donnez-mos le dédit . . . Je ne tiens pas mes engagements!!..Non vous devez me payer comptant, et vous me devez . . . Quoi?..Vous me devez 75 centimes.

DRAMATIC FARCE

Easy now . . . don't raise the curtain, I'm not going on . . . (The director, rushing up alarmed) You're joking, my dear Macaire, you're joking, aren't you? Not at all, not at all! . . . I'm not going on . . . You will not play such a trick on the theatre, on the author, on your poor fellow-actors . . . Brrrt! you're not keeping your commitments, I won't keep mine, give me the "penalty" . . . I don't keep my commitments!!—No you must pay me in cash, and you owe me . . . How much!—You owe me 75 centimes.

From the second *Robert Macaire* series, pl. 8 of 19 plates, this print published in *Le Charivari*, April 18, 1841. We have chosen this print as a parallel to the preceding, to show another pair of figures, one of whom restrains the other. But this print was evidently drawn in some haste: the background is only lightly sketched in, and the main figures are rapidly laid in with bold strokes of the crayon and a quickly done gray tone. The action is not so expressive as the preceding, nor is the composition so well balanced. Macaire, one of Daumier's favorite characters, plays an important role in the artist's political cartoons, where he stands for all the political corruption of the July Monarchy (1830-48), taking on all sorts of occupations in which he can make money by cheating people. Here he is an actor who refuses to go on until he is paid a sum which proves to be negligible.



12 *Un jour de grande toilette*

The "Saturday-night bath"

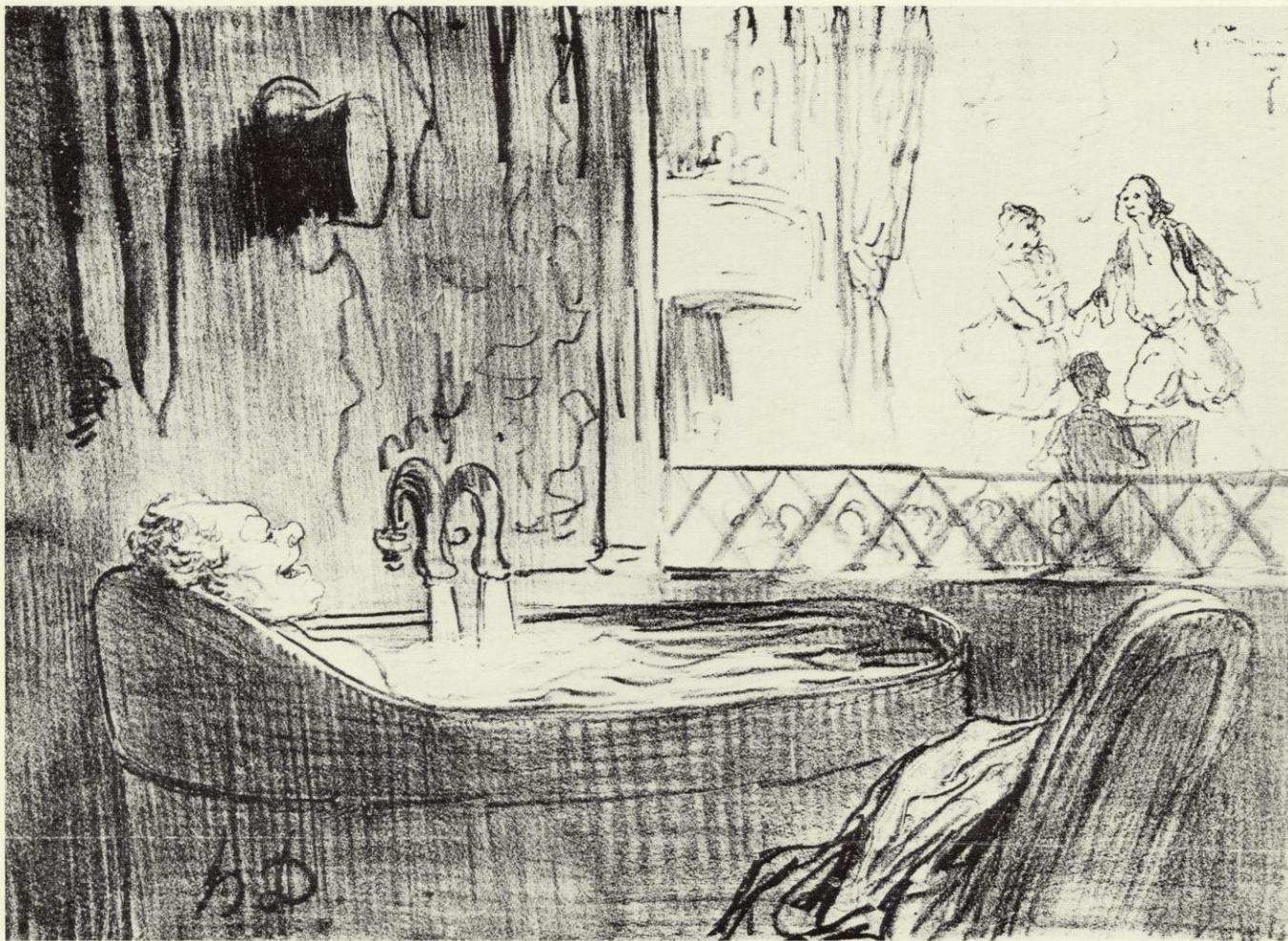
Pl. 50 of *Les Bons Bourgeois* (1847). The gentleman combs his hairpiece while his wife bathes. Home bathing was infrequent, since the water had to be delivered (like ice, in the days before the refrigerator) by specialists who brought carts with water tanks through the city and carried water on their backs up the stairs to apartments like this one. There are no faucets nor drain on the tub. A quiet composition, the print has subtle gray crosshatching as sensitive as the bolder background in cat. no. 10.



13 *J'veux pas entrer dans tant d'eau que ça . . . y doit y avoir des gros poissons*

I don't wanna go into all that water . . . there must be big fish in there!

From the series, *Enfantillages (Childishnesses)*, 1851-52, pl. 1 of 6 plates (this print published in *Le Charivari*, Dec. 19, 1851). Here the reluctant boy is bathed in a public bathhouse, less expensive than having one's own water delivered to the door.



14 *Amélioration qui ne tardera pas à être apportée aux théâtres de Paris pendant la canicule*

An improvement which will soon be installed in the theatres of Paris during the dog-days [the August heat].

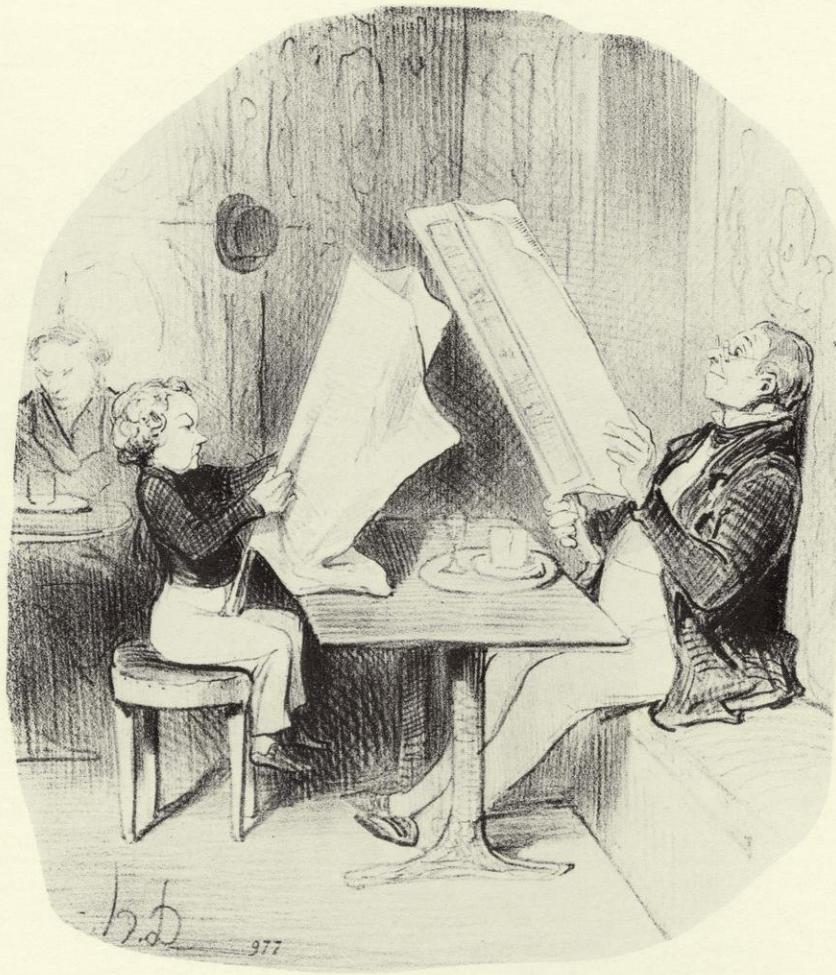
From the series, *Croquis d'Été* (Summer Sketches). Pl. 4 of 4 prints (note that there were other larger series under this title) August, 1859. A fantasy on the bathing theme: the theatre box is equipped with a bathtub for the enjoyment of the patron. Daumier did many theatre prints, more than a few of which concerned the hot summer season.



15 *Un bon mari, qui pour distraire son épouse, la conduit régulièrement au café, chaque dimanche soir*

A good husband, who in order to entertain his wife, takes her regularly to the cafe, each Sunday evening

Pl. 54 of *Les Bons Bourgeois* (1847). The rendering of the table is superb; the range and quality of grays and pattern of white areas is brilliant. Compare the sleeping wife with the guardsmen asleep in cat. no. 8. A nice touch here is the second newspaper clamped firmly under the husband's right arm, so that no one else can get to it before he finishes the first (both newspapers are fastened onto wooden frames for public use).



16 *Un enfant qui s'amuse de peu, le Constitutionnel lui suffit pour toute la soirée*

For a child who has little to amuse himself, the *Constitutionnel* will be enough for the whole evening

From the series, *Les Papas*, pl. 11 of 26 plates (June 17, 1847). Unlike the wife in the preceding print (published in *Le Charivari* on September 11) the boy here seems more serious than his father, who is considerably more relaxed and affable in appearance than the husband in the preceding example. Henry James, who knew Paris well, suggests that Daumier had found his subject in his own neighborhood: "He had not far to go to encounter the worthy man . . . who is reading the evening paper at the cafe with so amiable and placid a credulity, while his unnatural little boy, opposite to him, finds sufficient entertainment in the much-satirized *Constitutionnel*. The bland absorption of the papa, the face of the man who believes everything he sees in the newspaper, is as near as Daumier comes to positive gentleness of humour."



17 *Le départ pour le bal: Psiché et l'amour*

Setting out for the ball: Psyche and love

Pl. 59 of *Les Bons Bourgeois* (1847). The subject combines two characters usually seen as a young man and a girl—Cupid, the god of love and Psyche, whose attribute is a butterfly and who signifies the soul. Daumier's bourgeois has Psyche's attributes (the crown of flowers and the wings of a butterfly) as well as those of Cupid (the bow and arrow) and seems also to have fallen in love with his own reflection (like Narcissus). He must also be a satire on the classical themes in Daumier's *Histoire Ancienne* (see cat. nos., 6, 23, and 25). But again the folly is redeemed by the brilliant light-dark effects, especially in the contrast between the deepest black shadow and the two motifs of paunch and mirror.



18 *Huit degrés au-dessous de zéro*

8 degrees below zero

Pl. 63 of *Les Bons Bourgeois* (January 24, 1847). Unlike cat. no. 4 above, this print and the following one suited the cold Paris winter when they appeared in *Le Charivari*. The tension of the figures stiffened by the cold is perhaps also expressed by the vertical line of the cane which is continued in the side of the building, giving an almost transparent effect to his body.



19 *Six degrés au-dessous de zéro . . . Ah! je ne m'étonne plus si cette nuit j'étais glacé auprès de toi, bobonne!*

6 degrees below zero . . . ah! I'm no longer surprised that last night I was freezing next to you, darling

Pl. 65 of *Les Bons Bourgeois* (Feb. 1, 1847). Here the rich darks of the print make the cold seem less bitter than in the preceding print. Again one thinks of seventeenth-century Dutch artists; this is a print worthy of close study.

D. 1541; EMA 1977.395



20 *Je ne suis pourtant jamais tranquille quand j'te vois sortir comme ça . . . j'crains toujours monsieur Moussard, que, malgré toi, tu me fasses quelqu'infidélité!*

I am never easy when I see you go out dressed like that . . . I always fear, Monsieur Moussard, that, in spite of yourself, you are apt to be unfaithful to me!

Pl. 67 of *Les Bons Bourgeois* (1847). The wife sees her husband as he sees himself in his National Guard costume—grand and handsome (cf. cat. no. 8). Like his fellow bourgeois in the costume of Cupid (cat. no. 17), he does not see himself as Daumier (and we) see him. Yet Daumier has drawn him lovingly, down to the precise white lines incised into his spats over his dainty black boots. Daumier also gives us a decorative picture of a butcher's shop, in the festoons of sausages in the background.



21 *Nous ne partirons donc pas! . . . Hortense, je crois que ça va mordre . . . rien plus qu'une petite demi-heure!*

So we're not leaving after all! . . . Hortense, I think I'm going to get a bite . . . just a little half-hour more!..

Pl. 73 of *Les Bons Bourgeois* (1847). The happy fisherman, dry under his umbrella, which he holds in his left hand, while his poor wife stands on his right, getting soaked, is another of Daumier's characters who cannot see his own faults. As in the pictures of Paris in the winter, Daumier gets the feeling of people's reactions to weather. Note the delicately scratched white lines depicting rain.



22 *C'est bête d'avoir, en hiver, des enfants si beaux que ça!...*

It's a pity to have, in winter, children so beautifully dressed as that!

From the series, *Enfantillages (Childishnesses)*, 1851–52 (see cat. no. 13, above). Pl. 4 of 6 plates (this print published in *Le Charivari*, Dec. 27, 1851). Published two days after Christmas, this print shows an amiable father (in contrast to the inconsiderate husband of the preceding print) who lifts his children over the streaming cobblestones. Daumier achieves here a sense of space as well as atmosphere with the scratched-out white lines fortified with light gray crayon strokes, creating a foreground plane behind which the action takes place.



23 ENÉE ET DIDON

*Un brouillard protecteur obscurissait les cieux; / Et comme
ils se trouvaient tous deux sans parapluie, / Dans une
grotte sombre entraînant son amie, / Enée en ce beau jour
vit couronner ses feux. / Enéide corrigée par M. Villemain*

AENEAS AND DIDO

*A protective fog darkened the skies, / And since they
found themselves without umbrella, / Into a dark
grotto leading his beloved, / Aeneas this fine day sees
his burning passions crowned. / The Aeneid, improved
by M. Villemain.*

Pl. 15 of *Histoire Ancienne* (see cat. no. 6), 1842. As in the *Telemachus* print (cat no. 6), love is translated into modern terms as a man who takes advantage of a love-struck young woman. Here the scratched-out white lines are more vigorous than in the previous two images, possibly in keeping with Aeneas' passion.



24 *La rentrée entre onze heures et minuit*

Returning home between eleven o'clock and midnight

Les Bons Bourgeois, pl. 76 (Nov. 16, 1847). Striking here is the anxiety expressed by the body gesture or attitude, the midsection of the body thrust forward, knees slightly bent, balance not quite steady. With only a few lines, Daumier renders the vaguely guilty expression of the face, without losing the delicate light and shadow pattern created by the candlelight. Note also the care spent on the stair railing, in contrast to the casual background details in cat. no. 11. The modulations of gray, built up through networks of crayon strokes, set off the contrasts of rich black and white in the figure. Here one can see what essayists like Baudelaire mean in speaking of Daumier's "color" in the lithographs.



25 *L'ÉPÉE DE DAMOCLES*:

Tu ne te plaindras pas de manquer en ce jour / De couteaux pour diner, dit le tyran aimable. / Ma foi! fit Damoclès, si c'est un calembour / Je trouve que la pointe en est fort détestable. / Titre académique de Mr. Patin

THE SWORD OF DAMOCLES:

You don't complain of eating this day / Daggers for dinner, says the amiable tyrant / My faith! says Damocles, if this is a pun / I find that the point is quite disagreeable. / academic title by Mr. Patin

Pl. 11 of *Histoire Ancienne* (June 12, 1842—see cat. no. 6 for full series information). Included here as an example of anxiety in a classical subject (in comparison with the preceding print), this image shows again (as in cat. nos. 6 and 23) how Daumier brings sublime classical drama to the level of the ridiculous by having his bourgeois types act out the roles. (Damocles was a member of the court of Dionysius the Elder, tyrant of Syracuse, who was supposed to have forced Damocles to sit at a banquet under a sword suspended by a single hair, to demonstrate the precariousness of a king's fortunes.)



Paris in the Winter

The following three works were selected both for their superb portrayal of human reactions to cold and discomfort and for the technique of rendering snow on the lithographic stone (or suggesting through minimal lines an ice-covered river, as in cat. no. 27). But for our desire to keep almost intact the series, *Les Bons Bourgeois*, we would have included in this group the two prints showing the effects of severe cold on pedestrians in the street (cat. no. 18) or people in their houses (cat. no. 19).



26 LA QUEUE AU SPECTACLE:

Et les sans-coeur crient contre l'autorité / Qui les empêche de s'écraser, et qui passe / Sa vie dans la neige et dans la crotte / Voilà pourtant le sort des gouvernements!

THE LINE AT THE THEATRE:

And the heartless complain about the guard who prevents them from crushing themselves, and who spends his life in the snow and in the dirt; there lies the fate of governments!

From the series, *Emotions parisiennes*, pl. 21 of 51 prints published in *Le Charivari* from 1839 to 1842 (this print, Jan. 14, 1840; there were several series with this title). Here chosen as an example of Daumier's technique of rendering effects of snow and cold, this print also shows the ironic gulf between the heightened sentiments of the inflated caption and the banality of the situation, especially the bored guard.



27 EN VOILA UN DE PLAISIR: ou *La passion de la Pêche poussée jusqu'au dernier degré . . . Réaumur!*

THERE'S A MAN WHO REALLY KNOWS HOW TO ENJOY HIMSELF!: or The passion for fishing pushed to the last degree . . . "Fahrenheit"

From the series, *La Pêche* (Fishing), pl. 7 of 7 prints (this one published in *La Caricature*, 24 January, 1841). Réaumur was a French scientist (1683-1757) who invented the thermometer which bears his name, hence the pun. The dedication of the fisherman might be compared to the husband in cat. no. 21. Here the drawing of the coat is extraordinary, in the way the folds at the back hang from the buttons and in the sure dark strokes that build the trouser legs and accent the front of the coat. Note also the expressive tiny figures in the background, moving in opposite directions to create a sense of movement in what would otherwise be a static composition; also note the delicate line that traces the distant housetops, and how the spare gray lines help to suggest cold by not overdarkening the white paper. (Compare cat. nos. 18 and 19)



28 *Un monsieur qui s'enflamme en toute saison.*

A man who warms up in all seasons.

From the series, *Les Parisiens en 1852*, pl. 2 of 11 prints (this published in *Le Charivari*, Jan. 14, 1852). Like cat. no. 26, this print was chosen for our exhibition principally for the snow textures. The young woman who warms the heart of the portly gentleman is of the type called the *grisette* or *lorette*, a favorite subject of Daumier's chief competitor, Gavarni.

D. 2219; EMA 1977.466



Education

The following five prints were chosen both to demonstrate Daumier's ability to express action and to show how the themes subtly change after the Revolution of February, 1848. In the last two prints the relationship of teacher and pupils seems to parallel that of government and people.



29 *Un père faisant tout ce qu'il peut . . . pour pousser son fils dans la carrière des lettres.*

A father doing all that he can . . . in order to push his son into the career of letters.

From *Les Papas* pl. 19 of 23 (this print published in *Le Charivari*, Jan. 13, 1848).

D. 1586; EMA 1977.416



30 *Si tu ne viens pas plus vite que ça au collège, j'ty laisserai jusqu'à l'âge de quarante cinq ans' . . .*

If you don't come faster than that to school, I'll leave you there until you're forty-five! . . .

Pl. 22 from *Les Papas* (*Le Charivari*, Oct. 6, 1848)

D. 1589; EMA 1977.419



31 *Quand on a un père farceur*

When one has a clownish father.

Pl. 21 from *Les Papas* (*Le Charivari*, March 23, 1848). The father has donned his daughter's bonnet, but she seems not to approve of his permissive behavior.

D. 1588; EMA 1977.418



32 LES SUITES D'UNE INSURRECTION:

Malheureux, voilà donc où t'ont / conduit tes idées anarchistes . . . tu as crié: à bas la grammaire / et les pions! . . . je maudis le jour où je te l'ai donné!

THE CONSEQUENCES OF AN INSURRECTION:

Wretch, see where your anarchist / ideas have led you . . . you have yelled: down with grammar and the prefects [monitors]! . . . I curse the day when I gave it [grammar?] to you!

Pl. 23 from *Les Papas* (*Le Charivari*, June 1, 1849). The kneeling boy wears on his head a sort of dunce cap, made to resemble the ears of a jackass. An identical cap appears in one of the lithographs in the series, *Histoire Ancienne* (not in this exhibition), showing a schoolroom in Daumier's mythical ancient world.



33 TOUJOURS L'INFLUENCE DU CONGRÈS DE LA PAIX: *Ah! polissons, vous vous battez . . . vous ne savez donc pas que l'homme doit toujours rester pacifique et maître de lui-même! . . .*

STILL THE INFLUENCE OF THE CONGRESS OF PEACE: Ah! little rascals, you're fighting . . . you do not know then that man must always remain peaceful and master himself.

One of the drawings of topical news events (titled *Actualités*—not a series) published in *Le Charivari*, Sept. 19, 1849; other cartoons of that month dealt humorously with the Congress of Peace, concerning themes of disarmament, and the violent or militant reactions it brought on.



Drinking and its Consequences

Daumier's perceptiveness in capturing the condition of the human body, indeed of human character, extended into his depiction of drinkers. Vincent Van Gogh was impressed by one print, a wood engraving, *Men Drinking—The Four Ages of Drinkers* (the fourth drinker is in fact a child, holding his glass with both hands), to the point of making an oil copy of it (in the Art Institute of Chicago). The following prints are taken from four different series and show scenes ranging from the bucolic country inn where the boatmen are having a friendly glass of wine (although the logic of their philosophy is already as shaky as the legs of the standing figure) to the two prints where the bodies convey the full effects of drunkenness, and including the pathetic image from *Les Papas* of the "model son" who leads his drunken father home. Daumier's compassion might be contrasted with the critical severity of Hogarth's *Gin Lane*.



34 Vois-tu, mon ami Durand . . . il n'y a que deux éléments qui soient ceux du bonheur pour l'homme . . . c'est l'eau et le vin . . . mais ils ne doivent jamais être mélangés, sans ça le charme est détruit' . . . C'est vrai, Cabassol . . . buvons donc encore ce verre de vin en l'honneur de l'eau!

You see, my friend Durand . . . there are only two elements which provide happiness for man . . . they are water and wine . . . but they must never be mixed, or you lose the charm . . . It's true, Cabassol . . . so let's drink another glass of wine in honor of water! . . .

*From the series, Les Canotiers parisiens, pl. 12 of 20 plates published in *Le Charivari* from April to September, 1843 (this print published, June 2, 1843).*

D. 1034; EMA 1977.369



35 Robert . . . tu ne soutiens plus la conversation . . .
c'est pas poli ça! . . . Comment veux tu que j'soutienne la
conversation . . . j'peux plus m'soutenir moi-même! . . .

Robert . . . you're not holding up your part of the
conversation any more . . . That's not polite! . . . —
How do you expect me to hold up the conversation . . .
I can't even hold up myself any longer! . . .

From *Les Bons Bourgeois*, pl. 53 (publ. in *Le Charivari*, Sept. 4, 1847). Note that the scene takes place in a suburban or rural setting, perhaps like the country inn where the boatmen drink (cat. no. 34).



36 *Un fils modèle*

From *Les Papas*, pl. 17 (publ. in *Le Charivari*, Oct. 13, 1847).

D. 1584; EMA 1977.415

A model son



37 *Ma femme, t'as tort de me blâmer . . . comme l'a dit un fameux philosophe . . . y n'y a que de boire du vin sans soif qui distingue l'homme du reste des animaux! . . .*

My wife, you are wrong to blame me . . . Like the famous philosopher says, . . . it is only the drinking of wine without being thirsty which distinguishes man from the rest of the animals.

From *Croquades (Sketches)*, this print publ. in *Le Charivari*, Dec. 23, 1851. Professor William Hay of the Department of Philosophy has suggested that the husband's clouded reasoning may allude to the point near the end of Plato's *Symposium*, after the drunken Alcibiades has entered, where Eryximachus says "Are we to have neither conversation nor songs over our wine, but just to sit drinking as men do when they are thirsty?"



Swimming

Our exhibition ends on a happier note—the pleasures of swimming or bathing, in a series of prints most of which were published during the summer season—the dog days (*la Canicule*). Daumier recreated in his drawings the joys, humiliations, and fears of learning to swim (cat. nos. 41–43) and finally the luxury of being cool in the July heat (cat. no. 46) and the pride of achieving grace in the water if not on land (cat. no. 47). We have departed from chronological order in arranging this selection in order to create a progression from open water swimming to pools and life in the bathhouses, and to juxtapose prints in such a way as to emphasize the flow of movement and narrative action from one to another.



38 Voyage à St. Cloud

Voyage to St. Cloud

From *Les Baigneurs* (1839-1842), pl. 6 of 30 prints (this publ. in *Le Charivari*, Sept. 6, 1839). Here we see practical swimming, as two men swim across the Seine, floating their clothing in a tub before them, to which is tied a bottle of wine, conveniently cooling, one man with clay pipe clamped between his teeth, while the impressionistically rendered background shows horse-drawn carriages and a modern steamboat.

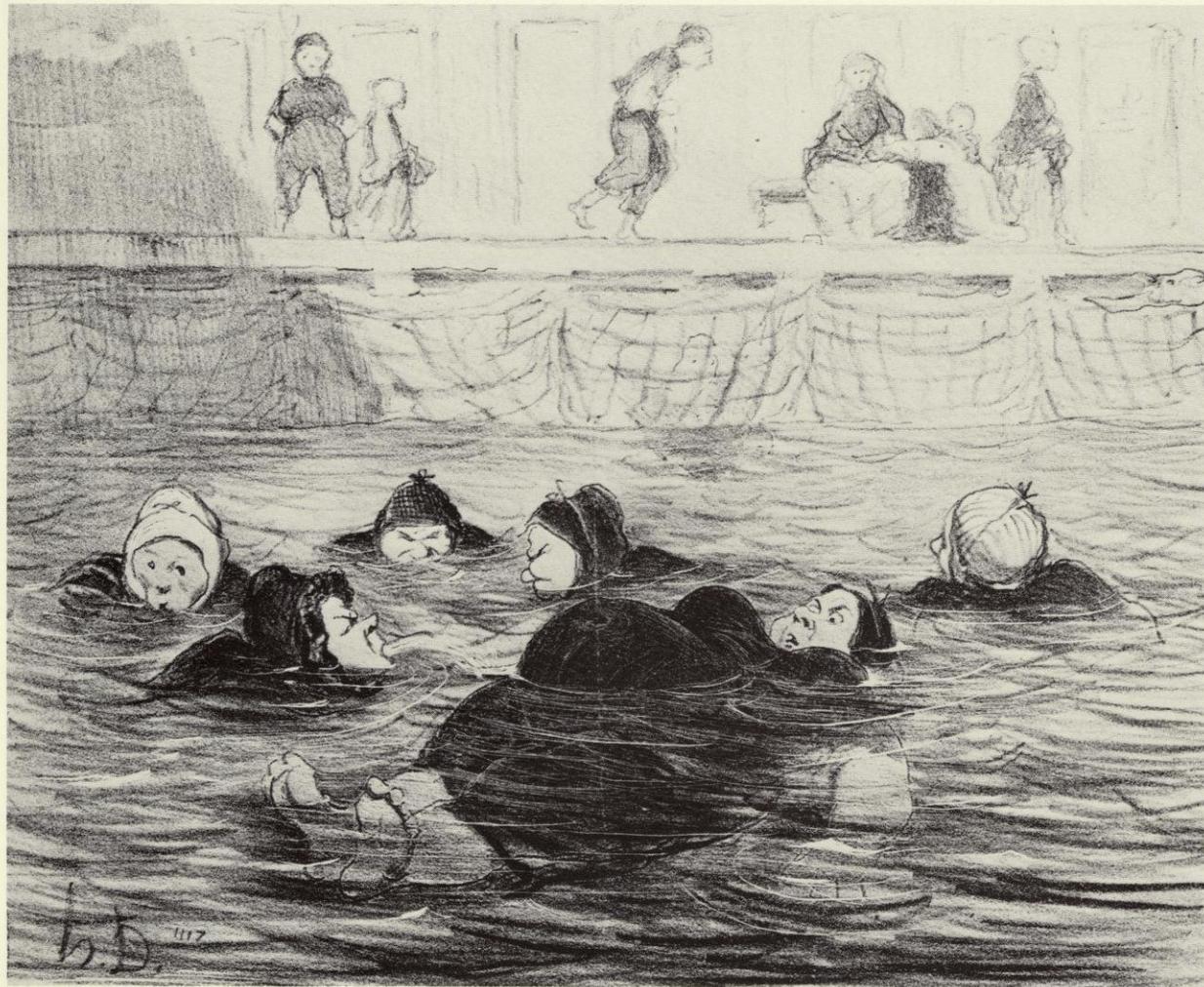


39 *En pleine eau*

In open water

From *Les Baigneuses* (the *Women Bathers*, 1847), pl. 12 of 17 (this publ. in *Le Charivari*, Aug. 29, 1847). Five women in voluminous bathing costumes have been rowed to the middle of a river (again, the atmosphere recalls Jean Renoir's short film, *A Day in the Country*, both Renoir and Daumier portraying with good-humored amusement the awkwardness of city people in their unfamiliar environment).

D. 1640; EMA 1979.1742



40 *Nayades de la Seine*

Naiads [water nymphs] of the Seine

From *Les Baigneuses*, pl. 1 (publ. in *Le Charivari*, July 14, 1847). The foreground lady floats ("faire la planche"—literally "to make like a board"), one of the skills taught by the professional swimming teacher (*maître nageur*). Such bathhouses still exist, floating on the Seine in Paris, but today they no longer use river water (or so they advertise).

D. 1629; EMA 1979.1735



41 *La Leçon à sec: Après trois mois de cet exercice non interrompu, on se trouve réduit à l'état de poisson, et l'être le plus timide, peut se présenter sans crainte . . . aux bains Chinois!*

The Dry Lesson [Dry Run]: After three months of this exercise, uninterrupted, one finds oneself reduced to the state of a fish, and the most timid being may present himself without fear . . . at the Chinese [or Turkish] baths!

From *Les Baigneurs*, pl. 19 (publ. in *Le Charivari*, May 30-31, 1841). The expression of the *maître-nageur* is not encouraging, but his pupil seems optimistic. [Note the touch of the top hat, the emblem of the bourgeoisie, which seems to float in the air above the "swimmer." (cf. cat. no. 43)]



42 *Arrive donc marsoin; a-t-on vu ce caniche là ça veut être marin, ça se fait des bateaux avec des coquilles de noix et ça craint les bains à quatre sous.*

Come on now, little porpoise; how about this duckling that wants to go to sea, that makes itself boats with nut shells and then fears the four-penny baths!

From *Les Baigneurs*, pl. 10 (publ. in *Le Charivari*, Sept. 27, 1839)

D. 770; EMA 1977.323



43 *Madame Rabourdeau à sa première leçon*

Madame Rabourdeau at her first lesson.

From *Les Baigneuses*, pl. 5 (publ. in *Le Charivari*, Aug. 5, 1847).

D. 1633; EMA 1979.1739



44 *Entre deux plongeons*

Between dips

From *Les Baigneuses*, pl. 4 (publ. in *Le Charivari*, July 29, 1847)

D. 1632; EMA 1979.1738



45 *Chère baronne, je vous félicite . . . vous venez de piquer une tête . . . oh! mais une tête . . . il n'y a que vous pour ces têtes là!*

Dear Baronne, I congratulate you . . . you have just taken a dive . . . , oh! but what a dive! . . . no one else could do it like you!

From *Les Baigneuses*, pl. 3 (publ. in *Le Charivari*, July 27, 1847). The pun is rather complicated, since "piquer une tête" is idiomatic for taking a dive, but "tête" also means "facial expression" as in "quelle tête!" (what a face you're making!). The elegantly clothed lady (probably the social inferior of the Baronne, and wanting not to offend her) might be commenting on the Baronne's facial expression as well as congratulating her on her dive. The hesitations suggest the lady is not improving the situation as she fumbles for words. Of course the drawing also underscores how people in high places put aside their dignity along with their elegant clothing when they dare to indulge in public swimming.



46 *Dans l'été ce n'est qu'ici que réellement je me trouve bien . . .*

In the summer it is only here that I truly feel good.

From *Les Baigneuses*, pl. 2 (publ. in *Le Charivari*, July 16, 1847).

D. 1630; EMA 1979.1736



47 *Parole d'honneur Mme. Frénouillet, ce n'est pas pour nous flatter mais, nous pinçons la natation un peu crânement. En nous voyant on jurerait deux poissons . . . Une Carpe et un Anguille.*

Word of honor, Mme. Frénouillet . . . it's not to flatter us, but we take to swimming quite gallantly. In seeing us one would swear we were two fish . . . a carp and an eel.

From *Les Baigneurs*, pl. 21 [published in *Le Charivari*, July 28, 1842, but also published earlier in *La Caricature*, June 13, 1841]. Note that *Les Baigneurs*, in spite of its masculine title, was not limited to male swimmers.



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