

French Paintings and Pastels, 1600–1945

The Collections of The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

Aimee Marcereau DeGalan, Editor



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Attributed to Honoré Daumier, *Exit from the Theater*, after 1863

Artist	Attributed to Honoré Daumier, French, 1808–1879
Title	<i>Exit from the Theater</i>
Object Date	after 1863
Alternate and Variant Titles	<i>Au Théâtre; Sortie du Theatre; L'Attente</i>
Medium	Oil on panel
Dimensions (Unframed)	12 13/16 x 16 1/8 in. (32.7 x 41 cm)
Signature	Signed lower left: h. D
Credit Line	The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. Purchase: William Rockhill Nelson Trust, 32-31

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Fig. 1. Charles Maurand (1824–1904), after Honoré Daumier, *Boulevard du Temple à Minuit*, 1862, wood engraving on paper, 8 7/8 x 6 5/16 in. (22.6 x 16 cm), Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1928, 28.108.434

Although Honoré Daumier's (1808–1879) prolific output in graphic media has long been a subject of dedicated study, the artist's smaller corpus of oil paintings continues to be a source of controversy and confusion. Such is the case with the Nelson-Atkins painting *Exit from*

the Theater, painted on a reused mahogany panel sometime after 1863. The painting represents, with some variation, the left side of Daumier's wood engraving *Boulevard du Temple à Minuit* (Fig. 1), which first appeared in *Le Monde Illustré* on February 22, 1863.¹ The museum acquired the painting in 1932 as an autograph work by Daumier through the art agent Harold Woodbury Parsons, who brokered the sale with the Parisian dealer Richard Owen. Owen purchased it from a Paris-based collector named [Paul?] Jungers in 1931, who may have owned the painting as early as 1923.² Its earlier provenance is unknown, and, as with most Daumier oils, the painting remains undocumented. The panel was unknown to Daumier's cataloguers, Edward Fuchs (1927) and K. E. Maison (1967), and it does not appear in their respective publications.³ The painting's murky history, as well as select clumsy passages, have led to doubts about the picture's attribution that first arose in 1958.⁴ However, recent research, as well as an extensive technical study within the context of a wider understanding of Daumier's techniques, offer reasons to reconsider the painting and place it in new light on firmer grounds of attribution.

Forgeries after Daumier's prints are an acknowledged problem.⁵ These fraudulent works capitalized on accepted subject matter and misunderstandings of the artist's technical development and process in response to increasing market demands for his work. A plethora of weak copies, with variations after well-known compositions, were the result. Bruce Laughton, a leading recent authority on Honoré Daumier, strongly questioned the attribution of *Exit from the Theater* to Daumier on these grounds, although he never saw the work in person.⁶ Subsequent scholars have generally deferred to his opinion, and as a result the painting has spent more than twenty years off view in storage awaiting further study.

Counterpoints to Laughton's opinion emerge from several different areas. To start, *Exit from the Theater* is not a direct copy of *Boulevard du Temple à Minuit* but rather an adaptation, with critical differences that play off of and inform one another. The painting presents a single group of theatergoers exiting a sobering performance, whereas the print features two groups of theatergoers: those at left, who exit a drama, and those at right, who exit a comedy or some other kind of lighthearted fare. This is evident not only by the stark contrasts of the facial expressions of the two groups but also by the accompanying captions in the print: "*Sortant du Drame*" (exiting a drama) and "*Sortant des Funambules*" (exiting the Funambules). "Funambules"

literally translates to "tightrope walkers," but here it probably refers to an actual place, the Théâtre des Funambules on the famed Boulevard du Temple. The theater was associated with the early career of Frédéric LeMaître (1800–1876), who went on to become a great classical actor. His name appears in the playbill in the background of the Nelson-Atkins painting, which reads "Lazare le Patre, Drame en Cinq Actes, Frederic Lemaître." Lazare le Pâtre (Lazarus the Shepherd), however, was four acts, not five, and LeMaître did not perform in it.⁷ Is the erroneous playbill the mark of a slipshod copyist who did not know theater history? Or was the reference to LeMaître a subtle, yet intentional clue, pointing to a deeper meaning?⁸



Fig. 2. Overexposed image of *Exit from the Theater* (after 1863)

Before delving into the connection to LeMaître, Laughton's refusal to consider the Nelson-Atkins painting as autograph needs to be addressed. First, it should be noted that the painting's natural resin varnish has become unsaturated and discolored with age, making critical assessment via photography and normal gallery lighting nearly impossible.⁹ Second, it is important to remember that Daumier was a printmaker and draftsman first and a painter second; self-taught in oil, he found the medium difficult. Daumier scholar Elizabeth Childs, who recently viewed the work in person, acknowledged the painting's many technical shortcomings, questioning the overall illegible faces and gestures of the individuals—for example, the figure at lower left and the girl's face at the far right, which dissolve into a blur of unrefined, heavy impasto.¹⁰ Childs also commented that "the hands [of the man with the red scarf and girl in yellow] are a mess, [and] look like mittens!"¹¹ Technical analysis, however, reveals there is some retouch on the hand and in the girl's face, which

could explain these weaker elements of the composition.¹² Once the painting was better illuminated (Fig. 2), Childs felt that the livelier colors and impressionist brushwork became more visible, which she agreed looked more characteristic of Daumier.¹³ Further, Childs felt that additional elements seemed representative of Daumier's known oils, including the treatment of the lively bow and the red scarf of the woman at center as well as the profile of the buildings at right and the non-specificity of their architecture.¹⁴ Studying the painting in better light reveals such subtle nuances, including the hint of gray in the mens' top hats as well as the variegated surface area. The surface includes several areas of heavy modeling built up with layers of paint that give a better sense of the underlying structure of the artist's figures.

Structure was important to Daumier, and he attempted to render the plastic forms of his compositions' principal elements through a series of successive thin washes placed over his initial linear designs. He often redrew his original outlines, as other scholars have shown, in materials associated more with drawing than with painting—charcoal, ink, lithography crayon, or water-based media—in an effort to maintain structural clarity and articulate details within his forms.¹⁵ Although paintings conservator Mary Schafer and Mellon scientist John Twilley did not find such drawing materials in the Nelson-Atkins painting, as confirmed in the accompanying technical essay, they did find evidence of double lines from a quill or reed pen scored into the wet ground around the edge of the central male figure's cheek, scarf, and top hat (see Technical Entry, Fig. 9).¹⁶ They also discovered that Daumier used a printmaker's brayer, or ink roller, in the application of his ground (see Technical Entry, Figs. 7-8).¹⁷ On at least two additional occasions, as Schafer and Twilley have shown, Daumier utilized a brayer in the production of an oil painting, a technique that produced the stipple-like texture revealed by radiographs.¹⁸ Due to the built-up layers of oil and varnish used to model *Exit from the Theater*, this subtle texture within the ground layer is not visible on the painting's surface, and therefore not likely to be the result of duplication by a forger.

All of this helps to account for the technical aspects of the painting and for select clumsy passages of paint; however, there is still the issue that the painting replicates a portion of the wood engraving and the question of what that might mean in terms of an attribution to Daumier. It is helpful to turn to what was happening in Paris in February 1863, when the wood



Fig. 3. Honoré Daumier, *Vue prise dans un quartier en démolition* (View of a Quarter about to be Demolished), 1854, lithograph on paper, Lilly Jacobson Collection, University of North Dakota, Grand Forks

engraving of the Boulevard du Temple first appeared in *Le Monde Illustré* (see Fig. 1). As part of Napoleon III's modern new vision for the city, he demolished medieval neighborhoods, with their narrow and winding streets, and built wide avenues, new parks, and city squares. The project lasted from 1853 to 1870, and demolition on the Boulevard du Temple began in early 1863, precisely when Daumier published his print.¹⁹ In 1854, at the outset of Napoleon III's city rejuvenation project, Daumier articulated the human toll that he anticipated this effort would have on the urban population in a caricature from *Le Charivari*, depicting a different street being torn down (Fig. 3). Here, a couple, newly displaced from their residence, stands in the foreground with birdcage in hand and their small child in tow. With mouths agape, they look in disbelief at the buildings soon to be torn down. While this caricature directly reflects the impact of Napoleon III's new plan for the city, the Boulevard du Temple print and the Nelson-Atkins painting, possibly produced nine years later, depict a street that was actively being razed without registering the actual activity taking place. Why?

Censorship laws in France from 1835 to 1848 and starting again with the reign of Napoleon III in 1852 prohibited caricatures of political subjects; however, as Judith Wechsler has shown, they met with varying degrees of enforcement.²⁰ Authority for censorship laws shifted in 1858 and then again in 1860, when the duc de Persigny, a loyal follower of Napoleon III, became responsible for the enforcement of civil law.²¹ As the government did not outline the changing rules of censorship, artists and writers had to tread carefully in delivering their antigovernment messages or else risk fines, suppression, or even imprisonment.²² Daumier,

who had always understood the theater as a powerful vehicle for the delivery of social messages, utilized the stage and other forms of spectacle to help wage this battle, not only specifically with what he saw as the destruction of his beloved city and the displacement of its urban and mostly poor residents but also more broadly against Napoleon III's regime. In the case of the Nelson-Atkins painting, he specifically summoned the name and reputation of the actor Frédéric LeMaître, who was associated with antigovernment positions both personally and professionally.



Fig. 4. Firmin Gillot (1820–1872) and Paul Hadol (1835–1875), “Frédéric-LeMaître et le Comte de Saullès à l’Ambigu: Frédéric-Comte de Saullès” (detail), 1864, engraving, published in *La Vie Parisienne*, April 6, 1864. Image from Bibliothèque nationale de France, département Philosophie, histoire, sciences de l’homme, FOL-LC13-81

In at least two roles that Frederic LeMaître originated, his characters satirized big government: Vautrin, from Honoré de Balzac’s play of the same name (1840), and Robert Macaire, from LeMaître’s own adaptation, *Robert Macaire ‘ce cynique Scapin du crime’* (1835).²³ Daumier

immortalized both title characters through a series of drawings, but with Robert Macaire he also went a step further and produced one hundred lithographs that appeared in *Le Charivari* between 1836 and 1842. The play *Vautrin* was immediately banned in 1840 on the grounds it was “disloyal and revoltingly immoral.”²⁴ The Macaire play, although initially a success, was also banned, and representations of Macaire were repeatedly forbidden until after Napoleon III’s reign.²⁵ Yet for French audiences, LeMaître remained indelibly linked not only to Macaire (as evidenced by the small banner in the lower left of an 1864 caricature advertising LeMaître in a new role; Fig. 4) but also to the theme of social struggle; he was well-known for his impromptu asides on such subjects.²⁶ Through this lens, the Nelson-Atkins panel, a theater scene with figures who exit a tragedy, could constitute a work of social commentary—through the voice of LeMaître/Macaire—to condemn the activities of France’s Age of Empire. With this work, Daumier skillfully evaluated and deployed a nascent political weapon of the era: public opinion.



Fig. 5. Honoré Daumier, *The Strong Man*, ca. 1865, oil on wood panel, 10 5/8 x 13 7/8 in. (26.9 x 35.2 cm), The Phillips Collection, Washington, DC, 0380

This was not the only time Daumier employed subtle criticisms of government in his oil paintings when censorship did not allow him to be direct. Scholars believe that his painting *The Strong Man* (about 1865; Fig. 5) may constitute a work of social commentary in which Daumier used the metaphor of the sideshow to express his aversion to Napoleon III and his propaganda machine. Painted around the same time as the Nelson-Atkins painting, it shares similar elements with it and the related print, with its group of open-mouthed figures

whose expressions register shock and horror at the events unfolding around them.

All of this assumes, of course, that the Nelson-Atkins painting is an autograph work, by Daumier himself. While forgeries after Daumier's prints are commonplace and reveal a lack of understanding of the artist's technical development and process, when considered in a different light—in this instance, quite literally under greater illumination and through extensive technical study—the Nelson-Atkins painting presents new evidence to counter old questions of attribution. Foremost among them is the artist's use of printmaking tools, including the unusual use of a brayer to apply the ground—a technique not visible on the surface or acknowledged in publication prior to the 1932 acquisition by the Nelson-Atkins, and thus not something a forger would ever know. The painting also presents subtle yet important variations from the print—rather than being a direct copy of it—as well as evidence of an artist who utilized the stage and other forms of spectacle to wage battle with government in an era of heightened censorship. In this new and clarifying light, it is time, after twenty years, to reconsider this painting anew.

Aimee Marcereau DeGalan
July 2021

Notes

1. The image, engraved by Charles Maurand, is also known as *Sortant du Drame et Sortant des Funambules*. Reprints appeared in the *Journal Illustré* on March 19, 1865, and in *Presse Illustré* on March 1, 1868.
2. The spelling of Junger[s]'s name varies, but is most often found as Jungers. See the provenance section of this entry for further details. Junger[s?] (d. 1934, Paris), may have owned the work as early as May 1923, when the painting may have been exhibited at the *Exposition Daumier et Gavarni*, Maison de Victor-Hugo, Paris, May–July 1923. The catalogue featured eleven Daumier paintings in the collection of Jungers. The Nelson-Atkins acquired several pictures with this dual Jungers/Owen provenance, a number of which have subsequently lost their attribution. See unknown artist, probably French, *View in Italy*, ca. 1850, <https://nelson-atkins.org/fpc/nineteenth-century-realism-barbizon/518>. Jungers brokered at least three other Daumier pictures whose
3. I use the term “unknown to Daumier's cataloguers” because if they had known about the work and did not believe it to be autograph, they would have included it in their respective forgeries' sections of their publications. Edward Fuchs, *Der Maler Daumier* (E. Weyhe, New York, 1927); and Maison, *Honoré Daumier: Catalogue Raisonné*.
4. See letter from Ebria Feinblatt, curator of prints and drawings, Los Angeles Museum of History, Science and Art, to Patrick Kelleher, former curator of European art, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, October 2, 1958, NAMA curatorial files. Although Feinblatt never saw the painting in person, she wrote to Kelleher that the painting was undoubtedly a forgery based on the artist's print of 1863.
5. Forgeries began in earnest following the 1889 *Exposition Centennale*, which drove prices higher and attracted many forgers. See K. E. Maison, “Daumier's Paintings and Drawings,” in *Daumier Paintings and Drawings*, exh. cat. (London: Arts Council of Great Britain, 1961), 18–19.
6. See letter from Simon Kelly, former associate curator, The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, to Bruce Loughton, December 27, 2008, NAMA curatorial files.
7. See email from Cindy Kang, contract researcher, The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, to Nicole Myers, former associate curator, NAMA, February 2012, NAMA curatorial files. Kang and Myers consulted archival records at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (BnF) and the *Arts du Spectacle*. The play premiered at the Théâtre Ambigu in November of 1840, which by then was no longer operating on the Boulevard du Temple. See Marie-Noëlle, *La Musique à Paris en 1830–1831* (Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale de France, 1983), 79.

8. As Mary Schafer and John Twilley have shown in the accompanying technical entry, the lettering on the playbill in the Nelson-Atkins painting is original to the painting, and thus not an addition by a later hand.
9. As noted by Schafer and Twilley in the accompanying technical entry.
10. As observed by Elizabeth Childs, department chair, Etta and Mark Steinberg Professor of Art History, 19th and 20th Century European Modernism, Washington University, St. Louis, during her visit to the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, December 11, 2017. I am extremely grateful to Dr. Childs for sharing her critical assessment of the painting and agreeing to go on record.
11. Childs visit to the Nelson-Atkins, December 11, 2017.
12. See accompanying technical entry by Schafer and Twilley.
13. Childs visit to the Nelson-Atkins, December 11, 2017. It is important to note that Childs does not outright accept the Nelson-Atkins painting as autograph Daumier, but rather finds that select passages, when better illuminated, bear more resemblance to Daumier's hand than previously acknowledged.
14. Childs visit to the Nelson-Atkins, December 11, 2017.
15. See Aviva Burnstock and William Bradford, "An Examination of the Relationship between the Materials and Techniques used for Works on Paper, Canvas, and Panel by Honoré Daumier," in *Painting Techniques: History, Materials and Studio Practice; Contributions to the Dublin Congress, 7-11 September 1998* (London: International Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works, 1998), 217-22.
16. See the accompanying technical entry by Schafer and Twilley.
17. See the accompanying technical entry by Schafer and Twilley, as well as Louisa Smieska, John Twilley, Arthur Woll, Mary Schafer, and Aimee Marcereau DeGalan, "Energy-Optimized Synchrotron XRF Mapping of an Obscured Painting Beneath *Exit from the Theater*, attributed to Honoré Daumier," *Microchemical Journal* 146 (May 2019): 679-91, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.microc.2019.01.058>.
18. The two paintings unquestionably by Daumier that also reveal the use of the brayer are *The Print Collector* (ca. 1857-1863; Art Institute of Chicago) and *French Theater* (ca. 1856; National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC). In the case of the Nelson-Atkins panel, Schafer and Twilley believe that "the texture may have had the additional advantage of reducing the visibility of brushstrokes associated with the discovery of an underlying landscape beneath *Exit from the Theater* by a different hand" (see their accompanying technical report). As the pigments utilized in the construction of the underlying painting are consistent with the time frame proposed for *Exit from the Theater*, I have chosen not to deal with it directly in this essay. For more on the underlying painting's history and process of discovery, see Smieska et al., "Energy-Optimized Synchrotron XRF Mapping."
19. Napoleon III's new vision for the city allowed for the expropriation of private property to create new streets through the existing urban core. As part of this plan, the Boulevard du Temple was demolished in an effort to link the Place du Château-d'Eau (today "Place de la République") to the Place du Trône (today "Place de la Nation"). For more on Napoleon III's efforts to modernize Paris, see David Jordan, *Transforming Paris: The Life and Labors of Baron Haussmann* (New York: Free Press, 1995); and David Harvey, *Capital of Modernity* (New York: Routledge, 2003).
20. Judith Wechsler, "Daumier and Censorship, 1866-1872," *Yale French Studies*, no. 122 (2012): 53-78, at 54.
21. Wechsler, "Daumier and Censorship," 54.
22. Henry Zeldin, *France 1848-1945*, vol. 2, *Intellect, Taste and Anxiety* (Oxford, 1977), 547, cited in Wechsler, "Daumier and Censorship," 54. See also the act of February 17, 1852, Article 22, which spells out the censorship laws: Gustave Rousset, *Code general des lois sur la presse et autre moyen de publication* (Paris, 1869), 223, as cited in Wechsler, 54n1.
23. Lemaître played Macaire—a redevelopment of a character from Benjamin Antier, Saint-Amand and Paulyanthe's play *L'Auberge des Adrets*—as a financial schemer that lampooned financial

speculation and government corruption; he became a thinly veiled stand-in for King Louis Philippe. This new play was a satire on Louis Philippe's July Monarchy and its financial oligarchy, with a central thesis of unmaking the bourgeoisie in power. It premiered in 1835 and was a wild success. See Stanislav Osiankovski, "History of Robert Macaire and Daumier's Place in It," *Burlington Magazine* 100, no. 668 (November 1958): 388–93. See also David S. Kerr, *Caricature and French Political Culture 1830–1848: Charles Philipon and the Illustrated Press* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 41–42.

24. Frédéric Lemaître created the title role in Balzac's *Vautrin*, which premiered in 1840. Lemaître played the role in a comedic way and wore a wig shaped like a pyramid, which was associated with the well-known toupee worn by Louis Philippe. See Mary F. Sandars, *Honoré de Balzac, His Life and Writings*, 2nd ed. (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1905), 237–41.
25. For more information concerning censorship during the Second Empire, see Judith Wechsler, "Daumier and Censorship"; see also Robert Justin Goldstein, "Censorship of Caricature and the Theater in Nineteenth-Century France: An Overview," *Yale French Studies*, no. 122 (2012): 14–36; and Elizabeth Childs, "The Body Impolitic: Censorship and the Caricature of Honoré Daumier," in *Suspended License: Censorship and the Visual Arts* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997), 151–89. For the ban on the Robert Macaire play, see John McCormick, *Popular Theatres of Nineteenth Century France* (London: Routledge, 1993), 106.
26. Osiankovski, "History of Robert Macaire," 389.

Technical Entry

Citation

Chicago:

Mary Schafer and John Twilley, "Attributed to Honoré Daumier, *Exit from the Theater*, after 1863," technical entry in Aimee Marcereau DeGalan, ed., *French Paintings, 1600–1945: The Collections of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art* (Kansas City: The

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Schafer, Mary, and John Twilley. "Attributed to Honoré Daumier, *Exit from the Theater*, after 1863," technical entry. *French Paintings, 1600–1945: The Collections of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art*, edited by Aimee Marcereau DeGalan, The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, 2021. doi: 10.37764/78973.5.512.2088

Exit from the Theater, an oil on panel attributed to Honoré Daumier (1808–1879), depicts a group of audience members departing a dramatic evening performance. The composition corresponds to the left half of *Boulevard du Temple à Minuit* (Fig. 1), an engraving after Daumier by Charles Maurand (1824–1904) that was first published in *Le Monde Illustré* in 1863. Acquired in 1932 as an authentic painting by Daumier, doubts about *Exit from the Theater* surfaced in 1958. Several historical inaccuracies were identified in the painted playbill, and the question of whether Daumier would have painted an abbreviated version of the Maurand engraving was raised. The painting's lack of provenance before 1923 and its absence from the 1930 and 1968 catalogues raisonnés only deepened the uncertainty.¹

Paintings that exist outside of Daumier's accepted oeuvre require a cautious approach to authenticity and chronology due to a number of complicating factors. While his lithographs can be dated based on their publication in newspapers, definitive dates for his oil paintings are rare. Another obstacle is the large number of forgeries that exist, some materializing within Daumier's own lifetime.² Unfinished works in the artist's studio at the time of his death were completed by later hands with the addition of signatures.³ In other instances, some autograph paintings have been irreversibly altered by restoration campaigns. It is also important to recognize Daumier's unevenness as a painter, reflected in late nineteenth-century descriptions of his work that range from "a remarkable energy, sureness of palette, and tonal intensity" to "rather laborious execution, technical deficiencies, and problems of completion."⁴ In light of these many challenges, recent technical studies of authentic Daumier paintings have introduced critical information about the artist's materials and technique that served as a point of comparison in the technical study of the Nelson-Atkins painting.^{5,6}



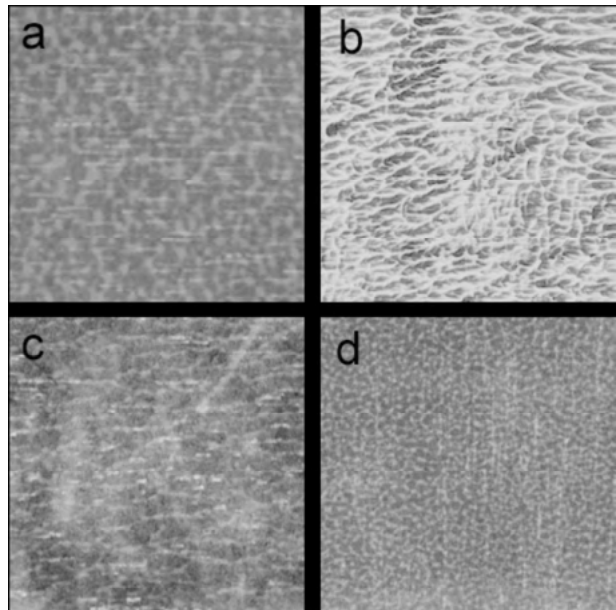
Fig. 6. Panel reverse of *Exit from the Theater* (after 1863)

Exit from the Theater was executed on a horizontally-grained mahogany panel,⁷ approximately 1.1 centimeters thick, with beveled edges on the reverse (Fig. 6). The panel was previously used by an unknown artist to paint a landscape, oriented 180 degrees from the upper theater scene. With specular illumination, thicker paint textures from the lower composition reveal an underlying tree and horizontal clouds. Holes, now filled with paint, are present at all four corners and although Daumier occasionally attached paper to the panel support prior to painting, there is no evidence of a paper substrate beneath the Nelson-Atkins painting.⁸

Daumier struggled financially and occasionally repurposed materials for his drawing and painting supports.⁹ Two Daumier works in the collection of the Musée d'Orsay—*Le Baiser* (ca. 1845) and *Martyrdom of Saint Sébastien* (ca. 1849)—were painted on panels that were once part of a cabinet or other piece of furniture.^{10,11} Notably, there are also examples in which Daumier repurposed the painting supports of other artists. *The Uprising* (1848 or later; Phillips Collection, Washington, DC) was executed on top of a discarded canvas featuring a portrait from a much earlier period,¹² and in another instance, Daumier reused the reverse side of a watercolor fragment painted by another artist.¹³



Fig. 7. Radiograph of *Exit from the Theater* (after 1863)



Figs. 8a–d. 8a. radiograph detail of Fig. 7, *Exit from the Theater* (after 1863); 8b. test panel with brayer-applied lead white; 8c. *The Print Collector* (ca. 1857/1863; Art Institute of Chicago, 1957.305); 8d. *French Theater* (ca. 1856; National Gallery of Art, Washington DC, 1963.10.13). Brighter pixels correlate to radio-opaque material. Each field of view is 2 centimeters.

In preparation for painting *Exit from the Theater*, the landscape was covered by a lead white ground with traces of natural barite and calcite. Its thick application and uneven, stipple-like texture dominate the radiograph, concealing nearly all details of the upper and lower compositions (Figs. 7 and 8a).¹⁴ This ground texture is suggestive of a stage in the printmaking process in which viscous printing ink is rolled onto a plate using a brayer. A replication experiment was undertaken on a test panel to which lead white paint was applied with a brayer. The unique pattern left by this

means of application did not spontaneously “level” and persisted through the drying process, becoming clearly visible in a subsequent radiograph (Fig 8b).¹⁵ In an ensuing review of Daumier radiographs, grounds with similar stippled patterns were identified on two unquestioned works by this artist: *The Print Collector* (ca. 1857–63; Art Institute of Chicago) and *French Theater* (ca. 1856; National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC) (Figs. 8c and 8d).¹⁶ This use of a brayer is consistent with Daumier’s incorporation of tools and materials from his printmaking trade into easel painting. Research by other scholars has shown that he introduced charcoal sketching, lithography crayon, ink, and water-based media, as well as the use of quill or reed pens into his oil painting process.¹⁷ Consequently, the stippled pattern of the ground is a significant connection between the Nelson-Atkins painting and authentic works by Daumier.

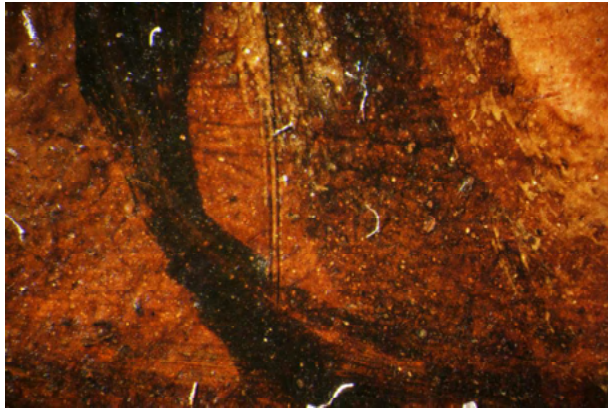


Fig. 9. Photomicrograph of incised marks, *Exit from the Theater* (after 1863), 10x

Although there is no evidence of crayon, ink, or water-based media on *Exit from the Theater*, a few incised marks were drawn into the wet ground using a quill or reed pen. The distinct double lines associated with this tool are present around the central figure’s proper right cheek, scarf, and top hat (Fig. 9). The radiograph of Daumier’s *Theater Audience* (ca. 1856–1860; National Museum of Western Art, Tokyo) reveals an incised mark made with this type of tool,¹⁸ and *Lunch in the Country* (around 1868; Amgueddfa Cymru-National Museum of Wales, Cardiff) contains the nib of a quill embedded beneath the varnish.¹⁹ Other fine scratches in the ground of the Nelson-Atkins painting appear to be haphazard and unrelated to compositional forms, consistent with those evident across Daumier’s

unfinished work, *Orchestra Stalls* (ca. 1865; Cincinnati Museum of Art).

Above the lead white ground of the Nelson-Atkins panel, a sienna-colored imprimatura was applied to establish a warm tonality overall. The imprimatura remains visible between compositional elements but also produces the reddish-brown color evident beneath the garments of the female figures and right male (Fig. 10). The infrared reflectogram in Figure 11 reveals a few sketch lines of unidentified medium, applied on top of the imprimatura, that loosely mark the right female’s bonnet, the bow of the central female’s bonnet (Fig. 12), a wider shape for the red scarf, and a few diagonal lines at the upper right corner.²⁰



Fig. 10. Detail of the right male's jacket, *Exit from the Theater* (after 1863)



Fig. 11. Infrared reflectogram of *Exit from the Theater* (after 1863), captured with an OSIRIS InGaAs camera. Courtesy of Rik Klein Gotink.

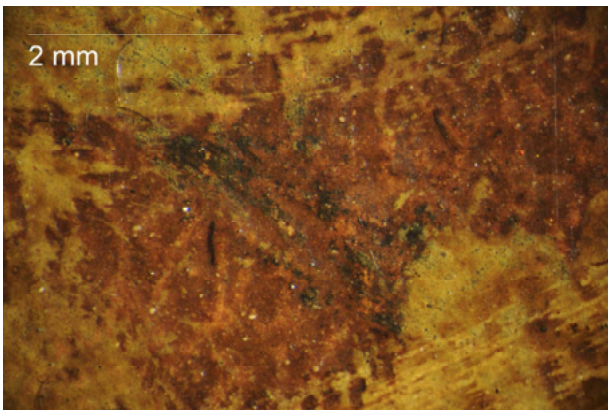


Fig. 12. Photomicrograph of black drawn line beneath the bow of the central female figure, *Exit from the Theater* (after 1863)



Fig. 13. Detail of two gentlemen on the left side of *Exit from the Theater* (after 1863), showing the painted lines used to sketch the faces

The faces were defined by thin, fluid strokes of black paint, rather than drawn lines, and these preliminary strokes remain visible in many instances (Fig. 13). Although paintings by Daumier have often been reported to include ink in this role, ink was not identified among the collected samples. With these initial strokes in place, the faces were constructed using opaque tan flesh tones, gray-brown shadows, and somewhat thicker highlights, placed on top of and around the painted lines. Thick impasto highlighting the nose and cheek of the right male is somewhat clumsily applied and differs from that of the other faces in its handling. In the final stages of painting, black contour lines were reintroduced on top of paint layers to define the figures further. The peripheral figures were executed quickly with less definition, often comprised of only three components: the initial black painted sketch, opaque red-brown paint (similar in color to the imprimatura), and a few highlights (Fig. 14).

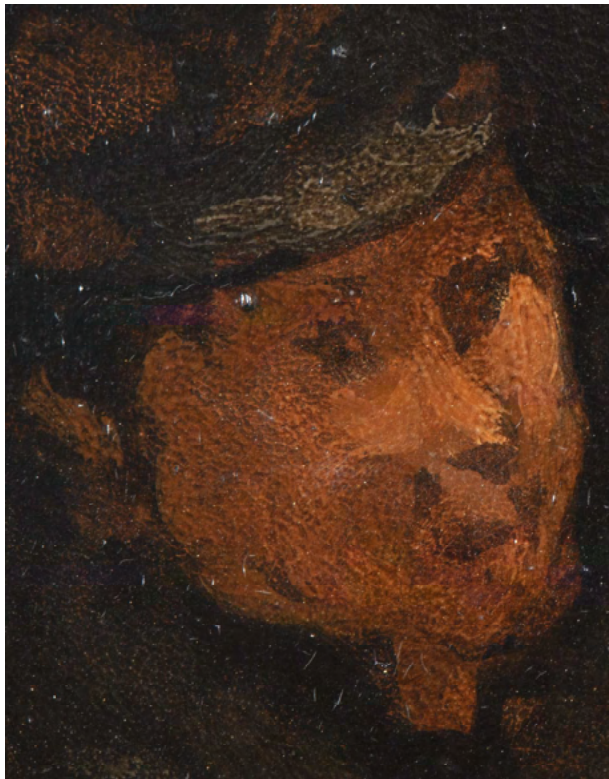


Fig. 14. Detail of the lower left male*, *Exit from the Theater** (after 1863)



Fig. 15. Photomicrograph of the playbill, *Exit from the Theater* (after 1863), 12.5x

The infrared reflectogram of Figure 11 more effectively reveals the lively brushwork found within the dark passages of the painting, such as the rapidly applied zigzagging strokes that make up the jackets of the leftmost figures and the right male's top hat. Thin washes and scumbles were applied to block in the background and bodies of the figures. Highlights were added with a somewhat dry brush, causing the paint to skip across the lower layers and produce textural effects, for example in the bow beneath the central female's chin. Within the playbill, the text was rendered with brown and black paint thinned with diluent, producing a feathery character at the edges of the paint strokes (Fig. 15).

A discolored and unsaturated natural resin varnish has shifted the colors and darkened the theater scene. The varnish produces an opaque yellow-green UV-induced visible fluorescence that may conceal the presence of non-original paint beneath the surface coating (Fig. 16). A small amount of retouching was added to the rightmost figure's face where a split in the panel, approximately 3 centimeters long, was stabilized with a wooden inset on the panel reverse. Paint along the lower left and bottom edges, near to, and including the right male's fingers, may contain later additions of paint, as these areas have a different color and texture when compared to the surrounding original paint (Fig. 17).



Fig. 16. Ultraviolet-induced visible fluorescence photograph, *Exit from the Theater* (after 1863)

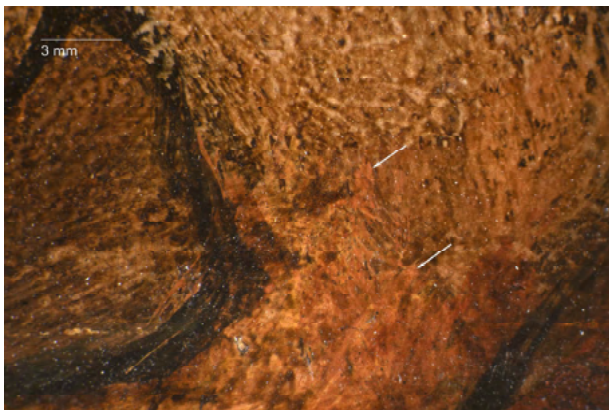


Fig. 17. Photomicrograph of *Exit from the Theater* (after 1863), showing orange retouching along the bottom edge and right male's fingers

There is no evidence of retouching or overpaint that would explain the discrepancies within the playbill concerning the theater, actor, and number of acts in the featured play, *Lazare le Patre*.²¹ Similarly, there are no obvious indications that the faint "h.D." monogram at the lower left was added at a later date. However, K. E. Maison prefaced his 1968 catalogue raisonné with an explanation as to why he refrained from using the term 'signed:' "Genuine works frequently bear spurious h.D. initials which may have been added at any time since Daumier's death, and the question of the authenticity of a monogram is in fact of minor importance."²²

Considering the number of Daumier forgeries and the questions surrounding the Nelson-Atkins painting, it was essential to confirm that the materials used were entirely among those available to Daumier. The reused panel provided yet another level of materials scrutiny since the

pigments of the underlying landscape must also have been in use prior to Daumier's execution of *Exit from the Theater* if, indeed, he was the artist. While the stippled ground texture connects the Nelson-Atkins painting more securely to authentic works by Daumier, this thick application of lead white was the main impediment to study of the underlying landscape, obscuring details that would otherwise be visible through radiography and infrared reflectography.

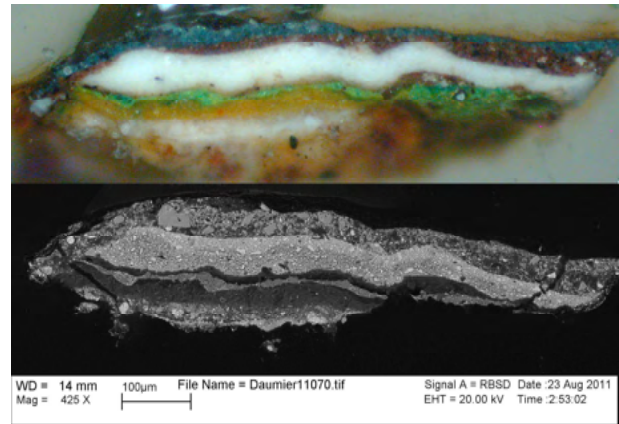


Fig. 18. Paint cross section from margin of *Exit from the Theater* (after 1863), shown as (top) visible light microscope image and (bottom) backscatter electron image, illustrating the thick lead white layer separating the theater scene from the underlying landscape scene. Scale bar = 0.1mm.

Initial tests that formed the basis for the eventual full revelation of the underlying landscape were carried out on microsamples taken primarily along the edges of the composition. These were studied by scanning electron microscopy (SEM) accompanied by elemental analysis using X-ray spectrometry, polarized light microscopy (PLM), Raman spectroscopy, and Fourier-transform infrared spectroscopy (FTIR). Each of these methods provides information complementary to the others from which a full understanding of the palette can be derived. In addition to confirming the presence of individual pigments, these methods were used to determine the ways in which pigments were combined for specific purposes through the study of cross sections that display the strata of paint applications and the individual components of these superimposed layers. Cross sections were studied by SEM with elemental analysis by X-ray spectrometry and additionally by reflected light microscopy and ultraviolet fluorescence microscopy. Figure 18 shows a cross section containing the full set of layers from both compositions; the sample location corresponds to the upper right sky of the theater scene

(atop the foreground of the landscape). The layers are irregular in thickness at this edge location but the greater thickness of the upper ground relative to the landscape is typical throughout the painting (Fig. 19).

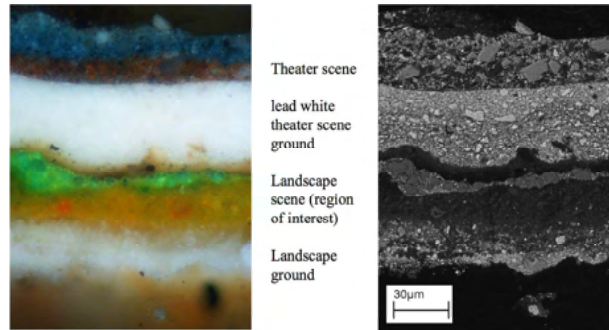


Fig. 19. Paint cross section details of *Exit from the Theater* (after 1863) in visible and backscatter electron images with the various strata labeled. Scale bar = 0.03mm.

Pigments identified on two paintings	
*Pigments in red were inferred from XRF elemental mapping only	
	Theater Scene
White	Lead white; barite, calcite, gypsum, minor dolomite, zinc white
Red	Iron earths, red lake, minor vermilion
Yellow	Lead chromate
Green	-
Blue	Prussian blue, cobalt blue aluminate
Violet	Cobalt phosphate violet
Black	Bone black with crushed barite
Ground Layer	Lead white; traces of crushed barite, calcite
	Landscape
White	Clay, gypsum, minor lead white
Red	-
Yellow	Iron earth, lead chromate, Naples yellow (inferred) , cadmium yellow (inferred)
Green	Viridian, chromium oxide, copper arsenite or acetoarsenite
Blue	Cobalt blue aluminate, cerulean blue, both dilute
Violet	-
Black	Bone black (minor)
Ground Layer	Lead white, crushed barite, calcite, silica

Table 1. List of pigments identified on *Exit from the Theater* (after 1863) and the underlying landscape

The limited color requirements for the somber evening theater scene resulted in a narrow palette emphasizing reds, pale yellows, black, and brown (see Table 1). Nonetheless, the mixtures were often complex and involved diverse colorless fillers. Access to the underlying landscape was limited to the panel margins and through small losses in the theater scene, providing minimal information on the landscape palette. Even so, a much more diverse palette of greens, bright yellows, and light blue sky (Fig. 20) was revealed. Like the theater scene, the landscape employs paints with multiple colorless fillers, compounds with identical compositions but possessing distinctive morphologies signifying different origins (such as crushed natural barite and fine, synthetic barite), and individual elements that are shared among multiple pigments in the same color

stratum (such as chromium in viridian and chrome yellow).



Fig. 20. Photomicrograph of *Exit from the Theater* (after 1863), showing sky blue paint from the underlying landscape and its ground layer exposed at an edge loss, field of view is approximately 0.5mm

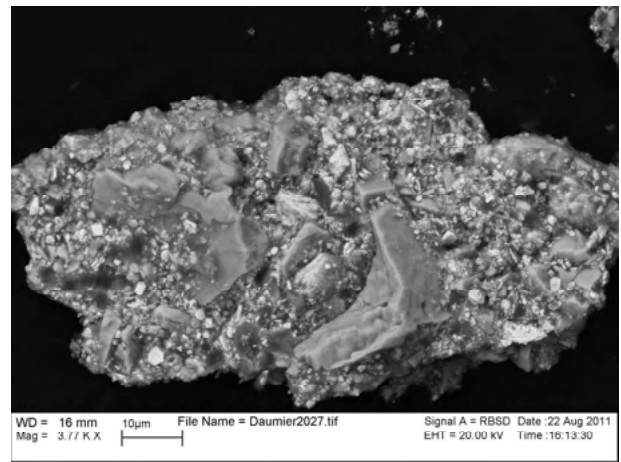


Fig. 21. Jagged particles of coarse natural barite make up most of this sample of flesh color from the mouth of the largest male figure, *Exit from the Theater* (after 1863). Size and shape differentiate them from synthetic barium sulfate which was also in common use. Smaller particles of lead white and chrome yellow surround the barite. Backscatter electron image, scale bar = 0.01mm.

The ground of the theater scene consists of lead white containing mere traces of crushed natural barite and calcite. Flesh colors employ the white pigments lead white, barium sulfate, calcium carbonate, and calcium sulfate, colored by traces of earth pigments and red lake pigment. Cleavage fragments of the barium sulfate, calcium carbonate, and calcium sulfate in the flesh color demonstrate that they are derived from crushed natural barite, calcite, and gypsum, respectively (Fig. 21). The red lake was prepared on a base of alumina and was

compounded with precipitated synthetic barium sulfate and minor amounts of gypsum. The red component of the lake pigment was too dilute to be identified. Red used for the scarf of the man on the right is based upon a natural iron earth pigment containing iron oxides and silicates highly diluted in a white mixture of lead white, calcite, crushed natural dolomite (magnesium-calcium carbonate), gypsum, and finely ground barite. Traces of lead chromate yellow and bone black, typified by calcium phosphate from the mineral component of bone, also occur. Yellow used for the woman's bonnet ribbon employs lead white, coarsely ground gypsum, finely ground barite, and lead chromate yellow. Bone black was determined to be the main black pigment used throughout the theater scene. Charcoal, with its distinctive cellular structures, was never encountered in either SEM or PLM. When used for black outlines without other color admixtures, the bone black is still typically accompanied by crushed natural barite, suggesting that this was a component of the paint as procured by the artist. Browns are comprised of natural barite, bone black, gypsum, lead white, crushed limestone, iron earth pigments and traces of lead chromate yellow. The only blue pigment identified in microanalysis samples from the theater scene lies in a small patch of the drab night sky. It contains Prussian blue (identified by FTIR) highly diluted with iron earth, crushed natural barite, gypsum, and traces of red lake. Synchrotron X-ray fluorescence spectrometry elemental mapping (described below) revealed the presence of cobalt not associated with the cobalt blue of the underlying landscape. Resampling the theater scene led to the discovery of cobalt violet, of the variety based on cobalt phosphate, used in red-brown applications of the theater scene, such as shadow flesh colors (Fig. 22). A small amount of nickel was consistently found in the cobalt violet (Fig. 23). Identification of the pigments used in *Exit from the Theater* confirmed that they were compatible with the late years of Daumier's work. The occurrence of cobalt phosphate violet, though unusual when compared to the limited studies of this artist's palette, is also consistent with this date.

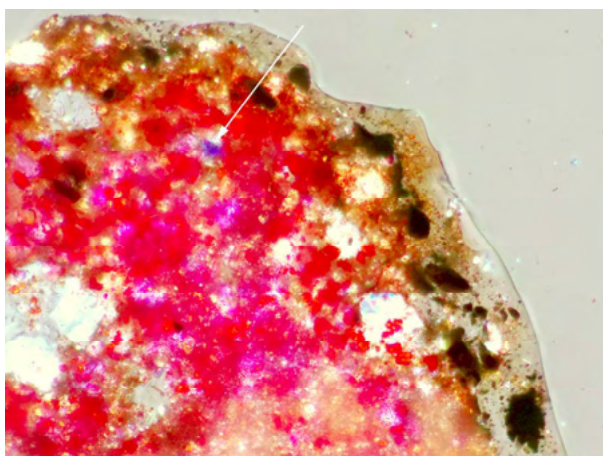


Fig. 22. Red pigments that make up the shadows in the faces of *Exit from the Theater* (after 1863), including cobalt phosphate violet beneath a semitransparent layer of bone black and iron earth. A single particle of cobalt blue is present at the arrow. Transmitted light with crossed polars, 200x.

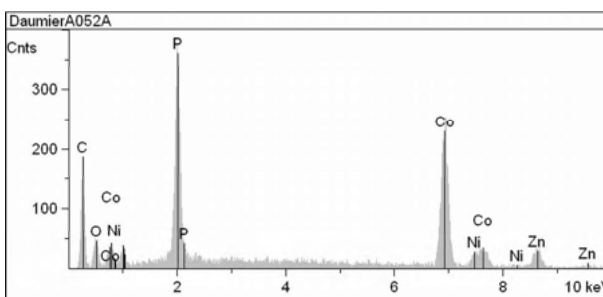


Fig. 23. X-ray spectrum from an individual particle of cobalt violet probed in the SEM showing a small amount of nickel (Ni) detectable along with the elements phosphorus (P), cobalt (Co), and oxygen (O), *Exit from the Theater* (after 1863)

The ground of the underlying landscape employed lead white, crushed natural barite, calcite, and a small amount of silica. Greens accessible at the margin belonging to the foliage contain viridian (hydrous chrome oxide), one of the copper arsenites (emerald green, $\text{Cu}(\text{C}_2\text{H}_3\text{O}_2)_2 \cdot 3\text{Cu}(\text{AsO}_2)_2$, or Scheele's green, CuHAsO_3), lead chromate yellow, white clay, quartz, and crushed natural barite (Fig. 24). Small amounts of cobalt blue also occur in the landscape green (Fig. 25). A yellow layer at the same location is comprised of pale iron earth (mostly clay), lead chromate yellow, and quartz. The edge sample of pale blue belonging to the sky of the landscape shown in Figure 20 contains lead white with traces of barite, quartz, cobalt blue aluminate, cerulean blue, and calcite.

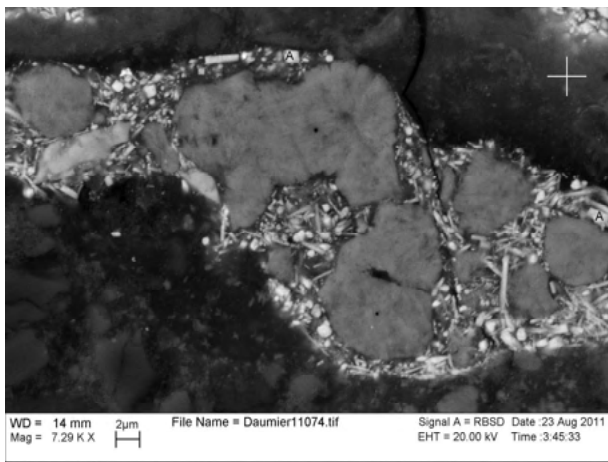


Fig. 24. Cross section detail of *Exit from the Theater* (after 1863), showing the landscape green layer in Figure 18 with coarse, rounded grains of copper arsenite green surrounded by brighter needles of lead chromate yellow, backscatter electron image, scale bar = 0.002mm

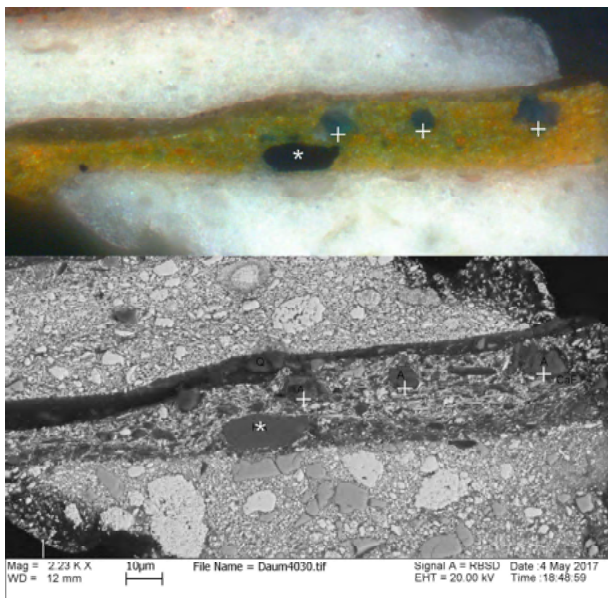


Fig. 25. Cross section detail of *Exit from the Theater* (after 1863), showing a second landscape yellow-green sample; (top) visible light microscope image and (bottom) backscatter electron image, showing sparse grains of cobalt blue "+" and a single example of bone black "*", scale bar = 0.010mm

The blue pigments were extremely dilute, and the presence of cerulean blue, a compound of tin and cobalt oxides, was initially discovered from only two individual pigment particles in the landscape sky probed in the SEM. Its presence guided the selection of conditions for synchrotron XRF elemental mapping (MA-XRF) optimized for visualizing the distribution of tin, in hope of thereby revealing the boundary between earth and sky. Cerulean blue was subsequently confirmed in additional samples from the landscape taken with the guidance of the MA-

XRF mapping results. The tin in this pigment, detected with high sensitivity in the MA-XRF mapping despite its dilute application, proved to be extremely important in recognizing the landscape depicted where it contributes to the blue hue of receding hills. The cerulean blue has a distinctive particle shape (Fig. 26) and was found to be prepared with a high content of magnesium not often seen in this pigment (Fig. 27). Compositional variations like this may prove valuable in the future for relating this pigment to other examples.

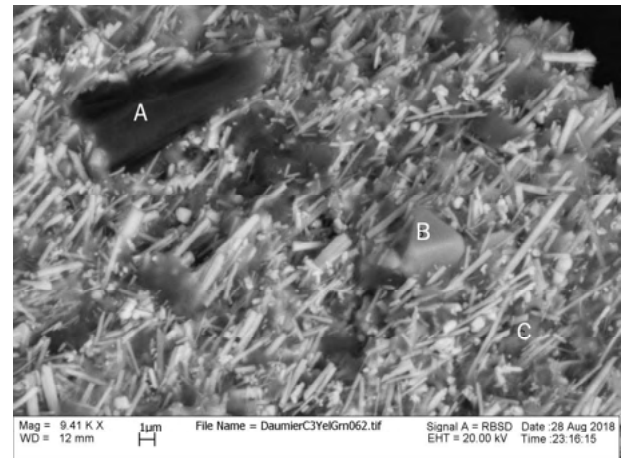


Fig. 26. Microsample beneath the chin of the man on the left corresponding with a tin response from the hills in the mid distance, backscatter electron image, *Exit from the Theater* (after 1863). Cerulean blue in the form of a blocky hexagon (B), a stray particle of charcoal (A), and an iron earth particle (C) are surrounded by needles of chrome yellow. Scale bar = 0.001mm.

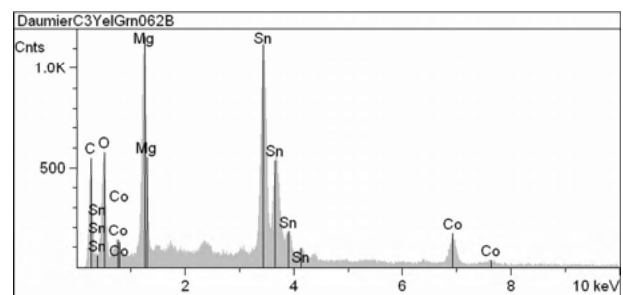


Fig. 27. X-ray spectrum from the cerulean blue particle in Figure 21 probed in the SEM showing a high level of magnesium (Mg) along with the required elements tin (Sn), cobalt (Co), and oxygen (O), *Exit from the Theater* (after 1863)

The breakthrough in visualizing the landscape beneath *Exit from the Theater* came from mapping the distribution of elements in the lower composition in spite of the overlying lead white ground and theater scene.^{23,24} It was made possible by the resources of the Cornell High Energy Synchrotron Source (CHESS), one of a handful of

national laboratories equipped for this work.^{25,26} Several million X-ray spectra for the entire painting were built up over the course of 14 hours, point by point, from each 0.15 x 0.15 mm “pixel” of the painting surface. The spectra were then processed in GeoPIXE to create a map, or image for each element detected.²⁷ Correlations between the distributions of elements in the maps and the specific pigments that contain them, confirmed through the other tests described above, allowed components of the underlying landscape to be visualized. Details of this underlying landscape are described at some length because the evolution of this scene forms the basis for a hypothesis regarding how the panel may have come into the possession of Daumier.



Fig. 28. X-ray fluorescence elemental map for arsenic acquired at 12.9 keV primarily showing green foliage of the underlying landscape depicted with copper arsenite green, *Exit from the Theater* (after 1863)

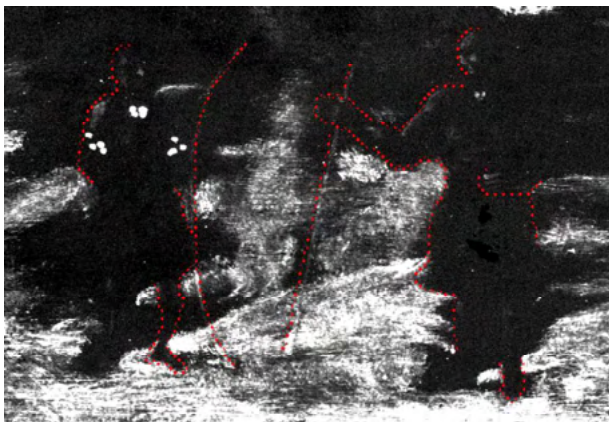


Fig. 29. Annotated detail from the center foreground of the arsenic K map acquired at 12.9 keV in Figure 28 showing figures in silhouette surrounded by arsenic in the foliage green, *Exit from the Theater* (after 1863)

The first synchrotron MA-XRF scan²⁸ showed copper and arsenic distributions from foliage in the underlying landscape that were highly correlated, consistent with the presence of a copper arsenite identified from prior microanalysis (Fig. 28). The map revealed two human figures not evident in radiographs (Fig. 29). An absence of copper and arsenic in the foreground defines their legs, feet, and torsos in silhouette, and the bright dots of copper and arsenic to the right of the tree can be read as adornments at the neck and arms of the leftmost figure. Certain fine details, such as shadows on the face and arm of the right-hand figure, were only apparent in the arsenic distribution and not the copper. This map also reveals that the figures were painted prior to the introduction of the foliage, as there was no elemental response detected from the foliage among these silhouettes.



Fig. 30. X-ray fluorescence elemental map for the tin K-line acquired at 38.5 keV, minus a contribution from barium. The map shows the role of cerulean blue in the color of the distant mountains. *Exit from the Theater* (after 1863).

Tin, anticipated from prior microanalysis in the SEM, was weakly detected in the landscape in a second synchrotron MA-XRF acquisition.²⁹ Despite an average count rate of only a few counts per pixel, the resulting map reveals a distinctive mountain range in the background of the landscape (Fig. 30). Subsequent refinements of the data revealed both cadmium and antimony. The presence of cadmium was initially revealed as a series of distinctly-shaped voids in the tin map. The presence of antimony, with a maximum intensity of only several counts per pixel and whose spectrum partially overlaps that of cadmium, was

discovered during optimization of data processing parameters to extract the tin and cadmium maps.



Fig. 31. X-ray fluorescence elemental map for the cadmium K-line acquired at 38.5 keV. Cadmium can be attributed to the use of cadmium yellow on highlights of the foliage. *Exit from the Theater* (after 1863).

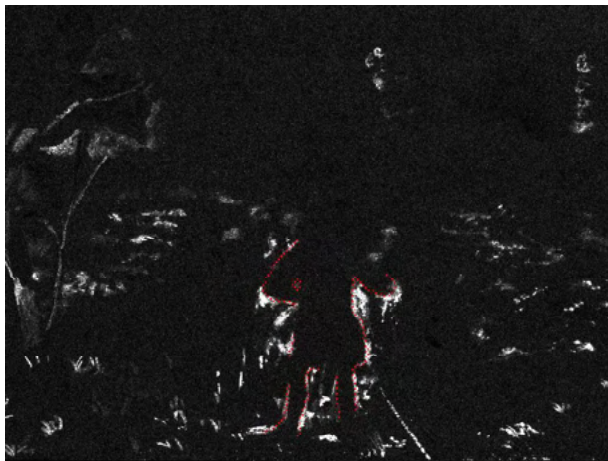


Fig. 32. Annotated detail from the center foreground of the cadmium map in Figure 31 showing a third figure in silhouette located between the two figures in Figure 29, *Exit from the Theater* (after 1863)

The cadmium distribution defines additional areas of vegetation not apparent in the copper and arsenic maps, including foliage behind the copper- and arsenic-rich tree and small tufts of grass (Fig. 31). Furthermore, in the center foreground of the image, just between the two figures revealed by the arsenic map described above, the cadmium distribution defines a silhouette of a third figure standing with legs apart (Fig. 32). The presence of cadmium at logical highlights on plant stems suggests that the pigment is likely a cadmium yellow. Cadmium yellow, in wide use by the mid-

nineteenth century, is also compatible with the attribution date of the overlying theater scene.



Fig. 33. X-ray fluorescence elemental map for the antimony K-line acquired at 36.5 keV, minus an overlapping contribution from barium, showing an intermediate range of mountains, *Exit from the Theater* (after 1863)

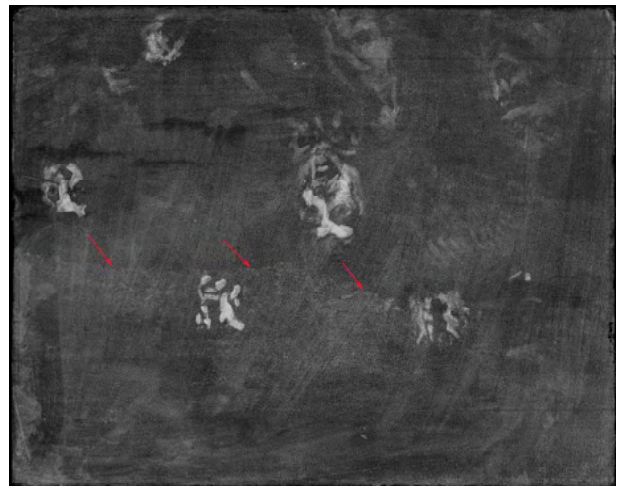


Fig. 34. X-ray fluorescence elemental map for the barium K-line acquired at 36.5 keV showing a range of foothills along with highlights from the overlying theater composition thought to be rich in calcium. The energetic barium K response from small amounts present in the calcium serves as a surrogate for calcium whose less energetic X-rays are absorbed by the overlying paint. *Exit from the Theater* (after 1863).

The antimony elemental map suggests the presence of previously unidentified Naples yellow (an oxide of antimony and lead) in the landscape scene, defining a second mountain range immediately in front of that defined by the tin map (Fig. 33). The depiction of visually recognizable features from the weak responses of cadmium and antimony is a significant advantage of the synchrotron method; the pigments associated with these weak responses, cadmium yellow and Naples

yellow, were not detectable by other techniques, including polarized light microscopy where optical properties make the task easier, and were not known to be present prior to mapping.³⁰

A third mountain range, to the immediate foreground of that indicated by antimony, was confirmed by both the strontium and barium maps (Fig. 34).

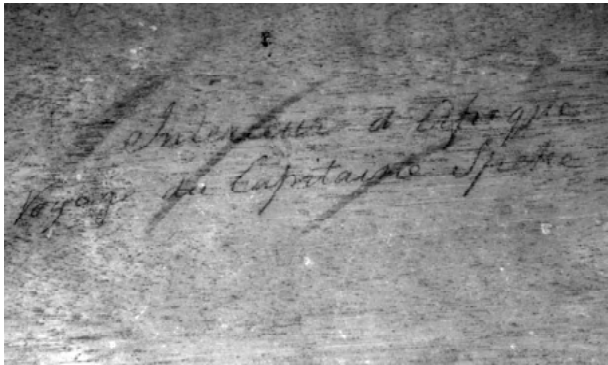
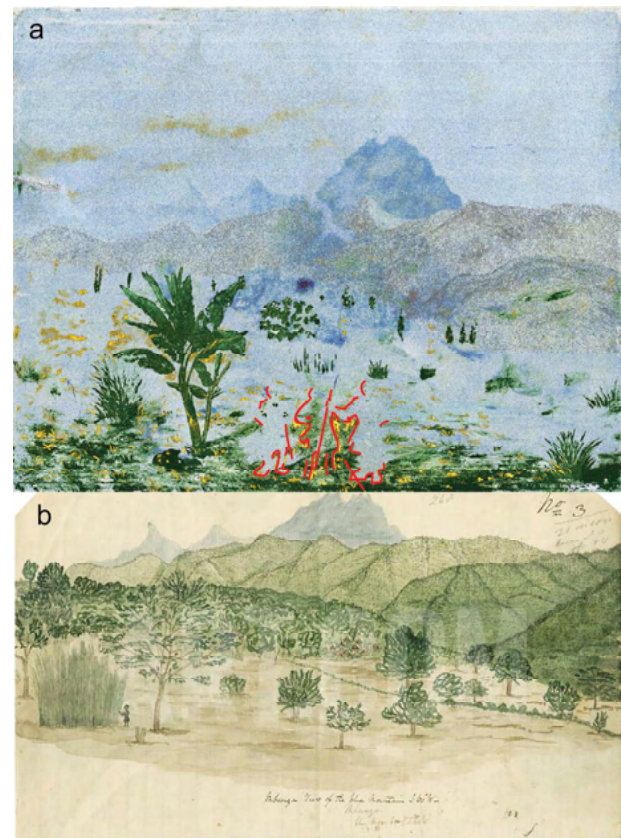
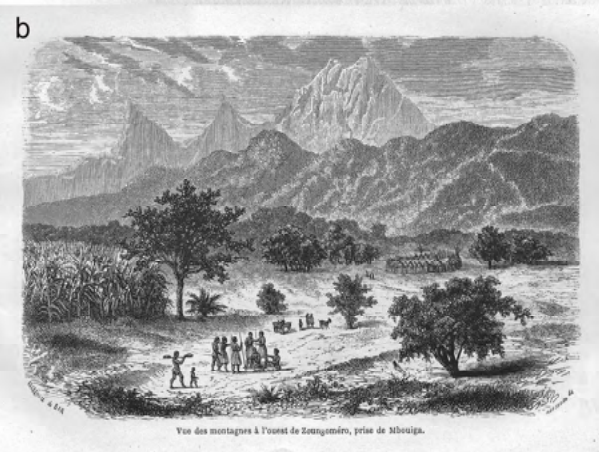
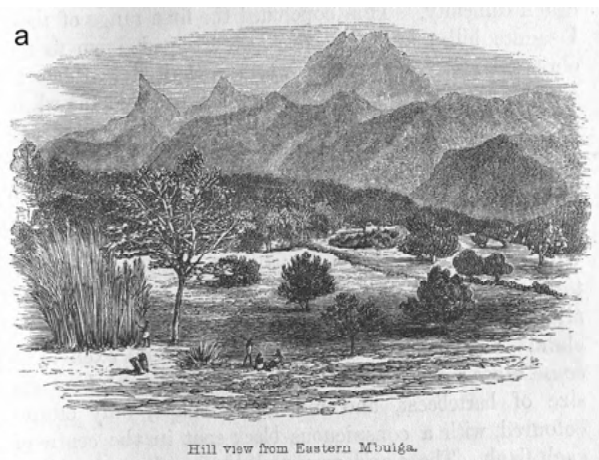


Fig. 35. Digital infrared reflected photograph of *Exit from the Theater* (after 1863), showing the inscription on the panel reverse

The landscape that emerged from the synchrotron MA-XRF scans was successfully linked to John Hanning Speke (1827–1864), a British explorer who searched for the source of the Nile River and whose name appears in a French inscription on the panel reverse – “Interieur a Afrique / Voyage du Capitaine Speke” (Fig. 35). The distinct profile of the mountain range, visible in the overlaid elemental maps of Figure 36a, matches that of *Mbwiga, View of the Blue Mountains S 60°W* (1858; Royal Geographical Society), a watercolor painted by Speke during his 1857–1859 expedition to Africa (Fig. 36b). This watercolor was reproduced with some minor variation as an engraving (Fig. 37a) in Speke’s 1863 travel account, *Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile*.³¹ In the arsenic distribution of the painting, the leftmost figure with a large curved bow and the rightmost figure with an angled spear and hand on hip (Fig. 29), correspond to expedition sketches painted by James Augustus Grant (1827–1892), who joined Speke’s second expedition to Africa in 1860.³² Grant’s sketches were also converted into engravings for the 1863 publication (Fig. 38).³³



Figs. 36a–b. 36a. Overlaid elemental maps of *Exit from the Theater* (after 1863), revealing an image of the underlying landscape. Courtesy of Louisa Smieska; 36b. John Hanning Speke, *Mbwiga, View of the Blue Mountains S 60°W*, 1858, watercolor, Royal Geographical Society, S0016604



Figs. 37a–b. 37a. *Hill View from Eastern Mbouiga*, engraving from Speke, *Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile* (Edinburgh and London: Blackwood, 1863), 45; 37b. *Vue des montagnes à l'ouest de Zoungoméro, prise de Mbouiga*, engraving from Speke, *Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile* (Paris: Hachette, 1864), 59



Fig. 38. Detail from the arsenic elemental map showing two figures (top); *Mzaramo, or Native of Uzaramo*, engraving from *Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile* (Edinburgh and London: Blackwood, 1863), 48, (bottom left); *Msagara, or Native of Usagara*, engraving from *Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile* (Edinburgh and London: Blackwood, 1863), 33, (bottom right)

Given these connections between the painted landscape and the expedition sketches, were there any circumstances in which a panel painting depicting scenes from a British expedition could have arrived in the hands of Honoré Daumier for reuse in France? In a letter dated February 9, 1864, Speke considered having an artist create oil paintings from his expedition imagery.³⁴ While he travelled to Paris during this period and could have engaged an artist,³⁵ it is unclear if he acted on this commission before his sudden death, roughly seven months later.

Another possibility is that the landscape painting, a composite of expedition imagery, was associated with the illustrative process of the French edition of Speke's 1863 travel account, published in Paris with numerous reworked engravings just one year later (Fig. 37b).³⁶ The development of printed imagery for books in the late nineteenth century is described as a complicated,

multistage process in which publishers, artists, engravers, lithographers, and printers influenced the final image, and “visual elements were invariably borrowed and reused in new contexts in order to visualize places and cultures previously unfamiliar.”³⁷ In this scenario several connections can be drawn between Daumier, who was first and foremost a printmaker, and the engravers and book illustrators working on the publication. François Auguste Trichon (1814–1898), an engraver whose name is featured below several of the illustrations in the French publication, was one of more than 60 different engravers working on the printed production of Daumier’s works from 1833 to 1878.³⁸ Daumier’s friendship with Gustave Doré (1832–1883) provides yet another link to Speke’s publication, as Trichon and six other artists associated with the 1864 engravings also collaborated with Doré on book illustrations.³⁹ Charles Maurand, the artist responsible for the wood engraving associated with *Exit from the Theater* (Fig. 1), also worked on Doré illustrations.

At its conclusion, the technical study made new discoveries in relation to the painting’s technique, materials, and execution date. The combination of palette studies and MA-XRF verified that all of the pigments—those present in the first and second compositions—are among those commonly encountered in later nineteenth-century European paintings. No anachronistic materials were uncovered that would definitively expose the Nelson-Atkins painting as a forgery. Despite similarities between the two palettes, there are clear differences that distinguished all components of the two paintings, making it unlikely that they were produced by the same individual working from a single stock of materials.

Many pigments of the underlying landscape are shared with the theater scene. One that is not, cerulean blue, deserves special attention. Not only was it a key means of recognizing the underlying scene through mapping of its tin content, but it is also a pigment better known in this period for use in watercolor. Because the travel sketches that inspired the landscape were executed in watercolor, use of cerulean blue to maintain constancy in the transfer to oil medium makes more sense than it might for a scene whose original execution was in oil and unrelated to preparatory watercolors. The commercial history of cerulean blue is not well-documented but it was available as a watercolor pigment long before being commercialized for oils and, thus, available to artists as a pigment.⁴⁰

The parallels in technique between *Exit from the Theater* and authentic works by Daumier are significant, particularly the distinguishing texture of the ground layer. The presence of a similar ground texture in the radiographs of two unquestioned paintings, one of which is a theater scene, provides the strongest correlation between Daumier and the Nelson-Atkins painting to date. The stippled ground texture is subtle and a feature of the artist’s preparatory process that is not easily observed on the paint surface for replication by a forger. Connections between Daumier and engravers affiliated with the French edition of Speke’s publication offer possible avenues by which Daumier may have obtained and repurposed the wooden panel. The underlying landscape, originally painted as a watercolor in 1858 and first published in modified form in 1863, provides the earliest possible date by which *Exit from the Theater* could have been completed. It is this latter date that fits within the time period in which Daumier was producing oil paintings that focused on the subject of the theater.⁴¹

Mary Schafer and John Twilley
November 2020

Notes

1. See accompanying catalogue entry by Aimee Marcereau DeGalan for an overview of the painting’s provenance and early questions regarding its authenticity.
2. Karl Eric Maison, *Honoré Daumier, Catalogue Raisonné of the Paintings, Watercolors, and Drawings*. (London: Thames and Hudson, 1968), 1:37. See also Douglas Campbell and Usher Caplan, eds., *Daumier 1808–1879* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1999), 30.
3. Campbell and Caplan, eds. *Daumier 1808–1879*, 27.
4. Edmond Duranty, “Études sur Daumier,” *Gazette des beaux-arts* 17, 2nd ser., no. 6 (June 1878): 539 and N[oème] C[adiot], “L’Exposition de Daumier,” *Courrier du soir* (May 24, 1878): 2, respectively, as cited and translated in Campbell and Caplan, eds., *Daumier 1808–1879*, 13.
5. The authors are grateful to former Nelson-Atkins curators Simon Kelly and Nicole R. Myers, and conservation scientist Johanna Bernstein for their contributions in the early stages of this research project.

6. Results from the technical study were disseminated in two prior publications. See Louisa M. Smieska, John Twilley, Arthur R. Woll, Mary Schafer, and Aimee Marcereau DeGalan, "Energy-optimized Synchrotron XRF Mapping of an Obscured Painting beneath *Exit from the Theater*, Attributed to Honoré Daumier," *Microchemical Journal* 146 (2019): 679–91. Mary Schafer, John Twilley, Louisa Smieska, Arthur Woll, and Aimee Marcereau DeGalan, "Technical Study of a Painting Attributed to Honoré Daumier at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art" *AIC Paintings Specialty Group: Postprints; Papers Presented at the 47th Annual Meeting, New England* (Washington, DC: American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works, 2021), 101–24.
7. Regis B. Miller, wood information specialist, November 29, 2016, unpublished report, Nelson-Atkins conservation file, no. 31–30. Miller identified the panel as African mahogany, a species of Khaya.
8. Aviva Burnstock and Mark Evans, "Three Daumiers in Cardiff Reassessed," *Burlington Magazine* 142, no. 1166 (May 2000): 283.
9. Campbell and Caplan, eds., *Daumier 1808–1879*, 23.
10. EROS database 2.0, Department of Archives and Innovative Information Technology, Center for Research and Restoration of Museums of France, F13445 and F10969, accessed August 7, 2011.
11. Campbell and Caplan, eds., *Daumier 1808–1879*, 23.
12. Elizabeth Steele, paintings conservator, Phillips Collection, noted in her 1999 examination report that the underlying portrait "does not bear any resemblance to any style of painting by Daumier, but rather, appears to be from a much earlier period (17th–19th century)."
13. See Campbell and Caplan, eds., *Daumier 1808–1879*, 23.
14. The film-based radiograph of *Exit from the Theater* was captured under the following conditions: 80 kV, 1 mA, 20 seconds. See radiograph no. 502, June 14, 2010, Nelson-Atkins conservation file, 32–31.
15. The mock-up panel was sized to simulate the absorbency of a painted surface, and commercial lead white paint was applied with a brayer. See digital radiograph no. 470, November 2, 2011, Nelson-Atkins conservation file, no. 32–31.
16. Radiographs for these paintings were graciously provided by conservators Ann Hoenigswald, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, and Allison Langley, Art Institute of Chicago. The authors are grateful to the many conservators who shared scans of existing Daumier radiographs as well as the following colleagues who captured new radiographs on behalf of this project: Miho Takashima (National Museum of Western Art, Tokyo), Ellen Hanspach-Bernal and Aaron Steele (Detroit Institute of Arts), Barbara Buckley (Barnes Foundation), and Alexander Kossolapov (Hermitage Museum).
17. Aviva Burnstock and William Bradford, "An Examination of the Relationship between the Materials and Techniques Used for Works on Paper, Canvas, and Panel by Honoré Daumier" in *Painting Techniques: History, Materials and Studio Practice; contributions to the Dublin Congress, 7–11 September 1998* (London: International Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works, 1998), 217–22.
18. Schafer, Twilley, Smieska, Woll, and Marcereau DeGalan, "Technical Study of a Painting Attributed to Honoré Daumier at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art," 103.
19. Burnstock and Bradford, "An Examination of the Relationship between the Materials and Techniques Used for Works on Paper, Canvas, and Panel by Honoré Daumier," 219.
20. Rik Klein Gotink, of the Bosch Research and Conservation Project, kindly captured infrared imagery of *Exit from the Theater* using an Osiris InGaAs camera.
21. These inconsistencies are outlined in the accompanying entry by Aimee Marcereau DeGalan.
22. Maison, *Honoré Daumier*, 39.
23. Smieska, Twilley, Woll, Schafer, and Marcereau DeGalan, "Energy-optimized Synchrotron XRF Mapping of an Obscured Painting beneath *Exit from the Theater*, Attributed to Honoré Daumier," 679–91.

24. This work is based upon research conducted at the Cornell High Energy Synchrotron Source (CHESS) which is supported by the National Science Foundation under award DMR-1332208. Our colleagues Arthur Woll and Louisa Smieska at CHESS were essential to all aspects of the synchrotron XRF and post processing with GeoPIXE. The microanalytical study and costs associated with XRF mapping were supported by an endowment from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation for conservation science at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. Logistical support in Ithaca was provided by the Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art at Cornell University, especially Andrew Weislogel and Matt Conway.
25. C. G. Ryan et al., "The Maia Detector and Event Mode," *Synchrotron Radiation News Technical Reports* (2018): 21–27, doi:10.1080/08940886.2018.1528430.
26. R. Kirkham et al., "The Maia Spectroscopy Detector System: Engineering for Integrated Pulse Capture, Low-latency Scanning and Real-time Processing," *American Institute of Physics Conference Proceedings* 1234, no. 1 (June 2010): 240–43, <https://doi.org/10.1063/1.3463181>.
27. "GeoPIXE: Quantitative PIXE Imaging and Analysis Software," CSIRO Earth Science and Resource Engineering, accessed November 9, 2020, <http://nmp.csiro.au/GeoPIXE.html>. The dynamic analysis (DA) approach contained in GeoPIXE is a fundamental-parameters technique for extracting element concentrations from XRF intensity, formally equivalent to linear least-squares fitting of spectra.
28. Performed with an excitation energy of 12.9 keV, below the lead L3 absorption edge (13.035 keV), to improve imagery for elements with x-ray ionization edges below that of lead.
29. Performed with an excitation energy of 38.5 keV, resulting in maps from several elements known to be present in both paintings but whose emission cannot be induced by the lower incident energy of the first run, namely the lead (Pb) L, strontium (Sr) K, and barium (Ba) K lines.
30. Deterioration of the pigments, along with their small proportion, may also be a factor in this difficulty. Early versions of cadmium yellow have often been observed to undergo oxidation and may suffer adverse interactions with copper pigments such as the copper arsenite known to be used in the landscape. See, for example: E. Pouyet et al., "2D X-ray and FTIR Micro-analysis of the Degradation of Cadmium Yellow Pigment in Paintings of Henri Matisse," *Applied Physics A* 121 (2015): 967, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00339-015-9239-4>; and J. Mass, J. Sedlmair, C. Schmidt Patterson, D. Carson, B. Buckley, C. Hirschmugl, "SR-FTIR Imaging of the Altered Cadmium Sulfide Yellow Paints in Henri Matisse's *Le Bonheur du vivre* (1905–6)—Examination of Visually Distinct Degradation Regions," *Analyst* 138 (2013): 6032–43, <https://doi.org/10.1039/C3AN00892D>.
31. John Hanning Speke, *Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile* (London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1863), 45.
32. James Augustus Grant, watercolor sketches, MS 17920, Archives and Manuscript Collection, National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh.
33. Speke, *Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile*, 47, 62.
34. John Hanning Speke to William Blackwood, February 9, 1864, MS 4191, fols. 162–163, Blackwood Papers, Archives and Manuscript Collection, National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh.
35. Speke traveled to Paris in 1864 and could have commissioned an artist at that time. His correspondence confirms that he was in Paris correcting proofs for the French publication of his travel account. See John Hanning Speke to William Blackwood, March 31, 1864, Folio 4193, Archives and Manuscript Collection, National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh. He was also in Paris at the invitation of Emperor Napoleon III, who offered support for a future expedition. Sidney Lee, ed., *Dictionary of National Biography* 53 (New York: MacMillan Company, 1898), 326.
36. John Hanning Speke, *Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile* (Hachette: Paris, 1864).
37. Leila Koivunen, *Visualizing Africa in Nineteenth-Century British Travel Accounts* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 7, 109.
38. Eugene Bouvy, *Daumier: L'Oeuvre gravé du maître* (Paris: Le Garrec, 1933), 1:11.

39. These artists include Adolphe François Pannemaker (1822–1900), Antoine Valérie Bertrand (b. 1823), J. Gauchard Brunier (n.d.), Alexandre de Bar (1821–1901), Charles LaPlante (1837–1903), and Jules Jean Marie Joseph Huyot (1841–1921).
40. The commercial introduction of cerulean blue is generally credited to Rowney in the year 1860 for use as a watercolor pigment, with its introduction for oil coming only in 1870. These dates could be seen as discrediting the attribution of the theater scene to Daumier since the pigment occurs in oil in the underlying landscape that must have preceded it in date. However, the material itself was known as early as 1805 and has been reported to have been sold earlier in Germany in the 1800s. (Winsor Newton, <http://www.winsornewton.com/na/articles/colours/spotlight-on-cerulean-blue/>, accessed November 9, 2020)
41. Bruce Laughton, *Honoré Daumier* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 60.

Documentation

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Provenance

[Paul?] Junger[s?] (d. ca. 1934), Paris, possibly by May 1923–no later than December 11, 1931 [1];

With Richard Owen, Paris, by December 1931–April 1, 1932 [2];

Purchased from Owen, through Harold Woodbury Parsons, by The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, MO, 1932 [3].

NOTES

[1] The spelling of this constituent's name varies, but is most often found as Jungers. See K. E. Maison, *Honoré Daumier Catalogue Raisonné of the Paintings, Watercolours and Drawings* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1968), no. I-7, I-172, and I-194. For the possible first name Paul, see deaccession proposal for Felix Zeim, *Still Life with Fish*, 32–178, NAMA registrar files. In December 1931, Paris-based art dealer and specialist in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century drawings, Richard Owen (1873–1946), was looking for buyers for four Daumier pictures he had recently purchased from a "well-known French collector [Jungers]". See correspondence from Harold Woodbury Parsons, NAMA art agent, to J. C. Nichols, NAMA trustee, December 11, 1931, NAMA curatorial files. Through the assistance of Owen, NAMA acquired the Daumier and several other works from this collector. See Harold Woodbury Parsons to William Mathewson Milliken, former director of the Cleveland Museum of Art, June 10, 1932, Cleveland Museum of Art Archives.

[2] Jungers may have owned the painting as early as May 1923 when it may have been exhibited at *Exposition Daumier et Gavarni*, Maison de Victor-Hugo, Paris, May–July 1923.

[3] The painting was placed on view at the Kansas City Art Institute from March 14, 1932 until after May 20, 1932, since the museum was not yet built. See "Objects owned by the W.R. Nelson Trust on exhibit at the K.C. Art Institute as of March 14, 1932," March 14, 1932, NAMA Archives, William Rockhill Nelson Trust Office Records 1926–33, RG 80/05, Series I, box 02, folder 17, Exhibition at the Kansas City Art Institute, 1932 and remained in the Art institute after May 20, 1932. See also, "Pictures remaining in the Art Institute after May 20, 1932," May 20, 1932, NAMA Archives, William Rockhill Nelson Trust Office Records 1926–33, RG 80/05, Series I, box 02, folder 17, Exhibition at the Kansas City Art Institute, 1932.

Related Works

Charles Maurand, after Honoré Daumier, *Sortant du Drame: Boulevard du Temple à Minuit*, 1862, wood

engraving on paper, 8 7/8 x 6 5/16 in. (22.6 x 16 cm), The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City.

Charles Maurand, after Honoré Daumier, *Les théâtres: sortant du drame et sortant des funambules*, 1862, wood engraving on paper, 8 7/8 x 6 5/16 in. (22.6 x 16 cm), The Cleveland Museum of Art.

Charles Maurand, after Honoré Daumier, *Boulevard du Temple à Minuit*, 1862, wood engraving on paper, 8 7/8 x 6 5/16 in. (22.6 x 16 cm), National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC.

Honoré Daumier, *Leaving the Theater*, ca. 1865, oil on canvas, 13 1/8 in. x 16 1/4 in. (33.3 x 41.3 cm), San Diego Museum of Art.

Exhibitions

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Fine Arts Festival, Allyn Art Gallery, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, IL, February 26–March 10, 1956, no. 6, as *Exit from the Theater*.

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M[inna] K. P[owell], "Art: Mr. Parsons Will Be Heard Thursday Night on 'The Italian Renaissance;' What Is to Be Seen in the Group of Recently Acquired Paintings for the William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art Was Told the Hospitality Committee Yesterday by Him," *Kansas City Times* 95, no. 88 (April 12, 1932): 10, as *Theater Exit*.

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