

Press release | 16 December 2024

## ART AROUND 1800 An Exhibition about Exhibitions

5 December 2025 to 29 March 2026

Press conference: Thursday, 4 December 2025, 11 a.m.

Opening: Thursday, 4 December 2025, 7 p.m.

The show *ART AROUND 1800* revisits the legendary exhibition cycle of that name at the Hamburger Kunsthalle. Presented in nine parts from 1974 to 1981, the series examined the impact of art in the »Age of Revolutions«, launching seminal debates on the social relevance of art that continue to resonate today. The effect was to write a new history of European art by focusing on themes and artists that broke with the conventions of their time: Ossian, Caspar David Friedrich, Johann Heinrich Füssli, William Blake, Johan Tobias Sergel, William Turner, Philipp Otto Runge, John Flaxman and Francisco Goya. The current exhibition *ART AROUND 1800* will comment on the historical displays created under the aegis of then director Werner Hofmann and update their approach from a contemporary perspective. For this purpose, over 50 paintings, books and works on paper from the Kunsthalle's collection dating circa 1800 will be brought together with selected loans and works by contemporary artists.

Arranged in three chapters, *ART AROUND 1800* will examine themes such as dreams, political landscapes and revolutionary energies from the viewpoint of the present day. Emphasis will also be placed on aspects that were missing from the shows of the 1970s, or which only came to light to some extent, yet are relevant for the period around 1800: feminism, Jewish culture and people of colour.

Like the originals, the current exhibition will be shown in the domed hall on the upper floor of the new museum wing inaugurated in 1919. In the 1970s, this area served as a central »space for contemplation« and for curatorial experiments. Sculptor Marten Schech from Berlin is designing the exhibition architecture in the form of a sculptural intervention.

Guest curators: Prof. Dr. Petra Lange-Berndt (University of Hamburg) and Prof. Dr. Dietmar Rübel (Academy of Fine Arts Munich)

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**Auguste Desperet** (1804–1865)  
*Third Eruption of the 1789 Volcano*,  
1833  
Lithograph, 26 × 33 cm  
Private collection, Hamburg

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