

Photography on a Silver Plate

A virtual exhibition of daguerreotypes to explore the faces, places and stories of the nineteenth century

*Created by Daguerreobase in association with Europeana
and published on Google Cultural Institute*

[Daguerreobase](#) presents "[Photography On A Silver Plate](#)", a virtual exhibition about the first true photographic process: the daguerreotype, created in the context of the European funded "Daguerreobase Project" and published in collaboration with [Europeana](#) and [Google Cultural Institute](#).

"Photography on a Silver Plate"

Silver, mercury and gold were the elements involved in the first truly successful photographic process: that of the daguerreotype. This technological miracle of the 19th century is now being ever more widely recognised as a unique and irreplaceable aspect of our international cultural heritage. In 1839 the invention of the daguerreotype, in the context of an increasingly industrialised civilisation, introduced a universal and continually evolving medium, by means of which our view of the world and everything in it was irreversibly changed.

The daguerreotypes presented in the exhibition have been selected from the open content archives of *Europeana*. They show us the faces, places and stories of the nineteenth century and testify to the conceptual breakthrough initiated by photography in the field of visual mass communication, which consisted in satisfying, yesterday as in today's digital age, our desire to permanently record the fleeting and unrepeatable moments of our lives.

You can visit the virtual exhibition on [Google Cultural Institute](#) and all the pictures presented in the exhibition can be accessed and viewed on [daguerreobase.org](#) and [Europeana.eu](#).

Daguerreobase

Daguerreobase is a public platform of archives, libraries, museums and private contributors from all over Europe, which gathers and preserves information on daguerreotypes. The website [daguerreobase.org](#) offers its users a unique research tool regarding daguerreotypes, not only for scientists, but also for collectors, photographers and the general public. On this website you can view, edit and store records of individual daguerreotypes and establish connections with other records on the basis of a wide range of characteristics and search criteria. The 160 daguerreotype collections currently represented on the website include those of the *Fotomuseum Provincie Antwerpen*, the *Rijksmuseum* of Amsterdam, the Museum Ludwig, the Albertina Museum, the *Archivio Storico della città di Torino*, the *Bibliothèque Historique de la Ville de Paris*, the

Fotomuseum WestLicht of Vienna, the *Istituto Nazionale per la Grafica* of Rome, the National Technical Museum of Prague, as well as several important private collections.

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A selection of the contents of *Daguerreobase* is visible in Europeana.eu, the website and digital library for European Cultural Heritage of the European Union. This project is partially funded by the ICT Policy Support Programme (ICT PSP) as part of the European Community competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme.

Europeana

Europeana.eu is an internet website that acts as an interface to millions of books, paintings, films, museum objects and archival records that have been digitized throughout Europe.

More than 2,000 institutions across Europe have contributed to *Europeana*. These range from major international collections such as the *Rijksmuseum* of Amsterdam, the British Library and the Louvre to regional archives and local museums in every member-state of the European Union. Their assembled and united collections allow users to explore the European cultural and scientific heritage from prehistory to the modern day.

Google Cultural Institute

Google Cultural Institute is the online platform created by Google to host the world's cultural treasures and make them accessible to all. It has been set up in collaboration with hundreds of museums, cultural institutions and archives.

Art Project, *World Wonders Project* and *Archive exhibitions* are the names of the three main sections of Google Cultural Institute which contain works of art, landmarks and world heritage sites, as well as digital exhibitions that tell the stories behind the archives of cultural institutions across the globe. “**Photography on a Silver Plate**” is part of *Archive exhibitions*, where curators, museums and websites such as *Europeana* bring their collections and archives to life by making them available online thanks to virtual exhibitions, with themes ranging from Nelson Mandela's handwritten prison letters to the ‘La Dolce Vita’ epoch in Italy.

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