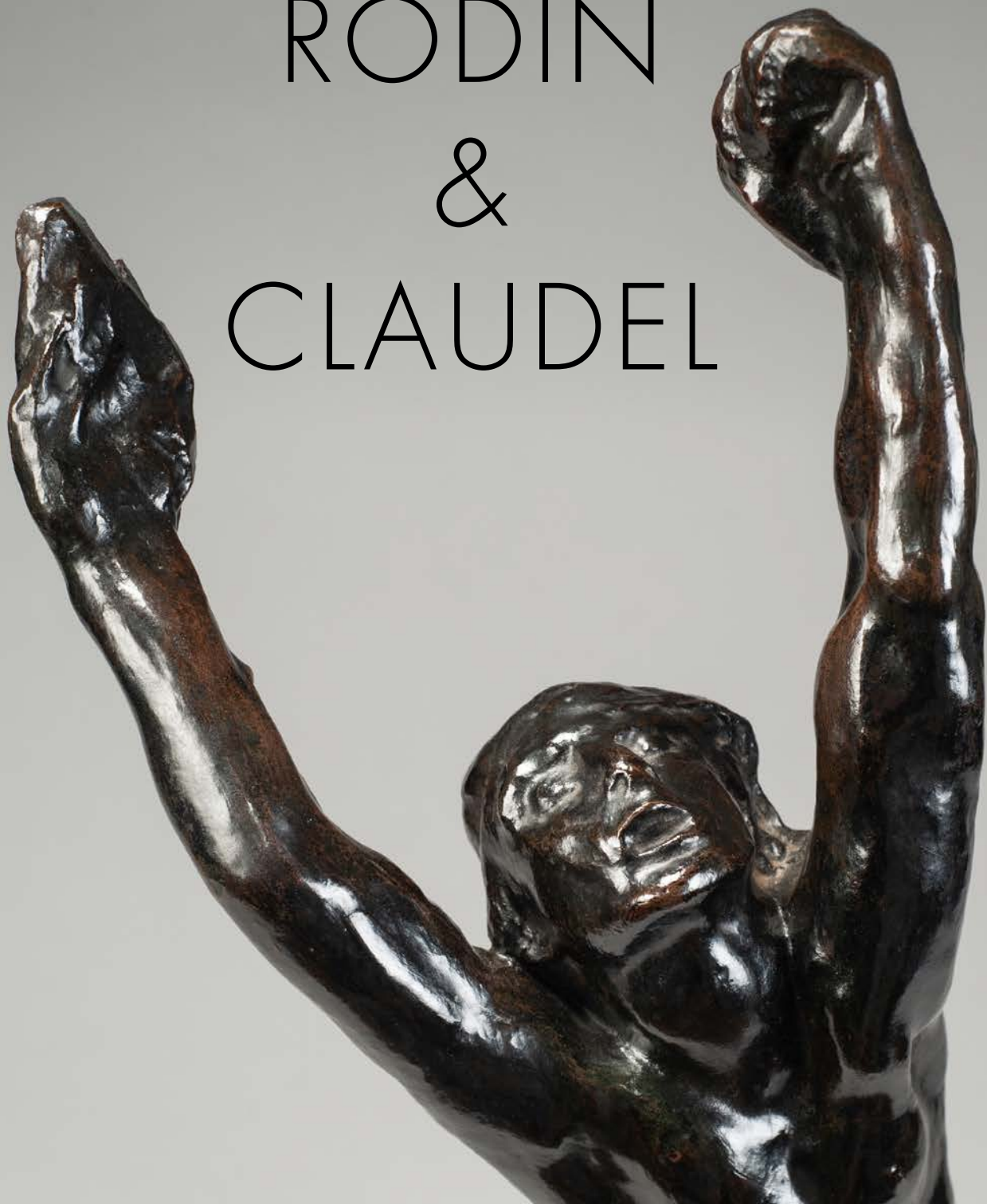


WORKS BY  
RODIN  
&  
CLAUDEL





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RODIN  
&  
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Detail view of: Auguste Rodin - *Maquette for the Burgers of Calais* (p. 20-21)

My passion for the sculpture of Rodin and Claudel really ignited 40 years ago when I first saw Rodin's *Iris Messenger of the Gods*. This started my journey into Rodin's sculpture beyond *The Kiss* and *The Thinker* and I discovered the pioneering works with which he really challenged the world of sculpture and rightly earned him the title of the father of modern sculpture. Naturally, the roles played by the two great loves in his life Rose Beuret and Camille Claudel became part of that passion. The importance of Camille Claudel as a sculptor in her own right has now been firmly established and the extent of her influence on his work is a fascinating and ongoing discussion.

This catalogue is a selection of works we have available for sale, together with a selection of sculptures we have sold recently. It marks a point in time, as by the time it is published, we will, no doubt, have found further works to offer our collectors and found homes for others.

When people discover we deal in sculpture by Rodin, the general response is incredulity, as a common misconception is that all Rodin's sculptures are now in Museum collections.

Rodin's worldwide recognition as a sculptor during his lifetime meant that his work is a feature of almost all the major museums in the world, the nature of his output, working in bronze editions as well as making multiple works in marble and plaster, has ensured that there are still significant amounts of his sculpture available to the collector.

Claudel's sculptures are far less numerous, as her sales and output were hampered by her struggle to be recognised and appreciated, many of her works were never cast at all in bronze due to a lack of demand, finances and the frustrated destruction of her own works. Finally, her incarceration in a mental institution for the last 30 years of her life, decreased demand for her sculptures further and she died in relative obscurity.

The availability of Rodin's sculpture is essentially down to the sculptor's desire for as many people as possible to enjoy his work. Rodin modelled all his works in plaster and then gave the plaster to a bronze foundry to make a mould of the work, to produce an edition in bronze. During Rodin's lifetime, if you wanted to own a particular work you would approach Rodin or one of his agents and request a cast of the work. Rodin would then authorise the foundry to make a bronze from the plaster version he had given them. These are what we term in the catalogue 'lifetime casts' and simply put, a lifetime cast is a work that was produced with Rodin's authority while he was still alive.

Certain very popular works were given to a specific foundry with the rights to cast. The best known of these is the Barbedienne Foundry which purchased the rights from Rodin for models including *The Kiss* and *Eternal Spring* and sent Rodin a commission for each cast they made.

By 1916 Rodin knew his health was starting to fade and he became very concerned that his work would stop being cast by his foundries after he died and his place in art history would therefore be diminished. He was also very concerned that unauthorised bronzes and copies would appear on the market without a control mechanism in place. To this end, he negotiated with the French government for his studio to become a museum and that on his death all the rights to his works would pass to that museum. The directors of the museum then took over the responsibility for bronze casts of Rodin's works to continue to be made. Therefore after 1917 bronze casts of Rodin's works were still made using the same moulds made from the same plaster models that had been supplied by Rodin. In the case of works produced by the Alexis Rudier foundry, which had the right to cast certain models from 1902 to 1952, the only difference between a cast made in 1917 and one made in 1918 was that the former was authorised to be cast by Rodin and the latter was authorised to be cast by the Rodin Museum.

This situation continued until 1952 when the last contract with a foundry agreed by Rodin himself came to an end. After this date, the Rodin Museum agreed that any further editions would be limited to a maximum of 13, an edition of 12 and one cast for the Museum itself. It is at this point that the Museum looked to its huge inventory of sculptures left to them by Rodin, all with his express permission to be cast in edition if there was the public demand. These casts are known as Museum casts and in general, have the inscription © *Musée Rodin*.

There will of course always be a special value placed on bronzes cast during Rodin's lifetime. The differences between the castings of all periods are, however, tremendous, and there is no formula for acquiring a great cast. Some of the bronzes made in the 1920s and 30s for example are superior in quality to casts from the same mould made by the same foundry in Rodin's lifetime. One must remember that Rodin did not physically make any of the bronzes or indeed supervise their casting; he was simply too busy sculpting. So, the quality of the bronze was down to the diligence and talent of the foundry workers who produced them. The key for the collector is to find a fine cast and this has many factors including the detail of the surface and the tones of the patina.

Some models are only available to be bought by collectors in an edition authorised by the Museum, as Rodin himself simply did not get some of his works cast in bronze. A good example of this is the magical sculpture of *Nijinsky* that Rodin left, in plaster form, to the Museum upon his death, but was only cast in bronze for the first time in 1958.



Detail view of: Camille Claudel - *L'Implorante* (p. 6-7)

Born in 1864 in northern France, Camille Claudel was a French sculptor who was not fully appreciated during her lifetime but has since become world-renowned for her figurative works in bronze and marble. Claudel now has her own museum, the Camille Claudel Museum in Nogent-sur-Seine, and her works are considered integral to any serious collection of sculpture from this period. She is also widely known for her controversial, and ultimately tragic, love affair with Auguste Rodin, which has been highlighted by two films, *Camille Claudel* and *Rodin*, along with numerous books.

Claudel began sculpting from a young age, modelling her siblings out of clay before convincing the family cook to fire them in the oven. Her early work impressed their neighbour, sculptor Alfred Boucher, who encouraged Claudel's family to support her artistic studies.

Moving to Paris in 1882, she began her formal studies at the Académie Colarossi, as it was one of the few institutions allowing female students at the time. Claudel was only 17 when she met Auguste Rodin at the Académie Colarossi in 1883 when the sculptor took over teaching classes from Alfred Boucher. Claudel's work impressed Rodin immediately and she became his studio assistant two years later.

*"Right away, Rodin recognized Mademoiselle's prodigious gifts. Right away, he realized that she had in her own nature, an admirable and incomparable temperament,"* wrote Claudel's friend and first biographer, Mathias Morhardt. (Mahon, 2011. p. 156)

Between 1885 and 1890, Claudel was Rodin's muse, lover and collaborator, never allowing their affair to interrupt her duties as studio assistant. The two sculptors worked side by side often, during what was one of the most extraordinary periods of creative collaboration in art history.

Their influence in each other's creative process is evident in many of their pieces made during this time, such as Claudel's modelling of the hands and feet on Rodin's *The Burgers of Calais* and the amorous intimacy of the two figures in Claudel's *The Waltz*.



## L'Implorante, petit modèle

Signed C. Claudel, numbered 36 and stamped with the foundry mark EUG. BLOT PARIS

Bronze, with rich mid and dark brown patina

Height: 11 1/8" (28.2 cm)

Conceived circa 1898, this cast circa 1910. This was a planned edition of 100, but only 59 were actually produced.

### Provenance

Gropper Art Gallery, Cambridge

Mary H O'Neill, Alabama (acquired from above in May 1971)

Private collection, New Hampshire (by descent from the above)

Camille Claudel's relationship with Rodin began to dissolve around 1890 when the master sculptor refused to end his long-standing relationship with Rose Beuret for Claudel. While it is difficult to pinpoint precisely the conception date for *L'Implorante*, it is undeniably connected to the heartbreak Claudel endured in the 1890s. The artist first modelled it as part of the group *L'Âge Mûr* in 1895, reworking it again in 1896 and this final version in 1898, which also marked the end of her association with Rodin.

*L'Âge Mûr* depicts the clothed, witch-like creature of Old Age forcing a man in his mature years to move away from Youth, a naked and beautiful female figure imploring the man to stay, with arms outstretched in the hopeless attempt to hold him back. The man reaches one arm back towards her in an impotent gesture but ultimately allows himself to be pulled forward by Old Age.

The piece is at once an allegorical representation of passing time and an emotive portrayal of the torment Claudel endured during her separation from Rodin.



Pictured above: Camille Claudel - *L'Âge mûr (Maturity)* - Bronze group in three parts - c. 1902 - Musée d'Orsay, Paris



## La Joueuse de flute or La Sirène, La Petite Sirène

Signed 'C. Claudel'

Numbered 1

Stamped with the foundry mark EUG. BLOT PARIS

Bronze, with rich green-brown patination

Height: 20 7/8" (53 cm)

Conceived in 1903. This example was cast circa 1905.

Provenance

Christie's, London, 30 June 1999, lot 149

Private Collection, UK

One of the final compositions created by Claudel before her declining health forced her to cease her sculptural work, *La joueuse de flûte* (*The Flute Player*) embodies the sheer joy of free artistic creation, as the flutist of the title loses herself in the lilting music that emerges from her instrument. Entirely nude except for a sliver of drapery which wraps itself around her torso in a sweeping curve, the nubile young woman throws her head back as she touches her pursed lips to the flute. Although seated on the tree stump, her entire body quivers with the energy of the tune, each limb and muscle engaged in the performance. She appears uninhibited by her exposure, oblivious to the fabric slipping off her arm as she gives herself completely to the music. While the combination of sensual abandon and lyrical musicality in the siren's body contains certain echoes of Claudel's earlier sculptural group *La Valse*, this lone, isolated figure is absorbed by something of her own creation rather than the seductive moves of a partner, mesmerised by the beauty of the music alone.

Conceived during a period of extreme financial hardship for Claudel, as she fought to pay the rent each month and buy artistic supplies, *La joueuse de flûte* was sold to one of the artist's most ardent supporters during her late-career – her trusted friend and principal agent, Eugène Blot. According to Blot, Claudel singled this sculpture out as her favourite work amongst her entire oeuvre, perhaps for the irresistible gaiety the musician exudes as she performs her tune. Blot intended to cast an edition of thirty bronzes of the composition, but only six were ever executed, making this one of the rarest works by Claudel.





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## Le Frère et la Soeur (Brother and Sister)

Signed A. Rodin

Inscribed L. Perzinka fondeur Versailles

Bronze with brown patina and lighter brown and red highlights

Height: 15.15" (38.5 cm)

Conceived circa 1890-91 and cast in 1899

### Provenance

Lord John Mc Laren, London (acquired from the artist, September 1899)

By descent

The collaboration between Auguste Rodin and his student, muse and lover Camille Claudel is well attested. The artists produced each other's portraits in the 1880s. Even more poignantly, Claudel's famous sculpture *L'Âge Mûr* (also known as *La Destinée* or *Le Chamine de la Vie*) can be interpreted as a biographical reconstruction of her bereavement at Rodin's decision to leave her for his ageing, life-long companion, Rose Beuret.

Considering the extent of Rodin and Claudel's mutual influence, it is striking to notice that very few models were the direct result of their artistic collaboration. Indeed, at the current state of knowledge, the present work, *Frère et Soeur (Brother and Sister)*, is the only work in which Rodin directly collaborated with Claudel, reusing the artist's model known as *La Jeune Fille à la Gerbe (Young Girl with a Sheaf)*, which was originally conceived in 1887 and whose terracotta version is currently housed in the collection of the Musée Rodin.

In light of the sculpture's biographical and visual relevance in both Rodin's and Claudel's oeuvres, the conception date of *Brother and Sister* is compelling. Rodin conceived the work in 1890 when his relationship with Camille Claudel was already deteriorating, as he decided to return to the faithful Rose Beuret. Strikingly, while the piece synthesises visually the symbiotic relationship the two entertained in the 1880s, it also relates to a crucial period in their relationship, which eventually led to their parting.

In his *Brother and Sister*, Rodin maintained almost entirely Claudel's composition. This is evident if one looks at the position of the figure's right arm, folded towards her shoulder, and legs, whose knees are converging to hide her modesty. At the same time, Rodin removed the large sheaf of wheat at the back and changed the position of the figure's right hand, adding a small child to the composition.

The iconography and origin of the piece might have a biographical relevance for the artist. Rodin's sister Maria, with whom he was particularly close while growing up, had died at the age of 24 in 1862 when Rodin was 22 years of age. The premature departure of his sister might have informed the subject of the present work, testifying to Rodin's desire to immortalise the memory of his sibling through the ideal, tender subject of the present sculpture.

The piece had great success on the collector's market during Rodin's lifetime, perhaps because of its tender nature which differentiated it from the sombre figures that characterised *The Gates of Hell*. As a result of such success, numerous museum collections around the world currently house versions of this model; to mention a few, apart from the Musée Rodin (Paris), the Fitzwilliam Museum (Cambridge), Walker Art Gallery (Liverpool), the Metropolitan Museum of Art (NYC) and the Museum of Fine Arts (Boston).

Archival documents in the Musée Rodin demonstrate that the artist commissioned the Perzinka foundry to produce the present cast of the model in June 1899. The cast was then purchased by Lord John McLaren (1831-1910) – a celebrated Scottish judge and MP. McLaren bought the piece following his daughter Otilie's advice. Otilie was a student of Rodin's in 1899 and had seen the piece in the master's atelier. The work was delivered to McLaren's London residence on 9 October 1899 and has remained in Britain ever since.





Detail view of: Auguste Rodin - *Le Penseur* (*The Thinker*), *Petit Modèle with Rounded Base* (p. 70-73)

Auguste Rodin is considered to be one of the greatest sculptors of the 19th- and 20th-centuries. The artist left his studio in Paris, the Hôtel Biron, in his will to the French State, now known as the Musée Rodin, housing the largest collection of his work as a sculptor and draughtsman. The artist's work is represented in major Museums and important private collections throughout the world. Rodin's will expressed his desire that the French State kept editing the bronze casts of his works, contributing to the gravity of his legacy.

Born in Paris in 1840, Rodin studied drawing at the Petite École together with fellow sculptor and friend Aimé-Jules Dalou. He moved to Belgium at the age of 24, struggling to find work in the French capital, and joined the atelier of Carrier-Belleuse.

A trip to Florence in 1875 and the encounter with Michelangelo's works represented a turning point in his career. Upon his return, Rodin conceived and presented the infamous sculpture *The Age of Bronze* at the Paris Salon. Initially rejected by the judges as being a cast of an actual person, the work was eventually accepted, marking the beginning of the artist's fame, which grew exponentially until his death in 1917. Among Rodin's most famous works are *The Kiss*, *The Thinker* and *Eternal Spring* – all conceived for his lifetime project of *The Gates of Hell* – a massive set of doors originally planned for the Museum of Decorative Arts in Paris but never delivered by the artist. His major public monuments include *The Burghers of Calais*, *The Monument to Balzac* and *The Monument to Victor Hugo*.

In light of his influence on the following generations of artists and sculptors in France and abroad, Auguste Rodin is considered the father of modern sculpture. In this circumstance, it is impossible not to mention the work of Camille Claudel – the artist's most famous pupil and lover. The relationship between Claudel and Rodin has been the subject of numerous books and films, representing a flourishing moment in the career of both artists until Rodin's decision to leave Claudel for his lifelong companion, Rose Beuret, in the early 1890s.

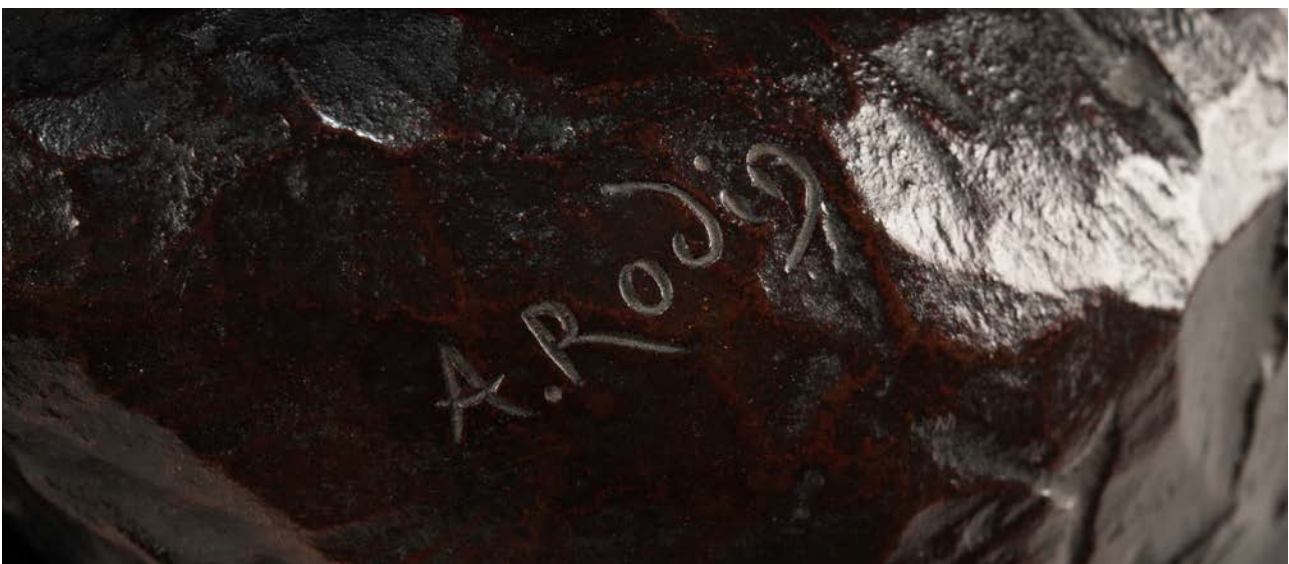
Rodin's wide-ranging influence was highlighted in the 2017 Grand Palais exhibition in Paris, marking the centenary of the artist's death.

Bowman Sculpture is the leading gallery offering authentic Rodin sculpture. Museum sales include *She who once was the Helmet-Maker's Beautiful Wife* to the Van Gogh Museum and the correspondence between the artist and his model, Sybil Mignon Cooke, to the Musée Rodin.

The 2014 show *'In Private Hands'*, brought together the largest group of the sculptor's bronzes ever shown in a private gallery.

#### Comité Rodin

The Comité Rodin is a wonderful source of archive and expertise material, which has helped establish and stabilise the Rodin market. All works we offer for sale are sold with a letter from the Comité confirming the provenance and authenticity of the works.



## Age d'Airain (Age of Bronze), petit modèle

Signed Rodin and inscribed with the foundry mark Alexis Rudier Fondateur Paris

Stamped with the raised signature A. Rodin on the interior

Bronze with brown-black patina

Height: 25 3/8" (64.4 cm)

Conceived between 1875-1877, this reduced version cast in November 1904, this bronze cast by the Alexis Rudier Foundry in November 1943.

### Provenance

Eugène Rudier Collection, Le Vésinet (acquired from the Musée Rodin in 1943)

Galerie Beyeler, Bâle

Arthur Stoll, Arlesheim / Corseaux (Acquired from the above in 1954)

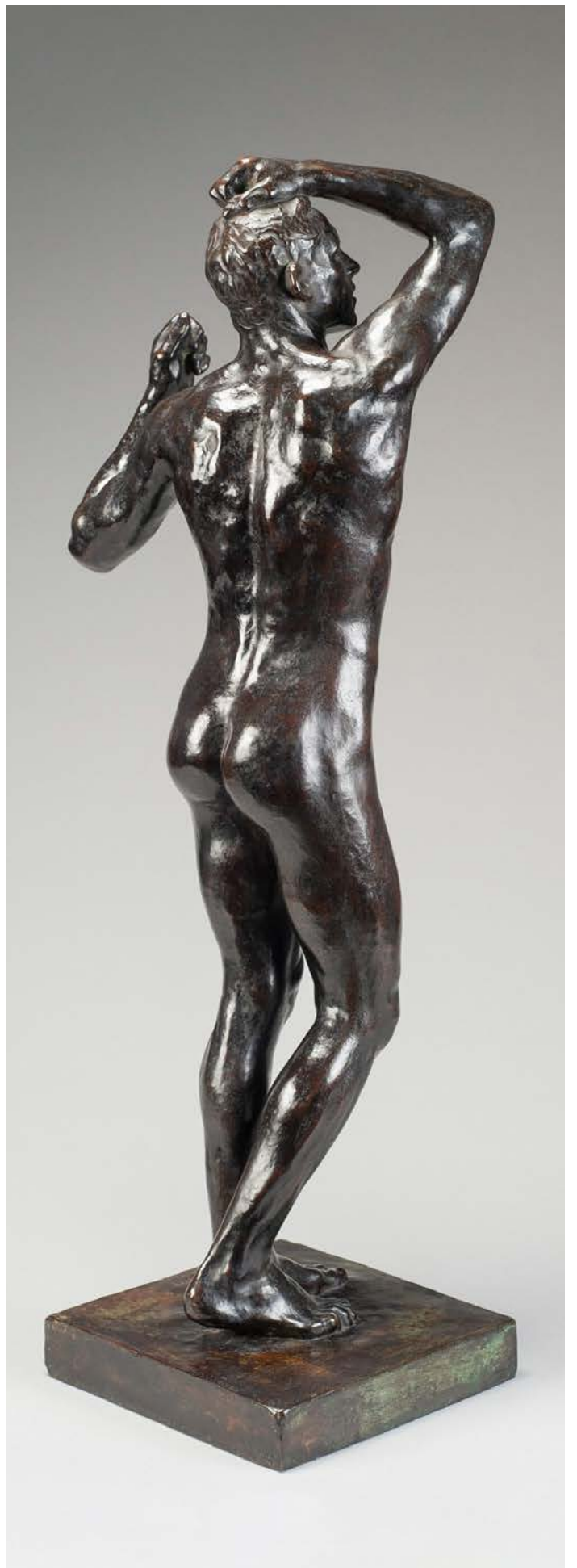
*The Age of Bronze* was the first-ever life-size work executed by Auguste Rodin, profoundly marking the career of the master.

Rodin sculpted the work in Belgium, having returned from a trip to Italy in 1875. The piece is indebted to Rodin's encounter with the Renaissance masters, and particularly to the work of Michelangelo. The apparent lack of a 'theme' for the sculpture relates to the sculptor's desire to engage with the same theme of the great Italian and ancient masters: the inspection, analysis and depiction of beauty – male beauty, in this instance.

When Rodin exhibited the work in 1877, the quality of the modelling was such that he was accused of having cast it directly from life - in other words, of taking a mould of a living human body and casting it in bronze. Indeed, Rodin had to enlist the help of the Belgian soldier, Auguste Neyt, who sat as his model and who gave evidence on Rodin's behalf that the work was modelled not moulded.

In spite of the scandal, Rodin gained two significant benefits from this initial rejection. First, the work became notorious, thus increasing his reputation; second, this incident influenced the rest of his career, as the artist never made a life-size work again, opting instead for over life-size or smaller than life-size modelling which characterised his production.







## Balzac, étude type c (buste) 3ème version, grand modèle

Signed A. Rodin

Inscribed Alexis Rudier Fondateur Paris

Bronze with a dark brown and black patina

Height 10 1/8" (26.2 cm)

Conceived in 1892. This example cast between 1918 and 1927. The Comité Rodin states that at least 10 casts of this sculpture in this size were produced after Rodin's death. There are no lifetime casts.

Provenance

Galerie Haussmann, Paris

Collection of François Lang, Paris (acquired between 1932 and 1938)

Private collection, France (by descent)

*"Such, too, is the "Balzac" to whom Rodin has given a greatness which, perhaps, over towers the figure of the writer. Rodin has seized upon the essence of Balzac's being, has not confined himself to the limitations of his personality, but has gone beyond into his most extreme and distant possibilities."* – (Rainer Maria Rilke, 1919, p.87)

*The Monument to Balzac* by Auguste Rodin was the most controversial sculpture of the 19th century. After the death of Honoré de Balzac in 1850, numerous attempts were made to raise funding for a public monument in the poet's honour. It was only in 1883 when the Société des Gens de Lettres received a gift from the State and a designated site from the City of Paris, that the commission of a sculpture could proceed. Henri Chapu was selected to complete the monument but unfortunately died in 1891, before the work was finished. The sculptors on the advisory committee, Jean-Alexandre Falguière, Antonin Mercié and Paul Dubois all voted that the work should be executed from Chapu's model by a practitioner, but were overruled by Émile Zola, the President of the Société at the time. Émile Zola encouraged Auguste Rodin to apply for the commission and after submitting a proposal in July of 1891, in a heavily disgruntled and disputed atmosphere, the project was awarded to Rodin.

Rodin took to the project with great enthusiasm and embarked on an intensive study of Balzac's life, work and character. He travelled to Balzac's hometown of Touraine and consulted with contemporaries of Balzac to obtain a sense of the great man. Rodin created numerous studies in plaster of his subject and the present model is a bronze cast of one such study, known as the *3rd Version of the Type C study, Large Model*.

After seven years of working on the model, and several attempts by the Société to cut his budget, Rodin exhibited his final plaster study at the Salon of 1898. In a century accustomed to scandals and public outcries, the reception of the work was unparalleled in the strength of the polarity of opinion. Considered vulgar by the Société des Gens de Lettres, Rodin was forced to withdraw the work from the Salon. The strength of opinion on the work was such that it divided France into pro and anti-Rodin members. Artists such as Paul Cézanne and Claude Monet applauded Rodin for his work and signed a petition for the monument to be adopted. Yet in the end, the commission was given instead to Jean-Alexandre Falguière, a member of the established old guard of Romantic sculptors.

Rodin's model of *Balzac* returned to his studio in Meudon where it remained until 1930 when it was cast in bronze for the Koninklijk Museum in Antwerp. Then finally in 1939 the Société des Gens de Lettres relented and had the work cast and erected on the corner of the Boulevards Raspail and Montparnasse in Paris. In spite of the backlash, Rodin never lost confidence in his work and the ambition behind it. It remains one of the most iconic sculptural monuments ever made.

Museums that possess other studies of the bust of *Balzac* include the Musée Rodin in Paris, the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, the Museum of Modern Art and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.



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## Maquette for the Burghers of Calais

Signed A. Rodin

Inscribed E. Godard Fond Paris and © by Musée Rodin 1975

Numbered 11

Bronze with rich dark brown patina

Height: 13" (33 cm)

Conceived in 1884, this example was cast in 1975. The model was never cast in bronze during Rodin's lifetime. In total nine casts of this variation without the pedestal were cast for the Musée Rodin between 1971 and 1976 by the Godard foundry.

### Provenance

Contemporary Sculpture Center Tokyo (acquired from the Musée Rodin in July 1977)

M. Senda, Ōmiya, Saitama Prefecture, Japan (acquired from the above in July 1977)

The present work is the first maquette for Rodin's iconic monument *The Burghers of Calais*. The monument was conceived as a homage to the brave citizens of Calais who sacrificed themselves to the invading English forces during the 100-year war.

According to the legend, detailed in Jean Froissart's *Chronicles* (1360–65), the King of England Edward III laid siege to Calais in 1346. After 11 months, as starvation gripped the inhabitants of the surrounded city, Edward commanded that they send out six men holding the keys to the city as an acknowledgement of defeat. These men, all of whom held high ranking positions, were then to be executed in order to save the other citizens. Although the burghers were eventually spared, after Philippa of Hainault, the Queen of England, asked her husband to pardon them, it was the original heroism of the act that so moved Rodin.

Rodin began work on an initial model for the monument in 1884 before the commission was even fully confirmed. He reworked the model a number of times over the next 5 years, executing the figures both independently and as a full group of 6. The monument, eventually completed in 1889, represented a radical departure from traditional works of this nature. Rodin was particularly concerned with illustrating the humanity of the figures, rather than simply portraying them as exalted heroes. Even in this early study, it is clear that the sculptor has begun to conceive not only the burgher's relationships with one another but also the different ways in which they approached what appeared to be their impending doom.

*"I did not group them together in a triumphant apophysis: for such a glorification of their heroism would not in any way have corresponded to reality.... With the uncertain outcome of their final inner struggle being waged between their devotion to the city and their fear of dying, it is as if each of them has to face their conscience alone."*



## Pierre de Wiessant

Signed A. Rodin, inscribed with foundry mark Alexis.Rudier Fondeur.Paris, with raised interior repeat signature A. Rodin and numbered on the interior in crayon 339

Bronze with rich mid, dark brown and green patina

Height: 17 7/8" (45.1 cm)

Conceived between 1887-1895; this reduction first produced in 1895; this bronze version cast in 1945. The Comité Rodin believe there were approximately 50 examples of this work made in total.

Provenance

Musée Rodin, Paris

Roland, Browse & Delbanco, London (acquired from the Musée Rodin in 1956)

Habib Sabet, New York (acquired in the 1960s)

Along with his older brother Jacques, Pierre de Wiessant was one of the six burghers who offered themselves to King Edward III as a sacrifice to save the City of Calais in 1347. Rodin won the commission to create a monument to commemorate this famous incident in January 1885 on the strength of his initial plaster model completed the previous year.

Rodin's inspiration came from the account in Jean Froissart's Chronicles, in which great emphasis was laid on the pious sacrifice of the citizens:

*"... Eustache de Saint-Pierre got up and said: 'Gentlemen, it would be a great shame to allow so many people to starve to death, if there were any way of preventing it. And it would be highly pleasing to Our Lord if anyone could save them such a fate. I have such faith and trust in gaining pardon and grace from Our Lord if I die in the attempt, that I will put myself forward first. I will willingly go out in my shirt, bareheaded and barefoot, with a halter round my neck and put myself at the mercy of the King of England.'"* (Quoted in Tancock 1976 op. cit., p. 382.)

Progress on the monument was hindered by a series of obstacles. The committee were initially shocked by Rodin's depiction of their heroes in his second maquette. In their response they told him:

*"This is not the way we envisaged our glorious citizens going to the camp of the King of England. Their defeated postures offend our religion."* (Quoted in Tancock 1976 op. cit., p. 383.)

The present work is the final version of the figure of *Pierre de Wiessant*, considered by many to be the most powerful of the burghers. The body expresses Wiessant's agonizing physical and psychological price for placing the collective good of the citizens of Calais above his own personal survival.

The disproportionately large hands are in a gesture that shows an intense internal struggle, and his feet—one planted, the other pivoting—simultaneously depict hesitation and movement towards an accepted destiny. The huge, flexed bicep is visually countered by the rope—a token of Wiessant's surrender—hanging down on the other side of his body, showing him bound, in sackcloth and surrendering to his fate.

Rodin decided to create just five of the burghers of Calais as individual sculptures for the collector's market. The archives in the Musée Rodin show correspondence between Rodin and Henri le Bossé, who made reductions and enlargements for Rodin, which resulted in reductions of *Jean d'Aire* and *Pierre de Wiessant* in 1895.

Early casts in bronze were made by Perzinka and Francois Rudier before Rodin settled with Alexis Rudier, who had the sole rights to cast the work from 1902 to 1952. The present work is a typical fine sand-cast bronze from Rudier with rich nuanced patina and fine attention to detail. It was cast in May 1945 and was purchased by the London gallery, Roland, Browse and Delbanco, who sold it to Habib Sabet in the 1960s.

An amazing entrepreneur, Habib Sabet started the first taxi service in Tehran with 20 dollars he earned at his bicycle repair shop. He went on to own distributorships for Dodge and Pepsi Cola and started Iran's first television station. A lifelong admirer of French art, he was a great collector and moved to Paris in 1974. He died in 1990, leaving his collection to his son Hormoz Sabet in Manhattan.



## Buste de Victor Hugo (Bust of Victor Hugo)

Signed A. Rodin

Bronze with brown patina

Height: 15.2" (38.7 cm)

Conceived circa 1885, this cast executed by François Rudier in May-June 1897. Just seven casts of this model were made during the artist's lifetime.

Provenance

Bizabeth (Bessie) Duncan Putnam, Davenport, Iowa (Acquired from the artist in May/June 1897)

By descent

Conceived circa 1885, this bronze was cast by the François Rudier foundry in 1897. The Comité Rodin states that at least 7 casts of this model in this size were produced between 1893 and 1916 by Griffoul & Lorge, J.B. Griffou, François Rudier and Alexis Rudier foundries. The Georges Rudier foundry cast four editions of the same model for the Musée Rodin between 1962 and 1973, and two more casts were produced by the Émile Godard foundry in 1980.

*The Bust of Victor Hugo* is sold together with a framed letter of provenance from the first owner of the work – Elizabeth 'Bessie' Duncan Putnam (1867-1928) – and with an etching signed by the artist.

Auguste Rodin was introduced to the great Romantic Writer Victor Hugo (1802-1885) in 1883 by the journalist Edmond Bazire. The artist produced the first full-size bronze of the model in the same year, donating it to the sitter. Another bronze cast, produced a few months later, was inscribed with a line from *La Légende des Siècles*: "*Un Poète est un monde enfermé dans un Homme (A Poet is a World enshrined in a Man)*" and was shown at the 1884 Salon. The present version of the piece is a 'reduction' of Rodin's initial concept for the work, being roughly 12 cm smaller than the bronze donated by the artist to Hugo.

Frederick Lawton's text, typewritten in the letter of provenance accompanying the piece, highlights the unorthodox nature of Hugo's sittings for the piece since he only agreed "*that Rodin should come and lunch every day if he wished to make the sketches he needed during the meal.*" The studies for the portrait were thus produced during numerous lunches at the author's house, who never posed for the artist in his studio. Engravings such as the one accompanying this piece were made after these studies.

The bust and engraving were acquired by Elizabeth D. Putnam directly from the artist in 1897, remaining in the family's collection ever since. Elizabeth Putnam was an archaeologist, a member of the Davenport Academy of Natural Sciences and an amateur painter. Rodin's interest in archaeology constituted the basis of their friendly relationship, which, according to archival documents, continued until 1903. In the letter of provenance, Ms Putnam describes how she acquired the work:

*"Rodin showed me a number of etchings and when I asked how much they were he replied he never had sold one. He finally asked fifty francs and signed it before me. The bust I paid 150 francs for. The head of the foundry [François Rudier] happened to be there and Rodin gave directions to have it cast especially."*

The letter constitutes a fascinating window into Rodin's studio life, as well as a fantastic item of provenance.



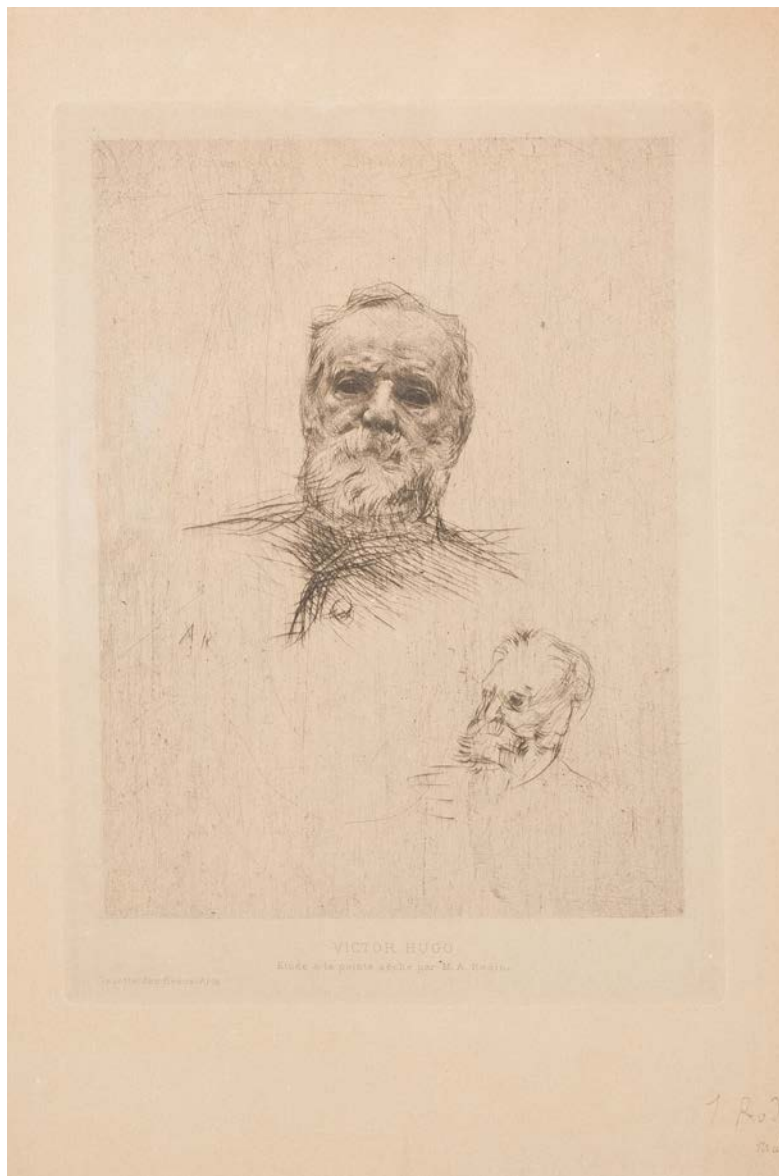
Étude de Tête de Victor Hugo (Study of the Head of Victor Hugo)

Signed and dated Rodin, Mai 1897

Drypoint engraving

7th state of 10 engraved

Dimensions: 11 1/2" x 14 3/4" with frame



Opposite: *Chap. IV - The Busts* in *Auguste Rodin* by Frederick Lawton with a note on the bottom added by Elizabeth Duncan Putnam, the original owner of the piece, describing meeting Rodin and buying *Buste de Victor Hugo*.

Auguste Rodin by Frederick Lawton.

Chap. VI. - The Busts.

"x x In one example, at least, that of Victor Hugo, a record has been preserved by third persons of the infinite pains taken by the sculptor to fill himself with the subject. It was in 1883 and Victor Hugo, old and verging on the grave, cared little to be a study for painter or sculptor. Introduced to him by a mutual friend, a journalist, Monsieur Bazire, a correspondence preceded the famous interview. One of the letters written by Rodin was the following:

"Dear and Illustrious Master," I apologise for my insisting, but the ambition is so natural that you will not reproach me. Moreover my desire, as I have already told you, is to be ready for Mlle. Jeanne's birthday. By beginning now, I shall manage it. Allow me, therefore, to count on a moment you will grant me from time to time. I shall not abuse your kindness or cause you any fatigue and the bust will get finished without your perceiving it. I remain, dear and illustrious Master, respectfully yours,"

There was a good deal of vacillation on the old poet and novelist's side and a good deal of maneuvering on the side of the sculptor's friends, in and out of the family before the definite consent was given. At last the matter was arranged. Rodin's cousin, Monsieur Thurat, told the author that he was present when Victor Hugo announced the fact. The sculptor and he were received in the library of the house close to the present Place Victor Hugo. The host stood by his bookcase and for some time said nothing, being lost in some inner dream. When he spoke, it was to propose that Rodin should come and lunch every day if he wished to make what sketches he needed during the meal, as practically open table was kept, a guest or two more might sit down without being especially noticed. So this was the course adopted. No regular sittings were granted to the sculptor; but he came and lunched for two or three months, not every day but sometimes several days running, and obtained a series of sketches showing a large diversity in the pose and expression.

An inconvenience was that Rodin could spare very little attention for the meal, being absorbed with his pencil and paper, and hurrying home as soon as he could escape to transfer his drawing to the block.\*\*\*\*\*The studies made by Rodin--it is the master who himself adds this information--were carried on not only at the table, but at other visits, until at length an intimation was given that they had lasted long enough. The bust which was the principal outcome of the foregoing experiments did not satisfy the aged poet--or his household. It was not considered flattering enough.\*\*\*The net results of these sittings were several busts of large and small size. One of the finest of them in marble was acquired by the town of Paris and placed in the Galliera Museum. (Removed to the "Petit Palais") The drawings which had served for their execution again by Monsieur Georges Hugo. It was from them that the dry paint engravings of the poet's head were made.

P.85--Dry Paints--\*\*\*The Victor Hugo is the best one to study if one wishes to realise what the juxtaposition of line upon line can do with no more resources than variation in the curve and pressure. A wonderful old man's head stands out as the background with ruffled hair and high polished forehead, barred with two or three wrinkles in the lower part. Heavy brows contract over eyes that look out with a gaze of power and pensive melancholy. There is a slight flabbiness of cheeks, the sign of age, which the white beard and moustache confirm. The mouth, however, has lost none of the firmness of manhood in its prime. There are nearly a dozen gradations of thickness in the lines of the nose, some to bring out the relief, others to indicate its tendency to the aquiline, and there are nearly a dozen more to express the deep orbits and the eyeballs that gleam within them. To say the aspect is sculptural is an extra praise, since there is a life likeness produced by modelling in two-dimensional space instead of three. p. 100.

(At first he used a drawing needle placed in a handle for dry paints.)

(In 1897 in Paris when I bought the bust of Victor Hugo from Rodin, the sculptor gave me practically the same account of dining at Victor Hugo's and making sketches while the poet was conversing.)- Elizabeth D. Putnam.

Rodin showed me a number of drawings when I asked how much they were he replied he never had sold one. He finally asked fifty francs. I signed it before me. The bust I paid \$150 for. The head of the bust happened to be blue. Rodin gave directions to have it cast specially, so as to get a golden tone. He told me to subject the bronze to sudden heat & cold - even burying it so as to get the old (green) look. S. D. P. Nov. 18-1924.

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## Danaide

Signed A. Rodin, inscribed and dated 1963 © by Musée Rodin

Inscribed with foundry mark Georges Rudier Fondateur Paris

With interior raised signature A. Rodin

Bronze with rich brown and green patina

Height: 8 1/4" (21 cm)

Length: 15" inches (38.1 cm)

Conceived in 1885, this bronze version cast in 1963.

### Provenance

Charles Slatkin Galleries, New York (acquired from the Musée Rodin in February 1965)

Collection M. Lande, Montreal (acquired from the above in 1965)

The *Danaide* was originally conceived as part of *The Gates of Hell* but was eventually omitted from the final design. The work was inspired by the story of the daughters of Danaus, taken from Greek mythology.

In this myth, Danaus, the son of the King of Egypt, had fifty daughters named the Danaides. His brother Aegyptus had fifty sons. Threatened by his brother, Danaus sailed to Argos with his daughters. The sons of Aegyptus pursued their cousins with the intention of marrying them and so furthering their power. The daughters were unwilling to marry but were forced to consent. Danaus therefore ordered his daughters to stab their husbands to death on their wedding night. Forty-nine obeyed their father, with only Hypermnestra sparing her beloved husband Lynceus. As a punishment for their crimes, the guilty Danaides were punished in the Underworld by having to try to fill broken vessels with water for eternity.

In the present model, Rodin portrays one of the Danaides, who has thrown herself to the ground, her water vessel by her side and her long hair flowing over the rocks. The sculptor conveys the stricken woman's despair at her absurd and inexorable task of endlessly refilling the broken vessel.

Rodin depicts the woman as youthful, sensual and vibrant despite her exhausting life in the underworld. As was common in the sculptor's work, here sensuality and pessimism go hand in hand. The sculpture is both alluring and despondent, a figure of youthful beauty and a manifestation of eternal despair.

It has been suggested by Monique Laurent that the model for the work was in fact Camille Claudel, although this theory remains unproven. The theory was popularised by Bruno Nuytten's movie *Camille Claudel*, which merged fact and fiction by showing Camille kneeling on the floor modeling for the work.

Rodin began work on *Danaide* in 1880 and at the end of the decade, the work was enlarged and transformed into marble for the Scandinavian collector, Dr. H. F. Antell. This marble was exhibited at the 1889 '*Monet-Rodin*' exhibition at the Galerie George Petit where it received considerable press attention. After the success of this exhibition, Rodin commissioned Jean Escoula to make a second marble of the *Danaide*, which is considered to be one of the finest marbles ever produced in his atelier (pictured below). This second version was exhibited at the Salon of 1890 and was purchased by the French government. Known as the Luxembourg Danaide it was originally in the collection of the Musée du Luxembourg. It is now housed in the Musée Rodin collection.



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## Désespoir de la Porte (Despair, from the Gates of Hell)

Signed A. Rodin

Plaster with red and brown shellac

Height: 7 1/4" (18.5 cm)

Conceived circa 1886-1887. This example produced circa 1900.

### Provenance

Charles Delanglade, Marseille (gift from the artist, circa 1900)

By descent

Charles Delanglade, Paris (acquired by descent)

Conceived circa 1886-1887. According to Comité Rodin, this plaster was made at the request of the sculptor around 1900, most likely by Eugene Guioché, producer of plaster casts for Rodin between 1897 and 1915. The Rodin Museum archives hold a letter from André Delanglade, nephew of the sculptor Charles Delanglade, Marseille (1870-1952) dated January 2, 1927, to Georges Grappe, curator of the Rodin Museum, mentioning the numerous works acquired from Rodin by the Marseilles collector Antoni Roux, works later given by Roux to Delanglade at the death of his son. It shows that his "uncle Delanglade" also received directly from Rodin two plasters "*A figure of despair*" and "*Little Mermaids*" with a dedication to Paul Arene.

Auguste Rodin's most highly praised work relates to the commission of a set of monumental doors for the Museum of Decorative Arts in Paris in 1880. These were the revolutionary *Gates of Hell*. Inspired by Dante's *Inferno* and Michelangelo's fresco of the *Last Judgement*, the bronze decorative doors stand 7.5 m high and depict a sea of writhing and restless bodies in a state of chaos. The work became an obsessive passion for Rodin and was still unfinished 24 years later in 1904 when the State withdrew funding for casting. He continued working, on and off, on this project until his death in 1917. The museum itself was never developed.

The present figure, known as *Le Désespoir de la Porte*, is taken from *The Gates of Hell* and appears as part of a group of other figures evoking grief and despair in the upper part of the right-hand leaf. With its unusual pose, the sculpture showcases Rodin's originality and ability to visually depict the feeling of desperation. The figure was conceived as a separate sculpture from the *Gates* circa 1890.

Rodin returned to the image three years later, enlarging the figure and changing the composition so that the clasped leg extends horizontally, and the head lays flat into the back of the bent knee. This one also appears on the door panel. A version of this figure in plaster cast with a smooth base is in the collection of the Victoria & Albert Museum, donated by Sir Claude Phillips in 1924.

A bronze cast by Alexis Rudier is in the collection of the Musée Rodin. Other casts by Alexis Rudier are in the collection of the Maryhill Museum, USA, the Brooklyn Museum, USA and the National Museum of Western Art, Tokyo. A version carved in white marble was sold at auction through Sotheby's in 1990 for \$800,000.



## Éternelle Idole (Eternal Idol), Petit Modèle

Signed A. Rodin and with repeat interior raised signature A. Rodin.

Numbered 6/12, inscribed Alexis Rudier Fondateur. Paris

Bronze with a rich brown patina

Height: 6 7/8" (17.4 cm)

Conceived in 1889. The Comité Rodin states that at least 2 bronzes were cast during Rodin's lifetime. This cast is one of no more than 13 bronzes produced between 1927-1944. This example was cast in 1944. One more cast was produced by Georges Rudier in 1958.

Provenance

M. Lebrun (acquired from the Musée Rodin in August 1944)

Private collection, Switzerland

Rodin conceived the *Eternal Idol* whilst working on *The Gates of Hell*, incorporating both of the figures independently onto the right-hand doorway. Sometime before 1890 the figures were combined into the group we now know. Rodin made a small 17 cm high bronze (the only lifetime cast of this model), which was delivered to the collector Antoni Roux in 1891. Roux later encouraged Rodin to produce a larger version of the model, which was carved in marble by Jean Escoula.

The work became one of Rodin's most powerful groups and its emotive force has elicited a range of symbolic interpretations. It is often seen as a depiction of tender adoration, the man's hands clasped behind his back in a symbol of respectful abstinence. Conversely, others have suggested the man's hands are not clasped in a respectful manner, but rather show that he is enslaved by the woman, unable to escape her power as she looks down pitifully upon him.

It is also impossible to ignore the similarities to Camille Claudel's *L'Abandon*, which was conceived in 1888, one year before the present work. Claudel's masterpiece uses a similar composition, but the two figures are shown in a loving embrace, rather than separated by the apparent gulf of emotional space in *Eternal Idol*. Perhaps the work echoed Rodin's own feelings towards his long-term lover and mistress.

Jules Desbois, one of Rodin's many assistants offers the following account of the inception of the work. "*One day, from up on the scaffold where I was working on the Burgers of Calais, I noticed Rodin, who between some screens, was doing a nude sculpture, for which the model was a young woman, stretched out on a table. As the session was drawing to a close he bent over toward the woman and kissed her tenderly on the belly - a gesture of adoration of nature, which gave him much joy.*" (Cladel, 1952, p. 271)

Perhaps, like a number of Rodin's greatest masterpieces, the true power of the model lies in its ambiguity. The novelist and poet Rainer Maria Rilke, who wrote a monograph on Rodin in 1903, argued that "*a grandeur steeped in mystery emanates from this group. One dare not attribute a meaning to it. It has thousands... There is something like the atmosphere of Purgatory in this work. Heaven is near, but has not yet been reached; Hell is near, but has not yet been forgotten.*" (Rilke, 2018, p.51)

This is the original size of this model, conceived by Rodin in 1889. The first cast was delivered to the collector Antoni Roux in 1891.



Éternelle Idole (Eternal Idol), Moyen Modèle

Signed A.Rodin and inscribed Georges Rudier Fondeur Paris and © by Musée Rodin 1969

Bronze with a dark green patina, with lighter green highlights

Height: 11 1/2" (29.4 cm)

Conceived in 1889, this example cast in 1969. The Comité Rodin states there were less than 12 casts made in total.

Provenance

B.G. Cantor, New York (acquired from the Musée Rodin in February 1970)

William Norton & Cie, New York

Collection Sam J. Levin, New York (acquired from the above in April 1970)





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## Étude pour le Secret (Study for the Secret)

Signed A. Rodin, inscribed with the foundry mark A Rudier. Fondeur Paris

Bronze with dark brown patina and lighter brown highlights

Height: 4 3/4" (12 cm)

Conceived in 1910; this example cast between 1931-45. Two examples cast by the Alexis Rudier foundry during Rodin's lifetime, and then 8 more examples were cast by the Musée between 1931-1952.

### Provenance

Private collection, USA (acquired from the Musée Rodin)

Fine Art Gallery of New Orleans

Private collection, USA (acquired from the above in 1989)

The conception of the present piece, known as the *Etude pour le Secret (Study for the Secret)*, relates to another famous work by Rodin, known as *La Cathédrale (The Cathedral)*. The works were conceived two years apart from each other, in 1910 and 1918 respectively, and relate to Rodin's fascination with hands and their sculptural representation.

Rather than focusing on the study of a single hand, the present work demonstrates the artist's reuse of single body parts to create an effective, condensed narrative, which characterises both the symbolist and modernist aspects of his production.

Two right hands are placed one in front of the other, almost mirroring each other. Rodin added a cylindrical object in the finished version of the piece so as to signify the impossibility of the encounter between the two. In the present study, however, the lack of such an object creates a different form of tension, which is heightened by the space between the two.

It is through such a space that the present work displays the evocative, almost mystic, power of its companion piece, *The Cathedral*. Rodin had been so fascinated by the Gothic architecture of French churches that he wrote and illustrated a book on the subject, *Les Cathédrales de France (French Cathedrals)*, in 1914. In the artist's own words, the aim of the book was "to inspire a love for this great art, to come to the rescue of as much of it as still remains intact; to save for our children the great lesson of this past which the present misunderstands. In this desire I strive to awaken intellects and hearts to understanding and to love."

In his *Cathedral*, the artist channelled his understanding and love of the art professed in the book, filtering the great vertical lines and dizzying empty spaces that characterise Gothic architecture through his symbolic representation of two mirroring hands. Indeed, the piece's upper thrust and interplay of empty spaces ultimately connects it with the present *Study for the Secret*.

Rodin cast this model twice in his lifetime, in 1916 and 1917 respectively; the latter was commissioned by the British painter John Lavery and was exhibited at the Victoria & Albert Museum exhibition in memory of the artist, organised in London in December 1917. The Musée Rodin continued editing the piece with the Alexis and Georges Rudier foundries, each casting the model 8 times.



## Eve, Petit Modèle

Signed 'A. Rodin'

Inscribed with the foundry mark Alexis Rudier. Fondateur. Paris. and with raised interior repeat signature 'A. Rodin'

Bronze with dark brown patina

Height: 29 3/8" (74.6 cm)

Conceived in 1881; this version created in this size in 1883; this bronze cast in 1946. The Comité Rodin believes that there are less than 40 examples of this work and that they were all made between 1886 and 1967.

Provenance

Eugene Rudier, Le Vesinet (acquired from the Musée Rodin in June 1946)

Collection Paul Belmondo, France (acquired from the above)

By descent

Rodin initially conceived *Eve* in 1881, while working on *The Gates of Hell* which was a major commission for the artist from the French government for the doors of the planned Musée des Arts Décoratifs in 1880. The figures of Adam and Eve were intended to flank the gates, doomed to watch over the hellish landscape as the dispossessed parents of original sin.

*Eve* is one of Rodin's best-known and celebrated sculptures. Rodin began working on a life-size study in 1881 but was eventually forced to abandon work, having struggled to capture the form of his female sitter, he realised that his model was in fact pregnant and so her pelvic shape was altering continuously throughout the process.

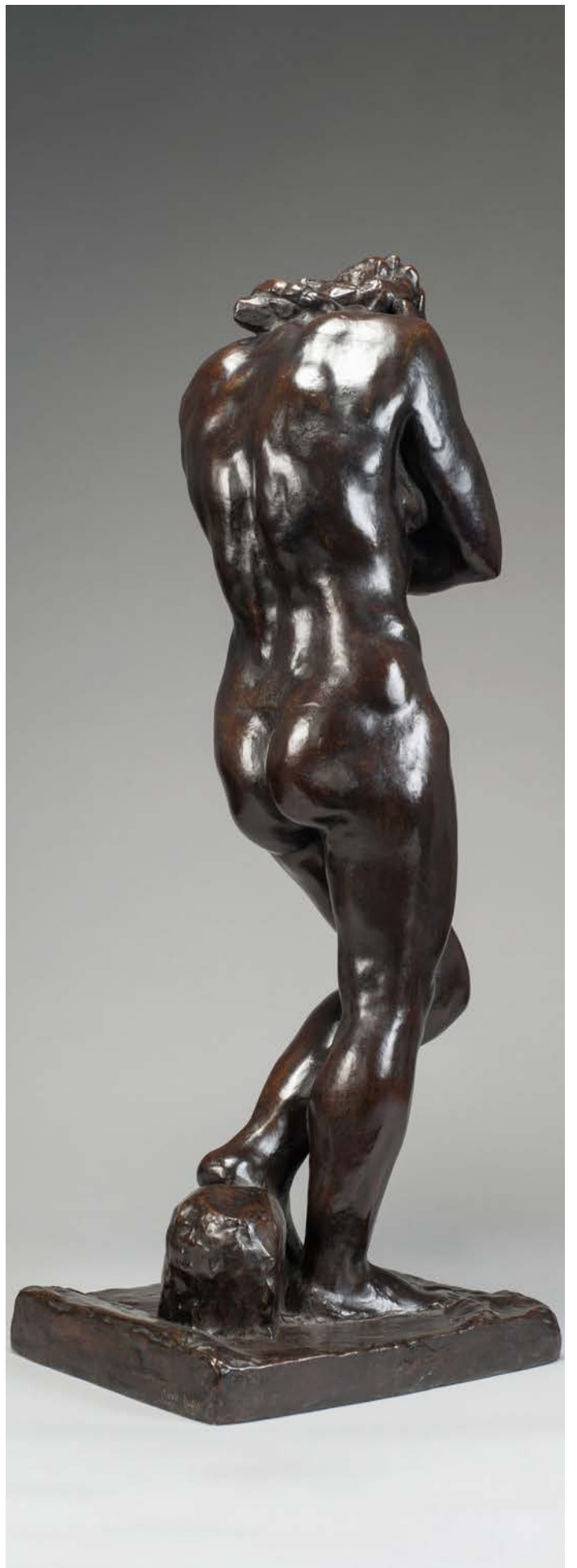
*"Without knowing why, I saw my model changing. I modified my contours, naively following the successive transformations of ever-amplifying forms. One day, I learned she was pregnant; then I understood."* (Le Normand-Romain, 2007, p. 345)

Having abandoned the large *Eve*, Rodin completed a smaller version of the piece, which he modelled with both a round and square base. This smaller version differed slightly from the life-size in the figure's hair, the smooth finish of the surface, and the position of the hands and feet. The work was incredibly well-received. The complementary juxtaposition between the sensual female form and the figure's humble posture and modest gesture made this an extremely popular image. Emboldened by the public's enthusiasm for the smaller model, he produced an edition of the work in bronze, initially using the foundries Francois Rudier, Griffoul et Lorge, Perzinka, and eventually Alexis Rudier. The present model is one of these bronzes cast by Rodin's preferred foundry, Alexis Rudier.

Unlike many contemporary interpretations of this theme, which present Eve either before the Fall in enchanting innocence or as a temptress, Rodin depicts Eve after she has eaten the fruit of knowledge, frozen in the moment of irreversible downfall. Aware of her own nudity for the first time, Eve shields her body, turning inward upon herself, face lowered, and thighs locked in a gesture that simultaneously expresses the acceptance of her guilt and a rejection of the consequences to come.

Moved by Rodin's ability to express the subject's inner turmoil through the subtleties of posture and composition, Reiner Maria Rilke wrote, *"That Eve... stands with head sunk deeply into the shadow of the arms that draw together over the breast like those of a freezing woman. The back is rounded, the nape of the neck almost horizontal. She bends forward as though listening over her own body in which a new future begins to stir. And it is as though the gravity of this future weighed upon the senses of the woman and drew her down from the freedom of life into the deep, humble service of motherhood."* (Rilke, 1946, p. 43).







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## Faunesse Debout (Standing Faunesse), Version au Rocher Simple

Signed A. Rodin with repeat raised interior signature

Inscribed Alexis Rudier Fondateur Paris

Bronze with a rich brown and green patina

Height: 23" (58.6 cm)

Conceived in 1884, this example cast in 1945. The Comité Rodin records 21 examples in total.

### Provenance

Roland. Browse & Delbanco, London (acquired from the Musée Rodin in August 1953)

Sir Sultan Mahomed Shah, Aga Khan III, London

Gina Lollobrigida (gift from the above, circa 1955)

Conceived in 1884, this cast was executed in 1945. This model was cast eight times during Rodin's lifetime. The Alexis Rudier foundry made five casts for the Musée Rodin between 1927 and 1945 then the Georges Rudier foundry made eight casts after 1952.

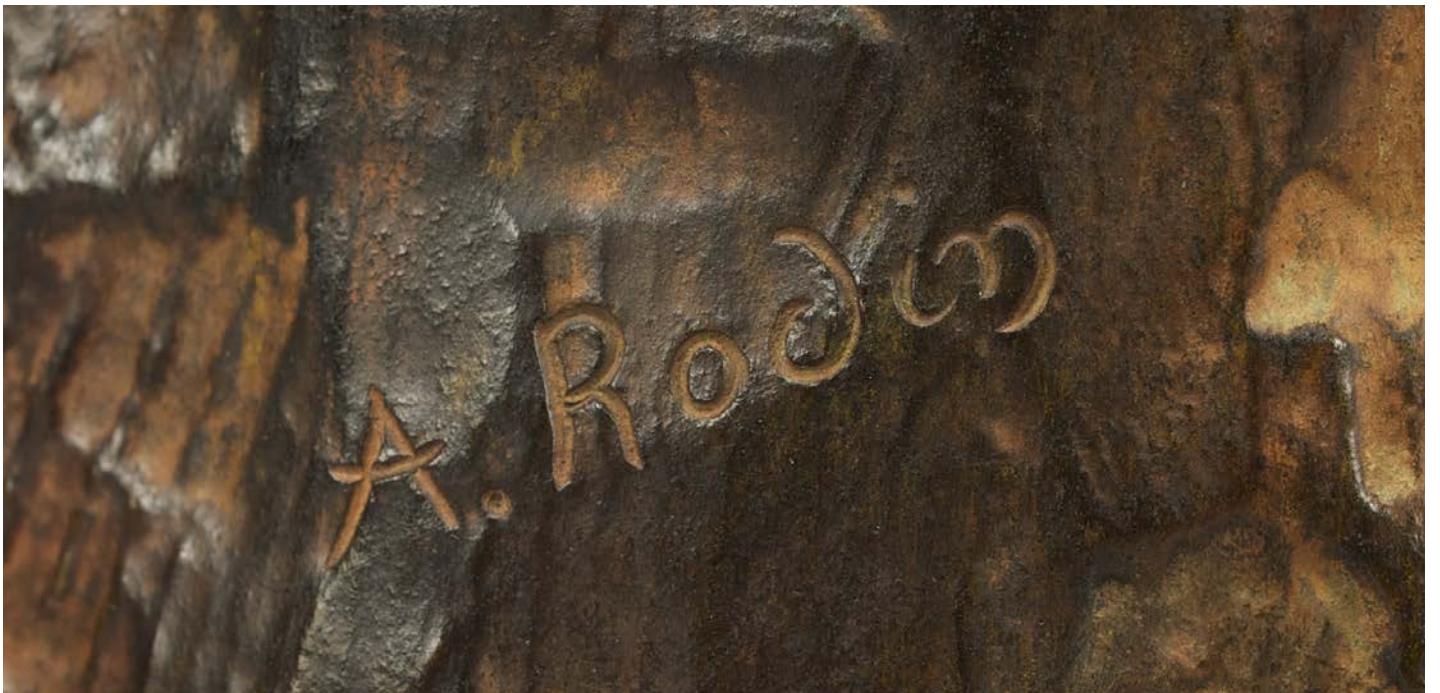
The figure of the faunesse, or female faun, can be traced back to the mythology of ancient Rome where the creatures were normally depicted as half woman and half goat. Here Rodin's *Faunesse* appears almost entirely human, and it is only the somewhat otherworldly facial features that subtly allude to her mythical nature.

In ancient mythology, both fauns and faunesses were known for their love of music and wine as well as their lustful nature. Much like the sculptor's other models depicting faunesses, here the veiled eroticism of the model and its allusion to female sexuality would not have been lost on his contemporary audience.

Rodin conceived the present model for *The Gates of Hell*. Another similar model, *Kneeling Faunesse*, which itself was a variation on *The Awakening*, was also conceived for Rodin's great portal and displays a similar figure in a kneeling position. Rodin included the model in *The Gates of Hell* before 1887, where it appeared to the right of *The Thinker* and next to *Meditation*. In this configuration, it acted as the centrepiece of a group of figures known as *The Judgement* in the left part of the tympanum.

The *Standing Faunesse* was first exhibited as an independent work in 1899 when a plaster version was shown in both Belgium and the Netherlands. The work received a rapturous response, and the critic Ray Nyst described the model as a "*charming little standing Fauness, stretching her flesh and looking at her body.*"







## L'Enfant Prodigue (Prodigal Son), Petit Modèle

Signed A. Rodin and inscribed Alexis Rudier Fondateur Paris and with raised interior signature A. Rodin

Bronze with rich deep black patina

Height: 21 ¾" (55.4 cm)

Conceived in 1888 and cast in bronze by the Foundry Alexis Rudier between 1928 and 1946 in an edition of at least 10 examples; this example cast in bronze in 1944.

Provenance

Eugène Rudier, Le Vésinet (acquired from the Musée Rodin in 1944)

Dr Lucien Capart (acquired from the above, circa 1945-1946)

By descent

Galerie François Fabius, Paris (Acquired from the above in 1992)

First modelled by Rodin in 1884, this example was cast in June 1944 by Rodin's specified foundry Alexis Rudier, under the authority of the Musée Rodin. 10 casts were made between 1928 and 1946 from a plaster left to the Museum by Rodin on his death in 1917.

An enlarged stone version of this work was exhibited publicly at the Salon des Cent in 1884. However, in 1900 when Rodin erected his own pavilion at the Place de l'Alma to coincide with the Paris Exposition Universelle, he chose to exhibit the original small plaster version of the model on a column. This was then exhibited again in 1902 in Prague. From this original plaster, the Museum then produced the 10 bronzes, of which the present example is one.

One of Rodin's most celebrated works, *The Prodigal Son* is derived from the larger group *Ugolino*, which was originally conceived as part of the sculptor's design for *The Gates Of Hell*. Specifically, the child to the left of the main figure in *Ugolino* matches the head and torso of the present work. Rodin later used the reclining figure to create *Fugit Amor*.

The stone version, sculpted for Rodin by François Pompon in 1894, was originally entitled *Child of the Century*, the model was however renamed *The Prodigal Son* in reference to the biblical parable (Luke 15:11-32). According to the story, a father divides his estate evenly between his two sons. One son uses his inheritance shrewdly; the other squanders his on wild living. Eventually, the wayward son returns home to his father proclaiming, "I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son." However, rather than rebuke his son, the father instead forgave him and held a great feast in honour of his return.

In this original version of the *Prodigal Son* we see a figure full of remorse, his outstretched arms showing his plea for forgiveness. "I accentuate the lines that best accentuate the state of mind I am interpreting", the artist told Paul Gsell. "I emphasised the protrusions of the muscles which conveyed distress. Here, there... I exaggerated the tendons that mark the fervor of prayer."

Similar to the artist's famous proclamation that his *Thinker* thinks not only with his brain but also "with every muscle of his arms, back and legs, with his clenched fist and gripping toe," here we see a figure whose every twist, every tendon and muscle conveys that of extreme sorrow and distress.

The moment of return has been portrayed by many artists from Rembrandt to Brancusi. Many represented the scene with both father and son, Auguste Rodin however only sculpted the son, his tormented body arising from an unworked formless mass.



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## Homme a Genoux (Kneeling Man)

Signed, numbered no. 1 and inscribed with foundry mark Georges Rudier Fondateur Paris

© by Musée Rodin 1959

Bronze with brown and green patina

Width: 12.6" (32.2 cm)

Height: 4.1" (10.4 cm)

Conceived 1888, this cast 1959. Produced in a unique edition of 12 casts between 1959 and 1965.

### Provenance

Roland, Browse & Delbanco Gallery, London (acquired from the Musée Rodin in October 1959)

Sir Simon Marks, London (acquired from the above in 1959)

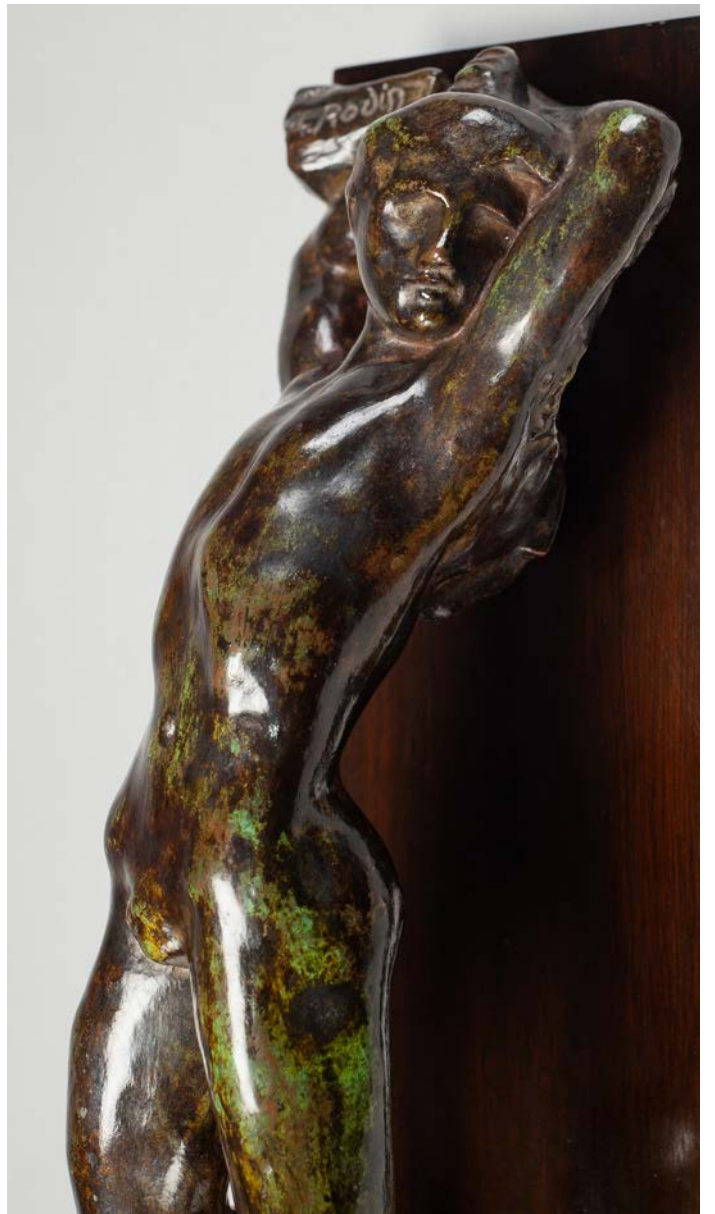
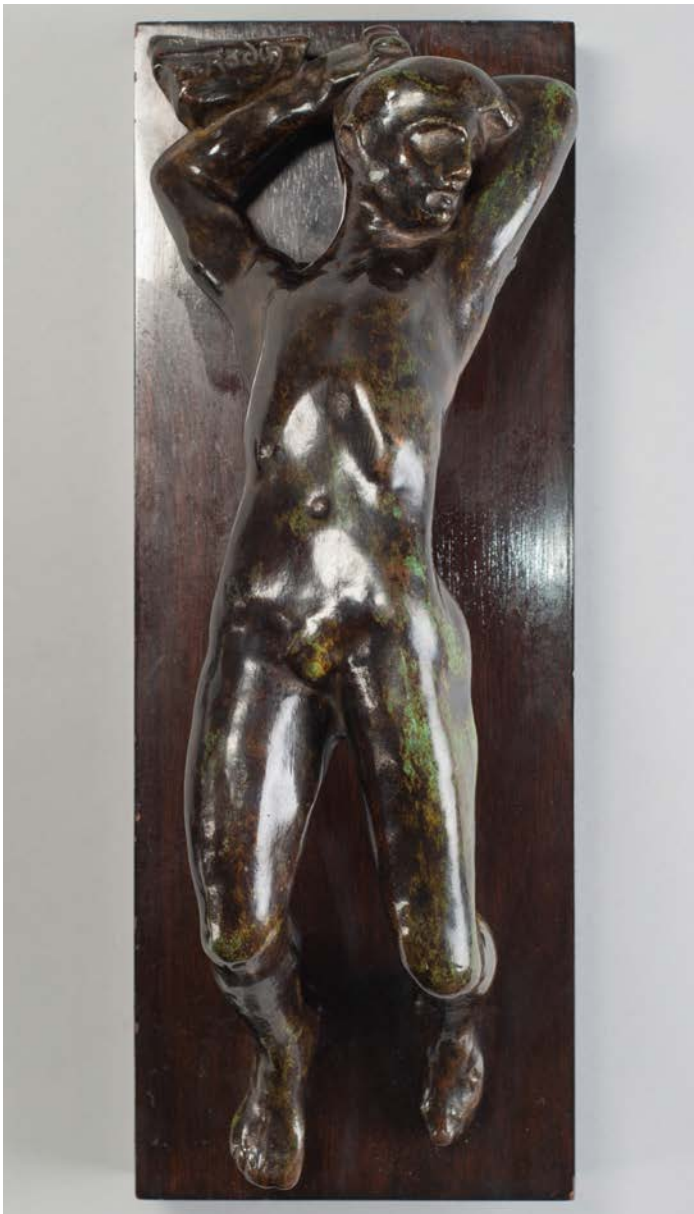
By descent

The *Homme a Genoux* is aptly described by the Comité Rodin as being also titled *Homme de Fugit Amor*. Rodin not only changed the titles of his works in response to critics and collectors whose opinions he valued but also famously took a figure from a composition and reused it at a different angle or combined it with another. In this figure we can see an echo of the figure from *Fugit Amor*, where the male is on his back reaching out for a female, just out of his grasp. We can also see the essence of the works in his *Prodigal Son*; see page 46-47.

This version was left as a plaster by Rodin to the Museum on his detain in 1917 and was not cast in bronze by the Musée Rodin until October 1959. This cast being the first one made - cast no. 1.



Pictured above: Auguste Rodin - *Fugit Amor* - Alexis Rudier cast 1944



## Nijinsky

Signed A. Rodin

Inscribed © by Musée Rodin Paris and with the number 8

Bronze with a rich dark brown patina

Height: 10" (26 cm)

Conceived in 1912, this example cast in 1959. There are no lifetime casts.

Provenance

Roland, Browse & Delbanco, London (acquired from the Musée Rodin in October 1959)

Galerie Gerald Cramec, Geneva, Switzerland

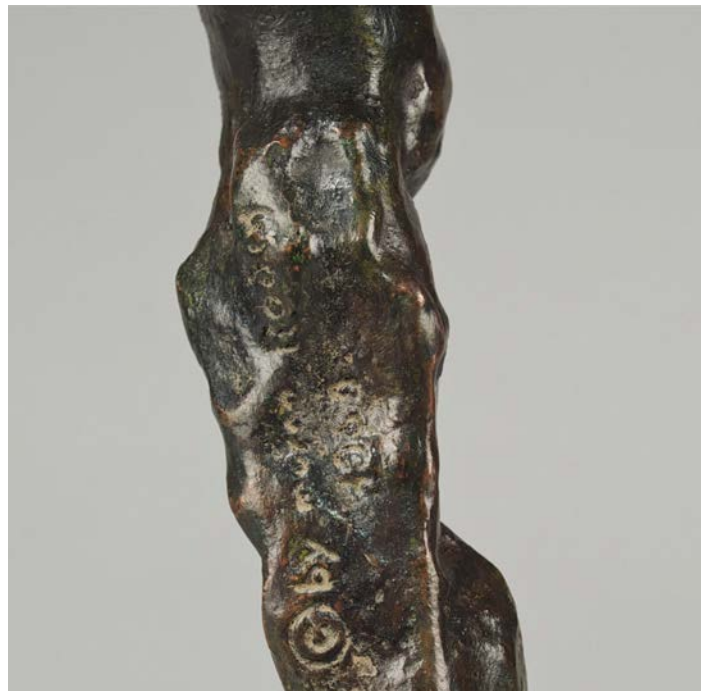
By descent

Conceived in 1912, this example cast in 1959. A single edition of thirteen casts were made for the Musée Rodin by the Georges Rudier foundry between 1958 and 1959.

Vaslav Nijinsky (1889–1950) propelled ballet into the age of modernity with his performances in *Le Pavillon d'Armide*, *Le Spectre de la Rose*, and *Petrouchka*. Celebrated for his virtuosity and for the intensity of his characterizations, he was the subject of many contemporary artists such as Modigliani, Max Jacob, Marc Chagall and of course Rodin.

In 1912, at the Ballets Russes in Paris, Nijinsky choreographed and danced in Debussy's *L'Après-midi d'un Faune* at the Theatre du Chatelet. Sadly, the performance received negative press and it was said that the *'bewildered public did not applaud'*. Gaston Calmette, owner and editor of *Le Figaro* published a negative article in his newspaper describing the performance as *'erotic bestiality and shameless gestures... the pantomime from the body of a misshapen beast, hideous of face and even more hideous of profile...'* which was *'...justifiably booed'*. Rodin, outraged at this article, attended the show the following night and rushed on stage to congratulate Nijinsky for his performance. In response to Calmette's article, Rodin signed an article written by Roger Marx published in *Le Matin* in support of the dancer. The very same day, Nijinsky travelled to Meudon to thank Rodin for his support.

In July 1912, before the Ballets Russes left for England, Rodin modelled a sketch of *Nijinsky*, successfully depicting his distinctive features, highlighting his broad muscular shoulders, prominent cheekbones, and elongated ears.



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## Jardinière des Titans (Vase of the Titans)

Signed A. Carrier-Belleuse

Terracotta

Height: 15 ½" (39.1 cm)

Conceived 1877 and this work created before 1887.

### Provenance

Private collection, France

The present example is an extremely fine terracotta cast of a work modelled by Rodin whilst he was in the employment of the eminent Romantic sculptor, Albert-Ernest Carrier-Belleuse. At this time, Carrier-Belleuse was one of the best-known sculptors in 19th-century Europe, working as the director of the Sèvres porcelain works. He employed a large studio to help him execute the numerous public and private commissions he received.

It is clear from a drawing now in the collection of the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Calais, and also recorded by June Hargrove in *'Life and Work of Albert Carrier-Belleuse'*, that Carrier-Belleuse designed the vase himself before giving the project over to Rodin to execute.

The pencil drawing is typical of Carrier-Belleuse and shows languorous figures atop an ornate pedestal supporting a large, bulbous vase. However, the sculptural realisation of the design is unanimously attributed to Rodin.

The four Titans, mythological giants conquered by the gods of Olympus and doomed to support the hefty vessel, have been imbued with strong introverted gestures and robust musculature. This is typical of Rodin's work at this stage in his career and reminiscent of Michelangelo's figures on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel.

Between 1875 and 1876, the young sculptor took a long-awaited trip to Italy. In a letter to his long-term partner, Rose Beuret, he wrote that he had managed to learn a few of Michelangelo's secrets. "*I believe,*" he told Rose, "*that the great magician is revealing a few of his secrets to me.*" (Beausire and Pine, 1985, p.33) One can see similar handling of the male form in Rodin's seminal *Thinker*, which he modelled three years after the present work in 1880.

The *Vase of the Titans* was exhibited in 1957 during the exhibition *Rodin, ses collaborateurs et ses amis* at the Musée Rodin and was also produced in a glazed ceramic version that can be found in several museum collections, including the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Musée Rodin. However, the surface of the ceramic is devoid of the texture and detail of the terracotta works, which were cast in sections, then assembled and finished by hand.







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## L'Éternel Printemps (Eternal Spring), 2nd Reduction

Signed 'Rodin'

Inscribed with foundry mark 'F. BARBEDIENNE FONDEUR'

Inscribed with letter M on the interior and numbered 21

Bronze with rich mid and dark brown patina

Height: 20 ½" (52 cm)

Conceived in 1884; this bronze version cast between 1910-1918 in a total edition of between 32 and 33 examples.

### Provenance

Galerie Zborowski, Paris

Galerie M. Bousso, Paris

Allan Frumkin Gallery, New York (acquired from the above in Auguste 1966)

Along with *The Kiss*, the present work was originally conceived to represent the tragic love story of Paolo and Francesca, as told in Dante's *Inferno*. Given the predominance of the front view of the work, it is possible the model was first intended to adorn *The Gates of Hell*. An image taken by Charles Bodmer in 1886 shows an early sketch for the work displayed in front of the frame for the Gates, perhaps lending weight to this hypothesis. Nevertheless, there is no documentary proof that Rodin ever intended the work to adorn his great portal.

The date of conception, 1884, does however tie in with the period in which Rodin's relationship with Camille Claudel was blossoming and it has been suggested that perhaps the images of tenderly embracing lovers carried some autobiographical significance for the sculptor. Rodin himself cited the composer Beethoven as an influence, telling Jeanne Russell much later that "*it was whilst listening to it for the first time (Beethoven's Second Symphony) that I pictured Eternal Spring, just as I have modeled it since.*"

It is also important to note that the torso of the woman was in fact taken from Rodin's earlier work *Torso of Adèle*, which he sculpted between 1878 and 1872. This work depicts the torso of Rodin's favorite model Adèle Abbruzzesi, which is used without adjustment in the present work.

Whatever provided the exact genesis for the two lovers, *Eternal Spring* went on to become an icon of Romantic love and one of Rodin's most well-known and certainly most commercially successful models.







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L'Éternel Printemps (Eternal Spring), 3rd Reduction

Signed Rodin

Inscribed F. Barbedienne Fondateur

Bronze with rich brown patina

Height: 15 3/4" (40 cm)

Conceived circa 1884. This example cast between 1908 and 1912. The Comité Rodin states there were between 80 and 83 casts in total.

Provenance

Galerie Tamenaga, Tokyo

Private collection, Japan (acquired from the above in August 2002)





## Le Baiser (The Kiss), 1st reduction

Signed Rodin

Inscribed with foundry mark F. BARBEDIENNE FONDEUR

Stamped with the letter K and number 12

Bronze with rich brown patina

Height: 28 1/4" (71.8 cm)

Conceived in 1886 and cast between 1910 - 1918. The Comité Rodin states that between 49 and 50 casts were made.

Provenance

Collection François, Belgium

Sotheby's, London, 3 December 1980, Lot 9

Private Collection UK

Conceived in 1886 and cast between 1910 - 1918. The Comité Rodin states that between 49 and 50 casts of this 1st reduction were made.

Like many of Auguste Rodin's best-known works, *The Kiss* was initially conceived as part of *The Gates of Hell* – the artist's most ambitious sculptural project, which occupied the last thirty-seven years of his life – but was eventually omitted from the final design. The artistic inspiration for the *Gates* derived from Dante's *The Divine Comedy*, which depicts the Italian poet's epic journey through the Underworld. Rodin initially thought *The Kiss* would have to be the dominating piece of the composition, in place of *The Thinker*.

The subject of the sculpture is linked to an episode in Dante's *Inferno*, where the poet meets Paolo and Francesca, two nobles of Rimini, who shared their first kiss while reading about the Arthurian love story between Lancelot and Guinevere. Tragically, the lovers were discovered by Francesca's husband, who killed them. The pair descended to hell, damned for their illicit love. The story of Paolo and Francesca has received enormous attention in the History of European Art and has been depicted by artists such as Sandro Botticelli, Ingres, Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Auguste Doré.

In this circumstance, Rodin's visual reinterpretation of the poem universalises its subject matter, expanding far beyond the boundaries of its literary background. The two sculpted figures are fused together in an everlasting embrace. As the woman's arm encircles her lover's neck, the man's right-hand presses firmly but gently on her left thigh, enhancing the sinuosity of the composition. The stark contrast between the softness of the young lovers' bodies and the rock on which they sit, highlights their youth and the tenderness of their gestures. *The Kiss* is now universally perceived as a visual epitome of passionate love.

The marble version of *The Kiss* was first exhibited as an independent group in 1887 in both Paris and Brussels. Rodin's depiction of the embracing lovers met with a mixed reception during his lifetime. It was prudishly received at the Chicago World's Fair of 1893, where it was considered unsuitable for public display and relegated to one of the inner rooms of the exhibition. In Britain too, the reception of the piece was highly controversial. In 1914, when the American collector Edward Warren lent a marble version of the sculpture to the town hall of Lewes in East Sussex, its inhabitants considered it morally unsound, first demanding it be covered by a cloth and that the sculpture be returned to its owner.

Unlike Britain and the United States, the sculpture was applauded by the French public. Its enthusiastic reception led the artist to sign a contract with the Barbedienne foundry, which allowed them to produce a bronze edition of the model in four sizes between 1898 and 1917 – the year of the artist's death. This example is one of the 71.8 cm high editions, the largest version cast by Barbedienne.

Other casts and versions of *The Kiss* are part of museum collections such as the Musée Rodin, the TATE Britain, the Ny Carlsberg Museum in Copenhagen and the Philadelphia Museum of Art.







Le Baiser (The Kiss), 3rd Reduction

Inscribed Rodin

Inscribed with foundry mark F. Barbedienne. Fondateur.

Bronze with rich mid and dark brown patination

Height: 15 1/2" (39.4 cm)

Conceived in 1886 and cast in bronze by the Barbedienne Foundry, Paris in an edition of 105 between 1898 and 1919.

Provenance

Victor Grossi, Chile

By descent



Le Baiser (The Kiss), 4th Reduction

Signed Rodin

Inscribed F. BARBEDIENNE, Fondeur and stamped with the letters "I" and "VL" and with ink number 67954 Gog

Bronze with rich dark brown patina

Height: 10" (25.3 cm)

Conceived in 1886, this example cast in April 1907. The Comité Rodin states that between 93 and 103 examples were cast between 1898 and 1918.

Provenance

Private collection, Germany (received as a present from their grandfather in the 1960s)





Detail view of: Auguste Rodin - *Le Penseur (The Thinker)*, *Petit Modèle with Rounded Base* (p. 70-73)

## Le Penseur (The Thinker)

Auguste Rodin's *Le Penseur* (*The Thinker*) is one of the most iconic sculptures in art history. The timeless work has become internationally recognisable as a symbol for the depths of humanity's intelligence and philosophical genius. This, however, was not always the artist's intention.

Auguste Rodin initially conceived the sculpture as an integral piece for the tympanum of his monumental work *La Porte de l'Enfer* (*The Gates of Hell*). Inspired by Dante's *The Divine Comedy*, Rodin originally called the sculpture *Le Poète* (*The Poet*), and positioned it as an omniscient figure presiding over the tumultuous scenes of judgement and damnation below. Both spectator and participant in Dante's phantasm of Hell, the sculpture immediately became a powerful and transcendent figure for critics, collectors and enthusiasts alike.

The significance of *Le Penseur* was not lost on Rodin. The sculptor explained his decision to redefine *Le Poète* into *The Thinker* as we all know today, stating that the "project was not realised" and that simply replicating the original piece from *La Porte de l'Enfer* "would have been without meaning".

"Guided by my first inspiration I conceived another thinker, a naked man, seated upon a rock, his feet drawn under him, his fist against his teeth, his dreams. The fertile thought slowly elaborates itself within his brain. He is no longer dreamer, he is creator." (Tancock, 1976. p. 111)

Soon after its creation, the sculptor redeveloped the figure into a freestanding piece that is no longer associated with the torment of *La Porte de l'Enfer*, but instead challenges one definitive interpretation by inviting admirers to create their own unique perceptions. It cemented Rodin's widespread fame and is considered his artistic legacy.

"The fame of its creator ... the memorable pose, and its susceptibility to varied interpretation, including satire, have contributed to making *The Thinker* perhaps the most famous modern sculpture in the world." (A.E. Elsen & R.F. Jamison, 2003. p.174)

*Le Penseur* was immediately highly sought after by collectors and art institutions. Rodin first exhibited the work in Copenhagen in 1888 but didn't officially change the name from *Le Poète* to *Le Penseur* until the landmark Monet-Rodin exhibition of 1889 in Paris.

The work's immense popularity led to Rodin casting the model in three sizes: the original size, an enlarged one, and a reduced version for the collectors' market. The first larger cast was made in 1902, before being presented to the City of Paris in 1906. It was originally sited in front of the Pantheon and then moved to the Musée Rodin in 1922. The piece is indicative, perhaps more so than any of Rodin's major early works, of Michelangelo's influence on Rodin's sculptural style.

The sculptor was greatly inspired by the art of Michelangelo during his visit to Italy in 1875. This resounding influence is evident in the figure's contrapposto stance, similar to Michelangelo's *Bacchus* (1497), and the seated, pensive pose also seen in the Renaissance artist's *Crouching Boy* (1530).

Rodin was also revered for sculpting *Le Penseur*, along with many of his other works, from the natural movements of a live model. This technique gives *Le Penseur* a human fluidity of both mind and body, infusing the sculpted form with living and breathing qualities. It is reflective of the power of mind and body to instigate introspection and action and transforms the act of contemplation into an all-encompassing undertaking.

"What Rodin did in this figure was to rethink the visual concept of a cogitating male and to accentuate the total effort required of mind and body to resolve a difficult problem. The lowered head alone, caused by the crossover gesture of the right arm to the left thigh, both of which are part of the body's expression of total self-absorption, separates Rodin's Thinker from the many prototypes proposed by scholars." (A.E. Elsen & R.F. Jamison, 2003. p.174)

## Le Penseur (The Thinker), Petit Modèle with Rounded Base

Signed A. Rodin with repeat raised interior signature and inscribed Alexis Rudier Fondateur Paris

Interior with a label from the Gallery Bernheim Jeune

Bronze with brown patina

Height: 14 3/4" (37.6 cm)

Conceived circa 1880-1881; this reduction conceived in 1903 and the present example cast between 1905 and 1914. This is one of six known casts made between 1903 and 1914.

Provenance

With Bernheim Jeune Gallery, Paris in December 1918

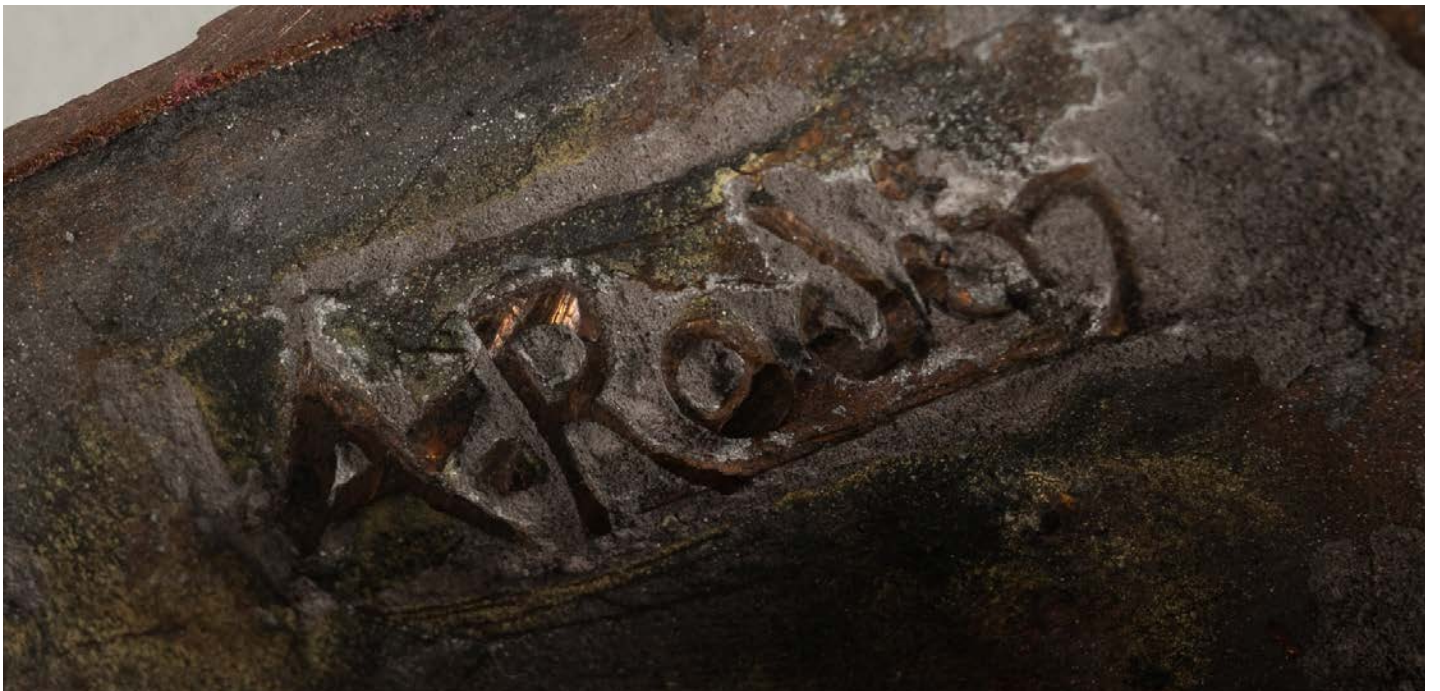
Howard Young Galleries, New-York

Ralph Harman Booth, Grosse Pointe, MI (gift from the above in 1926)

This version of *The Thinker* was first conceived in 1903. It differs from the second version in the treatment of the back of the base, hence its description 'version with rounded base'. The Comité Rodin believes that a total of 45 casts of *The Thinker* in this scale were made; all of them prior to 1952.









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## Le Penseur (The Thinker), Petit Modèle

Signed 'A. Rodin'

Inscribed with the foundry mark 'Alexis RUDIER. Fondateur. PARIS.' and with raised interior signature 'A. Rodin'

Bronze with green and brown patina

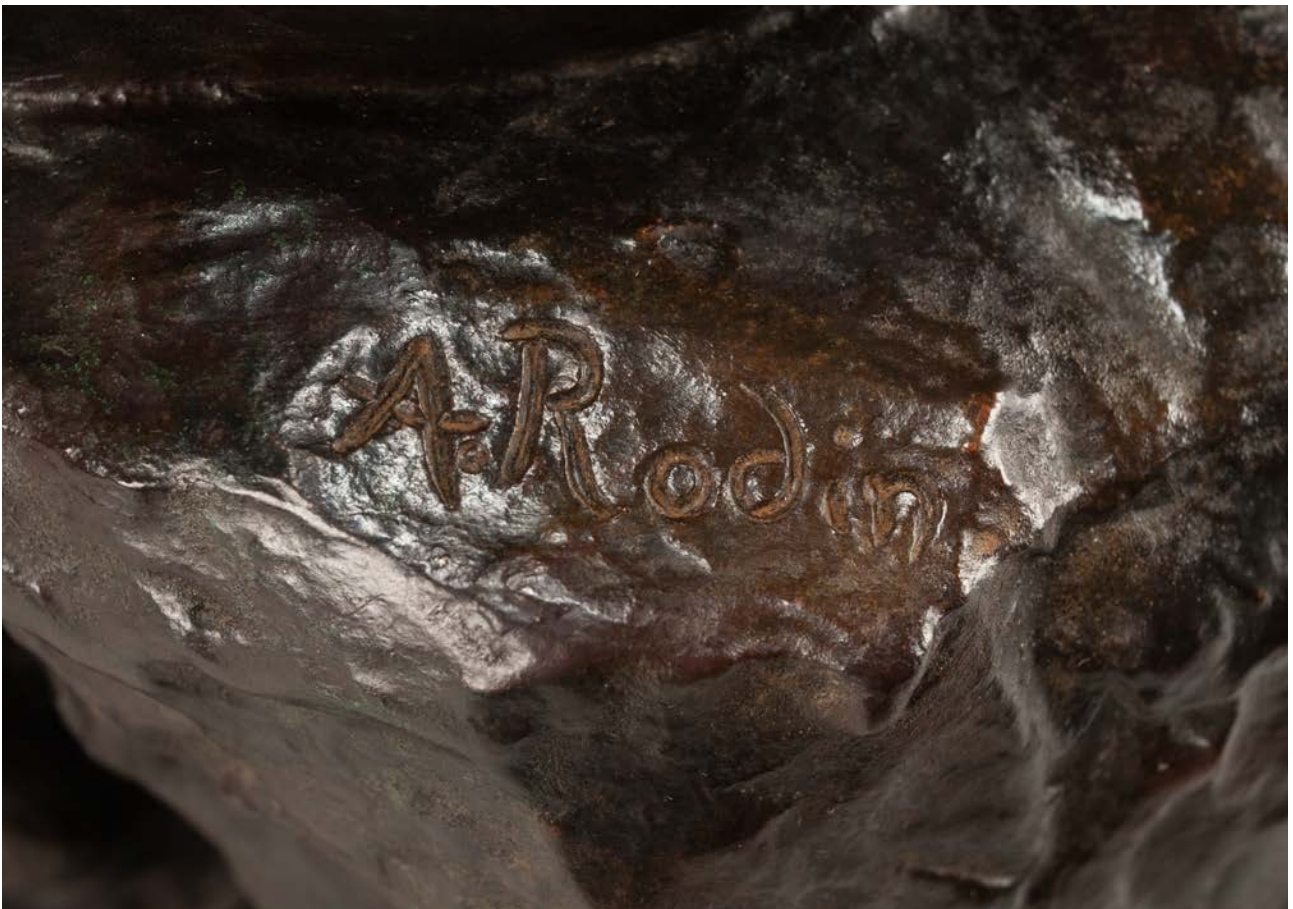
Height: 14 7/8" (37.7 cm)

Conceived in 1881-1882; this example cast by Alexis Rudier between 1920 and 1930. The Comité Rodin believes that there are a total of approximately 45 casts of this work in this size and that they were all made between 1902 and 1952, 8 of which were made during his lifetime.

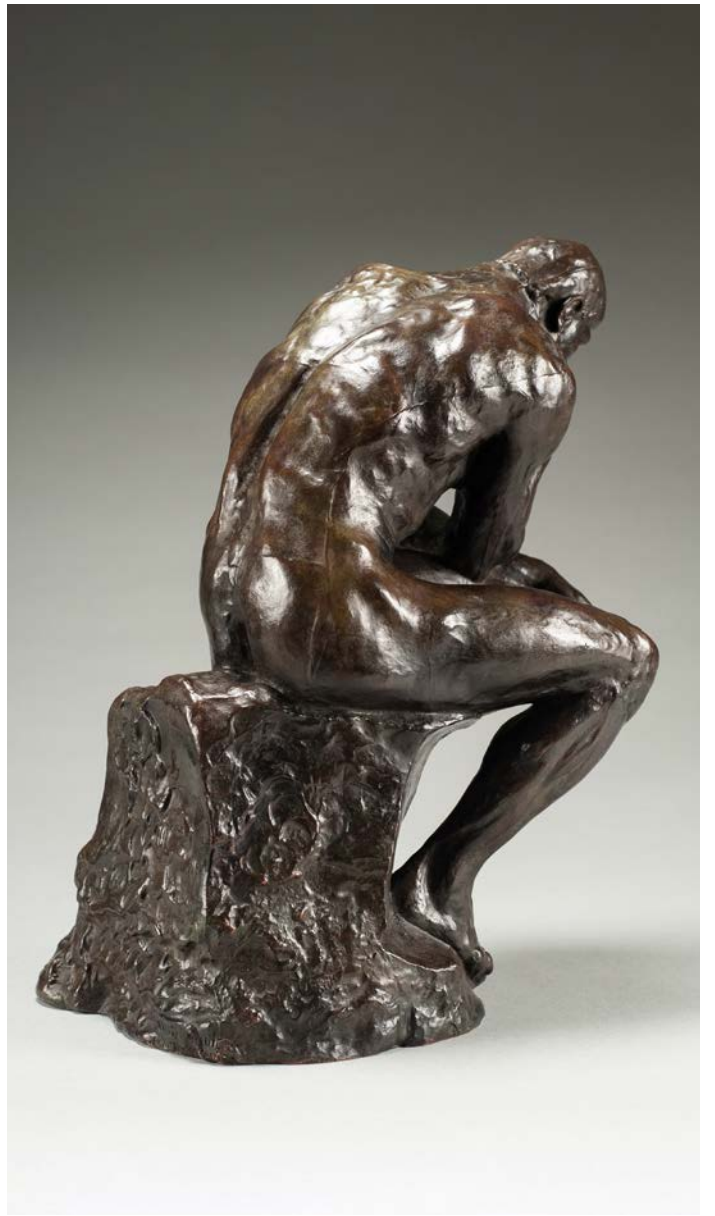
### Provenance

Private Collection, Japan (acquired circa 1970)

This present work is an example of the reduced version of *Le Penseur* cast for the collectors' market. The bronze was cast between 1920 and 1930 by the Alexis Rudier Foundry, which produced many of Rodin's most famous works after the sculptor granted the foundry exclusive rights from 1902 until 1952.









## Maquette Préparatoire Pour le Bas-Relief du 'Poète et La Muse'

Signed A. Rodin and stamped with foundry mark ALEXIS RUDIER/FONDEUR PARIS

Bronze with rich dark brown patina on a white onyx plinth

Height (with plinth): 7 5/8" (19.4 cm) - Height (without plinth): 4 5/8" (11.7 cm)

Conceived before 1905; this example cast in 1927.

### Provenance

Private collection, Germany (acquired from the Musée Rodin in February 1943)

Private collection, New-Jersey, USA

### This example exhibited

*Rodin Udstillingen Skulpturer; Malerier; Tegninger*, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen, DK, Sep. 1930, no. 106.

This bronze is a cast of a preparatory study for Rodin's 1905 larger relief, *Le Poète et la Muse*, the plaster version of which is in the Musée Rodin, Paris. Rodin believed strongly in the inspiration provided by his muses and the relationship behind creative genius and passion. Typically Rodin also titled the work as *Maternity*, portraying the image as a Mother and child. The finished work, for which this sculpture was the study, was re-named *Nuit de Mai*. Marble versions were commissioned from Rodin in 1905 by the American collector James Phelan and in 1913, by the French collector Maurice Fenaille.

The Comité Rodin state that the sculptor requested one bronze cast of this study from Alexis Rudier around 1910-1915. The Musée Rodin then ordered two further cast from the Rudier Foundry in 1923 and 1927, of which this cast is the version made in 1927. No other casts are known.



Pictured above: Auguste Rodin - *Le Poete et la Muse (The Poet and the Muse)* - Marble - Height: 19.7" (50 cm) - circa 1900



## Masque de l'Homme au Nez Cassé (Mask of A Man With A Broken Nose)

Signed A Rodin with repeat raised interior signature M. A. Rodin

Inscribed Alexis Rudier Fondateur Paris

Bronze with a brown patina on onyx plinth.

Height: 10" (25.4 cm)

Conceived between 1863-1864, this example cast between 1919-1923.

### Provenance

Galerie de l'art Français et Japonais, Tokyo (acquired from the Musée Rodin between 1919 and 1927)

Private collection, Japan (acquired through the Japanese art market in the 1970s)

By descent

*"What is commonly referred to as ugliness in Nature can in Art become a great beauty. [...] In fact, in Art only that which has Character is beautiful. Character is the intense truth of any natural spectacle, be it beautiful or ugly [...]"* - Auguste Rodin, *L'Art: Entretiens Réunis par Paul Gsell* (Paris, 1911), pp. 46,51.

Rodin considered this portrait to be his earliest major work and described it as his first exceptional piece of modelling. He began the portrait in 1863, intending to submit it to the Paris Salon as his debut sculpture. The following year *The Man With The Broken Nose* became *The Mask Of The Man With The Broken Nose* when the cold conditions in Rodin's studio caused the back of the head to freeze and break off overnight. Rodin, embracing the element of chance, wanted to exhibit the portrait bust as it was, however, he continued to return to work on it for over a year before submitting it to the Salon. Much to his disappointment, the Salon rejected the work in 1864 and again in 1865, unable to accept what they considered to be a fragmentary model by an unknown sculptor.

Rodin however persisted and in 1874 he commissioned Léon Fourquet to carve a marble of the model. By this point he had extended the work down to the shoulders and replaced the back of the head, trying to present the work as being more classically themed. The sculpture was finally accepted for exhibition at the Salon and was Rodin's first work to be shown there. Shortly after, Rodin had the original version cast in bronze, an example of which was finally exhibited at the Salon in 1878.

The model's debt to classical antiquity is clear, particularly in the blank eyes and thick strands of hair that allude to the busts of ancient Greece and Rome. This effect would not have been lost on its contemporary audience and it is one which Rodin was encouraged to explore by his close circle, who recognised his genius but also understood the Salon's criteria.

Rodin's approach was revolutionary in that he combined the elements of classicism with expressive naturalism, as the portrait was clearly modelled from life. The sculpture was based on the face of a local handyman, nicknamed Bibi, who modelled for Rodin in the Saint-Marcel district outside Paris. Rodin depicted Bibi without flattery, broken nose and all, beginning what would become an ongoing exploration of unconventional beauty.

This cast of *Mask of Man With the Broken Nose* possesses a special raised repeat interior signature, which was designed by the Rudier Foundry. Furthermore, it also has a very rare "M" stamp above the interior signature of Rodin (see illustration opposite). The stamp is only present in very early casts of the work, authorised by the Rodin Museum immediately after Rodin's death.

The Comité Rodin states that since this model was produced in various versions, it is impossible to know for certain how many casts of each version were produced, including the present one. Examples of the *Mask of A Man with A Broken Nose* can be found in many museums around the world, most notably in the Musée Rodin in Paris, the Metropolitan Museum in New York, the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Harvard Museum at Harvard University. In Europe, the Neue Glyptothek in Munich and the Kunsthalle Bremen both possess casts as well.



## Suzon

Signed A Rodin

Marble

Height: 12 1/8" (30.8 cm)

Height including base: 15 1/2 " (39.2 cm)

Conceived in 1873-1875; this marble version executed between 1900-1914.

Provenance

Baron Auguste Goffinet, Belgium (acquired circa 1900-1914)

Private collection, Belgium

Born in Paris in 1840, Rodin studied drawing at the Petite École alongside fellow sculptor and friend, Aimé-Jules Dalou. After struggling to find work in the French capital, he moved to Belgium at the age of 24 and joined the atelier of Albert-Ernest Carrier-Belleuse, one of the most fashionable sculptors of the Second French Empire.

Rodin was initially tasked with completing the compositions of other sculptors' works for interior schemes and decorative objects but was quickly given more creative freedom. It is now widely accepted that several works signed by Carrier-Belleuse were in fact partial or complete works by Rodin.

This particular piece, called *Suzon* (and occasionally *La Petite Manon*), was first modelled in 1872 and created shortly after Rodin left the atelier of Carrier-Belleuse. *Suzon* is characterised by distinct facial features, such as a rounded face, a slightly upturned nose and a half-opened mouth showing glimpses of teeth behind petite, yet sensuous lips. The bust demonstrates Rodin's complete command of his master's approach to feminine beauty and represents the sculptor's refined Neo-Rococo style during this period.

Financial difficulties early in Rodin's career forced the sculptor to cede both a marble and plaster version of *Suzon*, along with the related rights to reproduction to the Compagnie des Bronzes in 1875. The immediate and immense popularity of *Suzon* led to the sculpture being reproduced in various mediums, formats and sizes until 1939.

Along with models in terracotta, bronze, plaster and marble, the Compagnie des Bronzes presented five sizes of the sculpture. This particular piece is a rare lifetime marble carving that was one of approximately 25 versions executed by the Compagnie des Bronzes between 1910 and 1920.

Auguste Rodin is considered the '*Father of Modern Sculpture*', due to his influence on future generations of artists and sculptors around the world long after his death. Rodin's timeless legacy was highlighted at the 2017 Grand Palais exhibition in Paris, which marked the centenary of his death.



## L'Enlèvement d'Hippodamie (The Abduction of Hippodamia)

Signed Carrier-Belleuse

Stamped Bronze Garanti au Titre Paris and entitled Enlevement

Bronze with a dark brown patina with green and lighter brown highlights

Height: 25 1/2" (65 cm)

Conceived in 1871, the bronze cast prior to 1888 when the Pinedo Foundry acquired the rights to the cast.

### Provenance

Private collection, France

By descent

The present work is the fruit of the compelling collaboration between the French master Auguste Rodin and Albert-Ernest Carrier-Belleuse before the start of the former artist's independent career in the mid 1870s.

*The Abduction of Hippodamia* is first documented in an 1871 catalogue for a sale in Brussels, which included a terracotta version of the model. At the time, Rodin was working for Carrier-Belleuse, who ran a large workshop to face the numerous commissions he received from all around Europe.

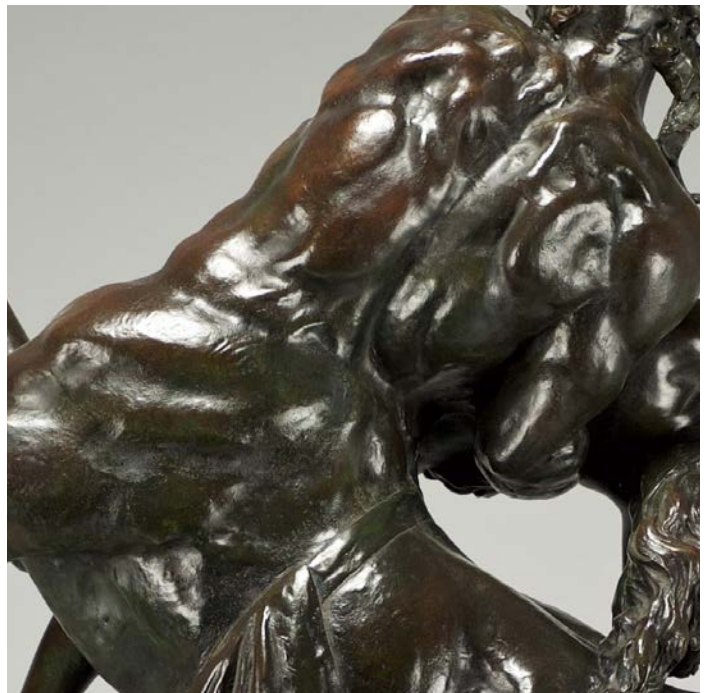
In recent years, the American scholar June Hargrove has highlighted that the Centaur's body, "*which ripples with a bold musculature,*" is characteristic of Rodin's male figures for the *Vase of the Titans*, which the artist sculpted around 1877 after a drawing by Carrier-Belleuse. Likewise, Hargrove points out how the screaming face of the Centaur is very similar to *The Calls to Arms* (1878) – Rodin's submission for the Monument to the Defence of Paris.

Such visual evidence is so compelling that, although bearing the signature of Carrier-Belleuse, the work is generally agreed to have been modelled in part by his pupil Rodin. On the other hand, the slim idealised form of Hippodamia is typical of many of Carrier-Belleuse mythological nudes.

Much like its conception history, the iconography is dense in meaning. The Greek mythological tale of the Abduction is drawn from Ovid. The Lapiths, a peace-loving people of Thessaly, were celebrating the wedding of their King Pirithous to the beautiful Hippodamia. The Centaurs were invited to the ceremony but quickly began to misbehave. One of them, Eurytus, full of liquor, attempted to carry off the bride, and soon a battle, known as the Centauromachy, raged in which drinking vessels, table legs and antlers served as weapons. Finally, thanks to the intervention of Theseus, the Centaurs were driven off.

The story has enjoyed great success in the history of art, inspiring artists from ancient to contemporary times. Particularly during the Renaissance, when the depiction of this scene was used to symbolize the victory of civilization over barbarism.

This model is in private and public institutions worldwide, including the National Gallery, Washington, USA, The Cincinnati Museum, USA, and Vizcaya Museum & Gardens, USA.



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Detail view of: Auguste Rodin - *Age d'Airain (Age of Bronze)*, *petit modèle* (p. 14-17)

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