



Fundación "la Caixa"

Fundació "la Caixa", in collaboration with the Rodin Museum of Paris, presents 57 sculptures, 25 photographs and 25 drawings at the Social and Cultural Centre in Tarragona

Auguste Rodin

Today the work of Auguste Rodin (Paris, 1840 - Meudon, 1917) exerts the same fascination that it did half a century ago. The clarity of his insight, the newness of the concepts he developed, and the diversity of his styles, materials and modes of expression make Rodin one of the most brilliant sculptors in the history of art. Fundació "la Caixa", in collaboration with the Rodin Museum of Paris, presents an exceptional collection of works at its Social and Cultural Centre in Tarragona, which show the grandeur of the master's genius. The exhibition *Auguste Rodin* assembles 57 sculptures ³/₄ including the monumental sculpture *Jean de Fiennes*, belonging to the famous sculptural group *The Burghers of Calais*³/₄, as well as 25 drawings by the artist and 25 photographs of some of his most important works.

The exhibition *Auguste Rodin* will be open to the public at the Social and Cultural Centre of Fundació "la Caixa" in Tarragona (C/ Cristòfor Colom, 2), from 19 September to 10 November 2002.

All of the works included in the exhibition are on loan from the Rodin Museum of Paris—the director of which is **Jacques Vilain**, curator general of Heritage—, without whose invaluable collaboration it would not have been possible to present this show in Spain. The exhibition curators are **Antoinette Le Normand-Romain**, curator general of Heritage and head of the Department of Sculpture of the Rodin Museum; **Claudie Judrin**, chief curator of Heritage and head of the Department of Drawings of the Rodin Museum, and **Hélène Pinet**, head of the Photograph Collection of the Rodin Museum.

The 57 sculptures assembled for the exhibition include some of Rodin's most representative works, such as *The Bronze Age* (1877), *The Thinker* (1880), *The Kiss* (1882-1886), his likeness of *Gustav Mahler* (1909), *Ugolino and his Children* (1882), *The Eternal Spring* (1884) and two models of *The Gates of Hell* (1880). Also on display is the monumental sculpture *Jean de Fiennes*, which forms part of one of the artist's most famous group sculptures, *The Burghers of Calais*.

A collection of 25 photographs and 25 drawings, the latter originally the property of the genius himself, round out the *Auguste Rodin* exhibition. Eugène Druet, Jean-François Limet and Jacques-Ernest Bulloz were a few of the early-twentieth-century photographers who succeeded in capturing the beauty of some of Rodin's major works, such as the monument to *The Burghers of Calais*, *The Bronze Age* and *The Thinker*.

Under the title *Auguste Rodin*, this exhibition shows the grandeur of Rodin's genius and illustrates some of his creative methods. The artist considered that his sculptures were never completed or fixed, but rather had infinite possibilities. Through reduction and enlargement, he would continually modify the scale of a given work, and, with it, its perception and meaning. In parallel fashion, he would recur to his "descartes" or spare parts (heads, arms and legs) and combine numerous independent figures to create unexpected and original compositions. Thus, several of the figures he sculpted for *The Gates of Hell* became famous quite independently of this grouping. These include *The Kiss*, *The Thinker*, *Ugolino and his Children* and others.

Auguste Rodin (Paris, 1840 – Meudon, 1917) began his artistic training at the age of fourteen under Horace Lecoq de Boisbaudran and Louis-Pierre Gustave Fort at the Special Imperial School. After withdrawing briefly to a monastery, he returned to secular life to attend Barye's courses at the National Museum of Natural History and began to work in Carrier-Belleuse's studio. His journey to Italy in 1875 enabled him to observe the classics, particularly Michelangelo, and from that point on he devoted himself uninterruptedly to the creation of eternal forms like *The Bronze Age*, *The Walking Man* or *Saint John the Baptist* within a universe that was uniquely his.

By the end of the nineteenth century, Rodin's prestige had increased considerably and he was commissioned to create the monumental bronze door for the future Museum of Decorative Arts of Paris. For *The Gates of Hell*, Rodin sought inspiration in images from Dante's *Inferno*, representing scenes like the agony of Ugolino, and employing contorted figures to symbolise the damned. During this period, Rodin received several commissions such as *The Burghers of Calais* or the monuments to Victor Hugo and Honoré de Balzac. In 1890, together with Carrière, Puvis de Chavannes, Dalou and Messonier, he founded the Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts.

Rodin's role in the artistic milieu of his time was very significant. He portrayed his friends and the celebrities of the worlds of art, literature and politics, endowing his works with a personal and humane dimension at all times. In 1908 he undertook a group of sculptures, in which he focused on the body's movement in dance, fascinated as he was by its freedom of gestures and postures. On the whole, Rodin's work, which is placed at the turn of the twentieth century, offers a great variety of styles, materials and modes of expression. The artist created freely, using multiple combinations and developing original concepts that continue to be a contemporary artistic reference even today.

Auguste Rodin

From 19 September to 10 November 2002

Opening: Wednesday, 18 September 2002, at 8 p.m.

Social and Cultural Centre of Fundació “la Caixa” in Tarragona

C/ Cristòfor Colom, 2
43001 Tarragona

The exhibition is open to the public:

Mondays to Fridays, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. and 5 – 9 p.m.

Sundays and holidays, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. – 9 p.m.

Guided visits for the general public: Saturdays, 6 p.m. and 7 p.m.

School visits and organised groups: Advance booking by phone, 977 24 98 71

Family visits: Sundays, 12 noon, advance booking by phone, 977 24 98 71

Information:

ww.fundacio.lacaixa.es

Admission free of charge

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