

## Auguste Rodin

**MEDIUM** Sculpture

**NATIONALITY** French

**LIFE DATES** 1840 - 1917

Auguste Rodin, arguably the greatest sculptor of the nineteenth century, was largely self-educated in his art.

Rodin came to public attention with the controversy surrounding the exhibition of the plaster of *Age of Bronze* at the Paris Salon of 1877. Three years later at the Salon of 1880, when it was shown cast in bronze, it received a third-class medal; it was purchased by the State and set up in the Luxembourg Gardens in Paris.

The twenty years between the commencement of work in 1884 on the decorative portals that became *The Gates of Hell* and the great retrospective exhibition of 1900 at the Paris Exposition Universelle were the most productive of Rodin's career. During this period, he worked on such public monuments as *The Burghers of Calais* (1884-95); the monuments to *Claude Lorrain* (1889-92), *Victor Hugo* (1889-1909), *Balzac* (1891-98), and *Labor* (1894-97, never realized); and on numerous portraits and figures or groups generated by or related to *The Gates of Hell*.

Rodin was a founding member of the Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts, later becoming Vice-President of the society and President of its Sculpture Department. He was also appointed a member of the Conseil Supérieur des Beaux-Arts, a titular member of the Berlin Academy of Fine Arts, and was awarded Honorary Doctorates by the University of Léna, the University of Glasgow, and Oxford University. In 1910, he was appointed Grand Officer of the Légion d'Honneur.

Before his death at Meudon in 1917, Rodin donated his collection to the state, and the National Assembly voted to establish the Rodin Museum, which opened in Paris in 1919.

