

RODIN RILKE HOFMANNSTHAL

DER MENSCH
UND SEIN GENIUS

Press Release

November 16, 2017

For more than a hundred years the Nationalgalerie – Staatliche Museen zu Berlin has presented key works of the French sculptor Auguste Rodin (1840-1917), like ‘The Thinker’, ‘The Age of Bronze’ and ‘Man and his Thought’. On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of Rodin’s death, the Alte Nationalgalerie presents a special exhibition that focuses on the bronze figurine ‘Man and his Genius’ which until now has received little attention. The small sculpture, which dates from 1896, shows a winged female genius retreating from a male nude – symbolic of artistic inspiration.

The bronze is closely linked to the work of two important literary figures: Rainer Maria Rilke, whose writings were a major contribution in the popularization of Rodin in Germany and who composed the poem “Nike” specifically about this sculpture, and Hugo von Hofmannsthal, who discovered the plaster model in Rodin’s studio on his trip to Paris in 1900, and immediately commissioned a bronze cast. ‘Man and Genius’ stood as inspiration on Hofmannsthal’s desk in Rodaun near Vienna for 20 years. As financial hardship forced Hofmannsthal to sell his Rodin, it was Rilke in turn who procured the bronze for the Swiss collector Werner Reinhart. From there it later entered the collection of the Nationalgalerie.

The unfinished and the fragmentary shape Rodin’s oeuvre. Questions of artistic signature and openness of interpretation in art arise. Rilke and Hofmannsthal took great inspiration from Rodin, which is reflected in their work and in the history of the small bronze.

What is special about this exhibition curated by Maria Obenaus and Ralph Gleis is that, for the first time, a less prominent work of Rodin from the Nationalgalerie’s collection is explored from different angles. The bronze, along with a few additional works for comparison, enables a glimpse into the art world around 1900. Exhibits are sculptural works from Paris’ Musée Rodin and Kunsthalle Bremen, graphic works by Eugène Carrière and Max Klinger from the Kupferstichkabinett and the Kunstbibliothek der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin as well as writings and photographs from the archives in Frankfurt am Main, Marbach and Bern. They make not only the working methods of Rodin understandable but also transport the history of the object within the context of the literature of the time – and deal with the issue of inspiration in art for Rodin and his contemporaries.

**Rodin – Rilke – Hofmannsthal
Man and His Genius**
17.11.2017 – 18.03.2018

**Alte Nationalgalerie
Staatliche Museen zu Berlin**
Bodestraße 1-3
10178 Berlin

www.augusterodinberlin.de

Opening Hours

Tue, Wed, Fri, Sat, Sun 10 am–6 pm
Thu 10 am–6 pm
Mon closed

Admission

10 Euro, reduced 5 Euro (incl. permanent collection)
Free admission for children and young people up to the age of 18

Press Contact

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*The exhibition is made possible by the
Freunde der Nationalgalerie*



Nationalgalerie
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The exhibition will be accompanied by a catalogue in German language published by Maria Obenaus and Ralph Gleis with Verbrecher Verlag, with contributions from Ralph Gleis, Torsten Hoffmann, Maria Obenaus and Ursula Renner as well as extracts from the correspondence between Rilke, Hofmannsthal and Reinhart. 128 pages, ca. 53 illustrations, 25 Euro. Available at the museum and online at www.augusterodiniberlin.de

The exhibition is part of the official celebration of the 100th anniversary of Auguste Rodin's death: www.rodin100.org

Visitors can share their impressions in social networks using the hashtags **#Rodin100**

For more information and press photographs to download, see the press area at our websites www.augusterodiniberlin.de or www.smb.museum

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