

RODIN RILKE HOFMANNSTHAL

DER MENSCH
UND SEIN GENIUS

Biographies

Auguste Rodin is born in Paris on 12 November 1840. He is rejected three times by the École de Beaux-Arts and trains from 1864 to 1871 at the studio of the sculptor Albert-Ernest Carrier-Belleuse. After a long stay in Brussels, Rodin travels to Italy in 1875-76 in order to study the works of Michelangelo. Back in Paris he comes into contact with the Symbolists around the writer Stéphane Mallarmé. Rodin's dealings with the fragmentary and his designs for monuments often provoke scandals. Rodin becomes internationally renowned around 1900, due to numerous exhibitions and publications. He dies on 17 November 1917 in Meudon near Paris.

Rainer Maria Rilke is born in Prague on 4 December 1875. After studying art history, fine art becomes one of his main literary subjects. The "Letters on Cézanne" are today amongst Rilke's best-selling works. The encounter with Rodin, who he meets in 1902 in Paris, had the greatest influence on his understanding of art. In 1903 he publishes a Rodin monograph and works as Rodin's private secretary for several months in 1905-06. After the First World War Rilke lives in Switzerland. He dies on 29 December 1926 in a sanatorium near Montreux.

Hugo von Hofmannsthal is born in Vienna on 1 February 1874. His first lyrical works are published parallel to his studies in law and Romanic languages. He gives up plans for a postdoctoral work on Victor Hugo and devotes himself to poetry. His first trip to Paris in 1900 deeply influences him: he meets numerous protagonists of the European cultural scene, among them Auguste Rodin and the composer Richard Strauss, who sets Hofmannsthal's librettos to music from 1906 onwards. Hofmannsthal is among the founders of the Salzburg Festival in 1920. He dies on 15 July 1929 in Rodaun near Vienna.