

WHO'S WHO AT THE RODIN MUSEUM

Within the Rodin Museum is a large collection of bronzes and plaster studies representing an array of tremendously engaging people ranging from leading literary and political figures to the unknown French handyman whose misshapen proboscis was immortalized by the sculptor. Here is a glimpse at some of the most famous residents of the Museum...

ROSE BEURET



Mignon, Auguste Rodin, 1867-68.
Bronze, 15 ½ x 12 x 9 ½".
The Rodin Museum, Philadelphia.
Gift of Jules E. Mastbaum.

At the age of 24 Rodin met Rose Beuret, a seamstress who would become his life-long companion and the mother of his son. She was Rodin's lover, housekeeper and studio helper, modeling for many of his works. *Mignon*, a particularly vivacious portrait, represents Rose at the age of 25 or 26; *Mask of Mme Rodin* depicts her at 40.

Rose was not the only lover in Rodin's life. Some have speculated the raging expression on the face of the winged female warrior in *The Call to Arms* was based on Rose during a moment of jealous rage.

Rose would not leave Rodin, despite his many relationships with other women. When they finally married, Rodin, 76, and Rose, 72, were both very ill. She died two weeks later of pneumonia, and Rodin passed away ten months later. The two were buried in a tomb dominated by what is probably the best known of all Rodin creations, *The Thinker*. The entrance to the Rodin Museum is based on their tomb.

CAMILLE CLAUDEL

The relationship between Rodin and sculptor Camille Claudel has been fodder for speculation and drama since the turn of the twentieth century. Their tumultuous fifteen-year relationship was the basis for Henrik Ibsen's 1899 play *When We Dead Awaken* as well as the Oscar-nominated 1988 film *Camille Claudel*, starring Isabelle Adjani and Gérard Depardieu. The relationship began in 1883, between Rodin the forty-three-year-old teacher and Camille, nineteen, his beautiful, talented student. It ended in 1898, and although she continued to sculpt Camille began to show signs of mental illness. She was committed in 1913 to an asylum, where she spent the last 30 years of her life. Camille is depicted in a number of works in the Rodin Museum. In *Thought* (1886-89), Rodin intended to create a head so alive that it would impart vitality to the seemingly lifeless mass of marble beneath it. His study for *La*



La France, Auguste Rodin, 1904.
Bronze, 18 ¾ x 17 x 13 ½".
The Rodin Museum, Philadelphia.
Gift of Jules E. Mastbaum.

France, completed six years after their split, was based on Rodin's memory of Camille's features.

HONORÉ DE BALZAC



Balzac, Auguste Rodin, 1897.
Bronze, 41 ¾ x 15 ¾ x 13 ¾".
The Rodin Museum, Philadelphia.
Gift of Jules E. Mastbaum.

In 1891, Rodin won a commission to create a monument to the revered French novelist (1799-1850). The sculptor compiled a series of photographs and portraits of Balzac, hired models of a similarly large build, and read all of his works, including the novels comprising his masterpiece, *La Comédie humaine* (*The Human Comedy*). He made a number of studies of the writer's head and body, four of which are in the Museum. When the monument was unveiled in 1898 it was scorned as "a monstrosity." The scandal was so notorious that enterprising vendors began selling caricature plaster sculptures of the monument, showing a seal posed as Balzac (an example of this souvenir is also on view in the Museum). The monument was finally erected in downtown Paris in 1939---22 years after Rodin's death.

VICTOR HUGO

The French Romanticist, considered by many the greatest poet of his day (1802-85), is most widely known for his epic 1862 novel, *Les Misérables*. In 1883, the aging writer agreed to let Rodin make his portrait, with one impractical condition---he refused to pose. Rodin was forced to quietly sketch Hugo while the writer conversed and dined with his friends. Hugo died soon after, and his family was displeased with Rodin's finished bust.



Victor Hugo, Auguste Rodin, 1883. Bronze, 17 x 10 ¼ x 10 ¾".
The Rodin Museum, Philadelphia.
Gift of Jules E. Mastbaum.



JOSEPH PULITZER

The newspaper publisher (1847-1911), who endowed the Pulitzer Prizes for outstanding journalism, engaged in publishing's most notorious war when his *New York World* battled William Randolph Hearst's *New York Journal* during coverage of the Spanish-American War. Their two-year reign of sensationalism led to the creation of the term "yellow journalism." Pulitzer was very ill and blind when he sat for Rodin in France in 1907.

Joseph Pulitzer, Auguste Rodin, 1907. Bronze, 19 x 18 ½ x 10".
The Rodin Museum, Philadelphia. Gift of Jules E. Mastbaum.



GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

The British playwright (*Pygmalion*, *Man and Superman*) generally refused to sit for his portrait but he made an exception for Rodin, whose work he greatly admired. Rodin found great delight in reproducing the writer's unique features---his forked beard, sneering mouth and hair parted in two standing locks. While working on the 1906 portrait, Rodin remarked that Shaw (1856-1950) resembled the devil, to which Shaw quipped, "But I *am* the devil!"

Bust of George Bernard Shaw, Auguste Rodin, 1906. Bronze, 15 1/2". The Rodin Museum, Philadelphia. Gift of Jules E. Mastbaum.

POPE BENEDICT XV

The Pontiff served as leader of the Catholic Church from 1914-22, adopting a strict policy of neutrality during World War I while initiating several charitable programs for war victims. Rodin traveled to Rome in 1914, but the Pope never had time to sit for him. When the sculptor returned in 1915 the Pope agreed to only four sessions, frustrating Rodin with his refusal to sit still. It is for these reasons that the bust is unfinished.



Pope Benedict XV, Auguste Rodin, 1915. Bronze, 9 1/2 x 6 3/4 x 9 3/4". The Rodin Museum, Philadelphia. Gift of Jules E. Mastbaum.



The Athlete, Auguste Rodin, 1901-04. Bronze, 16 7/8 x 12 1/2 x 11 1/4". The Rodin Museum, Philadelphia. Gift of Jules E. Mastbaum.

SAMUEL STOCKTON WHITE

While visiting Paris in 1901, Philadelphian Samuel Stockton White III was introduced to Rodin by a mutual friend. The muscular White, a gymnast and award-winning bodybuilder who studied at Princeton and Cambridge University, offered to pose for the sculptor. The result was a pair of sculptures named *The Athlete*, which exist at the museum in two versions. White later entered the family business. His grandfather, the pioneering dentist Samuel Stockton White, was founder of S.S. White Dental Manufacturing Company of Philadelphia, a manufacturer of porcelain teeth, drills and supplies for dentists. Samuel Stockton White III and his wife Vera, a painter, bequeathed their important collection of early modern art to the Philadelphia Museum of Art in 1967.



'BIBI'

Who is *The Man With the Broken Nose*? He was neither artist nor scholar, but rather a handyman nicknamed 'Bibi,' who lived in the working class Paris neighborhood where Rodin had rented a stable. Rodin began the portrait, his first major work, at the age of 23, when he could not afford a studio or professional models. Little is known about this man, whose face not only conjured images of the ancient Greeks in Rodin's imagination, but also resembled that of a famous broken-nosed sculptor, Michelangelo.

Mask of the Man with the Broken Nose, Auguste Rodin, 1863-64. Bronze, 10 ¼ x 6 7/8 x 9 ¾". The Rodin Museum, Philadelphia. Gift of Jules E. Mastbaum.

GUSTAV MAHLER

The Austrian composer (1860-1911) was one of the most important and influential conductors of his age. He rose to prominence as musical director of the Vienna Opera, and finished his career in the U.S. with the Metropolitan Opera and the New York Philharmonic. Mahler was seriously ill when he posed for Rodin in 1909. The artist was impressed by Mahler's facial features, saying they were a mix of Frederick the Great, Benjamin Franklin, and Mozart. The Mahler bust is considered one of the finest and most moving of Rodin's late portraits.

Gustav Mahler, Auguste Rodin, 1909. Bronze, 13 ½ x 9 x 8 ¾". The Rodin Museum, Philadelphia. Gift of Jules E. Mastbaum.



HANAKO

Rodin made more than fifty portrait studies of Japanese dancer Ohta Hisa (1868-1945), better known as Hanako. The dancer specialized in melodramatic scenes of suicide or violent murder, and Rodin masterfully captured her intense emotional expressions in his portraits. Two portraits of Hanako are housed in the Rodin Museum in Philadelphia.

The Mask of Hanako, The Japanese Actress, Auguste Rodin, 1908, executed 1911. Pate de Verre, 8 5/8 x 4 ¾ x 3 ½". The Rodin Museum, Philadelphia. Gift of Jules E. Mastbaum.



Father Pierre-Julien Eymard,
Auguste Rodin, 1863. Bronze, 22 ¾
x 11 x 10 ½ ". The Rodin Museum,
Philadelphia. Gift of Jules E.
Mastbaum.

FATHER PIERRE-JULIEN-EYMARD

In 1862, following the death of his beloved sister Maria, the young and grieving Rodin decided to take religious orders. He entered Father Eymard's Society of the Blessed Sacrament, assuming the name Brother Augustin. When Rodin modeled a bust of Eymard in 1863, the Father saw that his pupil's skills as a sculptor far outweighed his religious calling. He convinced Rodin to return to the world and become a sculptor. Even so, Eymard was not happy with his likeness. Rodin made the Father's hair sweep up in tufts above the temples, and Eymard thought this made him look like the devil. He asked Rodin to remove them, and the artist refused. It is interesting to note that the prayer scroll tucked in the priest's cloak contains several misspelled Latin words---a sign, perhaps, that Rodin may not have been the best of students.

The Rodin Museum is located on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway at 22nd Street. For general information, call (215) 763-8100. Museum hours are Tuesday through Sunday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Closed Mondays and holidays. A contribution of \$3 per person is suggested. For more information call (215) 684-7864.