





This publication relates the fascinating story of the Metropolitan's acquisition of sculpture by Auguste Rodin, a collection distinguished from so many others because a great number of these works were purchased from or given by the sculptor himself. This chapter of Museum history dates back to the later years of Rodin's life, in the early 1900s, and was deeply influenced by the personalities and tastes of several of the artist's contemporaries: two generous and committed benefactors, Kate Seney Simpson and Thomas Fortune Ryan; the prominent American sculptor and chairman of the trustees' Committee on Sculpture, Daniel Chester French; the Metropolitan's purchasing agent John Marshall; and the Museum's vice director from 1905 to 1910, and later, director (1910–31), Edward Robinson. The culmination of their efforts was first celebrated with the opening in 1912 of a special Rodin gallery at the Museum, displaying works that now form the core of the selection of Rodins on view in the André Meyer Galleries for nineteenth-century European paintings and sculpture.

While Rodin stirred up controversy with the eroticism of his sculpture and the scandals of his personal life, nevertheless he was recognized during his own time as a major artist. In the period between the two world wars, critical opinion grew antipathetic to his art. While some acknowledged that insofar as Rodin broke with academic traditions, he could be considered the father of modern sculpture, many found his work old-fashioned and sentimental. A revival of interest and appreciation for Rodin's genius occurred in the 1950s, and scholars continue to reassess his contribution to European sculptural tradition.

The Metropolitan's collection—most of which is illustrated in this article written by Clare Vincent, Associate Curator in the Department of European Sculpture and Decorative Arts—is a balanced representation of the sculptor's work, including bronze, marble, and terracotta pieces, and larger-scale compositions as well as the more intimate and spontaneous works that have appealed to modern sensibilities. Many will remember the familiar sight of the Rodins when they were displayed on the balcony overlooking the Great Hall, between 1957 and 1969. They were removed so that the Museum could be refurbished in preparation for the 1970 Centennial Year. Their recent reinstallation in the light-filled André Meyer Galleries was a welcome event, one that might have gratified those who so diligently pursued the original Rodin acquisitions some seventy years ago.

Philippe de Montebello
Director

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COVER: Edward Steichen's autochrome of 1907 entitled Rodin—The Eve shows the sculptor with a plaster version of Eve (see fig. 2). 6¼ x 3¾ inches. Signed and dated in ink on mount "STEICHEN MDCCCXVII." The Alfred Stieglitz Collection, 1949. 55.635.9. OPPOSITE: Signature from The Tempest (fig. 10)



RODIN AT THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

A HISTORY OF THE COLLECTION

By Clare Vincent

When Auguste Rodin died in November, 1917, the major portion of the Metropolitan Museum's extensive collection of his sculpture had already been acquired. On May 2, 1912, the Museum opened a gallery devoted entirely to Rodin—a major event, and a tribute to Rodin's artistic stature, since still in the future was the founding of such institutions as the Museum of Modern Art that would make the acquisition and exhibition of a large body of work by a living artist commonplace. The gallery contained bronzes, marbles, sketches in terracotta and plaster, and drawings, comprising a collection of the sculptor's work recognized by critics of the period as one of the best in existence. One French critic, writing in the April, 1911, issue of *France-Amérique*, commented: "They are installing the first sculptor of the time in their museum, as France's Valois [kings] invited the Juste and Laurana from Italy, or as Louis XIV brought Bernini [to France]."

Indeed, Rodin, then in his early seventies, had emerged as the preeminent sculptor of his time. The son of an inspector in the Paris Préfecture de Police and a former seamstress, Rodin grew up in a working-class district of Paris known as the Mouffetard. His early instruction was provided by the "Petite Ecole" (the Ecole Impériale Spéciale de Dessin et de Mathématiques, a school for the training of decorative artists), where he acquired a thorough grounding in the traditions of French eighteenth-century art, and by informal studies of anatomical structure under the tutelage of Antoine-Louis Barye, the French Romantic sculptor, best known for his animal subjects. Refused entrance to the prestigious Ecole des Beaux-Arts ("Grande Ecole"), he escaped the rigid Neoclassical training that still dominated its curriculum in the mid-1850s, but forfeited the early success that Ecole graduates were ordinarily assured.

Instead, Rodin served a long and difficult apprenticeship. For many years he was employed as a modeler in the Paris studio of the highly successful and prolific sculptor Carrier-Belleuse, and later, during the economic chaos that followed the Franco-Prussian War, he left France for Belgium, where he became a partner of the sculptor Joseph van Rasbourg in the execution of numerous monumental stone sculptures in

1. Adam, or The Creation of Man, shows the first man being roused to life slowly and with difficulty. It was modeled originally in 1880, and for a time Rodin intended to incorporate the figure into his design for The Gates of Hell, the portal planned for a building, which was never constructed, to house the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris. In July, 1910, the American sculptor Daniel Chester French, and Edward Robinson, then vice director of the Metropolitan Museum, saw the plaster model for the figure in Rodin's studio. The Museum commissioned this bronze, which was cast from Rodin's plaster model in 1910 or early 1911 by Alexis Rudier. According to a note on the list of the Metropolitan Museum's purchases from Rodin in 1910, the work had not previously been cast in bronze or carved in marble. H. 76¼ inches. Gift of Thomas F. Ryan, 1910. 11.173.1



2. Eve, modeled in 1881 and originally designed for *The Gates of Hell*, was at one point intended to be used as a pendant to Adam, with the two figures flanking the monumental portal. The pair, not part of Rodin's first ideas for the project, vanished quite early in its evolution, but each survives as a freestanding and larger-than-life-size figure. Together they provide one of the sculptor's more intriguing exercises in iconography. The source of Rodin's inspiration has been found in three works of Michelangelo. The right arm and hand of Adam derive from *The Creation of Man* in the Sistine Chapel; the left arm and hand are those of the dead Christ of the *Pietà* in the Cathedral of Florence. Eve is depicted shielding her face in shame, a gesture adapted from another of the Sistine Chapel figures, the Adam of *The Expulsion from Paradise*. This bronze was cast by Alexis Rudier in 1910. H. 68½ inches. Gift of Thomas F. Ryan, 1910. 11.173.2

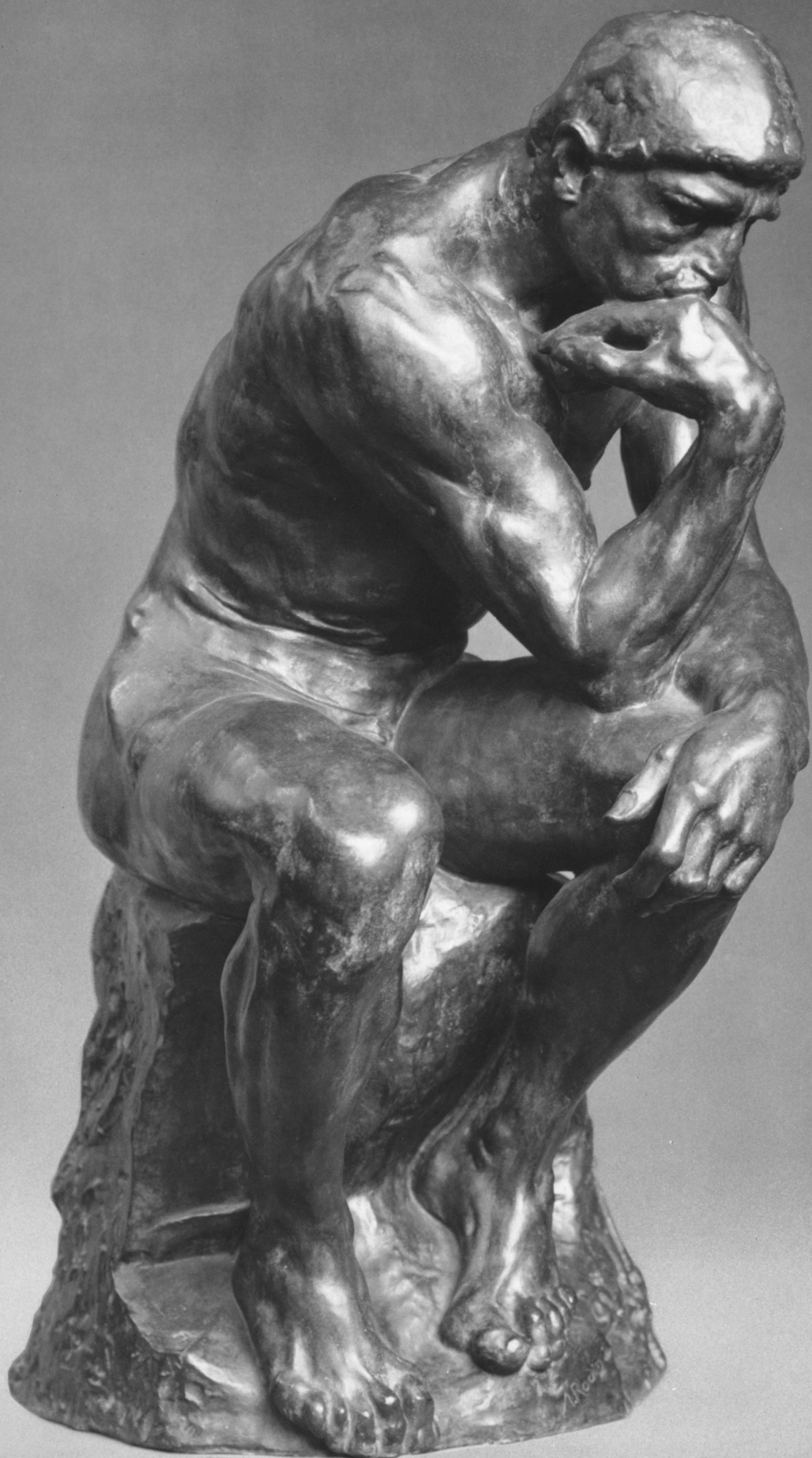
Brussels. He also traveled extensively in France and in Italy, where he was deeply impressed by the work of Michelangelo. These experiences provided a rich foundation for the series of nude male figures of extraordinary strength and originality that Rodin began to create in the late 1870s: *The Bronze Age*, *Saint John the Baptist Preaching*, *The Walking Man*, and the first studies for Adam.

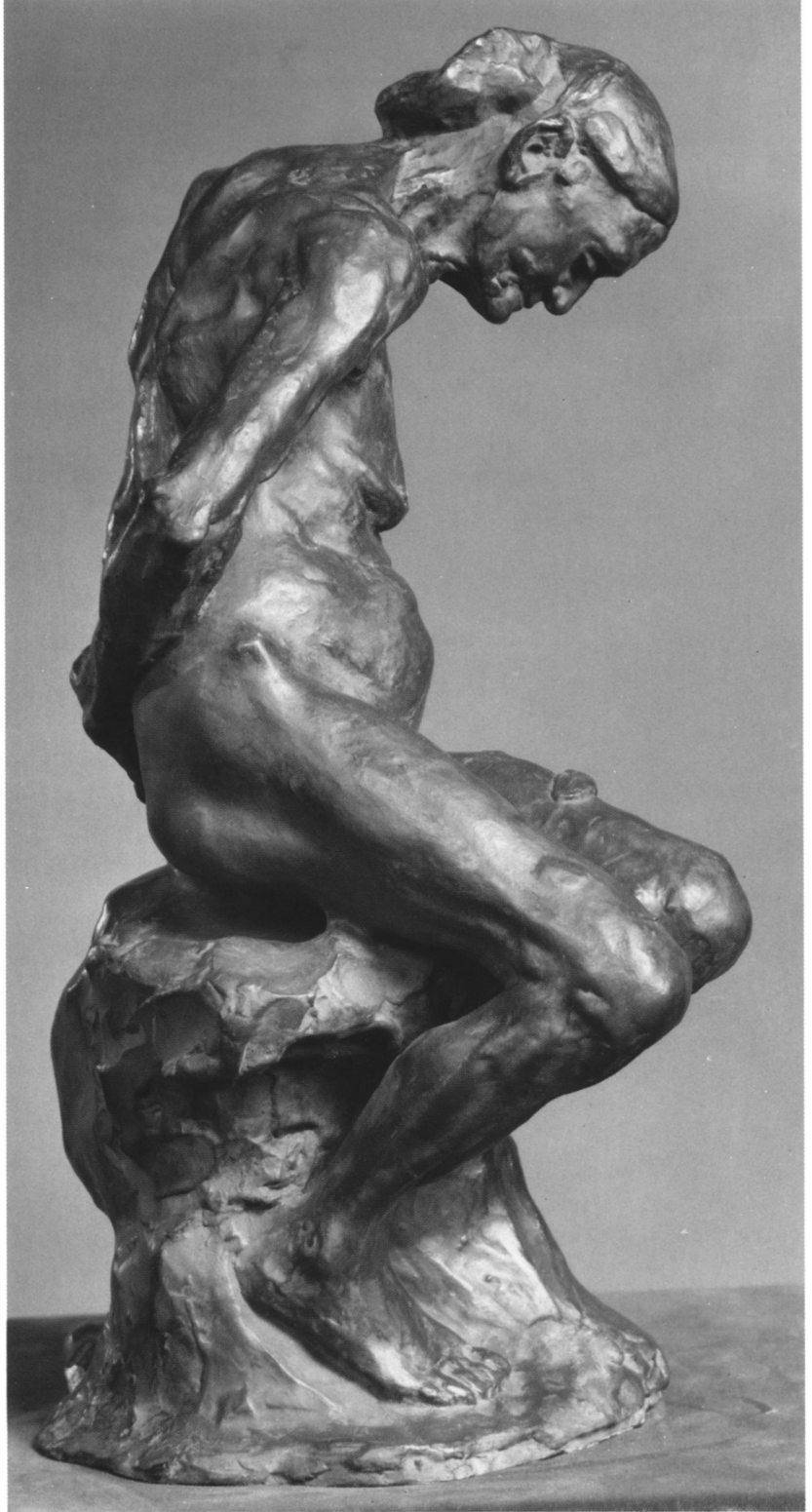
In 1880, Rodin finally received his first commission from the French government. The work, a monumental portal covered with sculptural relief, was to be the entrance to a proposed building for the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris. Entitled "*The Gates of Hell*," it was based on Dante's *Divine Comedy*, but Rodin's conception of the eternal punishment for human perversity and sinfulness is of such subtlety and depth that it defies capsule description. The creation of the *Gates* occupied Rodin for more than a decade, and years later he was still revising the work. It was, in fact, never finished, but the project provided Rodin with a wealth of figures that he would later extract and enlarge individually. Some were among the sculptures exhibited in the Metropolitan Museum's gallery in 1912.

Rodin's next great commission was for *The Burghers of Calais*, undoubtedly his best-known and most successful public monument. Its history, from the granting of the commission by the city fathers of Calais in January, 1885, until the final unveiling of the bronze group in June, 1895, was not without difficulties, both financial and aesthetic. *The Burghers* commemorates an episode in the Hundred Years' War in which six of the leading citizens of Calais offered themselves as hostages to the English king Edward III in return for his lifting the siege of their city. Rodin's humanized portrayal of the heroes as terrified men and his abandonment of the traditional vocabulary of allegorical symbols in favor of individual poses and gestures that reveal character were innovations that brought his work into conflict with the accepted formulas for public monuments.

Rodin had strong support among certain influential critics and French government officials, however, and public commissions followed throughout the remainder of the century. These included monuments to Bastien-Lepage (1886), Claude Lorrain (1889), Honoré Balzac (1891), Victor Hugo (1891), and President Sarmiento of Argentina (1894), although some were never completed and others, like the Balzac, in their final

3. In its original position as the focal point of *The Gates of Hell*, *The Thinker* (*Le Penseur*) occupied the center of the lintel and presided over the myriad entrapped and entangled figures of the damned that populate the door below. Behind him a chaotic dance of death takes place, but the figure sits isolated and unaffected. He is stripped of clothing, and there are no symbols to assist in identifying him. He is perhaps the poet, the judge, the sculptor—all of these or none. The figure, detached from its original context and enlarged to monumental proportions in a model of 1902–3, has since been invested with multiple meanings. As Rodin requested, it marks his tomb at Meudon. The Metropolitan Museum's bronze was cast by Alexis Rudier in July, 1910, from the smaller model of the figure that Rodin extracted from the *Gates*. H. 27¾ inches. Gift of Thomas F. Ryan, 1910. 11.173.9





4. The Old Courtesan, or She Who Was Once the Helmet-Maker's Beautiful Wife (*Celle qui fut la belle heaulmière*), the latter title taken from the poem by François Villon, was derived from a bas-relief on The Gates of Hell. It was modeled in the round and enlarged to its present scale probably about 1883. This bronze was cast by Alexis Rudier in 1910. H. 19¾ inches. Gift of Thomas F. Ryan, 1910. 11.173.3

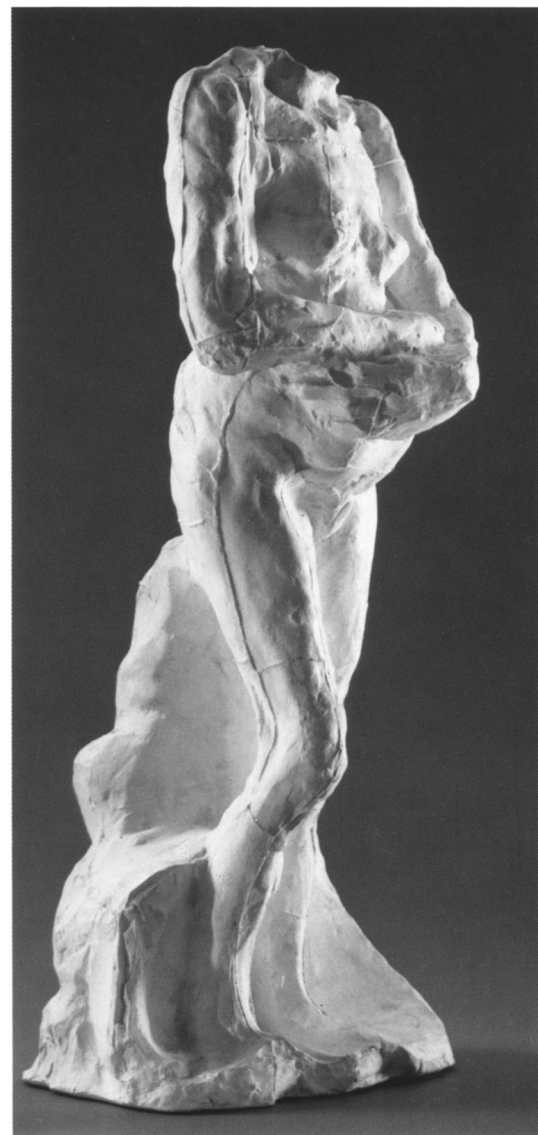
form were rejected outright. By the early 1890s the number of Rodin's commissions enabled him, however, to employ assistants—especially those highly skilled marble carvers called practitioners, some of whom would become well-known sculptors in their own right—to carry out a major part of the execution of marbles from models (usually plaster) provided by the sculptor. In 1900, he erected his own pavilion at the Paris Exposition Universelle and filled it with 150 of his sculptures.

The Metropolitan Museum's 1912 gallery contained a remarkable range of the sculptor's work. The massive bronze Adam (fig. 1) and the Eve (fig. 2), originally designed to flank The Gates of Hell, were there. So were such bronzes as The Thinker (fig. 3) and The Old Courtesan (fig. 4), both derived from the myriads of figures that covered the Gates. At the entrance to the gallery stood the marble Pygmalion and Galatea (fig. 7), depicting the mythical sculptor at the moment when his perfect creation becomes a living woman. The marble groups of Cupid and Psyche (fig. 8) and Orpheus and Eurydice (fig. 9), variants on the theme of the anguish of lost love, and both believed to have been carved about 1893, were also displayed. At the far end of the room, *Beside the Sea* (fig. 11) exemplified the serenity of mood characteristic of the late marbles.

In addition, portraits of Rodin's contemporaries were exhibited: a marble bust of the poet Anna de Noailles (fig. 14), and bronze busts of the painter Pierre Puvis de Chavannes (fig. 12) and the sculptor Jules Dalou (fig. 13). The gallery included exquisite sketches in terracotta made as preparatory studies for such sculptures as the Monument to Balzac (fig. 15) and the Triton and Nereid (fig. 30). These were supplemented by figure studies in terracotta and plaster (figs. 5, 6, 18, and 38–46) and by drawings and watercolors, chiefly studies of the female nude but also including the enigmatic Nero (fig. 21) and a fine portrait of the Japanese actress Hanako (fig. 17). In all, there were more than forty sculptures and drawings, accompanied by a portrait of Rodin by the American artist Robert MacCameron.

Most of these works had been purchased from the sculptor. Some, such as *Beside the Sea*, *The Tempest* (fig. 10) and the portrait of the Comtesse Anna de Noailles, entitled *Madame X* at Rodin's request, were selected from more or less finished work in the sculptor's studio; others, such as the Adam and the Eve, were commissioned by the Museum to be cast in bronze from the sculptor's plaster models. Many were gifts of the sculptor himself. The drawings were, with one exception, purchased by the Museum from the 1910 exhibition of Rodin's drawings at Alfred Stieglitz's Photo Secession Gallery in New York. The exception was a pencil drawing, *The Abandoned* (fig. 20), which had been purchased through Roger Fry, the English art historian and critic.

The establishment of the Metropolitan Museum's gallery was something of an adventure. It was unusual enough that a major museum would acquire and exhibit a collection of the work of a living artist, but Rodin was, moreover, a singularly



5. The subject of this study was an Italian woman who had once been a professional model and also posed for *The Old Courtesan*. This plaster cast bears an exhibition stamp from Prague, and it was probably included in the exhibition of Rodin's work held there in 1909. H. 12 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches. Gift of the artist, 1912. 12.12.1



6. This study for Galatea is a plaster cast from a model either for the Pygmalion and Galatea of 1889, or for a new version of the group made in 1909. H. 12½ inches. Gift of the artist, 1912. 12.12.2

7. Ovid's *Metamorphoses* relates the story of the Cypriot king and misogynist Pygmalion, who, scorning mortal women, fell in love with an ivory statue of a maiden that he himself had carved. His prayer to Venus for a woman as beautiful as his work of art was answered when the goddess transformed the figure into flesh—the perfect maiden, Galatea. Rodin's sculpture depicts the moment when the artist sees the first stirrings of life in his creation. This literal rendering of the myth apparently had its origins in quite a different subject, for the first sketch, according to Paul Gsell's interviews with Rodin, "was a faun, horned and hairy who clutched a panting nymph. The general lines were about the same, but the subject was very different." Rodin commented, "You must not attribute too much importance to the themes you interpret . . . the principal care of the artist should be to form living muscles." The piece was first modeled in 1889, but a list enclosed in a letter dated January 6, 1908, from John Marshall to Edward Robinson, indicates that the first marble replica of the work (now in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen) had been sold to a collector, Carl Jacobsen. The Metropolitan's marble had not yet been carved at the time of Marshall's letter. H. 38¼ inches. Gift of Thomas F. Ryan, 1910, in memory of William M. Laffan. 10.31

independent spirit. His private life was as turbulent as his career as a sculptor, and the erotic nature of much of his art lent support to gossip. His lifelong devotion to the mistress of his youth, Rose Beuret, was interrupted by a long and stormy affair with one of his students, Camille Claudel, who subsequently went mad. Late in his life the sculptor succumbed to the dubious fascination of Claire de Choiseul, an American woman who had married into the French nobility.

In 1912, at the time of the opening of the Metropolitan Museum's Rodin gallery, the artist and his sculpture were still capable of stirring up periodic furor. Less than a month after the Museum's gallery opened, one such controversy made headlines in the *New York Times*. In the spring of 1912, Vaslav Nijinsky danced his now legendary ballet *L'Après-midi d'un faune* for the first time in Paris. The sexual frankness of Nijinsky's Faun was considered by some to be scandalous, and when a letter defending the Russian dancer appeared over Rodin's signature in the Paris newspaper *Le Matin*, the wrath of the French press descended on the sculptor. In one of his less glorious moments, he immediately repudiated the letter, actually written by his long-time admirer, the critic Roger Marx. The latter was left despairing of his friend, but the incident did not prevent Nijinsky from posing for Rodin. Several small studies of the dancer resulted, including one (fig. 57) of surpassing spontaneity, in which Rodin succeeded in capturing the expressive and violent movement of the dancer's compact and powerful body.

The controversy was reported in detail in the *New York Times*, which repeated the accusations of *Le Figaro*'s Gaston Calmette that Rodin's studio at the Hôtel Biron, once a convent school, now contained "a series of objectionable drawings and cynical sketches which depict with greater brutality and far further detail the shameless attitudes of the Faune," and that a proposal to make the Hôtel Biron into a museum of the sculptor's work would give this gem of eighteenth-century French architecture to "regiments of hysterical women admirers and self-satisfied snobs." The *Times* ended by quoting the French critic's query as to whether the French taxpayers should have purchased the Hôtel Biron in 1911 for \$1,000,000 "simply to allow the richest of our sculptors to live there." In fact, the bitter controversy ended only in 1916 when Rodin gave all of the sculpture still in his possession to the French government, and the Chamber of Deputies finally passed the legislation necessary to the creation of the Musée Rodin at the Hôtel Biron.

For whatever reason, the art pages of the *New York Times* were silent on the subject of the newly opened gallery at the Metropolitan Museum. The *Sun*, however, ran a detailed account, noting that in number, scope, and beauty of individual pieces, the Metropolitan Museum's collection could be rivaled only in Paris. The article went on to say that "aside from their individual aesthetic value, the recent accessions command attention in that they constitute a representative collection made with the advice and approval





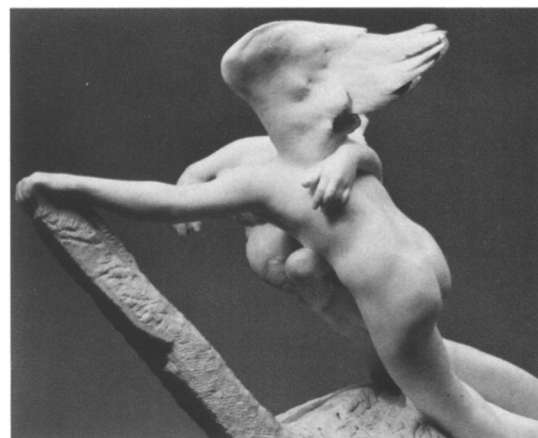
of the sculptor himself, who has further shown his interest in the collection by the unusual character of his gift, unusual since Rodin has rarely parted with any of his studies in clay or plaster which he keeps in his studio and private Museum at Meudon."

The genesis of this remarkable collection was, however, considerably more complex than the *Sun's* summary would suggest, involving the taste and enthusiasm of several people who deeply influenced its formation. The first who left evidence of her enthusiasm was Kate Seney Simpson, the daughter of a Brooklyn banker and art collector, George I. Seney, and the wife of a New York lawyer, John Woodruff Simpson. In the early years of the century, their residence at 926 Fifth Avenue contained a substantial collection of paintings, sculpture, prints, and drawings. Wilhelm von Bode, the director of the Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum in Berlin, came to view the collection, as did the French art historian Paul Vitry. Mrs. Simpson knew Edward Steichen and had seen some of the magical photographs of Rodin and his sculpture that Steichen had made during a series of visits to the studio at Meudon from 1902. She had connections at the Metropolitan Museum, where, in 1887, her father had been elected a patron in recognition of his gifts. Roger Fry, who was briefly curator of paintings at the Museum, came to admire the Rodins. So did at least two of the Museum's directors, Sir Caspar Purdon Clarke and Edward Robinson.

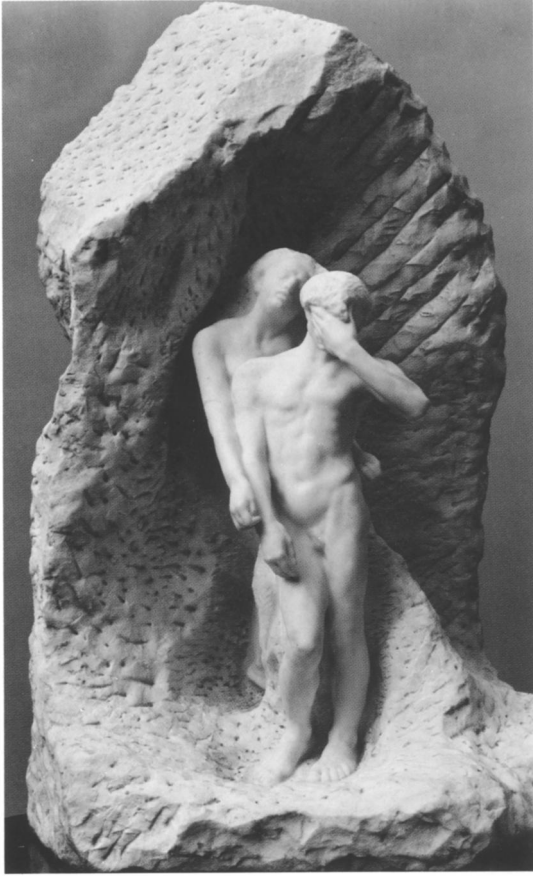
Like many a wealthy New York matron in those years, Mrs. Simpson spent her summers in Europe. In 1902, Rodin modeled her portrait. The finished marble bust (fig. 22) was exhibited in 1904 in the Salon of the Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts, where a critic for the influential *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* described it as exquisite but leaving something to be desired in the cutting of the marble. Nevertheless the portrait pleased the sitter, and more than a decade later she wrote to Rodin, "My bust is the joy of my life. How you have penetrated my soul!"

As early as 1903, the Simpsons began assembling their collection of Rodins, with the purchase of five pieces of sculpture. These were *The Thinker*, *Saint John at the Column*, *Centauresse*, and heads of Balzac and Napoleon. In succeeding years, they purchased both sculpture and drawings from Rodin. Mrs. Simpson visited him regularly until the onset of World War I and corresponded with him until his death in 1917. Moreover, she used her considerable powers of persuasion to encourage the acquisition of Rodin's sculpture by American museums, for not only was she an influential advocate of the Metropolitan Museum's policy of acquisition of the sculptor's work, but she was also involved with the early purchases of the Cleveland Museum of Art, the City Art Museum of Saint Louis, and the Albright Art Gallery in Buffalo. Eventually Mrs. Simpson donated her own collection of Rodins to the National Gallery of Art.

At the Metropolitan Museum, her campaign began with a talk with its first director, Louis Palma di Cesnola. She fol-



8. The tale of Cupid and Psyche from *The Golden Ass*, by the Latin author Lucius Apuleius, provided Rodin with a number of subjects. This marble illustrates the moment of Psyche's abandonment by Cupid, the winged god of love. According to Apuleius, Cupid fell in love with the beautiful Psyche and visited her nightly, leaving before dawn. Through the machinations of Venus, who was jealous of her beauty, Psyche came to believe that her mysterious lover was a hideous serpent, and so one night she looked upon the sleeping Cupid by lamplight. A drop of burning oil awakened him, and, angry with the girl for her lack of trust and fearful of Venus's wrath, he abandoned Psyche to a life of wandering and atonement, until at last the goddess relented. Then Jupiter made Psyche immortal, and she and Cupid were reunited. No other rendering of this version is known and the date of the Metropolitan's marble is not certain. Some Rodin scholars have suggested that it might have been made as early as 1886, but the first record of it occurs in a letter from Rodin dated July 23, 1894, stating that the marble was unique and that it shared with Orpheus and Eurydice the distinction of being the first of his original works in an American collection. It seems likely that the marble was newly carved when it was acquired by Charles T. Yerkes, the American collector, in 1893. In 1910, Thomas F. Ryan bought it for the Metropolitan. H. 30 inches. Gift of Thomas F. Ryan, 1910. 10.63.1



9. Rodin depicted several events from the story of Orpheus, the mythical Thracian poet in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. This marble depicts Orpheus with his wife Eurydice, who died of a snakebite. In his sorrow, Orpheus followed her into Hades and with the magic of his poems, sung to the accompaniment of his lyre, so charmed the presiding god and goddess that they struck a bargain with him. If he could lead his wife to earth without a backward glance, she would be restored to life. But on the journey back to earth, Orpheus, fearing that Eurydice had not followed, broke the bargain, only to lose his wife for the second time. Here Rodin has shown the poet, grief and uncertainty evident in the sag of his shoulders, blindly leading Eurydice, still limping, from the gloomy shadows of the underworld. The figure of Eurydice, recognizable as that of *The Martyr* (fig. 25), but here returned to the standing position of a still earlier incarnation on *The Gates of Hell*, illustrates Rodin's propensity for exploring the multiple interpretations of a single form. This marble, which is signed and dated 1893, appeared with the marble *Cupid and Psyche* in the sale of the Charles T. Yerkes Collection of the American Art Association on January 22, 1910. H. 50 inches. Gift of Thomas F. Ryan, 1910. 10.63.2

lowed the talk with a letter to the trustees, dated May 23, 1903, in which she pointed out that the Museum's sculpture collection was "noticeably deficient" and would be "greatly improved by the addition of one of the masterpieces of Auguste Rodin." She urged that this deficiency be remedied as soon as possible, adding that "Rodin is now an old man and the time is limited in which it will be possible to command his services, but I know from having visited his studios, both that in Paris and that in Meudon, that he has now on hand some beautiful finished and unfinished work which could probably be obtained."

Not only did she propose, but she also acted. In 1906, she lent two bronzes, a *Saint John the Baptist Preaching* and a *Bronze Age*, to the Museum. In the same year she commissioned another *Bronze Age* (fig. 24) for the Metropolitan and had the satisfaction of seeing it installed in a place of honor at the foot of the great staircase. It was also in 1906 that Roger Fry introduced her to Edward Robinson. Then vice director of the Museum, Robinson consulted her repeatedly during the course of the years of the Museum's major Rodin acquisitions. Although she, herself, made no further gifts to the Museum, as late as 1913 she was still avidly pursuing a donor for another piece: *The Martyr* (fig. 25), considered especially appropriate, as it was an addition to the collection of sculptures derived from *The Gates of Hell*. Moreover, one of Mrs. Simpson's presents to her sister, Mrs. Nelson Robinson—a bronze *Burgher of Calais* (fig. 26)—ultimately came to the Museum in 1940 as the gift of Mrs. Robinson's niece, Miss G. Louise Robinson. The gift of the *Burgher* was accompanied by still another bronze, *The Walking Man* (fig. 27), which Rodin had dedicated to Mrs. Robinson.

Daniel Chester French played another of the key roles in the Rodin purchases. French was one of America's most prominent sculptors and, with his contemporary Augustus Saint-Gaudens, probably its finest. A New Englander by birth, he bought a home and studio in New York City in 1888. By 1910, he had produced a formidable series of public monuments, including such familiar New York landmarks as the Richard Morris Hunt Memorial at Fifth Avenue and 70th Street, Columbia University's Alma Mater, and the personifications of the continents for the United States Custom House.

In 1903, as a newly elected member of the Metropolitan Museum's Board of Trustees, French was made chairman of the Committee on Sculpture, a standing committee of the Board of Trustees. Early in 1906, the committee issued a remarkably farsighted report urging that the Museum acquire and display the work of modern sculptors. The committee asserted that "at present both in this country and abroad, a large activity and high artistic spirit" prevails among sculptors and that the acquisition of their work was both practical and desirable, for "the expenditure of a sum equal to the cost of one work of antiquity, of historic or archaeological value, would create a collection of popular interest and would tend to stimulate this important art." To that end, the committee







recommended that the Museum make a special effort to purchase the works of Antoine-Louis Barye, Auguste Rodin, and Augustus Saint-Gaudens. The committee's next recommendation seems to indicate a new-found sensitivity to the aesthetic problems of displaying sculpture, urging that sufficient space be set aside so that "separate works may be exhibited with appropriate surroundings tending to enhance their artistic effect." It even proposed that the Museum consider holding periodic exhibitions of the current work of modern sculptors.

At the time of the report the Museum already possessed several works by the sculptors mentioned by the committee. These were the impressive Theseus and the Centaur Bianor by Barye and portraits by Saint-Gaudens: The Children of Prescott Hall Butler, Francis David Miller, and Homer Saint-Gaudens. Rodin was represented by the bust of Saint John the Baptist (fig. 28), an exceptionally fine bronze that had been given in 1893 by Samuel P. Avery. Avery was one of the Museum's founding trustees and a guiding spirit in the early years of the institution's existence. He was also the donor of the Barye Theseus. In addition, there was Rodin's Thinker in the mechanically enlarged version of 1903–4, which was cast in plaster for the Saint Louis Exposition of 1904 and presented afterwards to the Metropolitan Museum by the French Ministry of Public Instruction and Fine Arts. With these works already in the collection, there can be no doubt that the committee meant to acquire the works of the three sculptors in considerable depth. During the next twenty years, that is the course the Metropolitan Museum pursued.

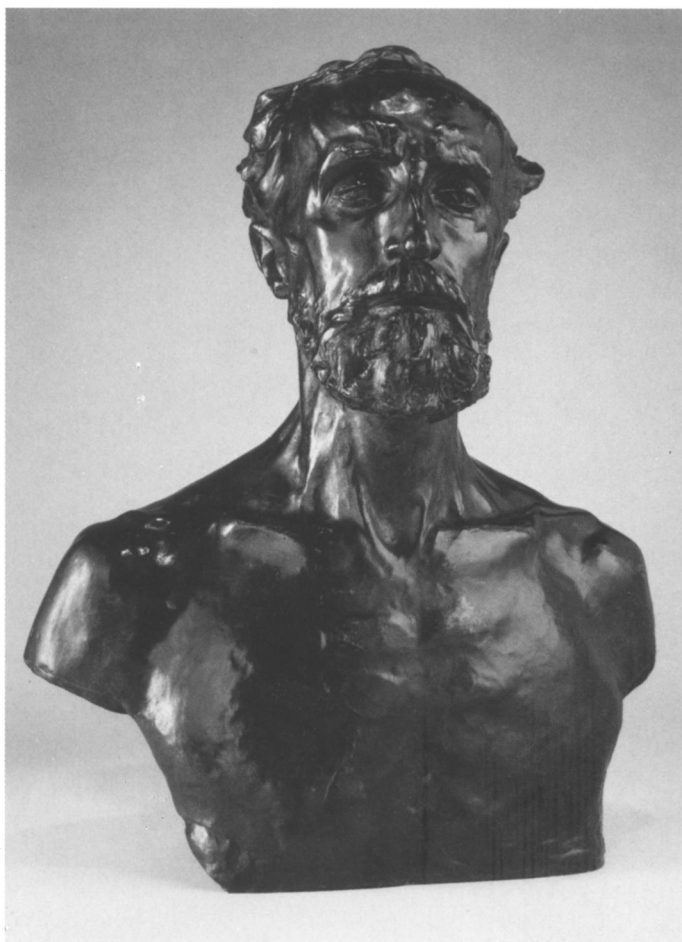
In 1908, the committee recommended the commissioning of two sculptures from Rodin. One was a charming bronze called Brother and Sister (fig. 29), to be cast from a model that Rodin is believed to have finished about 1890 or 1891

10. The dramatic forward thrust of this head identifies it as one of Rodin's attempts to capture the effects of violent motion or extreme stress on the human figure. As is the case with many of Rodin's works, the meaning of this sculpture has remained somewhat problematical, to judge from the several titles it has borne. Some, like The Marathon Runner or The Terror Stricken, were quite literal, while others were allegorical: The Mind; The Storm, or The Tempest (*La Tempête*), the last being the title given to this marble at the time of its purchase from Rodin in 1910. A similarity has been noted between The Tempest and a bronze bust in the Musée Rodin in Paris called The Cry, and it is believed that the origin of the bronze lay in a preliminary study for the marble. The bronze, lacking the elaborately braided tresses of the final head, is a much more literal portrayal of a woman in anguish, and has a poignant immediacy missing in the marble. Neither The Cry nor The Tempest can be dated with certainty, but it is documented that Edward Robinson and Daniel Chester French saw this work in Rodin's studio in July, 1910. H. 13½ inches. Gift of Thomas F. Ryan, 1910. 11.173.7

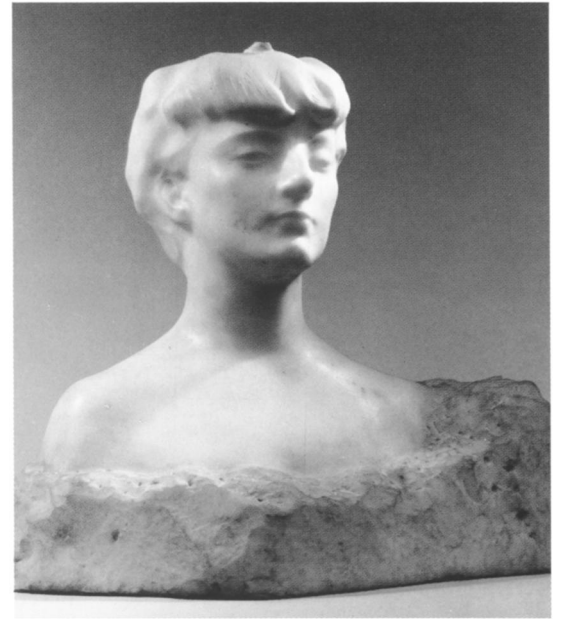
11. Toward the end of his career, Rodin turned to calmer subjects like *Beside the Sea*, or *Bather* (*Grande Baigneuse*), less filled with the psychic tensions that energize the figures of *The Gates of Hell* or *The Burghers of Calais*, or the overt eroticism of such works as *Eternal Spring* or *The Kiss*. Several marble replicas were made of many of Rodin's more popular sculptures, and it has sometimes been difficult to determine the number of marbles and the sequence of their carving in the absence of documentation; but it is known from John Marshall's letter of January 6, 1908, that the Metropolitan Museum's marble *Beside the Sea* was the first created. It remains the only version in this medium. H. 23½ inches. Gift of Thomas F. Ryan, 1910. 11.173.5



12. Pierre Puvis de Chavannes (1824–98) had a highly successful career as a painter of large-scale decorative murals. Rodin so admired his paintings that he proposed a joint exhibition of their work at the Galerie Georges Petit in Paris. Nevertheless, Puvis proved as difficult as some of Rodin's other friends who sat for portraits. He was upset by the first, bare-chested bust that Rodin modeled in 1890, and he was less than happy with the clothed version. Years later, Rodin said: "Puvis de Chavannes did not like my bust of him, and it was one of the bitter things of my career. He thought that I had caricatured him. And yet I am certain that I have expressed in my sculpture all the enthusiasm and veneration that I felt for him." The original plaster model was exhibited in the Salon of the Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts in 1891. This bronze was cast by Alexis Rudier before Robinson and French visited Rodin in July, 1910. H. 21 inches. Gift of Thomas F. Ryan, 1910. 11.173.8



13. Unlike Rodin, Jules Dalou (1838–1902) was trained at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, but, never wholly at ease with the formulas of academic sculpture taught by the faculty, he left the school in 1857. After 1879, his republican views recommended Dalou to the officials of the newly proclaimed Third Republic, and he became one of the busiest and most successful sculptors of public monuments in late nineteenth-century Paris. Several years after 1883, when Rodin modeled his portrait, the two sculptors ended their long friendship with mutual hard feelings over the commissioning of a monument to Victor Hugo planned for the Panthéon. The Metropolitan Museum commissioned this bronze bust of Dalou in 1910, three years after it had purchased from the founder Houdebine three bronzes cast from Dalou's genre sculptures *The Young Mother* and *two Bathers*. H. 20½ inches. Gift of Thomas F. Ryan, 1910. 11.173.4



14. The subject of this portrait bust entitled Madame X was the Comtesse Anna-Elisabeth de Noailles (1876–1933), a poet, intellectual, and friend of Rodin, who belonged to the literary circle known as the “Nouvelle Pléiade.” The marble bust is unfinished, and a note on the list of the Metropolitan Museum’s purchases dated July 22, 1910, says that, according to Rodin, this bust was an “order executed about three years ago, which the lady refused to take because of the prominence given to the nose and [Rodin’s] declining to modify it as it was true to nature.” The note continues: “‘Otherwise,’ he said, ‘she is a very intelligent person.’” H. 19½ inches. Gift of Thomas F. Ryan, 1910. 11.173.6



and for which the Museum paid 2500 francs, or about \$500. The second was a very much more imposing work, a marble group to be replicated from a plaster model entitled Triton and Nereid. The plaster model has since disappeared, but it is known from photographs, several of which were sent to the Metropolitan Museum for the approval of the trustees (fig. 31). They gave their consent, and set aside the equivalent of 28,000 francs or about \$5,600 from future appropriations for payment to the sculptor when the marble was finished. There were several suggestions for modifications of the work. The model for the Triton and Nereid had been made some fifteen years earlier, and in the interim, one of the Nereid's legs and the Triton's arms had dropped off and broken. It was suggested that these elements be modeled again and attached to the appropriate figures, but Rodin was reluctant, feeling that the additions would betray themselves as lacking the original inspiration. Rodin agreed to comply, but whether the request did, in fact, displease the sculptor or whether he had too many other commissions at the time, Rodin would not bind himself to a written agreement about the delivery of the marble.

That Rodin took the commission seriously is evident from its mention in the correspondence of the period. The plaster model was exhibited in the Salon of the Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts of that year and the commissioning of the marble reported in several Paris newspapers. Moreover, a photograph taken in 1910 shows the plaster model with rather awkward additions of an arm and a leg to the Triton, indicating that Rodin must have tried to comply with the wishes of the Metropolitan Museum's trustees, but the Museum's marble was apparently never begun. There is no trace of it, and, in fact, no marble version of the subject was ever made. The Museum ultimately satisfied itself with a terracotta sketch of the subject (fig. 30), a work that reflects the extraordinary sensitivity and freshness of Rodin's autograph modeling, appealing to modern taste as none of the marbles do.

In 1906, Edward D. Adams, a trustee of the Metropolitan Museum and fellow member of French's Committee on Sculpture, commissioned a marble version of *The Hand of God* (fig. 32). The subject was one that already existed in marble. The completion of the second marble apparently presented no problem, and according to the account of Victor Frisch, one of Rodin's practitioners, or assistants who specialized in marble carving, it was Frisch who executed the second marble. The marble was finished in 1908, and Adams gave it to the Museum in the same year.

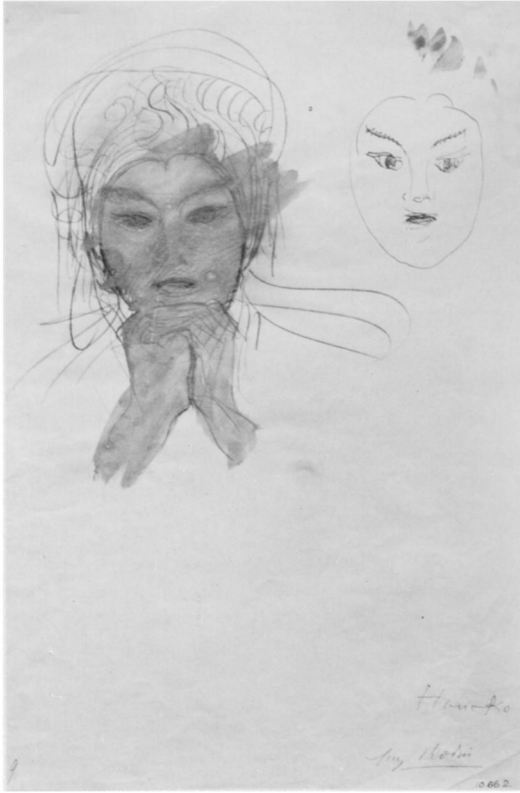
But after the Museum had acquired these three works, negotiations came to a stop for want of funds. The donor who made a reality of the plans of the Committee on Sculpture was Thomas Fortune Ryan.

Ryan's rise to riches and success gave substance to the nineteenth-century dream of America as the land of limitless opportunity. Born in Virginia in 1851, he was soon both orphaned and penniless. At seventeen, he went to work in a



15. (left) In 1891, the Société des Gens de Lettres commissioned a monument to Balzac to be erected at the Palais Royal in Paris. Rodin made numerous preparatory studies for the figure in an effort to create a vivid image of the author, who had died in 1850. The purchase list of July 22, 1910, cites this work as "Balzac. Study for the head of Balzac after a man of Tours. The only original." In 1891, during the course of the evolution of the head of the figure from a lifelike portrait to the great, craggy, masklike face of the final version, Rodin made several trips to Tours, the city of Balzac's origin, on the theory that he could find men there with similar facial characteristics to serve as models for Balzac's portrait. H. 9¼ inches. Rogers Fund, 1912. 12.11.1

16. Rodin's plaster model for the Balzac monument remained at Meudon, where in 1908 Edward Steichen made a dramatic photograph of the work silhouetted against the night sky. The final figure, more a symbol than a portrait, created a furor and was rejected by the Société. It was not cast in bronze until after the sculptor's death. Gray-green gelatine carbon. 14¾ x 19 inches. Gift of Alfred Stieglitz, 1933. 33.43.38



17. The Japanese actress Hanako posed for a number of portrait studies in 1908, and Rodin portrayed her mobile face in various media. The pensive mood of the actress in this sketch is disturbed by the disquieting second image of her face as an enigmatic mask. Pencil, pen and brown ink, gouache, and traces of red chalk. 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 8 $\frac{7}{16}$ inches. John Stewart Kennedy Fund, 1910. 10.66.2



18. In 1912, Edward Robinson wrote to Rodin: "Your gift of the small studies of details will be much appreciated by students of sculpture and they will be of inestimable importance as a lesson to show that the master of Impressionism in sculpture obtains his success through the close and laborious study of nature, a fact that his imitators are apt to forget." L. of arm, 8 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches; of smaller hand, 4 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches; of larger hand, 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Gift of the artist, 1912. 12.12.9, 16, 10



19. The Embrace was one of seven drawings purchased from an exhibition of Rodin's drawings held at Alfred Stieglitz's Photo Secession Gallery in 1910. All were then comparatively recent works, belonging to the period when the sculptor was testing his ability to capture the human form in motion by making quick sketches without ever taking his eyes from the model. Some of these he reworked, making corrections or adding color, but nearly all of them are recognizable by the freedom and spontaneity of their draftsmanship. Pencil, watercolor, and gouache. 12 $\frac{13}{16}$ x 9 $\frac{7}{8}$ inches. John Stewart Kennedy Fund, 1910. 10.66.6



Baltimore dry goods company. At twenty-two, he left for New York to begin as a messenger in a brokerage house, and by the time he was twenty-four he had purchased his own seat on the New York Stock Exchange. His career eventually encompassed controlling interests in railroads, municipal transportation systems, electric companies, banks, insurance, and tobacco. By 1910, he was involved as well with the development of lucrative diamond-, gold-, and copper-mining ventures in the Belgian Congo.

His mansion at 858 Fifth Avenue was filled with paintings, rare books and prints, enamels, oriental carpets, Italian majolica, and Renaissance furniture—in short, a vast selection of the art treasures that were prized by wealthy American collectors of the period. The special strength of the collection was Italian Renaissance sculpture, but he had also acquired several dozen Barye bronzes, as well as small bronzes by Meissonier, Troubetzkoy, and Rodin. His one Rodin marble, Napoleon, had been on loan to the Metropolitan Museum since 1912.

It is said that Ryan was introduced to Rodin by the Duchesse de Choiseul, whose influence over Rodin in the years between 1904 and 1912 was considered by Rodin's old friends and trusted employees to be disastrous. On September 16, 1912, the *New York Times* recorded the final break between the sculptor and the duchess, reporting that the rupture was welcomed by Rodin's admirers and that according to gossip in Paris art circles, the duchess was regarded as having "exercised too great influence over the master, made him live at the rate of \$40,000 a year, imposed her opinion on the sale prices of his work, and generally monopolized the sculptor's affairs." Nonetheless, the duchess does seem to have been instrumental in providing Rodin with American clients.

In 1909, Rodin modeled Ryan's portrait during a series of sittings described in a 1910 issue of the Paris journal *Le Gil Blas*:



20. (left) *The Abandoned (L'Abandonnée)* was the first of Rodin's drawings acquired by the Metropolitan Museum. It was purchased through the English art historian and critic Roger Fry, who visited Rodin's studio in 1906 at the urging of Mrs. Simpson. Pencil. $7\frac{7}{8} \times 11\frac{15}{16}$ inches. Rogers Fund, 1910. 10.45.20

21. *Nero (Néron)* is one of Rodin's rapid sketches that shows the results of later reworking. It has been discovered that this figure was originally that of a woman. The bold outline of the final version has been drawn in pencil over washes of watercolor and gouache. Probably about 1900–1905. $12\frac{3}{4} \times 10$ inches. John Stewart Kennedy Fund, 1910. 10.66.5



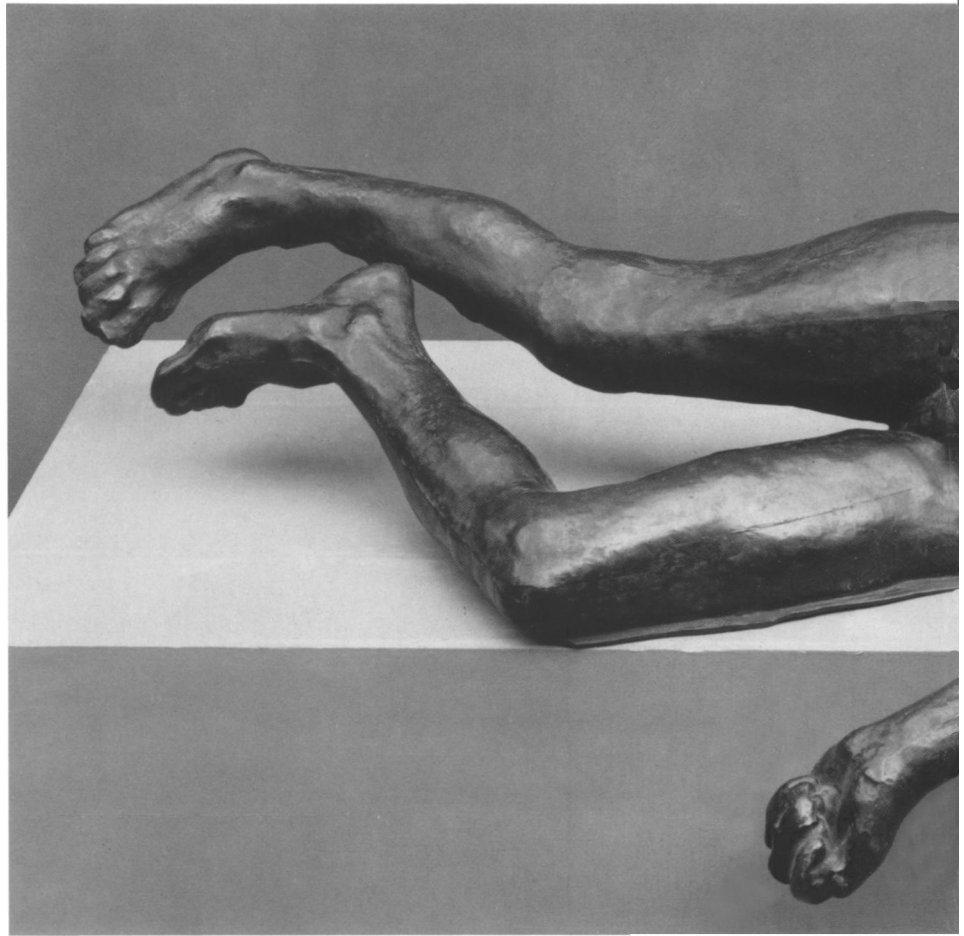


23. Fallen Caryatid Carrying an Urn (*La Caryatide tombée portant une urne*) was cast in terracotta after a variant of the Fallen Caryatid Carrying Her Stone. The latter was derived from the figure of a crouching woman that Rodin used at the top of the left pilaster of *The Gates of Hell*. H. 16 inches. Gift of Thomas F. Ryan, 1910. 12.13.2

22. This marble portrait bust of Mrs. John W. Simpson, the New York collector who enthusiastically advocated the Metropolitan Museum's purchases of Rodin's sculpture, was completed in 1904. In 1942, Mrs. Simpson briefly considered giving the bust to the Metropolitan Museum, but when the rest of her collection of Rodin's sculpture and drawings was accepted by the National Gallery of Art, she requested that her portrait remain with the collection. H. 21 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches. The National Gallery of Art. Gift of Mrs. John W. Simpson. Photograph: National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.



24. The Bronze Age (*L'Age d'airain*) was the first full-scale figure Rodin exhibited publicly, initially in 1877 at the Cercle Artistique in Brussels and later that year in the Paris Salon. The lively modeling and realistic appearance were such departures from academic conventions that Rodin was accused of casting from the live model, a practice frowned on. The first bronze, cast from the plaster model of 1876, was exhibited without controversy at the Salon of 1880. The Metropolitan's bronze was cast by Alexis Rudier. H. 72 inches. Gift of Mrs. John W. Simpson, 1907. 07.127



Mr. Ryan posed in the studio in which the sculptor is housed on the rue de Varenne on the ground floor of the marvelous Hôtel Biron. He posed without speaking, because he knew no French at all and Rodin knew no English. He posed without budging, for he is an American, that is to say, as immovable as a rock. It was a marvel and the understanding between the two was perfect.

The result was a portrait (fig. 33) that Ryan did not like, not surprisingly, since it certainly captures Ryan's rocklike rigidity, and contemporary descriptions of him—as handsome and broad shouldered, with a large head, high brow, “big, smiling” eyes, and a firm mouth shaded by a curling mustache of iron gray—suggest that the portrait is far from flattering. In fact, the portrait was not among Ryan's gifts to the Museum, but rather was given to the Museum by Rodin himself.

In spite of his feelings about the portrait, Ryan seems to have developed a deep admiration for the sculptor, and in 1909, he was ready to entertain the Metropolitan's proposal that he supply funds to augment the Museum's collection of the sculptor's work. The next year Ryan gave three of Rodin's marbles to the Museum. Two of them, Orpheus and Eurydice and Cupid and Psyche, had come from the sale of the collection of Charles T. Yerkes, which was held at the American Art Association on January 22, 1910. The third,



Pygmalion and Galatea, was purchased from Rodin. Ryan provided an additional \$25,000 for use by the Museum in making further purchases. Surviving documents tell us that Ryan also generously agreed to leave the choice to three men: French, Edward Robinson, and John Marshall.

Robinson, vice director of the Metropolitan Museum between 1905 and 1910, was a specialist in classical archaeology from Boston, where as curator of classical art and later, director of the Museum of Fine Arts, he was instrumental in the acquisition of that museum's outstanding collection of classical sculpture. In 1910, he succeeded Sir Caspar Purdon Clarke as director of the Metropolitan Museum, a post he held until 1931. By the end of 1906, he was already under Mrs. Simpson's enthusiastic tutelage concerning the acquisition of Rodin's works. In 1908, he was deeply involved with the Museum's commissions from Rodin, and it would be Robinson and French who made the final selection of the Museum's purchases in 1910.

John Marshall's career, like Robinson's, began in Boston, where he was also employed by the Museum of Fine Arts in the acquisition of antique sculpture. Marshall followed Robinson to New York to become the Metropolitan Museum's European purchasing agent for classical art. During the last days of 1907, Marshall traveled to Paris from his base in Rome

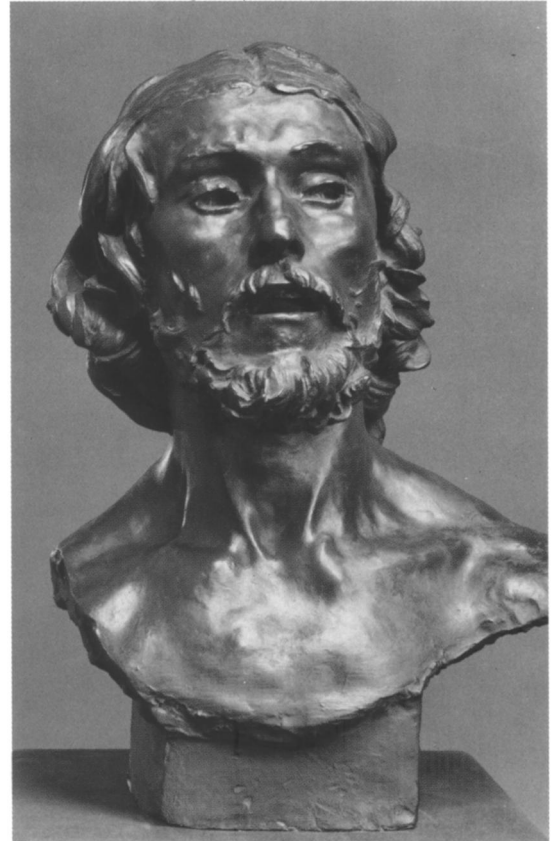
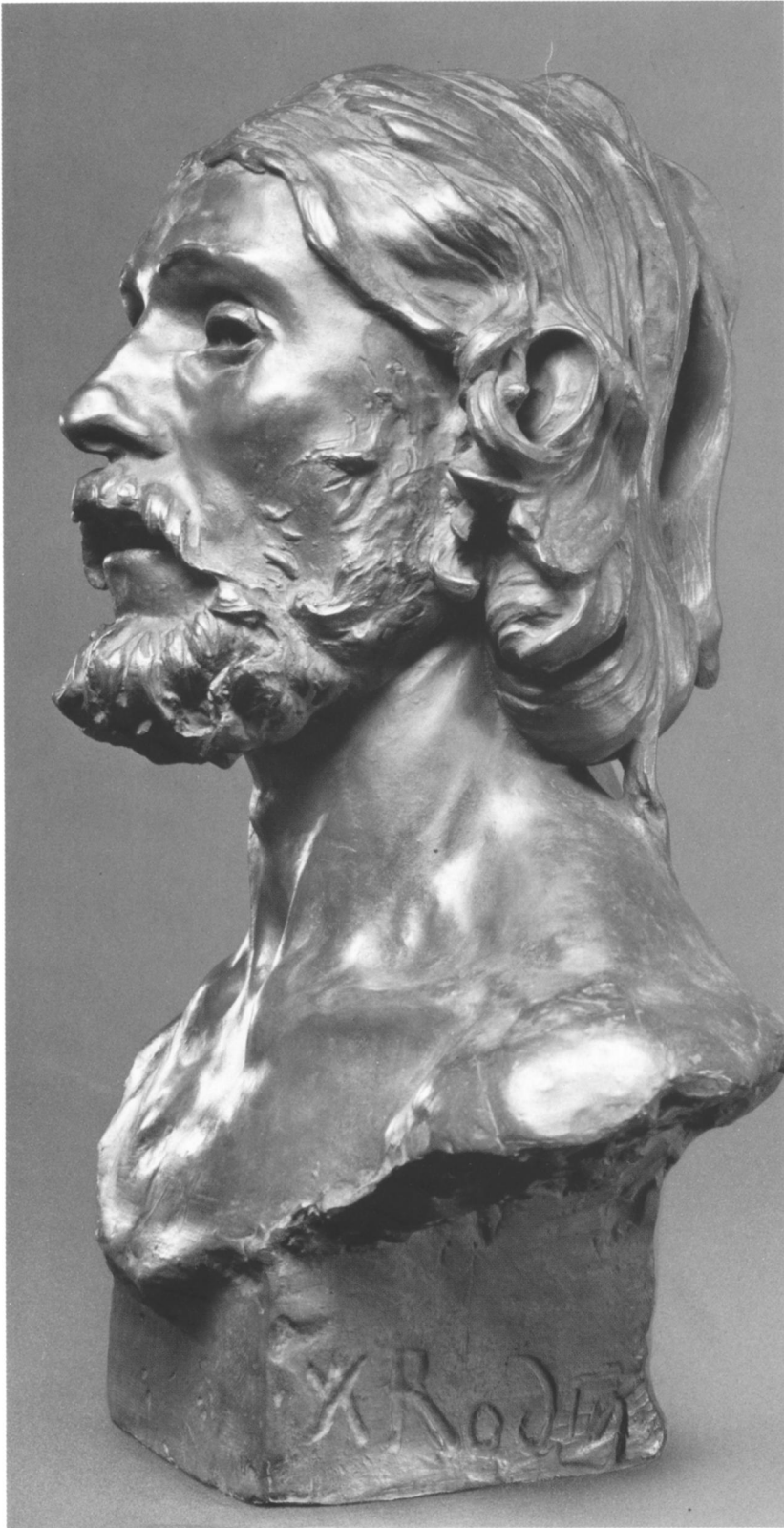


25. (left) The Martyr (*La Martyre*), extracted from the Gates, was originally a standing figure, but in this enlarged version it is supine, with limbs curiously convulsed. Mrs. Simpson wrote Rodin that while dining with a close friend, she expressed her desire that the Museum have this bronze, and the friend agreed to donate it. The bronze arrived in January, 1914, when the donor saw it for the first time. L. 61½ inches. Gift of Watson B. Dickerman, 1913. 13.22.1

26. The Weeping Burgher (*Andrieus d'Andres*) was cast about 1908 or 1909 from a reduced model made in 1900 of one of the figures from The Burghers of Calais. The bronze was a present from Mrs. Simpson to her sister, Mrs. Nelson Robinson. H. 17 inches. Gift of Miss G. Louise Robinson, 1940. 40.12.6



27. Rodin exhibited a plaster model for *The Walking Man* (*L'Homme qui marche*) in his pavilion at the Place de l'Alma at the time of the Exposition Universelle of 1900. In the catalogue, the work was described as "Saint John the Baptist. A powerful study for the statue at the Luxembourg Museum." A sculptural hybrid with a complicated history, *The Walking Man* was made from a ruined torso from one study for *Saint John the Baptist Preaching*, which Rodin joined to the legs from another study for the *Saint John*. The legs reflect a theory of Rodin's about the sculptural representation of motion: both feet are planted firmly on the ground, incorporating phases from both the beginning and the end of a step, in a position that never actually occurs but gives the impression of motion. This bronze is inscribed to Mrs. Nelson Robinson of New York: *M. Rodin heureux de voir/ son oeuvre l'homme qui marche/ figurée dans son salon lui offre/ ses hommages affectueux*. ("M. Rodin, happy to see his work *The Walking Man* represented in her salon, presents his affectionate respects to her.") H. 33½ inches. Gift of Miss G. Louise Robinson, 1940, in memory of her aunt, Mrs. Nelson Robinson. 40.12.4



28. This bronze bust of Saint John the Baptist was the first of Rodin's sculptures to enter the Metropolitan Museum's collection. It is a fine lost-wax cast with an unusually pleasing dark brown patina. It may have been the same bronze commissioned from Rodin by George A. Lucas in 1888 and cast by the founders J. B. Griffoul and J. Large. H. 21 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Gift of Samuel P. Avery, 1893. 93.11



29. The decorative character of Brother and Sister (*Le Frère et la soeur*) serves as a reminder that Rodin's Petite Ecole training enabled him to earn his living as a modeler of small genre sculptures during his early years and that as late as 1882, he was still making models for decorative porcelains for the Manufacture Nationale de Sèvres. This small bronze was the first commissioned from Rodin by the Metropolitan Museum in 1908 from a model made about 1890–91. H. 15 inches. Rogers Fund, 1908. 08.265

in order to negotiate the Metropolitan Museum's first two commissions from Rodin.

In Paris, Marshall made a careful selection of sculptures in Rodin's studios that he thought appropriate for the Metropolitan Museum's collection. In a letter to Robinson, dated January 6, 1908, Marshall listed twenty-four of these, together with their prices. Most of the sculptures could be obtained either in bronze or in marble, and in many cases, Marshall commented on the quality of the existing examples. He also enclosed photographs of many of them. The photographs were numbered to correspond to the numbering in his list—a blessing, because Rodin so often changed the titles of his sculptures that titles alone are often misleading. For a total of \$26,000, Marshall's personal choice among the twenty-four listed were Musset and His Muse (fig. 34), Grande Baigneuse, later called *Beside the Sea* (fig. 11), Paolo and Francesca (fig. 35), La Martyre, later called *Head of Sorrow* (fig. 36), Psyche, later called *Standing Faunesse* (fig. 37), Pygmalion (fig. 7), portraits of Rochefort and Falguière and four other unspecified portrait busts, The Old Courtesan or *La Belle Heaulmière* (fig. 4), Caryatid (fig. 23), Triton and Nereid (fig. 30), Colonel Lynch, and Brother and Sister (fig. 29). Of these, Grande Baigneuse, The Old Courtesan, Pygmalion, and Brother and Sister were eventually acquired by the Museum. The Caryatid was to come in cast terracotta, rather than the bronze version that Marshall admired, and the Triton and Nereid would be the delicate terracotta sketch mentioned earlier, rather than the marble version which was commissioned but never delivered.

Marshall particularly admired the Grande Baigneuse (fig. 11) because it was beautifully worked and the first example of the subject. His comment on the plaster model of the Triton and Nereid reveals his predilection for the antique:

It is one of his most attractive works; it challenges no one; has nothing eccentric. The front of the Triton is absolutely antique in the modelling; the girl is free and rigorous; the grouping decorative from every point, and the whole work might easily pass for some superb Hellenistic monument. The artist is all but 68 and the Museum if it possessed this group in bronze or in marble would have probably the only specimen he would ever make of it. So beautiful a thing ought not to be left in plaster. M. Rodin thought it would be fine in marble—and, indeed, who would doubt it?

On Marshall's recommendation, the Committee on Sculpture authorized the commission of the Brother and Sister and the Triton and Nereid in March, 1908. They were enthusiastic also about the busts of Falguière and Rochefort, the Psyche, the Pygmalion and Galatea, and a Sappho, which for some reason was not favored by Marshall. French, using his prerogative as chairman of the committee, vetoed the group entitled Musset and his Muse (fig. 34). Although no reason is given in French's report, he may have felt that Rodin had depicted the erotic ecstasy of the poet a little too literally for public display. While the physical longing of Psyche for Cupid or



30. (left) This terracotta Triton and Nereid (*La Néréide et le triton*) appears on the Metropolitan Museum's purchase list of July 22, 1910, with the note that it is the original sketch for the large group in marble ordered by the Museum. The sensitivity and freshness of the modeling of this work indicate that it is, indeed, the product of the sculptor's own hand. It, like the head of Balzac, the terracotta torso, and the Bacchante, is highly prized as the work of a master modeler, untouched by processes that are necessary to the production of sculpture in a less fragile medium—for example, the casting of a plaster founder's model or, in turn, the casting of a bronze from the founder's model—but inflict small losses in the surface detail of the sculptor's work. H. 16 inches. Rogers Fund, 1910. 12.11.2

31. A photograph taken in Rodin's studio at the time of John Marshall's visit late in 1907 or in the first days of 1908 shows the life-size plaster model of Triton and Nereid. The work was commissioned in marble by the Metropolitan Museum on the basis of Marshall's description and photograph, but Rodin never completed it.



32. Given Rodin's admiration for Michelangelo, it is not difficult to see the Renaissance master's unfinished sculptures as the probable source of the characteristic "signature" of a Rodin marble, the deliberate exploitation of the contrast in color and texture between rough and polished stone. The Hand of God (*La Main de Dieu*), or Creation, is one of Rodin's more original compositions: the rough stone has been used to represent both primeval matter and the sculptor's medium, while the smooth, white emergent forms represent the bodies of the first man and woman, and the great life-giving hand is a symbol of the original Creator, and perhaps, quite literally, of the sculptor, as well. Rodin expressed his reluctance to work in marble in an interview in 1889, saying that although he could not afford to do his own carving at the price he could charge, he could never be entirely satisfied with a work executed by another, because even the most exacting reproduction of the original model would always display traces of the marble carver's own interpretation. Nevertheless, when popular demand for his sculpture increased during the 1890s, Rodin began to employ a number of assistants to carry out the work of making marble replicas, among them Victor Frisch, who carved this piece. A larger version in marble had been sold to the collector Albert Kahn about 1906, when the Museum's work was commissioned by one of the Metropolitan's trustees. H. 29 inches. Gift of Edward D. Adams, 1908. 08.210

Pygmalion for Galatea came cloaked in the respectability of classical mythology, Musset and his Muse had no such sanction.

By 1910 most of the \$26,000 mentioned by Marshall as necessary to the purchase had been provided by Thomas F. Ryan. Robinson wrote to French that he thought it "desirable for you and me to get together and determine which works we would recommend for purchase, and then find out what these will cost. We shall thus be in a better position to know how much money will be required, if any, in addition to what Mr. Ryan has so generously promised." The upshot was French and Robinson's trip to Rodin's studio in the summer of 1910 to see the sculpture in question.

French recorded his impressions of the visit in several letters. In one, addressed to Harriet French Hollis and dated July 21, 1910, he wrote:

Last Sunday Mr. Robinson, Assistant Director, and I went out to Rodin's studio at Meudon to meet him and make our selection. He has a glass-topped studio in spacious grounds filled with statues and groups in all stages of development. He is a man of seventy-five more or less, short and thick-set and full of vigor, with a big head and strong features, giving the impression rather of a physical force than mental or poetical. He is entirely simple and unassuming and kindly in his manner and apparently as pleased with praise of his work as if he had never had any.

To his brother, William M. R. French, director of the Chicago Art Institute, French described Rodin as a "much more attractive man than I expected and I am glad to have got rid of my preconceptions of him. He seems a very simple, unassuming, rather timid, affectionate person, entirely engrossed in his art. There seemed to be nothing of the *poseur* about him."

On July 18, 1910, Robinson wrote a letter to Rodin, enclosing a list of the sculptures that he and French had chosen with Rodin's advice during their visit. A second list was drawn up on July 20th, of which Rodin kept the original and the Metropolitan Museum, a copy dated July 22nd. The July 20th list included substantially all of the works purchased for the Museum's gallery: Adam, Eve, The Thinker, Puvis de Chavannes, Dalou, and The Old Courtesan, all bronzes; The Tempest, Beside the Sea, and Madame X, in marble; and the Head of Balzac, the Triton and Nereid, and Caryatid in terracotta. The first two terracottas, perhaps because they were both original sketches, were to be purchased from the Museum's regular funds rather than from Thomas F. Ryan's gift.

There were also several requests that were not to be filled. A marble group called Benedictions had already been sold. A terracotta version of The Kiss, which Robinson had apparently thought to be an original sketch, was found to be a cast. A bronze cast of the subject could not be obtained from Rodin because the plaster model and its casting rights had been sold to the bronze founder, Barbedienne. (Such sales were not unusual among nineteenth-century sculptors, but quite rare in Rodin's case.) A Brother and Sister, which





Robinson had remembered as an original terracotta, may have been another work called *Young Woman and Child*. Rodin offered, instead, a plaster model, originally made for the bronze founder, which presumably was used to cast the bronze commissioned by the Museum in 1908. Robinson and French decided not to have the model.

The Caryatid on Robinson's list is described as a small bronze. A cast terracotta version of it was purchased, although Robinson repeatedly referred to it as an original terracotta sketch, making it hard to determine whether or not a prejudice against terracotta and plaster casts was, in fact, the determining factor in his rejection of *The Kiss* and *the Brother and Sister*.

At the end of the July 22nd list, Rodin added a paragraph offering as gifts to the Museum the bronze bust of Thomas F. Ryan (fig. 33) and "the small sliding boxes" or drawers (*les petites caisses tiroirs*) "with hands, feet, etc." The origin of these studies lay in working methods peculiar to Rodin. The sculptor's habit of composing figures from various individually modeled parts, or conversely, of removing parts from completed figures and using them elsewhere, as well as that of modeling small figures and then enlarging them to life size, were well established by the mid-1880s. In some instances these sculptural fragments can be recognized as parts of completed sculptures, but more often, it is not possible either to identify or date them with any certainty. At some undetermined time, Rodin also began giving bases to some of his fragments, making small independent sculptures of them; others he combined to create strange, hybrid forms. Still others were laid out, perhaps for future use, in trays and drawers in the sculptor's studio: hence, Rodin's reference to "the small sliding boxes."

The sculptor's final gift contained some pieces that were not mentioned in the July 22nd list, including a generous selection of studies for figures that can be identified with various finished sculptures, several of which are related to works that the Museum purchased (figs. 5 and 6). The sculptor also sent one original terracotta (fig. 46), a torso.

The purchases of 1910 remain the nucleus of the Metropolitan Museum's collection of Rodin's sculpture to be seen at present in the André Meyer Galleries for nineteenth-century European paintings and sculpture. The group was enlarged in 1913, when Thomas F. Ryan added a bronze bust of George Wyndham (fig. 49) and six drawings (including fig. 48), and Watson Dickerman, a friend of the Simpsons, gave *The Martyr* (fig. 25). Of the gifts and bequests acquired after 1913, some of the best are: *Eternal Spring* (fig. 52), commissioned by Isaac D. Fletcher from Rodin in 1906 and bequeathed to the Metropolitan Museum in 1917; the pencil and watercolor studies of female nudes (fig. 47), which were gifts of Georgia O'Keeffe in 1965; the studies of hands and the cast hand of Rodin holding a sculptured female torso (fig. 51), bequeathed in 1966 by the sculptor Malvina Hoffman, who had been a pupil and friend of Rodin; and two bronzes, a



33. (left) This bust of Thomas F. Ryan was cast in bronze by Alexis Rudier from the model made in 1909. Ryan was the New York financier and art collector who provided most of the funds for the Metropolitan Museum's purchases of 1910. H. 23 inches. Gift of Auguste Rodin, 1911. 11.174

34. The marble version of *Musset and His Muse*, or *Poet and His Love* (*Le Poète et l'amour*), was photographed by John Marshall and his wife in Rodin's studio late in 1907 or early in 1908, but it was rejected by the chairman of the Museum's Committee on Sculpture, Daniel Chester French.



35. Paolo and Francesca, the doomed lovers from Dante's *Divine Comedy*, was another of the sculptures that Rodin extracted from The Gates of Hell. The marble was photographed in Rodin's studio by John Marshall and his wife, and Marshall noted that it was shown in London in January, 1905.

36. The Head of Sorrow (*Tête de la douleur*) or *La Martyre*, as Marshall called it in his list of 1908, is a greatly enlarged version of a head that Rodin used for several of the figures of the damned on the Gates. Later he also used it as the head of Joan of Arc in a model for a proposed monument to the martyr. The marble is shown in another of the photographs Marshall sent for the Metropolitan's approval, and it is probably the one now in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen.



37. Still another figure derived from The Gates of Hell, the Standing Fauness (*La Faunesse debout*), or "Psyche or The Bather," as Marshall referred to this unfinished marble, was photographed in Rodin's studio at Meudon in 1907 or 1908. None of the four marbles in Marshall's photographs were among those ultimately purchased by the Metropolitan Museum.



38. These four legs and arm were cast in plaster from original studies probably modeled in clay. The origin of this type of piece lay in the working methods developed by the sculptor in the 1880s, when he was occupied with *The Gates of Hell*, involving both the synthesis of figures from individually modeled parts and the subtraction of parts from completed figures. L. of arm, $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches; leg at top right, $7\frac{1}{8}$ inches; middle leg, $5\frac{1}{4}$ inches; leg at lower left, $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches; leg at lower right, $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches. Gift of the sculptor, 1912. 12.12.15, 11, 12, 13, 14



39. The original study for this plaster cast was probably modeled about 1885 for one of the figures of the monument to the *Burghers of Calais*, but it was not used in the final version of any of the *Burghers*. L. $13\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Gift of the artist, 1912. 12.12.8



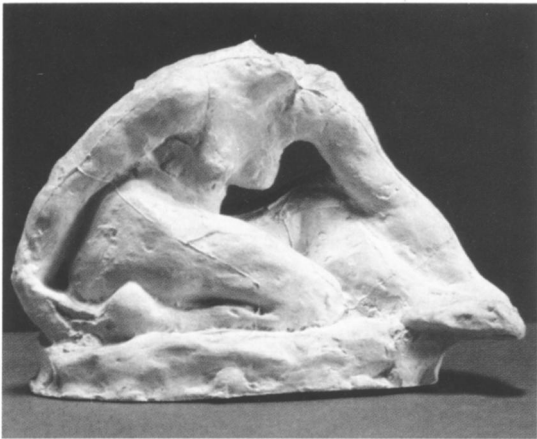
40. Obsession, a human figure literally tied in knots, was Rodin's metaphor for the anguish of psychological disorder. The original of this study was probably modeled about 1896 for the marble sculpture entitled Obsession now in the Musée Rodin in Paris. H. 5½ inches. Gift of the artist, 1912. 12.12.4



41. Mariana Russell was the Italian-born wife of the Australian painter John P. Russell. In 1888, Rodin modeled her portrait in wax, and at a later date, believed to have been about 1896, he again used Mrs. Russell as a subject for sculpture, this time portraying her variously as Minerva or Pallas Athena. This plaster was cast from a study, possibly for the portrait of 1888, but more probably for one of the later sculptures. H. 10 $\frac{1}{8}$ inches. Gift of the artist, 1912. 12.12.6



42. The poet Rainer Maria Rilke, who was for a time Rodin's secretary, wrote: "There are among the works of Rodin hands, single, small hands which, without belonging to a body, are alive. Hands that rise, irritated and in wrath; hands whose five bristling fingers seem to bark like the five jaws of a dog of Hell." These two plasters were cast from original studies of clay or plaster made at an unknown date. L. of hand at left, 2 inches; at right, 2 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches. Gift of the artist, 1912. 12.12.18, 17



43. Head of a Muse is a plaster cast from a study modeled about 1903–4 for Rodin's uncompleted monument to James McNeill Whistler. H. 4 inches. Gift of the artist, 1912. 12.12.7

44. The original study from which this plaster cast of a young woman was made was possibly modeled about 1889 in preparation for a sculpture entitled *The Shell and the Pearl* (*La Coquille et la perle*). The marble version of the sculpture, now in the Musée Rodin in Paris, differs considerably, however, from this study. H. 4 inches. Gift of the artist, 1912, 12.12.5



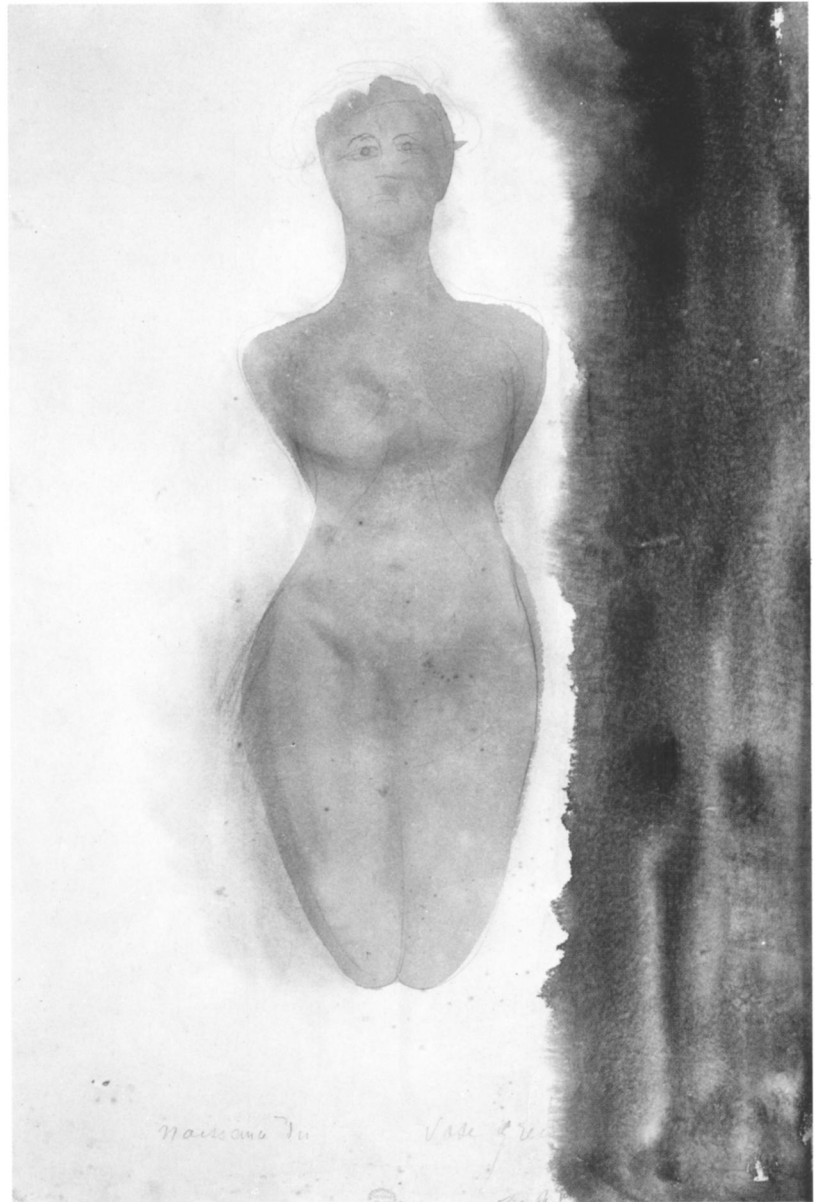
45. The plaster cast shown here, *Study of a Young Girl Kneeling*, was made for an unidentified sculpture. H. 8 inches. Gift of the artist, 1912. 12.12.3



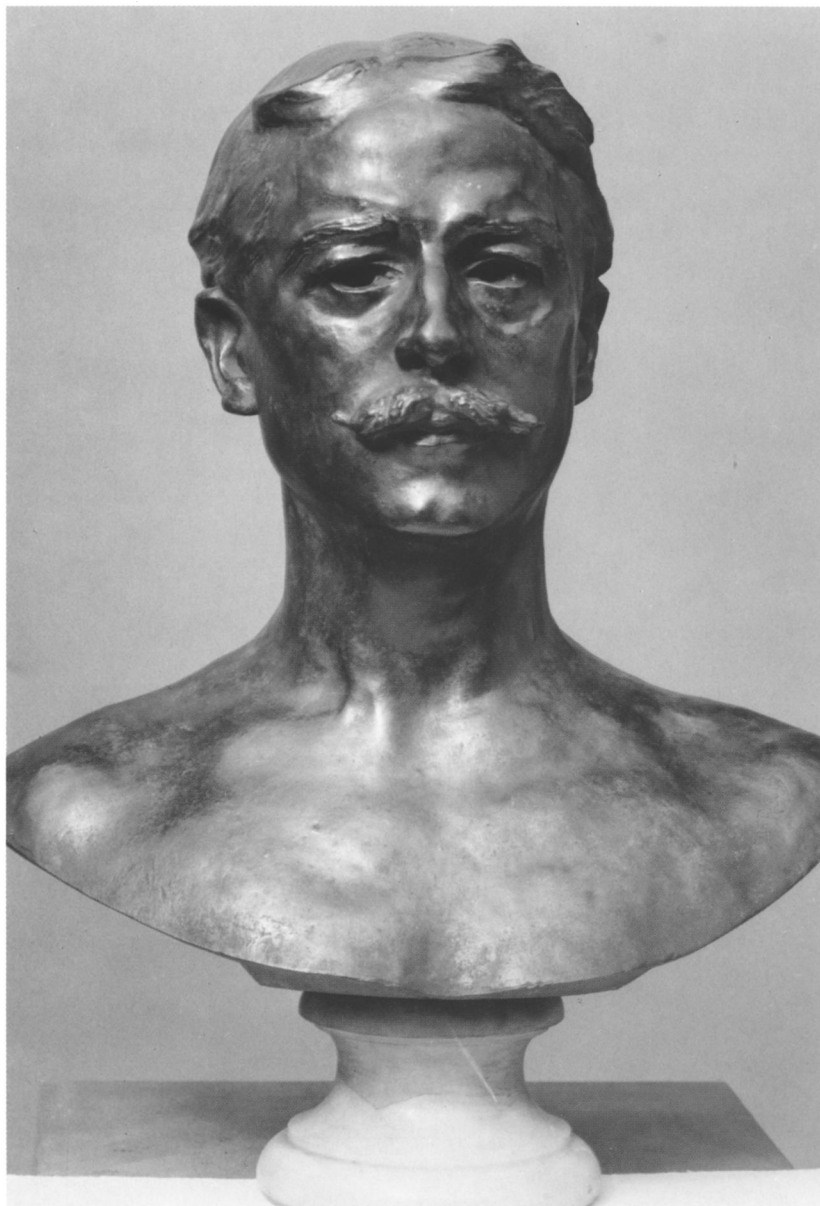
46. Rodin's involvement with the sculptural fragment stemmed from several sources. One was certainly the habitual use of casts from antique fragments as models for drawing classes. Another was accidental. In the poverty-stricken years of Rodin's early career he was unable to preserve many of his clay works, and they froze or dried out and often were damaged or destroyed. Still another source lay in the sculptor's work habits. In the 1880s, he began to extract many of the small, individual figures from the reliefs of *The Gates of Hell* and to enlarge them to create freestanding sculptures, and the procedure led to the regular removal and recombination of whole bodies and parts of bodies. Problems of distortion induced Rodin deliberately to break apart finished sculptures in order to correct or remodel a part. The intentional ripping away of the head and limbs of this terracotta torso, evident in the traces of violence preserved in the baked clay, has left a vividly modeled fragment, partly Michelangelesque and partly antique in its inspiration, but purely Rodin's in its execution. L. 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches. Gift of the artist, 1912. 12.13.1



47. The mixture of violence and eroticism that characterizes much of Rodin's work in the 1880s was intensified by his preoccupation with two highly charged literary sources: Dante's *Inferno* and Baudelaire's *Les Fleurs du mal*. Those inhabitants of Dante's Hell doomed by the sins of the flesh recur in the Gates as well as in many drawings of the period, while other drawings demonstrate how Rodin had absorbed the satanic nature of Baudelaire's poetry. This study of a nude female figure, *Witches' Sabbath (Sabbat)*, is reminiscent of Rodin's illustrations for a private edition of *Les Fleurs du mal*, finished in 1888 but not published until 1898. Nowhere among the published illustrations, however, is there a figure so sexually explicit as this one. Such material was strong stuff for the period, even for the relatively liberal Parisians. Watercolor and lead pencil. 12 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches. Gift of Georgia O'Keeffe, 1965. 65.261.1



48. Rodin entitled this drawing, which plays upon the similarity of the form of an antique vase to the female figure, *The Origin of the Greek Vase (Naissance du vase grec)*. An ardent admirer and collector of antique sculpture, Rodin wrote: "Antiquity and Nature are bound together in the same mystery. . . . The glory of Antiquity is to have understood Nature." The drawing is one of six given by Thomas F. Ryan in 1913 and probably not very much earlier in date. Pencil and gouache. 19 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 12 $\frac{5}{8}$ inches. Gift of Thomas F. Ryan, 1913. 13.164.2



49. George Wyndham (1863–1913), chief secretary for Ireland from 1900 to 1905, presided over the banquet held in Rodin's honor while the sculptor was in London for the presentation to the Victoria and Albert of Saint John the Baptist Preaching. In 1904, Rodin modeled the English statesman's portrait. Wyndham was pleased with the likeness. Apparently, he had no objections to the bust, depicting as it did the sitter in the nude—a practice customary in antiquity, but profoundly disturbing to Rodin's compatriot Puvvis de Chavannes a few years earlier (see fig. 12). This bronze was cast by Alexis Rudier from Rodin's model of 1904. H. 16¼ inches. Gift of Thomas F. Ryan, 1913. 13.164.7



50. This plaster cast was made from a study that was probably done in preparation for a sculpture Malvina Hoffman referred to as *The Child's Farewell* (*L'Adieu d'un enfant*) in one of her letters to Rodin. This is one of five small hands she bequeathed to the Museum. L. 6¼ inches. Bequest of Malvina C. Hoffman, 1966, Presented by Rodin to his pupil Malvina Hoffman and given by her to The Metropolitan Museum of Art. 66.247.5



51. *The Hand of Rodin* (*La Main de Rodin*) is composed of a plaster cast of Rodin's right hand and a female torso modeled by the sculptor. The cast was made by Amedée Bertault and inscribed to Malvina Hoffman: LA MAIN DE/RODIN A/Malvina Hoffman/1919. L. 9 inches. Bequest of Malvina C. Hoffman, 1966, Presented by Rodin to his pupil Malvina Hoffman and given by her to The Metropolitan Museum of Art. 66.247.6





53. The model for this terracotta Bacchante has been recognized as Rodin's mistress and lifelong companion, Rose Beuret, but the date of the bust is unrecorded. The youthful appearance of the model, however, and her guise as a follower of Bacchus, the god of the vine, suggest that the work is related to a Bacchante, now lost, that occupied the young sculptor about 1864–66, and for which Rose Beuret posed. H. 15 inches. Purchase, 1975, Charles Ulrich and Josephine Bay Foundation, Inc. Gift. 1975.312.7



54. Redolent of the eighteenth century both in subject and technique, but probably done in the late 1870s, Rodin's *The Age of Gold* (*L'Age d'or*) reflects the sculptor's meticulous training in the traditions of French eighteenth-century draftsmanship under Horace Lecoq de Boisbaudran at the Ecole Impériale Spéciale de Dessin et de Mathématiques, now the Ecole Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs. Lecoq de Boisbaudran, who ultimately became director of the "Petite Ecole," as it was popularly known, strongly opposed the academic training practices that were current at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in the 1850s. When Rodin began his studies at the Petite Ecole, Lecoq de Boisbaudran's students were drawing not only from the live model, but also from the sculptures of such eighteenth-century French masters as Clodion and Bouchardon. Black chalk and traces of white chalk on gray paper. 18⁷/₁₆ x 12 inches. Rogers Fund, 1963. 63.92.3

52. *Eternal Spring* (*L'Eternel Printemps*) began as Zephyr and Earth, and it was exhibited in the Salon of 1897 as Cupid and Psyche—both titles calculated to lend respectability to the eroticism of the subject. The woman's torso—which appears in many of Rodin's works, including *The Gates of Hell*—is recognizable as that of a model named Adèle. *Eternal Spring* is in a lighter vein than the *Gates*, however, full of spontaneously awakened sensuality and implying neither guilt nor punishment to come. This marble version was commissioned from Rodin in 1906 by Isaac Fletcher and finished by March, 1907. The original model was made about 1884. H. 28 inches. Bequest of Isaac D. Fletcher, 1917. 17.120.184



55. One of the workshop practices that Rodin shared with many sculptors of the nineteenth century was the removal of one or several figures from a successful monument and the casting of a series or "edition" of bronzes in reduced size for collectors. This process, like the one of enlargement, was facilitated by the use of a mechanical device for the purpose, based on the principle of the pantograph, invented by Achille Collas in 1836. This bronze statuette of Pierre de Wissant, one of the Burghers of Calais, was reduced to its present size by the Collas method about 1895–99. It was cast by Alexis Rudier. H. 17¾ inches. Bequest of Mrs. Stephen C. Clark, 1967. 67.155.12

figure of Pierre de Wiessant, one of the Burghers of Calais (fig. 55), and a female torso (fig. 56), which were bequests in 1967 of Mrs. Stephen C. Clark and Miss Adelaide Milton de Groot, respectively. The most recent addition to the collection is the promised gift of a bronze of Nijinsky (fig. 57).

The Museum made no further purchases of its own until it acquired in 1963 the splendid chalk drawing *The Age of Gold* (fig. 54) and in 1975 the winsome *Bacchante* in terracotta (fig. 53), both early works and dating from a period not represented among the purchases of 1910, the gifts, or the bequests.

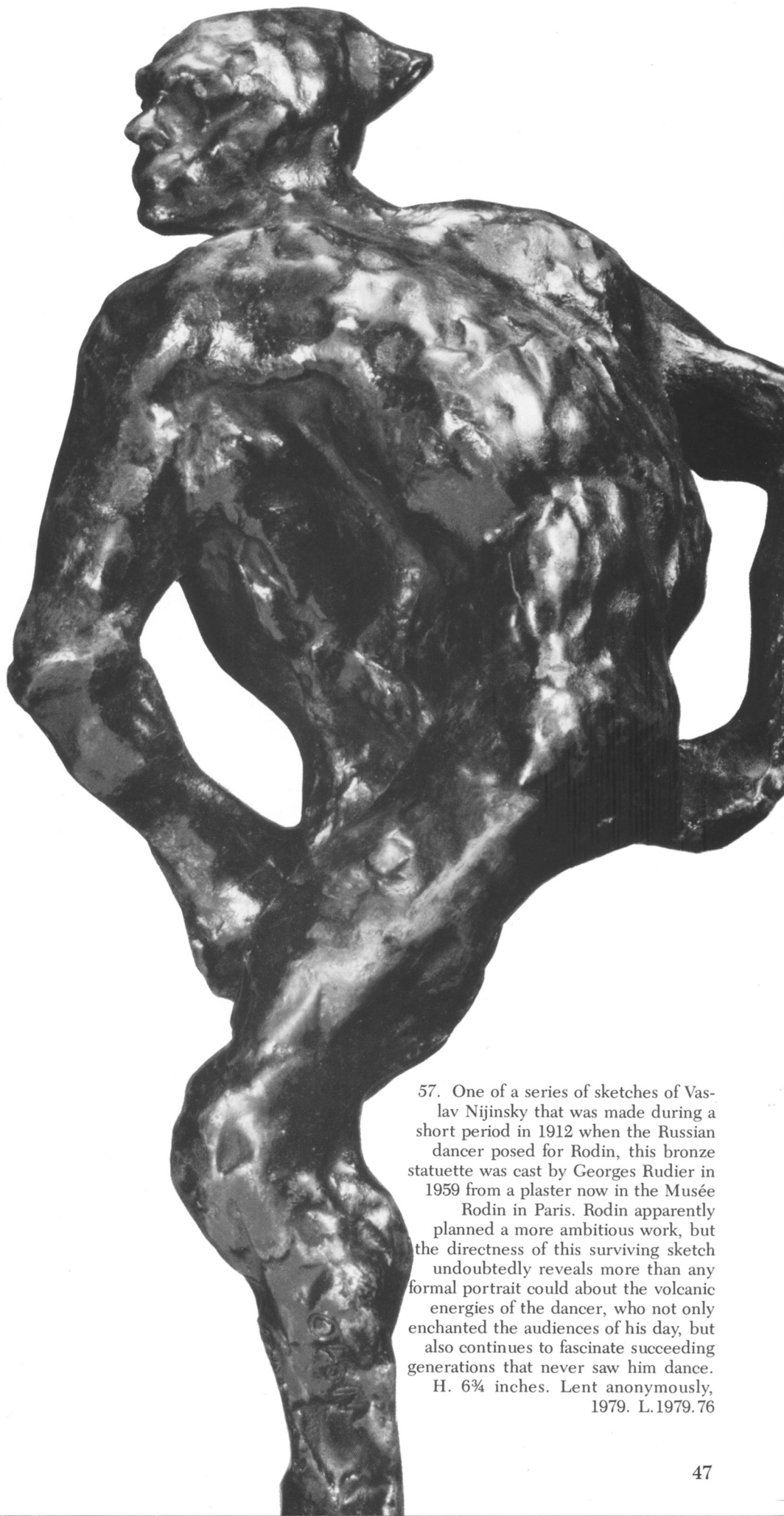
By the middle of the twentieth century, Rodin's monumental sculptures, and especially his marbles, were more or less in eclipse. The narrative element in the majority of his sculptures was considered old-fashioned. In addition, certain ideas about the nature of sculpture that were incipient in the early 1900s had by mid-century brought about a thoroughgoing change in the way in which sculpture of the past was viewed. One was a theory of the inherent integrity of sculptural media: for example, what can best be created in clay cannot and should not be translated into another material such as marble; what is appropriate to carved marble cannot be satisfactorily cast in bronze. Above all, great importance was placed on the unique piece, designed and executed by the artist alone. Both values were utterly foreign to nineteenth-century sculptural practice.

Instead, Rodin's more intimate works in plaster, terracotta, and wax, together with the best bronze casts, were favored. In these pieces, Rodin often abandoned the burden of narrative to concentrate instead on some aesthetic problem that resulted from his increasingly radical assaults on the human form, a preoccupation that linked his work to that of mid-twentieth-century sculptors.

Recently, however, critical evaluations of Rodin have begun to take a more balanced view, giving attention to both the monumental and the intimate aspects of the sculptor's work. It is a view not unlike the one that has governed the Metropolitan Museum's acquisition of its comprehensive collection of Rodin's sculpture.

56. Rodin was not the only sculptor of the late nineteenth century to explore the expressive potential of the partial figure, but certainly he sustained more interest in the subject than any of his contemporaries. It was not until the next generation of sculptors—for example, Aristide Maillol, Henri Matisse, Wilhelm Lehmbruck, and even Constantin Brancusi—that the partial figure was seized upon and made into a major sculptural form. This bronze torso was long thought to be one of a group of torsos that seemed to be related to Rodin's *Iris*, *Messenger of the Gods*, a partial figure known to have been modeled about 1890–91. Recently, however, the model for this sculpture and for the terracotta torso given to the Metropolitan Museum by the sculptor (fig. 46), has been identified, and it is known that she posed for Rodin about 1901. The Museum's bronze was cast by Alexis Rudier, probably from a plaster model that appears in a photograph of Rodin taken soon after 1900. H. 15¾ inches. Bequest of Miss Adelaide Milton de Groot (1876–1967), 1967. 67.187.48





57. One of a series of sketches of Vaslav Nijinsky that was made during a short period in 1912 when the Russian dancer posed for Rodin, this bronze statuette was cast by Georges Rudier in 1959 from a plaster now in the Musée Rodin in Paris. Rodin apparently planned a more ambitious work, but the directness of this surviving sketch undoubtedly reveals more than any formal portrait could about the volcanic energies of the dancer, who not only enchanted the audiences of his day, but also continues to fascinate succeeding generations that never saw him dance. H. 6¾ inches. Lent anonymously, 1979. L.1979.76

Notes

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p. 3 Louis Gillet, "Le Musée Rodin à New-York," *France-Amérique*, April 1911, p. 227.

p. 8 Roger Marx: Judith Cladel, *Rodin*, trans. by James Whitall (New York: 1937), p. 220; *New York Times*, June 2, 1912, part 3, p. 4.

pp. 8, 11 *Sun*, May 12, 1912, p. 15.

p. 11 Pierre Baudin, "Les Salons de 1904," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 1 (1904): 481; Simpson to Rodin, March 6, 1916, Musée Rodin Archives, Paris.

pp. 11–12 Simpson to Metropolitan Museum Board of Trustees, May 23, 1903, Metropolitan Museum Archives.

pp. 12, 15 *Report from the Committee on Sculpture*, Jan. 15, 1906, Metropolitan Museum Archives.

p. 19 Commissioning of marble Triton and Nereid: *Le Petit Journal*, June 18, 1908; *Le Siècle Illustré*, June 28, 1908; *Le Gil Blas*, July 1, 1908. Clippings in Musée Rodin Archives, Paris; Photograph with plaster model: *L'Art et les Artistes* 19, no. 109 (1914): p. 97; Victor Frisch and Joseph T. Shipley, *Auguste Rodin: A Biography* (New York: 1939), p. 431.

pp. 20, 24 *Le Gil Blas*, September 1910. Clippings in Musée Rodin Archives, Paris.

p. 28 Marshall to Robinson, Metropolitan Museum Archives.

p. 30 Robinson to French, Feb. 24, 1910, Metropolitan Museum Archives; D. French to W. French, Aug. 13, 1910; Robinson to Rodin, July 18, 1910, Musée Rodin Archives, Paris; Archives of both Musée Rodin, Paris, and Metropolitan Museum contain copies of Metropolitan's purchase list of July, 1910.

fig. 7 Rodin's comments: *Auguste Rodin: Art*, trans. by Mrs. Romilly Fedden (Boston: 1912), p. 164; **fig. 12** *Auguste Rodin: Art*, p. 143; **fig. 17** Robinson to Rodin, Feb. 7, 1912, Musée Rodin Archives, Paris; **fig. 28** Lucas bronze: *The Diary of George A. Lucas: An American Art Agent in Paris, 1857–1909*, trans. by Lilian M. C. Randall (Princeton: 1979), vol. 2, p. 666; **fig. 32** T. H. Bartlett, "Auguste Rodin—VIII," *The American Architect and Building News* 25, May 25, 1889, p. 250; **fig. 42** "Auguste Rodin," trans. by Jessie Lamont and Hans Trausil and reprinted in Albert Elsen, *Auguste Rodin: Readings on His Life and Work* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: 1965), p. 123; **fig. 47** "Venus," *L'Art et les Artistes* 10 (1910): 248; **fig. 51** Hoffman to Rodin, n.d., Musée Rodin Archives, Paris; **fig. 56** Photograph: Robert Descharnes and Jean-François Chabrun, p. 226.

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