

Bowman Sculpture opens extraordinary exhibition of over thirty works by Auguste Rodin



Rodin: The Birth of Modern Sculpture at Bowman Sculpture, 2017. Courtesy of Bowman Sculpture. Photo: A.C. Cooper.

LONDON.- This summer [Bowman Sculpture](#) celebrates Auguste Rodin's unrivalled contribution to the history of art with The Birth of Modern Sculpture, an extraordinary exhibition of over thirty works including a rare lifetime cast of the artist's famed Eternal Spring (conceived in 1884) as well as a selection of his most renowned pieces such as The Thinker, The Kiss, Balzac and Man with a Broken Nose. The exhibition will also include original copies of letters written by Rodin and a number of drawings unseen in public.

Coinciding with the centenary of the death of Rodin (b. 1840 – d. 1917), The Birth of Modern Sculpture aims to underline the great master's enduring sculptural legacy with significant works ranging from the early years to his late abstracted figures.

Exemplifying Rodin's earlier work, visitors will be able to see Maquette for The Burghers of Calais, which the sculptor first conceived in 1884 as the inspiration for his emblematic monument. Created as a homage to the brave citizens of Calais who sacrificed themselves to the invading English forces during the Hundred Years' War (1337-1453), this rare model (cast in 1975) offers us a fascinating insight into the artist's early concept for this commemorative public sculpture.

Among the extremely rare works on show is Rodin's Fugit Amor, originally conceived in marble in 1887, and later cast in bronze for the Musée Rodin by the Alexis Rudier foundry in 1944. First realised as part of The Gates of Hell and inspired by the story of Paolo and Francesca from Dante's Inferno, the two figures known as Fugit Amor can be seen twice on the right hand door. Another example of a notable work on display is The Abduction of Hippodamie (c1871), an early work part modelled by Rodin under the mentorship of Albert-Ernest Carrier-Belleuse (1824–1887). Depicting a centaur carrying a young woman, The Abduction of Hippodamie is a remarkable example of two sculptors collaborating with surprising effect.

The Birth of Modern Sculpture will also showcase three works from the later part of Rodin's career such as his Mouvement de danse figures. The artist's late dance figures have enjoyed a marked revival in interest, particularly in the UK, and the exhibition at Bowman Sculpture will be an opportunity to see a number of rarely-seen bronzes. Works such as Pas de Deux – Mouvement de Danse Type G, conceived in 1911, showing dancers with exaggerated poses is an excellent example of Rodin's later move towards abstraction.

To mark the 100th anniversary of Rodin's death (1917), a programme of dedicated exhibitions has been organised at institutions around the world, notably Rodin : The Centennial Exhibition at The Grand Palais, Paris (22 March – 31 July 2017), Versus Rodin: Bodies Across Space and Time at The Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide (4 March – 7 July 2017) and Rodin at The Met at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (17 September – 18 January 2018). The Birth of Modern Sculpture will be staged in 18 September - 10th November 2017 at 1 Canada Square in London's Canary Wharf, offering visitors another unique opportunity to see these beautiful works.

For Robert Bowman, Director Bowman Sculpture, this exhibition is the culmination of nearly 40 years of expertise exploring the sculptor's prolific work. He explains: My passion for Rodin started over 35 years ago when I first saw 'Iris, Messenger of the Gods' at Sotheby's. And so began my journey into Rodin's sculpture beyond 'The Kiss' and 'The Thinker'. I discovered the pioneering works with which he really challenged the world of sculpture. In this exhibition I hope to share an array of exquisite works which demonstrate the artist's fascination for the human form, its beauty but also its flaws, and the way in which he celebrated these traits with equal emotion.