

MATISSE & RODIN

FROM 23RD OCTOBER 2009 TO 28TH FEBRUARY 2010

Exhibition curator: Nadine Lehni

In the coming autumn, the Rodin Museum in Paris will be staging a face-to-face encounter between two outstanding creative artists who were only a generation apart, Henri Matisse et Auguste Rodin. Rodin was the dominant figure in the sculpture of the period while Matisse, Rodin's contemporary for the first seventeen years of the 20th century, introduced revolutionary changes in its painting. The story of the encounters and relations between these two major artists is one that has remained unexplored until now.

"Matisse & Rodin" will put forward some fresh thinking on what Matisse, the master of Fauvism, made of Rodin, on what his works can tell us about the affinities, correspondences or differences between the two artists. On show to the public will be a wide-ranging selection of Matisse's sculpture, an aspect of his work to which no specific exhibition has been devoted since 1975.

As well as those of the Musée Rodin, the exhibition is based on the collections of the Musée Matisse in Nice, while also drawing widely on public and private collections from France and abroad. Between 20th June and 27th September, a slightly different version will be on show at the Musée Matisse in Nice.

When the two artists met for the first time, in 1899, Matisse was thirty years old and Rodin sixty. At a much later date, Matisse, who had come to show the sculptor his drawings, was to give an account of this meeting and of his disappointment at Rodin's reaction and the sculptor's advice to him to produce more polished drawings.

The painter, however, was to refer frequently to the sculptor in his observations; he acquired one of his works in plaster at an early date and, like the older man, had as his favourite subjects female nudes in non-academic poses, caught in the intimate setting of the studio. Like Rodin, Matisse as a sculptor preferred modelling, using particularly malleable materials, to handling the hardness of stone.

Likewise, in the field of the graphic arts, there is an authentic thematic and stylistic affinity to be observed between the two artists. Matisse began his discovery of Rodin's drawings and working methods from the year 1900. Here at the turn of the century, the liberating energy revealed in Rodin's drawings and his free treatment of the figure had a considerable effect on younger artists that has remained largely unknown.

By selecting certain specific works and using a thematic approach, "Matisse & Rodin" sets out to show both points of convergence and divergence in the sculptural and graphic work of the two masters.

It aims to explore Matisse's sculpture and drawings and, from the perspective of Matisse's art, to see Rodin in a new light. It should thus serve to highlight the new territories opened up by the sculptor, prefiguring directions that were to be taken up by Matisse.

Exhibition catalogue: joint publication RMN/musée Rodin.

130 col. ill., 160 p., 21x28 cm, 35€

Additions to the exhibition include guided tours, encounters with specialists in various fields, one-day seminars and a booklet of games for families.

Enquiries : www.musee-rodin.fr

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Closed on Mondays

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Matisse, *The Serf*, bronze 1900-1903.
© Succession H. Matisse.
Photo : François Fernandez.
Coll. Musée Matisse de Nice.



Rodin, *Female nude with long hair, head thrown back*, graphite and watercolour, ca. 1900.
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Rodin, *Balzac*, second study for nude F, known as *As an Athlete*, Bronze, 1896.
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