



Press release, July 7, 2020

Following the publication of the article in *Les Echos* of July 6, 2020 and a series of dispatches concerning the impact of COVID-19 on its business model, the Musée Rodin would like to provide some clarification.

The Musée Rodin is the only non-subsidized state-owned museum in France, funding all of its own operating costs, salaries and activities. In addition to the usual museum funding sources (museum shop and ticket office, space rental, touring exhibitions, partnerships and sponsorship), the Musée Rodin has been producing and selling original Rodin bronzes editions for over a hundred years. This activity is as old as the museum itself; its development is unrelated to the Covid-19 health crisis.

Editions of original works

The Musée Rodin is a state-owned museum. As such, it does not sell the works of its collection, which are part of the public domain and therefore inalienable and imprescriptible. Its collections have traditionally included a bronze of each original edition, and these works are also part of the French national collections.

However, the museum is also the "beneficiary" and heir to the artist's copyrights. Rodin himself wanted the Musée Rodin to edit and sell original bronzes made from the moulds or original models he bequeathed to the museum. These editions, limited to twelve, are produced in strict observance of the regulations and of Rodin's moral rights. Indeed, the museum ensures that his moral rights are respected and takes legal action in the event of counterfeit.

The Musée Rodin has developed the edition of bronzes in recent years, basing those editions on significant archival research, under the supervision of its Scientific Committee.

Rodin's international reputation

It was Rodin's intention to ensure the survival of his museum and the international dissemination of his work. The collections compiled by Thomas Fortune Ryan for the Metropolitan Museum in New York, Jules Mastbaum for the Philadelphia's Museum and Gerald B. Cantor for the Iris & Gerald B. Cantor Center for Visual Arts at Stanford University, and those at the Museum of Western Art in Tokyo and the the Shizuoka Prefectural Museum in Japan, resulted from the edition of original works.

The works in question are neither copies nor reproductions, but original works in their own right.

The COVID-19 health crisis

As a self-funded museum, the Musée Rodin has been hard hit by the closure of its premises for over three months and by the drop in international tourism, as foreign tourists make up a large percentage of its visitor numbers. The revenue from the ticket office and museum shop has plummeted. Faced with the COVID-19 crisis, the museum will draw on the reserves it acquired in the past from the sale of bronzes to make up for its current losses.

The museum has also launched an online campaign for donations to help conserve its collections and pursue its mission.

The Musée Rodin reopened to the public on July 7, 2020, in compliance with the current hygiene regulations. Throughout the summer, it proposes a programme of events open to all.

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