

Auguste RODIN (1840-1917)

***SAINT JEAN-BAPTISTE***

Reduction n°1 - half life size.

Bronze, richly shaded green brown patina

*H : 77,8 cm, L : 47,5 cm, D : 23,3 cm*

Authentic example signed "A.Rodin", cast by "Alexis Rudier Fondeur Paris" (mark), inside relief "A.Rodin" seal.

**Cast in 1930**

*Edition details - Comité Rodin inclusion advice (2015-4674B) :*

- 7 examples cast by Thiebaut for Rodin before 1917.

- 4 examples cast by Alexis Rudier after 1920 for the museum, including ours.

- 4 examples cast by Georges Rudier.

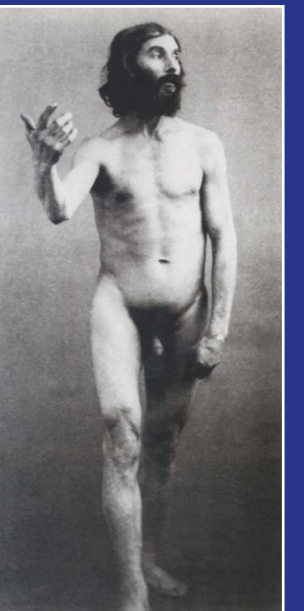
*Exhibition reference :*

*Salon in 1880, plaster (original size)*

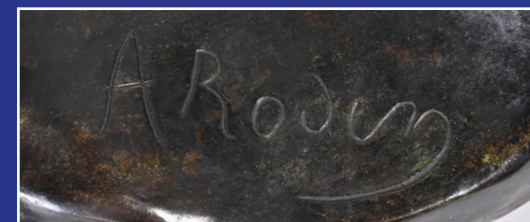
*Saint Jean-Baptiste* is Rodin's second most important work after the *Age d'airain* (1875-1877) about which the artist was accused of having directly moulded a human body, a scandal that made him famous. Successfully exhibited with good critics at the Salon in 1880 in its monumental size, two meters high (to avoid the precedent accusation), it followed the *Gate of the Hell* commission. The story of this sculpture is essentially about the meeting in 1878 between Rodin and Pignatelli, an Italian model wishing to pose for the young artist. As Pignatelli was jumping on the base ready to be the sculpture subject, Rodin exclaimed: "But, it is a walking man!!!"... Thus, two sculptures were born from this meeting : ours, and - over twenty years later - without arms nor head, the *Homme qui marche*.

In addition to its historical importance, this sculpture is instructive for several reasons. First, even with the reduction, a third of the original, the sculpture conserves a very strong appearance showing the universal dimension of the piece.

Secondly, in comparison with around 350 examples of the *Baiser* edited by Barbedienne, this one is more than ten times less important. Indeed, Alexis Rudier became the most sought after founder linking quality of casting, patina and chiselling. Even after Rodin's death, the Maison Rudier kept the almost exclusivity of the models edited for the Museum. Following great results in the 1920s, the museum commissioned several casts like ours, at a time when Rodin's exhibitions abroad had great success. But the Great Depression in 1929, and its consequences in Europe, slow down the sales by the museum, which kept in its collections the available examples. Our example was one of them before being sold to Eugene Rudier.



Pignatelli, nude model for the *Saint Jean-Baptiste*.





Examples in Museums :

- Before 1917, seven casts by Société anonyme de fonderie artistique (Thiébaud frères, Fumière et Gavignot successeurs)
  - Cambridge, Fogg Art Museum, bequest of Grenville L. Winthrop, one bronze without mark (inv. 1943.1147).
- After 1920, four casts by Alexis Rudier :
  - Pittsburgh, Carnegie Institute, Museum of Art, 1920, (inv. 20.14.3).
  - Los Angeles, Cantor Coll., acq. sale, Christie's New York, 8 novembre 1995, n°137 (former Jules Mastbaum Coll.), 1925.
  - Hagerstown, Washington County Museum of Art, gift of Anna B. Singer who had acquired it at the exhibition 1930, Amsterdam , the Hague, n°11 (inv. A0003.31.0403)
- Paris, Collection UDB : our example.
- Four casts by Georges Rudier (from n° 5 to 8)
  - LACMA, gift of the Cantor Art Foundation, 1973, n°6 (M.73.108.12)

