

Akim Monet Fine Arts, LLC



Auguste RODIN (1840-1917)

La Voix Intérieure ou La Méditation, sans bras
The Inner Voice or Meditation without arms

Bronze

21 1/4 x 7 1/2 x 6 1/4 in. (54 x 18,8 x 15,9 cm)

Ed. 8 + 4AP

1896/97

On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the passing of Auguste Rodin on November 17, 1917 the Musée Rodin officially presented the first bronze cast of this sculpture

The bronze is inscribed A. Rodin, © by Musée Rodin and numbered, dated and stamped with the foundry mark of Susse Fondeur, Paris

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PROVENANCE

Musée Rodin, Paris

AUTHENTICATION

A certificate of authenticity, signed by the Director of the Musée Rodin, is given to every purchaser of an original bronze by Auguste Rodin

This work will be included in the forthcoming *Auguste Rodin catalogue critique de l'oeuvre sculpté* currently being prepared by the Comité Auguste Rodin at Galerie Brame et Lorenceau under the direction of Jérôme Le Blay

EXHIBITED

Disruptive selection, Fall 2019, Popcorn Gallery Akim Monet Fine Arts, Los Angeles

OTHER CASTS IN PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

London, Victoria & Albert Museum, large model cast in 1897, given by the artist in 1914
Adelaide, Art Gallery of South Australia, large model cast in 1982, gifted in 1996



Wax model of *The Inner Voice* at Fonderie Susse, Paris. This model is used for the casting into bronze.



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NOTES

Absorbed in her thoughts, standing in a marvelous arabesque, whose powerful forms are equally soft and graceful, [...] the *Meditation* or *The Inner Voice* is fundamental to our understanding of Rodin's work.

In it the study of nature is complete, and I have made every effort to render art as complete as possible. I regard this plaster as one of my best-finished, most accomplished works

[Rodin] wrote to Prince Eugene of Sweden on 2 January 1897, informing him that he intended to give the cast of the figure that was going to be exhibited in Stockholm to the Swedish National Museum.



MICHELANGELO (1475-1564)
Model of a slave, dark red wax on a metal armature rising from a cylindrical wood base

Michelangelo's influence was evident: [*The Inner Voice*] can thus be related to the red wax *Slave*, in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, which Rodin admired so much that he is said to have suggested putting a prayer stool in front of the cabinet in which it was displayed.

The figure of *Meditation* can [...] be recognized in *Christ and the Magdalen*, *Constellation*, and especially in the *Monument to Victor Hugo*, where she initially represented the *Muse of Les Orientales*.

In order to include this figure in the composition, Rodin had to demolish the outer side of the right leg, the left knee, and the arms on one of the plaster casts of the complete figure.

He then reduced it and invented new arms, many of whose terracotta and plaster studies, now in the Musée Rodin collections, were also used for the female nude known as *Cybele*, when she was, in turn, added to the monument.



Auguste RODIN (1840-1917)
The Inner Voice, wax foundry model

Neither of the [...] maquettes for the monument satisfied Rodin. He was so uncertain about the arms that he decided to have the figure enlarged without arms, and to exhibit it as such in 1897, together with the monument group. At this time the statue was called *The Inner Voice* after a collection of poems published by Victor Hugo in 1837:

Gentle, melancholy, and charming, her fresh young body is all impregnated with seawater, and it is she who murmurs and whispers the sweet words carried by the babbling waves, which rustle on the verdant banks, and are sung by children, young girls, and lovers. Rodin has made his idea visible to everyone. These two women [the two Muses], are not apparitions, they are voices. The poet cannot see them. He listens to them as space unfolds before him.

But the title *The Inner Voice* failed to take hold. Turn-of-the-century critics spoke of the "nereid" (sea nymph) or the "muse," and the name was gradually replaced by *Meditation*, possibly owing to a witty remark Rodin made to Gsell:

I left my figure in that state deliberately, believe me. It represents Meditation. That's why it has neither arms to wave about, nor legs to walk away with.

Because of its unfinished appearance, the public found it hard to understand *The Inner Voice* when it was shown in Dresden and Stockholm in 1897. "How courageous it was to have chosen the fragmentary, expressive *Inner Voice* in 1897," wrote Claude Keisch about the purchase of a plaster made by the Albertinum, Dresden, after the 1897 International Exhibition.

However, this was the state that Rodin preferred, since it reflected the new direction his work was taking. Rilke understood what the sculptor meant immediately. His poet's intuitiveness led him write probably the best—and most frequently quoted—interpretation of the work:

The arms are surprisingly absent. Rodin felt them in this instance to be something extraneous to the body, which sought to envelop itself without any external aid. One may recall [Eleanora] Duse, who, in a play by D'Annunzio, when bitterly abandoned, tries to give an embrace without arms and to hold without hands. This scene... conveyed the impression that the arms were a superfluous adornment, something for the rich and overindulgent, something which those in pursuit of poverty could easily cast aside. In that moment she did not look as if she had sacrificed something important... The same is true of Rodin's armless statues; nothing vital is missing. One stands before them as if before a completed whole that brooks no complement.

We are grateful to Madame Antoinette Le Normand-Romain for the above entry and essay in the publication: THE BRONZES OF RODIN catalogue of works in the Musée Rodin, Volume 2, p. 509-514 (RMN 2007)



Plaster of *The Inner Voice* at Fonderie Susse, Paris (front & back). This plaster model is used for the casting into bronze.



The Inner Voice at Fonderie Susse, Paris (back). Bronze.

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The Inner Voice at Fonderie Susse, Paris (front). Bronze.

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The Inner Voice at Fonderie Susse, Paris (right). Bronze.

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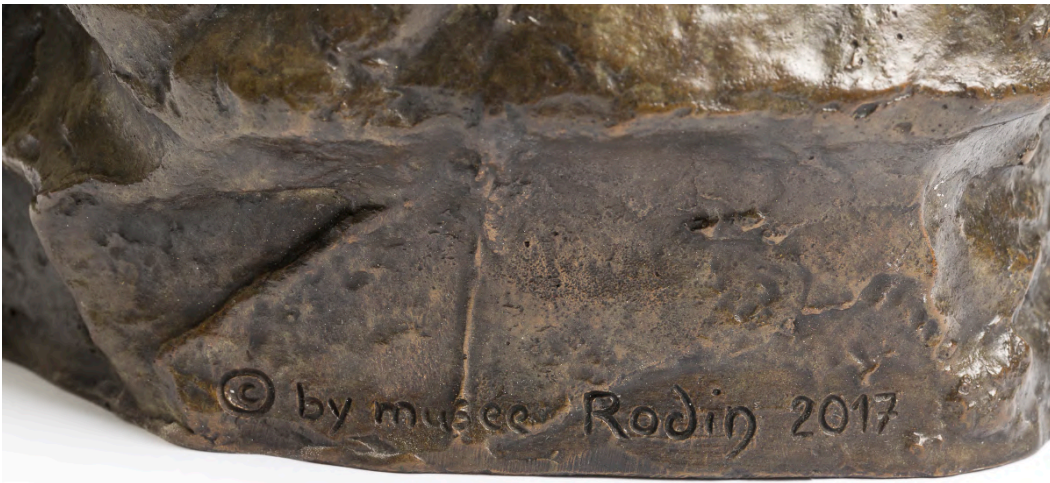
The Inner Voice at Fonderie Susse, Paris (left). Bronze.

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The Inner Voice at Fonderie Susse, Paris (signature & edition).



The Inner Voice at Fonderie Susse, Paris (Musée Rodin authenticity seal).