



**August Rodin** was born in Paris on November 12, 1840. He was the second child of Marie Cheffer and Jean-Baptiste Rodin, a police department clerk. August began to teach himself to draw at the age of ten, and as a teenager attended the Petite Ecole, a school that specialized in art and mathematics. His drawing teacher sought to develop the personality of each one of his students so that it might be expressed in their work.

In 1857 Rodin submitted a clay sculpture to the Grand Ecole, a respected school of fine arts in France. His application was denied, as were two other submissions. As a result Rodin decided to find work as a craftsman and ornamenter,

producing decorative objects and embellishments for architecture. He did this for the better part of two decades.

In 1864, Rodin met a young seamstress named Rose Beuret. In 1866 the couple had a son. In that same year Rodin submitted his first sculpture for exhibition and also entered the studio of Albert-Ernest Carrier-Belleuse, a successful mass producer of art objects. It was here Rodin would spend the next six years producing staircase and doorway embellishments, and designing roof embellishments.

During the next six years Rodin traveled abroad. This journey became a pivotal point in his life as an artist. His travels to Italy, where he was drawn to the work of Donatello and Michelangelo, were perhaps the most influential. Rodin said, "It is Michelangelo who has freed me from academic sculpture." On his return to Belgium Rodin began working on his *The Age of Bronze*, a life-size male figure. This piece would bring significant attention to Rodin.

Rodin and Rose Beuret returned to Paris in 1877. In 1880 Rodin met Edmund Turquet, the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Fine Arts, and received a commission that yielded some of his finest pieces, including *Adam and Eve*, *The Thinker* and *The Kiss*.

August Rodin died on November 17, 1917. His work has been compared to Michelangelo, and he is recognized as the most important sculptor of the modern era. It is said that he freed sculpture from the repetition of traditional patterns, paving the way for greater experimentation in the 20th century.