

Auguste Rodin, Künstler/-in (*12.11.1840 Paris, +17.11.1917 Meudon)



Title	La Porte de l'enfer
Also known as	Das Höllentor The Gates of Hell La porte de l'Enfer
Date	1880–1917
Medium	Bronze
Dimensions	object: 680 x 400 x 85 cm
Signature	-
Inscription	-
Catalogue raisonné	-
Edition / number	4. Guss (1942-1947)
Edition	-
Inv. No.	1949/0022
Credit line	Kunsthau Zurich, Donated by Emil Georg Bührle, 1949
Accession year	1949
Object type	sculpture
Classification	B 3[1] sculpture 16th to 19th century
Description	In 1880 Rodin was commissioned by the French government to create a monumental bronze gate with scenes from Dante's 'Inferno' for a Musée des Arts Décoratifs. The museum was never built; Rodin's gate, on which he worked until his death, remained unfinished. Rodin also treated many of the 186 figures in separate sculptures, such as 'Denker' or 'Grande ombre', the crowning trinity developed from his earlier 'Adam'. See inv. 1968/59 and inv. 2381.
Provenance	frühestens ab 1942 – 1949, Eugène Rudier (*1875, +1952) (Giesser/-in), Malakoff-Paris

KUNSTHAUS ZÜRICH

1942, Arno Breker (*1900 Elberfeld (Wuppertal), +1991 Düsseldorf) (Auftraggeber/-in)
1949, Emil Georg Bührle (*1890 Pforzheim, +1956 Zürich) (Sammler/-in), Kauf auf
Rechnung Baufond
ab 1949, Zürcher Kunstgesellschaft | Kunsthaus Zürich (Museum), Zürich, Geschenk

Provenance category A – The provenance for the period from 1933 to 1945 can be reconstructed. This is not a case of Nazi-looted art.

About the provenance This version of Rodin's 'Gates of Hell' was the fourth casting of the work to be made by the Rudier foundry in Paris between 1942 and 1947 at the latest. The casting was ordered in 1942 by the German sculptor Arno Breker for the National Socialist 'Führer Museum' in Linz. Although payments were made, until the end of the war in 1945 there was no delivery and thus, the sculpture remained in Paris and in the ownership of Rudier. After the war, the work came to the Kunsthaus in 1947 for an exhibition of metal castings from Rudier's foundry. Together with three other bronzes from Rudier's holdings, two by Rodin and one by Bourdelle, the Gates of Hell was acquired for the Kunsthaus in 1949. While the other works mentioned above were acquired with a contribution from the city of Zurich, the Gates of Hell entered the collection through the so-called building fund and thus with funds from Emil Bührle. This building fund had been set up in context with the project planning for the large exhibition hall paid for by Emil Bührle. (State of research 13.01.2022)

Literature

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- Albert E. Elsen: The Gates of Hell by Auguste Rodin, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985.
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- Thomas D. Trummer (Hrsg.): Bilder der Pandemie, Köln: Walther König, 2020, S. 92 f. (ill.).