



L'Éternel Printemps

(The Eternal Spring)

AUGUSTE RODIN

1840–1917 | FRENCH

Bronze with brown patina | Conceived 1884; cast between 1905 and 1910
Signed "Rodin" (on base), with Barbedienne foundry mark

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MEDIUM

Bronze with brown patina

DIMENSIONS

20 1/4" high x 26" wide x 13" deep (51.8 x 67 x 31.6 cm)

DATED

Conceived in 1884; cast between 1905 and 1910

SIGNED

"Rodin" (on base), with Barbedienne foundry mark

*“He who thinks of sculpture thinks
of Rodin first.”*

— RAINER MARIA RILKE, 1903

L'Éternel Printemps

AN EXTRAORDINARY LIFETIME CAST

One of the most important artists in history, Auguste Rodin is hailed as the father of modern sculpture. His revolutionary works captured the depth of human emotion like no other, stunning in the intensity of their expression and technique. Please see the photos of an extraordinary lifetime cast of one of Rodin's most famous bronzes, *L'Éternel Printemps* (The Eternal Spring).

Conceived at the height of his career in 1884, this sculpture tells the age-old narrative of forbidden love. It was originally intended for his pivotal *Gates of Hell* commission, as it depicts the affair of Francesca da Rimini and Paolo Malatesta, who famously appear in Dante's *Inferno* for their transgression. Highlighting the lovers' bliss rather than their ultimate punishment, Rodin felt the bronze was too sensual and removed it from his *Gates of Hell*. He chose to create this stand-alone version that would become one of his most acclaimed and beloved works.

Rodin's technical mastery was unmatched in his day, and by the turn of the century he was regarded as the best sculptor since Michelangelo. His composition is dynamic from every angle, utilizing negative space in the arch of the woman's back and her lover's outstretched arm to create movement and feeling. This bronze still has its original lovely, warm brown patina, a perfect complement to the lovers' warm embrace. The pair seems happily frozen in time, and the title, *The Eternal Spring*, shows Rodin's intention to leave their amorous pose forever uninterrupted.

After exhibiting this sculpture at the Salon of 1897 to rave reviews, Rodin awarded its casting to the Barbedienne foundry. Our work is from Barbedienne's exclusive second reduction, meaning it is the second largest of the four versions they produced. This sculpture was also importantly cast when Rodin still personally approved the finished bronzes and was completed between 1905-1910.

As one of Rodin's most iconic works, most versions of this sculpture reside in important museum collections, including the Musée Rodin, Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. It is also responsible for setting Rodin's highest auction record ever, when a marble version achieved \$20.4 million at Sotheby's in 2016.

DATED

Conceived 1884; this cast
1905–1910

SIGNED

"Rodin" (on base), with
Barbedienne foundry mark

DIMENSIONS

20 1/4" high x 26" wide x 13" deep (51.8 x 67 x 31.6 cm)



Provenance

CHAIN OF OWNERSHIP

Private collection, Argentina, acquired in the 1910s

Private collection, France

M.S. Rau, New Orleans

Private collection, Texas

M.S. Rau, New Orleans

The Comité Auguste Rodin records the work's earliest provenance as a private collection in Argentina, acquired in the 1910s by family tradition. The chain of ownership above is that certified by the Art Loss Register, 15 August 2025.

Inscriptions & Casting

MARKS

Signed “Rodin” on the right side, at the rear of the mound

Foundry mark “F. Barbedienne. Fondateur” on the left side

Letter “S” struck on the edge of the base, corresponding to a foundry workshop active circa 1905–1910

THE BARBEDIENNE EDITION

On 6 July 1898 Rodin agreed a renewable ten-year publishing contract with the Leblanc-Barbedienne foundry covering *Le Baiser* and *L'Éternel Printemps*, in several sizes and unlimited quantity. A plaster taken from a marble was entrusted to the foundry, which produced reductions using the Achille Collas mechanical reduction process that Barbedienne held under patent.

To the initial edition of *L'Éternel Printemps* in sizes of 64 cm, 40 cm and 25 cm, Leblanc-Barbedienne added a 52 cm reduction in 1900 — the second in order of size. It was produced until 1918 in an estimated 32 to 33 examples. Rodin received a 20% royalty on these sales; the original invoices are held in the archives of the Musée Rodin.

CATALOGUE CRITIQUE

The Comité Auguste Rodin has recorded the work in its archives for inclusion in the forthcoming *Catalogue Critique de l'Oeuvre Sculpté d'Auguste Rodin*, in preparation at the Galerie Brame & Lorenceau under the direction of Jérôme Le Blay, under the number **2018-5711B**.

Comité Auguste Rodin

Letter from the Comité Auguste Rodin, signed by François Lorenceau and Jérôme Le Blay, recording the bronze under number 2018-5711B.

COMITÉ AUGUSTE RODIN *Bronzes, Marbres, Plâtres, Cires, Terre-Cuites* CATALOGUE CRITIQUE DE L'ŒUVRE SCULPTÉ

Jérôme LE BLAY
François LORENCEAU

Référence :

Eternel Printemps, second état, 2^{ème} réduction dite aussi « taille n°4 »

Bronze à patine brune claire nuancée – 51,8 x 67 x 31,6 cm

Signé « Rodin » sur le côté droit à l'arrière du tertre, avec la marque de fondeur « f. Barbedienne, Fondateur » sur le côté gauche et avec la lettre « S » frappée au tas sur la tranche.

Conçu en 1884, cette taille réduite en 1900, cette fonte entre 1905 et 1910.

Provenance : Collection privée, Argentine (Acquis dans les années 1910 par tradition familiale)

Monsieur,

Pour faire suite à votre demande, nous vous prions de trouver ci-après le résultat de nos recherches concernant le bronze de l'*Eternel Printemps*, second état, 2^{ème} réduction que vous nous avez soumis pour examen.

Auguste Rodin a convenu le 6 juillet 1898 avec la fonderie Leblanc-Barbedienne d'un contrat d'édition de 10 ans renouvelable pour le *Baiser* et l'*Eternel Printemps*, en plusieurs tailles pour chacun de ces deux sujets et en une quantité non limitée. Un plâtre obtenu par moulage d'un marbre fut initialement confié à la fonderie Leblanc-Barbedienne qui en fit réaliser des réductions par le principe de la machine de réduction mécanique d'Achille Collas dont Barbedienne détenait le brevet.

À l'édition initiale de l'*Eternel Printemps* dans les tailles de 64 cm, 40 cm et de 25 cm, Leblanc-Barbedienne ajoute en 1900, la réduction d'une hauteur de 52 cm (la deuxième en termes de taille) qui sera produite jusqu'en 1918 entre 32 et 33 exemplaires selon les recensements.

L'épreuve que vous nous avez présentée, tant par son montage intérieur, ses détails que ses marques intérieures et extérieures, est tout à fait conforme aux fontes de l'édition Barbedienne qui s'est étendue de 1900 à 1918. La lettre S frappée à l'intérieur correspond à un atelier actif vers 1905-1910. Les épreuves produites par Barbedienne portent habituellement un numéro à l'encre inscrit à l'intérieur mais il est fréquent que ce numéro s'efface avec le temps. Cette vente a donné lieu à une commission de 20% versée à Rodin au titre de ses droits d'auteur dont les factures originales se trouvent dans les archives du musée Rodin.

Pour votre information et en l'état actuel de nos connaissances, nous avons l'intention d'inclure cette œuvre dans nos archives en vue de la publication du *Catalogue Critique de l'Œuvre Sculpté d'Auguste Rodin* actuellement en préparation à la galerie Brame & Lorenceau sous la direction de Jérôme Le Blay sous le numéro 2018-5711B.

En vous souhaitant bonne réception, je vous prie de croire, Monsieur, en l'expression de nos salutations les plus distinguées.

François Lorenceau

Jérôme Le Blay

N.B. : Ce document n'est pas un certificat d'authenticité. Il ne sera pas délivré des duplicata

GALERIE BRAME & LORENCEAU - 68, BOULEVARD MALESHERBES - 75008 PARIS
Tél. : 33 (0)1 45 22 16 89 - Fax : 33 (0)1 45 22 01 67 - e-mail : comiterodin@bramelorenceau.com
TVA FR 74 572 173 565

Comité Auguste Rodin — Translation

English translation of the preceding letter.

COMITÉ AUGUSTE RODIN *Bronzes, Marbles, Plasters, Waxes, Terracotta* CRITICAL CATALOGUE OF SCULPTED WORK

Jérôme LE BLAY
François LORENCEAU

Reference:

Eternal Spring, second state, 2nd reduction also called « size no. 4 »
Bronze with a clear brown patina - 51,8 x 67 x 31,6 cm

Signed «Rodin» on the right side at the back of the mound, with the foundry mark «F. Barbedienne. Fondateur» on the left side and with the letter «S» struck on the pile on the edge.

Designed in 1884, this size reduced in 1900, this cast between 1905 and 1910.

Provenance : Private collection, Argentina (Acquired in the 1910s by the family)

Monsieur,

To follow up on your request, please find below the results of our research concerning the bronze the *Eternal Spring*, second state, 2nd reduction, that you submitted to us for examination.

Auguste Rodin agreed on July 6, 1898 with the Leblanc-Barbedienne foundry to a ten-year extendible contract for the *Kiss* and the *Eternal Spring*, in several sizes for each of these subjects in an unlimited quantity. A plaster obtained by molding a marble was initially entrusted to the Leblanc-Barbedienne foundry. They made reductions using Achille Collas' mathematically precise mechanical reduction machine, to which Barbedienne held the patent. To their initial edition of the *Eternal Spring* in the sizes of 64 cm, 40 cm and 25 cm, Leblanc-Barbedienne added in 1900 a 52 cm reduction (the second largest in terms of size). According to the censuses, between 32 and 33 copies were produced until 1918.

The example that you have presented to us, based on its interior assembly, its details, and its marks inside and outside, is quite in conformity with the Barbedienne edition that was made from 1900 to 1918. The letter S, stamped on the inside, corresponds to an active workshop around 1905-1910. Barbedienne's prints usually carry an in-house ink number, but this number often fades over time. This sale resulted in a 20% commission paid to Rodin in respect of his copyrights, the original invoices of which are in the archives of the Rodin museum.

For your information and in the current state of our knowledge, we intend to include this work in our archives for publication in the Critical Catalog of Sculpture by Auguste Rodin currently being prepared at the Brame & Lorenceau Gallery under the direction of Jérôme Le Blay under number 2018 5711B.

I hope this letter finds you well, sir; in the expression of our most distinguished salutations.

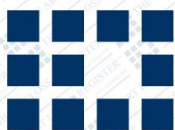

François Lorenceau


Jérôme Le Blay

N.B.: This document is not a certificate of authenticity. It will not be delivered duplicate.

Art Loss Register

Certificate dated 15 August 2025 · ALR Ref: S00262093



THE ART LOSS REGISTER™

www.artloss.com

Ms Victoria Burr
M. S. Rau Antiques
M. S. Rau Antiques, 630 Royal Street
New Orleans 70130
United States

15th August 2025

ALR Ref: S00262093

We have now carried out a search of the Art Loss Register database for the following item based upon the information that you have provided:

ITEM:	L'Éternel Printemps
ARTIST:	Auguste Rodin
DATE / PERIOD:	Conceived in 1884; cast between 1905 and 1910
DESCRIPTION:	Signed "Rodin" (on base), with Barbedienne foundry mark
MEDIUM:	Bronze with brown patina
DIMENSIONS:	Height: 20 1/4 in; width: 26 in; depth: 13 in.
CURRENT OWNERSHIP:	Trade, New Orleans, Louisiana, USA, acquired in 2025.
HISTORIC PROVENANCE:	Private collection, Argentina, acquired in the 1910s. Private collection, France. M.S. Rau, New Orleans. Private collection, Texas. M.S. Rau, New Orleans.



We certify that this item has not, to the best of our knowledge, been registered as stolen or missing on our database nor has a claimant reported this item to us as a loss between 1933 and 1945. It should, however, be noted that:

- not every loss or theft is reported to us, but our database includes Interpol and other Police losses which have been circulated;
- our database does not contain information on illegally exported or excavated artefacts unless they have been reported to us; and
- we do not have details of all items confiscated, looted or subjected to a forced seizure or forced sale between 1933 and 1945.

It is important for you to note that this Certificate is no indication of the authenticity of the item. Nor is this Certificate an export licence. The details above for Current Ownership and Historic Provenance are those provided to us at the time of this search and we do not guarantee the provenance of any item we have searched. Your search with the Art Loss Register demonstrates due diligence but may not excuse you from undertaking further research or providing further information if established at a later date. Should we become aware of any abuse of this Certificate we may find it necessary to take action.

Julian Radcliffe
Chairman, The Art Loss Register

The Art Loss Register, 16 Black Friars Lane, London EC4V 6EB
Tel: +44 (0)207 841 5780 Email: info@artloss.com Company number: 02455350

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Museum Comparable



The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

Eternal Spring

Modeled ca. 1881, carved 1907 — Marble — On view in Gallery 800

Museum Comparable



Musée Rodin, Paris

Eternal Springtime

Marble — On view at the Musée Rodin, Paris

Museum Comparable



Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Eternal Springtime

Modeled about 1881; cast about 1916–17 — Bronze — 62.86 cm (24 3/4 in.) · Acc. 1993.50

Auction Comparables

Five works in marble and bronze by Rodin depicting the same subject. Records per the artnet Price Database.



L'ÉTERNEL PRINTEMPS

1884 — Marble — Height 66.6 cm (26.22 in.)

Sotheby's New York — Impressionist & Modern Art Evening Sale, Lot 17 — 9 May 2016

\$20,410,000



Éternel printemps, premier état, taille originale — variante type C

1884 — Bronze — Height 66.7 cm (26.26 in.)

Sotheby's London — Impressionist & Modern Art Evening Sale, Lot 19 — 3 February 2015

\$2,911,813



L'éternel printemps, premier état

1884 — Bronze with brown patina — Height 63.5 cm (25 in.)

Christie's New York — Impressionist and Post-Impressionist Art Evening Sale, Lot 24 — 8 May 2000

\$1,766,000



Éternel printemps, premier état, taille originale, variante type A

1883 — Bronze — Height 63.7 cm (25.08 in.)

Sotheby's London — Modern & Contemporary Evening Auction, Lot 17 — 4 March 2025

\$1,603,461



L'éternel printemps, second état, 1ère réduction

1884 — Bronze — Height 66.5 cm (26.18 in.)

Sotheby's London — Impressionist & Modern Art Evening Sale, Lot 4 — 19 June 2012

\$1,210,083