

Venus

Auguste Rodin



WWW.HOLARTBOOKS.COM
TUCSON, ARIZONA

Hol Art Books, 2009

"Venus" translation Dorothy Dudley (public domain), 1912

"Dance of Shiva" translation © Tina Kover, 2009

All rights reserved

Printed in the United States of America

on FSC Mixed Sources certified, 30% PCW recycled paper

"Venus" first published 1912 by B. W. Huebsch, New York

Cover image: *Aphrodite*, known as *Venus de Milo*. Late 2nd century BC.

Island of Melos (Milo in modern Greek), Greece. Gift of the Marquis de Rivière to Louis XVIII, 1821. Musée du Louvre, Paris.

For more information about this book please e-mail info@holartbooks.com

ISBN 978-0-9823257-7-3

ISBN 978-0-9823257-8-0 (deluxe)

ISBN 978-0-9823257-9-7 (e-book)

holartbooks.com

#A-026

Contents

VENUS, page 1

First published in English in 1912, *Venus* is Rodin's singular description of the famous Greek sculpture, the *Venus de Milo*, now in the Louvre, Paris.

(Translation by Dorothy Dudley, 1912)

THE DANCE OF SHIVA, page 35

Written in 1913 and first published in 1921, Rodin's *The Dance of Shiva* considers a bronze statue of the Hindu god, through a set of written impressions.

Though looser in form than *Venus* this short work shares the same passion and melodrama.

(Translation by Tina Kover, 2009)



Venus

Modelled by the sea, which
is the reservoir of all the forces,
you enchant us and you sway us
by that grace and by that calm
which strength alone possesses,
and you bestow on us your
serenity. It prevails like the
charm of melodies powerful
and deep.

What triumphant amplitude!
What vigorous shadows!

From the boundaries of
the two worlds throngs come
to contemplate you, venerated
marble; and the twilight deepens
in the room that you may be
more clearly seen, shining
alone, while the silent hours
pass, heavy with admiration.

Still you hear our clamors,
immortal Venus! Having loved
your contemporaries, you
belong to us, now, to all of us,
to the universe. The twenty-
five centuries of your life seem

only to have consecrated your
invincible youth. And the
generations, those waves of
the ocean of the ages, to you,
victorious over time, come
and come again, attracted
and recalled irresistibly.

Admiration is not spent as
a marble wears away.

To the poets, to the seekers,
to the quiet artists, in the heart
of the city's tumult, you give
long moments of refuge.

Mutilated, you remain entire
to their eyes. If the ravages of
time have been permitted, it is

only that a trace may continue of their profane effort and of their impotence.

You are not a vain and sterile statue, the image of some unreal goddess of the Empyrean. Ready for action, you breathe, you are a woman: and that is your glory. You are goddess only in name; the mythological nectar does not run in your veins. What is divine in you is the infinite love of your sculptor for nature. More ardent and above all more patient than other men, he was

able to lift a corner of the veil too heavy for their idle hands.

And you are not, moreover, a mosaic of admirable shapes. There are no admirable shapes, but the shapes that agree, those that summon and presuppose one another according to the irrefutable logic of harmonious necessity, those that borrow life from one another. Yours gather in an indivisible whole, and it is the calm torrent of life that passes over you, that torrent whence you have sprung, naked and one.

About the Author

Auguste Rodin (1840–1917) was a French sculptor. Born in Paris, Rodin attended art school at a young age, but unable to advance to a higher education in art, he spent much of his early life working as a craftsman, doing decorative, architectural work. It wasn't until receiving a modest museum commission in 1880 that he was able to dedicate himself to his own art full-time.

By 1900, his dominating artistic career was well-established. A prodigious worker, he remains best known for singular sculptures like *The Thinker* and *The Kiss* and his monuments to French writers Honoré de Balzac and Victor Hugo.

While Rodin's works can be found in museum collections and on public display in cities around the world, the Musée Rodin—opened in Paris in his former residence in 1919—continues to hold the largest single collection of the artist's work.



Hol Art Books is an independent press dedicated to publishing and promoting exceptional writing on visual art—classic works of art criticism and history, artist texts and biographies, foreign literature in translation, and the best of contemporary writing.

In a departure from traditional publishing, Hol brings authors and publishing professionals together online to collaboratively identify, evaluate, and develop its titles. This unique model is designed to create a more open and dynamic environment in which to publish books that meet high standards of excellence and have lasting resonance with readers.

Join us.

Visit holartbooks.com to find and publish great books on visual art.