

A. Rodin

Eddy Simon

Joël Alessandra, Illustrator

NBM Publishing (Feb 15, 2020)

Hardcover \$19.99 (112pp)

978-1-68112-241-0

Eddy Simon's smart, entertaining graphic biography of the renowned sculptor and artist Auguste Rodin begins with Rodin's childhood and his first steps toward sculpture, shaping dough at the side of his mother. His adult life is shown through the eyes of three women who aided him, loved him, and inspired him, their viewpoints individualized and not always flattering.

The book makes use of photographs, notes, extensive quotations, and dozens of detailed and convincing drawn reproductions of Rodin's famous pieces. These combine with a "Further Reading" section and a chronological summary, resulting in a rich, illuminating overview of Rodin's life and career.

Illustrator Joël Alessandra faced a formidable task when it came to translating Rodin's brilliant, detailed, and static art for a panel-by-panel format. His depictions of the major events and everyday routines of Rodin's life also capture the passion and vitality for which Rodin's work is known. The raw carnality of Rodin's art and romantic relationships are preserved, too.

The book's text and structure are equal to its visual appeal, achieving the monumental duty of boiling an expansive life down to its essential elements. It includes a critical public art show and an intimate argument between lovers. Its inclusion of the women who played such significant roles in Rodin's life helps to humanize the artist and his complicated personal life, conveying both his intensity and his contradictions.

Produced in close association with the Rodin Museum, *A. Rodin* is an excellent introduction to the artist, and one with deep insights for art experts.

PETER DABBENE (March / April 2020)

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