



Rodin's Hands, and Arms - Parts is Parts

Tate Modern has an expansive exhibition, *The Making of Rodin*, currently open. Above is a panorama of just some of the vast library of small body parts he made in preparation for an uncompleted suite of sculptures, but which he kept in files for possible use.



The Age of Bronze - Rodin

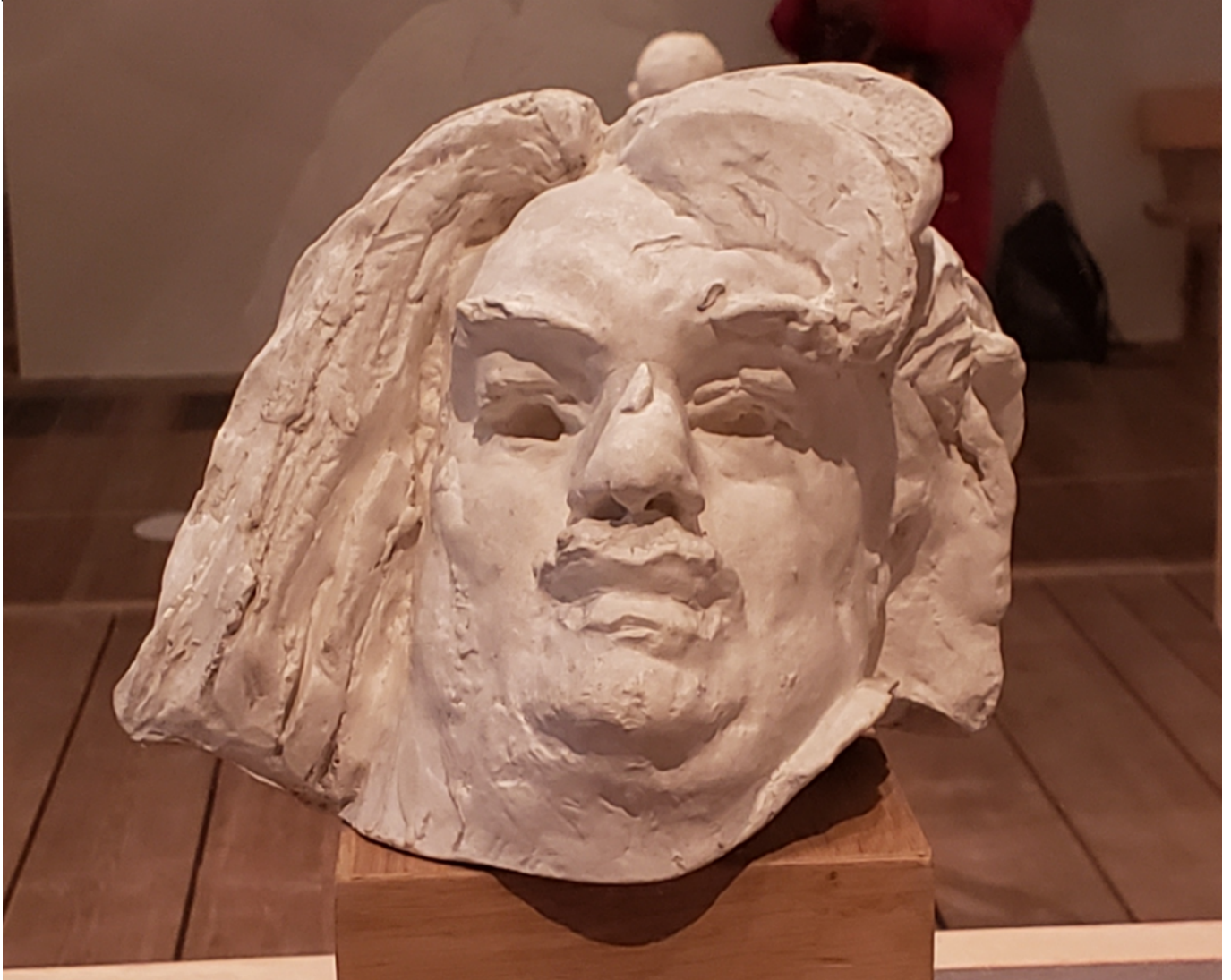
The very first thing we see, alone in the entry gallery, is *The Age of Bronze*, a life sized nude. But this is the only bronze in the show. This exhibition focuses not on the finished marble or cast bronze sculptures with which we're mostly familiar, but with the plaster and clay from which those finished products emerged.

It's hard to deny the power of Rodin's works, from *The Thinker* to his busts and full body works on Balzac. Here one gets to see the studies and preparatory models which led to those, and many other, great works. Here, with *The Thinker* one is able to get so close to the piece, and see details in the plaster which most likely would vanish in the darkness of bronze:



The Thinker — Rodin

Just look at the musculature on the near arm. Here we see the head for Balzac, still rough:



Balzac's head — Rodin

And here is Balzac's bath robe (seriously), the finished model is in the background, seen from the rear:



Balzac's bath robe — Rodin

And finally, a study of Camille Claudel, Rodin's assistant, an artist in her own right. An entire gallery text is given over to discussion of the treatment of women — artists and models both — within the strictures of the times.



Camille Claudel

I very much enjoyed this exhibit. And Tate is to be commended on their gallery COVID protocols, which by and large worked out. The crowds were never too big, the arrows on the floor tended to keep people moving along in controlled paths, and masking was mostly observed.