

With preface by Ronald S. Lauder, foreword by Renée Price, and essays by Oskar Bätschmann, Alessandra Comini, Sharon Hirsh, Ulf Küster, Jill Lloyd, Paul Müller, Peter Pfrunder, and Noëlle Pia

This catalogue accompanies a major exhibition devoted to the Swiss artist Ferdinand Hodler (1853–1918). It explores several key aspects of his work: his numerous self-portraits; his Symbolist canvases; his majestic paintings of the Swiss Alpine landscape; and a series of shockingly frank portraits of his lover, Valentine Godé-Darel, documenting her decline and death. There are also intimate photographs of Hodler taken by Gertrud Dübi-Müller, which show him as a very engaging figure, in bowler hat and striking various poses.

The essays in this volume cover all aspects of Hodler's life and work. Ulf Küster discusses the artist's work in series and variations, presenting him as a pioneer and advocate of modernism. Oskar Bätschmann looks at the late and last works by Hodler, describing them as "mystical celebrations of light and color." Jill Lloyd offers an overview of the Valentine Godé-Darel works, with a focus on their "unrelenting realism and particularity." Paul Müller discusses gestures in Hodler's Symbolist figurative paintings, in which "the body as a form of expression moves to the foreground." Sharon Hirsh studies the artist's late self-portraits, which "offer a glimpse into his emotional presence." Alessandra Comini analyzes the impact of Hodler and his Swiss peers on Austrian artists such as Gustav Klimt, Oskar Kokoschka, and Egon Schiele. And Peter Pfrunder offers insights regarding a series of photographs in which Hodler serves as a model.

The exhibition is on view at the Neue Galerie New York from September 20, 2012, to January 7, 2013, and at the Fondation Beyeler, Basel, from January 27 to May 5, 2013. It has been organized by Jill Lloyd, independent curator and Neue Galerie board member, and Ulf Küster, curator at the Fondation Beyeler.