

MEDIA RELEASE

Zurich, 29 January 2010

Just published: Catalogue raisonné James Pradier (1790–1852)

The catalogue raisonné by Dr. Claude Lapaire devoted to the œuvre of James Pradier (1790–1852) has just appeared. This new reference work on one of Switzerland’s major sculptors has been published by the Swiss Institute for Art Research (SIK-ISEA) in collaboration with 5 Continents in Milan.

James (actually Jean-Jacques) Pradier ranks among the great artists of 19th-century Geneva and one of the most significant sculptors of the Romantic school in Europe. Pradier left for Paris in 1808, and in 1813 he won the highly desirable Prix de Rome, which brought him a five-year residence as pensionnaire of the Académie de France in the Eternal City, where he perfected his skills. Upon his return he was literally swamped with commissions for a number of prestigious projects in the French capital, working on the interior of the Dôme des Invalides, on the Place de la Concorde, the Arc de Triomphe, the Palais du Luxembourg and the Chamber of Deputies. For his home town he produced various busts of Genevan scholars and the famous statue of the philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

The Musée d’art et d’histoire in Geneva owns a large collection of sculptures by Pradier, and this has steadily expanded in recent years. Other works by the sculptor can be seen in the great museums of Europe, Russia and America.

Claude Lapaire, the author of this new standard work on Pradier and Honorary Director of the Musée d’art et d’histoire in Geneva is also one of the most prominent experts on sculpture in Switzerland. Alongside numerous essays on this subject, he wrote the catalogue raisonné on Auguste de Niederhäusern-Rodo (1863–1913), which was published in 2001, likewise by SIK-ISEA.

The Catalogue raisonné of James Pradier contains over 500 works – about 100 of them previously unpublished – which are individually analysed and described in detailed studies. The work also presents a great many sources, preparatory sketches by the artist, different casts and versions, and even works produced posthumously to drawings by the sculptor. A painstaking reconstruction of his development provides insights into Pradier’s unusual career, conveying a graphic account of his day-to-day routines and his links with other artists and clients. The plates have been printed in a demanding duotone process.

Paul-André Jaccard, head of SIK-ISEA’s Antenne romande, led this project with expertise from 2004. The work received financial support from the Loterie romande, the Canton of Geneva, the Hans Wilsdorf Foundation, the Leenaards Foundation and many other foundations and private benefactors.

Publication

Claude Lapaire, James Pradier (1790–1852) et la sculpture française de la génération romantique. Catalogue raisonné. Published by the Swiss Institute for Art Research (SIK-ISEA), Zurich and Lausanne, and 5 Continents, Milan, 2010. 23 x 29.5 cm, 512 pages, 578 catalogue numbers, 800 duotone illustrations, in French, CHF 140.–, ISBN 978-88-7439-531-6

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