



Press Release

From 3 February to 21 May 2023, the Musée Jenisch Vevey will be taking a fresh look at Valentine Godé-Darel (1873-1915), the lover of Ferdinand Hodler (1853-1918) and mother of their daughter Paulette, through a cycle of works relating to the illness she suffered until her death on the 25 January 1915 in Vevey. For the first time in 45 years, an exhibition will bring together an exceptional set of 63 drawings and paintings, tracing their love affair from the time they met until Valentine's illness and death, which occurred here in Vevey almost 110 years ago. Combining some 115 works taken from collections belonging to the Musée Jenisch Vevey and a variety of prestigious institutions, as well as Swiss and international private collections, the exhibition aspires to take a fresh and critical look at the relationship between the two protagonists and the major collection of works known as the "Valentine cycle".

Valentine became Hodler's model the moment they met in 1908, subsequently posing for the masterful compositions '*Femme joyeuse*' (1912) and '*Splendeur linéaire*' (1908-1909). Her beauty was radiant. Their working relationship quickly became more personal, and they began a tumultuous love affair involving a series of break-ups and reconciliations, all documented in the artist's sketchbook. In 1913, Valentine discovered that she was pregnant, but at the same time suffering from cancer. From that moment on, Hodler recorded on paper and canvas the slow and inexorable progression of the disease, followed by the agony and death of the woman who had become "the most intense passion of his life"¹. The exhibition comprises some 47 works from the 'Valentine cycle' – the last major public presentation took place in 1976² – demonstrating that significant artistic challenges underlying their emotional entanglement were also addressed. The exhibition invites us to reconsider the woman behind the model, and more broadly, to question others, those whom we love and whom we mourn. A research project run by the Institut Ferdinand Hodler.

An exhibition in partnership with the Institut Ferdinand Hodler (Geneva), curated by Anne-Sophie Poirot and Niklaus Manuel Güdel, scientific collaborator and Director of the Institute respectively.

With the collaboration of Margaux Farron, Fine Arts collaborator of the Musée Jenisch Vevey.

Press conference on January 31, at 10.30 am
Opening on February 2, at 6.30 pm

¹ Jura Brüscheiler, Hodler érotique, Geneva, Éditions Notari, Collection Hodleriana, vol. 1, 2016, p.117.

² At the exhibition « Ein Maler vor Liebe und Tod », Kunsthaus Zurich, 9 April – 23 May 1976, curated by Jura Brüscheiler.