

## Rainer Maria Rilke with the Painter Baladine Klossowska and her Son Balthus (1922)

### Abstract

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Austrian writer Rainer Maria Rilke (1875-1926), is widely regarded as one of the most significant poets in the German language. The themes of transience and transformation which he explored in his poetry mirrored his peripatetic life, which spanned the decades of upheaval and change from the *belle époque*, through World War I, to the Weimar Republic. In 1901 he married the sculptor Clara Westhoff, but left her shortly after their daughter was born. Troubled by financial worries throughout his life, he cultivated and was supported by a network of relationships and friendships from social luminaries and aristocratic patrons such as Princess von Thurn und Taxis and Harry Count Kessler, to prominent intellectuals such as Hugo von Hofmansthal, Paul Valéry, Stefan Zweig and André Gide. He spent most of the war years in Munich and left in 1919 after the overthrow of the Bavarian Soviet Republic, which he had supported. The photograph shows him with his lover, the painter Elisabeth Dorothée (Baladine) Klossowska, whom he met shortly after his departure from Munich. She would remain a significant figure in his life. He would also remain close with and sponsor her son, Balthasar, who would become known as the painter Balthus (1908-2001). The picture shows them in Switzerland, where Rilke, who suffered from leukemia, lived during the final years of his life.

### Source

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Source: Rainer Maria Rilke (1875 - 1926) with the painter Baladin Klossowska and her son Balthus on an excursion, Beatenberg, 1922.

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