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*and a number of donors who wish to remain anonymous***Rubenianum Fund launched with a bang!**

The Rubenianum Fund was officially launched at a black tie dinner at the Rubens House in Antwerp, on 10 February. At the invitation of three of Belgium's leading private banks (Bank Degroof, Bank Delen and Petercam), some 80 guests attended this memorable event, including HSH Prince Nikolaus of Liechtenstein. The dinner was held in a transparent tent erected in the illuminated courtyard of the house, and the sudden snowfall only served to enhance the magic of the evening. The guests were first given a tour of the museum by curator Ben van Beneden, and then heard Professor Arnout Balis explaining the history and the goals of the Corpus Rubenianum, and the evening was concluded by a strong plea by Antwerp's Alderman for Culture, Philip Heylen.

Since this first event, and also thanks to the press coverage of the initiative, this innovative approach to raising the support for such a unique project has gained widespread attention both in Belgium and abroad. Subsequent fundraising events have been organized in New York, at the residence of the Belgian Consul-General, as well as in Belgium. In the coming months, it is planned to further broaden the appeal by dedicated efforts in several other European cities with historical ties to Flemish art and culture.

Thanks to the help of many volunteers and the strong support of the King Baudouin Foundation, the Rubenianum Fund has been able to get off to a flying start, and the first two additional scholars financed by the Fund will join the Rubenianum on a full-time basis as of 1 September.



From left to right Prof. Arnout Balis, Thomas Leysen and Ben van Beneden at the opening event in the Rubens House

Dear Friends of the Rubenianum,

It is with great pleasure that I introduce the first issue of The Rubenianum Quarterly. The purpose of this new publication is to update you regularly on the progress of the publication of the Corpus Rubenianum, tell you about the various initiatives of the Rubenianum Fund, and inform you about the activities of our research and documentation centre. Since the launch of the Fund, created at the beginning of this year to give a firmer financial footing to the Rubenianum, we have been overwhelmed by the surge of support from various parts of the world. Thanks to benefactors and donors from Belgium, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, France and the United States, it has been possible already to raise some €1.1 million – bringing us more than half way towards our minimum goal of €2 million. This bodes well for our ambition of completing the Corpus Rubenianum by 2020, and more generally of reinvigorating the Antwerp-based research on Rubens and on the Flemish art of his period. I would like to express a deep gratitude to all who have given their support, both financially as well as with their time, to this endeavour. We will strive to have this lively and committed 'Rubens community' grow further in the years to come, allowing us to deepen our understanding and appreciation of one of the great moments in the history of western art.

Thomas Leysen
Chairman, Rubenianum Fund

Interview with Jeremy Wood

The section of the *Corpus* devoted to Copies and Adaptations from Renaissance and Later Artists: Italian Artists (Vol. xxvi, part 2) covers so much material that it has been divided into three volumes, all by Jeremy Wood, the first of which – devoted to Rubens's study of work by Raphael and his School – appeared in January this year. The second volume, focused on Rubens's study of Titian and other artists working in North Italy, is currently in press and will be presented at the Museo Nacional del Prado in Madrid in November 2010. Readers of this short interview are cordially invited to this event. But, in case you can't attend, the author agreed to answer some questions from Cécile Kruyffhooft about how the publication is progressing.

Q Can you tell us about yourself and how you handled this massive amount of material?

A I was invited to contribute more decades ago than I care to think about, initially as a collaborator with Kristin Belkin. After she moved to Highland Park in New Jersey, working closely together became much more difficult because I remained on the wrong side of the Atlantic. As a result we decided to split the project so that she focused on the German and Netherlandish copies (published as Vol. xxvi, part 1, in 2009) while I took charge of the Italian material. The latter is much the larger section, containing no fewer than 259 items, making it one of the biggest – perhaps the biggest – in the entire *Corpus*. You might think that a small sketch after an Italian picture is very much easier to deal with than one of Rubens's major altarpieces. But the problem, from my point of view, is that many of the Italian prototypes have a very extensive literature and even more complex problems of interpretation in their own right. You only have to think of Raphael's frescoes in the Vatican Stanze (covered in the first of my volumes) or Titian's paintings for the *camerino* at Ferrara and the *poesie* for Philip II (discussed in my second volume, currently in press). Quite often the literature on the Italian sources itself makes reference to Rubens's copies and this immediately extends the bibliography that I have to cover alarmingly. And, of course, it's not just a matter of understanding the history of these Italian works in their own right but trying to grasp what Rubens may have known about them, which can be an entirely different matter altogether.

Preparing these volumes has been a bit like running a marathon: it's needed some practice. I wrote essays on individual problems that came to my attention – for example, a group of Rubens copies that was obtained by Padre Sebastiano Resta (1635–1714) which I discussed in *Master Drawings* as long ago as 1990, and another on the attributions that Rubens sometimes wrote on his Italian drawings for the *Wallraf-Richartz-Jahrbuch* in 1994. But, more importantly, I was curator of an exhibition on Rubens as a copyist that opened at the National Gallery of Scotland in Edinburgh in 2002 and then moved to the University of Nottingham

where I work. I was very lucky that it was on display only a short distance from my office and I could look at the loans every day and sometimes outside opening hours.

Q To what extent do your volumes deal with drawings and to what extent with paintings?

A The first volume is really more about works on paper because Rubens bought and retouched such a lot of copy drawings after work by Raphael, Giulio Romano and Polidoro da Caravaggio, but in the second volume the emphasis shifts more towards the painted replicas even though some of these are only known from early descriptions. When it came to Venetian art, Rubens preferred making very careful facsimiles on canvas or panel and in oil, and, even more remarkably, on the same size as the originals. He began doing this in Italy as a relatively young man, but, as everybody knows, it was when he visited Madrid and London between 1628 and 1630 that he embarked on making a large number of these replicas. Many writers have commented on how unusual it was for a mature artist to go back to being a student, and the painted copies that result, such as the *Adam and Eve* after Titian in Madrid, and the later adaptations of the *Worship of Venus* and the *Andrians* in Stockholm that he painted after his return to Antwerp, are among the most famous works of their kind in the entire history of art. So, the short answer to your question is that the connections with Rubens's own work as a painter become far more evident in the volume that's about to appear.

Q You mentioned that Rubens retouched some copy drawings – how can you tell the difference between the underdrawing and Rubens's additions?

A Cécile, I know how interested you are in this because you yourself own one of Rubens's most beautiful and important drawings of this kind. This problem has generated a great deal of discussion among writers on art over the centuries. Connoisseurs in the 18th century, such as Pierre-Jean Mariette (1694–1774) and Jonathan Richardson (1667–1745), knew all about this, even though they're not infallible. Modern taste – and the pressures of the saleroom – has been less comfortable with the idea that Rubens



would take a journeyman copy and draw on top of it in his own style. The result, of course, is not a copy at all because Rubens may never have seen the original. Anne-Marie Logan, the distinguished drawings scholar who has for long worked in the USA, deserves a great deal of the credit for observing that Rubens was far more of a retoucher than a copyist – my volumes are full of acknowledgements to her clear-sighted judgement. From my point of view, I find it surprising that some scholars have tried to identify what are basically standard 16th-century pen-and-ink copies after artists like Polidoro – other examples of which survive in large quantities for comparison – as works that are entirely by Rubens. It's true that he sometimes reworked these earlier sheets so extensively that they end up covered in his handiwork, but, more often, large portions of the underdrawing remain visible and untouched – which makes separating the hands much easier. That's not the case with red chalk and sometimes with red wash. In those cases the different layers become blended, but luckily these examples are in the minority.

Q What was the purpose of Rubens's copying, retouching and reworking?

A As the politicians say, I'm so glad you asked me that (meaning exactly the opposite, of course). This really is the most difficult question you could ask. I think one of the main dangers is assuming that there's one consistent answer that will cover all the copies and adaptations and that remains valid throughout Rubens's life. For example, people have tended to assume that Rubens was primarily interested in Titian's work because he admired his handling of paint, but it's also obvious he studied his work because Titian recorded what a number of famous men and women of the 16th century looked like, and he also provided a great deal of information about the dress of the period. Conversely, Rubens was also deeply interested in the work of Francesco Primaticcio, but writers have tended to shun this because it doesn't fit their preconceptions. I have a great deal to say about this in my three volumes so will you forgive me if I say, rather cheekily, that your readers will have to look in them for a more detailed and – I hope – satisfactory answer?

Prince Hans-Adam II of Liechtenstein visits Rubens in Antwerp

On 22 April HSH Prince Hans-Adam II of Liechtenstein, patron of the *Corpus Rubenianum* Ludwig Burchard, honoured Antwerp with a visit. Paul Huvenne, Director of the Royal Museum of Fine Arts Antwerp, and his staff organized a well-balanced programme which included Antwerp's major Rubens highlights. The Prince was accompanied by Johan Kräftner, Director of the Liechtenstein Museum in Vienna, and Manfred Leithe-Jasper, formerly Director of the *Kunstkammer* of the *Kunsthistorisches Museum*. The guests were offered a private tour of Antwerp Cathedral and the Rubens House in the company of the respective curators. At the *Rubenianum*, Arnout Balis introduced the Prince to the Burchard Archive, which forms the basis of the *Corpus Rubenianum* Ludwig Burchard. Final venue of this informal and most agreeable visit was the Royal Museum of Fine Arts, where the Rubens, Van Dyck and Jordaens collection is currently featuring in the exhibition 'Closing time. Jan Vanriet' (until 8 October 2010).

Rubenianum acquires Van Dyck documentation of Horst Vey

Last February the sad news reached the *Rubenianum* that the eminent German Van Dyck scholar Horst Vey had passed away on the 7th of that month. Dr Vey was Curator at the *Wallraf-Richartz-Museum* in Cologne before becoming Director of the *Staatliche Kunsthalle Karlsruhe* (1973–1995). The *Rubenianum* library holds over sixty titles by his hand on a wide range of art-historical topics. Above all, Horst Vey will be remembered as a leading Van Dyck expert. His catalogue on Van Dyck's drawings – *Die Zeichnungen Anton van Dycks* (1962), the first book to appear in the series *Monografieën van het Nationaal Centrum voor de Plastische Kunsten van de XVIde en de XVIIde eeuw* – still stands as a reference work. Even more important is the recent *Van Dyck: a complete catalogue of the paintings* (2004), to which he contributed the chapter on

Van Dyck's so-called second Antwerp period.

Everyone who has had the honour and pleasure to work with Dr Vey, keeps a particularly warm souvenir of this tall and engaging gentleman-scholar.

The *Rubenianum* is very fortunate and grateful to have recently acquired Dr Vey's personal Van Dyck documentation, kindly donated by Mrs Vey. Carefully organized according to painting, historic person etc., the dossiers contain the basic material for Dr Vey's publications, consisting of a multitude of sources and images, and enriched with his own comments. This treasure of information is a welcome addition to the *Rubenianum*'s extensive Van Dyck documentation, built around Dr Ludwig Burchard's archive.

Four new acquisitions for the Rubens House

The active acquisitions policy pursued by the Rubens House has recently led to four new objects being acquired for the museum on a longer-term loan basis. The newly acquired loans come from private collections in Flanders, Germany and Switzerland. They include a painting of *Two dogs and the head of a cow* by Frans Snijders (which can be traced back to the collection of the Marquess of Leganés, 1580–1655) and Jacob Jordaens's *Madonna and Child in a garland of flowers, fruit and vegetables* dating from the 1630s. A third painting of *Saint Sebastian* shows the Roman martyr affectionately being attended by two angels. Although conclusive evidence is still lacking, this tantalizing painting might well be the second version of Rubens's *Saint Sebastian* at the Palazzo Corsini in Rome. Further technical investigations and ultimately a confrontation of both paintings will help to determine whether the *Saint Sebastian* at the Rubens House is a work by the master or a studio work. The most impressive painting of the four is, however, the *Portrait of Isabella, Infanta of Spain, in the habit of a Poor Clare*. This intimate bust portrait of Isabella is generally accepted to be the prototype, done from life, of the official portrait painted by Rubens in 1625.

The Rubenianum Lectures

Starting from September 2010 the Centre for Flemish Art of the 16th and 17th Centuries and the *Rubenianum* will embark, with the support of the Foundation Inbev Baillet Latour, on a series of quarterly lunchtime talks on recent Rubens scholarship and related subjects.

The 30-minute talks are open to the general public and take place on Sunday mornings at the *Rubenianum* at 11 am, followed by an aperitif. Admission is free. The 2010–11 programme will include:

- Ben van Beneden
Geschilderde kunstkamers en het neostoïcisme. De casus Willem van Haecht (26 September 2010)
- Prof. Arnout Balis
Rubens' Theoretische Notaboek (19 December 2010)
- Prof. Hans Vlieghe
Over David Teniers de Jongere (March 2011)
- Prof. Carl Van de Velde
De brieven van Rubens (June 2011).

You will find more detailed information in the next issue of *The Rubenianum Quarterly*.



Rubens, *Portrait of Isabella, Infanta of Spain, in the habit of a Poor Clare*