

The Rubenianum Quarterly

2012
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The birthplace of Rubens

Carl Van de Velde



J. Meyssens, Peter Paul Rubens, etching

When and where was Rubens born?

The question is in itself not very important, but as long as it remains unanswered, it can give rise to misunderstandings among the general public, which has always been interested in trivial questions. Therefore, the Centrum Rubenianum has reconsidered the available sources. This article presents an overview of the arguments. Detailed results will be published shortly.

In the caption to an etching showing Rubens's portrait that was published in Antwerp in 1649 by Jan Meyssens (1612–1670), he is said to have been born in Antwerp on the 28th of June 1577.

The likeness is based upon Paul Pontius's engraving of 1630, but shows the artist without hat. The print is part of a series of 100 numbers, entitled *Images de divers*

hommes d'esprit sublime. The etchings owe their notoriety no doubt to the fact that they were reproduced, with their captions, in Cornelis de Bie's *Gulden Cabinet van de Edel-Vry Schilderconst* (Antwerp 1661), a collection of lives of mostly Flemish artists. We do not know where Meyssens collected this information. He cannot have taken it from an official record. Births and deaths were not registered in Western Europe until after the French Revolution. Churches kept registers of baptisms, marriages and funerals, but the name of Rubens has not been found in any such records in the different cities that claim to have been his birthplace. Meyssens presumably just picked up this date in Antwerp. Having arrived there in 1640 only, he cannot have known Rubens personally, but he was certainly well acquainted with his artistic surroundings.

A similar solution was proposed in the *Vita Petri Pauli Rubenij* that was written between 1668 and 1676 by the artist's nephew Philip Rubens the Younger. He also indicated 1577 as the year of Rubens's birth, not in Antwerp however but in Cologne. The Latin text of the *Vita* was not printed until 1837, but its contents have been known from the late seventeenth century onwards through Roger de Piles' *Vie de Rubens* (Paris 1677), of which the *Vita* is the main source. De Piles repeated that Rubens was born in Cologne in 1577. The result was that all later authors have agreed on 1577, but situated Rubens's birth either in Antwerp or in Cologne, depending on whether the author followed De Bie or De Piles. It is important to note that Meyssens and Philip Rubens are independent sources. The fact that they disagree on the city of birth is proof enough of that.

These opinions were seriously challenged in 1853, when R.C. Bakhuizen van den Brink revealed that Jan Rubens, the father of the artist, had passed several years in captivity in Germany. Charged with an adulterous relation with Anna of Saxony, William the Silent's wife, he had at first been held prisoner at Dillenburg. His wife Maria Pijpelinckx succeeded, by paying a large sum of ransom money, in obtaining a softening of regime, allowing the couple to live in a fixed residence in Siegen from 1573 to 1578.

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Rubens and beyond

It would be as idiotic to deny that Rubens, Van Dyck and Jordaens are the dominating masters of seventeenth-century Flemish art as it would be to deny that numerous other artists of considerable talent were active in their time who are worthy of our admiration. The Rubenianum plays a fundamental part in the research on the greatest names in Flemish art, but it is also central to the study of artists who may be less famous, but whose contributions to Flemish art helped define its course. It is they who made our sixteenth and seventeenth centuries a true Golden Age: not a period in which artistic excellence was the domain of a few exceptional personalities, but an age in which it seems to have flourished like never before.

In my own field of speciality, works on paper, the facilities of the Rubenianum may be even more important than in the more completely researched field of painting. If gifted artists like Jan Cossiers, Cornelis Schut or Lodewijk de Vadder are by now reasonably well defined as painters in the art-historical literature, as draughtsmen they are still harder to grasp. A trip (in my case, unfortunately, a transatlantic one) to the Rubenianum is always a sure way to gain an insight, however fragmented, into the graphic style of such artists.

This may seem irrelevant to all but the smallest circle of experts. But it is research of this kind which enables scholars to sharpen, refocus and renew their vision of Flemish art, and which informs courses and seminars at universities, and programmes and acquisitions at museums worldwide. It is this research that helps collectors and art dealers to better understand what is in their possession. And it is thanks to this research that the interest in Flemish art can be kept alive among a broad and international public.

Stijn Alsteens

Curator, Department of Drawings and Prints
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

Lieneke Nijkamp in the spotlight

In 2011 the City of Antwerp recruited two young and brilliant art historians for the documentation and photo library of the Rubenianum: Lieneke Nijkamp and Bert Watteeuw. Their tasks are so diverse and numerous that it is worthwhile to allot each of them a whole page in our Quarterly. First we go international and give the floor to the Dutch-born Lieneke Nijkamp, who is meanwhile well acquainted with the Belgian way of life, Flemish culture and the peculiar Antwerp vocabulary.

My first serious encounter with Flemish Baroque art happened six years ago, when I was allowed to assist Gregory Martin with his catalogue of Flemish Art of the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam during my curatorial internship at the museum. Now, several years later, I find myself at the heart of Flemish art again, as research assistant at the Antwerp-based Rubenianum.

Together with my colleague Bert Watteeuw I am responsible for the documentation. This, of course, is a very broad job description that asks for specification. But let me first start by introducing our hybrid collection. As with the library, our core documentation consists of all the information Ludwig Burchard gathered before bequeathing it to the city of Antwerp. His extensive documentation on Rubens has since then served as the basis for research for the *Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard*, and is therefore separately stored. Our documentation on other artists is also built upon the Burchard documentation, although we no longer actively document Spanish, German, Italian or Dutch art as we restrict our focus to sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Flemish art. Besides the boxes of our so-called ‘reading-room documentation’ we also hold several archives on Flemish art that formerly belonged to such eminent scholars and art experts as R.-A. d’Hulst, Marie-Louise Hairs and Pierre de Séjournet. Parts of these archives have been or will be integrated into our documentation. In the end, anyone researching a specific work of art will be able to find a variety of different documents brought together in our documentation per artist, and in some cases even per object: photographs, handwritten notes by several scholars, and excerpts taken from auction catalogues, periodicals, books and newspapers. My job is to keep all of this organized, safeguarded and up-to-date; an almost impossible job, but challengingly satisfying at the same time.

During my first month at the Rubenianum I focused on clearing out and updating our documentation on Jacob Jordaens. Luckily I am able to ask for assistance from our in-house scholars and affiliated experts like Nora De Poorter and Hans Vlieghe. Many museums, art dealers, individual researchers and art lovers write to us every week with questions related to Flemish art. This specific part of my job is one of my favourites. Every enquiry asks for research and diplomacy, and



although we are rarely able to make new attributions, it is always satisfying to be able to assist in someone’s professional or personal research. Enquiries can range from conducting provenance research for museum objects, to pointing out interesting literature on a subject depicted in a privately owned painting.

One of my first big assignments at the Rubenianum was to brainstorm on our digital future. As my previous employer had been the Netherlands Institute for Art History (RKD) in The Hague, I was already familiar with databases designed for documenting art. At this moment, a pilot on cooperating with the RKDImages database has been evaluated positively, and in the near future we will be able to document digital-born images in a customized database, as well as digitize important parts of our collection for better accessibility. Important reasons for cooperating with the RKD are being able to build on one centralized database and to divide the workload of documenting Flemish art. My colleagues, of course, tend to suspect me of being a Dutch spy still working for the RKD, but the Rubenianum will be able to differentiate itself from the RKD by presenting more specialized information on works of art through our own

(yet to be developed) website interface. For me personally it has also been interesting to compare working methods between the RKD and the Rubenianum, as in general it has also been fascinating for me as being Dutch to live and work in Belgium. To name just one small example, I had never realized that I would have to accustom myself to a whole new vocabulary on documentation. Trivial words such as ‘file’ and ‘archive shelving’ are completely different, as is also the pronunciation of Rubens and Jordaens. This has of course led to funny miscommunications between me and my colleagues. However, one of my colleagues at the RKD recently pointed out to me on the phone that I wasn’t even aware any more that I was using a Flemish expression; I guess my assimilation has almost been completed!

Another project I embarked on, was instigated by the many boxes of photographs that I stumbled upon during my first months of exploring every hidden corner of our building. As the Rubenianum had been understaffed for many years, images on art had been assembled but never reached our documentation. Soon the realization dawned that this was a task we could not handle alone. By publishing an advertisement in a local newspaper, I was able to form a team of dedicated volunteers who assist us by gradually mounting the photographs and adding the right description. Not a day in the week goes by without progress as we have volunteers working on the documentation every day. On this occasion I would like to thank Gaston, Ria, Carrie, Ann and Marc for their incredible patience and diligent effort! Together with art history students we hope to integrate these images into our documentation this summer.

Other parts of my job range from presenting and discussing documentation issues at conferences, guiding upcoming and already established art historians through our holdings, and assisting during lectures held at the Kolveniershof. During my studies at university I was primarily trained at art museums such as the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, the National Gallery of Art in Washington DC and the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles. Working at a documentation centre, however, does not differ that much at all. Instead of works of art, our collection consists of documents and photographs on art. But a major difference compared to working at a museum, is that the Rubenianum serves as a global hub for research on Flemish art. We are not restricted to a confined collection, but instead we document every Flemish work of Baroque art. The Rubenianum is therefore a very inspiring institution that brings together universities, museums, art dealers and other art history professionals. I feel very privileged to be part of this and of our dedicated team, and to be allowed to set out the future policy of a documentation that has proven to be of major importance.

The birthplace of Rubens [Continued from page 1]

Jan Rubens was then permitted to return to Cologne, where they had lived in the first years of their emigration from Antwerp. Maria Pijpelinckx and her children settled back in Antwerp after Jan Rubens had died in 1588. The conclusion was evident. If Peter Paul Rubens was born in 1577, it could only have been in Siegen.

Neither Cologne nor Antwerp were willing to abandon their claims. Research was done in the archives of Antwerp, Cologne and Siegen and revealed a number of interesting documents. Cologne was defended by the local archivist L. Ennen, but has proved afterwards not to have strong arguments. Antwerp could count upon several supporters (du Mortier, Génard and Van den Branden). They concentrated on the city of birth, much less on the date, which was only marginally challenged. Bakhuizen van den Brink’s documents had made clear that Maria Pijpelinckx was certainly in Siegen on 14 June 1577, and this forced Génard to advance, without any further evidence, the birth to May 1577.

Two documents discovered in the Antwerp archives contain information about Rubens’s age at different moments in his life. His mother declared on 10 December 1596 in a request to the Antwerp magistrates that she had two sons for which she had to act as custodian, because they were still under age: Philip, she said, was twenty-two, the youngest, Peter, twenty years old. The birth date of Philip, according to his biography of 1615, was 27 April 1574, so he was indeed twenty-two years old in 1596. We cannot be sure that she made an exact calculation of the age of his younger brother, for all that mattered was that they both were less than twenty-five years old. The second statement comes from the artist himself. He gives himself as forty-one years of age on 28 August 1618. This is perfectly compatible with the birth date given by Meyssens.

Finally there is Rubens’s epitaph, composed by his friend Gaspar Gevartius shortly after the artist’s death. It confirms that Rubens was sixty-four years old when he died. The text was only carved into a tombstone in Rubens’s funeral chapel in Saint James in Antwerp, in 1755. Before that date, there was no such inscription there. In fact, the 1755 carving was copied from de Piles’s *Vie de Rubens*. De Piles knew the epitaph because it had been added by Philip Rubens to his *Vita* before he sent it to him. Until then, it was probably only a sheet among the papers left by Albert Rubens, the pupil of Gevartius, indicated by Philip Rubens as the source from which he had composed his *Vita*. It is all but certain that no mistake was made, e.g. in copying lxiixi for lxiix. In his own poem on Rubens in the *Gulden Cabinet*, De Bie has correctly calculated that the dates given in Meyssens’s caption for Rubens’s

birth (28 June 1577) and death (30 May 1640) led to the conclusion that the artist was not sixty-four but sixty-three years old when he died. Besides, was Gevartius rightly informed about his friend’s birthday? They only got to know each other later in life.

The supporters of Antwerp did not pay much attention to these considerations. They concentrated on trying to prove that, while it was undeniable that Jan Rubens was not permitted to leave Siegen, his wife Maria Pijpelinckx had had the opportunity to travel to Antwerp long enough to give birth there to her baby. Recently, J. Rombaut and R. Tijs have revived this theory, but in a slightly different form, since they claim that Rubens was born in the later months of 1576. Both the nineteenth-century theory and that of Rombaut and Tijs rely in part upon the same arguments, which makes it unnecessary to deal with the old arguments here again. This was done efficiently by Max Rooses in 1903. In his authoritative monograph on Rubens, having evaluated all the arguments brought forward by the different camps, he concluded that Peter Paul Rubens was born in Siegen on 28 June 1577.

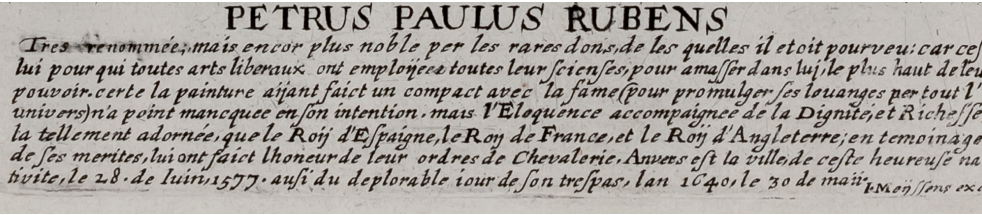
This conclusion can be supported today. Looking at the whole of Meyssens’s series of prints, we realize that he was very much concerned about the truthfulness of the information provided in his captions. He usually sticks to years of birth and death and only gives precise days in a very limited number of cases, seven out of one hundred: Rubens (28 June 1577), Van Dyck (22 March 1599), Jordaens (19 May 1594), Erasmus Quellinus (19 November 1607), Hendrik de Keizer (15 May 1565), Jacob Matham (15 October 1571) and Pieter de Jode (22 November 1606). Whenever his dates can be checked (e.g. for Van Dyck, Jordaens, Quellinus) they are correct. The only mistake that can be found in his captions is that Jordaens was not born in 1594 but in 1593. Since the day of his baptism was indeed the 19th of May, we may attribute this to a misprint. We must conclude, with Rooses, that Meyssens is a reliable witness. He may have been wrong, as he is with regard to the city where Rubens was born, but there is no reason to imagine that he would have deliberately told something which he did not think was the truth.

The second seventeenth-century source,

Philip Rubens’s *Vita Petri Pauli Rubenij*, relates a lot of episodes from his uncle’s life and career and none of these has proved to be unreliable. It is true that he voices the family point of view of the past, in which Jan Rubens is represented as having lived peacefully in Cologne ever since he had left Antwerp. The episode of the adultery, the imprisonment and the arrest in Siegen were left in the dark. This had been the family’s attitude ever since Maria Pijpelinckx had returned to Antwerp, not only because it was not exactly the most glorious page of the family history, but also for two compelling reasons. The first is that the princes of Orange had throughout the affair insisted that every suspicion of scandal should be avoided. Even after Jan Rubens was granted liberty to leave Siegen, it was absolutely forbidden for him to set foot in the Low Countries. Second, by maintaining that Jan Rubens had lived an undisturbed life in Cologne, it allowed the family to retain the status it had enjoyed in Antwerp previously.

This observation is important in that it helps to refute an allegation made in the nineteenth century, most forcefully by Van den Branden, that by leaving Antwerp in the 1560s, Jan Rubens had forfeited his rights of citizenship of Antwerp and that his children had to regain them. Peter Paul Rubens, according to this theory, could only have enjoyed Antwerp citizenship by having been born there. The invalidity of that theory is proved by the case of his brother Philip. Neither Philip’s status of fully authorized inhabitant of Brabant nor his citizenship of Antwerp had been hampered by the fact that he had been born in Cologne, as his father had lived there peacefully and continuously ever since he had left Antwerp until his death. This was confirmed by the States of Brabant in 1607, and again by the Archdukes Albert and Isabella in 1609. This official recognition was needed to allow Philip Rubens to assume the charge of secretary to the city of Antwerp, more precisely to prevent anybody from challenging his nomination. Peter Paul did not need such explicit confirmation to be recognized as an Antwerp citizen. Who would have denied him that right when he claimed it?

The supporters of the theory that Rubens was born in Antwerp had to prove that his mother could have been in Antwerp at the right time to give birth to Peter Paul. For



Génard, she had to be in Antwerp in May 1577, while Rombaut and Tijs want to see her there in the last months of 1576. The physical presence of Maria Pijpelinckx in Siegen is attested in February, April and June 1577 and, as a document newly brought into the discussion proves, in the last months of 1576. Not a single document mentions her as being in Antwerp during that period.

Her supposed travel to Antwerp between September and December 1576 is said to have been necessitated by the partition of the inheritance of Jan Rubens's stepfather Jan de Lantmeter, the second husband of his mother, already a widow with a child. In his will, dated 5 July 1566, he had divided his belongings among their five children. The date of this testament, wrongly given by Rombaut and Tijs, is important, for it shows that Jan Rubens knew about its existence. When he was informed, in the first months of 1576, of his stepfather's death, he immediately reacted by signing, on 31 May 1576, a debt recognition to his wife for the ransom money she had paid for him, by giving her complete mastery over all his possessions and making her curator of their children. By doing so, he reassured the creditors from whom she had borrowed the money, in all probability the Pijpelinckx family, that they would be reimbursed. The next day, Maria Pijpelinckx signed a document to cancel her husband's obligation if she died before him, a standard legal operation which does not need any specific explanation. Both documents were signed in Siegen. Rombaut

and Tijs suggest that Maria Pijpelinckx brought this document to Antwerp and used it to claim her part of the inheritance, but this is contradicted by the observation that in the final partition of 6 August 1576, the stake originally intended for Jan Rubens was not allotted to him but to the children of his wife, and that they were represented by their grandfather Hendrik Pijpelinckx. If Maria had been present and considered a valid curator for her children, why would she not have been mentioned, as were all the other members of the family that were partners? Moreover, in April 1577, Jan Rubens had to make a new procuration, in Cologne this time, appointing a team consisting of Maria Pijpelinckx, her father and her uncle and Jan's brother Philip de Lantmeter, as curators over his belongings and those of his children. So, to cut a long argument short, there is no reason to suppose that Maria Pijpelinckx travelled to Antwerp in 1576.

An additional argument corroborating the view that she did not leave Siegen in that year can be found in the text of a long request (twenty folios recto and verso) in Latin presented to William of Orange in January 1577. The document, preserved in the Koninklijk Huisarchief in The Hague, was described by Bakhuizen van den Brink in 1853, but since he did not give a transcription, it has passed unnoticed since then. Although signed by Maria Pijpelinckx (as *Maria uxor Joannis Rubenij*), it must have been for the largest part the work of Jan Rubens himself. It is a plea for

mercy, quoting arguments from the Bible, from ancient history and literature, but also from the miserable life of the defendant, to be granted permission to return to freedom in his homeland, or at least closer to it. The request insists that Jan Rubens has passed five years in detention, twenty-six months of incarceration and thirty-four months in a milder regime. This points to a date of spring 1576, which curiously coincides with the time when Jan Rubens must have been informed of the death of his stepfather. Writing the text will probably have taken several months. The request was presented to William of Orange in January 1577. This suggests that it was only finished shortly before. Several passages are interesting with regard to our problem. We notice in particular the quote where Maria Pijpelinckx implores mercy for her husband, for herself and especially for her five unhappy children (*cum quinque parvis aequae infelicibus liberis*). Even if we assume that the document could have been finished some time before it was presented to the prince, or that parts of it were written earlier, it still is an argument in favour of dating the birth of Peter Paul Rubens, the sixth child of Maria Pijpelinckx, later than the request, that is in 1577.

There is consequently no reason to doubt the conclusion reached by Max Rooses in 1903: Peter Paul Rubens was born in Siegen on the 28th of June 1577.

The author wishes to thank C. Eymael, C. van Havre, J. De Landtsheer and P. Valkeneers for their precious help.

Rubenianum Team Building in Amsterdam

The organizations working together at the Rubenianum have recently grown significantly, thanks to the efforts of the Rubenianum Fund and to a spectacular increase in the number of volunteers. All thirty-five people working at Kolveniersstraat 20 have different tasks and working schedules, so it can't be said that all of us – old hands and newcomers alike – know what our co-workers' roles are within our various organizations. This was reason enough to organize a day of team building. Our destination was soon chosen, for what could be more suitable than paying a visit to the trio that stands at the very core of our work: Rubens, Van Dyck and Jordaens? So off we went to Amsterdam, where the eponymous exhibition in the Hermitage was nearing its end.

On 31 May, therefore, twenty-five of us boarded a bus early in the morning and headed for Holland. We made good use of our travelling time, conversing over a nice breakfast and filling in a questionnaire about internal communication. The atmosphere really began to mellow when two quizmasters from the Rubenshuis divided us into ten teams and grilled us about Rubens, our various institutions and ... each other.



We probably had to rack our brains the most about the photos of our colleagues as toddlers, which we were supposed to identify – a sometimes hilarious undertaking.

Thanks to a merciful lack of traffic jams, we soon arrived in Amsterdam, where we received a warm welcome from our Hermitage colleagues. No fewer than eight of our Rubenianum co-workers took turns acting as guides, sharing their knowledge about their favourite paintings and giving it a personal slant. For many of us the available time proved too short to take in all the treasures on display.

Amsterdam expert Lieneke Nijkamp then

steered us deftly through the city centre, taking us after lunch to the Willet-Holthuysen Museum on the Herengracht for a guided tour and on to café Nel on Amstelveld for a final drink, with the whole group in the best of spirits.

Our excursion to Amsterdam was extremely worthwhile, both as a museum visit and, of course, in terms of team building. Many colleagues got to know one another better, and that is indispensable to the smooth running of any organization.

Véronique Van de Kerckhof

Rubeniana

Introducing our new feature: 'Authors in residence'

Our Quarterly is very much alive and thus new columns are added. Corpus authors are the next victims: whenever they show up at the Rubenianum for research on their volume, they will be harassed from all sides to write down their impressions, encounters, adventures, conversations etc. and share these with our readers. Our first catch is Prof. Reinhold Baumstark, former Keeper of the famous Liechtenstein Collection in Schloss Vaduz and former General Director of the Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen in Munich.

'A Room with a View'

For a scholar in seventeenth-century Flemish painting, the invitation to contribute a volume to the *Corpus Rubenianum* Ludwig Burchard probably will be his most exciting challenge, offering the chance to enter the royal path of Rubens research. Naturally one pursues one's studies wherever excellent libraries present the opportunity to explore the vast amount of past research or wherever Rubens's work can be studied in the original in museums and collections. However, we are in the fortunate possession of a centre that embraces all Rubens knowledge, indeed constitutes the focus of Rubens research: the Centrum Rubenianum in Antwerp. Here one finds an excellent library and photo collection but especially the archive of the late Ludwig Burchard, the eminent Rubens scholar, with its thousands of references arranged in orderly fashion in boxes and his annotations penned in the volumes of his personal library. To be able to delve into the Burchard material, to consult his notes, comparing them with one's own knowledge, not only enriches one's work but inspires it.

When the Rubens scholar comes to Antwerp for several days in order to work in the Centrum, he or she is welcomed into a world of extraordinary privilege: cared for by the omnipresent, always helpful assistants Marieke, Prisca and Bert, supported by Véronique and Viviane, superbly informed of the Centrum's working facilities, inspired and enriched by conversations with Arnout whose knowledge, energy and enthusiasm are inexhaustible, and with the Centrum's 'Altmeister' Carl who brought Ludwig Burchard's bequest from London to Antwerp as Aeneas had carried the palladium from Troy to the future Rome. However, even this wealth of support and inspiration is further heightened. Once the Rubens scholar takes his seat at the work table, the treasure of the Burchard archive behind him, Burchard's and his own notes, photographs and books on the table before him, his view falls through the window onto an unforgettable panorama: before him stretches the garden of Rubens's home – at the right the living quarters, at the left the studio, the place of origin of most of the master's output. Among the first works created there are the paintings of the *Decius Mus* cycle that constitute my part of the *Corpus Rubenianum*: a more felicitous inspiration is hardly imaginable. The place

that draws the eyes concretizes the work sphere, crystallizes it into a *lieu de mémoire*. Thus the Centrum Rubenianum, besides all its wonderful working facilities, offers a further jewel: a study room with a Rubens view.

Reinhold Baumstark

Monkey Madness in Seventeenth-Century Antwerp

Comical scenes with monkeys in human attire are part of a pictorial genre that was fully developed in seventeenth-century Flemish painting, and which was practised by a selection of Antwerp masters in particular. Around 1575, the engraver Peeter van der Borcht introduced it as a theme in its own right in a composite series of widely disseminated prints, which are strongly embedded in the artistic heritage of Pieter Bruegel the Elder. Thereafter, highly inventive painters such as Frans Francken II, both Jan I and Jan II Brueghel, Sebastiaen Vrancx, Jan van Kessel I, and above all David Teniers II, took up the brush and assured the continuing popularity of monkey satire (in French called *singerie*). Teniers developed, at an early age, into the standard-bearer of the genre. Together with his younger brother Abraham Teniers, he was able to play the art market like no other, and in so doing triggered the dissemination of monkey satire far beyond the borders. Later in the seventeenth century other artists like Nicolaes van Veerendaël – who from early on in his career specialized in painting flower still lifes – jumped on the bandwagon of the 'monkey painters'.

Despite its apparent success at the time and the vast amount of works still extant, no serious attempt has been made so far to bring together the rich and diverse material in an in-depth study. In the forthcoming Rubenianum Lecture these often-hidden treasures will be brought to public attention in their full scope for the first time. The speaker will first sketch the origins and artistic development of the genre, hereby introducing the various players and outlining their individual stylistic input. In the second part the richness in subject-matter will be further explored, addressing questions of meaning and suggesting means of interpretation, drawing on a wide variety of visual and textual sources.

Bert Schepers



Reinhold Baumstark

The Rubenianum Lectures

We proudly present a Rubenianum lecture by our Centrum Rubenianum colleague

BERT SCHEPERS

Monkey Madness in Seventeenth-Century Antwerp. Genesis and dissemination of a pictorial genre

23 September 2012, 11 am

Bert Schepers, editorial and research assistant for the *Corpus Rubenianum*, will share his vast knowledge on the genre of *singeries* with our audience. For many years he has been conducting his PhD research on the particularly Flemish and highly amusing pictures of monkeys in human attire. Don't miss this unique preview!

The Rubenianum Lectures are organized with the support of the Inbev-Baillet Latour Fund.



David Teniers the Younger, *The Monkey Painter* (detail)
© Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado

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