The Rubenianum 3 Quarterly

Rubens House and Rubenianum host important heritage event

On 18 October, the Rubens House and the Rubenianum were honoured by a memorable event, including a princely visit. On that evening, the King Baudouin Foundation organized the annual festive gathering of its numerous heritage funds and their representatives. Given the recent collaborations between the Foundation and both the Rubens House and the Rubenianum, Antwerp served as an obvious location for this year's event.

The meeting was preceded by a private visit of HRH Prince Lorenz, Patron of the Heritage Fund of the King Baudouin Foundation. Under the expert guidance of its curator Ben van Beneden, the Prince paid an extensive visit to the recently enriched Rubens House collection. After this visit, the intimate atmosphere of the Kolveniershof's attic offered a suitable setting for an exclusive viewing of the de Ganay Manuscript. This fascinating album is one of four known copies after the lost theoretical notebook of Peter Paul Rubens. Purchased at the beginning of 2012 by the King Baudouin Foundation, it was given on long-term loan to the Rubens House. Arnout Balis, author of the Corpus Rubenianum volume devoted to Rubens's theoretical notebook, elucidated on its unexpected and intriguing contents. The presence of another copy, commonly referred to these days as the Borges Manuscript, ensured an exceptional and highly informative encounter.

The private viewing was followed by a full programme of speeches. Introduced by Thomas Leysen, Chair of the Heritage Fund's Management Committee, a number of guest speakers presented some of the Foundation's successful Antwerp projects, such as the Rubenianum Fund (well known to our readers), the donation of the Documentation Fund of Pierre de Séjournet to the Rubenianum, and several prestigious extended loans to the Rubens House. The Fonds Courtin-Bouché, a valued corporate benefactor of the Rubenianum Fund active in various fields of heritage support, was represented by Hélène Bussers. The evening was concluded by Dominique Allard, Director of Heritage at the King Baudouin Foundation, who encouraged the audience to join forces for the protection and promotion of our Belgian artistic heritage. This involvement, the very mission the King Baudouin Foundation has been pursuing vigorously for many decades now, continued to be the topic of conversation among the guests in the agreeable circumstances of a festive reception at the Kolveniershof. | Véronique Van de Kerckhof

Dear Friends of the Rubenianum,

Looking back at 2012, we can only be pleased at the momentum that the Rubenianum community has gained in the course of the past year: the publication of a new Corpus volume; an intensified cooperation between the Rubenianum and the RKD in The Hague on the one hand and with Antwerp's Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten on the other; the growing popularity of the Rubenianum lectures; the increased recognition from the outside world attested by greater media attention and also exemplified by the two princely encounters pictured on this page – but above all, by the gratifying buzz of scholarly activity in and around the Kolveniershof. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to thank all our donors and benefactors.

They have been the catalyst to make all this happen!

Thomas Leysen Chairman, Rubenianum Fund





◆ HRH Prince Lorenz and Arnout Balis examine the de Ganav Manuscript in the company of Thomas Leysen and Cathy Berx, Governor of the Province of Antwerp

HSH Prince Hans-Adam II von und zu Liechtenstein in his Vienna Winter Palace with Thomas and Nancy Leysen

Corpus Rubenianum

The Rubenianum welcomes Van Dyck student Adam Eaker

On this page attention is usually drawn to a staff member of the Rubenianum or to a new Corpus volume. But near the coffee machine word soon spread about an enthusiastic visiting scholar doing research for his dissertation on Anthony van Dyck. As this young American considered himself fortunate enough to work at this delightful place, he was soon accosted by the editorial board of the RQ and asked to write down his experiences. We are glad and proud to give the floor to Adam Eaker. And, yes, the Rubenianum is praised to the skies, but all he says here is absolutely true!

It's hard for me to overstate what a pleasure it is to spend this year conducting research for my dissertation at the Rubenianum. While I had long been familiar with the legendary publications associated with the Rubenianum, I had never actually set foot in the Kolveniersstraat until arriving in August to begin my year as a visiting scholar. During the past few months, I've been delighted to discover that my Belgian colleagues are as welcoming as they are eminent.

I began studying Flemish art in New York, when I enrolled in a seminar on Rubens taught by David Freedberg at Columbia University. Professor Freedberg has since become my dissertation advisor, and he played the primary role in encouraging me to spend a year in Antwerp. I'm very grateful to him for opening this door to me. A grant from the Belgian American Educational Foundation made this year financially possible, and I'd like to express my thanks to the Foundation and its president, Professor Emile Boulpaep.

My dissertation uses the career of Anthony van Dyck as a lens to examine the related phenomena of the portrait sitting and the study of the live model in the seventeenth century. My research combines more traditional kinds of art-historical enquiry with

methods drawn from literary criticism and social history. In addition to being based at the Rubenianum, I'm also a visiting scholar at the University of Antwerp's history department, which has a very strong group of professors and students working on visual culture and material history.

Having begun my dissertation research in New York, I appreciate what a privilege it is to study Rubens and Van Dyck in their hometown. New York has wonderful museums, libraries and universities, but, within my particular area of interest, nothing compares with the concentration of resources and expertise at the Rubenianum. At Columbia, I often have to wait several days for a given book to arrive from storage, if it's available at all. At the Rubenianum, I simply stroll from my office to the stacks, confident that whatever volume I need is at my fingertips. One book that is never far from my desk is the 2004 catalogue raisonné of Van Dyck's works by Susan Barnes, Nora De Poorter, Oliver Millar and Horst Vey. This catalogue is emblematic for me of the high bar set by scholarship at the Rubenianum.

The Rubenianum's library is peerless, but the experts gathered here under one roof are an equally valuable resource. On my way to the coffee machine, I may bump into Arnout Balis or Hans Vlieghe. Their scholarship was my constant companion while I prepared for my qualifying exams last year, but I little imagined that I would soon meet them in the flesh. It's certainly daunting to discuss my dissertation with such legendary scholars, but I'll always be grateful for the feedback I've received this year.

Another unexpected pleasure of working at the Rubenianum is conversing with colleagues about things that have nothing to do with art history. Sitting at lunch, I've learned a lot about the Dutch language, Belgian politics, and even the Flemish sense of humour. Furthermore, the presence of friendly colleagues my own age has staved off much of the loneliness I anticipated in embarking upon a year abroad. With the two Berts, Lieneke, and Ute, I've not only gone to exhibitions and toured Baroque churches, but also watched movies and drunk pintjes.

I'm excited about the Rubenianum's plans for the future, particularly the digitization that will one day make the documentation gathered here available to me even back in the United States. While I treasure the year I am spending in Antwerp, I recognize that most scholars do not have this luxury. I'm grateful to Véronique Van de Kerckhof for placing the emphasis on digitalization in her vision of the Rubenianum's future.

One unfortunate aspect of my time in Antwerp is that it overlaps with the renovation and closure of the Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten. However, even this cloud has a silver lining, as the curators of the museum are temporarily housed at the Rubenianum, making them even more accessible. Because a portion of my dissertation deals with study heads, I've been especially grateful for the presence of Nico Van Hout, who is writing the Corpus Rubenianum volume dealing with this fascinating material.

When not in my office at the Rubenianum, I can usually be found at one of the city's museums or archives, poring over a painting or attempting to decipher some seventeenthcentury handwriting. One of my favourite things to do in Antwerp is just to walk the city streets, their names mostly unchanged since Van Dyck's day. A recent experience that encapsulates what I love about living here was a day I spent in the reading room at the Plantin-Moretus Museum. I had gone there to read an account of Maria de' Medici's 1631 visit to Antwerp, a topic I will discuss in a Rubenianum lecture this March. It took only a few minutes for me to realize that the book I was reading had been printed in the building I was sitting in, nearly four hundred years ago, and that I had walked past many of the sites visited by the French queen on my way to the reading room. I've become an art historian in pursuit of precisely this proximity to the past, and I'm incredibly grateful to the Rubenianum for making it possible for me to have a year of such encounters.



Monkey Madness in Seventeenth-Century Antwerp

Some afterthoughts*

Bert Schepers

New blood in focus

In the previous issue of the Rubenianum Quarterly, curator Ben van Beneden presented no less than six long-term loans from private collectors that enriched the collection of the Rubenshuis this autumn. One of the new arrivals is a small but remarkable painting on copper by Jan Brueghel the Elder from the early 1620s, hitherto unpublished: Monkeys Feasting (fig. 1). An abundant troop of mischievous monkeys has occupied a prominent room of a country estate and swarms around a plate of fruit, served in the middle of the table. Others are seen playing cards, throwing dice, drinking, dancing, or simply 'monkeying around'. In the language of the time a picture like this would commonly be called a Simmenfeest, an epithet frequently encountered in Antwerp probate inventories. Some of the figures are clearly drawn from life, as attested by an oil sketch in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (c. 1616), which Brueghel probably made during his visits to the menagerie of the Archdukes at the Brussels court. On the other hand, the naughty creature below on the right seems to have been modelled after a specimen found in a print by Adriaen Collaert, c. 1597 (Hollstein 1478).

Monkeys occasionally turn up in Rubens's oeuvre, but almost exclusively as marginal figures and mostly serving a decorative purpose. There is no indication that the learned artist was especially interested in the playful antics of Brueghel's wild and hairy but humanlike protagonists. Still it is not without reason that his *Monkeys Feasting* has been selected to enrich the collection. After all, Jan Brueghel and Rubens were close and intimate friends and despite their very different artistic

temperaments they often collaborated, allowing them both to develop to the fullest extent their creative genius.²

In Brueghel's Monkeys Feasting, hardly distinguishable above the arched gate, is a trimmed picture representing Pan and Ceres (Prado, Madrid), which had been painted shortly before in Rubens's workshop in collaboration with another famous specialist from the artist's immediate circle: Frans Snyders.³ It can, however, not be excluded that Brueghel also had a hand in it. This easily overlooked detail can be understood to symbolize the 'cultivated' (Ceres) versus the 'wild' nature (Pan), and ties in closely with the monkeys' natural misbehaviour in an unnatural (civilized) environment.

Brueghel was not the first Antwerp artist to come up with disturbing pictures of monkeys in human attire. It is in fact Frans Francken the Younger who is generally credited as the initiator of a novelty genre that soon turned out to be a big hit in Flemish painting. But Brueghel did play an important role in the artistic development of the genre and his *Monkeys Feasting* can be seen as a key work in more than one respect, as will be demonstrated below.

Monkey madness in a nutshell

In my Rubenianum Lecture I wanted to put the genre of Flemish singeries into a broader perspective and to illustrate how it developed over time. As early as about 1575, the engraver Peeter van der Borcht introduced the theme as a subject in its own right in a composite series of widely disseminated prints, strongly embedded in the artistic heritage of Pieter Bruegel the Elder. Subsequently, highly inventive painters such as the aforementioned Frans

Francken II, both Jan Brueghel I and II, Sebastiaen Vrancx, Jan van Kessel I, and above all David Teniers II, took up the brush and assured the continuing popularity of monkey satire (fig. 2). At an early age, David Teniers emerged as the standard-bearer of the genre. Together with his younger brother Abraham, he managed to play the art market like no one else, and in so doing triggered the dissemination of monkey satire far beyond the borders. Later in the seventeenth century, other artists such as the enigmatic monogrammist CDF and Nicolaes van Veerendael – 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 first part of the lecture, the origins and artistic development of the genre were sketched, thereby introducing the various players and outlining their individual stylistic input. Special attention was devoted to the connection with painted picture galleries, a genre that had emerged on the Antwerp art scene around the same time and was developed by the very same artists.⁴ Another important aspect of the discussion proved to be the close family ties and the tightly knit artistic network of the artists involved. In the second part, the richness in subjectmatter was further explored, addressing questions of meaning and suggesting means of interpretation, drawing on a wide variety of visual and textual sources. Looking into the world of proverbial wisdom proved to be a fruitful path.5



Fig. 1 Jan Brueghel the Elder, Monkeys Feasting.
Private collection, on long-term loan to the Rubenshuis
(reproduced with kind permission of the owner)



Fig. 2 David Teniers the Younger, Monkeys in a Kitchen. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid



Fig. 3 Rubens, Dance of Peasants and Mythological Figures. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid



Fig. 4 Johannes Hilarides, Monkeys Dancing in the Countryside, etching

An unexpected metamorphosis

Research into the patchwork of *singeries* produced outside Antwerp during the early modern period turned up - quite unexpectedly - an image which clearly refers to a well-known Rubens composition. It concerns a humorous broadside print issued by Johannes Hilarides (Schneevoogt undescribed), which has so far escaped attention in the literature on Rubens. Published in Amsterdam around 1700, it transforms one of Rubens's late works into a mock depiction of country life (figs. 3 and 4). The caption reads: Jaa sie maar helder toe / gy meuchter wel in gaapen! Het is doch anders niet / als 't leeven van de aapen (Yes, look closely and don't be fooled, for what you see is nothing else than monkey business).

Although produced in a very different context, this witty makeover is not unlike the satirical print of about 1545 in which Niccolò Boldrini (recording a design by Titian) transformed the famous *Laocoön* marble group into a turbulent band of monkeys. Assuming that Rubens knew Boldrini's caricature, and given his profound love for the Antique and his deep admiration for Titian's oeuvre (so brilliantly demonstrated by Jeremy Wood in his volume on *Titian and North Italian Art*), 6 one cannot help but wonder if he would have seen the humour in it.

Rubens kept his Dance of Peasants and Mythological Figures (fig. 3) for himself. It is recorded in the inventory of pictures listed in his house and studio after his death in 1640 (no. 103. Vne danse des paysans Italiens). Shortly afterwards it was acquired for the Spanish king by Don Francisco de Rochas and sent off to Madrid, where it still remains. Its composition had, however, already been disseminated during Rubens's lifetime in a print by Schelte Adamsz Bolswert (no. 20 in the so-called 'Small Landscapes' series, c.1638), which eventually led to Hilarides's cheeky spin-off. What his reaction would have been, if Rubens would have come to know that decades later his work would fall victim to a Dutchman's joke, is left to the imagination.

On a further note, it is worth mentioning here that Elizabeth McGrath, in the keynote address of 'Reframing Jordaens: Iconography & Interpretive Contexts'

(symposium, Brussels 2012), convincingly argued that Rubens in some of his late works seems to have been directly inspired by Jordaens's particularly comfortable treatment of ancient fables and themes from classical mythology. It is true that Rubens here depicts the Olympian deities having come down to earth joyfully to interact with festive peasants in a warm and friendly atmosphere, just as Jordaens used to stage them. Given its hybrid subject-matter, the picture and the prints produced after it will not be discussed in CRLB XI, Mythological Subjects (McGrath et al.) as one might expect, but in the volume dealing with Rubens's Genre Scenes (CRLB XVII), prepared by Margret Klinge.

Brueghel revisited

In his revised catalogue raisonné (2008–10) of the painted oeuvre of Jan Brueghel the Elder, Klaus Ertz lists another version of Monkeys Feasting, signed and dated BRVEGHEL. 162(?), which in Ertz's opinion was painted in collaboration with Brueghel's son Jan the Younger (no. 545). When comparing both pictures, it is strikingly evident that the rapiers, feathered caps and other garments observed in the Rubenshuis painting are absent in the version reproduced by Ertz, and in any of the recorded contemporary copies for that matter. Much of the monkeys' colourful attire seems to have been added by a later hand, except for the monkey sitting at the right edge of the table, dressed in a scarlet jester costume, and the mother monkey carrying her baby on the far right. Taking into account that Brueghel's invention undoubtedly served as the direct model for his son-in-law David Teniers's Monkeys in a Kitchen, signed and dated D.TENIERS.F. A° 1660 (fig. 2), the question arises as to whether the Rubenshuis picture might not have been retouched by Teniers himself. The additions seem rather untypical for Brueghel, but instead are more in keeping with Teniers's artistic language, as is clear from another one of his singeries at the Prado, Monkeys in aTavern. Here the attire and the mise en scène of the monkeys in the foreground is remarkably similar. This hypothesis is strengthened by the observation that the artist had indeed made similar interventions in the Interior of a Picture Gallery at the

Courtauld Institute of Art Gallery, London, a work painted by Frans Francken the Younger c. 1615, but subsequently elaborated and signed by Teniers around 1650.7 This intriguing aspect of Teniers's production is not very well known and further research will still be necessary, but if our assumption proves to be correct, these interventions are reminiscent of Rubens's lifelong practice of retouching, copying and adapting the works of his much-esteemed predecessors (both close to and far from home), as is discussed at great length in the bulk of material that makes up Copies and Adaptations from Renaissance and Later Artists (CRLB XXVI.I, German and Netherlandish Artists, and xxv1.2, Italian Artists, 1-111, by Kristin Belkin and Jeremy Wood, respectively). The story continues ...

The research leading up to my dissertation (KU Leuven) will be published in a future volume of 'Pictura Nova: Studies in 16th- and 17th-Century Flemish Painting and Drawing' (Brepols Publishers), edited by Hans Vlieghe and Katlijne Van der Stighelen, both long-time members of the Centrum Rubenianum, and also contributing extensively to the CRLB.

^{*} This contribution elaborates on the theme of the author's Rubenianum Lecture, delivered on 23 September 2012.

Rubenshuis: The Highlights, 2012, no. 24, displayed in the master

² See Christine Van Mulders, Works in Collaboration: with Jan I and Jan II Brueghel (CRLB [Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard], xxvII.I), forthcoming.

³ See Robels 263, to be discussed in CRLB XXVII.2, Works in Collaboration: Other Artists, designated to Anne Woollett.

⁴ Room for Art in 17th-Century Antwerp (exh. cat. Rubenshuis, Antwerp, and Mauritshuis, The Hague, 2009–10), Zwolle 2009. 5 Further reading: Bert Schepers, 'Aepen simmekens, bevejanen

en mertecooien. De aanwezigheid en symbolische betekenis van de aap in de maatschappij en beeldcultuur van de Lage Landen, 1500–1700' and 'Het Simmenspel', in Wonderlycke dieren op papier in de tijd van Plantin (exh. cat. Museum Plantin-Moretus/Prentenkabinet), Antwerp 2007: 95–123 and 167–71 (also in French); idem, 'De simmen dronckaert. Over apenstreken en drinkcultuur in de vroegmoderne Nederlanden', in De kunst van het drinken. Herberg- en drinkscènes in de Belgische schilderkunst (exh. cat. Nationaal Jenevermuseum, Hasselt), 2011: 53–77; and the author's contribution on Van Veerendael, in Rubens, Van Dyck, Jordaens et les autres. Peintures baroques flamandes aux Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique (exh. cat. Musée Marmottan Monet, Paris), 2012–13: 116–19 (also in English).

⁶ See CRLB XXVI.2, Copies and Adaptations from Renaissance and Later Artists: Italian Artists, II.

⁷ David Teniers and the Theatre of Painting (exh. cat. Courtauld Institute of Art Gallery, London), 2006–07, no.1; Room for Art, op. cit. (note 4), p. 39, fig. 18.

Drawing art history students closer to the Rubenianum

On 27 November Professor Maximiliaan Martens and Professor Koenraad Jonckheere (Universiteit Gent) treated their students to an exceptional class. In the spacious attic of the historic Kolveniershof a choice selection of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century drawings from two Antwerp private collections was spread out for close study. The students, professors and collectors



Students of Ghent University have a close look at Flemish old master drawings in the attic of the Kolveniershof

debated matters of iconography, technique and attribution while the Rubenianum staff pointed out avenues for further research. This first study session is part of a larger cataloguing project on Flemish drawings in private collections hosted by the Kolveniershof.

On the same day we received a second group of art history students under the guidance of Professor Katlijne Van der Stighelen and Klara Alen (KU Leuven). Annual introductory sessions for Leuven students familiarize them with the Rubenianum at an early stage in their academic careers. This year, as a first, curator Joost Depuydt (special collections, FelixArchief) joined forces with us. He shared his intimate knowledge of the Antwerp city archives, identified useful finding aids and relevant sources for art historians, gave a tour of the FelixArchief storage facilities, and showcased the rich special collections holdings.

On 3 December Professor Joanna Woodall, Professor Eric Jorink and Dr Ed Wouk visited the Rubenianum with students from The Courtauld Institute of Art. A private tour of the Rubens House Museum was followed by an in-depth introductory session on the Rubenianum research resources. On 19 December students of Professor Karolien De Clippel (Universiteit Utrecht) enjoyed a similar programme, added to by Centrum Rubenianum colleagues, who initiated them into the process of academic text and image editing that produces the Corpus Rubenianum Ludwiq Burchard.

Good relationships with the academic world are critical to us, as facilitating and stimulating research into Flemish art of the early modern period is one of the core missions of the Rubenianum. Local partnerships with the Rubens House Museum, the FelixArchief, and the major Antwerp museums, as well as the generous support of a community of private collectors enable us to accomplish the goal of drawing in these studious crowds. | Bert Watteeuw

Tribute to our Rubenianum volunteers

Since 2008, when Nelly Verreydt chose to return to the Rubenianum offices after having served the institute for 38 years, she has been patiently coordinating and carefully registering the continually rising number of enquiries received by the Rubenianum, the Rubens House and the Centrum Rubenianum. In 2009 Nicole Verbeken-Acke joined our team as front desk assistant, adding a cheerful note to the welcoming of visitors. Lena Bliadze continued assisting the Rubenianum after her internship in 2010. There has been no job we haven't been able to entrust her with.

In January 2012 we published a call for volunteers. We were in need of additional front desk assistance, and this vacancy was filled by the elegant Vivke Aertsen. We also welcomed Gaston Van der Cruyce – who was introduced to us by Nicole. Ria Malisse, Carrie Noé, Ann Van de Poel and Marc Nicolay signed up shortly after. One year later they have managed to mount a large pile of photographs, and have become experts in their own right as it turned out to be quite a puzzle to match every picture with the right caption. Ann left us after six months of diligent work, but the others wish to stay on for other projects.

Last summer we received voluntary help from five art history students and one promising graduate to integrate the mounted photographs into our documentation. Special thanks are due to Eurydice Van Durme, Yamina Bens, Eva Moeyersoons, Amina Vloeberghs, Leen Moons and Nils De Winter. In turn we

hope to have provided them with some useful practical experience within their future field. On a more structural basis, two young art historians were recently added to our team: Caroline De Wever and Karen De Meyst. As fresh graduates they are able to assist us with more in-depth research projects and we are very grateful for their continued efforts.

We can really take pride in our dedicated and diligent volunteers. Without the vast amount of work put in by them, we wouldn't be able to function as we do! | Lieneke Nijkamp



The Rubenianum Lectures

The Rubenianum Lectures have become an established cultural event in Antwerp. In 2013, we continue our series with four expert scholars sharing their research on seventeenth-century Flemish art.

We kindly invite you to our next lecture on 24 March 2013, 11 am, at the Rubenianum, Kolveniersstraat 20, 2000 Antwerp:

ADAM EAKER

(Columbia University, New York) The Queen in the Studio. Anthony van Dyck's Maria de' Medici

In this lecture Van Dyck's portrait of Maria de' Medici is taken as the point of departure for a discussion of the studio visit in the early modern period. Literature abounds with tales of artists surprised by their royal patrons while at work. For Van Dyck, however, the patron's visit to his studio became a choreographed performance that allowed him to promote his own reputation and the status of portraiture.

The lecture is in English.

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

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