

The Rubenianum Quarterly

2016
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Announcing project Collection Ludwig Burchard II

We are pleased to announce that through a generous donation the Rubenianum will be able to dedicate another project to Ludwig Burchard's scholarly legacy. The project entails two main components, both building on previous undertakings that have been carried out to preserve the Rubenianum's core collection and at the same time ensure enhanced accessibility to the scholarly community of the wealth of Rubens documentation.

Digitizing the Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard, launched in 2013 and successfully extended until May 2016, will be continued for all Corpus volumes published before 2003, abiding by the moving wall of 15 years, that was agreed upon with Brepols Publishers, for the years 2016–18.

The second and larger component of the project builds on the enterprise titled *A treasure trove of study material. Disclosure and valorization of the Collection Ludwig Burchard*, successfully executed in 2014–15. An archival description of Rubenianum objects originating from Burchard's library and documentation has since allowed for a virtual reconstruction of the expert's scholarly legacy. Much emphasis was placed on the Rubens files during this project, while the collection contains many other resources that are of considerable importance to Rubens research. For instance, Burchard frequently scribbled his thoughts on attribution in the margins of his own catalogues while scrutinizing a painting on site. His notebooks and appointment diaries reveal carefully planned travel details. Burchard's correspondence attests to his international network of scholars and art dealers. Each and every one of these objects makes for a unique resource on Rubens research, but has only been roughly inventoried so far. This present project includes a more detailed description of these archival documents, which will allow the research community, and Corpus authors specifically, to delve further into the archive and benefit from Burchard's accurate

observations. Another part of the project involves the conservation and description of engraved reproductions and original drawings, some dating back to the 17th century, that form an interesting part of Burchard's Rubens files.

This announcement does not allow me to describe all the separate parts of the project, dubbed *Project Collection Ludwig Burchard II*, but interim results will be published regularly through the Rubenianum's newsletter and website. Close collaboration with the RKD and Illuminare will ensure a fruitful exchange of expertise. The project's final results should be presented at a conference devoted to archival best practices that the Rubenianum is planning for 2018. | *Lieneke Nijkamp*



Dear friends, colleagues and benefactors,

I have the pleasure to inform you of the imminent publication of the first part of the mythology volumes in the Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard. The two volumes are going to press as we speak and will be truly impressive.

Consisting of nearly 1000 pages and over 400 images, they will be a monumental addition to our ever-growing catalogue raisonné of Rubens's oeuvre and constitute a wonderful Easter present.

In the meantime, volume XIX, 4 on Peter Paul Rubens's many portrait copies, the volume on the famous Decius Mus series (XIII, 2) and volume XVII on his collaborations with Jan Brueghel have been translated and are in the process of being edited. The photo editing advances diligently as well. We expect all of these volumes to come out before the end of this year. In sum, we are proceeding at cruising speed now and have the ambition to keep up this pace until this gigantic project is finished in 2020.

The Corpus Rubenianum has proven to be an Odyssey – to stay on topic – but Ithaca is in sight.

Let me also take this occasion to warmly thank the two team members who have recently left us, Marieke and Prisca.

They both played a crucial role in the publication of several volumes in the past years.

Koen Jonckheere

Director of Publications

< A gem from Ludwig Burchard's archive: Pieter Soutman's drawing of *The Consecration of St Eloi* as Bishop of Noyen, 1618–24. Pen and brown ink and wash (published in Barrett 2012, cat. DL-18).

New staff member archival and documentary collections

Elise Gacoms introduces herself and her activities at the Rubenianum

‘Rien au monde ne me vaudrait l’immense plaisir d’avoir pu toucher du doigt et examiner de tout près ces magnifiques coulées de couleur pleines d’or et d’azur, des coups de brosse magiques, ... C’est une des plus belles leçons de peinture que j’aie reçues de ma vie ... c’est aussi ma plus grande jouissance...’ In his discourse *Pourquoi j’aime l’Art* (1948), Antwerp artist Emile Vloors (1871–1952) interrupts the enumerating nature of his survey on remarkable painters to reveal his personal sensation about Rubens’s work. In 2012 I acquired my Master’s degree in art history with a thesis on Emile Vloors. My specialization therefore lies in academic art of the late 19th and the early 20th centuries. Nonetheless, the above quote goes to show that these artists were very much touched by the old masters. Besides, they built on a rich tradition that found its origin in the 17th century. Therefore, one might say that with my arrival at the Rubenianum I’m going ‘back to basics’.

Over the past two years I have been working at the library of the Royal Conservatoire Antwerp. I contributed to the inventory of two large institutional archives: the archive of the conservatoire itself and the archive of former drama school Studio Herman Teirlinck. Fortuitously or not, during the 1950s and ’60s, the students of the Studio resided in the Kolveniershof!

Amid the spirits of Rubens, Burchard and Teirlinck (and, with the ‘Stadsfeestzaal’ barely a hundred metres away, also that of Vloors, for he lived there from about 1909 until his death), my job at the Rubenianum for the next three years will be fourfold: arranging and describing the Rubenianum’s main archival and documentary heritage collections; following up new developments of the Rubenianum’s archival description system in Anet; co-coordinating the creation of a new depot; and cataloguing Flemish art in the *RKDImages* database.

In addition to the well-known scholarly estate of Ludwig Burchard – the Rubenianum’s core collection – our institution also harbours a dozen other archives and documentation collections originating from several prominent connoisseurs and art-historical institutions. It will be my primary task both to describe and arrange these collections and to improve their accessibility. In February I started off with our archive of Horst Vey, the late Van Dyck expert whose files on the artist were given to the Rubenianum in 2010. Simultaneously, with the

much-appreciated help from our volunteer Sare Fierens, work has started on the recently donated collection of Jean-Pierre De Bruyn, expert on Erasmus Quellinus II and curator of the Antwerp Keizerskapel. In the next few years, I will also focus my attention on the collections of Ludwig Burchard, Marguerite Casteels, Roger-A. d’Hulst, Hans Gerhard Evers, Fritz Grossmann, Marie-Louise Hairs, (Charles) Van Herck auctioneers, Max Rooses, Pierre de Séjournet and the former Iconographic Institute of Antwerp.

Each and every one of these collections is a unique resource for art-historical research: they contain a wealth of documentation on the oeuvre of 16th- and 17th-century artists, including photographs, annotated documents and correspondence of the creator.

Though some of the information found in these collections has already been published, I am certain that many unknown gems are still to be found there. While working on an archive, you always encounter exciting surprises and discover small treasures: unique or rare photographs, documents on works of art that only surfaced once in trade, and so forth. What will emerge from the comprehensive photographic archive of Van Herck? And from the documentation files of Evers, which are currently hardly accessible? Those are some of the questions I’m very eager to answer. Furthermore, these archives are of great importance to historiographical research, as they give us insight into the methodology of some of the iconic art historians within our field. As sediments of research, these archives often attest to a life’s work. Once you delve into such a paper legacy, a very vivid image of the ‘archival creator’ arises. It is this personal component that has always intrigued me about archives: so many stories – personal as well as professional – may lie behind one single document.

Arranging and describing archives includes research into the archival creator, compiling an inventory, evaluating conservation issues, (re)arranging and repackaging the documents protectively and publishing the inventory and provenance details through the online archival description system of Anet, which the Rubenianum implemented in 2015. Another part of my job will be to improve the online visibility of the Rubenianum archives by contributing to new developments of the archival description system, as well as by rethinking the digital platforms currently in use by the Rubenianum, such as *RKDExplore*.

Which brings me to the third part of my job. Apart from my work on the Rubenianum archives, I will also contribute to the online description of Flemish works of art in the *RKDImages* database as well as assist in training temporary cataloguers and following up other aspects with regard to the collaboration with the RKD – Netherlands Institute for Art History.

Lastly, together with my colleague, librarian Ute Staes, I will be responsible for the storage room that is to be created on the Rubenianum premises. This includes designing the designated space, preparing and coordinating the relocation of the archives, but also the equipment of an adjacent room for the preliminary handling and storage of new acquisitions.

In short, I very much look forward to contributing to the increased accessibility of the Rubenianum archives and revealing its hidden gems to a wider audience on the one hand and getting to know the research community devoted to early modern Flemish art on the other. I am sure that I will find myself inspired by Flemish art more than once, just like Emile Vloors aptly described his own experience with Rubens. I hope to have cast a glimpse on my future projects with this short introduction and, as my work advances, I am sure to keep you updated on small and large discoveries through our newsletter and website.



Elizabeth McGrath interviewed by Gregory Martin

You must be glad that the first *Mythology* volume is soon to be out; can you say what were your trials and tribulations as editor?

Mythology 1 is unlike any previous Corpus volume in that it has several authors – six in fact, ourselves included – so this has led to interesting complications; that’s the phrase I would use rather than your ‘trials and tribulations’. At an early stage we decided that it was best not to attempt to impose a uniform style but to allow variations of emphasis within the established Corpus structure. One of the hardest things was to try to stop the timetable from slipping too much – quite difficult given the other commitments that our collaborators had. This meant too that I was writing the Introduction to the book before I had seen many of the entries ... So I made my essay more of an introduction to the subject, suggesting something of what classical mythology meant to educated people of the time, as well as outlining how the ancient gods and their stories were depicted before Rubens as well as by him.

I think all our texts benefited from your editing – you are a ‘natural’ with a blue pencil.

One way or another I have had quite a lot of experience of revising texts, especially as editor of the *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*. And besides, I was greatly helped by our dedicated and resourceful ‘editorial team’ at the Rubenianum.

The book’s subtitle is ‘Achilles to The Graces’, and you had the pleasure of writing about the Prado *Three Graces*, as well as Boreas and Orithyia and Ganymede, while allotted to me were the many compositions of Diana, including the touching *Diana and Callisto* in the Prado; what about some of the other highlights?

Bert Schepers has elucidated the whole series of *Battles of the Amazons*, including several little-known works from the artist’s earliest years of activity. And there are the pictures on the theme of the rescue of Andromeda catalogued by Fiona Healy, who also, among other works, writes about the splendid Liechtenstein *Discovery of Erichthonius* (and introduces alongside it a hitherto unknown composition of this subject). Carl Van de Velde deals with the early *Aeneas Departing from Troy* in the Louvre as well as that museum’s *Death of Dido*. This impressive late painting is less appreciated than it should be, as perhaps too is the astonishing Hermitage *Bacchus on a Barrel* analysed by Karolien De Clippel. As you can see just from this selection, our volume covers very nearly every aspect of Rubens’s style too.

Our co-authors are a mixture of the old, like us, and the early middle-aged; do you think there are enough youngsters taking up the Rubens challenge?

Rubens seems to be an acquired taste for many people, even in his homeland. But the Centrum Rubenianum has played a crucial role, especially in recent years, in introducing some very gifted young scholars to Rubens and the artists in his entourage. So the future looks promising for Rubens research.

The Centrum Rubenianum – as it has come to be called – can only have been a glimmer in the eyes of Roger d’Hulst and Frans Baudouin when you were young; I wonder how you first became aware of the artist?

Well, in my childhood home in the west of Scotland, we had a book about art: *The Hundred Best Paintings*, which my father had acquired by collecting cigarette coupons. In it there was only one Rubens, the National Gallery *Susanna Fourment*. I liked this lady. When I was about twelve, I saw her again on the cover of a booklet on a shelf in our local newsagent. The shopkeeper refused to let me undo the wrapper to peek inside, but I decided it was just right as a birthday present for my father. I was distinctly embarrassed when I found reproductions inside of lots of naked and near-naked women – *The Three Graces*, the goddesses in the Prado *Judgement of Paris*, *Diana and Callisto* and *Helena Fourment in a Fur Wrap*. My father seemed happy enough with the book, however. Later it migrated to my bookshelf. After all, the author was Julius Held.

But I think it was when you were at university in Glasgow that you had your Rubens epiphany ...

Yes, I was to see Helena ‘in the flesh’ in Vienna in the summer of 1966 on the start of a voyage of art-historical discovery that took me round Italy and ended in Munich. It was there, in Munich, that I resolved that, however much I admired Giotto and Raphael, Rubens was the artist for me. The little *Fall of the Damned* decided the matter: if I loved this picture, then I must love Rubens.

You earned your living working in, and then running, the Photographic Collection of the Warburg Institute in London, where you also taught; I wonder what brought you there in the first place?

My peculiar degree in ancient Greek and the history of art qualified me for the Warburg and for little else, and besides I had visited its library, was a fan of the Institute’s *Journal* and admired the director Ernst Gombrich, whose *Story of Art* had been a revelation to me. He took me on to write a thesis on Rubens’s decorations for the Cardinal-Infante Ferdinand’s entry into Antwerp. Julius Held happened to be around the day I was interviewed and Gombrich asked him if he thought this a worthwhile subject; unfortunately none of us knew that John Rupert Martin was then working



on this topic for the Corpus. Otherwise, I suppose my thesis might have become a book rather than a couple of articles.

You have known the Rubenianum over several decades; do you look back on the early days with affection?

Yes, indeed; it was Kristin Belkin, then writing about the Costume book for the Corpus, who introduced me as a potential contributor in the mid-1970s. But I did not immediately start on the subject assigned to me as I felt I had still so much to learn about Rubens. What I did manage to learn had a lot to do with the Rubenianum ‘community’ into which I had been accepted. Paul Huvenne was particularly generous in making me feel at home there, and Arnout Balis, who agreed to be the editor of my volume on Rubens’s historical subjects, was to become a close comrade. Of course my first visits were to the cosy quarters at the top of the Smit van Gelder Museum, where one could stay on with a picnic till all hours.

The move to the Kolveniershof in 1981 marked a transformation ...

It certainly was important in symbolic as well as practical ways, making the library a public resource and linking the Rubenianum to the Rubenshuis, as had always been the intention of Baudouin and D’Hulst. Since then the Corpus went through some lean times when funding and morale were low. But now, thanks to the Rubenianum Fund, the place is a hive of activity, and the atmosphere of collegiality is infectious for scholars of my generation as well as for the young.

Your reputation as a scholar has taken you far afield; I think it was in 1977 that you stepped centre stage in the Rubens world ...

That is going a bit far, but certainly the 1977 exhibition in the Koninklijk Museum

was fantastic – and a turning point in my life. I met many famous pictures and scholars for the first time, the latter at the conference – I suppose the stage you talked about – organized by the Centrum. I have one regret, though, and that is that the members of the Rubenianum denied themselves the chance to participate, acting only as hosts – which was a great pity. I gave a talk about Rubens's decoration of the façade of his house, identifying the subjects on the frieze as reconstructions of ancient paintings described by Greek and Roman authors. This seemed to go down quite well, but I discovered later that the 1920s Parisian outfit I was wearing had a lot to do with it: Konrad Renger's pointed question to me in the discussion afterwards was 'Can I buy your dress for my wife?'

Michael Jaffé gave me some trouble when I was writing the National Gallery Flemish school catalogue, and I think you had problems with him when writing your Corpus volume?

Actually Michael Jaffé never behaved towards me in the way he famously did to certain 'rivals'. Partly at least that was because I was female and tended to write about iconography. And after all he examined and passed my thesis in 1971, despite the indigestible lunch he claimed Gombrich had given him beforehand. But it won't be news to you that though I persuaded him that Romulus rather than Aeneas was the subject of the so-called Cardiff Cartoons, I failed completely in my attempt to convince him that those tapestry designs, which he had published as by Rubens, could not be by the artist or even from his studio. He even threatened that I would be responsible for his death by apoplexy if I published this view, which I eventually did – without, thank goodness, the threatened effect. His arch-enemy, Julius Held, did not employ the same style of rhetoric or 'argument', but certainly showed marked indignation when he once caught me sitting next to Jaffé at a conference.

But I think you got on quite well with Julius Held, didn't you?

Yes, I did. I believe he trusted me, and we had many fruitful exchanges over the years. I was invited to give lectures at Williamstown in his honour towards the end of his life. I wish that the Rubenianum had been able to benefit more from his presence and expertise, but old histories of competitive rivalry were involved here, as with Jaffé.

That invitation to Williamstown was a fine tribute to you; among your other distinctions was to be the first female Slade professor at Oxford University, and then more recently you gave the prestigious Gerson lecture at Groningen where your subject was not Rubens but Jordaens ...

I have become increasingly attached to Jordaens, and relish the way he takes up certain themes from Rubens, especially Bacchic themes, and goes still further with them to produce amazing effects. I have tried to counter the view, sometimes held



Peter Paul Rubens, *The Three Graces* (detail). Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid

even by his admirers, that Jordaens was not a sophisticated artist. In fact he appears from his art as a man of thoughtfulness and intelligence.

Another of your interests has been the presence of black people in European art. Can you say what led you to this subject?

You could say that this came naturally from experiences in life as well as art. As far as art is concerned, the fact is that Rubens and his contemporaries introduced African and Indian figures into their works in more important, varied and sympathetic roles than artists at any period before the last century, and this seemed to deserve investigation. Jordaens's marvellous picture in the Rubenshuis which shows Moses confronting the viewer with his Ethiopian wife, as, in the biblical story, the patriarch confronted his critical sister and

brother, has a message for our time as much as for his own.

Can I go back to an earlier topic and ask where you learnt your Latin and ancient Greek – as your proficiency in both has been one of your defining characteristics?

My school in Kilmarnock was not a very academic one, but it was possible to study Greek as well as Latin, even if the option was rarely taken up. I persuaded four of my friends to join me in choosing the subject so that a Greek class would take place. In fact I was motivated by a fascination with classical mythology, helped along by the copy of Robert Graves's *Greek Myths* that I found in the local library and, of course, by those mythological pictures in my father's little Rubens book. So you see that Rubens and Mythology have been part of my life for a very long time.



Peter Paul Rubens, *Diana and Callisto*. Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid

Rubeniana



Jan Boeckhorst, *Achilles among the Daughters of Lycomedes*. Oil on paper, laid down on panel, 23.5 × 34.5 cm

Rubenshuis acquires a modello by Jan Boeckhorst

The Rubenshuis recently acquired a modello for *Achilles among the Daughters of Lycomedes* by Jan Boeckhorst (c. 1604–1668), a German-born painter who was a pupil and assistant of Rubens. The modello, which fits superbly into the collection of the Rubenshuis, was acquired with funding from the Friends of the Rubenshuis.

The discovery of Achilles, disguised as a woman, among the daughters of King Lycomedes was regularly depicted in paintings. Rubens and Van Dyck, for example, both treated this Homeric theme. According to an ancient legend, Achilles' mother, knowing that her son would die if he fought in the Trojan War, entrusted him to Lycomedes' household, where he lived among the king's daughters in his palace on the island of Scyros. When war threatened, Odysseus and other Greek chieftains were sent to fetch Achilles, knowing they had to trick him into revealing himself. They cunningly deposited a heap of feminine gifts before the women – jewellery, clothes and other finery – as well as some weaponry. When time had come to select a gift, Achilles instinctively grabbed the weapons, thus betraying his true identity.

The sketch served as a modello for the painting of the same name (c. 1653–55) at the Staatsgalerie in Schleissheim. Boeckhorst's modello will be displayed alongside similar examples by Justus van Egmont and Jan van den Hoecke. | *Ben van Beneden*

Open for registration From book to byte. Art publications in transition

On 21 April 2016 the Rubenianum organizes a study day in conclusion of the project 'Digitizing the Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard'. This day will be devoted to the transition from printed volumes to web-based art-historical publications, presenting case studies from the Low Countries, parallel to online museum catalogues that have recently been published under the umbrella of the Getty Foundation's Online Scholarly Catalogue Initiative. A variety of projects will be discussed, illustrating challenges as well as success stories and covering viewpoints from museums, libraries and publishers alike. The study day includes contributions by the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, Flemish Art Collection, IRPA/KIK Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage, and Brepols Publishers. Participants receive free access to the Rubenshuis museum, and can also sign up for a brief behind-the-scene tour of the Rubenianum.

All lectures are in Dutch. Registration is mandatory and open until 14 April. For registration and programme details, please consult our website <http://www.rubenianum.be/nl/activiteit/van-boek-tot-byte>.

The study day is part of the project 'Digitizing the Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard', sponsored by the Samuel H. Kress Foundation and the Flemish Government.

The Rubenianum Lectures

Sunday, 19 June 2016, 11 am

Jamie Richardson
Bryn Mawr College, Pennsylvania /
Rubenianum Fellow 2015–16
*Frans Francken the Younger and
the Curious Case of the Encyclopedic
Still Life*

While previous studies have investigated the gallery painting genre as a progressive whole, little attention has been given to its earliest stages of development as manifested in the work of the genre's likely inventor, Frans Francken the Younger (1581–1642). This lecture will address its least studied category, the so-called 'encyclopedic still life' or *Preziosenwand*, painted exclusively by Francken and his studio, in the context of early modern curiosity culture and its discursive practice of collection.

The lecture is in English and coincides with the start of the Summer Course for the Study of the Arts in Flanders – The Age of Rubens in Context, 19–29 June 2016.

Coming out soon New Corpus volume

The Centrum Rubenianum is proud to announce the publication of the first of three volumes on Rubens's mythological subjects. The book will be presented at the Rubens House in early May.

CORPUS RUBENIANUM LUDWIG BURCHARD

PART XI



Elizabeth McGrath – Gregory Martin – Fiona Healy
Bert Schepers – Carl Van de Velde
Karolien De Clippel

MYTHOLOGICAL SUBJECTS
1 · Achilles to The Graces

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