

## Stucco in Europe (Modave, Belgium, 5-6 March 2005)

Leon Lock

International conference on

STUCCO AND PLASTER SCULPTURE IN EUROPE IN THE 17TH CENTURY : INSPIRATION,  
CREATION, PRODUCTION, REPRODUCTION

with the inauguration of the exhibition

POMP AND PROPAGANDA : THE STUCCO DECORATION AT MODAVE AND ITS ENGRAVED  
MODELS

followed by a study day on

STUCCO AND DECORATION IN PRIVATE 18TH-CENTURY LIÈGE REGION COUNTRY HOUSES

organised by the Musée du Château de Modave (Belgium) and The Low Countries  
Sculpture Society

Saturday 5 March 2005

from 10 am to 10.30 am

Special opening of the village church with the Marchin mausoleum by Lucas  
Faydherbe

from 10 am

Private view of the château and the exhibition

11 am

Michel Clavier, Musée du Château de Modave  
Introduction

11.15 am

Baron Daniël Cardon de Lichtbuer, president of the Association royale des  
Demeures historiques et Jardins de Belgique, former president of Europa  
Nostra and of the Banque Bruxelles Lambert (ING Bank)  
Inauguration of the exhibition

Stucco decoration at Modave and in the Spanish Netherlands in the 17th

century

11.25 am

Léon Lock, University of London

Les stucs de Jan Christiaen Hansche : aspects historiques et artistiques

11.55 am

Christine Cession, Institut royal du Patrimoine artistique, Brussels

La conservation et la restauration des stucs à Modave : une première approche

12.25 pm

Lode De Clercq, independent architectural historian, Antwerpen

Le stuc au XVIIe siècle dans les Pays-Bas méridionaux : aspects techniques

12.45 pm Discussion

1 pm

Lunch at the château and further opportunity to visit exhibition and château

The tradition of figurative stucco in Europe in the 17th century

Moderator : Fabrice Giot, Université catholique de Louvain

2.30 pm

Laurence Labbe, independent conservator of sculpture, Paris

Le chantier de restauration des stucs de la Galerie des Glaces de Versailles

3 pm

Prof Dr Uta Schedler, Universität Osnabrück

Figurative stucco in the school of Wessobrunn : models and workshop practice

3.30 pm

Dr Eloy Koldewey, Rijksdienst voor de Monumentenzorg, The Netherlands

Beyond the borders : from Swedish Skokloster to a desire for the future

3.50 pm Discussion

4.05 pm Pause

Plaster and stucco sculpture in Europe in the 17th century

Moderator : Myriam Serck-Dewaide, Institut royal du Patrimoine artistique, Brussels

4.30 pm

Pier Terwen, independent art historian and conservator of sculpture, Leiden

An unexpected recovery : the early 17th-century stucco chimney piece at the

## Dekema State (Leeuwarden)

5 pm

Dr Charles Avery, independent historian of sculpture, London

Stucco in Italian sculpture from Giambologna to Bernini

5.30 pm

Geneviève Bresc-Bautier, Musée du Louvre, Paris

Les galeries de moulages d'antiques, du château de Fontainebleau à l'Académie royale de Paris

6 pm Concluding discussion

6.30 pm to 7.30 pm

Last opportunity of the day to visit château and exhibition

## Sunday 6 March 2005

9.30 am

Visit of the château de Deulin\* in two groups (French-English)

11.30 am

Visit of the château de Marchin in two groups (French-English)

1 pm

Lunch at the château de Waleffe\*

2.30 pm

Visit of the château de Waleffe\* in two groups (French-English)

4.30 pm

End of the study day

(\* interiors listed patrimoine exceptionnel of Wallonia)

## Contents of the conference

Taking the stucco decoration by Jan Christiaen Hansche at Modave (1666-1673) as starting point, the conference intends to discuss stucco and plaster sculpture in different sculptural contexts in Europe during the 17th century. It hopes to encourage thinking about the links between the uses and traditions in these materials. Plaster and stucco were used in three principal traditions : the decoration of walls and ceilings ; casting sculptures, particularly antique models ; and the full-scale model, i.e. the last preparatory stage in the production of monumental sculpture in stone, marble, wood and bronze. Until now, these three uses have been studied separately and in their own right, particularly in local contexts such as

stucco in architectural commissions.

Themes to be discussed will include many of the following :

- guild structures for stuccoists and sculptors
- the use of models (drawn, engraved, etc) and the importance of the third dimension
- international exchanges and mobility of artists and craftsmen
- the technical specificities of the different materials
- methods of production in the 17th century
- casts in sculptors' workshops : sources of inspiration and workshop practices
- the full-scale model, the last preparatory stage in the production of monumental sculpture in wood, marble, stone and bronze
- workshop structures : location, dimensions, specialisation, organisation
- current conservation and restoration methods
- figurative stucco vs. geometric stucco : differences in production and in prestige
- the types and circles of patrons
- the prestige of stucco decoration and galleries of casts of antiques compared to other types of decoration
- the importance of stucco in the architecture of the 17th century

The château de Modave\* in the former independent prince-bishopric of Liège was partly burnt down in 1651 and 1652 by the troops of Charles IV, duc de Lorraine. From circa 1655 to 1673, Jean-Gaspard-Ferdinand, comte de Marchin sumptuously rebuilt and redecorated the medieval fortress. Originally from relatively low nobility, he became the right hand of Louis II de Bourbon, known as the Grand Condé. He married a French noblewoman of high ascent, Marie de Balsac d'Entraignes, marquise de Clermont. He was created count by the Holy Roman Emperor and invested Knight of the Order of the Garter by Charles II. He would even have been offered the marshal's baton by Louis XIV (which he supposedly refused). Eventually, however, he did not resolve his ambiguous political situation between France and Spain: he was poisoned by the Spanish secret service at Spa ! Far away from his military interests, Marchin invested huge sums in the lavish decoration of his country seat, with tapestries, stuccoes, monumental black marble chimney pieces, etc. This took him until his death in 1673. Much to raise his social standing in the eyes of his visitors, he hired fashionable artists to execute the spectacular stucco decoration in the state apartment (on the theme of The Labours of Hercules) and in the main hall (family tree), as well as the marble mausoleum to his parents in the specially-built chapel adjoining the village church. Today, Modave is one of the few seventeenth-century country houses in Belgium to have survived the numerous wars of the time. It is also arguably the finest architectural ensemble of its kind together with the now sadly dilapidated country house of Beaulieu (near Machelen, north of

Brussels) built by a friend of Marchin, the comte Claude-Lamoral de la Tour et Tassis (whose son later became Fürst von Thurn und Taxis). The exhibition « Pomp and propaganda : The stucco decoration at Modave and its engraved models », open to the public from 1 April to 29 May 2005, every day from 9 am to 6 pm (and from 7 to 31 March for groups by appointment), brings together engravings that the exceptional stuccoist Jan Christian Hansche used as sources of inspiration during his career from c. 1653 to 1685. Comparing the engraved image with photographs of the stuccos (and the real stuccos for those at Modave) will allow the visitor to understand the design and production of important cycles of stucco decoration such as at the châteaux of Horst, Beaulieu and Modave and the abbey of Park at Heverlee. The Compagnie intercommunale bruxelloise des Eaux owns the 450 ha/1000 acre nature reserve at Modave since 1899, where it sources some 20% of the drinking water used today by more than two million consumers in Brussels and its suburbs. It also owns the château, since 1941, and the CIBE is proud of its important function in the conservation of national heritage and in tourism ([www.cibe.be](http://www.cibe.be)).

Programme as at 17 January 2005. The organisers reserve the right to make any necessary changes.

As seats are limited, they must be booked firmly and be accompanied by the appropriate fee. Booking will be closed 72 hours before the start of the conference.

Please book on [www.lowcountriessculpture.org](http://www.lowcountriessculpture.org) for credit card payments. Alternatively, make a transfer to The Low Countries Sculpture Society's Belgian account 979-9814912-69 (IBAN BE71 9799 8149 1269, BIC ARSPBE22). Please make sure that we receive your payment cleared of all bank charges

The conference on 5 March (coffee, lunch and tea included) at 30,- euro p.p. / 20,- euro per full-time student (please send a copy of your student ID)

The study day on 6 March (entrance fees, 3-course lunch and drinks included) at 48,- euro p.p.

Travel tips : Brussels-N4-Modave : 105 km, 1 hour 15 min. Take E411 to Namur. Beyond Namur (exit 18, Courrière) change to dual carriage way N4 to Marche and Arlon. At the exit « Liège, Dinant, Hamois, Havelange » change to the N97 in the direction of Hamois and Havelange. Continue straight on for 11 km, through Hamois and Havelange. At Havelange the road is renamed N636. Still continue straight on. After 5 km you reach Pont-de-Bonne where you take a right turn up the hill towards Modave. After 2 km the first drive of the château is on your right. However, for the village church you continue for a few hundred meters straight on, before taking left towards the village. (At this same point the second drive to the château is on your right.) The church is in the middle of the village.

Liège-Modave: 38 km, 30 min. Take the N63 to Marche-en-Famenne. Exit after Terwagne onto the N641. Take a right towards Modave. The château will be on the left of the road at the end of a long drive; but the village church is in the middle of the village on the right of the road.

Nearest train station : Huy (13 km). Trains from Brussels, Namur and Liège generally every hour. [www.b-rail.be](http://www.b-rail.be)

Accommodation tips. A limited number of rooms has been booked at nearby hotels for the night of Saturday 5 to Sunday 6 March 2005. To benefit from the booking, please transfer the reservation of a room to your name. All the bookings that are not transferred will be cancelled on 15 February 2005.

#### Contact details

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[castle.be](http://castle.be), [www.modave-castle.be](http://www.modave-castle.be)

#### Reference:

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