

## Innovation & Experience in early baroque (Antwerp 9 Dec 05)

International Conference

INNOVATION AND EXPERIENCE IN EARLY BAROQUE IN THE SOUTHERN NETHERLANDS:  
THE CASE OF THE St CAROLUS BORROMEUS CHURCH IN ANTWERP

Friday 9 December 2005

Organized by the

Higher Institute of Architectural Sciences Henry  
van de Velde, College of Design Sciences,  
Hogeschool Antwerpen

In collaboration with the

v.z.w. Museum Rockox  
Erfgoedcel Antwerpen  
Department of History (University of Antwerp)

During the sixteenth century Antwerp was at the forefront of the Renaissance north of the Alps. Not only a new architectural style flourished in the Antwerp metropolis, but at the end of the sixteenth century sciences such as mathematics, optics, geometry and perspective became more and more important. They helped to redefine architecture and the other fine arts on a more scientific base. Their introduction in the arts at the beginning of the seventeenth century lead to new experiences, applications and even innovations in architecture. The Jesuit Order played a very crucial rule in this process. The realization of their new church in the centre of the city of Antwerp became one of the first attempts to bring together the applications of all those new ideas in one total project. Paintings by Peter Paul Rubens and sculptures by Hieronymus Duquenoy, Artus Quellinus etc. were participating in one of the first Early Baroque architectural realizations in the Low Countries. This church, actually the St Carolus Borromeus Church, was designed by François d'Aguilon, a scientist and architect of the Jesuit Order. His publication *Opticorum Libri sex* on optics and on the reflection of light was edited by the Officina Plantiniana in 1613, the same year he started his project for the church. This scientific and theoretical work helps us to understand the new experiences with light and space he experimented with.

It is the aim of this international symposium to bring together researchers to confront the results of their studies about the relationship of Rubens' s paintings with the Baroque interior, the interpretation of the façade of this Counter-Reformation church, the phenomenon of diffuse light created by reflection and refraction on marble statues, pillars and multiple ornaments, the combination of linear and parallel perspective applications, the sacral and social use of space and the signification of the façade and towers as parts of a perspective scene in the city landscape.

The central question will be whether we can conclude that at the beginning of the seventeenth century the innovative sense of creating a new architecture, so typical for the sixteenth century in Antwerp, still persisted in this city, and even lead to a new interpretation of architectural space.

Program:

9.30

Words of welcome by Prof. ir.arch. Richard Foqué (Dean College of Design Sciences, Hogeschool Antwerpen)

9.40

Opening lecture by Prof. Dr. Bruno Blondé ( Department of History, University of Antwerp): Space and Urban History

10.00

Introduction by Prof. Dr. ir.arch. Piet Lombaerde (Higher Institute of Architectural Sciences Henry van de Velde, College of Design Sciences, Hogeschool Antwerpen)

10.15

Prof. Dr. Werner Oechslin (ETH Zürich): Baroque: Space, Time and Historical Knowledge

10.45 Coffee break

11.00

Dr. August Ziggelaar S.J. (Copenhagen): P.P. Rubens and François de Aguilón

11.30

Dr. Sven Dupré (Centre for History of Science, Ghent University): François de Aguilón and his Opticorum Libri Sex

12.00

Prof. Dr. Barbara Haeger (Ohio State University): The Façade of the St Carolus Borromeus Church: Marking the Threshold of the Sacred

12.30 Lunch at the Snyders House (offered by KBC Rockox House)

14.00

Prof. Dr. ir.arch. Piet Lombaerde (Higher Institute of Architectural Sciences Henry van de Velde, College of Design Sciences, Hogeschool Antwerpen): The Role of the Façade and the Towers of the St Carolus Borromeus Church in the Urban Landscape of Antwerp during the Seventeenth Century

14.30

Prof. Dr. Ria Fabri (Department of Arts, Karel de Grote University College, Antwerp): Light, Measurement and Perspective: theoretical approach of the Interior of the St Carolus Borromeus Church

15.00

Drs. Antien Knaap (New York University): Visual Relationships between Rubens's Ceiling Paintings and the Altar of the Carolus Borromeus Church in Antwerp

15.30

Drs. Léon Lock (University of London) : The Importance of Sculpture in the Interior of the St Carolus Borromeus Church

16.00 Coffee break

16.30

Drs. Nathalie Poppe (Higher Institute of Architectural Sciences Henry van de Velde, College of Design Sciences, Hogeschool Antwerpen): The Phenomenon of Day-Light in the Interior of the St Carolus Borromeus Church: a New Interpretation

17.00

Prof. Marc Muylle (Higher Institute of Architectural Sciences Henry Van De Velde, College of Design Sciences, Hogeschool Antwerpen): From Light to Sound: Combining Digital Efforts in the Simulation of the Illumination and Acoustic Environment of the St Carolus Borromeus Church

17.20

Drs. Joris Snaet (University of Leuven): The Building of the Antwerp Jesuit Church: the Creation of an Ideal Sacred Space

17.50

Drs. Bert Timmermans (University of Leuven): The Chapel of the Houtappel family. The Privatisation of the Church and the Extension of the House in Seventeenth-Century Antwerp

18.20 Questions and Final Conclusions

#### 18.40 Reception at the Rockox House

Symposium Fee:

60 Euro per person or 30 Euro per student

All payments are due by 15 November 2005. Payments received after this date cannot guarantee a seat at the lunch as only a limited number of 80 persons can be accepted for the lunch.

All payments must be made by bank transfers to:

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Quote: Symposium CB2005 and your full name

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