Dear Friends of the Rubenianum,

As I look back at the first full year of existence of the Rubenianum Fund, it is clear that our initial expectations at the time of creation of the Fund have been exceeded. This fills me with gratitude towards our benefactors and donors, but also towards the many people who contributed so effectively to the fundraising effort.

It was fantastic to see how, in such a short period, the Rubenianum Fund has energized the whole scholarly community and led to a new momentum in the preparation and publication rhythm of the Corpus Rubenianum. It was also a crucial factor in gaining increased attention from the public authorities and securing their support for our endeavours. It was equally gratifying to see that we have been able to reach out to a wider public beyond the ‘hard core’ of the Rubens connoisseurs through this Rubenianum Quarterly, but also through the ‘Rubenianum Lectures’ and indeed through the first field trip which we organized.

The challenge is now to maintain this momentum in the years ahead. Based on the enthusiasm which we have been able to generate collectively, I feel confident that we will succeed.

Thomas Leysen
Chairman Rubenianum Fund

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Donor community growing

The fundraising efforts for the Rubenianum have continued to proceed at an encouraging pace. So far, the Rubenianum Fund has raised somewhat more than 1.5 million euros, taking us over three quarters to the minimum goal of 2 million euros. All in all, more than 75 donors have committed up to now. About half of the amount raised came from private individuals (of which in turn almost half came from Belgium, and the balance from all over Europe and from the United States). Nineteen percent was accounted for by two Belgium-based foundations, the InBev-Baillet Latour Foundation and the Fonds Courtin-Bouché. Art market professionals and auction houses contributed some 20 percent, and corporate donations amounted to slightly over 13 percent of the total amount. A few more fundraising events are planned in the course of 2011, leading hopefully to the gathering of the full amount originally envisaged.

The dates for the second field trip for the donors (after the highly successful event in Madrid, on which we reported in the previous issue of the Rubenianum Quarterly) have been set. It will take place between 2 and 5 July, and will take the participants to London, Boughton House and Chatsworth. In London, there will be a visit to the drawings in the Seilern Collection at the Courtauld Institute. At Boughton, one of the highlights will undoubtedly be the full series of Van Dyck oil sketches for the so-called Iconography (portraits of leading Antwerp citizens). In Chatsworth, participants will be able to view the print room and see among many treasures the ‘Antwerp Sketchbook’ with copies after Rubens’s lost ‘Theoretical Notebook’ (as discussed by Arnout Balis on pages 3–4 of the present issue).

The programme will close with a dinner at the residence of the Belgian ambassador. The donors will be advised of the full programme shortly by a separate mail. In view of the limited number of participants, early registration will be advisable.

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Chatsworth House
Corpus Rubenianum

Corpus authors meet in Antwerp
1 December 2010 will go down as a red-letter day in the annals of the Centre voor de Vlaamse Kunst van de 15e tot en de 17e eeuw and the Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard Fund. For the first time ever, current and designated authors of the series were invited to come together for a meeting, and despite relatively short notice, twenty-two authors made their way to Antwerp, with only four unable to attend.

The initiative for such a gathering was in no small way indebted to the enthusiasm generated by the success of the Rubenianum Fund, whose generous financial backing has given the Centre its resources to provide increased assistance to authors. At the same time it was important to explain to authors that such support brings with it the obligation to meet the deadline of 2020 for completion of the publication of the Corpus.

The meeting was addressed by three members of the Editorial Board: Prof. Arnout Balis, chair of the Centre, Prof. Emeritus Carl Van de Velde, and Dr Fiona Healy (this writer). In his introduction Arnout Balis outlined the points to be covered: a brief résumé of the current state of the Corpus; the importance of the Burchard Documentation; the structure of a Corpus volume (essay and entries) and what the Centre expects of all authors to achieve the goal of completing the Corpus by the end of the decade.

Communication plays a vital role in maintaining the motivation required to see long-term projects to their desired conclusion. Authors need someone they can turn to for help, be it to acquire photographic material, when making a study trip, or to enquire who might assist in solving a particular problem. Equally, the Centre requires regular reports on the progress of individual authors so that the publication schedule can be monitored and updated. It needs to be able to figure travel expenses into the annual budget and be kept informed of any problems. To streamline these and a number of other organizational aspects, the Editorial Board appointed me ‘corpus coordinator’. Though still early days, the network of communication remains easy by email and judgement and make a different attribution. Particularly intriguing was the account of the Corpus’s complex genealogical structure: an author does not write a book but a part, or even a sub-part, which may consist of one or more books with one or more volumes. To give you an example: Part xxxii on ‘Copies and Adaptations from Renaissance and Later Artists’ consists of sub-part 1: ‘Northern Artists’ and sub-part 2: ‘Italian Artists’. Kristin Bellin’s sub-part 1 is one book in two volumes, while Jeremy Wood’s sub-part 2 comprises three books of two volumes each. It has been calculated that on completion the 29 parts of the Corpus will total almost 50 books and that the number of volumes could be as high as 86. With considerable work remaining to be done, the meeting constituted an important factor in motivating all authors to achieve the goal of completing the Corpus by the end of the decade.

With considerable work remaining to be done, the meeting constituted an important factor in motivating all authors to achieve the goal of completing the Corpus by the end of the decade. Communication plays a vital role in maintaining the motivation required to see long-term projects to their desired conclusion. Authors need someone they can turn to for help, be it to acquire photographic material, when making a study trip, or to enquire who might assist in solving a particular problem. Equally, the Centre requires regular reports on the progress of individual authors so that the publication schedule can be monitored and updated. It needs to be able to figure travel expenses into the annual budget and be kept informed of any problems. To streamline these and a number of other organizational aspects, the Editorial Board appointed me ‘corpus coordinator’. Though still early days, the network of communication remains easy by email and

Rubens’s lost theoretical notebook

Arnout Balis

What is presented here, is a summary of a lecture delivered at the Rubenshuis in Antwerp on 19 December 2010, in the context of our recently founded series of ‘Rubenianum Lectures’. Eventually, the material treated here will be published in the Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard (volume xxv THE THEORETICAL NOTEBOOK). The publication will be authored by myself and David Jaffé of the National Gallery, London.

Rubens has been called one of the most erudite of painters; witness his constant rethinking of iconographical themes on the basis of his readings and his vast (but only partially preserved) correspondence (see the next issue of this Quarterly). His interests were wide and diverse, but he left us few explicitly formulated thoughts on artistic matters.

Tantalizing, then, are the rumours, which already circulated in the 17th century, concerning a manuscript notebook containing Rubens’s remarks on optics, symmetry, proportions, anatomy, architecture and a study of the human passions by way of a juxtaposition of quotations from classical literature (e.g. Virgil) and visual parallels (e.g. Raphael). Our first source is Giovanni Pietro Bellori, in his 1673 biography of the painter. Though still early days, the network of communication remains easy by email and

unpublished and the completion of the Corpus is a step closer.

The scholarly literature since then is far from unanimous about the attribution of this manuscript to the young Van Dyck, and it seems advisable to give it a more neutral name, such as the ‘Chatworth MS’. In his research on the Chatworth MS, Michael Jaffe concentrated on the visual motifs, which to a large degree were based on existing material (mostly engravings). But he also meticulously reconstructed what happened with Rubens’s original manuscript till its disappearance in 1720, and he also unearthed many facts about a third copy, which is now called the ‘Johnson MS’ after its first known owner (now in the Courtauld Institute Galleries, London). Nobody had expected it, but after some years a fourth copy of Rubens’s lost notebook has come to light: fragments of it were published by Juan Borges, who had acquired it for his own collection in Madrid (let us call it the ‘Borges MS’), and so it came to the attention of my co-author, David Jaffé.

If I may summarize: the original Rubens manuscript is lost for ever, but we have four copies of it available for study, and they deserve better than being termed ‘apocryphal’. Let us, then, explore their possible importance for Rubens research. When reading the reports by Bellori and De Piles, one might get the impression that Rubens’s notebook contained rather standard ingredients, typical for art-theoretical treatises: anatomy and proportions of the human body, symmetry and perspective (if this is what they meant by ‘optics’). The exploration of the passions and emotions is perhaps the most original

Geometrical analysis of the Hercules Farnese (Bordeaux MS)

Comparison between the face of an antique Venus and a horse’s muzzle (Chatworth MS)
Three new studies on Flemish art presented at the Rubenianum

21 February 2011 was a lively day at the Rubenianum. Well over a hundred scholars and enthusiasts of Flemish art met in the Rubenianum for the presentation of three interesting studies on early Netherlandish art.

A new study by Pictura Nova

David Teniers the Younger (1610–1690) is the subject of a highly valued series Pictura Nova. Studies in 17th and 18th Century Flemish Painting and Drawing. Initiated and edited by Hans Vlieghe and Katlijne Van der Stighelen, this series of art-historical studies already includes several monographic and thematic studies that are indispensable in every art library.

In addition to Hans Vlieghe’s book, there were two more studies at – and as many as one might expect of a series of this kind – two new titles in the Pictura Nova series. Both volumes, co-edited by himself and published in the series Museum at the Crossroads, handle the proceedings of symposia held at Leuven University. Both explore pictorial themes – the portrait and the nude – in an innovative and interdisciplinary way and their authors are internationally renowned specialists. Rather surprisingly touching upon the variety of topics dealt with in these publications, Katlijne Van der Stighelen cited an anecdote linking the respective themes in a literal and amusing way. She quotes from Judith van Gent’s recent dissertation on the portrait painter Bartholomeus van Helst. In the 1670s, a young woman pressed charge against Bartholomeus and his assistant, abjured of her Helst, also a portrait painter. He had painted her portrait, as commissioned by her and her husband, but he also used her features in a naked Venus, without asking her permission. The anecdote ends happily as the case was settled by mutual agreement: the sitter and the artist eventually got married.

For those who are interested in the study of Flemish art history, books remain indispensable and precious bearers of information, the most suitable medium to reflect and divulge research. The Rubenianum may be considered a natural host for such book-related events, a manifold of historical facts, interpretations and theories, Rubenianum may be considered a natural host for such book-related events, a manifold of historical facts, interpretations and theories.

New studies on David Teniers the Younger

The detailed contents of the latter two can be found on www.rubenianum.be/pictura.png

Rubeniana

New York auctions at Christie’s and Sotheby’s, 26–28 January 2011

16 January 2011 was an exciting day for any collector interested in Rubens, especially Rubens drawings. The Christie’s auction of Old Master & 19th Century Paintings, Drawings & Watercolours at 10.30am (lot 221) included twelve drawings (lots 263–274) from the collection of the late Ludwig Burchard painted from the Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard, among them at least five Rubens drawings: no. 263, the double-sided Adoration of the Shepherds (also called ‘The Adoration of the Shepherds’) and Christ Shown to the People; no. 267, ‘The Temptation of Christ’; no. 268, ‘The Temptation of Christ’; no. 271, ‘A Standing Angel with a spear and the nails of the cross’; and lot 273, ‘A Standing Angel with a spear and the nails of the cross’. It is amazing how the apostle figures cannot be associated with a Rubens work, one may wonder whether they possibly are quick sketches after the work in question. Rubens himself was apparently discussing an idea for the sculpture. It is also close to the engraving by Pieter Cloquet in reverse (but not traced for transfer).

Lot 272: Sir Peter Paul Rubens: ‘A Standing Angel with a spear and the nails of the cross’. Burchard wrote on the mount in pencil: marqure de Luxembourg and another man. Burchard also noted an abbreviation of to ‘attributed to Rubens’. The angel does not offer a complete picture of the costume, there is enough to surprise us with a portion of the costume, there is enough to surprise us with a portion of the costume. It is assumed that the angel is a portrait of a male nude.

Lot 271: Sir Peter Paul Rubens: ‘A Standing Angel with a spear and the nails of the cross’. Burchard wrote on the mount in pencil: marqure de Luxembourg and another man. Burchard also noted an abbreviation of to ‘attributed to Rubens’. The angel does not offer a complete picture of the costume, there is enough to surprise us with a portion of the costume, there is enough to surprise us with a portion of the costume. It is assumed that the angel is a portrait of a male nude.

Lot 270: Sir Peter Paul Rubens: ‘A Standing Angel with a spear and the nails of the cross’. Burchard wrote on the mount in pencil: marqure de Luxembourg and another man. Burchard also noted an abbreviation of to ‘attributed to Rubens’. The angel does not offer a complete picture of the costume, there is enough to surprise us with a portion of the costume, there is enough to surprise us with a portion of the costume. It is assumed that the angel is a portrait of a male nude.

Lot 269: Sir Peter Paul Rubens: ‘A Standing Angel with a spear and the nails of the cross’. Burchard wrote on the mount in pencil: marqure de Luxembourg and another man. Burchard also noted an abbreviation of to ‘attributed to Rubens’. The angel does not offer a complete picture of the costume, there is enough to surprise us with a portion of the costume, there is enough to surprise us with a portion of the costume. It is assumed that the angel is a portrait of a male nude. The sheet also darkened somewhat due to exposure to light. The drawing with an estimate of $200,000–$300,000 did not sell. cornelis Gallo II engraved it in reverse without Rubens’s inscription (Hollstein vol. 65, no. 145, 268 x 171 mm). The drawing was bought in black and red chalk on brown paper without Rubens’s inscription. A recently discovered Rubens drawing, incised and rededened on the verso, was auctioned at Christie’s, London, 05 July 2007, lot 94 (196 x 136 mm).
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