

# Elevated Minds at Amsterdam Centre for the Study of the Golden Age

22 september 2015

On the 3rd of November dr. Stijn Bussels and dr. Bram van Oostveldt will present their project Elevated Minds at the Amsterdam Centre for the Study of the Golden Age.

Location: Doelenzaal, University Library of the University of Amsterdam  
Time: 15:30-17:00

More information will follow soon.

The website of the Amsterdam Centre for the Study of the Golden Age: <http://acsga.uva.nl/news-and-events/seminars-and-events/seminars/seminars/content/folder/lectures/2015/11/elevated-minds.html>

# Symposium Museum voor Schone Kunsten Gent, De Gouden Eeuw revisited

4 januari 2016

On Friday the 25th of March dr. Bram van Oostveldt, dr. Stijn Bussels and Laura Plezier, MA will be present at the symposium "De Gouden Eeuw Revisited, Nieuwe perspectieven op de kunst uit de Nederlanden" at the Museum voor Schone Kunsten in Gent. This symposium is initiated by the researchers of Elevated Minds. Click further for more information in Dutch

## Inhoud

Voor 'De Gouden Eeuw Revisited' herschikt het MSK Gent haar collectie kunst uit de Gouden Eeuw grondig en laat verrassende werken uit de reserves zien. Met dit symposium willen we de historische contextualisering van de schilderkunst van de Gouden Eeuw verder uitdiepen. Voor de middag werpt het symposium een internationale blik op de Gouden Eeuw. De Nederlandse kunst vertoont weliswaar karakteristieken die haar bijzonder maken, maar tegelijkertijd kan en mag de Nederlandse kunst niet geïsoleerd worden bekeken. Schilders uit de Nederlandse republiek bleven intensief contact houden met kunstenaars uit de Zuidelijke Nederlanden en daarbuiten. Na de middag wordt de Gouden Eeuw binnen een breder kader geplaatst; een antropologisch kader waar kunst niet louter wordt gewaardeerd voor haar schoonheid, maar daarnaast ook functioneert als een manier om bepaalde angsten op te roepen en ze tegelijk ook te bezweren. Om dit duidelijk te maken zullen we ons concentreren op wat we 'vreselijke schoonheid' noemen, iets wat op een zekere paradox duidt, de aantrekkingskracht van het vreselijke en hoe dat in termen van schoonheid en het sublieme kan worden uitgedrukt.

## Programma

09:30 Ontvangst

10:00 Inleiding

- Catherine de Zegher Directeur Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Gent
- Stijn Bussels Leiden University Centre for the Arts in Society

10:30 Zeventiende-eeuwse kunst uit de Nederlanden in een internationaal perspectief

- Koenraad Jonckheere Universiteit Gent
- Thijs Weststeijn Universiteit van Amsterdam
- Ralph Dekoninck Université Louvain-la-Neuve [lezing in het FR]

12:00 Debat

12:30 Lunch en vrij bezoek aan de tentoonstelling

14:00 Inleiding

- Bram Van Oostveldt Leiden University Centre for the Arts in Society

14:30 Vreselijke schoonheid en het sublieme

- Caroline Van Eck Universiteit Leiden
- Laura Plezier Universiteit Leiden
- Matthieu Somon Université Paris 1, Panthéon-Sorbonne [lezing in het FR]
- Hanneke Grootenboer Head of the Ruskin School of Art Oxford University

16:30 Debat

17:00 Koffie en thee

## Praktische informatie

PRAKTISCH Kostprijs € 15 / studenten € 10 Lunch en bezoek aan de tentoonstelling inbegrepen. Inschrijven via [lieven.van.den.abeele@stad.gent](mailto:lieven.van.den.abeele@stad.gent) of 09 / 240 07 37. Deelname in de kosten overschrijven via BE11 0910 1974 1448 (GKCCBEBB) van AGB Kunsten en Design, Botermarkt 1, 9000 Gent.

<http://mskgent.be/nl/agenda/symposium>

# Presentation of the forth coming exhibition

9 March 2016

On the 25th of May the ERC research group will discuss their ideas on a forth coming exhibition on architecture and the sublime.

The meeting will take place from 13-18h in the Heinsius room at the University Library.

## Frederik Knegtel awarded with Bourse Descartes grant

26 April 2016

We are proud to announce that Frederik Knegtel, one of our ERC members, has received the Bourse Descartes.

Each year, the Institut français and French Embassy award the Bourses Descartes, which are designed to support students or PhD candidates who intend to study at a French educational institution or would like to finance a research partnership.

The scholarship will enable Frederik Knegtel to finish his investigation of seventeenth-century primary source material. Texts and images deriving from all corners and levels of society have to be taken into account, and the scholarship will provide him the opportunity to conduct and complete this research during a period of five months.

The Bourse Descartes will also partially foster the Van Gogh research program, a collaboration between the ERC research group at Leiden and the doctoral group led by Prof. dr. Colette Nativel at Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne. This franco-dutch partnership, created by the Partenariat Hubert Curien (PHC), has already financed several research meetings in Leiden and Paris the last few years.



Please visit the following website for more information: <https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/en/news/2016/04/bourse-descartes-knegtel>

# Successful workshop

25 May 2016

On the 25th of May authors and advisors discussed the forthcoming publication on Wondrous Architecture in the Seventeenth Century which will come out alongside the same exhibition at Royal Palace in Amsterdam in 2017.

## Wondrous Architecture in the Seventeenth Century

A few years ago when dr. Stijn Bussels was invited to present the ERC project 'Elevated Minds' in the Royal Palace Amsterdam, there was a collective wish to organise an exhibition. The intriguing overwhelming impact of grand buildings, such as the Amsterdam Town Hall was one of the main reasons to make an exposition concerning the political aspect of the intense emotions architecture and how these emotions are dealt with in texts and images. Together with the exhibition, a publication will come out on this Wondrous Architecture of the Seventeenth Century, both scheduled in 2017.



The seventeenth-century Dutch Republic can be characterized for her keen interest in what is the exception, in what overwhelms completely because it does not come close to everyday life, in what appears as a total surprise. In contrast with the dominant view on the art in the Golden Age many Dutch artists were strongly fascinated by that which goes beyond the average, by that which can hardly be captured into words because it is so remote from normal life.

Of course, we do not want to deny that in the Golden Age many painterly genres which represented everyday life did enjoy an unprecedented growth, such as genre painting and still life painting. However, there is more than just the dominant view on art in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic as a mirror of everyday life. There was an extreme interest in what is exceptional, from extreme violence and dirtiness to highly elevated subjects. The interest in the exceptional can be illustrated in the popularity of the mythological figure of Phaeton in Dutch literature and visual arts. The interest in Phaeton illustrates how writers and visual artists explored the possibilities, limits and dangers of humankind to enter heavenly heights.

Wonder, marvel and related overwhelming feelings do play an important part in seventeenth-century architecture, as well as in texts and images dealing with this architecture. Eymert-Jan Goossens already pointed out how the Amsterdam Town Hall functioned as an impressive visualisation of social ideals. Pieter Vlaardingebroek on his turn gave us a detailed insight in how this visualisation of social ideals was carefully planned and executed. Koen Ottenheym emphasised the international context of the visualisation of social ideals by showing the influence of Italian architects and especially Scamozzi. We want to build further on this expertise by looking at how the visualisation of social ideals in grand buildings such as the Amsterdam Town Hall had to elicit strong emotions that were used within a political context.

Century-old patterns of thought, as the Seven Wonders of the World and the Theory of Harmony, made it possible to perceive, discuss and enforce the magnificence of architecture. Poems, paintings, prints, and drawings that took the Town Hall as their central subject and presented the building as a wonder that exceed everyday reality can be seen as 'performative' in the sense that these texts and images do not merely mirror that what can be seen, but give form to the perception of architecture. The poems and works of art stimulate the reader or viewer to be even more amazed if eventually they are confronted with the building itself. Consequently the spectacle that the observation of the building elicit, is prepared in text and image. The effect of the building is enforced. Such an interaction between architecture and textual and visual discourses is already discussed by Caroline van Eck, among others in the context of seventeenth-century England. We will continue this field of research.



During this workshop the authors: Stijn Bussels, Bram van Oostveldt, Caroline van Eck, F. Smidt, Jo'anne van Ooijen, Laura Plezier, Minou Schraven and Frederik Knegt presented their ideas regarding their own contributions. The publication won't be a catalogue, but a collection of essays that explores more in depth the central theme of the exposition, being the relation between architecture, wonder and power. Every contribution will start from the Amsterdam Town Hall, but will also take other seventeenth-

century buildings into consideration, with special attention for the Louvre, Banqueting House and Saint Peter's Basilica.

The workshop was attended by prof. dr. Colette Nativel, Alexander Dencher, Mathilde Bert and the experts Eymert-Jan Goossens and Pieter Vlaardingerbroek. The workshop is supported by the European Research Council, the Scaliger Institute and Nuffic-Van Gogh Programme.



## Special Issue of JHNA

25 May 2016

Stijn Bussels and Bram van Oostveldt were the guest editors of this special issue of JHNA, the Journal of Historians of Netherlandish Art. In this special issue the ten authors re-evaluate the role of the antique concept of the sublime for understanding seventeenth-century Netherlandish painting and prints. Given that the Dutch Golden Age is often perceived as focusing on worldly art, this is an unexpected topic. Yet cultural historians, including the contributors to this issue, have recently noted how differently early modern thinkers conceived of the sublime, as they relate it to effects of the unsettling, overwhelming, transporting, or enchanting in Dutch and Flemish art.



In this special issue of JHNA the authors question how the sublime can function as a fruitful concept that allows us to gain more insight into the effect and agency of seventeenth-century art in the Netherlands. With the help of art theory, poetics, laudatory poems, fragments from diaries, biographical data, and theological concepts, the contributors show that by using different theories of the sublime in analyzing specific works of art we can better understand their precise impact. With examples from divergent painterly genres, emblematic works, and spectacle the authors point at the capacity of overwhelming art to accentuate the exceptional position of the artist, elevate the onlookers morally, or offer them ways to deal, in the secure space of the representation, with deep-rooted fears, divine magnanimity, and superhuman infinity.

Click on the link for the whole Open Acces journal:<http://www.jhna.org/index.php/vol-8-2-2016>



# **“Shiver and Admire in the Dutch Golden Age. Artus Quellinus’ Statues in the Amsterdam Tribunal”**

**23 September 2016**

Stijn Bussels will give a lecture on the 'Statutes in the Amsterdam Tribunal' at the 'Public Statues Across Time and Culture' conference in Oxford. The conference will be held on 28 and 29 September in the Lincoln College of Oxford.

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Throughout history and across cultures people have set up statues in public spaces - to honour rulers, to reward benefactors, to worship gods and goddesses or simply to admire. This conference brings together leading historians, art historians and archaeologists to discuss the role played by public statues in historical cultures ranging from ancient China to modern Turkey, from Palmyra to Georgian England. Key issues to be explored include the ways in which the setting of public statues contributed to their meaning, the ways that audiences responded to public statues and what contemporary discourses reveal about the role of statues in society. Looking at public statues as a widespread historical phenomenon should suggest new perspectives for considering the specific case studies considered and will generate discussion concerning shared problems of evidence and methodology in approaching the subject. The event is open to anybody with an interest in sculpture, public space or comparative history.

For more information about the conference and other speakers please check their website on: <http://www.torch.ox.ac.uk/public-statues-across-time-and-culture>

## Autour de Junius

21 October 2016

On Wednesday 19 October the last Van Gogh travel grant meeting between the research group of Colette Nativel and Elevated Minds took place in Paris.

During this succesful meeting Colette Nativel spoke about the relationship between the aesthetics of Junius and Calvin. After her talk she and Stijn Bussels hosted the table discussion about Junius and imagination in three version of De Pictura.



# Honorary doctorate for prof. Caroline van Eck

11 November 2016

The ERC research group congratulates prof. Caroline van Eck with her honorary doctorate which she received from the University of Neuchâtel.

Caroline van Eck received the honorary doctorate at the Faculté des lettres et sciences humaines on Saturday 29 October in the Aula des Jeunes-Rives of the University of Neuchâtel.

*Other doctorats honoris causa were:*

Mme Florence Aubry Girardin *Faculté de droit*

M. Pierre Pestleau *Faculté des sciences économiques*

M. John Pickett *Faculté des sciences*



# Naturalismen kunst, wissenschaft und ästhetik

12 February 2017

On the 27th of January Stijn Bussels gave a presentation with the title 'How Close to Nature Was the Art of the Dutch Golden Age?'

The conference 'Naturalismen, Kunst, Wissenschaft und ästhetik' was organised by the University of Hamburg. As is well known, the term naturalism carries a multitude of meanings. It can designate an artwork's qualities that are considered characteristic of a specific time period or movement or it could even define a stylistic epoch in itself. In this historical sense of the term, one speaks of a "Renaissance Naturalism" or a "Naturalism" of around 1900. However, even if considered systematically, meanings of naturalism diverge quite profoundly depending on the context. On account of this, the conference will address the overarching connections or parallels among the profusion of naturalisms. A consistent use of the term is intended to describe the tendency of an artwork to strive toward the imitation of nature or a heightened level of reality. This raises the question, how did techniques of description and varieties of illusionism produce knowledge? To what extent did instances of objectivity and claims to truth derive from an apparent withdrawal of artistic intervention? Which aporias are inherent in naturalism?

<https://www.fbkultur.uni-hamburg.de/naturbilder/aktuelles/naturalismen-flyer.pdf>

# New Publication a special LIAS issue

16 March 2017

The team of Elevated Minds is proud to announce that their special issue 'The Sublime in Early Modern Theories of Art and Literature' is available online. Please visit the following website to read the special issue:

[http://poj.peeters-leuven.be/content.php?url=issue&journal\\_code=LIAS&issue=2&vol=43](http://poj.peeters-leuven.be/content.php?url=issue&journal_code=LIAS&issue=2&vol=43)

When thinking about the sublime, most people would spontaneously refer to an aesthetic experience - be it in nature, in art or in the self - that destabilises us, that evokes conflicting emotions of awe and fear, of horror and fascination, or that escapes our human understanding. This eighteenth century notion of the impressive and the awe-inspiring is often connected to the sublime. However, the sublime is a much older notion. It is a rhetorical concept that finds its main source in the treatise *Peri hypsous* probably written in the first century AD by an anonymous author, who is generally referred to as Longinus. In this special issue the editors have collected five essays that revisit and deepen the understanding of the role and importance of Longinus for humanist thought.

## Introduction

The Early Histories of the Sublime

- Van Oostveldt, Bram; Bussels, Stijn; Jansen, Wieneke

## Defending the Poet

The Reception of *On the Sublime* in Daniel Heinsius' *Prolegomena on Hesiod*

- Jansen, Wieneke

Where to Draw the Line? Longinus, Goulu, and Balzac's *Lettres*

- Gilby, Emma

'*Sone fiunt suaviores*' Musical Implications in the Early Modern Reception of Longinus' *On the Sublime*

- Refini, Eugenio

Lectures du *Traité du sublime* par Franciscus Junius F.F.

- Nativel, Colette

## An Unstable Sublime

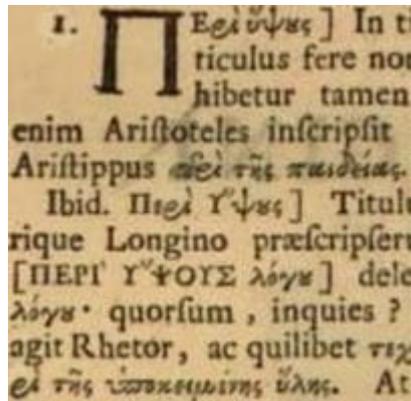
Milton's *Pandemonium* and the *Baldacchino* at St. Peter's in Rome

- Delbeke, Maarten

# Scholarly forgetting

21 May 2017

On April 7 Wieneke Jansen participated in an international expert meeting on ‘scholarly forgetting’ at the Humboldt Universität in Berlin.



The workshop was part of the research project “A Fresh Look Backwards: Scholarly Forgetting in the History of the Humanities” (<https://www.klassphil.hu-berlin.de/de/aktuelles/programme-7-8-april-neu-001.pdf>) led by Dr Han Lamers and funded by the Volkswagen Foundation. In her paper, Wieneke Jansen discussed forgotten aspects of Pseudo-Longinus’ treatise On the sublime in early modern as well as current scholarship, and argued how seventeenth-century readings of the treatise influence modern interpretations to the present day.

# Style between Anthropology, Archaeology, Classics, and Art history

## 19 June 2017

On the 26th of May 2017 Stijn Bussels and Bram van Oostveldt gave a lecture entitled 'What Does Style Do? Neoclassicism and Reviving Antiquity' on the first Byvanck symposium.

The symposium was held in the National Museum of Antiquities. Style is a fundamental concept shared by anthropology, archaeology, classics and art history. After a period of eclipse from agendas of inquiry, it has now become central again in discussions of globalization, culture transfer or design analysis. The Byvanck Chair in Leiden was endowed to foster the study of the art and archaeology of the classical world, and to mark the new tenure of Caroline van Eck as Byvanck Professor and of Marike van Aerde as Byvanck Fellow, this symposium is organized to address the concept of style, developed originally in classical rhetoric, to explore a new common ground for the four disciplines that are all concerned with the material, visual and textual culture of the Graeco-Roman world.



For more information about the programme please check:

<https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/en/events/2017/05/style-between-anthropology-archaeology-classics-and-art-history>

# Summer School Ecole du Louvre-Honours

## 30 June 2017

From 28 June until the 4th of July the summer school of the École du Louvre-Honours will take place in Leiden and Paris. The theme of this year is Artistic Propaganda in Paris and the Netherlands in the 17th Century. The Sublime. Stijn Bussels and Caroline van Eck are the lecturers of this series. Bram van Oostveldt and Frederik Knegtel will give a talk during this summer school.

### Programme Wednesday 28 June

10h00-10h30 (Old Observatory (Kaiserstraat 63), University Leiden)

#### Welcome

Caroline van Eck

Professor of art and architectural history until 1800, Cambridge University

10h30-12h00

#### Introduction to the General Theme

and the Broader Study of the Dutch Golden Age

Stijn Bussels

Assistant professor in drama and art history at Leiden University / LUCAS, head of the ERC-programme Elevated Minds

14h00-16h00 (Amsterdam)

### Programme Thursday 29 June

#### *Visit of the Rijksmuseum*

9h30-11h00 (Old Observatory, University Leiden)

#### **The Sublime or Repulsion and Abhorrence in the Dutch Golden Age**

Stijn Bussels

11h15-12h45 (Old Observatory, University Leiden)

#### **The Petrifying Gaze of Medusa: Ambivalence, *Ekplexis*, and the Sublime**

Caroline van Eck

14h00-16h00 (The Hague)

### Programme Friday 30 June

#### *Visit of the Mauritshuis*

9h30-11h00 (Old Observatory, University Leiden)

#### **The Delightful Horror of the Massacre of the Innocents**

Stijn Bussels

11h15-12h45 (Old Observatory, University Leiden)

#### **The Overwhelming Impact of the Amsterdam Town Hall**

Stijn Bussels

14h30-16h (Amsterdam)

### Programme Monday 3 July

#### *Visit of the Royal Palace (former Town Hall)*

Paris, France

8h45-9h00 (École du Louvre, cafeteria)

#### **Welcome reception - coffee break**

9h00-9h30 (École du Louvre, salle Angkor)

#### **Presentation of the École du Louvre**

Charlotte Wilkins

Assistant to the academic director and lecturer, École du Louvre

10h00-12h00 (Hôtel et Dôme des Invalides)

**Visit of the Hôtel des Invalides**

Frederik Knegtel

PhD candidate - Elevated Minds, Leiden University

13h30-15h00 (musée du Louvre, département des peintures françaises et du Nord, département des sculptures)

**The Sublime in the representation of power**

French and Dutch propaganda in the 17<sup>th</sup> century

Sarah Moine

PhD candidate, Leiden University

15h00-16h30 (musée du Louvre, département des peintures françaises et du Nord)

**Programme Tuesday 4 July****Attraction and repulsion: the Sublime in the horror**

Zoé Marty

PhD candidate, Ecole du Louvre

10h00-12h00 (École du Louvre, salle Angkor)

**Delightful horror: Monicart's Versailles**

Bram van Oostveldt

Lecturer, Amsterdam/Leiden Universities

14h00-16h00 (École du Louvre, salle Angkor)

**Discussion and work with the students**

Caroline van Eck

Stijn Bussels

Camille Horent,

Lecturer, Ecole du Louvre