**Rubens inspires Antwerp in 2018**

19 October 2017

**The cultural city festival *Antwerp Baroque 2018. Rubens inspires* pays homage to Peter Paul Rubens and his baroque, cultural heritage in 2018. VisitFlanders and the city of Antwerp are investing 14.8 million euros to strengthen the international reputation of Peter Paul Rubens. Ticket sales for an ambitious series of exhibitions in which the historic Baroque enters into dialogue with contemporary masters start today. The final piece of the festival is the *Rubens Experience Center,* which will open in 2020. Restoration of the portico and the garden pavilion, two authentic elements of Rubens’ home, have already started. Both infrastructure projects mark the beginning of a new future for the Rubens House.**

**Rubens Experience Center architects have been announced**

The City of Antwerp wants to expand the Rubens House with an experience center in which the art-historical value of the building and the garden are retained. The city looked for a suitable architectural firm to develop a vision for the Rubens site (with a reception area and experience center) via an Open Call for Candidates by the Flemish Master Architect. The design team Robbrecht en Daem Architecten CVBA was chosen as the winner. VisitFlanders and the City of Antwerp are investing 6 million euros in the project. The opening of the new reception area and experience center is planned for 2020.

Alderman for Culture Caroline Bastiaens looks forward to a new future for the Rubens site: *“Restoration of the 400-year-old portico and garden pavilion was sorely needed. But we will not only be restoring authentic elements. The Rubens House will also receive a new reception area and experience center. The architectural firm Robbrecht & Daem won the design contest. We were charmed by their vision, which is based on understanding, respect and admiration for Rubens and that honours the site and the spatial principles that Rubens himself incorporated in his house and garden.”*

Flemish Minister for Tourism Ben Weyts: *“Flanders is the birthplace of lots of European art and culture. Yet too few people in Belgium and abroad are aware of this. International promotion of a concept, like the Flemish Masters, is only successful if the theme is also alive in Flanders. It's an explicit goal to make Flemings enthusiastic about our Flemish Masters, in the broadest sense of the word.”*

*For more information see appendix 1*

**Restoration of authentic portico and garden pavilion Rubens House has started**

The conservation-restoration of the portico and the garden pavilion in the Rubens House started on 18 September 2017. The portico and the garden pavilion are the only two original remnants of Rubens' home because it was extensively rebuilt since the 18th century. They are also rare traces of Rubens as an architect. These 400-year-old elements were in need of restoration. The restoration works have a visible impact on the site, but the museum will remain open. The restoration works will be open to the public during the festival year *Antwerp Baroque 2018. Rubens inspires*. Visitors will be able to follow and experience the restoration. Concurrent with the start of the restoration, the museum is also launching a call for witnesses who can tell them something about the reconstruction of the Rubens House from 1939 to 1946.

*For more information see appendix 2*

**Cultural city festival ‘Antwerp Baroque 2018. Rubens inspires’ - exhibition programme**

The cultural city festival *Antwerp Baroque 2018. Rubens inspires* pays homage to Peter Paul Rubens and his baroque, cultural heritage. The backbone of the city festival is a series of exhibitions in which Rubens and the baroque period are confronted with contemporary art and artists. The festival runs from June 2018 to January 2019.

Tickets for all these exhibitions are available via [www.antwerpbaroque2018.be](http://www.antwerpenbarok2018.be/)

**Rubens’ Return**

Rubens House

From 1/6/2018

Curator: Ben van Beneden

The Rubens House collection is being further enriched with new, long-term loans as part of *Antwerp Baroque 2018. Rubens inspires.* The Rubens House has had a successful loans policy for quite some time. Just think of David Bowie’s Tintoretto or the Self-portrait by Anthony van Dyck. They will be joined by even more masterpieces in the coming months. The new acquisitions will be announced during the run-up to the festival. VisitFlanders is co-investing in sustainable accessibility for tourists of the new acquisitions during the city festival in 2018.

*For more information see appendix 3a*

**Michaelina**

MAS in collaboration with Rubens House

1/6/2018 – 2/9/2018

Curator: Dr Katlijne Van der Stighelen

The Rubens House organises the first retrospective of the oeuvre of Michaelina Wautier (1614–1689) and demonstrates the exceptional talent of an artist who became great in a period when female artists were very uncommon. Her work is ground-breaking in every sense. The MAS will be hosting the Rubens House with this exhibition.

*For more information see appendix 3b*

**Sanguine | Bloedrood. Luc Tuymans on Baroque**

M HKA in collaboration with KMSKA

1/6/2018 – 16/9/2018

Curator: Luc Tuymans

The M HKA confronts the genius of Baroque masters with the vision of contemporary artists. Curator Luc Tuymans brings dramatic Baroque works into the experimental spaces of modern art and overwhelms the visitor by placing key Baroque works in dialogue with contemporary artists. The exhibition brings national (including a high-profile selection from the KMSKA) and international masterpieces to Antwerp via unique loans. One of the eye-catchers in this exhibition is *Five Car Stud* by Edward Kienholz.

*For more information see appendix 3c*

**Experience Traps**

Middelheim Museum

1/6/2018 – 23/9/2018

Curator: Sara Weyns

With ‘Experience Traps’ the Middelheim Museum sheds light on the contemporary legacy of Baroque, with an important focus on the area of tension between nature and artifice. International contemporary artists including William Forsythe, Bertrand Lavier and Bruce Nauman, were invited to create new works, specific for the museum and public spaces in the city. They will be located at the intersection between architecture, sculpture and installation, and they zoom in on different style elements characteristic of the Baroque motifs: grottos, labyrinths, tableaux vivants, follies, fountains, trompe-l’oeil, etc.

*For more information see appendix 3d*

**Paul Kooiker - Studio**

FOMU – Photo Museum Antwerp

28/6/2018 – 7/10/2018

Curator: Joachim Naudts

For years Kooiker has been making images departing from nudes in art. He has come to his own, aberrant art history. His frame of reference is mainly aimed at the 20th and 21st century, with artists like Hans Bellmer or Hans-Peter Feldmann. For this project he made a special, one-time excursion to the Baroque of the 17th and 18th century; the Baroque of Rubens and Rembrandt.

*For more information see appendix 3e*

**Baroque Book Design**

A story about friendship and collaboration

Museum Plantin-Moretus

28/9/2018 – 6/1/2019

Curator: Dr Dirk Imhof, Dr Goran Proot and Dr Geoffrey Brusatto

The Museum Plantin-Moretus will place book designers, and Peter Paul Rubens in particular, in the foreground during the Baroque festival. How did the book evolve in the Baroque period? Why did a publisher like Balthasar Moretus work together with prominent artists? Which vision did contemporary innovators propagate in the book trade? The exhibition in the Museum Plantin-Moretus ‘Baroque Book Design. A story about friendship and collaboration’ shows publishers' love of the trade. How publishers motivated artists, printers and designers to create a top product in the past and continue to do so in the present.

*For more information see appendix 3f*

**Cokeryen - Photo Film Food**. Tony Le Duc / Frans Snijders

Snijders&Rockox House

28/9/2018 – 13/1/2019

Curator: Tony Le Duc

The Baroque painter Frans Snijders (Antwerp, 1579 - 1657) is famous for his hunting scenes, impressive market scenes and still lifes. What culinary photographer Tony Le Duc and Frans Snijders have in common is a keen eye for attractive compositions. Tony Le Duc works magic with colour and elevates staple foods to art. For the exhibition ‘Cokeryen – Photo Film Food’ he brings together works by Snijders and his contemporaries and he confronts this selection with his own work. The location is also very special; it is Frans Snijders' home and atelier. The doors will be opened to the public in 2018.

*For more information see appendix 3g*

**Monumental Churches Antwerp**

1/6/2018 – 31/10/2018

MKA in collaboration with OKV

Antwerp has five monumental churches where the Baroque and the social world of Rubens come to life ‘in situ’. The majestic Cathedral of Our Lady, St Paul’s Church, St Andrew's Church, St Charles Borromeo Church and the St James’ Church. These churches were amongst the most enthusiastic purchasers of new work by Rubens and his contemporaries. In 2018 this permanent offering will be made even more accessible to visitors. Visitors will be able to discover the life story of Rubens via a new route through the five churches. A Rubens masterpiece (or a masterpiece by one of his contemporaries) that can still be admired at the location for which it was designed and created will be placed in a new light in each church, in collaboration with Public Art Collection Flanders.

*For more information see appendix 3h*

**Baroque Burez**

MAS

From 1/6

Curator: Marieke Van Bommel

In 2018 the MAS welcomes photographer-artist Athos Burez with a photo series about baroque. With 30 images and installations displayed on the Boulevard, Athos will provide an idiosyncratic and contemporary look at different genres from the style period: still lifes, portraits, landscapes and interiors. It will be the first time that works by Athos can be admired in a solo exhibition in Antwerp.

*For more information see appendix 3i*

**Events**

In addition to these exhibitions, a cultural events programme entitled 'Baroque in the city' has also been drawn up. More details will be released at the end of 2017.

**More information and pictures:**

www.antwerpbaroque2018.be

<https://stadantwerpen.prezly.com/>

[https://stadantwerpen.prezly.com/media#](https://stadantwerpen.prezly.com/media)

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