



Call for Papers • Call for Posters

# Making Space for Festival, 1400–1700

## Interactions of Architecture and Performance in Late Medieval and Early Modern Festivals

21–24 March 2013  
Venice, Italy

*A Joint Conference Organized by*  
The ESF Research Networking Programme PALATIUM  
The Society for European Festivals Research

*Co-Organizers*  
The University of Warwick, U.K.  
The University of Leuven, Belgium

### The Conference

The conference will consider how princely and civic architecture of the period, together with ephemeral architecture constructed for the occasion, have contributed to the implied meaning of a diverse series of festivals across Europe between approximately 1400 and 1700. Scholars have interpreted festivals as temporarily transformative, through visual and dramatic agency, of the political and social significance of great houses and palaces. They have argued further that perceptions of a city's built environment and princely houses were subject to idealising transformation as a result of ephemeral structures and performed actions during the occasion itself, and subsequently by means of festival books and other records.

Festivals were notable occasions of social and political exchange affecting a city's reputation, and the political and cultural relations of its sponsoring authorities. These matters were addressed through drawing together opinion formers, including princes and ambassadors of nations and city states, as well as visitors, from across a wide and diverse range of European localities.

Much work of a comparative and analytical nature remains to be done in assessing the impact of individual festivals, as well as the broad phenomenon of festival's significance in the transnational environment, following on from pioneering studies by Jean Jacquot and his colleagues in the 1960s and 70s, furthered by subsequent scholarship.

Drawing on the combined resources of PALATIUM and the Society for European Festivals Research, the conference will bring together leading experts in the interpretation of architectural and visual history with scholars versed in the history of festivals and their political, social, dramatic and artistic significance. It will thus provide opportunities for fruitful exchange between colleagues, and point the way to future areas of research collaboration.

## **Proposals for papers**

Proposals may address one or more of the following overlapping themes:

### **1. Festival Interventions in the Princely and Noble Environment**

Festivals on occasion prompted the extension or adaptation of palaces and noble residences, in order to accommodate spectacular events and house elite visitors. Examples might include the provision of accommodation for Queen Elizabeth and her entourage at Kenilworth in 1575, or the adaptation and enhancement of the Palazzo Pitti to serve as setting for the Florentine *naumachia* of 1589. Proposals are invited for papers addressing the practical arrangements for adaptations of this kind, including the financial costs and the necessary administrative and design resources, together with the immediate and longer-term consequences for the palace or noble residence and its owners. How did such adaptations serve the interests of the authorities who sponsored them? What messages did they convey to those attending the festival event? How did the adaptations serve the visual and dramatic purposes of the festival in performance? How did existing princely and civic architecture affect the conception and delivery of festival?

### **2. Ephemeral Architecture and the Meaning of Festival**

Festivals typically entailed elaborate processions through streets and along rivers decorated with temporary (rarely permanent) architecture. Such architecture, involving triumphal arches but also on many occasions incorporating other types of structure, was designed to convey political, social and cultural messages by means of paintings and inscriptions, but also by allusion to formal sources, stemming most often from re-discovered classical concepts of architectural order. Papers are invited which address the interpretation of an ephemeral feature or series of features along a processional route, or placed conspicuously in an urban or rural location, thus relating court space with public space. Notable examples might include the elaborate and artistically significant arches designed or decorated by Rubens for the *Pompa Introitus Ferdinandi* to Antwerp in 1634, or the extraordinary floating architecture created in 1615 by architects and hydraulic engineers for the double Spanish-French marriage ceremonies on the Bidasoa river which marks the boundary between the two countries.

### **3. Transformed Courts and Cities: the Festival in Performance**

Festivals were presented in existing or specially constructed or adapted theatres and indoor spaces, normally addressing an elite audience, and/or outdoor locations on city streets and piazzas, canals, rivers and lagoons. In both cases, interventions took place in

the built environment of the sponsoring city or state, altering temporarily or permanently its social, political and cultural meanings. Equally, the scenography of performance frequently entailed the representation of cityscapes, as in the spectacular *intermedii* created for the Florentine festival of 1589 or the scenery designed by Inigo Jones for the Stuart masques in England. An architecturally and financially ambitious building such as the Teatro Olimpico in Vicenza might be erected, specifically to house festival performance, and in so doing to contribute to the extension of a developing society's cultural reach. An initiative of this kind was of significance even if, perhaps especially if, the project proved virtually still born. Papers are invited which consider how spatial interventions made civic and princely locations ready to take on the meanings which festival sponsors envisaged. Papers are also invited which explore the architectural allusiveness of festival in performance, taking in stage machinery and spectacle, and where appropriate assessing how dance, visual effects and soundscape create space for a three-dimensional art.

#### **4. Festival Space: Looking Before, Then and After**

Late medieval and early modern festival architecture characteristically recollected earlier times and places, as a way of acknowledging dynastic inheritance, and as a means of recruiting prestige, most often through allusion to classical or biblical precedent. Papers are invited which consider how architectural presentation of the past is filtered through current visual language and responds to current preoccupations and habits of mind. Festival architecture moreover seeks to present an ideal image of the present, as noted above, through dressing the urban townscape as ideal environment, employing temporary structures and inviting bourgeois embellishment in the form of displayed tapestries and refurbished house fronts. Papers are invited which consider the social and micro-political effects of such architectural adaptation. Festivals moreover created visual space by employing elite and non-elite performers to occupy urban locations by way of processions, set games, animal hunts, chivalric competitions and displays of skill. Papers are invited which explore the effects of such activities on the visual experience of environment, or which address the sense of place that arises from rehearsal and pre-planning of princely and bourgeois indoor and outdoor events. Papers are invited, finally, which consider how modern ceremonial occasions such as coronations, the inauguration of a President, royal and princely weddings, such as recently in England and Sweden, and the celebration of jubilees, such as that for Queen Elizabeth II in 2012, entail interventions in the physical and visual environment in mimicry of, or in contrast with, festivals of the late medieval and early modern period.

#### **PALATIUM**

The conference forms part of the ESF Research Networking Programme *PALATIUM. Court Residences as Places of Exchange in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe (1400-1700)*, on this occasion planned in collaboration with the Society for European Festivals Research. The PALATIUM programme aims at creating a common forum for research on the late medieval and early modern European court residence or 'palace' (*palatium*)

with an interdisciplinary perspective. The world of the courts 1400–1700 constituted a network of truly European scale and international character, but its architecture is only rarely studied in its ‘connectivity’. In this programme the ‘palace’ is seen as a location for cultural exchange. Human interaction in this space is regulated and codified by a set of rules, known as ‘ceremonial’. The interaction between palace architecture (tangible) and ceremonial (intangible, but known through a set of tangible testimonials of different types, written and visual) is one of the key questions the PALATIUM network aims to address.

The palace’s space and form carry multiple connotations. To the informed observer they represent power, lineage, and tradition versus innovation. The decoding of this system of signs necessitates input not only by architectural and art historians, but also by various other disciplines, such as archaeology, politics, literature, theatre and music. The PALATIUM programme seeks to encourage theoretical and methodological debates in the field, and aims in particular at stimulating exchanges of knowledge and experience between historians, architectural historians, art historians, and researchers in related disciplines – thus building up a network of scholars, institutions and research groups across Europe which mirrors the international network of courts that is being examined.

So far PALATIUM has organized around a dozen scientific meetings across Europe, ranging from methodological workshops and colloquia on specific topics to large thematic conferences. The 2013 conference in Venice will be its second thematic conference; the first thematic conference, *The Habsburgs and their Courts in Europe*, was held in Vienna in 2011. For further information on the various events organized by PALATIUM, see: [www.courtresidences.eu](http://www.courtresidences.eu)

### **The Society for European Festivals Research**

The Society, formed as one outcome of an ESF-sponsored workshop (Venice, 2010), draws together scholars from across Europe and further afield who have published books and articles on the performance history of European festival, together with festival’s political, social, cultural and economic meanings, or who have an academic interest in one or more of these topics. By means of conferences and workshops, as well as an active website and other means of communication, the Society promotes the development of scholarship in the relevant areas, across a wide range of traditional disciplines. A monograph series of publications with Ashgate publishers, including a Research Companion, is in its formative stages. Book-length collections of essays based on the first conferences are at press or in preparation. The Society encourages young researchers by providing opportunities to contribute to its workshops and conferences, and by facilitating the path towards publication. Its 2013 conference in Venice follows conferences and workshops in Venice, London, Bergamo and the University of Warwick. The 2013 conference will broaden the Society’s range by focusing specifically on the architectural environment of festival. It will also provide opportunities for scholarly exchange, both during the conference and subsequently, between members of PALATIUM and the Society.

Any persons of suitable qualifications, including independent scholars, are welcome to respond to this Open Call for Papers. In particular, members of PALATIUM as well as members of the Society are warmly invited to submit proposals.

## **How to Apply**

Abstracts of papers are invited by **15 October 2012**. We welcome proposals that are comparative and synthetic, as well as detailed studies of particular cases. Abstracts should be limited to 300 words, and should be headed with the applicant's name, his or her university/professional affiliation where appropriate, and the title of the paper. All abstracts must be in English, which will be the working language of the conference, and the language in which papers will be delivered. Conference papers will be 20 to a maximum of 30 minutes in length. This should be borne in mind when writing your abstract. Abstracts should define the subject and summarize the questions to be raised in the proposed paper.

With the abstract please submit a one-page **curriculum vitae**, with your full contact details. All proposals will be held in confidence during the selection process. Only one submission per author will be accepted.

Send your proposal by e-mail to the conference chairs, Ronnie Mulryne ([ronnie@mulryne.net](mailto:ronnie@mulryne.net)) and Krista De Jonge ([krista.dejonge@asro.kuleuven.be](mailto:krista.dejonge@asro.kuleuven.be)), with copies to the PALATIUM coordinator Pieter Martens ([pieter.martens@asro.kuleuven.be](mailto:pieter.martens@asro.kuleuven.be)) and the conference coordinator Margaret Shewring ([m.e.shewring@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:m.e.shewring@warwick.ac.uk)).

All applicants will be notified of the acceptance or refusal of their proposal by 15 November 2012. Abstracts accepted by the Conference Scientific Committee will be published for open access on the PALATIUM website and the website of the Society for European Festivals Research.

## **Costs and Registration**

Attending the conference is free; there is no registration fee. There will be charges for optional excursions and for the conference dinner. The European Science Foundation provides funding for travel and accommodation of the selected speakers, and of a limited number of grantees (see below). ESF regulations for funding imply that priority shall be given to scholars from ESF member countries which support PALATIUM.

## **Publication of Papers**

Papers presented at the conference will be considered for publication, after further work and in response to issues raised at the conference or subsequently, in the series published by Ashgate Publishing for the Society for European Festivals Research. The editors in this case will be J. R. Mulryne and Krista De Jonge. Publication is in both printed and eBook formats. The Society may commission additional articles to ensure adequate coverage of the topic. The Society does not publish Conference Proceedings.

## **Call for Posters**

PALATIUM and SEFR wish to encourage and share the work of early-career researchers. Postgraduate researchers in particular are invited to submit proposals for posters to be displayed at the conference. In addition to conference display, accepted posters will be placed after peer review on the organisations' websites.

Posters should outline and where appropriate visually illustrate the applicant's work in progress. They should also carry the applicant's name and academic profile (degree obtained and degree registered for, where appropriate) and the name and affiliation of any degree supervisor.

Proposals for posters are invited by **1 December 2012**. To apply, send the text for your proposed poster, limited to 300-500 words, by e-mail to the conference coordinator Margaret Shewring ([m.e.shewring@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:m.e.shewring@warwick.ac.uk)). Successful applicants will receive a template for setting out posters accepted for display. Before publication, copyright permission must be obtained for illustrations.

## **Presentation of Posters at the Conference**

The Conference's Scientific Committee will select a small number of the accepted posters for presentation during the conference. Each applicant selected in this way will be allocated ten minutes to summarise his or her poster and to offer further comment on its topic.

## **Grants for Young Scholars**

PALATIUM offers travel grants to early-career researchers who wish to participate in this event. The number of available grants is limited. The selected grantees will be asked to briefly present their work in progress during the conference. The deadline for grant applications is **31 December 2012**. All grant applications must be made online. For more information and the application procedure, see the Grants pages of the PALATIUM website: <http://www.courtresidences.eu/index.php/grants>

## **Convenors/Conference Chairs**

J. R. MULRYNE (University of Warwick), Co-Convenor, SEFR

Krista DE JONGE (University of Leuven), PALATIUM Chair

## **Conference Scientific Committee**

Birgitte BØGGILD JOHANNSEN (National Museum of Denmark)

Monique CHATENET (Centre André Chastel, INHA, Paris)

Iain FENLON (University of Cambridge)

Bernardo J. GARCÍA GARCÍA (Fundación Carlos de Amberes), PALATIUM co-Chair

Pieter MARTENS (University of Leuven), PALATIUM Coordinator

Margaret M. McGOWAN (University of Sussex), Co-Convenor, SEFR

Margaret SHEWRING (University of Warwick), Co-Convenor, SEFR

## Conference Coordination

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## Venue

The conference will be held in **Palazzo Pesaro Papafava**, Venice, a Renaissance palazzo constructed in the mid-fifteenth century overlooking the Canale della Misericordia, with entrances from the canal and from the Calle de la Rochetta (district of Cannaregio). It is currently a Research and Teaching Centre of the University of Warwick.



*Palazzo Pesaro Papafava and the Canale della Misericordia*

