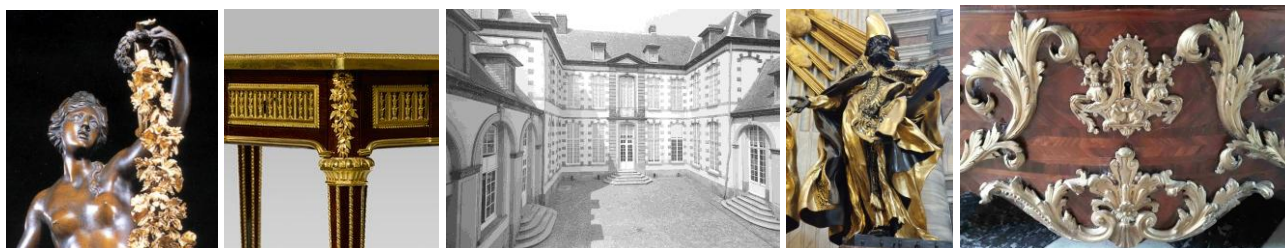


European Gilt Bronze from the Renaissance to the Present Day

Third Edition of the Annual International Conference on
European Sculpture and Decorative Arts



Hôtel de la Roche, Mons, Belgium, Friday 9 – Monday 12 July 2027

A combined effort of the Centre de Recherches Historiques sur les Maîtres Ébénistes and the Low Countries Sculpture Society, whose libraries and archives have merged and are housed in the Hôtel de la Roche (1750) at Mons, the *Annual International Conference* had its inaugural edition in July 2025.

This edition, dedicated to European gilt bronze, aims to address issues relating to all types of gilt bronze, from furniture ornaments to figurative sculpture in the round, via relief sculpture and fully functional works of art, like candelabra.

The design and manufacture of gilt bronze has always been a complex and expensive process, requiring a wide range of skills and specialisms, whether it be the casting of brass, chasing and finishing, gilding or any other form of embellishment, or assembly methods. Disentangling these has proven to be particularly strenuous and few art historians, conservators and material technicians have attempted to study this field – a field that has often suffered from inappropriate methodologies taken from the world of the history of painting or sculpture (notably « connoisseurship »). All this despite the fact that a number of precursors paved the way to an enriched – or even holistic – approach to the subject, for instance Jennifer Montagu's *Roman Baroque Sculpture, The Industry of Art* and her subsequent works on bronze and gilt bronze.

It is the present conference organisers' belief that a proper history of European gilt bronze needs to be rooted both in extremely diligent archival research, combined with a deep knowledge of material practices. It is thus only the combined efforts of art historians and material scientists that can yield a truthful view of the design, production, consumption, collecting and display of gilt bronzes.

Our conference proposes to study cases that can shed light on this reality, throughout Europe and North America, from the Renaissance to the present day. Issues of design history, collaborations between creators and producers, artists and artisans, as well as the relations with any other people involved in the production of gilt bronze may be studied.

The rich tradition of Parisian gilt bronze will be taken as a practical starting point during the excursion in Paris before the conference, while it is hoped that the conference itself will study the whole range of production centres in Europe and beyond.

2027 Committee of Honour

Dr **Alan Darr**, Detroit Institute of Art

Dr **Jennifer Montagu**, The Warburg Institute, London

Prof em Dr **Hans Ottomeyer**, München

2027 Scientific Committee

Jean-Dominique Augarde, Centre de Recherches Historiques sur les Maîtres Ebénistes, Paris / Mons

Christian Baulez, formerly Château de Versailles

Rufus Bird, Rufus Bird Art Advisory

Enrico Colle, Museo Stibbert, Firenze

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Dr **Robert van Langh**, Drents Museum, Assen (NL)

Dr **Arie Pappot**, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

Luca Raschèr, Zürich

Prof em Dr **Volker Seiberth**, University of Heidelberg / The Low Countries Sculpture Society

2027 Organising Committee

Lionel Arsac, Château de Versailles

Dr **Katia Berseneva**, Ecole du Louvre, Paris

Tobias Desmet, Gallery Desmet, Brussels

Me **Guillaume Hambye**, notary, Mons

Dr **Léon Lock**, The Low Countries Sculpture Society, Brussels / Mons

Grégory Maugé, Centre de Recherches Historiques sur les Maîtres Ebénistes, Paris / Mons

Sylvie Millasseau-Wengraf, art historian, Switzerland

Thierry Naveaux, The Low Countries Sculpture Society, Brussels / Mons

Dr **Bertrand de Royere**, Roma

Renaud Serrette, Mobilier National, Paris

Jenny Tondreau, Collegiate church of Sainte-Waudru, Mons

Oral Publication

The conference will take place without audience (apart from the speakers, moderators and a few benefactors), but it will be filmed and broadcast live on YouTube for free, on our dedicated channel, « The Low Countries Sculpture Society ». The relevant parts of the programme are highlighted in red.
<https://www.youtube.com/@Lowcountriessculpturesociety>

Written Publication

The conference proceedings will be published in 2028 in a new academic journal dedicated to European sculpture and decorative arts, based on our annual international conferences.



Programme as planned

Friday 9th July 2027

before 14.00 Individual travel to Paris
14.00-19.00 Optional excursion in Paris
20.00 Group dinner
Night in Paris

Saturday 10th July 2027

10.00-17.00 Optional excursion in Paris
19.22-21.42 Paris Nord > Mons in OUIGO train
22.00 Welcome drink in Mons
Night in Mons

Sunday 11th July 2027

9.30-17.00 Entire day of conference
Night in Mons

Monday 12th July 2027

9.00-13.00 Half day of conference
13.00 Closing lunch
(14.19-15.13 Mons > Brussels Central by SNCB train)
(14.19-15.31 Mons > Brussels Airport Zaventem by SNCB train)
(Flights from Brussels Airport Zaventem after 17.30)
(14.22-16.45 Mons > Paris Nord by OUIGO train)
(14.45-15.15 Mons > Maubeuge by taxi + 15.42-17.42 Maubeuge > Paris Nord by TER train)
(Flights from Paris Charles de Gaulle or Paris Orly after 20.30)
(14.00-14.50 tbc. Mons > Airport Brussels South Charleroi by FLIBCO coach)
(Flights from Brussels South Charleroi Airport after 17.30)

The above programme is indicative, non-contractual and subject to change without notice.

Practical Aspects

The conference has an international and multidisciplinary orientation. As such, we hope to attract lively participation from junior and senior scholars in the history of bronze, sculpture, archaeology, as well as practitioners of scientific technical analyses and restoration-conservation in the same and other relevant fields. Short papers (maximum 30 minutes) of new research or work in progress may be presented in English or French. A minimal passive knowledge of English *and* French are highly recommended to enable full participation in the ensuing discussions, which form the core of the conference.

The Society covers accommodation expenses in Mons for foreign speakers at the conference, as well as group meals and the optional excursions (but not accommodation in Paris). On the other hand, travel arrangements to and from Mons are the responsibility of the individual participants and their travel expenses will not be reimbursed.

CALL FOR PAPERS: The deadline for submitting proposals is 5th October 2026 at noon

Please send participation proposals with a 200-word abstract of the intended paper and a 200-word CV by email to: [info @ lcsculpture.art](mailto:info@lcsculpture.art). **We prefer to receive your abstract written in your mother tongue.** We will then have it professionally translated into English and French for our Scientific Committee. We will inform of the Scientific Committee's decision in July.



Timing as planned

5th October 2026 at noon

Deadline for submission of paper proposals

End of October 2026

Scientific Committee's decision

until 15th March 2027

Writing of papers by the speakers, in their mother tongue

15th March 2027 at noon

Deadline for submission of full papers, with their accompanying PowerPoint presentation

April 2027

Final paper acceptance by the Scientific Committee

May 2027

Professional translation of the papers and PowerPoint presentations, in English and French

15th May 2027

Publication of the conference programme

11th-12th July 2027

Conference at Mons

July-October 2027

After the conference, potential changes and corrections to the papers done by the speakers

31st October 2027

Deadline for submission of papers in their final version to be published, together with the images