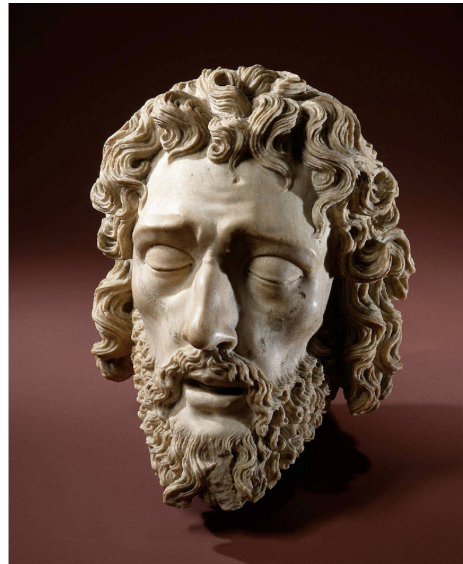


SYMPOSIUM LOOSE HEADS
21 AND 22 SEPTEMBER 2009, ROME
ACADEMIA BELGICA
&
REALE ISTITUTO NEERLANDESE A ROMA

ORGANISED BY
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Point of departure in this symposium is the representational tradition in word and image of loose heads, the iconification of separate body parts and its cultural/historical significance in relation to changing concepts of sensations/pain, cruelty and their practice.

In art and hagiography the 'loose or disembodied head' holds a pivotal role. Well-known examples are the so-called 'cephalophores', amongst which the patron of France St Denis is the most widely known. After their execution they picked up their head and carried it along towards chapel, church or grave. In other cases the head takes up its original place after the beheading. A special veneration of reliquaries in the form of the heads developed in the High Middle Ages and continues to the present. In the Late Middle Ages and Renaissance new examples and categories of increasingly popular 'loose heads' developed. In Italy as well as in Northern Europe many St John confraternities came into being, which venerated the head of Saint John or "Johannes in disco". It is telling that many of these organizations consoled the capitally condemned in their last moments and often negotiated with the medical doctors who were after these bodies for anatomy.

Thanks to a renewed and broad interest in the Bible especially the severed heads of the Old and New Testament gained popularity during the Late Middle Ages and Early Modern Period. This seems to have expressed itself in hundred of paintings and woodcuts of Judith and Salomé with the heads of Holofernes and John the Baptist, next to those of David with that of Goliath.

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MONDAY 21 SEPTEMBER
@ ISTITUTO OLANDESE A ROMA

- 9:15 **Coffee**
- 9:20 Opening by the directors **Prof. Walter Geerts (AB)** and **Prof. Bernard Stolte (KNIR)**
- 9:30 Setting Concept and Agenda by **Catrien Santing** and **Barbara Baert**
- 10:00 **Esther Cohen (Jerusalem):** *Head and body: The meaning of decapitation*
- 10:45 **Coffee**
- 11:00 **Scott Montgomery (Denver):** *Securing the Sacred Head: Cephalophory and Relic Claims*
- 11:45 **Jeanette Kohl (California):** *The Currency of Heads. Portrait Medals and Reliefs in the Renaissance*
- 12:30 **Barbara Baert (Leuven):** *Head and face. Spiritual and visual intertwinings between the Johannesschussel and the vera icon*
- 13:15 **Lunch break**
- 14:30 **Mateusz Kapustka (Wroclaw):** *Fighting with St. John's Heads. Images of the Caput in a Political Struggle*
- 15:30 **Visit to the complex of San Giovanni Decollato**

TUESDAY 22 SEPTEMBER
@ ACADEMIA BELGICA

- 9:00 **Coffee**
- 10:00 **Arjan de Koomen (Amsterdam):** *The Victimized Artist: Decapitated Selfportraits of the Early Modern Period*
- 10:45 **Coffee**
- 11:00 **Marina Montesano (Genova):** *Adam's skull*
- 11:45 **Bob Mills (London):** *Talking Heads*
- 12:30 **DominicAlain Boariu (Geneva):** *Cephalovory. A homofageous gaze over some Western Art's beheadings*
- 13:15 **Lunch break**
- 14.15 **Catrien Santing (Groningen):** *Matters of the heart or the brain? Renaissance discussions about body and soul*
- 15:00 **Coffee**
- 15:15 **Bert Watteeuw (Leuven):** *Ruff Stuff. Framing the Face in Early Modern Dress and Portraiture*
- 16:00 **Florike Egmond (Leiden):** *Drawing conclusions*
- **Barbara Baert and Catrien Santing:** *Formulating preliminary content book*
- 16:45