The conference

In celebration of the 500th anniversary of the birth of Gerard Mercator, the Cultural Heritage Cell Waasland and Ghent University are delighted to announce the international conference ‘Mercator Revisited - Cartography in the Age of Discovery’.

The conference will take place from April 25th-28th, 2012 in the city of Sint-Niklaas, Belgium.

The conference focuses on the place of cartography in general and of Mercator in specific in the 16th century. The Age of Discovery presented mapmakers with unprecedented opportunity and scientific obligation to collect, record and categorise the world ‘as it was’. The greatest mapmakers of the era were scientists, craftsmen and humanists combined, influenced by international politics, science and philosophy.

This conference aims at giving a fresh impetus to the study of Mercator and of the cartography of his time. It is open to contributors with a background in a.o. geography, historical cartography, history, art history or cultural heritage.

Topics

The conference focuses on the following five main themes.

- Science and technology as related to cartography in the age of Mercator
- Mercator’s inspiration and cartographic output
- Cartography and the Age of Discovery: the expanding world view, iconography, ideologies of maps...
- New ways of approaching cartographic heritage in view of new techniques
- Mercator’s entourage, world view, philosophy and cosmology

In addition, contributions regarding other aspects of the life and work of Mercator may also be proposed.

Keynotes

We are pleased to announce that keynote presentations will be delivered by:

Prof. Jerry Brotton - Queen Mary, University of London
Prof. Mark Monmonier - Syracuse University
Dr. Thomas Horst - Universität der Bundeswehr München

Call for papers

We invite the following types of contributions:

- Abstracts of up to 500 words (in English) describing original research must be submitted by September 1st, 2011.
- Full papers of up to 5000 words (in English) describing original and unpublished research must be submitted by October 1st, 2011.

A selection of high-quality submissions will be accepted for presentation and included in the Conference Proceedings, handed out during the event. The best peer-reviewed papers will be considered for publication in a special issue of The Cartographic Journal.

All submissions must be sent electronically via the website.

Registration

Registration will open in October 2011 via the registration form on the website.
Venue

The conference will take place in the centre of Sint-Niklaas, located 30 minutes by train from Ghent and Antwerp and 15 km from Rupelmonde, the birthplace of Gerard Mercator.

Accommodation

As from October 2011, early birds will be able to book rooms in the IBIS-hotel Sint-Niklaas at reduced rates. More information will appear on the website in due time.

Social programme

Already planned (optional) social events include:

- Guided visit to the Mercator exhibit in the City Museum: this temporary exhibit will use various innovative digital tools to represent Mercator’s life and work. Show-stoppers are two original Mercator globes.
- Guided visit to the Museum Plantin-Moretus (Antwerp) on Saturday, including a special viewing of several key-documents from the collection.
- Conference dinner in Sint-Niklaas

Important dates

Deadline for submission of abstracts: September 1st, 2011
Deadline for submission of full papers: October 1st, 2011
Early bird registration and accommodation booking: October 15th, 2011 to January 15th, 2012
Regular registration: after January 15th, 2012

Organisation

This event is organised by the Cultural Heritage Cell Waasland and Ghent University, and supported by the International Cartographic Association (ICA), the Flemish Government and the City Museum of Sint-Niklaas and the Koninklijke Oudheidkundige Kring van het Land van Waas (KOKW).

For more information on the event, submission of abstracts/papers and subscription, please consult the conference website:

www.mercatorconference2012.be

Contact: contact@mercatorconference2012.be