



## **BAROQUE IN THE VATICAN** **Art and Culture in Papal Rome II**

An exhibition organized by the  
*Art and Exhibition Hall of the Federal Republic of Germany* in cooperation with the  
*Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana*, the *Fabbrica di San Pietro* and the *Musei Vaticani*

***Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland***

**Bonn, 25 November 2005 to 19 March 2006**

*Martin-Gropius-Bau*

Berlin, 12 April to 10 July 2006

*Baroque in the Vatican* is a continuation of its successful predecessor *The High Renaissance in the Vatican*. More than 350 objects will be on exhibit: Many of them will be on view for the first time outside of their institutions and on loan from the exhibition's partners in the Vatican, the *Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana*, the *Fabbrica di San Pietro* and the *Musei Vaticani*; they will also be augmented by works of art from numerous European collections.

At the heart of the exhibition is the approx. 5 meters-high *Wood Model of St. Peter's Dome* designed by Michelangelo and Giacomo della Porta. Michelangelo's design of the dome not only became the emblem of Baroque Rome, but the cathedral with its dome and square, completed after one hundred years of building history, symbolizes like no other artwork the Counter-Reformation Church's own claim to world influence: A claim that, faced by declining political importance, particularly became manifest the intellectual and artistic leadership maintained by Papal Rome, which radiated out across Europe. The history of St. Peter's construction and of its interior, organized in specific sections, follows along this line accordingly. The most renowned artists of the time were involved in its history, such as Michelangelo Bernini, Borromini, Sacchi, Guercino and Reni.

In the late 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries papal Rome became the focal point of all religious, artistic and scientific movements of the era. At this 'emporium of the Universe', art as well as all the novel intellectual and scientific achievements were enjoyed by the appropriate public. That is why the popes and their cardinals, the major religious orders, as well as the Roman nobility consistently and successfully used art and science to glorify a revived Catholic Church and as well as its worldly and other-worldly representatives.

Baroque art, in the interaction between architecture, painting and sculpture, represents a balanced interplay of light, material and color. The exhibition seeks to reflect this by including the various media, such as paintings, sculptures, tapestries, paraments, books, etchings and drawings. It will also address the major fields of Papal patronage, as well as the patron activities of the cardinals and religious orders by the example of the most important (and most beautiful) works. These include, for instance, the construction and furnishing of family palaces and villas, the building of a family chapel and, most important, the construction and furnishing of the major Churches commissioned by the religious orders.

Due not least to the global relationships of its missionary orders, Rome and the Vatican were not only known for art but also as a center of science. The *Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana* and the circle around Cardinal Caesar Baronius had a decisive impact on the establishment of the apologist ecclesiastical history and on the development of Christian archaeology. The Roman *Accademia dei Lincei* played a leading role in the establishment of our modern world view and became the model for all other modern academies of sciences. Named after the sharp-sighted lynx (ital. *lince*), the Accademia had no lesser goal than the study of the *theatrum totius naturae*, the creation of images of all the natural appearances. The ‘Lynx-eyes’ provided us with the first image created with the help of a microscope: typically, of bees, Pope Urban VIII<sup>th</sup>’s heraldic animals. In this context the exhibition section designed in cooperation with the *Hermann von Helmholtz-Zentrum für Kulturtechnik* at the *Humboldt-Universität* in Berlin will not only show contemporary documents, instruments and ‘machines of wonder’. Replicas of the most important instruments will provide an unusual and often astonishing view into the knowledge of culture of Baroque Rome, completely in the spirit of the time. True to the theory of art of the time, science and art have a similar impact: the viewer is to experience *stupore*, astonishment, and *meraviglia*, wonder. In this manner curiosity is roused, which initiates the process of gaining knowledge while preserving enjoyment: A goal that the *Baroque in the Vatican* exhibition has also placed itself.

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