

la rivista di **en**gramma  
marzo **2023**

**200**

**Festa!**

**II**

La Rivista di Engramma  
**200**

La Rivista di  
Engramma

**200**

marzo 2023

# Festa!

a cura di Anna Ghiraldini, Chiara Velicogna  
e Christian Toson

II

*direttore*

monica centanni

*redazione*

sara agnoletto, maddalena bassani,  
asia benedetti, maria bergamo, elisa bizzotto,  
emily verla bovino, giacomo calandra di roccolino,  
olivia sara carli, concetta cataldo,  
giacomo confortin, giorgiomaria cornelio,  
silvia de laude, francesca romana dell'aglio,  
simona dolari, emma filipponi, anna ghiraldini,  
ilaria grippa, laura leuzzi, vittoria magnoler,  
michela maguolo, ada naval,  
alessandra pedersoli, marina pellanda,  
filippo perfetti, daniele pisani, stefania rimini,  
daniela sacco, cesare sartori, antonella sbrilli,  
massimo stella, ianick takaes de oliveira,  
elizabeth enrica thomson, christian toson,  
chiara velicogna, giulia zanon

*comitato scientifico*

janie anderson, barbara baert, anna beltrametti,  
lorenzo braccesi, maria grazia ciani, victoria cirlot,  
fernanda de maio, georges didi-huberman,  
alberto ferlenga, kurt w. forster, nadia fusini,  
maurizio harari, fabrizio lollini, natalia mazour,  
salvatore settis, elisabetta terragni, oliver taplin,  
piermario vescovo, marina vicelja

**La Rivista di Engramma**

a peer-reviewed journal

**200 marzo 2023**

[www.engramma.it](http://www.engramma.it)

*sede legale*

Engramma

Castello 6634 | 30122 Venezia

[edizioni@engramma.it](mailto:edizioni@engramma.it)

*redazione*

Centro studi classicA luav

San Polo 2468 | 30125 Venezia

+39 041 257 14 61

©2023

edizioni**engramma**

ISBN carta 979-12-55650-10-2

ISBN digitale 979-12-55650-11-9

ISSN 2974-5535

finito di stampare giugno 2023

Si dichiara che i contenuti del presente volume sono la versione a stampa totalmente corrispondente alla versione online della Rivista, disponibile in open access all'indirizzo: <http://www.engramma.it/eOS/index.php?issue=200> e ciò a valere ad ogni effetto di legge. L'editore dichiara di avere posto in essere le dovute attività di ricerca delle titolarità dei diritti sui contenuti qui pubblicati e di aver impegnato ogni ragionevole sforzo per tale finalità, come richiesto dalla prassi e dalle normative di settore.

# Sommario

- 9 *Festa Barocca*  
Vincenzo Latina
- 15 *Le triomphe de Silène, de Panopolis au Jardin du Luxembourg*  
Delphine Lauritzen
- 29 *Una festa cesariana a Costantinopoli: i Lupercalia*  
Frederick Lauritzen
- 35 *“The more we study Art, the less we care for Nature”*  
Fabrizio Lollini
- 47 *Candlelight party al Sir John Soane’s Museum*  
Angelo Maggi
- 51 *Per il settantesimo genetliaco di Wilhelm Dilthey*  
Giancarlo Magnano San Lio
- 59 *La festa della vita*  
Alessandra Magni
- 67 *Vers une Architecture. Cento anni di un libro-manifesto*  
Michela Maguolo
- 79 *Il re è nudo*  
Roberto Masiero
- 85 *La festa della memoria*  
Arturo Mazzarella
- 91 *Ciudad Abierta*  
Patrizia Montini Zimolo
- 95 *Morfologia di giochi culturali tra Cinquecento e Settecento*  
Lucia Nadin
- 103 *L’engramma in-festato della rivoluzione*  
Peppe Nanni

- 113 *Dalla festa di Iside a quella di Sant'Agata*  
Elena Nonveiller
- 123 *L'altro Omero di Pavese.*  
Giuseppe Palazzolo
- 133 *La festa della più-vita*  
Enrico Palma
- 141 *Grotesque images and carnival culture in the tradition of Ovid*  
Bogdana Paskaleva
- 159 *Inverno e guerra al Cocoricò del 1993. È Riccione o Venezia?*  
Filippo Perfetti
- 169 *Festa mitica*  
Margherita Piccichè
- 179 *Festa della pietra, festa per sempre*  
Susanna Piscicella
- 187 *Festa a corte*  
Alessandro Poggio
- 197 *Le conseguenze della festa*  
Ludovico Rebaudo
- 221 *Filmare la festa*  
Stefania Rimini
- 229 *Una festa smisurata*  
Antonella Sbrilli
- 233 *Filarete, la gioia festosa del compimento*  
Alessandro Scafi
- 239 *Feste in Brianza*  
Marco Scotti
- 245 *"Il mormorare insieme"*  
Massimo Stella
- 261 *The Naples Hypsipyle crater re-visited*  
Oliver Taplin
- 269 *Una "festa" in gemma di Antonio Berini (?) al Civico Museo d'Antichità Winckelmann di Trieste*  
Gabriella Tassinari
- 287 *Ecate, o l'anarchia come festa*  
Gregorio Tenti
- 289 *La clausura dell'infinito*  
Stefano Tomassini

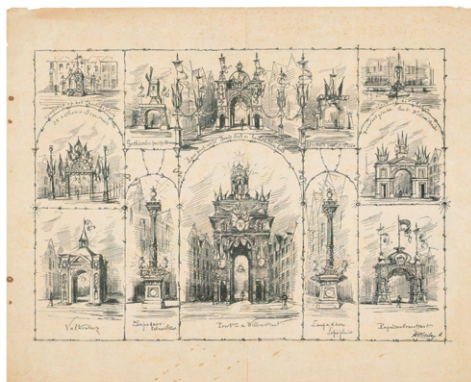
- 299 *L'iconografia della festa rinascimentale*  
Giulia Torello-Hill
- 309 *Un harem da costruire entro l'8 marzo*  
Christian Toson
- 313 *Quel fulgore d'Astrea*  
Francesco Trentini
- 325 *Strategie ludiche*  
Flavia Vaccher
- 331 *Cos'è che fa una festa?*  
Gabriele Vacis
- 337 *The Dutch architect Berlage and his sense of festivity in 1887*  
Herman Van Bergeijk
- 343 *Bonne nuit la Tristesse!*  
Chiara Velicogna
- 351 *Spasmodici trucchi di radianza*  
Silvia Veroli
- 355 *Festa (riepilogo d'intenti)*  
Piermario Vescovo
- 361 *Pieter Bruegel il Vecchio, "La gazza sulla forca" (1568)*  
Alessandro Zaccuri
- 365 *La fine del tempo libero (e il recupero della festa)*  
Paolo Zanenga
- 373 *La potenza dell'effimero*  
Flavia Zelli
- Che festa sarebbe senza di voi?**
- 385 *Giulia Farnese come Madonna, in un dipinto di Pinturicchio per Alessandro VI Bor-*  
*gia (2007)*  
Sergio Bertelli
- 397 *"Autunnale barocco"/"Springtime Prague" 1968. La parola sottratta (2008)*  
Giuseppe Cengiarotti
- 413 *Teatri romani (2009)*  
Paolo Morachiello
- 449 *The Last Great Event. Isle of Wight Festival, August 26th-30th, 1970 (2019)*  
Sergio Polano
- 461 *Apparizioni metagrammatiche e autobiografia per immagini (2012)*  
Lionello Puppi



- 475 *Il tempio, la festa, il passato (2013)*  
Mario Torelli
- 491 *Aby Warburg als Wissenschaftspolitiker (2020)*  
Martin Warnke

# The Dutch architect Berlage and his sense of festivity in 1887

Herman Van Bergeijk



H.P. Berlage, architectural projects for the 70th birthday of Dutch king Wilhelm III.

The spirit, the mentality of a certain period, petrifies in a city.  
And in turn, the city determines the spirit of the people who live and work there.  
(Geert Mak, *De goede stad*, Amsterdam 2007, 24)

In 1887 The renowned Dutch architect H.P. Berlage made some architectural designs for the festivities in the city of Amsterdam in honour of the 70th birthday of the king. They cannot be considered as one of his most important buildings but their effect was crucial because the designs not only drew the attention of a national audience but also because they marked the

beginning of a period of transition in the personal and professional life of the architect that finally led to his most famous work, the seminal Stock Exchange in Amsterdam. Yet, they show how he operated in the Dutch context and are an ambivalent sign of his character.

Hendrik Petrus Berlage (1856-1934), by many considered to be the father of modern architecture, was not a very festive person. On the contrary, his personality seems to be determined from the beginning by a great sense of seriousness, a fact that is confirmed by how his grandson, the journalist Max van Rooy, described him in a recent biography. Already in a photo, taken during his grand tour through Italy in 1881, we see him standing with a wine bottle in his hand, studying more the design of the object than enjoying its content. His intellect was continuously looking for the reasons behind the object and never by the sheer pleasure that they might have procured. In none of the photos that have survived we see him laughing, being happy or having fun. This does not mean that he did not have an investigative mind but instead of accepting the reality for what it is he was looking for what that reality could be in the future. He truly believed that in the end socialism would prevail but was not really ready for fighting for the realization of this ideal, even if his whole life long he would design ideal projects that represented his great hopes for society. Maybe his protestant upbringing can be held responsible for this austere mentality, not permitting him to engage in any frivolities. The seminal socialist journalist Henri Wiessing, who appreciated his work and was an advocate of it, described him of being a 'rather melancholy than cheerful man'. His drive to explain the motives behind his work led to many articles in professional magazines that are an illustration of his desire for an architecture of the future and the day to day practices of an architect who had to deal with the conditions of a slowly changing society. This did not always turn to his advantage. As Jan and Annie Romein, two of the most prominent Dutch historians, noted:

[Berlage] was a master builder, if not, and certainly not a writer. [...] The supernumerary paragraphs in his writings betray this defect at first glance. He quotes randomly, he repeats himself constantly and his argument is more confused than complete. In a word: his style of writing strangely lacks all the constructiveness that characterizes his architectural style in such a special way (Romein, Romein [1938-1940] 1973).

He nevertheless was relentless in his wish to understand the motives of his thinking and his art. Already in his first writings, the young Berlage was exploring the ways that he could approach the reality in front of him. The observations that he had made during his long trip through Italy not only found their way in a travel log but were also the basis for his first articles in which he looked at the making of the Saint Peter church in Rome but in which he also made a comparison between Amsterdam and Venice and to a certain degree Paris. Whereas Venice was seen as picturesque, Paris was an example of a monumental city. Amsterdam, the city in which he lived, had to be both, picturesque and monumental. This is the first token of his belief that contradictions could and should lead to compromises and did not have to weaken the result but in effect could make it stronger. It would, however, take a long time, before he found a way to give form to the compromises in a convincing and alienating way. For a long time he was wavering between all kind of historical styles depending on the context where the

architectural object would be located. Only the gothic did not have his sympathy due to the connection to the catholic church. But at the beginning of the 1890s would he begin finding his own voice.

The foundation for his thinking was laid down in these years after his study at the Polytechnic School in Zurich where he had received a notion of the teachings of the German architect Gottfried Semper. The treatise that Semper, who was not any more teaching in Zurich, had written, on the technic and tectonic arts, was a bible for the Dutch architect. Unfortunately, or perhaps fortunately, Semper never finished the third volume on architecture of this treatise. But from the theoretical work of Semper Berlage learned the difference of a work and an art form in an object whereby the work form was related to the structure and the art form was like a dress that was draped over the work form. Berlage was also confronted with Sempers concept of *Stoffwechsel* (metabolism), the idea that new materials led to a new art form. These theories left a deep impression on him. He truly believed that there had to be a relation between theory and practice, even if it was not clear to him how that could occur. This would be the struggle of his life. Always occupied in trying to clarify his thoughts on architecture as a humanistic practice. His approach to architecture was deeply rational and based on his optimistic social beliefs.

In the Netherlands Berlage found a job, working for the civil engineer Theodor Sanders, who was engaged in finding traffic solutions for the city of Amsterdam. He proposed tramways and projected important breakthroughs in the city in order to adapt it to the rise of different means of circulation. The employment of Berlage was intended to enhance the aesthetic qualities of the designs and the projects they had at hand. Berlage was very much aware of this and often provided his drawings with cartouches giving them the status of artwork. They were an extra means of giving cachet to designs that were far from spectacular. As an architect Berlage was hardly capable of liberating himself from the yoke of the historical styles. Nothing festive. In fact, the people that inhabit his drawings are drawn in total isolation, showing that they were not participating in togetherness, in the designs that he made. This in contrast with his observations of Italian realities where he had witnessed how people come together to celebrate certain events, from carnival to the arrival of the Pope in Palermo.

Maybe this was what Berlage had in mind when he was asked by the national society for the promotion of architecture to make the designs for the celebrative entry of the Dutch King Willem III in Amsterdam in 1887. The occasion was the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birthday of the monarch. For Berlage it was the opportunity to put himself in the spotlight. He made drawings for a special festive guide and designs of various temporal isolated structures that were informed by his knowledge of the past but they were placed in the context of his view of the city of Amsterdam. In the still existing drawings we see city gates, small monuments, pavilions, arches and columns. On many of them flags have been placed. They cannot be seen as joyful traces or clues of a new era to come. There is no *homo ludens* as Johan Huizinga would define it in his famous book but instead contemplations of a young architect on the heaviness

of his time in which poverty and other social malpractices were still in plain sight. It is probably in the same period that Berlage was writing theatrical plays that are also loaded with idealistic and moralistic symbolism and show no traces of any kind of happiness. They are 'heavy' in every aspect and are based on classical traditions.

In regard to the event of 1887, the architect addressed his views and gave his opinion on all the celebrative decorations in a lecture that he gave on the matter at the end of May of that year, just two months before he married Marie Bienfait with whom he would have four children. The lecture would also be published under the title *Blijde inkomsten en steden in feesttooi* (Happy revenues and cities in festivities). It gave him the opportunity to expose his ideas on the image of a big city, a subject very dear to him, that led, in particular, to his later interests in town planning. In his lecture he asked himself if Amsterdam had done everything in order to present 'a tasteful dress' and started with exhibiting his knowledge of celebrative entries in many European cities. Again he could depend on his Italian experiences and what he had taken from the book of Semper. In his lecture he stated: "Whether this festive dress was always just as tasteful, he thought he could doubt, when one consulted the ancient history of the Greeks, Romans or Egyptians. The speaker treated in detail the decorative art of cloth and dress among the Greeks, and then described in minute detail the glad entry of an Egyptian Pharaoh after a splendid victory, as still appearing on various monuments". Again it is from past history that Berlage found his material to criticize the way that the Dutch cities and society had evolved. In his long lecture he slowly constructed his argument in an analogous way as he would compose his buildings. Never showing a building that was designed in a spontaneous and artistic way but always as an end result of a long and complicated process of reflecting and reasoning.

In the end his conclusion was that one had to do 'much with little means' He gave some hints, which should be kept in mind: '1. Only a few large decorative pieces need to be illuminated; 2. there needs to be taken advantage of the water; 3. the lines should be simple and architectural. Precisely because these requirements had been taken into account, the lighting on Dam Square and Heerengracht were the most beautiful'. He pleads that in the future by such important events only the silhouette lines of the buildings and architectural structures are lighted in order to arrive at a maximum effect. If he kept to his own hints is difficult to deduce from the drawings. The impression is that he was still trying to find his way of looking at things. In sympathy with the ideas that he had professed earlier he was convinced that for a city like Amsterdam one had to look for solutions that were in the middle between picturesque and monumental and that were not merely cosmetic. If he saw his own designs for the festivities as such is hard to find out. He hardly expressed a word on his own work but embedded it in a discourse with many *Holzwege*, wandering paths that led the listener in and through a maze of small and bigger historical facts. His obsession for historical explanations had not given him many new ideas as his drawings of the monuments or moments that he created show. A festive liberation had not occurred and the stern and austere but mild Berlage still had to wait for his moment in a still unknown future. It is this liberation that many architects are searching

for. It is however more ironic than strange to consider that an architect like Berlage, severe in all his doings, would engage in the participation and arrangement of these kinds of festivities. Maybe that is also one of the most conspicuous contradictions of modernity?

---

## Riferimenti bibliografici

Berlage 1883

H.P. Berlage, *Amsterdam en Venetië*, "Bouwkundig Weekblad" 3 (1883), nr. 34, 217-219, nr. 36, 226-228; nr. 37, 232-234.

Berlage 1889

H.P. Berlage, *Blijde inkomsten en steden in feesttooi*, "Bouwkundige Bijdragen" IX (1889), 23-25, 32-34.

*Het Nieuws van den dag* 1887

Het Nieuws van den dag, 28th May 1887.

Nerding, Oechslin 2012

W. Nerding, W. Oechslin, *Gottfried Semper 1803-1879. Architektur und Wissenschaft*, Zürich 2012.

Romein, Romein [1938-1940] 1973

J. Romein, A. Romein, *Erfaters van onze beschaving*, Amsterdam [1938-1940] 1973, 849.

van Rooy 2022

M. van Rooy, *Heb ik dat gemaakt? De vormende jaren van H.P. Berlage, bouwmeester*, Amsterdam 2022.

van Bergeijk 2003

H. van Bergeijk, *De steen van Berlage, Theorie en praktijk van de architectuur rond 1895*, Rotterdam 2003.

van Bergeijk 2010

H. van Bergeijk (ed.), *H.P. Berlage, Italiaanse reisherinneringen*, Rotterdam 2010.

van Bergeijk 2017

H. van Bergeijk, *The language of architecture – the architecture of language. The case of the dutch architect H.P. Berlage*, in A. Borsari, M. Cassani Simonetti, G. Iacoli (a cura di), *Archiletture. Forma e narrazione tra architettura e letteratura*, Milano 2017, 91-104.

van Bergeijk 2019

H. van Bergeijk, *Stug en sober. De toneelstukken van de Nederlandse architect H.P. Berlage*, "Zacht Lawijd" 184 (2019), 75-94.

van der Woud 2006

A. van der Woud, *Een nieuwe wereld. Het ontstaan van het moderne Nederland*, Amsterdam 2006.

van der Woud 2010

A. van der Woud, *Koninkrijk vol sloppen. Achterbuurten en vuil in de negentiende eeuw*, Amsterdam 2010.

van der Woud 2015

A. van der Woud, *De nieuwe mens. De culturele revolutie in Nederland rond 1900*, Amsterdam 2015.

Wiessing 1960

H.P.L. Wiessing, *Bewegend Portret. Levensherinneringen*, Amsterdam 1960, 160.

---

## English abstract

In 1887, Dutch architect H.P. Berlage designed some buildings for the festivities in Amsterdam honoring the king's 70th birthday. Although not considered his most significant work, they played a crucial role in his career's transition and marked the beginning of a period of personal and professional transformation leading to his seminal work, the Stock Exchange in Amsterdam. Berlage's grandson described him as serious and not a festive person, and his upbringing could be responsible for his austere mentality. His belief in a future socialist society influenced his idealistic designs, which he supported through articles in professional magazines. However, his writing style lacked the constructiveness that characterized his architectural style. Berlage believed that contradictions could lead to compromise, which strengthened the outcome, and his exposure to Gottfried Semper's teachings reinforced his approach to architecture as a humanistic practice. Berlage's deep rationality led him to seek the reasons behind the object rather than their immediate pleasure. He found a job working for a civil engineer, Theodor Sanders, in Amsterdam, where he proposed aesthetic enhancements for traffic solutions. Berlage's approach to architecture was deeply optimistic and based on his beliefs.\*

*\*The English abstract above was written by ChatGPT and strictly unedited by the editors of this issue (> Editoriale). This sentence itself was automatically translated with DeepL.*

---

*keywords* | Hendrik Petrus Berlage; Willhem III; Festivities.



la rivista di **engramma**

marzo **2023**

**200 • Festa! II**

**a cura di Anna Ghiraldini, Christian Toson e Chiara Velicogna**

**numero speciale con contributi di Architettura, Archeologia, Letterature, Estetica e arti visive, Antropologia e storia della cultura, Digital Humanities, Teatro, di:**

Damiano Acciarino, Giuseppe Allegri, Danae Antonakou, Gaia Aprea, Barbara Baert, Kosme de Barañano, Giuseppe Barbieri, Silvia Burini, Maddalena Bassani, Anna Beltrametti, Guglielmo Bilancioni, Barbara Biscotti, Elisa Bizzotto, Renato Bocchi, Giampiero Borgia, Federico Boschetti, Maria Stella Bottai, Guglielmo Bottin, Lorenzo Braccesi, Giacomo Calandra di Roccolino, Michele Giovanni Caja, Alberto Camerotto, Alessandro Canevari, Franco Cardini, Alberto Giorgio Cassani, Concetta Cataldo, Monica Centanni, Mario Cesarano, Gioachino Chiarini, Claudia Cieri Via, Victoria Cirlot, Giorgiomaria Cornelio, Massimo Crispi, Silvia De Laude, Federico Della Puppa, Fernanda De Maio, Gabriella De Marco, Christian Di Domenico, Massimo Donà, Alessandro Fambrini, Ernesto L. Francalanci, Dorothee Gelhard, Anna Ghiraldini, Laura Giovannelli, Roberto Indovina, Vincenzo Latina, Delphine Lauritzen, Frederick Lauritzen, Fabrizio Lollini, Angelo Maggi, Giancarlo Magnano San Lio, Alessandra Magni, Michela Maguolo, Roberto Masiero, Arturo Mazzeola, Patrizia Montini Zimolo, Lucia Nadin, Peppe Nanni, Elena Nonveiller, Giuseppe Palazzolo, Enrico Palma, Bogdana Paskaleva, Filippo Perfetti, Margherita Picciché, Susanna Piscicella, Alessandro Poggio, Ludovico Rebaudo, Stefania Rimini, Antonella Sbrilli, Alessando Scafi, Marco Scotti, Massimo Stella, Oliver Taplin, Gabriella Tassinari, Gregorio Tenti, Stefano Tomassini, Giulia Torello-Hill, Christian Toson, Francesco Trentini, Flavia Vaccher, Gabriele Vacis, Herman, Van Bergeijk, Chiara Velicogna, Silvia Veroli, Piermario Vescovo, Alessandro Zaccuri, Paolo Zanenga, Flavia Zelli

**e, nella sezione “Che festa sarebbe senza di voi?”: Sergio Bertelli, Giuseppe Cengiarotti, Paolo Morachiello, Sergio Polano, Lionello Puppi, Mario Torelli, Martin Warnke**