

Orientations

Inaugural Conference of the International Society for Cultural History



Ghent University, Belgium August 27–31, 2008

Venue

The main conference venue will be Ghent University's Faculty of Arts and Philosophy, Blandijnberg 2, 9000 Ghent. The largest Faculty of Ghent University, the 'Blandijn' as it is often called, was partially designed by architect Henry van de Velde. Its Book Tower (which houses the University's library collection) adds a distinctly modern touch to the skyline of a city that was among the biggest and wealthiest cities of Northern Europe during the Middle Ages.

Ghent

Today, Ghent remains a vibrant city with over 230.000 inhabitants, a significant part of which is made up by the many students attending its various educational facilities. Located at the confluence of the rivers Schelde and Leie, it is the third largest city of Belgium and the capital of East Flanders. Once a busy harbour, Ghent's historical centre now has plenty of shops, cafés, bookstores and restaurants. A stroll around the old harbour area (Graslei and Korenmarkt) and the impressive Belfry and Sint-Baafs cathedral (where Van Eyck's *Adoration of the Mystic Lamb* draws thousands of art lovers each year) are certainly worthwhile. Those who prefer the intimate feel of medieval cobbled streets can direct their steps towards the Patershol (where the Huis van Alijn museum gives you an impression of Ghent folk life), next to the mighty Gravensteen. Those with more contemporary taste can admire the collection of the MSK, which houses an impressive collection of Flemish and international masters, or the SMAK, the museum of contemporary art (both in the Citadelpark).

Travel

By plane

Brussels Airport is Belgium's national airport and is probably the easiest way into Belgium for air travellers. Brussels Airlines, the biggest airline company, offers connections from most European cities, but most international airlines fly Brussels as well. Brussels Airport has its own railway station, which connects directly to Ghent (which is about 45 minutes away).

Although marketed as “Brussels South,” the home base of lower-budget companies like Ryanair is actually still a considerable distance from the Belgian capital itself. However, regular bus connections to the railway station of Charleroi (the closest city) which is about 70 – minutes train ride from Ghent make it a viable alternative.

By car

* From the south (France): take the E17/A22 in Lille, which runs via Kortrijk to Ghent (take exit 9)

* From the north (the Netherlands): take the E 19 to Antwerp, then the R1 (direction Gent – Sint-Niklaas) for about 3 kilometres, through the Kennedytunnel. Then follow the E17/A14 (direction Gent – Sint-Niklaas)

* From the east (Germany): take the E40 / A3 (Brussels). In Brussels, take the Ring (E19) and re-enter the E40 at exit 10 (direction Gent – Aalst) and continue some 40 kilometers. Then take exit Zwijnaarde.

* From the west (coast): the E40 takes you directly from Ostend to Ghent

By train

Ghent’s position in the centre of Flanders makes it easily accessible by train. Most major cities (Bruges, Antwerp, and Brussels) can be reached by direct connection within the hour. For more information, see <http://www.b-rail.be/>

In the city

Ghent’s compact surface and the conference venue’s central location (a mere ten-minute walk from the city centre) ensure that most distances within the city can easily be covered on foot. As cars have been largely banned from its historic centre, this is probably the best idea. For longer distances, an extensive public transportation network with regular busses and trams covers most of the city and its outskirts

Accommodation

Lodging

Ghent has many hotels and B&B’s; however, the city being a popular tourist destination during the summer, we advise you to book well in advance. A list of hotels can be found at <http://www.visitgent.be/> and <http://www.bedandbreakfast-gent.be/>

- Conference visitors can book at a special discount price in the Aparthotel Castelnou close to the conference venue via info@castelnou.be before Juli 1. Prices are € 73 a night for a 1-4 night stay, € 67 for a stay of 5 nights and up for a single room (double/twin + € 14 a night). Please mention the name of the congress when you book. Keep in mind that the number of rooms available is limited.

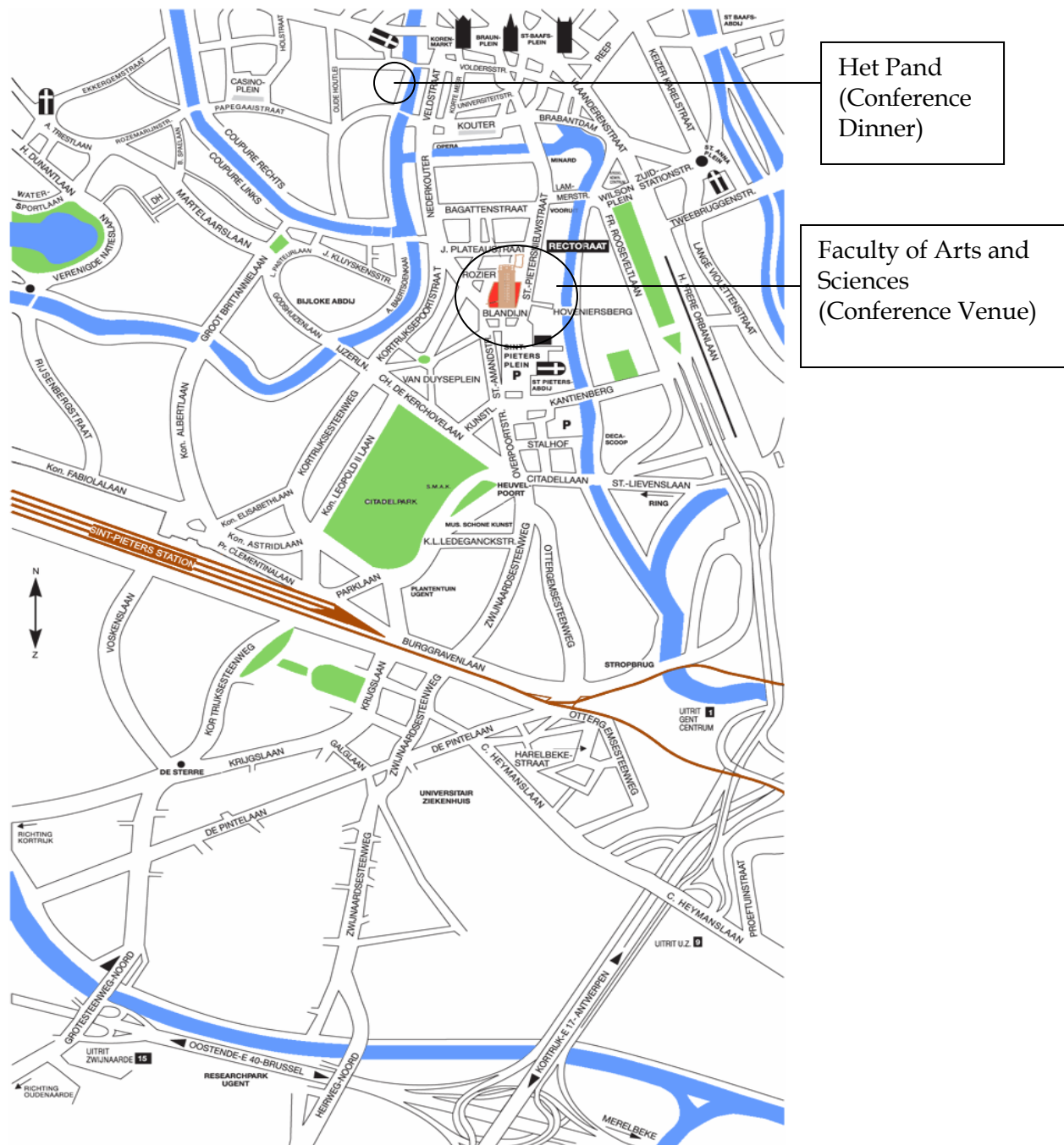
Food and drink

Ghent offers a wide variety of restaurants and bars that cater to every taste and budget. Several smaller restaurants and bars in the vicinity of the conference venue offer breakfast and a light lunch or sandwich, while the town centre offers plenty of dinner options.

- Those who wish can take a sandwich lunch (including drinks) at the conference venue itself, at a cost of € 18 for three days. (cf. registration form)

In Touch

Those who register will be added to the mailing list, which will provide members and attendants with regular updates on the conference. The final programme will be mailed to you by July 1. Questions and remarks can be addressed to dries.vrijders@ugent.be



Het Pand
(Conference
Dinner)

Faculty of Arts and
Sciences
(Conference Venue)