



Elsbeth Plumers and Conference of the birds

Three people are involved in the "Conference of the Birds" project: The artist Elsbeth Plumers, the architect Piet Besteman and the recently deceased graphic artist Eric Hamburg.

Elsbeth Plumers is an artist and sculptor. she was born in 1954 in Hengelo, Netherlands. She went to university to study Biology and geography. From 1980 to 1985, she studied at university of the Arts, more specifically in the sculpture department in Amsterdam. She specialized between 1985-1988 at the Rijksacademie (Amsterdam), where Shinkichi Tajiri offered her to join 'Klasse Tajiri' in Berlin (1987/1988).

She is inspired by nature and fascinated by the creation of the earth. This translates into sculptures cast in bronze, works in glass and ceramics. Golden Spike is a professional geological term. It marks the precise location of the limit of a stage on the geological time scale that's why she calls her book Golden Spike. The book is composed of coats, like those of the Earth, and each coat has a different colour. She does not penetrate the Earth, but delves into its artistic life. Geology is the theme that runs through her work. The preface is written by palaeontologist John de Vos and the epilogue by Jelle Reumer, professor at Utrecht University.

The Conference of Birds

The Conference of the Birds (Persian: Mantiq at-Tayr) is a collection of medieval Persian poems written by the Persian Sufi poet Farid al-Din Attar in 1177. It is in the form of an allegory and consists of about 4,500 couplets.

In Persian the term "Simorgh" is ambiguous meaning the great bird Simorgh and also thirty (in Persian "si") birds (in Persian, "morgh"). Elsbeth was inspired by this poem in creating this grand artwork. This artwork represents some birds searching for their sovereigns. The birds of the world gather to decide who is to be their sovereign. The hoopoe suggests that they should find the legendary Simorgh. "Dear hoopoe, welcome! You will be our guide; / It was on you King Solomon relied ..."

He tells the birds that they have to cross seven valleys in order to reach the mountain Kaf. But despite their trepidations, they begin the great journey.

On the way, many perish of thirst, heat or illness, while others fall prey to wild beasts, panic and violence. Those that continue reach the mountain to learn that Simorgh the king is, in fact, each of them and all of them.

For this artwork, the architect was inspired by the dome of San Carlos Alle Quattro Fontana, the church of San Carlo alle Quattro Fontane, dedicated to Charles Borromeo. It owes its name to the crossroads at which it is situated and whose four corners are decorated with a fountain representing the Tiber and the Arno on the one hand, and Diana and Juno on the other, one of which is integrated into the façade of the church. This work by Borromini is considered to be one of the masterpieces of Baroque architecture. The dome has been modernized. Borromini gave the dome an optical illusion by reducing the size of the boxes of interlocking polygons and crosses. Where he made bands on a heavy brick dome of a thick brick dome.

Piet seeks a mathematical system with prefabricated elements. The dome represent Attar's Simorgh poem about the birds arriving at Mount Kaf. The first models are made of 80 g paper (70 x 55 cm), and the bird model is made of 300g paper (145 x 105 cm). The bird model is hanging, but is quite stiff when placed on the ground.

Piet Besteman was the architect of this project and Eric Hamburg was the graphic artist.

For Eric Hamburg time and space were closely linked things that had to remain in balance. Nailing down the one irrevocably called the other. The more tightly time is framed, the less room for the form. The vaguer the time, the more firmly defined the form. Now time has time has stopped for Eric Hamburg. But at the same time, it has not. Because the forms Eric has made- small adjustments to space- they 'll remain.

(In the months following his death on 28 October 21, this thought process continues to occupy us.

How did Eric Hamburg experience time and space? His brother-in-law knows how to sum it up: "The space; that is what remains.")













