

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

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**The Interplay of
Art, Sound and Music.
International Festival Culture
in Baroque Rome**

Despite the increasing loss of papal influence in the 17th century, baroque Rome continued to be the central stage for the self-representation of the great European powers. Due to the pope's position as head of the Catholic Church, numerous sovereigns maintained ambassadors before the Holy See who demonstrated the status and continuity of the catholic dynasties by organising festivals. In the elaborately decorated national churches services were celebrated with polychoral music performances, bell-ringing, drums and trumpets invited the Roman people to the public squares where festival machines were erected, which in the evenings served as stages for serenata performances and firework display. In my thesis I analyse the festivals as complex multimedia events which longed to communicate symbolically or concretely articulated messages and to emotionally manipulate the public. Often the visual and auditory media were not overlaid arbitrarily but were used in relation to each other with the aim of increasing aesthetic effect and intensifying the semantic messages. Through the examination of individual testimonies of concrete festival events, the perception and reception by the public is discussed and the international festival culture interpreted as a communicative space, which not only was used by protagonists in Rome to exchange political positions and intensify loyalties and hostilities, but which also constituted an object of discourse in European court public.