The early modern period witnessed an explosion of the representation and performance of violence. In European cities, renaissance and baroque theatre staged gruesome and passionate plays, while in the streets, during religious festivals and public entries of sovereigns, state and church conjured up violent images of subjection and suffering. The book market added to this spectacle of violence, as the early modern period saw the development of an advanced material infrastructure for the production, distribution, consumption, and appropriation of such imagery. A fast-growing body of texts and prints registered violent episodes of the past and the present. On a daily basis, the public could study in detail the techniques used in battle, to torture martyrs or execute criminals. How can we explain this apparent fascination for violence? What effects and affects did these scenes aim to arouse? What relationships were enforced between the audience and the depicted or enacted scenes? What groups were depicted as violent and did they obtain specific violent qualities?

The two-day conference Imagineering Violence aims to analyze early modern techniques of representing violence and their transformations over time. We invite proposals from all relevant fields of studies: history, theatre studies, literature, book history, emotion and sensory studies, etc. We specifically invite lectures that cover the technical and performative aspects of the depiction of violence, whether in print or painting, on stage, in the anatomical theater, the scaffold, or elsewhere. What regimes of representing and staging violence can we trace? We assume that by zooming in on the concept of violence, we are forced to rethink traditional boundaries, between secular and religious realms, between East and West, between baroque and classical styles, between theatricality and spectacle, between the public and the private sphere. Violence engages audiences in complex ways, it provides strong embodied experiences, can fascinate or abhor, exploit the curiosity and the
desires of the public of consumers, install a breach with daily life, or turn reality into a stage. Papers could explore how the development of an advanced market for violent imagery could drive spectators into new realms, getting caught in new technical loops by advanced visual means, and rethinking their own position towards the institutions in power. Papers may also exploit the cultural (social/gendered/religious) distinctions enforced by these visual regimes: which groups were depicted as violent, how were these distinctions made into embodied experiences?

The conference will be sided by various artistic events.

We invite proposals for papers of around 400 words. Please add a short bio (100 words). Lectures at the conference will be around 20 minutes, with ample time for discussion.

Please send your proposals to Michel van Duijnen (m.f.van.duijnen@vu.nl). The deadline for sending in proposals is 1 August 2018. Authors will be notified of paper acceptance or non-acceptance at latest September, 2018.

The conference Imagineering Violence is organized by the Dutch-Belgian research group ITEMP - Imagineering Violence: Techniques of Early Modern Performativity in the Northern and Southern Netherlands 1630-1690. See our website: https://itempviolece.wordpress.com