Acknowledgements

I thank my advisor Prof. Theo D'Hondt for setting up the inspiring environment in which this work has found its roots. He created the intellectual environment by bringing the group of people together that surrounded me during the past years. I would like to thank him for introducing me into the field of object-oriented reflection and for his support. He also had a substantial influence on the structure of this text.

I owe special thanks to the people that form the heart of the Agora group: Wim Codenie, Koen De Hondt, Carine Lucas, Marc Van Limberghen. They were always open for discussion and helped me in solving all kinds of problems. Especially in the design of Agora they were influential. All four are co-responsible for its current shape. Wim, Koen, Carine and Marc proof-read this dissertation, some parts more than once.

Kris De Volder, Karel Driesen, Serge Demeyer also proof-read parts of this text. I thank Kris for the numerous and long discussions on reflection. I would like to thank Karel for the numerous discussions on whichever topic. I thank Serge for his continuous interest and support.

Thanks, also for comments on the text, to the members of the thesis committee: Prof. Pierre Cointe, Prof. Viviane Jonckers, Prof. Pattie Maes, Prof. Robert Meersman, Prof. Luc Steels, Prof. Dirk Vermeir.

Several other people have been helpful. I owe thanks to the former members of the Agora group and the students that helped in shaping and implementing Agora. In the early stages of this research Michel Tilman and Thanh Son Du have been helpful.

Franz Hauck has been open for discussion each time we were able to meet. More recently, Niels Boyen, Wolfgang De Meuter, Kim and Tom Mens have helped by showing their interest. I thank Prof. Viviane Jonckers for giving helpful comments on the introduction of the text.

All other people of the Computer Science Department and the Programming Technology Lab each play an important role in maintaining an optimal working environment. I hereby also thank all people, in and outside the department, that have shown interest in my work.

Michel Beke and Arlette Vercammen are responsible for the layout of the text. I thank OO Partners and the people of the IT department of VTM for providing the infrastructure and the calm environment to finish this text. Finally I thank my friends and family for the necessary distraction once in a while. I especially thank Arlette for her support.