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The learning curve

Flanders makes a bid to attract more international students

Dafydd ab Iago

International education can mean big money – but is that a good or bad thing?

The growth in global competi-

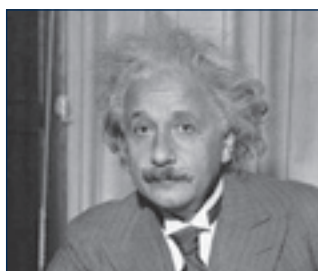
tion for international students in recent years is dramatic. Competition has led education ministries around the world to examine their education brand, marketing strat-

egies and communication policies. Flanders is no exception, although the region is only now awakening to the opportunities and challenges of international education.

Speaking at an international education conference in Antwerp last month, Flemish education minister Frank Vandenbroucke finally admitted the need to raise

the global attractiveness of Flemish education. Referring to the lofty goals set down by the 1999

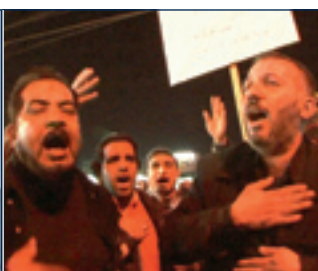
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Brussels' Solvay Conference on Physics has hosted some of the most memorable moments in scientific history

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Interview

The new rector of Brussels Free University made waves recently when he said more courses should be taught in English. We talk to Paul De Knop about international education

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Government saves Dexia with credit guarantees

But measure will hit smaller banks hard, federation says

Alan Hope

The federal government stepped in last week to give state guarantees to Dexia bank, a move designed to restore customer confidence in the institution. The measure had the desired effect and shares in Dexia took off in the following day's trading, with Dexia the day's biggest riser, 16% up on the day after a high of 25%.

The agreement came after a night of tough talks between the federal government and its counterparts from France and Luxembourg. In effect, the three governments will stand guarantor for a year for

any loans made by Dexia to other financial institutions. The state will also guarantee Dexia-issue bonds, with Belgium guaranteeing 60.5% of the total, France 20.5% and Luxembourg 3%.

The agreement follows the nomination of former Belgian prime minister Jean-Luc Dehaene as the new chairman of the Dexia board – an appointment designed to restore confidence in the bank. Dehaene will serve alongside Frenchman Pierre Mariani as CEO. According to reports, a Belgian plan to split Dexia was rejected by

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EDITOR'S NOTES

Continental Superstar

Timing is essential. The Museum of Art and History in Brussels' Jubelpark has organised a gorgeous show of mechanical organs from the early 20th century. But you really have to hear them being played to appreciate their impact. That's why you have to be in the museum between 14.00 and 16.00 when the organs thump out their tunes.

These giant mechanical beasts used to be played in streets and bars across much of northern Europe. They finally died out in the 1950s, chased out of town by novelties like Wurlitzers, vinyl records and tape decks. Many were sold abroad to British and US collectors, who snapped them up and carefully put them back together again.

They might all have gone by now if it wasn't for Bert Anciaux, Flemish minister for culture, who last year used €610,000 from the Flemish "major art fund" to buy up the Ghysels collection of 16 mechanical musical boxes, hurdy-gurdys and dance hall organs.

Some people asked whether he was right to spend money on gaudy mechanical organs rather than saving an endan-

gered Rubens from export. But others pointed out that a single dance hall organ could easily fetch a quarter of a million euro at auction, and Anciaux had cornered four of them.

This unique collection was created by a passionate Belgian, who bought up neglected organs and restored them in his Schaarbeek workshop. The four dance hall organs were made by Mortier of Antwerp and Decap of Herenthals to play in the seamen's cafes along the Scheldt waterfront or in cafes on major Flemish highways. The biggest is the 92-key Continental Superstar from 1923, which will be raising the roof every day (except Monday, when the museum is closed).

The organs are displayed in a large room with a wooden dance floor that simply invites visitors to take their partners for a spin. There is also a small bar to add to the atmosphere in this delirious exhibition.

Derek Blyth

Until 8 March, 2009

online

www.continentalsuperstar.be



The mighty one: a Decap organ from Herenthals

Flanders Today

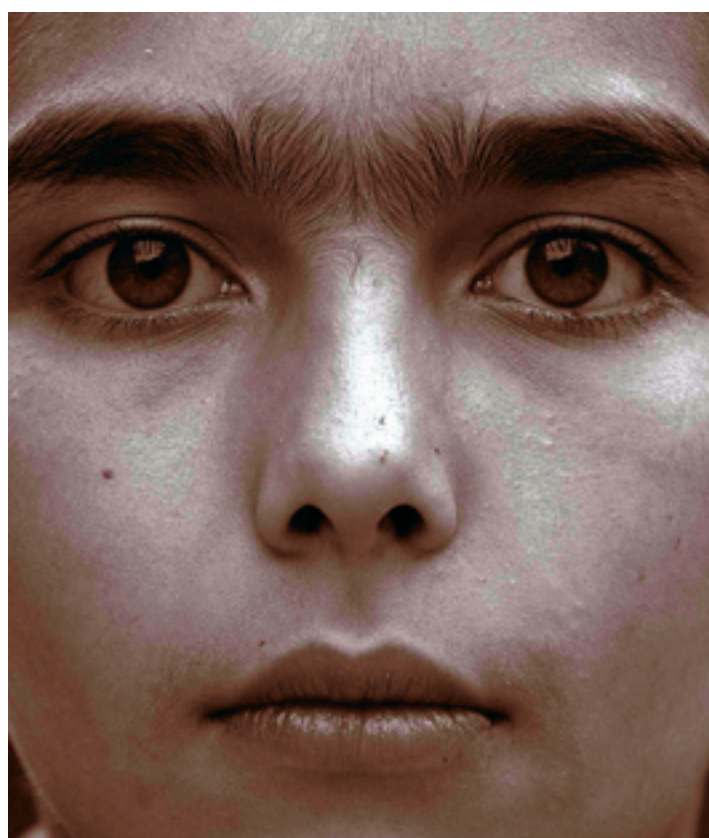
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FACE OF FLANDERS



The Messenger

You can see the above face on the streets of Bruges – in photograph form but also in real life, which is the message of a new festival running in the city until 10 December. "Flanders is not secluded from the rest of the world; we live in a global society, and we have that global society here in Bruges," says Michel Dewilde, the curator of the multi-media event called The Messenger.

But this is not just another "issues of immigration" festival. The entire concept came from a desire on the part of Dewilde to re-define how artists and others – particularly politicians – label and present those people they consider "the other." The city best known for its lace and horse-drawn carriages has just launched one of the most politically charged arts and culture festivals in the country.

Dewilde, who is the curator of the visual arts department for the city of Bruges, calls traditional representations of certain populations "dangerous". Artists and curators run the risk, he says "of inviting forms of exoticism or colonial visions, of exhibiting 'the other' – the person who is strange. We're not representing them as 'the other' – they're just messengers."

The festival is a mixture of exhibitions, concerts, theatre, lectures and readings by both local and visiting artists. It's spread around the city in public spaces, as well as in cultural centres and sometimes in private homes.

The central exhibition, from which the entire festival takes its name, is a series of large-scale photos and personal stories in multiple locations. Individual stories, rather than a collective view of a subculture, are important to the festival's mission. "When ministers talk about 'intercultural', they're not talking about Australians or the English; they're talking about Africans, Muslims," says Dewilde. "So I thought, let's work with these people from a personal point of view. They're not universal stories; it's their personal experience with identity politics."

Another exhibition, *Matrix 1*, specifically takes a critical look at multicultural representations offered in other exhibitions. *Brugge Sprekt*, meanwhile, is an exhibition – also in a number of locations – of interviews with newcomers to the city. Performance groups Union Suspecte and Abattoir Fermé team up for the theatre piece *They Eat People*, while Moroccan choreographer Khalid Benghrib presents *La Smala B.B.*, an absurd fable inspired by both the fantastical work of 15th-century Dutch painter Hieronymus Bosch and life in the slums of Casablanca.

Running through the entire festival is the much-discussed notion of integration. "When politicians try to integrate certain inhabitants into society, it means they are not already part of society," says Dewilde. "I've never understood this. Some people think that black or Muslim foreigners are not actually part of society, which is completely untrue. I'm very wary of integration politics – integrate them into what? They are already part of society."

Lisa Bradshaw

online

www.cultuurcentrumbrugge.be

TALKING DUTCH

notes on language



toekomst

The doomsayers are having a whale of a time, what with banks falling like skittles and the power of the euro in your pocket shrinking. Front pages show either gathering clouds or arrow-headed lines nose-diving off a graph.

But you get used to anything, especially doom and gloom. So I was brought up short by a small article in a paper titled *NMBS investeert in nieuw rollend materieel voor de toekomst* – NMBS (Belgian railways) invests in new rolling stock for the future. So the NMBS not only thinks there is a future, but that it's worth investing in it.

More and more people want to let the train take the strain: *jaarlijks stijgt het aantal reizigers met 5%* – annually the number of passengers rises by 5%. The annual investment of €475 million is earmarked for providing each passenger (or as they insist on saying in Britain, customer) with *een zitplaats in de piekuren* – a seat during the rush hours.

But back to the future, we know that the future's not ours to see, dangling tantalisingly beyond our grasp. Yet, grammatically, the future in Germanic languages such as Dutch and English is best seen as an extension of the present. Rather than having a future tense (as in French), these languages have various ways of expressing the future using the present tense, which makes the future part of now. The Dutch word *toekomst* is connected to the verb *toekomen*, which means, among other things, to be entitled to, to approach, to arrive, to make do. So *het haar toekomstende deel* means that which is hers by right (literally, "the her entitled part"); *hij is naar mij toegekomen* – he came up to me; *de trein is toegekomen* – the train has arrived; *hij moet met weinig toekomen* – he has to make do with little.

In these interesting times, people are thinking about their futures – *de mensen denken aan hun toekomst*. The trouble is seeing far enough into the future: *de nabije toekomst* is perhaps easier to see than *de verre toekomst*. Near or far, some say that we cannot look into the future – *wij kunnen niet in de toekomst kijken*. Perhaps the best bet is to go to a fortune teller *om je toekomst te voortellen*.

In any case, *onze toekomst staat op het spel* – our future is at stake. Perhaps all will be well when the dust settles. The Jeremiahs would say that this is *een toekomstdroom* – a pipe dream; a more tentative assessment might be that *het is nog toekomstmuziek* – it is still in the future.

And in the future, how will *toekomstige generaties* regard recent events on the markets? *Een storm in een glas water* – a storm in a teacup or *het was maar het begin* – it was just the beginning?

I had hoped for some comfort from www.toekomst.be, but no one sees any future in it.

Alistair MacLean

FEATURE



Flemish universities have adopted the toga – now they need foreign students to go along with them

The learning curve

Continued from page 1

Bologna Declaration, he argued that Flanders should participate more actively in the “single European higher education area” with its increasingly mobile student population.

But there are winners and losers in this situation. Countries who want to increase global attractiveness will inevitably compete in a global “academic arms race” with clear winners and losers. Currently, English-speaking countries such as Australia, Canada, Britain, the United States and, more recently, Ireland have been able to attract millions of students and earn vast sums by charging higher fees. Each year, Britain takes in over €16 billion in education revenues, while Australia last year raked in €6.25 billion, making education Australia’s third largest export (after coal and iron ore but ahead of tourism).

The losers in this battle have often been developing countries that not only see their best students leave but also suffer from an outflow of funds to English-speaking countries. Vandenbroucke, a socialist, does not like the idea of waging a “global war on talent”. He sees the real strength of European – and Flemish – higher education in its contribution to the global public good. It does so, he argues, by unlocking Europe’s – and the world’s – academic potential. “We should make clear how Europe can contribute answers to the global challenges,” he says, critical of the climate of commercialisation, or what he dubs the “commodification” of knowledge.

“It is true that we have a low number of international students compared to English-speaking countries,” says Annegreet Olijve of the Flemish Inter-University Council. “But Flanders only started a marketing programme for Flemish higher education last year.” She explains that fees for students from outside the EU are usually the same as for Belgian students, except for a few special programmes that can cost up to €5,500 per year. This means that international education is not a money-spinner for Flanders.

“There are very few financial gains for Flanders from international students,” says Olijve. “The fees are low. This is more about contacts with students [and foreign institutions], research and internationalisation in general.” She goes on to argue that international education in Flanders aims

more at quality rather than quantity. “We do not need to have enormous numbers of foreign students. We want good students.”

But this attitude might not last much longer. “Everyone will have to jump on the bandwagon,” says education specialist Dr Robert Coelen of Leiden University in the Netherlands. “Foreign students are an important source of revenue for Australia. They not only pay the institutional fee but also spend money on living in the country.”

Coelen was speaking along with minister Vandenbroucke at a conference organised by the Dutch-based European Association for International Education. “We are moving from a higher education system that is almost free of charge and taught in the native language to a more expensive education taught in English,” argues Coelen. The number of

foreign students has continued to rise dramatically despite the fees at Coelen’s University of Leiden increasing sharply following the introduction of English-only Master’s degrees in 2006.

“Anyone who wants to survive in this new global environment has to go with the flow. And incidentally, our research has shown that foreign students consider it acceptable and appropriate to pay more for a good education,” says Coelen.

His colleague Piet Van Hove, head of the University of Antwerp International Department, notes that Flanders has been successfully recruiting

foreign students at doctorate level for some time now. “For Master’s degrees, this is more difficult. Due to language legislation, offering a higher education in English is not always easy to implement,” he admitted.

Despite the traditional Flemish reluctance to commercialise education, the system may eventually have to abandon its scruples. Bernd Wächter, Director of the Academic Cooperation Association, underlines the importance of general internationalisation trends on continental Europe. Here, the number of English-taught programmes has tripled over the last five years to around 2,400.

Wächter recently co-authored the book *English-Taught Programmes in European Higher Education*, which notes that the Netherlands, Finland and other Nordic countries are leaders in English-language education, predominantly at postgraduate level. Countries like the Netherlands and Denmark have even been pushing up fees so as to turn non-EU students into money spinners.

“Flanders has improved the marketing of its international

education, even if it started later than the Netherlands,” says Wächter. “It is not doing so badly.” The German expert in international education points to positive initiatives such as the website www.studyinlanders.be and the presence of Flemish educational bodies at international fairs. Flemish higher education institutes and universities have also grouped themselves together under the name “Flamenco” and created a special agency to better position Flemish higher education internationally.

Despite these positive developments, Wächter criticises Flemish policy for the restrictions on education in languages other than Dutch. Flemish education regulations state that for every course at Master’s level that is delivered in English there must be a Dutch-language equivalent in the same province. “I do not think that Flanders is doing itself a favour with its policy on protecting the Dutch language,” says Wächter. “International students will not come if they cannot study in English.” Despite that, he says it would be “foolish” to stop teaching undergraduates in Dutch. “I would concentrate schemes mainly in Dutch at Bachelor level. English would be for postgraduates.”

Meanwhile, Gertie De Fraeye, president of the Flemish Student Association asks: “Is teaching in broken English good for quality?” De Fraeye argues that a rash “Anglicisation” of higher education will decrease quality and make it more difficult for certain social groups to go to university. She specifically points to students from a minority background – refugees but also students who have hearing problems, suffer from dyslexia or have followed technical schooling where there were fewer language courses. “At the beginning of their studies, students have not yet perfected their knowledge of Dutch. For the labour market, Dutch as a language of education has great advantages,” she insists.

De Fraeye is not convinced that lecturers would be able to teach their subjects as well in English as in Dutch. “They would be less clear and less expressive,” she notes. Added to this, she argues that students can learn better in their mother tongue. They may even see their marks plummet if they have to listen to long lectures in English rather than Dutch.

Within the Flemish government, economy and innovation minister Patricia Ceysens comes out clearly against the equivalent principle. “You cannot imagine a better example of provincialism,” Ceysens told the weekly magazine *Knack*. Meanwhile, Vandenbroucke’s cabinet told *Flanders Today* that the minister has not yet taken a decision on English-language courses. “He’s waiting for a study that he commissioned.”

online
www.ecie.org
www.vlir.be

How many students come here?

Flanders has concentrated heavily on certain regions in attracting international students, such as Asia and Africa. “We need to go to Latin America. But that’s a political decision,” admitted an official to *Flanders Today*. Aside from the 3,150 students taking part in the European Union’s Erasmus exchange programme in 2006-2007, Flanders managed to attract 4,963 other students from EU countries and 5,609 non-EU European students. Africa provided a further 1,041, followed by Asia with 2,300 and only 539 from Latin America and North America.



STUDY IN **FLANDERS**

The website www.studyinlanders.be provides information about study opportunities in Flanders, Belgium for foreign students, researchers and academics. The information is clustered in different chapters: Flanders, the Flemish higher education system, research, and practical information on how to prepare your stay. Information regarding the higher education institutions and the study programmes (accredited non Dutch-language courses) can be retrieved through search engines. Further details and contact references are summarized in fact sheets.

www.studyinlanders.be • Federated entity of Belgium • Capital city: Brussels • Area: 13,522 km² • Language: Dutch • **Strong in education, strong in innovation** • Dynamism • High quality of life • Dynamism • Time zone: GMT + 1 • Electricity: 220V • Openness • Country dialing code: 32 • **Small region, global vision** • Temperate maritime climate • **Your future, your challenge** • Avant-garde art and culture • High-tech federated state

WWW.STUDYINFLANDERS.BE





PHOTO OF THE WEEK • BRUSSELS ● Protestors from the animal rights organisation Peta (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) demonstrate outside the European Parliament in Brussels against EU support for bullfighting. The EU pays an estimated €220 to breeders of bulls, which

helps to keep the bullfighting industry alive. Meanwhile action groups opposing the sport have joined together to lobby Brussels for a ban on bullfighting across Europe. "Even if you believe that bullfighting is tradition or culture, this can never justify cruelty to animals: cruelty is cruelty no matter

where in the world it happens," the group says.

online

www.bullfightingfreeeurope.org

THE WEEK IN FLANDERS

WEDNESDAY 8 OCTOBER

Holidays at the coast are no longer popular among children over 12, single people and fami-



lies without children, according to figures from the West Flanders economic study bureau WES. The Belgian seaside is still popular, however, among the under-fives and pensioners over 65. ● A planned coal-fired power station in the Antwerp harbour area will produce as much carbon dioxide as 2 million cars, according to environmental organisations protesting at the plans. Coal stations produce twice as much CO₂ – 6 million tonnes a year in the Antwerp case – as gas-fired stations. ● Radiation levels in Belgium are far below the legal limits, according to measurements carried out between March and May this year by the consumer organisation OIVO. This is despite Belgium being ninth in the world tables for use of Wifi and wireless internet, with more mobile phones than inhabitants. OIVO found no difference in levels between city and country, and even the presence of a

phone mast in the area did nothing to levels. ● The Maes beer slogan "Maten, Makkers, Maes" is the most recognisable of 2008, in a poll carried out by ad agency Brandhome. Euro Millions ("Wordt schandalig rijk") was second, with Red Bull ("Geef je vleugels") third.

THURSDAY 9 OCTOBER

The court of appeal in Antwerp dismissed the case against a number of Antwerp city employees accused of using city-issued Visa cards for personal purchases. The case cost former mayor Leona Detiege her job, as well as police chief Luc Lamine. ● Antwerp is the most dangerous municipality in the country for the number of road accidents, with 2,741 in 2007, according to the National Institute for Statistics. There were 2,616 injuries, 26 of them fatal. Ghent came second with 1,861 (2,327 injuries, 10 deaths), followed by Brussels with 1,252 (1,252 and 7). Honnelles in Henegouwen was the safest with only one accident and one injury.

FRIDAY 10 OCTOBER

Fortis Insurance Belgium played host to 50 guests at an exclusive lunch in the Louis XV restaurant in Monaco, at a cost of around €150,000. The guests were mainly foreign brokers, a spokesman said. A spokesman for prime minister Yves Leterme later described the event as "hardly

appropriate". ● Leuven University is the highest-placed Belgian university in this year's Top 200 list produced last week by the Times Higher Education Supplement. Leuven comes in at 72, lower than last year's 61st place.

Weekend 11-12 OCTOBER

Singer Geike Arnaert is to leave the group Hooverphonic to pursue a solo career, a decade



after joining as the group's fourth singer. The group's manager stressed there was no question of a dispute. Geike just wants to pursue other musical projects, he explained. ● Dozens of motorists had their car windscreens cracked or broken by flying stones on the E19 between Mechelen and Brussels after road-workers neglected to clear away stone chips following resurfacing work. ● A man who called in a fake bomb alert to the Antwerp law courts has been sentenced to 10 months in prison

and a fine of €550. He will also pay €30,000 in damages to the city of Antwerp and the state.

MONDAY 13 OCTOBER

Belgium will be ready to bring in the standard EU car numberplate in 2010, mobility minister Etienne Schouppe announced. The plate has black letters on a white background, the EU stars and the letter B. The combination of three numbers and three letters remains unchanged. ● A Serbian asylum-seeker committed suicide in Vottem detention centre after his request for asylum was rejected. The man had been picked up in September on the Thalys from Paris to Brussels. ● Members of the public wanting to donate to the annual food collection organised by the Belgian Foodbanks Federation will this year be asked to buy food-coupons instead of depositing plastic bags full of sugar, pasta or other foodstuffs in the collecting-places. Delhaize, which sponsors the action, has banned plastic bags from the shop. Instead, customers will be given coupons for a breakfast, a lunch or a full day's meals, which they can then scan at the checkout.

Breaking news

for breaking news see
www.flanderstoday.eu
under press room

FIFTH COLUMN



Only an opinion poll

My colleague from page 2 last week asked for suggestions of words that could feature in Talking Dutch. Well here's one, Alistair: versplintering. Two, even: versplintering and versnippering. Both roughly translate as "fragmentation" and are frequently used to describe the party landscape in Flanders.

Party landscape (*partijlandschap*), too, is a typical Flemish term, as we do not have a two-party system, but a (growing) number of different parties. A recent opinion poll by VRT and *De Standaard* shows a new phenomenon: whereas in the past voters were divided between three large "traditional" parties and a number of smaller players, the votes are now split almost evenly between five middle-range parties. The party landscape has fragmented.

The Christian democrat, liberal and socialist parties are the traditional ones. For decades Belgian politics was quite simple, even with a coalition system: as the Christian democrats were always the largest party, they formed a government with either the liberals or the socialists, switching between the two every now and then.

Those days are long gone. You only need to look at the Flemish government to see that: its ministers are Christian democrats, liberals, socialist and one Flemish progressive. Before media minister Geert Bourgeois resigned last month, the Flemish government had one more party within its ranks: the nationalist N-VA. And if the recent opinion poll has any truth in it, the next Flemish government may look even more like a jigsaw puzzle.

The poll shows that five parties could win between 21% and 14% of the vote: the Christian democrat CD&V, the liberal Open VLD, the socialist-progressive SP.A/VI.Pro, the extreme nationalist Vlaams Belang and – surprisingly – the new, ultraliberal Lijst Dedecker.

After the small nationalist party Volksunie split up into two new parties at the beginning of this century an electoral threshold of 5% was established to prevent *versplintering*, considered a threat to political stability. Small parties, it was expected, would either disappear or be swallowed up by larger ones. A couple of years later, all of this seems to have been to no avail. The nationalist N-VA, which recently tore away from a cartel with CD&V, can now expect a result of around 7%, just like the greens. This takes it well above the electoral threshold.

Small parties are still around. Moreover, large parties have become smaller and are even matched by a new party like Lijst Dedecker. The outcome can only be described as total fragmentation. This, however, is only an opinion poll. Which is exactly what politicians say about it, when asked to comment.

Anja Otte

Anja Otte is a freelance Flemish journalist whose work regularly appears in *De Standaard*

Bill would regulate psychologist profession

The psychiatric profession needs new laws to protect vulnerable patients from “quacks” masquerading as therapists, according to two Christian democrat politicians. CD&V deputy Luc Goutry and CDH senator Marc Elsen have brought forward a bill to regulate the field.

Under Belgian law, only psychiatrists may treat people with psychiatric illnesses. However, in practice the sector is dominated by psychologists, social workers and therapists, whose job-titles have no legal protection. The word “psychotherapist,” for example, has no legal definition, leaving it open for people with no training or qualifications whatever to set up in practice.

The new bill would set down the conditions for use of the title “clinical psychologist”. “That way a psychiatric patient would have a guarantee of decent care,” said Goutry. “The gurus, the cartomancers and the cult-leaders who profit from the patient’s vulnerability will be chased off”.

Van Lijsebeth heads P Committee

Antwerp’s chief prosecutor Bart Van Lijsebeth is to take over the chair of the P Committee, the body which oversees the activities of the federal police.

A magistrate by training, he worked in Antwerp and Brussels, dealing with organised crime, drugs and hormone trafficking before moving to State Security in 1994. In 1999 he left to head the Antwerp prosecutor’s office, where he reorganised magistrates into teams, each specialised in a particular field. His departure comes as a surprise; it is reported he did not seek the new position, but was brought in to take over the P Committee when André Vandoren left to head up the anti-terror service Ocad.

Students is no good at grammar

Seven out of 10 students in Flemish schools are lost when it comes to Dutch grammar, according to a poll carried out by the magazine Over Taal among 359 final-year school students. Girls do slightly better than boys, and Dutch students are slightly better at identifying parts of speech.

However they slip behind their Flemish counterparts on parsing of sentences. Conjugation of verbs is the strongest suit of most, with spelling described as “fair”. One major difference is that students whose courses include Latin did more than twice as well as others, with seven out of 10 scoring well.

Bail-out for the politicians’ bank



Dexia chairman Jean-Luc Dehaene, French economy minister Christine Lagarde and Yves Leterme after a night of talks

Continued from page 1

the French, with the state guarantees finally the only move that Paris would accept.

But the agreement caused anger among Fortis shareholders, some of whom were said to be considering legal action. Rumours of liquidity problems had caused the situation where Fortis had to be sold off cheaply, they complained. If Fortis had enjoyed similar state guarantees to Dexia’s, an estimated half-million shareholders might not have suffered losses.

But Dexia is not just any bank. Formerly known as Gemeentekrediet, the bank was for long the monopoly banker for the country’s 508 municipalities. It still manages the finances of most of them. In that respect, Dexia crosses all boundaries – political, linguistic and community. And many municipal authorities still hold shares in the bank,

either directly or via the Gemeentelijke Holding. The close links all politicians in this country have with their local municipalities – Jean-Luc Dehaene was mayor of Vilvoorde from 2001 to 2007 – explains to an extent the favouritism shown.

Rival banks allege that the guarantees will offer Dexia an unfair competitive advantage by allowing it to offer better credit terms. Prime Minister Yves Leterme was careful to avoid accusations of disruption of commerce by promising that the other “system” banks – Dexia, Fortis, ING and KBC – could call for state guarantees if they needed them. Banking federation Febelfin, which represents 109 smaller banks, issued a statement calling for the possibility to be open to all of their members. The smaller banks fear that the guarantees will make it harder and more expensive for them to get credit on the inter-bank market.

KBC • National bank governor Guy Quaden has clarified statements made earlier in the week which appeared to suggest that other banks were heading for disaster. Quaden had warned that “some banks which now appear to be healthy could be attacked in the days to come”. The statement was taken to refer to KBC, the Leuven-based bank which has so far managed to escape the crisis in the sector relatively unscathed. KBC shares were immediately hit, but Quaden went on to deny that he had been talking about KBC, a bank he described as having “a solid situation as regards liquidity and solvability”. KBC was, he said, “very well managed” and “considered one of the best European banks,” he said. Shares in KBC continued to fall, by 15% before the clarification, and another 15% after.



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Solvay Conference held in Brussels

Science forum brings together the world's greatest physicists

Stefano Siggia

The 23rd Solvay Conference on Physics took place in Brussels last weekend – a world-renowned event which attracts top scientists from international universities. This year's topic was "Quantum theory of condensed matter".

For the past 97 years, Brussels' Solvay Conference in Physics has been a landmark in the world of advanced science. The first meeting in 1911 was conceived as an international scientific council to improve understanding of molecular theories and kinetics. Since then, it has covered a broad range of topics in physics.

The conference was the brainchild of the Belgian chemist and industrialist Ernest Solvay. Born in Rebecq in 1838, he pioneered a process in 1861 to create soda ash from the ammonia-soda process. He opened his first factory in Belgium and soon expanded to other countries, including Germany, Britain and the United States. He used much of his wealth to establish various scientific institutions, including the



The first Solvay Conference in 1911 brought Albert Einstein (back row, second from the right) and Marie Curie, the only woman, to Brussels

International Solvay Institutes for Physics and Chemistry.

The inaugural meeting in 1911 was the world's first international physics conference, an invitation-only event that brought together prominent scientists such as Max Planck, Ernest Rutherford, Marie Curie, Henri Poincaré and a 25-year-old Albert Einstein. Chaired by Nobel Prize winner Hendrik A Lorentz, the committee of scientists studied radiation

and quanta through two different approaches – quantum theory and classical physics.

The conference was a great success, leading to the creation of the chemistry and physics institutes the following year. Conferences were subsequently held every few years in Brussels, always with the aim of increasing understanding of physics.

One of the most notable conferences was in 1927 when electrons

and photons were the topic of discussion. Some 29 of the world's greatest physicists attended, including August Piccard, Louis de Broglie and again Max Planck and Marie Curie. Albert Einstein and the Nobel Prize winner Niels Bohr took centre stage by debating the interpretation of quantum mechanics. Einstein expressed his reservations about Werner Heisenberg's theory of the Uncertainty Principle of quantum physics, arguing that "God does not play dice," to which Bohr replied, "Einstein, stop telling God what to do."

The conferences are still invitation-only, but the 2005 event introduced public lectures for the first time, along with workshops. Last week, physicists met once again in the grandeur of the Metropole Hotel to discuss the quantum theory of condensed matter. Among the 50 participants were Nobel prize winners Wolfgang Ketterle, Klaus von Klitzing and Frank Wilczek.

online
www.solvayinstitutes.be

Deminor begins legal action for Lehman victims

Deminor, the advice bureau for small shareholders, has set up a creditor's committee for customers whose investments in the stricken American bank Lehman Brothers may have been lost when the bank collapsed. Deminor wants to help investors get their money back and intends to join in the bankruptcy proceedings now under way in the United States.

In the meantime, Deminor also intends to take legal action against companies that sold financial products guaranteed by Lehman, particularly investment protection insurance. The main companies targeted are Fortis Insurance, Deutsche Bank, Swiss Life, Citibank and Ethias. A Deminor spokesman said at least two of those companies advertised the products as guaranteed safe and designed for the more cautious investor. "As a result of that, some people invested as much as 50% of their savings," he said.

A number of Belgian investors in Lehman products have already signed up with Deminor, which is also collecting names in the Netherlands, France, Switzerland, Italy and Germany. An estimated 4,000 investors in this country could have lost an average of €50,000 each. Total losses in Europe could be as high as €24.5 billion.

Santens family accused of fraud

Six members of the family of textile magnate Marc Santens are being investigated in connection with suspected money laundering, fraud and forgery, magistrates at Oudenaarde have announced. Santens himself, his nephew Lieven and four of their children are under investigation. Last week 75 police officers took part in searches at all of the suspects' homes. Documents were seized and computer equipment taken off for analysis.

The family started manufacturing towelling products after the Second World War, and is the only producer still operating in Flanders, the competition having decamped to low-wage countries. The factory produces a million hand-towels a week.

Marc Santens, 82, is a former chairman of Kredietbank, now KBC. His nephew Lieven, the company's vice president, aged 75, was mayor of Oudenaarde from 1988 to 2000. Both men were created baron in 1986. The company is now run by Santens' son Jean-Baptiste, who is also being investigated, along with Lieven Santens' daughters Françoise and Anne, and son Bernard, according to reports in financial daily *De Tijd*.

The investigation is thought to centre on the creation of offshore partnerships in tax havens, and evasion of tax and VAT, as well as the use of false documentation.

Biofuel jobs at risk as demand stagnates

Hundreds of jobs and millions of euros in investment could be at stake if the federal government continues to do nothing to stimulate demand for biofuels, two Flemish ministers have said.

In a joint letter last week, environment minister Hilde Crevits and economy minister Patricia Ceysens called on federal finance minister Didier Reynders and energy minister Paul Magnette to take steps to strengthen demand. While 5% of all diesel sold in France and 4.9% in Germany is produced from agricultural crops, Belgium barely reaches 1.1%. This is far below the 5.75% promised in 2005 as a target for 2010 under the Kyoto agreements. An EU

energy policy package, moreover, sets a target of 10% for 2020. Neither of those targets will be reached, the ministers said, unless steps are taken.

"A great many Flemish enterprises have made it plain that the lack of a mandatory mixing policy is creating major problems which are bringing them into economic and financial jeopardy," Ceysens said, referring to the policy in some countries obliging diesel producers to mix their product with a proportion of bio-diesel. The federal government rejected the mixing option, preferring a production-quota system instead.

Companies have pumped €160 million into investment in



production capacity, and a further €360 million in production itself. If nothing is done about demand,

Ceysens said, producers "would not be looking forward to a very long life".

BUSINESS FLASH



Automobiles

The Ghent-based assembling affiliate of the Swedish Volvo car group is to slash 250 jobs from its payroll as the global slowdown hits production. The move is part of the company's worldwide restructuring that will reduce the workforce by a total of 3,300. But the company has confirmed its plans to produce the XC60 model in Ghent from next year and has earmarked the facility for assembling the future S60 and V50 models from 2010.

Property

Firstal Industrial Europe, the property management and semi-industrial buildings developer, is seeking to invest up to €475 million in Flanders and the Netherlands as part of its development in Western Europe. The company has made its first investments in Flanders where it will build distribution facilities in Bornem and Puurs. The first logistic centre is due to open in March next year.

IT

Hewlett-Packard, the US computer and services group, is to cut 300 jobs at its EDS computer services affiliate in Mechelen over the next two years. The move, part of the company's restructuring programme, which calls for a cut of some 24,600 jobs worldwide, follows the acquisition of EDS by Hewlett-Packard last year. Over 3,000 workers are employed by the US company in Belgium.

Fast food

Boîte à Pizza, the French fast food chain specialised in the home delivery of "gastronomic" pizzas, is to open its first outlet in downtown Brussels. The company has plans to open up to 35 franchise operations in the country next year. It is known in France for having created a "fois gras pizza".

Software

Fermat International, a Brussels-based developer of software for the financial sector, has been taken over by US-based Moody's, the leading supplier of specialised services for financial institutions.

Water bottling

Sip-Well, the American-owned supplier of office drinking fountains, has inaugurated its latest bottling plant in Londerzeel. The company is the market leader in Belgium with some 25,000 water fountains and 750,000 daily consumers.

Flooring

Unilin, the West Flanders laminated wood and floorboard producer, is investing €100 million in a new production unit in Nizhny Novgorod in Russia. The company said that total investment in the new facility could reach €430 million if demand in Russia called for extra capacity.

Banks crisis hits supermarket chain

Supermarket chain Carrefour could miss its target of opening 60 new Express mini-stores in 2009 because candidate franchisees are finding it difficult in the current financial climate to find the credit they need. That's according to Marc Oursin, director of the group in Belgium.

Carrefour has 180 Express shops in Belgium, each operated on a franchise basis by self-employed businessmen. It is estimated that start-up costs for an Express store are between €50,000 and €75,000.

"It's getting harder to find candidates," Oursin said. "We are worried about the impact on our investment budget for 2009. The credit crisis is forcing us to be more cautious."

Meanwhile the retail industry federation Fedis pointed out that the problem was not restricted to Carrefour. Banks are generally more wary of giving credit, and small businesses bear the brunt of the problem. The potential impact on chains of a reduction in investment could lead to a "negative spiral," Fedis director Dominique Michel said.

However the new financial caution could mean more people turning to franchising rather than starting up their own business, the Belgian Franchise Federation said. "A franchise formula holds less risk for the small businessman," a spokesman said. Carrefour is one of the biggest of the 100 or so franchisers in Belgium, as well as being the biggest retail distribution chain. The franchise sector involves about 3,500 franchisees, employing a total of about 30,000 people. Franchise stores account for about 6% of the retail sector, or sales of about €2.4 billion.

Fortis compensation plan "unacceptable"

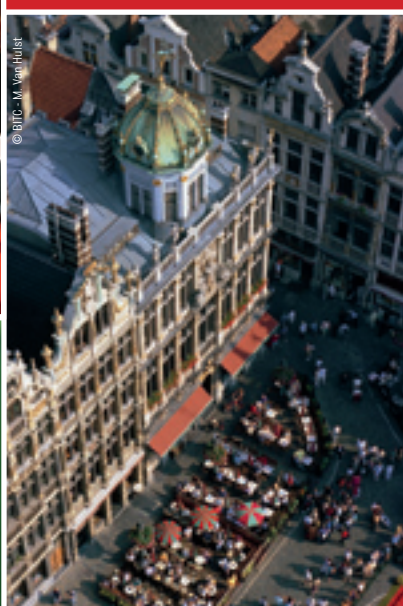
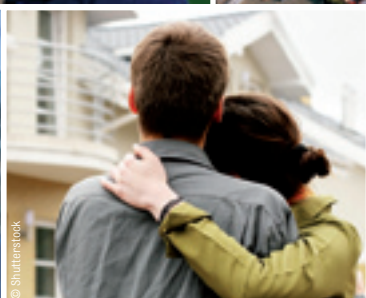
Small shareholders who lost money in the collapse of Fortis will be compensated, but not before 2014, the government has announced. The move has been attacked by opposition parties and shareholder representatives as "discrimination".

The compensation comes from a fund set up by the government, which will be fed in part by any gains the government makes from its shareholding in BNP Paribas, which acquired Fortis in return for equity, and from dividends earned by the shares. But the government will first withdraw its initial €9.4 billion investment, annual interest at 4.11% and a 2% risk premium. At this stage, it is impossible to estimate how much money might be left in the coffers for shareholders, if indeed there is any. When the government obtained its 11% share in BNP Paribas, shares were worth €68; last week closed with the share trading at €59.9.

More worrying for critics of the plan, the compensation will not apply to all shareholders equally. Shares must have been bought on 1 July at the latest, when the price stood at €9.94 before plunging into freefall. They must also have been held until 3 October. The limit is also set on the number of shares held: only shareholders with 5,000 shares or fewer will be eligible.

According to the Flemish federation of investment clubs and investors (VFB), this is "an unacceptably bad solution," and a case of "manifest discrimination". Not only does the cap of 5,000 discriminate against some small shareholders, the requirement for every holder to be a "natural person" means that many small savers who invested via pension funds and life assurance policies will not be compensated.

Meanwhile at least one shareholder representative aimed to take the government to court to try to overturn the agreement reached with BNP Paribas over Fortis. Investors' union Dolor lodged a complaint with the Centre for Equal Opportunities, claiming that the government's package excludes 75% of shareholders through no fault of their own. Dolor claims to have received 18,000 shareholders questions and complaints about the Fortis situation in the last three months.



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DESIGN

Pretty on the inside

Kortrijk hosts the 21st edition of one of Europe's top design events



Stéphanie Duval

Beginning this week, the Kortrijk Xpo will be the setting of many a design fan's dreamland. It will be hard to recognise the place – usually bare and industrial looking but now decorated to represent the *crème de la crème* in interior design.

"For any given fair, exhibitors normally start building their stands about a week before the opening. With Interieur, some of them start almost two weeks in advance," says Dieter Van Den Storm, project coordinator of the 21st edition of Interieur 08.

"We tend to set very high standards for our exhibitors," Van Den Storm admits, "not only when it comes to the quality of their

work, but also regarding the way they present it. We don't want it to be a boring showroom, we want to tickle visitors' imaginations." Every designer or design company that wants to participate has to apply and is carefully selected by a special committee, even when the exhibitor has participated before.

So it's not hard to tell why, every two years, visitors from all over Europe descend on Kortrijk to witness the latest technologies, the latest trendsetters and the hippest new looks in interior design. "What really makes Interieur different from other international fairs is that we aim for the big audience," explains Van Den Storm. "Not only professionals are welcome, but also private individ-



Jaime Hayon's multi-leg cabinet, above, is part of his Showtime collection, inspired by classic MGM musicals. Above, left: a conquest for interior designs hunters. Left, Swarovski puts its trademark crystal sparkles in gorgeous hanging lamps

uals, design enthusiasts and those in search of inspiration. It makes the fair an excellent ground for test cases: exhibitors can spot immediately what is going to be a hit with the public."

Of course professionals also flock to the fair to keep up-to-date on what is happening in design and to discover the newest talent. "Our aim is to be a platform for designers. And by that we mean all designers, whether they belong to a group, are still in school or are just starting up their own business," says Van Den Storm.

Everyone, for instance, is invited to participate in the Design Competition. Contributions are judged anonymously to ensure everyone has an equal chance.

This year the theme is "living, working and playing", and 286 designers from 33 countries sent in a prototype of an object not yet in production. They are all exhibited at the fair, whether they won or not. "We've seen in the past that a lot of these ideas get picked up by professionals and that some of them are even commercialised within six months after the fair," explains Van Den Storm. It is the perfect way for young talent to hook up with the big international players.



An original Jaime Hayon: the designer brings his fantasies to Kortrijk

Ever since 1968, when the first Interieur biennial took place, an international guest of honour has been invited. This year, it's Jaime Hayon, who will showcase his work in an exhibition. The choice for this designer was not self-evident, Hayon being the youngest and first ever Spanish guest of honour to Interieur.

"As always, we wanted to support an upcoming and relatively unknown designer," explains Van Den Storm. "But Jaime Hayon is somewhat of an anomaly in that his designs are colourful, frivolous and always full of fantasy, while there has been this tradition of inviting designers that are more minimalist." Hayon indeed has big shoes to fill, with predecessors such as Philippe Starck, Jasper Morisson and Rolf Fehlbaum.

But a surprising guest of honour is all part of the strategy to make Interieur an innovative and creative fair that will keep visitors on their toes. Visitors and professionals will be able to get together and debate not only the eccentric work of Hayon but many other design subjects.

Several lecturers will share their views on innovative design, and visitors can also enjoy workshops, discussions and pres-

entations around this subject. German professor Michael Braungart will talk about durability in design, according to his principle of "cradle to cradle" – modelling human industry on natural processes – and several international architects, designers and engineers will join in the debate.

A special section of the fair is open to young and experimental artists, showcasing their first steps into the frenzy of the design world. It is also a place for educational institutions to present themselves and their programmes of study. Visitors benefit by marveling at the fantasy and creativity of tomorrow's design.

"I always like to say that interior design entails a little bit of dreaming," says Van Den Storm. "Design is expensive – I'm not one to deny that – but I would like to offer visitors the chance to draw inspiration from what they see here. Interieur does not aim to sell, it aims to offer ideas and inspire."

17-26 October, Kortrijk Xpo, Doorniksesteenweg 216

online
www.interieur.be

5 reasons to go to Interieur

1 Jaime Hayon: The famous Spanish designer's work would not be out of place in a madhouse for artists. He creates a youthful, colourful fantasy land and says that visitors to the fair "can rest assured that they will be surprised". At 34, he's the youngest Interieur guest of honour ever.

2 The prestigious Design Competition is anonymous – no favouritism among judges is possible.

3 The Young Designers Fair, a low-budget affair for those on the brink of a reputation.

4 Chemist cum designer Michael Braungart. His best-selling book *Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things* has inspired both politicians and entrepreneurs. He'll deliver the keynote speech in English for the Design at Work Awards.

5 Dressing Right is the first label in the world to launch a complete range of clothes with the Max Havelaar quality label. All Interieur hosts will be wearing the new line that successfully mixes fashion with pure ethics.

FESTIVAL

Give me liberty

International documentaries offer a week of serious political film-making in Brussels



"An explosion of truth, justice and memory," is how one activist described the investigation into the human rights abuses of Chilean ex-dictator General Augusto Pinochet, beautifully recorded in the documentary *The Judge and the General*

Saffina Rana

If it has been banned or forcefully repressed, it will be in this year's Festival van de Vrijheid, or Festival of Liberties. The annual Brussels event contains everything from slavery, rape and child labour to anarchy and homosexuality by way of migration, drugs and democracy.

To celebrate the 60th anniversary of the declaration of human rights, "prohibition" is this year's theme. So put away your apathy and head down to Flagey from 16 to 26 October to sample the rich programme of films, concerts,

debate, theatre, dance and photography that spotlight resistance in the face of violations currently occurring at home and abroad.

Over 400 films were received for the festival's international documentary competition, but they have been whittled away to just 38. "Each film has been chosen for its aesthetics, originality and dynamism," says Mathieu Bietlot of the festival team and co-ordinator of socio-politics at Bruxelles Laïque, a non-profit human-rights organisation.

"The films have to be engaged, raise critical awareness and evoke the desire of the public to concern themselves with the rights and

freedoms in the world," he says. "These are the criteria, but we favour engaged points of view, and we try to avoid simplistic or one-sided propaganda. The filmmaker's approach has to be critical and independent – in investigation, comparison of sources and viewpoints."

The main prize is a hefty €5,000 towards distribution and promotion of the winning film. Bietlot has several favourites. *Shadow of the Holy Book* tells the story of dictatorship in Turkmenistan. "It's a subject that nobody talks about and not much of the world is interested in, but the film impassions me from start to finish," he says. "It's because of the way that the filmmaker has constructed it and conducts his investigation. It's worthy of Orwell. He reveals all the mechanisms of totalitarianism and the support received from certain multinational companies."

Closer to home, *HF6* is about the lives and problems of Belgian steelworkers. "It's very human, touching and, at the same time, full of hope," says Bietlot.

The helpful clustering of films around a common thread provides an insight into how similar prohibitions are dealt with in different parts of the world. Screening on 22 October, *Baad-e-Da-boor* shows the way in which Iranians have got around the government ban on watching



Antwerp Zoo staff's sophisticated new togs

Continued on page 13

FASHIONISTA



Animal fashion

Why are the Antwerp Zoo and Planckendael organising a fashion contest? I don't necessarily associate zebras and tigers with high fashion – seeing as I'm not a big Cavalli fan. But it all made sense to me last week, when I attended a spectacular fashion show in the fairytale décor of the Antwerp Zoo by night.

Both the zoo and Planckendael animal park in Mechelen have been given a bit of a make-over of late, with new logos and different house styles to distinguish themselves as quality brands. So, naturally, a new uniform for the employees of both was in order. Anja Stas, commercial director of the parks, decided to call on Belgium's great fashion reputation, so, together with the Flanders Fashion Institute, she launched a contest for independent designers to create the new looks.

Many creatives sent in their ideas, which were all published on a website. Visitors could flip through the suggestions and vote on their favourite. A smart move on behalf of the organisation: making sure their zoos' guests will like what they see. After the voting, six finalists were chosen to work out their version of the uniforms: three for each park. Those designs were presented to the media at the Antwerp Zoo in a show destined to be remembered by even the most seasoned fashion journalists.

Because, honestly, when will they ever get to see dancers and models interact with a hologram hippo on the catwalk again? It was another very good move to put Rudolf Werthen in charge of the event. The famed musician, conductor and producer created a 3D fantasy world for the occasion, providing the perfect backdrop for the animal parks' employees to show the mini collections.

And since a contest is not a contest without a winner, an entire row in front of the stage was reserved for the jury, stuffed with fashion heavyweights, but also with actors, singers and a writer (apparently Tom Naegels is a big zoo fan). While they retreated to debate the outcome, guests were entertained by animal people: models wearing high-fashion versions of flamingo and leopard costumes, behaving as aloof and intriguing as their counterparts a few cages down.

At the end of the night, the jury had finally reached their decision. The Antwerp Zoo employees will soon be going to work in classy 1960s Jackie Kennedy-inspired outfits designed by stylist Muriel Delvigne. In Planckendael, staff will be dressed sporty and flashy with matching scarves and hats designed by Daisy Plas. From now on, it won't just be the peacocks showing off their colours.

Stéphanie Duval

FILM FREAK

Pink Screens

Roll out the pink carpet: one of the most unique (and certainly the most social) of Brussels' many film festivals is this one devoted to queer and genderqueer offerings – gay, lesbian, bisexual,

transsexual and plain old alternative gender views.

"Culture shapes identity," says the festival in a statement. "The stereotypes given to different sexes are ingrained in a child from

birth...Be aware of the shackles that tie us down; ask yourself about the assignment of gender; fight the hetero-normality."

Pink Screens fights hetero-normality with a "Dark Side of Queer" theme this year, as several films attest. Opening film *Vivere*, by award-winning German director Angelina Maccarone, is told from three points of view when a cab driver, en route from Germany to Rotterdam to find her kid sister, picks up a stranger. Japanese film *Sabaku*, meanwhile, finds a father exacting a sexually violent revenge on two men who assaulted his gay son. Certainly memorable, but not for the squeamish.

On a more intellectually torturous note, the festival hosts the Belgian premiere of *Brideshead Revisited*, a tale of hypocrisy, social class and lack of free will, based on the novel by Evelyn Waugh. Starring Matthew Goode (*Copying Beethoven*), Ben Whishaw (*Perfume*) and Emma Thompson, the film is getting very good reviews in the UK and the US.

The festival includes many short films and also documentaries, including *Be Like Me*, recording the arduous journey of Iranians going through sex reassignment surgery. You'll also find debates, an exhibition and a show by the Drag Kings of Brussels in the festival events line-up.

Pink Screens appropriately closes with the film *Elève Libre* (*Private Lessons*), which a critic recently told me had "more oral sex than any other Belgian film I've ever seen." Sounds like a recommendation, and director Joachim Lafosse, plus actor Yannick Renier, will be on hand to introduce the film (both of them amazingly cute).

Lisa Bradshaw

23 October – 1 November, Cinema Nova, Arenbergstraat 3, Brussels

online
www.gdac.org



The oral office: Fantastic Belgian film *Elève Libre* finds a teenager caught up in a very adult world

CASTLE SERIES

In perfect harmony

It's not often that a castle's architecture, interior decoration, and even its furniture are all designed in the same style. But that's exactly what you find at Loppem Castle in West Flanders.



All in good taste: the Charles Borromeo sitting room

Denzil Walton

In 1856, Baron Charles van Caloen and his wife, Countess Savina de Gourcy Serainchamps, appointed the English architect Edward Pugin to draw up plans for a new castle on the outskirts of Loppem, a few kilometres south of Bruges. It was to be constructed on the site where a 17th century castle had been destroyed in 1760.

Papers in the castle show that the first bricks were baked with clay from the lake. The bricks had hardly been laid when a misunderstanding arose between the owners and the architect. Van Caloen wanted a more Flemish look to his castle, so he called in his friend Jean de Bêtune to amend the plans accordingly. Construction went ahead without any further problem and the castle was completed by 1863.

"The result is an excellent example of the Flemish Gothic Revival style, which was chosen by my husband's great-grandparents to express their deep religious and national feelings," explains Baroness Marie-Agnès van Caloen. "Alternative styles such as Neo-Renaissance or Neo-Classicism were considered as pagan and foreign."

Loppem was the first of many architectural successes for de Bêtune, who later went on to design the huge complex of Maredsous Abbey. As for Pugin, he was retained by van Caloen and, together with de Bêtune, designed most of the castle's furniture in the same style. This accounts for the

almost perfect harmony throughout every room of the building.

The huge entrance hall is particularly striking. With a height of 17 metres it's like entering a church. The vault of the entrance hall of the castle is actually based on the council room in Brugge town hall, which dates back to 1421. It was here that van Caloen and his guests played billiards on a table that can still be seen.

Moving up the handmade oak staircase and banisters, which took local carpenters 10 years to complete, there are interesting rooms on the first floor used by King Albert I and Queen Elisabeth during their stay at Loppem. They have been reconstructed in their original state and are filled with old documents, photographs and souvenirs from this period, including objects that belonged to the King. However, the bed in the King's room was not used by Albert, who insisted on sleeping on his own camp bed. This was hardly surprising – King Albert frequently fought with his troops during the war and shared their dangers and discomforts, while Queen Elisabeth worked as a nurse at the front.

On the ground floor, the Charles Borromeo sitting room contains a number of frescoes by German painter August Martin representing episodes in the Crusades. The explanatory texts are penned by the influential Flemish priest and poet Guido Gezelle (1830-1899), who was a friend of the family. The dining room contains an impres-

sive collection of Gien porcelain, while the kitchen displays old kitchen implements such as waffle irons, biscuit moulds, oil lamps and an earthenware vessel in which watercress was grown.

The chapel is where the children celebrated their first communion and the family gathered for daily prayers. It contains an outstanding collection of sculptures in wood, stone and ivory, some of them painted in polychrome and dating back to the 14th century. Relics include skullcaps of popes, while religious paintings and portraits decorate the walls.

Past the chapel is a recently renovated wing which contains well-presented displays of paintings and sculptures dating from the Middle Ages to the early 20th century. Many of these were collected by Baron Jean van Caloen during his extensive travels. Worthy of attention is a 16th century wooden carving of the Garden of Good and Evil; collections of ivory from Goa and alabaster from Mechelen; a stained glass window from 1460; and the 1571 triptych "Jesus amongst the doctors" by Frans Pourbus the Elder.

"It's interesting to note that after the plans had been approved someone enquired where the toilet was located," admits Baroness van Caloen. "This small but vital room had been forgotten, and was hastily added to the ground floor as an afterthought."

The castle park was created before the castle was built. In 1851 garden architect Jean Gindra designed a completely new park

layout in English landscape style which incorporated some elements of the early 19th century park. The old ramparts were dug out and converted into a lake and a kitchen garden was constructed. Visitors can still walk along the original winding paths and across bridges to get surprising views of the castle.

In 1873, a labyrinth was planted at the edge of the grounds by the brothers Albert and Ernest van Caloen under the supervision of their home teacher. Using one and a half kilometres of green and copper beech hedges, the boys created dozens of corridors. Initially the labyrinth was only open to family members, but in 1892 it was opened to the public and evolved into a popular attraction which can still be visited

today.

In 1952 the castle and park became the property of the Jean van Caloen Foundation to protect the future of this exceptional heritage site. In 1975 the castle was made accessible to the public. Towards the village of Loppem, but within walking distance from the castle car park, is Restaurant Ten Voute, with a tearoom open from 15.00 to 18.00 every day except Tuesdays.

Loppem Castle is open every day from 1 April to 31 October except on Mondays and Fridays.

online

www.kasteelvanloppem.be
www.tenvoute.be

Royal guests

Towards the end of the First World War, the Belgian royal family requested that the castle be temporarily made available for their use. On 24 October 1918, King Albert I and Queen Elisabeth arrived, turning Loppem Castle briefly into the headquarters of the Belgian army and an international meeting point. "It must have been a busy time for castle staff, and challenging too, as food was scarce due to the ravages of war," says Baroness van Caloen. "The French President Raymond Poincaré paid the King a visit on 9 November, followed by Prince Yorihito of Japan."

During his stay at the castle, King Albert I formed the so-called Loppem Government. The King made two important decisions in the castle. He ruled that everybody should have the right to vote, and he signed a paper that would make Flanders officially Dutch speaking. The Prime Minister of the Loppem Government – the first government after World War One – was Léon Delacroix (1867-1929).

On 25 November 1918 the royal family departed. Queen Elisabeth took a few final photographs and 12-year-old Princess Marie-José clung to a rabbit that Germaine, the youngest daughter of Baron Albert van Caloen, had given her. She called it "Loppem". In his diary, Baron Caloen wrote of his pride at having received such noble guests and his delight that Loppem Castle now had such a special place in Belgian history. "He would have been even more delighted when a car drove up a few days later requesting that the castle be made ready for the visit of another royal family," says the Baroness. "In early December, King George V of England and his sons arrived for a two-day visit!"



A special place in history: Loppem Castle has been the home of kings



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Human nature

Why is the public largely unaware of the Port of Antwerp's unique nature reserve?



Forester Leo Lauwers chases away dogs and motorcycle racers from a delicate ecosystem

Marc Maes

The port of Antwerp is more than industrial containers, cargo and traffic: the whole area includes 27 officially registered nature habitats in different sizes and configurations from the Opstalvallei near the ABT bulk terminal to the Groot Rietveld on Antwerp's left bank. Providing shelter to a wide diversity of fauna and flora, you'll find a barn owl residing in Oosterweel church and a falcon housed in the Samga warehouse.

Leo Lauwers started working with the Port of Antwerp more than 35 years ago when it was still part of the city's huge administration – he joined the Antwerp Port Authority in 1990 as a supervisor and was appointed port forester three years ago, a new job

created by the port authorities.

The idea to go ahead with this specific task "was a combination of concern for nature and the need for an official control system," Lauwers explains. "The port area is attractive to many kinds of adventurous activities – but also illegal ones." Alongside the mountain bikers, the port is a magnet for waste dumpers and poachers. "It's my job to keep illegal hunters away."

When, in 2005, the nearby rural district of Hoevenen received noise nuisance complaints due to the Enduro motorcycle racing and training on sand stocks near the port's A12 motorway, Lauwers' first official assignment was to make an official report, including booking the offenders and drawing up conclusions on behalf of a process-

server.

Lauwers, 59, describes his job as environmental management, safeguarding the natural reserves in the port area. As a nature lover, he grew into the job organically, combining inspection activities, maintenance and repairs.

The port forester is supervised by the Environmental and Spatial Management Service of the Port Authority, and Leo's weekly inspection itinerary – notoriously lengthy – is only known by his direct superiors. The rest of his time is spent on administration, drawing up reports, including "statistics on damages, infractions and suggestions for new plantings."

On Antwerp's left bank, port eco-management is supervised by a commission of the Port Authority and the Nature and Forest Agency of the Flemish Ministry of Environment; the installation of a similar supervising body for the right bank is being prepared.

Proving his ability to maintain a delicate balance in his work, Lauwers enjoys a good working relationship both with environmental organisation Natuurpunt, as well with the private port companies. Equipped with his Alfa-Pass, the port forester has unlimited access to port installations, quays and loading areas. "Just recently, we discovered a nest of swifts in a hangar – a rare species, especially in an industrial environment – and now we are investigating whether there are other colonies of swifts inside other port hangars," he says.

Lauwers feels that the public appreciates his job, even when this translates into keeping people from walking their dogs in bird breeding areas. "I get positive reactions when they get to know what I do," he says, "but that's where it ends. Public awareness on port nature still has a long way to go. In July, a Flemish Port Day took place, and nobody came to see the nature reserves – which is quite significant, I think."

online

www.portofantwerp.com

Continued from page 10

foreign TV programmes and films. Later that evening, *Birmanie, La Revolution par Image* tells the story of how Burmese exiles living in Norway set up an independent television station, which was instrumental in exposing to the rest of the world last year's violent repression in Burma, with images and witness accounts. On the same evening, *Ondes de Choc* charts how journalists at Radio Okapi entered into the heart of Congo conflicts and brought witness accounts of the atrocities out into the open.

The festival will also hold 15 public debates and discussions with filmmakers. They pose questions on an array of issues, including abstinence and liberal sexual practices, immigration, the independence of the press, free speech and the far right, whether city dwellers should care about agriculture and the daily surveillance of the public. "We're not pretending that these are the 15 most important issues facing Belgian society, but they are particularly pressing at the moment," says Bietlot.

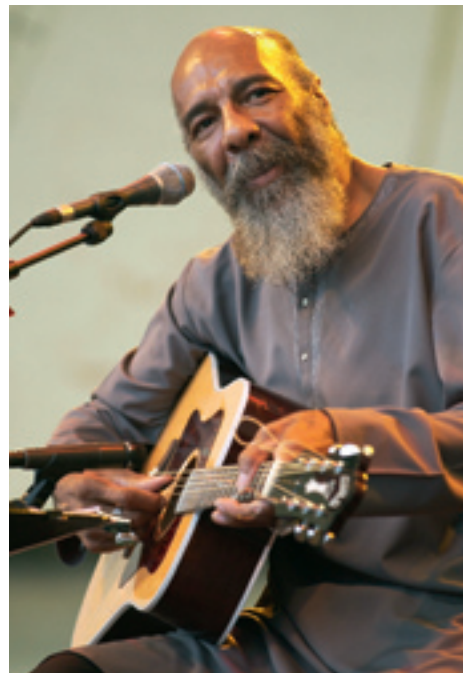
Book your tickets early for the concert programme – it includes legendary musicians Femi Kuti, Richie Havens and Toumani Diabate, all renowned for their involvement in the struggle for rights (and for their sell-out performances).

Now in its seventh year, the festival has been growing at an exponential rate since a modest line-up back in 2001. Last year, 13,000 people attended at the Pathe Palace, so this year the festival has moved home to Flagey and the nearby Marni Theatre to accommodate the growing numbers and events.

It's a good sign: Despite the sometimes arduous subject matter, increasing numbers of people are becoming more concerned about what's going on in the world.

online

www.festivalvandeervrijheid.be



Legendary roots performer and activist Richie Havens opened the Cannes Film Festival this year and now plays Brussels' Festival of Liberties

TOUCHING BASE

the week in sport



Baseball

The Port of Antwerp Greys, previously known as the Merksem Royal Greys, have won their fourth straight Belgian national baseball championship by comfortably sweeping the Hoboken Pioneers 3-0 in the best-of-five series.

Port of Antwerp had previously secured Belgium's spot in the A-group European Cup for clubs next year in a qualifying tournament on their home turf. This means they will be competing with the continent's very best for the European crown next season.

In an all-Flemish final Port of Antwerp discarded Hoboken, which had had the best record in Elite Division play:

Hoboken Pioneers 0-5 Port of Antwerp Greys
Port of Antwerp Greys 14-7 Hoboken Pioneers
Hoboken Pioneers 1-6 Port of Antwerp Greys

Dan Howard dominated to win in game 1 by allowing only one hit, while Dennis van Hoof won a sloppy game 2. Young Kenny Vandenbranden lost both games for Hoboken.

Geoffrey Kenis and Brett Diamond hit home runs for Hoboken in Game 2, while Kim Wybo and Filip Vandermeiren answered with home runs of their own for Port of Antwerp in that same game.

American football

In weeks two and three of the national Junior American football league, the Brussels Black Angels won twice more to take the lead in the western division. The Monarchs won their second game of the season against the Titans to take go ahead on the eastern division.

4/10: Lions 53-0 Cougars
5/10: Tigers 10-12 Black Angels
Diamonds 0-13 Tribes
Gators 13-18 Bulls
Monarchs 32-0 Titans
11/10: Centaures 0-33 Lions
12/10: Tigers 24-6 Bulls
Tribes 41-14 Phoenix

After three rounds the Black Angels have the best offense, putting 87 points in three games. The Monarchs have the best defense, surrendering only six points in two games.

Rugby

The national First Division for men is split exactly down the middle after three matches, with half the team winning two games and losing one and the other half winning one and losing two. As such ASUB, Boitsfort, Frameries and Kituro share first place with seven points. Every other team shares fifth place with five points.

5/10: Soignies 25-10 Ottignies
Kituro 14-11 Boitsfort
Coq Mosan 13-6 Dendermonde

Down in the Second Division, Brussels Barbarians surrendered their share of first place after losing to former co-leader Anderlecht 6-17. This gives Anderlecht sole possession of the lead with a full nine points out of three matches.

Leander Schaerlaeckens

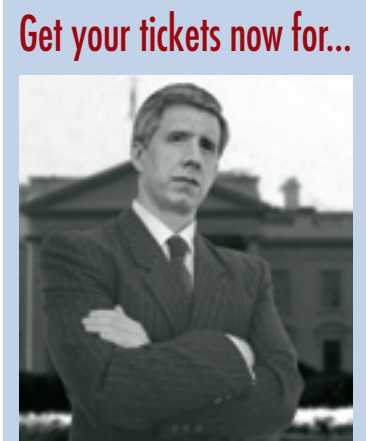
Classical & New Music

Antwerp
deSingel
Desguinlei 25; 03.248.28.28, www.desingel.be
Concerts at 20.00:
OCT 15 Film concert: The Man with the Movie Camera, documentary by Dziga Vertov with music by DJ Buscemi and friends
OCT 17 Iva Bittová & Bang on a Can All-Stars
OCT 23 Till Fellner, piano: Beethoven sonatas

Bruges
Concertgebouw
’t Zand 34; 070.22.33.02, www.concertgebouw.be
OCT 18-24 20.00 Concert series of Beethoven’s orchestral music with Anima Eterna, conducted by Jos van Immerseel

Brussels
Bozar (Paleis Voor Schone Kunsten)
Ravensteinstraat 23; 02.507.82.00, www.bozar.be
OCT 15 20.00 New Latin American Philharmonic conducted by Ricardo Araujo, with Anne-Julie Kerhella, soprano: Beethoven, Araujo (new work dedicated to victims of violence in Columbia)
OCT 16 20.00 Le Concert Spirituel conducted by Hervé Niquet: Dandrieu, Handel
OCT 17 20.00 and **OCT 19** 15.00 Trio Talweg: Shostakovich, Tchaikovsky
20.00 Belgian National Orchestra conducted by Walter Weller, with Frank Braley replacing Radu Lupu, piano: Legley, Bartók, Mussorgsky

De Munt
Muntplein; 070.23.39.39
Until OCT 22 La Cenerentola by



The Best Man
28 October – 1 November,
Théâtre Marni, de Vergniesstraat 25, Brussels. Tickets from www.atc-brussels.com

The American Theatre Company in Brussels is at its best when it takes on the dark side, like it did two years ago with Eric-Emmanuel Schmitt’s The Visitor – about Freud during Nazi occupation – and last year with Glengarry Glen Ross, which chronicles cut-throat competition in the workplace. At the end of the month, ATC presents the beautifully-timed The Best Man, a stinging satire that looks at the corrupt behind-the-scenes action involved in the nomination of a US presidential candidate. One candidate is a principled intellectual with a couple of demons to live down, the other a fiery populist backed by a strong political machine. Sound familiar? Amateur English-language theatre in Brussels always sells out, so reserve your place now for this production, which Gore Vidal penned nearly 50 years ago – but could have written today.

Rossini conducted by Marc Minkowski, staged by Joan Font

Maison des Musiques
Lebeauststraat 39; 02.550.13.20
OCT 17 12.30 Agnès Peytour, harp

Royal Music Conservatory
Regentschapsstraat 30; 02.213.41.37
Concerts at 20.00:
OCT 15 Orchestre Sturm und Klang conducted by Thomas Van Haepereen: Schnittke, Schnittke, Van Rossum, Shostakovich
OCT 17 Ensemble Orchestral de Bruxelles conducted by Jacques Vanherenthals: Mozart, Saint-Saens, Beethoven (02.343.70.40)
OCT 18 Antti Siirala, piano: Mozart, Brahms, Chopin
OCT 21 Cuarteto Casals: Schubert, Beethoven, Mendelssohn

Saint Michael and St Gudula Cathedral
Sinter-Goedeleplein; 02.217.83.45
Brussels International Organ Week (OCT 19-26):
OCT 19 16.00 Jozef Sluys, organ: Bach
OCT 20 20.00 Martin Haselböck, organ: Marchand, Alain, Keril, Reger
OCT 23 20.00 Stefan Johannes Bleicher, organ: Purcell, Bach, Hosokawa

Sint-Marcuskerk
de Frélaan 72; 02.331.37.14 or www.32sonates.be
OCT 17 20.00 Olivier De Spiegeleir, piano: Beethoven sonatas

Jazz & blues

Antwerp
Arenberg Theatre
Arenbergstraat 28; 070.22.21.92
OCT 15 20.30 Christian Scott

deSingel
Desguinlei 25; 03.248.28.28, www.desingel.be
OCT 22 20.00 Dave Douglas Magic Circle

Bruges
De Werf
Werfstraat 108; 050.33.05.29
OCT 18 20.30 Bennie Wallace Quartet (US)

Brussels
Ancienne Belgique
Anspachlaan 110; 02.548.24.24
OCT 23 20.00 Dave Holland Quintet (Skoda Jazz)

Jazz Station
Leuvensesteenweg 193-195; 02.733.13.78
Concerts at 20.30:
OCT 15 No Vibrato **OCT 17** The Sidewinders **OCT 18** Chris Mentens Jazz Van + Jacques Piroton **OCT 22** Mélanie De Biasio **OCT 23** Fada

Le Grain d’Orge
Waversesteenweg 142; 02.511.26.47
OCT 17 21.30 Generals Jack

Sounds Jazz Club
Tulpenstraat 28; 02.512.92.50, www.soundsjazzclub.be
Concerts at 22.00:
OCT 17 Fred Delplanq Quartet **OCT 18** Manu Hermia Quartet **OCT 20** Master Session **OCT 21** Da Romeo & The Crazy Moondog Band

The Music Village
Steenstraat 50; 02.513.13.45
Concerts at 20.30:
OCT 16 Isabelle Rigaux-Charles Loos Quartet **OCT 17** Wendell Brunious & the New Orleans Z’Hulus **OCT 18** Nathalie Loriers Quartet with Bert Joris **OCT 22** Peter Claus Quartet **OCT 23** Alexandre Tripoli Quartet

Pop, rock, hip-hop, soul

Antwerp
Lotto Arena
Schijnpoortweg 119; 0900.26.060
OCT 17 & 31, NOV 1 20.00 De Kreuners

NOXX
Straatsburgdok – Noordkaai 3, www.noxantwerp.be
OCT 17 23.00 Mario Winans

Sportpaleis
Schijnpoortweg 119; 0900.26.060
Until OCT 17 20.30 Milk Inc

Borgerhout
Hof Ter Lo
Noordersingel 30; 03.543.90.30
OCT 17 Limewax, Donna Summer, Monster Zoku Onsomb, Broken Note, Nero’s Day at Disneyland, DJC64, Sickboy, Droon, Valav, Rik Mayhem & Tim Terror

Brussels
Ancienne Belgique
Anspachlaan 110; 02.548.24.24
Concerts at 20.00:
OCT 16 Port O’Brien **OCT 17** Easy Star All Stars. Steve Winwood **OCT 18** James Hunter **OCT 22** Arthur H

Beursschouwburg
Auguste Ortstraat 20-28; 02.550.03.50, www.vkconcerts.be
OCT 18 20.30 Horse Feathers

Fuse
Blaesstraat 208; 02.511.97.89
OCT 18 23.00 Pokerflat Label Night: Steve Bug, Argy. Flesh presents: Ewan Pearson

Koninklijk Circus
Onderrichtsstraat 81; 02.218.20.15
OCT 22 20.30 Noa

Le Botanique
Koningstraat 236; 02.218.37.32
Concerts at 20.00:
OCT 17 Elvis GhettoBlaster **OCT 18** Son of Dave. Demon One + Kery James **OCT 20** Teitur **OCT 21** Bodies of Water **OCT 23** Thalia Zedek

Recyclart
Ursulinenstraat 25; 02.502.57.34, www.recyclart.be
Concerts at 22.00:
OCT 16 Nele Van Den Broeck **OCT 17** Feeling of Love **OCT 18** The River Curls Around the Town **OCT 19** Mathieu Ha

VK Club
Schoolstraat 76; 02.414.29.07, www.vkconcerts.be
OCT 16 20.30 Cecilia::Eyes + Cranes

Vorst-Nationaal
Victor Rousseaulaan 208; 0900.00.991
OCT 15 20.00 Sandrine + James Blunt

Ghent
Handelsbeurs
Kouter 29; 09.265.92.01
OCT 18 20.00 Luna Twist

Kortrijk
De Kreun
Jan Persijnstraat 6; 056.37.06.44
OCT 16 20.00 Ayco Duyster

Leopoldsborg
CC Leopoldsborg
Kastanjedreef 1; 011.34.65.48, www.ccleopoldsborg.be
OCT 17 20.15 Kris De Bruyne

Leuven
Het Depot
Martelarenplein 12; 016.22.06.03
Concerts at 20.00:
OCT 17 Martha Wainwright **OCT 18** 20.00 Dead Souls + Motorpsycho **OCT 23** Marcos Valle with Wanda Sá: 50 years of bossa nova

Stuk
Naamsestraat 96; 016.32.03.20
OCT 16 20.30 Maps & Atlases + Amenra + Don Caballero

World, folk

Antwerp
Amuz
Kammenstraat 81; 03.248.28.28
OCT 18 21.00 Haj Mohamed Bajedoub Ensemble, Sufi music

OCT 19 15.00 Samira Kadiri & Arabesque: traditional Andalusian music

Zuiderpershuis
Waalse Kaai 14; 03.248.01.00, www.zuiderpershuis.be
Concerts at 20.30:
OCT 17 Nuru Kane & Bayefall Gnawa (Senegal/Morocco) **OCT 18** Enrique de Melchor (Spain)

Brussels
Bozar (Paleis Voor Schone Kunsten)
Ravensteinstraat 23; 02.507.82.00, www.bozar.be
OCT 17 20.00 Haj Mohamed Bajedoub Ensemble, Arab-Andalusian music

Espace Toots
Stuckensstraat 125; 02.241.15.83
OCT 17 20.00 Urbango, tango/folk/jazz

Sounds Jazz Club
Tulpenstraat 28; 02.512.92.50, www.soundsjazzclub.be
Concerts at 22.00:
OCT 16 & 23 Antonio Segura ‘Flamenko Project’ **OCT 22** Caribe Con K, Caribbean music

Théâtre Molière
Bastionsquare 3; 02.217.26.00, www.muzeekpublique.be
OCT 17 20.00 Renata Rosa (Brazil) & Lucia Pulido (Colombia)

Kortrijk
De Kreun
Jan Persijnstraat 6; 056.37.06.44
OCT 23 20.00 Vieux Farka Touré

Leopoldsborg
CC Leopoldsborg
Kastanjedreef 1; 011.34.65.48, www.ccleopoldsborg.be
OCT 18 20.15 Etta Scollo (Sicily) **OCT 19** 20.15 Zjef Vanuytsel

Dance

Antwerp
Vlaamse Opera
Frankrijklei 3; 070.22.02.02
OCT 16-23 Royal Ballet of Flanders in Sleeping Beauty, conducted by Benjamin Pope, choreographed by Marcia Haydée, staged by Pablo Nuñez

Leuven
30CC Schouwburg
Bondgenotenlaan 21; 016.20.30.20, www.30CC.be
OCT 15 20.00 Rosas in Steve Reich Evening, tribute to the American minimalist composer, choreographed by Anne Teresa De Keersmaecker

Theatre

Aalst
De Werf
Molenstraat 51; 053.73.28.12, www.ccdewerf.be
OCT 22 20.00 Woest, solo performance by Tom Lanoye (in Dutch)

Antwerp
Antwerpen X
Berchem, Antwerpse Ring; 070.344.555, www.daens.be
From OCT 4 Daens: The Musical, music by Dirk Brossé, staged by Frank Van Laeke with Lucas Van Den Eynde, Fabrice Pillet, Free Souffriau (in Dutch with French surtitles)

deSingel
Desguinlei 25; 03.248.28.28, www.desingel.be
OCT 22-25 20.00 Sportivo Teatral in La Pesca, written and staged by Ricardo Bartis (in Spanish with Dutch and French surtitles)

Bruges
Stadsschouwburg
Vlamingstraat 29; 050.44.30.60
OCT 21 20.00 Woest, solo performance by Tom Lanoye (in Dutch)

Brussels
KVS Bol
Lakensestraat 146; 02.210.11.12,

www.kvs.be
OCT 18-NOV 1 20.00 (OCT 26 15.00) De Radicle verliezers/Les Perdants radicaux, written and staged by Raven Ruëll (in Dutch)

KVS Box
Arduinkaai 9; 02.210.11.12, www.kvs.be
Until OCT 18 20.30 Le Salon, dance theatre (Peeping Tom trilogy; without dialogue)

Kaaistudio’s
Onze-Lieve-Vrouw van Vaakstraat 81; 02.201.59.59, www.kaaitheater.be
OCT 15 & 17 20.30 Nature Theatre of Oklahoma in Rambo Solo, written and staged by Pavol Liska and Kelly Cooper, performed by Zachary Oberzan (in English)
OCT 16 & 18 20.30 Nature Theatre of Oklahoma in Romeo and Juliet, written and staged by Pavol Liska and Kelly Cooper (in English)

Kaaitheater
Saintelettesquare 20; 02.201.59.59, www.kaaitheater.be
OCT 21 20.30 Mefisto for ever by Tom Lanoye (in Dutch)
OCT 23 20.30 Wolfskers by Jeroen Olyslaegers, Cassiers, Erwin Jans (in Dutch)

Passa Porta
A Dansaertstraat 46; 02.226.04.54, www.passaporta.be
OCT 20 20.00 Theaterliteratuur in Vlaanderen: Stefan Hertmans, Tom Lanoye, Jeroen Olyslaegers, Peter Verhelst (in Dutch)

Ghent
Capitole
Graaf van Vlaanderenplein 5; 0900.84.100
Until OCT 17 Supervrouw with Els de Schepper, one-woman comedy show

Hasselt
Cultuurcentrum
Kunstlaan 5; 011.22.99.33, www.ccha.be
OCT 18 20.00 Woest, solo performance by Tom Lanoye (in Dutch)

Leuven
Stuk
Naamsestraat 96; 016.32.03.20
OCT 16 20.00 SKaGeN in DegrotemonD (in Dutch)
OCT 16 20.30 Lampe in Isaac and All the Things He Doesn’t Understand, written and staged by Pieter De Buysser (in Dutch and English)
OCT 20-21 20.30 De Roovers in Metamorphosen by Ovidius, adapted by Benjamin Verdonck + I’m Happy Men by Sara De Bosschere and Benjamin Verdonck (in Dutch)

Mechelen
CC – Stadsschouwburg
Keizerstraat 3; 015.29.40.00, www.cultuurcentrummechelen.be
OCT 17 20.15 Woest, solo performance by Tom Lanoye (in Dutch)

Tielt
CC Gildhof
Sint-Michiëlstraat 9; 051.40.29.35
OCT 15 20.00 Woest, solo performance by Tom Lanoye (in Dutch)

Tongeren
CC De Velinx
Dijk 111; 012.39.38.00
OCT 23 20.30 Woest, solo performance by Tom Lanoye (in Dutch)

Visual arts

Aalst
Stedelijk Museum ’t Gasthuys
Oude Vismarkt 13; 053.73.23.40
OCT 19-NOV 23 Van Propo tot nu, show in two locations on the theme of art in a social and political context, with works by Marcel Mariën, Panamarenko, Roger Somville, Marcel Broodthaers and Roger Raveel, among others

Antwerp
Contemporary Art Museum (MuHKA)

Leuvenstraat 32; 03.260.99.99, www.muhka.be
Until DEC 7 Broodthaers & friends, works by Belgian artist Marcel Broodthaers shown with works by Panamarenko, Robert Filliou, Bernd Lohaus, Guy Rombouts and Walter Swennen (www.amuseevous.be)
Until NOV 23 Lonely at the top, sound effects work by Dutch artist Jasmina Fekovic, also known as Documentarista
Until JAN 4 The order of Things, group show questioning the use of archival images

deSingel
Desguinlei 25; 03.248.28.28, www.desingel.be
Until NOV 2 Construction: Privacy, Politics, Conflicts & Obsessions, work by Swiss architect Christian Kerez

Extra City
Tulpstraat 79; 0484.42.10.70
Until NOV 16 Mother's Day, audiovisual installation by Smadar Dreyfus

Fotomuseum
Waalse Kaai 47; 03.242.93.00
Until JAN 4 Gérald Dauphin, retrospective of work by the Antwerp photographer (1938-2007)
Until JAN 4 Een wereld zonder einde (A World Without End), retrospective of work by Belgian photographer Marie-Françoise Plissart

Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten/Royal Museum of Fine Arts
Leopold De Waelplaats; 03.238.78.09
Until DEC 14 Head on Shoulders. Portrait busts in the Low Countries, 1600 – 1800, likenesses of politicians, scientists, philosophers, mythical figures, writers and actresses

Middelheim Museum
Middelheimlaan 6; 03.827.15.34
Until DEC 14 Rodin: Balzac, story of a masterwork, tribute to the French sculptor's famous work

Modemuseum (MoMu)
Nationalestraat 28; 03.470.27.70, www.momu.be
Until FEB 8 Maison Martin Margiela (20) The Exhibition, celebrating the 20th anniversary of the fashion house

Bruges
Arentshuis
Dijver 16; 050.44.87.11
Until DEC 7 Günter Brus, retrospective by the avant-garde Austrian on his 70th birthday

Groeningemuseum
Dijver 12; 050.44.87.43
Until DEC 31 Leuven Loans, 15th- and 16th-century paintings and woodcarvings from Leuven's Van der Kelen-Mertens museum
Until JAN 4 Stradanus (1523-1605), artist at the Medici court, retrospective of Bruges-born artist Johannes Stradanus, with paintings, drawings, prints and tapestries

Brussels
Archief van de Stad Brussel
Huidevettersstraat 65; 02.219.43.74
Until DEC 24 Daily life in Brussels during the 1950s

Atomium
Atomium Square; 02.475.47.72, www.atomium.be
Until OCT 19 Expo 58: Between Utopia and Reality, documents, plans, objects, films, photographs and scale models of Expo 58
Until OCT 19 Lucien De Roeck's Star, design of the famous symbol of Expo 58
Until OCT 19 The Pavilion of Temporary Happiness, built from 33,000 drink crates to house screenings and exhibitions about World Fairs (near the Atomium on Louis Steensplein)
Until DEC 30 Van New Look tot Expo 58, fashion from the time of Belgium's 1958 World's Fair, with evening gowns, wedding dresses, cocktail dresses, women's suits, coats, handbags and accessories

Belgian Comic Strip Centre
Zandstraat 20; 02.219.19.80, www.stripmuseum.be
Until NOV 16 Smurf for All, All for Smurf: original drawings and documents celebrating the famous characters created 50 years ago by Belgian comic strip artist Pierre Culliford, known as Peyo

Belvue Museum
Paleizenplein 7; 02.511.44.25, www.belvue.be
Until NOV 30 Broodthaers onomwonden (Broodthaers Outspoken), tribute to Belgian artist Marcel Broodthaers (1924-1976), with works by Christoph Büchel & Giovanni Carmine, Wim Delvoye, Fabrice Samyn and Zin Taylor

Bibliotheca Wittockiana
Bemelstraat 23; 02.770.53.33
Until FEB 28 25 Years of Passion Shared, fine, hand-crafted bookbindings since the Renaissance, from the Wittockiana's collection

Bozar (Paleis Voor Schone Kunsten)
Ravensteinstraat 23; 02.507.82.00, www.bozar.be
Until OCT 19 Eric Delayen, installations with video, drawings and photographs

The Cellars of Cureghem
Ropsy Chaudronstraat 24; 070.25.20.20, www.cavesdecureghem.be
Until JAN 11 Körperwelten 4 (Body Worlds 4), anatomical exhibition of human bodies by German scientist Gunther Von Hagens

Costume and Lace Museum
Violettestraat 12; 02.213.44.50
Until DEC 30 Van New Look tot Expo 58, women's fashion from the time of Brussels' 1958 World's Fair, with evening gowns, wedding dresses, cocktail dresses, suits, coats and accessories

De Elektriciteitscentrale European Centre for Contemporary Art
Sint Katelijneplein 44; 02.279.64.35
OCT 16-JAN 11 Réfléchir le monde, show of photographs, videos and installations by contemporary French artists on the occasion of the European Union's French Presidency

De Markten
Oude Graanmarkt 5; 02.512.34.25
Until NOV 2 Dialoog/Dialogue, group show

Flemish Parliament – De Loketten
IJzerenkruisstraat 299; 02.552.40.43
Until DEC 20 Screenworlds, contemporary photography from Flanders, with work by Carl De Keyzer, Caroline Van Poucke, Jimmy Kets, Stephan Vanfleteren, Tim Dirven and Tony Leduc, among others

ISELP
Waterloosesteenweg 31; 02.504.80.70
Until NOV 29 Hymne, installation by Claude Lévêque
Until NOV 29 La Concubine, photographs by Stephanie Friedli
Until NOV 29 Jewellery by Isabelle Carpentier and ceramics by Marie-Agnès Marlair

Justitiépaleis
Poelaertplein; 02.512.19.63
Until OCT 31 Room for Justice, an exhibition by Lawyers without Borders on globalisation and justice
Until NOV 11 Corpus Delicti, contemporary installations, sculpture, photographs and video art by Guillaume Bijl, Thierry De Cordier, Edith Dekyndt, Wim Delvoye Jan Fabre, Panamarenko and Johan Muyle, among others (www.corpus-delicti.be)

La Fonderie – Brussels Museum of Work and Industry
Ransfortstraat 27; 02.410.99.50
Until DEC 7 Sous les palmiers: la mine (Under the Palm Trees: The Mine) photographs of miners in

Morocco during the 1960s, by Charles Henneghien

Royal Museum of Art and History
Jubelpark 10; 02.741.72.11
Until MAR 8 Continental Superstar, 16 organs from the Ghysels collection, with recreated dance floor, bar and lighting

Royal Museum of Fine Arts
Regentschapsstraat 3; 02.508.32.11, www.fine-arts-museum.be
Until JAN 4 Meunier in Séville, 80 paintings by Belgian artist Constantin Meunier (1831-1905)
Until JAN 18 Landscapes and portraits by Belgian artist Lismonde
Until JAN 25 Breuk en erfenis (Separation and heritage), show marking the European Union's French Presidency, with 1970s works by French artists

Royal Museum for Central Africa
Leuvensesteenweg 13; 02.769.52.11
Until OCT 19 Expo 58, films and photographs, ethnographic objects, plants, artwork and animals that were displayed in the seven pavilions dedicated to the Belgian Congo at Brussels' World's Fair

Saint Michael and St Gudula Cathedral
Sinter-Goedeleplein; 02.217.83.45
Until NOV 24 Septiformis, paintings, photographs, installations and video works by several artists

Sint-Gorikshallen
Sint-Goriksplein 1; 02.502.44.24
Until OCT 26 Brussels Architecture in the 1950s and 60s, photographic exhibition

Théâtre Marni
Vergniestraat 25; 02.354.43.68
Until NOV 4 Visages, photographs by Rui Moreira

Thüringen Lander Representation in Brussels
Square Vergote 39; 02.737.04.05
Until NOV 7 European Insights, the dynastic relations between Belgium and the duchies of Saxe Coburg and Gotha

Tour & Taxis
Havenlaan 86C; 02.549.60.49
Until NOV 3 World Press Photo, prize-winning images from the international photo-journalism contest
OCT 18-APR 26 It's our Earth!, interactive exhibition on sustainable development, with interventions by Belgian and international artists

WIELS
Van Volxemlaan 354; 02.347.30.33
Until NOV 2 Kelly Walker, works with appropriated and recycled images
Until NOV 2 Nothing More Natural, drawings, computer and video exploring the relationship between sex and technology in contemporary society by Flemish artist Anne-Mie Van Kerckhoven

Deurle
Museum Dhondt-Dhaenens
Museumlaan 14; 09.282.51.23
Until NOV 23 CAPMAX, installation in the museum's garden by Emilio López-Menchero
Until NOV 30 Works by American artist Kara Walker
Until NOV 30 Works by Belgian artist Kris Martin

Ghent
Caermersklooster
Vrouwebroersstraat 6; 09.269.29.10
Until DEC 21 Glans en duister, photographs by Eric Standaert
Until DEC 21 Harold Lloyd, tribute to the American actor and director (1893-1971)

Dr. Guislain Museum
Jozef Guislainstraat 43; 09.216.35.95, www.museumdrguislain.be
Until APR 12 The Game of Madness: On Lunacy in Film and Theatre, representations of madness in film,

Don't miss this week



World One Minutes Brussels

Until 12 December. *De Buren, Leopoldstraat 6, Brussels. Entry free. Info on 02.212.19.30 or www.deburen.eu.*

Here's an idea. Give artists exactly sixty seconds to make a video on any subject they want then screen the videos in an exhibition space. This inspired notion comes from the Amsterdam-based One Minutes foundation and the results can be seen in Brussels at the Dutch-Flemish De Buren centre. The exhibition features submissions by artists from 90 different countries, each one offering a totally different vision of the world. Some visitors will see this as a speeded-up world tour, with images from Africa to Belgium and from China to the Netherlands. Others will approach it as a microcosm of human creativity compressed into one-minute video bites.

plays, paintings and contemporary art, with works by James Ensor, Jan Fabre, Hugo Claus, Fernand Khnopff and Dirk Braeckman, among others

Museum of Fine Arts
Fernand Scribedreef 1 – Citadelpark; 09.240.07.00, www.mskgent.be
Until JAN 18 Giambattista Piranesi, prints by the Italian architect and artist (1720-1778), from the Ghent University Print Collection in collaboration with the Royal Library of Belgium

Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst (SMAK)
Citadelpark; 09.221.17.03
(Every first Friday of the month free entrance from 18.00 to 22.00)
OCT 18-NOV 23 Coming People, works by young artists
OCT 18-JAN 3 Faux Jumeaux, carte blanche to Belgian artist Michel François
OCT 18-JAN 18 Anyth, paintings by Werner Mannaers

Witte Zaal
Posteernestraat 64; 09.267.96.77
Until OCT 24 Die Wasserrüben und der Kohl (Turnips and Cabbage), recent paintings by Ronald Ophuis, Wilfried Vandenhove and Jan Imschoot

Hasselt
Modemuseum
Gasthuisstraat 11; 011.23.96.21
Until OCT 31 Ten dans gevraagd (Invitation to Dance), dance costumes by fashion designers and artists from 1920 to the present day

Kemzeke
Verbeke Foundation
Hulsterstraat Noord; www.verbekefoundation.com
Until NOV 16 Vision in Motion – Motion in Vision, exhibition of moving art

Maaseik
Maaseik Museum
Lekkerstraat 5; 089.81.92.99
Until MAR 31 The Terracotta Army of Xi'an: Treasures of the First Emperors of China, 14 life-size sculptures of warriors from the world-famous Terracotta Army shown with some 200 artefacts from the Qin and Western

Han dynasties

Mechelen
Cultuurcentrum
Minderbroedersgang 5; 015.29.40.00, www.cultuurcentrummechelen.be
Until NOV 23 Honorons Honoré, tribute to 19th-century French caricaturist Honoré Daumier, with works by contemporary Belgian artists

Ostend
Kunstmuseum Aan Zee
Romestraat 11; 059.50.81.18, www.pmmk.be
Until DEC 15 In the Cherished Company of Others, drawings, sculptures, paintings and installations by Marc Camille Chaimowicz, shown with works by international artists

Turnhout
Stadhuis/Erfgoedhuis
Grote Markt 1; 014.44.33.98
Until OCT 26 De Architecten Taeymans in Turnhout, plans, models and photographs of works by a family of architects, Pieter-Jozef Taeymans and his three sons

Wezembeek-Oppem
Gemeentezaal
Marcelisstraat 134
OCT 18-19 Art Intermezzo, works by artists resident in the commune

Ypres
In Flanders Fields Museum
Grote Markt 34; 057.23.92.75
Until NOV 12 Off the record, work by artist-in-residence Wendy Morris

Festivals & special events

Festival of Flanders: The international classical and new music festival celebrates its 50th anniversary with concerts in every province
Until OCT 29 across Flanders
070.77.00.00, www.festival.be

Brussels
Korea Festival: Panoramic view of Korean culture, with exhibitions, concerts, theatre and children's events
Until FEB 28 at Bozar, Ravensteinstraat 23
02.507.82.00, www.bozar.be

INTERVIEW

Paul De Knop

Free University of Brussels' (VUB) new rector, Professor Paul De Knop, caused quite a stir at the opening of the academic year by calling for postgraduate courses to be taught in English.

First of all, why are you in favour of an English-language university in Brussels?

We need an English-language university to attract more students. Brussels is in a very special linguistic situation. The first language spoken on the street is French. English comes second and then Dutch. So we are in an area with a lot of potential international students. At the same time, we have to prepare Flemish students for ever greater internationalisation.

How does Brussels stand in terms of international education?

Brussels is a unique selling point. In China, for instance, Belgium is not as well known as Brussels. My idea is to have English-language education with Bachelor's and Master's Degrees. We could also attract Belgian students who want to study in English. The Netherlands decided to conduct their Masters programmes in English because very few people wanted to come to the Netherlands to study in Dutch. If you want to attract international students, you clearly need English.

The [French-language university] ULB has a lot of foreign students because French is an international language. At VUB, we also cannot hire the best professors if they do not speak Dutch. According to the current rules, we have to assess professors according to abilities in their profession, but also according to their ability to speak Dutch. That said, it would be pointless to teach a group of

solely Dutch-speaking students in English.

Would having more English-language education not threaten Dutch as a scientific or university language?

It would not threaten Dutch since the English courses would be set up alongside the Dutch ones. What really threatens Dutch as a scientific language is the fact that we have to publish in international reviews, which are almost exclusively in English.

Would this English-language university get the same amount of Flemish funding as the Dutch-speaking universities?

Currently, our English language college Vesalius does not get any Flemish funding. It is completely self-funded. If we take internationalisation seriously, then we need more funding, not only for any English university but also so that students and professors can go abroad.

The Dutch-speaking VUB split from the French-speaking ULB in 1969. Now you want to join up again?

No, I do not want to join up with them again. I want to cooperate. The University of Maastricht, just across the border in the Netherlands, cooperates closely with the ULB. So why can we not form an English-speaking university with our neighbour the ULB or with other French-speaking universities? I am not saying that there are no existing agreements with

the neighbouring ULB. But we do definitely need more joint programmes. For instance, the sports federations have split into Dutch and French-speaking units because of funding. But internationally sportspeople compete in Belgian teams – the two federations come together. So why not act together internationally in higher education as well?

What have been the reactions following your speech on these issues?

Reactions came from students and the education minister. I feel they did not fully understand my proposal. We want to keep the Dutch Bachelor's. Master's would be joint programmes with other Flemish universities. We want certain Bachelor's, Master's and postgraduate courses to be taught in English. The rector and vice-rector of the ULB are very happy about my project to set up an English-speaking university.

What are the major challenges facing Flemish universities?

We need more money for higher education. It is fine to say that we have to compete with universities abroad, but then we need to have the same resources. In the Netherlands, for instance, student fees are three times as high as here in Belgium. I'm not saying that students have to pay more, but the government must put more money into higher education. We need higher salaries for our professors so that they can be competitive with other countries. My colleagues at other Flemish universities all agree that we need the same resources as elsewhere. Just look at the US where salaries are higher and universities



Bart Demeule

are real economies. Our education minister Frank Vandenbroucke is also pleading for more money for higher education.

What are your plans for the VUB?

I am working towards a strategic plan for February 2009. This would also give an overview of the programmes that we will undertake with Ghent. As for the ULB, we are meeting to discuss cooperation. I also want to convince more people about the high quality of our university. People need to know what the VUB stands for. Another challenge is that our campus university is not open enough to the city. We have to open more in terms of cultural and other activities.

Why do you feel the VUB needs a special status because it is located in Brussels? After all you are not from Brussels.

Brussels is in a totally different situation to other cities in Flanders. Here Dutch is a third language, after French and English. The public transport is bad. There is a

high level of youth unemployment. And, importantly for students, rents are higher than elsewhere. I want politicians to recognise the specific situation of Brussels.

What about the other Flemish universities?

Our minister wants to see more equal opportunities in higher education. To do that you will still need six Flemish universities. The universities of Ghent and Leuven can't do everything. You need a local university in Brussels in Dutch. I understand what the University of Leuven is trying to do by aiming at 21 campuses across Flanders. But I say give Brussels the opportunity that it really deserves. We need to have an exemption from the regulations on university funding to allow us to establish an international programme. We also need greater recognition of the fact that quality is more important than quantity. The VUB, for instance, is a champion in mathematics, but this does not mean we have a lot of mathematics students. We should not have to reorganise because we are a small university.

Interview by Dafydd ab Iago

THE LAST WORD

what they're saying in Flanders

Party people

"Things are finally going well again. For the time being, anyway. Now we can still party, tomorrow, maybe not."

One of the guests at a lavish party in Monaco organised by Fortis Insurance following soon after the bank's collapse

Going up

"Worryingly high. But at the same time, I'm not going to pretend this result isn't satisfying. We're not the underdog any more. We're the party to beat."

Jean-Marie Dedecker whose party is now third in Flanders with 16% of the vote, according to a poll

Art overvalued

"If you have to pay more for a painting than you would pay for ten houses, then you know something's not right. But that's not the painting's fault. That's just the law of supply and demand."

Jan Hoet Flemish art guru who has just published a book of memoirs

Lunchtimeconcerts Screenworlds
Water ErikVanLooy Beauvoorde
castle Flemishcomics
next week in Flanders Today