



FLANDERS TODAY

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Jelle Cleymans, p.16

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Landscapes of war

Ninety years ago, the guns fell silent on the Western Front. But what happened after that? Not many people are aware of the extraordinary story of reconstruction and renewal in the land known as Flanders Fields

Denzil Walton

For most of the First World War, Allied and German forces were involved in trench warfare along the Western

Front. In Flanders, the front line extended from Nieuwpoort on the coast, along the banks of the previously picturesque River IJzer, past Diksmuide, around the medieval

town of Ypres, and past Mesen to the French border. Its width varied from two to 10 kilometres, so that on a clear day a Belgian soldier would have been able to stand in

relative safety behind the front line and see the German army moving in relative peace on the other side.

The land in between, however, was a monstrous hell of death and

destruction. In this long, narrow stretch of West Flanders, more than half a million soldiers were

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Arts

Sex! Outrage! Passion! Dance-theatre show *Otango* comes from Argentina, but the whole idea developed right here in Flanders



Active

Belgium would pretty much shrivel up and die without one of chocolate's key ingredients: sugar. The Sugar Museum in Tienen scoops up amazingly unexpected facts



Living

Is that beer really Belgian? Welcome to the first in a four-part series that introduces the best of the officially certified Belgian Family Brewers

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Belgium in the top five of nations with highest tax

Low threshold for top rate adds to tax burden

Alan Hope

Belgium remains one of the world's top five nations for the tax burden placed on individuals, according to a study carried out by economic consultants KPMG. The study looked at top tax rates and thresholds, and concluded that Belgium not only has a higher top rate, but also a lower threshold above which the top rate applies.

Top-rate taxation has remained constant at 50% for the duration of the period studied, from 2003 to 2008. That puts Belgium behind Denmark at 59%, Sweden at 55%,

the Netherlands at 52%, and equal with Austria and Japan. The average for all countries studied was 28.8%.

Top rates came down on average by 2.5% over the period studied, with wide variations. France cut its rate from 48.1% to 40%, Germany from 48.5% to 45%, while Italy and Spain both cut top rates from 45% to 43%.

The study also points to the "significant new development" involving the introduction of flat-rate taxes in Europe, mainly in Central and Eastern Europe. The latest

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EDITOR'S NOTES

Met onze jongens aan de IJzer

Eighty years ago, Clemens De Landtsheer made a film about the First World War in Flanders titled *Met onze jongens aan de IJzer*, or *With Our Boys on the Yser*. He based it on old footage from the war taken by the French and Belgian armies, combined with images from sentimental war movies of the time. The end result wasn't exactly propaganda, but it wasn't straight documentary either.

De Landtsheer was a Flemish nationalist who served as Secretary of the IJzer Committee, and his aim in making the film was to show the suffering of the Flemish soldiers in the trenches at a time when the military leaders were almost entirely drawn from the French-speaking elite. Inevitably, he occasionally allowed his political enthusiasm to blur his objectivity, creating a film that used the horrors of trench warfare to further the Flemish movement. But who can blame him for doing so at a time when the Belgian government flatly refused to provide grieving Flemish parents with gravestones of their sons inscribed in Dutch?

The movie's impact was enormous; it was screened more than 400 times in cinemas across Flanders and provided De Landtsheer with the funding to create the Flandria Film production company.

The Royal Film Archives in Brussels owns a colour version of the 1933 movie, which was fully restored in 1991. To mark the 90th anniversary of the Armistice, the archive has brought out a new DVD of the film and its original soundtrack, along with several other films by De Landtsheer. It comes with subtitles in English and a commentary on its political significance by three scholars from Ghent University.

Met onze jongens aan de IJzer might not be the most factual of films, but it provides a fascinating insight into a key period in European history when the Flemish were struggling for equal rights with French speakers.

Derek Blyth

online

www.filmaarchief.be/dvd



Cover

Mike Sheil took the photograph on the cover of this issue near Bayernwald looking west, with the low hill of Kemmelberg in the background and the Croenart Chapel Cemetery in the foreground.

online

www.westernfrontphotography.com

Flanders Today

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FACE OF FLANDERS



Paul Janssen

For its 25th anniversary, *Eos Sciences* magazine polled 6,300 people to find "Belgium's greatest scientist". The honour went to Paul Janssen, a Flemish chemist who has developed medicines that have saved millions of lives across the world.

Born in Turnhout in 1926, Janssen studied chemistry, biology and physics in Namur and in 1951 earned a degree in medicine from Ghent University with a specialisation in pharmacology. The world of medicine was very different in those days, and many doctors caused more damage than the disease itself. Often the choice for many patients was to either wait for spontaneous healing or let nature run its course.

This was still the situation when Janssen began his career. Working part time at Ghent University, he created his own drug research company with a loan of 50,000 francs (€1,250) from his father. He met a great deal of resistance from colleagues, but criticism faded after he discovered ambucetamide, an anti-spasmodic treatment for the relief of menstrual pain.

In 1956, he gave up his part-time job to set up the company Janssen Pharmaceutica. Two years later, he developed haloperidol, an anti-psychotic for the treatment of schizophrenia. There followed a steady stream of successful drugs, such as domperidone, Imodium and miconazole, which established Janssen as one of the world's leading pharmaceutical companies.

As well as being a brilliant scientist, Janssen was a successful businessman who gradually expanded his company into other countries. He had a firm belief in the role of medicine in alleviating poverty and in 1985 set up the first Western pharmaceutical factory in China.

The company's expansion plans eventually took it to the moon, when Lomotil, a medication for treating diarrhoea, was used in the Apollo space programs. Janssen became a Baron in 1990 but continued his groundbreaking work, turning his attention to AIDS. In 1995, together with Belgian scientist Paul Lewi, he founded the Centre for Molecular Design to harness the powers of supercomputers in developing new treatments for AIDS.

Over the years, Janssen Pharmaceutica has developed over 80 medicines, including five that made it onto the list of essential medicines drawn up by the World Health Organization – more than any other company.

Janssen died in Rome in 2003 while attending celebrations to mark the 400th anniversary of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences. Two years later, the pharmaceutical company Johnson & Johnson, which had acquired Janssen Pharmaceutica, founded the Dr Paul Janssen Award for Biomedical Research.

Janssen's contributions to medicine and humanity have won him over 80 awards and 22 honorary doctorates. The only one that eluded him was the Nobel Prize, though many colleagues believed he deserved it. Nobel Prize winner Sir James Black once said: "The greatest of us all, Dr Paul, didn't get it. Perhaps he did too much so that his work couldn't be easily summarised in a sentence or two. All I know is that his life's work was Nobel Prize worthy."

Stefano Siggia

online

www.janssenpharmaceutica.be

TALKING DUTCH

notes on language



voorrang

One urban myth that used to do the rounds was of a Brussels hospital that had a special ward for injured foreign drivers. These were not just those who came from drive-on-the-left countries but mainly people who were not at home with the Belgian right-of-way rules. A couple of beds were also reserved for foreign pedestrians who thought that zebra crossings were for pedestrians.

All nonsense of course, though foreign drivers should be forewarned about the *voorangsregels* – the right-of-way rules on Belgian roads, which, unless the road is marked otherwise, always give priority to drivers to your right, no matter how small the road.

Until recently, *als je al gestopt was, was je de voorrang van rechts kwijt* – if you had already stopped, you no longer had right of way. This resulted in court cases where the one said: *Hij had geen voorrang, edelachtbare, hij was gestopt* – he had no right of way, your honour, he had stopped; to which the other would retort: *Niet waar, ik had alleen maar afgereemd* – Not true, I had only slowed down. Now the law is different: *wie stopt, behoudt de voorrang van rechts* – he who stops keeps the right of way from the right. This explains why you may sometimes see two cars stopped at a junction with the drivers warily eyeing each other.

The word *voorrang* comes from *voor* and *rang* – fore or first, and position or rank. Other *voor* words include *voordeel* – advantage ("first part"); *voorsprong* – head start ("jump ahead"); *voorbeeld* – example ("first picture"); *voorpagina* – front page; *voorlopig* – provisional ("running ahead"); *voorkomen* – prevent ("come first"); *voornaam* – first name; *voorspelling* – prediction or prophecy. My favourite *voor* word is *voorbode* – a forerunner or an omen ("messenger ahead"). You can cast your mind back some months and think of some precursors of the present crisis – *voorbodes van de huidige crisis*. Or when the clocks change back again, you can look out for swallows – *zwaluwen, de voorbodes van de lente* – the heralds of spring. The word may look vaguely familiar. It gives us the English word "foreboding", meaning a feeling that something bad is going to happen, yet in Dutch *voorgevoel* ("fore feeling") would probably be used.

Voorrang is often used with public services: *Wie werkt krijgt voorrang bij een sociale woning in Antwerpen* – Those who work get priority for social housing in Antwerp. *Wie dicht bij school woont, krijgt voorrang* – Those who live close by a school get preference. Some even argue that *voorrang van links is veel veiliger* – right of way from the left is much safer; others want to scrap the rule – *voorrang afschaffen*. Whatever happens, if you don't want to end up in that mythical ward, or worse, remember that the tram always has right of way: *de tram heeft altijd voorrang, ook op voetgangers* – even over pedestrians.

Alistair MacLean



PHOTO OF THE WEEK • JAN FABRE An art installation by Jan Fabre consisting of onions and potatoes suspended within condoms has provoked protests among museum visitors because the produce has begun to rot. Visitors to the Museum for Contemporary Art (Muhka) in Antwerp have complained about the smell of the work by Fabre, arguably the most famous contemporary Flemish artist. The installation, entitled "Spring is on the Way",

is the latest in a line of perishable works by Fabre, following dead beetles hung from the Royal Palace and a work composed of Ganda ham wrapped around pillars at a University of Ghent building. The Antwerp museum bought the idea for the work some years ago. For the installation, vegetables and contraceptives were hung by museum staff themselves.

FIFTH COLUMN



Yes, he can

Some readers may wonder why Jean-Marie Dedecker pops up in almost every issue of Fifth Column. Is this a personal quirk of your correspondent? Well, not really. Jean-Marie Dedecker seems to be unavoidable. On that count, only Barack Obama does better these days. Dedecker, whose successful *Lijst Dedecker* drives his political opponents to despair, again dominated a relatively quiet week in politics. For starters, he made the cover of *Humo*, one of Flanders' most widely-read publications. Known for its humorous art work, the magazine portrayed him as a devil with two horns and a diabolical grin. In the interview, Dedecker said some remarkable things. I have a scandal ready for the 2009 elections, he warned. This means that Dedecker knows about some kind of dishonesty (possibly corruption), yet he prefers to keep silent until the time is right for him to cash in politically. Questioned about this in the discussion programme *Phara*, Dedecker found himself in his favourite position – on his own, confronting three journalists and a writer. This is the establishment, in his eyes. Dedecker, who after all is a former judo coach, enjoys a good fight.

Other politicians can only dream of that kind of exposure. When Vlaams Belang held its party congress on Sunday, half of the quotes that made the TV news were about...Dedecker. Again. This is, of course, no coincidence. The reason Vlaams Belang feels compelled to underline the difference between itself and *Lijst Dedecker* is because it is losing votes to Dedecker. A couple of weeks ago, a similar scene was to be found at the congress of SPA, a completely different party in all respects, but one that is also losing voters to Dedecker.

For years Vlaams Belang, and its predecessor Vlaams Blok, never lost an election. The international media flocked to tell the story. And, although Vlaams Belang was banned to the opposition benches because of its extreme programme on immigration, Flanders was seen by the outside world as a nasty, little, racist region. The Belgian press, too, was once fascinated by Vlaams Belang. Take Filip Dewinter's speech at the congress last Sunday. His appeal for fiscal disobedience (refusing to pay the taxes that flow to Wallonia) would once have filled the newspapers for days on end. Now it was treated as a pathetic attempt to get some attention.

The international press has yet to discover Jean-Marie Dedecker. The story he tells is, of course, less easy. He strongly believes in the free market economy and in personal liberty. He discloses scandal after scandal, embarrassing many of his political opponents. And, somehow, he seems to be everywhere these days. Him, and Barack Obama.

Anja Otte

THE WEEK IN FLANDERS

Wednesday 29 October

● The Brussels prosecutor's office launched an investigation into allegations that the board of Fortis Bank knowingly spread false information regarding its financial situation. This follows claims that the impact of the American mortgage crisis was known long before it was admitted. ● People in Flanders pay on average €1,000 more for a funeral than people in Wallonia, according to consumer rights organisation Test-Aankoop. ● A Leuven chef won first prize at the International Chinese Cookery Competition in Beijing. Peh-Fo Pak of the Ming Dynasty restaurant won gold medals in two categories for his seafood platter and his lamb chops with courgette flowers. ● A decision by the Antwerp police chief to make officers wear fluorescent vests over their uniforms risks turning them into "walking targets," union representatives said. The original plan was for the vests to be worn in traffic situations, but that has now been extended to include other interventions. ● One Belgian in four has sleep problems, according to a survey by research organisation Ipsos. Complaints include inability to fall asleep and waking too early, the study said. ● The town of Kasterlee in Antwerp province is to ban the sale of beer, glühwein and genever at its annual Christmas market this year, following a serious brawl that took place during last year's festivities. "We want to bring back a cosy Christmas atmosphere," said mayor Ward Kennes.

Thursday 30 October

● One business in 10 has problems with

late payments, according to a study by Vlerick Leuven Gent Management School. Half of all bills are paid after 30 to 60 days, and 20% only after 60 days. ● The number of car jackings is falling faster in Wallonia than in Flanders, according to figures from the federal police. Whereas there were 511 in Flanders and 508 in Wallonia in 2003, the numbers have dropped to 344 in Wallonia and 452 in Flanders. Police promise the crime would remain "a top priority". ● A 34-year-old son of restaurant owners from Eindhoven has been named the world's best beer-pourer. Tommy Goukens won this year's Stella Artois World Draught Master, organised by the Leuven-based brewer InBev, defeating a dozen international competitors. ● The mayor of Bilzen in Limburg province called for Maastricht to close its coffee shops in an effort to tackle "drugs tourism" in the border area. "Maastricht is Europe's biggest drugs supermarket. Shut the store down," said Johan Sauwens. ● Belgium has 2,500 advisers working in politicians' private offices, compared to only 1,250 in France, a country with six times the population, according to a study by think-tank Itinera.

Friday 31 October

● October was the hardest month ever for the Bel-20, the index of major stocks traded on the Brussels stock exchange. In four weeks, the 20 top-quoted stocks lost about a quarter of their value. ● There is no shortage of credit in Belgium despite the global financial crisis, according to Febelfin, which represents the financial sector. According to the latest figures

for September, there was some €200 billion in credit lines available – more than last year at this time. ● The federal government was reported to be looking into a financial rescue for troubled aircraft manufacturer Soneca. This follows a request from French-speaking parties hoping for a *quid pro quo* for the capital injection of €3.5 billion in the mainly Flemish KBC bank. ● Vlaams Belang MP Frank Vanhecke could be prosecuted for racism if the European Parliament follows the advice of its own judicial committee and lifts his parliamentary immunity. Vanhecke is alleged to have sanctioned the publication of a racist opinion in a party pamphlet in Sint-Niklaas.

Weekend 1 and 2 November

● The government is considering sending a battalion of troops to Congo to take part in a possible EU peace-keeping force in the North-Kivu region. But the move would go against a decision by the parliamentary commission investigating the Rwanda massacre, which resolved never again to send Belgian troops to a former colony following the massacre of 10 paratroopers. ● Fourteen prisoners have committed suicide in Belgian jails so far this year, more than in the whole of 2007, the justice ministry confirmed. ● Belgium produces half of the total European production of chrysanthemums, which are widely used on 1 November in Catholic countries to decorate graves. The typical ball-shaped flower is grown in 400 ha of open land and 21 ha of greenhouses, producing 11.5 million plants a year. Some 90% of all

existing species were developed by Belgian plant breeders.

Monday 3 November

● A liberal police union has described as "scandalous" a petition being circulated by senior police officers in the Brussels-Elsene zone, calling for support for police chief Guido Van Wymersch, who is currently under investigation for fraud. ● Police have reopened an investigation into the bags used to wrap the body of murdered student Annick Van Uytself, who disappeared in April 2007 on her way home to Diest from a party in Schaffen. They include a rare sort of grey sack made from recycled material, which, if identified, could help lead to the killer. ● A man overpowered a customer in the safety-deposit room of an ING bank in Overijse and walked out with 44 kg of gold worth some €800,000. The victim, aged 37, said the robber had his hand in his pocket as if holding a gun. ● Jazz critic and teacher Juul Anthonissen, known for his reviews in *De Standaard* and his classes at the conservatories of Ghent and Brussels, has died at the age of 77. Anthonissen also organised concerts and festivals and was responsible for bringing jazz giants such as Charlie Mingus and Keith Jarrett to Flanders.

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

FEATURE

In Flanders Fields Museum



Home sweet home: Nissen huts provided temporary accommodation for many families

Continued from page 1

killed, wounded or went missing. Tens of thousands of civilians were forced to flee for their lives, and villages, farms, woods and fields were totally devastated. When peace was finally restored 90 years ago, on 11 November, 1918, virtually nothing was left of the original landscape. The area became known as the *Verwoeste Gewesten* – the Devastated Lands.

What happened next is a remarkable story of the perseverance and opportunism of the Flemish people. After the Armistice, two action plans were hastily formulated. The first was to retrieve, identify (if possible) and bury the bodies of the soldiers who had died on the front. Many of these had been left unburied for years, and all clues as to their identity had been lost. Others who had been buried in temporary graves were exhumed and laid to rest in permanent cemeteries.

The second task was to level the ground. The British Army's Chinese Labour Corps played a key role in this. Initially shipped over from China to support the fighting soldiers by digging trenches and latrines, they stayed in Flanders after 1918 to help clean up the war zone and did not return to China until 1920.

German prisoners of war were also put to work. Trenches, craters and shell holes were filled in, and, at some point, it was declared that civilians could be allowed to return to the war zone. But they were warned to expect the worst.

"It would have been an extremely traumatic return – a nightmare scenario," says Piet Chielens, coordinator of the In Flanders Fields

Museum in Ypres (or Ieper in Dutch). "One farmer returned to his farm, found absolutely nothing recognisable and committed suicide. Another man from Ypres couldn't find a trace of his farm until he spotted a tap to an underground water pipe that he had installed in 1914. It was the only thing remaining of his property."

The first priority was to build temporary accommodation. Scattered around the battlefields were huge dumps of wood and scrap iron, which were used to construct basic huts and sheds. "Amazingly, some of them still exist today," says

Chielens. "I know of houses on the outskirts of Ypres with sheds in their back gardens that were built in 1919."

Other families took over abandoned Nissen huts – the prefabricated, portable buildings developed by Major Peter Nissen of the Royal Engineers in 1916. At least 100,000 of them were produced in the First World War as temporary barracks for soldiers. The Belgian government also provided some people with temporary wooden huts.

The availability of clean drinking water was a problem. The

River IJzer and the two lakes that provided water to Ypres were contaminated. Local breweries came to the rescue by drilling deep holes and pumping up clean water, which they used both for brewing and to provide potable water to local inhabitants.

The next task was to redevelop and restock the land. This was necessary not only in the war zone itself but up to 10 kilometres on either side. One of the reasons was the extensive use of chlorine, phosgene and mustard gases in the region. These poisonous gases were not only fatal to humans but

killed everything living in their path, including livestock and vegetation. The Belgian Ministry of Agriculture provided new seeds and plants, while farmers in the Netherlands – particularly from the province of Limburg – donated cattle, horses and chickens. Slowly but surely, new life began to return to the Devastated Lands.

Still, working in Flanders Fields in the early 1920s was a dangerous occupation. It has been estimated that a quarter of the one billion projectiles fired during the First World War failed to explode and remained live. Farm labourers were constantly being maimed or killed by unexploded shells and rockets. It was apparent that the initial clean-up operation had been too superficial.

"Around this time some clever opportunists appeared on the scene," says Chielens. "They would perform a service of 'deep digging'. For a fee they would thoroughly dig out a hectare of land, remove all the shells and proclaim it as clean. A number of family fortunes were made in this way."

Scrap metal merchants also amassed great personal wealth by going from battlefield to battlefield collecting shells and selling the iron and copper. Both jobs were fraught with danger and frequently led to workers losing limbs, if not their lives.

With the land beginning to yield its first crops and livestock increasing in numbers, farm buildings could be rebuilt. Often the same architect would be commissioned to build a number of farms and would simply use the same design. The result is clearly visible today around Ypres, where the farm buildings tend to look alike. In



Living in the ruins: the whole of Ypres was reduced to rubble

Poperinge and Abele, a few kilometres to the east and, therefore, out of the immediate war zone, the farms are more varied. You can even find 17th- and 18th-century farmsteads in these regions.

A deeper examination of the population statistics of Flanders Fields before and after the war reveals some interesting anomalies. "Around half of the farms rebuilt in the war zone in the 1920s were not actually reconstructed by the original families," says Chielens. "West Flanders was known for its rich agricultural land, and, despite the devastation and the unexploded shells, its potentially rich pickings attracted Flemish farmers from agriculturally poorer parts of Flanders to come here and settle." This naturally leads to the question: where did the original farmers go?

"During the war, thousands of farm labourers evacuated from the war zone emigrated to Normandy," explains Chielens. "They already had contacts there, as both areas had a thriving flax industry. After 1918, they simply decided to stay in Normandy. Many French farms would have been short of manpower as their young men had joined up and perished in the war. So I'm sure they would have been welcomed."

It has been estimated that around 50,000 farmers and farm labourers left the war zone between 1914 and 1918. Of these, about 25,000 never returned, but happily settled down in France. Such a population movement was made easier by the fact that most of them would have been tenants and not landowners,

and could fairly easily set up home elsewhere.

It was a similar story with the towns and villages along the front line. The town of Ypres was totally destroyed during the war, and its 17,000 citizens had no choice but to flee. After the war it was rebuilt, but by 1930 one third of its population were not the original inhabitants.

"They were the builders, masons, carpenters and architects who had come from elsewhere in Flanders to help reconstruct Ypres," says Chielens. "They liked what they had helped to rebuild and settled here. You can't blame them. Before the war Belgium was the second biggest industrial power in Europe. Afterwards, its industrial capacity was largely destroyed. Rebuilding Ypres was an opportunity for long-term work."

In 1967, the final annex to the Cloth Hall in Ypres was finished, marking the end of the "Period of Reconstruction" of the *Verwoeste Gewesten*. Unfortunately, it was not quite the end of the trauma: in 2007 a farmer was killed by a 90-year-old unexploded shell.

Each year, nearly 300 tons of rusting bombs, grenades, mortars and shells are unearthed. About one in 20 contains poison gases that are still potent enough to kill. Despite all the efforts over the past 90 years, a part of the legacy of this horrendous episode in European history still remains buried in the soil.

online

www.ieper.be

05 things to do

01 Visit the In Flanders Fields Museum

The In Flanders Fields Museum in Ypres is one of the most impressive museums in Belgium, engaging the visitor with personal stories of real people from the war period. You can follow a particular person – soldier or civilian – through the events of the war, and, in some cases, they actually speak to you. There are also touch-screens, multimedia presentations, original film clips and exhibitions focusing on topics such as the media and the war, music and war, and war art.

www.inflandersfields.be

02 Listen to the Last Post

Every evening at exactly 20.00, all traffic under the Menin Gate Memorial in Ypres is stopped by a local policeman, and local buglers perform the Last Post – the traditional salute to the fallen soldier. This simple but moving ceremony has been carried out since 1928, although it was suspended during the German occupation of 1940 to 1944. The tradition was transferred during the war years to Brookwood Barracks in England and restored on the day after liberation in September 1944.

www.lastpost.be

03 Cycle the Peace Route

This 45-kilometre cycle route starts in Ypres and takes in many of the key sites of interest related to the First World War. The highlights include Palingbeek, Hill 60 and Hill 62, which were all locations of major strategic significance to the armies of both sides. It also passes a number of military burial sites, such as Tyne Cot Cemetery in Zonnebeke, the German Soldatenfriedhof in Langemark and Essex Farm Cemetery. It was at Essex Farm – an Advanced Dressing Station – that Canadian John McCrae wrote his famous "In Flanders Fields" poem. Maps are available at local tourist offices.

04 Explore Diksmuide

"Town Link" is a three-kilometre walk around the West Flanders town of Diksmuide, described in a free route map from the Diksmuide tourist office in the town square. It leads you to 16 information panels that explain details of the town's past and show the appearance of the townscape before, during and after the war. Halfway you can take a short diversion to the European Peace Domain, which consists of the IJzer Tower, the Pax Gate and the Crypt. The IJzer Tower is a 22-floor museum focusing on the daily struggles of Flemish soldiers during the First World War. Its current temporary exhibition is *Animals in War*.

www.ijzertoren.be

05 Read a novel

Sebastian Barry's *A Long, Long Way*, which was short-listed for the 2005 Man-Booker prize, tells the story of 18-year-old Willie Dunne, who leaves Dublin, his family and the girl he plans to marry to enlist in the Allied forces. It's 1914, and he arrives in Flanders to encounter violence on a scale he could not have imagined. Barry grippingly describes Willie's personal struggles and the harsh consequences of war. In the second battle of Ypres in April, 1915, poison gas is used for the first time. Based on eye-witness accounts, Barry describes the aftermath: "The hole was filled with bodies. Their faces were contorted like devils' in a book of admonition, like the faces of the truly fallen, the damned, and the condemned. Horrible dreams hung in their faces as if the foulest nightmares had gripped them and remained visible now frozen in direst death. Their mouths were ringed and caked with a greenish slime, as if they were the poor Irish cottagers of old, who people said in the last extremity of hunger had eaten of the very nettles in the fields. And still the echo, foul in itself, of that ferocious stench hanging everywhere."

www.sebastianbarry.com



Flanders fields: the poisoned land was hardly fit for growing food

Belgium's eco-footprint grows, reports WWF



Rich countries consume more than they can produce

Belgium's ecological footprint is growing despite increased environmental awareness, although the country is not among the worst performers in the EU, according to the latest biannual Living Planet Report published by the WWF, the global conservation organisation.

A country's ecological footprint is defined as the amount of resources it uses compared to the area of productive land and sea available to produce those resources. Some nations – particularly those in the poorer parts of the developing world – are net contributors. Others – mainly developed Western countries with a massive appetite for resources – are net debtors. The world's demand for resources, taken as a whole, first exceeded its ability to supply them in the 1980s, and the global deficit has been growing ever since.

A table of countries with the largest footprint – and therefore the largest net deficit – is led by the United Arab Emirates, the US and Kuwait. Then comes Denmark, with Belgium in 17th place, behind EU nations Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, the Czech Republic, the UK and Finland. To put the matter in simple terms: each Belgian requires 5.1 hectares of land to produce the things we consume, but we have access on average to only 1.1 ha.

At the other end of the scale, the lowest consumers are Haiti, Afghanistan and Malawi – predictably, among the poorest countries in the world. Belgium also scores highly on the scale of water consumption, reaching nearly 2,000 cubic metres per person per year. The figure includes not only water used directly in domestic consumption, but also the water required to produce and manufacture imported goods, which in Belgium's case is much higher.

November brings 5 changes you shouldn't ignore

New rules came into force on 1 November, and the country went digital on 3 November

1 An energy certificate must now be provided when selling an existing house. The certificate will rate the house's energy consumption on a scale of one to 100 and give tips on improving the score. It must be issued by a recognised expert at a cost of €200.

2 The rail authority NMBS will give priority to online sales of international rail tickets. Special counters for international tickets will now only be available in five stations: the three main Brussels stations, Liege and Antwerp. Another 34 will sell international tickets at their domestic counters, and a further 69 will issue tickets ordered online.

3 103 major rail stations will provide accessibility help to people of limited mobility, including wheelchair users.

4 A pre-nuptial agreement can now be authenticated by a notary without the need to go to court as was previously the case. Existing agreements may now be in conflict with new laws on succession.

5 Free-to-air analogue TV signals have been scrapped, forcing the last viewers –



Antwerp station will be one of only five keeping an international ticket desk

around 60,000 of them – who used an aerial to watch the two Flemish- and two French-speaking public channels to now use a digital decoder. Cable viewers are not affected.

Journalist acquitted

Douglas De Coninck, an investigative journalist with *De Morgen* (see *Flanders Today*, 29 October) has been acquitted by a court in Dendermonde of charges that he leaked the contents of a confidential investigation file. De Coninck was accused together with Chris De Vleeschauwer, whose brother Peter was murdered in 1996 in what the family maintains was an inside job involving fellow Brussels police officers. De Vleeschauwer was also acquitted.

"As well as saying there had been no crime," De Coninck told *Flanders Today*. "The judge in the case made it clear that she thought the way the investigation had been carried out over the last 12 years was disastrous. And that's the point I was making in my articles."

Eastern Europe leads on low taxes

Continued from page 1

country to convert is Estonia, where rates fell from 26% in 2003 to a flat 21% in 2008. The study also cites Slovakia (38% down to 19%), Lithuania (33% to 24%), and Romania (40% to 16%).

"In 2007 Romania was the lowest rate in the EU," the study comments, "but it has since been overtaken by the Czech Republic, which this year introduced a flat rate tax set at 15%, and by Bulgaria, whose new flat rate of 10%

gives it the lowest personal tax rate of the 27 EU member states."

The thresholds at which those rates come into force are as important as the tax rates themselves, and Belgium scores badly on that point, too. The low threshold is only €32,960, though still higher than Hungary (€9,375), Malta (€19,693) and Poland (€33,442). By contrast, top rates in Germany are only triggered when income reaches €250,000 and in Switzerland at \$549,434.

The report also notes that municipalities levy local taxes

at a rate based on national income tax – anywhere up to 11% for residents, or a flat rate of 7% for non-residents. In addition, married couples file joint tax declarations except in the year in which they were married, or if they are living apart.

online

www.kpmg.com

New licence will guarantee Deurne's future as business airport

Flemish environment minister Hilde Crevits has issued a new licence for the airport at Deurne, outside Antwerp, which aims to cut the number of training flights in an effort to tackle the persistent problem of noise nuisance.

The new permit takes the place of another issued in 2004, which was declared void last May by the Council of State because of the lack of an environmental impact report. It contains three main measures, which a spokesperson for the ministry said would allow Deurne "to develop further as a business airport of regional importance."

The number of training flights will be cut to 23,000 in 2009, to 21,000 in 2011 and to 19,500 in 2013. After 2014, the limit will be reduced to 8,000 to allow advanced training of pilots learning to fly on Instrument Landing System, for which Ostend and Deurne are equipped.

There will also be a ban on "touch and go" landings on Sundays and public holidays, a technique which involves planes taking off immediately after landings. The airport will also increase the fees charged for landings and take-offs. According to Crevits, Deurne charges less than other competing airports, so the fees will go up as part of a strategy to limit flights to those using Antwerp as a final destination.



Eduin Vromanschelle

Van Quickenborne opposed to new rules for small companies

Enterprise minister Vincent Van Quickenborne has expressed opposition to a proposed new EU measure that would exempt many small businesses from the requirement to publish annual accounts. "It makes no sense to bring in less transparency," he said.

The measure concerns businesses employing fewer than 20 people with an annual turnover of less than €2 million. This would apply to about 253,000 businesses across the country, according to estimates. They would no longer be obliged to compile an annual

balance-sheet and deposit it with the National Bank, as they are now. The obligation would then apply to just 62,000 businesses across the country.

According to an EU working group that helped prepare the proposal, the removal of the need for an annual balance-sheet would save the average business about €1,200 a year.

Opponents of the plan point out that information may still have to be provided to shareholders, employees and others. And, unlike at present, there would be no standardised form, so reports

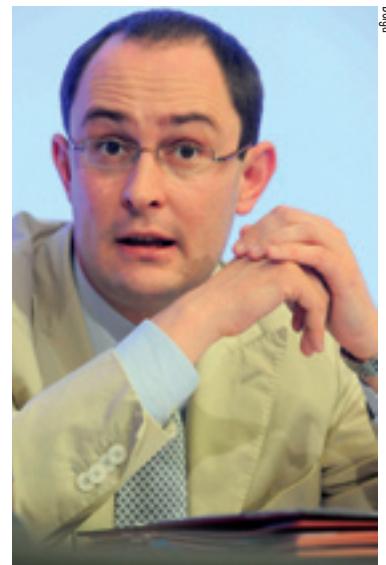
would vary widely in the information given.

The issue was due to come up this week in the European Parliament, and Van Quickenborne said he would be encouraging Belgian MEPs to present a counter-proposal. "I'm an advocate of simplification," he said. "But annual accounts are a useful instrument that you would do better not to throw overboard."

The Institute of Auditors has also criticised the proposal. "The administrative burden on companies will not be reduced, but will in fact increase," said secretary-

general David Szafran. Experience in different states in the US showed that it would become impossible to compare accounts across the EU if the uniformity of the present system was lost.

The government, meanwhile, bases much of its statistics on the information provided by companies in their annual submission, according to a spokesperson for Unizo, the representative group for the self-employed. "If we have to fill out all sorts of surveys at the request of the government, then we're no closer to home," he said.



Vincent Van Quickenborne



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BUSINESS FLASH



Chemicals • Solvay

Chemical company Solvay wrote off €256 million in the third quarter, the value of its shares in bank and insurer Fortis. That helped push profits down to €292 million. Solvay has held the Fortis shares in question since before the Second World War.

Enterprise • SMEs

Around 1,000 entrepreneurs applied for a start-up loan last year to go into business for themselves, the minister for small businesses Sabine Ruelle announced. The total amount administered in loans came to €14.9 million.

Cinema • Utopolis

Cinema chain Utopolis has decided not to appeal a decision by the Competition Council to allow Kinepolis to go ahead with expansion plans without waiting for approval. "It's not for us to take this struggle any further," a Utopolis spokesman said. The company said it was surprised that the Council had made no ruling about Kinepolis' dominant position in the market.

Retail • Ikea

Unions representing staff at home furnishings chain Ikea carried out picketing actions at all six stores in the country, in protest at management plans to introduce a system of collective bonuses.

Retail • Carrefour

Unions at supermarket giant Carrefour kept 10 hypermarkets closed last week as part of an ongoing protest at pay and working conditions imposed on staff at the company's new hypermarket in Bruges.

Imaging • Agfa-Gevaert

The Mortsel-based imaging technology group made a net loss in the third quarter of €13 million, the company announced. Sales in the same period fell by 6% to €741 million. The company blamed the results on the economic slow-down.

Banking • KBC

Leuven-based bank-insurer KBC received a government-backed capital injection of €3.5 billion. The bail-out takes the form of shares sold to the government, which carry a coupon giving a premium of 10% over dividend in 2009 and 15% in the years after.

Drugs • UCB

The pharmaceuticals group has received the approval of the US Food and Drugs Administration to market its epilepsy medication Vimpat, following similar approval by European authorities in August.

Real estate • Cofinimmo

The country's largest property company registered a 31% increase in rental income in the first nine months of the year, with total net profits up 17.1% to €77.2 million.

Flemish government attacked over bookkeeping

The Flemish government failed to show the proper level of care when it reorganised in 2006, according to the federal Court of Audit in a report last week.

The Flemish government began in 2006 to implement its Better Management Policy (BBB), which essentially split the tasks of policy creation and execution. Government departments would draw up policy lines, and the execution

would then be entrusted to public or, in some cases, private agencies.

The Court of Audit likened this reorganisation to the restructuring of a business, to which strict procedures are applied by the law – including the mandatory publication of a report on the company's financial state, together with a report by an external auditor.

But the Flemish government failed to meet the standards expected of a business, the court

concluded. It set standards for its own institutions that were much lower than those required of the private sector, and even then those were sometimes not met.

Flemish budget and finance minister Dirk Van Mechelen described as "a lot of baloney" a claim by the Court of Audit that the region's budget was in fact less "rose-coloured" than it was being made to appear. According to the court, various "negative elements"

for the government were being "covered up". But Van Mechelen described his budget as "reinforced concrete".

Van Mechelen also denied a claim by the court that the financial situation of the Flemish Public Institutions (VOI) was not clear. "All the figures are delivered every year in a report and as an annex to the budget," he told the Flemish parliament.



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EXHIBITION

Full circle

The FotoMuseum presents the first retrospective of Gerald Dauphin

Kevin Gerard Walsh

The archives of Antwerp photographer Gerald Dauphin were donated to the city's photography museum after his death in December of last year. It hasn't taken long for the museum to cull a selection of the best for the wonderful new exhibition *Gerald Dauphin: 360°*.

As the title implies, the show is something of a panorama of Dauphin's life as a photographer, including the high points of his work in the United States in the 1960s, his photos of contemporary artists and selections of his commercial work. Indeed, the first photograph you see is one of a cheque to Dauphin for \$100 from *Avant Garde Media*, dated 1 November, 1969 – presumably for an early New York commission.

Dauphin went to America in 1966, where he worked for the

Being a solidly Brussels' boy, Antwerp's FotoMuseum was a bit of a discovery for me. A very contemporary, elegant space, it is only 10 minutes' walk due south from the cathedral. Don't hesitate to spend some time in the bookshop, which boasts an excellent range. With Antwerp's contemporary art museum (MUKHA) practically next door, Waalse Kaai is well served by cafés and restaurants. It's an easy full day of Antwerp culture. **KGW**

control or the right to strut down the street in sequins and false eyelashes. The underbelly of this social upheaval is also depicted: New Yorkers with their backs literally turned on the tragic clash of begging and luxury on Fifth Avenue, or the pathetic seediness

famous fashion photographers Irving Penn and Richard Avedon. Like many other artists in 1960s and '70s New York, Dauphin's work is inspired by and records America's contemporary social and political upheavals. The Stonewall era, for instance, is documented with archly amused drag queens, the Annual NYC Dyke March and the

very first gay pride parade in Christopher Street.

While the personal becomes political and, in retrospect, historical, Dauphin remained sensitive to the individuality of the people demanding withdrawal from Vietnam, greater gun



Gerard Dauphin's work spans decades, but 1960s and '70s New York shines like a beacon to social photographers

of peep-shows and boarded up businesses in the Bowery.

At first, some of the work seems too much a typical styling of the era, but this is deceptive, and they repay with careful gazing. Some of the street portraits recall the work of Diane Arbus, but, while there is certainly an overlap in subjects, Dauphin views people with a greater warmth and humanity.

A modest colour shot of a young couple, stopped in the street, their fashion gloriously 1970s, best demonstrates this sensitivity. It has echoes of Arbus' iconic 1963 street portrait "Teenage couple on Hudson Street, N.Y.C", but while Arbus' photo can seem like a confrontation, Dauphin's shot invites sympathy and connection.

This generosity towards the subjects is also typified by a beautifully gentle portrait of Charlotte Rampling. While most of Dauphin's work is black and white, the Kodak Yellow series provides bursts of saturated primary colours, with the mustard yellow of Kodak's logo brought to the fore. The fact that it's a commercial commission, with recognition of corporate identity a primary goal, does not serve to make the work any less valuable.

It's refreshing to see that, while the documentary and political nature of the Flemish photographer's work is to the fore, the commercial aspect of his career is not neglected as somehow less authentically artistic. Playful fashion shoots are represented alongside grittier black-and-white realism, and dotted throughout are exquisite portraits and candids of artists and performers – including a shot of Salvador Dali that manages to be both iconic and oddly sad.

There is also a very strong series of jazz greats in portraits and mid-performance, including Ella Fitzgerald, lost in her music, and Chet Baker, captured in striking chiaroscuro hunched over the keyboard, tense with concentration.

The exhibition includes parts of Dauphin's archive itself, with stacks of box files and detailed annotations on yellow legal pads that give a brief glimpse into the choices made before the final image. There are also many intimate shots of fellow artists of the contemporary Antwerp scene, such as writer Hugo Claus and designer Paul Ibour, who says that "Gerard Dauphin made photographs with his eyes, not with a camera".

Until 4 January, FotoMuseum, Waalse Kaai 47, Antwerp

online
www.fotomuseum.be



Like a bird in the sky: Marie-Françoise Plissart

Worlds without end

Two additional shows make the FotoMuseum irresistible this month

Running concurrently with the Gerald Dauphin show at the FotoMuseum is the first retrospective of Brussels photographer Marie-Françoise Plissart. Works in *A World Without End* range from her atmospheric and enigmatic photo novel *Right of Inspection*, via her resonant portraits of Kinshasa and its people, to her most recent work, including Brussels, China and the Trans-Siberian express.

Plissart, who has had a varied career (including a spell as a taxi driver – and this special insight into Brussels by night is reflected in her work), is known as a very open and approachable woman, both considered and relaxed. Her work reflects this as it explores the possibilities of documentary reportage and fiction, the natural and the architectural, colour and black and white.

She is also a bit of a formal innovator, with dizzying bird's eye shots from tall buildings, which give a new perspective on Brussels, not to mention Kinshasa. The massive composite grid with the street life of Congo's capital in the foreground, sweeping back to panoramic views of the city, is a highlight.

But my personal favourites from *A World Without End* are the masterfully lit images of disused industrial buildings that render them as mysterious as cathedrals, and landscapes shot through grids of factory windows. One cannot fail to be impressed by her vertigo-inducing self portrait, balancing a heavy, large-format camera on the ledge of a skyscraper while buffeted by the wind. Photography as adrenaline sport?

Also showing at the FotoMuseum, but just until 7 December, is *Starting Back*, which showcases the photography of French filmmaker Chris Marker, perhaps best known for the influential 1962 film *La Jetée*. For this show, Marker has assembled around 200 still images spanning nearly six decades: faces both anonymous and famous that the 87-year-old has seen during his worldwide travels, as well as images of political protest, such as the May 1968 and Vietnam War demonstrations. The exhibit is enriched with recent works and includes the 2005 video installation "Owls at Noon", a meditation on the 20th century's suffering through war.

FILM

Just what the documentarian ordered

Flemish production house Savage Film debuts its finest

Lisa Bradshaw

We were working on a project in which the main character died. That's the thing with making documentaries. You can't control reality."

Despite never having picked up a camera, Bart Van Langendonck knows plenty about documentary filmmaking: his Brussels-based company Savage Film has produced several in only two years.

"I stumbled into film," he shrugs. That's a lucky thing for many young Flemish filmmakers working on hard-to-finance documentaries and first features. Savage has concentrated on documentary projects, three of which are on show this month at Bozar. "I like them," says Van Langendonck simply. "When I'm flipping through the TV, I usually get stuck on a documentary." There's not a lot of money for documentary filmmaking in Flanders, which tends to favour fiction productions. But Van Langendonck knows a good thing when he sees it. "When I get an interesting documentary project, I can't refuse it."

Checking out the line-up at Bozar, that's easy to understand. The directors have crossed the world finding personal stories that don't make it into Western Europe any other way. *Lost in Transition*, by Thom Vander Beken, tells the story of Serbian youth who live in refugee camps on the outskirts of Belgrade. "I didn't even know about these camps of Serbs who used to live in Croatia," says Van

Langendonck. "The director was really touched by the situation. His own mother died when he was young, and he didn't really have a father figure. In Serbia, he encountered all these people who were struggling a bit with the same problem – fathers who aren't there, parents who were killed during the war, young people really living on their own trying to deal with the situation."

Wild Beast, meanwhile, follows a young man who lives and works around the film studios of Hengdian – the Hollywood of China. The man's past is in fact riveting: he left his homeland in the north when he was 15, at one point getting lost in a blizzard in the mountains. Filmmaker Jeroen Van der Stock recreates past true events as the story unfolds.

Bram Van Paesschen also debuts his new film *Pale Peko Bantu* at Bozar. It's the first in a trilogy about life in the Congo. "He has a very personal approach to his subjects and spends a lot of time with them," explains Van Langendonck. "He gets things out of them that you don't usually see in documentaries."

Van Langendonck worked in music management and concert promotions in the 1980s. The company he worked for also took on management for Wim Vandekeybus' dance company Ultima Vez when it was still in its infancy, never realising that its first production would make Vandekeybus internationally famous overnight. In 1994, Van Langendonck went to work for



Above, *Wild Beast*; right, producer Bart Van Langendonck

the dance company full time as general manager.

That's where he took his first steps towards film production: choreographer Vandekeybus also makes experimental films. Van Langendonck worked with an outside production company and eventually left Ultima Vez to become a founding partner of the production company CCCP. Finally, he struck out completely on his own in 2006 with Savage Film.

In the coming year, Savage will produce its first fiction features – Van Langendonck is in pre-production on three, with all first-time feature directors. This includes Vandekeybus' first full-length movie, *Galloping Mind*, which will be shot in Brazil.

There are a number of small production houses in Flanders with only a handful of employees, just like Savage Film, where Van Langendonck makes up half the staff. He hires more help on a

project-by-project basis. Despite the competition and dwindling funds from local television broadcasters, the company is adding to its project list every day. "I've been lucky that most of my projects have been financed," the producer says. He notes the valuable funding from the Flemish Audio-Visual Fund, as well as from the European Commission's Media Programme, which provides monies specifically for film projects in the development stage.

Media Programme funding is "kind of hard to get," admits Van Langendonck. "I learned that I got it because I was passionate about my projects and about the directors that I was working with. There are a lot of rules and forms to fill out with European funders, and you end up repeating yourself."



Apparently, I managed to make it more personal." He pauses. "So I guess passion is the rule to make it work."

Lost in Transition screens on 13 November, *Wild Beast* and *Pale Peko Bantu* screen on 16 November at Bozar, Ravensteinstraat 23, Brussels, www.bozar.be

online
www.savagefilm.be

DANCE

Labour of lust

An irrational mix of macho and emotion, the tango continues to enchant

Leo Cendrowicz

Ironic as it might sound, the tango is by far the most macho of dances. In the sizzling *Otango*, slinking provocatively across Flanders this month, the men might have taken a testosterone shower for all their proud pouting and chest puffing. And the women, while exuding come-and-get-me poses from the other side of the stage, inevitably succumb to this animal preening after a smouldering exchange of glances.

Passion and sensuality are the leitmotifs of *Otango*. Importing some of Argentina's most accomplished tango dancers, the show tells a story of love found and lost in the barrios of Buenos Aires in 1910.

First dreamed up four years ago by Belgian Olivier Tilkin, the show is only now taking its bow in Europe. "It may seem odd to have a Belgian link to a Latin American phenomenon," says Tilkin. "But passion is international."

Belgium has always had a keen feel for the dance: in April, Brussels hosts its annual Tango Festival, an event that has a major international cachet. But *Otango* is not a dance demonstration. "It was very important for us to have a real story to tell, but to tell it through dance and music," Tilkin

says. "I didn't want to just offer a tourist trip. I wanted a show that would express the art and culture of the tango."

The story starts in the Buenos Aires' harbour, as night falls on an old café, the first of six scenes, 60 costumes, rousing music and bewitching footwork.

The tango itself originated in Buenos Aires among poor immigrants, with the men often dancing together – indeed, these homoerotic undercurrents are reflected in *Otango*. The tango quickly moved to the bordellos, where it evolved to take on elements from different immigrant influences, and even today there is a good deal of confusion and overlap between the styles. Tango is still heavily based on improvisation: while there are patterns or sequences of steps used to teach the dance, it evolves mostly on the dance floor, combin-

ing various steps in a spontaneous manner, as determined by the lead.

But the tango is also an urban phenomenon, and *Otango* tries to express the dance's own story through the show. "This is a metaphor for life in the city," says dancer Melina Brufman. "The essence of tango is Buenos Aires, even though the city has changed. It's a cultural legacy. The most iconic elements, like the bordello, have disappeared, which means tango now has a new form."

Brufman says that while salsa is exciting and bolero is romantic, the tango has a much stronger emotional connection. "You cannot fake it," she insists. "There is lust, there is a physical element, but there is also deep emotion, many emotions: love, fear, sadness, joy."

11 November – 1 December across Flanders

online
www.otango.com



A mix and match of partners is one of the many delights of the sexy *Otango*

Sweet talk

Welcome to the wonderful and often surprising world of sugar

Denzil Walton

Have you ever been by car to Tienen in the autumn? If so, you have probably got stuck behind a slow-moving tractor pulling a trailer loaded to the brim with white, carrot-like root vegetables. They are sugar beets. The next time it happens, you might like to dwell on a startling statistic. Six million tons of sugar beets are transported on the public roads around Tienen every year.

Tienen – the Sugar City – is therefore the place to go to find out about sugar. More specifically, its Sugar Museum will answer all your many sugar-related questions.

You are led around by a highly informative and entertaining audio guide available in Dutch, English, French and German. You will discover the history of sugar beet in Flanders, how it's grown, harvested and processed and a thousand-and-one uses for sugar. Children will probably love the touch-screens, introducing Profes-

sor Zucchero and the animated members of his Sugar Parliament. In one room, music-lovers of all ages tap their toes to 50 clips of songs containing the word "sugar".

The surprises start early on: the Flemish sugar beet industry has its roots in Napoleon's struggles against the United Kingdom. In 1807, the British began a blockade of France, which prevented the import of sugar cane from the Caribbean. To prevent cries of "Mon dieu, pas de sucre!", sugar beet quickly developed as the perfect alternative. By 1812, Frenchman Benjamin Delessert had developed an industrial process to extract sugar from the beets, and by the end of the Napoleonic wars, over 300 sugar beet mills were up and running.

Since Belgium was annexed to France, the rich loam soils of the fields around Tienen were used intensively for cultivating sugar beet. It's a biennial plant, which means it takes two years to complete its life cycle. During its



Chill out, it's not real: Tienen's Sugar Museum presents information with an appetising flair

first growing season, it produces a large (1-2 kg) storage root, which contains 15-20% sucrose by weight. If not harvested, the root uses the nutrients to produce flowers the following year.

Until the 1960s, sugar beet was harvested manually – an operation that required thousands of seasonal workers. The museum has a fascinating video interview with a former labourer who describes the back-breaking work. Thankfully, a horse was used to pull a device that lifted the roots out of the ground, but after that it was nothing but toil and sweat for the team of workers.

One labourer would follow the horse and shake the soil from the beets, laying them in neat rows; a second would use a beet hook to separate the leaves from the root; a third worker forked the beets into the back of a cart. The worker in the video says that if he was doing the first job, he found it easier to crawl on his hands and knees over the fields rather than walk bent over double. He estimated he crawled five kilometres a day.

I also learned that when sugar beet is refined, it doesn't just lead to sugar but also to "sugar treacle". This is a significant by-product that can be recycled into citric acid. (And I always thought citric acid came from citrus fruits!) Citric

get from the museum: collectors of sugar packaging are called glycophiles – but only if the pack is complete with its contents. If they just keep the packaging without the sugar, they are called paraglycophiles. These -ophiles organ-

Collectors of sugar packaging are called glycophiles but only if the pack still contains the sugar

acid has various applications, such as flavouring or preservative in the food industry. It's also used in pharmaceuticals and cosmetics, plus in the photography, cement and textiles industries.

Another film shows a sugar artist at work as he melts the grains, pours the syrup into carefully constructed and often complicated moulds and forms the most amazing structures. Some of these are on display in the museum, which organises regular sugar art competitions.

Finally, here's another example of the incredible information you

ise frequent meetings around the world to exchange and exhibit their collections – some of which have acquired the status of works of art.

At the end of your visit, the Museum Café on the ground floor is strategically positioned to refresh your flagging energy reserves. Next door, local products can be purchased. If you have a sweet tooth, you will be spoilt for choice.

online
www.suikermuseum.be

Tienen's "other" museum

In 10 AD, a Roman commander stood on top of the Wijngaardberg overlooking Tienen and decided it would be a pleasant place to set up camp. It was, and the Romans stayed for 300 years. Between 1997 and 2003, a 30-hectare site was excavated – one of the biggest archaeological digs ever undertaken in Flanders. Unearthed were over 1,400 graves, a temple to Mithras and a potter's workshop. Many of the items discovered are on display in the Toreke Museum in Tienen, which is next to the Sugar Museum.

The displays give a particularly fascinating glimpse into various rituals of the Romans. For example, pots were found containing the seeds of *Atropa belladonna*, the deadly nightshade, the berries of which are hallucinogenic – and toxic in large quantities. Roman priests are believed to have used the drug in sacrificial ceremonies. In the Mithras temple, the bones of 270 chickens, lambs and pigs were found that had been sacrificed to the gods during the summer solstice. Probably the most striking is the life-size reconstruction of a burial chamber found in a recently discovered tumulus.

online
www.erfgoedsitetienen.be

TYRE TRACKS



Shutterstock

At the intersection, turn left. As the road curves to the right, the Ieper-IJzer Canal opens up in front of you. Take the left bank, where there is a well-maintained bike path. The trees that line the route here make for an idyllic bit of cycling.

The past is never far away in Ypres. The canal itself was a scene of major fighting after the first gas attack in 1915, with the Germans occupying the slightly higher right bank and the allies the left. After one kilometre, you come to the John McCrae Memorial on the right, a preserved bunker marking the area where McCrae, a Canadian medic and poet, was killed in 1918. Paper poppies line the dark space and a plaque commemorates his most famous poem: "In Flanders Fields".

Continuing along the canal, the past fades away; Clydesdales graze in verdant fields, cows mill about on dairy farms, kayaks work their way through the water. Nothing seems farther away than war. Just over two kilometres further, the path crosses the canal to the

right. Follow the path over the canal to a road and turn left, where you continue straight ahead to bike route 64, which leads out into farmland.

The route crosses several roads here, and at one point even passes through a dairy farm. Eventually, the steeple of the church in Langemark rises on the horizon. You come to a sign discussing local wildlife, where you turn right onto Groenstraat, following the signs for bike route 26. You'll be led along Ieperstraat and Briekestraat and back into the past. Though no sign marks it, the area you are pedalling through is where gas was first used in the war, against French troops in 1915. The slight incline, almost imperceptible on a bicycle, represents the "high ground" for which so many were killed.

Soon there will be signs for the Minty Farm Cemetery, a detour to the left. To end the ride, stay on Briekestraat past the Divisional Collecting Post, Belle Alliance and New Irish Farm cemeteries. Cross the major road with care and enter a calm residential area.

Turn right onto Briekestraat, with La Brique Military Cemetery on the right. At the intersection, turn left, cross the N313, and then finish the ride by continuing straight to the Menin Gate, a poignant reminder that the cemeteries just passed represent only a fraction of the true loss of life. The gate commemorates more than 55,000 Commonwealth soldiers who fought around Ypres and still have no known grave.

Distance:
15 kilometres

Difficulty:
Easy. Good bike paths and flat terrain leave you free to enjoy the scenery

Time:
One hour

In Flanders Fields

This is a route of contrasts along the Ieper-IJzer canal and then through the fields of West Flanders, where the past and present rest side-by-side. Begin in Ypres by taking Diksmuidsestraat north from the Grote Markt. The cloth hall that dominates the square dates originally from the 13th century, though it was completely destroyed during the First World War and rebuilt over the following 50 years according to the original plans.

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BREWERY SERIES

Never be fooled again

Many authentic Belgian beers now carry a quality label

Robyn Boyle

Ever been surprised to find out, after praising your all-time favourite "Belgian" beer, that it is in fact brewed by a multinational in some other country? These kinds of disappointments are best avoided, but that is made difficult with the current trend that has many a foreign brew marketing itself as a "Belgian Style Ale".

Thankfully, a non-profit organisation called Belgian Family Brewers (BFB) has created a special label to protect and promote truly Belgian beers. The label, represented by a tricolour BFB logo indicative of the national flag, guarantees a unique product from an independent Belgian brewery that has met certain quality standards. To obtain a BFB label, the brewery must be continuously active and in the hands of the same family for at least 50 years, which must be single-handedly in charge of the commercialisation of its beer. The family may not bottle their brew under any other name or label.

Launched in November of last year, BFB now counts 11 member breweries, nine of which are located in Flanders. In this series that celebrates the first anniversary of the label, we'll introduce you to a new member every week this month. The first: Bosteels Brewery in Buggenhout.

The Bosteels family has been brewing beer for over 200 years in the small village not far from Dendermonde in East Flanders. The brewery still looks a lot like the quaint brick farmstead that physician JB Bosteels bought for his family back in 1791 (the "established" date we see on their labels today).

It was the doctor's son, Joseph Bosteels, who began brewing beer at the site in 1843, an ideal complementary activity to his role as Buggenhout's mayor. His sons, in turn, hired the famous Ghent architect Louis Minard (as in the Minardschouwburg in Ghent) to design the family residence in 1859.

Through the years, the white-washed house has been beautifully restored with maximum respect for the original, neo-classical style. The listed house and several free-standing buildings encircle a spacious inner courtyard. Close



Photos by Ben Gandon

Pick your poison: Antoine Bosteels is a seventh-generation brewer with a BFB quality label

by, antique horse-drawn carriages are parked, as if waiting patiently for the brewery's next promotional event. Here I was greeted by seventh generation brewer Antoine Bosteels who runs the business alongside his father, Ivo Bosteels.

Even with the brewery's enormous success, Antoine speaks modestly about their three famous niche beers: Pauwel Kwak, Deus Brut des Flandres and Tripel Karmeliet. At no other brewer in the world will you find three more divergent beers in terms of origin, style, appearance and flavour.

Kwak, to begin with, is historically linked to the region. In the late 18th century, Pauwel Kwak was a brewer and innkeeper of De Hoorn in Dendermonde. "His Kwak beer was very popular among locals, in particular the many coachmen who would stop there for a rest," explains Antoine. "This being the time of Napoleon, a law was passed that required coachmen to stay with their horse and carriage at all times."

Since the coachmen could no longer go inside for a drink, Kwak designed a glass that would bring the drink to the coachmen. The tall, skinny glass with a bulb at the bottom came with a wooden handle that, when fixed to the carriage, allowed the coachmen to continue to enjoy their favourite beer, even while underway. "The foot was added later so that the glass could be placed on a table, but historically it was a hanging glass," adds Antoine. Kwak is a strong (8.4% alcohol), full-bodied

ale, amber in colour with a dense, creamy head, a sweet, malty aroma and only a slightly bitter finish.

Deus Brut des Flandres, meanwhile, is a Bosteels speciality beer so unique that it is often mistaken for a bottle of sparkling wine. "At a large brunch with my extended family several years ago, each table had a selection of wines and Champagnes to choose from, with each bottle chilled on ice," explains Antoine. "As a brewer, of course, it struck me that there was no beer available, despite the fact that we also have 75 cl bottles. That's when I thought to take our beer production one step further, to make it more exclusive."

ment in the neck of the bottle, which is then frozen and the sediment expelled.

After more than 12 months of this high-maintenance conditioning, the result is a golden, highly carbonated brew with a thick, meringue-like head. Its aroma, both spicy and fruity, hints at the very high alcohol content (11.5%). Served in flute glasses, Deus makes for an excellent aperitif and is certainly worthy of its own ice bucket at the most elegant social gatherings.

Talk about saving the best for last: Tripel Karmeliet has recently drawn a lot of media attention after being awarded the title "World's

In the early 1990s, we knew we wanted to create a new beer that was blonde, re-fermented in the bottle and made up of different kinds of grain," he says. "After three years of testing, we ultimately chose the three-grain combination of wheat, barley and oats."

All that was left to do was choose a name. While leafing through a book on the brewer history of the region, Antoine happened across an ancient recipe created by a Carmelite Monastery in Dendermonde in 1679. The three-grain recipe was almost identical to the one Bosteels Brewery had formulated. Hence the name, leaving Antoine to move on to other things, like making the drawings for the label and designing the glass.

The glass alone is so voluptuous and self-assured, one can't help but have high expectations of the beer. And Tripel Karmeliet delivers. It pours golden yellow with a very prominent, billowy white head. Citrus fruits, vanilla and spices are very present in both aroma and taste, while the wheat provides for a refreshing crispness going down. Not too much notion of the high alcohol content (8.4%), but what makes the biggest impression is its unpreceded oatiness.

"Our products are for tasting," Antoine explains, "which means you don't drink them standing up in a pub. You have to really take your time to enjoy them, seated around a table with friends."



"There are more old boozers than old doctors": words to live by from Bosteels

After much research, the brewer finally chose a partner in France to help create Deus. The beer begins its fermentation at Bosteels before travelling to the Champagne region for further maturation. What ensues is a complex process whereby the bottles are placed horizontally and rotated periodically so as to collect the yeast sedi-

Best Ale" from the international consumer magazine *Beers of the World*. Last August, the magazine led a blind tasting in London where a panel of judges agreed that Tripel Karmeliet was the best in its class, among hundreds of entries.

The story of the beer's origin is also exceptional, and one that Antoine clearly enjoys telling.

online

www.belgianfamilybrewers.be

Discover
more Flemish
speciality beers in
our ongoing series on
Belgian Family Brewers
this month

Classical & New Music

Antwerp

Amuz
Kammenstraat 81; 03.248.28.28
NOV 9 15.00 Andrassy Trio: Graupner, Mozart, Süssmayr, Druschetzky

Queen Elisabeth Hall
Koningin Astridplein 26; 0900.26.060
NOV 8 20.00 Wim Mertens Ensemble

Bruges

Concertgebouw
't Zand 34; 070.22.33.02,
www.concertgebouw.be
NOV 5 20.00 Critical Band, tribute to American composer James Tenney by Bl!ndman and Champ d'Action

Brussels

Bozar (Paleis Voor Schone Kunsten)
Ravensteinstraat 23; 02.507.82.00,
www.bozar.be
NOV 7 20.00 Belgian National Orchestra, conducted by Walter Weller, with Karin Adam, violin: Dvorak, Glazunov
NOV 8 20.00 Bamberger Symphoniker, conducted by Jonathan Nott, with Pierre-Laurent Aimard, piano: Schönberg, Berg, Varèse, Bartók
NOV 9 11.00 Muriel Sarlette, oboe; Caridad Galindo, piano: Britten, Poulenc, Skalkottas, Chong, Poot, Kalliwoda.

De Munt
Muntplein; 070.23.39.39,
www.demunt.be
NOV 7 20.30 Femke Sonnen and Yuri Higashida, violin; Luk Nielandt, oboe; Ludmilla Tschakalova, harpsichord: Marais's Sonnerie de Sainte-Geneviève du Mont-de-Paris, Couperin's Concerts Royaux

Flagey
Heilig Kruisplein; 02.641.10.20,
www.flagey.be
NOV 7 20.15 Brussels Philharmonic: Mendelsohn, Brahms, Shostakovich
NOV 9 11.00 Frederick Haas, 'Hemsch' harpsichord: Rameau
NOV 10 20.00 New World Concert: Charlemagne Orchestra for Europe, conducted by Bartholomeus-Henri Van de Velde: Strauss' Four Last Songs, Dvorák's Symphony No 9, op 95
20.15 Ictus Quartet: Webern, Stravinsky, Ligeti, Steen-Anderson

Royal Music Conservatory
Regentschapsstraat 30; 02.213.41.37
NOV 5 20.00 La Risonanza, conducted by Fabio Bonizzoni, with Roberta Invernizzi, soprano: Purcell, Handel
NOV 11 20.00 Jerusalem String Quartet with Martin Fröst, clarinet: Beethoven, Smetana, Brahms

Sint-Marcuskerk
de Frélaan 72; 02.331.37.14,
www.32sonates.be
NOV 7 19.30 Sophie Gourlet, flute; Florian Noack, piano: Schubert, Sancan, Reinecke, Medtner

Hasselt

Grenslandhallen
Gouv. Verwilghensingel 70; 0900.69.900
www.musichall.be
NOV 10 20.00 Nabucco by Verdi with the Sofia National Opera, conducted by Borislav Ivanov

Opera

Antwerp
Stadsschouwburg
Theaterplein 1; 0900.69.900,
www.musichall.be
NOV 6 20.00 Verdi's Nabucco by the Sofia National Opera, conducted by Borislav Ivanov

Vlaamse Opera
Frankrijklei 3; 070.22.02.02
NOV 7-18 20.00 The Rape of Lucretia by Benjamin Britten, a new co-production with Operastudio Vlaanderen, conducted by Elgar Howarth

Brussels

Bozar (Paleis Voor Schone Kunsten)
Ravensteinstraat 23; 02.507.82.00,
www.bozar.be
NOV 9 20.00 Les Arts Florissants in Les Indes galantes, opera-ballet by Rameau, conducted by William Christie

Vorst-Nationaal
Victor Rousseaulaan 208; 0900.00.991
NOV 8-9 20.00 Carmina Burana by Carl Orff and El Amor Brujo by de Falla, with the Sofia National Opera conducted by Borislav Ivanov
NOV 11 20.00 Nabucco by Verdi with the Sofia National Opera, conducted by Borislav Ivanov

Ostend

Kursaal (Casino)
Monacoplein; 0900.69.900,
www.musichall.be
NOV 7 20.00 Nabucco by Verdi with the Sofia National Opera, conducted by Borislav Ivanov

Jazz & blues

Antwerp

Queen Elisabeth Hall
Koningin Astridplein 26; 0900.26.060
NOV 5 20.00 Herbie Hancock Sextet

Brussels

Flagey
Heilig Kruisplein; 02.641.10.20,
www.flagey.be
NOV 7 12.30 Robin Verheyen, saxophone; Aki Rissanen, piano
NOV 12 20.15 Youth Jazz Orchestra

Jazz Station

Leuvensesteenweg 193-195;
02.733.13.78
NOV 5 20.30 Greg Houben Trio
NOV 6 20.30 Jazz Station Big Band: Bob Mintzer special concert
NOV 7 20.30 Thomas Champagne Trio
NOV 8 18.00 Electric Miles Project
NOV 12 20.30 Pascal Mohy Trio

Sass'n Jazz

Koningsstraat 241; www.sazznjazz.be
NOV 5 20.30 SM's Steady Wednesdays
NOV 6 & 13 20.30 Nicolas l'Herbette Experience + Jam Session

Sounds Jazz Club

Tulpstraat 28; 02.512.92.50,
www.soundsjazzclub.be
NOV 8 21.00 Geezer Young and The Witness

The Music Village

Steenstraat 50; 02.513.13.45
Concerts at 20.30:
NOV 6 Folk-Tassignon Quartet
NOV 7 Ivan Paduart
NOV 8 The Cotton City Jazz Band
NOV 11 Fréquences Jazz
NOV 12 Siân Pottock

Ghent

Vooruit
St Pietersnieuwstraat 23; 0900.26.060,
www.vooruit.be
NOV 6 20.00 Henry Threadgill

Pop, rock, hip-hop, soul

Antwerp

Lotto Arena
Schijnpoortweg 119; 0900.26.060
NOV 12 19.00 Amon Amarth + Mastodon + Trivium + Slayer

Sportpaleis

Schijnpoortweg 119; 0900.26.060
Until NOV 8 20.30 Night of the Proms, classical/pop line-up with Simple Minds, Live, Sinéad O'Connor, John Miles and more

Borgerhout

Hof Ter Lo
Noordersingel 30; 03.543.90.30
NOV 9 16.45 Carnifex + Whitechapel + Protest the Hero + Architects + Despised Icon + Unearth + Parkway Drive
NOV 10 20.00 'Heidenfest 2008': Finntroll + Primordial + Eluveitie + Equilibrium + Catamenia + Manegarm
NOV 12 20.00 Tricky

Luchtbal Cultuurcentrum

Columbiestraat 8; 03.543.90.30,
www.ccluchtbal.org
NOV 11 20.30 The Last Poets

Brussels

Ancienne Belgique
Anspachlaan 110; 02.548.24.24
NOV 5 20.00 Trust
NOV 6 20.00 De Heideroosjes. Kora
NOV 7 18.30 Screening of film Joy Division + Kevin Hewick + Section 25 & Peter Hook + afterparty with DJs.
NOV 8 20.00 Cocoon
NOV 9 20.00 Cold War Kids
NOV 10 19.30 Roots Manuva + GZA
NOV 11 20.00 Black Kids. Elbow

Bozar (Paleis Voor Schone Kunsten)
Ravensteinstraat 23; 02.507.82.00,
www.bozar.be
NOV 12 20.00 Tracy Chapman

Hallen de Schaerbeek
Koninklijke Sinte-Mariastraat 22;
02.218.21.07
NOV 10 20.00 Pendulum

Koninklijk Circus
Onderrichtsstraat 81; 02.218.20.15
NOV 7 20.00 Rokia Traoré + Bai Kamara Jnr
NOV 11 20.00 Chuck Berry

Le Botanique
Koningstraat 236; 02.218.37.32
Concerts at 20.00:
NOV 5 Syd Matters + Mariée Sioux. Volcano + Why? **NOV 7** Metronomy + Ladytron. Lang Horne Slim + Dead Science + Shearwater
NOV 8 White Rainbow + Valet + Jackie O Motherfcker
NOV 9 Sky Larkin + Lovvers + Los Campesinos. Sam Sparro
NOV 10 Cursive. The Ting Tings

Don't miss this week



Johannette Zomer & Fred Jacobs

16 November, 15.00,
Augustinus Muziekcentrum
(Amuz), Kamenstraat 81,
Antwerp. Tickets from
03.229.18.80 or www.amuz.be

The English lute song is all the rage these days, ever since Sting got a lute as a present and recorded some songs by the Elizabethan master John Dowland. The programme for this concert is somewhat more recent, featuring works by Henry Purcell, Robert Johnson and Henry Lawes, the latter of whom was sent by Charles II to Italy and France to check out the latest advances in composition – so seriously were these things taken in those days. The lutenist is Fred Jacobs, who gives master classes in the Netherlands and is much in demand all over Europe. The singer is Dutch soprano Johannette Zomer (photo), who has worked extensively with Belgian conductors Philippe Herreweghe and René Jacobs.

NOV 11 Ma Rain + Luka Bloom Ron Sexsmith
NOV 12 Stereolab

Recyclart

Ursulinenstraat 25; 02.502.57.34,
www.recycleart.be
NOV 10 21.00 The Magnetix + Jack of Hearts + Hell*Zo

VK Club

Schoolstraat 76; 02.414.29.07
NOV 7 20.15 Black Sheep + TBA + Guerilla Poubelle

Ghent

Capitole
Graaf van Vlaanderenplein 5;
0900.69.00
NOV 10 20.00 Tom Helsen

Charlatan

Vlaamse Markt 6; 09.224.24.57
NOV 12 20.00 These Arms Are Snakes + Russian Circles

De Centrale

Kraankindersstraat 2; 09.265.98.28,
www.decentrale.be
NOV 12 20.00 The Datsuns + El Guapo Stuntteam + The Chart Birds

Vooruit

St Pietersnieuwstraat 23; 0900.26.060,
www.vooruit.be
NOV 7 20.00 Daniel Johnston
NOV 8 21.00 The Slackers
NOV 12 20.00 Slow Club + Confuse the Cat

Hasselt

Muziekodroom
Bootstraat 9; www.muziekodroom.be
NOV 6 20.00 Warren Suicide + T Raumschmiere

Kortrijk

De Kreun
Jan Persijnstraat 6; 056.37.06.44,
www.dekreun.be
NOV 6 20.00 Flip Kowlier
NOV 8-9 Sonic City Festival: Zu, Candy Hank
NOV 13-14 Tom Helsen

Leopoldsburg

CC Leopoldsburg
Kastanjedreef 1; 011.34.65.48,
www.ccleopoldsburg.be
NOV 7 20.15 Jerez-Texas
NOV 8 20.15 Guido Belcanto

Leuven

Het Depot
Martelarenplein 12; 016.22.06.03
Concerts at 20.00:
NOV 5 Ma Rain + Luka Bloom
NOV 6 Hermano
NOV 10 Tony Joe White
NOV 11 Kane

Stuk

Naamsestraat 96; 016.32.03.20
NOV 7 22.00 Nononoise Live
NOV 12 22.30 Perverted + Grant Hart

World, folk

Antwerp

Zuiderpershuis
Waalse Kaai 14; 03.248.01.00,
www.zuiderpershuis.be
NOV 6 20.30 Monica Salmaso (Brazil)
NOV 7 20.30 Asere (Cuba)
NOV 9 20.30 Cristobal Repetto, tango

Brussels

Sounds Jazz Club
Tulpstraat 28; 02.512.92.50,
www.soundsjazzclub.be
NOV 5 22.00 Caribe Con K – Los Soneros del Barrio, Caribbean music
NOV 6 22.00 Antonio Segura 'Flamenca Project'

The Music Village

Steenstraat 50; 02.513.13.45
NOV 13 20.30 Rey Cabrera invites Moune a Case

Wolubilis

Paul Hymanslaan 251; 02.761.60.30,
www.wolubilis.be
NOV 5 20.30 Pari Maleki & Konya Ensemble (Iran)

Dance

Antwerp

Stadsschouwburg
Theaterplein 1; 0900.69.900,
www.musichall.be
NOV 5 20.00 Boris Eifman Ballet in Tchaikovsky, choreographed by Boris Eifman

Brussels

KVS Bol
Lakensestraat 146; 02.210.11.12,
www.kvs.be
NOV 11-13 20.00 Nine Finger, dance/ performance by Fumiyo Ikeda, Benjamin Verdonck and Alain Platel (in English)

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 DEC 7 Chris Marker: Staring Back, photography by French filmmaker Chris Marker
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

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 established by the famous Antwerp designer

Ardoorie
Cultuurkapel De Schaduw
Wezestraat 32; 0479.80.94.82, www.deschaduw.net
NOV 7 20.30 Photos by Tilde De Wandel

Bilzen
Landcommanderij Alden Biesen
Kasteelstraat 6; 089.51.93.42
Until DEC 14 Limburg in 't geweer, 300 years of military history in Limburg province, with paintings, drawings, weapons and models

Bruges
Arentshuis
Dijver 16; 050.44.87.11
Until DEC 7 Günter Brus, retrospective of 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: Artist at the Medici Court, retrospective of Bruges-born artist Johannes Stradanus, with paintings, drawings, prints and tapestries

Brussels
Argos – Centre for Art and Media
Werfstraat 13; 02.229.00.03, www.argosarts.org
Until JAN 3 Interstitial Zones, 15 artists offer a critical alternative to the mass media's coverage of modern history

Biblioteca Wittockiana
Bemelstraat 23; 02.770.53.33
Until FEB 28 25 Years of Passion Shared, the Wittockiana collection of fine, hand-crafted book bindings since the Renaissance

deBuren
Leopoldstraat 6; 02.212.19.30, www.deburen.eu
Until DEC 12 World One Minutes Brussels, the best one-minute videos from 90 countries

De Elektriciteitscentrale European Centre for Contemporary Art
Sint Katelijneplein 44; 02.279.64.35
Until JAN 11 Réflechir le monde (Reflecting the World), photographs, video and installations by contemporary French artists on the occasion of the European Union's French Presidency

Flemish Parliament
IJzerenkuistraat 299; 02.552.40.43
Until DEC 20 Screenworlds, contemporary Flemish photography, with work by Carl De Keyzer, Caroline

Van Poucke, Jimmy Kets, Stephan Vanfleteren, Tim Dirven and Tony Leduc, among many others

ING Cultural Centre
Koningsplein 6; 02.547.22.92
Until MAR 15 Oceania: Signs of Ritual, Symbols of Authority, sculptures, masks, artefacts, weapons and utilitarian objects from Melanesia, Polynesia and Micronesia

ISELP
Waterloosesteenweg 31; 02.504.80.70
Until NOV 29 Hymne, installation by Claude Lévéque

Until NOV 29 La Concubine, photographs by Stephanie Friedli
Until NOV 29 Jewellery by Isabelle Carpentier and ceramics by Marie-Agnès Marlair

Instituto Cervantes
Tervurenlaan 64; 02.737.01.90
Until NOV 15 Amor/Desamor, video works on the theme of love by 28 Spanish artists

Jewish Museum of Belgium
Minimstraat 21; 02.512.19.63
Until DEC 28 Inedit, Idel Ianchelevici's sculptures photographed by Stephen Sack

Justitiapaleis
Poelaertplein; 02.512.19.63
Until NOV 21 Corpus Delicti, contemporary installations, sculpture, photographs and video by various artists (www.corpus-delicti.be)

La Fonderie – Brussels Museum of Labour 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

Le Botanique
Koningstraat 236; 02.226.12.57
Until NOV 30 Habeas Corpus, group show on the theme of the body, with contemporary paintings, drawings, videos and sculpture

Museum voor Architectuur De Loge
Kluisstraat 86; 02.642.24.71, www.civa.be
Until DEC 21 Belgie 58, drawings, photographs, documents, furniture and more showcasing the significant architectural and decorative forms of the 1958 style in Belgium

Royal Museum of Art and History
Jubelpark 10; 02.741.72.11
Until MAR 8 Continental Superstar, 16 mechanical 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 made in Spain in 1882 and 1883 by 19th-century Belgian artist Constantin Meunier
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
Until FEB 15 CoBrA, major retrospective on the 60th anniversary of the foundation of the Cobra movement

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

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

Deurle

Museum Dhondt-Dhaenens
Museumlaan 14; 09.282.51.23, www.museumdd.be
Until NOV 23 CAPMAX, installation in the museum's garden by Emilio López-Menchero
Until NOV 30 Projections and shadow puppetry by American artist Kara Walker
Until NOV 30 Photography and sculpture by Belgian artist Kris Martin

Ghent

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

Design Museum

Jan Breydelstraat 5; 09.267.99.99
Until JAN 26 100 years Demeyere, stylish cooking utensils by the Belgian manufacturer.
Until JAN 26 Retrospective of German jewellery designer Hermann Jünger (1928-2005)

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, plays, paintings and contemporary art, with work by James Ensor, Jan Fabre, Hugo Claus, Fernand Khnopff and Dirk Braeckman, among many 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)

Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst (SMAK)

Citadelpark; 09.221.17.03, www.smak.be
Until JAN 3 Faux Jumeaux (False Twins), carte blanche to Belgian artist Michel François
Until JAN 18 Anyth_=, paintings by Werner Mannaers
Until NOV 23 Coming People, work by young artists

Witte Zaal

Posteernestraat 64; 09.267.96.77, www.francekunstart.be
Until DEC 6 Moments in Time, show exploring the relationship between time, image and the surrounding space

Hasselt

Modemuseum
Gasthuisstraat 11; 011.23.96.21
Until JAN 4 Ten dans gevraagd (Invitation to Dance), dance costumes by fashion designers and artists from 1920 to the present day

Z33

Zuivelmarkt (Beguinage) 33; 011.29.59.60
Until JAN 4 The Great Exhibition Part 1: Europe, a project by Ives Maes linking world exhibitions to science fiction

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 200 artefacts from the Qin and Western Han dynasties

Machelen-Zulte

Het Roger Raveelmuseum
Gildestraat 2-8; 09.381.60.00
Until FEB 22 Ensor & Raveel: Kindred Spirits, drawings and paintings by the Belgian artists

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

Meise

Kasteel van Bouchout, Meise Botanical Garden
Nieuwelaan 38; 02.260.09.20
Until FEB 1 Plantenportretten (Plant Portraits), watercolours by the garden's illustrators

Ostend

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

Tervuren

Royal Museum for Central Africa
Leuvensesteenweg 13; 02.769.52.11
Until AUG 31 Omo: People & Design, Hans Silvester's photographs of southwestern Ethiopia's nomadic tribes and objects from the museum's collection

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

Antwerp

De Boekenbeurs: Huge annual Flemish book fair with six themed days and book signings by dozens of authors, including Anne Provoost, Dimitri Verhulst, Kristien Hemmerechts, Lieve Blancquaert and Tom Naegels
Until NOV 11 at Antwerp Expo, Jan Van Rijswijcklaan 191 03.260.81.22, www.boekenbeurs.be

De Nachten: Two-day music and literary festival in association with Boekenbeurs, featuring authors Arnon Grunberg and Samir El-Youssef and performances by Girls in Hawaii, Arsenal, Els Mondelaers and many more
Desguinlei 25, www.denachten.be
NOV 7-8 at deSingel, Desguinlei 25, and Petrol, d'Herbouvillekaai 25 www.denachten.be

Bruges

The Messenger: Multidisciplinary festival on immigration and international culture with exhibitions, theatre, dance, film, debates and readings

Until DEC 10 across Bruges www.cultuurcentrumbrugge.be

Brussels

BRONKSFestival: International performances for children in Dutch and without dialogue
NOV 8-11 at venues across Brussels 02.219.99.21, www.bronks.be

Brussels Non European Art Fair:

Sculpture, masks, fetishes, weaponry, jewellery and ethnic objects

NOV 6-9 at Pierre Bergé & Associates, Grote Zavel 40 02.504.80.30

Het Grote Ongeduld!: Short film festival presenting all the final works from the Belgian film schools, followed by an after-party in Kultuurkaffee

NOV 12 19.00 at the Free University of Brussels' Aula Q, Pleinlaan 2 02.629.23.25, www.hetgroteongeduld.be

Homo Universalis:

Tijs Goldschmidt and Joël De Ceulaer discuss biology, evolution and the role of Darwin, as well as art and literature (in Dutch)
NOV 6 20.00 at deBuren, Leopoldstraat 6 02.212.19.30, www.deburen.eu

Get your tickets now for...



Creativity World Forum

19-20 November, Lotto Arena, Antwerp. Register at www.creativityworldforum.be

Inspiration can strike us at any moment, but can we become more creative if we try harder? "Boost Your Inspiration Quotient" is the theme of the fifth Creativity World Forum in Antwerp, a conference of creative buzz by pros in business, the arts, design, media, technology, policy and communications. Among several notable lecturers are Dan Heath, author of the critically acclaimed *Made to Stick: Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die*; Steve Wozniak, co-founder of Apple; and *Monty Python* alum John Cleese (photo), who is now apparently in the motivational speaker biz. They are joined by poets, artists, professors and entrepreneurs for a complete experience from all sides of inventiveness. You will also have the opportunity to "pimp up your idea" with the help of members of the Addict Lab. All disciplines are welcome, from cooking to advertising.

Masarat Palestine Festival: Theatre, dance, debates, poetry, music and film
Until 18 JAN at Halles de Schaerbeek, Bozar and other locations in Brussels 02.218.21.07, www.halles.be

Working Title Festival: First edition of festival by WorkSpaceBrussels, with performances by young international artists
NOV 8-16 in venues across Brussels www.kaatheater.be

65 Years Paul Claeys: Tribute to the Belgian author with Luc Devoldere (in Dutch)

NOV 7 20.00 at Passa Porta, A Dansaertstraat 46 02.226.04.54, www.passaporta.be

Leuven

Playground Festival: Performances, projects and installations by visual artists, theatre makers and choreographers

Until NOV 7 at Stuk, Naamsestraat 96 016.32.03.20, www.playgroundfestival.be

Ostend

Tokyo Drums: Japanese music show
NOV 8 20.00 at Kursaal (Casino

INTERVIEW

Jelle Cleymans

Jelle Cleymans is one of the stars of the hit musical *Daens* and is also staging his own show – with his mom.



If you want to talk to Jelle Cleymans, you need to get in line behind the kids – from wide-eyed toddlers who saw him on Ketnet, to blushing teenagers who remember him from children's soap *Spring*. He's now 23 and appearing in the smash hit *Daens: The Musical*, as well as touring in *Een surfplank naar de maan* (A Surfboard to the Moon), a musical show for children. He plays opposite his mother, Karin Jacobs, whose poems he set to music. *Flanders Today* caught up with him after the opening show.

How was your opening night?

It was nice. We noticed it was a little bit too short. We need to have five minutes or so more. Other than that, everything worked. It's difficult to make something for children because they're so honest. The minute it's not fun anymore, they go off fidgeting in their seats and talking. But there was none of that.

What's the show like?

When my sister and I were small, my mother made up poems, because we took part in speaking competitions. It bothered her that the children always chose the same poems, so she went off and wrote her own, which she loved doing – she used to work with the Royal Youth Theatre in Antwerp, so she had a real feel for what children like to see and hear. We won those competitions quite often, in part because the poems were so original. For years I said to her, you ought to do something with these poems. Then I got the idea to take some and set them to music.

Most people know me from *Spring*, that's pop music for children and young people. I wanted to make a different kind of music for children because *Spring* is really commercial. I wanted to make music with acoustic guitar, double bass, accordion, with everything sounding really folksy. I think we've succeeded in that. It's not kids' music, it's children's poems set to music, and the two go together really nicely.

You're doing this while appearing in *Daens*, and the two are very different.

It's funny to be playing one evening for 1,800 people and then do a children's show for 60. In the last few years, I've mostly worked for children, so *Daens* is something else – really for adults. I was a bit anxious about that, in case people might not accept that there was someone in the show who had performed mostly for kids. It's been a great challenge for me to play in such a production.

Daens is a really Flemish story, and this is the first time in Flanders a musical has been put on with only Flemish actors. Normally there are Dutch people who come here to work, but not for this. I also think it would be difficult for this show to travel to the Netherlands because, while every Fleming knows the story, if tomorrow I were to mention the Priest Daens

in the Netherlands, nobody would know what I was talking about. I think it's too Flemish.

Do you have ambitions outside of Flanders? The West End or Broadway, for instance?

If I have any international ambition, it's about the Netherlands. I have a love of the Dutch language. I write lyrics, always in Dutch. I like to sing in Dutch, I feel comfortable, it suits me perfectly. I can never remember English lyrics, and I've got a terrible accent in English. Of course you can take lessons to get over that. But I just don't have the feeling I'm bringing anything to the lyrics.

I just thought, you're someone who started very early, full of energy, always busy with two or three things at a time. Isn't Flanders a little small for you?

If you could add in the Netherlands, that would be okay. It's a tough question. You ask, would you like to play Broadway; yeah, the desire is certainly there, but to make that a reality is the difficult part. We Flemings are by nature less explorer types; we go off less often than other people in Europe in search of adventure.

You're on stage with your mom, and your dad is your booking agent. How is it to work with them?

Great fun. We have a really friendly relationship, which I think is necessary if you work together so much. Whenever I accept a project, I call them immediately to ask what they think or how I should approach it. It's great to do something like that with your parents.

You grew up in a showbiz family.

My father is a musician, and my mother is an actress and singer. When they were still married they

had a band that toured all over Flanders. My dad played with [Flemish singer] Guido Belcanto and for years with [children's characters] Samson and Gert. My mother worked a lot in the theatre and a lot on TV, so I was brought up in that world. I fell into the pot when I was young, like Obelix. And my sister, too. She plays piano, she's into theatre and films.

Were they showbiz parents, pushing you on to follow in their footsteps?

On the contrary. In those days, if we got a request to take part in something, my parents would first of all ask, is that really what you want to do? We had to stay in school and study at the same time, so we'd be asked, how are you going to combine this job with homework, with exams. Are you ready to give up a huge part of your free time? And one rule was, you can do whatever you like, but if your schoolwork is suffering, that's the end of it. And that worked, because then you know why you have to do your best in school – because you want to carry on doing those things! I think that was a good rule.

What do the children think of our new beard? I was a bit shocked when I saw you. It's not the look we're used to.

It's for *Daens*. I've had some reactions, but *Daens* is really alive in Flanders right now, and people know what I'm working on, and they automatically make the connection. My girlfriend likes it; that's the most important thing.

Interview by Alan Hope

Daens runs until 13 December at Antwerpen X. *Surfplank naar de maan* plays a number of dates throughout Flanders into next year. See <http://tinyurl.com/jelle-dates> for tickets.

online
www.jellecleymans.com

THE LAST WORD

what they're saying in Flanders

Tough times ahead

"This temporary government is unable to find an agreement on broad lines of principle. If we don't make some tough choices in the months to come, there'll be no point going on into 2011."

Karel De Gucht
Belgian foreign minister in an interview with *La Libre Belgique*

Dangerous driving?

"Do I blame anyone for what happened? Yes. The driver of the bus. It's irresponsible to drive so fast. We are going to discuss the possibility of taking legal steps."

Relative of tourists involved in a bus crash in Egypt, in which six Belgians died

Leaving Belgium

"I've been here for a year and a half now, and I'd really like to have stayed longer. Belgians are impressive, diplomatic and friendly. They never get angry. I've never heard a raised voice since I was here."

Sam Fox
US Ambassador to Belgium preparing to pack his bags

CreativityWorldForum BrusselsJazz

Orchestra GiambattistaPiranesi

WeekvandeSmaak Radioboeken

Goudwerk

next week in Flanders Today