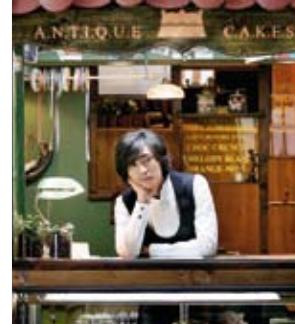


Lost in the post.....6

Reorganisation of the Belgian postal delivery service is on the cards, but a planned strike in protest has been averted at the last minute. CEO Johnny Thijs still hopes that the revamp will go ahead regardless.

**Chinese whispers 11**

The spotlight is on China at this year's Ghent Film Festival, but 34 other countries are also on the billing at Belgium's biggest and most eclectic movie festival. Our film critic picks out the names to remember and the movies not to miss.

**It's my party 13**

Hot young Flemish novelist Saskia De Coster is launching her new novel, *Dit is van mij* (This is mine) by taking over the Beurschouwburg in the centre of Brussels and putting on a party with bands and DJs. And it's open to anyone.

**INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERIES – PART 2: GHENT**

➤ **SPECIAL PULL-OUT GUIDE INSIDE !** <

Inspiration

Missionary, leper, hero – and now saint. Father Damien is about to make Flemish history

LEO CENDROWICZ

The Catholic Church has created thousands of saints over the centuries, but few have displayed the courage of the Flemish missionary due to be canonised on Sunday, 11 October.

Joseph de Veuster, better known as Pater Damiaan (Father Damien), has become a beloved figure the world over for his work caring for sufferers of Hansen's disease, or leprosy, in Hawaii in the latter part of the 19th century.

Defying conventions that said he should avoid the leper colony, Damien embraced it, rebuilding their village and, in the process, catching the fatal disease himself. An inspiration for the likes of Gandhi and Mother Theresa, Damien is today the spiritual patron for lepers, HIV/AIDS patients and outcasts. He is also a hero for Flanders:

in 2005, TV audiences voted *Damien de Grootste Belg*, or The Greatest Belgian.

Pope Benedict XVI will canonise Damien in Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome before a crowd estimated at 100,000. Flanders has been celebrating all year under the slogan "Damien Inspires", and the days before and after the canonisation will see a number of events, including exhibitions, tours, processions, graveside vigils and, of course, church services.

Most of these will happen in Tremelo, where Damien was born and where the Damien Museum is located, and the nearby Leuven, site of his crypt and the Damien Documentation and Information Centre.

➤ *continued on page 5*

**Flanders House taken over by diplomats**

The controversial former director of the Flanders House in New York City, Philip Fontaine, will not be replaced, the Flemish government has announced.

Fontaine was sacked last month after allegations of financial mismanagement, including payments made to a company run by his partner. He was also accused of operating a disastrous personnel policy, which led to one staff member contacting the Flemish politician Jean-Marie Dedecker of the LDD party. Dedecker exposed the allegations against Fontaine after a visit to New York when he personally met with members of the staff of Flanders House.

Fontaine's job will be taken by a member of the diplomatic corps, and Flanders House will represent Flanders across the entire US. Previously, the region had a diplomat in Washington, but the former occupant of that post, Bart Hendrickx, left over two years ago and has since become head of the international office of the Catholic University of Leuven.

Under the decision, Flanders House in New York will lose its non-profit status to become a fully-fledged diplomatic outpost, just like the Flanders Houses in London or Madrid. The change also means that the governing board – who appar-

ently had been warned of Fontaine's problems but did nothing – will be scrapped, with responsibility for the running of Flanders House passing to the Flemish government. Flanders minister president Kris Peeters, who has responsibility for the region's foreign affairs, will be in charge.

While a suitable diplomat is being sought, the running of Flanders House will be taken over by Kris Dierckx, who represents Flanders at the UN organisations in Geneva. His first job will be to sort out the social status of Flanders House employees in New York, who were left by Fontaine with no sickness insurance. ♦

Flanders hits Kyoto targets

But minister warns there is work still to do

ALAN HOPE

Flanders has attained its targets under the Kyoto accords on the limiting of emissions of greenhouse gases, the Flemish Environment Agency (VMM) announced last week. Under the Kyoto agreement, the region has to cut its emissions by 5.2% between 2008 and 2012 compared with the reference year of 1990. According to figures issued last week by the VMM, that target was attained in 2008, when emissions were 10.8% down.

"This shows that our policy is having an effect, and that the effort is paying off," said environment minister Joke Schauvliege.

The latest news is indicative of a trend, she said, in which emissions of greenhouse gases have been falling since 2004.

However Kyoto does not demand that the target be met once only; any reduction in greenhouse gases, to be meaningful, needs to be maintained. "Every sector – industry, construction, agriculture, transport and electricity – has to continue with their efforts," the minister said. We also have to look forward to the post-Kyoto period when the targets become even tougher." By 2020, Belgium as a whole will have to reduce its greenhouse gases by 15%.

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This week, the 100th issue of Flanders Today comes off the presses in Groot Bijgaarden. It's now two years since we launched a newspaper in English covering the Flemish part of Belgium. We now have 11,000 subscribers across Europe and distribute a further 9,000 copies in schools, universities, tourist offices and hotels. As we enter our third year, we have ambitious plans for more feature stories and supplements. We also hope to organise events for our readers like walking tours and brewery visits, following the success of our historical tour of Antwerp last week. Let us know what else we can do. We will listen.

Derek Blyth
Editor in chief

Breaking news

Get the news from Flanders online in English and French at www.flanderstoday.eu



FLANDERS TODAY
OCTOBER 7, 2009

News in brief

An Antwerp police officer who **shot dead a man** caught robbing a pharmacy will not face disciplinary proceedings, a police spokesman said. The officer fired three times with an MP5 semi-automatic machine pistol normally carried unloaded in the police van. However the prosecutor's office could still take legal action if it finds the shooting was not lawful.

Only DIY and clothing untouched by crisis



© shutterstock

Major household purchases are being postponed, Fedis says

Belgians changed their shopping habits in the first six months of the year as a result of the economic crisis, according to a report by the retail federation Fedis. Most sectors have felt the pinch as the public turned to saving instead of spending. Savings went up, from 13% of disposable income in 2008 to 15% this year.

For the first time in nine years, food sales were down – by 1.3% compared to the same period in 2008. One in five consumers cut back on food spending. Brand names were hardest hit, Fedis said, dropping nearly two percentage points of market share to 53%. Store-brand products remained stable, but discount brands leapt from 24.5% to 28% of the market. Four in 10 consumers told Fedis they now consciously go looking for bargains.

The non-food sector is also feeling the effects of the crisis: spending on video material was down 3%, games down 4% and electrical goods down nearly 4%. "We are all putting off major purchases like washing machines, dishwashers, vacuum cleaners and dryers," a Fedis spokeswoman said. Only clothing and do-it-yourself equipment saw sales go up, by 3.3% and 2.9% respectively.

The restaurant industry is also suffering, with an average of four businesses going bankrupt every day – a total of 1,101 in the first half of this year. In addition, 798 retail stores and 644 wholesalers went out of business.

The number of jobs in the retail industry will still be up in 2009, but much less than in 2008: 1,000 extra jobs this year compared to 4,000 last year.

"Businesses have no choice but to make other efforts to attract customers," said Fedis director-general Dominique Michel. "Selling more involves investing more – in renovation, diversifying, opening new outlets. Nearly eight out of 10 businesses in our survey said they would be making new investments this year."

→ www.fedis.be

presentation of content, as well as acting awards for van den Eynde (leading man) and Jo De Meyere (supporting actor). Other winners included Simone Kleinsma, best actress for *Sunset Boulevard*, and Anne Mie Gils, best supporting actress for *Elisabeth*.

FLANDERS TODAY

Independent Newsweekly



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Derek Blyth

Brussels' local **Flemish station** **TVBrussel** this week started a new series of programmes aimed at older viewers. Called *Linking generations presenteert*, the series will cover matters of interest to the over-50s, thanks to a subsidy of €165,000.

The musical Daens! by **Studio 100**, starring Lucas van den Eynde, Free Sofriau and Jelle Cleymans, swept the board at the Flemish Musical Awards last week. The show won best musical, best direction, best cast, best book and best

The Flemish have **never been so sporty**, with the number of people taking an active part in sport three times higher now than it was in 1969, according to research from the Catholic University of Leuven (KUL). The rise is biggest among women and older people. The reasons given include more media interest and a wider variety of sports on offer. Favourite sports: football, cycling and swimming, followed by dance, tennis and running.



Schaauvliege looks forward to total recycling

→ continued from page 1

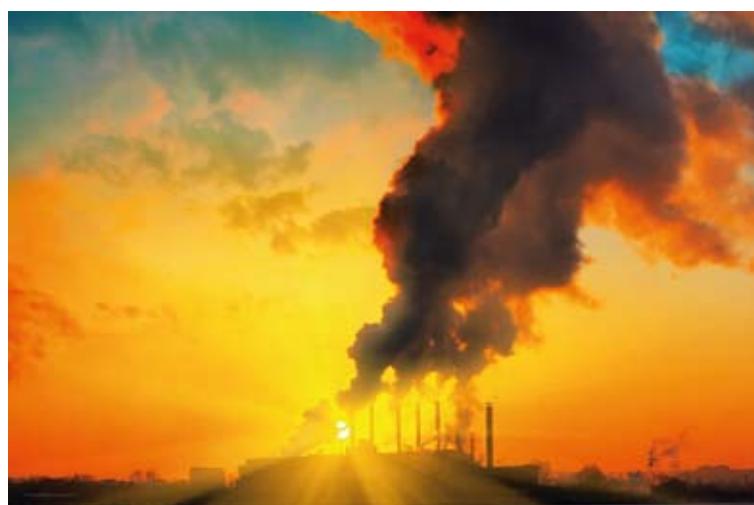
The so-called Kyoto Protocol was a protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, signed at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. The protocol contains limits on emissions of four greenhouse gases which contribute to climate change – carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide, sulphur hexafluoride and methane, as well as two groups of gases. Among the countries that signed up to the framework convention, the US is the most notable country not to have ratified the Kyoto protocol, which means the targets are not legally binding on Washington.

Back in Flanders, the VMM considers the achievement of the Kyoto target to be a result of efforts by industry and the power-generation sector – although the economic crisis certainly also had an effect. Emissions from the transport industry went up very slightly, and heating of buildings also went up, largely as a result of last year's cold winter.

Schaauvliege, in an interview with *De Standaard* newspaper, praised the "cradle-to-cradle" philosophy of Professor Michael Braungart, a German chemist and environmental activist who once lived in a tree as a green protest. Braungart advocates a society without waste, and therefore without the environmental dangers that waste creates.

"Next year I'm in the chair of the European environment council," Schaauvliege said. "There will be an informal council on cradle-to-cradle, and Braungart will work alongside us. I want investment in this area. If we can make a chair whose materials can be completely recycled, and export that sort of product, then we're on the right road."

Elsewhere the Flemish green party Groen! were experiencing difficulties in finding a successor to veteran leader Mieke Vogels, who stepped down last month. Wouter De Vriendt, the favourite to replace her, withdrew



© shutterstock

from the race unexpectedly last week for "personal reasons". As a compromise, party members have proposed a co-chair, occupied jointly by Tinne Vanderstraeten, one of the party's rising stars, and Wouter Van Besien, vice-chair under Vogels. The party's French-speaking counterpart, Ecolo, operates such an arrangement. But Van Besien has rejected the idea

of a co-chair in favour of the existing chair/vice-chair arrangement. At a party congress last weekend, where the succession was hotly discussed, the party pledged to profile itself as radical, promising "achievable and comprehensible ideas that don't scare people, but bring them hope". ♦

THE WEEK IN FIGURES

10 years

extension to the working life of the country's three nuclear power stations



€250-€300 million

anticipated annual revenue for the treasury generated by this measure

€800 million

investment required by Electrabel, which runs the power stations

€60 million

in unpaid bills left behind by former Brussels minister Pascal Smet, now in the Flemish government, according to his successor, Brigitte Grouwels

72 hours

spent in the high-security wing of Bruges prison by VTM journalist Faroek Özgünes, who is making a documentary

1,356

people who visited the regularisation office in Antwerp's town hall since 15 September, 500 of them to submit an application

33%

percentage of Belgian employees bored at work, according to a poll by HR consultants StepStone

64%

households with access to the internet, up 4% on 2007. In almost all cases, the connection is broadband: only 4% still use dial-up

13

consortiums that have applied to be involved in the construction of four new prisons planned in Beveren and Aalst in Flanders, and in Sambreville and Leuze-en-Hainaut in Wallonia

€155 million

paid out by the unemployment benefits agency in 2008 to 18,000 "jobless" claimants who were in fact employed

€34,307

cost of the military security for the luxury yacht of King Albert II last year, according to the defence ministry

FIFTH COLUMN

ANJA OTTE

A quirky character

"I can count and I will continue to count. For anyone who can count, 35 plus 72 still equals 117." This was by far the most hilarious statement during the opening debate of the Flemish Parliament. It came from budget minister Philippe Muyters of the nationalist N-VA, who so far remains something of an unknown to the Flemish man in the street.

The opposite is true of Jan Peumans (N-VA), the man everyone thought would get Muyters' portfolio. Peumans had to settle for the presidency of the Flemish Parliament, which was a bit of a disappointment, but he didn't sulk. Instead, he has become somewhat of a celebrity.

Jan Peumans comes from Riemst, a Limburg town that is closer to Maastricht and Liège than Brussels or Antwerp. For a long time, Peumans stayed clear of national politics, which he felt he could do without. He kept an outsider's perspective, even after he had moved to his party's inner circle.

This has made him a favourite with journalists, who appreciate his candidness, his quirky character and critical attitude. They also respect his work in parliament, especially on the Oosterweel project, long before this plan to complete the Antwerp Ring became heated. Shortly before the elections, several newspapers voted him "best Flemish MP".

After the elections, he was named as the next mobility minister, but his party opted for the outsider Philippe Muyters. When, a couple of years ago, something similar happened to Flemish MP Eric Van Rompuy, he took his brother Herman's advice. Be free, Herman said. From then on, Eric Van Rompuy always spoke out (until, that is, Herman became prime minister).

It looks like Jan Peumans has chosen the same option. The presidency of the Flemish Parliament requires a bit of distance, but that is not how Peumans functions. He started out by making clear that he would not be visiting the royal palace for reasons of protocol. Peumans simply does not like royalty. Next, he spoke of his love for Wallonia, which is quite unusual for a Flemish nationalist. When a minor scandal erupted in Wallonia over the huge retirement bonus paid to the president of the Walloon Parliament, Peumans joined in the debate. He declared himself shocked by the size of his own paycheck. "I can do with thousands of euro less," he said.

Now that is how you make headlines in Flanders. That, and bad maths.



A royal audience greeted the first performance in Antwerp last week of *Pippi zet de boel op stelten*, a new stage production of the adventures of Astrid Lindgren's incorrigible heroine. The show, written by Stany Crets and starring Amaryllis Utterlinden in the lead role, has been touring in the Netherlands since earlier in the year. For the opening show in Antwerp, Prince Laurent, Princess Claire and five-year-old Princess Louise were in attendance, the latter two finding the musical worth a standing ovation. The show will tour across Flanders until January.

→ www.pippimusical.be



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16.00 Investing in Belgium – real estate and financial assets (ING)

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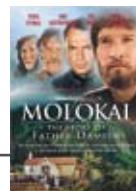
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Inspiration

Eleven leprosy patients from Damien's Hawaiian village will travel to Rome

→ continued from page 1

Vital Van Dessel, the mayor of Tremelo, invited Barack Obama, who spent part of his youth in Hawaii, to the celebrations this weekend. The US president politely declined, but the US Ambassador, Howard Gutman, will read a message from the President in the city on Sunday.

Nonetheless, Tremelo should brace itself. "Tremelo held a parade on the centenary of Damien's death in 1989, which drew 17,000 people," says Van Dessel. "But the canonisation is much bigger."

The mayor is unabashed in hailing Damien as his personal hero. "Every time has its own heroes, but, for me, Father Damien remains the greatest," he says. "He always inspires me, even though it is hard to follow his example. He was a man who gave everything without expecting anything in return."

Who is Father Damien?

The man who became a model for charity was born in 1840, the seventh of eight children, in a region beset by failed potato and grain harvests. The young "Jef" – described as square, sturdy and well-conditioned – took his

solemn vows at the age of 21 in the French monastery church of Issy. He chose the name Damien after a young doctor who died a martyr's death in the fourth century.

At the age of 23, before he had even completed his novitiate, he sailed for Hawaii to work as a missionary. Soon after arriving, he was ordained in Honolulu.

During his early years in Hawaii – then an independent kingdom – Damien explored much of the archipelago and learned the local language. He was stationed for nine years in the Puna district. His decision to tend to the needs of lepers on the island of Molokai came in 1873, almost a decade after his arrival.

It is hard today to imagine the stigma of leprosy at the time and the nerve it took to volunteer to treat sufferers. Ever since the arrival of Captain James Cook in 1778, native Hawaiians had been devastated by European diseases like smallpox, influenza, cholera, measles and, worst of all, leprosy. In the 100 years between 1770 and 1870, the local population plummeted from 250,000 to 50,000. A policy was introduced in 1873 to isolate those afflicted by leprosy –

described by locals as the "separating sickness" – not only because of the fear of contagion, but because the authorities feared such a disfiguring disease would spoil the archipelago's beautiful and prosperous image. Before long, those showing the first symptoms were being systematically rounded up and isolated on the Kalaupapa peninsula of Molokai Island.

The Catholic missions decided that four young priests would take turns working on Molokai Island, thus ensuring that missionaries would always be present but would not have to endure a long stay in such a frightful environment.

But when he heard about the mission, Damien begged the Catholic Prefect Apostolic to send him there. A week later, he arrived at the colony, a lawless chaos whose 800 filthy inhabitants lived a slow death in huts, with only one another's company and the sweet intoxicating juice of the ti tree for distraction.

Damien changed that. His primary concern was to restore a sense of personal dignity and value. With help only from the few lepers who were capable of it, he built cottages, an aqueduct, schools, a church and a dispensary. Later, they enlarged the hospital, improved the landing and the road leading to the wharf, opened a store with free provisions, grew vegetable gardens and even started a choir and a band.

Damien quite literally built the community of Kalaupapa. He organised a parish, set up associations, celebrated the Eucharist, performed marriages, baptised the newly born, took confession, visited the sick and administered last sacraments. During his time there, he conducted 6,000 funerals and personally constructed 2,000 coffins.

He became a beloved, if eccentric, figure; he wore a flowered native dress under his cape, tied up the brim of his battered clerical hat with string. And in a very literal sense, he embraced his flock. He washed their bodies, bandaged their wounds, tidied their rooms and hugged them unflinchingly.

The death of Damien

One Sunday in 1885, Father Damien opened his sermon not with the customary "Brethren" but simply: "We lepers". During the next five years his face took on the signs of leprosy: leonine, patchy, with thick lips. Despite his disfigurement, he made no changes in his life and continued his work.

He died in 1889 at the age of 49.



Although he is no longer buried there, the people of Kalaupapa maintain Father Damien's grave, which is visited by thousands of tourists every year



The beautiful Kalaupapa peninsula and community on the Hawaiian island of Molokai

He was carried to his grave by a cortège of weeping lepers, many blind and sick, and buried a few yards from an open field that is believed to contain as many as 2,000 unmarked graves.

Less than two months after his death, a Leprosy Fund was founded in London, the first organisation devoted to helping victims of the disease. As the years went on, Damien's name was used by associations around the world that were set up to combat the disease: Damien-Dutton Society in the US, Friends of Father Damien in the Belgian Congo, Damien Foundation in Korea.

Though his grave still marks his burial place, Damien's body did not stay in Hawaii. King Leopold III, mourning over the death in 1935 of his wife Queen Astrid, decided he would find peace having Damien re-buried in Belgium. The priest's remains were dug up and sent half way around the world in a zinc-lined coffin of koa wood, covered by the American flag.

When the boat carrying the casket arrived in Antwerp in 1936, it was greeted by the most prominent figures of church and state in Belgium, including the king, Prime Minister Paul van Zeeland and Jozef-Ernest Cardinal van Roey.

But Damien is still beloved in Hawaii. His statue is one of the two the state sent to the Capitol's Statuary Hall in Washington DC – the same statue can also be

found in Honolulu in front of the State Senate building. Honolulu's Damien Memorial High School carries his name, while the local Damien Museum is located on the grounds of St Augustine Church in Waikiki.

Much has changed since Damien's time. Leprosy has been curable since the development of sulfone drugs in the 1940s, and those treated with drugs are not contagious. Hawaii scrapped the exile policy in 1969. Patients sent to Molokai before 1969 are free to leave, but many chose to stay at the Kalaupapa settlement. About 100 people live there, including care workers and patients. Eleven of the about 20 aging patients still living at Kalaupapa will make the trip to Rome for Damien's canonisation.

At the ceremony, Pope Benedict will give Honolulu Bishop Larry Silva a small box containing one of Damien's tarsal bones, which had been kept in the archive of the Fathers of Holy Hearts in Leuven.

In the three weeks that follow, the relic will be hand-carried to celebration ceremonies throughout Hawaii before finally ending up at its permanent home in Honolulu Cathedral, the church where Father Damien was ordained. But by then, of course, he will be Saint Damien. ♦

Watch the canonisation of Father Damien live on Canvas from 9.30 to noon on Sunday, 11 October

→ www.damiaan2009.be



Father Damien's St Philomena church. Up to 2,000 lepers are buried in the field next to it

Vansteenkiste allowed home

Luc Vansteenkiste, the former head of the employers' organisation VBO remanded in custody on suspicion of insider trading, has been released from Vorst prison in Brussels after eight days of detention. Vansteenkiste was imprisoned after he failed to cooperate in the investigation to the satisfaction of investigating magistrate Michel Claise. His detention led to criticism of the frequent abuse of the remand system.

Vansteenkiste was arrested two weeks ago. His wife showed up at the prison every day at 05.30 with clean clothes and toilet articles, but she was repeatedly denied access to her husband.

According to reports, Vansteenkiste was determined not to respond to attempts to pressure him into con-

fessing. When a single-occupancy cell was found for him, he refused to move, and occupied his time by giving his two cellmates lessons in Dutch. The investigation covers the sale of shares in Fortis bank at €5.40 by Compagnie Bois Sauvage, of which Vansteenkiste was a director, just days before the share price collapsed to €1.50. Vansteenkiste was also a director of Fortis at the time.

According to his lawyer, speaking outside the prison following the release, Vansteenkiste "remains in the same position as before, that he has nothing with which to reproach himself." His release was conditional, he said, without revealing the nature of the conditions. ♦



Vansteenkiste looked tired and drawn as he left Vorst prison last week

Postal strike averted

The post office managed to avert a growing mail strike last week by withdrawing its proposals to introduce a new level of postal worker.

Last Friday, mail deliveries in Brussels and Wallonia were disrupted or cancelled as a result of industrial action in protest at the post office's plans to bring in so-called neighbourhood mail carriers, who would deliver only normal mail and be paid far less than normal mail carriers, who would be left to deliver recorded mail, bringing pensions to housebound elderly people and perform other more specialised tasks.

However, postal workers – who have seen their numbers cut and their workloads increase in recent years – regarded the introduction of the neighbour-

hood mail carriers as a ploy to hive off much of their work to new low-paid staff, leaving the way clear to cut their numbers. In Brussels and Wallonia, anger quickly led to industrial action, but unions in Flanders preferred to wait to see what management would do next.

In response, the CEO of the post office, Johnny Thijs, backed down from his proposal, although he described the idea as "frozen" rather than "scrapped".

The plan was to have been implemented initially as a pilot project in 28 of the more remote postal centres in the country. Thijs expressed "understanding" of the unions' concerns, and called them together for talks, due to take place as *Flanders Today* went to press. ♦



Neighbourhood mail carriers would deliver all ordinary mail

Baroness bows out at Concentra

Tony Baert, the baroness chairwoman of Concentra, publishers of *Het Belang van Limburg*, last week stepped down from her post at the age of 80, after 56 years in effective control of the company.

Born Antonia Martens, she was the niece of Frans Theelen, the son of the founder of Concentra. In 1953, Theelen asked Martens and her husband Jan Baert to take over the running of the company. Baert, director of the *Brugsche Courant* newspaper, was seen as Theelen's natural heir, in the absence of children of his own.

When Theelen died in 1971, the Baerts bought out the rest of the family, turning their effective sole control into an economic reality. Tony Baert exercised an important influence within the company, earning herself the nickname "the empress of Hasselt".

Jan Baert died in 1986, and his son Peter took over, turning Concentra into a multimedia group, swallowing up the *Gazet van Antwerpen* and, in a revolutionary move, launching the free newspaper *Metro* in 2000. Concentra now also owns a series of local TV stations, jobs weekly *Vacature* and *Radio Nostalgie*.

In 2000, Concentra merged with the holding corporation Imperial Invest, but the Baert family retained a 64% stake. The two groups demerged in 2003.

Peter Baert withdrew from running the company in 2000, reportedly for personal reasons that included clashes with his mother, who continued to exercise her influence from the chair. Peter Baert's place was taken by three men: Willy Lenaers now replaces Tony Baert as chairman, and will be replaced as COO by Marc Vangeel. Robert Ceuppens remains as managing director. ♦

Holy orders lose €1.5m in Lehman crash

The financial crisis has had some unexpected victims, it was revealed last week. The Flemish religious order the Brothers of Love lost €500,000 in the collapse of US bank Lehman Brothers, while the Sisters of St Vincent, whose nunnery is in Gijzegem, lost €1 million.

Cloistered orders are non-profit partnerships like any other, explained managing director of the Brothers, Raf De Rycke. "We have money to invest. It would be a sign of bad management if we were to leave it sitting in the bank while awaiting a missionary project."

The order invested in Lehman products without realising how risky the derivatives were, De

Rycke said. "We are very cautious investors. We have a committee which screens our investments for risk. Nobody saw the failure of Lehman Brothers coming," he said.

In Gijzegem, meanwhile, the Sisters declined to comment on their case.

Religious orders are forced to invest wisely in large part because their members are getting older, and young people are not joining up to keep things going. The Brothers of Love have no intention of turning their backs on the investment market, De Rycke said. "It would not be wise to stop investing. We simply have to make sure we don't put all our eggs in one basket." ♦

THE WEEK IN BUSINESS

Banking • Citibank

Citibank Belgium is expected to be sold shortly to France's Credit Mutuel as part of a plan by its US parent to recover from the financial market's turmoil. Other interested candidates include Spain's Santander and the French SocGen. The bank is currently involved in a messy court case after misleading innocent investors into buying structured products issued by the failed US Lehman Brothers. Several Flanders-based charities and religious orders are among those who lost more than €400 million in total.

Chocolates • Best Belgian

Best Belgian Chocolates of the World, an association that includes five Flemish chocolate manufacturers, has opened a flagship store on Brussels' Grote Markt. The new outlet includes a workshop and a chocolate academy. The association plans to open a "chocolate village" in the former Victoria plant in Koekelberg next year. It also hopes to be present on the Belgian stand at the Shanghai World Exhibition.

Dredging • Jan De Nul

Aalst-based dredging company Jan De Nul has won a €61 million contract to deepen and broaden the Atlantic end of the Panama Canal over a 14-kilometre stretch. The company had already won an earlier contract as part of a consortium building six new sluices on the canal.

Food • Smeva

Smeva, a Lummen-based specialist in refrigerated food equipment, has acquired the Dutch Geerlofs company. Geerlofs is the market leader in the Netherlands in preservation techniques.

Medical technology • Arseus

Arseus, a leading distributor of products and services to the medical and pharmaceutical sector, has acquired Duo-Med, a leading medical technology supplier in the Benelux region.

Metals • Nyrstar

Nyrstar, the Balen-based, non-ferrous metals producer, has acquired 85% of the Coricancha zinc mine in Peru for some \$15 million. The move comes just days after the company announced that it had acquired 19.9% of the Australian Ironbank Gold Company, which is involved in extracting large zinc deposits in eastern Greenland.

Pharma • Solvay

Brussels-based chemicals and plastics group Solvay has sold its pharmaceutical activities to the US Abbott company for €5.2 billion, including €600 million in deferred payment. Solvay entered the pharma business in the late 1970s, and the sector contributed some 30% of the group's turnover and more than one-half its profits.





14 JACOB AND HIS SWORD
FATHER OF GHENT FESTIVAL
 WALTER (74)
 Of course the festival is commercial today. It has always been. If you have a bar, you want to get rich in ten days. Wouldn't you?

15 A BAR IN AUGUST
 (Wed to Sun) Oh my god, did nobody tell you? If you come to Ghent in the first half of August, everything is closed. After the Festival (ten nights of non-stop partying in July), the whole city falls into a coma, and all the barkeepers take a few weeks off. The last Ghent nighthawks now gather on the terrace of L'HEURE BLEUE, one of the only bars that's open.

16 FREE CONCERT ON MONDAY
 (Every day / free concert on Mon) At TREPUNT, folk singer Walter De Buck did a few concerts on a wooden stage in 1968. He and his friends only had some barrels of beer, acoustic guitars and smelly sandals, but the vibe was good. Over the decades, this small-scale hippie gathering has grown into the Ghent Festival, one of Europe's biggest city festivals in the second half of July, with over 1.500.000 visitors per year.

17 TOO MANY COLOURS LOCAL TIP
 (Every day / Late dinner) The interior decorator of PINK FLAMINGO'S is insane – there's just too many colours. This barbiedoll bar is totally kitsch, with funky music and a Ghentish in-crowd. 'The Pink' is always full, but especially a good choice on Monday when most other bars in the centre are closed. Spaghetti till midnight.

18 GAY BAR
 (Every day) For strictly gay bars, extravagant parties or darkrooms, better go to Brussels or Antwerp. It's not that there is no gay scene in Ghent, it's just that the scene is rather relaxed and hangs out in the same bars as everybody else. CASA ROSA is a gay bar, but it's also just a place for a chat and a drink.

19 WE ❤ COPS LOCAL TIP
 Being a cop in Ghent will never be the same again. 'Flikken' (Cops) was a popular series on national TV, filmed in Ghent from 1999 to 2009. 'T KROCHTJE' was the cops' regular bar in the series. Every year, we organized a special 'Cops Day', when children walked through Ghent with fake handcuffs and police caps as if it were normal. Police vans happily went along, and you could sit on a police bike if you asked friendly. Now that the TV series is over, nobody will happily ask for a policeman's autograph again...

20 ALTERNATIVE NIGHTLIFE
 You don't really know Ghent until you've seen the sun rise here on a morning during the Ghent Festival in July. This little square called Vlaamarkt is the last party place to drink Irish coffees when everything else closes down. During the rest of the year, BAR JOS and BAR DES AMIS are a good starter for a chat with a beer, cocktail or wine. The CHARLATAN is the musical epicentre of the square, with at least three concerts a week (usually free on Thursdays and Sundays). Dj's take over in the later hours. Charlatan is a Ghent trademark, owned by a three-eyed evil man. KINKY STAR runs its own record label and puts on free concerts on Tuesday and Sunday. 'T BEGIN VAN 'T EINDE' means 'the Beginning of the End'. Indeed.

21 MORE GOING OUT
 When you're getting bored of standing in line outside the always-busy Charlatan **20**, check this square to see what's on. Especially the VIDEO is a cute ass-magnet (m/f), and sometimes you have to squeeze them all just to get to the bar. On Wednesdays: free live indie rock or elektro. More (jazz) bars and clubs just next door – go see for yourself.

22 WORLD'S BIGGEST LOLLIPOP
 The late-gothic/early-renaissance CITY HALL has been restored down to the finest details, for a few million euros. Then somebody found out in an old dusty book that the historically correct colours for the drainpipe are white and blue. So that's how they painted it, in happy lollipop colours. To see is to believe!

23 JUST DANCE
 (Tue to Sun) ABACHO is good for a party with pop hits in a big thirteenth-century cellar (not gay, but many gay regulars). In the same street: CLUB CENTRAL for salsa and PLANSIE for dancing on the ceiling.

24 NO, YOU'RE NOT DRUNK
 This number is on the map twice because the exact same building is there twice. This is why. In 1913, the World Fair was held in Ghent. The city wanted to look medieval, because that was what people liked in those days (just like today). So many buildings on the Graslei and Korenlei were reconstructed "like the good old Middle Ages". For the house at Graslei n°8, inspiration came from drawings of the Bricklayer's house, a 16th-century building that had disappeared. But during a renovation project in the 1980s, a house was discovered nearby, entirely preserved behind another wall. This was the original Bricklayer's house! We decided to keep this one too, so Ghent now has two almost-identical houses, very close to each other.

25 WEEKEND PARTY
 Korenmarkt and Klein Turkije are a party zone with commercial beats, loud fun and a striptease bar. Especially crowded on weekends. Around the corner from McDonald's, look for pop-electro club TIJUANA. Free unless it's a private party, no strict dresscode.

26 MORE THAN MOVIES
 (Every day) SPHINX is the oldest cinema in Ghent, programming arthouse movies. But many just come to comment on cute butts, with a cocktail on the terrace. Ask the barkeepers for going-out tips – perhaps they'll even take you along.

27 IRISH PUB

28 GIVE PISS A CHANCE
 This little alley is the most smelly spot in town. Lakes of urine everywhere. Watch out boys and girls: € 60 if you get caught.

29 JAZZ CLASSIC
 (Every day) Through the thick smoke in the beautiful wooden interior, you spot bar philosophers, talkative people, and many dreadlocks. DAMBERD has been a bar for about 250 years, and since 1978 jazz has been the thing.

30 BEACH WITHOUT SAND
 Hard to imagine that in the 90's you could still drive and park your car here. On a fine summer day, the Graslei is now an open-air festival all night long. The terraces serve beer, but most drink cans from the nightshop.

31 UNEXPECTED PLEASURE LOCAL TIP
 (Wed to Sun) Locals who first enter the new jazz bar HET ONVERWACHT GELUK all say the same thing: it feels like it's always been here. On Wednesday, barkeeper and sax-player Xavier mainly programs old-school jazz in 1930's to 1950's style (for free).

32 HOTSY TOTSY
 (Every day) HOTSY TOTSY: jazzy student bar in 1930's style with a pooltable. Live concerts on Thursday.

33 NICOTINE BAR
 (Mon to Thu) FATIMA used to be an old people's bar. When the owners retired in 2003, an art student took over and left the interior just the way it was with the nicotine-yellow ceiling. He calls the bar his 'graduation project'. On Monday the 'Radical Knitters' gather here for a die-hard knitting session.

34 MEAT STICKS WITH JESUS
 (Tue to Sun / Dinner till 00:00) 'T OUD CLOOSTER (The Old Monastery) is a restaurant-bar with religious statues and candlelight all over the place. A favourite for lovers. € 16 for the famous meatstick with vegetables, fruit and fries.

35 FREE FREE FREE FREE WIFI
 (Every day) DE LOGE looks like a chilly lounge at first sight, but they make it up with endless coffee for € 3,50 (raise your finger for a refill), free wifi, a free concert on Wednesday and free 'boterhammen mee preparee' (bread with minced meat) at 19:00 on Monday.

36 IRISH PUB

37 VEGGIE FAST FOOD
 (Mon to Sat / Lunch and dinner) GREENWAY = fast and vegetarian, mainly with biological ingredients. € 7 for a Join-the-Club sandwich with tempeh (voted best Belgian sandwich in 2008).

38 ITALIAN-STYLE PIZZA
 (Mon to Sat / Lunch and dinner) PANE & VINO is not cosy – just plain tables, friendly service and cheap thin-bottom pizza. Just the way it should be. € 6 for a Margherita / € 9 for the pizza rucola and gorgonzola.

39 MAKE UP CLUB
 (Fri and Sat) Big mirrors, soft golden walls, designer lighting and fashionable people: MAKE UP club is where it's at. As the name suggests, don't come dancing in your dirty shoes and ripped jeans – unless they're designed ripped jeans of course. Between € 5 and € 10.

40 NEW OLD BEER FREE WIFI
 (Every day) Like in most Belgian cities, the small city-breweries have all closed in Ghent. Annick is reviving the tradition here. Her father and grandfather were brewers too, and she just can't resist. The beer is called GRUUT like this brewery and bar.

41 AFTER-PARTY BREAKFAST
 (Closed on Tuesday and Wednesday) JACQUET is a good breakfast spot after a long night out, because they open at 06:00, and even at 05:00 during the famous Ghent Festival (second half of July).

42 THAI WOK
 (Every day / Lunch and dinner) Just pick your own meat, vegetables and sauce for a cheap healthy meal at THAI WOK. € 7,50 for a full plate.

43 FROM BUTCHER TO BAR FREE WIFI
 (Mon to Fri / Lunch and dinner) In Ghent, it all becomes a bar in the end. BIZ'ART first was a butcher (see the counter) and an icecream saloon (see the frescos in the back), now it's a crossover between a bar and a living room. € 7 for pasta Rachel with turkey.

44 GOOD FOOD GOOD JAZZ LOCAL TIP
 (Every day / Dinner) EL NEGOCITO lies right next to the red light district, but the special thing is that shady nightlife people, old smokers, students and Ghent's best jazz musicians all mix perfectly. Free concerts on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, and some more live music just when they feel like it. Juan Carlos, the cook from Chili, does good honest food, like sardines for only € 6,50.

45 CUBAN CIGARS AND PIZZA
 (Closed Wed) LA CASA DEL SIGARO CUBANO is run by a Colombian-Italian couple, so this is what they sell: cigars and... pizza. They even have a special room with Havanas if you like 'em fat and exclusive (the cigars, not the pizza).

46 THE GLASS STREET
 In Ghent, a typical nineteenth-century shopping gallery (like you still find in Brussels today) turned into the red-light district, where women sit behind windows to attract customers. Everybody knows it as 'the little glass street'.

47 EXOTIC COCKTAIL CORNER
 All the popular cocktail bars in the Lammerstraat have the same owner, but he styled all of them differently. African, Spanish, Mexican or French interior: take your pick. Drunk will ... anyway they ... you get.

48 GRAND CAFE FREE WIFI
 (Every day) During the day, young intellectuals read the newspaper at VOORUIT KAFEE. Then they stay for a play or a concert. Then they get drunk and stay a bit longer. Then they stay all night for a weekend party. Also see **102**.

49 24 / 24 SNACK-BAR
 (Always) Snackbar 'T HOEKSKER is always open, and that's quite unique in this small town. € 2,75 for a sandwich / € 8,25 for a spaghetti.

50 FRIES FROM JULIEN LOCAL TIP
 (Every day) Welcome to DE GOUDEN SATÉ or 'The Golden Meatstick', which everybody here just calls 'at Julien's place' (although it's Peter who bakes them during the night). Fries every day from 11:00 in the morning until 07:00 in the morning. Damn it, these guys are saints!

51 BIKER'S NIGHTMARE
 Every student on a bike knows it's suicide. Half of the cobblestones in this downhill street are loose, so it gets damn slippery in winter.

52 COSY SOFAS
 (Mon to Sat) The well-hidden GEUS VAN GENT is a bar made up of living rooms with comfortable sofas, golden mirrors, many grandma's tables and one pooltable. Jam session on Wednesday with Ghent's music students.

53 STUDENT STREET
 There are 50.000 students in Ghent, and around 30 student bars in this one street. So that means: lots of drinking on the street and dancing on the table. The Overpoortstraat is calmer during holidays and on weekends (yes, Belgian students go home on Friday). Best day is Thursday during the school year.

54 ROCK, METAL, PUNK
 (Every day) With about three live shows every week, FRONTLINE upholds a long-standing tradition in Belgium when it comes to death, speed, white and black metal, punk, trash, gothic, stoner rock, hardcore, industrial, noise, doom, grind and crustcore. Entrance is in the little alley. Between € 0 and € 10.

55 INTERNATIONAL BAR
 (Mon to Sat) Many regulars of THE PORTER HOUSE are exchange students, so come here to say "cheers" in 35 languages (especially on Wednesday).

56 DANCE CLUB & AFTER-CLUB
 (Mon to Sat) On a sunny Sunday morning, come and have a look around here. Ghent's nighthawks are hanging around on the sidewalk, unable to open their eyes, figuring out the meaning of life. DECADANCE is the only all-week club in Ghent. Different styles for every day of the week (the drum'n'bass nights on Wednesdays are legendary). Usually between € 2 and € 5, free before 23:00.

DOWNLOAD THE FULL VERSION OF THIS MAP ON WWW.USE-IT.BE

ALSO GET THESE!
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GHENT



GENT/GHENT/GAND

Like many cities in Belgium, Ghent is spelled in different ways by different people, so don't get confused. In the list above, it's Dutch/English/French.

HERE IS ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT LIVING AND STUDYING IN FLANDERS' BIGGEST STUDENT CITY

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Home and away in Ghent

The city of Ghent is known for its many historic buildings, such as the Gravensteen Castle and the Sint-Baaf's Cathedral, but also for the massive music festival Gentse Feesten in the summer and the many parties at the hipper-than-thou art centre Vooruit.

Ghent has also a rich academic history, with the University of Ghent (UG) founded in 1816. Throughout the years, the institution has remained true to its original philosophy of being a socially engaged and pluralistic educational system.

In its first year, UG had a student population of 190, spread over four faculties. Now, about 32,000 students study here, in 11 faculties spread all over the city. This makes Ghent the biggest student city of Flanders, just edging out the historically largest university town, Leuven.

The many research centres and laboratories put the UG on the international map, attracting every year nearly 3,000 international students, of which about 800 are on an Erasmus Exchange project.

The website of UG has a lot of advice for incoming international students, from how to use public transport to "how to act like a local". For instance: "Ask somebody to teach you the correct Ghent pronunciation of vree wijs, goe bezig, beestig and de max. They all mean 'nice' but with some subtle differences." (In fact, this piece of advice originally comes from Use-It Tourist Info for Young People, who co-produced this student guide.)

The helpful Erasmus Student Network (ESN) was founded in 1990 to support and develop student exchange all over Europe. They have a division in Ghent, which helps all Erasmus students make the best of their time in the city, which is the capital of the province of East Flanders. You can visit their office between 18.00 and 20.00. Becoming a member costs just €5, and in return you get invited to all their parties and events, enjoy discounts and consume drinks at promotional prices in the Erasmus pub The Porter House in Stalhofstraat.

ESN Ghent's office is in
"De Thermal", Hoveniersberg 24

www.esngent.be

→ KATRIJEN LINDEMANS



Dutch/Flemish
Commit this to memory: Ghent is in Flanders, the northern half of Belgium. The people are called Flemish. Their language is called Dutch, though you'll also hear people refer to it as Flemish. The Dutch, however, are never called Dutch. Unless you're looking to get punched in the face.

© Image Source / REPORTERS

Student hot spots

The Porter House · Stalhof 1
Charlatan · Vlasmarkt 6
Cafe Video · Oude Beestenmarkt 7
Hot Club de Gand · Schuddevisstraatje
(an alley off of Veerleplein)
Hotsy Totsy Café · Hoogstraat 1
Vooruit · Sint-Pietersnieuwstraat 23
(arts centre and café, the beating heart of culture in the student district)

Bars bars bars

→ KATRIJEN LINDEMANS

Beatriz Hernanz recently arrived in Ghent to begin law studies at the university. From Spain, she is one of the many international students to have a room in a "student house". Like most of the Erasmus students, the 23-year-old spends a lot of time in The Porter House, which just happens to be in the same street as her room. "I've only just arrived, but I've already gone out a lot. I like places like The Porter House, Video and Charlatan," she says. "I'm also trying to discover a lot of the city during the weekends because soon I'll have to start studying!"



Ghent has a lot of bars (319 according to www.cafeplan.be). Many students like to go out in Overpoort, a street with bars on both sides, often linked to student groups or fraternities. Enjoy a night out in Bowling Overpoort or check the legendary Decadance for some serious beats. Overpoort also has a few pita bars and one very famous frietkot (french fry stand) to still your late-night cravings.

Thursday is the big bar night in Ghent; since most Flemish students go home on the weekends, nearly all student bars are closed then. So where do you go? "When you have your room in a student home, you never really feel alone," explains Lizette Van Genugten from the Netherlands, who studied law in Ghent last year as an Erasmus exchange student. "We either went downtown – Charlatan was my absolute favourite – or held our own parties in our rooms," she says. Then quickly adds: "Of course, I also caught up on studying."

And don't forget Erasmus student organisation ESN, which often organises events or day trips to Brussels or Antwerp on weekends.

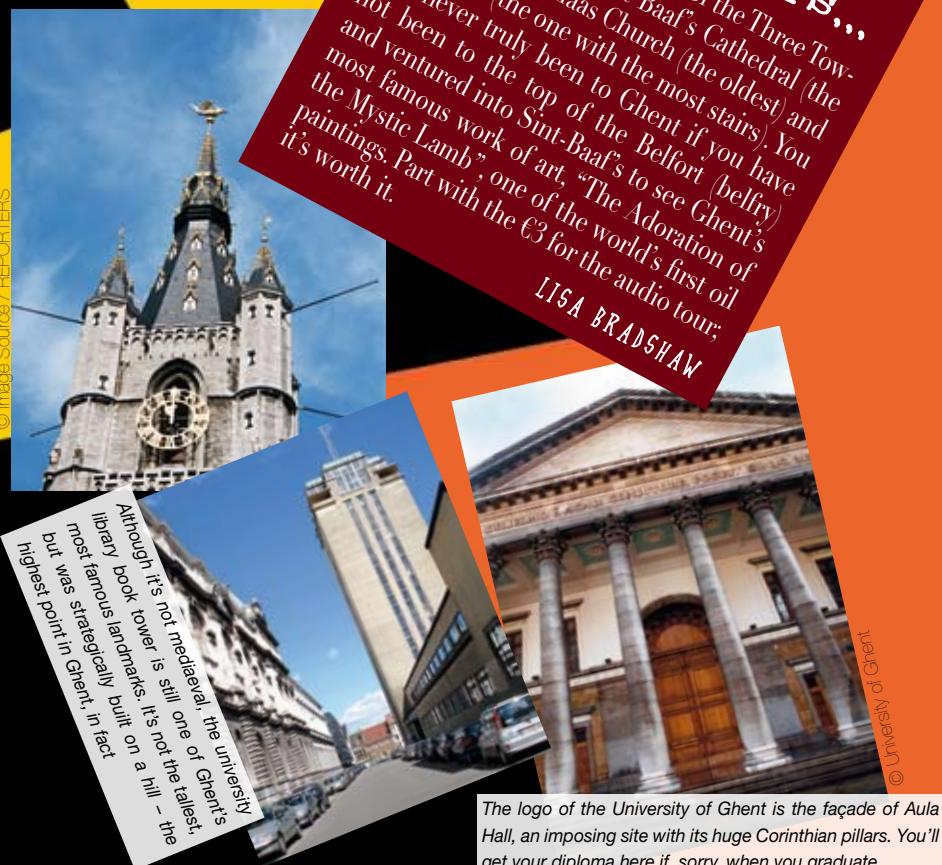
Ghent's art schools also supply a steady stream of students who populate jazz bars. That's where you'll usually find Thomas O'Leary, an American PhD student in his second year doing research on embryonic stem cell derivation. "I like places like Hot Club de Gand, Hotsy Totsy and a few places around the Graslei. But I'm always trying out new cafés in search for a new favourite," he says.

Being an international student implies being away from home. Beatriz already misses her friends and the Spanish sun, and Thomas misses his family and the option to shop on a Sunday. But sometimes it also works the other way around. Back in The Netherlands, Lizette missed international contacts so much, she decided to pause her studies for a year and join ESN Utrecht. As culture coordinator, she now organises all sorts of cultural activities for international students at the University of Utrecht.

and three towers...

Ghent is known as the City of the Three Towers. That refers to Sint-Baaf's Cathedral (the largest), Sint-Niklaas Church (the oldest) and the Belfort (the one with the most stairs). You have never truly been to Ghent if you have not been to the top of the Belfort (belfry) and ventured into the Sint-Baaf's to see Ghent's most famous work of art, "The Adoration of the Mystic Lamb", one of the world's first oil paintings. Part with the €3 for the audio tour, it's worth it.

LISA BRADSHAW



The logo of the University of Ghent is the façade of Aula Hall, an imposing site with its huge Corinthian pillars. You'll get your diploma here if, sorry, when you graduate

© University of Ghent



Bright lights, little city

The country's biggest film festival descends on Ghent

LISA BRADSHAW

The Flanders International Film Festival could rename itself an arts festival and not be stretching the truth. With musical concerts, exhibitions, parties and discussions across Ghent, it would be easy to take part in a dozen activities without seeing a single movie.

But we don't recommend it. With more than 140 films from 35 countries, a spotlight on Chinese cinema and several good Belgian selections, it's worth fitting a few into your schedule.

There are plenty of crowd pleasers and big titles to choose from, such as the hurts-so-good, post-romance comedy *500 Days of Summer*; Jane Campion's new film *Bright Star*, which details the romance between poet John

Keats and Fanny Brawne; and *Messenger*, another surprisingly good US drama about the emotional consequences of the war in Iraq.

Any of those films would be an excellent choice. But film festivals are for exploring – for picking an obscure documentary about rice farmers or a social drama by a Chinese director you've never heard of. And this festival offers you plenty of opportunities for that.

6-17 October

Across Ghent
Most films at the festival are subtitled in English
→ www.filmfestival.be



Best of China: Fish Eyes

The Asians

The festival places a special emphasis on Asia this year, particularly Chinese films (in a nod to Europalia). Contemporary Chinese cinema conveys the complexities of a culture caught between tradition and modernity, with its rapid economic growth and increasing influences from the west. Director Wang Quan'an and actress Yu Nan are on the jury, so you'll find some of their previous films, including 2007 Golden Bear winner *Tuya's Marriage*.

Most of the new Chinese films in the programme do not yet have a Belgian distributor. "Festivals are more and more the only platform for world cinema," says the festival's programme director Wim De Witte. "That's a shame because there are really beautiful films that can change the way you see the world." Of the 11 new Chinese films on the programme, you'd do well to see young director Zheng Wei's *Fish Eyes*, the story of a father and son eking out a living in a desert region, when a mysterious woman suddenly enters their lives. Getting the most out of the minimalist landscapes, it's superbly shot and fills its silences with emotion.

The exhibitions

The festival has a special focus this year on films from Asia, so its annual exhibition is *Anime! High Art - Pop Culture*, a window onto the world of Japanese animation. Arts centre Vooruit, meanwhile, returns Almost Cinema, with performances enhancing the central exhibition of artists who operate outside of the traditional boundaries of film. Almost Cinema is a cornerstone event of the Flanders International Film Festival, consistently delivering work that is both entertaining and provocative.

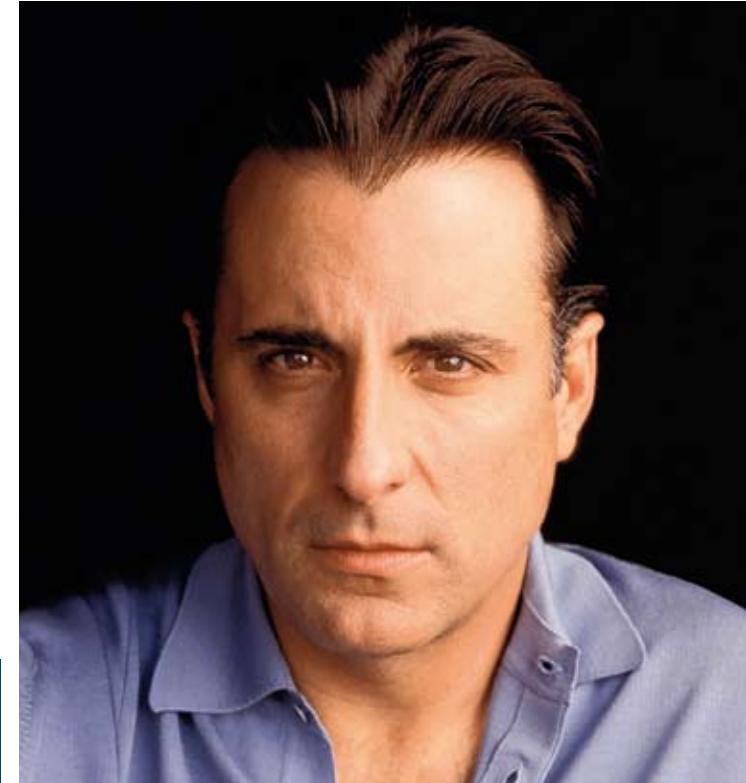
The sounds

The festival's focus has always been sound and music, with many performances of film music. Flanders' own Jef Neve is on the programme this year, as well as the Traffic Quintet, who join composer Alexandre Desplat for *Divine Féminin*, a tribute to world-class actresses. Shigeru Umebayashi, the Japanese composer known for his work on Zhang Yimou's films and a wealth of other international projects, plays two concerts.

The festival is home to the World Soundtrack Awards, which is open to the public and draws über-famous composers to Ghent. Desplat is one of this year's guests of honour, and he'll lead the Brussels Philharmonic in a performance of several of his award-winning scores, including *The Queen* and *Lust Caution*. Marvin Hamlisch, Oscar-winning composer of more than 50 films, including *The Sting* and *Sophie's Choice*, will also be at the 17 October ceremony to receive a Lifetime Achievement Award.

Desplat is also nominated this year for both Film Composer of the Year and Best Original Score for his work on *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*. He'll be given a run for his money in the Original Score category by *Slumdog Millionaire*'s AR Rahman, who will also be turning heads at the event.

And then there is the other end of the spectrum: the festival has invited Kevin Costner and his band Modern West to perform their old-fashioned blend of country music. Costner is a big star for the festival but, unfortunately, his singing is even worse than his acting.



Andy García

The guests

The big draw at this year's festival is Cuban-American actor Andy García (*Ocean's 11*, *The Lost City*), who will talk about his new comedy *City Island*. Another venerable festival guest, French director Claude Miller, will introduce his new film *Marching Band* later that same night. Seeing García doesn't mean you have to miss the much-anticipated new film *Soul Kitchen* by the phenomenal German-born Turkish director Fatih Akin (*Crossing the Bridge*, *The Edge of Heaven*), which screens at the same time – it's showing again as one of the festival's closing films.

The competitions

The film festival sponsors several competitions, including a popular public choice award. But the big prize is the juried Grand Prix, which is awarded to the film that makes the most creative use of music. The Bergman-inspired Turkish film *There*, about a family coming together after the death of the mother, and the Danish film *Applause*, with a mesmerising central performance by Paprika Steen as an alcoholic actress, are two highlights of the 12 entries.



Altiplano by the Belgian/American couple Peter Brosens and Jessica Woodworth

The Belgians

The Belgian selections this year are as diverse as the country: Feature film *Altiplano* (also in competition for the Grand Prix for Best Film) by husband-and-wife team Peter Brosens and Jessica Woodworth (*Khadak*) finds the native people of the Peruvian Andes turning against the foreign doctors in their village. *Portrait of a Young Man as an Artist* is the long-awaited documentary on dEUS musician Tom Barman, who let Manu Riche trail him with a camera for two years.

Two more Flemish films are part of the section called A Look Apart, a series of experimental films curated every year by Cis Bierinckx, director of Brussels'

Beursschouwburg arts centre. *Not Waving But Drowning* by Elias Grootaers documents the flight of Indian emigrants to the UK (by way of Zeebrugge). *Double Take* is Johan Grimonprez's revealing look at our "catastrophe culture" that cleverly cuts in old footage of Alfred Hitchcock taking chase after his double.

Meanwhile, over at Ghent University's cinema, a release party celebrates a new DVD of films by Emile Degelein. The 83-year old former director and author will be on hand to introduce a screening of three of his short films.

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FLANDERS TODAY
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**SAS
KIA
DE
COS
TER**
PROMETHEUS
**DIT
IS
VAN
MIJ**



© Joran Jacobs

Dit is van mij

ALAN HOPE

For most authors, the launch of a new book involves some warm white wine, little sandwiches and the grudging attendance of a few inky-fingered critics. Not for hot young Flemish novelist Saskia De Coster. She's launching her new novel, *Dit is van mij* (This is mine) by taking over the Beurschouwburg in the centre of Brussels and putting on a party with bands and DJs. And yes, you're all invited.

"My book wants to celebrate itself, so I wanted throw a party for it," she tells me. "If it wasn't for my book, I would never throw a party. I am too afraid to do that, afraid that no one would turn up."

But she's looking for a "festive occasion" around the book. "I'm not going to read out loud all night."

The entertainment features Mastercab and a set by Kristof Uittebroek of Customs. "Music is a big source of inspiration to me," De Coster, 33, says. "I need a soundtrack to my writing. Music can really hit me very directly."

As for the novel, her sixth, she calls it "a crystal-clear book about the endless deferment of choices and the madness of love – full of humour, doubt and passion". The main character, Jakob, quits his job and decides to give up on the idea of love. The latter is a bit more difficult, though, since his love for photographer Jade borders on obsession.

"The book deals with the question what belongs to you and what does not, emotionally

speaking," explains De Coster. "You become a person through encounters and relationships with other people. They influence you, and you give them something back. But what happens when the balance is lost? How far can you go before you are lost or even sucked dry? And what to do when you realize you have gone too far and are lost? Can you just delete the past?" ♦

9 October, from 20.00

Beursschouwburg café
Ortsstraat 29, Brussels
Entry is free but reserve at
pers@standaarduitgeverij.be
→ www.saskiadecoster.com



OTHER BOOK EVENTS THIS WEEK

Tom Naegels new book *Beleg* on the shelves!

Discussion with Joseph Pearce & Erwin Mortier → Leuven

Ode to Hugo Claus reading marathon → Brussels



Rock & Pop

Ghent

Handelsbeurs
Kouter 29; 09.265.92.01,
www.handelsbeurs.be
OCT 10 20.00 Joan as Police Woman
OCT 11 20.15 Kevin Costner & Modern West

Vooruit

St Pietersnieuwstraat 23; 0900.26.060,
www.vooruit.be
OCT 8 20.00 Tomàn, The Sedan Vault

Grimbergen

CC Strombeek
Gemeenteplein; 02.263.03.43,
www.cstrombeek.be
OCT 9 20.30 Axl Peleman

Hasselt

Muziekodroom
Bootstraat 9; 011.23.13.13,
www.muziekodroom.be
OCT 8 20.30 Big Pete & The Backbones with Alex Schulz
OCT 10 20.00 Limbomania featuring Herk-De-Stad

Leuven

Het Depot
Martelarenplein 12; 016.22.06.03
OCT 13 20.00 Das Pop

GET YOUR TICKETS NOW!

Lady Linn & Her Magnificent Seven

21 November, 20.00

Ancienne Belgique, Brussels

If you haven't seen them yet, don't wait any longer. It's been an upward trajectory for this seven-piece band led by the nostalgic voice of Lien De Greet (Lady Linn), an ensemble that makes jazz and swing standards sound new again. Last year's album *Here We Go Again* was a collection of originals, and the Lady makes them sound like she's been singing them all her life. Three of the singles became hits, as did the only cover, Eddy Grant's "I Don't Wanna Dance", which brought down the house at last summer's Rock Werchter. But this time you can see them up close and personal.



→ www.abconcerts.be

Le Botanique

Koningsstraat 236; 02.226.12.57
Concerts at 20.00:
OCT 7 Florence and the Machine, Swanton Bombs + Girls
OCT 8 Yodelice
OCT 10 Patrick Wolf
OCT 11 Under Buyen + Our Broken Garden + Mads Langer, The XX

Vorst-Nationaal

Victor Rousseaulaan 208; 0900.00.991
OCT 14 20.00 Pixies



Jazz & Blues

Bruges

De Werf
Werfstraat 108; 050.33.05.29

♦ Agenda ♦

FLANDERS TODAY
OCTOBER 7, 2009

OCT 10 20.30 Gebhard Ullmann
Basement Research
OCT 15 20.30 Nathalie Loriers Trio
and Bert Joris with his String Quartet

Brussels

Bozar

Ravensteinstraat 23; 02.507.82.00,
www.bozar.be

OCT 9 20.00 Keith Jarrett
OCT 14 20.00 Maceo Parker (Skoda
Jazz Festival)

Flagey

Heilig Kruisplein; 02.641.10.20,
www.flagey.be

OCT 15 20.15 Marcin Wasilewski Trio

Jazz Station

Leuvensesteenweg 193-195;
02.733.13.78

OCT 7 20.30 Narcissus

OCT 10 18.00 Le Tintamarre du Gros
Bruno

OCT 14 20.30 Henri Greindl Quintet

Koninklijk Circus

Onderrichtsstraat 81; 02.218.20.15,
www.cirque-royal.org

OCT 15 20.30 Jan Garbarek Group
(Skoda Jazz Festival)

Le Grain d'Orge

Waversesteenweg 142; 02.511.26.47

OCT 9 21.30 One Way

Musical Instruments Museum

Hofberg 2; 02.545.01.30,
www.mim.fgov.be

OCT 13 12.30 Jan Rzewski & Fabia
Fiorini

Sazz'n Jazz

Koningsstraat 241; 0475.78.23.78,
www.sazznjazz.be

Concerts at 20.30:

OCT 7 Le Tintamarre du Gros Bruno

OCT 13 Vendeurs d'Enclumes

OCT 14 Larissa Quartet

Sounds Jazz Club

Tulpenstraat 28; 02.512.92.50,
www.soundsjazzclub.be

Concerts at 22.00:

OCT 7 Caribe con K - Los Soneros del
Barrio, Caribbean music

OCT 8 21.00 The Singers Night

OCT 9 Greg Lamy Quartet

OCT 10 21.00 Brussels Rhyth'm
Blues: The Witness

OCT 12 Master Session

OCT 13 Laurent Doumont Soul Band

OCT 14 Chamaquiendo, salsa

The Music Village

Steenstraat 50; 02.513.13.45,
www.themusicvillage.com

OCT 7 20.30 Casual Encounter

OCT 8 Marie-Christine Maillard, jazz
and Henri Salvador

OCT 9 Houben's Factory

OCT 11 Darren Sigesmund



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Ghent

Vooruit

St Pietersnieuwstraat 23; 0900.26.060,
www.vooruit.be

OCT 11 20.00 The Swingmasters + DJ
Ivan Scheldman

Grimbergen

CC Strombeek

Gemeenteplein; 02.263.03.43,
www.cgstrombeek.be

OCT 14 20.30 Peer Baierlein Quartet,
CD release concert

Sint-Truiden

Academiezaal

Plankstraat 18; 011.70.17.00,
www.academiezaal.be

OCT 13 20.15 Bobo Stenson Trio



Antwerp

deSingel

Desguinlei 25; 03.248.28.28,
www.desingel.be

OCT 10 20.00 Manuel Moreno
Junquera 'Moraito', flamenco guitar

Zuiderpershuis

Waalse Kaaï 14; 03.248.01.00,
www.zuiderpershuis.be

OCT 9 20.30 Afel Bocoum (Mali)

OCT 10 20.30 Dong Girls + Xinjiang
Dolan Muqam Arts Ensemble (China)

OCT 15 20.30 Orquesta do Fubá
(Brazil)

Brussels

Art Base

Zandstraat 29; 02.217.29.20,
www.art-base.be

OCT 9 20.00 Carolina Pereira,
Argentinian tango

Flagey

Heilig Kruisplein; 02.641.10.20,
www.flagey.be

OCT 10 20.15 Ricardo Ribeiro and
Rabih Abou-Khalil (Portugal)

Sazz'n Jazz

Koningsstraat 241; 0475.78.23.78,
www.sazznjazz.be

Concerts at 20.30:

OCT 8 Duo Raposo, fado

OCT 9 Formatic Folk

OCT 10 23.00 Sazz n Jazz Trio, Turkish
pop

OCT 11 Fasil Quintet

OCT 15 Wolke

The Cotton Club - Grand Casino

Duquesnoystraat 14; 02.289.68.66,
www.gcb.be

OCT 10 20.00

OCT 11 20.00 Cora Burggraaf, mezzo;
Christoph Berner, piano: Bizet, Wolf,
Strauss, Weill

OCT 10

Theatre 140

Eugène Plaskylaan 140; 02.733.97.08,
www.theatre140.be

OCT 9-10 20.30 Silent film concert:
Red Heroine by Wen Yimin (China
1929) with live music by Devil Music
Ensemble (US)

VK Club

Schoolstraat 76; 02.414.29.07,
www.vkconcerts.be

OCT 10 19.30 GlobaLocal Festival
'Along the Waterside': Black Out + Kaly
Live Dub + DJ Justin Toland

OCT 14 21.30 Boban I Marko
Markovic Orkestar, Balkan brass band



Antwerp

Amuz

Kammenstraat 81; 03.248.28.28,
www.amuz.be

OCT 11 15.00 Psallentes Femina, ritual
songs from the Flemish beguinages

Arenbergschouwburg

Arenbergstraat 28; 070.222.192,
www.arenbergschouwburg.be

OCT 13 20.15 Ryuichi Sakamoto,
piano

deSingel

Desguinlei 25; 03.248.28.28,
www.desingel.be

Concerts at 20.00:

OCT 9 Konzerthausorchester Berlin
conducted by Lothar Zagrosek,
with Stefan Vladar, piano: Kodály,
Schumann, Brahms

OCT 14 Ensemble Explorations with
Christine Busch, violin; Roel Dieltiens,
cello: Haydn, Boccherini, Rossini,
Mendelssohn

Brussels

Bozar

Ravensteinstraat 23; 02.507.82.00,
www.bozar.be

OCT 8 20.00 Guangzhou Symphonic
Orchestra conducted by Yu Long, with
Jian Wang, cello; Shen Tiemei, voice:
Chen Qigang, Guo Wenjing

OCT 10 20.00 Anima Eterna
conducted by Jos van Immerseel, with
Ronald Brautigam, fortepiano: Strauss,
Brahms

OCT 11 11.00 Cora Burggraaf, mezzo;
Christoph Berner, piano: Bizet, Wolf,
Strauss, Weill

De Munt

Muntplein; 070.23.39.39,

Ypres

Stadsschouwburg

Vandenpeereboomplein 31;
057.22.88.16, www.westclassic.be

OCT 11 17.00-19.00 Collegium
Instrumentale Brugense conducted by
Ivan Meylemans, with Ludo Marien,
accordion; Stefaan Craeynest, cello:
Mozart, Holst, Elgar, Devreese,
Piazzolla

Ghent

Vlaamse Opera

Schouwburgstraat 3; 070.22.02.

Benauisse and Lies Pauwels (in Dutch)

OCT 13 20.00 Needcompany in Het Hertenhuis, staged by Jan Lauwers (in Dutch)

Tervuren

British School of Brussels

Leuvensesteenweg 19; 02.675.42.51,

5walker7@versateladsl.be

OCT 11 20.00 Der eingebildet Kranke by Molière, staged by Barbara Abend (in German)

Wezembeek-Oppem

Internationale Deutsche Schule

Lange Eikstraat 7; 02.675.42.51,

5walker7@versateladsl.be

OCT 10 20.00 Mit Musike, staged by Barbara Abend (in German)



Visual Arts

Aalst

Netwerk: Centre for Contemporary Art

Houtkaai; 053.70.97.73,
www.netwerk-art.be

Until NOV 7 Time as Activity: video art and installations by international artists

Antwerp

Cathedral of Our Lady

Handschoenmarkt (03.213.99.51)
Until NOV 15 Reunion: from Quinten Metsys to Peter Paul Rubens, masterpieces from the Royal Museum of Fine Arts return to the Cathedral

Contemporary Art Museum (M HKA)

Leuvenstraat 32; 03.238.59.60,
www.muhka.be

Until NOV 8 Lonely at the Top: A Larger Europe #1, art from republics of the former Soviet Union

Until JAN 3 Textiles: Art and the Social Fabric, installations, sculptures, film, flags and banners

Extra City

Tulpstraat 79; 03.677.16.55,
www.extracity.org

Until OCT 25 Guy Tillim: Avenue Patrice Lumumba, examination of modern history in Africa against the backdrop of its colonial and post-colonial architecture by South African photographer Guy Tillim

Until OCT 25 Lieven de Boeck: Dictionary of Space, Part II, letters and drawings from the 19th century to the present day

Havencentrum Lillo

Scheldelaan 444, Haven 621;

www.havencentrum.be

Until DEC 14 Tabula Scaldis: Tafeereel van de Schelde, panoramic drawings and other documents take visitors on a tour of the River Scheldt from end to end

Mode Museum

28 Nationalestraat; 03.470.27.70,
www.momu.be

Until FEB 21 Delvaux: 180 Years of Belgian Luxury, history of the famous leather goods house

Rockox House

Keizerstraat 12; 03.201.92.50,
www.rockoxhuis.be

Until NOV 15 A Gift to God, private patronage of religious art during Antwerp's Golden Age

Brussels

Archief en Museum voor het Vlaams

Leven te Brussel

Arduinkaa 28; 02.209.06.01,

www.amvb.be

Until OCT 31 Herinnering & Migratie: Erfgoed van nieuwe Brusselaars (Memory and Migration: Heritage of New Brusselaars): film, documents, texts and poems record the experience of Brussels' immigrants

Argos: Centre for Art and Media

Werfstraat 13; 02.229.00.03,
www.argosarts.org

Until DEC 19 Actors & Extras, contemporary artists explore the contrast between the work of actors and extras in cinema

Danish Cultural Institute

Koningstraat 35; 02.5230.73.26,
www.dkibenelux.org

Until OCT 22 Urban DK, graffiti art

Fondation pour l'Architecture

Kluisstraat 55; 02.642.24.80,
www.fondationpourlarchitecture.be

Until OCT 18 De tijd van de boetiek (The Time of the Boutique), 200 years of shop windows and interiors

Hallepoort

Zuidlaan; 02.534.15.18

Until OCT 25 Archeologie om de hoek (Archaeology around the corner), archaeological finds in Brussels over the past 20 years

Horta Museum (Winter Garden)

Amerikastraat 25; 02.543.04.90,

www.hortamuseum.be

Until OCT 31 Jean-Charles Detallante, sculpture

ISELP

Waterloosesteenweg 31; 02.504.80.70

Until OCT 17 Véronique Poppe: Human Capital, paintings; Françoise Joris, ceramics; Bénédicte Monaville, jewellery

Until NOV 14 Flesh, drawings by Dany Danino, sculpture by Hughes Dubuisson and ceramics by Sofi Van Saltbommel

Jacques Franck Cultural Centre

Waterloosesteenweg 94; 02.538.90.20,

www.cccjacquesfranck.be

Until OCT 31 Marc Rossignol: Cacher Montrer, paintings and installation

Jewish Museum of Belgium

Minimstraat 21; 02.512.19.63,

www.new.mjb-jmb.org

Until OCT 15 Een geheugen op papier (A memory on paper), Jewish life in Belgium recorded in historic postcards

Le Botanique

Koningsstraat 236; 02.226.12.57

Until NOV 22 Controverses: Een juridische en ethische geschiedenis van de fotografie (Controversy: A Judicial and Ethical History of Photography)

Musical Instruments Museum

Hofberg 2; 02.545.01.30,

www.mim.fgov.be

Until OCT 11 Alan Lomax in Italy '54-'55, photos honouring the late American ethno-musicologist

Nova Cinema foyer

Arenbergstraat 3;

www.nova-cinema.org

Until OCT 10 Stephen Tunney (aka Dogbowl), drawings

WIELS

Van Volxemlaan 354; 02.347.30.33,

www.wiels.org

Until DEC 6 Ann Veronica Janssens: Serendipity, installations by the contemporary Belgian artist

World Bank Brussels

Marnixlaan 17; 02.552.00.32

Until OCT 31 In the Eyes of a Woman: Roma Portraits, the lives of various Roma communities seen through the eyes of female photographers

Deurle

Museum Dhondt-Dhaenens

Museumlaan 14; 09.282.51.23,

www.museumddd.be

Until NOV 29 Absence is the Highest

Form of Presence, film and visual art works by Robert Gober, Julião Sarmento and Luc Tuymans

Ghent

Design Museum

Jan Breydelstraat 5; 09.267.99.99,
http://design.museum.gent.be

Until OCT 11 Yrjö Kukkapuro, retrospective of the Finnish designer from the late 1950s to the present day

Until OCT 11 Ceramics by Raoul Duffy (1877-1904)

Until OCT 11 Schoonhoven Silver Award: Poetry in Silver, competition with 55 international artists

MIAT

Minnemeers 9; 09.269.42.00,
www.miat.gent.be

Until OCT 18 Ghent on porcelain cards from 1840-1865

Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst (SMAK)

Citadelpark; 09.221.17.03, www.smak.be

Until NOV 15 Raphaël Buedts, furniture objects

Until NOV 22 Nick Ervinck, GNI-RI sep2009 EITOZOR, installations

Until NOV 22 Sculptural collections by various artists

OCT 10-JAN 10 Michel François, Faux Jumeaux (False Twins), photographs, videos and sculptures

Hasselt

Fashion Museum

Gasthuisstraat 11; 011.23.96.21,

www.modemuseumhasselt.be

Until NOV 8 In Her Shoes, trends and evolution of women's shoe design, from 1900 to contemporary designers

Literary Museum

Bampsalaan 35; 011.22.26.24,

www.literairmuseum.be

Until FEB 20 Zeg Roodkapje, waar ga je heen? (Say, Little Red Riding Hood, Where Are You Going?), the truths and fictions in fairy tales

Kemzeke

Verbeke Foundation

Westakkers; 03.789.22.07,

www.verbekefoundation.com

Until NOV 15 Artificial Nature, outdoor sculpture and installations by contemporary Belgian and European artists

Leuven

Museum M

Leopold Vanderkelenstraat 28;

016.20.09.09, www.mleuven.be

Until DEC 6 Rogier van der Weyden 1400 | 1464 Master of Passions, work by the 15th-century Brussels city painter, the first exhibition in Leuven's new museum

Mechelen

Speelgoedmuseum (Toy Museum)

Nekkerspoelstraat 21; 015.55.70.75,

www.speelgoedmuseum.be

Until JAN 3 Thirty-five years of Playmobil

Ypres

CC Ieper - Lakenhallen

Grote Markt 34; 057.23.94.80,

www.acci.be

Until OCT 4 Wat overblijft (What remains), recycled assemblages by Flemish artist Camiel Van Breedam



Architecture Day 2009: Annual event during which more than 75 buildings open their doors to the public, plus over 30 tours devoted to the architecture theme day

OCT 11 10.00-18.00 in cities across Flanders (Antwerp, Brussels, Genk, Ghent, Herentals, Leuven, Mechelen, Ostend, West Flanders); Reservation required for walking, bike or bus tours 03.257.52.13, www.dagvandearchitectuur.be

Europalia China: Festival celebrating Chinese art and culture, ancient to contemporary, with more than 450 events

Until JAN 30 across the country

FACE OF FLANDERS

Hilde Crevits

Whenever you see the phrase "Questions were asked in parliament", it's a sign of a serious, weighty matter being taken to the highest levels of the land.

Last week, when the Flemish parliament resumed, it had two pressing concerns. The first was Kris Peeters' presentation of his government's policy plans in a time of budgetary crisis. The second was a magazine photo shoot in which a minister was seen wearing some very posh frocks.

The minister is Hilde Crevits, public works and mobility, who had accepted an invitation from *Nina*, the glossy weekend supplement in *Het Laatste Nieuws*, to be photographed in a variety of outfits, including a ball gown by Dolce & Gabbana. *Nina* belongs at the more brassy end of the spectrum of fashion photography, and Crevits, whose everyday look is extremely tempered, was overly-made up and clearly ill at ease.

Her evident lack of conviction, however, wasn't about to save her from the wrath of her peers. Not since Susannah was spotted bathing by the elders has so much energy been spent on ostentatious denunciation.

The charge was led, in no great surprise, by Filip Dewinter of Vlaams Belang, who considered



the participation of a minister in such a shoot to be inappropriate. Dewinter, like others, thought it was too much for Crevits to be modelling expensive dresses at a time when Flanders was in sackcloth (evidently mistaking the shopping habits of *Laatste Nieuws* readers, who are rarely to be seen frequenting the upmarket boutiques of the Waterloolaan or the Nationalestraat).

Flemish political editorialist Walter Pauli chided the parliamentarians for wasting time on such a piffling matter, before going on to declare the photo shoot "unworthy of a minister". Veteran commentator Hugo Camps, a man you would not easily mistake for George Clooney, thought the shoot was "a disaster". The pairing of Hilde Crevits and Dolce & Gabbana

he considered severely: "The mating of an ox and a donkey would have been less painful. The farmer's wife in Hilde is hard to cover up. Put her in high heels and the whole world wobbles."

On Crevits' side, the silence was deafening. Someone pointed out that other ministers like Annelie Turtelboom and Pascal Smet had undergone makeovers for the popular prints. Nobody felt it necessary to point out that far from being a flibbertigibbet, Crevits is a dedicated minister whose intellect is only surpassed by her industry. The elders were determined to cast the first stone. And then it was all over.

As for Kris Peeters and his government's priorities, well who knows? Was anyone paying attention?

→ www.hildecrevits.be

ALAN HOPE

FLANDERS TODAY
OCTOBER 7, 2009

ALISTAIR MACLEAN

TALKING DUTCH



voorzorgsmaatregelen

zakdoekjes zorgvuldig weg – throw your tissues away carefully, rather than stuffing them into your pocket for the rest of the week. No words here for those who still use pressed and ironed handkerchiefs embroidered with their initials.

And if no hanky is to hand: *heb je geen zakdoekje bij de hand, bedek dan je mond en je neus* – then cover your mouth and your nose. So sleeves are permissible. And perhaps the best advice: *blif thuis als je ziek bent* – stay at home if you're ill.

At the foot of the poster just to drive the message home comes the chilling line: *deze eenvoudige voorzorgen kunnen levens redden* – these simple precautions can save lives. All of which makes taking the morning train sound like attempted suicide.

Of course it could all be another example of crying wolf and *de Mexicaanse griep* could pass as a footnote. Yet it's probably best to be safe than sorry. And the symptoms? Well, *koorts* – fever, *spierpijn* – muscular pain, *hoofdpijn* – headache. And if you are struck down, *de ziekte kan langer dan een week duren* – the illness can last for more than a week. Having just read this through again, I'm beginning to feel a bit fluey. Look out for a notice in next week's edition.

→ www.influenza.be

SHARON LIGHT

bite

't Parelhuis

Sebastien Dekeyzer got turned on to Champagne a few years ago – but he had a hard time finding any at a decent price in Kortrijk. For him, there was a simple solution: open his own Champagne bar and supply the goods himself. 't Parelhuis was born.

Dekeyzer and his girlfriend found a charming corner spot on Begijnhofstraat, steps from Kortrijk's Grote Markt and just outside the entrance to the *begijnhof* and its collection of 17th-century buildings, a recognized UNESCO World Heritage site.

In nice weather 't Parelhuis sets out barrels and high stools for those who enjoy combining a glass of bubbly with people-watching. It is also a wonderful spot for enjoying the bells from the nearby carillons in Sint-Maartenskerk and the Halletoren – almost too good, as it can get a bit booming.

't Parelhuis offers about 15 champagnes as well as Cava and Crémant d'Alsace. The majority sell for under €30 a bottle, with small discounts for purchasing six or more. If you want to enjoy a bottle on site, the prices are a bit higher.

Many people stop by just to sip a glass – half a dozen champagnes were on offer during our visit, all in the €4 to €6 range. We sampled a choice of three for €12. At Dekeyzer's recommendation, we enjoyed two Launois champagnes – a sweet rosé, a dry Blanc de Blancs and Guy Méa's tradition premier cru (semi-dry).

It was a lovely afternoon break in nice surroundings – an unusual substitution for an afternoon *pintje* – and the owners were friendly and knowledgeable. Opening hours are limited, though, so be sure to check ahead before venturing out.

→ www.tparelhuis.be



The last word → → →

Great grapes

"We've never had grapes of this quality before. Since the end of July we've had practically no rain, so diseases have been under control." Guy Geunis, wine producer, who is looking forward to a bumper vintage in Limburg this year

Shifting the blame

"Every time there's an incident, the prosecutor says, it's the fault of the foreigners' service, or the prison service, or the police, or social services, or the judge, or the legislator, or even the justice minister. It's never the fault of the prosecutor."

Socialist politician Renaat Landuyt, who has written a book on the blunders of the justice system

The road to Tremelo

"When I was five my mother put me on a plane to Hawaii. Little did I know I was on my way to Molokai to spend the rest of my life. Now I'm 68, and at least I can get to see Belgium. What a beautiful country." Leprosy victim Norbert Kaamayo, who visited Father Damien's native village of Tremelo last weekend

Wild West Flanders

"We're not living in the Wild West. What happened tonight goes much too far."

Lieven Lybeer, mayor of Kortrijk, after a drive-by gun battle between motorcycle gangs