

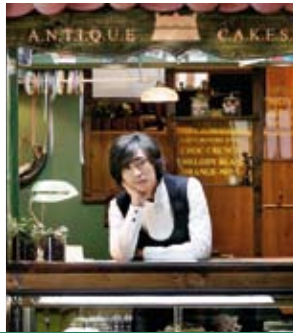
## Lost in the post.....6

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.

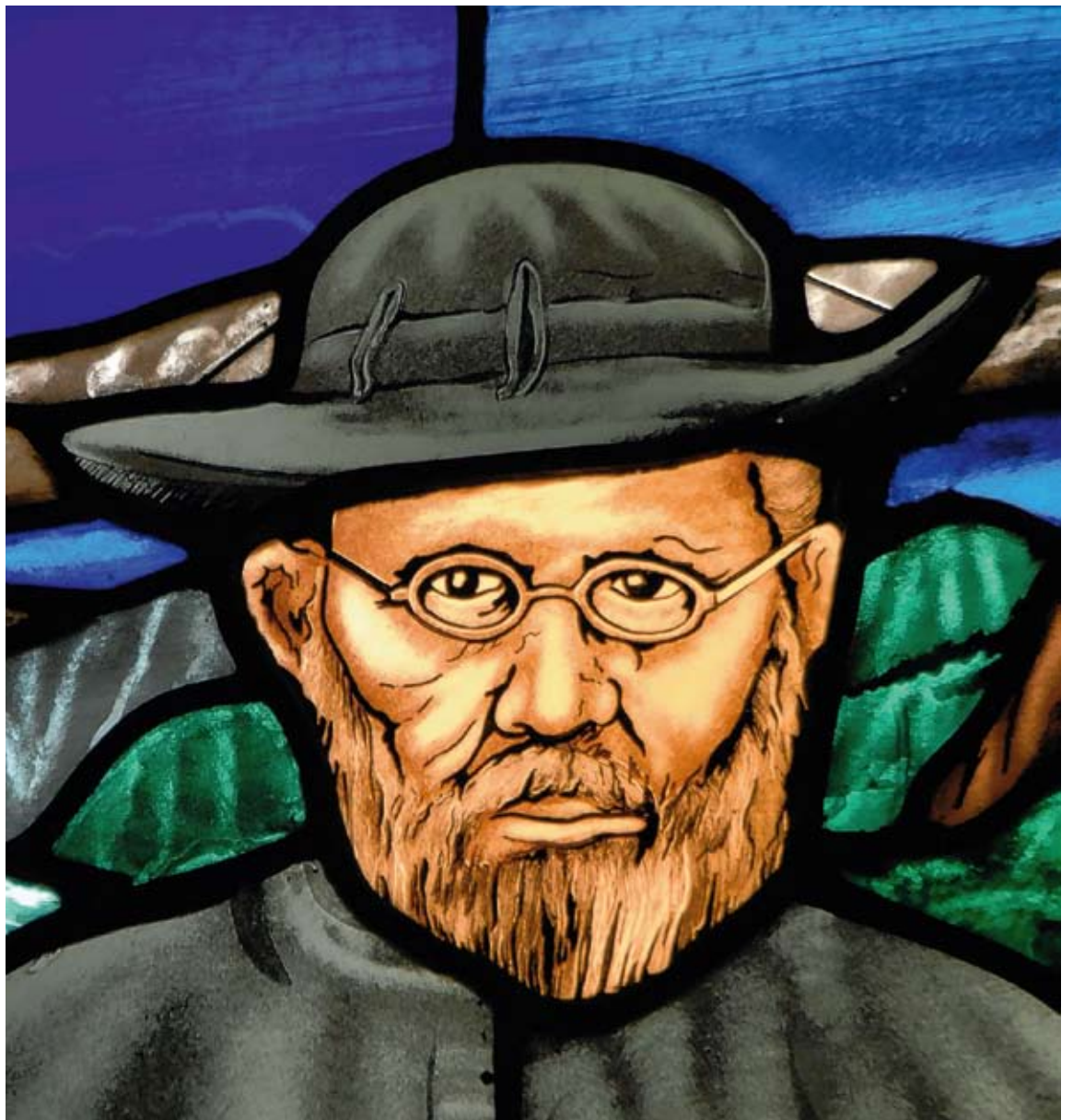
Defying conventions that said he should avoid the leper colony, Damien embraced it, rebuilding their village and, in the process, catching the fatal disease himself. An inspiration for the likes of Gandhi and Mother Theresa, Damien is today the spiritual patron for lepers, HIV/AIDS patients and outcasts.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

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## 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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## 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.

An **Airbus A330** due to be leased by the defence ministry for the transport of officers, politicians and members of the royal family is too big to be housed in any of the existing hangars at Melsbroek air base, the ministry said. Critics have attacked the leasing of the second-hand A330 from Portuguese company HiFly, claiming the decision was taken against the rules on public contracts.

**Fare dodgers on public transport** will only be prosecuted after they have been caught three times travelling without a ticket, the country's prosecutors-general have ruled. The decision is a surprise given that all transport authorities, including De Lijn and the NMBS, have made tackling fare-dodgers a priority. However the prosecutors also pointed out that previous offences can be taken into account when action is finally taken.

Organisations to help **people with a gambling addiction** have criticised the latest product of the National Lottery. Poker, a new scratch card, could make it more likely for people to move on to the card game itself, they said. The €2.50 card has a top prize of €100,000, which only appears twice in every 1.2 million cards.

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 Soffriau 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

### Only DIY and clothing untouched by crisis



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](http://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*.

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.

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

## FLANDERS TODAY

### Independent Newsweekly

Editor: Derek Blyth

Deputy editor: Lisa Bradshaw

News editor: Alan Hope

Agenda: Sarah Crew, Robyn Boyle

Art director: Michel Didier

Prepress: Corelio P&P

Contributors: Rebecca Benoot, Robyn Boyle, Courtney Davis, Emma Portier Davis, Stéphanie Duval, Anna Jenkinson, Sharon Light, Alistair MacLean, Marc Maes, Ian Mundell, Anja Otte, Saffina Rana, Christophe Verbiest, Denzil Walton

Project manager: Pascale Zoetaert

Publisher: VUM

NV Vlaamse Uitgeversmaatschappij

Gossetlaan 28, 1702 Groot-Bijgaarden

Editorial address: Gossetlaan 30

1702 Groot-Bijgaarden

Tel.: 02.373.99.09 – Fax: 02.375.98.22

E-mail: [editorial@flandertoday.eu](mailto:editorial@flandertoday.eu)

Subscriptions: France Lycops

Tel: 02.373.83.59

E-mail: [subscriptions@flandertoday.eu](mailto:subscriptions@flandertoday.eu)

Advertising: Evelynne Fregonese

Tel: 02.373.83.57

E-mail: [advertising@flandertoday.eu](mailto:advertising@flandertoday.eu)

Verantwoordelijke uitgever:

Derek Blyth



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## Schauvliege looks forward to total recycling

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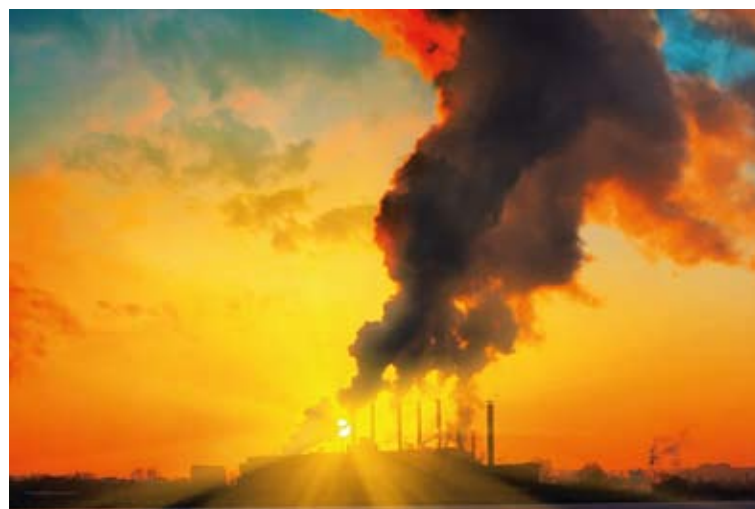
The so-called Kyoto Protocol was a protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, signed at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. The protocol contains limits on emissions of four greenhouse gases which contribute to climate change – carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide, sulphur 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.

Schauvliege, 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," Schauvliege 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 Farook 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



## Ghent University in project to set up Korean university

Ghent University is to assist the authorities in South Korea with the construction of a new university in Incheon, located outside the capital Seoul. Ghent, together with Harvard and Berkeley, will set up the educational provision of part of the campus, and then take in tuition fees for the 1,000 or so students, both Korean and Chinese, who sign up. Ghent will also provide the scientific staff required on the campus, with one-third coming from Korea itself and the rest from elsewhere in the world, while South Korea will carry out all construction and infrastructure work. "This gives our institution an international face," rector Paul Van Cauwenberge said.

Elsewhere, Van Cauwenberge announced that Ghent university is very

nearly bursting at the seams. This year, some 6,200 new students enrolled, with the result that lecture theatres are filled to capacity, and there is hardly a futon to be found for accommodation in the city. The total number of students is now 33,500. "I think our student numbers could go up a little bit more," he said. "By about two or three thousand, not more. Luckily we can stretch out to the edges of the city."

Ghent University has separate campuses on the edge of the city specialising in science, agriculture and veterinary science. "We used to be a Ghent university, today we're a Flemish university with an international aspect. Tomorrow we'll be standing side by side with the best of them," he said. ♦



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 Uiterlinden in the lead role, has been touring in the Netherlands since earlier in the year. For the opening show in Antwerpen, 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](http://www.pippimusical.be)

## 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 Phillipe 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.





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# Inspiration

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

→ continued from page 1

**V**ital 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.



Photos: Jenny Gargallo & Jeffrey Jumper

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

He was carried to his grave by a cortege 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](http://www.damiaan2009.be)



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



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

## Baroness bows out at Conentra

Tony Baert, the baroness chairwoman of Conentra, 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 Conentra. 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 Conentra

into a multimedia group, swallowing up the *Gazet van Antwerpen* and, in a revolutionary move, launching the free newspaper *Metro* in 2000. Conentra now also owns a series of local TV stations, jobs weekly *Vacature* and *Radio Nostalgie*. In 2000, Conentra 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. ♦

## 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

## 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.

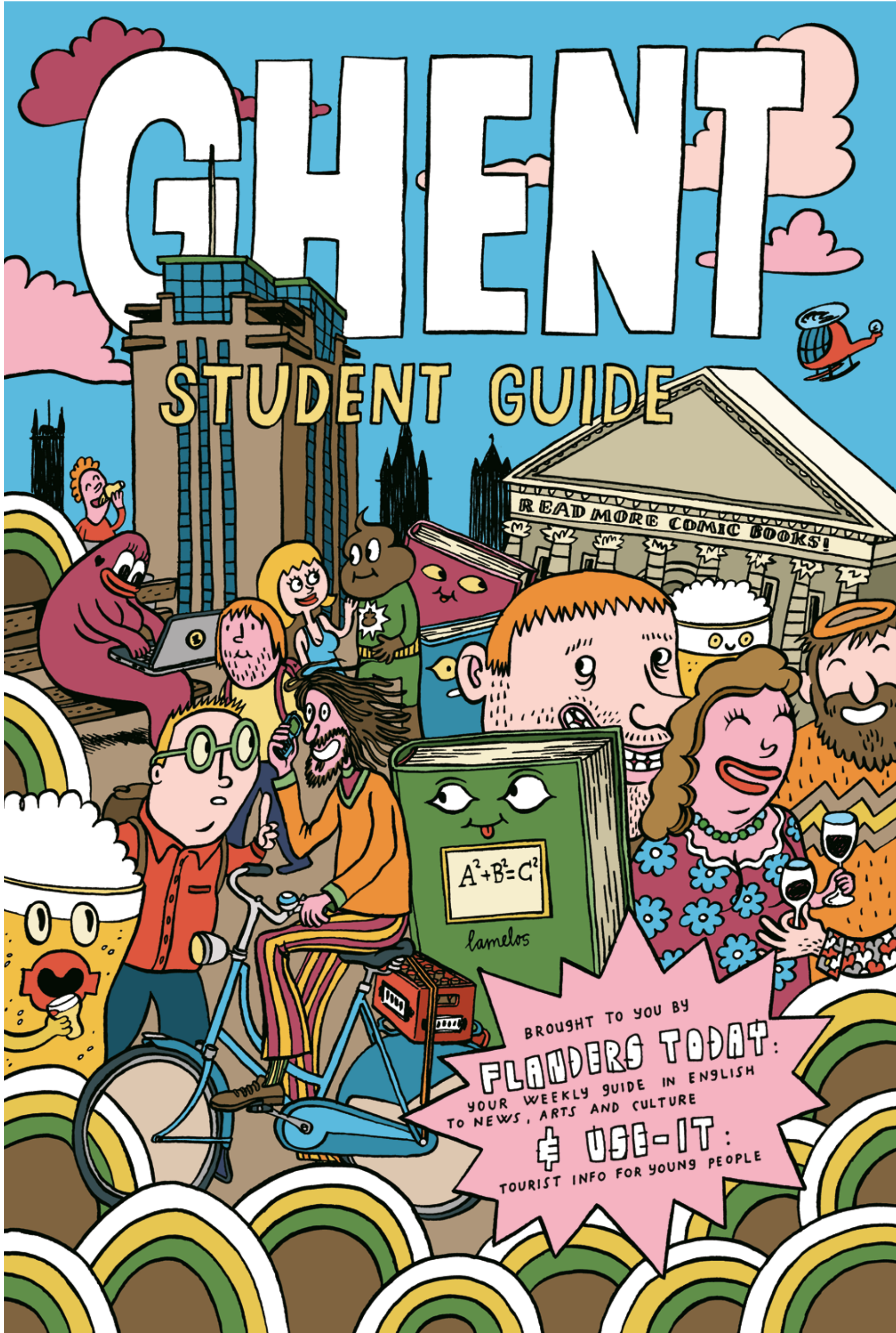
### Pharma • Solvay

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.



# GHEENT

## STUDENT GUIDE



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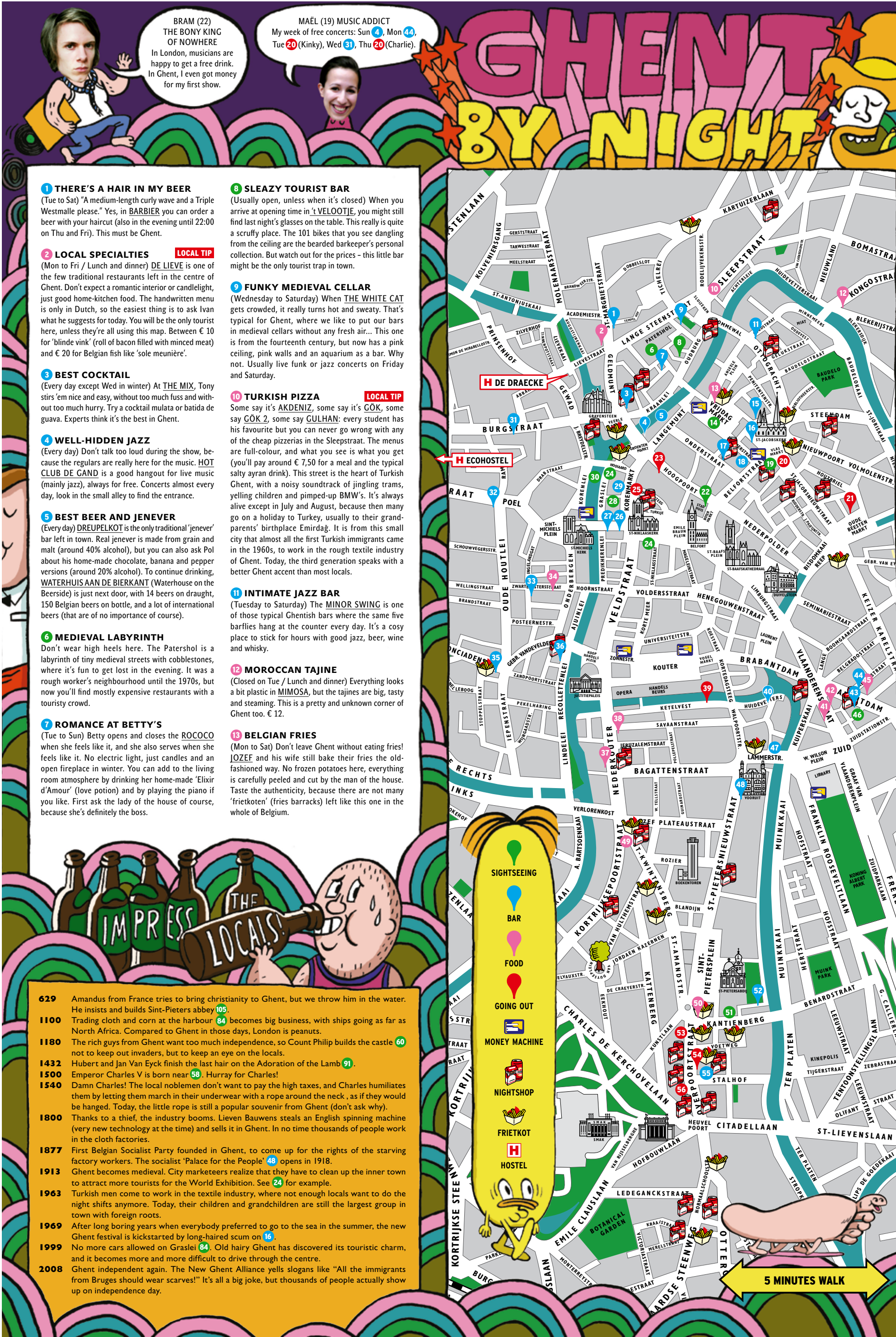
**FLANDERS TODAY:**

YOUR WEEKLY GUIDE IN ENGLISH  
TO NEWS, ARTS AND CULTURE

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TOURIST INFO FOR YOUNG PEOPLE





### 1 THERE'S A HAIR IN MY BEER

(Tue to Sat) "A medium-length curly wave and a Triple Westmalle please." Yes, in **BARBIER** you can order a beer with your haircut (also in the evening until 22:00 on Thu and Fri). This must be Ghent.

### 2 LOCAL SPECIALTIES

**LOCAL TIP**

(Mon to Fri / Lunch and dinner) **DE LIEVE** is one of the few traditional restaurants left in the centre of Ghent. Don't expect a romantic interior or candlelight, just good home-kitchen food. The handwritten menu is only in Dutch, so the easiest thing is to ask Ivan what he suggests for today. You will be the only tourist here, unless they're all using this map. Between € 10 for 'blinde wink' (roll of bacon filled with minced meat) and € 20 for Belgian fish like 'sole meunière'.

### 3 BEST COCKTAIL

(Every day except Wed in winter) At **THE MIX**, Tony stirs 'em nice and easy, without too much fuss and without too much hurry. Try a cocktail mulata or batida de guava. Experts think it's the best in Ghent.

### 4 WELL-HIDDEN JAZZ

(Every day) Don't talk too loud during the show, because the regulars are really here for the music. **HOT CLUB DE GAND** is a good hangout for live music (mainly jazz), always for free. Concerts almost every day, look in the small alley to find the entrance.

### 5 BEST BEER AND Jenever

(Every day) **DREUPELKOT** is the only traditional 'jenever' bar left in town. Real jenever is made from grain and malt (around 40% alcohol), but you can also ask Pol about his home-made chocolate, banana and pepper versions (around 20% alcohol). To continue drinking, **WATERHUIS AAN DE BIERKANT** (Waterhouse on the Beerside) is just next door, with 14 beers on draught, 150 Belgian beers on bottle, and a lot of international beers (that are of no importance of course).

### 6 MEDIEVAL LABYRINTH

Don't wear high heels here. The Patershol is a labyrinth of tiny medieval streets with cobblestones, where it's fun to get lost in the evening. It was a rough worker's neighbourhood until the 1970s, but now you'll find mostly expensive restaurants with a touristy crowd.

### 7 ROMANCE AT BETTY'S

(Tue to Sun) Betty opens and closes the **ROCOCO** when she feels like it, and she also serves when she feels like it. No electric light, just candles and an open fireplace in winter. You can add to the living room atmosphere by drinking her home-made 'Elixir d'Amour' (love potion) and by playing the piano if you like. First ask the lady of the house of course, because she's definitely the boss.

### 8 SLEAZY TOURIST BAR

(Usually open, unless when it's closed) When you arrive at opening time in **VELOOTJE**, you might still find last night's glasses on the table. This really is quite a scruffy place. The 101 bikes that you see dangling from the ceiling are the bearded barkeeper's personal collection. But watch out for the prices - this little bar might be the only tourist trap in town.

### 9 FUNKY MEDIEVAL CELLAR

(Wednesday to Saturday) When **THE WHITE CAT** gets crowded, it really turns hot and sweaty. That's typical for Ghent, where we like to put our bars in medieval cellars without any fresh air... This one is from the fourteenth century, but now has a pink ceiling, pink walls and an aquarium as a bar. Why not. Usually live funk or jazz concerts on Friday and Saturday.

### 10 TURKISH PIZZA

**LOCAL TIP**

Some say it's **AKDENIZ**, some say it's **GÖK**, some say **GÖK 2**, some say **GÜLHAN**: every student has his favourite but you can never go wrong with any of the cheap pizzerias in the Sleepstraat. The menus are full-colour, and what you see is what you get (you'll pay around € 7,50 for a meal and the typical salty ayran drink). This street is the heart of Turkish Ghent, with a noisy soundtrack of jingling trams, yelling children and pimpled-up BMW's. It's always alive except in July and August, because then many go on a holiday to Turkey, usually to their grandparents' birthplace Emirdağ. It is from this small city that almost all the first Turkish immigrants came in the 1960s, to work in the rough textile industry of Ghent. Today, the third generation speaks with a better Ghent accent than most locals.

### 11 INTIMATE JAZZ BAR

(Tuesday to Saturday) The **MINOR SWING** is one of those typical Ghentish bars where the same five barflies hang at the counter every day. It's a cosy place to stick for hours with good jazz, beer, wine and whisky.

### 12 MOROCCAN TAJINE

(Closed on Tue / Lunch and dinner) Everything looks a bit plastic in **MIMOSA**, but the tajines are big, tasty and steaming. This is a pretty and unknown corner of Ghent too. € 12.

### 13 BELGIAN FRIES

(Mon to Sat) Don't leave Ghent without eating fries! **JOZEF** and his wife still bake their fries the old-fashioned way. No frozen potatoes here, everything is carefully peeled and cut by the man of the house. Taste the authenticity, because there are not many 'frietkoten' (fries barracks) left like this one in the whole of Belgium.

- 629** Amandus from France tries to bring christianity to Ghent, but we throw him in the water. He insists and builds Sint-Pieters abbey **105**.
- 1100** Trading cloth and corn at the harbour **84** becomes big business, with ships going as far as North Africa. Compared to Ghent in those days, London is peanuts.
- 1180** The rich guys from Ghent want too much independence, so Count Philip builds the castle **60** not to keep out invaders, but to keep an eye on the locals.
- 1432** Hubert and Jan Van Eyck finish the last hair on the Adoration of the Lamb **91**.
- 1500** Emperor Charles V is born near **58**. Hurray for Charles!
- 1540** Damn Charles! The local noblemen don't want to pay the high taxes, and Charles humiliates them by letting them march in their underwear with a rope around the neck, as if they would be hanged. Today, the little rope is still a popular souvenir from Ghent (don't ask why).
- 1800** Thanks to a thief, the industry booms. Lieven Bauwens steals an English spinning machine (very new technology at the time) and sells it in Ghent. In no time thousands of people work in the cloth factories.
- 1877** First Belgian Socialist Party founded in Ghent, to come up for the rights of the starving factory workers. The socialist 'Palace for the People' **48** opens in 1918.
- 1913** Ghent becomes medieval. City marketeers realize that they have to clean up the inner town to attract more tourists for the World Exhibition. See **24** for example.
- 1963** Turkish men come to work in the textile industry, where not enough locals want to do the night shifts anymore. Today, their children and grandchildren are still the largest group in town with foreign roots.
- 1969** After long boring years when everybody preferred to go to the sea in the summer, the new Ghent festival is kickstarted by long-haired scum on **16**.
- 1999** No more cars allowed on Graslei **84**. Old hairy Ghent has discovered its touristic charm, and it becomes more and more difficult to drive through the centre.
- 2008** Ghent independent again. The New Ghent Alliance yells slogans like "All the immigrants from Bruges should wear scarves!" It's all a big joke, but thousands of people actually show up on independence day.





## 14 JACOB AND HIS SWORD

**JACOB VAN ARTEVELDE** is our hero from the Middle Ages. A wonderful statue, too, but somehow, somebody stole its sword in 1998. Panic! But fear not, the tourist board quickly ordered a new sword. Just when they were going to install it, a bunch of art students miraculously 'found' the old sword again. So then we had two of them. One is back in its place, the other is in the Counts' Castle **60**... in the weapons' collection.

## 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 **TREFPUNT**, 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 barbedoll 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

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 Vlasmarkt 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 **PLANSJEE** 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 TOTS

(Every day) **HOTSY TOTS**: 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 **OULD 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 **DE ORCHIDEE**. € 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 Havanais 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.

**DOWNLOAD THE FULL VERSION OF THIS MAP ON [WWW.USE-IT.BE](http://WWW.USE-IT.BE)**



## ALSO GET THESE!

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# GHEENT

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



GENT/GHEENT/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.

## Bars bars bars

KATRIEN 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 Charlantan," 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.



## 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 Therminal", Hoveniersberg 24

www.esngent.be

KATRIEN LINDEMANS

SO YOU'VE CHOSEN

The fabulous cover of our student guide to Ghent was provided by Janelos, a Dutch four-piece comic strip fanzine, consisting of Jeroen Fokke, Boris Peeters, Jan Peeters and Aleks Deurloo. They make comic strips and books, paint murals, customise shoes, perform on and off stage, grow their beards, participate in the strips-wet-pen (whiskers-throwing) during the Gentse Feesten, and generally try to have a lot of fun. Also, they're sexy!

www.janelos.nl

## 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 people, however, are never called Dutch. Unless you're looking to get punched in the face.

## 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 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



© Image Source / REPORTERS



Although it's not medieval, the university's most famous landmark is still one of Ghent's highest point in Ghent, in fact built on a hill – the



© University of Ghent

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

## 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)





# 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](http://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 Eurolalia). 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.

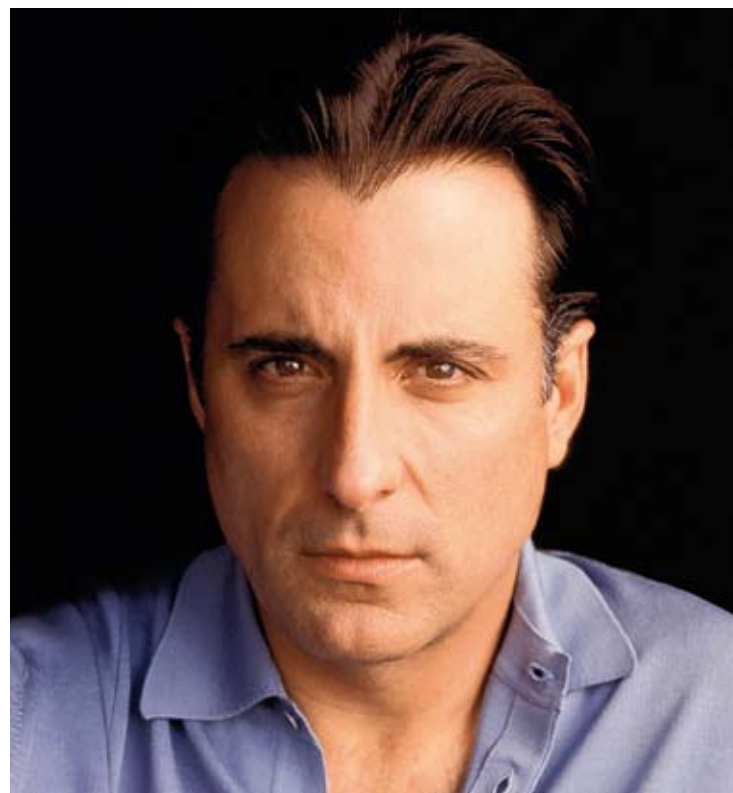
## The sounds

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.

## 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'



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

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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# SASKIA DE COSTER ROMETEUS DIT IS VAN MIJ



© Johan 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](mailto:pers@standaarduitgeverij.be)

→ [www.saskiadecoster.com](http://www.saskiadecoster.com)



Tom Naegels new book *Beleg* on the shelves!

Discussion with Joseph Pearce & Erwin Mortier → Leuven

Ode to Hugo Claus reading marathon → Brussels



## Antwerp

**Arenbergschouwburg**  
Arenbergstraat 28; 070.222.192,  
[www.arenbergschouwburg.be](http://www.arenbergschouwburg.be)  
**OCT 13** 20.30 Chris Chameleon  
**OCT 15** 20.15 An evening of reading,  
music and conversation with Nick  
Cave, Warren Ellis and Martyn Casey

## Petrol

Herbouvillekaai 21; 03.226.49.63,  
[www.petrolclub.be](http://www.petrolclub.be)  
**OCT 9** 23.00 Dave Angel + Daemon +  
K-Dust + Loop Generation + Sanaki +  
Dennlav + Whizz  
**OCT 10** 22.00 Raekwon + Lefto + TLP  
+ Wicked

## Sportpaleis

Schijnpoortweg 119; 0900.26.060,  
[www.sportpaleis.be](http://www.sportpaleis.be)  
**OCT 9** 20.30 Milk Inc.  
**OCT 13** 20.30 Elton John  
**OCT 14** 20.30 Fleetwood Mac

## Trix

Noordersingel 28; 03.670.09.00,  
[www.trixonline.be](http://www.trixonline.be)  
Concerts at 20.00:  
**OCT 7** The Dynamites featuring  
Charles Walker  
**OCT 12** The Thermals) + Part Chimp  
**OCT 13** VNV Nation  
**OCT 15** Lovvers + The Tubs

## Bornem

CC Ter Dilft  
Sint-Amandsesteenweg 41;  
03.890.69.30, [www.terdilft.be](http://www.terdilft.be)  
**OCT 11** 20.00 Chibeja

## Bruges

**Stadsschouwburg**  
t Zand 34; 070.22.33.02,  
[www.concertgebouw.be](http://www.concertgebouw.be)  
**OCT 8** 20.00 The Idan Raichel Project,  
acoustic concert  
**OCT 9** 20.00 Spinvis Solo

## Brussels

**Ancienne Belgique**  
Anspachlaan 110; 02.548.24.24,  
[www.abconcerts.be](http://www.abconcerts.be)  
Concerts at 20.00:  
**OCT 7** Shahkild + Sir Richard Bishop  
**OCT 12** Amatorski + Oi Va Voi  
**OCT 13** Ungdomskulen + Cougar  
**OCT 14** Robert Fripp + Porcupine Tree  
**OCT 15** Sharko + Chris Chameleon

## Beursschouwburg

Auguste Ortsstraat 20-28; 02.550.03.50,  
[www.vkconcerts.be](http://www.vkconcerts.be)  
**OCT 9** 21.30 At the Close of Every Day  
+ The Afterglow + Julie's Haircut  
**OCT 10** 19.30 Mocky

## Fuse

Blaesstraat 208; 02.511.97.89,  
[www.fuse.be](http://www.fuse.be)  
**OCT 9** 23.00 Drumderground Gold  
Edition: DJ Hype & MC Daddy Earl,  
N-Type, TC, Bunzero, Brekbit, Radial  
X and more  
**OCT 10** 23.00 Jeff Mills

## Koninklijk Circus

Onderrichtsstraat 81; 02.218.20.15,  
[www.cirque-royal.org](http://www.cirque-royal.org)  
**OCT 15** 20.30 Jan Garbarek Group

## 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

## Ghent

### Handelsbeurs

Kouter 29; 09.265.92.01,  
[www.handelsbeurs.be](http://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](http://www.vooruit.be)  
**OCT 8** 20.00 Tomàn, The Sedan Vault

## Grimbergen

### CC Strombeek

Gemeenteplein; 02.263.03.43,  
[www.ccstrombeek.be](http://www.ccstrombeek.be)  
**OCT 9** 20.30 Axl Peleman

## Hasselt

### Muziekodroom

Bootstraat 9; 011.23.13.13,  
[www.muziekodroom.be](http://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 Greef (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.



Arian Christiaens/Hanne Lamon

→ [www.abconcerts.be](http://www.abconcerts.be)



## Bruges

### De Werf

Werfstraat 108; 050.33.05.29

## OTHER BOOK EVENTS THIS WEEK



**OCT 10** 20.30 Gebhard Ullmann  
Basement Research  
**OCT 15** 20.30 Nathalie Lories 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**  
Koningstraat 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 Rhythm'n  
Blues: The Witness  
**OCT 12** Master Session  
**OCT 13** Laurent Doumont Soul Band  
**OCT 14** Chamaquiando, 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 Sigmund

## 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.ccstrombeek.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 'Moraíto', flamenco guitar

## Zuiderpershuis

Waalse Kaai 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 Orquestra 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**  
Koningstraat 241; 0475.78.23.78,  
www.sazznjazz.be  
Concerts at 20.30:  
**OCT 8** Duo Raposo, fado  
**OCT 9** Formatia 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** 22.00 Cintia Rodriguez  
(Brazil)

## 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,

www.demunt.be  
**OCT 9** 12.30 La Monnaie brass quintet:  
Handel

## Espace Senghor

Waversesteenweg 366; 02.230.31.40,  
www.senghor.be  
**OCT 14** 20.15 Jessica Ryckewaert,  
percussion; Nao Momitani, piano;  
Pierre Thomas, piano; Michel Massot,  
tuba: electronic and acoustic works by  
Claude Ledoux, Michel Fourgon, Denis  
Bosse

## Espace Toots

Stuckensstraat 125; 02.241.15.83  
**OCT 9** 20.00 Elisabeth Deletaille,  
violin; Eliane Reyes, piano: Sarasate, de  
Fallá, Ravel, Debussy

## Flagey

Heilig Kruisplein; 02.641.10.20,  
www.flagey.be  
**OCT 9** 12.30 Kryptos Quartet (PiKNiK  
muSiK)  
**OCT 10** 20.00 Anima Eterna  
conducted by Jos Van Immerseel:  
music by Brahms, Strauss, performed  
on period instruments

## Musical Instruments Museum

Hofberg 2; 02.545.01.30,  
www.mim.fgov.be  
**OCT 11** 11.00 Mozart Festival:  
chamber music by Mozart  
(www.festival-mozart.be)

## Royal Music Conservatory

Regentschapsstraat 30; 02.213.41.37,  
www.kcb.be  
**OCT 12** 20.00 Tetralyre chamber music  
ensemble: Martinu, Dvorak, Brahms  
**OCT 15** 20.00 Pygmalion conducted  
by Raphaël Pichon: Bach

## Ternat

**CC De Ploter**  
Kerkstraat 4; 02.582.44.33,  
www.ccdeploter.be  
**OCT 11** 16.00 Raphaella Smits, guitar:  
Bach. Bus trip to the chapel of former  
convent Rosario in Bever for acoustic  
concert, followed by dinner and talk  
with Raphaella Smits (leaves at 16.00  
from CC De Ploter)

## 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; 070.22.02.02,  
www.vlaamseopera.be  
**OCT 14-23** 15.00/20.00 Wozzeck by  
Alban Berg with the Flanders Opera  
Symphony Orchestra conducted by  
Martyn Brabbins and Choir conducted  
by Yannis Pouspourikas, staged by Guy  
Joosten with Gabriel Suovanen and  
Noëmi Nadelmann



## Antwerp

**deSingel**  
Desguinlei 25; 03.248.48.48,  
www.desingel.be  
**OCT 9-10** 20.00 Trisha Brown Dance  
Company in Repertoire Evening: Plains

## DON'T MISS

### Trisha Brown Dance Co

9-11 October

### deSingel, Antwerp

The grand dame of American postmodern dance takes residency in deSingel for three glorious days. Her company performs repertoire and early works, and the 73-year old pioneer herself will be interviewed on stage on 11 October.

Photo: Juliette Cervantes



→ [www.desingel.be](http://www.desingel.be)

(1968), Set and Reset (1983), You Can  
See Us (1996) and l'Amour au théâtre  
(2009)  
**OCT 11** 16.00/19.00 Trisha Brown  
Dance Company in Early Works: 7  
Works in Situ (1970-74)

## Brussels

**KVS Box**  
Arduinkaai 9; 02.210.11.12,  
www.kvs.be  
**Until OCT 10** 20.30 SOIT presents We  
Was Then by Hans Van den Broeck

## Leuven

**Stuk**  
Naamsestraat 96; 016.32.03.20,  
www.stuk.be  
**Until OCT 9** 20.30 Rosas danst Rosas,  
choreographed by Anne Teresa De  
Keersmaecker

## Ternat

**CC De Ploter**  
Kerkstraat 4; 02.582.44.33,  
www.ccdeploter.be  
**OCT 10** 20.30 Einzelgänger,  
choreographed by Joke Laureyns and  
Kwint Mانشoven



## Antwerp

**deSingel**  
Desguinlei 25; 03.248.48.48,  
www.desingel.be  
**Until OCT 10** 20.00 Troubleyn in Orgy  
of Tolerance by Jan Fabre (in Dutch)

## Stadsschouwburg

Theaterplein 1; 0900.69.900,  
www.musichall.be  
**Until OCT 25** The Sound of Music  
(musical, in Dutch)

## Bruges

**Biekorf**  
Kuiperstraat 3; 050.44.30.60,  
www.concertgebouw.be  
**OCT 10** 20.00 Maisondahlbonnema  
and Needcompany in The Ballad of  
Ricky and Ronny - A Pop Opera

## Magdalenazaal (MaZ)

Magdalenstraat 27; 050.44.30.60,  
www.ccbrugge.be  
**OCT 7** 20.00 Venizke, staged by Ben



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Benaouisse 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 eingebildete Kranke by Molière, staged by Barbara Abend (in German)

## Wезembeek-Оppem

**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)



## Aalst

**Network: Centre for Contemporary Art**  
Houtkaai; 053.70.97.73, www.network-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: Tafereel 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**  
Arduinkaai 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**  
Koningsstraat 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.fondationpourelarchitecture.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)**  
Amerikastraat25; 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.ccjacquesfranck.be  
**Until OCT 31** Marc Rossignol: Cacher/ Montrer, paintings and installation

**Jewish Museum of Belgium**  
Minimenstraat 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.museumdd.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 Dufy (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 EIT0ZOR, 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**  
Bampslaan 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 www.europalia.eu

**Festival of Flanders:** Major annual event encompassing seven festivals across Flanders, with dozens of cities staging hundreds of classical and contemporary performances and related events  
**Until OCT 30** across Brussels and Flanders www.festivalvanvlaanderen.be

**Opera in the Cinema:** Opera performances on the big screen  
**Until MAY 1** in Kinepolis theatres across Flanders (Brussels, Ghent, Hasselt, Kortrijk, Leuven, Ostend, Antwerp and Bruges):  
**OCT 10** Tosca by Puccini  
**OCT 24** Aida by Verdi  
**NOV 7** Turandot by Puccini  
**DEC 19** Les Contes d'Hoffmann by Offenbach  
**JAN 9** Der Rosenkavalier by Strauss  
**JAN 16** Carmen by Bizet  
**FEB 6** Simon Boccanegra by Verdi  
**MAR 27** Hamlet by Ambroise Thomas  
**MAY 1** Armida by Rossini

## Aalst

**Gent GO-GO Rollergrills:** A night of skating, music and debauchery with Belgium's first and only roller derby team, featuring DJs Jill Mathieu and Michel and Kristoff from Tune-Up. Dress up funky and get a free drink  
**OCT 10** from 21.30 at Rollerland, Trangel 20 GGGRG@hotmail.com

## Antwerp

**Amperdans4:** International dance and performance festival organised by wp Zimmer, Monty, Troubleyn/Laboratorium and Royal Ballet of Flanders  
**OCT 14-24** at venues across Antwerp www.amperdans.eu

## Brussels

**Brussels 2009 BD Comic Strip:** City-wide festival celebrating Brussels-based comic strip artists and the rich history of the Belgian comic  
**Until DEC 31** across Brussels www.brusselscomics.com

**Brussels Museums Nights:** Late-night opening of city museums, plus guided visits and workshops, among other activities  
**Until DEC 17** Thursdays, 17.00-22.00, in museums across the city 02.512.77.80, www.brusselmuseums.be

**Spokenworld:** International festival of artists, writers and opinion leaders who will speak about the gigantic "acceleration" in world history that characterised the two decades between 1989 and 2009  
**Until OCT 11** at Kaaithheater and Kaaistudio's www.kaaithheater.be/spokenworld

## Mechelen

**Contour2009:** Fourth biennial of the moving image, with media installations by Belgian and international artists. This year's theme is Hidden in Remembrance is the Silent memory of Our Future  
**Until OCT 18** on a walking circuit of 12 venues in the historic city centre 070.22.28.00, www.contour2009.be



## All down to Ghent

Fancy partying with 35,000 others to the sounds of some of the best international and national DJs in Ghent this month? That's how many the (in)famous I Love Techno will attract this year for its annual bash on 24 October, given the line-up.

The five colour-coded rooms at the Flanders Expo will pump to the likes of global clubland legends Carl Craig, Laurent Garnier, Dave Clarke, Tiga, Joris Voorn, Luke Slater and rising star Deadmau5, spinning the decks wearing a rather eerie oversized mouse head.

With all the experimental crossover these guys are known for, you won't be getting strictly techno for your €52; expect a liberal high-energy mash with house, jazz and hip-hop that will have you up all night. There's even electro-punk from The Bloody Beetroots and guerrilla-style trance from The Subs.

If you want to start training for it (or need a cheaper alternative), there's no need to skimp on festival atmosphere. Head to the United Colours of Ghent on 8 October where one €12 ticket will get you into six parties at Decadance, Vooruit and the ICC, all on the same night. Each venue hosts two parties with an eclectic range of Belgian DJs and bands including Shameboy, Nid & Sancy and a special roomful of DJanes – La Fille D'O, Nina de Man, Zohra and The Jelly Bellies – at the ICC.

Now if that doesn't get your mojo working, nothing will.

→ [www.ilovetechno.be](http://www.ilovetechno.be)

→ <http://nl.netlog.com/united-colorsofghent>



## FACE OF FLANDERS

ALAN HOPE

### 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 Annemie 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](http://www.hildecrevits.be)

## TALKING DUTCH

ALISTAIR MACLEAN



### voorzorgsmaatregelen

What goes around comes around, and that applies to this column, too. One of my first extolled the benefits of medicinal chest rubbing to deal with coughs and a *snotneus* – a snotty nose. And in the depths of last winter I described the arrival of the H3N2 flu virus – where did that go to?

What brings all this to mind was my daily mingling with the masses as I travelled to work this morning: opposite me sat a woman kneading her mobile with two hands and coughing regularly. Holding my breath was not an option, so I suffered in silence, breathing shallowly. Well, not really in silence, for all around I could hear other insidious coughings, all heralding the resurfacing of A/H1N1 flu, or swine flu – *varkensgriep*.

The precautions – *voorzorgsmaatregelen* shown on the flu campaign's poster do sound rather obvious, but not everyone seems to have got the message. So at the risk of boring you, here goes. The first piece of advice is *was regelmatig je handen* – wash your hands regularly. I understand this to mean frequently, and it's no bad advice.

The second one is for many of my fellow travellers: *bedek je mond en je neus met een papieren zakdoekje wanneer je niest* – cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you sneeze. And then *gooi je*

*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: *blijf 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 fluish. Look out for a notice in next week's edition.

→ [www.influenza.be](http://www.influenza.be)

## bite

SHARON LIGHT

### '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 Cremant 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](http://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