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Many products at Ikea are more expensive in Belgium than any other neighbouring country, according to research carried out by the European Consumer Centre


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The Flemish energy company Enfinity has signed a multi-billion euro contract with the People's Republic of China to supply the Asian country's first ever solar energy park


**Prom night** ..... 11

The Night of the Proms is celebrating 25 years of fusing pop with classical and engaging multiple generations. Our music critic goes over the line-up


**INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERIES – PART 3: LEUVEN**
**> SPECIAL PULL-OUT GUIDE INSIDE ! <**

## Learning in Leuven

At 579 years old, Leuven is the oldest remaining Catholic university in Europe and a hotbed of innovative research, from unborn babies to genocide

SAFFINA RANA

**B**e honest, the first thing that strikes you when you're in Leuven is just how many good-looking young people there are in town. Only then do you notice the gorgeous architecture. After that, it becomes quickly evident that Leuven is also crammed full of bars.

With over 32,000 students at the local university, it's not surprising. And with no enclosed campus, their energy spills out all over the town. They are everywhere – speeding past on bikes on their way to lectures, lolling in the squares and by the canals, hunting and gathering in

shops at the supermarkets and talking at the top of their voices in loud cafes after dark, come rain or shine.

Around 3,500 of these bright young things are international students enrolled on the numerous programmes that the local Catholic University of Leuven (KUL) offers in English – mainly masters, doctoral and post-doctoral research. Compared alongside the top 500 universities in the world, KUL comes in at a respectable number 72. Within Europe, it is currently ranked 23rd out of 199 universities.

► *continued on page 5*



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## Leuven University in top 100

The Catholic University of Leuven (KUL) is for the third year running the only Belgian university to figure in the top 100 list compiled by *The Times* newspaper. The KUL advanced seven places on last year's ranking to finish in 65th place.

The universities on the list were each given points regarding staff-student ratios, number of international staff, number of published articles by staff cited in journals and number of international students. As always, Harvard University heads the list with an overall score of 100. Cambridge comes next with 99.6, followed by Yale with 99.1. Leuven scored 74.2, with its advantages

outweighed by a very low score on staff-student ratios.

Leuven's French-speaking counterpart, the Catholic University of Louvain-la-Neuve, is the next Belgian establishment to figure on the list, in 126th place. Others on the list are Ghent (136), Antwerp (177) and the Free University of Brussels ULB (191).

Flemish commentators argued that four UK universities reached the top six partly because of the way that higher education is organised and financed in that country. Oxford and Cambridge, for example, can select from a huge pool of potential students, which means they get

the best students, according to Eric Spruyt of Antwerp University. In addition, those universities are allowed to spend the high tuition fees they charge on their own research and staff costs, while in Flanders there is no monetary link between student numbers and income. "While we're bringing in more students, our budget is not going up," Spruyt said.

The rankings are a matter of prestige to those universities that feature on the list, said Leuven vice-rector Peter Marynen. "Our place in the rankings will certainly play a role in attracting international staff and exchange students," he said. ♦

## The Netherlands agrees to flood Westerschelde polder

Dutch prime minister bows to the inevitable

ALAN HOPE

The dredging of the Westerschelde – the sea channel approach to the Port of Antwerp – can now go ahead following the Dutch government's decision last week to flood the Hedwige polder in Zeeland province. The decision brings to an end weeks of tension between the Dutch and Flemish governments over this issue. But Dutch prime minister Jan Peter Balkenende made it clear that he was agreeing reluctantly and described his "disappointment" at being unable to save the polder.

The flooding of the Hertogin Hedwige polder is the result of

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### Student guide inside

The cover of our student guide on page 7 features what has become the icon of the Catholic University of Leuven: a giant fly, based on the controversial sculpture by Flemish artist Jan Fabre, which you find in front of the university library.

The cover was designed by Bart Schoofs, an artist/illustrator/cartoonist based in Kessel-Lo. When he's not busy painting, drawing or spending hours on the internet pretending to be looking for inspiration, Bart plays the ukulele, bakes bread and sits on the toilet reading non-fiction books.

→ <http://brfvrn.blogspot.com>

## FLANDERS TODAY

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## News in brief

Teachers in the Dutch-speaking schools of Brussels will not be receiving a premium to encourage young teachers to come and work to the capital, according to the office of education minister Pascal Smet. The premium, intended to overcome a general reluctance among teachers to move to the city, has been awaited for some time, but budget savings are being blamed for what ministry sources stressed is a postponement only.

Surgeons at the Salvator hospital in Hasselt carried out two **jawbone implants** with grafts grown from the patients' own stem cells, the hospital announced last week. The implants are grown from bone marrow extracted from the patient's hip, which is then mixed with artificial bone to form new jawbone material. In old-style transplants, parts of the hip-bone itself was used, which led to pain and long recovery times. The new transplants can be done in a day clinic, the hospital said, and the patients suffer "no significant pain".

The new **DVD release** of top VRT series *Van vlees en bloed* (*Of Meat and Blood*), which is set in a butcher's shop, goes on sale this week – in 270 butchers. The series, starring Lucas Van den Eynde and Koen De Graeve, reached audiences of more than 1.6 million when it was broadcast earlier this year. The three-disc set will also be available at conventional DVD outlets.

Voting in this Sunday's (18 October) **Oosterweel referendum** is not compulsory under Belgium's electoral laws – and the Flemish government has made it clear that the results will not be legally binding. The referendum is intended to break the deadlock between supporters and opponents of a viaduct that would run above parts of Antwerp's inner city in order to close the ring road. But polls show that most voters favour a tunnel instead of a viaduct, which runs contrary to the government's position. All Antwerp residents over the age of 16 are eligible to vote, bringing the total electorate to 390,000 – 70,000 more than in a normal election, where the voting age is 18.

Flemish **cinema owners** have protested at a promotion by Humo magazine in which readers receive free tickets to the hit Flemish film *De helaasheid der dingen* (*The Misfortunes*). The tickets are only valid in the Kinepolis cinema chain, leading to what the industry federation called "abuse of power" and a breach of fair competition rules.

### Father Damien canonised

Barack Obama praised the man who built a community for leprosy sufferers



(l to r) Parliament chairman Patrick Dewael, Queen Paola, King Albert II and prime minister Herman Van Rompuy during the Vatican ceremony

Father Jozef De Veuster, otherwise known as Father Damien, was declared a saint by the Roman Catholic Church at a ceremony on 11 October in the Vatican. Born in 1840 in Tremelo, near Leuven, Father Damien is the patron saint of lepers, those suffering from leprosy, now usually referred to as Hansen's disease. Damien is also considered the spiritual patron for HIV/AIDS patients and "outcasts".

Present at the ceremony, together with an estimated 2,500 Belgians who had made the pilgrimage to Rome, were the king and queen, prime minister Herman Van Rompuy and other Christian Democrat members of the federal government. The ceremony was attended by 128 members of the De Veuster family, as well as about 550 people from Hawaii, where Father Damien cared for those suffering from leprosy in the 19th century before dying from the disease himself at the age of 49.

US President Barack Obama, who was born in Hawaii, issued a statement: "I wish to express my deep admiration for the life of Blessed Damien de Veuster. I also want to convey my best wishes to the Kingdom of Belgium and its people, who are proud to count Fr Damien among their great citizens."

President Obama continued: "Fr Damien has also earned a special place in the hearts of Hawaiians. I recall many stories from my youth about his tireless work there to care for those suffering from leprosy, who had been cast out. Following in the steps of Jesus' ministry to the lepers, Fr Damien challenged the stigmatising effects of disease, giving voice to the voiceless and ultimately sacrificing his own life to bring dignity to so many."

Four others were also sainted at Sunday's ceremony: the French nun Jeanne Jugan (born 1792) founded the order of the Little Sisters of the Poor, Francesco Coll y Guitart (born 1812) was a Dominican priest, Rafael Arnaiz Baron (born 1911) was a Spanish mystic and Trappist monk, while Zygmunt Felinski (born 1822) was archbishop of Warsaw and founder of the Franciscan Sisters of the Family of Mary.

→ [www.damiaan2009.be](http://www.damiaan2009.be)

A committee of architecture and urban planning experts has given a negative opinion on a **futuristic design** for the new headquarters of the Antwerp port authority, designed by Zaha Hadid. The British architect won a competition with her proposal – a 46-metre high diamond-shaped building resembling a hovering spacecraft. The building will cost €31 million and take until 2013 to complete. City alderman for port affairs Marc Van Peel said the committee's opinion would not prevent the project from going ahead.

The oeuvre of **James Ensor** consists of 850 paintings, according to a new catalogue published by Mercator-

### Correction

In our article on childbirth in Flanders last month, we wrote that the guide *Having Your Baby in Belgium* was free. It in fact costs €10. A new sixth edition is due at the end of November, published by the Community Help Service, [www.chsbelgium.org](http://www.chsbelgium.org).

## Dredging of the Scheldt could begin in February

→ continued from page 1

The dredging of the Westerschelde was agreed between the two governments in a 2005 treaty. The approach is crucial to Antwerp's shipping traffic, but the passage is silting up and requires dredging at 12 important points. The depth of the channel's draft also needs to be increased to allow the new generation of giant container ships to reach Antwerp.

The idea of flooding polder land was in the Dutch government's original plans, but last April Balkenende's government suddenly changed its mind, scrapping the flooding plan and focusing instead on creating estuarine marches outside the sea dikes. Two nature organisations argued that this would not offer protection for wildlife and took a case to the Council of State, which ordered a stop to the plan.

The Hague government has now bowed to the inevitable and accepted that flooding is the only way it can fulfil its environmental obligations and appease its Flem-

ish treaty partners.

But Dutch-Flemish relations have suffered as a result of the court-ordered delay. The Dutch were not only being blamed for backing out on a promise, but also accused of doing so for commercial gain, since super-containers that could not reach Antwerp would be attracted by the Dutch port of Rotterdam.

Kris Peeters, whose portfolio as Flemish minister-president includes the ports, made diplomatic but stern overtures to his Dutch counterpart. Meanwhile, Antwerp politicians Annick De Ridder and Ludo Van Campenhout met with equal measures of ridicule and populist support when they proposed a boycott on Zeeland mussels and oysters.

At the weekend, all parties were keen to congratulate themselves on the "breakthrough", as De Standaard called it. But real results could still be many months away as the Dutch government's



© Belga

Local people protested at plans for the *ontpoldering*, or flooding of the land

decision has to be supported by the parliament. The Council of State's suspension of the dredging has to be overturned, and the owner of the Hedwigepolder – ironically a West Flanders businessman named Gery De Cloedt – has to be convinced to sell the land, either at the price offered by the Dutch ("a good offer," according to Dutch agriculture minister

Gerda Verburg) or via a compulsory purchase.

De Cloedt has said he will take any legal steps needed to keep from losing his land. As Flanders Today went to press, one local paper predicted that work could start as early as February, but this might prove to be an optimistic forecast. ♦

## THE WEEK IN FIGURES

**75%**

of jobs for medical staff in Belgium's prisons are filled. Of the required 195 nursing staff, only 144 are filled. At Vorst prison, just over one-half of jobs are filled



**352,624**

loan defaulters among the population, including 12,344 who are more than a year in arrears. At the end of September, 4.88 million people had one or more credit arrangements in place, including mortgages (29%), hire-purchase (19%) and credit cards (47%)

**62**

age of Simone Lenaerts, who last week won the annual prize for a debut novel, entitled *Zeewater is zout, zeggen ze* (*They Say Seawater is Salty*). The average age for first-time novelists is now 45

**18 months**

sentence for a man from Harelbeke who stole the "Holy Thorn" relic from the local Sint-Salvators church. He was also fined €5,500

**31%**

employees who would turn up for work even when sick, according to a survey by temp agency Accountemps. The figures for other countries were higher: 58% in the US, 59% in Austria and 67% in the Czech Republic

**1,897,260**

newspapers handed out in classrooms during last year's Kranten in Klas (Newspapers in class) action, which involved 156,434 secondary and sixth-year primary pupils. This year's 10-week action started last week

**€800,000**

cost to the city of Antwerp for next weekend's referendum on the so-called Lange Wapper road-link proposal. The total includes €35,000 for catering on the day, €70,000 for publishing a brochure and €235,000 for sending out ballots

**175,000**

number of participants in this year's month-long action to encourage people to shop by bicycle. The action collected 2,268 million savings stamps, according to organisers Bond Beter Leefmilieu (Better Environment Union)

## FIFTH COLUMN

ANJA OTTE

### That email

Some seemingly innocent transactions become legendary in Belgian politics. There is for instance *that* phone call that took place between Johan Van Hecke, president of the Christian Democrat CD&V in the 1990s, and Stefaan De Clerck, who held the same function at the beginning of this century. Van Hecke assured De Clerck of his loyalty. At the end of the conversation, though, the line stayed open, and De Clerck overheard another conversation between Van Hecke and Open VLD president Karel De Gucht, who were celebrating the planned transfer of a number of CD&V defectors.

The incident proved traumatic to both De Clerck and CD&V. Never before had a party been so openly destabilised from the outside. Some – especially within Open VLD – even believed this would mean the end of the Christian Democrats as a major factor in Flemish politics. It wasn't: with both the prime minister and the Flemish minister-president as Christian Democrats, CD&V is now firmly back in the lead. But some of its prominent members still shudder when they think back to this episode.

And now there is *that* email. Last week a private exchange of messages between socialist SPA party president Caroline Gennez and some of her intimates became public. Someone had apparently stolen the printouts from her desk; next thing she knew, they were published in *De Standaard*. In the email, a personal friend advised Gennez on how she should break the news to some of the hopefuls who were to become new Flemish ministers.

The mail raises some questions. First of all, who is this friend – a complete unknown to most of Gennez's fellow socialists? Moreover, it shows the ugly backside of politics, saying, for example, that Bert Anciaux, who was left empty handed after the June election, should be compensated by becoming alderman in the city of Brussels. It also speaks of fellow party members in quite derogatory terms and touches on the sensitive issue of Frank Vandenbroucke, who Gennez ignored when it came to ministerial posts.

This situation has awakened old demons and unresolved issues in a party that is at its lowest ebb in decades. Nothing in the mail is all that new to Belgian politics, but the insulting language and wheeling-and-dealing are rarely exposed so publicly.

Eight years ago, Stefaan De Clerck suffered badly from *that* phone call. He survived, though, and is now justice minister. But he will never be remembered as a strong party leader. ♦

## Ikea costs more in Belgium

Shopping in Ikea is 22% more expensive than in neighbouring countries, according to a study carried out by the European Consumer Centre (ECC).

The ECC compared the prices of 20 items from the Swedish retail giant's latest catalogues in Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Germany and Britain. Belgium emerged as the most expensive, with France the cheapest. In one case, the difference was enormous: the basic Factum/Ädel kitchen costs €535 in France, whereas in Belgium you will pay €1,099 – more than double the price.

Belgium overall was 22% more expensive than France, far ahead of the Netherlands (14% dearer), Germany (2%) and the UK (1%). But it's not all bad news for the Belgian consumer: a Verksam office chair costs 12% less here than in France, and the Antilop

children's chair is 20% cheaper. Ikea admitted it adjusts its prices to local markets but pointed out that consumers are free to shop across borders. Prices depend on a number of factors, such as local fashions, the popularity of some products and the existence of strong local competitors, which can push prices down.

"We have always been very transparent about our prices," said spokesman Gerard Bos. And indeed, the ECC admitted it had chosen Ikea for its exercise in comparison simply because the company provides so much information on prices.

The company also criticised the sample size of the survey. "We have more than 6,000 items in our catalogue. Twenty products is only a fraction of that," Bos said. ♦

→ [www.ikea.be](http://www.ikea.be)

## Scouts go missing

Ten African scouts – seven from Uganda and three from Burundi – went missing this summer from an international scout camp called Flamboree, which was being held in Sint-Joris-Weert, Flemish Brabant. The camp, which started in early August, attracted 1,300 scouts from 36 countries. The missing scouts were all of adult age and came here on short-stay visas.

The phenomenon is not new. Six years ago a number of African scouts vanished during Flamboree, and in 2002 six Cuban volleyball players went missing during a sporting tour in Sint-Niklaas. In 2004, 12 members of the Congo military on a training

mission in the Ardennes also vanished into illegal immigration. And in March this year the city of Ostend decided to cancel exchange plans with its twin city of Banjul in Gambia when three teachers went missing.

Organisers of sporting and cultural exchanges pointed out that the procedure for bringing foreign visitors into Belgium is complicated, involving screening of all candidates, advance payments and proof of ties to the homeland. One in five visas applied from across the world is refused, while for certain immigration-sensitive areas like African countries the proportion can be as high as one-half. ♦



## All you need to know about banking services on arriving in Belgium

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# Learning from Leuven

## Criminal justice and medicine top research projects

► continued from page 1

**K**UL currently has over 1,000 research projects going on in just about every subject you can think of, from the natural sciences to theology, philosophy and law. Two particular areas that are contributing to a deeper understanding of the times and offering up new ways to tackle old problems are in the areas of criminal justice and medicine.

When it comes to crime, the 70-strong professors and assistants at the Leuven Institute of Criminology are investigating a diverse range of issues from the role that governments play in the global trafficking of heroin, to more home-policy orientated areas, such as the prevention of youth delinquency in Dutch- and French-speaking regions of Belgium.

Since its creation in 2007, the institute has been receiving international acclaim for its work on political crime and human rights violations. Much of the work focuses on how countries and new governments can deal with the aftermath of violent conflict and mass atrocities such as genocide and rape.

Stephan Parmentier, a professor and head of the department of criminal law and criminology, has a track record in researching restorative justice processes, especially "truth and reconciliation commissions" – which offer victims and offenders an opportunity

perpetrators in Bosnia and Serbia on ways of seeking truth and accountability. "We try to analyse and understand what is going on. One of the side effects of the research is to generate debate. It is of great relevance to the society in question," says Parmentier.

However, he cautions that the researchers don't have too much influence. "We try to be very careful in not steering a particular process in one direction or another because we think it's not our role. That should be dealt with by local people, local NGOs and local government, rather than foreign researchers," he says.

In South Africa, the government has been receptive to Parmentier's work and has recently asked the research team for more input. This hasn't happened at governmental level in Bosnia or Serbia. "It may have to do with their wariness to involve foreign researchers or the international community in general in the Balkans," says Parmentier. However, the research is being taken up by local NGOs discussing the formation of a regional truth commission.

Parmentier's team is now setting out to investigate how the principles of restorative justice might apply to the ongoing conflict in Colombia. Still in the early stages, they are aiming at holding 50 in-depth interviews with victims

*"These people are not always the nicest, but if they are willing to talk, then it's a unique opportunity to understand why they joined the violent gangs, how they view the conflict and how they see their own future."*

nity to face past events.

His latest work investigates how those processes formed in the 1990s in the wake of apartheid in South Africa might be applied in post-conflict areas. These include Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia, where human rights abuses took place on a large scale during the dissolution of Yugoslavia in the 1990s.

The research involves in-depth interviews with 800 victims and

offenders. "The offenders are paramilitaries, ex-paramilitaries and ex-guerrillas," explains Parmentier. "There's a security issue involved here of course, as these people are not always the nicest, but if they are willing to talk, then it's a unique opportunity to understand why they joined the violent gangs in the first place, how they view the conflict and how they see their own future."



Research at Leuven focuses on the aftermath of mass atrocities, such as the killing of Bosnian Muslims in Srebrenica in 1995. The picture shows the burial of 465 Bosnian victims in 2007

© Belga

### Higher hopes for new lives

When it comes to medical technology, some advances move faster than others. For example, ultrasound scanning of pregnant mothers has become a widespread practice all over the world, and fatal abnormalities in unborn babies can now be detected at a very early stage using ultrasound and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) techniques. However, early detection doesn't always mean that a fatality can be prevented. Complications like a rip (hernia) in the baby's diaphragm can limit the growth of the baby's lungs and drastically reduce its chances of survival once it is born.

But a team of doctors from Leuven, London and Barcelona, led by Jan Deprest, professor of foetal medicine at the university's Gasthuisberg hospital, has pioneered a technique using keyhole surgery and a small balloon that triggers the baby's lungs to grow while it is still in its mother's womb, and raises its chance of survival by up to 60%.

"The technique is born out of our frustration that babies still die because their lungs are too small," says Deprest. Doctors have known for years that restricting the windpipe makes the lungs grow. "Since an unborn baby breathes through its placenta and not its lungs, we were looking for a way to get in and put something in the windpipe to close it. But it had to be something you can easily take out again so that the baby can breathe

after birth. It also had to be minimally invasive," explains Deprest. Deprest and his team came up with the idea of using a balloon, and perfected the technique on rats and mice for several years to be certain it could really work with humans. They do it by inserting a plastic tube through a tiny 3mm incision in the wall of the mother's uterus. A minuscule 1.2mm camera is then passed through the tube, letting the surgeon find the mouth of the baby. A catheter loaded with a very small detachable latex balloon is then passed through the baby's mouth to its windpipe. The balloon is gently inflated just under the vocal chord to block the windpipe.

The whole procedure, which takes just 8-10 minutes, is the outcome of many years of research. "It has taken 10 to 15 years to perfect it to this," notes Deprest.

The technique is not without problems. It can cause premature delivery, and surgeons will only offer the operation as a last resort. "Using ultrasound and MRI, we make a considerable effort to know very accurately which babies will not survive without the procedure. We only offer the procedure if there is a less than 20% chance that the baby will survive," says Deprest.

"If we can get the pregnancy to 32 weeks [with the balloon in place] the baby has a 50-60% chance of surviving," says Deprest. "It still means that 40% of parents will lose their baby. It's psychologically very tough for parents."

When the baby is ready to be born,

unblocking the windpipe is easy. "The nice thing about the balloon is that you can pop it with a needle, and the baby can be born," says Deprest. After the birth, an operation to mend the actual hernia can then be carried out.

The research has been part-funded by public money from the EU Framework research programme. Since the instruments required to carry out the operation are highly specialised and designed particularly for the procedure, the EU has also invested in a company to manufacture them. "It's taxpayer's money that has made all this possible, because nobody is interested in solutions for rare diseases," says Deprest.

In Europe, the technique is only offered in Leuven, Barcelona and London. Leuven is the largest centre to offer it, and the Flemish government now subsidises housing for overseas parents who need the operation. "The procedure requires a highly-specialised team, so patients need to stay until the balloon is out before they can go back for delivery to their home country," says Deprest. They also need to stay in case of a premature delivery, which with the balloon would prove complicated in their home countries."

Deprest has performed a total of 250 operations, and the technique has now been adopted in the United States at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. Here, Deprest is joining a research effort to find other ways to simulate lung growth. ♦

# Enfinity signs €8 billion contract with China

**Flemish company to provide China's first solar energy park**

The Waregem-based energy company Enfinity announced last week that it had won a contract to develop large-scale solar energy projects in China. The contract is reported to be worth €8 billion over 10 years. Earlier this year, Enfinity, which has been in business for only four years, announced it would build China's first solar energy park, generating 10 mW, in Dunhuang province – a contract worth €27 million. Under the contract, the company will set up a joint venture with the state-owned China Guandong Nuclear Power Corporation (CGNPC).

Now CGNPC has come back to Enfinity for the development of two more projects, each of which is 100 times larger than the Dunhuang installation. The projects will run for 10 years and, while overall costs cannot accurately be estimated at this stage, Enfinity did confirm that the Chinese were talking about "a figure with nine zeroes". The two parks will have a peak capacity each of 2,000 mW – 200 times larger than Dunhuang.

Last week, contracts were exchanged between the company and CGNPC at the Hertoginnedal palace in eastern Brussels (where some of the nation's most important political events take place) in the presence of prime minister Herman Van Rompuy and Chinese vice president Xi Jinping.

Enfinity achieved sales last year of €83 million, far short of its declared ambition to reach €1 billion within five years. The ambitious target now looks much closer to being realised. The company employs 130, including newly-installed CEO Hans De Backer, formerly of Fortis. His engagement was meant to allow co-founders Gino Van Neer and Patrick Decuyper to shift their focus from management to international development.

• Meanwhile, the installation of domestic solar panels has tripled in Flanders over the past year, but the surge will not be enough to enable the region to reach its target of 6% green energy, according to the



© shutterstock

electricity and gas market regulator VREG. The growth in panels, from about 12,000 in 2008 to more than 35,000 in 2009, is largely a result of public subsidies: homeowners can apply for a municipal subsidy of around €500, as well as getting tax relief on a maximum investment annually of €3,600. Owners are given certificates for every 1,000 kW hours they generate, which can be exchanged with power genera-

tors like Electrabel for €450 each. Last week, innovation minister Ingrid Lieten opened Flanders' largest solar power park in Lommel, Limburg province. The park has a peak capacity of 1,700 kW, and most of the power generated will be consumed by Sibelco, a minerals company that owns the land on which the park is installed. ♦

## Higher VAT on building land demanded

Belgium has been ordered to apply a single VAT tariff to all building land, forcing an increase in the VAT paid in Flanders from 10% to 21%, and in Brussels and Wallonia from 12.5% to 21%. At present, buyers of new-build homes pay 21%, which the EU Commission has ruled is discriminatory. On several occasions, the federal government has been asked to adapt its rates to remove the discrimination.

The new rules, once applied, would lead to new negotiations on how the federal government and the regions divide up the tax revenue. At present, Flanders and the other regions levy a "registration tax" on building land, while VAT goes to the federal government.

The Building Confederation, meanwhile, expressed fears for job prospects if the government were to essentially double VAT on land. Because of the economic crisis and job uncertainty across industry, the number of building permits for new homes has fallen this year by 17%. An increase in the tax burden on new building would cause that slide to get worse as prospective homeowners either opted for existing houses or deferred construction until better economic times. The construction industry is now awaiting measures from the government to compensate for the increased VAT. ♦



## E-invoice is "a green hype" says industry



© shutterstock

Wood chips from waste wood go to make pulp for paper

A switch to generalised electronic invoicing, which environmental activists say would be cheaper, more sustainable and less damaging to the environment, would not save a single tree, according to the Paper Chain Forum (PCF), which represents the paper industry in Belgium.

Paper production in Europe fell by 16% in the last half of 2008 and the first half of 2009, to a total of 95 million tonnes. Part of that is due to the economic crisis and a lower demand by the printed media in the absence of advertising revenue. Part, though, is due to an increasing use of the internet by businesses.

The paper industry, PCF spokesman Firmin François said, recognises the utility of electronic communications for their efficiency, but the ecological arguments for e-commu-

nications are "false". Contrary to popular belief, he said, trees are not chopped down to make paper and switching to electronics "wouldn't save a single tree".

Recycled paper as a raw material accounts for at least half of all paper production in Europe, François said, with the share in Belgium at 58%. Wood fibres are obtained from the waste produced in logging along with offcuts from sawmills.

"People who buy kitchens never ask if they're the cause of deforestation," François said. "But they do if they use paper. Businesses should tell consumers the real reason for switching over to electronic communications, which is the lower cost. But of course that's not as sexy as surfing on the green wave. In fact it's nothing more than pure marketing." ♦

## THE WEEK IN BUSINESS

### Banking • Dexia

Belgo-French financial institution Dexia – which specialises in the financing of local authorities – is poised to sell its 20% minority stake in the French Credit du Nord bank to Société Générale. The deal is worth some €500 million.

### Brewing • AB InBev

Leuven-based beer group AB InBev has signed an agreement to sell its theme parks across the United States to the Blackstone investment group for up to \$2.7 billion. The theme parks, including three Seaworld centres, were part of the Anheuser-Busch group acquired last year by InBev in a \$52 billion takeover. The company has also finalised the sale of its beer-can production unit to the US Metal Container Corporation for some \$577 million.

### Chemicals • Solvay

Chemical and plastics group Solvay has signed a joint venture agreement with the Chinese Huatai company to build a plant in Shandong province with a production capacity of 50,000 tonnes of hydrogen peroxide per year. The new facility is expected to open in 2011.

### Drink • Coca Cola

US-based soft drinks giant Coca Cola is to build a €12 million research and development centre in Anderlecht, south-west Brussels, close to its existing facilities. The centre – which will service up to 108 countries in its European, Eurasian and African divisions – is expected to open in April next year.

### Foam • Recticel

Polyurethane foam producer Recticel has sold 50.6% of its Dutch Corpura affiliate to Advanced Medical Solutions in the UK. Corpura specialises in hydrophilic foams used in cosmetics and body care products.

### Insurance • Fortis Holding

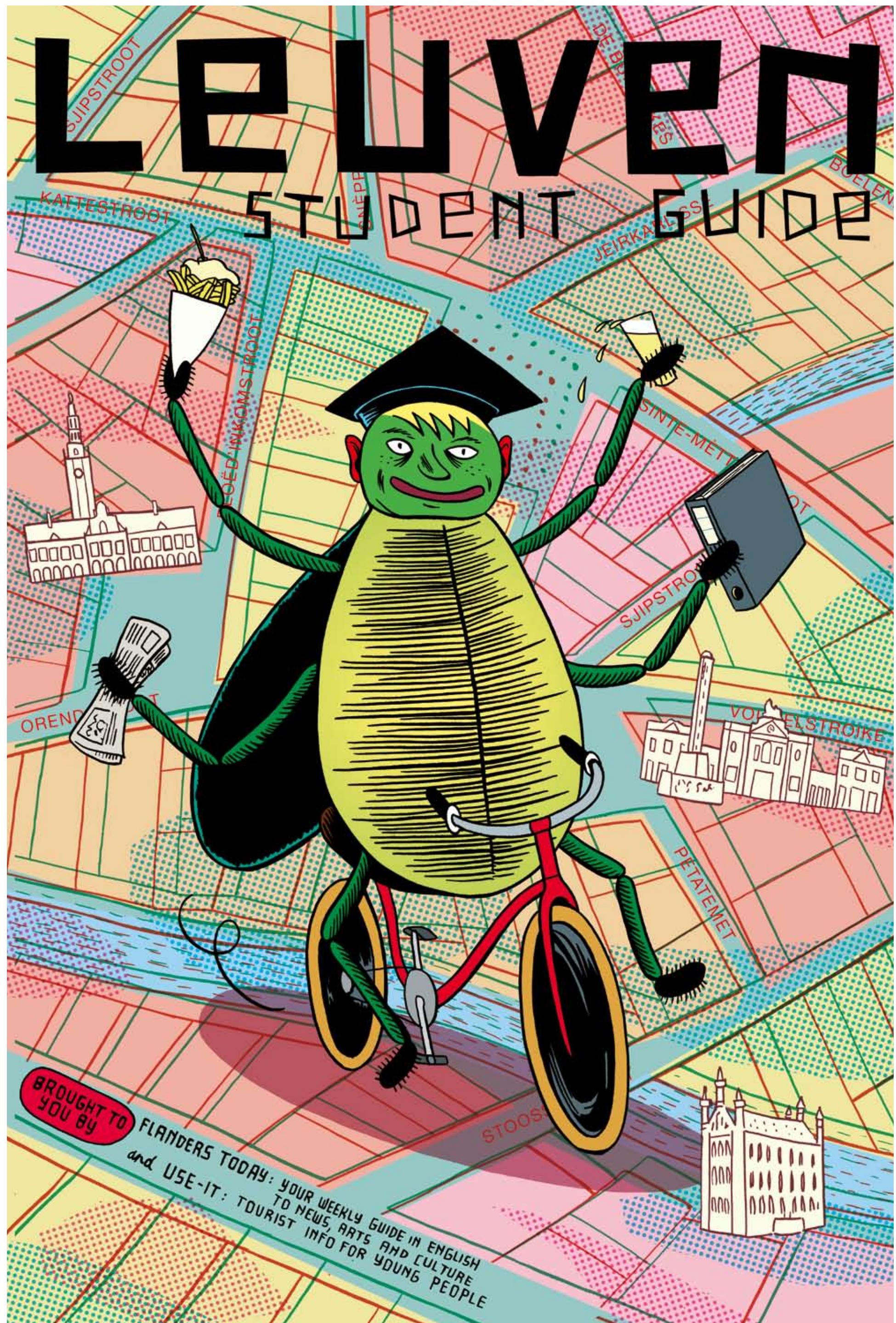
The insurance company Fortis Holding has sold Fortis Luxembourg IARD to the Swiss La Bâloise. The division is responsible for non-life insurance activities.

### Pharma • Tigenix

Leuven-based pharmaceutical company Tigenix has won approval from the EU Commission to start selling its ChondroCelect knee cartilage regeneration medicine in the European Union.

### Retail • Delhaize

The Brussels-based retailing company Delhaize has made a \$425 million bid to acquire 214 supermarkets belonging to the failed US Bi-Lo retailing group. The move will significantly strengthen Delhaize's activities in the south-eastern part of the United States and bring the group's total number of stores in the region to well over 1,500. Bi-Lo filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection earlier this year, a victim of the credit crunch.



### 36 15 METER MARY

What's that? A female version of Rio de Janeiro? A medieval fortress? No, this is the **KEIZERSBERG ABBEY** and the giant statue of the Virgin Mary is always watching over us. The Benedictine monks will let you sleep here for € 23/night, but you have to promise to go to church with the monks at least once a day. Now THAT's acting like a (very old) local.

### 37 HIPPIEST PLACE IN TOWN

(Tue to Fri / Lunch and Dinner / Sat only dinner) At **HUNGARIA** they serve fancy food like tuna-and-black-tiger-scampi. That'll be € 21, please. Luckily for nighthawks without too much cash, there's a lounge bar too, with jazz concerts on Thursday night and deejays on Friday and Saturday. If you've had enough of lounging around, move over to **SILO** 38, right around the corner, for some pumpin' beats.

### 38 SILO DANCING

(Open most Fridays and Saturdays / entrance around € 10) Dancing in a grain storage? Why not? **SILO** is an old - surprise, surprise - silo, turned into a houseclub, with superstar deejays like Jeff Mills, but local talent as well. If smooth electronics are your thing, you should've already been there.

### 39 TINY YACHTS

Nowadays the **VAARTKOM** is one big building site, since city architects have planned this old industry zone by the water to become a posh living-area in the future. Dangle your feet over the water and wave your hand at the wannabe-millionaires on their tiny yachts. In front of you, you see the **OLD STELLA BREWERY**, at your left is their new factory. Visiting the brewery is difficult (unless you're a group of 15 persons and made reservations 3 weeks ago) but the small café on the other side of the water (**DE LANTAARN**) is a classic too: legend says their tap is connected to a top secret underground pipeline, straight from the Stella brewery.

### 40 HEY, COWBOY!

(Wed to Sat) **FOOTLOOSE** is a bar for people who like to wear Stetson-hats in their free time and do some line dancing to country-tunes. There's a sign at the door, advising you to "scrap the shit off your boots" before entering the saloon". You probably best leave your horse outside, too.

### 41 CONCERT HALL

(open depending on program / entrance somewhere between € 10 and € 20) **HET DEPOT** is a fairly large concert hall (about 600 people). Lots of good (and bad) Belgian bands and international acts like Grandmaster Flash or Explosions in the Sky (look for flyers at 73). Check out the young soldiers of the Leuven singer-songwriter army on the Open Mic Night (first Wednesday of the month / free).

### 42 EARLY MORNING BEERS

Get out of the train and smell the Stella. That's the smell of malting, one of the main processes in brewing a pils beer. The square you're standing on, used to be typically Belgian. It had five fries shops in the middle, but they're gone now, since the square was 'cleaned up'. Still enough bars, though. Those bars were (and still are) the place where civil servants went for their first beer to get through their working day in Brussels. **DE NATIONALE** and **IN DEN OUDEN TIJD** are the classics: they've been here since before the first World War and today still sell their first beers at 6 o'clock in the morning. Welcome to Belgium!

### 43 JAZZ MUSEUM

(Closed every day) A record shop that's closed forever? Why is it on this map, then? Well, Jean-Pierre, the guy who used to run **CIRAC** was - and still is - a jazz fanatic. Nowadays he uses his shopwindow as a museum to expose his collection of autographed pictures. From Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington to Chet Baker and Lester Young.

### 44 MIRANDA AND MIRELLA

#### LOCAL TIP

(Closed on Thu) **TOEWIP** is a bar run by a father and his identical twin daughters Miranda and Mirella. Confusion guaranteed! Central in the well-preserved interior is a typical 'toppenbiljart', (bumper billiard, only played in Belgium and some parts of Holland and France). Go here on Tuesday and Sunday evenings to witness the traditional 'wipschiet' contest: 70 people shooting their bow-and-arrow in a big tower behind the bar (November to April). Watch out for falling arrows! (view of the tower from the Lepelstraat, around the corner)

### 45 FUNKY RECORDSTORE

(Tue to Sat) Hiphop, dubstep, regga, Afro... If **GIRAFFE RECORDS** doesn't have it, it probably just isn't funky. They do not limit themselves to just records: you can come in naked and walk out dressed like a homeboy, complete with matching graffiti material.

### 46 HEADBANGER'S HEAVEN

(Tue to Sat) From classic heavy metal such as Judas Priest, to Belgian sludgemeisters Amen Ra: **METAL ZONE** sells it all. Local tip: Lövenburg Death, a group of Leuven youngsters. There's also a large stock of essential attributes, such as cowhorns from which to drink your beer. SATAN!!!

### 47 HEAVENLY CHOCOLATES

(Tue to Sat) If you want to taste out-of-space superb Belgian chocolate, go to **TARTUFO**. The tightly dressed blue eyed guy running the shop makes everything by himself in his cellar beneath the shop. Try a dark truffle or one with pepper (€ 3,70 for 100 grams). We guarantee you, you won't brush your teeth for days to come.

### 48 CANNABIS CLOTHES

(Mon to Sat) Hemp (the plant that cannabis is made of) has more purposes than smoking yourself silly. At **HEMPMADE** all the underwear, shoes, bags, jeans and ice tea are made of hemp. The good news: none of that stuff looks as if your hippie parents wore it 40 years ago.

### 49 SKYLINE & FRIES

#### LOCAL TIP

Have a look at the Leuven skyline here. It exists of exactly one (1) tower: the salmon-pink **SINT-MAARTENSDAL TOWER**. A masterpiece of modernist architecture, some say. But most Leuveneers think it's an ugly, plastic-looking thing. Judge for yourself, while eating fries from **TFRIETWINKEL**, a good old-style fries shop.

### 50 INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINES & NEWSPAPERS

(Mon to Sat)

### 51 TEARJERKER BAR

(Mon to Sat) At **MARENGO** no one cares if it's early morning, noon or night: if one client feels like singing tearjerkers, the whole bar will sing along.

### 52 HOT COFFEE PLACE

(Mon to Sat) **PUNTO CAFFÈ** is where coffee-addicted fashionistas take a rest from shopping. It's new and fresh and always full. Luckily there's an extra room upstairs and a terrace on the pavement.

### 53 GLASS BAR

(Mon to Sat) The **TWEERBRONNEN LIBRARY** is located in a building designed by world-famous Belgian Art Nouveau architect Henry Van de Velde. Three reasons to go here, if you're not into Flemish literature. 1) Free WiFi! 2) The wonderful café, almost entirely consisting of glass. (But don't go there on Wednesday afternoon, because then the place turns into a wild kindergarten). 3) The gallery with regular exhibitions.

### 54 OLDEST STUDENT BAR

(Sun to Fri / 11.00-07.00) Watch that ceiling! The last coat of paint dates from 58 years ago - it's now one thick nicotine crust, slowly peeling off. **IN DEN BOULE** has been keeping students away from their books since the early 20th century. The family exploiting the bar today has been doing so since 1952. The bar is a living museum: full of yellowed-out pictures of student clubs and uncountable decorations once donated by customers. Good place to meet law and economics students. Don't forget your Burberry-scarf.

### 55 BAR & BOOKS

(Tue to Sun) **DRY COPPEN** is a combination of two good things: a bar and a bookshop. The books (guides and literature) are sorted by country and you're welcome to try before you buy. So you can see how the book goes with a good coffee and a piece of cake.

### 56 ERASMUS

Leuven has about 5000 international students. The international exchange-program 'Erasmus', is called after **DESIDERIUS ERASMUS**, one of the most important humanist thinkers in the 16th century. Here's his statue. He started the **Collegium Trilinguae** (college of three languages: Latin, Greek and Hebrew) in 1517, right around the corner on the Vismarkt, where you can still smell the 16th century at café **WENTELSTEEN**.

### 57 GAY DANCE BAR

(Tue to Sat / from 21.00) Leuven is not exactly the Belgian San Francisco. In fact, **KEY WEST** is the only gay dancing bar in town. You won't see too many guys wearing purple feathers in their bums, but if jumping around to Belgian kitsch-house is your thing: feel free. Happy hour on Thursday, from 22.00 till 23.00.

### 58 BEST CHICKEN

**LOCAL TIP** (Every day / Lunch and dinner) 57 years of serving chicken at the chicken shack **KIEKEKOT**! Each chicken roasts for 2 hours and 15 minutes. 4 tables, old pictures of Leuven and talkative owner Staf make for a combination that will easily survive another half century. The only thing Staf doesn't want to talk about is his secret spice-mix. Half a chicken will cost you € 4. Extra's (bread, apple-mash, butter): € 0,50.

### 59 BRING ON THE RUM!

(Every day) Grab a Chanchanchara (rum, honey and lime) in one hand, a warmblooded latin dancepartner in the other, and move to the buzzin' baselines of reggaeton and salsa. **VILLA ERNESTO** is a classic in local nightlife: beautiful people, good cocktails, an interior that looks like it's imported straight from a Havana barrio and excellent party vibes. Funny detail: one of the guys who founded this supersunny place, is TB Frank of the superdark Belgian new wave-band The Neon Judgement.

### 60 INVISIBLE RIVER

Leuven has a river, but it's covered on a lot of places. This is one of the places where you can see the **DIJLE**. It's very small, but nevertheless, it's always full of bicycles thrown in by students/bicycle thieves. Luckily the fire department dives them up now and then, so there's room to throw in fresh bicycles.

### 61 ETHIOPIAN FOOD

(Tue to Sun / Dinner) **HOUSE OF LALIBELA** is all about Ethiopian pancakes ('injera'). Have Minchet Abish (beef with ginger, onion, cardamom and white pepper) for € 10. Or go vegetarian: Yemiser Kik Aliche (red lentils, onions, curry and a special 'Lalibela'-spicemix / € 9). Good news: you're allowed to eat with your hands!

### 62 ORIGINAL FRIES-SHOP

**LOCAL TIP** (Nowadays most frietkoten (fries shops) are located in regular buildings. But **BIJ YESSINA** is still in an old-fashioned bungalow. Have your fries with mayonnaise and 'stoofvleessaus' (meat sauce): that's the way we eat them.

### 63 BOTANICAL GARDEN

(May to September 08.00-20.00 / October to April 08.00-17.00) Entering through the glass gate of the **KRUIDTUIN** (botanical garden) in springtime can be a small 'wow'-experience (if you're lucky with the weather). Your nose will immediately fill with an overwhelming mix of aromas. This little park is full of small flowerbeds with exotic nametags like Simsalabim and Raspberry Ice. Another great place to lay your lazy ass down.

### 64 SING LOUD

(Closed on Tue) "What about some **BEETHOVEN**?" is not a strange question, deep in the Leuven night. It means that the party needs a boost, and we're going for some karaoke at this kitschy place, where most people actually mean what they're singing.

### 65 THIN AND CHEAP

(Every day / Lunch and dinner / Sun only dinner) A good pizza is two things: thin and cheap. At **LA VECCHIA NAPOLI** the Margherita's are thin as a piece of paper and cost € 6.

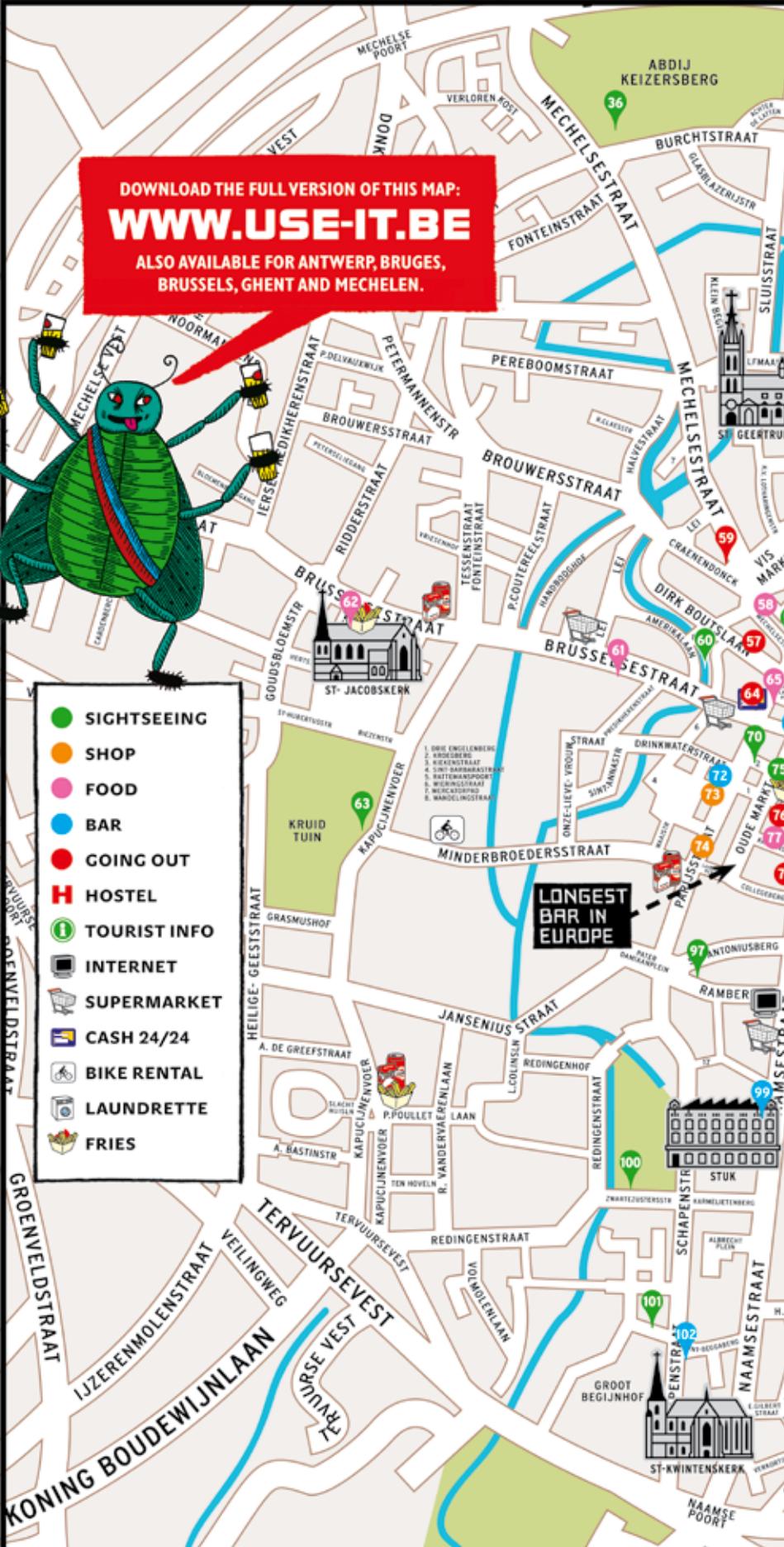
### 66 1896 BAR

(Mon to Sat) **GRAMBRINUS** has been here since 1896 and may very well be the prettiest grand café in town. Order a 'café glacé' (coffee-flavoured ice-cream) - the recipe is top secret - and take a seat in the leather chairs to enjoy the old murals.

DOWNLOAD THE FULL VERSION OF THIS MAP:

**WWW.USE-IT.BE**

ALSO AVAILABLE FOR ANTWERP, BRUGES, BRUSSELS, GHENT AND MECHELEN.



### 67 FONZY

Everybody knows **FONZIE**. No wonder: the guy has an open head and is pouring wisdom in it all the time. Leuven students regularly fill his cup with beer.

### TOURIST FAVOURITE

#### 68 NICE TRY

(Tue to Fri 10.00-17.00 / Sat 10.00-16.30 / Sun 14.00-17.00 / treasure room € 2,50 with student card / € 5) Aim for the stars, they say. We did, when we started building the gothic **SINT PIETERS CHURCH** in 1425, the plan was to build three towers - one reaching 170 metres (incredible at the time)! But water in the ground made the tower collapse when it was only 50 metres high. So we shortened it to 30 metres. If you look really good, you'll see three amputated towers. Inside, the main attraction is **HET LAATSTE AVONDMAAL** ('The Last Supper'), the masterpiece of 15th century painter Dirk Bouts.

#### 69 PARTY HARDY

(Fri and Sat / other days change / program on the door / entrance around € 5) F\*ck testosterone / stop the macho bullshit / get a life... and get a nightlife / lovers not f\*ckers / let's Rumba! The party-philosophy of **RUMBA & CO** is on a poster at the door. On weekdays the student party crowd shake their overqualified asses, on Fridays and Saturdays there's a good chance for a groovy party amongst locals. Once a month Phenomena nights: steaming parties for the funky gay bunch.

### 70 LITTLE MOUNTAIN OF SHIT

The traditional name of this street is **SCHIJTBERGSKE** ('Little Mountain of Shit'), because it used to be a semi-official public toilet. But don't even think about it, unless you want to pay an expensive fine.

### TOURIST FAVOURITE

#### 71 CITY HALL

(Mon to Fri 11.00 and 15.00 / Sat and Sun and October to March 15.00 / guided tour € 2 / starts at 1) We like to call everything a miracle. Nothing spectacular has to happen for that. The Sint-Geertrui church was built without the use of nails: we call it a miracle. And that's the most spectacular of the "7 Leuven Miracles". Perhaps the thing closest to a real miracle is the bomb that, in World War II, missed the gothic **CITY HALL** by a few centimetres. The only damage was a black burnmark on the façade. Oh yes, the City Hall dates back to 1439, but the niches in the façade remained empty until around 1850, when the famous French writer Victor Hugo suggested filling them up with 236 statues. Good idea, Victor!

#### 72 PIEJE'S PLACE

(Every day) Nowadays most bar owners have staff working for them. But Pieje is running **DEN DELPER** all by himself: he serves his clients, has a little chat and chooses which vinyl record will be spun next. The only thing he doesn't do himself, are the acoustic concerts he now and then organises.

### BRAM & MILOW (BROTHERS, 25&27, KARATE-CHAMPION & SINGER)

Go for a jog at 39. No! Come and listen to the fresh load of Leuven singer-songwriters at 41. No! Do both.

RACHID (25, FRISBEE FANATIC)  
The Monseigneur Ladeuzeplein (around 86) is a pretty square. But watch your head, because we throw frisbees and play soccer all summer.



### LOCAL TIP

Reading my newspaper on the sunny terraces of 10 or 4: bliss!

### LOCAL TIP

MAAIKE & INTI (27 & 28, SOCIOLOGIST & VIDEO DIRECTOR)  
Free open air movies at 99 on Mon, Wed and Fri in June!  
The movies start when it gets dark.

### 50 INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINES & NEWSPAPERS

(Mon to Sat)

LOCAL TIP



### 73 LEUVEN MUSIC CITY

(Mon to Sat) Back in the eighties, everyone wore black here: Leuven was new wave city. The nineties were very quiet, music-wise: action moved to bigger cities such as Antwerp and Ghent. Nowadays, Leuven singer-songwriters are big in Belgium: even our grandmothers can hum the mellow songs of Tom Helsen or Milow. Remarkable trends on the dancefloor: 1) Drum'n'bass is still huge in Leuven. 2) The slapstick deejay-act Discobar Galaxie. **JJ RECORDS** has been selling records since 1980 and survived all those trends.

### 74 SOUVENIR STREET

If you're in for an original souvenir-hunt, the **PARIJSSTRAAT** is where you want to go. This is where Leuveneers go shopping when they want 'something else'. **HET BESLOTEN LAND** has a big collection of international indie comics. Want something Belgian that you can understand? 'Boerke' is a funny comic about a silly farmer who doesn't say a word. Across the street is **HIPPO**, an über-stylish vintage shop. Their kitch isn't cheap – around € 20 for a shirt – but a glitter-bambi (€ 8) will surely bring a big smile to the faces of the ones you left at home. Time for a pitstop with fresh juice. Try a Mango Madness (mango, banana and orange / € 3,90) or a Framboosfresh (raspberry, pineapple, cherry, yoghurt and milk / € 3,90) at **PUR.PUR** (free WiFi). Over to **SAX**, now, a shop that is spreading good vibes through world music since 1986. If Afghan folkchants, Chilean reggae or desert-blues from Mali is your drug, let **SAX** be your dealer. Good secondhand section as well, where they also allow 'normal' popmusic.

### 75 STUDENT MOMMY

A statue for a landlady? Only in Leuven: 'DE KOTMADAM' is a lady who rents rooms to students. She used to be a second mommy to them, making sure they got enough sleep, preparing breakfast and giving them a shoulder to cry on, after disastrous exams. Nowadays we only see the owners when they come for the cash.

### 76 SNOOKER FOR BEGINNERS

(Every day) If you really suck at billiard, take part in the so called 'handicap-tournament' at **CHAOS SNOOKER** (Tue at 19:00): the worse you are, the bigger your advantage will be. (Entrance upstairs from EXPO 58 bar.)

### 77 BELGIAN FOOD AT NIGHT

(Tue to Thu: 18.00 - 03.00 / Fri to Sun: 18.00-04.00) When Leuveneers get hungry late at night, and just for once don't want to eat kebab, they go to **DE NACHTUIL**. It's not the cheapest place in town, but for € 12,50 they'll serve you chicory (a typical Belgian vegetable) rolled in ham. About as Belgian as fries, so you should definitely try it.

### 78 BLUES AND JAZZ BAR

(Every day) **DEN BLAUWE KATER** is a blues and jazz bar. They have exactly 100 kinds of beer in stock and twice a month, on Monday, there's a concert. Check out the party hall in the back for some heavy student action.

JANNE (25, SELLS LINGERIE)

Leuven is my favourite city in the world. **69**, **10** and **4**: all within walking distance. I'll never leave!

ELKE (26, FASHION JOURNALIST)

I've been around the world, but coming back to Leuven is always special. There's only one hip coffee place here, but the city just keeps me in balance.

PETER, MAXIME & KAREN (21, STUDENTS)

Beer for € 1 at the fakbars **83**. Yeehaw!



### 79 GOING UNDERGROUND

(Mon, Tue, Fri and Sat / entrance between € 3 and € 6 / sometimes free) Local hipcats make fun of the fact that Leuven finally has an alternative club. But they're clubbing here at **DER MACHINE** every night, anyway. Fridays: minimal, electro and techno. Changing genres on Saturdays: Drum'n'bass, goa, breakcore, reggae or salsa. There's concerts and parties on Monday and Tuesday too, because students are still full of energy, then.

### TOURIST FAVOURITE

#### 80 WHERE'S THE UNIVERSITY?

You probably wonder where the university is in this city. The answer is: everywhere. The campuses are spread all over town and today there's even satellites in other cities. Anyway, this place, the **UNIVERSITEITSHAL**, has been used by the university since 1432 and still is the central point.

### 81 BEAUTIFUL SQUARE

In for a spontaneous picnic? **HOGESCHOOLPLEIN** is the most beautiful square of Leuven, surrounded by old buildings (have a walk around the **PAUSCOLLEGE**). If it's cold, sit down on the terrace of **DE WERF** (Mon to Fri / Lunch and dinner), grab a cosy blanket and have a warm applejuice (€ 2).

### LOCAL TIP

The best icecream in Leuven? Every local has an opinion and no one agrees. There's two camps: the **GALET** fans and the **CROCANTINO** crew. Both are here in the **TIENSESTRAAT**: choose for yourself which team you're in.

### 82 ICE CREAM BATTLE

(Every day) **AT THE BEBOP** is a large bar, but it's always a race for the leather sofas. Blues and jazz concerts now and then (mostly wintertime). Big names sometimes, but you'll pay a few euros then. Restaurant in the back.

### LOCAL TIP

(Tue to Sat / from 22.00) Jo and Germaine – veterans of Leuven barlife and owners of **INN 'T JODOR** – are on a mission to keep old bar traditions alive. Hardboiled eggs for € 0,50, for example. They also have a 'tournée-générale-bell'. If you ring it, you'll have to pay all the other customers a drink. If someone else rings it: show your gratitude by raising your glass and saying 'schol'.

### 83 RING THAT BELL

(Tue to Sat / from 22.00) Jo and Germaine – veterans of Leuven barlife and owners of **INN 'T JODOR** – are on a mission to keep old bar traditions alive. Hardboiled eggs for € 0,50, for example. They also have a 'tournée-générale-bell'. If you ring it, you'll have to pay all the other customers a drink. If someone else rings it: show your gratitude by raising your glass and saying 'schol'.

### LOCAL TIP

(Tue to Sat / from 22.00) **ALMA** is a university restaurant. There's always a choice between Belgian food (pern = sausage made from blood, koninginnehapje = untranslatable, but yummy), exotic food and a vegetarian plate. If you're not a Leuven student, you'll pay € 2,90 extra, but you still won't spend much more than € 7 on a full meal and drink, including dessert.

### 84 STUDENT FOOD

(Mon to Thu / Lunch and dinner / Fri only lunch) **ALMA** is a university restaurant. There's always a choice between Belgian food (pern = sausage made from blood, koninginnehapje = untranslatable, but yummy), exotic food and a vegetarian plate. If you're not a Leuven student, you'll pay € 2,90 extra, but you still won't spend much more than € 7 on a full meal and drink, including dessert.

### LOCAL TIP

(Mon to Fri / Lunch and dinner) **LUKEMIEKE** is the oldest vegetarian restaurant in town. Their daily special is € 11 if you eat it in the restaurant or in the lovely garden, but takeaway is € 9 and you can make it a picnic. Tip: the **SINT-DONATUS PARK** **91** is right across the street!

### 85 HOLY GLOBALISM

**FATHER DAMIEN** is a worldwide Catholic hero for living with leprosy patients in 19th century Hawaii. He will be declared a saint on October 11th 2009. He's buried here at the **SINT-ANTONIUSKERK**. When the procedure was started to declare him a saint, his bones were divided into different small boxes. A part of his heel is now waiting to travel to Hawaii, where it will make a celebration tour of the islands before joining a lock of hair and his right hand. Globalism, anyone?

### LOCAL TIP

(Mon to Fri / Lunch and dinner / Sat only lunch / Closed in July and August) Same as **95**.

### 86 STUDENT FOOD

(Mon to Fri / Lunch and dinner / Sat only lunch / Closed in July and August) Same as **95**.

### LOCAL TIP

(Every day / closed from July 1st till September 14th / Free WiFi) On Sunday evenings the large bar of **STUK** is always crammed with a young international crowd that comes for the free jazz concerts. Friday is Scapes: mostly fairly civilized evenings, but people still talk about the day Antwerpian madman Mauro Pawlowski came to spin his collection of eighties hairmetal: everyone forgot they were supposed to hold intelligent conversation and ended up dancing on the tables. Movie-freaks: check out the program of **CINEMA ZED**, also located here.

### LOCAL TIP

(This small park – **DIJLEPARADE** – is one of Leuven's best kept secrets. It has a small lake and a green field of grass: everything young lovers need when the sun is shining. Young locals refer to this place as **Paradijsje** ('little paradise'). Go stand on the bridge and make a 'reverse wish': a wish for something not to happen. It really works! They say.

### TOURIST FAVOURITE

### 101 BEGUINAGE

The **GROOT BEGUINHOE** is so pretty and picturesque, you'd swear you've ended up on a Walt Disney set. Not! This is an old beguinage – a series of houses for religious women – nowadays transformed into a living area for foreign students and university staff. If you happen to be here in summer: lay down in the grass and enjoy a lazy nap.

### LOCAL TIP

(Every day) **BAR DEL SOL** is a little piece of heaven, strangely located in the outskirts of Leuven. On a sunny day, it feels like you're on some small square in a Barcelona barrio. No one knows what the little square in front of the bar is really called, but everyone calls it **PLAZA DEL SOL**. Take a seat, have a Ricard and match the parasols!

### LOCAL TIP

(Mon to Sat) Looking for an intelligent boy/girlfriend from – say – Malta? **PANGAEA**'s your place! This is where all international exchange students meet to chat about crazy Belgian habits, over a cup of coffee.

### 102 BARCELONA TERRACE

(Every day) **BAR DEL SOL** is a little piece of heaven, strangely located in the outskirts of Leuven. On a sunny day, it feels like you're on some small square in a Barcelona barrio. No one knows what the little square in front of the bar is really called, but everyone calls it **PLAZA DEL SOL**. Take a seat, have a Ricard and match the parasols!

### LOCAL TIP

(Mon to Sat) Looking for an intelligent boy/girlfriend from – say – Malta? **PANGAEA**'s your place! This is where all international exchange students meet to chat about crazy Belgian habits, over a cup of coffee.

### 103 MEET THE ERASMUS CROWD

(Mon to Sat) Looking for an intelligent boy/girlfriend from – say – Malta? **PANGAEA**'s your place! This is where all international exchange students meet to chat about crazy Belgian habits, over a cup of coffee.

### 104 SLEEP FOR FREE

Leuven is so safe, that the police can concentrate on drinking students. Drinking on the streets is forbidden in Leuven after 00.00. If you're really drunk, you might even spend the night here at **LEUVEN CENTRAAL** prison. And that's where some of our most notorious criminals live...

### 105 STUDENT WOK

(Mon to Sat / Lunch and dinner)

Ok, **WOK ON AIR** is a silly name for a restaurant. And yes, the superclean interior is not the best for a romantic date. But service is fast and the menu is a good mix of Japanese, Thai and Chinese. Thursday is Student Wok Night (€ 6,20 with rice / € 8,20 with noodles).

### 106 PART TIME PALM TREES

(Mon to Sat / Lunch and dinner)

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### 107 SOUP WITH A VIEW

(Mon to Sat / Lunch and dinner)

**DE COMMERCE** for a bowl of soup (€ 2,90): good place to watch the Leuven student crowd streaming in and out of the University Library **87**.

### 108 SOUP & BALLS

(Mon to Sat / Lunch)

The menu at **SOUP AWAY** changes depending on season, so you're sure that their ten daily soups will be fresh. Soup starts at € 2,50. Local tip: tomato+meatballs is more or less our national soup. Everybody's grandmother has a different recipe, but this one ain't bad either.

### 109 STUDENT WOK

(Mon to Sat / Lunch and dinner)

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### 110 PART TIME PALM TREES

(Mon to Sat / Lunch and dinner)

On sunny exam-days, hundreds of students are spread all over the lawn of the **SINT-DONATUS PARK** (a name that no one in the city uses, we say **STADSPARK** or city park) But where do those friggin' palmtrees come from? Well, in winter they're kept safe in a hothouse in **63**, but once the first rays of sun hit the city, they're dragged outside. Find the coconuts!

### 111 SOUP & BALLS

(Mon to Sat / Lunch)

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### 117 SOUP & BALLS

(Mon to Sat / Lunch)

# LONGEST BAR IN EUROPE

ON THE OUDE MARKT, ALMOST EVERY BUILDING IS A BAR. WE CALL IT THE LONGEST BAR IN EUROPE. GET READY FOR A PUB CRAWL!

## 1. PERFECT ICE TEA

COM.MEDIA has a slightly hipper - seventies - look than most places on the Oude Markt. The ice tea is served with the perfect amount of ice and a slice of lemon. Small snacks, too. Free WiFi.

## 2. COMPLICATED TOILET

KOMEET is a non-smoking place with healthy snacks and a clean interior. Boys, be careful: the sink to wash your hands looks a bit like a toilet. But it isn't! On the other side of the wall, the girls are washing their hands in the same sink. You wouldn't be the first one...

## 3. NIGHTHAWKS UNITE

OASE is a place where nighthawks never get kicked out before 6 in the morning. Lots of locals come here for a drink and a chat. And another drink. The main decoration are some covers of classic records on the wall: Otis Redding, Elvis Costello, Tom Waits and Jacques Brel. Check out the worn out vinyl record sleeves behind the bar, too: now that is what we call USED records!

## 4. FUNKY PARTY BAR

A fool for deephouse, jazz and funk? Get yourself served at APERO. This place is always full of stylish locals looking for a small party (deejay sets in the weekend). Get out your best dancing moves and blend in.

## 5. BURN THAT BAR

If things get really cosy at REVUE, the bar is put on fire. Really! Some 80° Strohrum is sprinkled on the (wooden) bar, a match is struck and... Whoosh!!! If you're here on a Friday night and wondering where all these old guys come from: that's the weekly reunion of the barmen of the last 20 years.

## 6. WHERE'S JOHNNY?

ECLIPS is a bar full of boy scouts. There used to be a cardboard Johnny Walker statue here, and the scouts always took Johnny for a walk. One day he didn't return. Today an Indian has taken Johnny's place. He goes for a walk, too, but always returns. If the poolroom upstairs is locked: don't ask!

## 7. BROWN BAR

BLOKHUT is what Belgians call a 'brown bar': a dark and cosy interior, with a crisp nicotine crust on the walls and a nice, no-nonsense atmosphere. Their terrace is the only one on the market that always has a bit of sun (except when the weather's nasty, which means almost always in Belgium). Tuesday, from September to April: beers for € 1,10.

## 8. GUITAR BAR N°1

If the guitars at 20 are a bit too heavy for you, try this no-nonsense bar with a soundtrack of loud (but not SO loud) guitars. If you're in for a spicy story, ask the barkeeper what DE PEYLKOKER actually means.

## 9. CHEAPEST STELLA

Cheapest Stella on the square at PLAZA: € 1,50. Owner Karim is here every night, to make sure that every customer is satisfied. Sports on a big screen. See that deejay in his wooden tower? That used to be a priest's preachin place.

## 10. BEST PASTA

METROPOLE is a beautiful non-smoking bar with big windows and the best pasta in town. Order a coffee, put yourself on the terrace, and observe the crowd. It's a hobby for many Leuveneers.

## 11. STUDENTS AND GRANNIES

Bert has been keeping DEN BROSSER open for over 15 years. Mixed crowd of students and grannies.

## 12. EARLIEST BAR

DE WEERELT opens its doors at 8 o'clock in the morning. So this is where the good students come for the first coffee before school, and the bad students come for their last beer before bed.

## 13. EAT, DRINK, DANCE, N°1

KAREMENT is one of the loungy dance bars where you can also eat. Deejays on Thursday, Friday and Saturday night. Daily soup for € 2,50 and 'zwarte pens' (sausage made of blood) for € 9.

## 14. CHERRY WINE

FARAO is a cosy bar with a young crowd. The only place on the Oude Markt that serves cherry wine.

## 15. BIC BILL BAR

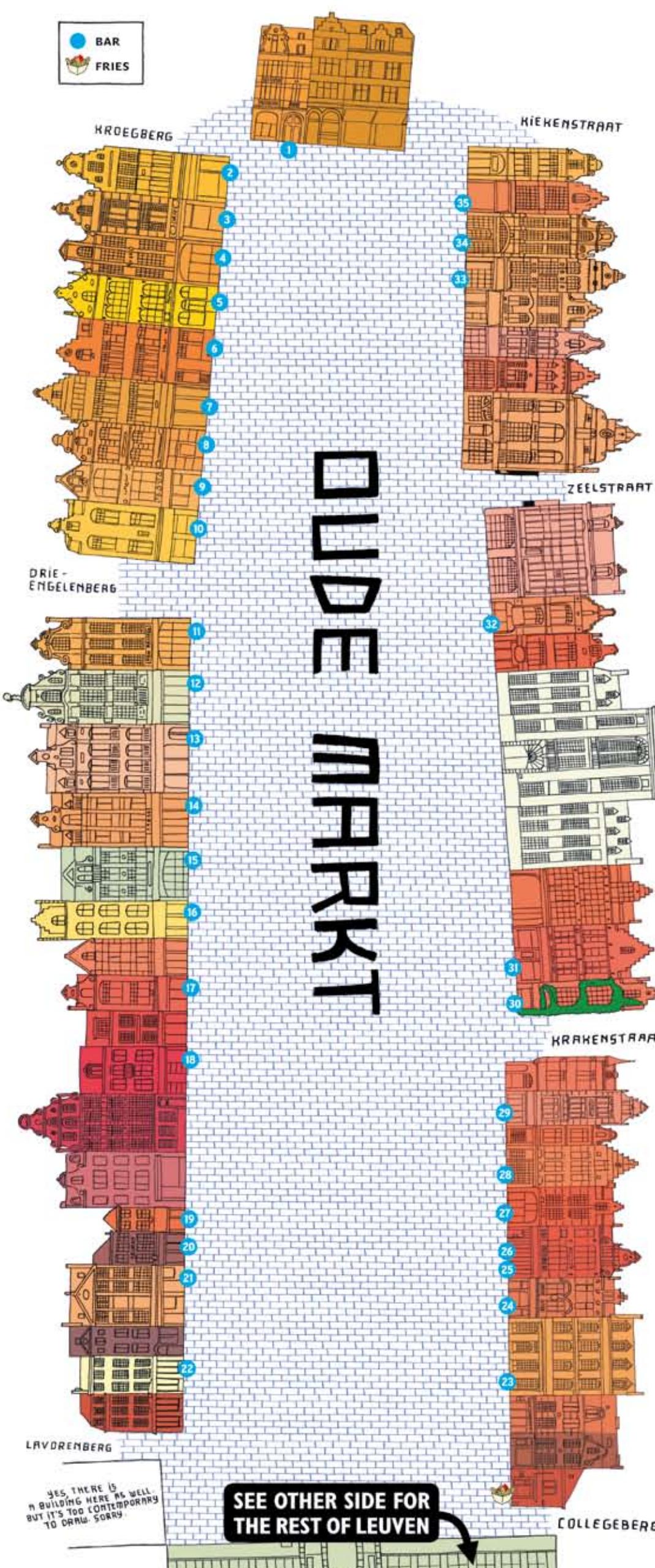
CAFE ALLEE, a Leuven classic with a quasi-industrial interior and staff that know how to pour a decent beer without stopping the conversation. Nice to know: this is the home-bar of Big Bill, a local Blues legend whose biggest hit was 'Een mee hesp', a song about cheese-and-ham sandwiches.

## 16. EAT, DRINK, DANCE, N°2

LOUVAIN LOUVAIN is something between a lounge-bar and a restaurant. During the day you can have a daily special here for € 9,5. The fries here are hand-made, and that's a big plus. Thursday to Saturday at 23,00, they turn the volume up and the lights down: dancing time!

## 17. SQUATTER BAR N°1

Go join the philosophical discussions in DE GIRAF, second home to Leuven squatters and anarchists, who come here to drink'n'talk 'till sunrise. The deejays (Tue to Sat) spin a mix of everything between balkanbeats and reggaeton, so some casual dancing may occur.



## 18. MOST ORIGINAL NAME

The crowd at DE KROEG ('The Bar') is a good mix of young and old. Everyone is talking to everyone and the personnel listens patiently to the wildest stories. Free internet in the back.

## 19. ONLY 33

The unwritten law in Leuven used to be that when you ordered a beer in a 33cl glass, you paid the same price as for a normal 25cl beer. This rule does not count in all bars on the Oude Markt, though. But here at 33 (surprisingly located in house n°33), you don't have a choice: every beer is 33cl (€ 1,90).

## 20. GUITAR BAR N°2

Like it loud? Try ROCKCAFE, where the young owner tries his very best to live up to the name of his bar: everything from CCR to Slayer and AC/DC. If it's got loud and dirty guitars, it's ok.

## 21. SMOOTH AND FUNKY DANCING

Less talking, more dancing! At ALEGRIA, young people from Leuven dance the night away to the funky R'n'B and smooth & tropical house tunes local deejays are spinning.

## 22. EAT, DRINK, DANCE, N°3

During the day, CAFE MANGER is a place to eat, but on Thursday, Friday and Saturday night, at 11 o'clock the dancing starts, even if you haven't finished your meal yet.

## 23. EAT, DRINK, DANCE, N°4

RODINS is bar / restaurant, but on Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings they turn up the volume and the beautiful people come out to dance to stylish beats and have a cocktail. Make sure your shoestrings are tied, because the dresscode's rather strict.

## 24. SMALL SNACK

Lots of young people come to eat a cheap snack at DE KEMEL. Pasta for € 5,80, pancakes for € 3.

## 25. THE YOUNG ONES

At FORUM the young boys and girls drink their first sips of alcohol. Lots of supersweet alcoholic soft-drinks on the menu. One metre of beer: 12 beers for € 18. Dancefloor in the back.

## 26. BEER CELLAR

(Every day) You've had it with those locals? DEN BIERKELDER ('Beer Cellar') is the most touristy place on the square. They have a legendary number of different beers, but once you end up here, you probably don't feel the urge to count anymore.

## 27. FRED'S PLACE

Want to meet an original soul? Go talk to Fred. He opened VILLA TEMPO 29 years ago with one cause: to play music that nobody knows. He still doesn't play requests and that's probably the reason his bar is a commercial disaster. But Fred doesn't care: he just doesn't want to play the commercial game some of the other bars on the square play. In fact, this is probably the only place on the Oude Markt where you'll always find a seat.

## 28. BAR WITH A REPUTATION

Very young crowd and lots of hormones dripping off the ceiling: DE COLFF has a bit of a reputation. But if you're into wild parties with sweaty teenagers and a commercial R'n'B soundtrack, go here.

## 29. SQUATTER BAR N°2

CHARLATAN has all 6 Belgian Trappist beers, which is quite unusual. And they only cost € 3 a glass! A glass of Cristal pils is € 1. It's mainly the Leuven squatter-crowd that comes here for some games of 'kicker' (table football).

## 30. SMALLEST BAR

INTRO has only 5 tables, so it's probably the smallest bar on the Oude Markt. The loud singing upstairs are students doing a 'cantus' (drinking, singing and drinking some more).

## 31. THIRTY SOMETHING

With its stylish livingroom-feel, CAFE ORIENT mainly attracts an open-minded thirty-something crowd.

## 32. ALL NIGHTER

7ELEVEN is open from 19.00 at night till 11.00 the next morning, even if all the party animals have gone. Have a full cocktail shaker for € 17, make some new friends and share.

## 33. THE BOSS

DE RECTOR (named after the 'boss' of the University) is a student-ambiance-café. But before dancing, you can stuff yourself with a daily special (€ 7,20): steak and fries on Mon, chicken on Tue, pasta on Wed, meat loaf on Thu and fish on Fri.

## 34. CLASSIC STUDENT BAR

AMBIORIX, one of the last original student bars on the square. If you hear drunken singing coming out of the windows on the first floor, students are having a 'cantus'. Order a metre of beer (14 beers / € 21). If you don't share, don't come complaining if your last glass is warm and you yourself feel slightly nauseous.

## 35. DANCING IN THE DARK

MEPHISTO is named after a scary guy with red eyes who doesn't like daylight. That's why they keep the atmosphere as dark as possible here. Dancing on the bar is very much appreciated. Sundays from 21.00: beer for € 1.



# Bridging the gap

Night of the Proms blithely marries pop and classical

MARIE DUMONT

**M**usical tastes, they say, are mostly shaped in our teens and early 20s. Fleming Jan Vereecke can trace his even further back to his childhood, when his father used to drive him to school in the morning. The radio would be tuned to a local station that aired famous symphonic overtures, opera arias and other tuneful titbits from the classical repertoire.

Years later and with those happy moments still ringing in his ears, Vereecke, a fresh-faced applied economics graduate, launched the first Night of the Proms at Antwerp's Sportpaleis with fellow enthusiast Jan Van Esbroeck. The name and concept were directly borrowed from the eight-week-long British classical festival The BBC Proms, whose famous last concert at London's Royal Albert Hall mixes popular classics and patriotic hymns. The pair expected only a handful of fellow students to turn up and had to pinch themselves when more than 13,000 did. Clearly, they were onto something.

The "Jannen", as they are known, are now jointly in charge of the Antwerp Sportpaleis. As for their brainchild, which celebrates its 25th anniversary this year, it embodies crossover in all its mellow seduction – or sanitised kitsch, whichever way you choose to look at it. Upbeat pop numbers jostle with dainty ballads, jazz standards and classical favourites, unfolding at a brisk pace. "No one gets to perform long enough to become boring," says Vereecke.

This well-oiled extravaganza has featured the likes of Sting, Joe Cocker, Simple Minds and Zucchero, yet its distinctive sound is provided by a full symphonic orchestra that returns year after year, Il Novecento, conducted by former Queen Elisabeth Competition laureate Robert Groslot. The

ensemble not only performs the classical pieces on the programme but also provides backing for the other numbers, with help from a rhythm section hidden among its musicians.

"I've always been fascinated by music that has a symphonic touch to it, by the richness of the orchestral sound," Vereecke tells me. "As it turns out, a lot of pop music is influenced by it."

Because of its casual treatment of classical music – pieces are routinely cut, arranged or seamlessly spliced together to form what is often a glorified version of elevator music – Night of the Proms gets little credit from purists. Vereecke likes to counter that he's done more to introduce the genre to the masses than more respectful approaches have ever managed. "Disney," he points out, "did much the same thing with the film *Fantasia*: open people's ears, bring classical music to kids who would never otherwise have had a chance to hear it."

From Antwerp, Night of the Proms has migrated to other locations, including the Netherlands, Germany, Spain and France. Only in Paris did the chemistry fail to work, causing performances to be discontinued. Vereecke blames it all on those snooty French. "They had trouble making the connection between the different kinds of music," he ponders. "The gap between audiences is bigger there than elsewhere: people tended to like one aspect of the programme but not others."

No chance of that happening in Antwerp, where Night of the Proms enjoys a captive and ever-growing fan base. "If you liked one show, you're bound to like them all," Vereecke says, pointing out that many listeners keep returning each year, bringing their children, grandparents, friends and colleagues, and thus bridging the



© concertpix.be

gap between generations – just as performers on stage blur distinctions between genres. "These people just like music, all kinds of music," says Vereecke. "Professionals in the music industry are often too keen to categorise. They think that there are many people out there who only like, say, reggae. Fortunately, our audience is a lot more open-minded."

## Music of the future, music of the past

### Orchestral Manoeuvres in the Dark

Their hairlines have receded and their waistlines expanded, but the songs penned in the '80s by vocalist Andy McCluskey and keyboardist Alan Humphreys still exert their old smoky, synthetic charm. You can't help wondering at the silliness of these bands' names sometimes, but for once it will be absolutely accurate: there will be plenty of orchestral activity and very little light.

### John Miles

Also featured in the original edition, the suave English vocalist has since become a regular. Vereecke deems "Music", his lushly-orchestrated hymn, "the best song ever composed" and has made it NOTP's signature. "Music was my first love, and it will be my last / Music of the future, and music of the past", he quotes. "What better way of summarising what we're all about?"

### Toots Thielemans

Belgium's most famous jazzman was there on the very first edition of Night of the Proms, cracking jokes and delivering dreamy standards on his harmonica. Twenty-five years later, he's still at it and in finer fettle than ever – at age 87.

### Roxette



This bright and cheerful duo from Sweden were originally booked for the 2002 edition but had to cancel when singer Marie Fredriksson was diagnosed with a brain tumour. She's now thankfully recovered and ready to dish out her catchy songs in English with smirking partner Per Gessle at the guitar.

### Il Novecento/Fine Fleur

This symphony orchestra and choir have been the concerts' backbone since the early 1990s and will, according to Vereecke, "play almost anything". This year they continue to explore the lighter side of the classical repertoire with an abridged version of Ravel's "Bolero", Brahms' fifth Hungarian Dance, and excerpts

from Rossini's "Thieving Magpie", but also recent scores composed for computer games. Not to forget, of course, Elgar's celebration of Britishness, "Land of Hope and Glory", which traditionally brings the event to a roaring close.

### Sharon den Adel



Making her début at NOTP, the glamourous singer of the Dutch band Within Temptation will demonstrate her unnerving vocals and penchant for Gothic fashion.

### Peter and Zoltan Katona

From Vivaldi to Piazzolla, no guitar duet is too daunting for these devilishly gifted twins from Hungary.



Twenty five years and counting: Jan Vereecke

24 October-11 November

Sportspaleis  
119 Schijnpoortweg  
Merksem (Antwerp)

→ [www.notp.com](http://www.notp.com)



## Flemish-Brabant & Leuven, one big painting

Scattered all over the world, and now temporarily united in M, the brand new museum in Leuven: more than 100 unique works by and about Rogier van der Weyden. And there is much more to see in Leuven, the capital of Flemish Brabant. In this student city you will find a rich cultural heritage, the beautiful beguinage and the oldest university of the Low Lands. Moreover, Leuven is an excellent operating base from which to discover the rest of Flemish Brabant, with its breathtaking scenery and delicious regional cuisine.

For more information please go to [www.leuven.be/welcome](http://www.leuven.be/welcome)



## Cost-cutting panic or investments in human capital?

In times like these, where we have to do more with less, there are two types of managers. **Those who cut costs** across the board, and **those who even now choose to continue to invest** prudently. Which type are you? The financial crisis and the uncertain economic situation are confronting managers with new challenges, but all too often they are also driving them to take decisions that are infused with panic and doom-and-gloom. But the ones who are forward-thinking and keep to their own course don't slam on the brakes – instead, they invest in the future.

### Knowledge determines your competitive power

An organisation that wants to maintain and strengthen its competitive position in the global economy must be powered by a well-oiled knowledge engine. Your workforce is your greatest capital and lifelong learning is an absolute necessity. The acquired knowledge flows back into your company and your knowledge capital grows larger and larger, increasing your competitiveness. This will keep you competitive in the rapidly changing economic context. We call this 'learning with impact'.



### Investing in training: costs versus benefits

Too often, training is still regarded as a cost instead of an investment. However, companies that view their personnel policy from a strategic standpoint continue – even when the economy becomes a serious challenge – to invest in training programmes for their most strategic employees. Investing in talent and training now guarantees you a significant jump on the competition when the economy gets going again.

### Vlerick, your partner in tailor-made training programmes

Those who have participated in a Vlerick training programme are undoubtedly better prepared than other employees to take on today's challenges. Via in-company programmes – focused on the development of individual employees as well as on organisational development – Vlerick Leuven Gent Management School offers you a collaborative project fully tailored to your needs. Thanks to in-depth knowledge of both local and international economic environments and years of

experience in training management talent, the School can develop a specially adapted management training programme for every organisation, in each phase of its development, targeting the most diverse aspects of its business.

**More info on our management programmes?**

Consult [www.vlerick.be](http://www.vlerick.be)



**Vlerick Leuven Gent Management School**



# Willard Grant Conspiracy

CHRISTOPHE VERBIEST

"If someone says they play with us, they do." You can read this somewhat weird statement on the MySpace page of Willard Grant Conspiracy. It already featured, in some form or other, on their early albums, released during the second half of the 1990s. There's a simple explanation: the band is a loose-knit collective with, in its early stages, just a few key members.

Only one has remained – the man who, in the end, has always been the mainstay of Willard Grant Conspiracy, Robert Fisher. He is the constant in an ever-changing line-up of musicians, although on the five or six times I've seen the band, they never sounded like a bunch of hirelings. That's probably because Fisher only works with his friends, people who play with him because they love his songs. They just have released their eighth studio album, *Paper Covers Stone*, which is largely filled with

songs they recorded long ago. Yet, it's not just a cheap revival of past glories. On the contrary, the new versions surpass the originals – which were in no sense weak. For newcomers, the record comes as a perfect introduction to the band. I once wrote in another publication that the playlist on my iPod with the songs of Willard Grant Conspiracy was called "To Boldly Go Where Nick Cave Doesn't Go Anymore". That was a joke, and I don't want to imply they're copyists, because they certainly aren't. But it gives you an idea where in the vast musical landscape you can find them. Their music has been called Americana or folk noir, but they also incorporate country and, in recent years, some touches of gospel. Yet at times they also rock the roof off a house. But in whatever direction the music goes, the warm baritone of Robert Fisher lies at its heart. Even when he sings gloomy

lyrics – and he doesn't shy away from that – his voice always has a consoling sound. That is true even when the music, as occasionally happens, is noisy or even apocalyptic. "Although we don't play blues," Fisher once explained to me, "that's the blues effect of our music".♦



20 October, 20:00

Botanique  
Koningsstraat 236, Brussels  
→ [www.botanique.be](http://www.botanique.be)

## MORE BANDS THIS WEEK

The All-American Rejects → *Ancienne Belgique, Brussels* →

Nouvelle Vague → *Het Depot, Leuven*

Indochine → *Vorst Nationaal, Brussels*



### Antwerp

**Arenbergschouwburg**  
Arenbergstraat 28; 070.222.192,  
[www.arenbergschouwburg.be](http://www.arenbergschouwburg.be)  
**OCT 15** 20.15 An evening of reading, music and conversation with Nick Cave, Warren Ellis and Martyn Casey  
**OCT 18** 20.15 Elliott Murphy and The Normandy All Star Band

### Lotto Arena

Schijnpoortweg 119; 0900.26.060  
**OCT 18** 20.00 Status Quo

### Petrol

Herbouvillekaai 21; 03.226.49.63,  
[www.petrolclub.be](http://www.petrolclub.be)  
**OCT 16** 22.00 Alec Empire + Mary Ann Hobbs + Matrix & Futurebound + Walsh + D1 + Murdock + Gaz + Goldorak & Solpher  
**OCT 17** 23.00 Jesse Rose + Discobar A Moeder + Fanklub Djs

### Sportpaleis

Schijnpoortweg 119; 0900.26.060,  
[www.sportpaleis.be](http://www.sportpaleis.be)  
**OCT 14** 20.30 Fleetwood Mac  
**OCT 17** 20.30 Green Day + Prima Donna  
**OCT 18** 20.00 Status Quo

### Berchem

**CC Berchem**  
Driekoningenstraat 126; 03.286.88.20,  
[www.ccberchem.be](http://www.ccberchem.be)  
**OCT 16-17** 20.00 Ugo Dehaes

### Borgerhout

**Trix**  
Noordersingel 28; 03.670.09.00,  
[www.trixonline.be](http://www.trixonline.be)  
Concerts at 20.00:  
**OCT 15** Lovers + The Tubs **OCT 16** Baddies + Yum **OCT 18** Our Brother the Native + Plants & Animals **OCT 19** Dredg + Lost Departement + Judgement Day **OCT 22** Star Club West + De Portables + Shash Shash

### Bruges

**Het Entrepot**  
Binnenweg 4; 050.61.02.48,  
[www.het-entrepot.be](http://www.het-entrepot.be)  
**OCT 17** 22.00 Daddy K + ND + Crooked Facts + Swordz ft. Tucko + Bootlickaz

### Brussels

**Ancienne Belgique**  
Anspachlaan 110; 02.548.24.24,  
[www.abconcerts.be](http://www.abconcerts.be)  
**OCT 14** 20.00 Robert Fripp + Porcupine Tree  
**OCT 15** 20.00 Sharko + Chris Chameleon

### Koninklijk Circus

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

### 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 22** 20.00 Dez Mona

### Heist-Op-Den-Berg (Antwerp)

**CC Zwaneberg**  
Berkenstraat 1; 015.25.07.70,  
[www.zwaneberg.be](http://www.zwaneberg.be)  
**OCT 16** 20.30 Kleinkunsteland: Te vroeg, te mooi, text and music of musicians who died young, featuring Robert Long, Bram Vermeulen, Wim Sonneveld, Toon Hermans, Wim de Craene and Connie Vandenberg

### De Kreun

Jan Persijnstraat 6; 056.37.06.44,  
[www.dekreun.be](http://www.dekreun.be)  
**OCT 16** 20.00 Heliocentrics feat Mulatu Astatke + DJ Six & The Bartender **OCT 17** 22.00 Party! Disko Drunkards + Friendly Fires + The Glimmers + Sounds of Stereo **OCT 18** 20.00 The Bug feat Flow Dan + King Cannibal + DJ Knorsq feat Saimm I **OCT 22** 20.00 Daedelus + Tim Exile + Kelpe

### Leuven

**Het Depot**  
Martelarenplein 12; 016.22.06.03  
**OCT 16** 20.00 Murdock + AKS Live + Chase & Status Live  
**OCT 17** 20.00 Mulatu Astatke & The Heliocentrics  
**OCT 21** 20.00 Nouvelle Vague

## DON'T MISS

### Almost Cinema

Until 17 October

### Vooruit, Ghent

Alas, there are so many movies to see during the Flanders International Film Festival in Ghent that many people never get to this exciting programme of sideline activities in the city's massive art centre Vooruit. Performance and music collide with film and other media art in a highlight of work that isn't quite cinema and, therefore, is rarely represented at traditional film festivals. You can still catch the *Nature Theater of Oklahoma* in *Rambo Solo* (a reflection on one man's relationship with *First Blood*) and the Almost Cinema exhibition, which, like great movies, is profound and entertaining at once.



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

### Ternat

**CC De Ploter**  
Kerkstraat 4; 02.582.44.33,  
[www.ccdeploter.be](http://www.ccdeploter.be)  
**OCT 17** 20.30 Tom Pintens and Buurman



### Bruges

**De Werf**  
Werfstraat 108; 050.33.05.29  
**OCT 15** 20.30 Nathalie Loriers Trio and Bert Joris with his String Quartet

# ♦ Agenda ♦

FLANDERS TODAY  
OCTOBER 14, 2009

## Brussels

**Bozar**  
Ravensteinstraat 23; 02.507.82.00,  
[www.bozar.be](http://www.bozar.be)  
**OCT 14** 20.00 Maceo Parker (part of  
Skoda Jazz Festival)

**Flagey**  
Heilig Kruisplein; 02.641.10.20,  
[www.flagey.be](http://www.flagey.be)  
**OCT 15** 20.15 Marcin Wasilewski Trio

**Jazz Station**  
Leuvensesteenweg 193-195;  
02.733.13.78  
**OCT 14** 20.30 Henri Greindl Quintet

**Koninklijk Circus**  
Onderrichtsstraat 81; 02.218.20.15,  
[www.cirque-royal.org](http://www.cirque-royal.org)  
**OCT 15** 20.30 Jan Garbarek Group  
(part of Skoda Jazz Festival)

**Sazz'n Jazz**  
Koningsstraat 241; 0475.78.23.78,  
[www.sazznjazz.be](http://www.sazznjazz.be)  
**OCT 14** 20.30 Larissa Quartet

**Sounds Jazz Club**  
Tulpstraat 28; 02.512.92.50,  
[www.soundsjazzclub.be](http://www.soundsjazzclub.be)  
**OCT 14** 22.00 Chamaquiando, salsa

## Ghent

**De Centrale**  
Kraankindersstraat 2; 09.265.98.28,  
[www.decentral.be](http://www.decentral.be)  
**OCT 18** 20.00 Sabin Todorov, piano;  
Bernard Guyot, sax

**Vooruit**  
St Pietersnieuwstraat 23; 0900.26.060,  
[www.vooruit.be](http://www.vooruit.be)  
**OCT 22** 20.00 Lidlboj + Marc Ribot &  
Ceramic Dog

## Grimbergen

**CC Strombeek**  
Gemeenteplein; 02.263.03.43,  
[www.ccstrombeek.be](http://www.ccstrombeek.be)  
**OCT 14** 20.30 Peer Baerlein Quartet;  
CD release concert

**Heist-Op-Den-Berg (Antwerp)**  
**CC Zwanenberg**  
Berkstraat 1; 015.25.07.70,  
[www.zwanenberg.be](http://www.zwanenberg.be)  
**OCT 22** 20.30 Living Roots

## Mol

**Muziekcafé Meulenberg**  
Milostraat 1; 014.32.11.54,  
[www.cafemeulenberg.be](http://www.cafemeulenberg.be)  
**OCT 16** 21.30 Nael Black and The  
Healers

## Ternat

**CC De Ploter**  
Kerkstraat 4; 02.582.44.33,  
[www.ccdeploter.be](http://www.ccdeploter.be)  
**OCT 18** 13.00-19.00 Folk and Jazz  
Day: concerts, workshops and an open  
podium



## Antwerp

**Zuiderpershuis**  
Waalse Kaai 14; 03.248.01.00,  
[www.zuiderpershuis.be](http://www.zuiderpershuis.be)  
Concerts at 20.30:  
**OCT 15** Orquestra do Fubá (Brazil)  
**OCT 16** Shahkilid (Iran) OCT 17  
Bassekou Kouyate en Ngoni Ba (Mali)  
**OCT 18** Hanggai Band (Mongolia)  
**OCT 21** Mitsoura (Roma music)

## Brussels

**Sazz'n Jazz**  
Koningsstraat 241; 0475.78.23.78,  
[www.sazznjazz.be](http://www.sazznjazz.be)  
**OCT 15** 20.30 Wolke

**VK Club**  
Schoolstraat 76; 02.414.29.07,  
[www.vkconcerts.be](http://www.vkconcerts.be)

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

## Ghent

**De Centrale**  
Kraankindersstraat 2; 09.265.98.28,  
[www.decentral.be](http://www.decentral.be)  
**OCT 16** 20.30 Orchestre Fifes,  
Morocco

**OCT 17 17.00/20.00 The Shouting**  
Fence, music on the theme of the  
Palestinian wall

## Leuven

**Stuk**  
Naamsestraat 96; 016.32.03.20,  
[www.stuk.be](http://www.stuk.be)  
**OCT 21** 20.30 The Isbells, CD release  
party



## Aalst

**CC De Werf**  
Molenstraat 51; 053.73.28.12  
**OCT 22** 20.00 Maria Friedman sings  
Sondheim

## Antwerp

**Amuz**  
Kammenstraat 81; 03.248.28.28,  
[www.amuz.be](http://www.amuz.be)  
**OCT 16** 21.00 Gesualdo Consort  
Amsterdam: Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck

## deSingel

Desguinie 25; 03.248.28.28,  
[www.desingel.be](http://www.desingel.be)  
Concerts at 20.00:  
**OCT 14** Ensemble Explorations with  
Christine Busch, violin; Roel Dieltiens,  
cello: Haydn, Boccherini, Rossini, more  
**OCT 16** Anima Eterna conducted  
by Jos van Immerseel, with Ronald  
Brautigam, piano: Strauss, Brahms  
**OCT 17** Quatuor Ébène: Haydn,  
Bartók, Debussy **OCT 21** Belgische  
Kamerfilharmonie conducted by Ben  
Haemhouts, with Jeroen Berwaerts,  
trumpet: Mendelssohn-Bartholdy,  
Haydn

## Brussels

**Espace Senghor**  
Waversesteenweg 366; 02.230.31.40,  
[www.senghor.be](http://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

## Ghent

**De Bijloke**  
Jozef Kluyskensstraat 2, 09.269.92.92,  
[www.debijloke.be](http://www.debijloke.be)  
**OCT 15** 20.00 Ars Antiqua Austria:  
Haydn, Schrammel

## Leuven

**Stuk**  
Naamsestraat 96; 016.32.03.20,  
[www.stuk.be](http://www.stuk.be)  
**OCT 20** 20.30 Naldjorlak I-II-III with  
French composer Eliane Radigue

## Mechelen

**Cultuurcentrum**  
Minderbroedersgang 5; 015.29.40.00,  
[www.cultuurcentrummechelen.be](http://www.cultuurcentrummechelen.be)  
**OCT 16** 20.15 Baroque orchestra  
B'Rock, featuring counter-tenor  
Maarten Engeltjes: Vivaldi, Hasse,  
Scarlatti

## Roeselare

**CC DeSpil**  
H Spilleboudtstraat 1; 051.26.57.00,  
[www.despil.be](http://www.despil.be)  
**OCT 22** 20.00 Chamber Orchestra  
of Belgium conducted by Ben  
Haemhouts: Haydn, Mendelssohn

## Aalst

**CC De Werf**  
Molenstraat 51; 053.73.28.12

**OCT 22** 20.00 Maria Friedman sings  
Sondheim

**Free  
subscription!**

## DON'T MISS

### Contour

Until 18 October

### Mechelen city centre

It's the final week of this fantastic biannual art circuit of the moving image (formerly known as video art), which any film or contemporary art fan should not miss. Hidden away in 11 quirky venues all within 10 minutes' walk of each other in Mechelen's beautiful historic centre, it's a way to explore the former capital of the Low Countries and the theme of the importance of history in "an age of forgetting".



→ [www.contour2009.be](http://www.contour2009.be)

## Leuven

### Stuk

Naamsestraat 96; 016.32.03.20,

[www.stuk.be](http://www.stuk.be)

**OCT 21-23** 20.00 NieuwZwart,  
choreographed by Wim Vandekeybus,  
live music by Mauro Pawłowski (with  
texts in English)



### Antwerp

#### Lotto Arena

Schijnpoortweg 119; 0900.26.060

**OCT 22** 20.00 ABBA The Story  
(musical)

#### Stadsschouwburg

Theaterplein 1; 0900.69.900,

[www.musichall.be](http://www.musichall.be)

**Until OCT 25** The Sound of Music  
(musical, in Dutch)

#### Berchem

##### CC Berchem

Driekoningenstraat 126; 03.286.88.20,

[www.ccberchem.be](http://www.ccberchem.be)

**OCT 21** 20.30 Het huis van

Bourgondië presents Ramskapelle (in

Dutch)

#### Brussels

##### KVS Box

Arduinkai 9; 02.210.11.12,

[www.kvs.be](http://www.kvs.be)

**OCT 22-31** 15.00/20.30 Compagnie

Cecilia presents The Broken Circle  
Breakdown featuring The Cover-Ups of  
Alabama, musical theatre with Johan  
Heldenbergh, Mieke Dobbels (in Dutch  
with French surtitles)

#### The Warehouse Studio

Waelhemstraat 69a; 0492.64.16.60, atc.  
[theatreinbrussels.com](http://theatreinbrussels.com)

**OCT 20-24** 20.00 The Yellow  
Wallpaper by Charlotte Perkins  
Gilman, adapted and staged by Caraig  
McGregor (in English)

#### Leuven

##### Stuk

Naamsestraat 96; 016.32.03.20,

[www.stuk.be](http://www.stuk.be)

**OCT 15-16** 20.30 Compagnie Barbarie  
presents Too Far East Is West (in  
Dutch)



#### Aalst

##### Netwerk: Centre for Contemporary Art

Houtkaai; 053.70.97.73,

[www.netwerk-art.be](http://www.netwerk-art.be)

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

#### Stedelijk Museum 't Gasthuis

Oude Vismarkt 13; 053.73.23.40

**Until DEC 23** Leerlooierij Schotte:  
Heden versus Verleden (Present versus  
Past), photos of an abandoned tannery  
before its reconversion by Henk van  
Rensbergen.

#### 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,



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Fax: 0

[www.muhka.be](http://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  
**Until FEB 26** Collectie XXIV: presentation of the museum's permanent collection, following the museum's renovation

**Extra City**

Tulpstraat 79; 03.677.16.55,  
[www.extracity.org](http://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](http://www.havencentrum.be)

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

**Mode Museum**

28 Nationalestraat; 03.470.27.70,  
[www.momu.be](http://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](http://www.rockoxhuis.be)

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

**Bruges**

**Bruggemuseum-Gruuthuse**

Dijver 17; [www.uitvindingvanbrugge.be](http://www.uitvindingvanbrugge.be)

**Until APR 25** De uitvinding van Brugge: De stad van Delacenserie (The Discovery of Bruges: The City of Delacenserie), the 19th-century architectural facelift of Bruges, thanks to local architect Louis Delacenserie

**Brussels**

**Archief en Museum voor het Vlaams**

**Leven te Brussel**

Arduinkaa 28; 02.209.06.01,  
[www.amvb.be](http://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](http://www.argosarts.org)

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

**Atomium**

Heysel Park; 02.475.45.75,  
[www.atomium.be](http://www.atomium.be)

**Until DEC 13** Africa: Fast forward, joint exhibition at the Atomium and Central Africa Museum, Tervuren, on the African continent today

**Autoworld**

Jubelpark 1, [www.autoworld.be](http://www.autoworld.be)

**OCT 15-30** The golden age of automobile photo-journalism, tribute to photographer André Van Bever

**Bozar (Paleis Voor Schone Kunsten)**

Ravensteinstraat 23; 02.507.82.00,  
[www.bozar.be](http://www.bozar.be)

**Until JAN 3** Portraits of Artists: 80 Years of the Centre for Fine Arts in Pictures

**Until JAN 24** Son of Heaven, 50

centuries of Chinese power and glory with some 250 masterpieces from China's most prestigious museums (part of Europaia: China)  
**OCT 18-JAN 10** The State of Things, works by some 50 contemporary Belgian and Chinese artists selected by Luc Tuymans and Ai Weiwei (part of Europaia)

**OCT 18-JAN 24** Still Life, works by 13 contemporary Chinese photographers  
**OCT 18-JAN 24** Architecture as Resistance, photographs, plans and models illustrating the work of Chinese architect Wang Shu (part of Europaia)

**Danish Cultural Institute**  
Koningsstraat 35; 02.5230.73.26,  
[www.dkibenelux.org](http://www.dkibenelux.org)

**Until OCT 22** Urban DK, graffiti art

**Design Flanders**  
Kanselarijstraat 19; 02.227.60.60,  
[www.designflanders.be](http://www.designflanders.be)  
**Until OCT 25** Visual Voltage, art, design and energy with works by Swedish designers during Sweden's presidency of the EU

**Fondation pour l'Architecture**  
Kluisstraat 55; 02.642.24.80,  
[www.fondationpourlarchitecture.be](http://www.fondationpourlarchitecture.be)  
**Until OCT 18** De tijd van de boetiek (The Time of the Boutique), 200 years of shop windows and interiors

**Hallepoort**  
Zuidlaan; 02.534.15.18  
**Until OCT 25** Archeologie om de hoek (Archaeology around the corner), archaeological finds in Brussels over the past 20 years

**Horta Museum (Winter Garden)**  
Amerikastraat 25; 02.543.04.90,  
[www.hortamuseum.be](http://www.hortamuseum.be)  
**Until OCT 31** Jean-Charles Delallante, 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](http://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](http://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)

**Museum of the National Band of Belgium**  
Wildewoudstraat 10; [rini@rinihartman.nl](mailto:rini@rinihartman.nl)  
**Until DEC 13** Rini Hartman: 8 Visions of Hope, solo exhibition by the Dutch artist on the eight themes of the UN Millennium Development Goals

**Tour & Taxis**  
Havenlaan 86C; 02.549.60.49,  
[www.tour-taxis.com](http://www.tour-taxis.com)  
**Until MAR 28** It's our Earth 2! From Kyoto to Copenhagen: Interactive exhibition exploring the effects of climate change on the natural world

**WIELS**  
Van Volxemlaan 354; 02.347.30.33,  
[www.wiels.org](http://www.wiels.org)  
**Until DEC 6** Ann Veronica Janssens: Serendipity, installations by the

contemporary Belgian artist

**Woluwe-Saint-Pierre Cultural Centre**  
Charles Thielemanslaan 93;  
02.773.05.81, [www.art-culture.be](http://www.art-culture.be)  
**OCT 21** Rwandan objets d'art, photographs (benefit exhibition; [www.ahazaza.org](http://www.ahazaza.org))

**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](http://www.museumdd.be)  
**Until NOV 29** Absence is the Highest Form of Presence, film and visual art by Robert Gober, Julião Sarmento and Luc Tuymans

**Ghent**

**MIAT**  
Minnemeers 9; 09.269.42.00,  
[www.miat.gent.be](http://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](http://www.smak.be)

**Until NOV 15** Raphaël Buedts, furniture objects  
**Until NOV 22** Nick Ervinck, GNI-RI sep2009 EITOZOR, installations

**Until NOV 22** Sculptural collections by various artists

**Until JAN 10** Michel François, Faux Jumeaux (False Twins), photographs, videos and sculpture

**Grimbergen**

**CC Strombeek**  
Gemeenteplein; 02.263.03.43

**OCT 16-DEC 10** Shot by both Sides, video installations by Pieter Geenen and Johan Grimonprez

**Hasselt**

**Fashion Museum**  
Gasthuisstraat 11; 011.23.96.21,  
[www.modemuseumhasselt.be](http://www.modemuseumhasselt.be)

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

**Literary Museum**

Bampsalaan 35; 011.22.26.24,

**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](http://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](http://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](http://www.speelgoedmuseum.be)

**Until JAN 3** Thirty-five years of Playmobil

**Tervuren**

**Royal Museum for Central Africa**

Leuvensesteenweg 13; 02.769.52.11,  
[www.africamuseum.be](http://www.africamuseum.be)

**Until JAN 3** Persona: Ritual Masks and Contemporary Art, masks from the museum's and other collections, shown alongside works by contemporary African artists



**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](http://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](http://www.festivalvanvlaanderen.be)

**Opera in the Cinema:** Performances by the New York Metropolitan Opera on the big screen, live via digital satellite, including Aida, Turandot, Carmen and Hamlet, among others  
**Until MAY 1** in Kinepolis theatres across Brussels and Flanders

**Skoda Jazz Festival:** festival that mixes the standard-bearers with up-and-coming talent, featuring Nouvelle Vague, Dave Douglas, Carla Bley, Jef Neve, Orquesta Buena Vista Social Club and more

**Until DEC 17** across Brussels and Flanders  
[www.skodajazz.be](http://www.skodajazz.be)

**Antwerp**

**Amperdans4:** International dance and performance festival

**Until OCT 24** across Antwerp  
[www.amperdans.eu](http://www.amperdans.eu)

**Brussels**

**Brussels 2009 BD Comic Strip:** City-wide festival celebrating Brussels-based comic strip artists and the rich history of Belgian comic

**Until DEC 31** across Brussels  
[www.brusselscomics.com](http://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](http://www.brusselmuseums.be)

**Darwin's philosophy:** Series of talks organised by DeBuren to mark the 100th anniversary of the death of Charles Darwin (in Dutch)

**Until DEC 7** at Flagey, Heilig Kruispark  
02.641.10.20, [www.deburen.eu](http://www.deburen.eu)

**Food & Feel Good Fair:** Healthcare, interior decor, fashion, food and gastronomy, leisure, family activities

## FACE OF FLANDERS

### Koen De Graeve

The role of a lifetime in *De helaasheid der dingen*

In Koen De Graeve's film debut *Dagen zonder lief*, we meet his character still asleep above his bar, before waking up to a liquid breakfast. In his next role, as the photographer sidekick to the journalist in *Los*, he has a penchant for pretty girls and partying. Then came the blockbuster hit *Loft*, where he gets memorably drunk at a dinner party and says too much.

Now the Flemish actor is starring in *De helaasheid der dingen* (*The Misfortunes*), playing the most famous alcoholic of contemporary Flemish literature.

"If I've been typecast, that's ok with me," says De Graeve, as jovial and laid back in person as he is on screen. "In the theatre, I work with different collectives, and we always choose what we want to play; so I've already played a variety of roles. In movies, if the story is good and the typecasting is correct, and that's the way my life is going to be, that's ok."

The 37-year-old has hit the jackpot with his role as Marcel "Celle" Strobbe in *De helaasheid*, directed by Felix van Groeningen (who also made *Dagen zonder lief*). Based on the best-selling, autobiographical novel by Dimitri Verhulst, the film recounts in vivid detail the childhood of the author, who grew up with his drunken, unstable father and three very similar uncles in a small town outside Aalst in East Flanders.

De Graeve plays the father, a role that was expanded for the film. Like nearly everyone else in Flanders, he read the book when it was published in 2006. "I was very touched by it," he says. "It's very funny and very raw. Verhulst describes basic experiences with this swollen kind of language – almost bombastic. It's a great book."

It's also a great film. Since opening last week in Belgium, it has garnered praise from critics across the country and abroad and is Belgium's official entry for consideration for an Academy Award nomination. The Flanders International Film Festival, the largest film festival in the country, used its early reputation and star power to sell out its opening night on 6 October – held unusually in two locations to accommodate the crowd of 2,800.

"The feeling among all of us is electric," says De Graeve, who plays alongside an exceptional ensemble cast, including Bert Haelvoet (*Man zkt vrouw, Flikken*) and Johan Heldenbergh (*Aanrijding in Moscou, Jes*). "We've been to Cannes, our producer just came back from Toronto; we've been selected for



## TALKING DUTCH

ALISTAIR MACLEAN



### kernenergie →

Somewhere in the back of a drawer I still have my old smiley *Kernenergie? nee bedankt* – "Nuclear energy? no thanks" badge. These days I see things differently.

Anyway, on my way to work this morning my eye was caught by a white pick-up van pulling a trailer with a large yellow box that passed me to stop outside the federal parliament in de Wetstraat in Brussels. I noticed the word Greenpeace on the side so crossed the street for a better look. The pick-up had stopped beside the usual huddle of cameras and booms waiting for ministers to arrive for their Friday morning confab.

Suddenly six Greenpeace t-shirts jumped out. Within seconds they uncoupled the trailer, and the pick-up sped off. As the police approached the six to tell them to move their trailer, the box slowly sank to the ground. The officers scurried around looking for wheels while above their heads the top folded up to complete the image of the federal prime minister holding a wind turbine snapped in the middle. In large letters ran the message *Sorry, hier stelt kernenergie de wet* – "Sorry, nuclear energy decides the law here".

It was a great piece of street theatre, but I had to tear myself away from the crowd before the end. As I strolled through the park to my daily grind, I thought about those wearing the t-shirts, their great planning and I must say, their convictions.

topped box the air was filled with the sound of various crooners singing songs about being sorry. This was interrupted every few minutes by an announcement, supposedly from the prime minister, apologising for the decision to put off the closure of the three oldest nuclear plants in Belgium for 10 years: "Bericht aan de bevolking – message to the public ("population") ... *De regering verontschuldigt zich maar hier stelt kernenergie de wet* – The government apologises but nuclear energy decides the law here.

All the time, the six t-shirts – men and women of all ages – stood to attention by their box. Reinforcements came and tried to kick their way in, but the box was too sturdy. Passing motorists sounded their opinions clearly for or against. Then there was movement at the top of the box as two teenage girls stood up holding banners. Meanwhile, ministers unwittingly arrived to be interviewed by the camera horde to the sounds of sorry, so sorry songs.

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

### The last word →→→

#### Peace prized

*"This strengthens the hope of the whole world that America will continue to play a stabilising role on the international stage."*

Prime minister Herman Van Rompuy on the Nobel Peace Prize awarded to US president Barack Obama

#### Talk the talk

*"The idea is to give migrants a sort of survival kit. With only standard Dutch, you won't get far in some situations."* Employment agency VDAB in Kortrijk, which is offering immigrants courses in West-Flemish dialect

#### Don't cry for me

*"There should be a little bit of sadness that I'm gone, but above all there should be a party because of all the great memories. There's no point in tears."*

TV presenter André Steegmans, better known as Felice, who died last week, in a message recorded for his funeral

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