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One in six people living in Belgium has experienced discrimination in the past year, putting the country just above the European average. The biggest complaints come from immigrants, where more than two-thirds felt the sting of intolerance


Savage Shakespeare 9

Het Toneelhuis teams up with KVS to take on Shakespeare's most ruthless work – rarely staged because of its grisly violence. Our reviewer sat riveted by the two-and-a-half hour production of *Titus Andronicus*


Pet or meat? 11

While many foreigners are horrified at the idea of eating horse meat, it's a Belgian habit that goes back centuries. Courtney Davis talks to a horse meat butcher, takes you through its different edible forms and discusses the ethical issues



THE SILENT SCREAM

Three people a day commit suicide in Flanders, the highest rate in Western Europe

ALAN HOPE

Every day in Flanders, three people commit suicide. Sometimes it will be a celebrity, like cyclist Dimitri De Fauw or singer Yasmine. But most time, it's an ordinary member of the public. Most of these stories don't make it into the newspapers. But in many cases, you'll find out that your tram was delayed due to someone throwing themselves onto the line.

In 2007, the last year for which complete figures are available, 984 people took their own lives in Flanders – 681 men and 303 women. The World Health Organisation rates Belgium as a whole at 21.1 suicide deaths per 100,000 people. That's far below

Lithuania, which leads the world on 38.6, but places Belgium at fifth place in Europe, behind Slovenia, Hungary and Latvia. Greece is Europe's least suicidal country, with only 3.5 deaths per 100,000 population.

The suicide rates in Flanders, in fact, are not much different from those in Wallonia, according to Grieke Forceville, director of the Centre for Suicide Prevention (CPZ). The centre is based in the Jette commune of Brussels and sponsors a telephone helpline manned by about 50 trained volunteers in Brussels and Leuven, as well as an internet chatline with 15 counsellors.

► *continued on page 5*

© Hans Siegers/Shutterstock

Judge's ruling is "censorship", claims VTM

A judge last week ordered TV station VTM to pull a *Telefacts* documentary after a complaint that the film contained images obtained illegally. The court ruling was described by the channel's director of information, Eric Goens as "a form of preventive censorship that is in conflict with the constitutional right to freedom of the press".

The ruling once again led to criticism of the procedure known as the unilateral petition, by which an applicant to a court can ask for measures to be taken without the opposing party being given the right to defend against or contest the claim. The procedure is used

in cases where delay would mean irreparable harm to the applicant, and it has been used several times to prevent publication of articles or broadcast of contentious material.

In this case, the documentary concerned the family of a woman who holds extreme religious beliefs and included testimony from her husband and children filmed undercover with a secret camera. The woman claimed the footage, which she had not seen, was illegally obtained and breached her right to privacy. The judge agreed and ordered the programme not to be broadcast on pain of a fine

of €100,000. VTM was given no opportunity to state its case.

The unilateral petition was invoked recently to force shops to withdraw the magazine *Dag Allemaal*, on pain of a fine of €1,000 per copy sold, after it published a photo of a woman without her permission. In August, *TV Familie* and *Blik* were pulled from shops after they published photos of a beauty contestant taken when she was a minor. And in October of 2007, Moulinsart, the owners of the rights to illustrator Hergé's work, stopped the broadcast of a film on *Tintin*, on the basis of hidden camera footage. ♦

Calls for action after a spate of road deaths

ALAN HOPE

More speed cameras, new funds for bridges and tunnels

The government has promised measures to make the roads safer for both cyclists and pedestrians after a series of tragic accidents over the past week in which a total of five young people were killed by speeding drivers. The first accident of the week involved a young man who ran into a group of four teenage cyclists. One of the young women, Laetitia Vandervelde, 18, was killed immediately, while Lauren De Cleyn, 17, died shortly after being taken to hospital. A third, 18-year-old Emilie Leus, died at the weekend of her injuries.

The three, together with fellow student Nicolas De Vos, 18, were cycling to the famous Wall of Geraardsbergen to take part in a ceremony that would initiate them into the medical faculty at Ghent University. The accident took place at Oosterzele, after the driver, 22, lost control of his car on a bend, driving 90 km/h in a 70 km/h zone. Emilie's father refused to condemn the driver. "Yes, he was driving too fast, but let's be honest, he didn't set out to cause this accident. Who can honestly say he never drove too fast? I don't want to judge him. This accident was pure chance."

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FLANDERS TODAY

Independent Newsweekly



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News in brief

The parents of an 18-year-old Antwerp girl who died of burns last month after an exorcism ceremony have been arrested and charged in connection with her death. A Muslim cleric thought to have carried out the ceremony on Layla Hachichi is already in custody. The parents have said they involved the cleric because Layla, who was lesbian, was possessed by devils. The cleric is thought to have used hot water in a "purification" ritual.

Environment minister Joke Schauvliege will put forward a proposal before the end of the year to limit the radiation produced by mobile phone masts, from the present 20 volts per metre to only three. The minister was responding to criticism from Groen! member Hermes Sanctorum that Flanders had failed to carry out checks on masts for more than a year. Sanctorum also revealed that there are 65 schools in Flanders with masts on their roofs, earning the schools between €5,000 and €10,000 a year.

The E313 Antwerp-Liège motorway will be closed on the Antwerp-bound side from 27 to 29 November. Traffic will leave the motorway at the Ham exit, junction 25, and Liège-bound traffic will be able to use lanes. The work involves construction of a new bridge at Ham linking the Langvoort container terminal and the Staatsbaan (N141).

A man who escaped from custody in the Brussels Justice Palace in January earlier this year has been arrested in Jette. He was preparing to carry out an armed robbery along with three accomplices. Yassin D was about to stand trial for armed robbery when he and another defendant were freed by a third man with a gun. The other defendant has since been picked up.

This year's AKO Literature Prize has been won by Erwin Mortier for his novel *Godenslaap* (*Sleep of the Gods*). The prize, established in 1986 for Dutch-language prose, was last won by a Flemish author in 1989, when it went to Brigitte Raskin for her debut novel *Het Kooekoeksgong* (*The Cuckoo Chick*). The judges described Mortier's novel, set against the background of the First World War, as "a Homeric epic". The prize consists of a sculpture and €50,000.

Ghent-based alt-rock band Absynthe Minded won the best song of the past decade, according to a poll by listeners to Studio Brussel. The winning song, "My Heroics, Part One", was described by front-man Bert Ostyn as "sober, recognisable and different".

Microwave bears and banana protectors top Christmas list



There are still a few weeks to go before the deadline for receiving Christmas wish-lists, but if you want a fleece blanket you can wear while watching TV, complete with embroidered name, you'd better be quick. The Snug Rug is the number one gift in the Christmas top 10, according to Amerone, a company based in Oelegem, Antwerp province, that deals in business gifts. Not only will you be snug and identifiable, you'll also be able to turn the heating down a couple of degrees. Get one for everyone in the family!

A Christmas tree is a must at this time of year, but who needs needles all over the place? Problem solved, with a handy electric tree, complete with realistic snowing action. It comes in two versions – 120 centimetres or 170cm high. Too tall for your office? Then try the USB-powered tree, only 10cm.

The polar icecaps may be melting, but Sleepy Bear is snug as a bug in the microwave, where his filling of wheat husks and lavender is warming to just the right temperature to make your bed all cosy. Like a hot water bottle, with no embarrassing leaks!

Power up the microwave again, this time to heat up your Slippies – slippers made of linseed and lavender which only take 90 seconds to bring you a whole evening of toasty toes.

For the busy executive who can't make it to the gym, try the Powerball, developed by NASA to help astronauts train their muscles in the weightless conditions of space. The ball has a motor inside that can reach speeds of 15,000 revolutions a minute, the purpose of which is not entirely clear.

Other gifts you can't do without: your own digital breath test to check you haven't had one glühwein too many, only €598.95; a banana protector to stop your mid-morning fruit from being squashed in your bag; a solar powered charger for mobile phone; and finally the Poken, a digital business card. Just hold your Poken up to someone else's Poken, and they'll have all your details in a flash. Put the cute back into executive!

→ www.amerone.be

Health minister Laurette Onkelinx has called on the medical profession to take action against the team doctors of Anderlecht and Club Brugge, after it was revealed that they had inoculated players against the A/H1N1 virus. Anderlecht admits its doctors took delivery of vaccines intended for risk groups among the population – including pregnant women, the chronically ill and health and education workers. Club Brugge, meanwhile, said it had bought its vaccines fairly. Last week, the World Health Organisation denied a claim made by club chairman (and doctor) Michel D'Hooghe that he was ordered by the WHO to have his players vaccinated.

Prime minister Herman Van Rompuy is well suited to becoming leader of the European Union, according to research by the University of Antwerp. Post-doctoral researcher Tobias Van Assche drew up a profile of Van Rompuy using the Leadership Trait Analysis technique, which examines speeches and interviews for word use. He found that Van Rompuy is a collegial leader, open with information, goal-oriented and interested in furthering international relations.



Crevits ready to provide "new funds" to make roads safer for cyclists

→ *continued from page 1*

The mayor of Oosterzele, Johan Van Durme, echoed the sentiment. "Sure, the young driver made a mistake. But, on the other hand, anyone who says this could never happen to him needs to think a bit more deeply." Van Durme promised the accident would be marked by a "meaningful, lasting memorial to the victims." The medical faculty at Ghent University, where a book of remembrance has been opened, said classes would be suspended to allow students to attend the funerals this week.

On 12 November in Beveren, a man of 36 was run over and killed by a driver who had suffered an epileptic seizure. Sufferers from epilepsy are obliged to turn over their driving licence, which can be returned at the end of a year, following a medical examination after a period of seizure-free treatment with medication.

In another accident over the weekend, a 19-year-old student from Kraainem was found dead at the roadside on the E40 at Sterrebeek,

having apparently been struck while crossing or walking alongside the road. Christophe Hollack was last seen in Leuven at 3.30, and his body was discovered around 9.00.

Also at the weekend, a father in Torhout saw his 18-year-old daughter hit by a speeding driver on a pedestrian crossing. Kelly Mortier was carried about 30 metres, coming to rest under a parked car. She was taken by emergency services to a nearby hospital, where she was declared dead on arrival. Kelly's father Frank and a friend managed to jump out of the way in time. The driver failed to stop but was arrested on Monday and identified as a 28-year-old man from Zedelgem. He had been drinking, according to police.

This week, mobility minister Hilde Crevits called for more speed cameras on roads, in addition to the 1,250 already in place. She also suggested the construction of cycle bridges and tunnels at crossroads,



A typical cycle path in Flanders, unlike in the Netherlands, is not separated from the main road

which are a frequent site of accidents. "It might be that we have to set up a separate fund for this work," she told Flemish broadcaster VRT.

The cycling union, meanwhile, says that the building of new cycle paths needs to be speeded up. At the current rates of progress, it could

take between 27 and 48 years to lay down all the paths already planned, they said. Investments worth €260 million, for 500 kilometres of planned paths are currently blocked in disputes over property rights, among other questions. ♦

THE WEEK IN FIGURES

354,605

people in arrears with the repayment of credit, according to figures from the National Bank. Some 4.9 million Belgians have some sort of credit arrangement, such as a mortgage



60%

of young people in Flanders between the ages of 15 and 19 regularly visit pornography websites, according to research from the Catholic University of Leuven. Four in 10 look at violent images, but fewer than 20% visit sites featuring racism or suicide

18,047

divorce petitions filed in Flanders in 2008. Fewer than half of all divorcing couples make use of mediation services, the federal ministry for family policy revealed

16

the minimum age for buying beer and wine stronger than 0.5% alcohol, after a new measure introduced in parliament last week. Until now, there was no restriction on the sale of alcohol other than spirits to young people

36%

increase in the quantity of counterfeit goods seized in 2008, according to the annual report of the Customs and Excise service. In two major hauls last year, customs discovered more than two million fake pills – a growth area for counterfeiters

0.75%

of the turnover of retail stores is lost to shoplifters, representing a total of €455 million from June 2008 to June 2009, according to the Centre for Retail Research, or 34% more than the European average

€220m

stolen from shops by employees, while a further €185m is lost to delivery fraud and internal error

80 tonnes

shrimps sold at auction in Nieuwpoort in September and October. Last year the figure was 23 tonnes, and the year before a mere seven tonnes

€21m

invested by the Flemish government in six water-power installations on the Albert Canal, which connects Antwerp to Liège. The installations will provide electricity to 10,000 families

Belgium is the least safe of the main cycling countries of Europe, with more accidents per year per capita than Denmark and the Netherlands. Belgium has 15.4 accidents per million inhabitants; the Netherlands has 10.4, and Denmark has 9.7, according to figures from 1999. In 2007, there were 88 fatalities, 926 serious injuries and over 5,000 minor injuries. A full 90% of this country's fatal accidents take place in Flanders.

Still, accidents involving cyclists are slightly less deadly than those involving two automobiles: 15 per 1,000 compared to 20. Nevertheless, the risk of being in an accident in the first place is four times higher for cyclists. Half of all fatalities involve the over-65s; for those aged 19 to 39, cycling is slightly safer than any other means of transport.

Figures: Observatory for Road Safety/Road Safety Support Point

Discrimination affects one in six

One in six people who live in Belgium has experienced discrimination in the past 12 months, according to statistics from the EU Commission's Eurobarometer. The survey questioned 1,000 people who live in Belgium out of 26,000 polled across Europe and found that 17% had been a victim of discrimination, compared to an EU average of 16%. Greece was the least discriminatory at 6%, while Italy was worst with 22%. The forms of discrimination included age, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation and disability, with ethnic discrimination being the most common in Belgium. Among the immigrant population, 71% said they had felt put down because of it. Discrimination on the grounds of disability and religion came in second and third place.

The rates of discrimination have not changed since last year, but Belgians appear to be becoming more diversity-oriented: 62% said they had friends of a different religion; 58% have friends who are

disabled; and 57% include immigrants in their social circle.

• Meanwhile, in Flanders, four out of five women have been the victims of sexism, according to a poll carried out by the Institute for the Equality of Women and Men for Flair magazine. The institute polled 1,580 women on their experiences of sexist proposals, remarks or treatment in the workplace, in public and also within personal relationships.

Three-quarters of those polled thought advertising was full of negative judgements about women, while one in three said they had suffered verbal or psychological aggression. Half of all women said they had ignored sexist behaviour from a fear of being seen as humourless or "too feminist". Belgium recently slipped 15 places in the World Economic Forum rankings for equal treatment of women, to 33rd place. The WEF said the difference in salaries was largely to blame for the drop in the ratings. ♦

FIFTH COLUMN

ANJA OTTE

What if?

Some quotes by former prime minister Jean-Luc Dehaene (Christian Democrat, CD&V) are legendary. "We will solve this problem when it arises," was one of them. "I will not answer hypothetical questions," is another one. Both have become classics of "Wetstraat" – the slang spoken in the Wetstraat (the Brussels street at the political heart of this country).

Because of Dehaene, it has become almost impossible to make any politician answer a hypothetical question. Still, there is one "what if" that plays on many people's minds: what if prime minister Herman Van Rompuy (CD&V) leaves to become the president of the European Union? In that (hypothetical) case, who will become prime minister?

The most likely candidate is foreign minister Yves Leterme, the Christian Democrat who was prime minister up until last year. Leterme gained an amazing 800,000 votes in the federal elections of 2007, making him the most popular candidate in decades. Many people feel he messed up, though. Because of his electoral promise that he would deliver a thorough state reform, he found it almost impossible to form a government with the French-speaking parties. He even had to include the socialist PS, who in Flanders are often considered to be an obstacle to exactly the state reform Leterme hoped to achieve.

Along the way, the cartel Leterme's party formed with the small nationalist party N-VA (which was a contributing factor to CD&V's electoral success) fell apart. In the end, the former prime minister stumbled over allegations that his government had breached the separation of powers in the handling of the Fortis deal. Leterme stood down, leaving Van Rompuy no option but to become prime minister. Some people would prefer not to see Leterme return to the highest position. The French-language newspaper *Le Soir* has even published a veto against the man. In his own party, too, there are doubts about Leterme, especially since Van Rompuy would leave one major project unfinished: that darned state reform again, in which the Flemish and the French speakers have not moved one inch closer to each other. Leterme might, in other words, be heading towards another fiasco.

Traditionally, it is up to CD&V party president Marianne Thyssen to make the ultimate decision. So far, she has not spoken out on the issue. She too has learned not to answer hypothetical questions, and Van Rompuy is still around. But when the problem does arise, Thyssen will have to solve it.

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Silent scream

The media can help to curb copycat attempts after a reported suicide

→ *continued from page 1*

In addition, the CPZ offers training packages for outside agencies, such as the psychology staff of the detention centres for asylum seekers, the Post Office and Belgian railways, and staff employed by rest homes and youth centres.

What is it about Flanders, or about Belgium, that accounts for the high suicide rate? "Research is under way, looking at the differences between Belgium and the Netherlands," explains Forceville. "But the results are not expected until the end of 2010."

The answer will probably be a combination of factors. "It could be a matter of willingness to seek help, openness to talking about emotions, the ability to recognise suicidal behaviour, the way health care is organised, or all of those things together," Forceville says.

According to the Ghent University-based Unit for Suicide Research, studies focusing on young people show that Flemish youth are less likely to discuss their problems with adults. The unit's coordinator, Dr Gwendolyn Portzky, reports that they are instead more likely to turn to drugs and alcohol than to trying to find solutions to their troubles.

This results in twice the suicide rate as Dutch youth. The chatline run by the CPZ is, Dr Portzky says, "is absolutely a good idea because it's a medium of communication that's tailored to the young people themselves." ♦

Suicide line 02.649.95.55 (calls are free)
→ www.zelfmoordlijn.be

Suicide, in the mind of the subject, is not a matter of death, it is a matter of escape from suffering

Suicide in the media

The hanging death of singer and TV presenter Yasmine is probably the most famous case of suicide in Flanders in recent years. The 37-year-old was not only a prominent figure in the media, as an openly gay woman, she was also a role model for many young people in precisely those age groups where suicide is a leading cause of death.

According to Flanders' Centre for Suicide Prevention (CPZ), the weeks following Yasmine's death by hanging saw a threefold increase in the number of calls to the suicide line, and eight times more visitors to the website than usual. In the week immediately following the death, the number of calls from relatives of potential suicides increased tenfold, an effect which CPZ director Grieke Forceville attributes to the reporting in the press of the number and web address of the organisation.

But the press coverage also had a negative effect, Forceville says, as twice as many callers expressed a desire to kill themselves by hanging. "That increase is certainly due to the reporting in the media of details of the method used. After Yasmine's death, the suicide line noticed a very clear imitation effect."

Suicide-prevention organisations have drawn up a set of guidelines for the press and media in covering suicides, in an attempt not to overdramatise or normalise the practice.



Suicide methods

Gender and age can determine how people end their own lives

Men: The vast majority of suicides among men in Flanders – 61% of all cases – involve hanging or strangulation. In 10% of cases, a firearm is used, and in 7% of cases poisoning, including death by overdose of medication. Most of those cases involve prescription drugs, including psychotropic medications. But in 1% of cases, pesticide is the poison of choice.

Some 6% of suicides take place in traffic, including deaths under a tram, metro or train, while 16% come under "other" and include jumping from a height, fire, drowning, gassing and sharp instruments.

Suicide is the leading cause of death for men aged between 35 and 49, accounting for nearly one-third of deaths.

Women: The number one suicide method for women is the same as men: hanging or strangulation (36%). Poisoning replaces firearms as the second largest method (19%), followed by drowning. Three times as many women as men use drugs to commit suicide. Fewer than 3% use firearms, while 19% use "other" methods, and 7% die in traffic.

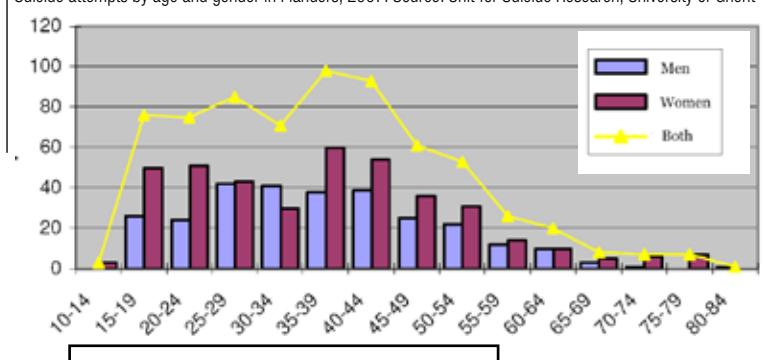
Suicide is the leading cause of death among girls aged 15-19 (21% of deaths) and for women aged 30-39 (12% aged 30-34, and 14% aged 35-39). Above age 39, breast cancer takes over as the leading cause of death. Younger men and women alike are more likely to throw themselves under a train, while older men and women are more likely to drown themselves.

Signs: Conventional wisdom has it that someone who talks about ending it all is the least likely to do it. Experts disagree: suicidal ideation, or the act of thinking about suicide, is considered an important danger sign. So are withdrawal and emotional fragility – the tendency to over-react emotionally to minor stimuli. On the other hand, there may be increased aggression or other attention-seeking behaviour.

The major "cry for help" is, of course, the suicide attempt, but just because it fails, even if it is half-hearted, doesn't mean it isn't a danger sign. About half of all successful suicides, according to Gwendolyn Portzky of the Unit for Suicide Research in Ghent, have been preceded by one or more failed attempts, and suicide experts don't differentiate between an attempt that had no chance of succeeding and one that was a narrow escape: intent is more important than success or failure. Suicide, in the mind of the subject, is not a matter of death, it is a matter of escape from suffering.

A potential suicide victim may know nothing about anatomy or pharmaceuticals, leading to a failed attempt. But the desire to escape will still be present, and the next attempt could be successful. It is important, therefore, to take all attempts seriously and seek qualified help for the depressed person. "A suicide attempt remains the most important risk indicator of a fatal suicide," says Dr Portzky.

Suicide attempts by age and gender in Flanders, 2007. Source: Unit for Suicide Research, University of Ghent



The Community Help Service in Brussels provides professional counselling in English and runs a confidential 24-hour help line: **02.648.40.14**



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putting people first

Quotas for women in the boardroom

CD&V senator introduces proposal that she says will make businesses more profitable

ALAN HOPE

Belgian businesses need to make way for more women in top positions, according to Christian-Democrat (CD&V) senator Sabine de Bethune (pictured), who last week proposed the introduction of a quota system. Of the 258 directors currently in Bel20 quoted companies, only 23 are women, or 9%.

According to the senator, who sits in the equal opportunities commission, the effects of the glass ceiling in the financial-economic sector and in the judiciary have led to crisis. A policy to increase the number of women in senior positions, she argues, could help resolve the problem.

The proposal would oblige stock market quoted firms to fill a minimum of 30% of their board seats with women. "Women broaden the agenda," de Bethune said. "That became clear in politics after a quota was introduced.

And there is now scientific evidence for what feminists have long been saying: companies with at least three women in decision-making positions are more profitable. That's clear from studies by McKenzie and the Goldman Sachs Institute."

Under the 1984 Smet-Tobback Law, a maximum of 66% of names on any electoral list can represent one gender. Not all list-members are elected, of course, but the actual number of women now sitting in the Chamber is 57 out of a total of 150. In the Senate, 15 of the 40 directly elected senators are women.

"There is a culture at the top, which sees to it that an empty place is filled with more of the same. They're looking for a clone of what is already there"

Sabine de Bethune

Quickenborne calls for telecoms transparency

Telecommunications companies need to make their bills more transparent and simpler to understand, according to telecoms minister Vincent Van Quickenborne, introducing a number of new measures last week.

From 2010, all telecoms bills – phone, internet, digital TV – will be obliged to carry the expiration date of the contract. "This will allow consumers to end their contract without hidden cancellation costs," Van Quickenborne explained. At present, contracts are mainly self-renewing, with few customers keeping track of expiry dates.

The minister also said that bills are laid out in a format that is outdated and unsuitable for modern conditions. With the increasing incidence of "bundling" – the sale of multiple services

in a single package – the customer often cannot tell how much they are charged for the different parts of the bundle. Companies need to change the way they present billing information to the public, he said.

The minister also called on companies to provide a secure website where customers can consult their billing details, how many calls they have made and how many hours they have been online. Telecoms companies will also have to propose to clients, at least once a year, the most advantageous tariff in force, based on the usage profile of the client. Finally, companies will be obliged to offer the option of receiving bills electronically, rather than only on paper. ♦

"Silent" deliveries could take trucks off the road

Mobility minister Hilde Crevits last week proposed to allow trucks to load and unload in the morning or evening if they conform to strict noise limits. This measure could take some trucks off the road during peak hours and spare haulage companies the cost of hours spent sitting in traffic.

Noise pollution has been identified as the biggest liveability problem faced by people in Flanders, according to polls. Several attempts have been made to reduce the number of trucks on the road during peak times, including distribution centres on the edge of towns, where trucks would unload and the

cargo would then be delivered in smaller delivery vans, or even delivery trams.

Crevits praised the innovative thinking behind such ideas but said it would be "utopia to think you could get trucks out of town centres in the next five or even 10 years." In the short term, the region has to find ways to reconcile mobility with making towns habitable, she said.

Her plan, based on pilot projects in the Netherlands, would allow trucks to drive into town centres for loading and unloading, providing they conform to strict noise levels so as not to disturb residents. The

Among the Bel20 companies, former state-owned telecoms giant Belgacom does best, with five women directors out of a total of 16 – the only company that achieves de Bethune's proposed quota. At the other end of the scale, Colruyt, Fortis and InBev are among the seven companies with no women in top jobs. Telenet and Befimmo are women-friendly, with two women each in top jobs. Nine of the Bel20 – Ackermans & Van Haren, Bekaert, Colruyt, Delhaize, Fortis, GBL, KBC NPM and Solvay – have not a single woman at the top.

"There is no shortage of explanations and excuses why there are too few women in top positions. There are, however, no arguments why it has to be that way," wrote an editorialist in De Standaard, reporting the initiative on International Women's Day last week. ♦



© Beoga

Omega sells Arseus to Waterland

Omega Pharma has sold its 24% interest in Arseus, its own former subsidiary, to Dutch-owned investment fund Waterland Private Equity, for a minimum of €60 million. At the same time, Omega CEO Marc Coucke sold Waterland 1.06% of his own stake, leaving him as the second-largest shareholder.

The sale price was €8 per share, but the price could go up to as much as €10.75 if Waterland later sells the shares on for a profit. The total value of the sale would then go up from €60m to €81.17m. Omega brought Arseus, its business services division, to the stock market in October 2007 for €10.25 a share.

Waterland, whose Belgian arm is based in Antwerp-Berchem, now holds 25.1% of Arseus and becomes the reference shareholder, gaining three seats on the board. Two of the new directors have already been named: Waterland principal Frank Vluyen and investment director Cedric Van Cauwenbergh. Arseus shares rose to €8.45 following the announcement. ♦

→ www.waterland.be



© shutterstock

proposed levels stand at 60-65 decibels (dB), which is slightly more than a normal conversation between two people.

This off-peak loading would avoid the need for drivers to be on the road during peak traffic hours, which would represent a serious

commercial advantage for haulage companies. Already, the cities of Antwerp, Hasselt, Kortrijk, Geel and Ninove have expressed an interest in taking part in Crevits' pilot project. The scheme is expected to get off the ground in the middle of 2010. ♦

THE WEEK IN BUSINESS

Banking • Fortis

An investigation into leaks in the procedure surrounding the sale of Fortis bank in 2008 is now complete, and the prosecutor-general's office will decide next month who, if anyone, will be prosecuted. The leaks were made to politicians while the bank sale was before a three-judge tribunal. A special investigator, the Ghent jurist Henri Heimans, was brought in to handle the allegations.

Banking • NBB

Jan Smets, currently a director of the National Bank of Belgium (NBB), will take over as governor in 2014, it was announced last week. The existing governor, Guy Quaden, retires next year and will be succeeded by his number two, Luc Coene.

Cinema • Studio

More than 5,000 Facebook users have started a protest action to prevent the closure of the Studio cinema in Leuven, which opened 41 years ago. The closure would leave the Kinepolis multiplex as the only cinema in the university town.

Courier • DHL

Some 1,000 jobs at the Belgian subsidiary of courier DHL, based in Diegem, could disappear later this year or early in 2010, according to union representatives meeting last week. Many of the redundancies, part of a worldwide restructuring involving the loss of 100,000 jobs, have already been announced, but others remain to be negotiated.

Energy • Enfinity

Green energy provider Enfinity, based in Waregem, has won a contract for the installation of a solar energy park in India, which will provide 1,000 megawatts of energy capacity. Enfinity won a similar contract for solar energy in China last month. The international attention generated by that contract "helped us greatly to realise our plans in India," said a company spokesman.

Fraud • Post Office

Police are investigating a possible fraud ring within the staff of the Brussel X sorting office, after a number of businesses reported invoices sent to clients had been opened and falsified, resulting in payments being transferred to the fraudsters' account.

Mobile phones • Nokia

Nokia has issued a recall notice for 14 million phone chargers, after it was discovered that the plastic covers could be opened with the risk of electric shock. The chargers, which were manufactured this year, will be exchanged free of charge. No incidents have yet been reported.

Titus Andronicus

SHARON LIGHT

An ensemble of Flemish actors stage one of the most difficult plays in history

Titus Andronicus is not known as one of Shakespeare's greatest works. On its best days, it is excused as a play written very early in the Bard's career, one that lacks the poetic genius of his later works. On its worst days, *Titus Andronicus* is simply described as "bad".

The play is known for its violence, in a plethora of forms. It's in fact so overwhelming that scholars cannot even agree on the total body count. *Titus* offers more than a dozen murderers, two decapitations, three severed hands, one severed tongue and one gang rape. As if that weren't enough, two brothers' bodies are baked into pies and served unknowingly to their mother.

But *Titus*'s inferiority goes beyond this absurd plot. Shakespeare bestowed little of his later rhyme and rhythm on the language, and the play contains none of his memorable one-liners or famous monologues. Similarly, his gift for character development appears nowhere in the one-dimensional collection on display here. *Titus* is a pure revenge tragedy; even the good characters have few sympathetic qualities.

What in the world, you may ask, would possess a company to select such a work for performance?

For one, *Titus*' second-rate reputation – and therefore lack of stagings – gives directors and actors an enormous amount of leeway. Few memorable productions exist in modern memory; Peter Brook's staging with Laurence Olivier in 1955 is the major exception. (It was so violent, members of the audience actually passed out.)

Titus' current incarnation at the KVS in Brussels, a co-production with Antwerp's Het Toneelhuis, using a Dutch translation by Willy Courteaux, is a compelling rendition of this obscure work.

I have seen the play before and, like most, found it difficult to relate to. I was further subdued when I entered the KVS and was greeted by a sign announcing that the performance was two-and-a-half hours without interval.

I have never seen an audience sit so still through a performance of such length. This *Titus* is riveting, creatively exploring tragic territory, sometimes in humorous ways, other times putting the audience in that uncomfortable place where they aren't sure if they should laugh or be horrified.

Few dead bodies stay on stage since the actors are busy playing multiple roles, but as the body count rises, the ground does get messier; by the end, it is littered with superficially innocent messes, symbolising the destruction of many lives. A lot of props and water are thrown around, and food makes a few effective appearances. A watermelon stands in for a decapitated head (the murderer goes so far as to enjoy a taste after punching it to pieces), and the actors play with a variety of ingredients in the infamous sons-baked-into-a-pie scene, including an unusual use for *Luikse siroop* that probably shouldn't be printed in a respectable family newspaper.

The play was a collaborative choice between the eight men and two women who appear in it, along with director Raven Ruëll. A week before the opening, he tells me, details were still being hammered out and the running time was five hours.

The team's creative process began with the text – or, more accurately, the elements missing from the text. "Shakespeare gives every director so much freedom; that shows his greatness," says Ruëll. "He doesn't offer any stage directions or explanations about the characters. For a director, that's a lot of fun because you have to dialogue with Shakespeare."

Moreover, the text itself is absent of any characters looking for a peaceful resolution to the conflict. It shows that,

© Koen Boos



in Ruëll's words, "each democracy is built on the bodies of the previous generation, built with the blood of the oppressed. History is repeating itself endlessly."

Part of the production's development was about how the actors – one of whom is Koen De Graeve, seen right now in the smash Flemish film *De helaasheid der dingen* – could present and live with these often despicable characters. And, naturally, a good deal of rehearsal time explored the portrayal of violence. Stage violence is never as realistic as film violence, so the company has focused on sounds and metaphors to make it as awful as possible. Ruëll pushed for "each killing to be an artistic act on its own".

The director sees violence as an integral part of human nature, much though we may wish to ignore it. There are healthy, controlled expressions of it built into society, and suppressing them can lead to violent explosions – which is taken to the extreme in *Titus*. Yet that extremity is balanced here by this ensemble of actors. "Sometimes a violent scene can be sad and funny at the same time," Ruëll says. "I would like the audience at certain moments not to know whether to laugh or to cry."

If that was the aim, they most certainly have succeeded; this *Titus* left me disturbed, entertained and pensive, and gave me a new appreciation for an often-belittled play that may not be so bad after all. ♦

Titus Andronicus is in Dutch with French and English surtitles. It runs at KVS until 27 November before moving on to Ghent and Antwerp next month

→ www.toneelhuis.be

Comedy of blood

Border crossings

LISA BRADSHAW

A celebrated Netherlands festival comes to Antwerp

A few months ago, I found myself descending into the brick-enclosed basement of an unfamiliar bookstore, where the lights were dim and it was very, very quiet. Fortunately, this was just because I was late – before the Border Kitchen events begin, the scene under Antwerp's Groene Waterman bookshop is in fact lively and inviting. There is the world's cutest little bar, which mixes with the soft, yellow glow and heady anticipation of literary greatness to create a most excellent Bohemian atmosphere.

On this particular night, British author Sarah Waters was on hand to talk about her new novel with Flemish author and theorist Kristien Hemmerechts. Because it was in English, the sold-out room was brimming with an international crowd, spanning generations in a way that very good authors often do.

Border Kitchen is a series of author events in De Groene Waterman, which this year ended with Waters and will start up again in January with Israeli writer David Grossman. The name of the series is slightly strange and has its origins in another event altogether: Crossing Border, an annual festival in The Hague, which is enjoying its first staging in Antwerp on 22 November.

Crossing Border is a literary music festival, which sounds strange, even to its founder, Louis Behre, who has been coordinating it in The Hague for 17 years now. The genres "have nothing in common," he laughs from his home in



First lady

SAFFINA RANA

One final concert before Lady Linn and Her Magnificent Seven retire for a year of recording



Antwerp. "That's why Crossing Border became so famous. When I started it, people thought I was crazy, and I probably was."

Crazy like a fox. Generally, if you're interested in one art form, you're interested in another, and the strange combination was so intriguing, audiences poured in from the very first year. The event has been selling out every year in the Netherlands and has already sold out the 2,000 places at the Arenbergschouwburg for Antwerp's very first edition.

Crossing Border's set up is democratic: several rooms in one venue host concerts, interspersed with readings or talks by writers "and a little bit of film," says Behre. "If you think you've seen enough after half an hour, you can leave the room and check out something else."

The festival has become a favourite for many musicians and writers from across Europe. "The writer can feel like a pop star, and the pop star can feel a bit like a writer because there is an audience for literature there, too," says Behre. Audiences feel the same. "Those who come for the music also see writers, and those who come for the writers also discover new pop music."

Behre was born in Belgium but then moved to The Hague with his family when he was a child. He has now moved back to Antwerp and trav-

els between the two cities, running his production company together with his wife. He called the very first festival Crossing the Border (meaning the border between literature and music), "but the title was too long for the poster," he says. "So we pulled out the 'the'. People said, 'you're organising a literature festival, and you don't even know how to write the name of it!'"

But the title stuck. Which brings us back to Border Kitchen. These purely prose events are like runners-up to the festival, a chance to test out authors to see who Behre could book for Crossing Border. "You prepare things in your kitchen; it's the preparing of the Crossing Border festival."

About 10 writers and 25 bands will be in the Arenbergschouwburg this Sunday for Crossing Border, including former Pavement front man Stephen Malkmus, who will deliver a solo performance of spoken word and music; master of Americana Steve Earle (*pictured*) and the long-awaited ensemble Monsters of Folk, made up of Conor Oberst, Mike Mogis, Jim James and M Ward. Writers include Jessica Anthony, proving to be one of America's brightest new novelists with her debut *The Convalescent*, and Flanders' own Erwin Mortier, fresh from winning the AKO Prize for Dutch literature.

Although the festival sold out weeks ago, you'll have your chance at tickets again next year – and every year thereafter. The festival has made and will continue to make one-off stops in other cities – Berlin, Glasgow and Austin, Texas, for instance – but The Hague and Antwerp are on the annual docket. Antwerp offers a fantastic audience, notes Behre. "The university is here, whereas The Hague doesn't have one. The Hague is actually a bit of a quiet city. Antwerp is what Crossing Border needs."

→ www.crossingborder.be
→ www.borderkitchen.be

The nights are drawing in, and Flanders' rock stars are starting to go south for the winter, or longer, as in the case of Ghent band Lady Linn and Her Magnificent Seven. The band has enjoyed roaring success at the most prestigious music festivals in Belgium this summer with their quirky swing-beat numbers inspired by the big band sound of the 1940s and '50s. But the Brussels gig on 21 November will be the last chance you'll have to catch them in Belgium for nearly a year.

"We are not going to play again until the new album comes out in October 2010," says Lady Linn, aka Lien de Greef. Not letting the success go to their heads, they are getting straight down to work. "We did a lot of gigs and played a lot of festivals, so it's better that we don't play for a while and start again fresh with new songs," de Greef tells me from a recording studio between mixing tracks.

De Greef can't quite believe the year she and the Magnificent Seven have had. Their audience has increased more than tenfold, and their 2008 album, *Here We Go Again*, hit the number two spot in the Belgian album chart. It has now been in the charts for the last 90 weeks and gone gold. "I didn't really expect it," she says. "I just wanted to see if I could write my own songs."

De Greef set up the band in her last year of studying jazz at the conservatory in Ghent so that she could sing all the old favourites that inspired her. "I didn't really know jazz before I went to the conservatory," she notes. "We played covers for five years. Then I began feeling the need to write my own music."

In February this year, De Greef won the Belgian Music Industry Award for best female artist. However, the highlight of her year was being asked to play at Flanders' Rock Werchter in July. Voted the best music festival in Europe several times over, the 2009 line-up included stadium fillers Placebo, Kings of Leon and The Black Eyed Peas. "It was one of the most beautiful days of my life," she says, "seeing all those people singing my songs."

The gig has contributed to the exponential growth of the band's fame. For De Greef, dealing with the adulation of persistent fans has not been easy. "Most of the time, they are very friendly, but they don't always leave you alone."

The 28-year-old was taken aback at the sheer number of fans wanting a photo while she was trying to enjoy herself as part of the audience at festivals in Belgium this year. "This summer was difficult for me," she says. "People kept coming to ask for photographs – but all the time! I was really getting stressed out. When I said sorry it wasn't the right moment, some people got mad and took a picture anyway. My mother says I should wear sunglasses and a scarf," she laughs.

The experience might make it into her next lyrics. All De Greef's songs are based on personal feelings. "I only write when I feel very good or very bad," she says. "I'm not the sort of person who can write when I'm feeling neutral."

De Greef is half-way through writing for the new album. The new songs range from being single and feeling lonely to the inspiration she feels from the late African-American singer Nina Simone. She tried a couple of them out at Werchter. "There's one song about the fact that sometimes it's ok to cry. Sometimes I just feel like crying, and I think a lot of girls have those days," she says. "It's also a bit ironic; I've written words like: let yourself go and enjoy the fact you're a drama queen."

Another is called "Sunday Blues". "When I was single, I felt lonely a lot of the time," De Greef explains. "I'd have a really good time partying on Fridays and Saturdays, but on Sundays I'd get so depressed. It's a really awful feeling, when everyone has gone and the city is a bit desolate."

But now there's a new man in her life. "Some of the songs are about that," she laughs. "But I'm scared to write a love song again because I did it in the past, and it wasn't appreciated by the person I wrote it for. So there's also a song about that and how I feel about him," she says.

As well as working on the new album, De Greef is putting together tracks for her other band, Howie and Lien. "It's much more electro, and I'm looking forward to performing," she says. The duo's first CD is scheduled to release in January.

Performing still makes it to the top of the list of what she wants to be doing in five years' time. "I want to be still performing, still singing, still writing songs and hopefully living together, hopefully have a child. I would love to have a baby," she says. ♦

→ www.ladylinn.be

There are still a few tickets left to see Lady Linn and Her Magnificent Seven at AB in Brussels on 21 November → www.abconcerts.be



Ordering chaos

The first-ever retrospective in Europe of Hungary's Lajos Vajda is in Antwerp this winter

ANNA JENKINSON

We want to do the same as Bartok and Kodaly have already accomplished in music," wrote Hungarian artist Lajos Vajda. Just as the composers Bartok and Kodaly looked to Hungarian folk songs as a source of inspiration for their music, Vajda was inspired by Hungarian, Serbian and Slavic folk motifs for his art, which is on show at the Museum of Fine Arts in Antwerp. "Without tradition nothing can be done," Vajda said.

In this first retrospective of Vajda's work in western Europe, the exhibition includes about 70 paintings, drawings and photo montages as well as some of the artist's personal belongings. *In the Footsteps of Bartok: Lajos Vajda and Hungarian Surrealism* aims to highlight the work of an artist little known outside his home country.

"It is striking that the work of artists who participated in a very personal way in the creation of a new avant-garde visual language in 1920s Europe remains so little known in the rest of the continent," comments Paul Huvenne, the museum's director, in the book accompanying the exhibition.

This lack of recognition can partly be explained by the conditions in post-Second World War eastern Europe, subjugated to a Stalinist regime that imposed a strict cultural policy. It was almost impossible to exhibit anything abroad other than socialist realist Hungarian art, according to museum archivist Greta Van Broeckhoven. "As a consequence, it is easily forgotten that between 1930 and 1940, and indeed after the war, the Hungarian avant-garde was a highly active movement," she says.

I was struck by Vajda's subdued colours, be it the Constructivist-style pictures from his student days at the Academy of Fine Arts in Budapest, the photo collages he made during his three-and-a-half years in Paris, the works he created in the Hungarian town and artists' colony of Szentendre or the large drawings in ink and charcoal from his later years.

Many of the works are black and white, and when there is colour it tends to be sombre shades of green, blue, brown and red. This darkness is perhaps not surprising given that

his short life – he died of tuberculosis in 1941 at the age of 33 – was one preoccupied with death. His childhood was marked by the First World War, his adulthood by the rise of Nazism and the Holocaust.

Vajda's works are a product of his time in more ways than one, with the artistic movements prevalent in the interwar period clearly influencing his work. Reminders of Paul Klee, Marc Chagall and Max Ernst are all present as are the Constructivists and Byzantine culture.

In fact, Vajda saw Hungarian art as a bridge between what he considered the two extremes of east and west, Russian Constructivism and Western European Surrealism. In his view, "it was up to the visual artist to distil personal narratives and ideals from all the historical materials available from these two sources," explains Van Broeckhoven.

Vajda's own personal narrative included Serbian and Russian cultural traditions, having lived in Serbia for much of his childhood. His series of icon-like works, characterised by heads with thick black outlines set against a brighter background, clearly show the influence of the Russian Orthodox iconic style.

The works he created in Szentendre from the mid-1930s were probably the most directly inspired by Hungarian folk motifs. He drew local houses and windows, crucifixes and tombstones and then worked these elements into larger compositions. His idea was to look to the past and then create something new by rediscovering and reinterpreting that heritage.

Among my favourites were two examples of this period, "Houses of Szentendre with a Crucifix" and "Floating Houses". Both are in dark colour tones and superimpose images. Vajda took the triangular pediments, small attic vents and simple window frames that he would have seen on his walks around Szentendre, a riverside town near Budapest, and used them to create a logical composition, as if his mind was creating order from his memories.

Vajda superimposed images in many different ways – for example in "Friends", a charcoal drawing of two entwined heads, the artist's and his friend Endre Balint's; or in "Icon Self-Portrait Pointing Upward", in which layers and shadows slowly emerge to unsettle the central



© Panther and Lily, 1930-33, PMM Ferenczy Museum, Szentendre

portrait. It was also a key feature of his photo collages such as "Panther and Lily" (pictured), a dark and disturbing work in which a panther bearing its teeth is juxtaposed with a wrinkled hand reaching out of the montage, a woman with a missing leg diving downwards and a skull half-concealed by lilies. It is this image that the museum chose for its publicity posters and the one that will therefore greet you at the entrance. ♦

Until 17 January

Museum of Fine Arts
Leopold De Waelplaats
Antwerp

→ www.kmska.be

One word of advice: since this festival runs from 17.30 until very late, it may be an idea to bring a couple of sandwiches with you if you don't care for burgers or hot-dogs. ♦

→ www.trixonline.be



© Neleo

TRIX OF THE TRADE - If you don't know Trix yet, this weekend is a good time to start

PM DOUTRELINE

Q: When is a rock venue not a rock venue?

A: When it's a rehearsal complex, a recording studio, a one-stop shop for youth initiatives, an all-round meeting place for local musicians and...two rock venues – that's when.

Handily situated on Antwerp's Noordsingel in Borgerhout, the Trix complex is arguably Flanders' most diverse and complete creative centre in the field of modern music: pop, rock, funk, rap, metal and many more genres are all represented in the programming policy of the organisers as well as in the facilities available to budding (and established) musicians.

In more ways than one, the Trix set-up is very similar to that of Dublin's venerable Temple Bar. As a youngster, you may go there on a regular basis to rehearse with your band, cut your all-important first demo and follow a handful of sound engineering classes...and then, before you know it, you're playing live in the same building!

Trix consists of two adjacent halls: Trix Club (formerly simply known as Trix), which has a capacity of 450, and Trix Zaal (affectionately referred to locally by the venue's old name, Hof Ter Lo), which hold 1,100.

Furthermore, Trix Club can be pared down to the Trix Bar formula, a much more intimate venue that proves ideal for invite-only showcases, warm-up gigs and private functions.

One quick glance at the forthcoming events demonstrates Trix's international dimension as well as its resolute eclecticism: the next few weeks will see performances by Jamaican teenage dancehall sensation Sean Kingston, The Lemonheads' Evan Dando, The Wu-Tang Clan's GZA and the breathtaking South African indie weirdoes Blk Jks.

But, for this critic at least, the most exciting Trix event takes place this Saturday, 21 November: the third edition of the **Old School Rockabilly Psychosis Night**. This rock 'n' roll extravaganza has been held at the venue since its inception and features the very best psychobilly and neo-rockabilly bands in Europe.

On this year's bill: Dutch outfit Bang Bang Bazooka, Belgium's newly reformed The Swampys, Germany's Sunny Domestozs and a triple whammy of British bands: Demented Are Go (pictured), Go-Kats and, for the first time in this country since 1988, Guana Batz, probably the world's most entertaining psychobilly band.

I could eat a horse

An eating habit that is on its way out in the rest of Europe is still going strong in Belgium

COURTNEY DAVIS

If to be hungry enough to eat a horse means to be famished, Belgians must be starving.

Belgium is one of the few remaining horse-eating countries in the world. Between Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Sweden, Italy and France, as well as Asian and South American countries, horse is consumed at the rate of 50 million a year.

In Flanders, the eating of *paard*, or horse, traces its roots to hard labour. A few hundred years ago, the town of Lokeren, East Flanders, used to be a small port city, which required the presence of many horses to haul and transport cargo. Famous for their strength, the Brabant horses would work until they were worn out, and then they would be slaughtered for food.

During this period, nothing could go to waste among European peasants and farmers. The tougher horse meat was made into the now-famous Lokeren horse sausage. A recipe evolved to make the sausage more palatable with a tomato sauce. Today, Lokeren horse sausages are registered with the EU for having historical and culinary significance. Based on the same traditional recipe, the horse meat is no longer from exhausted workhorses but comes from South America.

Luc Meert, a third generation butcher in Lokeren, has been making horse sausage his entire life, using his

grandfather Emiel's recipe. While continuing the family tradition, his shop, Bioslagerij Meert, is a reflection of how the consumption of meat is evolving. All of the products sold are made on site by Luc himself. While all their products are organic, horse is the only item that isn't certified bio.

"There isn't enough of a market to drive the horse meat industry to make bio products," he explains. "However, the horses live outside, eating grass, running as close to wild as possible. Plus, I am safe in the knowledge that the horses are hormone free. Horses' bodies can't survive hormones."

Horse meat is also free of tuberculosis and tapeworms so is safer to eat raw, which explains the popularity of horse steak tartar. Nutritionally, it is higher in iron and lower in fat than beef so is ideal for those with anaemia or who want less fat in their diets. Horse has a sweeter, leaner taste and a more striking appearance than beef, with a bloody, almost purple colour.

To try *paardenfilet*, or horse steak, in Flanders, Vilvoorde is the place to go. The town's residents are casually known as *pjeirefretters* (horse eaters), as the town in Flemish Brabant has a long history of horse trading. This has resulted in a statue of the famous Brabant work horse as well as a handful of speciality horse restaurants. However, it is not uncommon to have it at home served with

a side of fries and a nice homemade béarnaise sauce. Horse meat is easy to find at most butchers and supermarkets across Flanders. More expensive than beef (about €25-€30 a kilo), horse tends to be viewed as a culinary treat to have on occasion.

In addition to Vilvoorde's restaurants and Lokeren's sausages, there are a number of famous Flemish horse specialities. Antwerp has a dish called *schep*, a horse meat stew, very similar to *stoverij*, the Flemish beer-based beef stew. Ghent, meanwhile, has a deep-fried horse option, available at most of the *frituur* shops. The ample-sized *paardenlookworst*, or garlic horse sausage, has the same mild flavour as a hot dog but with a much denser consistency.

A nicer alternative is having horse in a *belegde broodje*. Smoked horse meat sold in many sandwich shops tastes very similar to bresaola, the Italian dried beef. Dark reddish brown in thin slices, the most significant taste is that of the smoke itself. Meert's butcher shop not only smokes its own sandwich meat, it makes its own horse salami.

Also known as Boulogne-sausage after a French port city that also utilised horses like Lokeren, Belgian horse salami is easy to recognise for its traditional square shape. Both smoked horse and salami can be found in butchers and shops. Just look for the Dutch word *paard*. ♦



Third generation butcher Luc Meert still uses his grandfather's recipe for horse sausages

© Julie van Schooten

www.cbc-bcp.be

But why would you want to? The ethics of eating horse



© Julie van Schooten

To an American, the idea of eating horse is so appalling that the US recently passed the American Horse Slaughter Prevention Act to prevent its consumption by animals or humans, abroad or at home. Given the country's romanticised cowboy history, this view is understandable.

The British are equally squeamish about consuming equine animals, despite chef Gordon Ramsey's publicity stunt to promote the meat. Perhaps it's the UK's affection for not just horses, but the infamous women's hats worn to the races.

There are a few reasons why many societies find it ethical to eat pig, chicken and cow but not horse. Many countries simply cannot disassociate the image of a horse from the meat. It might be different if there was a non-animal name for the meat, like "pork" for pig or "beef" for cow. When you eat horse, it is simply horse, and the name brings to mind images of Mr Ed.

Some chalk up their aversion to the beauty factor, considering horses noble and beautiful, thus harder to kill and

eat, but that same line of thinking would then rule out the consumption of venison, veal and the oh-so-adorable rabbit.

Then there is the idea that horses are quite smart. But again, pigs are also known for being highly intelligent; this doesn't save their delicious hide. Others indicate the emotional connection to the animal – we ride them and groom them and love them, much like a dog or cat. Horses are also used as workers and in sport. These multiple roles in society elevate their usefulness outside of being a source of protein. This makes the act of eating them seem wrong.

It does seem a bit hypocritical to eat one animal and not another, based on human feelings. Belgium is doing its part to make horse eating more humane by recently passing a law that requires the clarification of a horse's role: either a companion or not. Upon purchase, a horse has a chip embedded in it, so that once the horse's role in humans' lives is decided, the future for the animal cannot change. ♦



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DE SMET BRUSSELS 1620 Uccle-Drogenbos, Mr Guy Herrezeel, Tel 02/333.80.23, guy.herrezeel@desmetbrussels.be

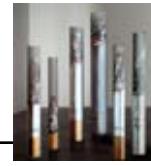
S.A. LOUIS BRUSSELS N.V. 1030 Brussels (Schaerbeek), Mr Marc Moncousin, Tel 02/743.81.81, moncousin.m@garage-louis.be

STERCKX N.V. 1640 Rhode-St.Genèse, St. Genesius-Rode, Mr Philip Van de Walle, Tel 02/359.94.85, philip@sterckx.be • 1500 Halle, Mr Yves Tielemans, Tel 02/363.15.35, yves@sterckx.be

Marlboro American Spirit

The mixed-media work of New York artist Tony Oursler is featured at Brussels' Baronian_Francey gallery through 9 January

www.baronianfrancey.com



FLANDERS TODAY
NOVEMBER 18, 2009



The Sorcerer's Apprentice

ANNA JENKINSON

Bruocella Symphony Orchestra has got a bit of everything up its sleeve for its children's concerts in Brussels this month – special lighting effects, ghosts and even a sorcerer with magic potions. So if the classical music alone isn't enough to keep the kids' attention, then these other attractions, all related to the music in one way or another, should be.

The programme includes *The Sorcerer's Apprentice* by Dukas, *Danse Macabre* by Saint-Saëns and the overture from Mozart's *The Magic Flute* as well as some well-known arias from the same opera sung by Scottish-born baritone Richard Craddock and soprano Bridget Peirson Davis. All the music has been chosen for its appeal to the younger, as well as older, members of the audience.

"It's always a challenge to find pieces of music that are not too

simple, not too long and yet still interesting and beautiful enough to really captivate an audience," said the orchestra's conductor, Jan Steenbrugge.

Children's concerts have become an annual fixture for the international amateur orchestra, with earlier performances featuring Prokoviev's *Peter and the Wolf* and Stravinsky's *The Firebird*. As in previous years, a narrator will explain the story behind the music so that the children understand what is going on. There will be three concerts – one with narration in Dutch, another in English and a third in French.

"The aim is to increase young people's awareness of music and of how it fits together with other art forms, such as dance and visual art," says the orchestra's president, Mary Wiklander-Williams.

During the interval, children can

try out the orchestral instruments to see what it's like to hold, hit or blow into their instrument of choice. While there's no minimum (or maximum) age for concert goers, Wiklander-Williams said that the performances generally appeal most to kids between five and 12 years – just the age when they start to consider playing an instrument. ♦

21 November, 15.00
Dutch narration
22 November, 14.00
English narration
22 November, 16.30
French narration
→ www.bso-orchestra.be



MORE CHILDREN'S MUSIC THIS WEEK
De Planken, pop group → Breughelzaal, Bree
Jan De Smet, Sinterklaas songs → De Zondvloed, Mechelen
Requiem for a Duck, musical theatre → Het Paleis, Antwerp



Koninklijk Circus

Onderrichtsstraat 81; 02.218.20.15,
www.cirque-royal.org
NOV 21 20.30 Abbamania. A Place to Bury Strangers

Le Botanique

Koningsstraat 236; 02.226.12.57
Concerts at 20.00:
NOV 18 Passion Pit **NOV 19** Faustine Hollander + Akron/Family. Hocus Pocus + Costanza DJ's **NOV 20** Port O'Brien + First Aid Kit. Bombay Bicycle Club **NOV 21** A Place to Bury Strangers. The Twilight Sad **NOV 22** Cornershop

Maison du Peuple

Sint-Gillisvoorplein 37-39; 02.217.26.00, www.maison-du-peuple.be
NOV 19 18.00 Jeep Novak

Vorst-Nationaal

Victor Roussealaan 208; 0900.00.991

NOV 21 20.00 Paul Anka

Ghent

Vooruit
St Pietersnieuwstraat 23; 0900.26.060, www.vooruit.be
NOV 24 20.00 aMute

Hasselt

Muziekodroom
Bootstraat 9; www.muziekodroom.be
NOV 19 19.30 Red Bull Soundclash: A Brand vs Stijn

NOV 21 20.30 Despised Icon + Architects + Horse the Band + As Blood Runs Back + Iwrestledabearonce! **NOV 22** 20.00 The Phenomenal Handclap Band

Kortrijk

De Kreun
Jan Persijnstraat 6; 056.37.06.44, www.dekreun.be
NOV 21 20.00 Tortoise + Party. Plastik party: Fred Hush + Static + Greedy + Compuphonic + Pier **NOV 24** 20.00 Open Ambarchi + Stephen O'Malley + Massimo **NOV 26** 20.00 Customs: Team William + De Staat + Hypnoiz DJ Team

Leuven

Het Depot
Martelarenplein 12; 016.22.06.03
Concerts at 20.00:
NOV 19 Zion Train **NOV 21** Leaf Hound + Colour Haze **NOV 22** Raymond van het Groenewoud **NOV 25** Yellow Man

Stuk

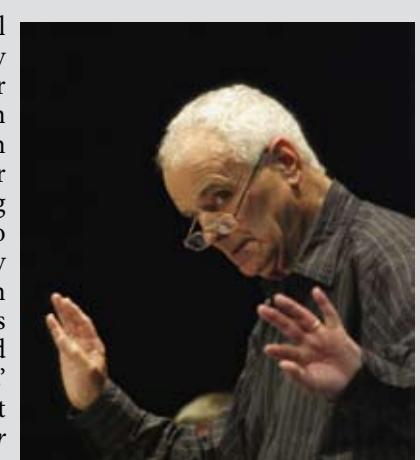
Naamsestraat 96; 016.32.03.20, www.stuk.be
NOV 20 20.30 iCu + Tortoise

DON'T MISS

Peter Maxwell Davies

20 and 21 November
DeSingel, Antwerp
Concertgebouw, Bruges

One of the most powerful and original contemporary composers in Britain, Peter Maxwell Davies has been living as a near-recluse on Scotland's Orkney Islands for almost four decades. Leaving their rugged isolation to celebrate his 75th birthday with a string of European concerts, he will be in Bruges and Antwerp this weekend to conduct Flanders' deFilharmonie in his latest violin concerto, *Fiddler On The Shore*, a sobering meditation on climate change and rising sea levels, starring violinist Daniel Hope. Davies' fifth symphony, his colourful *An Orkney Wedding, with Sunrise*, as well as Bernstein's *Divertimento* complete the programme.



→ www.defilharmonie.be

Agenda

FLANDERS TODAY
NOVEMBER 18, 2009

Ostend

Kursaal (Casino)
Monacoplein 2; 070.22.56.00,
www.kursaalostende.be
NOV 23 20.00 Jerry Lee Lewis



Antwerp

Buster
Kaasru 1; 03.232.51.53,
www.busterpodium.be
NOV 20 22.00 Adrien Volant

De Muze

Melkmarkt 5; www.demuze-jazz.be
NOV 22-29 Jazz festival celebrating the venue's 45th anniversary, with concerts by Philip Catherine Trio, Let's Call Ed, Erwin Vann, Erik Vermeulen, John Ruocco, Eric Thielemans and many more

Borgerhout

De Roma
Turnhoutsebaan 327; 03.292.97.40,
www.deroma.be
NOV 21 20.30 Ludovico Einaudi

Rataplan

Wijngemstraat 27; 03.292.97.40
NOV 19 20.30 Norma Winstone Trio

Brussels

Ancienne Belgique
Anspachlaan 110; 02.548.24.24,
www.abconcerts.be
NOV 21 20.00 Lady Linn & Her Magnificent Seven

Art Base

Zandstraat 29; 02.217.29.20,
www.art-base.be
NOV 20 20.00 Natrio - Natacha Wuyts Jazz Trio

Bar du Marché

Alphonse de Wittestraat 12; 02.644.04.00,
www.bardumarche.be
NOV 22 Olivier Stalon and Steven Delanno

Jazz Station

Leuvensesteenweg 193-195; 02.733.13.78
NOV 18 20.30 Wang Wei feat. Pierre Bernard
NOV 21 18.00 Wim Eggermont Quartet
NOV 25 20.30 ADKA Group

L'Alphabet

Waversesteenweg 1387; 02.662.23.00,
www.lalphabet.be
NOV 19 20.30 Gino Lattuca, Nicola Andrioli, Bart De Nolf, Mimi Verderame
NOV 21 20.30 The Never Greens
NOV 26 20.30 Gust Lhonneux

Maison des Musiques

Lebeaustraat 39; 02.550.13.20
NOV 20 12.30 Jacques Stotzem solo

Royal Music Conservatory

Regentschapsstraat 30; 02.213.41.37,
www.kcb.be
NOV 23 20.00 Toots Thielemans Jazz Awards carte blanche to accordionist Thibault Dille

Sazz'n Jazz

Koningsstraat 241; 0475.78.23.78,
www.sazznjazz.be
Concerts at 20.30:
NOV 18 Meeting Trio **NOV 19** Trio Ed'Mi Jazz **NOV 22** Pierre de Surgères Quintet **NOV 25** The Screaming Bitches

Sounds Jazz Club

Tulpstraat 28; 02.512.92.50,
www.soundsjazzclub.be

Concerts at 22.00:

NOV 18 Caribe con K **NOV 19** Julien Tassin Quartet **NOV 20** Greg Houben Trio **NOV 21** Alfio Origlio Tribute to Headhunters **NOV 23** Master Session

NOV 24 Laurent Doumont Soul Band

NOV 25 Chamaquiendo, salsa

Stekerlapatte

Priestersstraat 4; 02.512.86.81,
www.stekerlapatte.be

NOV 19 20.00 Daniel Barbenel

The Cotton Club - Grand Casino

Duquesnoystraat 14; 02.289.68.66,
www.gcb.be

NOV 21 21.30 Swing Swamp Quartet

The Music Village

Steenstraat 50; 02.513.13.45,
www.themusicvillage.com

Concerts at 21.00:

NOV 18 Mahé Parker **NOV 19** Jean-Louis Rassinfosse, Jean-Philippe Collard-Neven, more **NOV 20** Dany Doris & The New Look Trio **NOV 21** Sabin Todorov Trio + Steve Houben + Bulgarian voices

NOV 24 Jef Lee Johnson Band, American soul and funk **NOV 25** O.A.K Trio

Woluwe-Saint-Pierre Cultural Centre

Charles Thielemanslaan 93; 02.773.05.81,
www.art-culture.be

NOV 19 20.30 Summer Residence

Ghent

Vooruit

St Pietersnieuwstraat 23; 0900.26.060,
www.vooruit.be

NOV 18 20.00 Roy Hargrove Quintet

NOV 19 20.00 Seasick Steve

Sint-Truiden

Academiezaal

Plankstraat 18; 011.70.17.00,
www.academiezaal.be

NOV 18 20.15 Norma Winstone Trio

Ghent

Handelsbeurs

Kouter 29; 09.265.92.01, www.handelsbeurs.be

NOV 25 20.00 Eva Ayllón, Afro-Peruvian

Free
subscription!



Antwerp

Zuiderpershuis

Waalse Kaai 14; 03.248.01.00,
www.zuiderpershuis.be
NOV 19 20.30 Ayarkhaan and Yulia Charkova (Russia) **NOV 20** 20.30 Oumou Sangare (Mali) **NOV 21** 20.30 Renata Rosa (Brazil) **NOV 20** 20.00 deFilh



Antwerp

Amuz

Kammenstraat 81; 03.248.28.28,
www.amuz.be
NOV 20 21.00 Anima Eterna conducted by Jos van Immerseel: Durante **NOV 22** 15.00 Bl!ndman Sax & Bl!ndman Vox: Buxtehude

Brussels

Art Base

Zandstraat 29; 02.217.29.20,
www.art-base.be
NOV 22 19.00 Débora Rodrigues and João Escada, traditional fado

Beursschouwburg

August Ortsstraat 20-28; 02.550.03.50,
www.beursschouwburg.be
NOV 18 21.00 Diaspora Sounds

Bozar

Ravensteinstraat 23; 02.507.82.00,
www.bozar.be
NOV 19 20.15 Jil Jilala & Ghiwaniyat Orchestra (Morocco)

NOV 20 20.15 Idril & Imetela, Tarwan Chikh Muhend and Al Walid Mimoun, Berber music

NOV 21 20.15 Kadim Al Sahir (Iraq)

Espace Senghor

Waversesteenweg 366; 02.230.31.40,
www.senghor.be
NOV 21 20.30 Hossein Omoumi and Madjid Khaladj, Persian music

Flagey

Heilig Kruisplein; 02.641.10.20,
www.flagey.be

NOV 18 20.15 Renata Rosa

NOV 19 20.15 Malouma

Koninklijk Circus

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

NOV 18 20.00 Paolo Nutini

La Samaritaine

Samaritanesstraat 16; 02.511.33.95

NOV 24-28 20.30 Karoline de la Serna, flamenco, jazz, tango

Ghent

Handelsbeurs

Kouter 29; 09.265.92.01, www.

handelsbeurs.be

NOV 25 20.00 Eva Ayllón, Afro-Peruvian

Brussels

Bozar

Ravensteinstraat 23; 02.507.82.00,
www.bozar.be

NOV 19 20.00 Symfonieorkest Vlaanderen conducted by Kim Seikyo, with Pieter Wispelwey, cello: Dvorak, Britten, Elgar

NOV 24 20.00 Leif Ove Andsnes, piano with video by Robin Rhode: Pictures - Reframed, based on Mussorgsky's Pictures at an Exhibition

NOV 26 20.00 Liège Philharmonic conducted by François-Xavier Roth, with Sergei Nakariakov, trumpet: Mozart, Widmann, Mahler

Espace Senghor

Waversesteenweg 366; 02.230.31.40,

www.senghor.be

NOV 26 20.15 Electroacoustic concert

Piola Libri

Franklinstraat 66-68; 02.736.93.91,
www.piolalibri.be

NOV 18 19.00 Ensemble Sursum Corda, mediaeval music

Royal Music Conservatory

Regentschapsstraat 30; 02.213.41.37,
www.kcb.be

Concerts at 20.00:

NOV 18 Sergio Tiempo, piano: Bach, Chopin, Ginastera, more **NOV 19** Kopelman Quartet with Elisabeth Leonskaya, piano: Borodin, Shostakovich

NOV 21 Champ d'Action conducted by Jaan Bossier: Luc Breyeys **NOV 24** Mechels Kammer Orkest conducted by Tom Van den Eynde, with Olsi Leka, cello: Dvorak, Scheck **NOV 25** Heinrich Schiff, cello; Martin Helmchen, piano: Beethoven, Brahms, Lutoslawski, Debussy



Antwerp

Vlaamse Opera

Frankrijklei 1; 070.22.02.02,

www.vlaamseopera.be

Until NOV 21 15.00/20.00 Madame Butterfly, directed by Muhai Tang

DON'T MISS

Neighbours. Friends.Family

Until 29 November Sint-Gorikshallen Brussels

This exhibition of young artists from three of the EU's newest members – Slovakia, Hungary and the Czech Republic – offers some very interesting figurative work, selected for its ability to shed light on the culture as well as its artistic value. Accompanied by information about each country's society and traditions, it's being used as an education opportunity for schools but is also open to the public. Organised by the Visegrad Fund, a cultural organisation that represents all three of these countries plus Poland, it's a shame artists from Poland are not included. Still, it's a show worth visiting.



www.hallessaintgery.be



Antwerp

Agenda

Irene Álvarez and Federico Ordoñez, with Carmen Fernandez, voice; Alexander Gavilan and El Rizos, guitar



Antwerp

deSingel

Desguinlei 25; 03.248.28.28,
www.desingel.be

NOV 26-28 20.00 Muziektheater
Transparant and I Solisti del Vento in Een
nieuw requiem, musical theatre based on
Mozart's masterpiece, directed by Josse De
Pauw (in Dutch)

Zuiderpershuis

Waalse Kaai 14; 03.248.01.00,
www.zuiderpershuis.be

NOV 19 20.30 Les Recluses by Kofi
Kwahulé, directed by Denis Mpunga (in
Kirundi with French and Dutch surtitles)

Brussels

Auderghem Cultural Centre

Vorstlaan 183; 0484.76.81.17,
www.bloc-brussels.com

NOV 19-22 15.00/20.00 Brussels Light
Opera Company (BLOC) in The Pirates
of Penzance by Gilbert and Sullivan,
conducted by Steven De Mesmaeker,
directed by Ken Woolard

KVS Bol

Lakensestraat 146; 02.210.11.00
www.kvs.be

Until NOV 27 KVS and Het Toneelhuis
present Titus Andronicus by Shakespeare
(in Dutch with French and English
surtitles)

Kaaitheater

Onze-Lieve-Vrouw van Vaakstraat 81;
02.201.59.59, www.kaaitheater.be

NOV 20-21 20.30 Dark Matter, written
and performed by Kate McIntosh (in
English)

NOV 24-25 20.30 Space in Holland
Tsunami Drowning in Europe by Petra
Ardai, Feico Sobel and Baint Solymosi (in
Dutch)

Kaaitheater

Saintelettesquare 20; 02.201.59.59,
www.kaaitheater.be

NOV 24 19.00/21.00 LOD and Zeven in
Naar Medea, part 2, music/theatre by
Inne Goris and Pieter De Buysser, music
by Eavesdropper (in Dutch)

The Warehouse Studio

Waelhemstraat 69a; 0475.58.54.62

<http://theatreinbrussels.com>

NOV 24-29 20.00 Irish Theatre Group
presents short plays by Samuel Beckett,
directed by Roisin Dore (in English)

Ghent

LOD Bijloekaa

Bijloekaa 3; 09.266.11.21, www.lod.be

Until NOV 24 20.00/22.00 LOD & Zeven
presents Naar Medea, part 2, musical
theatre by Inne Goris and Pieter De
Buysser, music by Eavesdropper

Leuven

Stuk

Naamsestraat 96; 016.32.03.20,
www.stuk.be

NOV 19-20 20.30 NTGent in Kraps
laatste band by Samuel Beckett, staged by
Johan Simons (in Dutch)

NOV 23-24 20.30 Lazarus in En zo werd
het toch nog gezellig (And it Continued
to be Nice), written and performed by
Günther Lesage and Joris van den Brande
(in Dutch)

NOV 25-26 20.30 Random Scream in
Investment, dance/theatre directed by
Davis Freeman (in Dutch)



Antwerp

Contemporary Art Museum (M HKA)

Leuvenstraat 32; 03.238.59.60,
www.muhka.be

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

Middelheim Museum

Middelheimlaan 61; 03.828.13.50,
www.middelheimmuseum.be

Until DEC 19 Camiel Van Breedam,
recycled assemblages by the Flemish artist

Royal Museum of Fine Arts

Leopold De Waelplaats; 03.238.78.09,
www.kmska.be

Until NOV 29 Marcel Maeyer, paintings
by the contemporary Flemish artist,
former curator at the museum

Until JAN 17 In the Footsteps of Bartók:
Lajos Vajda and Hungarian Surrealism

Brussels

Atomium

Heysel Park; 02.475.45.75, www.atomium.be

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

Bozar (Paleis voor Schone Kunsten)

Ravensteinstraat 23; 02.507.82.00,
www.bozar.be

Until JAN 3 Sexties, comic-strip
illustrations and texts by Guido Crepax,
Paul Cuvelier, Jean-Claude Forest and Guy
Peelaert

Costume and Lace Museum

Violettestraat 12; 02.213.44.50

Until DEC 29 Grada: Mystery Writing by
Women, Croatian women's ancestral art
of embroidery applied to contemporary
fashion and utensils

Jazz Station

Leuvensesteenweg 193; 02.733.13.78

Until DEC 4 Daniel Detilleux: Digital
Vibrations in Music, steel sculptures
in collaboration with Jean Kluger and
Christian Soete

KVS

Arduinkaa 9; 02.210.11.12, www.kvs.be

Until DEC 17 Nuit Américaine,
photographs of the America west by
Flemish photographer Peter De Bruyne

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),
photography that has been banned or
otherwise been the subject of controversy

Royal Museum of Fine Arts

Regentschapsstraat 3; 02.508.32.11,
www.fine-arts-museum.be

Until JAN 31 Delvaux and the Ancient
World, some 60 paintings and drawings
by the Belgian artist evince his fascination
for classical antiquity

Until JAN 31 The Art of Gaming, works
from the collection of the National Lottery
on the occasion of its 75th anniversary

Royal Museum of the Armed Forces

Jubelpark 3; 02.737.78.33,

www.legermuseum.be

Until FEB 28 Anvalleuh!, works by

Belgium's best comic strip artists

Until APR 11 Dieren in de oorlog
(Animals in the War), archive photos
and films of animals affected by the First
World War

Sint-Gorikshallen

Sint-Goriksplein 25; 02.502.44.24,
www.hallessaintgery.be

Until NOV 29 Neighbours.Friends.
Family, paintings by young artists from
three recent EU member states

Deurle

Museum Dhondt-Dhaenens

Museumlaan 14; 09.282.51.23,
www.museumddd.be

Until NOV 29 Absence is the Highest
Form of Presence, work by Robert Gober,
Juliao Sarmento and Luc Tuymans

Deurne (Antwerp)

Zilpermuseum Sterckshof

Cornelissenlaan; 03.360.52.52

Until JAN 10 Coral and Bells: A
Collection of Rattles, silver and gold rattles
and jingling bells decorated with precious
stones, shown alongside miniatures and
children's portraits

Ghent

Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst (SMAK)

Citadelpark; 09.221.17.03, www.smak.be

Until NOV 22 Nick Ervinck, GNI-RI

sep2009 EITOZOR, installations

Until NOV 22 Sculptural collections by
various artists

Until DEC 6 Klaus Scherübel: Mallarmé,
Het Boek, installations

Museum of Fine Arts

Fernand Scribedreef 1 – Citadelpark;

09.240.07.00, www.mskgent.be

Until FEB 7 Max Beckmann, prints and
paintings from the collection of the Von
der Heydt Museum in Wuppertal

Until FEB 7 Fernand Léger's Le Grand
Déjeuner, masterpiece painting on loan
from the Museum of Modern Art in New
York

Grimbergen

CC Strombeek

Gemeenteplein; 02.263.03.43,

www.ccstrombeek.be

Until DEC 10 Shot by both Sides, video
installations by Pieter Geenen and Johan
Grimonprez

Hasselt

Cultuurcentrum

Kunstlaan 5; 011.22.99.33,

www.ccha.be

Until JAN 10 Helikon: Intens en divers
(Intense and Diverse), works by the 1960s
artist group

Leuven

Museum M

Leopold Vanderkelenstraat 28;

016.20.09.09, www.mleuven.be

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

STUK

Naamsestraat 96; 016.32.03.20, www.stuk.be

Until JAN 24 Matt Mullican, drawings,
sculpture, architectural constructions and
performances

Tervuren

Royal Museum for Central Africa

Leuvensesteenweg 13; 02.769.52.11,

www.africamuseum.be

Until DEC 13 Africa: Fast forward, the
African continent today (see also the
Atomium)



L-Week: Week-long celebration of lesbian
and bisexual women culminates in L-Day
at Ghent's Vooruit, with live music,
readings, debates and dance party

Until NOV 21 in Brussels and Ghent
www.l-week.be

Next Festival: Crossborder contemporary
arts festival organised by Eurométropole
featuring theatre, dance, visual arts, music,
talks and debates

NOV 21-DEC 13 at venues in Kortrijk,
Tournai, and Lille
069.25.30.80, www.nextfestival.eu

Time Festival: Biennal arts festival with
talks, performances, exhibitions and
screenings

Until NOV 28 across Ghent, Antwerp
and Brussels
0479.69.57.86, www.timefestival.be

Week van de Smaak (Week of Fl

FACE OF FLANDERS

Hannes D'Haese

"I've decided I'm going to be world-famous within five years."

It seems unfair to describe Hannes D'Haese as the artist who painted an elephant on the floor of the Euronext stock exchange in Amsterdam, since that's not what he'll be doing in the more sedate surroundings of the Brussels Accessible Art Fair this weekend. But he did it. And he'll be doing it again in London for the Elephant Parade in May next year.

D'Haese describes himself as an "action painter" and admits a debt of inspiration to Jackson Pollock. The fibreglass elephants, some of which were recently placed around the centre of Antwerp, are all decorated by artists and sold to raise money for elephant preservation.

Last week, the Flemish artist was in Amsterdam for the auction at Christie's of a set of elephants, including the one he action-painted in the Euronext and another done for the Dutch Avro TV channel, with proceeds going to protect the Asian elephant in Thailand.

The Accessible Art Fair aims to bring artists and their public together on first-name terms. Artists are there on the spot, ready to talk and explain their art to potential buyers. (Caveat emptor: the presence of the actual artist can make it difficult not to cave in and buy something.)

D'Haese had a "very pleasant" experience at last year's fair: "It makes art accessible, which is a great thing. It's not because you're starting to make a name for yourself that you have to only create art for money," he says.

The 44-year-old is the son of a prominent family: his mother is sculptor Begga D'Haese, and his late father was a controversial gerontologist, suspended for 20 years for his ideas, but eventually reinstated by the European Court of Human Rights.

D'Haese has one operating principle: "I've decided I'm going to be world-famous within five years."



It's no idle boast. Other artists at the fair may present work that is more, shall we say, polished. But few can claim to have sold paintings to Prince Albert of Monaco, to have designed a car for Citroen, to have developed personalised painted coffins together with actor Axel Daeseleire or to have the support of Diane Von Furstenburg and the former Camilla Parker-Bowles for his London appearance in 2010.

Five years may be erring on the side of caution.

→ www.accessibleartfair.com
→ www.hannesdhaese.be

ALAN HOPE

TALKING DUTCH

ALISTAIR MACLEAN



© de Vel

lopen →

Sacha and Simon are back and in one piece. S&S are two colleagues who have been sneaking out at lunchtime for months to train for the New York Marathon and, apart from the challenge of finishing, are raising money for charity. The race is so popular that, if their charity had not found them places, their chances of getting a starting number would have been remote.

I read recently that running is increasingly popular in Flanders: *10% van de Vlamingen tussen 12 en 75 loopt* – 10% of Flemings between 12 and 75 run; *dat is meer dan ooit tevoren* – that's more than ever before. In fact, it's three times the number that ran 10 years ago.

Apparently, there are different types of runners. Almost half are individual runners and are typically *mannen in de dertig en hoogopgeleid* – men in their 30s and well educated. A quarter of runners are social but competitive, and most of them are *aangesloten bij een atletiekclub* – a member of an athletic club. They like *een babbel tijdens het lopen* – a chat while running, but, at the same time, *ze willen zichzelf nog altijd bewijzen in het gezelschap van andere lopers* – they still want to prove themselves in the company of other runners.

Then comes *de gezelschapsloper* – the for-company runner of whom half are women and *heeft geen*

nood aan zware structuren – have no need for heavy structures; *het sociale aspect primeert* – the social aspect come first. A fourth category is *de gezondheidsloper* – the health runner – and has the largest proportion of *mensen die geen betaald werk hebben* – people who have no paid work. Perhaps they have more time to think about their health. And lastly, *de prestatieloper* – the performance runner – who is usually male and wants to push his *grenzen* – limits.

You may think they're all a bit loopy. Or you may have been meaning for some time to do something about your fitness. Then you should go to the website, where you'll find a training programme, even for the rustiest of you. In week one, you do mixed running and walking: *2 minuten lopen, 3 minuten wandelen* for about half an hour, three times a week. By following the programme over 10 weeks, you should be able to build up *een aanvaardbare conditie* – an acceptable condition. On the website, you can find a group near you to join. There's even a podcast with music and advice, so you can improve your Dutch into the bargain.

As for S&S, they are gradually adjusting to the confines of the office and to the fact that no one cheers them on as they stride down the corridor.

→ www.starttorun.be

SHARON LIGHT

bite

Remember cider?

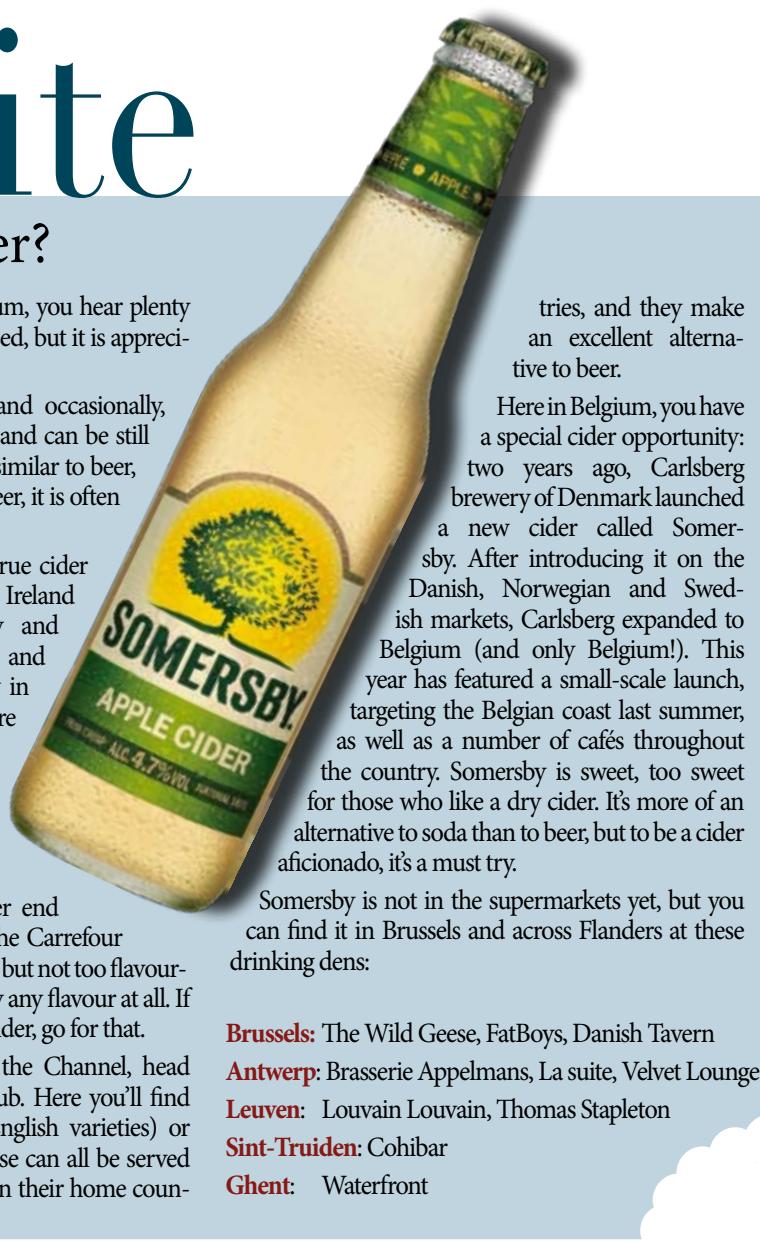
When it comes to drinks in Belgium, you hear plenty about beer. Wine isn't often discussed, but it is appreciated. And then there's cider.

Cider is fermented apple juice (and occasionally, pear). It ranges from dry to sweet and can be still or sparkling. Its alcohol content is similar to beer, in the range of 3% to 9%. Unlike beer, it is often served on ice.

Certain regions of the world are true cider territory – the United Kingdom, Ireland and northwest France (Brittany and Normandy) are well known, and their ciders are found fairly easily in Belgium. Spain and Germany are also traditional homes to cider.

French cider is the easiest to come by here; you'll find at least one variety at your local supermarket in 75 cl bottles, both the sweet and drier flavours. At the cheaper end are the generic ciders. I sampled the Carrefour brand – the sweet was not too sweet but not too flavourful, either; the dry (brut) had hardly any flavour at all. If your market offers a brand-name cider, go for that.

To explore cider territory across the Channel, head to your nearest English or Irish pub. Here you'll find Strongbow and Bulmers (drier English varieties) or Magners (sweeter Irish cider). These can all be served on ice; they are consumed widely in their home coun-



tries, and they make an excellent alternative to beer.

Here in Belgium, you have a special cider opportunity: two years ago, Carlsberg brewery of Denmark launched a new cider called Somersby. After introducing it on the Danish, Norwegian and Swedish markets, Carlsberg expanded to Belgium (and only Belgium!). This year has featured a small-scale launch, targeting the Belgian coast last summer, as well as a number of cafés throughout the country. Somersby is sweet, too sweet for those who like a dry cider. It's more of an alternative to soda than to beer, but to be a cider aficionado, it's a must try.

Somersby is not in the supermarkets yet, but you can find it in Brussels and across Flanders at these drinking dens:

Brussels: The Wild Geese, FatBoys, Danish Tavern

Antwerp: Brasserie Appelmans, La suite, Velvet Lounge

Leuven: Louvain Louvain, Thomas Stapleton

Sint-Truiden: Cohibar

Ghent: Waterfront

The last word →→→

Simple pleasures

"I get more pleasure from this than from a bunch of flowers, and I won't forget it in a hurry. Milking a cow is something you never forget how to do, not even after 80 years."

Tonja Nouwens, who expressed a wish on her 102nd birthday to milk a cow the old-fashioned way

Expensive habits

"Five pairs for myself; the rest are for my sister-in-law."

Lisa Sanders from Amsterdam, who picked up 11 pairs of Jimmy Choo shoes in a special action with H&M at the weekend in Antwerp, at a cost of €1,500

PM denies going green

"The prime minister has never argued in favour of the introduction of a green tax at European level." A spokesman for Herman Van Rompuy, denying a leaked remark from a Bilderberg meeting of elite business leaders

Dead wrong

"Queen Fabiola has just passed away. She died when she heard about the divorce of Laurent and Claire."

An anonymous hoaxter, who managed to insert a fake news alert on the website of the Belga news agency