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INDEPENDENT NEWSWEEKLY

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NEWS ♦ BUSINESS ♦ ARTS ♦ ACTIVE ♦ LIVING ♦ AGENDA ♦ INTERVIEW

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An Antwerp appeal court ruled in favour of a Mol restaurant owner, overturning a fine for breach of the smoking ban. Unclear provisions of the partial ban could lead to a total ban



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New York's famous Museum of Modern Art hosts a major show on Flemish expressionist James Ensor, highlighting the early work of a radical non-conformist



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Do not spend another summer evening sweltering in your attic apartment – find a screen on a square, beach or empty lot and join your fellow humans for open-air cinema



Restaurant owner halts Lange Wapper project

Antwerp viaduct plan on hold

ALAN HOPE

A solitary Antwerp restaurant owner has succeeded in halting plans for a massive road viaduct through central Antwerp. Last week, the auditor of the Council of State issued an opinion saying that the regional planning policy which governs the construction of the Oosterweel link, known locally as the Lange Wapper, was illegal and must be scrapped. The auditor is an adviser to the Council, which is not obliged to follow his advice, although it usually does.

The controversial link is designed

to close the Antwerp Ring on the eastern side and ease traffic from the left bank of the Scheldt to the motorways heading for Germany, France and the Netherlands. But the latest announcement means that the Flemish government is obliged to begin the whole planning procedure over again, which would result in a delay of at least three years.

Opposition to the plan is focused on a long bridge/viaduct, which would take traffic, including

→ *Continued on page 3*

Get ready for Ghent

Europe's largest outdoor festival is about to swallow up an entire city for 10 days

COURTNEY DAVIS

It isn't just one great big festival; it's the culmination of many small ones that come together to create the wonder we know as the Gentse Feesten. Almost every square and open space in Ghent will be commandeered by buskers, artists, performers, musicians, vendors and the nearly 1.5 million people that descend on the capital of East Flanders (normal population, 230,000) for this 10-day, 24-hour party.

The official outdoor activities begin on 18 July, but Gentse Feesten (or Ghent Festivals) really kicks off with the Ghent Jazz Festival on 8 July, this year featuring BB King, Jamie Cullum and Marianne Faithfull (see story, page 16). The big electronic music festival, 10 Days Off, meanwhile, begins on 17 July at the Vooruit.

Unlike most of "the feesten", as we locals like to say, both of these

festivals require the purchasing of tickets. But virtually all of the rest is free: that includes 13 public spaces with live music day and night, a street theatre festival and a puppet buskers' festival.

Both the theatre and puppet festivals are now among the most respected in Europe and are slowly beginning to equal the draw of the music, which once dominated the feesten.

Those are the big events, but many other organisations throw mini-festivals. The comedy festival, for instance, is popular, particularly the English Comedy Nights from 24-26 July.

All this can be a diversion from the carnival-like atmosphere of the main music tents, where the bulk of the drinking and late night revelling take place.

→ *Continued on page 4*

Grieving Flanders says farewell to Yasmine

Hundreds of fans crowded the Antwerp Crematorium last week for the funeral of Hilde Rens, otherwise known as the TV presenter and singer Yasmine. One of the country's most prominent out lesbian personalities, she committed suicide the week before.

Yasmine's suicide followed the break-up of her marriage to Marianne Dupon. Following the ceremony, Dupon collapsed and was taken to hospital by ambulance. She was detained overnight. Later her father revealed that she had been under

enormous emotional pressure as a result of the reactions of some fans of the singer.

"I received three letters at my salon," said Werner Dupon, a hairdresser. "Hate mail. The first two were complete nonsense, ridiculous. The third was something else. I reported it to the police."

He told how the couple had maintained contact even after the split, which he said "could have been therapeutic". But, he added, "Hilde succumbed to a dark night of the

soul."

The ceremony itself took place in the auditorium of the crematorium in Wilrijk, which was too small to receive the crowds, about 1,200 of whom followed proceedings on a giant TV screen set up outside.

Among the mourners were many friends from Yasmine's showbusiness career: TV personalities Anne De Baetzelier and Evy Gruyaert, actress Andrea Croonenberghs, and musicians Kris Wauters and Stan Van Samang.

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FLANDERS TODAY

Independent Newsweekly



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FLANDERS TODAY
JULY 8, 2009

News in brief

The Post Office last week unveiled the new 90-cent stamp commemorating Father Damiaan, who will be canonised on 11 October in Rome. The stamp combines two images of the Flemish priest, one showing him working among lepers in Hawaii. It will be on sale from 5 October.

The fire service in the Kempen area of Antwerp province was overwhelmed last week with emergency calls to deal with wasps' nests due to the warm weather. The majority of calls normally come in late August or early September when the fruit is ripest, but last week Geel fire department received 50 calls, Mol 40 and Turnhout 30. Meanwhile, a 45-year-old man in Gingelom died last week after being stung by a wasp.

A Bruges man has asked a court to order his ex-wife to pay €5,000 in damages for the use of a camera and a PlayStation she took when she left him in 2003. The articles themselves were returned to the man by the court, but he is now claiming "a symbolic amount for the damage she caused me," the man said. A ruling is expected next week.

A man in Sint-Niklaas last week treated an entire school of 300 children to an ice cream to mark his daughter's departure after nine years at the Sint-Lutgart school. Wim Uyttendaele owns an ice cream business. "It all started with a bet when my daughter was playing for the school in the final of the East Flanders netball championship," he explained. "After the first set, I promised to treat them if they won. When they took the cup, I decided to give the whole school an ice cream."

The government's Roads and Traffic Agency (AWV) this week started work on the N211 Luchthavenlaan bridge over the E19 near Brussels Airport, with a warning that the works could lead to lengthy delays in the weeks up to 15 August. Traffic will be restricted to one lane in both directions.

Dirk Lelièvre from Lubbeek last week became the first drunk driver to be ordered to use an alcohol lock. Under a law passed last month, breathalysers and locks can be installed that will prevent drivers from starting their cars unless they pass the breath test. Lelièvre was caught driving while

Troubled painter Vandenberg commits suicide

Philippe Vandenberg, a painter best known for his large-scale Expressionist works, committed suicide at his home in Ghent last week. He was 57.

Vandenberg was credited with reviving painting in Flanders after the predominance of conceptual art in the 1970s. A visit to New York in 1978 and exposure to the work of Jackson Pollock and Mark Rothko influenced him greatly.

There was always a darkness about him and his work. "I think only despair can bring us to act, or rather to react against our fate as humans who, against our will, find ourselves submerged in a life that is no more than an ante-room," he once said. On another occasion: "Painting is a rehearsal for death."

"Philippe Vandenberg seemed predestined to come to a tragic end," commented Jan Hoet, formerly the director of the modern art museum SMAK in Ghent, whose collection includes some of Vandenberg's work. Hoet famously criticised Vandenberg's work in the 1980s, a blow the painter found hard to get over, even though Hoet publicly recanted a decade later.

Born in 1952 in Ghent, Vandenberg initially studied art history before turning to painting at the Fine Arts Academy in Ghent. In his 30s, he achieved international recognition with exhibitions in Amsterdam, Washington, Madrid and Vienna. The Guggenheim in New York acquired a Vandenberg in 1986, and his work can also be seen in the Fine Arts Museum (MSK) in Ghent and the Contemporary Art Museum (MUKHA) in Antwerp.

"He created passionate, literary paintings that express inner torment in styles reflecting his admiration for artists ranging from James Ensor to Philip Guston," Brussels art critic Sarah McFadden said.



vandenberg © Belg

under the influence twice last year. The installation of the alcohol lock is a condition in the suspension of a three-month prison sentence, a five-month driving ban and a fine of €2,200. The lock, however, will cost him €2,500.

jollity in the office.

Reserves of Belgian mussels will last about another week, according to mussel farmers Reynaert-Versluys, one of only two producers off the Belgian coast. The Belgica mussels grow hanging from posts, unlike the more common Zeeland mussel which grows on the seabottom. They are reported to have up to 10% more flesh than their Zeeland counterparts. The grower hopes to double production next year.

Traditional oven-baked ham and pyramid-shaped "cuberdons" are the two latest foods to be awarded recognition as regional specialities by the Flemish Centre for Agricultural and Fisheries Marketing (VLAM). The ham is produced by Antonio of Gavere near Ghent. The cuberdons, also known as "noses", are made by Confiserie 2000 of Kluizen, also near Ghent. In all, 93 products have been awarded the VLAM seal of approval.

→ www.streekproducten.be

Two out of three mayors surveyed by *De Zondag* newspaper say they have been subject to threats and even violence. Ghent mayor Daniel Termont was punched in the face two weeks ago



“I’m glad I did it for the city,” says restaurant owner

→ *Continued from page 1*

heavy trucks, through a part of the centre of Antwerp that includes homes and schools. As well as a noise nuisance, the traffic would increase the levels of pollution by diesel particulates in the air, critics say. Opponents also argue that the Lange Wapper would do little to ease congestion.

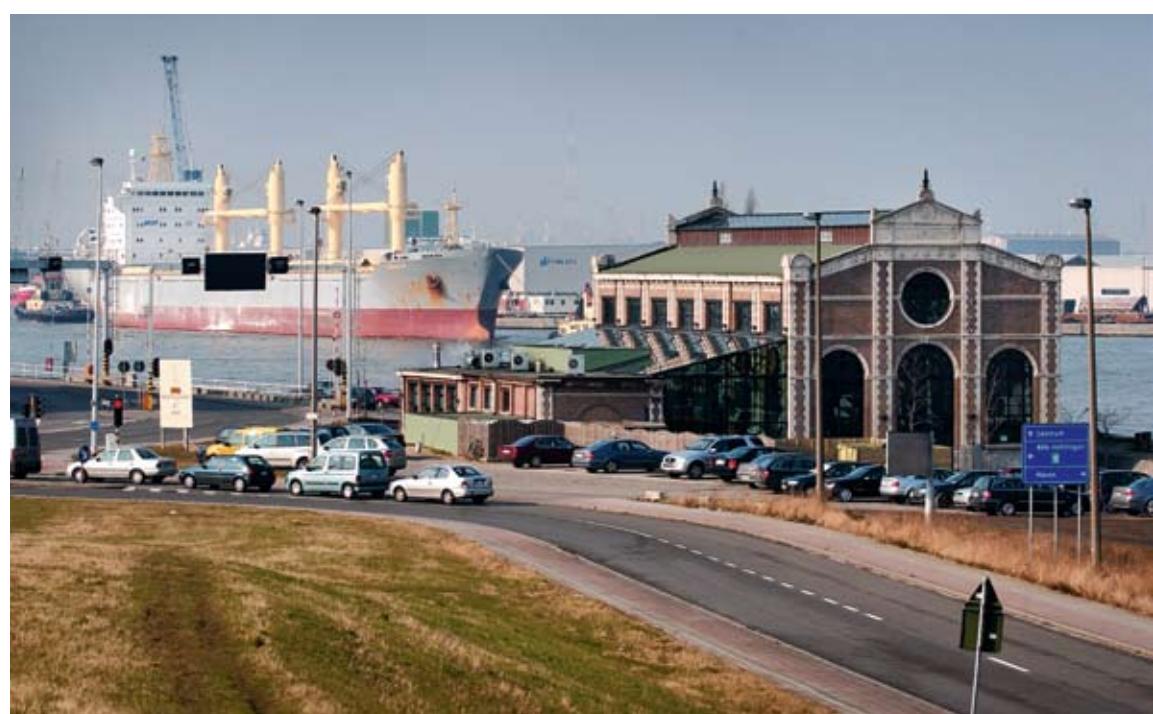
The case was brought by restaurateur Gunther Dieltjens, who, with his wife and a staff of 50, runs the Pomphuis restaurant, installed in an imposing pumping house dating from 1920. The Lange Wapper would pass directly over the restaurant, and pillars bearing the weight of the viaduct would need to be constructed in his car park and next to the terrace.

“I’m happy I did this for the city,” Dieltjens said after the auditor’s advice was given. “Obviously I

also did it for my business, but I wasn’t only driven by commercial interests. The city is better off without that bridge.” Protest group StRaten Generaal said the advice was “important and hopeful, not only for this but for other planning cases.”

The Antwerp Mobility Management Agency (BAM), which is responsible for the project, has not yet responded to the auditor’s opinion.

- Ademloos, one of the groups protesting at the Lange Wapper plans, last week handed over a petition of more than 66,000 names to Antwerp mayor Patrick Janssens. “This is a historic and joyful day,” said Ademloos chairman Wim Van Hees. The petition has raised more than enough signatures to force the issue to a referendum involving the people of Antwerp. ♦



© Belga

The viaduct would pass directly over the Pomphuis (right) and its terrace

THE WEEK IN FIGURES

2,504

bankruptcies in Flanders in the first half of the year, representing an increase of more than 27% on the same period last year. There were 433 registered in June alone.



12,902

jobs lost as a result of the 5,037 bankruptcies on a national level, the highest ever half-year total.

195,309

unemployed in Flanders in June, 23.5% more than the same time last year. Unemployment now stands at 6.8%, says labour minister Frank Vandenbroucke.

€4,000,000,000

in tax fraud detected in 2008, according to junior finance minister Bernard Clerfayt. Some €2.5 billion of the total was detected by routine inspections and audits, and the rest via special investigations.

40,000

jobs remain vacant due to lack of qualified applicants, according to reports. These include jobs in the healthcare and education sectors, especially in technical functions. Elsewhere, jobs in the restaurant sector are not being filled because of low wages.

3,673,177 kg

goods handled in June by the Flemish recycling shops (kringwinkels). The figure is substantially higher than the 2004 record of two million kg, but slightly short of the predicted four million. Last year, the amount of goods brought in rose by 10%, while sales increased by 13%.

993,495

crimes committed in Belgium last year, 2.3% down on 2007. The most common crime is theft and extortion: 416,457 cases, followed by criminal damage and vandalism: 122,076 cases. Crimes on the increase include bag-snatchings from cars (up 78%) and graffiti (up 134%).

13,000

Number of drivers unable to obtain an insurance policy from commercial insurers last year. The typical case is a man under 40 with a history of bad debt, usually driving a larger car.

72

young patients between six and 16 who have undergone rehabilitation therapy with dolphins under a programme run by Ghent University Hospital in the five years since the programme was set up. Most of the patients are victims of trauma, accidents, burns or amputation. The dolphins are kept at the Boudewijn Seapark just outside Bruges.

Smoking ban discriminates, court rules

The public health committee of the federal parliament last week approved a new smoking ban aimed at clearing up the grey area defining those premises to which a ban does not apply. But the new law seemed likely to be sunk before it was even launched, following a ruling by the Antwerp court of appeal.

The court was ruling in the case of Danny Vermeer, who runs the Kleppende Klipper restaurant in Mol, and who was appealing a conviction for breach of the existing smoking ban and a fine of €2,750. Vermeer argued that the ban was discriminatory in its current form – which requires bars and cafes that derive at least one-third of their sales from food to ban smoking, or provide separate accommodation for smokers under strict – and expensive – conditions.

The court of appeal upheld Vermeer’s case and ruled that the ban breaches the constitutional guarantee of equal treatment under the law. Patrons of restaurants, the court

said, enjoyed the law’s protection against inhaling smoke, whereas patrons of bars did not. Critics of the current law have pointed out that it is impossible in most cases to determine whether some premises are smoking or non-smoking.

The new law, which still has to complete its legislative passage, would exempt only bars that serve snack food, like nuts and potato chips, and include in the ban all forms of warm food service, regardless of the value of the sales.

That bill doesn’t go far enough for the CD&V, which would like to see a total ban on smoking in all bars, but which lost the support of liberals at the last minute. The CD&V has even called for a Europe-wide total ban, which would override Belgian legislation.

- The union of Flemish general practitioners (SVH) last week called on the Flemish government to introduce its own smoking ban in the region, to

make up for the failings in the federal law. “We are disappointed by the politicians,” said vice-chairman Rufij Baeke. “They did the job too quickly and turned in poor work.”

According to the doctors, Flanders could introduce such a law under preventive healthcare provisions, which are a responsibility of the regions. But politicians, including Flemish health minister Veerle Heeren, have declined the option, claiming the ban falls under federal responsibilities.

Meanwhile, elsewhere a shopkeeper in Koekelare in West Flanders was fined €55,000 for giving away 10 free disposable lighters with cartons of cigarettes, which the law considers a form of enticement to buy tobacco. The man, who runs shops in Ostend, Bruges and Adinkerke, plans to appeal the fine. ♦

Spitfire fragments recovered

A Flemish salvage group last week recovered fragments from a unique Spitfire which crashed in September 1943 in a field in Beveren-IJzer in West Flanders. The Spitfire XII was a prototype of which only 100 were constructed. Its design was intended to break the dominance of German fighters by flying faster and lower than the existing model. The plane, flown by Australian pilot Flight Sergeant Stan May, was escorting American fighter-bombers on a mission over Lille when it was shot down.

Flt Sgt May bailed out and returned to the crashed plane intending to set it on fire to prevent the Germans recovering the new technology. How-

ever when he saw how deeply the plane was buried in the ground, he realised there was no need. He was later hidden by a resistance group in Oostvleteren and helped to escape back to England via the Regina hotel



The Spitfire XII had “clipped” wings to allow for better manoeuvrability

In the house

10 Days Off

For one of the most glorious clubbing experiences in the world, head to Ghent this month, where more than 80 of the hottest national and international DJs will be setting the city alight from 17 to 27 July.

Started in 1995, the 10 Days Off festival has evolved into a tribal gathering for every genre of uplifting electronic music shaking dance floors across the globe – from house and funk to nu-jazz, dub step, broken beat and a variety of creative hybrids.

It's hosted at the lovely Vooruit theatre-cum-arts centre in the middle of the student district on the canal, and if the atmosphere of past editions is anything to go by, expect to be spending every night grinning madly with your arms up in the air until at least 7.00.

This year's international line up includes highly influential Detroit DJ Carl Craig on day 7 with his blend of artful upbeat techno; electroclash anthems to sing along to from France's Miss

Kittin & the Hacker on day 3 and a grand finale from UK acid house godfather Andrew Weatherall on day 10.

Ghent's own disco ambassadors, The Glimmers will spin their infectious blend of happy music, as well as playing a live set as the Disco Drunkards, a Belgian dance-rock dream team that includes Tim Vanhamel and Stéphane Missegheers from dEUS on the drums. **Saffina Rana**

→ www.10daysoff.be

Moving figures

Puppet Buskers

The European Figure Theatre Centre in Ghent's historical Patershol district keeps the ancient art of puppetry alive and shows it off every year during the Gentse Feesten. You'll find as many adults as children at its annual International Puppet Buskers Festival, which boasts a dizzying array of puppetry techniques.

It's actually difficult to apply the word "puppet" to some of the acts at Puppet Buskers. One year, performers donned costumes about 10 metres high to portray a family of giants, who had simple adventures in the streets of Ghent. The next, a group of performers made seemingly living creatures out of everyday objects like clothes pins and sheets. This year, you'll find a robotic monkey driving a little car around the squares,

which is, quite frankly, kind of creepy.

But then there are plenty of stick puppets, marionettes and hand-held contraptions that look a bit more puppet-like. Like street theatre, most shows are wordless (if not soundless), though you might find some dialogue in English or Dutch.

Also like the street theatre, acts are staged on squares around the city. But you can also visit the inner garden of the centre, where every day a series of shows are staged for one small admission price. You can sit all afternoon at a table and order drinks in one of the very few quiet places in Ghent during the Gentse Feesten. The Puppet Buskers literature calls it "an oasis of peace and cosiness". They are so right. **Lisa Bradshaw**

→ www.eftcgent.be



The city as stage

MiramirO

Every year during Gentse Feesten I make the speech: all that music is fine, I say, but the street theatre is really cool. My friends always give me a look stuck somewhere between sympathy and condescension. It's not that I'm saying we shouldn't dance and jump up and down and drink beer in front of booming stages, it's just that the street theatre offers me more surprises.

That's the charm of a long tradition of performance that relies on a very unpredictable stage. "When you work outside, anything can happen," says Fabien Audooren, programme director of MiramirO, the Gentse Feesten street theatre festival. "Sometimes you have to improvise. If you're in the middle of a performance, and it starts to rain, for instance, everyone has to decide what to do."

That includes the audience, the make-up of which is a lot more important in street theatre than in a traditional theatre, "where everything is focused on the stage," says Audooren, "and you are in the dark side of the room."

In street theatre, there is no dark side, which is why it is historically more interactive. Street theatre artists are so adept at manipulating audience members, particularly children, that I've often been convinced the child was an audience plant – until I saw the same act the following day using, of course, a different kid. This is what lends to the unbridled joy of street theatre – whatever happens, whether it goes right or wrong, is fundamentally human.

Gentse Feesten is billed as the largest outdoor festival in Europe, and it is – but only with the street theatre. It is, in fact, the largest music and theatre festival in Europe – and possibly the world. MiramirO is staging its 15th edition this year but only adopted its name last year – a combination of the Spanish verb for "to look" and the name of Surrealist Catalan painter Joan Miró i Ferrà.

There are about 20 acts, and all have been either found at other international festivals or commissioned especially for Ghent. Programmed with an eye to diversity, you'll find a mixture of short plays, acrobatics and comedy that each last anywhere from 30 to 60 minutes.

Some acts are better than others, of course but, since most of it is free, it's hard to go terribly wrong. Still, this year I would pay special attention to The Flying Karamazov Brothers and RolaRola, a large-scale performance (in street theatre terms), which has half the audience watching the circus, while the other half sees what is going on backstage at the same time. Halfway through, the audiences switch places.

Most of the acts take place at designated squares in Ghent. But the festival programmes at least one site-specific performance every year, and this year Berninna is staged in an old abandoned mansion. The Ghent-based Studio Orka has put together a mystery (solved with the help of the audience, naturally) that involves the intriguing question of the meaning of expiration. Where do products – and people – go when they are past their use-by dates? MiramirO has its own excellent little programme with descriptions of the performances in English and maps of the sites, available at the Gentse Feesten info tent on Emile Braunplein (also the site of a lot of theatre and puppetry).

If you wander even a little around the Gentse Feesten, you'll see plenty of street buskers that are not necessarily part of the MiramirO programme. Usually you can tell the difference between the army of jugglers, living statues and balloon animal-makers who set up shop on this and that corner and the "official" acts on the programme. But they blend together effortlessly in the centre of Ghent, where, for 10 days, all the city's a stage. **Lisa Bradshaw**

→ www.miramiro.be



1 city • 5 festivals • 10 days

All Ghent's public squares feature stages, drinks tents and live music, and each has its own organiser, with a specific profile or theme. From cheesy cabaret to world music to pop and rock, there are enough music genres to have you dancing to a different beat every day (and night) of the festival. This year, Ghent is undergoing construction in some of its most crowded festival spots, so the stage in the central Korenmarkt has been eliminated, and there is a bit more crowd control in the area than usual. Our guide will help you manoeuvre through the many hot spots. It's almost impossible to see and do it all – but don't let that stop you from trying.

World • Bij Sint-Jacobs

At the big stage on Bij Sint-Jacobs, you'll find theatre most afternoons and world and folk music every night. This is the stage run by Trefpunt, an old beat generation café that revived the Gentse Feesten in the 1960s and built it into what it is today. On the first and last day of the festival, catch Ghent artist and father of the Gentse Feesten, Walter De Buck, still delivering his now-trendy folk music at the age of 75. (See our story on Walter De Buck, page 8)



Dance • Baudelopark

Baudelo Park is a festival unto itself: circus acts, a spiegeltent (mirrored pavilion) filled with professional dancers gliding across the floor, a mellow Moroccan tent with rich pillows, hookahs and fresh mint tea. But the main draw of this enclave from the masses is the free dance lessons offered every day from 14.00 to midnight. Shake your tail feathers on the enormous open-air dance floor as you learn a plethora of styles including hip-hop, African and salsa.



Radio • Vlasmarkt

This is one of the most happening spots during the feesten, at least for the younger set. Urgent FM broadcasts live every day from 16.00, and a different band – all hoping to be the next big thing – takes the stage at 23.00 every night.

Blues • Groentenmarkt

Every night from 21.00, there's rock, disco, blues and more. Catch the Green Onions on 22 July playing vintage pop. But get there early: this is one of the few areas that will be crowd controlled with limited entry due to construction work.

Comedy • Veerleplein

Over by Ghent's castle, you'll stumble upon a goldmine of drinking and singing. Okay, the average age is over 70, but that doesn't mean it's not fun! In fact, it's a fantastic change of pace. With comedy sketch shows every day at 13.30 and cover bands throughout the day, this is an ideal place for down-to-earth good times. It's also known as the only place to get beer in real glasses – plastic is just so unsophisticated.

Parties • Graslei/Korenlei

The walkways on either side of the River Leie are home to the Polé Polé festival, the be all, end all of the Gentse Feesten. Perfect for people watching on a grand

scale, this is where you drink fancy cocktails in lieu of beer and dance from 15.00 to the wee hours. It is extremely unfortunate that the gigantic stage that usually spans the canal (to magnificent visual effect) has had to be abandoned because of construction projects. But there is still a stage and still the DJs, who start and end the party every night, with live performances in-between. Speaking of which, if you want to catch Choc Quib Town on 18 July or Lady Linn on 22 July, arrive early; this place is packed and one of those few areas with crowd control. www.polepole.be

Beer • Emile Braunglein

This central spot sequestered between two churches is more known for beer than music, as this is the site of the infamous Duvel

Droomschip. Start your daily ritual here at 11.00 with a live music set, followed by the Young Jazz Talent Ghent 2009 at 14.00. At 20.00, a DJ kicks the night off with 70s music, and various live acts follow well past midnight.

Brass bands • Sint-Baafsplein

Watch the Tour de France on a giant screen during the day and follow it up with some classic fun featuring a capella groups, brass bands and oldies music. Plus, this is where you catch the unmistakable Eddy Wally Show (the Flemish version of Tom Jones) on 21 July. The crowd will astonish you.

Beach • Francois Laurentplein

New to the Gentse Feesten this year, this square will be transformed from 23 July into a peaceful oasis during the day, with sand, palm trees and DJs spinning chilled tracks from 15.00. Start by stretching with yoga every "morning" at 13.00 so that when you return 12 hours later, you are ready to join the beach party dancing to DJs all night long. www.gentbeach.be

Alt rock • Kouter

Boomtown is back! The alt rock stage, which disappeared last year to the dismay of many, has returned. Sort of. Formally housed in the thick of things near the all-

night club Charlatan, Boomtown is now on the site of Ghent's Sunday flower market, known more for oysters and chilled white wine than all-night dance fests and inebriated revellers. Still, you've got the music: local faves Barbie Bangkok play on 25 July, and Daan the following night. It's free, but Boomtown has also partnered with Handelsbeurs concert hall to host ticketed shows, including everyone's favourite Ghent-based Puerto Rican Gabriel Rios.

Mime • Court House, Nederkouter & Schouwburgstraat

With antiques overflowing onto the footpaths, you'll feel as though you have stumbled onto a tiny patch of Paris. Mime, artists, and old men playing Pétanque add to the experience of nibbling croissants and sipping champagne under a bright yellow and blue Ricard tent.

Jazz • Festivalcafé, Jozef Kluykensstraat

A new addition this year is Festivalfestival, a free extension of the Ghent Jazz Festival. From Thursday to Sunday, 9-19 July, live jazz will flow for two hours from noon to 14.00. ♦

→ www.gentsefeesten.be

Belgium National Day

Belgium's national holiday is 21 July, and Ghent's Watersportbaan (located just outside the city ring a tram-ride away from the festival) hosts its annual over-the-top fireworks display. It's massive, artistically done, and thousands of onlookers show up.



Ensor's "Astonishment of the Mask", loaned to the New York show by Antwerp's Museum of Fine Arts

The Ostend curiosity shop

New York's MoMA stages major Ensor show

SARAH MCFADDEN

"Urban avant-gardist or small-town loony?"

So begins a *New York Times* review of the Ensor exhibition in New York. The question is only partly rhetorical.

Even for pros, the art of the reclusive but well-connected Ostender eludes categorisation and ready understanding. The writer, Pulitzer Prize-winning critic Holland Cotter, continues: "Belgian painter James Ensor, who has a survey of hilarious, gruesome beauty at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), is a puzzle to fans and strangers alike, a classic insider-outsider."

Americans who think they know Ensor (1860-1949) tend to regard him as an idiosyncratic loner and scurilous painter of masks, who railed against the world from the confines of his attic studio stocked with bizarre props from his mother's curiosity shop. This reductive but widely held impression is precisely what persuaded MoMA curator Anna Swinbourne that the time was ripe for a major Ensor show in the US, where the last one was seen over 30 years ago.

Two additional factors proved convincing: next year's 150th anniversary of the artist's birth and

the groundswell of interest among contemporary artists in the Belgian master's work.

The exhibition, which runs until 21 September, comprises 127 paintings, drawings and prints, most of which were created between 1880 and 1900, the period generally considered to be Ensor's richest and most innovative. All of the mediums, genres and motifs which the artist worked in and developed during those early, restlessly experimental years are amply presented.

Views of Ostend feature in landscapes, seascapes, townscapes and interiors, while aspects of Brussels (its streets and prominent citizens) can be recognised in social and religious allegories and political satires. Death runs like a current through self-portraits and images of skulls, skeletons, masks and grotesque, tragic-farcical scenes.

Not surprisingly, Belgian collections – principally the country's major museums – are well represented in a

show whose major sponsors include New York's Flanders House, the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Society of Friends of Belgium in America. Among the 55 Belgian loans are two important works that have never before been seen in the US.

The outsize drawings – one is over two metres high – are Biblical allegories from Ghent's Museum of Fine Arts, whose director, Robert Hoozee, is the author of one of the essays in the MoMA catalogue. (Michel Draguet, head of Brussels' Museum of Fine Arts, has contributed another.)

These visionary works, whose symbolic subject is celestial light, were included in the Ensor show staged by Brussels' Royal Museum of Fine Arts in 1999. Although roughly twice the size of MoMA's current exhibition, the Brussels presentation focused on the same two decades of the artist's nearly 70-year career.

Ensor continued creating until a few years before his death, by which time his faith in his own genius had been vindicated and his vituperative spirit appeased. Scorned early on by academics and modernists alike, his art was, in the end, collected and celebrated in his own country. So sensitive that he had frequently portrayed himself as the persecuted Christ, Ensor was made a baron and

honoured with an enormous retrospective at Brussels' Centre for Fine Arts Museum in 1929.

But by then, the quality of his production had been slackening for almost 30 years. Compared to the experimental, wildly heterogeneous and caustically defiant work which preceded it, much of Ensor's 20th-century output seems tame – sweet and effervescent, rather than dark and biting.

By focusing on the early work, MoMA presents the radical non-conformist who, milking a persecution complex and in retreat from the art world, created pictures which were unlike anything to be seen until the 20th century. Harbingers of the Futurism, Expressionism, Surrealism and Abstract Expressionism, Ensor's trend-flouting images still appear wonderfully strange, inventive and disturbing. ♦

After its run at MoMA, the exhibition James Ensor travels to the Musée d'Orsay in Paris, where it will be on view from October to February, 2010

→ www.moma.com

CULTURE NEWS

Following on the success of Turkish and Indian "Bollywood" films in Kinepolis, the cinema group now plans to release more **Asian movies**. Hong Kong action films and Japanese thrillers are of particular interest to the Belgian chain, which launches its new effort with the Chinese martial arts film *Cobweb*. The film opens on 8 July in Antwerp and Brussels.

Psychedelic American rock band **The Flaming Lips** had to cancel its appearance at Rock Werchter last week but will perform at the Ancienne Belgique in Brussels on 9 November. The Grammy Award-winning group is due to release a new double album, *Embryonic*, later in the year.

The government does not need to introduce a **ban on listening to MP3 players** in traffic, according to the Institute for Road Safety (BIVV). The institute recommends a campaign aimed at raising the public's awareness of the dangers of listening to loud music while walking or cycling.

Antwerp barista Peter Hernou has won this year's **World Latte Art Championship** in Cologne. "Latte Art" refers to decorating the milky foam on the top of the much-loved coffee drink. Another Antwerpener, Bart Van Sanden, came in second in "cup-tasting" – picking the one cup out of three that differs from the other two. Belgium came third overall in the country rankings, after the UK and South Korea.

Frank De Winne, currently manning the International Space Station, received an unexpected phone call last week: from Bono onstage in Barcelona in the opening concert of the group's new world tour. "Can you see Barcelona?" asked the rock icon. "We have a beautiful view of the blue earth right now," answered the Flemish astronaut. U2 will hit Belgium on its latest tour sometime in 2010.

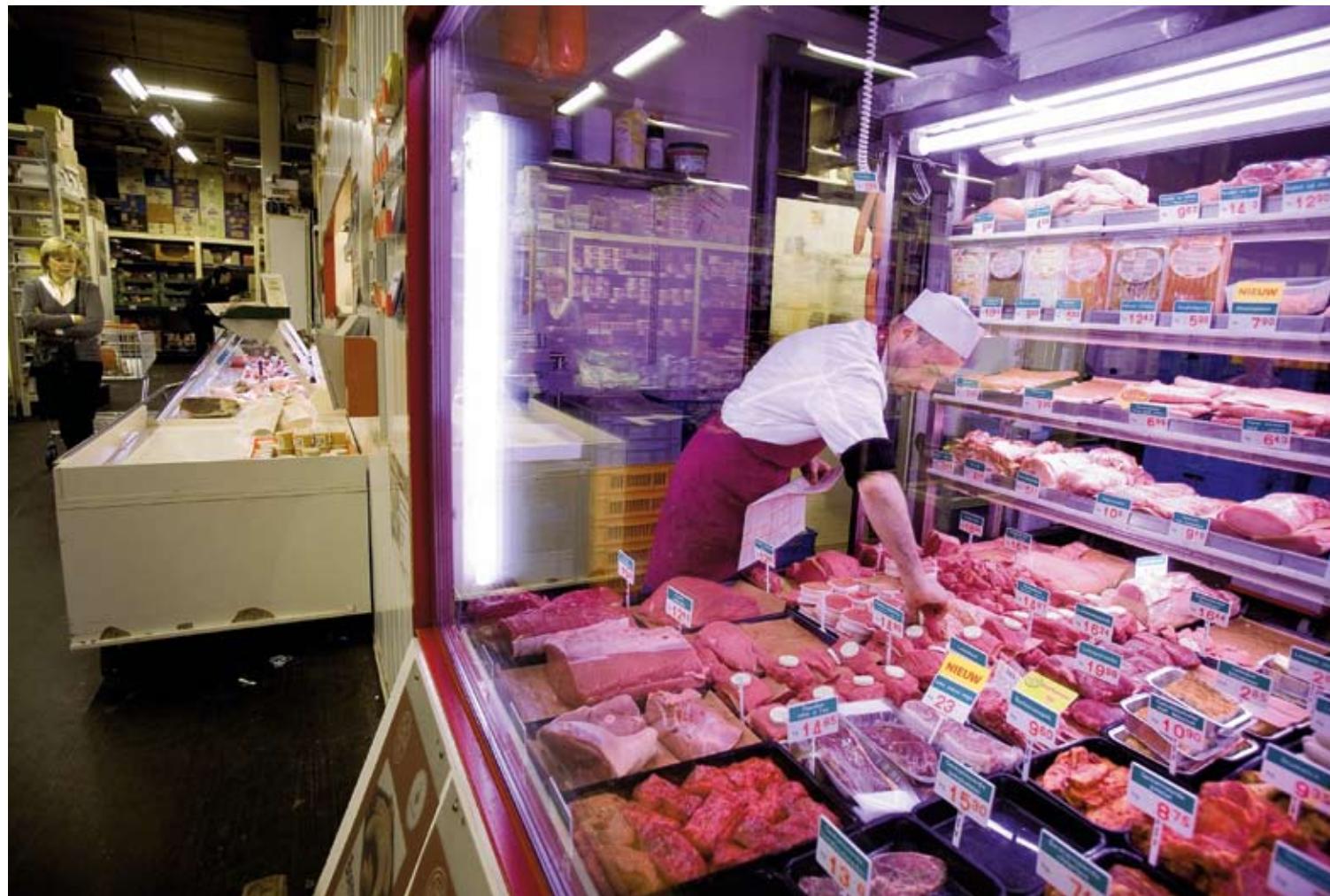


Bono phones home

The Flemish media regulator has given the go-ahead for a joint venture between the Norwegian company Norkring and the public-service broadcaster VRT to offer **digital TV and radio** in competition with Belgacom and Telenet. Norkring's programme will go out over the airwaves, while Belgacom goes by cable and Telenet by ADSL line. This will also allow transmissions to mobile devices.

Colruyt moves into first place

Carrefour boss unseated as competition edges ahead



Colruyt's meat department is consistently popular with shoppers

Colruyt, the Halle-based no-frills supermarket chain, has moved into first place in the country's retail rankings, overtaking Carrefour for the first time, according to a study by retail consultancy Marketing Map.

Colruyt's advance has been constant over recent years, but the economic crisis which began in the second half of 2008 has helped the group's fortunes rather than hindering them. Colruyt is uniquely positioned in the supermarket sector, between the

deep discounters like Aldi and Lidl, and the traditional brand-name retailers like Delhaize and Carrefour. Customers appreciate the availability of brand names, according to commercial director Jean-Pierre Roelands, but they are also looking for the best possible prices. "Since the competition is increasingly playing the house-brand card," he said, "the customers are coming more and more to Colruyt."

According to Marketing Map, Colruyt

can now claim 24.7% of the market, against Carrefour's 24.5%, compared with 23.5% versus 25.8% a year ago. Delhaize remained relatively stable at 21.5%, compared to 21.7% a year ago.

The biggest difference between the two contenders for top position is that Colruyt's progress has been constant, whereas Carrefour has been moving in the opposite direction, with no growth at all over the last five quarters. Last week the

group's Paris headquarters wielded the axe, and Marc Oursin, general director for Belgium, was replaced by Gérard Lavinay, with instructions from CEO Lars Olofsson to draw up a new business plan by the end of the year.

The company aims to achieve savings amounting to €4.5 billion in Belgium, France, Italy and Spain. Lavinay is the fourth director of Carrefour Belgium since the French group took over the GB group in 2000. ♦

THE WEEK IN BUSINESS

Cleaning • FBT

The Belgian Federation for Textile Care (FBT) last week took part in a promotion offering free dry-cleaning of sleeping bags for visitors to the Rock Werchter music festival. People leaving the festival grounds with a sleeping bag were handed a coupon that could be used in any dry cleaning shop belonging to the FBT.

Energy • Eandis

Eandis, the Melle-based energy provider and metering specialist, has started installing budget meters for natural gas in the homes of customers who experience difficulties paying their bills. The meters work with a rechargeable payment card. The gas is pre-paid, which helps avoid unpleasant surprises when the bills come in. The company estimates that about 20,000 of its 36,500 customers could benefit from the new meters.

Marine construction • DEME

The dredging group DEME has been awarded three contracts to construct the foundations of wind turbine installations in the Irish Sea and off the German island of Borkum. DEME, owned by the construction group CFE and investment company Ackermans & van Haaren, was involved in constructing the foundations of the Thorntonbank turbine park off the Belgian coast, which came onstream two weeks ago.

Graphics • Punch International

Guido Dumarey has resigned as CEO of Punch International following an incident in which he punched a union representative. In a press statement, Dumarey admitted he had made business errors, but said the incident had made him realize he would be of more use to the company working in the background. He will continue to chair the board of directors, and his place as CEO will be taken by current CFO Wim Deblauwe.

Internet payments • Ogone

Belgians last year bought 32 million tickets online for entertainment and sporting events, according to Ogone, the company that handles the majority of online payments. The figure represents a 25% increase on last year. Ticketing now accounts for more than 10% of Ogone's e-commerce business.

Temp agency • Adecco

Temp agency Adecco will not have to face charges of racial discrimination, a court decided, because the case against the company was delivered in French. The company's headquarters are in Groot-Bijgaarden.

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Verhaert boldly goes

Space technology company Verhaert Space last week gave a last glimpse of its Proba-2 satellite before it is packed up and sent to Russia for launch in November. Proba-2 was commissioned from the Kruibeke-based company by the European Space Agency (ESA). It will be launched to an orbit of 728km, where it will study the sun using two specialised instruments.

One of these, LYRA, is a UV-meter that can draw a timeline of the radiation "behaviour" of the sun. The other, the SWAP telescope, constructs a film using images of the sun's activity. The satellite, which uses one-twentieth of the power of an average

refrigerator, cost €18 million for development and construction. The Proba-2 launch comes eight years after launch of Proba-1, Belgium's first satellite, which

is still in orbit. The satellite will be transported together with the ESA's SMOS satellite. Data from Proba-2 will be processed in Redu in the Ardennes. ♦

KBC chief asks to be relieved

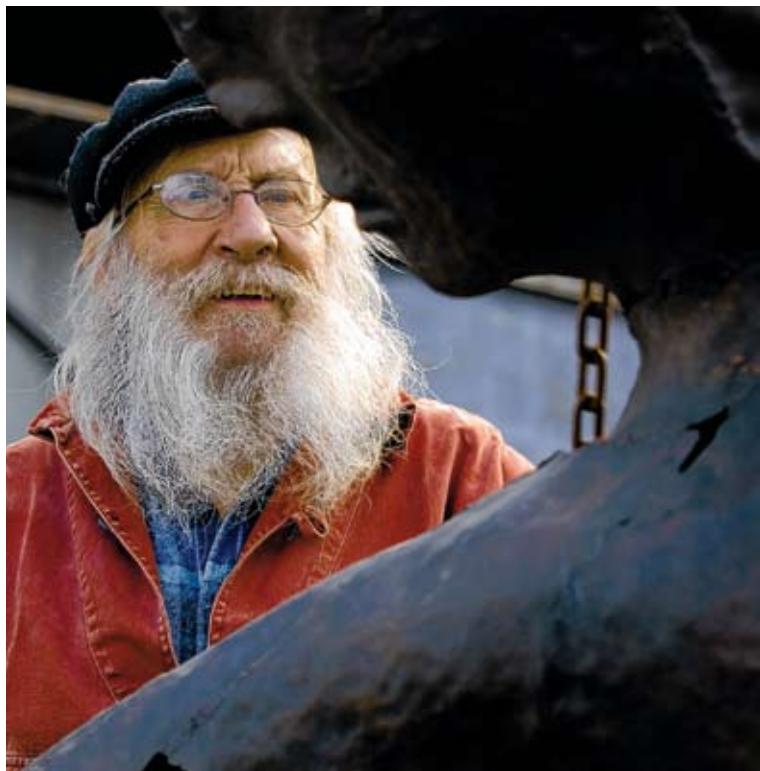
André Bergen, the CEO of Leuven-based bank KBC, will not be returning from sick leave. Bergen, who underwent heart surgery in May, was reported last week to have requested that his mandate be brought to an end. His place will be taken by Jan Vanhevel, who has been filling in for Bergen during his absence. ♦

Vanhevel's main task will be to prepare a restructuring plan within three months, on the orders of the European Commission, which gave conditional approval to the aid KBC has received from the government, pending a larger study of the restructuring plan. ♦

The grandfather of Ghent

How one man turned an ailing festival into the largest of its kind in Europe

LISA BRADSHAW



Although Walter De Buck is known across Flanders for being both a musician and a sculptor, to the people of Ghent, he is much more. Because it was De Buck who, in 1969, put together a music festival outside the Trefpunt cafe in Ghent. Forty years later, we still call it the Gentse Feesten, and it is now Europe's largest music and street theatre festival. Last year 1.5 million people came through. And De Buck is going down in history as a folk hero.

De Buck will turn 75 just a few days before he opens this year's Gentse Feesten on the Trefpunt stage in Ghent's Bij Sint-Jacobs square. His folk music from over the years is trendy once again and, though there will be plenty of admirers present, they'll really show up in

full force on the last day of the Gentse Feesten, when De Buck, together with other fellow musicians, closes the festivities with "Boombal Bombardment".

The raucous folk dance bash is a fitting end to 10 days of music, theatre, parties and endless events that the people of Ghent now take for granted.

But in the late 1960s, the Gentse Feesten, a tradition since 1834, had become nothing more than a big carnival. De Buck was known locally at the time for his opposition to city developments that would destroy historical districts and for his protest songs. He was busy with Trefpunt, a gallery, cafe and artist hang-out he had founded himself. Trefpunt's twice-weekly jam sessions were attracting so many people, they moved it

into the street in front of the cafe.

This being 1968, students and other young people were flocking to this group of hippies and beatniks playing protest songs, and Trefpunt became the gathering place for a new socially conscious generation. Interestingly, De Buck was also appealing to an older generation of Gentenaar because he played old folk songs from their own youth.

By 1969, the time was ripe for a music festival. "It was a success right away, but, of course, I never expected anything like this," De Buck tells me from the terrace of Sint-Pieter's Abbey in Ghent, which is hosting a new exhibition of work – mostly sculpture – by the artist. "It was a very active time, with the protests in Paris and change across Europe. Society was moving. We had these kinds of revolutionaries around us, but we also had the older generation because I was performing the songs of their time, too. It was a very successful formula, bringing the two together."

It still is. One of the charms of Gentse Feesten is that it hosts every imaginable genre of music, from rock and folk to cheesy cover bands and an entire stage dedicated to old people singing songs in the Ghent dialect. The 20-somethings have embraced the old traditions as a sort of kitsch form of entertainment. It seems almost miraculous that in the 21st century, De Buck's idealist notion of bridging the generations with a music festival is not just working – it's exploding exponentially.

"I don't like spaghetti"

Educated in the 1950s at Ghent's Fine Arts Academy, De Buck was



offered one year abroad to study. "Most of the students were going to Italy; that's kind of a tradition. But I have always been a bit contradictory," he smiles. "I said, 'I'm not going to Italy. I don't like spaghetti. I'm going to India.'"

He stayed with a guru his first six months, learning philosophy, then travelled around the huge country, studying the art forms. The journey has affected "the attitude" of his work, he says. "It's not a question of giving shape with an eastern influence, it's more the mentality that has influenced me." Returning to Ghent, he sculpted a great deal and assisted other sculptors on larger projects, such as the relief that hangs above the city administration building in Ghent's Zuid district.

But it took him 20 years to influence the city with sculpture the way he had done with music. De Buck staged that first music festival as an homage to a 19th-century folk singer named Karel Waeri, who left behind songs that are still used to help piece together Ghent's social history. "He was a songwriter who was very socially and politically engaged," explains De Buck. "He was a socialist *avant la lettre* – before the socialist party existed. His songs are very strong, but he was almost forgotten. I wanted to bring them to the public's attention."

The fateful 1969 Gentse Feesten did that, but De Buck eventually made sure that Waeri's presence was felt 365 days a year in Ghent

– he made a totem-like sculpture that illustrates several of Waeri's songs, which he gifted to the city of Ghent in 1989 and which now stands in Bij Sint-Jacobs.

That opened the door to a series of public works that now define Ghent's outdoor artistic landscape.

It was the OCMW, Flanders' social welfare service, that asked De Buck to design the "Brug der Keizerlijke Geneugten", or the "Bridge of Imperial Pleasures". They had established social housing for the elderly next to a canal in the Ghent district where Charles V was born and wanted to build a bridge – literally and figuratively – from the "royal side" to the "people's side". De Buck, together with members of an organisation he had founded that taught the unemployed new crafts, created four huge sculptures for each corner of the bridge – each depicting the antics of a young Charles, who was well known for sneaking away and infiltrating the surrounding populations.

"As an emperor, Charles was not liked, but as a boy he was very liked," says De Buck. The statues suggest that, left to his own devices, Charles might have run off to drink in the local taverns and marry the daughter of a butcher.

As much as the bridge sculptures are off Ghent's beaten path, "The Morisco Dancers" stand in the middle of it. In the very heart of the centre, between Sint-Baaf's cathedral and Sint-Nico-



The Morisco Dancers (above) by Walter De Buck are Ghent's most-photographed sculptures; the Karel Waeri statue in Bij Sint-Jacobs (above, right)

las church, residents and tourists alike gaze up in delight at the dancing sculptures, who look like they have been perched atop the pillars on this stepped gable roof since the middle ages.

But it was De Buck who made and put them there in the late 1980s. The dancers are a traditional decoration for the old buildings that used to house the society of mason workers. Found in Spain, France and Germany, the dancers represent "Moriscos", or Muslims who were forced to convert to Catholicism in 16th-century Spain. The city commissioned them, but De Buck "didn't like this theme of conquering," he says. So he made them his way: the top two figures represent the Indian god of Shiva and the Greek god Dionysus; the next two the devil and his wife and the lowest two a dancer and a musician. "Now it's a symbol of creativity," he says. "The victory of creativity instead of a victory of the Christians."

A piece that attracts nearly as much attention is "The Gentse Barge", a reconstruction of the original 17th-century barge that shuttled the royal and rich from Ghent to Bruges. Using illustrations of the original, De Buck recreated it with the help of his son – a decorative metal worker – and, again, unemployed workers.

Strolling through Ghent, it's nearly impossible to not see the influence of Walter De Buck. But it's Gentse Feesten time when he is justly celebrated. The feesten "is not all my fault!" he laughs. "There were a lot of circumstances that led to this phenomenon. I'm just a part of it. I'm like one brick in the whole building."

Seeing the man

18 July, 20.15 Walter De Buck opens the Trefpunt stage in Bij Sint-Jacobs for the Gentse Feesten

21 July, 16.00 "Meet the monument of the Gentse Feesten in the oldest monument of Ghent" says the programme. De Buck plays his original blend of folk and protest songs surrounded by his work at Sint-Pieter's Abbey in Ghent's Sint-Pietersplein. Repeats at the same time on **24 July**.

27 July, 23.00 De Buck closes the Trefpunt stage, together with other musicians, with Boombal Bombardment, the outrageously popular folk dance craze that has been taking over Belgium for the last couple of years. Expect a couple of thousand people, from teenagers to grandparents, to crush into the area to send off Gentse Feesten until next year.

Until 9 September I thought I was seeing double: sitting below a photo of himself at his exhibition at Sint-Pieter's Abbey in Ghent is the real-life Walter De Buck, watching you look at his life's work. He's there occasionally, happy to chat – or perhaps sell you something if you're so inclined. ♦



© Jordi Boveri

On the Scheldt: whether you watch the movie or the evening lights of Antwerp is up to you

SAFFINA RANA

Cinema al fresco

Summer in Flanders means cinema on the sea (and much stranger places)

Two male streakers running past the huge open air screen down by Flageyplein while the Belgian comedy *Iceberg* was on last week only managed to divert the attention of the audience – which responded with applause and whistles – for a couple of minutes. But it did add to the sense of occasion. And that's what open air cinema is all about.

Nestling in a deck-chair, sipping on a cocktail or from a flask of home brew and finding yourself laughing out loud with a couple of hundred other people is just the tonic for a balmy summer evening.

Especially if it's in an original location in the dead of night. In amongst the tall wind turbines in Kortrijk from 20.00 on 11 July to 8.00 the next morning, there's a special gathering of concerts, performances, karaoke, DJs and two all-night bars set up in shipping containers – as well as some open air cinema.

The Kortrijk Congé festival will be showing *Planet Terror*, a modern-day zombie film with a plethora of special effects on an enormous outdoor screen at 2.45 in the morning. If you survive both the zombies and the hour, you can welcome the sunrise with a dawn chorus from Icelandic composer Johann Jóhannsson and 30 of the strings from the Kortrijk Symphony Orchestra.

But all of that actually follows a day of

cinema in Kortrijk: catch Marilyn Monroe, Tony Curtis and Jack Lemmon in the gender-bending 1959 comedy *Some Like It Hot* or the quirky 2007 teen pregnancy flick *Juno* after a day of picnicking, BBQs, DJs and general merry-making earlier in the day on 11 July at the city's Summerscreen festival.

When the going gets really hot, Belgians head for the coast. The special screen on the beach at Zeebrugge every Thursday in July allows films to be shown in daylight, so it's perfect for keeping the kids occupied while you snooze in the sun (with your factor 30 on of course). Kids flicks are scheduled at 14.30 and 16.30, while the 20.00 screening is slightly more adult, with *Vicky Cristina Barcelona* on 16 July and *Slumdog Millionaire* on 23 July. If you have to, you can even watch *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull* on 30 July.

But you needn't be entirely exposed to the elements. In Flanders, Mechelen's Sportpark de Nekker will host Drive-In Movies on Friday and Saturday nights, beginning on 24 July with the New York subway highjacking thriller *The Taking of Pelham 123* before its general release and closing with *Ice Age 3* on 15 August. Summer concerts before the screenings will get you in the mood no matter how hard your working week has been, and you can always find some extra solace at the cocktail stand if

you've forgotten your own strawberry Martinis at home.

Inland, meanwhile, Antwerp returns the popular sunset screenings on the banks of the River Scheldt from Wednesdays to Sundays in August, as part of its Summer of Antwerp festival. The programme opens with *Juno* on 5 August and includes Belgian favourites *Dagen zonder lief* (*With Friends Like These*) and *Le Silence de Lorna* as well as the excellent animation about the Iranian revolution, *Persepolis*.

Meanwhile, in its 16th year, the Klinkers Festival in Bruges offers up an eclectic range of world music bands playing in some of the most ancient parts of the city, as well as two open-air screenings in the beautiful surrounds of the Astridpark. A tale of a boyhood rivalry that lasts a lifetime, the 1991 Belgian film *Totos les héros* will show on 27 July, while the stun-

ning 2007 historical epic *Mongol* about the life of Genghis Khan will screen the following day.

Sadly, there will be no screenings at the old Tongeren prison in Limburg province this year. The disused prison locked its doors for the last time in November 2008. But my favourite in the capital, the PleinOPENAir film and music festival hosted by the volunteers of the Nova independent cinema, is still going strong.

Although the programme hasn't quite been finalised, screenings will take place at a different sites in Brussels each weekend from 24 July until 9 August. Just check the Nova Cinema website closer to the date for details. Last year, watching cult films, sipping fresh fruit smoothies and discovering the delights of electro-burlesque music in the cornfields of Neerpede in Anderlecht as stars came out was simply magical. ♦

Find an outdoor screen near you

Kortrijk Congé: www.kortrijkconge.be

Drive-In Movies Mechelen: www.utopolis.be

Film op het strand, Zeebrugge: www.bruggeplus.be

Zomer van Antwerpen: www.zomervanantwerpen.be

Summerscreen, Kortrijk: www.summerscreen.be

Klinkers, Bruges: www.klinkers-brugge.be

PleinOPENAir: www.nova-cinema.org

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Blues family reunion

A big anniversary for the little town of Peer

MARC MAES

For the past quarter century, music fans have been flocking to the little village of Peer for a long weekend that has now become mainland Europe's most respected blues festival. An additional fourth day with John Fogerty headlining is the cherry on the Belgium Rhythm & Blues Festival's 25th birthday cake.

Although it's celebrating 25 years, the famous festival's humble beginnings were actually 37 years ago when the local youth council organised a free stage in the early 1970s. Soon an independent youth club called De Boskar began offering guitar workshops and organising community events. Peer began to think a little bigger.

In 1977, the free podium was incorporated into the Peerse Fieste, the local festival held every year, and big Flemish names like Raymond van het Groenewoud, Johan Verminnen and Philip Cathérine topped the bill.

In 1985, they decided to concentrate on the blues. "Since then, the event's reputation has spread abroad, reaching artists in the United States and Britain, and drawing a broader international audience with each year that goes by," says Jan Meurs, chairman of Break-Away, the non-profit that stages the festival.

Meurs explains that tour managers and performers alike enjoy

the friendly and relaxed atmosphere of the big festival in the little town in Flemish Brabant. "But it's also important that we've opted to concentrate on blues, blues-rock and roots music," he says. "We have become specialists, and artists know to find us."

The festival is so good at sniffing out new talent that it actually prices them out of its own market. Over the years, it has hosted many artists who kicked off their European careers in Peer and have become unaffordable now: John Lee Hooker and Ben Harper both played in Peer before their names (and fees) went through the roof.

From the very beginning, the festival was based in a huge tent with the capacity to hold 15,000. This limits the audience and the festival from becoming a massive event like Werchter and protects fans from Belgium's dodgy weather. "I'm glad we stuck to the idea," states Meurs. "The audience appreciates it."

Usually attracting less than the daily capacity, the festival wants to continue offering a mid-sized event with reasonable ticket prices and cheapish drinks. "We don't benefit from government subsidies or major sponsorship," he continues. "The whole idea of being self-supporting existed in the very beginning when the youth centre started, and we've remained loyal to that principle."

There are also a lot of kids' activities running alongside the main programme. "We attract quite a number of 20- and 30-somethings who bring their kids, so we provided an alternative programme for them, ranging from drawing festival posters to performing an improvised ballet with Canned Heat on stage," Meurs explains. "Today we have the kids of 25 years ago returning with their own kids! This has become a crucial element in the festival programme, especially because the artists love it."

For the 25th edition, which begins on 17 July, Peer took a look back at the event's history and programmed some of the early artists that played there, including John Mayall, a festival veteran and godfather of the British blues.

American blues harmonica player Rod Piazza, who played the festival 20 years ago, will also be back, along with former frontman of The Byrds, Roger McGuinn. Southside Johnny, called "the Grandfather of the New Jersey sound" also makes a return trip to Peer, as does Steve Winwood.

And, of course, John Fogerty, the Creedence Clearwater Revival-ist, who has helped shaped the face of modern guitar playing, wraps up this 25th blues family reunion with a bow. ♦

► www.brbf.be



Looking back at 25 years of Peer: Roger McGuinn (top) returns to Belgium's number one blues festival; the UK's Hokie Joint (above, left) takes the stage on Saturday and Jeff Beck (above, right) on Sunday

Touchline

MARTIN BANKS



Roller sports champion Wouter Hebbrecht

World Games

games, held in the German city of Duisberg in 2005, the country's athletes brought home 11 medals, including two golds. Philippe Preat, who heads the Belgian team, hopes to win at least 10 medals this year. "Anything else will be disappointing," he states firmly.

Kaohsiung, in south Taiwan, will welcome some 4,500 athletes from more than 100 countries for the 11-day event. Some 300,000 tickets have been sold to this first international multi-sport event to ever be held in Taiwan.

There are 35 Flemish on the Belgian team, and athletes will be competing under the Belgian flag. "They won't be there as Flemings or Walloons but as Belgians – and proud of it," says Preat. "This is an important sporting event, and they will do their very best for

the whole country."

Preat is the deputy sports director of the Belgian Olympic Committee and was team leader at four Olympics. "The selection criteria for the World Games were based on one main principle: each athlete should be a potential medal winner."

The 31-sport World Games differ from the Olympics in one obvious way: the participants in Taiwan will be mostly amateurs, including one of Belgium's best medal hopes, water skier Kate Adriaensen.

Some of the sports, such as billiards and boules, are, of course, not found on the Olympic agenda. But, says Roland Forthomme, Belgium's representative in billiards, this does not detract in any way from their sense of professionalism. "Just like our Olympic counterparts, we, too, have had to

work really hard to get onto the team."

William Van Der Biest, of the two-man Belgian boules team, meanwhile, is on a mission: "I'm really looking forward to Taiwan and showing the rest of the world how boules should be played!"

There are, in fact, a sprinkling of professionals on the team, including Wouter Hebbrecht, an ex-world champion in roller sports, and Diego Vandeschrick from Liège, a former European champion and world bronze medallist in karate. In addition, the five-strong air sports team, who finished third in the last world championships and are current European champions, are all drawn from the ranks of the Belgian army.

► www.worldgames2009.tw

The World Games take place in the Taiwanese coastal city of Kaohsiung this month, but if you've not heard about them, you are probably in good company. The event, held every four years, does not exactly compare with the World Cup or Olympic Games. That will not deter Belgium

from sending a 72-strong delegation to the event, including 46 athletes in 11 disciplines, including, yes, beach handball and tug-of-war. In fact, Belgium has been represented at the games every year since they were launched in 1981.

In that year, Belgium's medal haul was nine, including three gold and six bronze. In the last



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- => Basic computer knowledge.
- => Detail oriented.
- => Working knowledge of English and French.
- => Good interpersonal skills.
- => Ability to work in a team.
- => Experience in data entry and/or in the clinical research field is recommended.

Please send your CV to IDDI by e-mail: hr@iddi.com as soon as possible.

The leading English-speaking website in Belgium for jobs

xpats.com

Belgium's online community

Jobs online are updated daily during the summer break

Reach Belgium's international community and advertise your open position in Flanders Today and xpats.com by calling Tel 02/373.83.24 jobs@ackroyd.be



Institut Jules Bordet
Jules Bordet Instituut

The Department of Medicine, Medical Oncology Unit of the Jules Bordet Institute is currently looking for a DOCTOR OF MEDICINE, SPECIALIZED IN MEDICAL ONCOLOGY, FOR THE POSITION OF ASSISTANT HEAD OF CLINIC (fluency in French is a must; an interest in onco-geriatrics will be an asset).

The Medical Oncology Unit handles all patients with solid tumours. The medical care is divided between hospital care and out-patient consultations, with extensive involvement in clinical and translational research.

This Department also works in close collaboration with academic research groups, both on the national and international levels.

The Medical Oncology Clinic team currently consists of 10 medical oncologists.

Please send your application to the Human Resources Department, Rue Héger-Bordet 1, 1000 Brussels, Belgium or via e-mail: rh@bordet.be or ma.echterbille@bordet.be



We are currently seeking a (m/f)

Scientific and Regulatory Manager

Responsibilities:

- Support the Scientific Director in the work of maintaining and promoting IFRA's regulatory system worldwide
- Serve as key technical contact for coordination and preparation of IFRA Standards
- Act as a technical expert to advise and support member companies, customers and other stakeholders on fragrance related issues
- Work closely with the Research Institute of Fragrance Materials (RIFM; www.rifm.org) to document safety conclusions and develop IFRA Standards
- Monitor the consultation phase of Standards and manage their distribution to members and stakeholders in a timely manner
- Review and analyze databases and conduct external literature research for information on fragrance materials
- Provide impact assessment on technical issues
- Maintain knowledge on regulatory developments regarding fragrance ingredients / compounds worldwide
- Lead surveys on use level of fragrance materials
- Write (and potentially present) scientific data and non-technical summaries to a variety of audiences and in a number of different formats (e.g. newsletter contributions, and Information Letters)
- Support and maintain the technical sections of the IFRA website
- Provide support to primary industry committee meetings through project management, development of agenda and technical summaries, preparation of meeting minutes and follow-up actions on scientific and regulatory issues
- Manage the day to day activities of the IFRA Secretariat with regard to scientific and regulatory issues.

Job requirements:

- Higher education qualification in chemistry, toxicology or related field
- Strong verbal and written communication skills in English. One additional language would be a plus
- Experience in the fragrance or a related industry would be preferable
- Computer literate - using standard office software including MS Excel and Outlook and experience with database management tools.

Interested?

For additional information contact M. Vey
mvvey@ifra.org or phone +32 (0)22142062



♦ Agenda ♦

Helmut Stallaerts

The wonderfully droll work (paintings, video, installations) of this Brussels artist gets a fine exhibition at Baronian Francey gallery until 15 July

→ www.baronianfrancey.com



FLANDERS TODAY

JULY 8, 2009



Écran Total

SAFFINA RANA

The biggest film festival of the summer, Arenberg Cinema's Écran Total is celebrating its 20th anniversary with a bumper edition of 70 exceptional films, encompassing comedy, drama, classics, documentary and premieres ahead of their release dates.

To mark each of its years, the Écran team has put together a programme of 20 landmark films the festival has shown over the two decades, by directors they feel have changed the face of cinema. Appearing in the hall of fame is *Ladybird, Ladybird* by British director Ken Loach, which follows a woman's fight with bureaucracy to keep her family together, and the hilarious black comedy *Divine Intervention* by the Palestinian Elia Suleiman.

Showing alongside are 19 of the 23 international films chosen for this year's prestigious Director's Fortnight selection at Cannes. They feature *J'ai tué ma mère* (*I Killed My Mother*), which won three awards at the Fortnight this year. About a gay teenager constantly engaged in verbal sparring with his mother, it's the semi-autobi-

graphical first film from French-Canadian director Xavier Dolan (who wrote it when he was 17).

The selection also includes *De Helaasheid der dingen* (*The Misfortunates*), the quirky coming-of-age comedy by Flemish director Felix van Groeningen, which came away from Cannes with an honourable mention. Based on the novel by Dimitri Verhulst, the film doesn't open in Belgium until October.

New films on offer include *Soi Cowboy* by Thomas Clay, which premiered as part of Un Certain Regard at Cannes this year. Inspired by the modernist Italian director Michelangelo Antonioni, it tells the tale of an awkward love affair between a portly Danish man and a pregnant young Thai woman saved from Bangkok's red light district.

The festival's guest programmer this year is Arnaud Desplechin, the French director of gems such as last year's *Un Conte de Noël* (*A Christmas Tale*) and 2000's *Esther Kahn* (on Écran's programme of landmark films). He's been given the reins to select eight films

he's passionate about. Feast on the documentary *Le Tombeau d'Alexandre* (*The Last Bolshevik*) by Chris Marker or *Providence* by fellow Frenchman Alain Resnais. If you want to catch something in English, Clint Eastwood's *Million Dollar Baby* and M Night Shyamalan's fantastical *Unbreakable* are also on the list.

There are also classics like *Lola* by Jaques Demy (photo) and *Ghare Baire* (*The Home and the World*) by Satyajit Ray and auditorium packers like Alfred Hitchcock's *Notorious* to revisit when the weather is awry. ♦

Until 8 September

Cinema Arenberg
Koninginnegalerij 26,
Brussels

→ www.arenberg.be



MORE FILM THIS WEEK

Filmvondsten → *Cinémaek, Brussels*

Bruxelles fait son cinéma → *across Brussels*

Student Movie Day → *Kinepolis cinemas*



Antwerp

Queen Elisabeth Hall
Koningin Astridplein 26; 0900.26.060,
www.fccc.be

JULY 9 20.00 Burt Bacharach

Sportpaleis

Schijnpoortweg 119; 0900.26.060,
www.sportpaleis.be

JULY 9 20.30 Britney Spears

Brussels

La Porte Noire
Cellebroersstraat,
www.grievousangels.eu

JULY 9 22.00 The Grievous Angels
unplugged

Le Bar du Matin

Alsembergsesteenweg 172;
02.537.71.59, <http://bardumatin.blogspot.com>

JULY 9 21.00 Blackie & The Oohos
JULY 16 21.00 Coco Royal

VK Club

Schoolstraat 76; 02.414.29.07,
www.vkconcerts.be

JULY 9 20.15 Ward 21 + Beenie Man

Vorst-Nationaal

Victor Rousseauaan 208; 0900.00.991,
www.vorstnationaal.be

JULY 10 20.00 Ne-yo

JULY 14 20.30 Seal

Deurne

Openluchttheater Rivierenhof
Turnhoutsebaan 232; 070.222.192,
www.openluchttheater.be

JULY 11 20.30 Lucinda Williams

JULY 14 20.30 Suzanne Vega + Tom Pintens

JULY 16 20.30 John Butler + The Bony King Of Nowhere

Ghent

Charlatan
Vlasmarkt 6; 09.224.24.57,
www.charlatan.be

JULY 9 22.00 Kazzen & Koo

JULY 10 21.00 Karma To Burn + Fennango

Kessel-Lo (Leuven)

Jeugdhuis Sojo
Eén Meilaan 35; 016.25.60.88,
www.sojovzw.be

JULY 9 19.00 Karma to Burn



Antwerp

Buster
Kaasrui 1; 03.232.51.53, www.busterpodium.be

JULY 10 22.00 aRTET

Brussels

Café Bonnefooi
Steenstraat 8, www.bonnefooi.be

JULY 12 20.30 The Bonnefooi Acoustic Jam

The Music Village

Steenstraat 50; 02.513.13.45, www.themusicvillage.com
Doors open from 19.00:

Until JULY 11 21.00 The Swing Dealers

Ghent

El Negocito
Brabantdam 121; 0479.56.73.95, www.mi-negocio.net
Concerts at 22.00:
JULY 8 Sindicato Sonico JULY 11 Keko Yoma (Chile) JULY 14 Starvin Marvin

Band JULY 15 Reena Riot



Antwerp

Queen Elisabeth Hall
Koningin Astridplein 26; 0900.26.060,
www.fccc.be

JULY 10 20.15 Kodo One Earth Tour
- Ekkyo: Trans-border heartbeat

drummers of Japan

Bruges

Concertgebouw
't Zand 34; 070.22.33.02,
www.concertgebouw.be

JULY 8 20.15 Kodo One Earth Tour
- Ekkyo: Trans-border heartbeat

drummers of Japan

Brussels

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

JULY 11 21.00 Laos kai Kolonaki

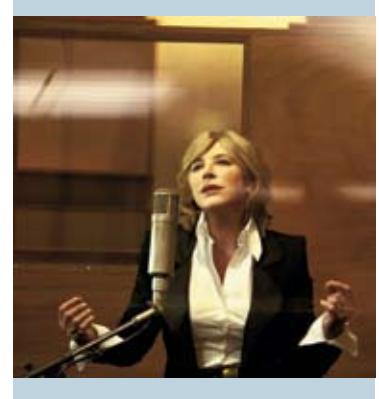
GET YOUR TICKETS NOW!

Marianne Faithfull

13 November
Ancienne Belgique,
Brussels

Gone are the days when this legendary singer's turbulent personal life was better known than her music. Now you can concentrate on the jaded lyrics, guitar that alternates between screaming and strumming and that voice like whisky on velvet. If you miss her at the Ghent Jazz Festival next week, make sure to catch her here.

→ www.abconcerts.be



(Greece)

Deinze

Markt Deinze
09.381.95.10, www.deinze.be

JULY 10 20.00 Thirty years of Frank Boeijen



Ekeren (Antwerp)

Stedelijke Muziekacademie
F. Pauwelsstraat 102; 0486.41.84.00,
www.gezellegezongen.be

JULY 10 20.00 Gezelle Gezongen

Ghent

Stedelijke Muziekacademie

F. Pauwelsstraat 102; 0486.41.84.00,
www.gezellegezongen.be

JULY 10 20.00 Gezelle Gezongen

Ghent

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www.gezellegezongen.be

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Ghent

Stedelijke Muziekacademie

F. Pauwelsstraat 102; 0486.41.84.00,
www.gezellegezongen.be

JULY 10 20.00 Gezelle Gezongen

Ghent

Stedelijke Muziekacademie

<p

♦ Agenda ♦

FLANDERS TODAY
JULY 8, 2009

Zebrastraat Kunstenplatform
Zebrastraat 32; 0477.78.90.98,
www.zebrastraat.be
JULY 9 20.00 Annelies Buyssens,
soprano, accompanied by Jozefien Van
Parys, piano



Kortrijk
Halletoren
Grote Markt; 056.27.78.40,
www.toerismekortrijk.be
JULY 9 20.00 Torenmuziek: free
concert from the top of the Halletoren
by bell ringer Frank Deleu

Ostend
Sint-Petrus en Pauluskerk
Sint-Petrus en Paulusplein;
059.51.49.03, www.orlandus.be
JULY 9 20.00 Ilse Vromans, flute; Peter
Ledaïne, organ



Ardooie
Cultuurkapel De Schaduw
Wenzestraat 32; 0479.80.94.82,
www.deschaduw.net
JULY 16-17 20.30 't Schoon Vertier,
cabaret



Bruges
Concertgebouw
't Zand 34; 070.22.33.02,
www.concertgebouw.be
JULY 9 20.00 Wim Helsen, comedy

Deurne
Openluchttheater Rivierenhof
Turnhoutsebaan 232; 070.222.192,
www.openluchttheater.be
Until JULY 9 20.30 Alex Agnew,
comedy

Antwerp

Cathedral of Our Lady
Handschoenmarkt; 03.213.99.51,
www.dekathedraal.be
Until NOV 15 Reunion: From
Quinten Metsys to Peter Paul Rubens,
masterpieces from the Royal Museum
of Fine Arts return to the cathedral

Fotomuseum

Waalse Kaai 47; 03.242.93.00,
www.fotomuseum.be
Until SEP 13 Fotografie in België
tijdens het Interbellum (Photography
in Belgium Between the Wars)
Until SEP 13 Theatres of the Real,
contemporary British photography
Until SEP 13 Geert van Kesteren:
Baghdad Calling/Why Mister, Why?
photo-reportage
Until SEP 13 Nick Hannes: Red
Journey, photographs from Russia in
2008

Middelheim Museum

Middelheimlaan 6; 03.827.15.34,
www.middelheimmuseum.be
Until SEP 27 Chris Burden, videos,
sculpture and installations by the
contemporary American artist

Modemuseum (MoMu)

Nationalestraat 28; 03.470.27.70,
www.momu.be
Until AUG 16 Paper Fashion, garments
made of paper and related materials
concentrating on the 1960s

Plantin-Moretus Museum

Vrijdagmarkt 22; 03.221.14.50,
<http://museum.antwerpen.be>
Until JULY 19 In the Wake of
Columbus: Antwerp Books and Prints
around the World, early books, maps
and illustrations printed in Antwerp

Rockox House

Keizerstraat 12; 03.201.92.50,
www.rockoxhuis.be
Until NOV 15 A Gift to God, private
patronage of religious art during
Antwerp's Golden Age

Blankenberge

Cultuurcentrum Casino
Zeedijk 150; 050.43.20.43,
<http://cultuur.blankenberge.be/>

Until OCT 4 Masereel en de zee
(Masereel and the Sea), retrospective
on the 120th birthday of the
Blankenberge-born Franz Masereel,
with etchings, wood cuts, paintings and
ceramics

Bruges

Arentshuis
Dijver 16; 050.44.87.11, www.brugge.be
Until SEP 27 The Museum of
Museums 2009, intervention by
contemporary artist Johan van Geluwe

Groeningemuseum

Dijver 12; 050.44.87.43, www.brugge.be
Until JULY 21 Charles the Bold:
The Splendour of Burgundy, Flemish
Primitive paintings, armour, tapestries,
manuscripts, fine gold and silverware
that were stolen from the Burgundian
court in the 15th century

Brussels

Belgian Comic Strip Centre
20 Rue des Sables (02.219.19.80),
www.comicscenter.net
Until SEP 27 Arithmetics of Troy,
comic strips by Christophe Arleston
(part of Brussels BD Comic Strip
festival)

Bibliotheca Wittockiana

Bemelstraat 23; 02.770.53.33,
www.wittockiana.org
Until OCT 10 The Premises of Comic
Strip, 19th-century strips, with works
by Rodolphe Töpffer, Caran d'Ache,
Benjamin Rabier and Fred Isly, among
others (part of Brussels BD Comic
Strip festival)

Bozar (Paleis Voor Schone Kunsten)

Ravensteinstraat 23; 02.507.82.00,
www.bozar.be
Until SEP 13 Sophie Calle,
photographs, audio and video works by
the contemporary French artist

Until SEP 13 Disorder, sculptures and
paintings by conceptual artist Bernar
Venet and comic strips about the art
world by Jacques Charlier

Until SEP 13 Portraits of Artists: 80
Years of the Centre for Fine Arts in
Pictures

Until SEP 13 Young Belgian Painters
Award 2009, works by the finalists

Until SEP 13 100 Sexes d'Artistes,
imaginative illustrations by Belgian
artist Jacques Charlier depicting the
genitals of 100 internationally known
artists

Until SEP 13 Fading, works by 40
contemporary Belgian artists

City Hall

Grote Markt; 02.279.64.35,
www.brussel.be/ardet.cfm/4440
Until SEP 27 The Brussels Epic of
Willy Vandersteen, works by the
Belgian comic-strip artist (part of
Brussels BD Comic Strip festival)

Costume and Lace Museum

Violettestraat 12; 02.213.44.50, www.brucity.be
Until SEP 29 stoffen & +, textile works
by Marie Beguin, Kathrin Laurent and
Charlotte Walry

Czech Centre

Troonstraat 60; 02.213.94.30
Until SEP 10 Jiru: Two generations of
photographers, prints by Czech Vaclav
Jiru and his nephew Jiri Jiru, who,
upon his return to the Czech Republic
after living in Brussels for 20 years,
became President Vaclav Havel's official
photographer

De Loge Architecturmuseum

Kluisstraat 86; 02.649.86.65, www.aam.be
Until AUG 2 Louise Bossut, Nicolas
Van Brande and Olivier Thieffry:
(reflect)3, photographs of shops,
cafés and other commercial venues in
Brussels

De Markten

Oude Graanmarkt 5; 02.512.34.25,
www.demarkten.be
Until JULY 11 Julien Coulommier,
photographs

Elsene Museum

Jean Van Volsemstraat 71; 02.515.64.21
Until SEP 13 Fading, works by 40
contemporary Belgian artists

Fondation pour l'Architecture

Kluisstraat 55; 02.642.24.80,
www.fondationpourlarchitecture.be
Until OCT 18 De tijd van de boetiek
(The Time of the Boutique), window
shopping from 1800 to today

Hallepoort

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

Jewish Museum of Belgium

Minimstraat 21; 02.512.19.63, www.new.mjb-jmb.org
Until OCT 15 Een geheugen op papier
(A memory on paper), Jewish life in

Brussels

Minimstraat 21; 02.512.19.63, www.new.mjb-jmb.org
Until AUG 2 Luc Tuymans: Against
the Day, 20 new paintings by the
contemporary Flemish artist

JULY 15-SEP 13 Ben Cain: The
Making of the Means, large-scale
installation by the former artist in
residence

WIELS

Van Volxemlaan 354; 02.347.30.33,
www.wiels.org

Until AUG 2 Luc Tuymans: Against
the Day, 20 new paintings by the
contemporary Flemish artist

JULY 15-SEP 13 Ben Cain: The
Making of the Means, large-scale
installation by the former artist in
residence

World Bank Brussels

Marnixlaan 17; 02.552.00.32
Until OCT 31 In the Eyes of a Woman:
Roma Portraits, the lives of various
Roma communities as pictured by
female photographers

Deurle

Museum Dhondt-Dhaenens
Museumlaan 14; 09.282.51.23, www.museumdd.be
Until SEP 13 When the mood strikes...
Wilfried & Yannick Cooreman's
collection of contemporary art, with
works by Franz West, Thomas Schütte,
Jean-Marc Bustamante and Jan
Vercruyse among others

Until SEP 13 Robert Devriendt,
paintings

Gaasbeek

Gassbeek Castle
Kasteelstraat 40; 02.531.01.30, www.kasteelvangaasbeek.be
Until AUG 16 Paul & Cie, a look at
Paul Arconati Visconti (1754-1821),
eccentric resident of Gaasbeek Castle
and fervent admirer of Napoleon
Bonaparte

Ghent

Design Museum

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Jan Breydelstraat 5; 09.267.99.99,
<http://design.museum.gent.be/>
Until OCT 11 Yrjö Kukkapuro,
retrospective of the Finnish designer,
from the late 1950s until the present
day
Until OCT 11 Ceramics by Raoul Dufy
1877-1904, works by the French artist
on loan from private collections and
museums
Until OCT 11 Schoonhoven Silver
Award: Poetry in Silver, silverware
competition with 55 international
artists

Dr Guislain Museum
Jozef Guislainstraat 43; 09.216.35.95,
www.museumdrguislain.be
Until SEP 13 Burland Toyland, works
made from recycled materials by Swiss
outsider artist François Burland
Until SEP 13 Unknown Secrets,
paintings by Serbian artist Goran
Djurović
Until SEP 13 Mens: Andere culturen
als amusement (People: Other Cultures
as Amusement)

MIAT
Minnemeers 9; 09.269.42.00,
www.miat.gent.be
Until AUG 1 Turkish Textile Workers
in Ghent, text and photographs
Until AUG 23 Felt: From Tradition to
Modern Art, work by István Vidák
Until OCT 18 Ghent on porcelain
cards from 1840-1865

Museum of Fine Arts
Fernand Scribedreef 1 – Citadelpark;
09.240.07.00, www.mskgent.be
Until JULY 31 Jan Janssens, paintings
by the Flemish master (1590-1650)
Until SEP 20 Raoul de Keyser, Artist in
residence, works on paper (1964-1979)
by the contemporary Belgian artist

Sint-Pietersabdij
Sint-Pietersplein 9; 09.243.97.30,
www.gent.be/spa
Until SEPT 6 Walder De Mulder,
photos of conductors, photographers
and other artists from the 1960s
to the 1990s by the Ghent-based
photojournalist
Until SEPT 6 Walter De Buck
Verbeeldt, sculpture and drawings by
the Ghent artist, singer and founder of
the legendary Gentse Feesten

**Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst
(SMAK)**
Citadelpark; 09.221.17.03,
www.smak.be
Until AUG 2 Dara Birnbaum:
The Dark Matter of Media Light,
retrospective of the American
contemporary video artist
Until AUG 2 Navid Nuur: The Value
of Void
Until AUG 23 Beyond The
Picturesque: Interpretations of
Landscape in Contemporary Art
Until AUG 23 Meteoriti, sculptures by
Bizhan Bassiri

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17.00 > 22.00
SUNDAY
12.00 > 14.30 & 17.00 > 22.00
MONDAY CLOSED.

DON'T MISS

Mayumana

9-19 July
Kursaal Ostend

This Israeli foot-stomping, barrel-banging fusion of music, theatre and dance is back in an all-new show. It's most often compared to *Stomp*, but its bizarrely visual humour and allusions to religion and secular life make it truly a product of its homeland.

⇒ www.kursaalostende.be



Until AUG 30 Carl De Keyzer: Trinity, photographs on power and violence by the Flemish Magnum agency photographer

Hasselt

Modemuseum

Gasthuisstraat 11; 011.23.96.21,
www.modemuseumhasselt.be

Until OCT 31 In Her Shoes, trends and evolution of women's shoe design, from 1900 to contemporary designers

Kemzeke (Stekene)

Verbeke Foundation

Westakkers 03.789.22.07, www.verbekefoundation.com

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

Mechelen

Speelgoedmuseum (Toy Museum)

Nekkerspoelstraat 21; 015.55.70.75,
www.speelgoedmuseum.be

Until JAN 3 Thirty-five years of Playmobil

Tervuren

Royal Museum for Central Africa

Leuvensesteenweg 13; 02.769.52.11,
www.africamuseum.be

Until AUG 31 Omo: People & Design, functional objects made and used by the Omo people of southwestern

Ethiopia

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

Ypres

Lakenhallen

Grote Markt 34; 057.23.94.80,
www.acci.be

JULY 10-OCT 4 What remains, retrospective of assemblages on war and violence by Flemish artist Camiel Van Breedam



Roller Bike Parade: Four months of rollerblading in the streets with staff on hand to help with equipment rental and maintenance

Until SEP 26 in Brussels (every Friday), Antwerp (every Saturday), Koksijde (every Sunday) and Hasselt (every Monday); all parades confirmed or cancelled by 16.00 www.belgiumrollers.com

Palm Parkies: Series of concerts in city parks, including BBQ and drinks

Until AUG 26 19.00 across Flanders www.parkies.net

Vlaanderen Feest: 11 days of activities in celebration of the 11 July Flemish holiday

JULY 11-22 across Flanders www.vlaanderenfeest.be

Antwerp

ABCa BBQ: The Antwerp British Community Association's annual barbecue and summer party; free for members, €12.50 for non-members

JULY 21 16.00-21.00 at FOS Sea-scouts Clubhouse, Beatrijslaan 41 www.abca-antwerp.be

Jackyland: Live concerts every Thursday by local talent, followed by after parties

JULY 9-SEP 10 at Magiq Spiegeltent, Oosterweelsteenweg (Noordkasteel) www.jackyland.be

Zomer van Antwerpen

Annual summer arts festival features concerts, circus acts, open-air film screenings, sunset barbecues and a woodland bar; most events free

Until AUG 30 across Antwerp 03.224.85.28, www.zva.be

Bruges

Cactus Festival: Outdoor music festival, featuring Tracy Chapman, Michael Franti & Spearhead, Bunny Wailer, Selah Sue, Paul Weller, Novastar, Black Box Revelation, Joss Stone, Lamb, Calexico and more **JULY 10-12** at Minnewaterpark, Bargeplein, Bruges www.cactusfestival.be

Brussels

Bozar family events: In Search of Sophie Calle: Family Kit. Follow the clues in the exhibition by French artist Sophie Calle (In Dutch and French). Also summer workshops in contemporary art for ages six to 12 in Dutch and French

02.507.82.00, www.bozar.be

Brosella Folk & Jazz: Annual free outdoor festival with concerts and family entertainment

JULY 11-12 15.00-23.00 at Théâtre de Verdure, Ossegem Park www.brosella.be

Bruparck: Four themed family weekends including music and dance activities, acrobatics, pirate shows, comic strips, Knights of the Round Table and more

JULY 12-AUG 23 at Bruparck, Eeuwfeestlaan 20, Heysel www.bruparck.com

Bruxelles fait son cinéma: Open-air cinema in a different location every night reviving the old tradition of traveling cinemas in the Mediterranean. Reception with Mediterranean snacks precedes all screenings. On 13 July, watch the French film *Entre les Murs* (The Class) in Verzetplein
12-21 July 21.00 across Brussels www.liberationfilms.be

De Gulden Ontsporing: Free music and theatre programme organised by Ancienne Belgique in celebration of the Flemish Community holiday. Kicks off in the city centre with *t Groot Muziek* and continues with brass bands, street theatre and children's activities. Concerts on the Grote Markt feature Yevgeni, Lady Linn, Gabriel Rios and more
JULY 11 across the city centre www.deguldenontsporing.be

Midi-Minimes Festival: Classical music festival with short, lunchtime concerts grouped according to historical period. Festival guest: Cellist Sigiswald Kuijken
Until AUG 28 12.15 at Miniemerkerk, Miniemerstraat 62, and Royal Conservatory, Regentschapsstraat 30 02.512.30.79, www.midis-minimes.be

Royal Museum of Fine Arts family events: The Magritte Mystery at 14.00 on 7 July, plus workshops for children ages six to 13 in Dutch all summer 02.508.33.33, www.fine-arts-museum.be

Ghent

Ghent Jazz Festival: Blend of young talent and world-renowned musicians at this annual international festival, featuring BB King, Dianne Reeves, George Benson, Christian Scott, Joe Jackson, Marianne Faithfull, Lady Linn & Her Magnificent Seven and more
Until JULY 19 at De Bijloke, J Kluykensstraat 2 www.gentjazz.com

Hasselt

Hasselt Danst: Learn a dance, then practice is to live music every Tuesday on an open-air stage. On 14 July, is the cha-cha.
Until September 12 19.00 across Hasselt www.hasselt.be

Muscadet – Aperitiefconcerten: Outdoor live music ensembles, choirs and orchestras every Sunday morning **Until AUG 30** 11.00 at Het Stadsmus, Guido Gezellesstraat 2 011.23.98.90, www.hetstadsmus.be

Leuven

Zomer van Sint-Pieter: Classical music festival with short, lunchtime concerts grouped according to historical period. Sister festival to Brussels' Midi-Minimes
Until Aug 28 across Leuven 016.23.84.27, www.zomer-van-sint-pieter.be

Mechelen

Parkpop: Concerts by pop, rock, blues, salsa, reggae, disco or soul groups every Thursday evening
Until AUG 27 20.30 in de Kruidtuin, Bruul 129 015.29.78.68, www.parkpop.be

Ostend

Momentum: New show by Israeli group Mayumana, an acrobatic fusion of dance, theatre, drumming and offbeat humour
JULY 9-19 at Kursaal (Casino), Monacoplein 2 070.22.56.00, www.momentumtheshow.be

CAFE SPOTLIGHT

REBECCA BENOOT



Het Elfde Gebod

Torfbrug 10, Antwerp

Basking in the shadow of Antwerp's majestic cathedral is a café that combines everything we Belgians consider sacred: the Virgin Mary and beer. *Het Elfde Gebod* (The Eleventh Commandment) takes the religious kitsch theme to a whole new level: it is literally filled from top to bottom with statues of saints and other holy artefacts.

Hundreds of eyes gaze upon you in a place where gluttony is too easily indulged due to the wide variety of Belgian beers on offer, not to mention the incredibly tasty ribs. The atmosphere is simply divine, quite literally, and exudes all the grandeur of a medieval fortress, aided by the robust wooden furniture and large circular chandeliers with (alas) fake candles.

The building that houses this devout pub, an oxymoron if there ever was one, actually dates back to the Middle Ages, but only the arches in the basement are original features – all that could be salvaged from a terrible fire hundreds of years ago.

In 1979, Irene and Jan opened this unique café, reminiscent of Antwerp's artistic Renaissance that was predominantly inspired by Catholicism. In the presence of the most famous saints in history, you only have to keep one thing in mind: "Thou shalt enjoy" (aka the eleventh commandment).

Ronse

Bruul 2009: Free outdoor music festival with performances every Friday, featuring Raymond Van Het Groenewoud, Sons of Queen, Sois Belle, Paul Severs and Freddy Birset
Until AUG 21 20.00 at Bruulpark 055.23.27.94, www.bruulronse.be

Zottegem

Rock Zottegem: music festival featuring Curvy Cuties Fanclub, Apocalyptica, Alice Cooper, Jasper Erkens, Michael Franti & Spearhead, The Pretenders, The Neon Judgement, Echo and the Bunnymen, Shameboy and more
JULY 10-11 at tent complex, Bevegemse Vijvers www.rock-zottegem.be

Zulte

Hoeverock: Free rock and blues concerts every Tuesday
Until AUG 25 19.30 in Het Gouden Hof, D'hoestraat 32, Olsene <http://hoeverock.wordpress.com>

FESTIVAL SUMMER

PAUL STUMP



© Arian Christiaens & Hanne Lamon

Ghent Jazz Festival

The sun is out, and the sky is blue, but it'll be raining in the hearts of many at this year's Ghent Jazz Festival

Jazz fans and players alike are mourning the death of one of Europe's best-known and best-loved performers – the reedsman Charlie Mariano. But if Charlie can't make it in person, there's little doubt that his spirit will infect the music of many of the big names performing at this summer's Ghent Jazz Festival. Previously known as the Blue Note Festival, and always leading into the massive Gentse Feesten, this is one of Belgium's

and now.

Comparing Neve with the stylistically-similar Canadian piano virtuoso Brad Mehldau should be one of the festival's more diverting sideshows. But even this is unlikely to be the main draw at this year's extravaganza, for which – if we can stretch the watery metaphor – they have really pushed the boat out.

There's a heavy stress in this edition on feel good, drive-time jazz with floppy-fringed wunderkind Jamie Cullum and glam songstress Melody Gardot underlining her status as queen of the jazz downloads, with her Holly Golightly cool and deliciously indulgent torch-singing.

Marianne Faithfull – whose interminable comeback still goes on – might want to watch her back. She's here, too, on 18 July, partnered with the fine

Gonzalo Rubalcaba, who is rapidly gaining a reputation comparable to another 2009 guest, McCoy Tyner. Coltrane's one-time piano man brings his formidable chops to bear on music new and old with the help of Gary Bartz, the idiosyncratic American reedsman who cut his teeth as part of one of Miles Davis' quasi-legendary early 1970s electric groups.

The idiosyncratic Bill Frisell, who teamed up with McCoy for the 2008 *Guitars* album, also puts in an appearance. Talking of guitarists, they don't get much bigger than George Benson – he's here, lyrically funky and mellifluous as ever.

This is one of a whole bunch of coups for Ghent, which has never enjoyed the big-city jazz cachet of Brussels, having been one of the second wave of cities the music reached when it first arrived in Belgium between the wars. But in spite of – or maybe because of – Ghent's location off jazz's beaten track, there are many opportunities for locals to catch Belgian performers.

Besides Neve and Lady Linn, these include percussionist Eric Thielemans, accompanying new music on bass drum, snare drum and, er, bicycle wheel. Ghent's Augustinian Monastery, meanwhile, will house sonic installations separately from the main Bijloke venue. Among those taking part are the classical pianists Frederick Croene and Timo van Luijk, who will build an installation of discarded pianos, which they will explore and play.

The festival also sets the stage for the International Composition Contest. Among the four composers/arrangers up for the prize this year are Jan Torkewitz and Nicolas Schriefer (Germany) and Veli-Matti Halkosalmin (Finland).

most star-studded and stylish jazz events.

Jef Neve was hardly born when Mariano began his long and justly famous collaboration with the country's greatest guitarist, Philip Catherine, in the late 1960s. And there's little doubt Charlie lived long enough to hear and appreciate Neve – the clean-cut genius of jazz piano – doing his thing: mellifluous standards and originals spun out in a carefree, lyrical, boppish style, heard most memorably on his calling-card 2005 album *It's Gone*.

It's likely that Neve – invited to play here alongside José James (with whom he recently shared the stage at Ancienne Belgique) – will be happy enough showering notes into the night, like the city's lights on the lapping canals. You can bet he will ensure that this is less of a wake for the departed and more a celebration of music as it is happening here

1980s popster-turned jazzier Joe Jackson. There's a substantial feminine presence at this edition of the festival: along with Flemish retro-jazz crooner Lady Linn (photo), who can do no wrong with critics at the moment, is a not-inconsiderable Nina Simone tribute night, featuring Dianne Reeves and Nina Simone's daughter, Lisa Simone Kelly, fronting the original Nina Simone band.

For those who like to keep it real – a fifth of Jack rather than a mint julep, say – one of jazz's other "first ladies" is in town: BB King's trusty guitar Lucille, no doubt well-attuned to the veteran bluesman's limitless library of delta and urban roots numbers that have been filling auditoria around the world for three decades and more.

Other guests in the legend category include an evening pairing accordion king Richard Galliano with Cuban piano giant

8-19 July

Bijloke site
Godshuizenlaan, Ghent
→ www.gentjazz.com

TALKING DUTCH

ALISTAIR MACLEAN



stripverhalen →

Fast cars and weekends don't always go together well. Monday's news is often laden with a litany of death by driving – sometimes with the drunken driver escaping with scratches and last-minute passengers never ever reaching home.

But sometimes near-death crashes elicit laughter. A recent report showed a half-page photo of the crash scene with the headline *Nero aan de dood ontsnapt* – Nero escapes death. A car lies on its roof just a few centimetres from the Nero-café in Hoeilaart, having just missed hitting the three-metre tall statue of the man himself, Nero. The occupants of the car we can forget (that's a very frontal, almost Dutch-looking sentence): they were fit enough to take to their heels.

Everyone in Flanders knows who Nero is. No, it's not the emperor. Nero is one of the creations of Marc Sleen, who lives in Hoeilaart. Nero features in the more than 200 *stripverhalen* – comic strips, which Sleen drew and wrote (every word) himself for daily publication in *De Standaard* newspaper. Sleen is now in his 80s and has put down his pen, but Nero and the other characters live on.

Nero is recognisable by his large nose, two strands of hair and red bow-tie. Sleen is a typical Belgian author; his characters are far from the extraordinary heroes of Marvel Comics. Madame Pijp (she smokes), for example, could not be further

from Wonder Woman. Nero's not the brightest of characters himself, but his motto is well worth employing: *Lach voor je blij bent* – Laugh before you are happy, *want anders zou je wel eens kunnen sterven zonder te lachen* – because otherwise you could well die without having laughed.

Sleen started as a political cartoonist and retained his sharp view on topical events in his Nero stories. Some years ago, the Belgian king featured in Nero's last story, *Zilveren Tranen* – Silver Tears. He had heard that Nero is soon to stop: "Ga je ermee stoppen?" – Are you going to stop? *Moedig!* – Brave!"

These words can be interpreted as a reference to the king's own role, which was then being questioned. More recently, when it seemed impossible for a national government to be formed, Sleen came out of retirement to draw a full page for *De Standaard* in which he had Nero giving Albert II advice on how to get out of the impasse.

A Nero museum has just opened opposite the Comic Strip Museum in Zandstraat in the centre of Brussels in the same building where Sleen drew his first Nero *stripverhalen*.

If you're learning Dutch, why not let Nero and his son Adhemar help you?

→ www.marc-sleen.be

The last word → → →

Small town, big prize

"People say a successful ad agency can only survive in Brussels or Antwerp. That's nonsense of course. It all comes down to bringing good people together, and you can do that in any city."

Pieter Goiris of Leuven-based agency Boondoggle, which won five prestigious Golden Lion awards in Cannes

Cop out

"I don't have a problem with the sentence so much as the court's motivation. I have the feeling my personality was on trial, not the facts of the case." Former Ghent police chief Peter De Wolf, who is appealing a one-year suspended sentence for falsifying a car accident report

Call of the cloth

"Have you ever thought of becoming a priest?"

From a letter written by Father Andy Penne to 300 young men in his parish

Rage against the royals

"One-third of all Belgians would scrap the Civil List, including payments for the King and Queen. The reason for this is the increasing number of pro-Flemish radicals who see the royal family as a major obstacle to the splitting-up of Belgium."

Tim Desmet of Profacts, which carried out a survey on support for the monarchy