

Murder and the press 6

In the last two weeks, journalists have been called "maggots" and grieving parents have asked the newspapers to leave them alone. How far should the media be allowed to go when reporting on crimes?



Coastal culture 8

Ostend has been named as Flanders' very first City of Culture, a bi-annual designation designed to highlight the cultural offerings of smaller Flemish cities. Already doing its part for art, Ostend cranks it up a notch this year to be the region's hottest destination



Foodie fantasy 10

The second edition of The Flemish Primitives is about to hit Bruges – no, not an exhibition of 15th-century paintings but a gathering of Belgium's best chefs in the spirit of collaboration and artistic improvement. Bring in some food scientists and watch the gastronomic sparks fly



Dirty Business

EMMA PORTIER DAVIS

When industry shuts down, Flanders gets stuck with industrial waste clean up

A whopping 90% of waste in Flanders comes from industrial sources – from innocuous office rubbish, such as paper and desk chairs, to highly toxic chemicals and metals, which often find their way into the soil and rivers.

Cleaning up this waste is the responsibility of the companies that created it, but there are many cases where the perpetrator has gone bankrupt or where a site was polluted by previous owners in the days when waste laws were not even a twinkle in the regulator's eye.

According to environmental group Bond Beter Leefmilieu Vlaanderen (BBLV), there are more than 75,000 plots of land across the region that have yet to be cleaned up. To complicate matters further, there will probably be less government funding this year.

The basic budget for clean-up will be €2 million more than in 2009, which was €23.6 million. But last year there was an extra €10 million from a special fund for these projects. "There is no decision yet whether we will again get an additional budget for 2010. That decision will be taken later on this year," says Flemish environment minister Joke Schauvliege.

"A budget cut would mean there would be a higher risk of contamination of the ground water and certain areas of land that just cannot be used," says Erik Grietens of BBLV, who adds that, even with the previous budget, it would already take up to 50 years to clean these plots. But it's essential to do so. Aside from the impact on the environment, industrial waste can also be a danger to us. "There will be a negative effect for those living nearby. You don't want children playing on these grounds. It would be bad for their health," says Grietens.

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Aid workers take off for Haiti

Specialised search-and-rescue team finds missing survivors

ALAN HOPE

A team of specialised Belgian aid workers took off last week for Haiti, just one day after a devastating earthquake caused thousands of deaths and left the country's infrastructure completely disabled. On Wednesday, 13 December, a B-Fast team specialised in finding victims under rubble set off from Belgium. The crew members and sniffer-dogs were accompanied by two nurses and an emergency doctor. On Friday, it was reported the Belgian team had saved a two-year-old boy trapped under fallen masonry.

However, by Monday one-half of the 60 rescue workers were back in Belgium after it became clear that the chances of finding more living victims had severely diminished. The team saved a total of

three people of the 70 or so found so far under rubble.

The earthquake, measuring 7.3 on the Richter scale, struck near the Haitian capital of Port-au-Prince on 12 January and was followed by two major after-shocks. The Red Cross has estimated that three million people may be affected. Rescue teams face the problem of an almost total lack of infrastructure as already dilapidated buildings, utilities and roads are now useless. Many hospitals collapsed during the earthquake, and medical supplies were urgently needed. The B-Fast team carry a full field hospital. As well as the victims of the quake itself, aid workers will soon be faced with the possibility of the spread of disease as bodies accumulate.

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The photo on page 1 was taken in 2001 by Henk van Rensbergen at the abandoned Carcoke Zeebrugge plant, which closed in 1997. Carcoke produced coke, a fuel made from coal. Rensbergen is one of the world's leading photographers of abandoned buildings.

→ www.abandoned-places.com

FLANDERS TODAY

Independent Newsweekly

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Project manager: Pascale Zoetaert

Publisher: VUM

NV Vlaamse Uitgeversmaatschappij

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News in brief

The crew of the **Belgian navy frigate** Louise-Marie will be empowered to arrest pirates in the waters off Somalia in the Horn of Africa and return them to this country for trial, after the introduction of a new law last week. The Louise-Marie spent four months in the region last year and returns to patrol the seas in September as part of the EU's Atalanta mission.

The news site **Indymedia.be** will close down, while its staff of volunteer citizen-journalists will move to a new media project, founder Han Soete announced last week. The new project will be run in conjunction with other media partners, whose names have also not been revealed. Volunteers last week received details of the plan and were invited to an information evening on 12 February, after which more will be revealed.

A court in Bruges last week sentenced three men to two, three and four years in prison for an **attack on a Togolese** man in May 2006 which put him in hospital for more than eight months. Raphaël Mensah died later of a pulmonary embolism, which family say was caused by his injuries. Two other men were given community service terms of 200 hours. The court heard that the five, all patrons of a Bruges skinhead bar, had beaten Mensah specifically because of the colour of his skin.

A woman and her two sons were last week given suspended sentences of one year for renting out rooms to illegal immigrants and the unemployed, despite the danger of electrocution, fire and carbon monoxide poisoning. Caroline Willemsen and her sons Karl, 37, and Philip, 34, were warned by inspectors in 2004 that their **properties in the Antwerp North** area were unsuitable for habitation. The trio were also each fined €5,500 and had €127,145 in illegal rents seized by the court.

Women are twice as likely as men **to suffer from sleep problems**, according to the coordinator of the multidisciplinary Centre for Clinical Sleep and Waking Research in Antwerp. A conference looking at sleep research from a variety of specialist angles took place last week at Antwerp University Hospital. Almost 25% of over-50s in Belgium suffer from some form of sleep disturbance, and the use of sleeping pills has gone up from 5% in 1997 to 9% now.



Bruegel's "Census at Bethlehem", from 1566, in the Brussels Fine Arts Museum

Computers expose fake Bruegels

An American mathematician has developed a computer programme that can spot a fake Bruegel from a real one by analysing the artist's use of the brush. Daniel Rockmore and his team at Dartmouth College developed the technique of sparse coding, which breaks a work down into the most basic elements used by an artist to represent reality – in the case of Bruegel, the brushstroke.

The team, which included experts on visual perception, scanned eight works by the Flemish artist Pieter Bruegel the Elder (1525-1569), as well as five known imitations, and mapped the brushstrokes according to direction, orientation, length and thickness, thus building up a sort of "vocabulary" of brushstrokes particular to Bruegel. The technique is similar to handwriting analysis except that brushstrokes are infinitely more variable than the 26 letters of the alphabet.

Armed with Bruegel's brushstroke-fingerprint, it should now be possible to spot a fake simply by showing that it doesn't carry Bruegel's stamp.

The technique has limitations, Rockmore admitted. It requires sufficient source material to draw up a profile of the artist's brush-hand, which of course need to be of unimpeachable provenance. However, over and above their application to the tracing of fakes, the techniques of sparse coding are likely to be of interest to art historians to measure, for example, if parts of a painting are by different hands – by members of an artist's studio or by later restorers.

"Our model is purely quantitative and data driven and does not take into account the vast experience of connoisseurs," said Daniel Graham, a post-doctoral fellow at Dartmouth. "Our work is complementary to the judgment of connoisseurs and to physical methods of authentication, like chemical signatures and analysis of canvas weaving. It is also complementary to what is considered the gold standard of attribution, chain-of-custody records. We see our method as another form of evidence, which can be weighed against traditional forms, and it has the distinct advantage of being rigorously objective."

The court of appeal in Brussels last week declared itself incompetent to rule on the case of a man who describes himself as a "**fiscal conscientious objector**". Jan Hellebaut refuses to fund the defence ministry and instead deposits 7% of the tax he owes in a peace-tax fund. Hellebaut, a teacher from Antwerp, must now go to the Court of Cassation, and then to the court of appeal in Ghent. "Military service has been abolished, but we are all still fiscal soldiers," he said. "I refuse to sponsor wars."

Singer Helmut Lotti and his wife, literary journalist **Jelle Van Riet**, have started proceedings against three magazines after two of them published a photo of Van Riet naked. The photo had previ-

ously been shown on TV during the quiz show *De slimste mens ter wereld*. The couple claim breach of copyright. One of the magazines, *Story*, protested that they had not published the photo, but like most other media (*including Flanders Today*) had only written about the incident.

The next time polar explorer **Dixie Dansercoer** goes to the North Pole, in April, he will be carrying a sample of chicken DNA. The DNA is part of the long-running art project of Koen Vanmechelen to breed various types of chicken in an attempt to create a universal chicken (or "Superbastard"). Dansercoer will bury a vial of DNA in the polar ice to be found by future generations.



With time running out for the rescue effort, attention now turns to rebuilding

→ continued from page 1

Accompanying the B-Fast team was a medical team led by Luc Beau-court, an emergency medicine specialist based at Antwerp University. The next day, a team from the Flemish Red Cross also left for Port-au-Prince, where the UN, itself having been seriously hit by the earthquake, is coordinating relief efforts.

The B-Fast team was criticised in some quarters, the broadcaster CNN reported, after it was forced to pack up its equipment and leave its field hospital and patients alone. The team stressed it was acting under the orders of the UN peace-keeping force in Haiti, which said it could not guarantee the team's safety.

Unlike some other aid workers on the ground, the Belgian team was not accompanied by its own security contingent and was in danger of being looting for equipment, medicine and even water. A detail of 34 military personnel left Melsbroek

air base on Sunday to provide security for the remaining B-Fast members and for diplomatic staff still in Haiti.

Also on the inbound flight were about 40 Belgian civilians living in Haiti, among them some aid workers. The civilians asked to be repatriated for fear of possible disease or an increase in violence.

Aid organisations receiving donations to assist with the relief effort include the Red Cross at account number 000-0006566-67 (mention "Haiti aardbeving") and 12-12, a joint operation of five organisations, including Handicap International and UNICEF Belgium, account number 000-0000012-12.

• In related news, it was revealed last week that Belgium gave a record amount of €1.3 billion last year in development aid, or the equivalent of €150 for every man, woman and child in the country. The sum means Belgium has met its target of donating 0.7% of GDP in aid some 40 years after the undertaking was first signed in the UN. Belgium is now ranked as one of the top six aid



Belgian rescue workers reunite two-year-old Redjerson Hausteen Claude, who spent hours under rubble, with his mother last week

donors in the world: only the Netherlands, Sweden, Luxembourg, Denmark and Norway did as well or better.

However, some aid organisations said the government had used "accounting tricks" to inflate the sum donated, such as writing off old

debts from the Congo, which were no longer expected to be paid in any case. "A fine gesture, were it not for the fact that the debts only existed in theory," said Bogdan Vanden Bergh of the charity 11.11.11.

THE WEEK IN FIGURES



2h45min

the average time spent every day watching TV in Flemish households, down 10 minutes from the peak in November 2007, according to figures from the Media Information Centre

42,000

Walloons travel each day to work in Flanders, according to figures from Wallonia's employment service. Another 105,000 work in Brussels. Only 22,000 Flemings work in Wallonia

0.7%

asylum applicants granted the status of refugee by Flemish asylum judges, compared to 6.3% when a French-speaking judge is sitting, according to Refugee Work Flanders

€16,800

damages awarded to the parish church in the town of Essen, as compensation for the suffering caused by damage to the church organ by falling masonry. The church has already spent the money on a new organ

67.25 metres

size of the largest bridal bouquet in the world, created as a record attempt by Menen dried-flower specialists Freezy Flor. The bouquet contains 3,500 orchids, 500 roses, 824 pearls and 6,000 wicker rings

Cardinal Danneels successor named

The new primate of the Catholic Church in Belgium is Monsignor André-Mutien Léonard, bishop of Namur. He takes over the archdiocese of Mechelen-Brussels from Cardinal Godfried Danneels, who is retiring. The appointment of Bishop Léonard, the subject of speculation all last week, was finally confirmed on 18 January by the Vatican and by the archdiocese simultaneously.

André Léonard (he added Mutien to his name in 1989 after the canonisation of Mutien-Marie Wiaux, a Walloon monk and teacher) was born in 1940, the youngest of four sons, who all became priests. He studied in Leuven and

at the Belgian college in Rome. He was ordained in 1964 and made bishop in 1991. A personal friend of the late Pope John Paul II, he also has close ties with the current Pope.

His appointment raises fears of a swing to what is seen as the hard-line wing of the Catholic Church. He has made no secret of his views on abortion, homosexuality and euthanasia and on measures in those areas introduced by parliament. His arrival in the Mechelen palace, according to federal social affairs minister Laurette Onkelinx, represents "a threat to the Belgian compromise," by which the leaders of the church agree

to maintain political neutrality.

There is another fear that Léonard's appointment may be a risk to scientific research, especially on stem-cell therapies, at the Catholic University of Leuven.

Archbishop Léonard does not automatically succeed to his predecessor's red hat, but it is thought highly likely he will be made a Cardinal by the Pope in short order, making him only the fifth Belgian cardinal since 1906. A fluent Dutch-speaker, he will eventually take up residence in the archiepiscopal palace in Mechelen. ♦

Jovanović nabs Golden Shoe

Standard player had to accept award in absence due to team boycott

LEO CENDROWICZ

Milan Jovanović has won the Gouden Schoen (Golden Shoe), awarded annually by a panel of players, coaches and sports journalists to the best Belgian football player of the year, for his scintillating form with Standard Liège.

The Gouden Schoen awards, held on 13 January in Ostend casino, also named Arsenal's Thomas Vermaelen as the best foreign-based Belgian player, while Bart Goor of KFC Germinal Beerschot Antwerpen took the Goal of the Year for his lob against Standard.

Serbian international Jovanović, 28, topped the poll of press and football personalities ahead of Anderlecht duo Mbark Boussoufa and Romelu Lukaku. Unfortunately, he was not able to accept the award in person because of his team's boycott of the

event due to sponsor *Het Laatste Nieuws*' inclusion of Standard player Axel Witsel in its nominations for "Gek van het Jaar" ("Crazy of the Year") next to, among others, baby killer Kim De Gelder.

Jovanović's award was accepted by prime minister – and keen Standard fan – Yves Leterme, who hailed the striker as "a terrific player". "Jova" or "The Snake", joined Standard in 2006 and played a pivotal role in helping the club secure the Jupiler League in 2008 for the first time in 25 years – and retain it again last season. Last year, he scored 17 goals in 31 games for Standard. However, he could be on his way out: Liverpool and AC Milan are rumoured to be seeking his services this summer.

Jovanović (pictured) also failed to



shine at the weekend as Standard were humbled 4-0 at home by a rampant Anderlecht – the first win by the *paars-wit* at the Stade Maurice Dufrasne in seven years. Standard are now 20 points off the pace of league leaders Anderlecht. ♦

FIFTH COLUMN

ANJA OTTE

Step by step

The small Flemish nationalist party N-VA and its eloquent leader Bart De Wever are always interesting to observe. N-VA has two ministers in the Flemish government, yet is an opposition party at the federal level.

Last week, for instance, De Wever announced that he did not want state reform before the federal elections of 2011. A weird twist, because state reform is the very reason N-VA exists. In essence, it is a separatist party, but it believes in evolution rather than revolution. Step by step, state reform by state reform, is how N-VA want Flanders to become independent (which is why French speakers fear these state reforms so much).

N-VA relentlessly insists on the need for state reform. In fact, N-VA's main, if not sole, reason for entering government is its hope of achieving meaningful state reform. In the past, the party even demanded "guaranties" for this at the start of a government term (although that tactic never really worked out as well as N-VA hoped).

So, all of a sudden, this long-awaited state reform can wait? Before last week, the mere suggestion of this would have outraged N-VA; but now its own leader is the one to call the whole thing off. Why? In his own words, De Wever does not want "an agreement like the ones about the budget or migration". He would rather have no state reform than a shoddy state reform.

There is, of course, another reason. (In politics, there almost always is.) Behind the scenes, Jean-Luc Dehaene of the Christian-Democrat CD&V is quietly working at finding a solution for the bilingual constituency Brussels-Halle-Vilvoorde, a sensitive matter that has frustrated Flemish and French speakers alike for decades. Should he find this magical solution – which is far from sure – it will inevitably be part of a larger package of compromises. Something like a state reform, really, albeit only a small one.

This may lead to some painful decisions on the part of the Flemish government. It might even have to appoint three recalcitrant French-speaking mayors who have repeatedly refused to obey the language laws! Surely N-VA does not want to be part of that. In their eyes, that would represent a step backwards. N-VA is not afraid of dirtying its hands for the sake of state reform, but, clearly, there are limits.

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45 minutes
group class



15 minutes
session with an expert



15 minutes
for relaxation time



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Dirty Business

Promising new technology for waste recycling despite budget cuts

continued from page 1

While the budget has come under pressure, there is much innovation when it comes to dealing with industrial waste. Companies are investigating ways to reuse and recycle materials, and ridding the ground and waters of noxious chemicals is turning into something of a business.

Reusing materials is the most eco-friendly method, as no resources are needed to convert them into something else. For example, where once industrial plants would have dumped water used for cooling into a nearby river, this water is now cooled and reused.

After reuse, the next preferred option to deal with waste is recycling (when the material is converted into something else). Materials technology company Umicore, for instance, has a business unit dedicated to the recovery of precious metals from electronic scrap and spent catalytic converters.

Flemish waste agency Ovam says the results are already evident, even if waste remains at high levels – barring a dip in the last few months of more than 10% as the recession caused a slump in manufacturing activity.

“Figures for the total amount of waste are stable, but the figures for reuse and recycling are improving,” says Ovam spokesman Jan Verheyen, adding that rubbish going to landfill, the least desirable waste disposal, was thus in decline.

Ovam is also busy with plans to introduce chemical leasing, whereby industrial giants would no longer buy the chemicals used to make their products but would effectively borrow them. “This has a great benefit because the waste streams are taken back,” says Verheyen.

The agency has also published plans to promote the development of environmentally- friendly goods and services, or eco-design. Says Verheyen: “We try to think about the environmental impact of a product over its whole life cycle, from cradle to cradle.”

To aid companies in their assessment, Ovam has produced a tool called an “ecolizer”, which helps them measure the impact of products “and see how recyclable they are”.

As well as dealing with waste streams, companies are also finding inventive ways to deal with old industrial waste, such as growing plants to suck up the chemicals (a process known as phyto-remediation) and converting sites for other uses.

In Ghent, there is a project underway to convert an old textile plant into blocks of flats and office space. The project, Alsberge & Van Oost, is, according to Grietens, a “fine example” of how former sites can be cleaned up and reused. The site, which is close to the N466 Drongenssesteenweg, is expected to house up to 400 residential properties and is being renovated in a manner that takes into account the environment and the archaeological value.



Industries' rubbish problems often become Flanders' rubbish problems when bankruptcy hits and sites are abandoned

Such projects are becoming more commonplace. Dominique Devos, a lawyer with DLA Piper in Brussels, says: “We haven’t paid much attention to it in the past, but a lot of these sites have huge potential.”

They also benefit from tax breaks. “There is new legislation whereby projects are selected by the Flemish government and carried out in a joint public/private partnership. There is a fiscal incentive in that you don’t have to pay tax when the development is sold.”

The payoff

Cleaning up the environment has to be managed in a holistic way. Phyto-remediation, for example, can take decades to be effective. Then the plants must be disposed of properly. “There’s a huge delay,” said BBLV’s waste management expert Kristof Debrabandere.

There’s also a risk in public/private partnerships that the goal of making a profit will crowd out environmental aims. However, concerns about image in an age where consumers demand that companies clean their act up is helping keep things on track.

Umicore was the first company in Belgium to sign a deal

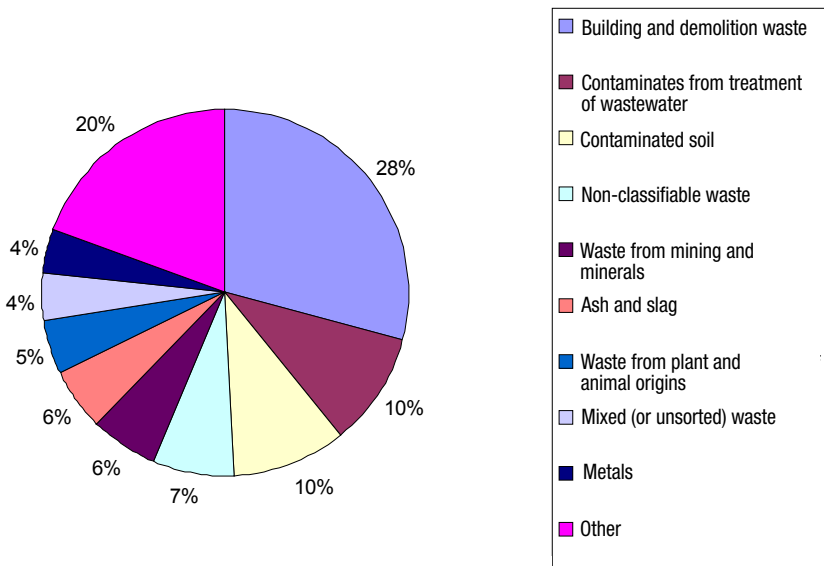
with authorities to clean up its old sites, extracting waste zinc from the soil. Eandis, which owned a lot of gas sites, has also agreed to clean itself up.

Lawyer Devos said: “Stock-listed companies are choosing voluntary agreements. This gives them a clear timing on the obligations they have,” says Devos. Meanwhile, Debrabandere adds that companies like Umicore, historically big polluters, have reinvented themselves as eco-friendly groups. “They couldn’t say they had turned a page and left that legacy. They would have been accused of green-washing.”

Given the raft of legislation being introduced at a European level, companies that jump on the bandwagon now will be ahead of the pack. It might be a dirty business, but it’s one that will ultimately pay off. ♦

www.ovam.be

Primary sources of industrial-related waste



Making good use of bad rubbish

Sifting through a pile of junk that’s been buried in a landfill hardly sounds like an appealing prospect, but the potential reward has got Groupe Machiels pushing up its shirt sleeves and delving in.

The group, based in Limburg, is about to become the first company to start up landfill mining in Belgium. Its plan is to sort through an old rubbish dump in Remo, re-disposing the waste. Valuable things are found in rubbish dumps – for example, metals that can be recycled. But Groupe Machiels will also be eyeing the garbage as a precious source of energy. All the paper, cardboard and vegetation, or biomass, will be burned to provide power.

“We are planning to take 15 million tonnes of waste, conduct water purification [of the leachate] and make electricity,” says a company spokeswoman. “We will also recycle or reuse the materials.”

Environmentalists have welcomed the plans, albeit with some scepticism. Kristof Debrabandere, a waste management expert, argues that there should be consideration paid to methane emissions which could be released once the site is mined. Methane is a potent greenhouse gas and is found in large quantities in landfills.

The project is still in its development phase, but once it is up and running, more than half of the waste could be converted into green electricity for 200,000 families a year for a period of 20 years.

Such projects kill two birds with one stone: Europe is panicking about its energy supply and cutting its greenhouse gas emissions so it needs to find more ways to create green energy and landfill sites are just a noxious blot on the landscape.

www.groupmachiels.com

Drawing a line

How far should the press go when human lives are brutally ended?

ALAN HOPE

One leading lawyer maintains that an alleged triple killer won't get a fair trial. A former minister characterises the press as "maggots feeding on the literal and figurative corpses" in a murder case. Belgium is in the grip of a new multiple murder case, and criticism of press coverage of the details is already at a boiling point.

A 38-year-old man from Loksbergen in Limburg is accused of the murder of a young couple, Shana Appeltans and Kevin Paulus, in January in his home town, and of a teenager in April 2007 near Diest. He has been identified by the newspapers, which have published photos, family and professional facts and lurid details of the murders (gained from anonymous sources "close to the enquiry").

For a reader from another legal system, the surprising element might be that so much is allowed to be reported. Belgian rules on press coverage are not laws, explains Yves Desmet, political commentator for *De Morgen*. The rules are laid down by the Council for Journalism, which consists of representatives of newspaper publishers, journalists and independent members. The council recognises the conflict between the right of the suspect to privacy and to the presumption of innocence on the one hand, and the public's right to information on the other.

When the Loksbergen double murder case first broke, some newspapers went farther than others, leading Desmet to attack, among others, *Het Laatste Nieuws* for publishing identifying details on the suspect. The main reporter for *Het Laatste Nieuws* replied to defend himself, pointing out that *De Morgen* had itself published enough details to identify the man and that his newspaper had stressed the man's presumption of innocence.

Only days later, hostilities were suspended, as the Leuven prosecutor's admission that the suspect had confessed to the murders (and to the murder of Annick Van Uytsel) opened the floodgates: now the newspapers could publish anything they could find.

The guidelines from the Council for Journalism, however, advise a minimum of reporting of identifying details, except in cases where there is an over-riding public interest, such as when a suspect is at large. A suspect can be identified where guilt is not at issue, such as when caught in the act or where a confession has been made.

However, as Paul Van Thielen, director of the federal judicial police, pointed out, "a confession is not necessarily the truth". He referred to

a case in Schiedam in the Netherlands in 2000 where a man confessed to the murder of a 10-year-old girl, leading to his conviction and an 18-year sentence. Four years later, he was released after DNA evidence proved beyond doubt that someone else had committed the crime.

In the Netherlands, the anonymity given to suspects even extends beyond the verdict. There, as Yves Desmet describes it, the system is "more strict but sometimes silly, so that the man who shot Pim Fortuyn is still known only as Volkert van der G".

In the United Kingdom, pre-trial reporting is restricted to the suspect's name and plea. The rules are not always adhered to, so that the 1991 murder conviction of sisters Michelle and Lisa Taylor was overturned in part because of press coverage which, the Court of Appeal said, created "a real risk of prejudice" to a fair trial.

In the United States, one of the most famous cases of prejudicial pre-trial press was the conviction of Dr Sam Sheppard for the murder of his wife in 1954. Sheppard, on whose case the TV series and movie *The Fugitive* were said to be based, served a decade in jail before F Lee Bailey, who later successfully defended OJ Simpson, convinced the Supreme Court he had not received a fair trial thanks to the "carnival atmosphere" surrounding the case. Sheppard was retried and acquitted.

"There are fundamentalists within the judicial world who want to protect their own interests," Desmet says. If their proposed restrictions were introduced, he says, "we would never have heard about the Brabant Killers case," which is still being investigated.

One of the "fundamentalists" is Ghent-based lawyer Walter Van Steenbrugge, who has recently repeated his objections to pre-trial coverage, as in his book *De affaire justitie*. "For the press, the

presumption of innocence is of little importance," he said. "The Flemish press is suffering from a hunger for sensation, and the more blood on the ceiling, the more copy there is in the paper." His recipe for a return to objectivity is stark: "As long as a case has not been fully disposed of by the courts, an investigating magistrate, a prosecutor and all other parties may not talk to the press. That's the only way to maintain the presumption of innocence." ♦



Dr Sam Sheppard, a prominent victim of pre-trial press coverage



Eddy and Martine Van Uytsel, parents of Annick, make an emotional appeal to be left alone

Amid the flood of news and speculation pouring out of the newspapers on the known and possible crimes of Ronald Janssen, the parents of one of his victims made an eloquent plea to be left alone by the media.

Eddy and Martine Van Uytsel are the parents of Annick, who was 18 when she disappeared in April 2007 while cycling home from a party in Schaffen, near Diest. Her last GSM signal was traced to Halen, where Ronald Janssen lives. Her body was found six days later in the Albert Canal. It had been carefully packed in plastic and weighed down, and all DNA and other trace evidence wiped out.

Following his confession to the murders of Shana and Kevin, Janssen admitted also to the killing of Annick, the prosecutors of Hasselt and Leuven have confirmed.

The Van Uytsel family have been represented from the start by star criminal lawyer Jef Vermassen, who is a familiar figure to media across Flanders, and who was in fact the first to propose Janssen as a possible solution to Annick's murder. Since then, he has also suggested Janssen might have other crimes on his conscience. However, while he remains one of the most prominent figures in the whole coverage of the affair, his

clients were asking to be excused from the spotlight.

"Our thoughts go out to the parents of Shana and Kevin," said Annick's mother Martine, while Eddy Van Uytsel looked on grim-faced. "Every parent who has ever lost a child will agree: this is the worst thing that can happen. We feel more of a bond now with the parents of Shana and Kevin, especially now that we know that our children have suffered the same trauma, at the hands of the same man. The fact that the killer is now arrested is a sort of consolation. No child will ever again be taken away by this man. But the places set for Shana and Kevin and Annick will always remain empty."

"We have long had to live with questions, and now we will have to go on living with the answers, and those we still have to discover. One question has now been answered: Who? But immediately new questions arise: What? Where? And most of all, Why?"

And they went on to ask the media to leave them alone. "For that, we need to be left in peace, for us and for our lawyer, free from any speculation, to try, as far as possible, to get on with our lives." ♦

InBev action threatens beer supplies

Stock up on your Stella now

ALAN HOPE

Industrial action by workers at the AB InBev brewery headquarters in Leuven, as well as breweries in Jupille and Hoegaarden, was expected to make itself sorely felt across the country this week, as stocks of two of the nation's most popular brews, Jupiler and Stella Artois, ran down in delivery depots and supermarkets.

The workers are protesting at plans by the company to cut 263 jobs. They have been blockading the Leuven plant since 7 January. Such a lengthy stoppage is unusual in recent Belgian industrial history, and lay-offs equal to or greater than those announced by InBev have not led to the same result when announced elsewhere. But InBev is profitable: the latest results showed profits of €3 billion on sales of €27bn. Against that background, unions said, the cutting of so many jobs is "decadent".

InBev did little to calm matters when it took its case to the courts, hoping to force unions to pay fines for continuing the blockade. It was seen as an escalation of the dispute, and the manoeuvre blew up in the brewer's face when the court in Liège, where the Jupille brewery is located, refused to accept the company's demands.

Then, at the end of last week, management announced that picketers would no longer be allowed



The company cut off supplies to the pickets, and the pickets cut off supplies to the country

to use wooden pallets to stoke their fires or to enter the factory for drinks. At press time, the two sides were due to come together for talks.

Other brewers, meanwhile, were ready to take advantage of the gap left by the InBev action. Haacht, which manufactures Primus beer, made plans for a nationwide advertising campaign. According to industry federation Horeca Vlaanderen, two in five

cafes have contracts with InBev — in some cases exclusive contracts. But, in the circumstances, that should not prevent them serving other beers while the dispute continues, secretary-general Luc De Bauw said. The problem many smaller brewers face, meanwhile, is time: it takes about a month for a newly-brewed pils to reach drinking quality, making unforeseen production increases impossible. ♦

Woestijnvis takes over Humo

TV production company Woestijnvis, responsible for, among others, the TV programme *Man bijt hond* and the hit film *Loft*, last week agreed to take a 49% stake in *Humo*, the weekly news and entertainment magazine. The deal was agreed with *Humo* publishers Sanoma Magazines after nine months of talks, for an undisclosed price. Sanoma will take a 25% stake in Woestijnvis.

"We're not listed on the stock market, so we don't have to divulge that sort of information," said Woestijnvis managing director Wouter Vandenhoute. "But we acquired *Humo* for a reasonable price. It would have been stupid, after all the fine things we've built up here in recent years, to take on financial risks."

Humo will move from its current home in Diegem to Vilvoorde, where De Vijver, the holding company that owns Woestijnvis, is located. But the two media entities will not be merging. "They will be two companies that work independently of each other," assures Vandenhoute. "Of

course *Humo* journalists will be able to be critical of Woestijnvis programmes. They have to. That'll keep us on our toes." Sam de Graeve, editor at über-popular quiz show *De slimste mens*, will join Jörgen Oosterwaals joint editor-in-chief of *Humo* when the show's season ends in two weeks.

The deal, according to Vandenhoute, has received the blessing of Guy Mortier, the magazine's editor emeritus and creative director. "That was very important for us," Vandenhoute said. "*Humo* was his child for many years. We're going to try to bring *Humo* back to the unique position it had in the 1980s."

One benefit of the acquisition has already become clear: the short films featuring cartoon character Kabouter Wesley, which Woestijnvis has been battling to remove from YouTube, can now be viewed, entirely legally, at the *Humo* website. ♦

→ www.humo.be

Scheldt dredging can begin

The dredging of the River Scheldt in the approaches to Antwerp harbour can go ahead, following a decision last week by the Council of State in the Netherlands, which ruled that an objection by two nature conservation organisations was not sufficient to halt the project.

The dredging is crucial to the future of Antwerp as a container port. Along the 70-kilometre channel between Vlissingen and the entrance to Antwerp harbour, known as the Westerschelde, the river is no longer deep enough at 12 points to allow the passage of the largest of the new container ships. They are currently only able to pass at high tide, which can mean valuable hours lost waiting outside the estuary.

The shallow points put Antwerp at a severe disadvantage compared with rival port Rotterdam, just up the coast. To complicate matters, most

of the Westerschelde lies in Dutch waters. Flanders has already cleared its own small part of the channel but could go no further without Dutch cooperation.

So when a Dutch court ordered a stop to the dredging plans last year, it was seen as little short of sabotage. The court was ruling on a complaint by two nature organisations that the dredging would have detrimental effects on the conditions for wildlife along the water's edge. These misgivings, in turn, were made worse by a decision by the Dutch government to change the way it ensured nature protection. Howls of protest followed what was seen as a reneging on treaty obligations by the government of Jan Peter Balkenende, with some populist Flemish politicians calling for a boycott on Dutch mussels.

Last week politicians from Flemish minister-president Kris Peeters on down welcomed the Dutch breakthrough. In Antwerp, meanwhile, the necessary ships have been booked from dredging companies Jan De Nul and Deme, the budget of €100 million from the Flemish Region is already set aside, and a starting date of 1 March was announced by public works minister Hilde Crevits. The works are expected to take two years to complete. ♦



◀ Opponents claim dredging threatens the wildlife in the polders of Zeeland

THE WEEK IN BUSINESS

Award • Manager of the Year

Bert De Graeve, managing director of Bekaert, has been elected Flemish "Manager of the Year" by readers of *Trends* business magazine. Zwevegem-based Bekaert is a world leader in steel-wire products. Under De Graeve, the company has successfully weathered the present economic turmoil.

Biotech • Galapagos

Mechelen-based bio-technology company Galapagos has signed a research partnership agreement with the Swiss Roche pharmaceutical company to develop treatments for chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases (COPD). The initial deal is worth €6 million, but could turn into a €400 million contract if successful. Galapagos now has research agreements with five of the world's 10 largest pharmaceutical groups

Chemicals • Solvay

Belgian chemical and plastics group Solvay plans will invest €160 million in its Vinythai affiliate in Thailand to develop a production line of epoxy resins derived from bio-fuels. The new plant will come on stream in 2012.

Chemicals • Taminco

Ghent-based chemical company Taminco is preparing to launch a €500 million IPO on the stock market. It would be the largest offering in years on the Euronext Brussels stock exchange.

Mail • Belgian Post

The presentation of De Post, the Belgian post office, to the stock market in the second half of this year could be put at risk by EU Commission concerns over state aids granted since 1992. Questions over capital injections (including one in 2003 worth €297.5m), taxation, guarantees and social benefits could delay the competition authorities' investigation, putting De Post's deadline in jeopardy. The 2003 injection was originally approved by the Commission but overturned by the court of justice. Another €62m in capital increases was never declared.

Metals • Nyrstar

Non-ferrous metals group Nyrstar is offering €140 million to acquire the Australian CBH Resources mining company. The move follows earlier acquisition of mines in the US, Greenland and Peru.

Mining • Atlas Copco

Atlas Copco, the Swedish industrial and mining equipment group, has set up a financial centre with €2.3 billion capital in Wilrijk, near Antwerp. The move takes advantage of Belgian notional interest legislation. Atlas Copco already employs 3,000 workers in Flanders, with a compressor production unit in Wilrijk, a distribution centre in Hasselt, a service facility in Overijse and an equipment-renting affiliate in Rumst.

Art + Sea = Ostend



Coastal resort is named as the very first "City of Culture"

LISA BRADSHAW

Long known (and recently touted in these pages) as a city that attracts artists of all kinds, Ostend has been chosen as Flanders' first-ever "City of Culture". The title is the initiative of former culture minister Bert Anciaux, who chose Ostend to come first, followed by Turnhout in 2012. (On the in-between years, the Flemish Region will appoint a "City of Sport".)

Aside from being virtually an artists' colony for painters and writers staying either full or part time, Ostend hosts many cultural events that other cities of its size (69,000) and location (at the far end of the country) would hesitate to take on: an annual theatre festival, dance festival (pictured) and film festival. The city is partially able to support them because of summer tourist trade – but it's also partly pride: a city that wants to keep its reputation as welcoming to artists had better offer them a cultural platform.

To that end, the city is renovating its old post office building, first constructed in the late 1940s, as a new cultural centre.

This will include two new theatres and fill a huge gap in the city's performance art space. Currently, the only stage in the city is the Kursaal auditorium with 2,200 seats. "This has caused us to have a lack of cultural partners, particularly socio-cultural associations and schools," says Nancy Bourgoignie, the city's alderwoman for culture. "With the renovation of the post office, we are actively doing something about that." Work begins this year and is set to finish in mid-2012.

Bourgoignie says that she is "not really surprised" that Ostend was chosen as the region's first City of Culture. "For years, Ostend has been the home base for many artists, and in the last 10 years there has been an increased attraction to artists, singers, writers and various other creative people. We always believed we had a strong case to be the first City of Culture."

Echoing the residents of the city, Bourgoignie explains that the city as a whole is open minded and accepting of alternative arts and lifestyles. "It's like a free

state for open minds," she says. "Creativity is encouraged here. And naturally, the closeness to the sea and the unique light also plays a big role."

The City of Culture was launched to recognise and encourage the cultural endeavours of smaller towns and cities in Flanders. "It was not the intention to explicitly leave out the larger cities," explains Gerda Van der Plas of the Flemish Culture Ministry, "but to encourage residents of smaller cities to take part in their cultural activities and to emphasise the offerings in these cities."

The budget for the year is €1,000,000, with €400,000 in support from the Flemish Region and the rest provided by private sponsors.

Ostend, meanwhile, has a wealth of activities planned and will add some extra mileage to their annual activities already on the schedule. City of Culture officially kicks off on 12 February with a special exhibition and runs through the end of the year. ♦

→ www.oostende2010.be

CULTURE NEWS

Flemish film performed so well last year that the Flemish Audio-Visual Fund is supporting 11 new films this year with funding. Among those that will shoot this year are *Uitgewist* (*Obliterated*) by Patrice Toye and *Vincent en het einde van de wereld* (*Vincent and the End of the World*) by Christophe Van Rompaey, director of the extremely successful *Aanrijding in Moskou*. Scripts being supported for further development include *Black* by Hans Herbots (whose *Bo* releases next month) and *Stille lente* (*Silent Spring*) by Jessica Woodworth and Peter Brosens, whose *Altiplano* is now showing in cinemas.

Many newspaper readers in Flanders were astonished this week to see Arno appearing in an ad for Lancia cars. The fiercely independent, trash talking, beer guzzling icon of Flemish rock said that he found it "an honour to do for Belgium what, among others, Carla Bruni has done in other countries. It must be that I'm a beautiful girl." The ad, with Arno's face pictured next to the new Lancia Delta, reads: "I have no car, and it's breaking my heart", in English. Those who know him realise, of course, that Arno has no driver's licence either.

Having finally surpassed the Catholic University of Leuven in student population, the city of Ghent has decided that they, too, need a student monument, like Leuven's "Kotmadam" on the Oude Markt (styled after women who supervise student houses), not to mention its iconic "Fonske" (Fountain of Wisdom). Ghent plans to erect an artwork on Sint-Pietersplein, a large square where student events are often held, and has hired local artist Anouk De Clercq to provide a proposal. They hope to be able to unveil the new monument this year.

The European Festival Awards has honoured Belgium with a full one-half of its 12 prizes for music fests in 2009. As part of the public prizes, Belgium won Best Medium-Sized Festival (Dour, Hainaut province), Best Small Festival (Cactus, Bruges), Best New European Festival (Openfields, also in Hainaut province) and Best Line-Up (Rock Werchter, Flemish Brabant). Industry prizes were given to Belgium for Artists' Favourite Festival (Rock Werchter) and Promoter of the Year (Herman Schueremans of Live Nation).

→ www.yourope.org



You name it, they've got it this year in Ostend

February: Opening Weekend No doubt, one reason the Flemish Region chose Ostend as the City of Culture for 2010 is because it is the 150th birthday of its most famous son, James Ensor.

- On **13 February**, Ostend's museum of fine arts, Mu.Zee, opens not yet another show of Ensor's work but the much more intriguing *Bij Ensor op Bezoek* (*Visiting Ensor*), a multi-media exhibition of work by visitors of the painter who would forever change expressionism. Welcoming them into his famous "blue salon" in Ostend, he hosted artists from near and far, who came to meet him – and sometimes to paint him, film him or write about him. The exhibition lasts through the summer, but this is the only day you'll also see the Spanish theatre group **Les Rates Mortes'** spectacular parade through the centre of the city, which begins at 19.00.

March:

- Milk, Inc.** If you missed this electronic duo at their big concerts in Antwerp last autumn, here is your second chance. On **13 March**, they turn the Sleuyter Arena into one big dance party.

April:

- 5 Days of Circus** Six circus acts in five days means you'll have to double up one day, but that probably won't be a problem since this takes place from **7 to 11 April**, the Easter vacation.
- Later in the month, on **22 and 23 April**, Canada's **Les 7 Doigts de la Main** comes to town with PSY, Mad Circus. It's not an exaggeration: this theatre/circus bunch is known for its surreal displays of a dream-like underworld. Just right for the city of Ensor.

May:

- Quarters:** this month is given over to neighbourhood groups in Ostend, who **every weekend** hold markets and other outdoor activities: live music, open-air theatre and plenty for kids.

The summer is possibly the most exciting time in the calendar of Ostend 2010. Stay tuned.

OSTEND 2010

A walk in the redwoods

Resist your urge to hibernate with part two of our winter walking series

MELISSA MAKI

Welcome to the second of our four-part *winterwandeling* (winter walking) series. This week we take you to Flemish Brabant and the exceptional Geographical Arboretum of Tervuren, which hosts a spectacular collection of trees from around the world.

Why visit an arboretum in winter? Because trees – especially this arboretum's giant sequoias and coastal redwoods – look even more majestic when covered with frost or snow.

The Geographical Arboretum of Tervuren is located just a few kilometres east of Brussels but, once within its confines, you'll feel as if you're kilometres away from anywhere. King Leopold II founded the arboretum in 1902. The initial landscape planning is attributed to Charles Bommer, who was then the curator of the National Botanical Gardens (now at Meise) and a professor at the Free University of Brussels.

The Royal Trust manages the park and maintenance is provided by the Flemish forest service. The arboretum is unique in Belgium – and in Europe – because of its formidable size and unique design. Trees in the 100-hectare woodland are organised by geographical origin rather than species. The idea is to help visitors experience the diverse varieties of trees in an atmosphere that is more akin to their native environment.

The origins of the more than 450 tree varieties span Europe, Asia, North Africa and the Americas. The arboretum is divided into "Old World" and "New World" sections. The Old World trees, in the eastern portion of the park, are indigenous to Europe and Asia, and even include a few varieties from Algeria. To the west, appropriately enough, are the New World trees of (mainly) North America. This section also features a notable variety from Chile, the *Araucaria*, more commonly known as the Monkey-puzzle tree (pictured below).

It had just snowed when I visited in early January, and it was quite the winter wonderland. The snow-covered conifers were breathtaking, and a number of visitors took advantage by donning skis. A couple of the hills were swarming with excited children, sleds in tow.

The arboretum's natural soundscape is sometimes punctuated by planes from Brussels Airport, which tends to draw you back to civilization, but otherwise the senses are overwhelmed by stunning scenery, the scent of pine needles and the chattering of birds.

Start your winter walk in the west at the main parking lot off Vlaktedreef with the impressive New World evergreens. Trails are easily apparent, but there's not much for signage, so be sure to bring a map, which you can print online or pick up at the Tervuren tourist office. The different tree types are numbered, so you can identify each species from the online map.

The trails are generally easy with some sloping hills, making the arboretum a great place for a family outing. If you're looking for a short walk, do the (roughly) three-kilometre loop around the New World section. You'll see stately firs from the Pacific Northwest of the US, as well as the extraordinary Monkey-puzzle and renowned California redwoods (photo right). If you want to see more, try the *Koninklijke Wandeling*, or Royal Promenade for a tour of seven kilometres through the whole park.

As in most natural areas of Flanders in winter, the trails can be snowy, wet and muddy, and so a good pair of boots is recommended. Entry to the arboretum and surrounding woods is free, but you won't find on-site information or toilets. Walking is the best way to experience the park, as bikes are only allowed on the Kapucijnendreef (and there is no bike parking). If you bring a dog, it must be on-leash. ♦

HOW DO I...

get a map?

This unofficial site offers a wealth of information (in five languages) about the arboretum and includes a map, detailed tree brochure and suggested walking routes.

→ www.arboretum-tervuren.be

The Tervuren tourist office sells a guidebook on the arboretum and offers a basic map that can be downloaded from their website. They also sell more detailed, topographical maps of *Het Zoniënwoud*, or the Sonian forest, of which the arboretum is a part.

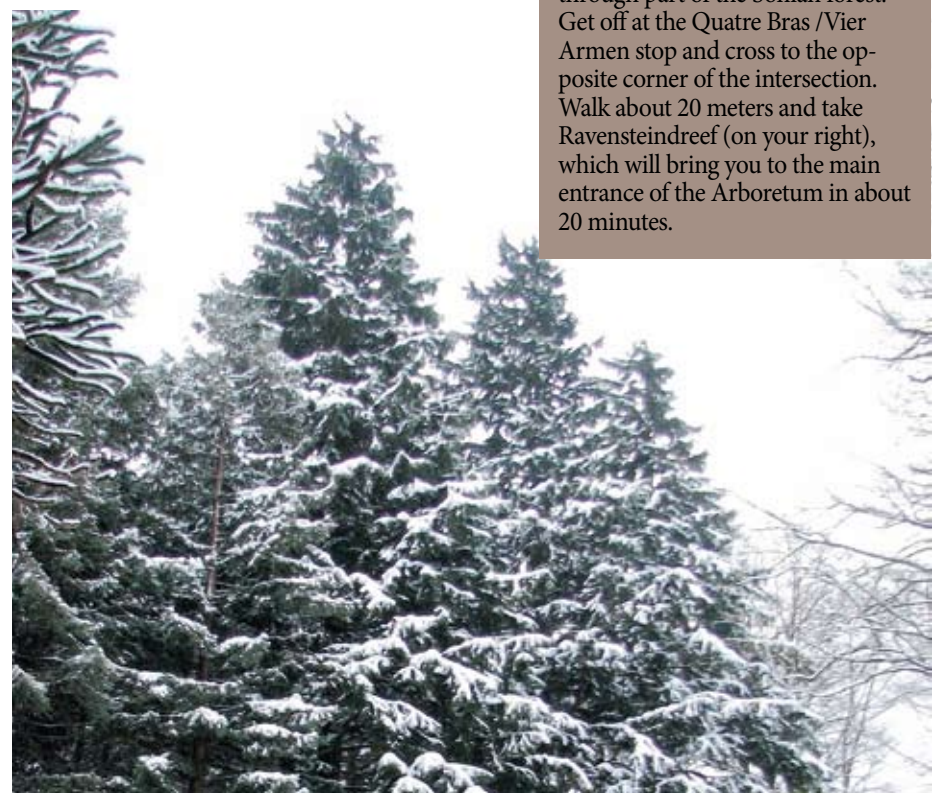
Markt 7, Tervuren

→ www.tervuren.be

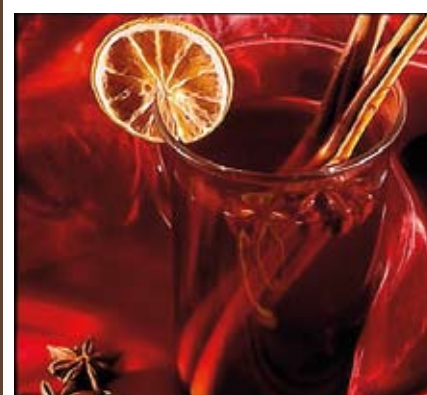
get there?

The easiest way to reach the arboretum is by car. Get to Tervuren via the Brussels ring road east, exit N3 Tervuren–Leuven. This main crossroads is known locally as the "Quatre Bras / Vier Armen" (four arms). After three kilometres, turn right into the village at the traffic lights and follow the Arboretum signs. From Brussels centre, you can reach the Vier Armen by following the Tervurenlaan all the way. The main access to the collections of the New World is located on the Vlaktedreef, which is a continuation of the Jezus-Eiklaan (parking area near the entrance).

By public transport: Take tram 44 from Montgomery underground station in the direction Tervuren Station. It's a scenic ride that crosses through part of the Sonian forest. Get off at the Quatre Bras / Vier Armen stop and cross to the opposite corner of the intersection. Walk about 20 meters and take Ravensteindreef (on your right), which will bring you to the main entrance of the Arboretum in about 20 minutes.



Post walk warm-up



After a couple of hours of *winterwandeling*, don't hesitate to check out the village of Tervuren. Its charming market square features a number of cafes and restaurants. Den Engel is a cosy pub at 21 Kerkstraat (just off the market square) with a menu featuring classic Belgian snacks. It also has a good selection of beers and drinks that will heat you up from the inside like *Hasseltse koffie* (coffee with jenever) and *warne wijn* (mulled wine).

The Flemish Primitives, take 2

Flanders' biggest culinary talents gather in the name of Belgian cuisine

COURTNEY DAVIS

The title might seem strange for a food event. But the group of chefs gathering on 8 February at the Concertgebouw in Bruges have much in common with the 15th-century painters known collectively as the Flemish Primitives: they are masters in their field, collaborating to expand the talent and scope of their art.

This culinary event brings together 17 Belgian chefs, most of them Michelin starred, as well as a number of visiting guests renowned for their talent, expertise and/or science, in the spirit of interaction and development.

The project began last year when Bruges food scientist Bernard Lahousse – the guy behind Flanders' food combining craze – brought 11 chefs to the first event to discuss science, food and culinary progress. This year, the group grew to 17 naturally. "It's a collective of passionate Belgian chefs who want to collaborate and exchange ideas."

Talent on hand is made up of a range of big names from the local and international world of gastronomy, including Dutch chef Sergio Herman of the three Michelin star Oud Sluis, the three Roca brothers (Josep, Jordi and Joan) of El Celler de Can Roca in Spain (last year named the fifth best restaurant in the world on the prestigious list of *Restaurant* magazine), and Flanders' own Peter Goossens of the Michelin three-star Hof van Cleve.

In its first year, the lectures, key note and chef demonstrations were given separately. This time, they interact and present simultaneously. "Last year the scientist presentations were all theoretical," explains Lahousse. "We want to show the application of science to provide solutions in the kitchen. Each chef will give a presentation on how they've been inspired to create

new gastronomic dishes, while related experts will explain what worked, what didn't and why."

The goal of The Flemish Primitives is to help establish Belgian cultural identity and how this unique gastronomy has reached a whole new level – not copied or mirrored from another country but driven internally by the area's own chefs, culinary history and local ingredients.

Guests include Harold McGee from the US, the famous *New York Times* columnist and cookbook author. Scientists from the Catholic University of Leuven and the University of Ghent will be in attendance, as well as experts from the Culinary Institute of America. Add in the German Institute of Food Technologies and the Howest Industrial Design Center, and you have a hotbed of diverse expertise and creativity all centred on food.

The event runs from morning until the evening's reception and party. But, besides the big names, the event remains a mystery, with specifics glaringly omitted. That won't stop foodies from buying up all the tickets, even if just to be in the same room with this group of food masters. It has been announced that four totally new tools and presentation methods will be revealed for the first time at the event.

The entrance fee is steep at €300. But you have the privilege of knowing that all the money is put back into next year's event; no guest or chef is paid. General members of the public are welcome, but, with that price tag, most of the 1,000 attendees are professionals looking to learn how to improve their methods in the kitchen. At the time this article went to press, about 100 tickets remained. ♦

→ www.theflemishprimitives.com



Home away from home: the exterior of Graanmarkt 13

Welcome home

Antwerp's latest shopping experience combines creature comforts

STÉPHANIE DUVAL

To say that Graanmarkt 13 is another concept store would be selling it short. It also wouldn't be accurate. More than two years ago, Ilse Cornelissens and her husband, Tim Van Geloven, started dreaming of their own shop in Antwerp. But their dreams were anything but conventional.

First proof of this is the wonderful location on the Graanmarkt: a quiet and picturesque plaza behind the old Bourla theatre. Beautiful, stately houses are obscured by rows of trees: not exactly what you would call a commercial site. But the fancy Schuttershofstraat – home to upscale boutiques such as Burberry, Gucci and Hermes – lies just around the corner. "We wanted to position ourselves near to the heart of things, but not right in the middle of it," Cornelissens explains, "because Graanmarkt 13 has to be more of a home than a shop."

You can take that quite literally, since Cornelissens and Van Geloven are moving into the apartment they designed on the top floor. The floor below will house their offices and a multifunctional room that can be used for receptions or art installations. The shop itself is on the ground floor. "We wanted to create a homely feeling," says Cornelissens, "a place where shoppers can experience a warm environment, where they can feel it's not just about spending money."

Though spending money will be inevitable, judging from the array of goods Graanmarkt 13 will offer. The couple recruited Bob Verhelst as their art director. The Flemish scenographer has been a consultant for Hermes, Cartier and Viktor&Rolf, and headed up the layout of exhibitions at fashion museums in both Antwerp and Paris.

Verhelst's visionary mix of fashion and art is a sure recipe for an interesting and unusual selection of brands and designers. Fashionistas will be happy to hear American brands such as Zero Maria Cornejo, Thakoon and Alexander Wang are now finally available here – exclusively in Belgium – next to Belgian designers Isabelle Baines and Sandrina Fasoli and French classics like Isabel Marant and Gaspard Yurkievich.

Everything in the boutique area is for sale: the fixtures from PS LAB Lighting, the furniture from Progreto Domestico and Dimore Studio, housewares from Nymphenburg and Felicity Jones.

Graanmarkt 13 is a group effort in more ways than one. Vincent Van Duysen is the award-winning Antwerp architect behind the project. "It wasn't easy because the previous owners had completely ruined the spaces," he asserts. Yet he succeeded in finding harmony between a cosy atmosphere and a clean environment in which design feels at home.

And while Bob Verhelst guides the content of the boutique and art space upstairs, Seppe Nobels – declared Best Junior Chef in 2005 and partner in crime of Wout Bru's catering company – is in charge of the restaurant in the basement. "We're going for honest cuisine with quality products," he says. "No molecular cooking, but a high level nonetheless."

Thus, at the grand opening on 13 February, Antwerp's Graanmarkt 13 becomes a one-stop-shop: for design and fashion, a glass of wine on the terrace and lunch down below. ♦

→ www.graanmarkt13.be

Avid shoppers should also note 10 February in their schedules, because that is when Jorrit Baars – mastermind behind Antwerp concept stores like Fish&Chips and Clinic – opens Your, his new version of the adventurous boutique in Antwerp.

→ www.your-antwerp.com

Meoooooww!!

Pink Flamingo's is a niche cafe with a difference

LISA BRADSHAW

There are plenty of cafes with plenty of gimmicks in Belgium. Maybe they have a kitschy collection of junk. Maybe they've preserved their Art Nouveau decor. Maybe they have 120 beers. Upon entering the Ghent cafe Pink Flamingo's on the nondescript Onderstraat, you feel you've entered a den of the first category. It even bills itself as a "kitsch & lounge bar".

But those who know what's what know that Pink Flamingo's isn't just kitsch – it's valuable kitsch. The always busy, always amicable spot is famous both inside and outside of Ghent for its wealth of ever-rotating 1950s, '60s and '70s collectibles.

"My living room looks a lot like this," smiles Lars Verhasselt, who, together with business partner Johan Deley, bought the cafe 11 years ago at the ripe age of 22. "It was a risk, but I was young," he says, as he lights up a cigarette on a cold December day just before Christmas. He's as much at home seated at his bar, as he is behind it, which is where you'll find him most of the time.

The place already had its name and its tell-tale sexy kitty logo (by "Atomic style" designer Matto Le D) two years before that. First it was a bookshop, then a second-hand shop, then a coffee bar. The owners, clearly unable to find their niche, sold it to the then-students. Verhasselt and his partner liked the kitsch quality that was already present and decided to keep it. In the years since, they've made the space a Mecca for collectors. There's nothing for sale, but they come to look.

Verhasselt is a collector, and he gets together with others of his feather to decide on upcoming themes: Pink Flamingo's is no helter-skelter kitsch joint – objects on display and their place-

ment are all planned well in advance and always follow a theme, be it "Italy", "divas" or "religion". Rotating every three months, the theme will soon be "erotique".

But, right now, it's "Almodóvar". You'll find the obvious delectable collectibles – stills of Penelope Cruz and other beautiful women from the Spanish director's movies – but also objects, such as old televisions, that suggest his genre, and still others that make it clear these people know what they are doing. A 1970s telephone puts one in mind of a key prop in *Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown* – or perhaps it's to remind us that Almodóvar worked for Spain's national telephone company in his youth. Record players and album covers from the same period are a reminder that his films' soundtracks are often played long after the cinema curtain has closed.

Some of the pieces are owned by Verhasselt or someone on his "team" of collectors – others are borrowed. With the ongoing craze for all things retro, "it's getting harder and harder to find original pieces that are affordable; prices are 20 times what they were 10 years ago," he says. "If I didn't change the interior, it would be easy. But I would get bored. And for the customers, it's better this way."

Changing the theme means that collectors (and any other admiring public) who want to have a peek at the latest collection just have to come back – not a bad business plan. The cafe used to, in fact, have a party every time the theme changed. But the noise level got a bit out of hand, and neighbours complained. So now they throw a big annual DJ dance party every January at Ghent arts centre Vooruit.

One thing that never changes, though, is the infamous Barbie chandelier just inside the doorway, which was commissioned by



the cafe's original owners. It's so original and unexpectedly fabulous that it's now on the official tour the city gives to visitors.

The cafe has done so well, Verhasselt has been able to open two shops around the corner – Zsa Zsa Rouge, which sells a collection of new colourful housewares and kitsch curios, and Petit Zsa Zsa, a children's shop for very cool parents and their kids.

Verhasselt wasn't born in Ghent, but he had friends here as a youth and decided to call it home, too. "People come here and stay here," he says of the city. But he could be talking about his bar. The customers are loyal, from the students through to the pensioners. "Our longest-standing customer died a year and a half ago," says Verhasselt. "He was 82."

But they are also diverse. The menu doesn't hurt – a good selection of beer and spirits (including the best Irish coffee outside of an Irish pub), plus milkshakes if you please. But mostly it's the feel of the place – run by 20- and 30-somethings who actually appear to know the value of making the over-40s feel at home. And the barkeeps are more patient with broken Dutch than anyone should ever have to be. Pink Flamingo's might be aching hip, but it doesn't care if you are. ♦



Pink Flamingo's Royale

30 January, from 22.00
Vooruit balzaal and cafe
Sint-Pietersnieuwstraat 23
Ghent

www.pinkflamingos.be





Flemish-Brabant & Leuven, one big painting

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

For more information please
go to www.leuven.be/welcome



Cost-cutting panic or investments in human capital?

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

Knowledge determines your competitive power

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

Investing in training: costs versus benefits

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

Vlerick, your partner in tailor-made training programmes

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

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

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Management School**



Mr Nobody

CHRISTOPHE VERBIEST

Once upon a time, Jaco Van Dormael was, thanks to his debut *Toto le héros* (*Toto the Hero*), the golden boy of the francophone Belgian cinema. But he hasn't directed a film since his second feature *Le huitième jour* (*The Eighth Day*) from 1996. He did invest quite some time in a Tintin project until Hergé's widow decided that Steven Spielberg and Peter Jackson were better suited.

She might change her mind after seeing Van Dormael's long-awaited third feature, *Mr Nobody*, playing now across the country. It's the director's first film in English and a roller coaster ride in which the imagination goes wild.

Nemo Nobody is, in 2092, the last living mortal on earth. At age 117 and surrounded by immortals, he contemplates his life. Or does he? Because we don't see one life, we see several, constantly multiplying. We're presented with a series of possible lives that all stem from one dilemma: will the nine-year-old Nemo (in a train station called Chance) decide to move

with his mother to the United States, or will he choose to stay in the United Kingdom with his father? Each choice leads to a different life, and within these two lives he's faced again with similar choices.

The consequences of choice are a constant thread in Van Dormael's work, dating back to his 1984 short *È pericoloso sporgersi* (*It is Dangerous to Project*) and narrated in *Mr Nobody*: "We cannot go back. That's why it's difficult to choose. As long as you don't choose, everything is possible."

Sounds serious, but Van Dormael serves it with a nice slice of humour. Jared Leto, who plays Nemo Nobody, thought that *Requiem for a Dream* was the wildest film he had ever played in, but admitted he had to change his opinion.

Visually, *Mr Nobody* is an amazing film – from the set design, with references to *2001: A Space Odyssey* and *Metropolis*, to the camerawork – but the charac-

ters are more puppets on a string than fleshed out human beings. Maybe that's what humans are in the hands of Fate.

In any case, this approach renders *Mr Nobody* a bit cerebral at times, and I could have done without the philosophical digressions about time, string theory and whatever, but chances are you won't see another movie this year that is as inventive and as entertaining at the same time, with poignant moments tossed in as a bonus. A fairy tale for adults from Wacko Jaco. ♦



→ www.mrnobody-lefilm.com



MORE FILM THIS WEEK

Cemetery State → *Beursschouwburg, Brussels*

La Ventana → *Zebracinema/Z33, Hasselt*

Death in Venice → *Filmhuis Klappeij, Antwerp*



Aalst

De Werf

Molenstraat 51; 053.73.28.12,
www.ccdewerf.be
JAN 23 20.00 AedO

Antwerp

Buster

Kaasrui 1; 03.232.51.53,
www.busterpodium.be
JAN 22 22.00 The John Swift Band

De Roma

Turnhoutsebaan 327; 03.292.97.40,
www.deroma.be
JAN 22 20.30 Stash + Red Light
Symfonic Orchestra

Sportpaleis

Schijnpoortweg 119; 070.345.345,
www.sportpaleis.be
JAN 23 20.00 Depeche Mode

Trix

Noordersingel 28; 03.670.09.00,
www.trixonline.be
JAN 28 19.30 Enter Shikari

Ardoonie

Cultuurkapel De Schaduw
Wezestraat 32; 0479.80.94.82,
www.deschaduwnet
JAN 22 20.30 Bai Kamara Jr

Brussels

Ancienne Belgique

Anspachlaan 110; 02.548.24.24,
www.abconcerts.be
JAN 21 20.00 Ok Go

Fuse

Blaesstraat 208; 02.511.97.89,
www.fuse.be
JAN 23 23.00 Ripperton album release
party, featuring Raudive

Koninklijk Circus

Onderrichtsstraat 81; 02.218.20.15,
www.cirque-royal.org
JAN 24 20.00 The Black Angels +
Wolfmother

La Porte Noire

Cellebroersstraat 67; 02.511.78.37,
www.grievousangels.eu
JAN 22 22.00 The Grievous Angels

Le Botanique

Koningsstraat 236; 02.218.37.32
JAN 25 20.00 Local Natives
JAN 26 20.00 Good Shoes

Recyclart

Ursulinenstraat 25; 02.502.57.34,
www.recyclart.be
JAN 21 20.00 Domestic Science
Club#1: How to Make Your Own
Clouds **JAN 22** 22.00 Climate Jockey
Night + Rebel Up DJs + Lowdjo +
Jay Weed + Douster **JAN 28** 20.30
Jean-Louis + Clement Nourry + Jam
session Brussels Open

Théâtre Varia

Scepterstraat 78; 02.640.82.58
Until JAN 23 20.30 Vaya Con Dios

Woluwe-Saint-Pierre Cultural Centre

Charles Thielemanslaan 93;
02.773.05.88, www.ticketnet.be
JAN 23 20.30 Jane Birkin

Ghent

Charlatan

Vlaammarkt 6; 09.224.24.57,
www.charlatan.be
JAN 21 22.00 Child Abuse, grindcore/
fusion

GET YOUR TICKETS NOW!

Chichester Psalms

featuring Jef Neve

**22 January
to 20 March
Across Flanders**

Last year he gave us his first piano concerto; this year he's staying with a classical theme for an Agnus Dei. Jazz prodigy Jef Neve, this month awarded Musician of the Year at the MIAs, has found a new avenue for his inventiveness. Together with the Vlaams Radio Koor, who commissioned the piece, he'll be playing a series of concerts across Flanders, kicking off on 22 January at Flagey in Brussels. Also featuring the *Chichester Psalms* by Leonard Bernstein and extracts from *West Side Story*.



© Stephan Vanlasteren

→ www.vlaamsradiokoor.be

Kinky Star

Vlaammarkt 9; 09.223.48.45,
www.kinkystar.com
JAN 26 21.00 Chloe and the
Lonesome Cowboy

Vooruit

St Pietersnieuwstraat 23; 0900.26.060,
www.vooruit.be
JAN 27 22.00 Tape Tum

Grimbergen

CC Strombeek

Gemeenteplein; 02.263.03.43,
www.ccstrombeek.be
JAN 21 20.30 Joji Hirota & His Taiko
Drummers

Kortrijk

De Kreun

Jan Persijnstraat 6; 056.37.06.44,
www.dekreun.be
JAN 21 20.00 Lieven Verstraete
JAN 22 20.00 JtoheC & The Bad
Mothas
JAN 24 18.00 Om

Leuven

Het Entrepot

Binnenweg 4; 050.61.02.48,
www.het-entrepot.be
JAN 23 22.00 Bootlickaz + Lady G
+ Crooked Facts

Stuk

Naamsestraat 96; 016.32.03.20,
www.stuk.be
JAN 21 20.30 James Blackshaw +
Hellvete
JAN 28 20.30 Dez Mona + Blackie &
the Oohoos

Meise

GC De Muze
Brusselsesteenweg 69; 02.272.00.29,
www.demuzevanmeise.be
JAN 23 20.00 Lenny Khur

Sint-Niklaas

OJC Kompas
Driekoningenstraat 48; 03.776.72.70,
www.ojckompas.be
JAN 22 20.00 All That Is Punk



Alseberg

CC De Meent
Gemeenveldstraat 34; 02.359.16.00,
www.demeent.be
JAN 28 20.15 De Nolf + Sheppard +
Pallemarts

Antwerp

Buster
Kaasrui 1; 03.232.51.53,
www.busterpodium.be
JAN 20 21.30 Chad McCullough
Quartet

De Hopper

Leopold De Waelstraat 2;
03.248.49.33, www.cafehopper.be
JAN 24 16.00 Groove Juice Special
JAN 25 21.00 The Circle

De Roma

Turnhoutsebaan 327; 03.292.97.40,
www.deroma.be
JAN 21 20.30 Roland Van Campenhout

Bruges

De Werf
Werfstraat 108; 050.33.05.29
JAN 22 20.30 Rudresh Mahanthappa +
Indo Pak Coalition

Stadsschouwburg

Vlamingstraat 29; 050.44.30.40,
www.cultuurcentrumbrugge.be
JAN 23 20.00 DjanGO!, tribute to
Django Reinhardt by Minor Swing and
Nuages

Brussels

Jazz Station
Leuvensesteenweg 193; 02.733.13.78
JAN 20 20.30 Charlier with Sourisse
Quartet
JAN 23 18.00 Nami
JAN 27 20.30 The Flying Fish Jump

Sazz'n Jazz

Koningsstraat 241; 0475.78.23.78,
www.sazznjazz.be
Concerts at 20.30:
JAN 20 20.30 Mathilde Renault
JAN 21 20.30 Piero Delle Monache
JAN 27 20.30 Octet Red

Sounds Jazz Club

Tulpenstraat 28; 02.512.92.50,
www.soundsjazzclub.be
Concerts at 22.00:
JAN 20 Chamaquiando **JAN 21**
Lattuca-Andrioli-Vanattenhoven Trio
JAN 22 Bardoscia-Roche-Estievenart
Trio **JAN 23** Golden 80s **JAN 25**
Master Session **JAN 26** Laurent
Doumont Soul Band **JAN 27** Caribe
con K - Los Soneros del Barrio

The Cotton Club - Grand Casino
Duquesnoystraat 14; 02.289.68.66,
www.gcb.be
JAN 23 21.30 Bruno Grollet Quartet

The Music Village
Steenstraat 50; 02.513.13.45,
www.themusicvillage.com
Concerts at 21.00:
JAN 20 Nathan Daems Quintet **JAN**
21 Labtrio **JAN 22-23** Rhoda Scott
& Félix Simtaine **JAN 27** De Beren
Gieren

Ghent

Vooruit
St Pietersnieuwstraat 23; 0900.26.060,
www.vooruit.be
JAN 20 20.00 Michael Moore
JAN 26 20.00 Erik Friedlander's
Broken Arm Trio

Grimbergen

CC Strombeek
Gemeenteplein; 02.263.03.43,
www.ccstrombeek.be
JAN 20 20.30 De Nolf + Sheppard +
Pallemarts



Antwerp

Zuiderpershuis
Waalse Kaai 14; 03.248.01.00,
www.zuiderpershuis.be
JAN 22 20.30 Bunun en Paiwan,
polyphony ('Taiwanese aboriginals)

Brussels

Sazz'n Jazz
Koningsstraat 241; 0475.78.23.78, www.
sazznjazz.be
JAN 28 20.30 Bruxelles' Aires Tango
Orchestra

Théâtre Molière

Bastionsquare 3; 02.217.26.00,
www.muzeikpublique.be
JAN 20 12.30 Hamon-Martin Duo
JAN 22 20.00 Deux Accords Diront
JAN 23 20.00 Julie Murphy & Fernhill +
Griff Trio

Vilvoorde

CC Het Bolwerk
Bolwerkstraat 17; 02.255.46.90
JAN 20 20.30 Etta Scollo – "Les Siciliens"



Antwerp

Amuz
Kammenstraat 81; 03.248.28.28,
www.amuz.be
JAN 22 21.00 Christine Busch, violin:
Bach, Ysaÿe, Prokofiev, more
JAN 24 15.00 L'Armonia Sonora
conducted by Mienke van der
Velden: German baroque cantatas
JAN 28 21.00 Chichester Psalms:
Vlaams Radio Koor conducted by
Timo Nuoranne, with Jef Neve, piano:
Bernstein, Eric Whitacre, Jef Neve

deSingel

Desguinlei 25; 03.248.28.28,
www.desingel.be
Concerts at 20.00:
JAN 21 50th birthday celebration for
Belgian composer Luc Brewaeys, with
Michael Schmid, flute; Bruce Richards,
horn; conducted by Georges-Elie:
Brewaeys, Jonathan Harvey and
Tristan Murail **JAN 22** Lecture Songs
#1: first in a series of New Year
concerts by Muziektheater LOD that
combine early music performances
with lectures by prominent thinkers:
baroque ensemble B'Rock, conducted
by Frank Agsteribbe: Purcell, Matthew
Locke. Speaker is mathematician
and philosopher Jean-Paul Van
Bendegem **JAN 23** Belgian National
Orchestra conducted by Walter Weller,
with Vadim Repin, violin: Brahms,
Zemlinsky, more **JAN 27** Hui Liu
Ensemble (Het Collectief and Dragon
Ensemble), conducted by Renchang
Fu: world premières of pieces by
composers Huang Ruo, Kee-Yong
Chong and Annelies Van Parys,
followed by traditional Chinese music

Bruges

Concertgebouw
't Zand 34; 070.22.33.02,
www.concertgebouw.be
Concerts at 20.00:
JAN 20 Lecture Songs #1: first of a
new series by Muziektheater LOD that

combines early music performances
with lectures by prominent thinkers.
Baroque ensemble B'Rock, conducted
by Frank Agsteribbe: Purcell,
Matthew Locke. Speaker is the
mathematician and philosopher Jean-
Paul Van Bendegem (in Dutch) **JAN**
22 Orchestre des Champs-Élysées
conducted by Andreas Staier: Mozart,
Haydn **JAN 27** L'Armonia Sonora
conducted by Mienke van der
Velden: German baroque cantatas **JAN**
28 Brussels Philharmonic conducted
by Hervé Niquet: Debussy cantatas
composed for the Prix de Rome award

Brussels

Bozar
Ravensteinstraat 23; 02.507.82.00,
www.bozar.be
JAN 20 20.00 Abdel Rahman El
Bacha, piano: Ravel **JAN 22 &**
24 15.00/20.00 Belgian National
Orchestra conducted by Walter
Weller, with Vadim Repin, violin:
Brahms, Jongen, more **JAN 24** 11.00
Emil Jonason, clarinet; Peter Friis
Johansson, piano: Debussy, Brahms,
more **JAN 27 & 28** 20.00 Mariinsky
Orchestra conducted by Valery
Gergiev: Tchaikovsky, Borodin,
Rimsky-Korsakov (Wednesday),
Mussorgsky, Shostakovich,
Tchaikovsky (Thursday) **JAN 28**
12.30 Baudouin Giaux, flute; Annie
Lavoisier, harp; Sophie Causanschi,
violin; Luc Vandermaelen, narrator:
music by Berlioz and readings from
his memoirs

De Munt

Muntplein; 070.23.39.39,
www.demunt.be
JAN 21-FEB 4 15.00/20.00 Elektra
by Richard Strauss, directed by Guy
Joosten, conducted by Lothar Koenigs

Flagey

Heilig Kruisplein; 02.641.10.20,
www.flagey.be
JAN 22 20.15 Chichester Psalms:
Vlaams Radio Koor conducted by
Timo Nuoranne, with Jef Neve, piano:
music by Leonard Bernstein, Eric
Whitacre, Jef Neve
JAN 26 20.15 Brussels Philharmonic
conducted by Hervé Niquet, with
Guylaine Girard, soprano; Alain Buet,
baritone; Bernard Richter, tenor:
Debussy

Kaaitheater

Saintelettesquare 19; 02.201.59.59,
www.kaaitheater.be
JAN 23 20.30 Kwadratur # 2/Transfo:
new music ensemble Bl!ndman,
conducted by Eric Sleichim, presents
the world première of a work by
Belgian composer Luc Brewaeys,
followed by arrangements by Sleichim
JAN 26 20.30 Lecture Songs #1: first
of a eries of New Year concerts by
Muziektheater LOD that combine
early music performances with
lectures by prominent thinkers.
Baroque ensemble B'Rock, conducted
by Frank Agsteribbe: Purcell, Matthew
Locke. The speaker is mathematician
and philosopher Jean-Paul Van
Bendegem

Musical Instruments Museum

Hofberg 2; 02.545.01.30, www.mim.be
JAN 24 11.00 Mate Szűcs, viola;
Daniel Blumenthal, piano: Henri
Vieuxtemps, Ernest van der Eyken,
Brahms (www.astoria-concerts.be)

Ghent

De Bijloke
Jozef Kluyskensstraat 2, 09.269.92.92,
www.debijloke.be
JAN 23 20.00 Chichester Psalms:
Vlaams Radio Koor conducted by
Timo Nuoranne, with Jef Neve, piano:
music by Leonard Bernstein, Eric
Whitacre, Jef Neve
JAN 27 20.00 Les Jeunes Solistes
conducted by Rachid Safir: choral
works by Monteverdi, Scelsi, Carissimi

Handelsbeurs

Kouter 29; 09.265.92.01,
www.handelsbeurs.be
JAN 20 20.15 Belcea Quartet:
string quartets by Beethoven and
Szymanowski

DON'T MISS

How doth the little crocodile Improve its
shining tail And pour the waters of
the Nile On every golden scale How
cheerfully it seems to grin How
cheerfully it seems to grin How neatly
it spreads its claws And welcomes
little fishes in With gently-smiling
jaws How doth the little crocodile
Improve its shining tail And pour
the waters of the Nile On every
golden scale How cheerfully it
seems to grin How neatly it spreads

Gedichtendag

(Poetry Day)

28 January
Across Brussels and
Flanders

A celebration of Dutch-language
poetry, with readings,
special exhibitions and con-
certs. Highlights include an
interview with Andy Fierens,
poet and host of "Donderda-
gen van de Poëzie"; acoustic
performance by Luc De Vos
of the rock band Gorki, ac-
companying friend and writer
Christophe Vekeman; and a
poetry walk in Lommel (Lim-
burg) featuring Bart Moey-
aert and other local poets,
plus *Aboriginal Storytellers* in
the Zuidpool café. Poetry Day
also includes presentations of
work translated into Dutch,
including a celebration of
Chinese poetry.

→ www.gedichtendag.com

JAN 28 20.15 Gavriel Lipkind, cello;
Roman Zaslavski, piano: Beethoven,
Brahms, Stravinsky, Britten



Brussels

De Munt
Muntplein; 070.23.39.39,
www.demunt.be
Until **FEB 4** 15.00/20.00 Elektra by
Richard Strauss, directed by Guy
Joosten, with Evelyn Herlitzius/
Nadine Secunde, sopranos (Elektra)
and De Munt Symphony Orchestra,
conducted by Lothar Koenigs



Antwerp

Vlaamse Opera
Frankrijklei 1; 070.22.02.02,
www.vlaamseopera.be
Until **FEB 13** Royal Ballet of
Flanders in Grands Égards, with
music performed by deFilharmonie,
conducted by Benjamin Pope

Brussels

Théâtre les Tanneurs
Huidevettersstraat 75; 02.512.17.84,
www.lesanneurs.be
Until **JAN 22** 20.30 Cie La Dame de
Pic in Humus vertebra, choreographed
by Karine Ponties



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Leuven

30CC - Schouwburg
Bondgenotenlaan 21; 016.32.03.20,
www.30CC.be
JAN 26 20.00 Toneelhuis in Foi,
choreographed by Sidi Larbi
Cherkaoui, music by Capilla Flamenca



Antwerp

CC Deurne Podium
Frans Messingstraat 36; 03.360.85.50,
www.ccdeurne.be
JAN 24 20.30 't Arsenaal in Belga by
Rachida Lamrabet, staged by Michael
De Cock (in Arabic, Dutch and
French, with surtitles in Dutch)

HetPaleis
Theaterplein 1; 03.202.83.11,
www.hetpaleis.be
Until MAR 19 Sunjata, de
leeuwenkoning van Mali (The Lion
King of Mali) (ages six and up; in
Dutch)

Toneelhuis/Bourla
Komedieplaats 18; 03.224.88.44,
www.toneelhuis.be
JAN 21-23 20.00 Bruno Vanden
Broecke in Missie, directed by Raven
Ruëll (in Dutch)

Bruges

English Theatre
Walplein 23; 050.68.79.45,
www.tematema.com
JAN 22-24 20.00 Cameron Stewart
in My Grandfather's Great War (in
English)

Brussels

Kaaistudio's
Onze-Lieve-Vrouw van Vaakstraat 81;
02.201.59.59, www.kaaitheater.be
JAN 20 20.30 & 21.30 Propositions 1
& 2: Reanimation, Reconstruction by
Miet Warlop (without dialogue)
JAN 21-22 20.30 Springville by Miet
Warlop (without dialogue)
JAN 28-29 20.30 NTGent in Julius
Caesar, written and staged by Peter
Verhelst (in Dutch)

Kaaitheater
Saintelettessquare 19; 02.201.59.59,
www.kaaitheater.be
JAN 21-30 **20.30 Tristero in Living**,
theatre/dance/live installation
(without dialogue)

KVS Box
Arduinkaai 9; 02.210.11.12,
www.kvs.be
Until JAN 23 20.30 Weg by Josse De
Pauw, music by Peter Vermeersch,
performed by De Pauw, Vermeersch
and Peter Vervloesen (in Dutch)

The Warehouse Studio
Waelhemstraat 69a; 0477.40.87.04,
www.theatreinbrussels.com
Until JAN 30 20.00 American Theatre
Company presents Oscar and the Lady
in Pink by Eric-Emmanuel Schmitt,
with Ruth England (in English)

Ghent

De Bijloke
Jozef Kluyskensstraat 2, 09.233.68.78,
www.lod.be
Until JAN 23 20.00 Autopsie Van Een
Gebroken Hart (Autopsy of a Broken
Heart), written and staged by An De
Donder & Dominique Pauwels (in
Dutch)

NTGent Schouwburg
Sint-Baafsplein 17; 09.225.01.01
www.ntgent.be
Until APR 2 20.30 Els Dottermans in
Was will das Weib? (music theatre, in
Dutch)

Sint-Niklaas

Museumtheater
Zwijgershoek 14; 03.766.39.39,
www.ccsint-niklaas.be
JAN 22-23 20.00 't Arsenaal in Belga
by Rachida Lamrabet, directed by
Michael De Cock (in Arabic, Dutch
and French, with surtitles in Dutch)



Antwerp

Royal Museum of Fine Arts
Leopold De Waelplaats; 03.238.78.09,
www.kmska.be
JAN 22-FEB 28 Work on paper,
paintings by Koen van den Broeck

Sfinks Café
Heuvelstraat 63a, Boechout;
03.455.69.44, www.sfinks.be
Until MAR 11 Arbeiders onder
druk (Workers under pressure),
photographs by Tineke D'haese and
Eric de Mildt, in cooperation with
Oxfam-Solidariteit

Brussels

art)&(marges
Hoogstraat 312-314;
02.511.34.20, www.arthis.org
Until FEB 21 Surprising Dialogues,
selection of outsider art from the new
museum shown alongside works from
fine arts museums in Belgium

Atomium
Atomium Square; 02.475.47.72,
www.atomium.be
Until APR 25 Ludic Modernism in
Belgium 1955-1963, photographs,
posters, models, films and furniture
recall the popular architectural style,
also known as Spirou or the '58 style

Beursschouwburg
August Ortsstraat 20-28; 02.550.03.50,
www.beursschouwburg.be
Until FEB 26 I Wasn't Born Yesterday,
Deary: A Trip in the Eye of Guy
Maddin, photographs by Michèle
Matyn of the Canadian town of
Winnipeg, home to cult film director
Guy Maddin

Bozar
Ravensteinstraat 23; 02.507.82.00,
www.bozar.be
Until APR 18 Frida Kahlo y su
mundo, works by the famous Mexican
artist on loan from the Dolores
Olmedo Museum

Brussels Info Place (BIP)
Koningsplein; 02.563.63.99,
www.biponline.be
Until JAN 29 Christophe Licoppe:
Brussels by Night, photographs

Jewish Museum of Belgium
Minimenstraat 21; 02.512.19.63
Until FEB 21 Arno Stern:
Retrospective, some 50 works by the
French artist known for founding
Expression Semiology

Natural Science Museum
Vautierstraat 29; 02.627.42.38,
www.naturalsciences.be
Until AUG 29 Whales and Dolphins

Royal Museum of the Armed Forces
Jubelpark 3; 02.737.78.33,
www.legermuseum.be
Until FEB 28 Aanvalleuh!, works by
Belgian comic strip artists
Until APR 11 Dieren in de oorlog
(Animals in the War), archive photos
and films of animals affected by the
First World War

Royal Museum of Art and History
Jubelpark 10; 02.741.72.11,
www.kmkg-mrah.be
Until MAR 14 Vier Doornikse
wandtapijten uit Pastrana (Four
Tournai Tapestries from Pastrana),
historically important tapestries
originating from the Belgian city

of Tournai and restored in Spain
(marking the EU Spanish presidency)
Until APR 18 Isabelle de Borchgrave's
I Medici: a Renaissance in Paper,
life-size paper replicas of historic
costumes
Until DEC 27 World Press Photo

Royal Museum of Fine Arts
Regentschapsstraat 3; 02.508.32.11,
www.fine-arts-museum.be
Until JAN 31 Delvaux and the
Ancient World, some 60 paintings and
drawings by the Belgian artist
Until JAN 31 The Art of Gaming,
works from the collection of the
National Lottery on the occasion of its
75th anniversary

Tour & Taxis
Havenlaan 86C; 02.549.60.49,
www.tour-taxis.com
Until MAR 28 It's Our Earth 2! From
Kyoto to Copenhagen, interactive
exhibition exploring the effects of
climate change on the natural world
Until MAR 28 John Fitzgerald
Kennedy: The American Dream,
photographs, audio-visual documents
and objects relating to the assassinated
US president (www.jfk-expo.be)

WIELS
Van Volxemlaan 354; 02.340.00.50,
www.wiels.org
Until JAN 24 Speedy Wash #6 :
installations by Anna Rispoli and
Teresa Sdravovich
Until APR 25 Felix Gonzales-Torres:
Specific Objects without Specific
Form, retrospective of the late Cuban-
born American artist

Geel

Gasthuismuseum
Gasthuisstraat 1; 014.59.14.43,
www.gasthuismuseumgeel.net
Until MAR 31 God of Doctor?,
collection illustrating the history of
healing in Geel

Ghent

Design Museum
Jan Breydelstraat 5; 09.267.99.99,
http://design.museum.gent.be/
Until FEB 7 Siegfried De Buck,
jewellery designer and silversmith
Until FEB 7 Artel (1908-1935), Czech
cubism in daily life
Until FEB 7 Disappeared from the
GDR, crockery design from 50 years
ago by Christa Petroff-Bohne

Museum of Fine Arts
Fernand Scribbedreef 1 – Citadelpark;
09.240.07.00, www.mskgent.be
Until FEB 7 Max Beckmann, prints
and paintings from the collection
of the Von der Heydt Museum in
Wuppertal
Until FEB 7 Fernand Léger's Le Grand
Déjeuner, masterpiece painting on
loan from the Museum of Modern Art
in New York

SMAK
Citadelpark; 09.221.17.03,
www.smak.be
Until JAN 31 Stefaan Dheedene,
installations
Until JAN 31 Jasper Rigole,
audiovisual installations
Until JAN 31 Faux Jumeaux (False
Twins), changing exhibition curated
by Michel François
Until FEB 7 Ben Benaouisse: Jan
Fabre revisited, performance art
Until MAR 14 GAGARIN The Artists
in their Own Words, a collection of
texts by participating artists

Grimbergen

CC Strombeek
Gemeenteplein; 02.263.03.43,
www.ccstrombeek.be
Until FEB 21 Witte schaduw (White
Shadow), drawings by Roger Raveel

Hasselt

Cultuurcentrum
Kunstlaan 5; 011.22.99.31,
www.ccha.be

Until FEB 21 Witte schaduw (White
Shadow), drawings by Roger Raveel

Leuven

STUK
Naamsestraat 96; 016.32.03.20,
www.stuk.be
Until JAN 24 Matt Mullican,
drawings, sculpture, architectural
installations and performances by the
American artist

Machelen-Zulte

Het Roger Raveelmuseum
Gildestraat 2-8; 09.381.60.00,
www.rogerraveelmuseum.be
Until FEB 21 Espace: Raveel en
Nederland, paintings



Djangofollies: Annual festival
celebrating the 100th anniversary
of the birth of Belgian Gypsy jazz
guitarist Django Reinhardt
Until JAN 31 in venues across the
country
www.lesrichesclaires.be

Europalia China: Festival celebrating
Chinese art and culture, ancient to
contemporary, with more than 450
events
Until JAN 30 across the country
www.europalia.eu

Gedichtendag 2010: Dutch/Flemish
poetry festival with readings,
performances, exhibitions, poetry
walks, writing competitions and more.
Culminate in an award ceremony for
this year's Herman de Coninck prize,
featuring presentations by all five
nominated poets: Paul Bogaert, Eva
Cox, Charles Ducal, Leonard Nolens
and Roel Richelieu Van Londersele
28 JAN across Brussels and Flanders
www.gedichtendag.com

Brussels

European Motor Show: Car fair with
focus on green technology
Until JAN 24 at Brussels Expo, Heysel
02.474.89.81, www.salonauto.be

Jazz Festival Marni: Annual jazz
festival, plus exhibitions and films
Until JAN 30 at Théâtre Marni and
Flagey
02.641.10.20
www.jazzfestivalmarniflagey.be

One Foot in America: Jewish
Emigrants of the Red Star Line and
Eugeen van Mieghem: Illustrated
presentation by Erwin Joos, the
director and curator of the Van
Mieghem Museum in Antwerp (in
English)
JAN 23 20.00 at the International
Jewish Center of Belgium
0477.281.678, www.ijc.be

¡Viva México Festival!:
Multidisciplinary arts festival
marking the bicentenary of Mexico's
independence and the centenary
of its revolution: Frida Kahlo,
modernist architecture, contemporary
photography and Imagènes des
Mexicano, a major show on
portraiture, plus performances and
screenings
Until MAY 24 at Bozar,
Ravensteinstraat 23
02.507.82.00, www.bozar.be

Ghent

Trouw Gent: Wedding fair
JAN 22-24 at Flanders Expo,
Maaltekouter 1
09.241.92.11
www.trouw-mariage-expo.be



REBECCA BENOOT

De Gouden Vis Nauwstraat 7 Mechelen

The Vismarkt in Mechelen may
be known for its many cafés and
restaurants, but the city's most
popular pub is juuust outside
of it, in the rightfully named
Nauwstraat (Narrow Street).
De Gouden Vis is a delectable
Art Nouveau café with a terrace
on the waterfront overlooking
the river Dijle. This exceptional
location makes it one of the
city's hot spots in the summer,
where you can enjoy a glass of
wine and a soft breeze in the
company of fragrant flowers
and candles.

This time of year, though, you'll
be heading indoors to an inter-
ior best described as "shabby
chic". The building that houses
De Gouden Vis is old and
rambling, but this adds to the
collective bric-a-brac charm.
With old books, golden mirrors
and Nouveau-style advertise-
ments and lamps, this café is a
hotbed of culture-loving crowds
of all ages, who come here to
discuss theatre, literature or
play a game of chess. Although
the menu is a bit restricted, the
establishment surely isn't.

What you will find on draft
is the Westmalle Dubbel and
the locally produced Gouden
Carolus Ambrio. Take yours
into one of three rooms in
three slightly different styles or
into the greenhouse. This bit of
"De Vis", as the locals call it, is
a special treat: tendrils of vine
snake around iron benches and
up and across the glass roof. At
night, De Vis is illuminated by
hundreds of tiny lights, setting
the mood for a cosy evening
under the "stars".



FACE OF FLANDERS

MARC MAES

Portus Ojomo

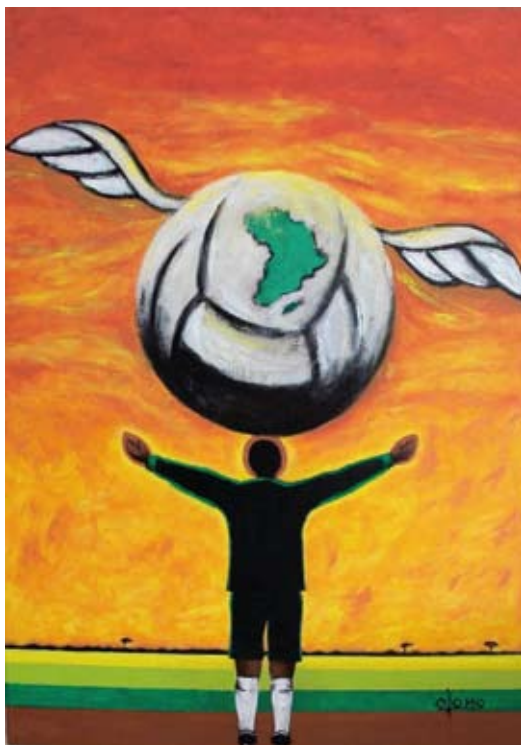
Besides referee Frank De Bleeckere, there will be one more Belgian presence at the FIFA World Cup in 2010. Portus Ojomo, a Nigerian national who arrived in Belgium in 1973 and has been a professional artist since 1980, will be at the highly-anticipated football championship next year in South Africa.

Ojomo, who lives in Antwerp, is one of the 160 contemporary artists worldwide chosen to contribute to the 2010 Fine Art project, which will promote African visual arts during the world's most-watched sporting event.

The 2010 Fine Art project, organised in collaboration with FIFA, invites five creative artists from each participating nation to submit their projects. "The idea is that the work of art should bring together the elements of the African heritage, and fuse it with the energy and excitement of the World Cup," explains Ojomo. Although the Belgian football team did not make it through the pre-selections, Nigeria did, so Ojomo is eligible for the project.

His painting "Overwinning" ("Victory"), pictured here, was among the first batch of 21 unveiled at the FIFA Final Draw weekend. The full collection will be reproduced as autographed posters and simultaneously displayed in art galleries in all of the 32 participating countries from mid-April.

In addition, the art will be printed as postcards and on merchandising such as mugs, shirts and mouse pads. Each artist receives a share of the revenues from anything sold bearing the image of their art. Meanwhile, the posters will be offered to collectors and football fans from around the world.



During the FIFA Final draw weekend in Cape Town on 2 December, FIFA marketing director Thierry Weil said he's confident that the 2010 Fine Art collection will help to build international excitement about the first-ever African world cup. "The FIFA World Cup is always primarily about world-class football but, as an event, it's always so much more. It fuses the energy of sport with the passion of cultures and peoples. We are therefore very excited that 2010 Fine Art received such enthusiastic support from so many top international artists."

→ www.artojomo.tk

TALKING DUTCH

ALISTAIR MACLEAN



aai de poes →

This past Monday was the most depressing day of the year, according to a psychologist with a formula. Which I suppose is good news, since it's behind us. Certainly, the harsh winter is beginning to take its toll on people's spirits. The papers don't help lift the gloom with stories about *armoed* – poverty, *een seriemoordenaar* – a serial killer and *aardbevingen* – earthquakes.

It's at times like these that we can be cheered by the unexpected. I met an old colleague from a former job the other day. She has no work and little to live on. When I asked how things were, she beamed when she replied: "I've got my health; what more do I need?" And she wasn't joking.

It brought me up short as I remembered the New Year's wishes we have all been exchanging: "*Beste wensen* – Best wishes" to which you reply "*en een goede gezondheid* – and good health" to which the other responds "*ja, dat is het belangrijkste* – yes, that's the most important".

I recently came across some tips on how to lift your spirits, just in case you need bucking up. Some require you to get off your couch: *vijf minuten op en neer springen* – jump up and down for five minutes. Another gets you out of the house: *vul je longen en wandel ca. 20 min.*

3x/week weer of geen weer – fill your lungs and go for a walk about 20 mins three times a week, weather or no weather.

If this sounds a bit too energetic, try laughing: *tien minuten een hartelijke lach verjaagt de stress van de dag* – ten minutes heartily laughing chases away the stress of the day. I've just tried a belly laugh but gave up after a minute because I didn't have anything particular to laugh about, and the cat gave me a look. Which leads me on to: *aai de poes wat vaker* – stroke the cat more often, which I'll try but without the guffawing.

This one does cheer me up, but it's best appreciated when the house is empty: *actief muziek spelen doet je al het andere vergeten* – actively playing music makes you forget all the rest. I must say, I'm always cheered by the arrival of Flanders Today on a Wednesday. Or you can search the internet for "*goed nieuws*" and there you'll find plenty of sites with all the good news you need.

Perhaps this is all a bit forced. A more tranquil approach may be necessary: *aanvaard wat je niet kan veranderen* – accept what you can't change; *alles kan, niets moet* – everything is possible, nothing is necessary. Which is all very well, but I have a deadline to meet.

→ www.doejemee.be

bite

SHARON LIGHT

Bistro Baobab

My parents were visiting from America, and naturally I took them to Bruges. But it wasn't for the quaint architecture or a canal boat ride. It was for a South African dinner.

Bistro Baobab, on Philipstockstraat, is just a stone's throw from the Grote Markt. Inspired by South African friends, Belgians Ann and Arne Biltris-de Spiegeleer began turning out some delectable and unusual flavours nearly five years ago. Arne is the waiter, navigating their narrow and cosy seating area while chatting up the customers. I would nominate him immediately for the "Friendliest Waiter in Belgium" award, if only such an honour existed.

Ann runs the open kitchen. The menu is rich with exotic and fresh flavours. Some feature familiar ingredients (albeit in combinations you may not have tried before), and a few are particular to South Africa.

For one, Baobab reminded me of how much I love amarula. A friend in the Peace Corps introduced me to this South African creamy fruit liqueur several years ago, but I had all but forgotten about it. It's made from the marula fruit, indigenous to South and West Africa; the liqueur is sweet, rich and easy-to-drink with an alcohol content of 17%. Over dinner, it featured beautifully in a tilapia dish, finished off with dried coconut; later it appeared in a fried banana dessert, and made its farewell as a digestif, a perfect ending to a great meal.

But Baobab also did its fair share of introductions. Several dishes feature a sweet and very slightly spicy



pickled red pepper called peppadew; we enjoyed it in our amuse bouche, where it was matched with a creamy, mild goat cheese.

The owners also import kingclip, a firm white fish found in South African (and other Southern hemisphere) waters. The flavour is subtle and took well to a peppery, cider-based preparation. Among the meat dishes, you'll find ostrich and springbok, an antelope native to southern Africa.

While you'll recognise the other ingredients, it's wonderful to see a menu full of fresh fruit flavours, including mango, papaya and avocado. And naturally a visit to Baobab is an opportunity to enjoy South African wines, often overshadowed in Belgian restaurants by European offerings.

It may hardly be part of the classic Bruges experience, but a visit to Bistro Baobab is worth its own trip.

→ www.bistrobaobab.be

Contact Bite at flandersbite@gmail.com

THE LAST WORD...

All shook up

"Jailhouse Rock was supposed to be the final number, but thanks to the enthusiasm of the public I had to sing a few encores."

Marco Kimsen from Stekene, who marked the 75th anniversary of Elvis' birth by singing 75 hits live

Aid absent

"People feel abandoned. They see the planes with emergency aid landing, but in our neighbourhood there's no question of aid getting through."

Flemish aid worker Martine Haentjens, who works for Protos in Haiti

Heartbreak Hotel

"My dear artistic hippie parents didn't like it in the 1970s when I became the drummer in a punk band. Later, my first RayBans were an occasion for parental protest, and my brother went on to buy his first Porsche. My poor mother's heart was broken."

Bart Peeters, who presents a new generation-gap quiz on VRT

Survivor

"I'm still here."

Joris Willems, aid worker in Port-au-Prince, in a text message sent to his family in Mortsel just minutes after the earthquake struck