

Blooming tourists 7

Flemish television is producing some unexpected fallout: tourists are flocking to the blossoming fruit fields of Haspengouw and the jenever distilleries of Hasselt, all inspired by Flemish TV dramas



Scrumming up in the world 11

Rugby, a game for posh blokes with broken noses, is taking off in Flanders. To celebrate the gentlemen's game as it descends on Dendermonde, we're giving away free beer!



Art collecting 13

This year's Canvas Collection brings together 200 artists – both amateurs and professionals – from across the country, all hoping for a shot at the €10,000 prize. We took a look at what's to see at the new exhibition in Bozar



Hello Dali

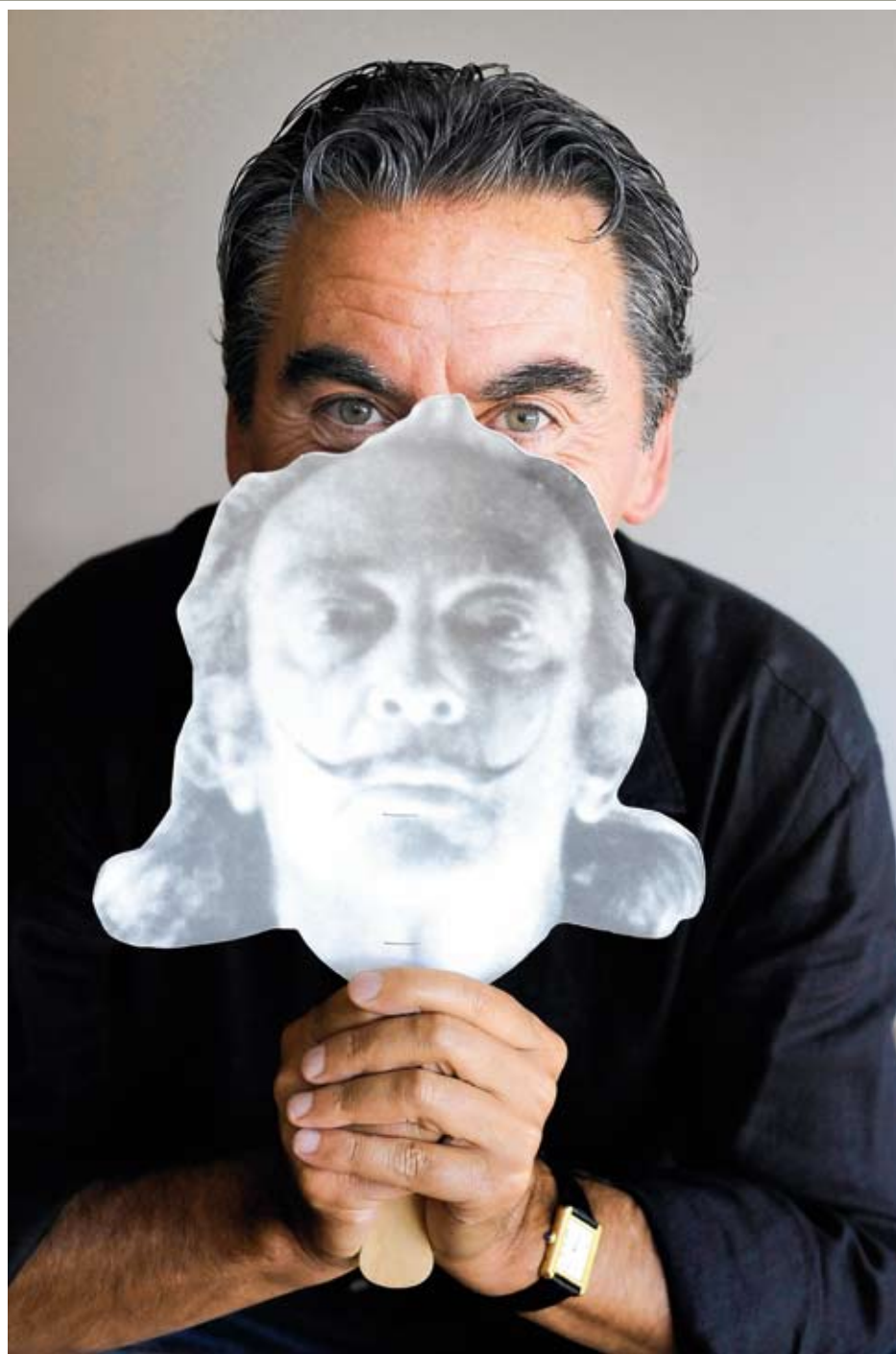
Flanders' most notorious "art" dealer sells his story to Hollywood

ALAN HOPE

One of the oddest double acts ever to appear on stage made an appearance recently at Flagey for a discussion on art fraud: Stan Lauryssens, Flemish fraudster turned novelist, whose 2008 best-seller, *Dali & I: The Surreal Story*, has just been published in French, and Chief Inspector Axel Poels, head of the federal police squad in charge of art and antiques crimes. Lauryssens, 63, started his career in fakery during the early 1970s as Hollywood correspondent for the Flemish *Panorama* magazine (now *P-Magazine*), interviewing stars like Liz Taylor, Faye Dunaway and Marlon Brando. Only he never set foot in Hollywood, and the interviews, published under the name Steven Stanley, were fabricated from articles in more scrupulous journals. One day he "interviewed" Salvador Dalí, probably the most famous living artist of the day, describing how the painter was working with Walt Disney on an animated pornographic film. That brought him to the attention of the American company Money Management Counselors. "They had three businesses: selling investments in land in the US, in diamonds and in fine art," Lauryssens explains. "They thought I was a Dalí expert, and they wanted me to sell his paintings." Only they weren't too fussy about whether the art was real.

At the age of 26, Lauryssens was hooked by the challenge, the excitement and the money. "Panorama had been paying me 18,000 BF a month [about €450]. Now I was on 2% commission, and I was netting 200,000 BF [€5,000] a month." The scam worked like this: Lauryssens (pictured) would take a painting, a poster or even a page from a catalogue and put it in an expensive frame, then sell the work to an unsuspecting investor for a fortune. "I used to buy lithographs for about €150, bring them in without paying taxes, have them put in a €500 frame, and sell them on for €5,000. People thought they were getting a great deal." The buyers were happy to invest undeclared income in the art, though Lauryssens choice of client was crucial. "These people knew nothing about art, and they didn't even like Dalí," he says. "Nobody was ever going to see the painting anyway. They could hardly hang it in the living room in case it was spotted and questions were asked. And if they were ever suspicious, there was nothing they could do. If they reported it, they'd have to explain where the money came from [to buy the work]. They'd be cutting their own throats."

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© Eric de Vliet

Leekens returns as Red Devils coach

LEO CENDROWICZ

Georges Leekens is to take the reins of Belgium for his second stint as coach, with orders to lead the Red Devils to Euro 2012. The former Flemish footballer previously coached Belgium from 1997 to 1999, taking them to the 1998 World Cup. Leekens (pictured) is the current coach of Belgian First Division side Kortrijk and is set to sign a two-year contract. Although Belgium has a strong crop of young, emerging players, including Arsenal's Thomas Vermaelen, Everton's Marouane Fellaini and Manchester City's Vincent Kompany, the Red Devils have not qualified for a major tournament since the 2002 World Cup. Leekens, 60, replaces Dick Advocaat after the Dutchman resigned just six months into his tenure. However, Leekens was third choice for the post: Eric Gerets was considered to be too expensive and former Belgium goalkeeper Michel Preud'homme was not freed by his club Gent.

This will mark Leekens' 19th managerial post over the past 26 years, with 13 stints in Belgian clubs, as well as brief spells as coach of Algeria and Turkish side Trabzonspor. He can claim to have coached almost all the top Flemish clubs during his career: Cercle Brugge (twice), CS Brugge, Mechelen, KAA Gent, Kortrijk (twice) and KSC Lokeren (twice), as well as Anderlecht.



© REUTERS/Fahad Shaded

Parties line up for June 13 battle

Top places on lists handed out

ALAN HOPE

The Belgian federal elections will be held on 13 June, it was confirmed last week. In the meantime, as Parliament approved a list of constitutional articles which will be reviewed in the new session, with a view to reform of the state, the parties were gearing up for their electoral effort. Belgian elections, unlike the British elections which took place last week, are run on a form of proportional representation. Parties present lists of candidates to the voters, who may choose a whole list or vote for the individuals on it. The formation of the lists is of supreme importance to politicians because one's position on the list more or less determines one's chances of being elected. If a party is expected to pick

up four seats, for example, then the fifth person on the list has a slim chance of being elected, but the sixth does not. Voters on the whole are happy with the choices being made for them. They also don't seem to mind that some people are standing with not the slightest intention of taking up the seats they are sure to win. Ingrid Lieten is leading the socialist party sp.a's list in Limburg; Geert Bourgeois is leading his NV-A party's list in West Flanders. Neither will be taking a seat in the Chamber on 14 June, because they are both serving ministers in the Flemish government and have, together with their colleagues, pledged to remain in Kris Peeters' administration until their full term of office is over.

continued on page 3

OFFSIDE

© Michael Neel



May the fourth be with you

Battle broke out last week – on 4 May, as luck would have it – between two groups of Imperial Stormtroopers, but the setting wasn't the farthest reaches of intergalactic space, nor was it even a sound stage of George Lucas's Industrial Light and Magic.

Instead, Mark Dermul, bank executive by day, otherwise commanding officer of Ghent-based Star Force Events, had come to court in Brussels to sue his arch-nemesis, known only as Bert D, for defamation.

Most of us don't have a nemesis at all, let alone an arch-nemesis, but surely a few blasts with some sort of ray-gun would have been sufficient, even given the Stormtroopers' notoriously poor marksmanship, rather than resorting to the enormous power of a Brussels court?

The events go back to October 2008, when a tribute at the Ghent Film Festival to movie composer John Williams was staged, for which the organisers wanted some geeks background personnel dressed in Stormtrooper gear. They contacted Star Force Events, a non-profit events organiser that exists for the amusement of Star Wars fans. Star Force Events was, however, unable to supply the required number of squads, legions and battalions, and so in turn put out a call to other fan clubs.

The Imperial Stormtroopers are elite troops in the popular Star Wars series, best known for their white armour that restricts their movement and makes them an easy target for enemies. At the event in Ghent, the lawsuit alleges, Bert D set about blackening the reputation of Dermul and his group, alleging, among other things, that Star Force was in a dispute with George Lucas over copyright issues. In the end, the organisers decided to dispense with the services of both fan clubs.

Dermul is now seeking an award of €500 for the damage done to his reputation. Bert D denies the defamation. The court will rule on 19 May.

→ www.starforce.be

News in brief

Priests and altar boys will this year not be taking part in the annual **Holy Blood Procession** in Bruges on 13 May. They will be replaced by seminary students. The association that organises the famous procession took the decision to avoid controversy following an admission of sexual abuse by the bishop of Bruges last month. The Papal nuncio and archbishop Léonard will also not take part.

Members of the Flemish Youth Council last week carried out a protest action on the roof of a Brussels parking garage calling for **affordable car insurance** for all young people. The action follows the release of a report last week that half of all 18-year-olds were unable to obtain insurance coverage, with the rest paying higher rates – up to three times more – than older drivers.

The mayor of Zaventem last week advised residents not to eat fruit or vegetables from their gardens after ash from a fire in a cosmetics warehouse was found to contain high levels of **polyurethane residue**. Residents are asked to contact 02.717.89.42 or milieudienst@zaventem.be if they found ash

on their property to allow for further testing.

A man from Maasmechelen, Limburg province, has been sentenced to two years in jail and fined €1.54 million for renting out rooms **unfit for habitation**. The man charged tenants €250 a month for a room in a building divided up into 28 spaces, all sharing one toilet. The man was sentenced to a further 10 months for causing the death of a workman who fell four metres and later died of his injuries. The victim was an illegal immigrant without official work papers.

Cigarette manufacturer Philip Morris is to close its laboratories in Leuven by the end of the year as a result of a new law that comes into force on 1 January, 2011 that **forbids the use of animals** in tobacco-related experiments. No alternative use had been found for the facility, which employs 63 people, the company said.

Cigarette sales fell by 12.7% in Belgium in the first quarter of 2010, according to the industry federation. The figure

– total sales €2,477,398,900 – represents the number sold with official excise stamps issued by the government and so excludes imported or smuggled cigarettes.

The decision by the Antwerp prosecutor's office to introduce a **fast-track procedure for shoplifters** should be extended to other cities, the organisation for the self-employed, Unizo, said last week. Thefts from shops in the port city rose last year by 26%, but more and more shopkeepers no longer reported thefts because they feel that little or nothing is done. The losses from shoplifting in Belgium in one year have gone up to almost €1 billion. Under the new procedure, shoplifters are detained for up to 24 hours and must be brought to court within four weeks. The procedure also applies to those found in possession of weapons.

Correction

In the front-page article of our issue of 28 April, we stated that former prime minister Wilfried Martens was a member of the European Parliament. Martens was an MEP from 1994-1998, but no longer sits in that body.

FACE OF FLANDERS

ALAN HOPE

Peter Swinnen

The job of official architect sounds like something that belongs more to the Florence of the Medicis than cutting-edge Flanders, but the fact that Peter Swinnen has just been chosen for the post shows it's no mediaeval relic.

Swinnen is young for the job. At 37, he's a generation younger than his predecessors Marcel Smet and Bob Van Reeth, both of whom were considered venerable dignitaries when they took the post.

Swinnen has been making a name for himself in the last decade, working with Johan Anrys and Freek Persyn in the Brussels-based bureau 51N4E.

In that time the partnership has put its name to projects like the Lamot centre in Mechelen, the converted mining site C-Mine in Limburg and the new CD&V headquarters in Brussels.

The job of Flanders' official architect, or *bouwmeester* (building master) goes back to 1998, when the Flemish government decided to bring some order to its otherwise chaotic building policy. The idea came from the Netherlands, where the post of *rijksbouwmeester* goes back to 1806.

Swinnen reckons the post will take up 70% of his time, but he's not worried about losing the prominence he's built up over the past 10 years. The partnership will continue to function and will still be eligible for major projects, even those

that receive public financing. "There are rules for that sort of thing," he said. "And those are sacrosanct."

What may well be old fashioned is his reason for accepting the post: "Call it a sort of idea of service. If you're called, you go."

One of the main challenges of the job, he predicts, will be the *bouwmeester's* influence on the private sector, as the government builds less on its own behalf and relies more on public-private partnerships. He plans to give more attention to building schools and works in the health-care sector.

"I want to be clear and direct, but also speculative," he said. "I'm not interested in playing at being a civil servant for five years. I'm arriving at a moment where my expertise can be useful, but this appointment is a stop along the way, not the end of the line."

FLANDERS TODAY

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Leading lights dominate the higher reaches of party lists

continued from page 1

As Anja Otte explains in this week's Fifth Column (right), the news so far has been somewhat dominated by "white rabbits" like TV figures Rik Torfs and Siegfried Bracke. Among the career politicians, meanwhile, there have been a few surprises on the lists, but more predictable results than anything else. In the arrondissement of Leuven – the half of the province of Flemish Brabant that is not part of Brussels-Halle-Vilvoorde (BHV) – Rik Daems (Open VLD) has been moved sideways, from list-leader for the Chamber to third in line for the Senate. Gwendolyn Rutten, who narrowly missed being elected to chair the party recently, leads the Chamber list. The man who beat her, Alexander De Croo, leads the Senate list. Vice premier Guy Vanhengel leads in BHV, the speaker of the Chamber Patrick Dewael in Limburg, Vincent Van Quickenborne in West

Flanders and Matthias Declercq in East Flanders.

As reported last week, Yves Leterme will lead his party's list in West Flanders, and Marianne Thyssen the nationwide Senate list. Also for CD&V, foreign minister Steven Vanackere leads the list in BHV. Defence minister Pieter De Crem leads in East Flanders and Inge Vervotte in Antwerp.

For the socialists, party chair Caroline Gennez stands in Antwerp against interior minister Annemie Turtelboom, who leads for Open-VLD. Bruno Tobback and Dirk Van der Maelen, two workhorse members who achieved high scores in *De Morgen's* report card on the parliament last week, lead for the socialists in Leuven and East Flanders respectively. Renaat Landuyt leads in West Flanders, and former vice premier Johan Vande Lanotte leads the Senate list.

N-VA chairman Bart De Wever leads his party's list for the Senate. Aside from Bracke and Bourgeois, N-VA named Jan Jambon for Antwerp. ♦



Rik Torfs and Siegfried Bracke reported on the elections. Now they're making the news themselves

FIFTH COLUMN

ANJA OTTE

White rabbits

Every election throws up "white rabbits": new candidates chosen for their fame, though not in politics. They are also known as BVs, short for *bekende Vlamingen* (famous Flemings). Last week again, three parties pulled out a white rabbit from their magician's hats.

The one that made most jaws drop was Siegfried Bracke, Flanders' best-known political journalist. Currently seen nightly on *Terzake*, he became famous for his hard-boiled TV interviews, with frequent interruptions whenever he felt questions were left unanswered – although over the past decade he opted for a more light-hearted version of interview.

The fact that Bracke crossed over to the other side surprised no-one, but his party of choice did. Bracke had always been close to the socialist SPA, contributing to the somewhat leftist image of public broadcasting but, in the end, decided to join the nationalist N-VA, the hype of the moment.

The events of recent years, Bracke said, had convinced him of the need for major state reform. It is hard, however, to picture Bracke waving Flemish flags or singing the Flemish anthem as is customary at N-VA party meetings. He admits to that, calling himself a "rational" rather than "romantic" nationalist.

Party leader Bart De Wever, who was as stunned by Bracke's decision as anyone, calls him an expert who has put 30 years of thinking into this conclusion and welcomes him with open arms. Who wouldn't?

Another white rabbit is Rik Torfs, a professor in church law, who became a celebrity in spite of that. Torfs will team up with CD&V party president Marianne Thyssen at the top of the CD&V senate list. Torfs is well known as a witty expert in church matters. He became a household name when he served as the one-man jury for three years in the popular quiz show *De slimste mens ter wereld*, acting like anything but a professor.

That same TV programme also introduced Eva Brems, yet another law professor, to the public. Brems, who up until recently was president of Amnesty International Flanders, will be a candidate for the environmental party Groen! in the upcoming election.

In his later years as a journalist, Siegfried Bracke introduced elements of entertainment into political journalism, believing that this would make it more attractive to larger audiences. In fact, he even co-hosted an election talk show with Rik Torfs. And while no-one doubts that last week's white rabbits are valuable candidates, the worlds of politics and entertainment have moved still closer. Bracke the journalist is no doubt pleased.

THE WEEK IN FIGURES



€6,720,000

losses suffered by Brussels hotels as a result of the flight ban following the Icelandic volcano eruption. Hotels saw nearly 23% of bookings cancelled.

9th

Belgium's position in world ranking of the quality of motherhood by country, according to the charity Save the Children. The table considers factors such as maternity leave, mortality during childbirth and the training of midwives. Norway, with a minimum of 46 weeks of paid maternity leave, topped the chart. Afghanistan came last.

€61.5 million

estimated value of a treasure trove of 271,000 pieces brought up from a wreck off the west of Java by Flemish salvage expert Luc Heymans. The haul includes 14,000 pearls, 4,000 rubies and 400 sapphires. The 75-man diving team made more than 22,000 dives to recover the treasure.

44%

of Belgian internet users don't trust social network site Netlog, according to a survey by InSites Consulting in Ghent. Only 21% expressed full trust.

47%

of all business meetings are pointless, according to Belgian respondents to a world-wide survey carried out by human resources company Robert Half International. Some 87% lose time regularly because of useless meetings.

Greying population presents worries for municipalities

Municipalities along the Flemish coast have as much as one quarter of their population above the age of 65, according to a study on the greying of the population by Dexia bank.

In 2007 – the year when the latest figures were compiled – there were two million people of pension age in Belgium, or 17.3% of the population. In Flanders the proportion is higher, at 18.4%. Wallonia lies on the average at 17.5% and Brussels at 14.4%.

More worryingly, the figure is rising everywhere, and by 2050 it is expected there will be 3.5 million people of pension age, or 30% of the population. That will have serious effects on municipal budgets, the Dexia study says, among them lower incomes (because of less tax revenue) and higher spending because of the greater cost of older people in health and social welfare provision.

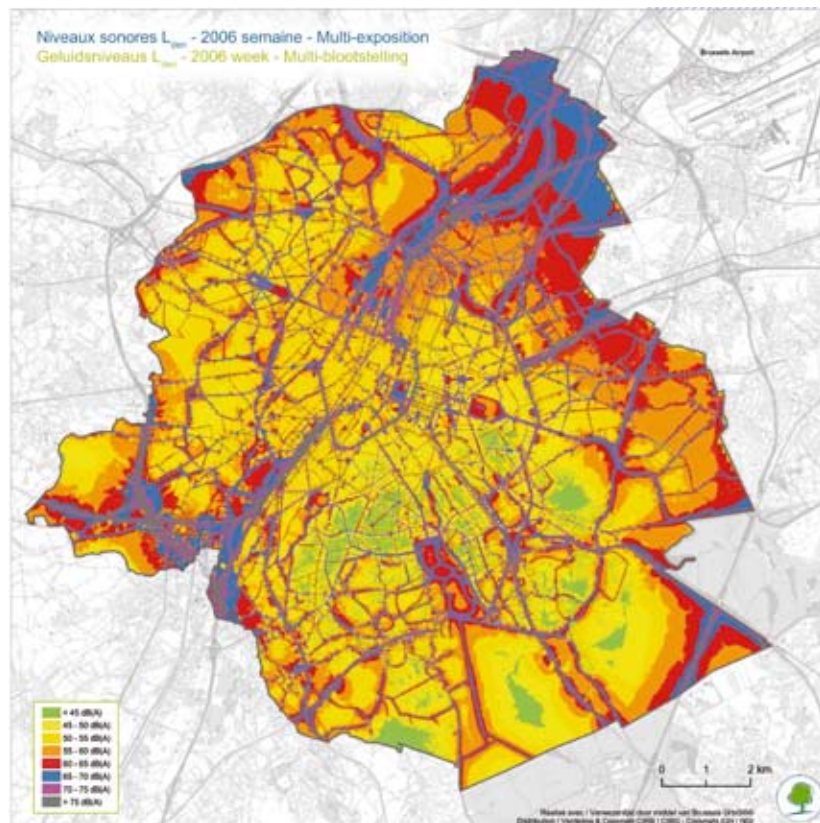
The cost of the ageing population is impossible to forecast accurately, the

study says, but one or two indications can be given. For instance, if the same proportion of people as now takes up residence in nursing homes at the same age as now, then the total population of nursing homes in Flanders will rise from 62,000 in 2007 to over 197,000 by 2050. In all of Belgium, the rest-home population will reach 359,000, while the number of people being cared for at home will double in Flanders to 248,000 by 2050. ♦

Table: Population increase in Brussels and Flanders over the next 50 years

	2010	2060	change
Brussels	1 072 063	1 327 652	23.8%
Antwerp	1 736 913	2 000 994	15.2%
Flemish Brabant	1 077 089	1 299 694	20.7%
West Flanders	1 155 771	1 155 094	-0.1%
East Flanders	1 424 085	1 663 953	16.8%
Limburg	836 916	890 804	6.4%
Total	6 230 774	7 010 539	12.5%

Source: Dexia at www.dexia.be/nl/smallsites/research/publicfinance



The map shows the level of noise in Brussels, part of a new noise atlas produced last week by the Brussels Institute for Environmental Management (BIM). Polls show noise as one of the most important reasons people give for wanting to move out of the city. The atlas paints a picture of the main noise sources: road traffic, trams and metros, trains and aircraft. The image maps all noise sources together, ranging from high – the blue areas in the north (from Meiserplein out to Haren/Diegem) and in the southwest (Anderlecht and Vorst) – to the quiet green patches dotted throughout the southern half. The purple and grey areas, mainly along major roads, have noise above 70 decibels, although the legal limit is 65dB.



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

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and cards can be ready for you the moment you arrive in Belgium. ING's Expat Services have 40 years of experience to help make your stay in Belgium as financially smooth as possible.



Hello Dalí

Rackets like LaurysSENS are easier to run in Belgium than in most of Western Europe

→ continued from page 1

In his book *Dali & I*, LaurysSENS tells of an undertaker who paid over \$100,000 in mixed currencies in a plastic bag and a butcher whose ill-gotten gains were stuffed into a Chinese vase in his living room. "I told myself it wasn't a crime," he says. "Because it was all black money. I felt like a kind of Robin Hood."

The end came when Money Management Counselors was busted for selling investment products without registration. LaurysSENS went to prison in Antwerp briefly before being released to await trial. Instead, he absconded to Spain and bought a house. And who should he find his new neighbour to be, high in the Catalan hills? Why, Salvador Dalí.

"These people knew nothing about art, and they didn't even like Dalí"

The story of how a fake interview led to fake paintings which led to a real acquaintance with Dalí seems too good to be true, and if something seems too good to be true, the advice goes, it probably is. So maybe it's not 100% accurate; when talking to LaurysSENS, you're constantly aware he's not only a convicted con-man, he's also a successful fiction writer. Regardless, it's a great story. In the end, the Flemish forger served five

months of a two-year sentence, most of it in Spain. "That was a prison for people picked up by Interpol, a better class of crook," he notes. "Prison in Spain was a holiday for me." And of course he picked up plenty of tips.

So is he now on the straight and narrow? I ask. He hesitates, refers me to his next book, then answers anyway.

"After Spain, I went to live in London for seven years. I'd lost most of my money. I used to steal newspapers from outside newsagents early in the morning. In one of them I read that the City of London was planning to decommission some public art, including the statue by Fernando Botero." The statue in Exchange Square, known as the "Broadgate Venus", is a huge reclining nude with the voluptuous proportions characteristic of the Colombian artist, symbolising wealth.

"I decided I was going to sell it," LaurysSENS states. "I used a trick I'd learned in prison and faxed the article, together with an official-looking letter, to five or six wealthy Colombian dealers. I asked them to send \$150,000 to an account I'd opened at the Midland Bank in New Bond Street, which also happens to be the address of Sotheby's. And one of them went for it. That was in 1993 or 1994. I was looking over my shoulder for a couple of years, but nothing has happened." ♦

→ www.stanlaurysSENS.com

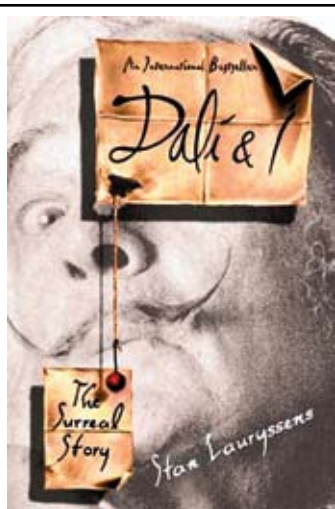


Famous Dutch art forger Han Van Meegeren passed off many of his own paintings as original Vermeers, such as "The Lacemaker", above, which ended up with wealthy American industrialist and art collector Andrew Mellon. Van Meegeren also sold fakes to the Nazis during the Second World War

©The National Gallery of Art Washington D.C.

Dali & I: The Surreal Story

Stan LaurysSENS' book *Dali & I: The Surreal Story* is published in several languages, including Dutch, French and English. Hollywood production house Room 9 Entertainment has bought the rights and is developing a film based on the book, starring Al Pacino as Dalí and Cillian Murphy as LaurysSENS.



Low priority

Belgium ignores art crimes, according to one of only two officers in the country assigned to the case

When you talk to Axel Poels, you're keeping half of the nation's Art Squad away from his work. In all of Belgium, there are only two police officers charged with tackling art fraud and art theft.

Experts claim that art crime is the third most lucrative form of organised crime in the world, after drugs and arms. Belgium is notorious as a pivotal point for all forms of illicit trafficking, from human beings to stolen cars, and including art and antiques. "In a good year, we recover about 10% of stolen works and make about 10 to 15 arrests."

Despite the public's interest in the subject, as evidenced by participation in the latest Heritage Day, which took fakes as its theme, Belgium's efforts to curb the crime are modest. "Nobody in Belgium is interested – not the parliament, and not the prosecutors," Poels says. "In Italy they have a squad of 250, and the French also take it extremely seriously. Here, art crime is the lowest of the low priorities."

So much so that when I ask for some figures, he's unable to supply them. "We don't have reliable figures because art crime is not prosecuted as such. For Belgian law, there's no difference between stealing a pair of jeans and stealing a painting by Magritte: they both count simply as theft. The same goes for dealing in stolen goods. The Italians and the French, as well as the Greeks, keep figures religiously, but Belgium doesn't."

Poels (pictured) makes a distinction between those who sell forgeries and

those who actually make them. The former is more common because it's easier to do. A dealer finds a painting that looks a bit like Permeke, for example, and puts a signature on it. Sellers like Stan LaurysSENS choose their customers carefully and don't put the fake in front of someone who's likely to be able to spot it.

Particular to Belgium are small auction houses, most of them owned by one of four families, which hold sales in small towns and target people unlikely to know much about art. "People are blinded by the auctioneer or even by a pretty frame, and they end up buying posters as real artworks, or cheap copies of statues from China or Spain. Three years ago we closed down one auction house and seized 80% of their stock as fake. Another house was selling statues by [Romanian Art Deco style sculptor] Demetre Chiparus, normally worth €100,000 to €150,000, for €50,000. In fact, they were fakes, worth about €200 at the most."

If you're in the market for art, there are a few tips you can follow, Poels says. "A lot of fakes go unnoticed because the owners can't or won't invest in research techniques. But anyone can go to an art expert and ask for an opinion. Look around and study the sort of object you want to buy. If you're thinking of investing a large amount, get an expert to make a stylistic study, which is enough to expose a lot of fakes." The other safeguard is provenance. For important works of art, a reputable dealer ought to be able to provide a provenance – the work's documentation including its travels and its various owners. "Provenance is very important," Poels agrees, "but there is no law obliging a dealer in Belgium to give you one. If I go to Maastricht, I'll get one by right, but in Brussels and Antwerp, they don't have to give you one." Best of all, remember the old-fashioned advice: If it seems too good to be true, it probably is. "The golden rule is *in dubio abstine*," Poels says. "If in doubt, walk away." AH



Tricks of the trade

Fledgling entrepreneurs are checking out how business is done across the border

EMMA PORTIER DAVIS

Setting up a business in Europe's single marketplace can provide golden opportunities. But navigating this complex hybrid of national business practices isn't easy. Dealing with business contacts in what are fundamentally diverse regions, understanding the modalities of exporting goods and services and the mesh of legal requirements can be stumbling blocks for aspiring entrepreneurs.

With that in mind, the European Union has been placing entrepreneurs with host companies around the region in the hope that they can learn how to operate effectively on an international level. New entrepreneurs may apply for internships with companies in other EU member states for up to six months, where they can gain essential know-how.

The Erasmus for Entrepreneurs scheme (named after the Dutch Renaissance philosopher who travelled extensively in Europe to inform himself about different cultures) is managed in Belgium by, among others, Enterprise Europe Vlaanderen (EEV). Since the project launched at the beginning of last year, five exchanges are already underway and a further nine are in the pipeline.

"The scheme offers entrepreneurs international experience," says Christine Vanhoutte, adjunct director at EEV, "and the chance to learn how a small and medium-sized enterprise works – how it is managed – and an insight into the threats and opportunities of the European internal market."

Under the programme, interns are given the opportunity to shadow a senior entrepreneur, engage in market research and development, learn about project development and innovation, understand financing and gain insight into the all-important task of selling their products.

Belgian solar power engineer Remy Tasse, 43, is presently undergoing an internship with France's Sun Partner. This budding green

entrepreneur wants to develop the technology for a wide range of applications, from architecture to devices such as electronic watches and toys. Understanding global markets will be crucial for his business as he has his sights set on exports.

"Electronic toys or handsets are only beginning to integrate solar technology, which means that the potential of development is huge if we take into account that many Research & Development programmes focus on the reduction of energy consumption of these devices," says Tasse, who has set up business-to-business firm Helio Consults. "Integrated solutions are already appearing in the building industry."

Tasse has a strong skill set for engineering, but signed up for the programme because he needed to develop his business skills. "Basically, I'm learning a lot in the technology field, but I've also been visiting prospective clients to understand what they are looking for, the price level and the status of the technology."

Dipping into the French market should give Tasse a much-needed opportunity to develop his own international network of clients. "For what I'm doing, Belgium is a small market," he explains. He plans to spend five months in total with Sun Partner (under the scheme, placements can be completed in stages), taking time out to develop his own company's activities.

What's in it for the host?

For host entrepreneurs, the benefits are not immediately apparent. Anyone who ever had an intern will no doubt grimace at the idea of taking extra time to show someone the ropes. But when Italian furniture entrepreneur Chiara Aiello spent time with Limburg-based peer Casimir Meubelen, she left a good impression with her hosts about participating in such schemes.

"We often have interns, and we always have



Knowledge exchange: Erasmus for Entrepreneurs sends Flemish interns out across Europe and brings foreign learners to Flanders

a good connection with them," says Casimir Reynders, owner and head designer of Casimir Meubelen. "It helps us stay involved with young people and young ideas, and, in the meantime, they can learn something."

According to Vanhoutte, meeting these entrepreneurs is also a business opportunity for hosts. "These could become people who they want to deal with in the future."

Making an internship work from the point of view of a host is all in the preparation. Says Reynders: "We had a long contact with her [Aiello] before she arrived. When there's a good match between a company and a stagiaire, we can all learn something. The advantage with this woman was that she already had a similar business."

Aiello had inherited a chair company and

wanted to explore more contemporary design, a cornerstone of Reynders' business. "She wanted to turn the company more into something for today and not old style. What was interesting for her was how we contact designers and also how to bring designers together."

EEV's programme is soon up for evaluation by the European Commission, the EU's executive arm, which also provides funding for the scheme. Vanhoutte has high hopes that it will be given the green light to continue. "The probability is that it will be," she says. ♦

➔ www.enterpriseeuropenvlaanderen.be

See you next spring

Ordinary citizens save green space in Ghent

LISA BRADSHAW

In local fights between tree huggers and developers, it's rarely the tree huggers who win.

That's why several thousand people in Ghent are celebrating the victory of an unlikely green space on the city's inner ring road.

Normally roadway islands, even if they contain grass and flowers, are hardly considered parks. But the two long and wide islands on the busy intersections near Ghent's Fine Arts Museum are called Charles de Kerchove Park, after the name of the stretch of ring road they inhabit. And, though stuck between traffic, they are two of the most beautiful patches of nature in the city, particularly in March and April when their Japanese flowering cherry trees are in full bloom.

The parks were put in after the Second World War in the style of Japanese Gardens, with cherry trees, boulders and winding paths between them.

It's difficult to imagine that city officials did not see it coming in a city known for its penchant for anarchy – not to mention bicycling – when they announced the plan to tear up the island gardens to add additional traffic lanes. It's partly the city's own fault: the islands are so beautifully-maintained, they

seem like an extension of the (frankly less attractive) Citadel Park next door.

Two years ago, when the plan was announced, the city politely ignored heritage departments that advised against removing the parks. Last year, a group of citizens formed the Committee for the Protection of Charles de Kerchovepark. They delivered nearly 7,000 signatures to city hall, set up a Facebook page 14,000 strong and hung banners in the park to alert passers-by of its imminent demise. Finally, on 29 April, the city announced it would find a different solution to the traffic congestion.

Certainly the decision is a relief for those who pass through the area, but it's also been an education in activism for everyday citizens. Fifteen-year-old Tosca Dierens, for instance, organised the save-the-park Facebook page. "When we hung large banners, even more people shouted protests at the mayor and the administration; for fear of losing votes in the next elections, they suddenly saw the beauty of the park." ♦



Boomtown

Flemish TV dramas boost tourism in Limburg

MARTIN BANKS

Limburg is the only province in Belgium to record an increase in visitor numbers over the last 12 months, according to a new report. The province welcomed 1.13 million visitors in 2009, a rise of more than 14,500 on the previous year. The surge is partly explained by the success of two TV drama series that were set in the picturesque province: *Katarakt* in 2007 and *De Smaak van De Keyser* in 2008. The first prime-time series featured a fictional family of fruit growers in Haspengouw and the second a fictional family of jenever distillers in Hasselt – both popular Limburg products. *Katarakt* pulled in 1.3 million viewers, a big success by Belgian standards. It was the most expensive drama series ever made in the country and featured endless shots of sweeping landscapes and spring orchard blossoms. "We commissioned a report to assess the full impact of the show, and it indicated that it had had a huge impact [on tourism]," says Sylvain Sleyden of the Limburg tourist board. "People found the region charming, and this appears to be reflected in what has been a significant increase in visitor numbers," says Sleyden. The report, published last week, reveals that out of the 10 Belgian provinces, Limburg was the only one to record an increase in visitor figures over the last year. The number of visitors to Belgium fell overall last year by 1.86% to 12.1 million, while visitor figures for Flanders and Brussels dropped by an even bigger 2.3% to 9.5 million. But perhaps the most compelling evidence of the programme's influence is the figure for overnight stays in Limburg, which soared by no less than 47% between 2006 and 2008. "What is striking here is that this increase occurred in the low season – that is, between January and March – when the holiday trade is notoriously slow," says Sleyden. As part of the consultation exercise, Flemings were asked about their general knowledge of Haspengouw and whether they were aware that it is known as the "fruit region" of Flanders. "The results showed that general awareness of the region was three times higher than



Flemish TV dramas bring tourists from neighbouring countries into Limburg province

before *Katarakt* aired," says Sleyden. "The figures in the report generally show that Limburg province is bucking both regional and national trends by increasing visitor numbers," he adds. "That, of course, is a source of great pride." Other reasons for Limburg's popularity as a holiday destination, he suggests, is the success of the Hoge Kempen National Park, the presence of pretty little villages like Oud-Rekem, and the Bokrijk open air museum (which is the region's most-visited attraction). In addition, many people are drawn in by Limburg's extensive cycle network; it was recently voted "Belgium's most popular cycling province" by Dutch and Flemish cyclists for the fourth year in a row. Limburg puts a strong emphasis on family holidays in its marketing. Out of the 3.8 million overnight stays in Limburg last year, 1.8 million were at holiday

parks like Molenheide at Houthalen-Helchteren. The rest were shared between camp sites, hotels and self-catering accommodation. Earlier this year, *Katarakt* began airing in the Netherlands, and Dutch tourists have already headed to the region in search of the show's locations. This could assure that visitor numbers remain strong this year, too. Last year, the Dutch accounted for one-third of tourists to Limburg, second only to Flemings. The third largest group were Germans, followed by Walloons. "The promotional spin-offs and marketing actions of things like *Katarakt* are, naturally, encouraging, but we still want to try to attract more visitors from the south of the country," says Sleyden. To that end, the region plans a high-profile campaign in Wallonia this summer. ♦

→ www.toerismelimburg.be

Exclusive beer reborn after Facebook bet

Duvel Moortgat will start brewing its Tripel Hop premium beer again, after losing a bet on Facebook. The company brewed the beer in limited edition some years ago, to great success. The beer was expensive but prized by connoisseurs for its dry, hoppy character. Tripel Hop contains three varieties of hops and is made with the dry hopping technique, in which "aroma hops" are added to the wort (containing the sugars which turn into alcohol during fermentation) after it has cooled and fermentation is over. That way, the essential oils which provide aroma and impart bitterness to the beer are not evaporated off during boiling. "No easy job for us to brew," commented marketing director Johan Van Dijk last week, confirming that he had lost the bet fair and square. The bet was a challenge laid down by Johan Madalijns, chairman of the beer appreciation society De Lambikstoempers, based in the Pajottenland region of Flemish Brabant. Madalijns bet Van Dijk that he could gather together 10,000 people in the Facebook group "We want Duvel Tripel Hop" by August. If he succeeded, Duvel Moortgat would have to brew the beer again. Van Dijk, who takes brewing lessons together with Madalijns, agreed, and the deal was set down in writing on the

back of a beer mat. Company CEO Michel Moortgat went along with the idea. The magic number was reached last week, long before the deadline. As *Flanders Today* went to press, the number had soared above 15,000. "I do everything I can to promote Belgian beer," Madalijns said. Last week Duvel Moortgat announced a rise in beer sales in the first quarter. "Despite the weak economic climate, Duvel Moortgat managed to record higher results," the company said in a statement. "Should no new and unexpected economic developments occur in the main markets, this growth shall continue in 2010." Duvel Moortgat brews not only Duvel but also Liefmans, Vedett, La Chouffe and Maredsous beers. ♦



The Duvel production line will be joined by the exclusive Tripel Hop

Singing bottle wins award

A singing bottle created by an Antwerp ad agency has won a coveted Webby Award for Campaign of the Year. Hank, the dancing and singing bottle, was the brainchild of the These Days agency. His message is to opt for glass as often as possible because of its recyclable properties and its low environmental impact. The campaign was dreamed up for FEVE, the European Container Glass Association. Belgium has the highest rate of glass recycling in Europe, according to FEVE, with 96% of all glass being sorted for recycling. Glass produced from recycling produces 20% less air pollution and 50% less water pollution than glass made from scratch. ♦

→ www.friendsofglass.com



THE WEEK IN BUSINESS

Auto • Audi

German chancellor Angela Merkel will join acting Belgian prime minister Yves Leterme on 11 May for the official Audi A1 production launch at the car assembly line in the Brussels commune of Vorst. The company expects to sell up to 100,000 of the new model this year.

Auto • Mercedes

The Belgian Mercedes distributor has won a contract to supply 600 Sprinter utility vans worth some €20 million to Belgacom over the next two years.

Auto • Sales boom

New car registrations jumped 20% in April, reflecting the continuing sales boom in the wake of the Brussels car show last January. The total registrations for the year so far is 14% higher than for the same period in 2009, at 218,606 for Peugeot as market leader, followed by Renault and Volkswagen.

Award • Young entrepreneur

Jo Nelissen, head of the Munsterbilzen-based ABN Klimatisatie, has been named Flanders best Young Entrepreneur of the Year.

Dredging • Deme

Antwerp-based dredging company Deme has won two contracts worth a total of €65 million to supply stones and rock substructures for the NorthStream gas pipeline linking Russia and Germany and to protect a 100,000-tonne Gazprom gas platform under construction on Canada's Nova Zembla Island.

Electronics • Barco

Kortrijk-based screen and electronic equipment producer Barco has won a contract with the US Navy to supply some 700 digital screens to be installed in the control panels of the fleet's submarines.

Holding • Bois Sauvage

The Brussels prosecutor's office is bringing charges of insider trading against the board of the Bois Sauvage holding company, as well as against its managers Luc Vansteenkiste and Luc Willame. The company is alleged to have dumped 2.6 million Fortis shares in October 2008, just before the bank-insurer had to be rescued by the Belgian and Dutch governments. Vansteenkiste, who sat on the Fortis board at the time, spent about a week in prison at the end of September last year in connection with the charges.

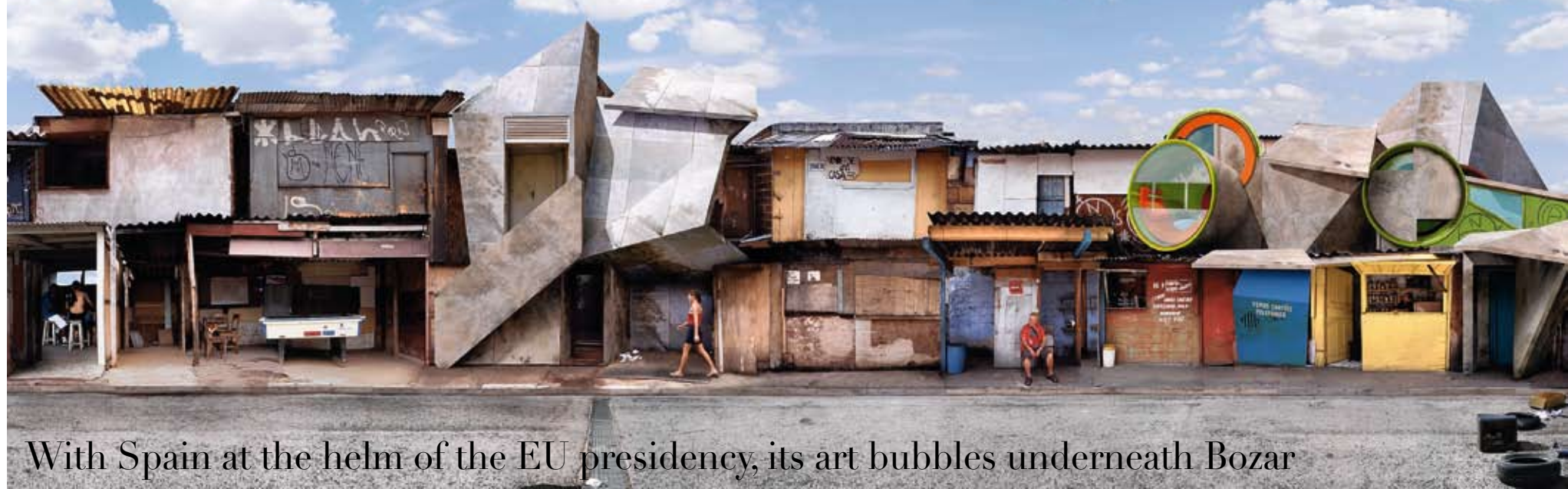
Property • Gimv

Flanders public investment company Gimv and Dexia bank have jointly set up a property fund to invest up to €100 million over the next four years in car parks in the Netherlands and Flanders.

Solar Power • Eandis

The industry federation for installers of solar panels has criticised electricity provider Eandis for claiming solar power was driving up electricity prices for other users, reported last week. BelPV, which represents the solar industry, said Eandis had made the statement to create controversy and to undermine their industry.

Angels in the basement



With Spain at the helm of the EU presidency, its art bubbles underneath Bozar

Dionisio González's; "Ipiranga III" (2006), part of a series resulting from years of photographing shantytowns in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro

ANNA JENKINSON

As soon as Spanish curator Fernando Castro Flórez heard that he had the go-ahead for an exhibition of contemporary Spanish art at the Bozar in Brussels, his mind started working overtime thinking of all the imaginative, exciting ways he could fill the large, lovely exhibition space that he remembered from previous visits. Then he saw where his exhibition would actually take place. "I come down the stairs, and it's dark, and I say 'oh my God, is this the real space for the show?'" Castro Flórez chuckles as he recalls his initial shock at the basement space that used to be a car park.

"At first I think it's impossible, that I can only invite one or two artists," the Spaniard goes on. "Then I think, [the challenge] is good for me, and at that moment – *El ángel exterminador*!" Like a light being switched on, Castro Flórez realised that this was the ideal opportunity to pursue an idea that had been at the back of his mind for many years: a project centred around Luis Buñuel's 1962 cult film *El ángel exterminador* (*The Exterminating Angel*), with its themes of entrapment and claustrophobia.

In the past, he had toyed with the idea of using the film for "maybe a book, an essay, a documentary" but it had never seemed quite right. This time, however, he knew he was on to something.

Buoyed by his flash of inspiration, the Madrid-based international curator set about contacting Spanish artists whose work had links with the subject matter or ideas in the film. The result is 28 artists' paintings, sculptures, photographs, videos and installations in a snapshot of Spain's contemporary art scene. Lending a theatrical dimension to the concept, there are also five evening events by dancers, actors and other performance artists. Films (including, of course, the title film) will screen next door at Cinematek. The exhibition, organised as part of the European Union's Spanish presidency, is the biggest of its kind in Brussels since Europalia Spain 25 years ago.

Hamster wheel

Javier Pérez's "60 Steps" consists of a video projection and a hollow wheel a couple of metres high, with steps around its outer edge that keep rotating like a huge hamster wheel. Looking through the wheel, you see a video projection of a naked man just managing to clamber up a white wall.

But after watching this hypnotic movement for a while, you realise that he is in fact climbing up very large steps that keep

rotating around and around. The fragility of man and the seeming futility of actions are themes of Buñuel's film.

"Luis Buñuel has always been a reference in my work," Pérez tells me, standing in front of "60 Steps", which he had to adapt to the smaller-than-usual space. "The screen is usually four times bigger than it is here," he says. "It's the first time it has been so small, but we discovered that it works anyway." Buñuel himself, in fact, originally wanted to film *El ángel exterminador* extravagantly in Brussels but had to settle for Mexico, where he was living in exile.

Just as Pérez's work was on show at the Guggenheim Bilbao a decade ago, almost all of the works have been exhibited before. But it's the first time they have been brought together.

The painted mural on the wall leading down to the exhibition space, however, is site-specific. Painted by Enrique Marty, it's full of larger-than-life, brightly coloured figures – sometimes grotesque, sometimes mad-looking. The naked figure at the top pointing down the stairs is Castro Flórez – "a ridiculous fat man," the curator laughs, describing the painted figure of himself.

A forgotten problem

Jacobo Castellano also came to Brussels to stage his "Serie Corrales" (2004), photos that depicts what the artist calls "a forgotten problem": the refugee camps in Western Sahara. An area that used to be a Spanish colony, since Spain's withdrawal in 1975, it has been the subject of ownership disputes taken to the United Nations. The camps are "a closed space...you can't get in or out," says Castellano.

Opposite the photographs is an installation that Castellano made after a visit to his old family home, long abandoned, in the Spanish village of Villargordo, part of the city of Jaén. Having asked his father for the keys, he set off to explore the past and found "a house in chaos", full of long-forgotten objects covered with thick layers of dust.

His installation incorporates some of those objects, including floorboards and cinema seats that had belonged to his grandfather, who owned the village's first, and last, cinema. Houses and rooms are a recurring theme in the exhibition, from Xavier Arenós' black-and-white photo series "Escape plan" to Bernardí Roig's "Wittgenstein House", a model based on the Vienna villa of the same name that philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein had built in the 1920s for his sister.

There are no long, explanatory texts around the exhibition as

Castro Flórez wanted to avoid the written word taking over from the visual element. What he has mounted on the walls in large letters, though, are snippets of dialogue from *El ángel exterminador*. Some are in the original Spanish, others translated into French, Dutch or English, such as "You must forgive him. Tonight he feels young again."

The curator says that the "trivial, very simple" sentences reflect our own minds. "We don't have philosophical minds. We forget sentences don't always have the perfect words." ♦

→ www.bozar.be

The film that sparked a festival

Luis Buñuel's 1962 surrealist film *El ángel exterminador* follows what happens to a group of upper-class friends who, after an evening at the opera, go back to one of their luxurious villas. They have dinner and then find that, inexplicably, they are unable to leave the house. Trapped in a room for days, tensions mount. There are quarrels, hallucinations and suicide, as the bourgeoisie succumbs to its animalistic instincts.



REBECCA BENOOT

More to Miró • Exhibition in Bruges proves Joan Miró was more than a painter



Spanish painter Joan Miró was a master of Surrealism, most famed for his paintings filled with rich, vibrant colours, intriguing shapes and strong black lines. But he wasn't just a painter; he also produced hundreds of lithographs and ceramics, of which 95 are now on display in Bruges, marking Spain's presidency of the European Union.

Miró was among the first artists to use "automatic drawing", meaning that he allowed his hand to move randomly across the paper, freed of any rational control, which coincided with the beginning of Surrealism as an art movement. Although he is considered a Surrealist, Miró rejected membership in any artistic movement.

Instead, he developed his own unique style, which is best described as a combination of organic forms and sharp lines that delve into the irrational subconscious, emanating Catalan pride and child-like innocence.

This compact exhibition in the majestic Oud Sint-Jan focuses mainly on the artist's lithographs. Overall, they are more subdued and sensual than some of his larger, bombastic paintings. In the lithographs, confusion alternates with clarity due to Miró's trademark black lines complemented by primary colours. The composition frequently seems simple, but the sophisticated swirls exude spirituality and passion.

Birds, skies and the female form are

representations of freedom that recur in his work. Having witnessed both World Wars and Franco's Fascist reign, his technique also personifies certain degrees of rebellion. The work illustrates his state of mind moving through sober and clean-cut to bigger, bolder and less refined in his later life.

After a chronological overview of letters and lithographs from different periods of his life, enhanced by works of contemporaries such as Pablo Picasso and Salvador Dalí, the exhibition concludes with a captivating French documentary featuring an 80-year-old Miró at work in his studio. He lived to 90, dying at home on Majorca in 1983. ♦

→ www.miro-brugge.be

Coming together to close

Jan Vanriet pairs his own work with the known and unknown collections of Antwerp's Museum of Fine Arts before it shuts down for renovations

ANNA JENKINSON

“I stand before you tired, but satisfied.”

With that, the 62 year-old Flemish artist Jan Vanriet opened his exhibition *Closing Time* at Antwerp's Royal Museum of Fine Arts.

That he is tired is no wonder, given the scale of the project. That he is just “satisfied” reflects a modesty one wouldn't expect from someone whose paintings are on display side-by-side with the museum's masterpieces, including works by Rubens, Van Eyck and Memling.

For its final exhibition before closing for four years of renovation works, the museum asked Antwerp-born Vanriet to select 150 works from the permanent collection and present them alongside a similar number of his own pieces. As the museum's curator Leen de Jong says, the museum's collection is now presented “in a totally new context”.

It's a bold and daring project. While it isn't the first time a contemporary artist has been shown “in dialogue” with a museum collection, it's unusual for it to happen on this scale. Vanriet was given free rein to select whichever of the museum's works he wanted, including those in the stock rooms, and then arrange them however he wanted.

“To do this with these kinds of masterpieces, it's unbelievable,” Vanriet told me. A once in a lifetime experience? “Yes,” he replies, “for me and for the museum.”

The works are arranged around 20 themes, each with a story to tell. Vanriet generally selected one or two works and then built each thematic room around those paintings, making connections through the subject, the colours or the particular shapes.

Take, for example room 12, entitled “Maikaefer, Fleg!” (“Maybug, Fly!”), the title of a nursery rhyme and also of three paintings by Vanriet based on a documentary film in which a daughter of Nazi propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels sings the song. Several of Vanriet's other paintings in this room feature singers, dancers and actors from German revues of the 1930s and are about artists who collaborated with the Nazis or who were interned in the concentration camps and required to perform for their guards.

Next to one such portrait, “Signal”, is James Ensor's “Astonishment of the Mask Wouse”, reflecting the ideas of cabaret, the stage and masks. Vanriet has also chosen a work picturing wrestlers in a barracks by Henri Evenepoel, a painting by Jules Pascin of a seemingly innocent girl and Georg Grosz's portrait of the author Walter Mehring, a victim of the Nazis.

Connections with the Second World War present elsewhere, too, such as in the “Transport” room, which takes on a personal dimension for Vanriet, whose parents were in the resistance, betrayed and transported to concentration camps. They survived, finding each other after the war and marrying.

“I come from a family that was defined to an extreme extent by the war,” Vanriet said in a 2002 interview quoted in the book accompanying the exhibition. “There are two ways of dealing

with this. You can either say that you reject it, that you don't want to work on it any more. Or else it remains a theme. Apparently in my case, it has continued to make its demands.”

The room entitled “The Flight”, contains six portraits by Vanriet of people deported from Mechelen to Auschwitz. The paintings are based on photographs from a recent documentary on the more than 18,000 people who suffered this fate. The portraits share the room with other works linked with persecution and flight in different contexts, for example, Joachim Patinir's 16th-century painting “The Flight into Egypt” and Flemish artist Gustave De Smet's “Vrouw van Spakenburg” (“Woman of Spakenburg”, painted during his stay in the Netherlands as a war refugee.

Sometimes the connection between two works is more visual than thematic, such as “Women on the Rokin” by George Hendrik Breitner, a late 19th-century scene of two women in black with slightly blurred faces walking through the city, and Vanriet's “Marrano, Identifying Mark”, a painting in similarly neutral tones dominated by two dark figures.

To put *Closing Time* together, Vanriet had to make countless choices. For his own works, he opted to include only those from approximately the last 20 years. The artist, who studied at Antwerp's Royal Academy for the Arts, explains that there is a common thread running through his works from this period and so they tell “a coherent story”.

Choosing which works to take from the permanent collection took many months. The reasoning for exploring works in the stockrooms was twofold: on the one hand, Vanriet wanted to show works unknown to today's public, and, on the other, it set in motion something new, creating fresh ideas and connections. The artist says, for instance, that the discovery of De Smet's “White Shirt on Black Ground” created a “special tension” and lifted the tone of his own series “Women in the Forest”.

Virtually all the museum's rooms were emptied in order to hang the selected paintings in their new places. “It's been all hands on deck in the last few weeks,” Vanriet says.

The only area to have had minimal disruption was the Rubens room, renamed here “Propaganda”. Almost all of the Flemish master's paintings are left hanging in their usual spots, with Vanriet simply adding his own canvases in-between the scenes of papal orthodoxy. One of them, “Marrano, Trace”, also known as “the painting with pebbles”, is inspired by a path in the Alhambra, with the loose stones alluding to the Jewish custom of placing pebbles on a grave.

Another is “Fire, Black”, a 2x2 metre painting of a burning synagogue, alluding to “Kristallnacht” of 1938 when the Nazis plundered and destroyed the possessions of thousands of Jews.

The last room, “Exit”, differs from the others – “my vanity over here”, Vanriet jokes, as the visitor is faced with a wall of photographs of the artist himself. The photographs, which include shots of a much younger Vanriet and of him painting the ceiling of the Bourla theatre, were all taken by his friend Herman Selleslags, who has been following and recording his life for several decades. A fitting conclusion to such an ambitious and well-executed exhibition. ♦

→ www.kmska.be



The Propaganda Room:
Rubens' “Christ on the Cross Between the Two Thieves” ▲ and Vanriet's “Fire, Black” ▼



Four-year facelift

Jan Vanriet's aptly named *Closing Time* will be the final exhibition staged at the Royal Museum of Fine Arts in Antwerp until 2014. The museum will close in October to carry out major structural works to improve safety and waterproofing of the Neo-Classical building, as well as add an extension of the public areas and galleries. During the €44 million project, about 120 of the museum's most important works will be transferred to the new Museum aan de Stroom, Antwerp's new museum, due to open next year. Other works from the Fine Arts Museum will be exhibited elsewhere in Belgium and overseas. The museum is already preparing its opening exhibition in 2014: Ruben's influence on artists from Van Dyck to Picasso.

A healthy relationship

Fall madly in love with West Flanders' most colourful brewery

STORY AND PHOTOS: MELISSA MAKI

If you, like me, don't have a car, it takes some effort to get to the De Dolle Brouwerij. You have to catch the train to Diksmuide and then walk or bike to Esen – the next village over. But you'll be handsomely rewarded for your trouble; it's a colourful place... in more ways than one.

I've made the trip to De Dolle no less than four times in the last six months. It started with the excellent beer, but it's the friendly atmosphere that has lured me back. Brewmaster Kris Herteleer and his wife, Els de Mûelenaere, are always on hand, welcoming and chatting with patrons, whether they are there to buy one beer or several cases.

De Dolle is considered a "hobby" brewery. They only brew during the weekend. This might aid in the establishment's relaxed ambience, but don't let that fool you – they produce some serious beer.

I first sampled De Dolle's brew a couple of years ago in the US and was smitten. I'm not alone: they export 50% of their product (about half of which goes to the US) and are well known among Belgian beer aficionados worldwide, despite the fact that they don't spend a cent on advertising.

Earning its name

This brewery in West Flanders has a long history. From 1882, three generations of the Costenoble family brewed there. In 1980, Kris and his brother Jo decided to buy the (then defunct) brewery after winning an exclusive Brussels' beer competition. The two were home brewers and college students at the time, juggling their respective studies in architecture and medicine with brewing on the weekends.

For this reason, they became known as *de dolle brouwers* – the mad brewers. Jo Herteleer has since left the business to pursue medicine in the developing world, but Kris has kept the brewery going strong.

Kris Herteleer is a Renaissance man. He's an architect, artist (you can see his paintings at the pub, and he's behind De Dolle's fanciful beer labels) and brewer, but he's also something of a historian. He has great respect and interest in brewing traditions and, in 2000, his historical research on West Flemish breweries earned him the Golden Hammer award from 't Hamerken, a Bruges non-profit association devoted to preserving beer history.

Few surviving West Flemish breweries

Kris tells me that in 1906, West Flanders had a whopping 586 breweries. Now there are only 21 active breweries, some of them very small. The advent of commercial brewing, with its expensive machinery and focus on profit over quality, has continually forced many smaller breweries out of business.

It's small-batch brewing and the focus on quality beer that Kris is interested in preserving. He prides himself on using traditional equipment and methods. Unlike most of the larger, commercial brewing operations, De Dolle's beer is not pasteurized or filtered and uses whole hops rather than hop pellets or extract.

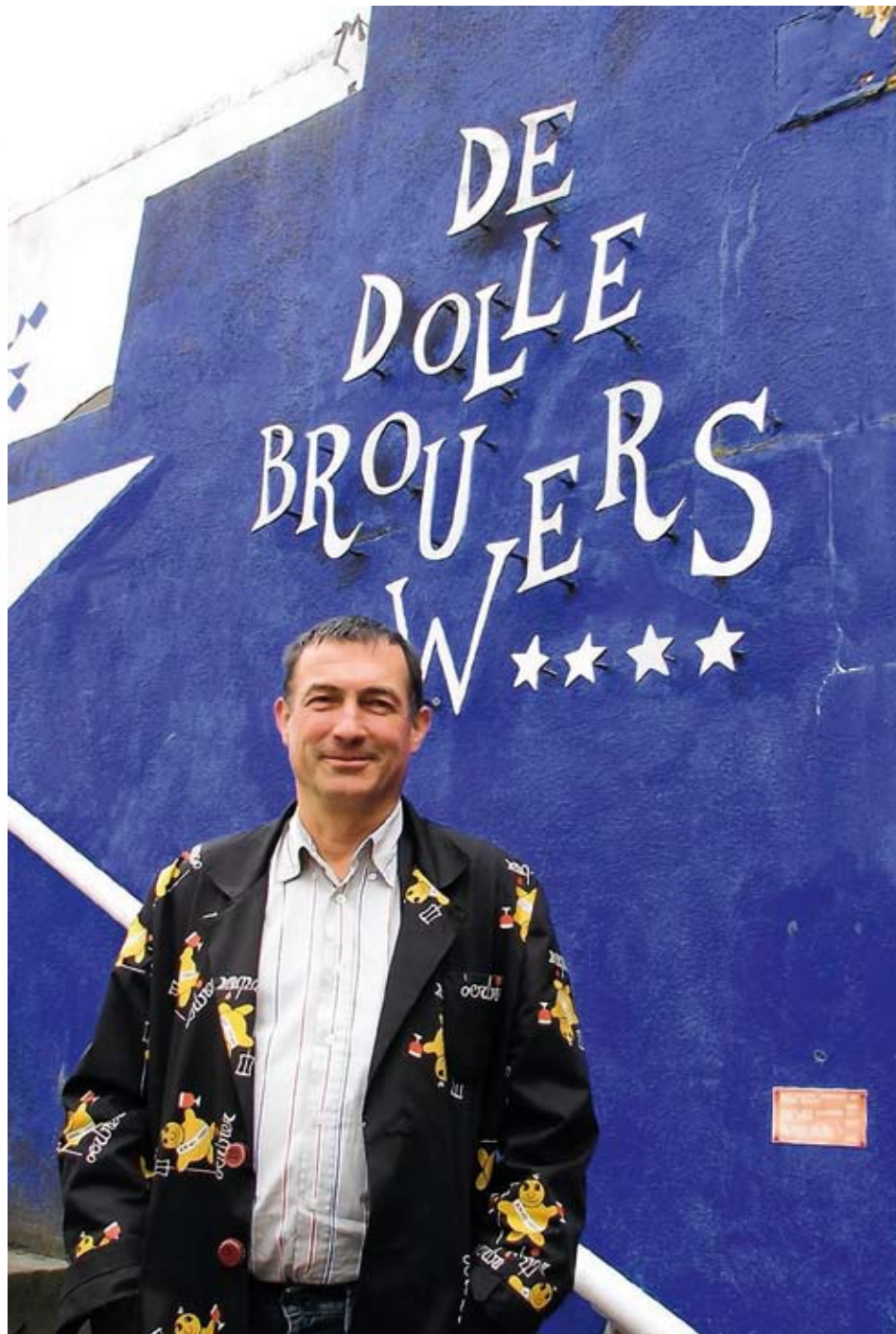
De Dolle even runs their wort through a copper "cool ship" (an open, shallow vat) during the brewing process. This traditional way of cooling wort in the open air was once widely done but is now only practiced by a handful of artisan brewers. As reported last week, lambic brewers also use the cool ship; but at De Dolle, the wort spends a much shorter time in the open air before being pumped through another cooling system and inoculated with cultured yeast. This occurs well before wild yeast has a chance to take hold of the wort, as is the tradition with lambic beer.

Though Kris has great respect for tradition, he's not old-fashioned. In fact, his penchant for experimentation sets him apart from other Belgian brewers. In addition to their regular line-up, De Dolle produces some innovative seasonal and specialty brews. And beer fans approve; their Cosmos Porter (an old, Flemish brown ale) won the consumers' choice award at Zythos, Belgium's biggest beer festival, in 2009, and their Exprmtl brew AD 2010 (a sour beer made with wine yeast) came in second this year.

Simple, optimistic and gentle

An fire at the brewery in early March did some serious damage to the pub area, but fortunately the brewing operation itself was spared. Despite the fire, De Dolle hasn't missed a beat – weekly tours have continued and a comfortable tasting area was set up next door in the old brewer's house. Beer bottling was delayed for a bit but has since resumed.

The brewery's exterior is whimsically decorated,



Brewer Kris Herteleer wears his heart on his sleeves

giving visitors a hint of what's to come. Primary colours dominate, and De Dolle's mascot – a bulbous, yellow cartoon character holding a brewers' fork – greets you. This is the embodiment of the brewery – a playful combination of a yeast cell and a man. You'll find it also on their Oerbier label, glasses and maybe even on the brewer's jacket.

"It is very simple, optimistic and gentle," says Kris. "It smiles at the result: the beer. But it doesn't get this for free – work and knowledge are held in its right hand, symbolised by the brewer's fork."

This hard work and positive attitude pay off. De Dolle is a favourite among tourists and locals

alike. It's a place where strangers easily strike up conversations with one another, something I've found to be a rarity in Flanders. Twice I've been lucky enough to get rides back to the train station with Flemish couples who seemed to find my broken Dutch endearing.

De Dolle is one of the only breweries in Flanders that offers weekly tours in English regardless if you are a group of two or 10. Your tour guide is typically Kris' nonagenarian mother. You'll hear some incredibly witty jokes (that she warned me not to share) and various anecdotes that back up her claim that beer is good for you. If she's any indication, we should all be imbibing daily. ♦



Mrs Herteleer – better known as "Moes" – takes you on a memorable tour of De Dolle

Visiting the mad brewers

De Dolle gives weekly tours on Sundays at 14.00 in English or French and 15.00 in Dutch. The cost is €3,50, which includes a beer. In addition, De Dolle arranges large group tours by appointment during the week with a minimum of 30 people.

Go there soon to sample the last of this year's Easter beer, Boskeun, a dangerously drinkable, yet amazingly complex blond beer.

To get to De Dolle by public transport, take a left out of the Diksmuide train station and head down Bortierlaan. Take a left on Maria Doolaeghestraat (N35), which becomes Esenweg and will take you all the way to De Dolle (Esenweg becomes Roeselarestraat). If you walk, it's about 40 minutes.

De Dolle Brouwerij
Roeselarestraat 12B, Esen

→ www.dedollebrouwers.be



The hooligans' game

Rugby takes off in Flanders

CHRISTOPHER TRAPMAN

It would have been difficult in 1823 for English clergyman William Webb Ellis to have imagined the longer term implications when, with a fine disregard for the rules of football played in his time, he took the ball in his arms and ran with it, thus originating the distinctive feature of the game of rugby.

It is a game that has evolved across the globe in many shapes and sizes. And later this month, East Flanders hosts one of the region's biggest sports events: Flanders Rugby Open Tournament.

In a version of the Laws of Football as played at Rugby School in 1846, all matches were considered drawn after five days – or after three days if no goal has been kicked. The number of players on the field has also evolved with the classic version of Rugby Union being played by teams of 15, while 13 players make up a team of Rugby League. Then there is seven-a-side rugby, which is the latest sport to accede to the Olympics in 2016, not forgetting 10-a-side rugby, which will be on display at Dendermonde.

Often derided as a violent game, rugby players like to think of their sport as a “hooligans’ game played by gentlemen”, while football is a “gentlemen’s game played by hooligans”. Others consider football as a contact sport and rugby as a collision sport.

Whichever camp you belong to, the game has evolved considerably over the years, and today it would be unlikely to attract the following reference by Thomas Hughes (author of *Tom Brown's School Days*) in 1834: “In my first year running with the ball, to get a try was not absolutely forbidden, but a jury of rugby boys of that day would almost certainly have found a verdict of ‘justifiable homicide’ if a boy had been killed in running in.”

In Belgium, rugby has remained the “poor relation” compared to other team games, despite a considerable increase in interest in the sport over the past decades.

Organisation of the game in Belgium has been assured by the Belgian Rugby Federation (FBRB) since 1934. After a serious interruption during the Second World War, competitive rugby for men and women has been growing over the last 60 years. Both numbers of players and



The Black Devils national rugby team (in black) beat Poland in Brussels last month

supporters has increased, as has the quality of the game. In 2009, FBRB had 10,500 affiliated members spread among 55 clubs, 23 of them in Flanders. Two clubs from Luxembourg also participate in the Belgian national and regional championships. Clubs belong to two regional leagues: the VRB (Vlaamse Rugby Bond) and the LBFR (Ligue Belge Francophone de Rugby).

Where once fitness was considered necessary for getting to the café first, and tactics for getting someone else to pay for the round, the FBRB and the regional leagues are now investing seriously in ensuring that these qualities are increasingly evident on the field. Now, more than half the members are under 20 years old, reflecting the increasing popularity among young people, and greater

attention is now being given to training youth teams. The national team has steadily climbed the rankings – from 54th place worldwide in 2003 to 26th place now, following the victory of the Belgian Black Devils over Poland on 24 April in Brussels.

While applauding the national team and their latest victory, congratulations are also due to the Belgian Under 19s, which beat Wales, to the Belgian second team, which beat Luxemburg, and to the Belgian Women's team, which beat Flandres Françaises – all on the same day. A good Saturday indeed for Belgian rugby! ♦

➡ www.rugby.be

Free beer for readers of Flanders Today!

Exchange this bottle cap for one beer during the Flanders Open Rugby Tournament on 22 or 23 May. One token per person



Descending on Dendermonde • The East Flemish town plays host to the biggest ten-a-side rugby tournament in Europe

Sarah Crew



Flanders Rugby Open Tournament welcomes 5,000 fans to Dendermonde this month



Former Flemish sports minister Bert Anciaux at last year's tournament

About 5,000 people will descend on Dendermonde later this month for Flanders Open Rugby, the biggest ten-a-side rugby tournament in Europe. Enter Dendermonde in East Flanders and you can't miss it; just follow the fans decked out in wigs and make-up, who look forward to the event all year and celebrate like it's the World Cup.

A record total of 64 Belgian and international teams will compete over the weekend. The open tournament is, as always, hosted by Dendermonde Rugby Club (DRC), one of the largest clubs in Flanders.

A ten-a-side competition, compared to the traditional 15-a-side, creates more fast-moving play, explains Paul O'Reilly, club member and father of four junior members of DRC. “Ten-a-side is a more open game with fewer forwards and more impressive tries,” he explains. Ensuring both a smooth and high standard of play will be referees from England. Alongside

five teams from Belgium are squads from the UK, Ireland, the Netherlands, France, Poland, Denmark, South Africa and Cameroon.

The tournament is separated into three divisions: men's, women's and veterans with total prize money of €3,000. While on-pitch action will be predictably fierce, off-pitch activity is likely to be equally electric with the rugby club transformed into a tent city and festival site.

Each team will be assigned its own military-style tent and the remaining grounds will be filled with beer tents, *frietkots*, barbecue and fun activities for the little ones. Both the local commune and Flemish Region have helped the club organise and finance what is the fifth largest sporting event in Flanders.

It kicks off on 21 May with a welcoming reception, while the main party on Saturday starts with a barbecue and continues with an Ice Age themed fancy dress party until the early hours of the morning. Prizes will be awarded to both the best-dressed individual and team.

The final ceremony with trophy presentation to the winning teams takes place on Sunday evening. The players may be weary and the fans a tad fatigued, but the tournament will end with a fitting festive finale. ♦

Flanders Rugby Open Tournament

21-23 May
Sportcomplex Sint-Gillis Dendermonde
203 Van Langenhovestraat

➡ www.dendermonderugby.com

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Canvas Collectie

ANNA JENKINSON

Canvas Collectie, or Canvas Collection, is an annual competition, an exhibition and a television series all rolled into one.

Artists from across the country, professionals and first-timers, were asked to submit artworks for the competition organised by VRT's Canvas television channel together with the French-language RTBF. About 8,000 artists applied and just under 200 were selected for the exhibition currently showing at Bozar in Brussels.

The top prize of €10,000 will be announced on 30 May, along with three other winners – a prize for a Dutch-speaking candidate, another for a French-speaking candidate and one voted on by the public. The works selected for the exhibition include paintings, photographs and installations. You'd be hard put not to find something to your taste, although the abilities vary and the sheer number of diverse works is a little overwhelming.

Among the numerous photographs, I found myself drawn to a series of African communities captured in the work of Wim De Schamphelaere and a pair of pictures that show Eric De Ville's "tower of Brussels", made from the facades of houses. Another wall is filled with black-and-white photographs; at the end is a work by Hilde Damman: on closer inspection, you realise it's actually an oil on canvas in her trademark shades of grey, black and white. Another intriguing work is "elderberry", made from ceramic and iron by Kristien D'Hont; it made me think simultaneously of a branch laden with berries and a molecule. Candidates submitted their works to one of nine contemporary art centres and museums in Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels. Each artist had 10 minutes to explain their work to the jury – a wonderful opportunity for the artists and also an exhausting one for the jury. The exhibition also pays tribute to

those who weren't chosen by having the wall of the entrance filled with about 30 works that failed to get through. How were they chosen? By a telephone call-in. The first rejected artists to call in once the selections had been announced got a space on the wall for their work. After all, art is subjective. If you can't make it to the exhibition itself, you can view the works online or catch one of the television programmes – every Sunday on Canvas (rebroadcast on Mondays on Canvas+).

Until 6 June

**Bozar
Ravensteinstraat 23
Brussels**

→ <http://canvascollectie.canvas.be>



MORE EXHIBITIONS THIS WEEK

For Your Eyes Only → *De Markten, Brussels*

Alter Ego → *Gaasbeek Castle, Gaasbeek*

Ed Templeton: the Cemetery of Reason → *SMAK, Ghent*



Antwerp

Arenbergschouwburg
Arenbergstraat 28; 070.222.192
www.arenbergschouwburg.be
MAY 13 20.15 Olafur Arnalds
MAY 16 20.30 Jason and the Scorchers
MAY 17 20.30 Hayseed Dixie

De Roma
Turnhoutsebaan 327; 03.292.97.40
www.deroma.be
MAY 12 20.30 15 years The Seatsniffers

Kelly's Irish Pub
Keyserlei 27; www.kellys.be
MAY 14 21.30 The Lowland Paddies

Petrol
Herbouvillekaai 21; 03.226.49.63
www.petrolclub.be
MAY 15 21.00 Balthazar + Superlijm + Lucy Love

Sportpaleis
Schijnpoortweg 119; 070.345.345
www.sportpaleis.be
MAY 15 20.00 Alicia Keys
MAY 17-18 20.00 Lady Gaga + Semi Precious Weapons

Trix
Noordersingel 28; 03.670.09.00
www.trixonline.be
Concerts at 20.00:
MAY 14 The Slackers + Edifiers **MAY 16** A Place to Bury Strangers **MAY 17** Tweak Bird + Sic Alps **MAY 19** Blitzen Trapper **MAY 20** Phosphorescent

Brussels

Ancienne Belgique
Anspachlaan 110; 02.548.24.24
www.abconcerts.be
Concerts at 20.00:
MAY 12 Olafur Arnalds + Wovenhand
MAY 13 The Caroloregians + The Slackers **MAY 14** A Fine Frenzy **MAY 17** Paul Weller **MAY 19** Deadmau5. Wolves in the Throne Room

Fuse
Blaesstraat 208; 02.511.97.89 www.fuse.be
MAY 15 23.00 Minus label night: Heartthrob, Matt John, Fabrizio Maurizi, DJs DEG + Pierre

K-NAL
Havenlaan 1; 0474.04.00.00, www.k-nal.be
MAY 12 23.00 Libertine Supersport & Fightklub present Ed Banger vs Gomma Rec with Ed Banger: Uffie Live, Breakbot, Busy P, Mashed Paper Klub
MAY 15 23.00 Montecoso Discotheque + Juan MacLean

Koninklijk Circus
Onderrichtsstraat 81; 02.218.20.15
www.cirque-royal.org
Concerts at 20.00:
MAY 12 Gill Scott-Heron (part of Les Nuits Botanique) **MAY 13** François Breut + Tindersticks (part of Les Nuits Botanique) **MAY 14** Roy Harper + Joanna Newsom (part of Les Nuits Botanique) **MAY 15** Carl + Arthur H Solo + Brigitte Fontaine. Efterklang + CocoRosie (part of Les Nuits Botanique) **MAY 17** Neil McSweeney + Richard Hawley **MAY 20** Cesaria Evora

Le Botanique
Koningstraat 236; 02.218.37.32
www.botanique.be
Concerts at 20.00 (Les Nuits Botanique):
MAY 12 Dum Dum Girls + A Sunny Day in Glasgow + Deerhunter, more **MAY 13** Casey + Gogol Bordello + Lonely Drifter Karen, more **MAY 14** Zaza + Black Rebel Motorcycle Club + Isbells, more **MAY 15** Cold Cave + Absynthe Minded + Maximilian Hecker playing the Grand Piano, more **MAY 16** Bachelorette + Wolf Parade + The Books, more **MAY 17** Jamie Lidell + Detours ADAMI + Baloji, more

Le Montmartre
Boondaalsesteenweg 344;
www.lemontmartre.be

DON'T MISS Zinneke parade

22 May

Downtown Brussels

We highly encourage everyone, no matter where they live in this great nation, to be in downtown Brussels on 22 May for the Zinneke parade. "Zinneke" is the name given to the Zenne river that circles Brussels and to the stray dogs that were traditionally found living there. They were mutts, so now Zinneke is a source of pride – one of multiple origin. That's Brussels all over, and the Zinneke crew works with residents of the city to create this special, artistically inspired parade every two years.



MAY 16 21.00 Chicago Red

Recyclart
Ursulinenstraat 25; 02.502.57.34
www.recyclart.be
MAY 12 21.00 Zun Zun Egui + Gurzuf + Les Hoquets

The Music Village
Steenstraat 50; 02.513.13.45
www.themusicvillage.com
MAY 20 12.30 Lennaert Maes, singer-songwriter (in Dutch)

Ghent

Charlatan
Vlasmarkt 6; 09.224.24.57
www.charlatan.be
MAY 13 23.00 Lucy Love **MAY 15** 22.00 Ginga **MAY 16** 22.00 PABLO & CO **MAY 18** 20.00 Titus **MAY 19** 20.00 Stereo TotalAndronicus **MAY 20** 21.00 5 years Genthology with Waxdolls + Kapitan Korsakov

Handelsbeurs
Kouter 29; 09.265.91.65
www.handelsbeurs.be
MAY 14 20.15 Harvey Quinnt

Kinky Star
Vlasmarkt 9; 09.223.48.45
www.kinkystar.com
MAY 14 20.00 Laboratoire: Huur is Duur + Grand Ordinaire **MAY 15** 21.00 JonGeduld: Sjöföttlich **MAY 16** 21.00 Söfa **MAY 18** 21.00 Pauwel De Meyer

Vooruit
St Pietersnieuwstraat 23; 0900.26.060
www.vooruit.be
MAY 12 22.00 Scout Niblett **MAY 19** 15.30 Garcia Plays Kyuss. 20.30 Phosphorescent

Hasselt

Muziekodroom
Bootstraat 9; 011.23.13.13
www.muziekodroom.be
MAY 13 20.00 Shy Child + Superlijm **MAY 20** 19.00 The Exploited + Heartbreaktunes

Kortrijk

De Kreun
Conservatoriumplein 1; 056.37.06.44
www.dekreun.be
MAY 15 20.00 69 + The Intelligence + JB Wizz **MAY 18** 20.00 Mi Ami

Leuven

Het Depot
Martelarenplein 12; 016.22.06.03
www.hetdepot.be
Concerts at 20.00:
MAY 12 Flip Kowlier **MAY 13**

Radio Modern's Ne Vuilen Avond with Jan Desmet, De Ludo's Live, 4 Schoon Madammen, more **MAY 14** Sweet Coffee + The Glimmers **MAY 15** Shameboy + Vermin Twins + Partyharders



Antwerp

Buster
Kaasrui 1; 03.232.51.53
www.busterpodium.be
MAY 12 21.00 Julien Fraipont Trio
MAY 13 21.00 Buster Jam **MAY 18** 21.30 Geert Schoeters Trio **MAY 19-22** 21.00 Swedish Week with jazz including Swedish composers, covers, and jazz fusion

De Hopper
Leopold De Waelstraat 2; 03.248.49.33
www.cafehopper.be
MAY 16 16.00 Sander Dewinne Quartet
MAY 17 21.00 Pieter Claus Quartet

't Kwartier
Keistraat 11; 0475.28.66.10
www.tkwartier.be
MAY 16 20.00 Sunday Jazz District

Trix
Noordersingel 28; 03.670.09.00
www.trixonline.be
MAY 13 20.00 InoisZZ session: Chaos of the Haunted Spire + Andrew Claes + Afterjam

Zuiderpershuis
Waalse Kaai 14; 03.248.01.00
www.zuiderpershuis.be
MAY 12 20.30 Rawfishboys + Os Meus Shorts

Brussels

Ancienne Belgique
Anspachlaan 110; 02.548.24.24
www.abconcerts.be
MAY 12 20.00 Robin Verheyen

Archiduc
Dansaertstraat 6; 02.512.06.52
www.archiduc.net
Until MAY 29 17.00 1060
MAY 17 22.00 Jean-Pierre Froidebise

Jazz Station
Leuvensesteenweg 193; 02.733.13.78
www.jazzstation.be
MAY 12 20.30 Vegetal Beauty & Guest
MAY 15 18.00 Stille + guest **MAY 19** 20.30 Giacomo Lariccia **MAY 20** 20.30 The Bundle

Marni Club
Vergniestraat 25; 02.639.09.81,
www.theatremarni.com
MAY 19 20.00 Phil Robinson Band
MAY 20 20.00 Kevin Mulligan Trio

Sounds Jazz Club
Tulpenstraat 28; 02.512.92.50
www.soundsjazzclub.be
Concerts at 22.00:
MAY 12 Chamaquiando, salsa **MAY 13** 21.00 The Singer's Night **MAY 14** Valentine's Day **MAY 15** Nicolas Moreaux Quintet **MAY 17** Master Session **MAY 18** Laurent Doumont Soul Tuesdays **MAY 19** Los Soneros del Barrio **MAY 20** Albert Villa Quartet

The Music Village
Steenstraat 50; 02.513.13.45
www.themusicvillage.com
Concerts at 21.00:
MAY 12 Mr Pringle's & The Bouyaka Horns **MAY 13** Lance & Donna **MAY 14** Caroll Vanwelden & Dirk Van der Linden **MAY 15** Nathalie Lories Trio + Bert Joris **MAY 16-17** Arina & Co **MAY 19** Vincent Thekal Quartet

Viage
Anspachlaan 30; 070.44.34.43
www.viage.be
MAY 15 20.30 Toots Thielemans

Ghent

Handelsbeurs
Kouter 29; 09.265.91.65
www.handelsbeurs.be
MAY 20 20.15 Tineke Postma Quartet



Antwerp

Zuiderpershuis
Waalse Kaai 14; 03.248.01.00
www.zuiderpershuis.be
MAY 14 20.30 Brassafrik
MAY 15 20.30 Svetlana Spajic

Ardoorie

Cultuurkapel De Schaduw
Wezestraat 32; 0479.80.94.82
www.deschaduw.net
MAY 14 20.30 Maggid (free)

Brussels

Art Base
Zandstraat 29; 02.217.29.20
www.art-base.be
MAY 15 20.00 Tango de La Plata, Argentinian tango

Théâtre Molière
Bastionsquare 3; 02.217.26.00
www.muziekpubliek.be
MAY 14 20.00 Pandit Ashok Pathak & Pandit Anindo Chatterjee (India)

Ghent

De Centrale
Kraankindersstraat 2; 09.265.98.28
www.decentrale.be
MAY 16 15.30 Wang Wei Quartet
MAY 17 19.30 Tamikrest (Mali) + Dirtmusic



Antwerp

deSingel
Desguinlei 25; 03.248.28.28
www.desingel.be
MAY 12 20.00 Budapest Festival Orchestra and Collegium Vocale Gent conducted by Iván Fischer: Bartók, Arvo Pärt, Mozart
MAY 15 20.00 Champ d'Action and De Scheldezones conducted by Erik Mast: world premières by Serge Verstockt & Stefan Prins
MAY 19 20.00 Richard Goode, piano: programme to be announced

Brussels

Bozar
Ravensteinstraat 23; 02.507.82.00
www.bozar.be
MAY 17 20.00 Les Folies Françaises conducted by Patrick Cohën-Akenine, with Isabelle Druet (dessus); Sébastien Droy (haute-contre); Lisandro Abadie (basse taille): scenes from Lully operas

Flagey
Heilig Kruisplein; 02.641.10.20
www.flagey.be
MAY 20 20.15 Oxalys Ensemble: Richard Strauss' Metamorphoses, in its original form arranged by Fabian Fiorini

Onze-Lieve-Vrouw ter Kapelle
Kapellemarkt; 02.507.82.00
www.placedelachapelle.org
MAY 20 20.00 Huelgas Ensemble conducted by Paul Van Nevel: Grand yvroigne et mal vivant, music by Jacobus Clemens Non Papa

Protestantse Kapel
Museumplein 2; 02.507.82.00
MAY 18 20.00 Geneviève Soly, harpsichord: Graupner, Handel

Royal Music Conservatory
Regentschapsstraat 30; 02.213.41.37
www.kcb.be
MAY 19 20.00 Vogler Quartett: Schumann string quartets

Ghent

Handelsbeurs
Kouter 29; 09.265.91.65
www.handelsbeurs.be
MAY 19 20.15 Hendrickje Van

Kerckhove, soprano; Inge Spinette, piano; Grieg, Schreker, Strauss, more



Antwerp

Vlaamse Opera
Frankrijklei 1; 070.22.02.02
www.vlaamseopera.be
MAY 12-20 15.00/20.30 Giasone by Francesco Cavalli, staged by Mariame Clément and conducted by Federico Maria Sardelli (in the original Italian with Dutch surtitles)

Brussels

De Munt
Muntplein; 070.23.39.39 www.demunt.be
Until MAY 19 20.00/15.00 Don Quichotte by Jules Massenet, with Marc Minkowski/Nicholas Jenkins conducting the De Munt Symphony Orchestra; staged by Laurent Pelly (in the original French with Dutch and French surtitles)

Ghent

Vooruit
St Pietersnieuwstraat 23; 0900.26.060
www.vooruit.be
MAY 12 20.00 The Rage of Life: music theatre for young people composed by Elena Kats-Chernin, written and staged by Igor Bauersima (in English with Dutch surtitles)



Brussels

KVS Bol
Lakensestraat 146; 02.210.11.00
www.kvs.be
MAY 20-23 20.00 More more more... future, music and dance choreographed by Faustin Linyekula (part of Congo Festival)

Théâtre Varia
Scepterstraat 78; 02.640.82.58,
www.varia.be
MAY 18-22 19.30/20.30 Cie As Palavras in Identificazione di una Donna, choreographed by Claudio Bernardo, performed by Bernardo and Johanne Saunier

Leuven

STUK
Naamsestraat 96; 016.32.03.20 www.stuk.be
MAY 11-12 20.30 Damaged Goods in Fault Lines, choreographed by Meg Stuart, Philipp Gehmacher & Vladimir Miller



Antwerp

CC Berchem
Driekoningenstraat 126; 03.286.88.20
www.ccbe.be
MAY 20 20.30 Theater Antigone in The Golden Boy, directed by Sarah Moeremans (in Dutch)

Fakkelteater
Hoogstraat 12; 03.232.14.69
www.fakkelteater.be
Until MAY 30 15.00/20.30 Mark Tijsmans, Ben Rottiers, Marijke Hofkens and Ann De Winne in Venetië in de sneeuw (Venice in the snow), directed by Jan Verbist (in Dutch)
Until JUNE 13 15.00/20.30 Ann Van den Broeck in The Musical Songbook, directed by Stany Crets (music theatre, in Dutch)
MAY 14-15 20.30 Nigel Williams in Geloof mij (Believe me), comedy (in

DON'T MISS



Arno Roncada

Until 20 June

Bozar, Brussels

This brilliant Belgian photographer inaugurates the new series *Junctions* at Bozar, in which an artist shows his or her own work alongside their choices from the archives of Antwerp's FotoMuseum. Roncada doesn't take pictures so much as invent them – he sets up scenes to look like candid shots of reality. In this show, he chooses historical landscapes, rephotographing and reconstructing them, charging them with new connotations, which he then pairs with his previous work. It's a must see at Bozar this spring.
➡ www.bozar.be

Dutch)
MAY 17-20 20.30 Sien Eggers in Hondstuk, written and directed by Stefan Perceval (in Dutch)

Monty
Montignystraat 3; 03.238.64.97
www.monty.be
MAY 20-22 20.30 Lazarus in Oblomow, based on the 1858 novel by Ivan Gontsjarov (in Dutch)

Ghent

Lakenmetershuis
Vrijdagmarkt 24-25; 0488.374.322
www.klupartistik.be
MAY 7-8, 14-15 Quartier Cartier presents the stories of neighbourhood residents in an improvisational production

Theater Tinnenpot
Tinnenpotstraat 21; 09.225.18.60
www.tinnenpot.be
Until MAY 31 20.00 Damiaan, directed and starring Jo Decaluwe (in Dutch)
Until JUNE 23 20.00 De buitenkant van Meneer Jules (The Outside of Mister Jules) by Diane Broeckhove, directed by Jan Verbist (in Dutch)

Vooruit
St Pietersnieuwstraat 23; 0900.26.060
www.vooruit.be
MAY 14-15 20.00 Troubleyn in De dienaar van de schoonheid (The Servant of Beauty), the third in a trilogy of monologues by Jan Fabre featuring actor Dirk Roofthoof (in Dutch)

Leuven

STUK
Naamsestraat 96; 016.32.03.20 www.stuk.be
MAY 18 20.30 Theater Antigone in The Golden Boy, directed by Sarah Moeremans (in Dutch)



Antwerp

Contemporary Art Museum (M HKA)



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Leuvenstraat 32; 03.238.59.60
www.muhka.be
Until SEP 19 Art kept me out of jail, performance installations by Jan Fabre

Fashion Museum (MoMu)
Nationalestraat 28; 03.470.27.70
www.momu.be
Until AUG 8 BLACK: Masters of Black in Fashion & Costume

FotoMuseum
Waalse Kaai 47; 03.242.93.00,
www.fotomuseum.be
Until MAY 16 Congo (belge), photographs of contemporary Democratic Republic of Congo by Flemish photographer Carl De Keyzer
Until MAY 16 Congo belge en images, historical photographs of the Belgian Congo, curated by Magnum photographer Carl De Keyzer
Until MAY 16 Bamako Encounters 2009, works by young African photographers

Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten/Royal Museum of Fine Arts
Leopold De Waelplaats; 03.238.78.09
www.kmska.be
Until OCT 3 Closing Time, work by Flemish artist Jan Vanriet presented alongside related pieces from the museum's collection

Sterckshof Silver Museum
Hoofdvunderlei 160; 03.360.52.52
www.zilvermuseum.be
Until JUNE 13 Delheid 1828-1980: From Michel to Climax, historical documents, photographs, tableware, sculpture and other objects from the Brussels-based silver manufacturer Delheid Frères
Until MAY 16 Designed 4 You, work by jewellery design students from Antwerp's Sint-Godelieve, created under the mentorship of well-known Flemish designers, such as Nico Taeymans and Robb Zilla

Borgloon
Gasthuiskapel Borgloon
Graethempoort 3; 012.67.36.00
www.artborgloon.be
Until MAY 23 Natura/naturans, group show reflecting nature and renewed life, coupled with guided nature walks

Bruges
Hospitaalmuseum
Mariastraat 38; 050.44.87.11
www.museabrugge.be
Until NOV 7 Ivory in Bruges, rare pieces from museums, churches and monasteries

Brussels
Argos Centre for Art and Media
Werfstraat 13; 02.229.00.03
www.argosarts.org
Until JUNE 19 Andrea Geyer: Spiral Lands, photos and documents examining the complex history of North America and the identity of its people
Until JUNE 19 Angel Vergara: Monday: Fireworks; Tuesday: Illuminations; Wednesday: Revolution, the early days of the Belgian monarchy and its cultural, social-political and economic context.

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Mixed media works by the Brussels-based Spanish artist
Until JUNE 19 Alexander Kluge: Poetics in Between Media, video art by the German film director

art)&(marges)
Hoogstraat 312-314; 02.511.34.20
www.arthis.org
Until JUNE 27 Musik Oblik, music and visual art project exploring sound and vision

Belgian Comic Strip Centre
Zandstraat 20; 02.219.19.80
www.stripmuseum.be
Until AUG 29 Moomin: Tove Jansson's Dreamworld, works by the Finnish illustrator and author

Bozar
Ravensteinstraat 23; 02.507.82.00
www.bozar.be
Until JUNE 20 Laurent Ney: Shaping Forces, first monographic exhibition by the Belgian architect-engineer
Until JUNE 20 Junctions: Arno Roncada, work by the Belgian artist paired with selections from Antwerp's FotoMuseum
Until JUNE 20 El Ángel Exterminador, major show of contemporary Spanish artists exploring the ambivalence between exterior and interior, on the occasion of the EU Spanish presidency (part of El Ángel Exterminador Festival)

De Elektriciteitscentrale European Centre for Contemporary Art
Sint Katelijneplein 44; 02.279.64.45
Until MAY 16 Bamako Encounters 2009, photographs and videos on the theme of frontiers: geographical, political, social and religious

De Markten
Oude Graanmarkt 5; 02.512.34.25
www.demarkten.be
Until MAY 25 For Your Eyes Only, group show of international women painters, including Antwerp-based Greman artist Katie Heck, New York based German artist Pia Dehne and American artist Mary Heilmann

Design Flanders
Kanselarijstraat 19; 02.227.60.60
www.designflanders.be
Until MAY 22 Ceramic Unica, ceramic art by The Fuping Eleven; photographs by Lydia De Bock

ISELP
Waterloosesteenweg 31; 02.504.80.70
www.iselp.be
Until MAY 30 Sopfie Palisse: Châteaux de sable, prints
Until MAY 30 Marie Beaudry, ceramics

Jewish Museum of Belgium
Minimenstraat 21; 02.512.19.63
www.new.mjb-jmb.org
Until MAY 30 Charles Szymkowicz: Schilder in het bloed (Painter in Blood), paintings by the contemporary Belgian artist

Royal Museums of Art and History
Jubelpark 10; 02.741.72.11 ,
www.kmkg-mrah.be
Until AUG 29 Isabelle de Borchgrave's I Medici: a Renaissance in Paper, life-size paper replicas of historic garments
Until AUG 29 Intersection, 14 contemporary artists show their work among the museum's permanent collections

Royal Museums of Fine Arts
Regentschapsstraat 3; 02.508.32.11
www.fine-arts-museum.be
Until MAY 30 Marc Mendelson, paintings, drawings and other work by the multi-media British-Belgian artist
Until JUNE 27 Symbolism in Belgium, the evolution of Symbolism from its origins in the romantic painting of the end of the 19th century, featuring Fernand Knopff, Félicien Rops and Jean Delville, among others

ULB - Building F1
Paul Hégerlaan 22-24 02.650.37.65
www.ulb.ac.be/culture
Until JUNE 30 Selbstdarstellung: Portraits de Grands Singes (Self: Portraits of Great Apes), photographs,

paintings and sculpture by artist and scientist Chris Herzfeld exploring the relationships between humans and apes on the occasion of the 175th anniversary of the Free University of Brussels (ULB)

WIELS
Van Volxemlaan 354; 02.340.00.50
www.wiels.org
Until JUNE 6 Do/Redo/Undo, survey of 50 years of performance art captured on video

Deurle
Museum Dhondt-Dhaenens
Museumlaan 14; 09.282.51.23
www.museumdd.be
Until JUNE 20 Sophie von Hellermann & Josh Smith, paintings
Until JUNE 20 Emo Verkerk, paintings

Gaasbeek
Gaasbeek Castle
Kasteelstraat 40; 02.531.01.30
www.kasteelvangaasbeek.be
Until JUNE 1 Studio Job presents Alter Ego, sculptures inspired by icons from Northern European (art) history

Ghent
Design Museum
Jan Breydelstraat 5; 09.267.99.99
www.designmuseumgent.be
Until JUNE 6 Richard Hutten, furniture, interiors and objects by the Dutch designer
Until JUNE 6 The Scandinavian Touch in Belgian Furniture 1951-1966

Kunstplatform Zebrastraat
Zebrastraat 32/001; www.zebrastraat.be
Until JUNE 20 update 3/body sound, group show using sound, light and telecommunications

Museum of Fine Arts
Fernand Scribbedreef 1 – Citadelpark; 09.240.07.00 www.mskgent.be
Until JUNE 27 Gustave Van de Woestyne, a retrospective of the Flemish painter
Until JUNE 27 Jean Delvin, paintings by the former director of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts

Museum of Modern Art (SMAK)
Citadelpark; 09.221.17.03 www.smak.be
Until MAY 16 Loek Grootjans: Leaving Traces, installations by the Dutch artist
Until MAY 16 Koen van den Broek: Curbs & Cracks, paintings by the Flemish artist
Until MAY 16 Collection FAKE?, interpretations of reality
Until JUNE 16 Ed Templeton: the Cemetery of Reason, photographs, paintings and sculpture by the American artist
Until JUNE 16 Electrified 02: Hacking Public Space, exhibition plus actions in public spaces across Ghent

Kortrijk
Museum Kortrijk 1302
Houtmarkt-Begijnpark; 056.27.78.50
www.kortrijk1302.be
Until MAY 16 Miniaturen: Gras dat verder groeit (Thumbnails: Grass That Continues to Grow), group show with works based on texts by Flemish writer Jozef Deleu

Machelen-Zulte
Het Roger Raveelmuseum
Gildestraat 2-8; 09.381.60.00
www.rogerraveelmuseum.be
Until JUNE 20 Pictografie: Schilderijen zijn ook tekeningen en vice-versa) (Pictography: Paintings are Also Drawings and Vice Versa), group show
MAY 16-JUNE 20 Zulma – Muze, model en madame, drawings, paintings and objects in memory of Roger Raveel's late wife, Zulma De Nijss

Ostend
Kunstmuseum aan zee (Mu.zee)
Romestraat 11; 059.50.81.18,
www.pmmk.be
Until AUG 29 Bij Ensor op Bezoek (Visiting Ensor), the world of master

Flemish painter James Ensor seen through the eyes of a variety of artists, writers and filmmakers who visited him in Ostend

Ypres
In Flanders Fields Museum
Grote Markt 34; 057.239.220
www.inlandersfields.be
Until JUNE 6 Gas! Attack, protection, care., dossier exhibition on the occasion of the 95th anniversary of the first gas attack in Flanders
Until AUG 15 Toiling for War, films, photos and objects tell the story of the presence of some 140,000 Chinese workers in World War One



Bruges
Procession of the Holy Blood:
Annual procession in four historical parts venerating the blood of Jesus brought to Bruges in the 12th century by Derrick of Alsace, Count of Flanders, after the second crusade
13 May from 14.30, across the centre
www.holyblood.com

Brussels
Human Cities Festival: Festival to showcase and plan public space in Brussels with talks, exhibitions and family events
Until MAY 16 across the city
www.festival.humancities.eu

Jette Organ Festival: Concerts every Sunday throughout May
MAY 16.00 at Sint-Pieterskerk, Kardinaal Mercierplein
0478.28.31.02, www.kerkjette.be

Kunstenfestivaldesarts: International festival of contemporary performing arts, including installations and film
Until MAY 29 in venues across Brussels
www.kfda.be

Ocean Liner Art: Ships that Shaped Our Lives: Lecture organised by BRIDFAS (British Decorative and Fine Arts Society of Brussels) by James Taylor, former curator at the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich (in English)
MAY 12 20.00 at the Dominican Church, Renaissancelaan 40
02.782.16.12, www.bridfas.org

Queen Elisabeth Piano Competition: Brussels' annual international competition involving some 80 young pianists
Until JUNE 14 at Brussels Conservatory, Bozar and Musical Instruments Museum
www.qeimc.be

Stoemp! Brussels Café Concerts: Free concerts by Flemish musicians in cafes across the city
Until June 9
www.stoemplive.be

The Pride: Brussels annual gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender celebration, with debates, actions, parties, film, a Rainbow Village and the big pride parade on May 15
Until MAY 16 across the city
www.blgp.be

Knokke-Heist
International Photography Festival: Festival featuring Belgian and international artists, including Tim Walker, Cecil Beaton and Paul Nougé
Until JUNE 13 across Knokke-Heist
www.knokke-heist.info

CAFE SPOTLIGHT

KATRIEN LINDEMANS



Moeder Lambic

Fontainasplein 8
Brussels

Last week in the first of our three-part series on brewery visits, we told you all about lambic – the beer partially brewed in the open air and only brewed in Belgium. If you love lambic, or even if you just love beer, you'll love Moeder Lambic. With a stock of about 200 traditional Belgian beers, this café in the centre of Brussels just off Anspachlaan is a must-visit. You won't find any commercial beers on the menu; instead you get beer from the best authentic Belgian breweries: Cantillon, Drie Fonteinen, Slaghmuylder. Moeder Lambic also serves many kinds of traditionally brewed beers from Flemish Brabant, like gueuze, krik and lambic. The café on Fontainasplein is the second success story of the owners, whose original Chez Moeder Lambic in Sint-Gillis is a legend. There is, however, next to no resemblance between them. Whereas the one in Sint-Gillis is rather small with a typical dark wooden interior, the one in the centre is four times as large and has a modern design with a nine-meter long counter displaying 40 taps and six hand pumps. All beers on tap can be ordered in a glass or in a one-litre jug and are very reasonably priced (€2.70 up to €4 a glass). If you're in the mood to celebrate, Moeder Lambic also stocks a few very rare and exclusive beers like the Millenium Geuze by Brewery Drie Fonteinen or Cantillon's Zwanze (a term that, in Brussels dialect, refers to the typical humour of the *Brusselaar*). The hard wooden benches and tables are slightly uncomfortable, but that doesn't seem to bother anyone. The tables come in handy if you order the ample plate of sausages and raw milk cheeses, served with sourdough bread and French farm butter. A real treat with the right beer, which your server will be happy to suggest. Moeder Lambic has a selection of "beers of the week" and hosts different beers from other countries every month. The staff are well-trained and know about all the different beers, which comes in handy if you got lost in the extensive menu. And, if you are still convinced you don't like beer, Moeder Lambic has alternatives so convincing you'll still want to go: homemade lemonade, farmer's fruit juice and a special selection of coffee and tea.

SHARON LIGHT

bite



Rood

Upon entering Rood, buried in the Turkish neighbourhood in the centre of Ghent, you immediately understand its name: this one-room restaurant features one dominant, bright red wall, while the rest of the space, tables included, are adorned with red touches. It's a dramatic – and fortunately not overwhelming – effect.

We debated whether the red theme continued into the food, despite our server's assertion that it did not. But almost every dish in fact featured a red item. That may simply be because red is pervasive in food – not something I had spent much time pondering before, but seemingly true.

Red or not, the food was great. The menu follows a straightforward structure. In each of four categories (salads, wok, pasta, suggestions), you'll find four options: vegetarian, meat, fish and chicken. There is also a selection of tapas, which didn't sound half as exciting as the regular menu, and a few soups.

We sampled all the soups on offer during our visit. A chunky, slightly spicy tomato soup received unanimous praise. I also enjoyed a mustard-cauliflower blend, but others felt the mustard flavour was weak. The carrot-pumpkin soup got a thumbs-down all around.

Every one of our five main courses, however, were well received. Not only are the serving sizes hearty, each dish features a nice variety of ingredients.

Contact Bite at flandersbite@gmail.com

Perhaps the salads are a bit more limited than other dishes, but, even so, try this on for size: five-herb house-smoked duck with plum chutney, mixed salad and soy dressing. Not too shabby for “just” a salad.

You'll find plenty of diversity amongst the ingredients, from truffle oil to bamboo shoots, a chestnut-cheese stuffing (in a parsnip) and a Thai basil or pumpkin-saffron sauce. Rood also puts a twist on some familiar preparations, such as a bouillabaisse of red bass, a hummus made of red beets or sea bass “in 't groen.” And it all somehow works well together, this food combining, like those Flemish chefs on TV are always telling us to do.

The prices were very reasonable, clocking in around €25 per person for wine and a filling meal, made of fresh ingredients, well seasoned, in dynamic combinations. And plenty of red.

→ www.restorood.be

- 📍 Sleepstraat 210, Ghent
- 🕒 Mon-Fri, 12.00-14.00 & 18.00-22.30
Sat 18.00-23.00
- ★ Fresh, creative and filling dishes in a warm atmosphere

TALKING DUTCH

ALISTAIR MACLEAN



daar →

It's often the small words that cause the learner the most grief. Regular readers of this column will have anguished at my occasional failure to use correctly the Dutch words *het* and *de*, which both mean “the”. Fewer problems should arise with *daar* – there. Nothing could be simpler you may think. And it's often straightforward: *zie je dat huis daar?* – do you see that house there? or *daar is het!* – there it is! And so are some phrases: *hier en daar* – here and there, and *tot daar* – up to there. But it becomes trickier in its compounds. So in *het zit daarin* – It's in there, the form *daarin* resembles the legal-sounding therein, which no normal person would use. Another example is *hij is handig daarin* – he is good at that.

The same way of constructing is used with all the prepositions: *daarop* – on that; *daarboven* – above that; *daarna* – after that; *daarachter* – behind that, *enzovoort* – and so on. Once you get the hang of it, and as long as you know the correct preposition, it's quite easy: *zijn antwoord daarop was voorspelbaar* – his answer to that was predictable; *daarmee kun je het schoonmaken* – you can clean it with that. Sometimes the *daar* word refers to more than one: *wat is het verschil daartussen?* – what is the difference between them?

The compounds often refer to

time: *de week daarvoor* – the week before; *daarnet* – just now; *kort daarop* – shortly after that; *eerst ... en daarna* – first ... and then; *de daaropvolgende zondag kwam hij niet* – the next Sunday he didn't come (“there up-following”).

Others are used when talking about space: *hij is daarboven* – he's upstairs; *daarbinnen is het warm* – it's warm inside; *jij moet daarbuiten blijven* – you must keep out of it.

Learners soon discover that they can't say much in Dutch before they have to resort to a *daar* word. So when you arrive alone and have to explain why your friend isn't with you, you could simply say *Tom is ziek* – Tom is ill. But you will probably have the urge to round this off with *daardoor kon hij niet komen* – that's why he couldn't come.

And if you don't want to say why even when pressed, a *daar* word will come in handy. She asks *waarom niet?* – why not? You can reply with *daarom niet* – because I say so (“therefore not”). It's a bit curt, but it does have a certain symmetry about it.

The *daar* words are quite demonstrative; you can choose to use the weaker *er* words: *ijs met chocola erop* – ice-cream with chocolate on it; *kom erin* – come inside; *ik kom eraan* – I'm on my way; *het zit erop* – it's finished.

THE LAST WORD...

Flagging campaign

“In fact the flag is supposed to be a uniting force, but the way they're using it can only lead to division. This is unbelievably stupid.”

Bart De Wever, leader of Flemish nationalist party NV-A, on the mass placement of Flemish flags on motorway bridges by the independence organisation Voorpost

Don't panic

“The fall in the euro is absolutely not a cause for concern.”

Karel De Gucht, EU Commissioner for trade

A star is born

“A dramatic, open-hearted and shocking story.”

Kimberley Vlaeminck, famous for having 56 stars tattooed onto her face, who publishes her life story on 15 May

Setting the record straight

“The elections are legal, but against the constitution.”

Outgoing Belgian prime minister Yves Leterme

NEXT WEEK IN FLANDERS TODAY #130

Feature

The iPad is about to hit the shelves in Belgium. Will we line up around the corner like the Americans?

Arts

Not-to-miss performances this month in Antwerp's Monty Arts Centre

Active

Our third and final brewery tour takes us to the 1,000-year-old village of Herzele, East Flanders