

All aboard for Shanghai 7

Flemish ministers are taking turns visiting the Belgian pavilion at the Shanghai World Exposition. Last week, Kris Peeters tried to make inroads with a Chinese car manufacturer to save Opel Antwerp


Slow fashion 9

The Flanders Fashion Institute's annual art *parcours* Vitrine is getting back to basics this year, with installation artists who are thinking about the permanence of fashion more than its seasonal fickleness


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Limburg bills itself as a "cycling paradise". Our reporter finds out if that's true in the first of a three-part series on cycling in Flanders' most scenic province



#132

Little by little

The small museums of Flanders are disappearing due to high operating costs and lack of subsidies

MONIQUE PHILIPS

Visiting a small museum can be a rewarding experience for foreigners and locals alike. Most of the time you'll have the place to yourself, and passionate volunteer guides enrich the experience. Flanders has hundreds of these museums, and they attract tourism and boost local trade.

But small museums are in a lot of trouble. Take De Snoek in Alveringem, a tiny town about 10 kilometres from the coastal city of Koksijde in West Flanders. This hidden gem, shouldering the grass-bordered Lovaart canal and its well-worn bike path, houses the only completely original 19th-century malt-house and brewery to survive Flanders' war-torn history.

By a fluke, this tiny speck of Flanders, known as the Northern Westhoek, behind the flooded river Yser, remained unoccupied territory during the First World War. This meant that De Snoek got to keep its copper kettles and pipes, while other Flemish breweries saw their equipment carted off by the German army to transform into ammunition.

De Snoek (which means "the pike") and the other intact family breweries in the area were considered no less than vital to the war effort. Thousands of Belgian soldiers were stationed behind the Yser, while interna-

tional troops gravitated around Ypres. For four long years, they battled in the trenches by day and drank in the breweries by night. Army officers feared the day their soldiers would run out of beer.

There was indeed a danger: steam escaping from breweries was often detected by German soldiers, and many were forced to stop brewing even if they still had their equipment. King George V granted the Sint-Sixtus abbey in Westvleteren special permission to brew at night. Fortunes were made, but the beer was brewed in a rush and was of inferior quality.

As it was at De Snoek. The brewer himself once notoriously declined one of his own pints, saying: "That canal water might do for the soldiers; I'll have a coffee." These are the kinds of anecdotes you find out in one of De Snoek's permanent exhibitions, *Het verhaal van de dorst in de Grote Oorlog* (*The Story of Thirst in the Great War*). It tells more about this lesser-known region, which hopes to be included in Flanders' big 2014-2018 Second World War anniversary centring on Ypres.

➡ continued on page 5



© Monique Philips

Jet studio up for sale

A legend went on sale last week, asking price €495,000. The historic Jet recording studio in the Koekelberg commune of Brussels, described as "the Abbey Road of Belgium", is on the market.

The studio was set up by Decca Records in 1942 and is the oldest working recording studio in the country. In its day, it echoed to the sounds of Shirley Bassey, Edith Piaf and the Rolling Stones. More recently, it has seen recording sessions by Manic Street Preachers, Hooverphonic, Das Pop and Zita Swoon.

Now, though, every home computer is a potential recording studio, and Jet is too much of a burden for current owner Staf Verbeeck. "I'm doing it with pain in my heart, but I have no alternative," he told FM Brussel. "This is the cold, hard economic reality."

Verbeeck hopes to see Jet continue as a going concern, but the asking price is for the



© Jet Studios

premises alone, which includes two recording studios and control room, lounge and guest bedrooms for visiting artists and two chambers for echo effects. Recording equipment, including a 40-channel Harrison 32C (the kind of console used to record Michael Jackson's album *Thriller*), is extra. ♦

 ➡ www.jetstudio.com

€60 million drugs gang broken up

Largest police swoop ever nets 29 suspects in Anderlecht

ALAN HOPE

Police in the Brussels commune of Anderlecht last week raided 102 private premises in what was described as the largest single police operation ever carried out in Belgium. The 550 officers visited 88 different addresses in the morning and 14 more in the afternoon, arresting 29 people in an operation designed to break up organised drugs trafficking.

The majority of the addresses were in the vicinity of Lemmingsplein in the part of Anderlecht known as Kuregem, the scene of violent clashes between police and youths earlier in the year and a part of the city claimed by some to be a police no-go area. Property seized included equipment for growing cannabis, seven luxury cars and €280,000 in cash.

The operation was 18 months in preparation, a police source said. The investigation into the

gang, who are claimed to have made some €60 million in drug money, started at the beginning of 2009, when police were tipped off about trade in cannabis. The clashes with gangs of youths are thought to have been orchestrated by the gang in order to throw up a smoke-screen.

"The gang wanted to create a zone where the police had no place and where it alone made the law, so it could carry on its drugs traffic undisturbed," explained Glenn Audenaert, director of the judicial wing of the federal police in Brussels. "We've always said we wouldn't stand for that, but it's taken some time to gather together the necessary information and evidence. Today, we're able to completely dismantle this whole organisation."

➡ continued on page 3

OFFSIDE

Falling apart in Brecht



A video of a beheading in Flanders has become a big hit on YouTube. But, not to worry, the beheading was that of a statue, situated until late April on the Gemeenteplaats in Brecht, near Antwerp.

The victim was Gabriel Mudeus, a distinguished jurist, humanist and contemporary of Erasmus. He was born in Brecht 450 years ago and died in 1560 in Leuven, where he had become professor of law.

Mudeus' statue was being moved as part of the renovation of the square, and when local man Ben Van Hoydonck saw workmen approach the statue, he reached for his video camera. "I thought to myself, this is going to go wrong and started filming. Even a child knows that a statue is made of sections and, if you want to move it, it has to be fastened securely."

The resulting video, just 52 seconds long, is titled "How they move a 100-year-old statue in Brecht" and has had nearly 80,000 hits. We watch as workmen circle the learned man, fastening chains around his base as they stand in the shovel of a digger. The crane to which the chains are attached begins to lift; the whole edifice leans to one side, and Mudeus takes an ignominious nose-dive into the bed of a truck, his head exploding into smithereens.

"I've had more than 300 emails from all over the world," Van Hoydonck said. Among them, the US bloopers programme *Most Daring*. "They wanted to know how much the images would cost," Van Hoydonck said. "I gave them my phone number."

Meanwhile in Brecht, plans for the re-inauguration of the square – and for the celebration of the 450th anniversary of the birth of the town's most famous son – have been postponed. The statue, we are assured, can be repaired.

→ www.youtube.com/watch?v=l57qJi8dp8

FLANDERS TODAY

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FLANDERS TODAY
JUNE 2, 2010

News in brief

Popular singer and theme park owner **Bobbejaan Schoepen** was buried last weekend following a funeral service open to the public. The service was held in a circus tent by the side of the Scheldt, about which he wrote one of his most popular songs. The guests included Antwerp mayor Patrick Janssens, ethics professor Etienne Vermeersch and several recording artists, among them Daan and Geike Arnaert, who paid musical tribute. Bobbejaan died of heart failure on 17 May, just one day after his 85th birthday. His remains, in a white coffin topped with his signature cowboy hat, were brought to their final resting place in a black horse-drawn carriage.

Idris Mohammed returned to his homeland with the human trafficker who brought him here at the end of last year. Usman escaped from Somalia to avoid being forcibly recruited into a group of boy soldiers.

The Fietserbond (Cyclist Union) has rejected claims by the motoring organisation Touring that **cycle trailers** – carriages for children pulled along by an adult's bicycle – are unsafe. Touring said that the trailers contained toxic materials in their fabric and that they had no standard form of lighting.

The **French Open** was a disappointment for Flanders' tennis stars, with top hopeful Yanina Wickmayer losing in straight sets to Daniela Hantuchova in the third round. Wickmayer, seeded 16th, lost 7-5, 6-3 to her Slovakian opponent. Kirsten Flipkens, the world's number 71, was beaten in the second round by Russia's Maria Sharapova. Among the men, Xavier Malisse, ranked 84, was forced to retire with a leg injury at 6-2, 6-2, 2-0 down against Spain's David Ferrer.

A **12-year-old boy who went missing** in Kortrijk has turned up – in Somalia. It is thought Usman

Flemish universities will go ahead with planned **exams on 14 June**, the day after the general election, despite a plea from education minister Pascal Smet for exams to be rescheduled so that students would be able to travel to and from their homes in order to vote. According to the universities, it would be impossible to reorganise exam timetables at such short notice, and they pointed out that proxy voting is an option for those whose homes are far from campus.

The Natural History Museum in Brussels has been given an honourable mention by the Council of Europe in its **Museum of the Year** awards. The museum

was praised for the originality of its exhibitions and for its accessibility to a wide range of visitors. The award itself was won by Ozeaneum in Stralsund, Germany.

Bart De Wever, chairman of the N-VA Flemish nationalist party, is the **most popular Flemish politician** on Facebook, it was revealed. De Wever, who also enjoyed popular success as a contestant on the quiz programme *De Slimste Mens Ter Wereld*, has 7,900 fans for his fan-page, although Ghent alderman Matthias De Clercq (Open VLD) has the most friends on his personal page.

Brussels is the 41st **most environmentally friendly** city in the world, according to an annual survey carried out by consultants Mercer, behind Washington DC, Yokohama and Belfast. The survey looks at a number of indicators such as water and air quality, sewer networks and traffic conditions. Calgary in Canada topped the chart. At the same time, Mercer produced its rankings of the most liveable cities, led by Vienna, with Brussels at number 15.

→ www.mercer.com

FACE OF FLANDERS

ALAN HOPE

Tom Dice

Last Wednesday, Flanders woke up to a new Tommeke. The night before, 20-year-old Tom Dice surprised Belgium by qualifying for the finals of the Eurovision Song Contest – a first for Belgium in six years. More astonishing, his simple acoustic song "Me and My Guitar" placed sixth at the finals last Saturday in Oslo. The original Tommeke, cyclist Tom Boonen, has lost almost as much shine as his sport, so the time was ripe for a new hero. Born in Eeklo in 1989, Dice is a graduate of the 2008 Flemish version of *X-Factor*, where he was coached by Maurice Engelen, aka Praga Khan. Dice came in second but led the field when it came time for Belgium's representative for Eurovision to be selected by the VRT.

Dice wrote "Me and My Guitar" with Flemish songwriter Jeroen Swinnen and English songwriter Ashley Hicklin. Belgium's expectations were low: the last Belgian to do well in Eurovision was Urban Trad in 2003, a folk group that reached second place singing in a made-up language. But something about the clean-cut Dice (he looks like a young James Taylor) appealed to the voters.

"I felt great, and then the results came, and I was really hoping, please say Belgium, and the cameras stayed with us, and then they said Belgium and everyone was flipping out. It was amazing," he excitedly told the cameras after, in fact, winning his round of the semi-finals.

Sixth in the Eurovision finals is the best result ever for a Flemish artist – the previous best was



© Giel Domen

a seventh place in both 1967 and 1969 by Louis Neefs. Dream Express' seventh place in 1977 equalled that, but they were Dutch expats.

Dice, meanwhile, probably has a promising career ahead of him, first as a teen idol and later as an easy-listening singer-songwriter. That's more than a lot of Eurovision graduates have done. Who now remembers Lily Castel (1971) Linda Lepomme (1985) or Vanessa Chinitor (1999)?

It was Germany, in the end, who won Eurovision this year: the cute, kicky 19-year-old Lena Meyer-Landrut's song "Satellite" was already being heard on Flemish radio the week leading up to the final.

→ www.eurovision.tv

Wired from birth

Flemish children prefer playing on the computer or gaming console, according to a survey carried out by the Toy Museum in Mechelen. Including television, Flemish children spend an average of three hours a day in front of a screen



Zero tolerance on crime bears fruit, as street-crime figures drop

→ continued from page 1

Following the raids of Tuesday, 25 May, several other search warrants were executed on Wednesday, this time on the financial side of the investigation. The gang is thought to have invested the proceeds of its traffic in real estate, for a value of €20 million, possibly going as high as €60 million. Among those suspected of involvement are notaries who may have failed to carry out their legal obligation to notify the authorities about transactions involving payments above €15,000 – an EU law designed to combat money laundering. By coincidence, Wednesday, 26 May, also saw the publication of figures that show that street crime in Kuregem has fallen by 30% over the past year, thanks to a policy of zero tolerance operated by police in the area. In some cases, the results are even more spectacular: while armed robberies are down 17% and car thefts down 31%, the number of thefts from cars fell by a massive 48%.

The zero tolerance policy was instituted following the troubles in the area at the start of the year. "More blue on the street is good for security," said interior minister Annemie Turtelboom.

Anderlecht mayor Gaëtan Van Goidsenhoven also welcomed the figures as "an important step in the normalisation of the area's way of life," but advised caution. "We cannot claim victory too soon," he said. "We've achieved an impressive result, but the war is not over yet." Both he and Turtelboom promised the zero tolerance policy would continue "as long as necessary".

• Meanwhile in Antwerp, mayor Patrick Janssens pledged to fight against senseless violence following an incident in which a group of youths ran amok, attacking bystanders without reason. Three people were stabbed, one man five times. Two others were beaten up nearby, police think by the same group. On Monday, one of the suspects was arrested, and the Antwerp prosecutor's office said it was intensifying efforts to track down the remaining suspects. ♦

Police outside the Kuregem police office in November 2009, just before it was attacked by a petrol bomb. The latest arrests will make it clear that Kuregem is not a no-go area for police



FIFTH COLUMN

ANJA OTTE

The Rule

Flemish politics are governed by The Rule, which is: the party that "owns" the theme that dominates the campaign wins the election. If the big theme is social security or redistribution, the socialists win. If it's food or environmental safety, the greens win. If everyone is talking about budgetary orthodoxy, then it's time for the liberals to cash in. If relations between the Dutch and the French speakers dominates, the nationalists are in for sure. And this last theme is exactly what is going on at the moment.

The chances are slim that you can find anyone on the street who can explain what confederalism means, yet this has become a major theme in the election debates. A confederation, should you wonder, is an association of sovereign member states. This is one step further than the federal state Belgium is at the moment – a union of partially self-governing regions and communities – and in the eyes of many French speakers, it is one step removed from Flemish secession.

The idea of confederalism has been around for a while. It is part of both CD&V's and Open VLD's party programmes, although neither of them has ever made much noise about this. What made it hot during this campaign is the separatist N-VA's sudden devotion to it.

For the party with Flemish independence as its main objective, this sounded a bit inconsistent, leaving it open to attacks. "Separatism or confederalism, what will it be?" CD&V's Marianne Thyssen sneered. "Open VLD will not join a government with a separatist N-VA," Open VLD's Guy Vanhengel added to the confusion. Vlaams Belang, that other separatist party, called confederalism "the surest way never to obtain Flemish independence". And, as per usual, whenever the shape of the state is discussed, all French-speaking parties felt obliged to contribute their bit as well.

Did all these attacks leave N-VA and its leader Bart De Wever bruised? Not at all. De Wever, a scholar of both Roman and Flemish history, knows The Rule all too well. This is his theme and, as long as this blabbering fills the air, his success is guaranteed.

This frustrates other parties, who want to talk about budget cuts (liberals) or pensions (socialists). The impact of those topics may hit people more directly, but the only way to get them into this campaign is by not reacting to their opponent's inconsistencies. Now, what politician can do that?

THE WEEK IN FIGURES



18,000
"green loans" approved by the government since the system, designed to encourage energy-saving investments in housing, was introduced in August last year

3,211
different species counted by volunteers during last week's biodiversity day, organised by conservation organisation Natuurpunt. The count covered mammals, birds, insects and plants

52,027 tonnes
of goods taken in last year by the 31 recognised kringloopwinkels, or recycling shops, in Flanders. The shops take in used goods like clothes and appliances, repair if necessary, then put them on sale

€104,000
raised by Antwerp Zoo from the auction of 32 elephant sculptures decorated by Flemish artists to mark the birth of baby elephant Kai-Mook last year. The money will go to an elephant nature reserve in India and the new elephant domain at Planckendael near Mechelen.

37%
of this year's graduating medical students opted for general practice, compared to an average of 26% over the last decade. For the first time, the annual target of 180 new GPs for Flanders looks like it will be reached

Tourists warned after stabbing attack of Belgian

The foreign affairs ministry has advised visitors to Egypt to avoid wearing clothes that make it too easy to identify them as Belgian after a Brussels man was stabbed in the town of Aswan while wearing a "Made in Belgium" T-shirt.

Philippe Lenders, 29, was on a cruise on the Nile, which landed at Aswan, site of the famous dam. Without warning, he was attacked outside the Nubian museum by a 33-year-old man already known to police.

Lenders was stabbed several times in the neck and chest. "He wanted to kill me," Lenders said from a hospital bed in Cairo, where he was transported for surgery. "It's unbelievable that I even survived." Witnesses later said the man had cried out that he

intended to behead Lenders. Speculation immediately appeared in the media that the attack was linked to the recent decision by the federal parliament to ban the wearing of the burqa or any other garment that obscures the face. The ban still has to be ratified by the Senate, which cannot be done before a new body is sworn in following the elections later this month.

The ministry of foreign affairs declined to speculate on the cause of the attack but warned tourists in Egypt not to give too many apparent signs of being Belgian. "Of course we can't ban explicit clothes," a spokesman said. "But you have to keep in mind that you're going on holiday to a strictly religious and conservative country." ♦

Prizes awarded in music, art and dance

This year's **Queen Elisabeth Music Competition** in piano has been won by Denis Kozhukhin, a 23-year-old Russian who was the last to play and who received both a standing ovation and the public prize for his rendition of the second Prokofiev concerto, described by one critic as "a lesson in simplicity".

In second place came another favourite of the public, the Bulgarian Evgeni Bozhanov, followed by the Dutchman Hannes Minnaar. The second Russian in the finals, Yuri Favorin, was ranked fourth, ahead of two of the five South Koreans in the finals, Kim Tae-Hyung and Kim Da Sol. The other six finalists,

as is customary, were not ranked. Meanwhile, the **Canvascollectie** for 2010, for the first time a joint venture between Flemish TV station Canvas and French-speaking TV station RTBF, was won by Patrick Mascaux and Christine Wilmes for their landscape photo "Distant Paradise". The public prize went to Eric De Ville from Brussels for his photo series *La tour de Bruxelles en Automne/La tour de Bruxelles by night*, in which city facades are reconstructed into a Tower of Babel, based on the 15th-century painting by Hieronymus Bosch. The KBC prize for the most promising young Flemish artist went to the Brussels-based Elly Van Eeghem, who won for her video "Toren" (pictured), in which she builds a tower of books.

Later this week, on 5 June, Flemish dance pioneer Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker's P.A.R.T.S. (Performing Arts Research and Training Studios) will be awarded the first-ever **Silver Lion for dance** at the Venice Biennale. The prize is intended to recognise young talent. The biennale said that P.A.R.T.S., which was founded in 1995, represents "a complete and intensive programme of studies in which the most advanced techniques of contemporary dance dialogue with other artistic disciplines". ♦



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Little by little

After boosting local economies for years, small museums now have to close

→ *continued from page 1*

De Snoek's successive owners have continuously managed to save this unique place by resisting the lure of industrial expansion and high copper prices – during the Korean War, for instance. They really want their brewery to live on as it was. And it's all here. The whole malting and brewing process, the way small steam or electric machines were added as they went along, yet preserving the original features and atmosphere.

Still, for the longest time, nobody knew about this place nor realised its potential. As a boy, historian Frank Becuwe (*pictured on page 1*) lived next door. When racking his brain in the 1980s about how to give this rural village – barely 15 minutes but a world away from Veurne and the coast – a boost, he knew what to do.

Convinced that a single well-chosen project

would trigger tourism and improve the economy, he wrote a pamphlet – called “De happy Westhooker” – and convinced his neighbours to offer their brewery up to visitors. Joined by a group of enthusiastic volunteers, he set up De Snoek.

In short, it was a fierce battle – restoring the roof, finding the funds, instigating a bike route, building a jetty, laying out a pretty square in front and adding a nice little terrace outside the old tavern, now serving as a museum café.

And it resulted in blatant success. The popular museum has become the motor for a flourishing countryside economy: bikers flock to the museum and the café, eat in nearby restaurants, sleep in local farms and buy local produce. The management, multi-language promotion and website all work well. De Snoek is now a listed monument.

In short, this museum has done everything right. There's just one hitch. It had to close. Before, if you wanted to visit the museum, you needed to collect the key from the café keeper and show yourself around. Not an ideal situation to start with, but now the young owner has changed jobs, and no one wants to take over the cafe.

Moreover, the volunteers, who all have day jobs, are fed up with having to come up with solutions. They would like the town council to step in and take over the long lease or the non-profit organisation, but negotiations have become stranded.

Becuwe, 50, who was once on the cabinet of the Flemish minister of internal affairs and urban policy, knows his way around subsidies and laws. Yet, for the last 15 years, he has been writing more pointless reports on De Snoek than he cares to remember. “Ministers and governors line up to visit the museum, declare their admiration, and receive their basket of locally-brewed beers, but, as soon as they drive off, they seem to forget about our problems and their promises,” he says. “I don't know how their



De Snoek is the only completely original 19th-century malt-house and brewery to survive Flanders' war-torn history

minds work. The urgency of our problems doesn't seem to register. Frankly, I'm done with writing for the umpteenth file, only to be chided for giving them too much work.” Furthermore, Becuwe, who now works for the Flemish Institute for Architectural Heritage, sees problems looming beyond De Snoek. In his vicinity alone, the George Grard museum has already packed up and, by the end of this year, both the Bachten De Kupe open-air museum and the Bakery Museum will lose their subsidised staff, as will many other institutions across Flanders. “They'll soon face the same problems as we do now,” says Becuwe.

Local traders are starting to feel the backlash and worry. Without the museums as stopovers, bikers will go biking elsewhere. Becuwe fears this will turn the clock back 30 years for countryside tourism and the local economy.

“A whole area benefits in the end,” explains Becuwe. “Even if they don't want to support us financially, they shouldn't bleed us dry

with taxes.” De Snoek, for example, pays €1,680 annually in property taxes, while receiving €1,000 in support.

“Why not exempt small museums from certain federal taxes, like they do for nature reserves? Or let us buy our electricity and gas in bulk? Cities get electricity at cheaper rates. We don't.”

All the red tape involved in running a small museum is “immobilising”, says Becuwe. “And I know money is available. They just need to re-budget. I know one thing. If De Snoek is forced to close, it's the end of my personal commitment as a historian, too. No more research, no more writing books, no more saving heritage, no more lectures on breweries. If De Snoek isn't worth saving, nothing is.” ♦

Mout- & Brouwhuis De Snoek

Fortem 40, Alveringem

→ www.desnoek.be



During the First World War, Sint-Sixtus abbey in Westvleteren was the only pub (legally) allowed to brew

Digging for answers • The former miners who give tours in Limburg are becoming obsolete

Despite manning the most popular tourist attraction in Genk, the volunteers of the Mijndepot, ex-miners who've been guiding the public around their former workplace for 22 years, feel let down. Located in the recently restored mining buildings of Waterschei, just outside the Limburg town, the Mijndepot (*pictured*) has been asked to leave the premises.

Its new owner, the city of Genk, is building an industrial park and needs the space. The park covers 16,000 square metres, the Mijndepot 100 square metres. The tour will not close, but professional city guides will take over. Xavier Huygen, chairman of the Mijndepot, is trying to understand this logic. “We're not trained guides,” the former miner admits, “but we can tell plenty of stories about the harsh life underground – how we lived like pigs down there.” (He launches into a description, which I will not repeat here, that very much proves his point.)

Huygen claims there can't be a future for Genk, now the second-largest city in Limburg, without honouring its coal-mining past. Both Belgian and immigrant youngsters, he says, need to learn why their families came to live in Genk, a former village of 100 people. “The miners made Genk big, made this country big. So

why doesn't the city show us some respect?” he asks. “If we can't stay on, I'll personally throw all our exhibits in the bin. I paid for most of it myself anyway.”

He's telling his volunteers, though, not to give up yet. “But the city will wait it out until us ex-miners have all closed our eyes for good,” he says. “I'm 57 but still have a good 10 years in me, even if my knees are shot from working the mine. So it's worth continuing as long as we can.”

The museum volunteers are guaranteed a place until the end of 2012, as there is a World Exhibition on Mining planned. “Visitors will ride the small bikes we had in the pit and trigger off electric displays en route,” says Huygen.

Beyond 2012, their future looks bleak. Huygen: “Until the city cottons on, we're in a pickle, and we'll just tackle problems as they come along.”

Their latest problem is an electricity bill, passed on by the city, for €13,000. A guided tour costs €2. MP

Mijndepot

André Dumontlaan, Genk

→ www.mijndepot.be



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Five Flemish universities provide on-demand research

TANIA RABESANDRATANA

In Brussels, Antwerp, Ghent, Hasselt and Leuven, you can find a *wetenschapswinkel*, or science shop. No, not retailers of geeky gadgets, but small entities that carry out scientific research on behalf of civil society organisations, free of charge.

The concept first appeared in the Netherlands as a post-1968 movement that gradually spread to other countries; now Romania, Italy and Australia all have science shops. In Flanders, the network was established in 2006, after pilot projects in Brussels and Antwerp. Today, Saskia Vandeputte coordinates the *wetenschapswinkels* – a group of five science shops based at universities, funded by a grant from the Flemish ministry of economy, science and innovation.

It works like this: non-profit, or non-governmental organisations (NGOs), carry out field work that generate questions, both at the conceptual and practical level: How to define and frame an issue? What are the potential solutions? These questions can be complex and challenging, and the organisations often don't have the time, skills or tools to answer them.

At a science shop, academics do research on behalf of the organisation. It's a fair deal: NGOs get serious, personalised academic input into their work, while students and professors contribute to research that is particularly relevant and in touch with society's needs.

Science shops only work on the basis of real-life requests. Every year, about 10 new organisations find their way to the shops; the network receives between 30 and 50 new requests a year. Most have to do with social sciences, with about two-thirds answered by the faculty of psychology and educational sciences.

"The typical request is about evaluating the impact of a specific education or social action – does it work?" Vandeputte explains. However, the network wants to reach a broader range of NGOs and push disciplines like engineering or medical sciences. "I'm quite convinced that some organisations also have more science- or technology-based questions, but they don't find their way to the science shops," Vandeputte says.



Science shops coordinator Saskia Vandeputte



The science shops helped determine the present and future impact of Antwerp's participation in the Homeless World Cup

From the homeless world cup to language issues

Flemish science shops tackle a wide range of issues. Two years ago, for example, the Action Project Hardcore Drug Users in Antwerp set up a football team to take part in the Homeless World Cup. This spectacular project gave birth to an eight-part TV programme, which followed the selection and training of the players, as well as the actual tournament in Melbourne in 2008.

The social workers turned to the science shops network; as part of her master's thesis, a student in social, cultural and personal welfare evaluated the impact of the scheme. Of course, it fosters healthy competition and team spirit; but it can also generate frustration and exclusion. (There are only so many players you can include in a football team!) Hence, the student also made recommendations for the coming years, as this project has been extended to the whole of Flanders.

In a more controversial vein, the non-profit cultural organisation De Rand asked the science shops for input on the issue of language in the Flemish municipalities around Brussels. A linguist from the Free University of Brussels (VUB) studied the attitudes of people living in two municipalities of the *rand*, or border. She asked Dutch and French speakers in which language they are addressed in different places and circumstances, and in which language they *want* to be addressed.

"This is no easy research," Vandeputte notes. "The student was a linguist, but these issues are mostly political and rife with ideology, while scientific research is supposed to be independent and objective." In broad terms, the study's main findings were that Dutch speakers are more sensitive to language laws

"This is no easy research...these issues are political and rife with ideology, while scientific research is supposed to be independent and objective"

and switch more easily to French, while French speakers are less strict about being addressed in their own language, but have more difficulty switching to Dutch.

On a different note, the Flemish Platform for Accessibility turned to the science shops to evaluate the access of mentally disabled people (such as Alzheimer's sufferers) to society in general, and to public spaces in particular. A graduate in social, cultural and personal welfare interviewed people with disabilities as well as their relatives and caregivers. She will present her work at a two-day conference in November this year; the influence of her research can be significant in the field, as it tries to frame a novel concept of "mental accessibility". As Vandeputte stresses: "The impulse really came from the research itself."

This is indeed one of the objectives of science shops: opening up a dialogue between academia and society and giving NGOs and citizens an insight into

how scientific research actually works. Research can be slow and complex, sometimes powerful, and always subject to interpretation.

In the future, Vandeputte hopes to boost the quality and ambition of the shops' work, for instance by extending it to research at PhD level. She also wants to broaden the work of the network to other disciplines and across borders. As part of the massive EU-funded project PERARES (Public Engagement with Research and Research Engagement with Society), the Wetenschapswinkel Brussel is involved in research into violence against pregnant women throughout Europe.♦

Want to use the science shops?

To find out if a science shop can help you with research and information, non-profit organisations must register in the network's database and can submit research requests anytime. The coordinator will get in touch for an initial meeting to discuss if and how the network can research the question. On the other end, students and researchers can browse the database to look for questions they find interesting and relevant.

The network's services include not only match-making but also a close follow-up of the research process. Generally, the research is carried out by Master's degree students.

→ www.wetenschapswinkel.be

Peeters woos Chinese at Expo

But carmaker Geely not interested in Opel Antwerp

ALAN HOPE

Last week, Flanders Day was held in the Belgian pavilion at the World Expo in Shanghai. It marked the start of a six-day visit by Flemish minister-president Kris Peeters at the head of a trade mission organised by Flanders Investment and Trade (FIT).

The visit started with a "friendship concert" starring Flemish conductor Dirk Brossé, who has been touring the world with the music of film composer John Williams. Also among those taking part in the mission was Flemish astronaut Frank De Winne.

Peeters landed in Shanghai just as new information emerged that foreign companies had last year approved only 182 new investment projects in Belgium, 10 fewer than the year before. Furthermore, Wallonia is closing the historic gap with Flanders, with 67 projects launched there last year, good for about 2,000 jobs, compared to 78 in Flanders, totalling just over 2,800 jobs.

The total number of new jobs came to 5,317, down on the 2008 figure of 6,766 and far below previous years, when the number of jobs created easily topped 10,000.

"Belgium continues to suffer from a gigantic costs problem, whereas other countries, like Germany, have worked hard on that problem," said Roel Spee of Plant Location International, a division of IBM, which produced the figures. "Employment costs are still extremely high, and the rate of corporation tax is not likely to attract many investors."



From left: Jeroom Heyndrickx, director of the Catholic University of Leuven's Verbiest Institute, which is committed to a dialogue between Europe and China; Flemish minister-president Kris Peeters and astronaut Frank De Winne visit the Beijing Ancient Observatory

One of Peeters' main destinations on the mission was Hangzhou, the location of car manufacturer Geely's headquarters, where he was hoping to persuade Geely to rescue Opel Antwerp. Geely took over Volvo last year and now runs the Ghent Volvo factory. But the company is not interested in Opel, said Geely boss Li Shufu.

There was better news on other fronts. Environment week brought the signing of a cooperation agreement between Aquafin and the Beijing Construction Engineering Group (BCEG), an umbrella organisation for some 200 companies. The Chinese are interested in Flemish waste management technology and policy,

and closer cooperation will be sought with OVAM, the Flemish waste management agency.

In addition, Hong Kong Airlines is to start a regular cargo route between Hong Kong and Brussels, beginning in September with three flights a week via New Delhi, rising to six from October or November. The link is expected to help create up to 800 new jobs.

Following Peeters' visit, environment minister Joke Schauvliege headed Flemish environment week. Innovation minister Ingrid Lieten and health minister Jo Vandeurzen have already visited Shanghai, and interior minister Geert Bourgeois is also scheduled to go.♦

Founder of Ackroyd Publications has died

The entrepreneur who founded Ackroyd Publications, Monique Ackroyd, died on 24 May, 2010, in Brussels.

Born in Etterbeek in 1925, Ackroyd was the daughter of Colonel Edward Ackroyd, a British officer who married a Belgian woman at the end of the First World War.

Ackroyd (pictured) was educated in England during the Second World War and remained there until 1947, joining the *Yorkshire Post* at the age of 17. Back in Brussels, she launched *The Bulletin* in 1962, printing the first copies in the basement of her Brussels home. She was one of the first to realise that Brussels was rapidly changing into a multi-cultural city where English was an increasingly important language. Under Ackroyd and, after she retired, her son John Stuyck, *The Bulletin*

became the definitive reference for expatriates living in Belgium – "the Brussels Bible".

"She had a will of iron," said Derek Blyth, editor-in-chief of Ackroyd Publications. "But she never once compromised on editorial integrity. She gave Belgium an exceptional magazine."

In 2007, Ackroyd Publications was incorporated into the Corelio group and later that year launched *Flanders Today*. "Monique created a fantastic organisation with a strong team spirit," said Ackroyd general manager Christine Van den Berghe. "The different publications were of an exceptionally high quality, reaching out to the entire international community, including senior company executives and ambassadors."♦

→ www.ackroyd.be



New trading complex will provide 1,300 jobs

The Brasschaat-based property group Bernaerts will begin construction of a major new business-to-business (B2B) trading complex on the A12 at Willebroek, Antwerp province. European Market City will stretch 400 metres, with a floor space of 200,000 square metres. It will be made up of four buildings, including two 13-storey towers.

"Manufacturers, distributors and wholesalers from across the world will gather there to do business," said Tom Van Herwaarden of Bernaerts. "European Market City will cover more than 20 trade categories, including construction materials, fashion, interior design, diamonds and electronics, all under one roof." There will also be space to organise trade fairs, fashion shows and product launches. "We hope to bring in 200,000 visitors a year," says Van Herwaarden.

The complex will be built on the former Ased coke works. The severe soil pollution on the site has taken Bernaerts three years to clean up, in a public-private cooperation with the town of Willebroek, the Antwerp provincial development agency, the waterways authority, the Flemish government and the Waste management agency Ovam. The Willebroek site is now the largest



Architectural drawing of European Market City

brownfield development in Flanders.

European Market City will provide about 1,300 new jobs, with an estimated market value of €400 to €500 million. Construction is due to start at the end of the year and scheduled to be completed by January of 2012.♦

THE WEEK IN BUSINESS

Aviation • Abelag

Business aviation company Abelag, based in Zaventem, has won the coveted Gold Safety Award from the European Business Aviation Association.

Banking • KBLux

KBL private banking, an affiliate of Flanders' largest bank KBC, has been sold to the Indian Hinduja financial group for €1.35 billion. The deal follows months of negotiations involving the five candidates that bid for the business. KBC was forced by European authorities to divest some of its activities following a bail-out by the Belgian and Flemish governments in early 2009.

Beer • AB-Inbev

AB-Inbev, the world's largest beer group, is seeking bids for its Bass brand, brewed at Burton upon Trent in the UK. Bass Brewery, which is valued at €15 million, has suffered from a shift in drinking habits, with people moving away from ale. AB-Inbev, however, wants to retain the international distribution rights for Bass.

Building • Besix

Construction group Besix has won building contracts worth €2.7 billion in Abu Dhabi. The deals include projects for the Cleveland Clinic (in partnership with Samsung) and the construction of the Adnoc Tower.

Chemicals • Tessenderlo

Tessenderlo, one of the world's leading fertiliser producers, is seeking bids of up to €120 million for its potassium sulphate activities to reduce its debts. The company, with activities in plastics and pharmaceutical specialities, plans to develop its gelatine-based activities.

Property • Knokke-Heist

Up to 2,000 new hotel rooms are planned for the upmarket coastal resort of Knokke-Heist. Some 50 years ago, the town boasted 8,000 rooms, but the number is now down to less than 1,000. A 350-room hotel has already been confirmed, and the city has agreed to the construction of a second golf course. Knokke was once ranked as Flanders' most expensive property market, but top position has now been taken by Kraainem, outside Brussels.

Technology • Umicore

Brussels-based Umicore, which specialises in high-tech materials, is to build a catalytic mufflers research and development centre in Suzhou, China. The company is banking on the rapidly developing Chinese car industry to increase its production.

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Live, we take care of the rest

A pet name for a murder weapon

Twelve years after Rumplestitchkin landed in the final of the Rock Rally, Thomas Devos is back with a new band

CHRISTOPHE VERBIEST

Thomas Devos is relaxed when we meet him in his hometown, Brussels. The first reviews of *Come Watch Me Disappear*, the debut album of Tommigun, are just in, and they sound good. Understandably so: the debut is a tasteful combination of barbed pop, languishing late-night jazz and a few contrary rock songs.

In April Tommigun opened for the American cult singer Daniel Johnston during his European tour. A quite surprising combination, due to a shot of good fortune, Devos explains. "When we played a showcase last autumn in the Beursschouwburg to convince the Dutch label Excelsior to sign us, Johnston's European booking agent was present, too. We didn't know about this, but a week later he phoned me, proposing us the opening slot. A golden opportunity!" And did they get their deal with Excelsior? Check!

"We really needed that tour," Devos stresses. "It made us into a tight outfit." Tommigun nowadays is a five-piece band, but it started out as Devos' solo outing during a time off from his first major band Rumplestitchkin, a foursome that has released two recommendable albums: *Small-time Hero* and *Somersault*.

Devos felt three impulses to go solo. First, he was dying to work with Pall Jenkins from the San Diego band The Black Heart Procession, as producer. "But I never wanted to impose my dreams upon the three other members of Rumplestitchkin." Second, he felt the band had come to a dead end. "The other members all had day jobs; I was the only one to fully engage in music. I respected their decisions, but it led to some friction."

And last but not least: "I had reached a point in my life – I'm 38 – where I thought: is this all there is? I scored television shows and made music for theatre. And I loved to do that, don't get me wrong. But I wanted to sing and record my songs again."

So he travelled to San Diego a few times to chase his dream. Joeri Cnapeleinckx crossed the ocean too, because Devos wanted him to add some piano, but the latter ended up playing most of the other instruments. Tommigun was born. But the baby wasn't healthy, according to Devos. "I have one big problem: when I keep working on a project too long, doubts start creeping in. Tommigun was too much me; I prefer my music to be a bit more whimsical. So, when I went looking for musicians to play the songs live, I realised I didn't want to treat them as hirelings, but that they should become real band members."

Enter four extra players: the aforementioned Cnapeleinckx, Pim De Wolf (of the highly underrated Thou) on bass, drummer Mattijs Vanderleem and – Tommigun's secret weapon – singer Kaat Arnaert. They rerecorded some of the songs, and Devos even let Arnaert sing the lead in two of them. "Tommigun is no longer my solo outing, but, contrary to Rumplestitchkin, this is my band; I'm holding the reins," he clarifies.

By the way, Rumplestitchkin isn't over yet. "One of the members left. That was difficult because I had this boy's dream that the four of us, like U2, would stay together forever. So it was a bit weird to start again after a long hiatus. But we're writing new songs, and I have the feeling that we still have some good music to give."

The band name Tommigun refers to Tommy Gun, the nickname for a subma-



Thomas Devos, standing, and his band Tommigun

chine gun developed by John T Thompson that was popular among American gangsters during the Prohibition. A weird name, no? "A pet name for a murder weapon – this perfectly suits the music. It's dark and cute at the same time. And of course, there's the link with my name."

So, the question stays: will we ever hear a real solo album by Devos? It's a pertinent request, based on the few sparsely arranged songs that Rumplestitchkin and Tommigun have recorded. These, almost disguised solo work, are awesome. "Last year I helped my mother [folk singer Vera Coomans] to record a cover album in a small, isolated shack, with only a guitarist to accompany her. I must admit, I got a taste for doing the same: one voice, a guitar and maybe some organ. Yeah, a bit like Johnny Cash. But

before long, I started doubting again." And he concludes with a still slightly faltering voice: "Maybe I shouldn't ponder to long and just go for it." ♦

Tommigun plays

5 June, 14.00
FNAC (free)
Groenplaats, Antwerp

18 June, 20.30
Candelaershuis
Brugmannlaan 433, Brussels

→ www.myspace.com/tommigunmusic

Beursschouwburg's high-up shenanigans are the perfect kick-off to the summer festival season

CHRISTOPHE VERBIEST

Music documentaries very rarely get a theatrical release in Belgium, so it's a real joy to see that the Beursschouwburg in Brussels has programmed a handful of those films during Out Loud! #2. This rooftop (yes!) festival presents the Belgian premiere of new titles by Julien Temple, Jonathan Caouette and Jonathan Demme. Films are shown on Wednesdays and Thursdays, and on Fridays and Saturdays Out Loud! offers concerts. All for free.

Scott Walker: 30 Century Man is a portrait of one of rock's most famous recluses and one of its most haunting voices. *Oil City Confidential* by Julien Temple is a very entertaining overview of the extraordinary adventures of British pub rockers Dr Feelgood. The title of *Taqwacore: the Birth of Punk Islam* perfectly describes what this film by Omar Maheed has in store: Islamic punk. "I am an Islamist, I'm the anti-Christ!", we hear in a paraphrase of The Sex Pistols.

Trimpin: the Sound of Invention focuses on the eponymous artist who constructs sculptures and installations that include sound; hence, he's called "a kinetic sculptor". And *Joy Division* is a documentary that three years ago was overshadowed by Anton Corbijn's biopic *Control*, but it's a richer source of information on the doomed Ian Curtis.

Three of the eight films aren't documentaries: *Head*, the only film not dating from the last five years, is a

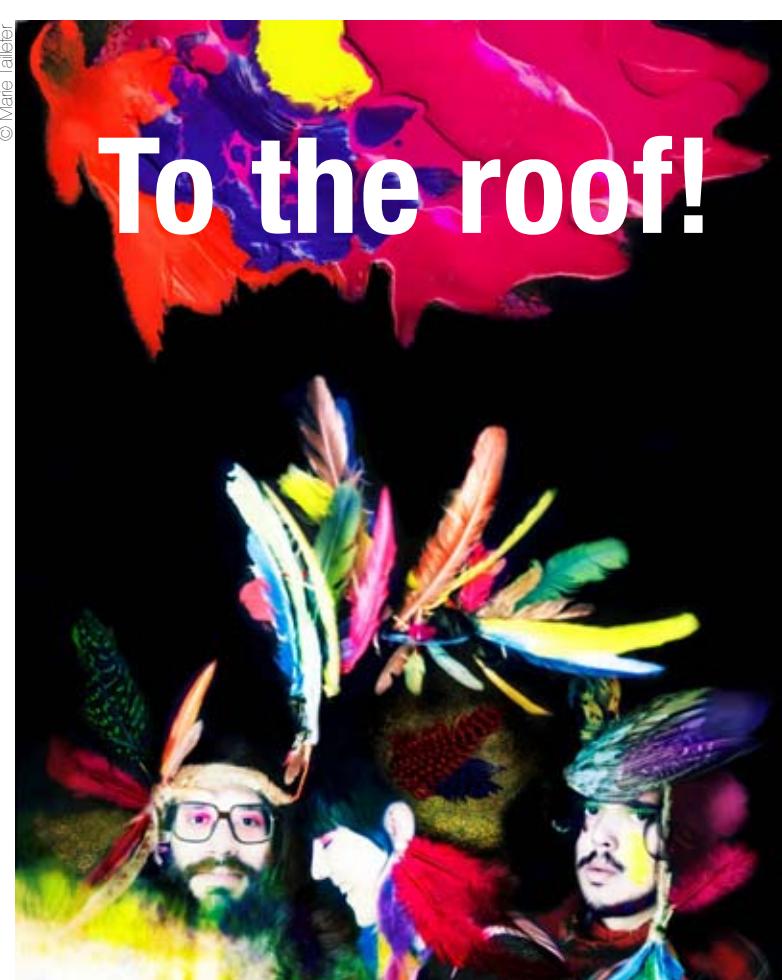
classic psychedelic work of fiction revolving around The Monkees. *Neil Young Trunk Show* is a concert film by Jonathan Demme (famous for *The Silence of the Lambs*, but for also the groundbreaking music film *Stop Making Sense*).

All Tomorrow's Parties by the American Jonathan Caouette (from *Tarnation* fame) defies every categorisation. The film is a portrait of the renowned très alternative festival with the same name, but, through its form, it's also a pamphlet against the corporate music industry. Filming was done by a few hundred amateurs on different formats (cell phone, camcorder, Super 8...). Out of tons of material, Caouette distilled this in-your-face movie. Lastly, a note on the concerts: if you're going to see one band, try not to miss Tape Tum, the brother dyad from Ghent that debuted earlier this year with *The Night We Called It a Day*, an engrossing collection of songs, gracefully hesitating between electronics and acoustics. ♦

Out Loud! #2

2-26 June
Beursschouwburg
A Ortsstraat 20, Brussels

→ www.beursschouwburg.be



Swiss trio Solange Laferange brings its mix of electro-clash to the top of Beursschouwburg on 19 June

In the name of slow fashion

STÉPHANIE DUVAL

Antwerpnaars will be doing a double-take this month, as Vitrine hits shop windows in unexpected corners of their fashion city.

In 1998, the Flanders Fashion Institute (FFI) launched the art/fashion *parcours* to give people in Antwerp the opportunity to discover their new, home-grown talent and see the creative process behind fashion. Installations by a selection of designers are staged in shop windows throughout the city. As of 2007, the event alternately takes place in Ghent and Antwerp. And, as the 13th edition of Vitrine opens, it's clear that the event is not just for fashionistas.

Slow Fashion is the theme this year, linking fashion to its current social and economic context. "We notice that the speed with which fashion seasons follow each other is a huge burden for designers," explains Agnes Wené, project manager at FFI. "With this theme, we invite them to go back to the source. It's a trend that pervades society: a longing for authenticity, sustainability and a reappraisal of the craft."

Handbag and housewares designer Michaël Verheyden appreciates the challenge: "We've been trying for years to work on the border between fashion, design and art. The hectic rhythm of fashion is intriguing, but, on the other hand, we try to resist it. We strive for the timeless in our designs. The installation we created for Vitrine revolves around a candlestick with

hand-made, slow-burning candles." Verheyden collaborated with Belgian company Slowlight on his installation, in accordance with the FFI's request to combine creative disciplines. Since last summer, the fashion institute became part of Flanders District of Creativity. "We believe in the strength of crossovers between different sectors," explains Wené.

The message is partly delivered by this year's curator: television writer and producer Tom Lenaerts. "We look for creative people who can inspire and influence us and the designers," says Wené. "Last year, we worked with artist Jan Hoet. This year, we'd like to see fashion through the eyes of one of the most influential media creatives." She adds that Lenaerts will not just give another perspective on fashion but will also speak to a different, and broader, audience.

Hard to please

"As soon as I knew what was expected of me, I was stoked to cooperate," says Lenaerts. "It's a privilege to be able to meet 25 of the fashion industry's brightest talents." The programme-maker was asked to listen to all of the participants' ideas and offer advice. "Some ideas were perfectly developed, others were still in an embryonic stage," he says. "I sat with the designers and talked with them, as a kind of ping-pong partner in the search for the best ideas. Everything starts with a good idea, but it's how you realise it that's most important."

Lenaerts says that his collaboration proved to him that fashion and television "aren't that far apart: both are about fighting for your idea and hard work – and never being too easily pleased."

You'll find an excited Lenaerts on the first day of the parcours inspecting the final results. "The Capara sisters made a dress from wax, which of course can be worn only once since it crumbles when you try to take it off. They made a video of this process and saved some of the pieces of the dress." Lenaerts also loved the idea of Belgian tailor Café Costume to create a political campaign for a new figure head for the fashion industry: a sheep. "We missed an iconic image that unites us all and that draws attention to the essence of what we're doing," says Bruno Van Gils of Café Costume. Shop windows for Vitrine were selected to allow spectators to discover not just the designers, but some unexpected places in the city as well. At each location is a map of the route, so you can start wherever you like. Technology lovers will be glad to know that each participant also gets a QR-code that can be scanned by your cell phone to download more information about the designers and their installations. ♦

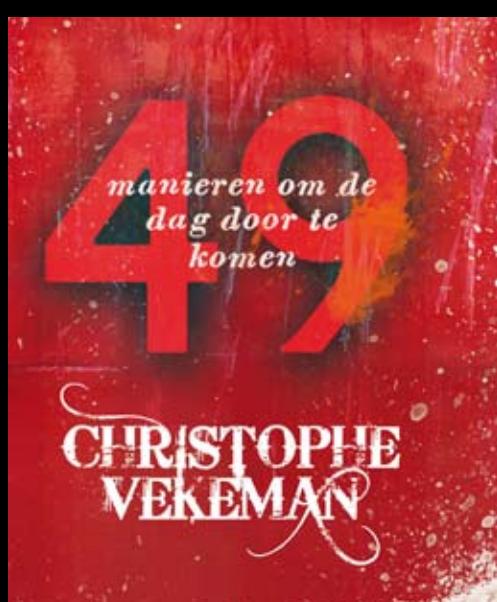
It's window shopping, but not as you know it



Creativity contest

To fully promote the concept of creativity this year, FFI invites everyone to customize their own version of the Vitrine 2010 poster, which can be downloaded at the Vitrine website. Email a picture or scan of your creation to vitrine.ffi@modenatie.com to win one of five design packages from FFI. The contest closes on 26 June, the last day of Vitrine.

Fresh Fiction



New on the bookshelves in Dutch

REBECCA BENOOT

De verdwenen meisjes (The Vanishing of Katharina Linden) · Helen Grant

The debut novel of British author Helen Grant, who lives in Tervuren, has earned her a nomination for the prestigious Carnegie Medal for young adult fiction. This mesmerising whodunnit revolves around Pia, an inquisitive and brave 10-year-old who decides to investigate the multiple disappearances of young girls in the quiet, rural German town of Bad Münstereifel. The publication of this Dutch translation coincides with the release of her second novel, *The Glass Demon*.

49 manieren om de dag door te komen (49 Ways to Get Through the Day) · Christophe Vekeman

Vincent de Wimper is the main character in Flemish author Christophe Vekeman's nonsensical new novel. Vincent is a mess after breaking up with his girlfriend, Patty, who was more passionate about Ikea than about him. This slightly bizarre loner lives in his own little world where he writes letters to his imaginary dog and pays his therapist with Monopoly money. Using his famously cynical style, Vekeman has created 49 short and sensational chapters that will both haunt and dazzle you.

Jimmy Corrigan: De slimste jongen ter wereld (The Smartest Kid on Earth) · Chris Ware

Renowned American illustrator Chris Ware has been drawing amazingly innovative comics about a melancholy character called Jimmy Corrigan for quite some time. They were originally published in his *Acme Novelty Library* comic book series and feature his unique blend of retro and Americana style. Ware's celebrated Corrigan strips have been assembled in a beautiful and heart-breaking book, which has finally been translated into Dutch. *Jimmy Corrigan* has been hailed as one of the greatest graphic novels ever published.

De dood heeft mij een aanzoek gedaan (Death Has Made Me a Proposal) · Kristien Hemmerechts

For nine months, Flemish author Kristien Hemmerechts kept a diary in which she gathered anecdotes, reflections and memories about life, death and love. Loss has always been an important theme in her work after losing two children to cot death and her husband, poet Herman de Coninck, in 1997. Written during a dark period in her life, this journal is the latest chapter in her relentless quest to make sense of the elusive and harsh side of reality and tries to answer the shattering question: should I end my life?

Fietsparadijs

Limburg boldly calls itself a “cycling paradise”, and our journo on wheels has a hard time disagreeing

MELISSA MAKI

With its idyllic landscapes, friendly people and over 2,000 kilometres of bike routes, Limburg is a cyclist’s dream. The province has long been a leader in developing and promoting its vast network of bike routes, attracting some two million bicyclists each year.

This year Limburg celebrates its 15th anniversary as a self-proclaimed *fietsparadijs* (cycling paradise) with a host of inspired activities and new, themed routes.

We know that most of you think of Limburg as being a far-off place, with no big city and no important monuments. What Limburg has is a wondrous diversity of nature and some of the most charming small towns in the country. In fact, Limburg is literally oozing with charm.

Limburg is also an example of why it’s a good thing so many towns across Flanders have train stations – even if they are only a mere pause on the track next to a farmer’s chicken coop. You can train or drive to Limburg in a couple of hours from anywhere else in Flanders.

This week we begin a three-part series on biking in the province’s most alluring areas – sure to arouse wanderlust in even those who might be inclined to say: “Limburg... isn’t that in the Netherlands?”

We begin with the enticing *fruitfietsroutes* (fruit cycling routes) of Haspengouw. As we recently reported, the Haspengouw region in southern Limburg attracts loads of national and international tourists in the spring with its plethora of flowering fruit trees. But when the blossoms fade and spring turns to summer, this fertile region has as much to offer. Harvest time in Belgium’s biggest fruit-producing region lasts from June through October and includes special events that feature sumptuous strawberries, cherries, pears and apples.

The Haspengouw *fruitfietsroutes* map (for purchase on the Limburg tourism website) was designed to highlight the fruit trees that are concentrated in this area during the blooming and harvest seasons. Cyclists of any ability can enjoy the *fruitfietsroutes* as there are six that range from 20 to 58 kilometres.

I picked the moderate “loop 2” (35 km), which begins in the centre of the Sint-Truiden, a lovely little city with a population of about 39,000 in the southwest of the province. Sint-Truiden grew up around an abbey established by St Trudo in the seventh century. The town boasts two UNESCO World Heritage Sites: the town hall, with its 17th-century belfry and the bénigage of Sint-Agnes.

The market square of Sint-Truiden (where you’ll find the tourist office) is one of the largest in Belgium (second to Sint-Niklaas). The historic square is stunning, but bikers beware: cars and parking are allowed so it can be incredibly hectic.

Loop 2 offers up some striking scenery, from tree-lined paths to idyllic villages and farms. One exceptional feature of this ride is that it’s mostly paved and relatively car-free.



While blossom time is past, you can still find full fruit trees all summer long

I chose to reverse the suggested route so that I could have a picnic around the halfway point and then a brewery stop as a reward near the end. To follow the same course, start at cycle route 135, near the Sint-Truiden town square, and head west towards Wilderen (follow bike routes 188, 187, 358). This is a particularly pretty portion of the ride, with an abundance of orchards and green.

Next comes routes 186 and 359. Here, the scenery along the trail starts to transition from trees to farmland, with orchards in the distance. On the way to 183, you pass through the little town of Gingelom and by its 19th-century castle.

Just past Gingelom, you’ll find a picnic spot on the left. It’s a perfect stopping point at about 20 km into the ride. If the one and only table is occupied when you arrive, you’ll be glad you planned ahead and packed that picnic blanket, along with your picnic.

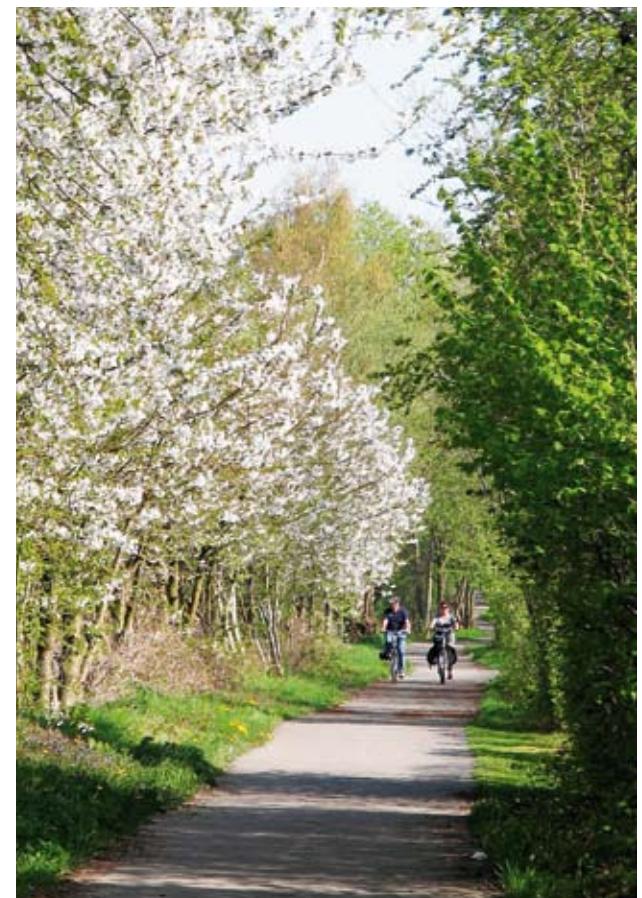
Bike onward to cycle route 182. On the way, you pass through Borlo, where you’ll find Het Pachthof, a bed and breakfast you can’t miss since it features massive remnants of the Second World War – a Patton tank and a helicopter – right out front. Here you’ll also find a war museum dedicated to the winter of 1944-45, when American soldiers came to Borlo to rest during the bloody Battle of the Bulge.

The route then takes you north where orchards abound once again. On the way to junction 184, you’ll pass Muzien and the starting point for a *fruitwandeling* (fruit walk). Next up is junction 185, but if you are a beer fan, you’d be a fool not to stop in Kerkom bij Sint-Truiden for an alfresco Bink beer at the Kerkom Brewery.

“Bink” is the nickname of the townspeople of Sint-Truiden. It means, “a real guy, rough but friendly,” according to Dieter Clerinx of the Sint-Truiden tourist office.

Now you are in the home stretch with only about 7.5 km to go. Follow 185 to 134 then finally 135 again to return to the starting point.♦

→ www.oogstfeesten-haspengouw.be



© Melissa Maki

Pit stops

What’s a bike ride without refreshments? Lucky for us, the Haspengouw *fruitfietsroutes* map points out picnic spots and cafes along the way. It even includes a bunch of coupons redeemable at local eateries. I cashed in one of mine for some free cheese to go along with my Bink beer at the Kerkom Brewery. There are several beers to choose from, including the Bloesem Bink and Kerkomse Tripel. The former is made with honey and Vroelingen pear syrup and the latter features a very satisfying level of bitterness that will thrill hopheads.

→ www.brouwerijkerkoma.be



© Melissa Maki

Feet and wheels



Cycling isn’t the only way to see the picturesque Haspengouw region. There are four designated walks and two driving routes designed especially for the blossom and the harvest seasons. You can even rent a Vespa to ride around the countryside or sign up for a vintage Volkswagen bus tour.

The Sint-Truiden tourist office can tell you what’s on at any given time, like harvest festivals and pick-your-own fruit days. *Grote Markt* 44

→ www.toerisme-sint-truiden.be

Turning Japanese

Owners have ambitious plans for the Japan Centre in Zoutleeuw, the subject of our monthly series on multi-cultural Flanders

DENZIL WALTON

Deep in rural Hageland, in a small suburb of Zoutleeuw and surrounded by fields of corn and sugar beet, lies a little bit of Japan. The Japan Centre in this scenic part of Flemish Brabant is gradually taking form in a converted 17th-century farm called Terhagen Winning. It's the dream of Japan-ophiles Saskia Rock and Bart Gits. Together they aim to bring a range of Japanese arts and disciplines to Flanders, with specific attention for the underlying Japanese philosophy, acquainting people with the norms and values of Japanese society that they believe can lead to a happier and more balanced life. They have the qualifications: Saskia has a Master's degree in Japanese studies, has lived and worked in Japan and both speaks and writes the language. Bart runs a school for Japanese taiko drumming and founded Tataké!, a *taiko* concert ensemble.

What is the point of a Japan Centre in Flanders?

Bart: Quite simply, to introduce people to the Japanese culture, its arts and crafts and philosophy. And to be a meeting place for anyone who is interested in anything to do with Japan.

Is it unique in Flanders?

Saskia: There is a Japanese cultural centre in Brussels, linked to the embassy, but it offers mainly exhibitions and films, nothing practical or physical. We want to give people the chance to do something with their hands: learn how to arrange flowers or play Japanese drums or cook sushi. In that respect, we are unique in Flanders.

What's so special about the Japanese way of life?

Saskia: Japanese society is built on respect – for people, for nature, for everything around us. Respect for people is reflected in the way people interact: the respect for

the elderly, the *sensei* or teacher, parents and mentors. This is an important part of many Japanese disciplines and martial arts.

Bart: A major part of the Japanese way of life is to pay attention to our surroundings and what's happening in the "here and now". I find this a great remedy against modern pressures and the feeling of not being in control of one's own life. If you pay attention to every step on your life path, you will see opportunities which you would miss if you are always focusing on the future.

What are your main activities?

Bart: Tataké! is our Japanese percussion group. I give weekly *taiko* lessons in Ghent, Antwerp, Mechelen and here in the Japan Centre. We also go on tour – to the Netherlands and France, and have even played in Japan. We founded the Belgian Taiko Federation which informs people about *taiko*.

Saskia: I give lessons in *ikebana*, which is the Japanese art of arranging flowers. It differs from Western flower arranging in that it brings nature into the home and uses several parts of a plant, not just the flower. We also offer a number of workshops covering a whole range of topics – *shibori* (dyeing fabrics), *chado* (tea making), *kyudo* (archery). For children, we run courses in kite-making, Japanese lanterns and *origami*.

And you organise corporate events, right?

Saskia: Yes, companies come to us for their team-building exercises, staff trainings, even Christmas and New Year parties with a Japanese theme. A favourite is the *taiko*. We teach them to play, which culminates in an evening performance. It's always great fun.

Bart: We can also provide a full Japanese meal, from appetizers to *umeshu* (plum wine) and a rich assortment of



Bart Gits and Saskia Rock perform *taiko* drumming

sushi, ending with the renowned Suntory whisky.

Saskia: We work in schools throughout Belgium, too. Our *taiko* lessons are extremely popular, but we also give talks and lectures on topics like Buddhism, contemporary Samurai and Wabi Sabi, the Japanese philosophy of life that means accepting and seeing beauty in decay.

Can people stay at the Japan Centre?

Bart: We are converting part of the farm into a bed & breakfast. Eventually we hope to accommodate 32 people in order to offer a full seminar centre with overnight accommodation. There will be a traditional Japanese kitchen as well as a *sento*, which is a Japanese bath house.

When will it all be ready?

Bart: We have plans, but nothing is set in stone. It's the Japanese way. We are taking it step by step; concentrating on and enjoying the opportunities open to us at the moment. People ask me: "What's your budget for the total renovation?" I don't

know, and I don't want to know. It would scare me too much! We just do what we can with our current resources."

Do you get any subsidies?

Saskia: No, but the farm is close to a lot of footpaths and cycling routes, so Hageland Tourism is interested in linking us into the tourism network. Also, there are not too many restored old buildings in the area, so a renovated 17th-century farm will be a great addition to the local heritage. ♦

→ www.japancentre.be

On at the Japan Centre

- Introduction to *ikebana* (Japanese flower arranging) 8 June, 19.00
- *Shibori* (dyeing) for beginners 13 June, 14.00
- Children's *origami* workshop 16 June, 14.00



A Dog of Flanders:

A Never-Before-Seen Look at Flanders

Until 29 August
Koningin Fabiolalaan
Jezusstraat 28, Antwerp

→ www.dogofflanders.be

The new book and the documentary, with English subtitles, can be purchased at the exhibition

Every dog has his day

• A new book and exhibition shed light on a little-known cultural phenomenon

What Flanders' biggest export? Chocolate, you say? Chemicals? Diamonds? No, it's *A Dog of Flanders*, a book written 138 years ago by a British author. There are 100 million copies in circulation, a pocket edition updated annually, five Hollywood films and a 52-week-long animated series. But up until recently, none of this could actually be found in Flanders. *A Dog of Flanders* is one of Belgium's strangest cultural phenomena. When Marie Louise de la Ramée published the book in 1872 (under the pen name



Ouida), she had discovered on a day-trip to Antwerp that large dogs were forced to pull carts full of wares for their owners – a common activity at the time. An animal rights activist, her book was a scathing critique of Flanders told through the story of a boy named Nello and his dog Patrasche.

The book ends tragically, with Flanders allowing Nello and Patrasche to freeze to death in the bitter cold of Christmas Eve. It's no wonder that the book was not taken up by the Flemish. Despite a few Dutch



language adaptations, there has never even been a proper translation.

However, there are 300 printings of the book in translation – in Japanese. The story is a legend in Japan; it's taught in schools, sold as dozens of different products and was the subject of a year-long 1970s animated television series, whose final episode was seen by 30 million people. It is one of the country's most beloved stories – you will not find a Japanese man, woman or child who does not know *A Dog of Flanders*.

Just what caused this national pride in the story was explored by filmmakers An van Dienderen and Didier Volckaert in their 2007 documentary *Patrasche: A Dog of Flanders – made in Japan*. Now the pair have launched an exhibition on the subject in Antwerp and published the very first official Dutch translation of the book. With essays on the atmosphere of Antwerp in the 1870s, the impact of the novel in Japan and the life of Ouida, the book also includes the original English text.

The exhibition, meanwhile, proves much about national cultures: images from *A Dog of Flanders* say more about the culture that produced them than about Flanders. ♦

LISA BRADSHAW



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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.



Agenda

Rachel Hovnanian

The New York artist brings her celebrated show *The Power and Burden of Beauty* to Kalmthout's ARTRA gallery: the vulnerability, fierce capacity and transient nature of beauty, bathed in the pureness of white
→ www.artconsultancy.be



FLANDERS TODAY
JUNE 2, 2010



Boccherini festival

ANNA JENKINSON

Luigi Boccherini is often overshadowed by that of his contemporaries Mozart and Haydn, which is the reason Bruges' Concertgebouw is dedicating an entire weekend to the 18th-century composer and cellist. You'll find concerts of chamber music, orchestral pieces and vocal works as well as lectures, debates and an exhibition all about the musician. Boccherini was born in the Italian town of Lucca in 1743 but spent most of his life in Spain, where he worked for patrons such as Don Luis and Kings Carlos III and IV. The Spanish influence is undeniable in works such as the "El Fandango" guitar quintet and the "La Tirana Espanola" string quartet, both of which are on the programme.

Add to that a concert of Spanish chamber music, where a Boccherini

sonata for violin and guitar are on a programme that also includes music by his Spanish contemporaries Pablo Vidal and Fernando Sor. Boccherini's chamber music often reflects the fact that he was a cellist. He wrote more than 100 string quintets, giving him the opportunity to include two cellos instead of just the one found in more common string quartet ensembles. His sonatas and concertos are also predominantly for cello. A sample of this music can be heard in the closing concert, when the programme includes his cello concerto in G, the famous minuet from his string quintet in E (have a listen on the Concertgebouw's website if you're not sure which one it is) and a string sextet.

Vocal works feature in the festival, from the "Stabat Mater" for soprano

and string quintet as part of the opening concert, starring American soprano Claron McFadden, to Italian concert arias sung by Argentinian soprano Soledad Cardoso. To get a bigger picture of Boccherini, there are plenty of interviews and lectures dotted throughout the weekend, as well as a 2008 documentary that follows the cellist Anner Bijlsma on his journey to Spain to pass on "the secret of Boccherini" to a new generation of musicians and an exhibition on the life and work of Boccherini.♦

4-6 June
Concertgebouw
't Zand 34, Bruges

→ www.concertgebouw.be

MORE SPECTACLES THIS WEEK

Queen Elisabeth Laureates' Concert → Bozar, Brussels

Nicolas Callot & deFilharmonie → De Roma, Antwerp

Herbert Schuch & Brussels Philharmonic → De Bijloke, Ghent



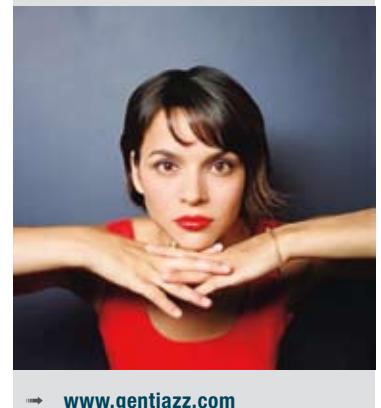
GET YOUR
TICKETS NOW!

Ghent Jazz Festival

7-18 July

De Bijloke

The annual festival that books every sort of jazz you can imagine into the massive courtyard of Ghent's classical music landmark printed its brochures too early. It just keeps adding the acts, like the legendary American spoken word jazzman Gil Scott-Heron and British ska band Madness ("jazz" being a loose term). Add that to the already scheduled line-up of Ornette Coleman, Toots Thielemans, the Pat Metheny Group and opener Norah Jones (*pictured*), and you've got one unmissable summer party.



→ www.gentjazz.com

JUN 2 20.00 Masta Ace & Ed Og, Kev Brown & Lmno + Camp Lo

JUN 3 20.00 Brazzaville + Youngblood

Brass Band

JUN 6 20.00 Panic Cell + The Damned

Things

Vorst-National

Victor Rousseauaan 208; 0900.00.991

www.forestnational.be

JUN 2 20.00 Christophe Willem

JUN 9 20.00 Jamie Cullum

Hasselt

Muziekodroom

Bootstraat 9; 011.23.13.13

www.muziekodroom.be

JUN 5 22.00 UltraMegaLore, The Party: Tom Barman & Mauro Pawlowski + Millionaire Soundsystem

Kortrijk

De Kreun

Conservatoriumplein 1; 056.37.06.44

www.dekreun.be

JUN 3 20.00 Polvo



Alsemberg

CC De Meent

Gemeenveldstraat 34; 02.359.16.00

www.demeent.be

JUN 4 21.00 Jamez (free)

Antwerp

Buster

Kaasru 1; 03.232.51.53

www.busterpodium.be

JUN 3 21.00 Singers Night JUN 4 21.00

Royal Roost JUN 8 21.30 Lennart

Heyndels Quintet JUN 10 21.00 Buster

Blues Jam

De Hopper

Leopold De Waelstraat 2; 03.248.49.33

www.cafehopper.be

JUN 6 16.00 Sofie Dykmans Combo

JUN 7 21.00 Lennart Heyndels Quintet

Agenda

FLANDERS TODAY
JUNE 2, 2010

De Roma
Turnhoutsebaan 327; 03.292.97.40
www.deroma.be
JUN 2 20.30 Gwen Cresens, Koen Van Roy and the Tanguedia string quartet
JUN 3 20.30 Wim Mertens Ensemble

't Kwartier
Keistraat 11; 0475.28.66.10
www.tkwartier.be
JUN 6 18.00 Sunday Jazz District Sextet conducted by Michel Spiessens

Trix
Noorderingel 28; 03.670.09.00
www.trixonline.be
JUN 10 20.00 Lidlboj

Zuiderpershuis
Waalse Kaaï 14; 03.248.01.00
www.zuiderpershuis.be
JUN 10 20.30 Ratevents: Phynt + C.A.C.A.

Bruges
De Werf
Werfstraat 108; 050.33.05.29
www.dewerf.be
JUN 4 20.30 The Vintage Jazz Cats

Brussels
Art Base
Zandstraat 29; 02.217.29.20
www.art-base.be
JUN 6 20.00 Magic Swing

Bizon
Karerbrug 7; 02.502.46.99
www.cafebizon.com
JUN 7 21.30 Bizon Blues Jam Session

Espace Senghor
Waversesteenweg 366; 02.230.31.40
www.senghor.be
JUN 4 20.30 Włodzimierz Nahorny Sextet

Indigo Studios
Van Volxemlaan 388; 02.534.75.72
www.indigostudios.be
JUN 9 20.30 Roy Ayers

Jazz Station
Leuvensesteenweg 193; 02.733.13.78
www.jazzstation.be
JUN 5 18.00 Casimir Liberski Trio
JUN 10 Jeroen Van Herzele Quartet

l'Alphabet
Waversesteenweg 1387; 02.662.23.00
www.lalphabet.be
JUN 4 20.30 BBQ Trio

Le Caveau du Max
Emile Maxlaan 87; 02.733.17.88
JUN 3 Guy Cabay Quartet

Sounds Jazz Club
Tulpenstraat 28; 02.512.92.50
www.soundsjazzclub.be
Concerts at 22.00:
JUN 3 Bodurov Trio **JUN 4** symmEtrio
JUN 5 21.00 Brussels Rhythm'n Blues: The Witness **JUN 7** Master Session **JUN 8** Laurent Doumont Soul Tuesdays **JUN 9**

Chamaquiando, salsa

The Music Village
Steenstraat 50; 02.513.13.45
www.themusicvillage.com
Concerts at 21.00:
JUN 4-5 Denise King **JUN 8** The Music Follies Night **JUN 9** Paradigm Junction **JUN 10** The KMGs

Viage
Anspachlaan 30; 070.44.34.43
www.viage.be
JUN 5 22.00 Mathilde Renault with Knutsson + Verbruggen Co



Antwerp

Zuiderpershuis
Waalse Kaaï 14; 03.248.01.00
www.zuiderpershuis.be
JUN 3 20.30 Shiyani Ngcobo

Brussels

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

JUN 3 20.30 Deleyaman (Armenia)
JUN 10 20.00 Myrddin De Cauter, contemporary flamenco guitar

Espace Delvaux
Gratèssstraat 3; 02.663.85.50
www.lavenerie.be
JUN 5 20.00 Les Tambours du Burundi, Rwandan genocide benefit concert

Protestantse Kerk Brussel
Nieuwe Graanmarkt 8; 02.512.03.67
www.protestantsekerkbrussel.com
JUN 6 16.00 Many voices, one sound: music, song and dance inspired by Hindu, Muslim, Christian and Buddhist religions

Théâtre Molière
Bastionsquare 3; 02.217.26.00
www.muziekpublique.be
JUN 3 12.30 Broodje Brussel: Tuur Florizone solo
JUN 9 20.00 Casuarina (Brazil)



Bruges

Concertgebouw
't Zand 34; 070.22.33.02
www.concertgebouw.be
JUN 4-6 iBoccherini! Festival: music by the 18th-century Italian composer, featuring Roel Dieltiens, cello; Piet Kuijken, piano; José Miguel Moreno,

guitar; Edding String Quartet; Christine Busch, violin + lectures, film and exhibition

Brussels

Bozar
Ravensteinstraat 23; 02.507.82.00
www.bozar.be

JUN 3 20.00 deFilharmonie conducted by Philippe Herreweghe, with Lise de la Salle, piano: Mozart, Tchaikovsky
JUN 6 11.00 Soloists from the Queen Elisabeth College of Music: Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, more
JUN 8 20.00 Belgian National Orchestra conducted by David Giménez Carreras, with Roberto Alagna, tenor; Nathalie Manfrino, soprano: extracts from Gounod's Roméo et Juliette
JUN 10 20.00 Liège Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Jean-Pierre Haect, featuring the fourth, fifth and sixth laureates of this year's Queen Elisabeth Piano Competition

Flagey
Heilig Kruisplein; 02.641.10.20
www.flagey.be
JUN 6 20.00 Liège Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by François-Xavier Roth, with Vadim Repin, violin; Tchaikovsky, César Franck, Paul Gilson

Kaaithéater

Saintelettesquare 20; 02.201.59.59
www.kaaithéater.be
JUN 4 20.30 Tom and Bess O'Bedlam: Music and Poetry Evening on madness in Renaissance England with Xavier Sabata Corominas, countertenor; Kameron Steele, narrator; Igor Shyshko, dancer.

Choreographed by Arco Renz, staged by Sybille Wilson

Ghent

De Bijloke
Kluyskensstraat 2J; 09.233.68.78
tickets@bijloke.be

JUN 6 15.00 Brussels Philharmonic conducted by Michel Tabachnik, with Herbert Schuch, piano: Korngold, Bruckner
JUN 10 20.00 François Fernandez, violin; Rainer Zipperling, cello; Boyan Vodenitcharov, piano: Haydn, Mozart

Leuven

30CC - Schouwburg
Bondgenotenlaan 21; 016.23.84.27
www.30CC.be
JUN 4 20.00 Brussels Philharmonic conducted by Michel Tabachnik, with Barry Douglas, piano: Debussy, Schumann



Leuven

Theatre des Martyrs
Martelarenplein 22; 02.223.32.08
www.theatredesmartyrs.be
Until JUN 13 times vary Savannay Bay by Marguerite Duras, directed by Philippe Sireuil (in English)

The Warehouse Studio

Waelhemstraat 69a; 02.771.67.06
milkwood.brussels@gmail.com

Until JUN 4 20.00 The Brussels Welsh Society and the Irish Theatre Group present Under Milk Wood by Dylan Thomas, directed by Paul Gray (in English)

Brussels

Bozar
Ravensteinstraat 23; 02.507.82.00
www.bozar.be

JUN 9 20.00 British actress and singer Marianne Faithfull reads Shakespeare's sonnets (in English with French and Dutch subtitles); musical accompaniment by Vincent Ségal, cello

Ghent

Theater Tinnenpot
Tinnenpotstraat 21; 09.225.18.60
www.tinnenpot.be

Until JUN 23 20.00 De buitenkant van Meneer Jules (The Outside of Mister Jules), written by Diane Broeckhove, directed by Jan Verbist (in Dutch)

Kortrijk

Schouwburg
Schouwburgplein 14; 056.23.98.55
www.cultuurcentrumkortrijk.be

JUN 2-3 20.15 Wouter Deprez in Je zal alles worden (You'll Become Everything), comedy (in Dutch)



Antwerp

Contemporary Art Museum (M HKA)
Leuvenstraat 32; 03.238.59.60
www.muhka.be

Until JUL 4 Europe at Large #5, works by

DON'T MISS



Show 2010

10-12 June
Hangar 29, Antwerp

If you like the TV programme *Project Runway* or its Flemish spin-off *De Designers*, this catwalk show is for you. Fortunately, these students of Antwerp's famous Fashion Department of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts aren't competing, so they don't hesitate to take risks in their end-of-year collections, putting together concoctions you'd never wear in a thousand years but which are utterly fabulous to look at. It's a walking art show.

► www.antwerp-fashion.be/show2010.html

Vyacheslav Akhunov, Babi Badalov and Azat Sargsyan, related to the collapse of the USSR
Until AUG 22 August Orts: Correspondence, work by the four Brussels artists who make up the Auguste Orts production platform on aspects of apparatus (camera movement, editing, sound vs image) and the unstable status of language
Until SEP 19 Art Kept Me Out of Jail, performance installations by Jan Fabre

Extra City
Tulpstraat 79; 0484.42.10.70 www.extracity.org

Until JUL 11 Valérie Mannaerts: Blood Flow, sculptures and installations by the Brussels artist

Fashion Museum (MoMu)
Nationalestraat 28; 03.470.27.70 www.momu.be
Until AUG 8 BLACK: Masters of Black in Fashion & Costume, historical phases of the colour black, its diversity in hue according to material and masterpieces by contemporary designers

Middelheim Museum
Middelheimlaan 6; 03.828.13.50 www.middelheimmuseum.be

Until SEP 19 New Monuments in the Middelheim Museum, Belgian artists focus on the future of the monument

Museum aan de Stroom (MAS)
Falconrui 53; 03.206.09.40 www.mas.be

Until JUN 5 Vooruit MAS, city project around the new museum for urban topics, heritage, art and architecture, featuring guided tours, readings, films and concerts

Photo Museum (FoMu)
Until JUN 20 Alain Van Haver, black-and-white photos by the Flemish photographer
Until JUN 27 Jacky Lecoutier: Polaroids, series of polaroids of every-day miracles by the Belgian artist
Until SEP 5 Filip Tas, work by the late Antwerp-based photojournalist, critic and visual arts instructor, who helped usher in a new era of artistic media photography

Until SEP 5 American Documents, Walker Evans' 1940 Labour Anonymous series and part of Robert Frank's The Americans from the 1950s join several well-known American photographers of the 1970s, including Diane Arbus, Robert Adams, Lewish Baltz and Mitch Epstein

Royal Museum of Fine Arts
Leopold De Waelplaats; 03.238.78.09 www.kmska.be

Until OCT 3 Closing Time, curated by



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Flemish artist Jan Vanriet, who presents his own work alongside related pieces from the museums collection

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 JUN 19 Andrea Geyer: Spiral Lands, photos and documents examining the complex history of North America

Until JUN 19 Ángel Vergara: Monday: Fireworks; Tuesday: Illuminations; Wednesday: Revolution, mixed-media work by the Brussels-based Spanish artist exploring the early days of the Belgian monarchy and its cultural, social-political and economic context

Until JUN 19 Alexander Kluge: Poetics in Between Media, video art by the German film director

art)&(marges
Hoogstraat 312-314; 02.511.34.20
www.artthis.org

Until JUN 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, work by the Finnish illustrator and author

Bozar

Ravensteinstraat 23; 02.507.82.00
www.bozar.be

Until JUN 6 Canvasscollectie, Belgium-wide project with works by amateur and professional artists

Until JUN 20 Laurent Ney: Shaping Forces, first monographic exhibition by the Belgian architect-engineer

Until JUN 20 Junctions: Arno Roncada, work by the Belgian artist paired with selections from Antwerp's FotoMuseum

Until JUN 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)

JUN 3-SEP 11 GEO-Graphics: Mapping Historical and Contemporary Art Practice in Africa, African objects from Belgian museums come face-to-face with work of contemporary African artists

Hallepoort Museum

Zuidlaan 29; 02.533.34.51

www.kmkg-mrah.be

Until AUG 29 Brussels Calling!, works by 10 Belgian and international artists, who were all lured by the capital at one time or another

KVS Box

Arduinkaaï 9; 02.210.11.12 www.kvs.be

JUN 3-17 From Inside, interactive installation by Thierry De Mey

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Royal Museum of the Armed Forces

Jubelpark 3; 02.737.78.33

www.legermuseum.be

Until JUN 6 Tinnen soldaatjes vertellen de geschiedenis (Tin Soldiers Tell the History), toy soldier exhibition with more than 6,000 figurines

Until AUG 31 Andreas Magdanz: Camp Vogelsang, large-format photos of the Rhineland training camp in North Westphalia by the German photographer

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 Doorsnede (Intersection), 14 contemporary artists show their work among the museum's permanent collections

Until SEP 5 Art and Finance in Europe, new look at masters of the 17th century with 20 works from the museum's collection, including Seghers, Breughel, Francken, Rembrandt and Rubens

Royal Museums of Fine Arts

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

Until JUN 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, Jean Delville, more

ULB, Building F1

Paul Hégerlaan 22-24; 02.650.37.65 www.ulb.ac.be/culture

Until JUN 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 JUN 6 Do/Redo/Undo, survey of 50 years of performance art captured on video

Until AUG 15 Rehabilitation, multi-media show by young artists on the theme of architectural renovation

Deurle

Museum Dhondt-Dhaenens

Museumlaan 14; 09.282.51.23

www.museumdd.be

Until JUN 20 Sophie von Hellermann & Josh Smith, paintings by the German and American artists

Until JUN 20 Emo Verkerk, paintings by the Dutch artist

Ghent

Design Museum

Jan Breydelstraat 5; 09.267.99.99

www.designmuseumgent.be

Until JUN 6 Richard Hutten, furniture, interiors and objects by the Dutch designer

Until JUN 6 The Scandinavian Touch in Belgian Furniture 1951-1966

Dr Guislain Museum

Jozef Guislainstraat 43; 09.216.35.95 www.museumdrguislain.be

Until SEP 12 De wereld andersom (The World Inside Out), art brut from the abcd collection in Paris

Until SEP 12 Innocent, Yet Punished, photographs by Lieven Nollet

Kunstplatform Zebrastraat

Zebrastraat 32/001;

www.zebrastraat.be

Until JUN 20 update 3/body sound, group show using sound, light and telecommunications

Museum of Fine Arts

Fernand Scribedreef 1 - Citadelpark; 09.240.07.00 www.mskgent.be

Until JUN 27 Gustave Van de Woestyne, a retrospective of the 20th-century Flemish painter

Until JUN 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 JUN 13 Ed Templeton: The Cemetery of Reason, photographs,

paintings and sculpture by the American artist

Until JUN 13 Electrified 02: Hacking Public Space, exhibition plus actions in public spaces across Ghent

JUN 5-AUG 22 Paolo Chiasera: Ain't No Grave Gonna Hold My Body Down, multi-media work based on concepts such as time and space

JUN 5-AUG 22 Simon Gush: 4 For Four, video installation by the South African artist centred on the relationship between David Oistrakh and Sergei Prokofiev

JUN 5-DEC 3 Inside Installations, 10 installations from the museum's collection

Hasselt

Fashion Museum

Gasthuisstraat 11;

www.modemuseumhasselt.be

Until JUN 6 Ultramegalo, photos, video and installations on the intersection of fashion, art and culture, curated by Flemish model Hannelore Knuts

Leuven

Museum M

Leopold Vanderkelenstraat 28;

016.27.29.29 www.mleuven.be

Until AUG 29 Philippe Van Snick, paintings, installations and sculpture by the Flemish artist

Until SEP 12 Angus Fairhurst, retrospective of the the late British artist

Machelen-Zulte

Het Roger Raveel Museum

Gildestraat 2-8; 09.381.60.00

www.rogerraveelmuseum.be

Until JUN 20 Pictografie: Schilderijen zijn ook tekeningen en vice-versa) (Pictography: Paintings are Also Drawings and Vice Versa), group show

Until JUN 20 Zulma: Muze, model en madame, drawings, paintings and objects in memory of Roger Raveels late wife, Zulma De Nijs

Meise

National Botanic Garden of Belgium

Nieuwelaan 38; 02.260.09.20

www.plantentuinmeise.be

Until NOV 2 Boxes Brimming with Life, photo installations by Flemish wildlife photographer Tom Linster

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.inflandersfields.be

Until JUN 6 Gas! Attack, Protection, Care: exhibition on the occasion of the 95th anniversary of the first chemical warfare in the world, during the First World War in West Flanders

Until AUG 15 Toiling for War, films, photos and objects tell the story of the presence of 140,000 Chinese workers in the Second World War



Basilica Festival

Limburg leg of the classical-oriented Festival of Flanders, featuring grand symphonic concerts in the Tongeren Basilica, intimate recitals by emerging young performers, a Hitchcock film with a live contemporary soundtrack by British composer Joby Talbot and a Day of Early Music on the Alden Biesen estate in Bilzen

Until JUL 10 across Limburg www.festival.be

Antwerp

SHOW2010: Annual graduation show of the Fashion Department of the Antwerp Academy, bringing together 6,000 spectators from all over the world to view the students' collections

JUN 10-12 19.00 at Hangar 29, Rijnkaai

150
070.344.646, www.antwerp-fashion.be

Beerse

Beeldenbiënnale Beerse (Image Biennial Beerse)

The 10th edition of the outdoor art concourse, featuring artists from Belgium and neighbouring countries

Until JUN 13 on Fri, Sat and Sun from 14.00-18.00, across Beerse (Antwerp province)

014.

SHARON LIGHT

bite



© Culinaria/ M

Culinaria²

Whether you are a foodie or just looking for a great deal on fabulous food, make time this weekend for Culinaria² at Brussels' Tour & Taxis, where 16 Michelin star Belgian chefs come together for a festival of food to buy, food to watch and food to eat.

Culinaria premiered last year in Jubelpark, attracting 14,000 visitors. At the request of the chefs, sponsors, participants, and the Brussels Region, it repeats this year, which suggests it may be destined for the annual calendar.

The bargain – and star attraction – of Culinaria² are the menus. Four four-course meals are available, each featuring six stars per menu – which is to say that each course is prepared by a different Michelin-starred chef. When purchasing your ticket (€40 in advance, €45 at the door), you choose your menu and receive vouchers for your courses.

Then you begin the walking dinner, travelling to each chef's tent for the subsequent serving. Two starters, a main course and a dessert are all served with a matching wine, and water and coffee are also included. You might try, for instance, Mechelen asparagus with Iberian ham and creamy parmesan by Christophe Hardique of Brussels' Bon-Bon, followed by a mixture of tomato, watermelon, tuna and feta from Vike Geunes of 't Zilte in Mol. Probably the most popular main course of the event will belong to the only three-star chef on site – the famous Peter Goossens of Hof Van Cleve in Kruishoutem. His braised veal cheeks with celery root, tarragon and parmesan cheese will be irresistible to most menu seekers.

Contact Bite at flandersbite@gmail.com

If you have a hard time choosing, you should spring for the *fijnproever*, or gourmet, set of vouchers, which entitles you to two full menus for €70/€75. That works out to less than €10 per course, less than anything you would find in these chefs' usual establishments.

Workshops at Culinaria², meanwhile, offer the chance to watch these chefs in action. Working with the tools or products of one of the festival's many sponsors, including Leffe, Häagen-Dazs and Italian appliance manufacturer Smeg, they will create new dishes or show off particular skills.

The sponsorship makes it sound a little hokey but how can you pass up the chance to see these chefs at work? You can't reserve a place in any of the 11 workshops, and last year's were packed to capacity, so plan ahead and arrive early.

Finally, there's the marketplace, with 50 stalls featuring products the chefs use in their menus. Taking part in Culinaria² can be a challenge for a chef, who has to make time for the event in the preceding months and who sometimes must close his restaurant during the festival. But 14 of the 16 chefs are joining Culinaria² for the second year running. Obviously they see something special here – and you will, too.

→ www.culinariasquare.be



Tour & Taxis, Havenlaan 86C, Brussels



June 3-6, times vary



The only place a Michelin-starred chef will serve you a dish for less than €10

TALKING DUTCH

ALISTAIR MACLEAN



juist →

To err is human, which is small comfort when you discover you've written what some call a typo, but in fact is often a howler. Not all readers are divine enough to forgive; and to be honest it is fun finding fault with someone else's writing. (Or perhaps that's just me.)

Relying solely on spellcheckers to assess your writing is risky, as this sentence shows. In Flanders, you can turn to de *Taaltelefoon* – the Language Telephone, which is *de taaladviesdienst van de Vlaamse overheid* – the language advice service of the Flemish government.

At the other end of the line, a language expert will answer your questions on Dutch *spelling* – spelling, *grammatica* – grammar, *uitspraak* – pronunciation, *stijl* – style. I wonder if that's the expert's only job, just sitting by the phone in case some doubter calls to ask what is *juist* – correct.

Take *klant* or *cliënt*; what is the difference? The answer given on the website corresponds to the English use of customer and client: *Strikt genomen een bankdirecteur heeft cliënten* – Strictly speaking, a bank manager has clients, as do *advocaten* – lawyers. *Klanten doen aankopen bij winkeliers* – customers make purchases from shopkeepers. So, now I know the difference, I may just complain if my bank addresses me as a *klant*.

Another enquirer asked: *Is de zin "Ze is weer beginnen werken"*

juist? – Is the sentence "She has begun to work again" correct? (The Dutch sentence is not; the English one is.) *De correcte zin is "Ze is weer beginnen te werken".*

Apparently, in informal speech *het woordje te* – the little word 'te' is often dropped. The advice is: *In verzorgde taal kunt u dat beter niet doen* – In polished language, it's better not to do that. Words to encourage rather than to admonish.

Here's one on pronunciation. *Spreek je de sc in sceptisch als [s] of als [sk]?* – Do you pronounce the sc in *sceptisch* as [s] or as [sk]? The surprising answer is: *U kunt kiezen* – you can choose. A *sceptic* in English is only pronounced [sk], as the US spelling of *skeptic* makes clear.

So what about confusion with *septisch* – septic? The writer soothes this concern: *de context wijst uit welk woord bedoeld is* – the context makes clear which word is meant. The worst that can happen is that *iemand er een flauwe grap over maakt* – someone makes a corny joke about it, which I now will not attempt. You can ask for advice *elke werkdag* – every workday from 9.00 to 12.00 and *elke schoolwoensdag van 14 tot 16 uur* – every Wednesday during school term from 14.00 to 16.00, for teachers as well as pupils I suppose. But don't all phone this week!

Tel: 078.15.20.25

→ <http://taaltelefoon.vlaanderen.be>

MEET THE READER



Antonia Harrison

Nationality:
Lives in:
Work:

British
Heusen-Zolder
Hypnotherapist

How did you wind up in Belgium?

I first moved to Brussels at age 19 to improve my French. I decided to learn Dutch, too. The second time around I moved here from Spain in 2006 with my now ex-husband and two sons.

You live in Heusen-Zolder in Limburg – a bit out of the way, isn't it?

I stayed here for three months when I first moved to Belgium, so I knew it was a good place to raise a family. We live in the suburb of Bolderberg, the home of the motor racing Circuit Zolder. It's pretty, and there is a tremendous feeling of community.

What language(s) do you speak at home?

We speak English at home but can all speak Flemish. Most of my friends are Flemish. My sons attend the local Flemish school.

You are a hypnotherapist, which sounds totally awesome.

Mainly people know hypnosis as a way to stop smoking. It's true – 95% of the people who come to me stop smoking in just one session and stay stopped. Through physical and mental relaxation, I speak directly to the unconscious/subconscious mind where all lasting change must take place.

THE LAST WORD . . .

Dream on

"I dreamed I was the King of Norway."

Tom Dice, who represented Belgium at the Eurovision Song Contest last weekend in Oslo

Not out

"The doctors advised me not to take part, but running is my life. How else am I going to stay in shape?"

Georges Berthelot, 87, the oldest runner in last Sunday's Brussels 20k run

Finance made simple

"Three steps to halve the black economy: 1. Only electronic payments above €400 2. Large bills (€500) scrapped 3. Taxes lower"

Flemish economist Geert Noels, who offered an economic plan in under 140 characters on Twitter

Hold your breath

"Our research shows that cyclists breathe in five to nine times more fine particles than passengers in a car."

Luc Int Panis of the Flemish Institute for Technological Research