

JUNE 30, 2010

Free
weekly!

INDEPENDENT NEWSWEEKLY

WWW.FLANDERTODAY.EU

Erkenningsnummer P708816

2/NEWS 5/FEATURE 6/BUSINESS 7/FESTIVALS 11/ACTIVE 13/AGENDA 16/FOOD

Little yellow BV 6

The latest BV (bekende Vlaming, or well-known Fleming) to make it big internationally is Uki, a bug-like creature whose five-minute animations have been sold across the world



Festival summer 7

It's the first-ever *Flanders Today* summer festival guide! No matter where you live in Flanders, there's a festival near you. Special pull-out guide inside!



Pit full of power 11

Atop an old clay mine in Antwerp province is Flanders' only school for paragliding. You can get off the ground in just a few days



#136

Belgium dances

While a country-wide event gets residents moving, the launch of Belgium's presidency of the European Union comes with concerns of a political vacuum and a chance for Flanders to drive the European agenda

LEO CENDROWICZ

Ready or not, Belgium takes on an awesome responsibility this week. From Thursday, 1 July, the country assumes the European Union's rotating presidency, a role that requires it to chair almost every meeting of the 27 member states for the next six months, setting the agenda, coordinating business and sorting out the inevitable squabbles among countries.

It is a moment for Belgium to shine: the rest of Europe, and indeed the world, will be watching as the country takes command of the complex EU institutional machinery. With the EU tentatively emerging from an economic downturn – and stumbling through crises like the recent euro debt threat – the Belgian presidency comes at a particularly sensitive moment.

Belgian politicians and officials insist they are more than up for the task. But they face an awkward handicap that risks overshadowing the entire presidency: in the wake of the June elections, there is no permanent government

in place. Nor is there likely to be one for some time.

The leader of the biggest party in the new parliament, Bart De Wever of the Flemish nationalist N-VA, is currently consulting with potential coalition partners. Given expectations that he will try to work with his near ideological opposite, Elio Di Rupo from the Francophone socialist PS, plus the need for a radical agreement on institutional reform before the coalition is in place, few actually imagine any new government will be formed before September, when the most serious business of the presidency will begin.

Indeed, when De Wever discussed the Belgian presidency in meetings with key EU officials last week – including European Commission President José Manuel Barroso, EU Trade Commissioner Karel De Gucht and European Council President Herman Van Rompuy – his target was the 12 October opening of the Belgian Parliament.

► *continued on page 5*



Manneken Pis “worst monument”

Manneken Pis, the cheeky little chap relieving himself on a pedestal in central Brussels, is the world's most disappointing monument, according to Australian travel writer Ben Groundwater.

Writing in the *Sydney Morning Herald* blog “The Backpacker”, Groundwater describes Manneken Pis as “Worst National Monument” before commenting, “OK, maybe it's not the national monument, but come on... Oh look, it's a boy having a wee, and, um ... right, let's go to the pub”.

“It's one of the major tourist attractions in your country,” Groundwater claimed. “but it's also one of the biggest disappointments for backpackers, particularly because it's so small. Most backpackers write to me that they have to go and wash away their disappointment in a nearby bar, where the Belgian beer never disappoints.”

Edmond Vandenhoute, president of the Order of the Friends of Manneken Pis, understands Groundwater's disappointment. “It goes back 200 years,” he explains, “when a group of women came over from England especially to see Manneken Pis. They noted their disappointment thus: ‘Did we really come so far just to see such a little boy?’”

However diminutive he may be, Manneken Pis continues to attract homage from the highest places. Last week Herman Van Rompuy, president of the European Council, delivered a new costume to add to Manneken Pis' collection of nearly 850. And the embassy of Malta, also diminutive but feisty, connected the boy up to pee Cisk lager, produced in Malta, which they handed out free to passers-by. There were no complaints from any Aussies present. ♦



Police raid Catholic church homes and cathedral

Cardinal, archbishop and Papal nuncio detained in last week's search

ALAN HOPE

Police last week raided the archiepiscopal residence in Mechelen in connection with allegations of child sexual abuse by clergy. They took away two truckloads of suspected evidence, including the computer belonging to Cardinal and former archbishop Godfried Danneels.

At the same time, search warrants were also carried out at the Sint-Rombout cathedral in the city and in the offices of the commission set up by the church to look into abuse complaints, located in Leuven. More than 450 case files were seized. The raids provoked immediate criticism from the church; from

Peter Adriaenssens, the respected child psychiatrist who chairs the commission; and from the Pope himself. On Monday this week, Adriaenssens announced that he would not continue in his post.

The Mechelen raid took place just as the country's bishops had gathered for a meeting with the Papal nuncio, although the Brussels prosecutor's office, who carried out the raid with police assistance, said this was a coincidence. Cardinal Danneels was brought from his nearby residence to join the gathering; all those present were detained and had their mobile phones removed.

► *continued on page 3*

OFFSIDE

ALAN HOPE

Brussels spells biodiversity with a bee



Imagine the sleepy heat of a summer afternoon, the gentle hum of bees a-buzzing, the air heavy with the scent of traffic from one of the main Brussels thoroughfares.

Believe it or not, that's a scene from a platform four floors up on the administrative centre of the city of Brussels, where the municipal authorities have installed three beehives.

The installation is part of the city's commitment to Year of Biodiversity 2010 and an initiative of the beekeeping association Apis Bruoc Sella (ABS). "Bees survive better in the city than in the countryside because they have fewer problems with pesticides used by farmers," said Marc Wollast, coordinator of ABS.

With the growth of intensive farming and increasing monoculture (the growing of a single crop on vast tracts of land), nowadays city bees actually have access to more varied sources of food. "It looks as if they'd have nothing surrounding them on the platform but metal and glass, but in fact right next to the administrative centre there are parks, gardens and trees, all of them excellent food sources."

The world of apiculture has been hit in recent years by a wave of mass losses, in what has become known as Colony Collapse Disorder. The causes are thought to be multiple, including mites, bacteria, viruses and malnutrition. More speculatively, some suspect genetically-modified crops and even radiation from mobile phone masts causing bees to lose their navigational powers, wander from the hive and die. The problem is of importance not only to apiculturists, but to agriculture in general, as many crops require bees for pollination.

Although it is their most urban project, this is not ABS' first venture at introducing bees to the city. Last year, they placed hives at the Massart botanical garden in Oudergem, on the roof of the Cameleon store in Sint-Lambrechts-Woluwe and in a school in Jette.

One of the hives on the outskirts of Brussels has been fitted with a webcam to allow you to watch bees entering and leaving all day long. The honey from the city of Brussels hives, meanwhile, is on sale inside the administrative centre.

See page 11 for family bee activities this month

→ www.apisbruocella.be

FLANDERS TODAY

Flanders Today, a free weekly English-language newspaper, is an initiative of the Flemish Region and is financially supported by the Flemish authorities.



The logo and the name Flanders Today belong to the Flemish Region (Benelux Beeldmerk nr 815.088). The editorial team of Flanders Today has full editorial autonomy regarding the content of the newspaper and is responsible for all content, as stipulated in the agreement between Corelio Publishing and the Flemish authorities.

Editor: Derek Blyth

Deputy editor: Lisa Bradshaw

News editor: Alan Hope

Agenda: Sarah Crew, Robyn Boyle

Art director: Michel Didier

Prepress: Corelio P&P

Contributors: Rebecca Benoot, Leo Cendrowicz, Courtney Davis, Stéphanie Duval, Anna Jenkinson, Sharon Light, Katrien Lindemanns, Alistair MacLean, Marc Maes, Melissa Maki, Ian Mundell, Anja Otte, Emma Portier Davis, Saffina Rana, Christophe Verbiest Denzil Walton

Project manager: Pascale Zoetaert

Publisher: Corelio Publishing NV

Editorial address:

Gossetlaan 30

1702 Groot-Bijgaarden

Tel.: 02.373.99.09 – Fax: 02.375.98.22

editorial@flanderstoday.eu

Subscriptions:

subscriptions@flanderstoday.eu

or sign up online at www.flanderstoday.eu

Advertising: Evelyne Fregonese

02.373.83.57

advertising@flanderstoday.eu

Verantwoordelijke uitgever:

Derek Blyth

Don't forget

Get the news from Flanders online in English and French at www.flanderstoday.eu



FLANDERS TODAY
JUNE 30, 2010

News in brief

Dutch publishing house **De Bezige Bij**, publishers of work by Hugo Claus, is to set up a subsidiary in Antwerp, in cooperation with Standaard Uitgeverij. The new company, to be named Bezige Bij Antwerpen, aims to be a "safe haven for writers" and a centre of public debate, the companies said in a statement. The imprint will concentrate on literary fiction and serious non-fiction.

Two doctors have been fined the record sum of €635,000 for prescribing **inappropriate medication** for patients suffering from chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS). The two, an endocrinologist and a neuropsychiatrist, were found guilty by a health insurance tribunal of prescribing medication not approved for the patients' condition. The doctors deny the charge.

A **controversial sculpture** by Flemish artist Wim Delvoye will be installed behind Kaaithéatre on the Arduinkaai in Brussels, the city council has decided. The plan to situate the work, a nine-metre-long cement truck made of steel rods so that it resembles a work of Gothic architecture, was first launched in 2004 but was scrapped after local residents protested and brought an action before the Council of State. The council has approved a new licence for the plan, and work will begin in October.

An employment agency in Hasselt that provides staff for local solar panel installers is using a **climbing wall** to ensure job applicants do not suffer from a fear of heights. According to Z-Staffing of Beringen, Limburg province, the rising demand for solar panels has led to more jobs, but candidates often do not realise that they have a fear of heights. Others think they can work at ground level instead, which is usually not the case. In a first trial of the wall, 200 candidates were whittled down to 17 capable of making it to the top.

The federal police is making more use of technical and scientific investigation methods like **telephone tapping and DNA analysis**, resulting in the budget running out, an independent committee revealed last week. In addition, Belgium is paying more for DNA tests than neighbouring countries. A DNA test can cost up to €400 here, but only €120 elsewhere. From this year's budget of €90 million, the committee reported, €60 million had already been spent by 31 May.

A 100-year-old woman was last week found guilty of unintentional homicide after a **tenant died** from inhaling carbon monoxide from a faulty room-heater. The woman, who, along with her son, rented out studio apartments, was not sentenced but will have to pay back €20,000 raised in rent for the

premises, where inspectors found 57 breaches of safety regulations. The son was given a six-month suspended sentence.

The five-strong Flemish contingent at **Wimbledon** was reduced to just Kim Clijsters by 28 June when *Flanders Today* went to press. Clijster, who was due to play Justine Henin in a fourth-round showdown, had earlier beaten Maria Kirilenko. Russia's Vera Zvonareva beat Yanina Wickmayer 6-4, 6-2 in the third round; Wickmayer herself had earlier knocked out fellow Fleming Kirsten Flipkens. American Sam Querrey had defeated Xavier Malisse in five sets in the third round, just after Malisse beat the German Julian Reister in four sets. And Kristof Vliegen lost to French player Julien Benneteau in the first round.

Tongeren-born **Freddy "Fast Freddy" Loix**, driving the new Škoda Fabia S2000 "facelift" model, claimed his sixth career win in the Ypres Rally on 26 June. The three-day competition – which is round six of the Intercontinental Rally Challenge – contained a total of 19 speed tests, with competitors racing 280 kilometres. British driver Kris Meeke, driving a Peugeot 207, was just six seconds behind Loix coming into the Saturday session, but he crashed out heavily, destroying his car in the process.

FACE OF FLANDERS

ALAN HOPE

An unidentified Moor

Pieter Paul Rubens' "Four Studies of the Head of a Moor" features in the new exhibition *Art and Finance in Europe* at the Royal Museum of Fine Arts in Brussels. The subject is a simple, relaxed man, clearly not a rich merchant or patron of the arts. That he is present in the exhibition has to do with the use to which he was put more than 300 years after the work was created.

The year is 1957, and the Belgian currency is being redesigned to mark the 100th anniversary of the National Bank, with the plan of featuring a Belgian king on each of the main bank notes. This work appears on the reverse of the 500 franc note. On the front of the note was a portrait of Leopold II, who became rich at the expense of millions of Congolese. Three years after the note was designed, Congo became independent of Belgian colonial rule.

Finance has always been a major subject for painters.



From the Renaissance on, the rise of portraiture was a means of immortalising the rich and famous who could afford the commission. In the 17th century, the period covered by the exhibition, the nascent art market was almost suffocated by the constant state of tension, if not outright war, across the continent. At the same time, the period saw the rise of the art dealer as an intermediary between client and artist, keeping abreast of changing tastes and, in time, heavily influencing them. The exhibition, which runs until 5 September, also features works by Daniel Seghers, Jacob van Es, Jan Breughel the Elder and Rembrandt. The unidentified Moor, meanwhile, went on to figure as a wise man in the centre of Rubens' altarpiece "The Adoration of the Magi", painted in 1624 and now on show at the Fine Arts Museum in Antwerp.

→ www.fine-arts-museum.be



Two truckloads of Catholic church case files seized by police

→ continued from page 1

Archbishop André Leonard, who took over as head of the Belgian church from Danneels and who was also present in Mechelen, later played down the church's shock at the raids: "The detectives were doing their job. It's not for me to say what the justice system can and cannot do. I don't want to give the impression that we think the church is above the law."

According to the archbishop, the police visit came as "a complete surprise. They came in and asked where we kept the paedophilia files. I had to disappoint them. There's no such file cabinet. So they searched the whole building, from the cellar to the bathrooms, all the way up to the attic. They

took away more or less everything."

Among the items taken, which filled two trucks, were the personal computer of Cardinal Danneels, computers belonging to the administration of the archdiocese, CDs and DVDs, correspondence files, memory sticks and hard drives.

The seizure of case files from the commission offices in Leuven caused the eventual resignation of its chairman. The commission was set up by the church as an office for internal investigations, but it operated for a decade until 2008 with not a single case being referred to the justice system.

The majority of the 450 cases now open came to light after it was revealed that Roger Vangheleluwe, then bishop of Bruges, had abused a family member for years. Adriaenssens expressed fears that potential further revelations would now be made impossible, as victims would be unwilling to now come forward knowing that any promise of confidentiality was meaningless. A spokesman for the prosecutor's office, however, promised that the confidentiality of victims was an important concern to the justice system as well as to the commission.

Police look in tombs for evidence

The Vatican lost no time in condemning what they called "the desecration" of the tombs of Cardinals Leo Jozef Suenens (1904-1996), Jozef Ernest Van Roey (1874-1961) and Desiré-Joseph Mercier (1851-1926). Initial reports stated that he two tombs had been opened – fuelled by the appearance of police officers with crowbars and electric drills. But recent cement work around the plaque marking the burial place of Cardinal Mercier led to a metal plaque being displaced. The grave of Cardinal Suenens, meanwhile, which is behind a wooden door, was investigated using a camera passed into the space through a small hole drilled in the door.

Investigators are now going to try to construct a case showing that in every situation where a priest was accused of sexual abuse, the church authorities did not bring the case to the attention of the judicial authorities.

The negative evidence is overwhelming: of all the cases brought before the church's own commission from 1998 to 2008, not a single case was reported to the police. Of all the cases reported to retired priest Rik Devillé, who operated as a one-man crusade against child abuse by the clergy, not one was passed along to the police, though they were reported to church authorities.

In each case, the church will attempt to explain why reporting the incident was not considered an option. The prosecutor, in the meantime, will be looking for evidence that the church covered up the crimes. ♦



© Belga

Police plan the search of the Sint-Rombout cathedral in Mechelen, one of several locations raided last week

THE WEEK IN FIGURES

114491	923	23	85
836	13	932	0
081	568260	7	
004154			
301	661	9	
246	FREE	7	

1.2%

of the Belgian population between the ages of 15 and 64 uses cocaine, according to a report by the United Nations. The country is in seventh place worldwide

81 litres

of beer drunk per head of population in 2009, according to figures from the Brewers Federation, a reduction of 1.3% on 2008. The main decline is in the restaurant and café industry; sales in supermarkets rose by 1%

300 tonnes

of Belgica mussels expected to be harvested this year off the Flemish coast, three times more than last year

2

thefts every day of copper wire from properties owned by the rail authority NMBS in the month of May. As well as the material loss, the thefts often cause service delays and safety problems. However, the government has scrapped a measure obliging metal dealers to demand proof of identity

€500

reward for the first photo to show that otters are active in Flanders, offered by conservation organisation Natuurpunt. The last confirmed sightings of otters in the wild date back to the 1990s

→ www.natuurpunt.be

Tour de France's Flemish detour

LEO CENDROWICZ

Cycling fans will be able to see the Tour de France in Flanders for two days next week when the world's most famous cycling race passes through Antwerp province and into Brussels.

The tour begins on with a nine-kilometre prologue on Saturday, 3 July in the Dutch city of Rotterdam. On Sunday, 4 July, some 223.5 km starts in Rotterdam, passing through Kapellen, Antwerp, Kontich, Mechelen and into Brussels, ending in Boudewijn Stadium. Just before arriving in Brussels, the tour will pass through

Meise, the town synonymous with tour legend Eddy Merckx, who turned 65 last month.

The next day's stage, 201 km from Brussels to Spa, takes in Tervuren, Duisburg and Overijse before moving into Wallonia. However, local hero Tom Boonen will not be part of the tour, thanks to a knee injury. The 29-year-old, injured last month in the Tour of California, was involved in a major crash on the fourth stage of the Tour of Switzerland two weeks ago, damaging his left knee. The Belgian Quick Step team admitted

it was a major blow: Boonen has won six stages of the Tour de France and took the green jersey in the 2007 edition.

But fellow Quick Step team member Stijn Devolder had the perfect warm-up for the tour, overcoming searing heat to take his second Belgian national championship title on Sunday, 27 June. Philippe Gilbert, who was in the lead 47 km from the finish, was caught and had to settle for second place, with Frederik Veuchelen coming third. ♦

FIFTH COLUMN

Responsibility

The day after the elections, 14 June, did not turn out to be *bijltjesdag*: no party leaders were sacked by party members frustrated by the election results. This is quite remarkable, given that this election has produced plenty of losers. More remarkable still was the resignation of Marianne Thyssen as president of CD&V, two weeks later.

No-one forced Thyssen out; on the contrary, she was begged to stay. Physically and mentally exhausted, she refused, leaving her party of Christian Democrats in a state of confusion.

Presidents who feel responsible for their parties' losses at the ballot box usually take a step aside the next day. The fact that Thyssen stayed on for two weeks, shows that there is more to her resignation. Apparently, she felt unable to cope with the tensions that rage within CD&V.

Roughly speaking (the truth is inevitably more complicated), there are two camps within the Christian Democrats: that of Flemish minister-president Kris Peeters, who is more regionalist, and that of acting prime minister Yves Leterme, who's instincts are more federal at the moment.

Many people within CD&V blame Leterme for the state the party is in. In 2007 he became prime minister with promises of state reform that he could not deliver. Along the way, he let go of the cartel with N-VA, which went on to become Flanders' largest party. Before the elections even, he stood aside, leaving it up to Thyssen to defend the undefendable.

If Leterme had headed the Senate list, he could have stood down on 14 June, making way for a new generation, untainted by all of this. Now, many people feel that he pushed Thyssen onto the glass cliff, only to watch her fall off.

This view is not entirely fair – CD&V agreed on the Thyssen scenario unanimously. But Leterme feels the heat and has repeated several times that he feels responsible for the election result, too, yet he still fancies a federal minister post.

How different the position of Kris Peeters. Peeters cleverly kept himself far from the federal elections, concentrating on his work as minister-president. He is one of the few Flemish politicians who can compete with N-VA's Bart De Wever, this election's winner, on credibility.

Almost by default, Peeters is now considered to be the real leader of CD&V. Still, it looks like that party, which has always combined many different views, has some shaky times ahead.

ANJA OTTE



Expat? Visit ING first.

Are you an expatriate? If so, you need support and advice. That's exactly what ING can provide for all your banking and insurance requirements. Our ING Expat service deals with everything, even before you arrive in

Belgium: accounts, bank cards, rental guarantee, etc. To find out what ING can do for you, don't hesitate to call one of our advisors on + 32 (0)2 464 66 64.

ING 

www.ing.be/expat



Belgium dances

→ *continued from page 1*

That means that outgoing prime minister Yves Leterme and his fellow ministers will continue in a caretaker role until successors are confirmed. And even if a new coalition is agreed, it will take time to get to grips with their complicated EU dossiers.

"If there is a crisis, the caretaker government will not be well placed to solve it," says Marc De Vos, head of the Itinera Institute, a Brussels-based policy institute. "It will be weak and unable to take any major decision. For example, the agreement in May on a €750 billion special vehicle would not have been agreed by a caretaker government."

Nonetheless, Leterme has promised a presidency "with a punch", insisting that its work would be unaffected by the country's political transition and that "there should be no doubt about Belgium's capacity to assume its responsibilities".

Just a few days after this month's elections, Leterme convened a meeting of federal, regional and municipal government leaders to finalise the Belgian presidency programme. The Belgian programme is aligned with that of the outgoing Spanish presidency, and the Hungarian presidency in the first half of 2011. This is the so-called "trio", which aims to coordinate three consecutive presidencies and ensure a smooth agenda transition between them.

A further discipline for the Belgians comes from the European Commission, whose 2010 work programme, which includes various plans for EU policy initiatives, fixes much of the set agenda for the EU's work.

No illusions

Speaking in Warsaw in early June, Belgian foreign minister Steven Vanackere explicitly recognised these constraints. "Some presidencies pretend they invent a whole new chapter in European history during their six months of fame," he said. "We are not like that. If we are honest with ourselves - which we Belgians generally are in our down-to-earth way of doing things - we have to admit that we are not going to start our presidency from scratch."

Vanackere promised that Belgium would assume the role of honest broker during its presidency. "If, as a result of this approach, the Belgian presidency will enjoy less visibility and will be more at the service of the EU, well, then I will be able to live with this," he said. "What matters to me is...being able to make some progress - however modest it may be - on the path towards more European integration."

Sharing the load

Belgium's task is lightened by the EU's new institutional architecture. The Lisbon Treaty, agreed last December, created Van Rompuy's post as permanent president of



© REUTERS / Yves Herman

Acting prime minister Yves Leterme (left) and European Council President Herman Van Rompuy

the European Council, as well as Catherine Ashton's position as High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. They now respectively chair the EU summits and the monthly meetings of foreign ministers.

Of course, Van Rompuy is a former Belgian prime minister, so coordination is easier with the Belgian presidency. One of his priorities is the EU's new research and innovation strategy: the commission is currently working on a draft plan, and the scheduled October 28-29 Brussels summit will be devoted to the issue.

A key factor that will spread the burden is the role of the regions and the communities: thanks to various institutional reforms, Belgium's federal system gives them exclusive policy competence in key areas and even grants them the right to represent the country in international negotiations and EU Council of Ministers meetings.

Flanders role

During this presidency, Flanders will represent Belgium in the policy fields of education, youth, sport, environment and fisheries. And Flanders will have scope to give its own spin on the agenda - for example, when it comes to the environment, the Flemish government will underline its life-cycle thinking known as "cradle to cradle". "Even without a caretaker government, we will have a big role to play," says Fré

The "trio" agreement between Spain, Belgium and Hungary ensures a smooth presidential transition

Lambrecht, councillor of foreign affairs in the cabinet of Flanders' minister-president Kris Peeters. "It is important for us to show we have an institutional role and the capability of presiding over council meetings. We want to show we are an open and creative region."

The list of councils and conferences in Flanders reveals a busy calendar. These include various informal meetings of the Council of Ministers, like the Ghent Environment gathering next month, the October meeting of sports ministers in Antwerp and the Bruges council in December on progress since the Copenhagen Climate Change Conference.

Others meetings cover issues like biodiversity, the knowledge-based bio-economy, maritime research and social inclusion. Nor should we forget Belgium's positive track record in the EU in terms of policy breakthroughs and managerial capacity. "Together with Belgium's general stance on the EU, if there is one country that seems to be able to still function without a government and at the same time take on the challenge of ensuring the smooth running of

the council, then this would be Belgium," says British political analyst Simone Bunse, a Georgetown University professor and author of *Small States and EU Governance: Leadership Through the Council Presidency*. But beyond the official EU business, the presidency is also a chance to make the most of the six months in the spotlight with a dash of cultural preening, including concerts, exhibitions and other events. Perhaps the most eye-catching will happen on 8 July: an exhibition match between Justine Henin and Kim Clijsters at the King Boudewijn stadium in Brussels, which should break the world attendance record for a tennis match (set in 1973 when women's champion Billie Jean King beat her male opponent, Bobby Riggs). It may have little to do with EU business, but the two tennis stars will - like Belgium and Flanders - be aiming to show Europe that they aren't cowed by performing on a big stage. ♦

→ www.eutrio.be/flanders

The programme

Belgium's EU Presidency programme was formally confirmed on 16 June at a meeting between acting prime minister Yves Leterme and representatives from the regions and municipalities. Here are its five priorities:

1. Socio-economics: Re-establish sustainable growth and competitiveness. This means developing a competitive, green knowledge economy (and implementing the EU's 2020 Strategy), implementing the new financial supervision architecture, strengthening the stability of the eurozone, restoring budgetary discipline and promoting innovation

2. Environmental policy: Switch to a green economy. Formulate concrete, ambitious targets at the COP 16 climate summit in Cancún; consolidate the link with new European policy objectives on energy, transport and emissions; prepare for the COP 10 Convention on Biodiversity

3. Freedom, security and justice: Consolidate and complete across the EU. Develop a uniform asylum procedure; combat terrorism, organised crime and illegal immigration; establish mutual recognition of court rulings

4. Social policy: Promote social cohesion. Seek social convergence; reinforce the social "safety net"; stress the EU's added value in health and ageing

5. External affairs: Broaden the global appeal of the EU as a force for peace and security. Set up the European External Action Service; continue enlargement negotiations; continue the WTO's Doha Round talks

Presidential dance

Twelve cities simultaneously celebrate Belgium's new leadership role

You, too, can help launch Belgium's presidency of the European Union when 12 Belgian cities play host to an interactive dance fest on 3 July. Bal Moderne will take to city squares to teach participants two short choreographed dances. A live feed will be televised in each city to allow everyone to watch each other, creating a feeling of solidarity. Bal Moderne was founded on the idea that dance should be used as a way to bring people together, whether they are skilled or not. "When people find they can do something they never thought they could, it's

sensational," says the organisation's Oonagh Duckworth.

The lessons begin at 20:00 in Brussels, Antwerp, Bruges, Ghent, Leuven, Hasselt, Charleroi, Eupen, Liège, Louvain-la-Neuve, Namur and Tournai. Check the website to see where to go in each city.

Duckworth says she's hoping for at least 1,000 people in each city to turn up to dance. "Belgium is a country with rich dance resources, which should be celebrated," she says.

→ www.balmoderne.be

EMILY ROMAN

Santens family to face fraud charges

The long-time business family allegedly laundered €200 million

ALAN HOPE

The prosecutor's office in Oudenaarde in East Flanders announced that it is bringing charges of tax fraud and money laundering against members of one of the 50 richest families in Belgium. According to the case, the Santens family, prominent in the textile industry as well as numerous other investments, allegedly laundered as much as €200 million over the years to avoid paying tax.

The investigation, which began in 2008, is being led by the special tax-inspection agency, the BBI. The complaint targets two parts of the Santens family, as well as business partner Lucien Vanwysberghe, and alleges the family used its own international subsidiary, Santens International, as well as straw-man shell companies in tax havens, to launder income and avoid paying tax. Santens, based in Oudenaarde, was

set up in 1913 and now holds a leading position in the production of bath and kitchen linens, manufacturing 100,000 towels a day, 90% for export.

The senior suspect in the case is Marc Santens, now 83 years old, former chairman of Kredietbank, now KBC, and ennobled as a baron by King Boudewijn in 1986. The second generation of Santens in the business, he has a long and distinguished history in Belgian business, having been a director of Sabena, Alcatel-Lucent Bell and Corelio Publishing.

Also a suspect is his nephew Lieven Santens, 76, a former mayor of Oudenaarde; his son Jean-Baptiste, now managing director of the company; and Vanwysberghe, with whom the Santens family own McThree Industries, a carpet manufacturer based in Waregem, West Flanders. ♦



King Albert tours the Santens factory, accompanied by Marc Santens (right) and son Jean-Baptiste Santens (left)

THE WEEK IN BUSINESS

Air transport • Qatar Airways

The Gulf-based carrier Qatar will launch a five-flights-a-week service between Brussels and Doha, beginning 31 January, 2011.

Autos • D'Ieteren

Brussels-based D'Ieteren, distributor of Audi on the Belgian market, will transfer the brand's distribution headquarters operations from its historic base in the Elsene commune of Brussels to Kortenberg, east of the city. The company, which expects sales to grow to some 35,000 vehicles in 2012 compared to the present 25,000, has build new testing facilities and is expected to hire additional staff.

Banking • KBC

Dublin-based KBC Asset Management, the affiliate of Flanders largest financial institution, has been sold to the RHJ International investment fund for €23.7 million. The deal is part of KBC's strategy to sell its non-core activities in the wake of its rescue by the Belgian authorities last year.

Building • Compagnie du Zoute

Knokke-based Compagnie du Zoute is investing €25 million in two apartment blocks with 93 luxury units in Blankenberge. The company has also strengthened its hold on the French Compagnie Immobilière d'Hardelot near Boulogne by acquiring the outstanding shares.

Dredging • Panama

Antwerp-based Dredging International has won a €33 million contract to enlarge one of the artificial lakes of the Panama Canal.

Mail • Bpost

The Belgian post office, which was recently renamed Bpost, is planning an IPO of some 25% of its equity later this year. The UK-based CVC investment fund, owner of almost 50% of the shares, seeks to recoup some of its investment. The move come ahead of the European liberalisation of postal services in January 2011.

Retailing • Delitraiteur

The upmarket retailer and delicatessen chain Delitraiteur plans to open three additional outlets in Boortmeerbeek, Aartselaar and Kontich this year. The company, owned by the Louis Delhaize group, already operates 28 stores in the country.

Shipping • Exmar

The Exmar shipping group, based in Antwerp, has sold its Opti-Ex oil drilling platform for some \$400 million to the US LLOG Deepwater Development Company.

VUB to offer arbitration degree

The Free University of Brussels (VUB) will begin offering a postgraduate degree in International Business Arbitration in the coming academic year. Increasingly, the university explained, arbitration outside of the courts is a growing phenomenon, particularly as trade relations increase with countries like China and India, where it is more common.

The course features modules on international economic and business law, trade and investment dispute settlement and alternative dispute resolution. The course, which will be given in English, will include special situations of dispute settlement within institutions like the World Trade Organisation, the International Criminal Court and NAFTA. The course is open to holders of a master's degree, and the university stressed that a legal degree is not an entry requirement.

Faculty will be recruited worldwide in conjunction with the Association for International Arbitration. Some members are John W Barnum, a partner in McGuire Woods LLP in Brussels; Johan Billiet, a judge at the Brussels Court of First Instance; and Edouard Bertrand of the Paris bar.

The course, which is two semesters, is the first of its kind to be offered in Belgium. ♦

→ www.vub.ac.be/postgraduate

Music industry calls for VAT cut

Free Record Shops across the country last week took the unilateral step of cutting VAT on music products like CDs and DVDs from 21% to 6%

– but only for a day. The move was the start of a campaign asking for a cut in VAT to rates more similar to those applied to books and concert tickets, in an effort to stimulate sales and combat illegal downloading. The campaign was kicked off on 25 June by singer Stijn Meuris, who sold CDs behind the counter of the Ghent store, and closed by Nathan "N8N" Ambach in Antwerp later in the day. Another 35 local artists took part at various locations. ♦

Animated Flemish series conquers international market

MARC MAES

With dropping revenues from music sales, record companies are scrambling to diversify. Motivated by earlier successful experiments, Universal Music's managing director Patrick Busschots has mined gold with the animated series *Uki*, soon to be seen Europe-wide and beyond.

Uki is the brainchild of designers at the Leuven-based graphic design company Topfloor, which in 2004 was commissioned by Busschots to design a number of kids' characters with the idea to develop a 3D animated series. A year later, Zaventem-based music label ARS teamed up with Ghent's 3D animation company Creative Conspiracy to further develop the project. Together with Diane Redmond, storyboard writer for the animated series *Bob de Bouwer* (*Bob the Builder*), they fine-tuned the *Uki* concept, which is designed for kids ages one to four. A trial episode was made for TV trade fairs and pulled down an award at the Kidscreen Summit in New York in 2008.

When Universal Music Belgium took over ARS Productions in 2007, Busschots started to lobby, and, after 18 months later of market research, the multinational decided to finance the project.



To date, 26 five-minute *Uki* episodes have been produced and another 26 will be ready by the end of the year. *Uki* is a happy little bug-like character who lives in a forest. Each episode is a new adventure with his friends. Universal Music presented the "kidcom" to its worldwide affiliates, who have been negotiating with their local TV stations. It has been running since April on Flemish broadcaster VRT's Ketnet, RTL-TV in Wallonia and Finnish MTV3. In September, *Uki* launches on Nickelodeon in Germany and the UK. Broadcasting deals have also been closed in Portugal, Australia, Poland, South Africa, India and Asia.

"*Uki* is a 100% Belgian production that's conquering the world," says Peter Decraene, director of business affairs at Universal Music Belgium.

"This type of entertainment is a great way to diversify, making use of our existing resources and contacts and adding revenue," says Busschots. The sales revenue, he emphasises, "goes beyond the production and sales of the TV programmes – it's the 'secondary market', the DVDs, books, merchandising. This is a very important source of income, comparable to what the music industry is generating." ♦

→ www.ukiland.com

Small businesses victims of road works

The government needs to introduce an embargo on road works of two or three years in areas where works have already been carried out, to lessen the cost for small businesses that suffer from the disruptions, according to Unizo, the organisation that represents the self-employed. Road works can be particularly hard on small retail businesses, as customers are prevented

from normal access, especially by car. In some cases, the disruption can be a fatal blow to businesses that are already struggling through the current crisis.

In 2007, the government introduced a new law allowing for compensation for businesses that suffer because of road works. However, a recent survey showed that 70% of business owners think the measure, which

provides compensation of €70 per day, is not sufficient. Small businesses are now calling for a local moratorium on further works in areas where works have recently been carried out. ♦



Did you know that Flanders has more summer music festivals per capita than any other region in Europe? That's the rumour anyway, and, eyeing this list, we're inclined to believe it. Whether you want to jump to world, jitter to jazz, head-bang in a grassy field or bring the kids along, boy, have we got a festival for you. And, beautifully, lots of them are free.

GOOKOORTS

FLEMISH FOLK? YES, THERE IS

The organisers of the Gooikoorts International Folk Music Festival may have gotten it wrong by advertising an "atmosphere of cosiness", an adjective not normally associated with folk music or festivals. Both are more about a shared experience of want and tribulation, be it inadequate toilet facilities or industrial accidents. But this doesn't faze the organisers, who are eager to stress that Gooikoorts is Flanders' strictly all-folk gathering and has the bill of fare to prove it. This year, there's the pan-European Burdon Folk Band and gypsy swing from Montpellier courtesy of Bel'Ogadjo. But there's also an all-too-rare opportunity to experience Flanders' own folk music scene leaders in the ersons of Peut-etre Demain (pictured), who are using the festival to launch a new CD, and Harakiwi, a more international-sounding world music combo, who will be making their last live apearance at Gooikoorts. There are few more pleasant ways of passing a summer afternoon than in this charming little town in the rural Pajottenland with the sun on your back and the weight of musical heritage sitting lightly on your shoulders. **Paul Stump**



Rock Werchter

1-4 JULY

WERCHTER, FLEMISH BRABANT

Belgium's biggest music festival is first-rate this year, with Rammstein, Green Day, Gossip, locals Absynthe Minded and classic grungers Pearl Jam. And did we know The Specials were still around? Rock Werchter is a classic and always a guaranteed get-down-and-dirty good time. So have fun if you have tickets; they've been sold out for a month.

→ www.rockwerchter.be

Gooikoorts

2-4 JULY

GOOK, FLEMISH BRABANT

Pure folk from here and abroad. See Critic's choice

→ www.gooikoorts.be

Ghent Jazz Festival

7-18 JULY

BIJLOKE GARDEN

Completely urban and yet hidden from view in the sizeable garden of the Bijloke music centre, this eclectic celebration of jazz - from Nora Jones to Ornette Coleman to Madness and the grand old man Toots Thielemans - amasses an equally diverse crowd that becomes more and more enthusiastic with each passing day. Expect insanity when Ghent's own Trixie Whitley closes the stage on the final night.

→ www.gentjazz.com

Cactus Festival

9-11 JULY

MINNEWATER PARK, BRUGES

Excellent pop and rock mix and family atmosphere. See Critic's choice

→ www.cactusfestival.be

It's fest

Brosella Folk & Jazz

10-11 JULY

OSSEGEM PARK, BRUSSELS

The Belgian population is as dedicated to this genre of music as their friends across the ocean in the likes of Nashville and Chicago. In a fabulous "Green theatre" in Ossegem park at the Atomium, it has a laid back vibe. There is both a blues day and a jazz day if you want to miss one or the other. Ivan Paduart and well-known local rock-jazzer Bai Kamara Jr will draw a tried-and-true audience and are well worth a gander on jazz day, especially for guitar lovers.

→ www.brosella.be

Blues Peer

16-18 JULY

PEER, LIMBURG PROVINCE

Not to state the obvious, but if you like the blues, you can get it here. Jerry Lee Lewis, Canned Heat, Booker T and Van Morrison just to get you started. This event has been around for 25 years so truly is a classic. Three whole days of moaning, head hanging and glorious down-and-out storytelling. Tell Imelda May you are sorry, she will be asking you to.

→ www.brbf.be

Gentse Feesten

17-26 JULY

GHENT CITY CENTRE

Just don't even bother going anywhere in the city of Ghent for these 10 days if you want to see or do anything other than the 24-hour-a-day street party that is the Gentse Feesten, the largest festival of its kind in the world. There's about a dozen stages in outdoor squares with live music all day and night, plus Ten Days Off, a massive techno festival in the arts centre Vooruit. Add to this a Dutch-language theatre festival, a street-theatre festival and a puppet buskers festival, and you'll know why 1.5 million people come to Ghent in July.

→ www.gentsefeesten.be



Vijverfestival

10 JULY

DILBEEK PARK, BRUSSELS

The highlight of this one-day fest has to be local boys Das Pop. But don't miss out on newcomers Customs with their Interpol style of alternative rock. This is not only a cool atmosphere of green but a child-friendly event. We all know that even music fans birth, and there are several activities outside of the line-up to keep you busy.

→ www.vijverfestival.be

CACTUS FESTIVAL

BRUGES' BIG FAMILY-FRIENDLY FIESTA

It was really no coincidence that the Cactus Festival in Bruges won the award for Best Small European Festival in 2009. It's a very family-friendly festival with loads of diverse off-stage animation, ranging from acrobats to art sessions. Of course, the music still is the most important, and Cactus treats artists and fans with respect: no overlapping concerts, no ultra-short sets. This year's line-up is impressive: Elvis Costello comes with The Sugarcane, a new acoustic band that, surely, will rock too. Tori Amos performs solo (when she's at her best), whereas Macy Gray invites you to put on your dancing shoes. Balkan Beat Box and Nigerian Seun Kuti lend the festival its exotic flavour. Cactus also has booked some strong Belgian bands, like Ghinzu, Balthazar en Absynthe Minded. One evening and two full days, it promises to be a hell of a weekend. **Christophe Verbiest**



Suikerrock

20 JULY - 1 AUG

TIENEN

Perhaps it's called "Sugar Rock" because it's one of the more palatable of the rock festivals. ZZ Top, John Fogerty and Golden Earring promise to keep the mullet crowd happy. For the popsters, there's Milk Inc, Seal and Clouseau. The recommended day would be that with Customs, Das Pop and the diva extraordinaire herself, Grace Jones. The main stage is on the main square, so you can always retreat into a bar if the rain falls. Please contact us when you find out what The Australian Pink Floyd Show are doing and why.

→ www.suikerrock.be

Stinks

30 JULY - 1 AUG

BOECHOUT, NEAR ANTWERP

The slogan is "A world to listen to", and they aren't kidding: folk, roots and world music mixed together. We have proof. The absolutely unmissable Orquesta Beuna Vista Social Club will grace the stage, as will Serbian composer Goran Bregovic, one of the most recognised masters of the modern world. He might even pull out a tango for you.

→ www.stinks.be

Lokersefeesten

30 JULY - 8 AUG

LOKEREN, EAST FLANDERS

What a line-up! You might think the programmers are drunk or at least when asked: "What kind of music do you like?" and they answer "Everything", they actually mean it. If you have listened to the radio for the past 30 years you will be in a constant state of sing-along here to Gang of Four, Sisters of Mercy, The Cranberries, Dinosaur Jr, Anthrax, The Human League, Air...do you think they get along? Just make sure Alice Cooper stays standing, and it could be a good bit of summer fun.

→ www.lokersefeesten.be

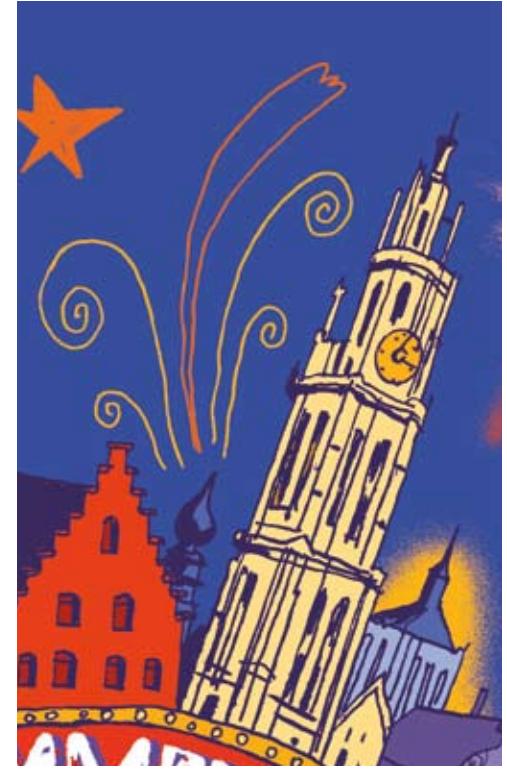
Bruksellive

31 JULY

THE GREEN THEATRE, BRUSSELS

This is a definite favourite in the free festival line up. Shadowed by the Atomium, there is an awesome descent into the park to multiple stages and an impressive Romanesque auditorium. Yes, Das Pop seem to be hitting a lot of festivals, but the real burner is Mintzkov, one of our star-studded locals, whose latest radio plays are on their way to being hits. Never a bad time at this festival and easily reachable by metro.

→ www.bruksellive.be



Festival time!

CRITIC'S CHOICE



MADNESS @ GHENT JAZZ FEST

A NEVER-ENDINGLY GREAT BAND HAULS OUT THEIR JAZZ

The quintessential English summer historically conjures up images of cricket games played on the village green, scones with strawberry preserve and jugs of Pimm's and lemonade. Any updated version should, by law, include a Madness concert. Few artists manage to represent their home country with such panache and energy. And few artists manage to look - and sound - this young after 30 years in the business. Their latest album *The Liberty Of Norton Folgate* shows an inspired band at the height of its creativity; expect, therefore, a healthy combination of new material ("Dust Devil", the divine "NW5") and old favourites ("Baggy Trousers", "Our House"...). Kudos to the Ghent Jazz organisers for acknowledging the oft-overlooked jazz element present in Madness' music. Four years after their triumph at the Lokerse Feesten and 18 months after Vorst-Nationaal, it's time for the "heavy, heavy monster sound" in Belgium again. **PM Doutreligne**

Dranouter Folk Festival

5-8 AUG

DRANOUTER, WEST FLANDERS

All that needs to be said is that it is held at Dranouter Folk Meadow. What you read is what you get: Tori Amos, Suzanne Vega and Belgium's own pop-folk master Ozark Henry are in the line-up. Like all Belgian festivals seem to do, they draw the top from any genre. Didgeridoo to violin, folk is folk.

→ www.folkdranouter.be

Jazz Middelheim

12-15 AUG

PARK DEN BRANDT, ANTWERP

Jazz is very close to the heart of this country, and this is a truly historical festival. Despite legendary jazz pianist Hank Jones passing away in New York recently, leaving his Thursday spot open, the festival promises the crème de la crème of our musical pride. To be gladly expected are Toots Thielemans, the godfather of the show, and the jazz sutras of Casandra Wilson. If you can't miss wailing sax (an instrument invented in Belgium) and some smoky, shady vocals, this is the place to be.

→ www.jazzmiddelheim.be

Antilliaanse Feesten

13-14 AUG

BLAUWBOSSEN, HOOGSTRATEN

If you have ever been there, you will know that the people of the Netherlands Antilles know how to throw a party. They eat, shake their money-makers and do a lot of hooting. That attitude and music have been transported from the Caribbean to Antwerp province in this largest party of its kind in the world. Filled with top names from Cuba to Antigua, including the smooth Clifford Smith, AKA Mr Vegas, and the street savvy Los Ilegales. Wear bright colours so as not to stand out.

→ www.antilliaansefeesten.be

Marktrock

13-15 AUG

OUDE MARKT, LEUVEN

Leuven, the town of students, alternative life and youth culture. The perfect home to this youthful display of all local talent. All Belgian all the time: The Van Jets, School is Cool, Balthazar, Customs and Stijn.

→ www.marktrock.be

Pukkelpop

19-21 AUG

KIEWIT, NEAR HASSELT

The second biggest of the Belgian rock festivals, with a draw of international acts that is always undeniably exceptional. Something for everyone who wants to get up and move, use an outdoor toilet and get a bit muddy. Placebo, The Kooks, Band of Horses, Kate Nash, Goldfrapp...it never ends. The local yokels worth noting are the alternative gurus Balthazar, the glammy Van Jets and the full-of-soul Selah Sue. It seems unfair just to mention these. Check the site, and you will have a hard time not attending every day.

→ www.pukkelpop.be

City Parade

20-21 AUG

HEIZEL, BRUSSELS

This moveable feast was at Brussel Bad last year, but now it's over near the Atomium: an entire day of DJs and dancing. See Critics' choice

→ www.cityparade.be

Maanrock

21-22 AUG

MECHELEN CITY CENTRE

They call it Flanders Biggest Free Rock and Pop festival, which could very well be true. It's certainly the one with the most locals bands: School is Cool, The Van Jets, Mintzkov, Das Pop, Arid, Clouseau and Belgium's entry to Eurovision, Tom Dice. If you haven't experienced a Flemish band's crowd before, it's worth checking out. The Flemish are dedicated followers of their own and get a bit crazy. They might wrap an arm around your shoulder and teach you the words.

→ www.maanrock.be

DIE ANTWOORD @ PUKKELPOP

SOUTH AFRICA'S FAVOURITE POTTY-MOUTCHED MONGRELS

A lot of people have heard of South African band Die Antwoord (The Answer), but few understand a word of what they're saying. Even if you grew up in South Africa, speak the language and "get" the local cultural references, you still don't understand it.

South Africa's favourite potty-mouthed "zef rap-rave crew" (zef essentially means "trashy") brings an utterly confusing but very entertaining mixture of '80s techno beats with dirty Afrikaans rap. The band is fronted by a tattooed skinny white guy called Ninja, supported by his spandex-wearing peroxide-blondie sidekick Yo-landi Vi\$\$er and DJ Hi-Tek. Together, they form a surrealistic trio that perfectly represents the modern-day melting pot that is South Africa and offers a "wild and crazy journey down the crooked path to enlightenment".

It's going to be a zef rap-rave all right, with lasers, smoke and 3D graphics. You may not understand much, but you won't be disappointed. **Sabine Clappaert**

→ www.dieantwoord.com



Gipsy's in het park

4 SEPT

BEUKENPARK, OOSTKAMP

If you're in more of a free-roaming, bangle-wearing mood, rattle yourself over to Gipsy's in het Park. Gipsy jazz to Gipsy ska are promised, and the program is a tribute to Django Reinhardt, who was born in Belgium and remains to this day one of the foremost European jazz guitarists. Honouring his name are the Dutch family the Basilys Boys, the laidback Piattos, the sometimes-funky, sometimes-rocky Phillip Catherine Quartet and the Original Seven Gipsy Ska Orchestra. All about family in the park. Be there with bells on.

→ www.gipsysinhetpark.be

Moulin Rock Festival

10-11 SEPT

TESSENDERLO, LIMBURG PROVINCE

One of the younger festivals, this promises to be one of the more interesting for the die-hard new-music seeking crowd. The programme isn't out yet, but last year included a fun line-up, with The Kids, Team William and The Galacticos. Stay tuned for more on this end-of-summer celebration.

→ www.moulinrock.be

CITY PARADE

CLUBBING UNDER THE ATOMIUM ALL DAY, ALL NIGHT

Let me see, a whole day of partying around four stages, 30 trucks, incredible sound systems and to more than 100 DJs, all for free in the lush parklands surrounding the glistening structure of the Atomium in Brussels. What's not to like about City Parade?

If you've ever loved clubbing but wished you could do it during the day here's the chance to dance your socks off with an up-for-it crowd, out in the open. Else, it's a great opportunity to see what dance music is all about, have a picnic and experience the deck wizardry of top local and international DJs such as Paul Oakenfold, Dave Clarke and Green Velvet. City Parade rolls from 14.00 to midnight, with the actual parade of trucks, DJs, decks and dancers is between 17.00 and 19.00. If you haven't had enough by midnight, there's an afterparty 'til dawn, but it will set you back €25. **Saffina Rana**



Live! We take care of the rest!

**Euromut
welcomes you
to Belgium.**

It is essential that you receive the best health care advice and customer service. We'll make your administration as easy as possible and have solutions for every request.

More than 4,000 expats choose Euromut every year. They can't be wrong!

Contact the Business Customer Care by mail: expats@euromut.be, by phone: +32 2 44 44 700.



euromut
health insurance

Live! we take care of the rest!

www.euromut.be/expats

Getting extreme

There's no petting zoo at De Schorre, home to paragliding, hang gliding and mountain boarding

MELISSA MAKI

It's official: it's summer. With warm weather, the opportunities for outdoor activities expand exponentially. The time couldn't be better for a visit to one of Flanders' provincial parks. For the fourth edition in our family recreation series, we take you to the province of Antwerp, where options abound.

The provincial park De Schorre tends to get overlooked in favour of its flashier rival to the north, Rivierenhof. But with De Schorre's central location, open-air concerts and adventure sports, this little park really packs a punch.

Created in 1993 in the small town of Boom, De Schorre is one of the newest recreation areas in Flanders. The 75-hectare park is strategically located between Brussels, Mechelen and Antwerp and offers the chance to bike, boat, fish, walk and dance. If you are truly adventurous, you can even learn how to fly. De Schorre is built atop an old clay pit. In fact, this region was known for centuries for its clay mining and formidable brick industry – the park's tagline is “een put vol pit” (“a pit full of power”). Reclaiming this industrial area was a clever move. The province has created both an economic boost for the region and a lovely green oasis.

You can rent *waterfietsen* (pedal boats) at the information centre by the half hour. Pedal boats are definitely not the most agile of water vessels, as my companion and I

discovered when attempting to dock ours, but they really embody the carefree feeling of a beautiful summer day and are an entertaining way to explore the park's ponds. Just don't be surprised if the resident ducks and geese get up close and personal as you tour around. They are clearly used to getting handouts (which, as we all know, is not a good idea).

The park offers five kilometres of walking paths. Strolls along the three ponds are suitable for buggies and wheelchairs, but walks in the park's wooded areas are not. About one-third of the park is set aside as a nature reserve. The perfect way to see this area is by foot. I especially enjoyed the *vlonderpad* (raised boardwalk) in the southwest portion of the park that takes you through a beautiful, boggy area and forest.

Check with the Rupelstreek-Vaartland tourist office for longer routes. You can connect up, for instance, with the extensive Rivierenland walking routes at De Schorre. This is an impressive network of 310 kilometres of hiking trails that are clearly marked with red signs and numbered junctions.

De Schorre rents bikes and is an excellent starting point for rides. You can begin the 49-kilometre Baksteenroute (brick route) through the Rupel region here. This scenic ride takes you through the countryside, past old villages and castles and along the banks of the Scheldt and Rupel rivers.



Learn to paraglide at De Schorre recreation park

De Schorre is also home to mini-golf and both football and hockey fields, but if that's not thrill-seeking enough for you, you should know that it's also home to Flanders' only accredited school of paragliding and paramotoring. Ikarus provides paragliding training right in the park. Founder Cris Claessens has been flying for 17 years, since he was 14 years old. He assures me that with their help you can learn the basics of paragliding in a few days.

Ikarus boasts a club with 100 members who participate in various trainings, trips abroad and competitions. Since the school's inception seven years ago, more than 500 people (mostly from Flanders but also from as far as

Mexico and Brazil) have been trained in the extreme sport. Other extreme sports practiced at De Schorre include hang gliding and mountain boarding (think snowboard, but with wheels). De Schorre has an on-site cafeteria that features a variety of snacks and light meals and an indoor playground just in case the rain falls. Parents will love the fact that the terrace is adjacent to the outdoor play area. As if this weren't enough, the park is also a popular venue for outdoor events. It is home to the free, multicultural Mano Mundo festival in May and plays host to Tomorrowland, the huge, two-day techno dance party, where 200 artists will perform next month. ♦

Getting there

There are several De Lijn busses that go directly to the domain, including 500 between Antwerp and Mechelen, 502 between Boom and Antwerp Rijnkaai, and 295 between Boom and Sint-Jansvliet.

If you want to go by train, you'll need to walk (or bike) two kilometres to De Schorre from the Boom train station. But beware! Trains don't stop in Boom at the weekend.

Provinciaal Recreatiecentrum De Schorre
Kapelstraat 83, Boom

→ www.provant.be

MORE PROVINCIAL PARKS IN ANTWERP

Rivierenhof is called the *groene long* (green lung) of Antwerp. This 130-hectare domain features two castles, a rose garden and an arboretum, plus an abundance of activities, from the fairytale playground to mini-golf and fishing. *Turnhoutsebaan 232, Antwerp*

The centrepiece of the **Zilvermeer** is water. There are several lakes and white sand beaches formed by sand extraction where swimming, boating and fishing are now possible. The best part is only accessible to divers: the Atlantis underwater art museum. *Zilvermeelaan 2, Mol*

De Nekker, meanwhile, is the place for sports, with football fields, tennis courts, an “adventure course” and skate park. There's also a water playground for the kids and a lake for swimming, with beach. Cyclists and hikers can rent trekkers huts in the park for a reasonable rate. *Nekkerspoel-Borcht 19, Mechelen*

© Melissa Maki



Ode to a bee

Everything you ever wanted to know about pollinators but were afraid to ask

Brussels' Natural Sciences Museum throws a jolly Bee Party in its garden on Wednesday, 7 July. All the family is invited to honour the Queen Bee and the vital importance of pollination by insects, birds and bats.

This is your chance to see beehives up close and to taste honey, chocolate, fruit and vegetables – all products that we wouldn't have if it weren't for bees and other pollinators.

The museum hosts a range of games and activities, and in-house experts will be at hand to answer questions. The younger ones will appreciate the bouncy castle and getting a face of “happy bee” make-up.

This event takes place as part of the International Year of Biodiversity 2010, to celebrate the importance and the richness of our fauna and flora. Conserving biodiversity isn't just a matter of saving whales and pretty exotic flowers: many plants and animals are endangered across the globe, and this includes species that we rely on for food, medicines and textiles. **Tania Rabesandratana**

→ www.naturalsciences.be



© Michal Salaban

© Shutterstock

11

Where nature meets history

With an exciting past and special attention to today's outdoor enthusiasts, Wijnendale is a West Flanders highlight

STORY AND PHOTOS MELISSA MAKI

Wijnendale Castle is a stunning piece of architecture in the heart of West Flanders that occupies a prominent place in Belgian history.

Just three kilometres from the village of Torhout, Wijnendale is a stereotypical fairy tale castle: Neo-Gothic, a moat and a drawbridge. Half of the building is private, as it is still occupied by the owners, but half has been made into an excellent museum about the castle's history.

The original castle was built by Robrecht de Fries, Count of Flanders, towards the end of the 11th century. Successive rounds of nobility occupied the castle, and it saw numerous battles. It was finally mostly destroyed by Napoleon's troops in 1811.

In 1833, the Matthieu family bought what remained and had it painstakingly reconstructed in mediaeval style. The castle has now remained in the Matthieu family for five generations.

It was at Wijnendale that King Leopold III made an infamous choice that would go down in history. In May of 1940, the king had a tense meeting at the castle with his ministers, who advised him to flee to England in order to show solidarity with the Allies and serve as a symbol of Belgian resistance. The king's decision to defy their wishes and remain in Belgium during the German occupation was eventually seen by many Belgians as Nazi collaboration and helped lead to his fall from the throne in 1951.

The walk

The *Wijnendalebos* (Wijnendale forest) is an enchanting, 180-hectare forest that borders the castle grounds but is owned by the Flemish government. About half of the forest is open to the public and

the rest is a nature reserve. There are many fine opportunities for both biking and walking in and around this domain.

You'll find majestic ash, oak and beech trees as well as younger stands of conifers. These woods have seen a lot of history. From the 12th century on, the forest and area around the castle was commonly used for hunting parties.

Start your walk at the castle on the paved Fonteinpad. You'll soon pass the Wijnendale chapel, a popular pilgrimage site and, as legend has it, the spot where Mary of Burgundy fell from her horse while hunting falcons at Wijnendale in 1482. She was only 25 and tragically died a few days later.

As you continue, you see a set of stone steps. At the top, you'll find the castle's old ice cellar. Look to your right across the open field as you continue onward. Soon you'll have a distant picturesque view of the back of the castle.

Keep going straight past the carrot and grain fields until you see the signs for *Wijnendalebos* and *Wandelpad*. The route is increasingly lined with leafy trees. After a bit, you come to a gate. This is the beginning of *Wijnendalebos*, and you'll find maps of the walking and biking routes right here.

The road is paved at first and then turns to dirt. You'll pass an old bunker and then turn left. The paths are clearly designated by signs and arrows. After heavy rain, some areas on the trail can get pretty muddy, so plan accordingly with your choice of footwear.

The *bosreservaat* (nature reserve) shows up on your right. It's no doubt that this protected area contributes to the rich variance of flora and fauna in the forest. There are over 500 species of mushrooms as well as elusive birds like the black woodpecker. Dotted along the route are signs that educate



The magnificent Wijnendale Castle dates back to the 11th century and has been the home of famous political demands, royal deaths and popular fox hunts

visitors about the environment. Make a left to find a particularly pretty section of forest with tall, skinny pine trees growing up out of a feathery carpet of ferns. You'll turn right and then quickly left again to stay on the walking path (there is also a bike route that runs through this area, but the walking path indicates that bike aren't allowed). As you continue straight, there will be a boardwalk that takes you over the *kasteelbeek* (castle stream).

Keep following the path to find pines on your left and deciduous trees on your right. The trees thin as you continue on the route. Make a left to join up with *Meerlaandreef* at the forest's edge with trees on your left and fields of potatoes on your right. Make a right as the walking and biking paths join up again and then a left on *Planterijdreef* to return back to the castle. The loop takes about 1.5 hours. ♦

Trump card

Maps for both walking and biking are available at the Torhout tourist office and the castle's visitor centre. Buy the *Troefkaart* (Torhoutse Trump Card) for €8 and get a bike rental and free pot of delicious, locally made *Wostyn* mustard. This incredible deal from the Torhout tourist office also includes maps and a number of coupons, including free entry to the Wijnendale castle museum, pottery museum and a bottle of the regional *Thouroutenaere* beer, at one of 14 participating cafes.

If you really want to make a day of it, take the train to Torhout and bike or walk to the castle and back. You can head directly there on *Oostendestraat* or several more circuitous and scenic routes. Rental bikes are also available at the castle visitor centre, located at the gatehouse of the Wijnendale Castle.

Wijnendale Castle

Oostendestraat 390

Wijnendale (Torhout)

→ www.toerismetorhout.be

Coming up in next week's castle recreation series: the colossal Laarne Castle in East Flanders



An old greenhouse at Wijnendale Castle

Castle worthy fare

Quench your thirst (and hunger) after all that walking at Wijnendale Wandel. just up *Oostendestraat* from the castle. This wonderful tavern offers up traditional snacks, like homemade lasagne and sandwiches, but the service and care that goes into the food's preparation make it a standout. The chef himself came out to inquire whether we had enjoyed our meals.

Most meals include a little pot of boiled new potatoes and a trip to the well-stocked salad bar. The Wijnendale cheese is worth trying, and the ham with melon and port sauce is a refreshing choice for a warm summer's day.

If you're a beer geek like me, you'll delight in their selection. But if you become overwhelmed by the 70 choices, you can't go wrong with their house beer, the *Wiendaels Wandelingske*, made by Van Den Bossche Brewery in East Flanders.

→ www.wijnendalewandeling.be



Summer of photography

The lack of performing arts in the summer is more than compensated for by the visual arts, and this annual festival delivers every genre of photography imaginable, all summer long
→ www.zomervandefotografie.be



FLANDERS TODAY
JUNE 30, 2010



Écran Total

IAN MUNDELL

Some people may be left scratching their heads at the choice of Jonathan Nossiter as the guest programmer at Écran Total, the annual summer film festival at the Arenberg Cinema in Brussels. If the American is known to the film-going public at all, it is for *Mondovino*, his combative 2004 documentary about the wine trade, although he also has a handful of fiction films to his name.

"We decided to give the *carte blanche* this year to a director who is perhaps a little less well-known because he has such an interesting personality and an outspokenness that is increasingly rare in cinema," explains Emmanuel Gaspart, Écran Total programmer. "We really liked his frankness and accessibility, and that's apparent in his choice of films."

Nossiter's theme is freedom of expression, and he has chosen seven films from the past 50 years which are nothing if not unrestrained. He admits in his programme notes that there is little else to connect them. "So much the better," he writes, "because if exercising freedom of expression is the most noble act of resistance at any given moment in history, it is because it is intrinsically without codes and restrictions."

Quite a few of the films experienced problems when first released, although for different

reasons. Pier Paolo Pasolini's *Saló* (1975) touched nerves by setting the Marquis de Sade's catalogue of debauchery, *The 120 Days of Sodom*, among a group of Mussolini's fascists. People not offended by the explicit sex were sure to take exception to the politics. A different taboo was explored in Marcel Ophüls' *Le Chagrin et la pitié* (*The Sorrow and the Pity*, 1969), which cut very close to the bone in its account of French collaboration during the Second World War.

A more joyous freedom of expression can be found in *Touki Bouki* (1973) by Djibril Diop Mambety, a sort of African *Easy Rider* that celebrates youthful rebellion and experiments with sounds and images (*pictured*). Nossiter will introduce the film in person on 2 July.

Also on the programme are Max Ophüls' lush historical drama *Lola Montès* (1955), Jean-Marie Teno's witty critique of colonialism *Afrique, je te plumerai...* (1993) and Juzo Itami's comic combination of Japanese gangsters and noodles *Tampopo* (1985). Finally, the most obscure choice is Kira Muratova's *The Asthenic Syndrome* (1989), a challenging catalogue of social maladies from the age of glasnost. Other highlights of Écran Total include a John Cassavetes retrospective, from his directing

Until 14 September
Cinéma Arenberg
Koninginnegalerij 26
Brussels
→ www.arenberg.be

MORE FILM THIS WEEK

- Wilkinson American Movie Day → Kinepolis cinemas
- Cinédecouvertes/Filmvondsten → Cinematek, Brussels
- Kottekoer open-air film festival → Jeugddienst, Dilbeek



Antwerp

Café d'Anvers
Verversrui 15; 03.226.38.70
www.cafedanvers.com
Concerts at 21:00:
JUL 1 Ralpheus **JUL 2** Free Vibes with Die Clique + DJ Prinz + William
JUL 3 Bartholomeo + Patrick Schmidt + 2Winz & Friends **JUL 8** Ralpheus

Rivierenhof open-air theatre
Turnhoutsebaan 232; 070.222.192
www.openluchttheater.be
Concerts at 20:30:
JUN 30 Richard Thompson **JUL 1** Black Box Revelation + The Kids
JUL 2 Ocho Y Media **JUL 4** Melody Gardot **JUL 8** Flip Kowlier + The Original Wailers

Kelly's Irish Pub
Keyserlei 27; www.kellys.be
JUL 2 22.30 Steve Jones

Trix
Noordersingel 28; 03.670.09.00
www.trixonline.be
JUN 30 20.00 KMFDM + Revco World
JUL 3 19.00 The Oppressed + Pandaz + Enraged Minority + Fabulous Bastards
JUL 6 20.00 The Strange Boys + DLN & Rufus

Ardoorie
Cultuurkapel De Schaduw
Wezestraat 32; 0479.80.94.82
www.deschaduw.net
JUL 2 20.30 Marvelas Something

Brussels
Ancienne Belgique
Anspachlaan 110; 02.548.24.24
www.abconcerts.be
JUL 7 20.00 Caetano Veloso

Le Montmartre
Boondaalsesteenweg 344;
www.lemnontmartre.be
JUL 4 20.30 Jason Ricci

Recyclart
Ursulinenstraat 25; 02.502.57.34
www.recycleart.be
JUL 1 20.00 Cinemusik + Trance Formation
JUL 2 22.00 Tupolev Sound Crash + Benito Band + Imperial Tiger Orchestra, more
JUL 8 22.00-23.00 Cinemusik: Rajasthan Live Cinema, outdoor screening

Ghent
Charlatan
Vlasmarkt 6; 09.224.24.57
www.charlatan.be
JUL 1 22.00 Bed Rugs

El Negocito
Brabantdam 121; 0479 567395
www.mi-negocio.net
JUN 30 22.00 El Negocito XL: Viper Rosa
JUL 6 22.00 Luxemburger

Kinky Star
Vlasmarkt 9; 09.223.48.45
www.kinkystar.com
JUL 3 21.00 Hush Hush
JUL 4 21.00 Microphonics



Antwerp

Buster
Kaasrui 1; 03.232.51.53
www.busterpodium.be
JUN 30 21.00 Playtime Session **JUL 1** 21.30 Singers Night **JUL 3** 22.00 Hombres Amplificados **JUL 6** 21.30 Yamundo **JUL 7** 21.30 Thomas Nobels Trio

GET YOUR
TICKETS NOW!

Puggy

2 February, 2011

Ancienne Belgique
Brussels

It might seem a long way off, but this show is sure to sell out – just like they've done three times in Botanique – and this is going to be one of those great evenings in Ancienne Belgique that your friends will talk about and you'll feel like a loser for missing. This increasingly popular Brussels pop/rock trio have traditionally invited a British, a French and a Swedish musician up onstage with them. They sing in English (really, what choice do they have?), and the long-awaited new CD, *Something You Might Like*, is out now to warm you up for the seven-month wait.



→ www.abconcerts.be

Café Hopper

Leopold de Waelstraat 2; 03.248.49.33
www.cafehopper.be
JUL 4 16.00 LAB Trio
JUL 5 21.00 The Slick Symposial

Brussels

Bizon
Karperbrug 7; 02.502.46.99
www.cafebizon.com
JUL 5 21.30 Bizon Blues Jam Session

Café Bonnefooi
Steenstraat 8; 0487.62.22.31
www.bonnefooi.be
JUL 4 20.30 The Bonnefooi Acoustic Jam

La Samaritaine

Samaritanesstraat 16; 02.511.33.95
www.lasamaritaine.be
JUN 30-**JUL 3** 20.30 Ivan Tirtiaux

Sounds Jazz Club

Tulpstraat 28; 02.512.92.50
www.soundsjazzclub.be
Concerts at 22:00:
JUN 30 Los Soneros del barrio, Caribbean **JUL 1** Tassin-Di Maio Quartet **JUL 2** Riverside Funk Orchestra **JUL 3** Radoni's Tribe **JUL 5** Master Session **JUL 6** Toon Van Dianant Trio **JUL 7** Chamaquindo, salsa **JUL 8** Julien Tassin Trio (tribute to Jimi Hendrix)

The Music Village

Steenstraat 50; 02.513.13.45
www.themusicvillage.com
JUL 1 20.30 Gabrielle Ducombe Quartet
JUL 6-7 20.30 Philippe Thuriot, accordion

Ghent

El Negocito
Brabantdam 121; 0479 567395
www.mi-negocio.net
JUL 7 22.00 Silver Junkie



Brussels

Art Base

Zandstraat 29; 02.217.29.20
www.art-base.be

JUL 30 20.00 Dubravko Lapaine, didgeridoo

JUL 2 20.30 Trio Sirin, Eastern European songs

JUL 3 20.30 Altland, traditional Jewish music

Espace Delvaux

Gratèsstraat 3; 02.663.85.50

www.lavenerie.be

JUL 2 20.30 Batuque de Cordas (Brazil)

La Tentation

Lakensestraat 28; 02.223.22.75

www.latentation.org

JUL 3 20.30 Amador, Cabaret de Buenos Aires, Tango circo y folklore

Le Bar du Matin

Alsembergsesteenweg 172; 02.537.71.59

http://bardumatins.blogspot.com

JUL 1 21.00 Delbi (France) **JUL 2** 22.00 DJ Xogn, gospel, swing, rockabilly **JUL 3** 21.00 BDM 2nd anniversary party with Batucada Sound machine (New Zealand) **JUL 8** 21.00 Tokyo Chutei Iki (Japan)

Ghent

De Centrale

Kraankindersstraat 2; 09.265.98.28
www.decentrale.be

JUL 2 19.00 Somalian cultural evening featuring a reading, exhibition, dance performance by Kacaan, concert by Aar Maanta, DJ party and Somalian buffet

Leuven

Abdij Keizersberg

Mechelsestraat 202; 0498.45.40.57

JUL 4 17.30 Snakes in Exile, Celtic folk



Antwerp

Vlaamse Opera

Frankrijklei 1; 070.22.02.02

www.vlaamseopera.be

JUN 30 20.00 Vlaamse Opera Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leif Segerstam: Sibelius, Rautavaara, more

Brussels

St Michael and St Gudula Cathedral
Sinter-Goedeleplein; 02.507.82.00

www.cathedralestmichel.be

JUL 6 20.00 Xavier Deprez, organ: Bach, J Jongen



Brussels

De Munt

Muntplein; 070.23.39.39

www.demunt.be

Until JUN 30 19.30 Macbeth by Verdi with Scott Hendricks (Macbeth) and Tatiana Serjan/Lisa Houben (Lady Macbeth). Paul Daniel conducts De Munt Symphony Orchestra and Choirs. Staging by Krzysztof Warlikowski (in the original Italian with Dutch and French surtitles). Introductions in Dutch and French 30 minutes before each performance

Ghent

Vlaamse Opera

Schouwburgstraat 3; 070.22.02.02

www.vlaamseopera.be

JUL 3-10 19.30 Peter Grimes by Benjamin Britten, with Jorma Silvasti (Peter Grimes), Judith Howarth (Ellen Orford). Conducted by Leif Segerstam and Yannis Pouspourikas, staged by David Alden



Ghent

NTGent Schouwburg

Sint-Baafsplaat 17; 09.225.01.01

www.ntgent.be

Until JUL 25 20.30 Les Ballets C de la B and NTGent in Gardenia, directed by Alain Platel and Frank Van Laecke (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 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

Hospitaalmuseum

Mariastraat 38; 050.44.87.11

www.museabrugge.be

Until NOV 7 Ivory in Bruges, rare pieces from museums, churches and monasteries

Brussels

Archief en Museum voor het Vlaams Leven te Brussel

Arduinkaa 28; 02.209.06.01

www.amvb.be

Until AUG 31 Herinnering & Migratie: Erfgoed van nieuwe Brusselaars (Memory & Migration: The Heritage of new Brusselaars), presentation of the stories behind the arrival of 19 new immigrants to Brussels

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 **Until JAN 30** The Studio of Franquin: Jijé, Morris and Will, rare documents and drawings show mutual influences between the four comic-strip artists who revolutionised the art form in Europe

Bibliotheca Wittockiana

Bemelstraat 21; 02.770.53.33

www.wittockiana.org

Until SEP 11 Parti pris: the duo Léon Wuidar and La Pierre d'Alun, books and illustrated bookbindings

Diamond Museum

Koningin Astridplein 13-23; 03.202.48.90

www.diamantmuseum.be

JUL 1-AUG 31 HarT voor HarD, jewellery in the shape of a heart

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

Photo Museum (FoMu)

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 media photography

Until SEP 5 American Documents, Walker Evans' 1940s 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

Ra

Kloosterstraat 13; 03.292.37.80

www.ra13.be

Until JUN 30 Backstage, photographs of fashion shows of students at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts by Sonny Vandevelde

Royal Museum of Fine Arts

Leopold De Waelplaats; 03.238.78.09

www.kmska.be

Until OCT 3 Closing Time, curated by Flemish artist Jan Vanriet, who presents his own work alongside related pieces from the museum's 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

Archief en Museum voor het Vlaams Leven te Brussel

Arduinkaa 28; 02.209.06.01

www.amvb.be

Until AUG 31 Herinnering & Migratie: Erfgoed van nieuwe Brusselaars (Memory & Migration: The Heritage of new Brusselaars), presentation of the stories behind the arrival of 19 new immigrants to Brussels

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 **Until JAN 30** The Studio of Franquin: Jijé, Morris and Will, rare documents and drawings show mutual influences between the four comic-strip artists who revolutionised the art form in Europe

Bibliotheca Wittockiana

Bemelstraat 21; 02.770.53.33

www.wittockiana.org

Until SEP 11 Parti pris: the duo Léon Wuidar and La Pierre d'Alun, books and illustrated bookbindings

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

ISELP

Waterloosesteenweg 31; 02.504.80.70

www.iselp.be

Until AUG 21 Médium, photographs by Vincen Beeckman

Jewish Museum of Belgium

Minimenstraat 21; 02.512.19.63

www.mjbjmb.org

Until OCT 3 Bericht aan de bevolking: De joodse geschiedenis op affiches (Message to the People: Jewish History in Posters), more than 250 documents from the museum's collection

Le Botanique

Koningsstraat 236; 02.218.37.32

www.botanique.be

DON'T MISS



Amen

Until 18 July

Botanique, Brussels

"In South Africa, football is not a religion," says Belgian photographer Jessica Hilltout. "But it is everything that religion should be." And it's a sense of fair play, diversity and, above all, elation that radiates from *Amen*, Hilltout's series of photographs depicting ordinary South Africans – in empty lots, city streets and dirt plains – playing football. Included are shots of self-made footballs, which, in the international frenzy of World Cup, reminds us that it only takes some plastic bags, a bit of twine and a few pairs of feet

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 AUG 15 Rehabilitation, multi-
 media show by young artists on the
 theme of architectural renovation
Until SEP 12 Wangchi Mutu: My
 Dirty Little Heaven, collages by the
 New York-based Kenyan artist

Yaruna
 Waversesteenweg 214B; 02.512.93.12
www.yaruna.com
JUL 1-OCT 14 A Nun's Room,
 installation by Scottish artist Paul
 Morris (www.anunsroom.com)

YUM
 Van Volxemlaan 295; 02.502.69.12
www.ccncoa.org
Until JUL 9 For Your Eyes Only,
 group exhibition organised by the
 Center for Contemporary Non-
 Objective Art

Gaasbeek
Gaasbeek Castle
 Kasteelstraat 40; 02.531.01.30
www.kasteelvangaasbeek.be
Until AUG 8 Theatrum Mundi V -
 Cythera, drawings and installations
 by Flemish artist Peter Depelchin

Ghent
Design Museum
 Jan Breydelstraat 5; 09.267.99.99
www.designmuseumgent.be
JUL 3-OCT 24 Super Normal:
 Sensations of the Everyday, objects
 from around the world selected by
 designers Naoto Fukasawa and Jasper
 Morrison
JUL 3-OCT 24 Piet Stockmans:
 Retrospective, works in porcelain by
 the Flemish designer
JUL 3-OCT 24 Nilton Cunha: Good
 Luck, works in silver and Corian by
 the Flemish designer

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,
 including work by Adolf Wölfli,
 Henry Darger and Martin Ramirez
Until SEP 12 Innocent, Yet Punished,
 photographs of mentally ill criminals
 by Ghent-based photographer Lieven
 Nollet

Museum of Modern Art (SMAK)
 Citadelpark; 09.221.17.03
www.smak.be
Until AUG 22 Paolo Chiasera: Ain't
 No Grave Gonna Hold My Body
 Down, multi-media work based on
 concepts such as time and space by
 the Italian artist
Until AUG 22 Simon Gush: 4 For
 Four, video installation by the
 South African artist centred on the
 relationship between David Oistrakh
 and Sergei Prokofiev
Until DEC 3 Inside Installations,
 10 installations from the museum's
 collection
JUL 3-OCT 3 Xanadu! The SMAK
 collection presented by Hans Theys

Verzameld Werk
 Onderstraat 23a; 09.224.27.12
www.verzameldwerk.be
Until SEP 11 Travelling by
 Book, exceptional international
 publications, plus related installations
 and films

Hasselt
Literair Museum
 Bampselaan 35; 011.26.17.87
www.literairmuseum.be
Until NOV 7 Tom Schamp: Feest in
 de stad (Party in the City), work by
 the Flemish illustrator

Leuven

Museum M
 Leopold Vanderkelenstraat 28;
 016.27.29.29 www.mleuven.be
Until AUG 22 Anthony van Dyck:
 Masterpiece or Copy?, two seemingly
 identical versions of the painting St
 Jerome with an Angel by Anthony
 van Dyck
Until AUG 29 Philippe Van Snick,
 paintings, installations and sculpture
 by the Flemish artist
Until SEP 12 Angus Fairhurst,
 retrospective of the late artist, a
 member of the Young British Artists
 movement

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
Until AUG 29 Louise Bourgeois,
 14 works by the recently deceased
 French-American artist from the
 collection of her Ostend friend and
 fellow artist Xavier Tricot

Tervuren

Royal Museum for Central Africa
 Leuvensesteenweg 13; 02.769.52.11
www.africamuseum.be
Until SEP 30 Bonjour Congo,
 photographs and documents from
 Brusselaars on the presence of the
 Congo in Brussels
Until JAN 9, 2011 Congo River:
 4,700 Kilometres Bursting with
 Nature and Culture, interactive
 exhibition on the lifeblood of Congo,
 from source to mouth
Until JAN 9, 2011 100 Years in 100
 Photographs, outdoor exhibition
 celebrating the 100th anniversary of
 the African Museum building
Until JAN 9, 2011 Indépendance!
 Congolese Tell Their Stories of
 50 Years of Independence, multi-
 media exhibition looks at the
 Democratic Republic of Congo from
 independence to today

Ypres

In Flanders Fields Museum
 Grote Markt 34; 057.239.220
www.inflandersfields.be
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

Belgium's EU Presidency: Belgium
 takes the helm of the European
 Union Council for six months and
 launches a series of events to mark its
 presidency
JUL 1-DEC 31 across the country
www.brusselsinternational.be

Antwerp

Zomer van Antwerpen: Annual
 outdoor summer festival with parties

DUSK 'TIL DAWN

SAFFINA RANA

Sun, sea, sand, techno

All you lovely people who like the
 notion of dancing the night away but
 just can't stay up late enough do it -
 rejoice. Summer is here, which means
 that dance music has finally made it
 into daylight and out into the open
 fields of festivals throughout the
 country.

What's even better is that it will be hitting
 the coast this weekend. Kick off your flip-flops and feel the sand between
 your toes this weekend as a top
 international line-up of technomaniacs,
 including DJs Ricardo Villalobos,
 Ben Klock, Raresh and Marcel Dett-
 mann take you higher at a 12-hour
 extravaganza on Zeebrugge beach.
 Hosted by Fuse, Brussels' much-loved
 temple of techno, this summer one-off
 also features Fuse residents Pierre,
 Deg and Peter Van Hosen.

It has been eight years since Fuse has
 thrown off its nocturnal ventures and
 stepped out onto Belgian sands, and
 amongst the fuzzy warm feelings that
 remain in my memory from the last
 edition, dancing to a glorious sunset
 with an up-for-it crowd is one of the best. **Fuse on the Beach** is a full-on festival from 13.00
 to 1.00. Expect a huge fenced off area of beach and two stages with incredible sound systems.
 Once you've swapped your ticket for a wristband at the gate, you'll be able to come and go as you
 please.

Fuse on the Beach will set you back €36 on the day or €28.50 in advance from Fuse, FNAC and
 Free Record Shop, leaving you just enough to buy a good sunscreen. No need to worry about how
 you're going to get back into town - for a little bit extra, Fuse will put you on a bus home to Brussels,
 Ghent, Antwerp, Leuven, Hasselt, Liège, Namur or Charleroi.

→ www.fuseonthebeach.be



© Shutterstock

and concerts, plus circus acts,
 workshops, performances, films,
 BBQs and more

JUL 2-AUG 29 on squares across the
 city
www.zva.be

Brussels

Apéros Urbains: Weekly aperitif
 plus after-parties at one of three
 partner clubs: Fuse, K-Nal and the
 Vaudeville; free entrance with
 purchase of drink at Apéros Urbains
Until SEP 3 across the city
www.aperos.be

Brussels Beach: Free festival with a
 beach in the city centre, plus sports,
 culture, concerts, canal cruises, food
 stands and more

JUL 2-AUG 22 at Saincteletteplein
 and Dijlestraat
www.brusselbad.be

Festival Clandestins IV: Fourth
 edition of the performing arts and
 music festival with theatre, concerts,
 cabaret, screenings, DJs and VJs plus
 the Bar des Clandestins

JUL 1-3 at Théâtre de Poche,
 Gymnasiumweg 1a
www.clandestins.com

Midis-Minimes: Lunchtime classical
 concerts all summer long

JUL 1-AUG 27 at Miniemerkerk,
 Miniemerstraat 62, and the Royal
 Conservatory, Regentschapsstraat 30
www.midis-minimes.be

Ommegang: Annual historic
 parade and pageant re-enacting
 the entry into Brussels of Emperor
 Charles V and his court in 1549.
 This extravaganza opens the
 cultural programme of Belgium's
 EU presidency and includes 1,400
 participants in period costume, brass
 bands, horses and falconry displays,
 and a medieval village with jousting
 archery and other activities
Until JUL 1 21.00 on Grote Markt
 and Grote Zavel
 02.512.19.61, www.ommegang.be

Plazey Festival in the Park

Family-friendly festival featuring
 concerts by Daan, Raymond van
 het Groenewoud, Band on the Run
 and more, plus circus workshops,
 gourmet food and children's theatre
 and activities

Until JUL 4 in Elizabeth Park,
 Koekelberg
 02.412.00.50, www.plazey.be

Recyclart Holidays: Free summer
 activities including concerts and film
 screenings

Until AUG 19 at Recyclart, Station
 Brussel Kapellekerk, Ursulinenstraat 25
 02.502.57.34, www.recycleart.be

Visionary Africa: Festival of
 literature, music, performance
 and exhibitions recognising the 17
 African nations celebrating their 50th
 anniversary of independence

Until SEP 26 at Bozar,
 Ravensteinstraat 23
www.bozar.be

Ghent

Gent Jazz Festival: Annual outdoor
 festival featuring Norah Jones, The
 Pat Metheny Group, Madness and
 more

JUL 7-18 18.00 at Bijloke
www.gentjazz.com

Parkkaffee: Cultural festival in
 the park, with dance and theatre
 performances, circus and magic acts,
 children's entertainment, workshops,
 campfires, concerts, food and more

JUL 1-AUG 31 at Groenstaakstraat
 37, Mariakerke (Ghent)
 09.227.99.94, www.parkkaffee.be

Gooik (Flemish Brabant)
 Gooikoorts: International folk music
 festival featuring Burdon Folk Band,
 Bal O'Gadjo, Fred Morrison Trio,
 more
JUL 2-4 in Gooik
www.gooikoorts.be

Hasselt

Sterrenfestival: Write a wish on
 coloured paper and hang it in the
 Japanese Garden's bamboo tree
JUL 3-5 at Japanse Garden,
 Gouverneur Verwighengsingel 23
 011.23.52.00, www.hasselt.be

Leuven

Zomer van Sint-Pieter: Lunchtime
 classical concerts every weekday
JUN 30-AUG 26 at 12.15 in Sint-
 Pieterskerk, Grote Markt, and 30CC-
 Schouwburg, Bondgenotenlaan 21
www.zomer-van-sint-pieter.be

Ostend

Dansand!: Contemporary dance
 festival featuring Belgian groups
 such as PARTS, Ultima Vez and Sidi
 Larbi Cherkaoui's Eastman, plus film
 screenings, exhibitions and after-
 parties
JUL 1-4 on the beach and in the
 Royal Galleries, Parijsstraat & Zeedijk
www.vrijstaat-o.be

FuZee!: Third edition of the cultural
 festival featuring four Saturdays of
 international street theatre, fire and
 light displays, a parade and more

JUL 3-AUG 28 on the beach
www.fuzee.be

Tongeren

Stadsmuzikantenfestival: Free
 outdoor concerts by pop/rock
 musicians, including Stan van
 Samang, Mama's Jasje, Jean Bosco
 Safari, more
JUL 4 14.00-18.30 in the city centre
www.tongeren.be

Turnhout

Turnhout Terrast: Free live
 entertainment on cafe terraces, from
 small concerts to dance and street
 theatre acts
JUL 4 14.00-18.00 on the Grote
 Markt
www.turnhoutzomert.be

SHARON LIGHT

bite



© Shutterstock

Savan's Aahaar

Over the years, I have had some bad Indian meals in Belgium. It's not just that the meal should have been ashamed to call itself "Indian", it's that the meal should have been ashamed to call itself "food."

But Savan's Aahaar in Antwerp turns that idea around; the restaurant's name is actually "food" (*aahaar* in Sanskrit), and that is really an understatement of the excellent offerings in this understated establishment.

It would be easy to walk past Aahaar's humble storefront on Lange Herentalsestraat, near Central Station, without a second glance. Peering through the front window, it looks like a take-away joint, with only three tables in view. But Aahaar extends back to a larger dining area, a second room housing the daily buffet and a garden out back if you're lucky enough to visit on a sunny day.

The restaurant's decor is, shall we say, basic. There are a few slight attempts at decoration, but this is not a place to visit for atmosphere. It is a place to visit for food. The restaurant caters to the Jain population of Antwerp and is therefore vegetarian.

Honestly, the most I knew about Jainism before entering the restaurant was that they were a growing force in Antwerp's diamond industry. Since then, I have learned that Jainism is an orthodox Indian religion with a strict interpretation of living a non-violent life. Out of respect for the souls of animals, they eat a vegetarian diet, and they do not even eat root vegetables, such as potatoes, onions or carrots, as even that is seen as a disruption to a living being (either because the vegetable itself is living and/or because uprooting the vegetable would disturb insect life in the soil). You may have heard about the Jain monks in India who sweep the ground in front of them as they walk so as not to accidentally harm any insects.

In that respect, Savan's Aahaar is a Jain-friendly restaurant. Potatoes and carrots can be found, and

Contact Bite at flandersbite@gmail.com

the dishes that subscribe to the Jain restrictions are labelled. Other than notes about a dish's Jain status, there is no explanation on the menu. Our server was very helpful in answering questions, and within minutes our pea-filled samosas had arrived, as well as *khasta kachori*, fried savoury pastry bites in a sweet, creamy spicy sauce. We had thick, rich lassis (yogurt drinks) topped with cardamom. The lassi was delicious and not exceeding sweet; the mango one was sweeter – almost too sweet on its own but an excellent complement to the spicy dishes that were in store. We all opted for their all-you-can-eat buffet – a steal at only €9, and the popular option with the other diners as well. A note above the buffet explains that you can refill as many times as you like, with the simple request that you do not waste food.

Our plates were soon full, and we did not waste. A dal soup was prepared with cashew nuts and cloves, a nice alternative to the lemony varieties in many Indian restaurants. There was *gobi aloo* (cauliflower and potatoes), a potato curry dish, and two Jain options: *ramja* (red kidney beans) with herbs and spices and a scrumptious fried okra that wasn't the least bit slimy. On the side were white rice, *chapati* flatbread, *pappadums* and cubes of a rice-based preparation with the same texture as cornbread. The warm dishes were all respectably spicy (those lassis came in handy) and everything was respectably tasty. For quality Indian food at a good price, it would be hard to beat Savan's Aahaar.

→ www.aahaar.com

► Lange Herentalsestraat 23, Antwerp
🕒 Mon-Fri 12.00-21.30; Sat-Sun 13.00-21.30
★ One of Flanders' best Indian food restaurants, hands down

NEXT WEEK IN FLANDERS TODAY #137

Feature

The Gentse Feesten versus Zomer van Antwerpen. A Gentenaar and an Antwerpenaar argue over where to spend your summer

Focus

Antwerp is back as the starting point for Europe's Tall Ships Race, with a chance to see beautiful sailing ships before they take off to Denmark and Norway

Arts

With all the activities around the 50th anniversary of the Democratic Republic of Congo's independence from Belgian colonial rule, we've rounded up a few books to help you make sense of it all

TALKING DUTCH

ALISTAIR MACLEAN



• warmte •

Things are warming up. And just at the right time, too. The exams are over, which comes as a relief to the modern parent who feels obliged to mollycoddle their young to the point where you have to tiptoe round the house just in case you distract the young crammers.

Yes, the sun has got its hat on, hip hip hooray, and should be out in the coming days. Which makes the timing of a campaign titled "*kies voor groene warmte* – choose green heat" perfect. The holidays are upon us, the festivals are kicking off with Rock Werchter on 1 July, and young and old will be heading off on vacation.

The Flemish Energy Agency wants us to think about using green heat by installing *zonneboilers* – solar boilers and *warmtepompen* – heat pumps. To drive their point home, the agency handed out at railway stations thousands of *zonnedouchezakken* – solar shower bags, which is a very long word for a black plastic bag that you can fill with water and hang in the sun until you are ready to prick it and create your solar shower.

The bags are of course *bioafbreekbaar* – bio-degradable. To help things along, some *BVs* (*Bekende Vlamingen* – Well-known Flemings) have offered to be filmed to show how the bags work. And you can take your pick, though I would imagine actress Lien Van de Kelder's performance under the

solar shower will prove an encouragement to many.

So will these bags find their way into the campsite at Werchter in the coming days? A survey reveals that, surprise surprise, festival goers don't spend much time keeping themselves clean. Details that you probably don't want to know include the fact that *20% ververst niet dagelijks hun onderbroek* – do not change their underpants every day. A similar number *poeten niet dagelijks hun tanden* – do not brush their teeth every day. Is there no good news? Well, more than half say they shower every day. And to keep the smells under control, there is a lot of deodorant spraying.

Drinking is a major feature of festivals: *gemiddeld drinkt men twaalf biers per dag* – on average people drink 12 glasses of beer a day. The food you can just imagine, though a very few mentioned eating fruit.

Sociology Professor Vanbeselaere describes the *feestgedrag* – festival behaviour as a ritual: "*De examens zijn voorbij en de jongeren willen allemaal samen vieren* – The exams are over, and young people want to celebrate together".

Sounds good to me. And they can all look forward to clean underpants and salads in a few days as they gather their strength and, dare I suggest, earn a few euro before the next festival.

→ www.energiesparen.be

THE LAST WORD . . .

Biblical proportions

"*CD&V* is like Lazarus from the Bible. We keep on rising up again, stronger than before."

Wouter Beke, acting party president

Wild goose chase

"*Canada geese* are exotics and don't belong here. Their presence doesn't extend the biodiversity of Flanders. The government should have done something years ago."

A spokesman from Flanders Bird Protection, which announced that Belgium and the Netherlands have contributed €750,000 to rat control professionals in Merelbeke to catch Canadian geese, which are taken to a vet and put down

Never give up

"I've tried everything, including taking the exam totally unprepared. That was my best score ever."

Mark Martain, 42, from Ypres, has failed his driving theory test 64 times

Poetic license

"I like to make up pretty sentences and usually write when I'm feeling good. My inspiration comes from my bike rides, which I do almost daily."

Sint-Niklaas has appointed a young poet-in-residence, 14-year-old Olivia Wittock