

You are
what you eat 3

Hygiene standards in the country's restaurants and food retail businesses are abysmal, according to the food safety agency, which wants to publish the names of the worst offenders



Pig poo
powers park 6

A holiday park in Limburg gets 100% of its electricity from methane gasses produced by a pig farm down the street, drastically cutting its CO2 emissions



Land, ho 12

Antwerp is home base for the renowned Tall Ships Race, which finds young sailors from different countries teaming up to race across European seas



#137

Battle of the summer festivals



© Gentse Feesten

LISA BRADSHAW

Two Flemish cities,
two journalists
who love them.
Let the games
begin

It's not that I have anything against Antwerp. *Per se*. It's just that I'm not falling for their nonsense. Zomer van Antwerpen, they call it, as if every city doesn't have a *summer*. But nooo, Antwerp is super special, see, because they've planned lots of events. Well, who hasn't? OK, they may have done a tad more, with all their fancy outdoor bars and "world-class" performances. But that

still doesn't excuse them stringing out their summer festival for endless weeks (until it peters quietly out to nothing). A festival needs a beginning and an end, and the splashier the better. It needs to boldly say, HERE I AM, and if you don't get your ass in gear, you are going to miss me. It needs to provide an ongoing sense of familiarity while simultaneously shaking things up a little.

→ continued on page 4

Ghent vs Antwerp



© Zomer van Antwerpen 2010

REBECCA BENOOT

Imagine a steady stream of construction dust in your eyes, rowdy college students with cheap beer and non-stop noise by no-name bands ringing in your ears until you want to scream. Sound good? Then by all means, go to the Gentse Feesten in Ghent this month. Now imagine a beautiful sunset, a cool breeze, warm sand between your toes and drinking an imaginative

cocktail in the company of friends. Sounds very exotic doesn't it? This is just an ordinary night by the Scheldt during the Zomer van Antwerpen, or Summer of Antwerp. Every year tens of thousands of people attend this vibrant city's hot and happening summer festival. It's two whole stress-free months (as opposed to 10 overcrowded days) of culture, entertainment and good times.

→ continued on page 5

Body of soldier identified

An Australian soldier missing for 93 years will finally receive a military burial

ALAN HOPE

The body of an Australian soldier uncovered during archaeological digging in the West Flanders village of Ploegsteert two years ago has been identified. Private Alan James Mather, from Inverell in New South Wales, died in the Battle of Messines in 1917 at the age of 37.

The find was made during the Plugstreet Project, a research project in the battlefields of the First World War. Plugstreet was the soldiers' pronunciation of the name of the village Ploegsteert. It was clear from the uniform that the man was an Australian, but there was no trace of identification. DNA tracing of the descendants of the 34 men reported missing in action from the unit was

considered too expensive. Instead, researchers at the Catholic University of Leuven measured the amount of strontium in the enamel of the unknown soldier's teeth, which allowed them to identify the area where he grew up. Strontium, a mildly radioactive element, enters the enamel through the food we eat, which differs from area to area. That reduced the number of potential candidates from 34 to seven. Then, researchers at Oxford University examined the skeleton, and found he had had a diet high in fish. That brought the number of candidates down to two, for whom DNA examination was now a possibility. A sample was obtained from the 96-year-old niece

of Private Mather, and the identification was complete.

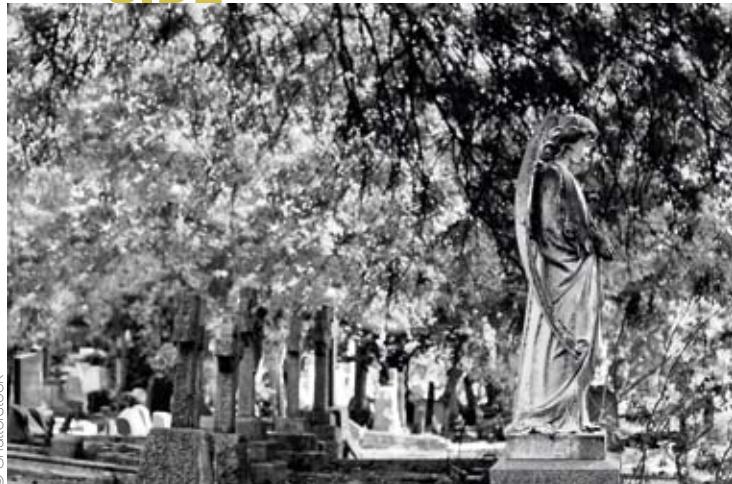
"This news is...an extreme shock filled with an immense amount of joy," his great niece, Kim Bloomfield, told Australia's ABC Radio. "It's a one in a million chance because there are so many unidentified missing soldiers from World War One."

Private Mather will be buried with full military honours on 22 July at the Prowse Point Commonwealth War Graves cemetery near Ypres (pictured). A nephew will be flown to Belgium to be present at the cemetery. More than 6,000 Australians died fighting in the First World War. ♦

→ www.pluginstreet-archaeology.com



© Commonwealth War Graves Commission



© Shutterstock

ALAN HOPE

The solution for dead bodies?

"Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," promises the Book of Common Prayer, cheerfully. Well, not necessarily, it turns out. Mankind may have been limited down the ages to two methods of disposing of dead bodies – burial and cremation – but scientists have been looking for new, more environmentally sound ways of passing through nature to eternity.

Resomation, the proponents call it. To you and me, it's the preferred technique of mobsters the world over – dissolving the body in a vat of acid. Or not acid, exactly – potassium hydroxide (KOH), a highly corrosive alkali. The body is placed in a silk bag, then a metal cage. That's loaded into a Resomator, which is filled with water and KOH and heated.

After about three hours, what's left is a greenish-brown liquid and a soft bone-like compound. That part goes in an urn for the relatives; the liquid, which is filled with nutrients, gets sprinkled on flower beds in a memorial garden.

The method is championed by environmentalists, who find cremation wastes energy and produces too much CO2. It also sends mercury from our fillings into the air at an alarming rate. Burial should be a simple, natural process, but it's hindered by embalming and expensive and unnecessary coffins. It also uses up a lot of land.

But in Belgium, like in most other countries, resomation is illegal. But Geert Bourgeois, Flemish minister of the interior, is thinking about changing that. On a request from the funeral industry, he wants to hear from experts on the prospects of introducing resomation, or alkaline hydrolysis. ("Resomation" is, in fact, a trademark of Resomation Ltd, a company based in Glasgow, Scotland.)

If the technique is allowed, Flanders will become one of the few places in the world to approve it. At present, it's legal in Canada and the state of Minnesota in the US. The state of Vermont approved it but later brought in a moratorium (no pun intended), which is still in force. California has a proposal on the table.

And another revolutionary technique is just around the corner. It was developed in Sweden, and it's called "promession", or (another trademark) cryomation. In that, you're sunk in a bath of liquid nitrogen until you freeze solid, then placed on a vibrating mat until you're shaken into a fine powder. Perfect for an eternity on the mantelpiece, and zero emissions.

→ www.resomation.com

FLANDERS TODAY

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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 Lindemans, 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

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FLANDERS TODAY
JULY 7, 2010

News in brief

Internet company Yahoo is not obliged to hand over **details of its webmail** customers to the Belgian justice system, the court of appeal in Ghent ruled last week. Police investigating a fraud ring had asked for account details of some suspects last year, and Yahoo was later fined €55,000 for refusing. The court last week ruled that Yahoo, as a provider of free webmail, was not sufficiently in control of the network to fall under the law allowing magistrates access to account details.

Flemish mobility minister Hilde Crevits is looking for 14 municipalities to volunteer for a project to measure the quality of Flanders' **cycle paths**. Last week, Crevits announced the purchase of five specially designed bicycles that measure the quality of the road surface as they ride along. Zemst in Flemish Brabant has already volunteered. Flanders has more than 12,000 kilometres of cycle routes.

Selor, the federal government's employment agency, is to open up job vacancies to people who have **suitable experience and skills**, but lack the necessary diplomas. With the new "boarding pass" system, candidates will take a test to determine if they are suitable for a position before being allowed into the full selection procedure. It is hoped that the system will help solve the lack of applicants for some government jobs.

Millionaire businessman **Ivan Sabbe** has threatened to lodge a complaint with the privacy commission if the PvdA (Workers' Party of Belgium) continues to feature his home in Waasmunster, East Flanders, on a cycle route the party provides. The route marks the homes of rich people, and the privacy commission has already given an opinion that publicising the route is a breach of privacy laws, but so far no complaints have been received. Sabbe, whose fortune comes from the family carpet business, is also a politician with the Lijst Dedecker (LDD) party.

The **burbot** (*Lota lota*), a freshwater relative of the cod and an original ingredient of Ghent's traditional *waterzooi* dish, is making a comeback in the city's waters, the Institute for Nature and Forestry Research reports. The fish disappeared from the area in the 1960s, as its natural hiding places in the banks of rivers were affected by pollution and the shoring-up of riverbanks with concrete. A programme to reintroduce the fish to the waterways of Flanders, including the Grote Nete, has been under way since 2000. For the time being, however, the fish is a protected species and will not be appearing in *waterzooi* any time soon.

A police squad investigating the **robbery of a supermarket** in Aalst in 1985 has had to be reinforced, after they received more than 500 tips from the public following a TV

re-enactment. The Aalst robbery, in which eight people were killed, was the work of a gang responsible for 28 deaths in supermarket robberies between 1982 and 1985. Most of the robberies took place in Flemish and Walloon Brabant; the Aalst attack was the gang's only foray into East Flanders. None of the crimes has ever been solved.

The government is paying too much for **service cheques**, according to the research institute Hiva at the Catholic University of Leuven. The cheques are used to pay for a variety of household jobs, such as cleaning and ironing, and were intended to help combat the black economy. Businesses that are paid with service cheques make an average of 19% profit on each cheque, but the net cost to the government – the €1.24 billion paid out minus the €423 million in increased tax and social security income – represents €15.6 for every €20.8 cheque worth.

The King Boudewijn Foundation has issued a new free booklet on dealing with the **death of a partner**. The brochure, published in conjunction with the national federation of notaries, covers issues like wills, organ donations and legal matters, such as contacts with the municipality. Death of a partner was one of the major reasons cited in a recent survey into why people engage the help of a notary. The brochure, in French and Dutch, is available from the foundation's website.

→ www.kbs-frb.be

FACE OF FLANDERS

Chokri Ben Chikha



In a time of fragile relations between Belgium and the Democratic Republic of Congo, commemoration of a statue to two colonial-era heroes might seem a bit undiplomatic. But its organiser, Chokri Ben Chikha, has noble motives. As subsidies for the theatre and the arts in general shrink, he's set up a consultancy, half in jest and whole in earnest, to advise

town and village councils on their colonial monuments.

The statue was erected in 1900 in Blankenberge and depicts two Belgian soldiers, Lieutenant Jozef Lippens and Sergeant Henri-August De Bruyne, kidnapped in 1892 and murdered by the troops of Sultan Sefu. The two hold heroic poses, while at their feet is a naked Congolese woman. The inscription, in French and Dutch, reads: "Those who died a hero's death for civilisation". Ben Chikha was born in Ostend to Tunisian parents, but grew up in Blankenberge. "I've always been strangely fascinated by the misplaced romanticism of that statue," he said. "Every fifth of September, the old colonials hold a ceremony in front of it. There's something sad about it. They really believed they were heroes, that they brought civilisation with them."

Ben Chikha studied history, is a prize-winning dancer and helped found the avant-gard Flemish theatre group Union Suspecte. The company staged a reworking of Hendrik

Conscience's epic *The Lion of Flanders* and caused uproar with the piece *Our Lady of Flanders*. So he has a record of iconoclasm.

"For me, it's not a question of who's right, but about what you do about it. How do you solve such a complex problem, because, in the meantime, the statue is still standing there," he says. "I'm putting myself forward as the right man for the job – as the peace-maker, the artist with African-Arab roots who grew up in Blankenberge."

The peace-making effort well initially be an outdoor theatre piece, *Hero's Death for Civilisation*, which has already been performed on the Blankenberge seafront. It will also be staged during the Gentse Feesten and Theater-aan-Zee festivals this summer. Meanwhile, Ben Chikha's consultancy is offering a 50% reduction on its fees (up to €55,000 for an annual contract) to mark the 50th anniversary of the DRC's independence.

→ www.chok.be

Numbers gone awry

The town of Sint-Niklaas has promised a check of all house numbers and a new procedure for allocating them after complaints from the town's ombudswoman that there was no order to the system



Food safety agency demands improvements

Industry threatened with name-and-shame on hygiene

ALAN HOPE

The owners of food-service businesses who fail to come up to standard could face a name-and-shame policy in the future, the head of the federal food safety agency has warned. Writing in the agency's 2009 annual report, managing director Gilbert Houins said EU rules allowed the agency to publish the results of its inspections online, including the names of businesses that fail inspections. That's already the case in the Netherlands and Denmark.

Last year, agency inspectors visited 12,128 businesses, including restaurants, cafes and snack bars. For hygiene overall, and the state of freezers and refrigerators in particular, only 57% obtained a passing grade. That's slightly better than 2008, when only 47% were considered satisfactory. Worse still, only 31% were found to be adequately prepared for unexpected situations like a power outage. The Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain employs 1,328 people, including 556 inspectors in 11 provincial units across the country. With a budget of €183 million in 2009, it has five laboratories of its own and cooperation agreements with 67 outside labs. The agency carried out more than 1,500 inspections in Geraardsbergen and Bilzen in Flanders, Wavre and Ath in Wallonia and Sint-Joost-ten-Node in Brussels. Despite advanced warning of the inspections, only 62% of the premises were in order. Four were closed down and 416 given a warning. The inspections took place in supermarkets and butchers, as well as industrial kitchens, restaurants and snack bars.

There were also 1,261 complaints made by consumers in 2009, more than twice as many as two years ago. That is partly explained as a result of the greater visibility of the telephone tip line, the agency explained.

The agency also carried out 37% more controls in 2009 than in 2008. Now it threatens public exposure, or what Houins called "a Michelin guide in reverse".



FIFTH COLUMN

ANJA OTTE

How not to lose your virginity

Not much is known about the talks that *informateur* Bart De Wever has had in the past two weeks, paving the way for the formation of a new federal government. Only one issue stands out so far: the political future of De Wever himself.

His nationalist party N-VA may have won the elections, but De Wever has no ambition of becoming prime minister. Flemish nationalist parties – N-VA and its predecessor Volksunie – have always been apprehensive when it comes to entering governments. Whenever they do, party members suspect their own ministers of putting their own careers before their parties' interests. This is one of the reasons why De Wever opted to stay out of the Flemish government in 2009.

Moreover, there is always a price to be paid for the post of prime minister. N-VA would rather see the French-speaking socialists, with hopeful Elio Di Rupo, pay the cost. Plus, it is a bit odd for De Wever to become prime minister of Belgium, a nation in which he does not believe.

All the other Flemish parties, however, would prefer to see Bart De Wever in rather than out of the federal government. Patrick Janssens, socialist mayor of Antwerp, was the first one to point out that "it is only logical that De Wever should not stay on the side". Janssens has good reasons to say this: in 2006 he swept away the opposition in the municipal elections. At that time, De Wever, also from Antwerp, was known only to a political in-crowd. With De Wever now at his peak of popularity, Janssens may be up for a real battle in 2012. No wonder he prefers De Wever getting his hands dirty, the surest way to see his popularity dwindle.

The Christian Democrat CD&V, too, has rather Machiavellian reasons to hope for a minister De Wever. The Christian Democrats believe that their electoral defeat is due to their "taking up responsibility". By this logic, De Wever owes his victory to opting out – both of the Flemish and federal government. They will not tolerate him as some sort of looker-on, producing one after the other of his famous one-liners.

De Wever, meanwhile, concentrates on shaping a government with parties that are described as "fire and water". You cannot stay a virgin forever, his opponents say. But maybe De Wever, being a Roman scholar, knows better. Who better to guard a fire than a Vestal virgin?

THE WEEK IN FIGURES



42

Number of floors of the tallest apartment block in the country, to be built on the Brussels canal opposite Tour & Taxis by developers Atenor. The €100 million complex will also include offices, shops and houses

8.2

average age at which a woman in Flanders has her first child, according to the Study Centre for Perinatal Epidemiology. The age has gone up from 26.3 in 1991

68,774

births in Flanders in 2009 – 1,348 to teenagers and 1,451 to women over 40

28%

more paid for fish in Belgium than the EU average, according to Eurostat. Belgium is the most expensive country for fish, while consumers here also pay more for bread (16%) and meat (21%)

61%

of people in Belgium have sent a message out on Twitter – a so-called tweet – in the past three months. Nearly one in three sent a tweet in the last seven days, and only 18% have never done so

King visits DRC, while request made for Lumumba murder inquiry

Three sons of Patrice Lumumba, the first prime minister of the newly independent Congo who was assassinated in 1960, are lodging a complaint against 12 named Belgians for their role in the killing.

Lumumba was arrested, tortured and shot a year after taking office. A number of people have claimed that the then Belgian King Boudewijn gave the order to kill Lumumba, or at least made it clear that he should be eliminated.

The announcement of the planned action came as Boudewijn's brother and successor, King Albert II, travelled to the Democratic Republic of Congo to take part in celebrations marking the 50th anniversary of independence. The king's visit has been criticised by some who see it as an endorsement of the regime of president Joseph Kabila and his lamentable human rights record. The king's visit was marked by his decision to make no public statements. Meanwhile, Yves Leterme, the acting prime minister who accompanied the king and queen to the former colony, was criticised by the press after he refused to publicly sign the condolence book opened on the death of Floribert Chebeya, the human rights activist murdered last month in Kinshasa after apparently attending a meeting with the national police chief.

Leterme asked for the book to be brought to the Belgian ambassador's residence in Kinshasa, rather than going himself to sign it at the Chebeya family home. ♦



President Kabila of the Democratic Republic of Congo greets the Belgian king and queen last week at a military parade in Kinshasa marking 50 years of Congolese independence

Clijsters vs Serena Williams in Brussels

LEO CENDROWICZ

Kim Clijsters bounced back from her shock Wimbledon quarter-final defeat to Russia's Vera Zvonareva last week to enjoy a run in the mixed-doubles with fellow Fleming Xavier Malisse.

Zvonareva's 3-6, 6-4, 6-2 victory over Clijsters came just a day after Clijsters had knocked out Belgium's Justine Henin. Clijsters is still less than a year into her comeback after two years out, but after a bright opening she buckled, giving way to a string of 14 unforced errors in the third set.

She then focused on the mixed doubles with Malisse and again reached the quarter-finals, losing a thrillingly entertaining match against Brazil's Marcelo Melo and Australia's Rennae Stubbs in straight sets 7-6, 7-6. Clijsters and Malisse had earlier beaten top seeds Nenad Zimonjic from Serbia, and Australia's Sam Stosur 6-4, 7-6. Meanwhile, Clijsters' planned "Best of Belgium" clash with Henin at the Boudewijn Stadium in Brussels on 8 July has been hastily changed after

Henin injured her elbow. Fans can still see Clijsters play, but Henin has been replaced by newly-crowned Wimbledon champion Serena Williams for the exhibition, which is expected to be watched by a crowd of around 40,000 – a world record for a tennis match. Finally, in the wake of Wimbledon, the new WTA ranking brings Clijsters up to seventh place and fellow Flemish player Yanina Wickmayer to 17th. ♦

→ www.sport.be/bestofbelgium



Need another reason to
choose Ghent over Antwerp?
See page 14

Ghent vs Antwerp:

► continued from page 1

And nothing does that like the Gentse Feesten.

The good people of Ghent have been throwing this party for...wait for it...167 years now, and it is the...wait for it...largest music and street theatre festival in Europe. In fact, it's not called Gentse Feesten – Festivals of Ghent – for nothing. It's actually the coming together of several festivals for 10 glorious days.

But even that number is debatable since most people consider the respected Ghent Jazz Festival, which starts this week, to be part of the Gentse Feesten. As you no doubt saw in our Summer Festival Guide last week, the annual jazz fest welcomes the likes of Norah Jones, Ornette Coleman and Madness.

But, as they say, that's just the beginning. The Gentse Feesten is also a street theatre festival, a comedy festival, a puppet buskers' festival, a techno festival, a youth circus festival and a rock festival called Boomtown that embodies the freedom and impulsivity of being young in one of Europe's most vibrant small cities.

That's one of the beautiful things about Gentse Feesten – you don't need a plan, and you don't need much money, because, aside from all of that, every square in the city centre becomes a free live music stage. It's split up by genre, so you can choose to sit a spell at the world stage, the Flemish crooners stage, the blues stage, the cheesy cover bands stage or the Polo Polo festi-

val, which finds a stage stretched across the canal. Or you can just wander around. No ticket required.

However, should you be the type who likes to plan, there are also ticketed performances in the city's many indoor spaces, from cabaret to full-fledged theatre. Nearly all of them are in Dutch and some of them are in the city's dialect because the festival is a celebration of that, too.

And the Gentse Feesten doesn't turn into a pumpkin when the clock tower strikes midnight. After the music is over, the street parties begin, most notably with DJs on Sint-Baafsplaat and in the Vlaamsemarkt, where the all-night cafes congregate on any night. About 7,000 people traditionally wrap up their night with an Irish coffee.

The Gentse Feesten is busy, the programme is massive, and it all fills you with a nervous sense of being in the middle of chaos, yet secretly protects you in its little city-centre culture cocoon. Sublime.

Of course, a few residents who live in the heart of Ghent's centre actually take their holidays during the Gentse Feesten, citing 24-hour-a-day noise. But who cares about them? If you can't take the heat, baby, stay out of the kitchen. ♦

► www.gentsefeesten.be

Photos: © Gentse Feesten



Best of Gentse Feesten

The Gentse Feesten is several festivals in one. Here's three of them not to miss.

MiramirO Programmers travel Europe all year 'round searching for the best street theatre to bring to Ghent. It happens in designated squares in the centre, plus a short walk east to Sint-Baafsplaat. If there's one act you really want to see, get there early. *Gentenaars* are rabid street theatre lovers, and the crowds can get thick. A few acts – but very few – are in tents and require reservations.

► www.miramiro.be

International Puppet Buskers Festival Lest you think that the Gentse Feesten is crazy and wild and not suitable for those under 17, this should put your fears to rest. In the cutest little courtyard you're ever likely to see is this festival of puppeteers from across the world. The

work is so top-notch, some adults attend with no children in tow whatsoever.

► www.eftc.be

Bataclan This sort of mini circus festival showed up a few years ago, rather unannounced, on an empty lot no one ever noticed before off the Willem de Beersteeg. It turned out to be outrageously popular with Ghent's many young hipster parents for its bizarre circus acts, human jukebox, Jesus for Kids (don't even ask) and chairs hanging from trees. It's packed to the gills but still feels like a secret.

► www.cirq.be

Need another reason to
choose Antwerp over Ghent?

See page 12



FLANDERS TODAY

JULY 7, 2010

summer festival showdown

→ continued from page 1

This festival has actually become so popular that many productions needing a ticket are already sold out.

But fear not! There are still tickets to a number of shows and loads of free activities if you'd like to soak up the laid-back atmosphere of this bubbling summer metropolis – the largest, most international city in Flanders, I might add.

Zomer van Antwerpen offers inhabitants an eclectic mix of music, movies and performance in both the city's top locations and lesser-known spots. People of all ages can revel in this combination of tradition and innovation, without road works, noise or dirt. (Have you been to the giant construction site that is Ghent lately? No, and wisely, neither has anyone else.)

In Antwerp, you can sit back and relax in the Zomerbar, a green oasis fully equipped with grass huts, hammocks, sand and colourful cocktails, just south of the city centre. This year it will be accompanied by the Zomerbibliotheek, an intriguing mobile library for those of us who enjoy a good book with our Bordeaux. (We're rather unsure if the Hoegaarden-guzzlers of the Gentse Feesten can actually read.) Activities that are free of charge, for example, are the outdoor movies in one of the hangars by the Scheldt. This year's theme is "parties", ranging from raves to dinners, so prepare yourself for swinging cinematic treats, such as *The Full Monty*, *Almost Famous* and *Mamma Mia*. If you prefer

music, you can visit one of Antwerp's many squares that host charismatic singers from the four corners of the world, resulting in one big neighbourhood party, including regional food and drink.

The Zomerfabriek is one of this year's new locations, a renovated industrial site in the up-and-coming neighbourhood Nieuw Zurenborg. It not only has a swanky lounge bar but houses many of the top acts, like Renaissance man Geert Hautekiet's *Vieze verol tjes* (*Dirty Tales*), a combination of music and saucy satire, and the funky beats of Friday night's Late Night Shows, which alternate with Saturday's movie shorts.

If you find yourself stranded at 4.00 after a night of partying, just head to the Nulsterrenpension, the Zomerfabriek's very own hotel. This former office building has been turned into a low-cost B&B, where you can catch a few winks and some breakfast for as little as €15. I doubt Ghent thought of this. But this summer's highlight will without a doubt be *De Duiker*, the newest production of the Royal de Luxe, who have previously graced our majestic city with spectacular parades featuring giants, elephants and magical tales. From 20-22 August, you can feast your eyes on this year's legend featuring a giant, a diver and a bag full of hopes and dreams.

Elbowed by drunk youth while getting your sandals filthy or bagsful of hopes and dreams. Take your pick. ♦

Photos: © Zomer van Antwerpen 2010



Best of Zomer van Antwerpen

Many of the ticketed events in Zomer van Antwerpen are already sold out, but not all of them.

For those that are, you can still get a piece of the action: a limited number of tickets are always on sale at the door right before the performance. These are the ones worth fighting for.

It's your wedding day, and everything goes horribly wrong. Throw in some acrobats, a little situational humour and some catchy live music, and you've got the latest non-language creation by the Basque Country's internationally renowned **Circus Klezmer**. 4-15 August

Dwaallicht (*Will-o'-the-wisp*) is based on the Flemish classic by novelist Willem Elsschot, who also happens to have a festival in his honour right now in Antwerp. Things just keep on getting better here, don't they? Anyway, actor Warre Borgmans plays the famous character Frans Laarmans, accompanied by a little rock 'n' roll. 2-28 July

Antwerp theatre company **De Roovers** presents the fabulously funny *Blue Remembered Hills* based on the 1970s BBC television play by Dennis Potter, where the lines between children and grown-ups get very blurred indeed. 3-24 July

Finally, what do you get when you combine sensual dancing, divine voices, gut-wrenching love and two Italian cyclists? Answer: the strange yet captivating open-air spectacle **Luce**. Enough said. 7-10 July

→ www.zomervanantwerpen.be

From pigs to power

A Flemish holiday park is the unlikely site of a flagship scheme designed to help save the planet

MARTIN BANKS

Dirk De Backer and his family may have been blissfully unaware, but they are among Flemish holidaymakers "doing their bit" to cut greenhouse gas emissions.

Dirk, his wife Karin and their two children, recently stayed at the Molenheide holiday park in Houthalen, Limburg province. As they relaxed in their pristine chalet, they didn't realise that the park has a somewhat unusual source for its energy supply – pig manure.

The electricity powering the TV, cooker, fridge, microwave and all other electrical installations in the park's wooden bungalows comes from pig waste. "To be honest, I don't give much thought to sources of energy, but all credit to the owners here for coming up with such a novel idea," says Dirk, a teacher from Antwerp.

It is feared that many European countries, including Belgium, will struggle to meet the EU's 20% target for the use of renewables, such as solar and wind, by 2020. But Molenheide, a family-owned park that attracts 300,000 visitors annually, has stolen a march by introducing its own system of cutting CO2 emissions. According to Marc Vanherk, sales manager at Molenheide, the bio-fuel system it has used since the spring of 2009 enables the park to slash its emissions output by an estimated 3,000 tonnes per year – and helps stabilise the amount it spends each year on electricity. The hope is that cost savings made to the park's annual energy bill will eventually be passed on to its customers.

How it works

Methane gases from pig manure, crops and basic agricultural "leftovers" produced at a nearby farm is processed and transported via a pipeline to Molenheide, where it supplies virtually all its electricity needs. The electricity is used to heat bungalows on the site and also the park's swimming pools which, previously consumed 350,000 litres of oil every year. Even in the event of a power outage, "this

unique CO2-neutral power source" ensures that anyone staying at the park will never be without electricity, explains Vanherk.

"I think what we are doing here is really quite unique," he says. "This is one of the biggest holiday parks in the whole country, and we are sourcing our electricity from one of the most reliable and environmental-friendly forms of energy. The method we use produces electricity for what effectively is a small village. If anyone else in Belgium can make such a claim, I would like to know who."

The groundbreaking system was introduced after the park owners struck a deal with local farmer Piet Lavrijsen just 1.5 kilometres away. "Piet had a lot of experience in composting," says Vanherk. "With fuel prices seemingly forever on the rise, we saw this as an opportunity to come to some arrangement to try to cut our annual energy costs and become less reliant on old-fashioned fossil fuels."

The park had to change their electrical installations and install a special engine that itself operates on a mix of methanes and bio-fuel in order to pump the power source from the farm. "It required a lot of technical changes," confirms Vanherk. "An underground connection links the farm to our park and to the furnace that powers our network of buildings and pools. It's one of the most modern installations in Belgium."

Molenheide is now entirely run from renewable energy, putting them, says Vanherk, "at the forefront of efforts to cut CO2 emissions." He sees this as a great advantage. "There is currently great uncertainty about the security of the energy supply, something highlighted last year when supplies to some EU countries like Slovenia were seriously disrupted by the dispute between Russia and Ukraine. The same could happen again but, because our energy is sourced from bio-fuels, we know we won't be affected." ♦

→ www.molenheide.be



All the bungalows and swimming pools at Molenheide holiday park are powered by pig manure and other bio-fuels



The specially made engine that pumps the power from farm source to holiday park itself operates on a mix of methanes and bio-fuel



The Qu-Ant-EM can distinguish details of 50 picometres, or one-trillionth of a metre

Seeing is believing

Antwerp is now home to the most powerful electron microscope in Europe

TANIA RABESANDRATANA

Qu-Ant-EM (Quantitative Analysis in Antwerp via Electron Microscopy) is a new member of the European family of electron microscopes. It is encased in a 5.5-metre-high metal box that looks like a big coffee machine. But inside the innocuous-looking shield, rests a top-notch electron microscope that took two years to build at a cost of €10 million.

The equipment is very sensitive, so it has to remain as stable as possible. To avoid vibrations or temperature changes, the microscope is enclosed in an additional wooden box. Also, the equipment is operated remotely, so manipulations on the actual machine remain minimal.

An electron microscope produces a magnified, detailed image of a sample. The difference with an optical microscope is that, instead of a light source going through the specimen to observe, the machine uses a beam of electrons and achieves much greater magnification.

Like most electron microscopes, Qu-Ant-EM offers a magnification of about 1,000,000 times, but, more importantly,

its resolution is extremely high: it can distinguish details of about 50 picometres, ie at the level of the atom.

In addition, the microscope boasts a powerful correction system, both in its hardware and its software, that corrects aberrations and generates exceptionally neat images in two as well as in three dimensions.

"It was already possible to observe atoms," notes Professor Gustaaf Van Tendeloo, director of EMAT, the research group that hosts Qu-Ant-EM in Antwerp. Now, with Qu-Ant-EM, scientists get much clearer images and can study the properties of materials in great detail, without damaging the samples. In particular, this technology will allow scientists to study how the surface of a material influences its properties and behaviour. "For instance, silicon is usually a grey material, but very tiny particles of silicon take a different position and a red colour," Van Tendeloo explains.

Qu-Ant-EM was inaugurated at the end of June, and four team members are currently training to become expert users of the

microscope; gradually, they will be able to train others to use this one-of-its-kind machine. "If you're used to driving a car from a given brand and change to another brand, you will get used to the slight differences within minutes. But this is like driving a Formula 1," smiles Van Tendeloo. The research centre EMAT (Electron Microscopy for Materials Science) belongs to the department of physics of the University of Antwerp and is the core group of the NANO excellence centre. It focuses on the study of materials using different electron microscopy techniques.

EMAT coordinates a network funded by the EU called ESTEEM (Enabling Science and Technology through European Electronic Microscopy). Any European scientist who wants to use one of the network's microscopes can submit a short proposal. If the request is accepted, the researcher is free to use the machine for a given length of time in order to gather data for his or her own research. ♦

→ www.emat.ua.ac.be

Flying Entrepreneur system delayed

Unizo requests that the replacement system for the self-employed become a priority of any new government

ALAN HOPE

Small businesses have called upon the government to make a priority of bringing in the system of "Flying Entrepreneurs".

According to a proposal introduced by outgoing federal minister of farming and the self-employed, Sabine Laruelle, the system would provide coverage for small businesses in the event of prolonged illness and maternity leave. In 2008, there were 18,552 cases of self-employed business people experiencing prolonged illness and another 5,422 cases of business owners on maternity leave. Under Flying Entrepreneurs, they could make use of a temporary replacement – another experienced business person available to step in

for up to 30 days because their own business could afford to spare them, for instance, or drawn from the ranks of the retired.

Candidate replacements sign up to a register, and business owners who require a replacement choose someone, then discuss contract terms. The system was first launched as a pilot project in 2004 by Unizo, the organisation that represents the self-employed.

"It's a positive sign that the government is willing to extend the system," said a Unizo spokesperson. "However, businesses at present still have no replacements available." The system should have come into force on 1 July, but, because of the fall of



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the government, the elections and the continuing uncertainty of coalition-forming negotiations, that deadline was not met.

The barriers to introducing the system include a lack of necessary legislative instruments, clear rules on the liability

of the replacement entrepreneur and payments to be made to social security. Most importantly, at this point no action has been taken to recruit potential flying entrepreneurs. ♦

First Indian elected to chair Diamond Centre

Nishit Parikh, chief executive of Diarough, has been elected president of the Antwerp World Diamond Centre (AWDC) for a term of two years. Parikh, a naturalised Belgian, is the first president of Indian origin to hold the post. The AWDC is the official representative body for the Antwerp diamond industry.

Parikh was born in Navsari, on the west coast of India, and moved with his family to Antwerp, where his father set up Diarough in 1975. Parikh studied at the Antwerp International School and in Paris. He now runs the family business, which employs about 50 people in Antwerp but has factories in Canada, South Africa, Botswana, India and Thailand.

Diarough is one of only 79 companies worldwide on the list of shareholders approved by DeBeers, the world's largest provider of rough diamonds, for the bulk purchase of stones. His appointment is highly significant as he is a strong supporter of Antwerp as a world diamond centre and a counter to moves from within the Indian diamond community to move operations out of the Flemish city.

"We congratulate Mr Nishit Parikh on his election as AWDC president," said Freddy J Hanard, chief executive of the AWDC. "With his intimate knowledge of the diamond business and his long record of public service, he comes well equipped to fill this role. And with his dedication to the continued strength of the Antwerp centre, we are confident that, just like his predecessors, he will loyally defend the interests of all the sectors that make up our business community." ♦

Belgacom fined for customer mailings

Telecoms giant Belgacom has been fined €800,000 by the Belgian Institute for Post and Telecommunications (BIPT) for failing to give out adequate information regarding customer rights on tariff increases.

Belgacom announced an increase in the price of two of its internet subscriptions in February this year. Customers were notified, but the announcement came too late and contained either insufficient or incorrect information, the industry regulator found. According to law, when a company increases the cost or changes the terms of a contract, customers must be informed at least a month in advance of the changes taking effect. Customers must also be informed that, due to the changes, the contract can be cancelled without any financial penalty. According to BIPT, Belgacom sent out a general mailing that made no mention of that legal provision. Later in individual communications, some customers were informed of their cancellation rights, while others were given information regarding conditions for free cancellation (which are not applicable by law).

Belgacom said it was "surprised" at the ruling and that it would appeal the fine. In a statement, the company said that it was "convinced that its willingness to keep the client as well informed as possible is not in any doubt" and that it had used "every means available to keep clients informed".

• Belgacom subsidiary Scarlet has taken over the activities of mobile phone operator MobiSud in Belgium. The MobiSud network, which services mainly clients from the Maghreb region of Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia, was a joint venture between Maroc Telephone and Belgacom. The network, now owned exclusively by Scarlet, will continue to provide high-quality mobile phone services at a good price, Belgacom said. ♦



© Reuters

Flemish "Nobel Prizes" announced

Researchers at the Catholic University of Leuven (KUL) have won three of this year's five FWO awards, sometimes referred to as the Flemish Nobel Prizes. The Excellence awards, each worth €100,000, are handed out by the Fund for Scientific Research on a five-yearly basis in recognition of Flemish scientists responsible for groundbreaking research in one of five main scientific areas.

Winners this year are:

- Peter Carmeliet, director of the Vesalius Research Centre at KUL, for his work on blood vessels in the fight against cancer
- Bart De Moor of KUL, for research in linear algebra, an area central to modern mathematics and its applications

- Paul Rutgeerts of KUL, for his work on the origins of intestinal disorders
- Sonja Snacken of the Free University of Brussels (VUB) for her work on a more humane criminal advocacy
- Dirk Inzé of the University of Ghent for his work as head of the celebrated genetics lab, which previously won an FWO excellence award in 1990 and is responsible for developing the world's first genetically modified plant

Meanwhile, six starting grants have been awarded to young researchers at KUL by the European Research Council. The grants, worth an average of €1.25 million, go to Hans Jacquemyn of the department of biology for work on the associations between orchids

and moulds; Peter Janssen, department of neuroscience, for the mechanisms under which the brain converts visual information into motor activity; Philippe Lemey, department of microbiology and immunology, for the spread of viral infections; Adrian Liston, department of experimental medicine, for auto-immune diseases; Giovanni Maglia, department of chemistry, for the study of single molecules using nanopore analysis; and Patrick Verstreken, department of human genetics, for the communication between brain cells. ♦

THE WEEK IN BUSINESS

Autos • Audi

German auto group Audi is investing an additional €150 million in its Vorst operations for the construction of additional parking and office facilities. The company, which produced its first Audi A1 vehicle barely six weeks ago, has already invested some €300 million in the site.

Brewing • AB Inbev

World leading beer group AB Inbev will gradually centralise all its purchasing activities in Leuven, the company's historical headquarters. Up to 70 new jobs will be created.

Building • Bam

The Belgo-Dutch Bam building consortium has won the €460 million contract for the new Nato headquarters in Haren, near Brussels. Work on the new facilities is expected to start in September and will provide employment to 650 workers over the next five years.

Capital • Dollar millionaires

Belgium has the second highest proportion of dollar millionaires in Europe after Switzerland, according to the Boston Consulting Group. Up to 3.5% of the country's households qualify against 7.6% Swiss families. Singapore heads the world list, and Belgium ranks eighth, just behind the US.

Cinema • Barco

Kortrijk-based Barco has won a contract from the Canadian Empire Theatres group to provide some 50 of its cinemas with 3D digital projectors.

Insurance • Ageas

Insurer Ageas will pay €261 million to acquire British broker Kwik Fit Insurance Services. This is the first takeover by Ageas since it relaunched after being hived away from Fortis Bank last year. Kwik Fit sells liability insurance and life assurance to the public, mainly via the internet.

Retail • Krëfel

Electronics and appliance retailer Krëfel has invested €12.5 million to expand its distribution centre in Grimbergen. The new facility will supply the chain's 71 stores, including the new outlets recently inaugurated in Wevelgem and Izegem. The company has plans to open up to 10 additional shops in the next couple of years.

Shipping • Flemish ports

The Flemish government last week approved a financing structure for the construction of three new locks in the ports of Ghent-Terneuzen, Antwerp and Zeebrugge. The Antwerp Waasland harbour lock will be built first, and in Zeebrugge works will begin in 2014. The Ghent-Terneuzen lock is currently the subject of talks with the Dutch government over funding, with a decision expected by the end of the year.

Binnen **Ackroyd Publishing** zijn we op zoek naar een (m/v)

SALES MANAGER



Ackroyd, de multimedia uitgever van o.a. The Bulletin en xpats.com, is dé absolute referentie voor de Engelssprekende community die werkt en leeft in België. Ackroyd maakt sinds 2007 deel uit van de Corelio-groep en is ook uitgever van Brussels Unlimited, Newcomer en Expat Directory. Het publiceert ook de wekelijkse krant Flanders Today in opdracht van de Vlaamse Overheid en het driemaandelijks WAB (Wallonia and Brussels) in opdracht van AWEX & WBI. Naast gedrukte uitgaven is Ackroyd organisator van talrijke evenementen voor zijn doelgroep, zoals o.a. de Welcome Fair.

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- Je neemt de eindverantwoordelijkheid over de inkomsten van Ackroyd Publishing. Dit betekent de inkomsten uit lezers- en advertentiemarkten.
- Teneinde de inkomsten te laten stijgen bepaal je samen met de general manager en de hoofdredactie een marketing & sales strategie die op korte en lange termijn geïmplementeerd dient te worden. In dat kader bekijk je de verdere synergiën met Corelio om de interne organisatie te optimaliseren.
- Hiervoor kan je rekenen op een team van medewerkers die aan jou rapporteren. Samen met 3 commerciële medewerkers sta je in voor de verkoop van alle advertentieruimte (thema en rubrieken) in onze publicaties en op onze sites. Je speelt zowel een rol als coach, trainer en motivator van het sales team. Je zet de juiste doelstellingen, volgt nauw op en coördineert het behalen van deze doelstellingen. Je bent ook in staat om nieuwe projecten te bedenken, ontwikkelen en te coördineren.
- Samen met de marketing event coördinator werk je acties uit die resulteren in meerverkoop of meerbereik van onze titels en events.
- Jullie doel: in de beste verstandhouding de beste resultaten halen.

- Naast jouw coaching taken neem je zelf nog een aantal key dossiers (zoals Flanders Today) in handen en vertegenwoordig je Ackroyd op de markt. Als professioneel commercieel talent geloof je in een lange termijnrelatie met jouw eigen klanten, waarbij een win win relatie wordt nagestreefd. Daarnaast ben je geïnteresseerd in de community van Expats en in staat om creatief nieuwe dingen te ontwikkelen.

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- Je beheert vlot het Engels en het Frans.

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Klaar voor de job van je leven? Stuur dan je cv met motivatiebrief naar jobs.advertising@corelio.be of naar Gossetlaan 30, 1702 Groot-Bijgaarden t.a.v. Jeroen Verhasselt

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Regarding Congo

A surge of new books look at the former Belgian colony with fresh perspectives

EMMA DAVIS

Since the famous British explorer Henry Morton Stanley wrote about his historic trip down the Congo River in the late 19th century, the Central African nation has inspired writers from Joseph Conrad to Evelyn Waugh, Graham Greene, VS Naipaul and Barbara Kingsolver. In the late 1990s, American journalist Adam Hochschild penned *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa*,

provoking a wave of soul-searching among Belgians as they came to terms with the brutality of forced labour in their former colony.

This year's 50th anniversary of the Democratic Republic of the Congo's independence from Belgium has prompted both Flemish journalists and historians to take another look at the country's colonial past, present and future. ♦

◀ From *Futur simple* by Flemish photographer Stephan Vanfleteren and journalist Koen Vidal



© Stephan Vanfleteren



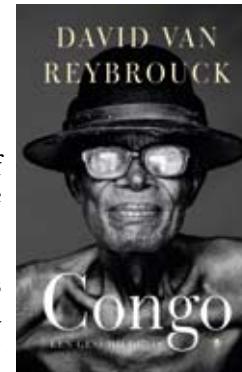
Past

Congo: een geschiedenis (Congo: A History)

David Van Reybrouck
(De Bezige Bij 2010)

With chapters dedicated to each major period of the Congo's history since 1870, this weighty tome (it runs to just under 700 pages) looks like the ultimate historical reference book. But the eye-catching cover of David Van Reybrouck's magnum opus is some indication that this is much more than a detailed account of the nation's colonial and post-colonial days.

Over a period of several years, the Flemish writer conducted hundreds of interviews with Congolese, including child soldiers, smugglers and rebel leaders, weaving in their version of a history that has been typically told from the perspective of Westerners. Although predominantly an academic, Van Reybrouck's flair for telling a story (he is also a contributor to Flemish daily *De Morgen*) keeps the reader hooked and ensures that a potentially hefty read remains on the light (yet highly informative) side. Much to Van Reybrouck's surprise, the book has become Flanders' number one bestseller and has been called in the press "the new standard for anyone interested in the ex-Belgian colony".



Present

De ontdekking van Congo (The Discovery of Congo)

Rudi Vranckx
(Meulenhoff/Manteau 2010)

Veteran hack Rudi Vranckx spent a year travelling the breadth of the Congo. Through detailed observations and interviews, he whisks readers to the colourful, bustling and harsh life of modern-day Congo, giving a flavour of everything from the role of witchcraft in society to the importance of mining. Posing tough questions along the way about Belgium's role in colonial Congo and its perceptions of the Congolese, this is Belgian soul-searching in action.

Vranckx includes beautiful sketches by Congolese artists of the local surroundings, but these would have been better printed on plates, giving them the higher impact they deserve. The book is accessible but probably more enjoyable for someone with some prior understanding of the Congo's history.

Future

Futur simple: de kinderen van de Congo (Future Simple: The Children of the Congo)

Koen Vidal & Stephan Vanfleteren
(Meulenhoff/Manteau 2010)

"Thirty-three million of the 60 million Congolese are younger than 18." That is the premise of this book in which, in their own words, several youngsters tell their life story. Among them is former child soldier Arnold Arganze's stark and haunting account of his capture, atrocities he was forced to be part of, and escape. Congo taekwondo champion Linda Kilumba's story is more hopeful, and yet, despite qualifying, she was denied her place in the Beijing Olympics by the Congolese authorities, who are suspected of having sent their favourite – rather than their best – athletes.

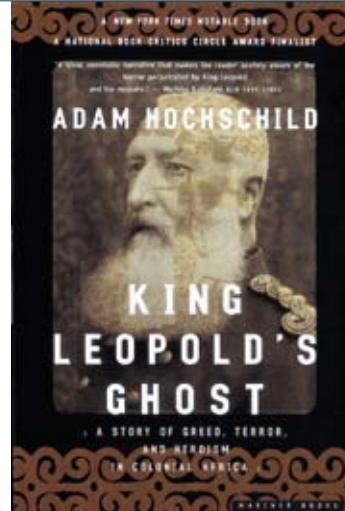
The authors, Flemish political journalist Koen Vidal and photographer Stephan Vanfleteren, also look at the early days of Congo children's lives, interviewing a feisty midwife who yells at young, single mothers, asking them how they, practically children themselves, will give their babies a good start in life. This is a pertinent question in a country where one in five children dies before the fifth birthday. *Futur simple* is an easy yet compelling and at times disturbing read with Vanfleteren's trademark black-and-white portraiture throughout.

Over to English

King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa

Adam Hochschild
(Mariner Books 1998)

This gripping and graphic account of the horrors of King Leopold II's regime of forced labour in the Congo Free State (1885-1908) exposed in an accessible way the brutality of Belgium's colonial past to a wider, not to mention international, public. Although heavily criticised by academics at the time – notably regarding his estimation of the number of Congolese who died at the hands of the free state (there was no population census back then) – that should not deter anyone from reading this portrayal of a murderous regime from this author-cum-journalist-cum-historian, who knows how to keep his reader hooked.



CULTURE NEWS

Peter Vandermeersch, editor-in-chief of the daily newspapers *De Standaard* and *Het Nieuwsblad*, has announced his departure from Belgium to become editor-in-chief of *NRC Handelsblad* in the Netherlands. Vandermeersch has worked for more than 20 years for Corelio publishing, which also publishes *Flanders Today*. During his time at *De Standaard*, sales went up from 75,000 to 93,000 a day.

Digital TV broadcaster Exqi is suspending broadcasts of its general interest channel **Exqi Plus** for the summer and airing only programmes on its sports channel Exqi Sport. "There's no point in stubbornly carrying on down the wrong road," commented chief executive Gabriel Fehervari. The Exqi channels have been plagued by problems from the outset: when Fehervari said he was aiming for a 20% market share, other commercial channels stopped using the services of Alfacam, the TV services company he also runs.

Flemish public broadcaster **VRT** will move from the American Theatre, where they have been based since the World Expo of 1958. The broadcaster said the building had become dilapidated and too expensive to maintain. The future of the TV studios, which once welcomed stars like the Beach Boys and Elton John, has not been decided.

Mechelen's Utopolis cinema will begin an experiment next January called **Movies for Mommies**, daytime screenings where mothers and babies can sit together in dim light, with the sound of the movie lowered. The cinema will have a play area, a changing room, breast-feeding corner and bottle-warmer.

Brussels City council has banned buskers from making music in the streets, but only on uneven hours. Street music will be legal from 10.00 to 11.00, but then illegal for an hour, before becoming legal again at noon. The new rule was introduced following complaints from businesses at the constant sound of music, and buskers' disregard for the rule that states no musician can stay in one place for more than half an hour.

Ghent-based artist **Gery De Smet** is showing his work for the first time in the United States. His new exhibition *See something? Say something!*, a title taken from a New York subway announcement designed to fight terrorism, will be at the American University Museum in Washington DC until 8 August. The show consists of paintings and his short film *De wanen in ons (The Delusions Inside Us)*.

"Our fixation on the offences continues to be a bit egocentric. Right now the Congolese are waiting for our engagement in the Congo of the future, not for our lamentations over the Congo of the past."

David Van Reybrouck
in an interview in Metro

Blood River: A Journey to Africa's Broken Heart

Tim Butcher
(Vintage Books 2007)

Daily Telegraph journalist Tim Butcher retraces the footsteps of 19th-century explorer Henry Morton Stanley, who worked for the same newspaper. Travelling the entire length of the 4,700-kilometre River Congo, Butcher's journey takes him through the dangerous east where militia are still roaming, on a motorbike with Georges the pygmy, in a pirogue, a river boat and finally a helicopter. His book focuses on the people he meets, without indulging in tales of journalistic heroics, despite the harsh and extraordinary feat. Among the many poignant moments is the tale of a Belgian missionary who narrowly missed death at the hands of rebels, a village where Butcher finds an older generation who remember technologies youngsters have never seen, and a fisherman who begs Butcher to take his son and give him a new life in the developed world.

A bewitching path

Castle Laarne's haunting past is revealed along a seemingly innocent walk

TEXT AND PHOTOS MELISSA MAKI

Castles conjure up rich historical imagery. These commanding stone structures elicit thoughts of a bygone era where the iron fist of nobility and armoured battles were commonplace. For the third instalment of our castle recreation series, we take you to a place in East Flanders with an especially wicked past.

The town of Laarne lies just east of Ghent and is home to Castle Laarne, one of the most well preserved, feudal water castles in Belgium. In the early 1600s, Laarne and the adjacent village of Kalken were the sites of witch hunts. Several accused witches were imprisoned in the keep of the castle, where they were interrogated and tortured. Four of these were later burned at the stake.

A few years back, some creative and clever women convinced the towns to embrace this sordid history. The Heksengilde (Witches Guild) is a group of eight women who regularly don capes and pointy black hats in order to promote tourism and historical interest in their communities.

The Heksengilde worked with the area tourist council to establish the Heksenpad (Witches Path) in 2007 as a way to commemorate the 400-year anniversary of the witch burnings.

The Witches Path

The Heksenpad is a walking or biking path that references Laarne and Kalken's dark but fascinating witch-hunt history. You can get a map of it at the Laarne tourist office. The map includes historical information, and there are also placards along the route with information in Dutch.

I chose to bike the 20-kilometre Heksenpad due to its length, but there are some portions of the path that are more suited to walking if you have the time. The route is well marked with white hexagonal signs, which are easy to follow if you're on foot, but which can be a bit elusive if you're cycling. I suggest procuring a map to avoid getting too lost.

You start your trip at the castle, cycling east on Kasteeldreef. Follow the signs until the road turns to dirt. You'll see mainly farmland here with some trees along the edges. When you get to a bend in the road, take a right. This is where Janne Callens, midwife and suspected witch, had a homestead. Callens is one of the four unfortunate souls to have been burned at the stake back in 1607.

Keep following the signs, and you'll soon be on another dirt path heading towards Ascopstraat. At the intersection of Ascopstraat and Heirweg is the site



of the Laarne gallows, where criminals were hung and where the witches were burned.

Turn right onto Heirweg. As you continue, take note of the intersection with Rivierenstraat on your left. This is the site where Passcheyne Neyts lived – another of the persecuted witches. Keep going on Heirweg until you reach Holeindestraat and then make a left. Take care here; this can be a busy intersection. The path here is fairly straight and then it makes a curve. Take a left at Holeindereide – a dirt path that connects back to Rivierenstraat. Just before it does, you'll see the spot where Lieven Lammens, the only man in this area accused of witchcraft, lived. Lammens escaped death by fire but was tortured both at the Castle Laarne and Gravensteen Castle in Ghent, before being exiled from the community for 10 years.

Cross Rivierenstraat and make a left onto Beddeneedstraat. Follow Beddeneedstraat for some time until you reach Ascopstraat and take a right. The signs will lead you then down a dirt path that will take you through fields and then into a pretty clearing within a wooded area. Three

dirt paths intersect here. It's a great, shaded spot to take a break.

Make a right out of the woods. The dirt path will line up with Bergstraat, and you'll be headed towards Klein Gent (Little Ghent). You'll see a placard indicating the home of Josyne Celis, another midwife and suspected witch, who was also executed in 1607.

Continue onward and upward to cross over the E17. Make a right on Magretstraat and follow this street until it intersects with Rietveldstraat. Follow the signs, and soon you'll cross over Dendermondesteenweg. You'll see the restaurant La Fermette; the witches were said to have held Sabbath near this spot.

Continuing, you'll cross over the E17 again and end up on Meerskant. You'll pass the Vanhercke B&B, owned by one of Laarne's contemporary witches. It's a cosy place with two guest cottages across from a pretty pond.

Next take a right on Lagen Heirweg.

This scenic, tree-lined portion of the ride takes you past the Paardenmelkerij

't Kattenheye, an equine dairy farm

with beautiful Haflinger horses. Here

you can buy a number of items made

with horse milk, including cosmetics, ice cream and even a liquor with a pleasant coconut flavour. 't Kattenheye also provides tours and rents out stagecoaches. If you are lucky, and catch the owner at the right time, you can meet some of the horses.

Continue on Lagen Heirweg and follow the signs until you eventually make it to Eekhoekstraat. Turn right at Korte Eekhoekstraat. This puts you on a lovely path that takes you around the backside of the castle and back to the starting point via Mellestraat.

Shorter routes

If you don't have a leisurely day to spend in Laarne, I recommend walking the final portion of the route (from Eekhoekstraat to Korte Eekhoekstraat to Mellestraat) in order to do a small circle around the castle.

Or try the six-kilometre Kruidenpad. This marked walking path begins in Kalken and meanders along a canal. The walk features herbs and plants that were used by witches. Maps are available at the Laarne tourist office, and there are guided walks available. Members of the Heksengilde guide the first (18 July) and final (17 September) walks of the season. ♦



Trail fare

There aren't many options right along the Heksenpad for food and libations, but I did come across a charming little place in Destelbergen. De Verseau serves up typical Belgian cuisine and features a lovely terrace with comfortable teak chairs and umbrellas for shade.

Meersakkerstraat 1, Destelbergen

If you are in the mood for more of a gastronomic experience, check out the Kasteel Van Laarne restaurant. It's located in the outbuildings of the castle and has a terrace that provides a stunning view. For €60, you get dinner and dessert, with options like a half-lobster grilled with garlic butter and herbs or a smoked tuna and foie gras terrine. They also offer a business lunch for €30.

Castle visit

Laarne Castle is only open on Sunday and Thursday and only with a reservation. It comes with a tour in Dutch for €7. The castle is home to an impressive collection of European silverware as well as antique weapons, furniture and art. You can request an English-speaking tour in advance, and a guidebook for the castle is also available in English.

Maps for the Heksenpad are available at the Laarne Tourist Office, but it is not open on the weekends and has varied hours during the week. Plan accordingly.

Castle Laarne

Eekhoekstraat 5

→ www.slotvanlaarne.be

Laarne Tourist Office

Dorpsstraat 2

→ www.laarne.be

Knowing your Buddha

In Antwerp province lies the path to enlightenment

DENZIL WALTON

So often we hear how religion divides communities, brings turmoil and leads to war. So it's refreshing to visit the Tibetan Institute in Schoten, just north of Antwerp, where the focus is very much on dialogue, tolerance, understanding and harmony. Or as its Director Frans Goetghebeur so eloquently puts it: "We aim to support those liberating tendencies in society that free people from their demons and society from its disasters."

The first Tibetan Centre in Flanders was established in a house in Antwerp in 1975 under the guidance of Lama Ogyen (1933-1990). The temple was located in what was once a studio, but space constraints led to a larger facility, including an authentic Buddhist temple in traditional Tibetan style, being built in Schoten in 1998.

Its focal point is the large, comfortable meditation room with three large statues of the Buddha, a colourful collection of 21 gold *thangkas* (artworks) and the Tibetan version of the Buddhist canonical texts. In the garden is an eight-metre high Stupa of the Thousand Lotuses, which celebrates the birth of the Buddha and reflects various aspects of the path to enlightenment. The institute's library holds more than 1,500 books in Dutch, French, English, German and Tibetan covering a vast range of topics on Buddhism and Tibet, as well as CDs and videos. There is also a small shop selling books, leaflets, texts, incense and other items.

Three full-time professionals and 15 volunteers organise a range of activities, including practical lessons on various Buddhist meditation practices and courses on the essential message of the Buddha. Two decades ago, the institute was the first Buddhist centre in Europe to arrange an introductory program on Buddhism specifically for teachers. It has been followed by nearly 1,500 educators of all levels throughout Belgium.

In all its activities, the institute's focus is very much on integration. "Throughout the history of Buddhism over 25 centuries, it has always integrated smoothly with other cultures, societies and peoples," says Goetghebeur. "In Flanders, we have the same mission. We therefore work closely with other religious groups, enjoy meaningful dialogue with cultural, scientific and political organisations, and build bridges by visiting hospitals, prisons and educational establishments. And of course we welcome anyone to the institute who is interested in finding out more about Buddhism."

The approach seems to be working. Over 6,000 people visit the institute every year. Among them are hundreds of students, from first grade pupils of local schools to university postgraduates working on their theses. The institute also has concrete plans to expand, in preparation for when the Belgian government recognises Buddhism as an official religion that can be taught in schools. The legislation is expected to be passed at the end of this year, and the institute supports the Buddhist Union of Belgium in the creation of a Higher Institute of Buddhist Studies. "This is a key development, as anyone who is going to teach Buddhism in a school should thoroughly know all the traditions and be able to present all the Buddha's teachings without being influenced by their own convictions," explains Goetghebeur.

As to what the Buddha teaches, the basic tenet is to avoid harming others and to help others as much as possible. A way of expressing this is to abandon negative or destructive actions and reactions, to practice virtue and to subdue your own mind.

"By abandoning negative actions, such as stealing or killing, and destructive motivations, such as anger and bigotry, we stop harming ourselves and others," says Goetghebeur. "To practice virtue means to develop beneficial attitudes like unconditional love and compassion. By subduing our mind, we cut away all false projections, thus making ourselves calm and peaceful by understanding reality as it is and not as we distort it through our emotions and dualistic thinking."

With language divisions, religious differences and political discord continually threatening to pull Belgium apart, any teaching that aims to bring people and cultures together is surely relevant. ♦

→ www.tibetaans-instituut.org

In good hands

Frans Goetghebeur has been associated with the Tibetan Institutes in Schoten, Brussels and Huy (Wallonia) for more than 30 years. For 10 years he presided over the Buddhist Union of Belgium and is currently President of the European Buddhist Union. He continues works to promote inter-ideological dialogue within western traditions, disciplines and groups, as well as within Buddhist organisations. Apart from various articles in journals, he has published several books, including *Alles verandert* (*Everything Changes*), *De dood, een metgezel voor het leven* (*Death, a Companion for Life*) and *Duizend gezichten van het Boeddhisme* (*The Thousand Faces of Buddhism*).

What's On?

An Introduction to Meditation for Beginners Discover how to start meditating and what the benefits are. *9 August, 20.00*

Generosity: How and Why Developing a generous spirit is not only a blessing to others but can help you receive blessings yourself. *12 August, 20.00*

Open Day at the Institute Take a guided tour and learn more about the basics of Buddhism. *5 September, 15.00*



Ambiorix opens first flagship store

One of the last remaining producers of a once-thriving Flemish shoe industry, Ambiorix finally opened its first flagship store last week in Tongeren. The brand was founded in 1895 by shoemaker Louis Steyns and survived the crisis that cost his competitors their businesses in the 1970s.

One of the reasons Ambiorix still exists is the label's uncompromising attention to detail and quality. Instead of focusing on mass production, Ambiorix stayed true to its roots. Today, the company is reaping the

benefits of that strategy. In 2007, Ambiorix was sold to the Vavedin family. "To our company, the opening of a flagship store is not just an opening, but a new step forward in our strategy", says Peter Vavedin, company president (pictured). "It's a place where a Belgian and international public can discover our brand and the quality, design and comfort of our product."

And there's a lot to discover. Ambiorix produces 100,000 pairs of shoes annually in their factory in Tongeren.

STÉPHANIE DUVAL

→ www.ambiorix.be



Setting sail for Antwerp

The port city is host for the 2010 Tall Ships Race

MARC MAES

About a million people are about to visit Antwerp's harbour, as the city plays host to the first leg of the Tall Ships Race, an international showcase and competition between traditional tall-masted sailing ships.

This is the port city's fifth time as home base of the event, which kicks off to the public on 10 July. Organised by Sail Training International (STI), the Tall Ships Race was designed to train young people in the art of sailing, while bolstering international friendships. Members of the crew on every ship come from different European countries.

Some 100 vessels will be at the waterfront, including an absolute record of 25 Class A ships, which are ships longer than 50 metres. Previous editions in Antwerp – the last was in 2006 – attracted between 500,000 and one million visitors, and the port thinks that, if the weather holds out, they could break that record, too.

The Class A and B ships will be open to the public during the day, free of charge, with hospitality and corporate business activities taking place in the evenings. Practical on-site organisation of the event depends on a loyal network of 250

volunteers. "We're happy to see that so many people are reacting to our appeal to help us out during the race weekend, from drivers to liaison officers," says Annik Dirkx, press officer of the Antwerp Port Authority.

The Tall Ships will dominate the city, with the Class A cathedrals of the seas moored on the river Scheldt quays and the other vessels in the Eilandje docks. Related activities will take place, including an exhibition of ship and harbour equipment, a maritime market, kids' village and a parade of ships. Boat trips will weave you in among the tall ships, and fireworks light up the port and cast a shine over the innumerable masts and riggings. The ships will already begin arriving by 7 July, and depart on 13 July, when the ships leave the port and quays and prepare for a massive sail parade on the River Scheldt. They then head to Zeebrugge, where the actual race starts on 14 July.

"For me personally, the impressive sail out is the highlight," says Dirkx.

Walking tall

"Although the Tall Ships Races are a nautical event, they go beyond the sailing experience," says Jan



"The true challenge lies in living together on a ship": climbing the rig on a tall sailing ship



The tall ships start pulling into Antwerp's harbour on 7 July

Stalmans, a 28 year old designer, who raced in the event four years ago and has since travelled over 10,000 nautical miles on tall ships. He's part of the group of *Antwerpnaars* who meet weekly in the countdown to the start of the 2010 Tall Ships Race.

"The motto of Sail Training International is 'international friendship and understanding', and that's what it's all about," he continues. "Getting together with young people from all over the world, in a relatively small space, and making it to the next port of call."

Propelled by the enthusiastic public reception when ships enter a new port on their journey, young people from all kinds of backgrounds and nationalities respond to STI's appeal. "Apart from seasickness, the true challenge lies in living together on a ship," says Rob Leye. "Getting to know yourself and your fellow crewmembers – running away isn't an option. The big bonus is that you get to meet people from all over the world."

Another challenge is the duty schedule on board the tall ships. "When we boarded the 'Antwerp Flyer', the officer on duty assigned us into three crews, working in four hour shifts, 'round the clock," says Stalmans. "A huge difficulty for some of us, but you really learn to live within the system and to get the most out of your eight hours of time off."

The officer on duty also takes into account the experience of crewmembers – every team is a mix of "veterans" and new trainees. "Contrary to what you may expect, an open mind and zeal to sail are more important than a swimming certificate," laughs Chuck Lauwers. "That's lesson number one: when you fall off the ship, don't try to swim – just wait until they pick you up."

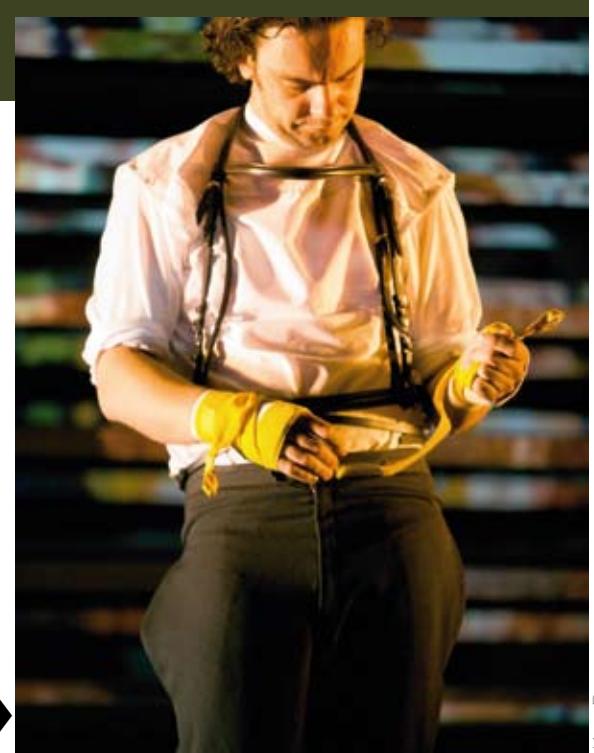
Stalmans survived his first high seas storm soon after the start of the 2006 Tall Ships Race, off the coast of La Coruña, Spain, with gale force winds of eight to nine in the Gulf of Biscay. "There's a proverb saying 'Red sun at night, sailor's

delight; red sun at morning, sailors take warning', and we really lived through that," he remembers.

As members of the STI Belgium branch, the former trainees meet on a regular basis – for some of them, participating in a Tall Ships race was the key to a maritime career. Maarten Vrebos, for instance, worked on an offshore support vessel before signing on to a Tall Ships Race. From there, he decided to go to the Maritime Academy in Antwerp and now works with Redwise marine recruitment for offshore assignments. This year, he charted his own boat, the D-class "Osprey" to participate in the race. All these 20-somethings are racing this year, competing against each other on the "Antwerp Flyer", the "Wylde Swan" and the "Osprey". ♦

10-13 July
Along the Scheldt River
Antwerp

→ www.tallshipsrace2010.be



Goeiedag, Avignon

Theatremakers from across Flanders head to France this week

While hundreds of thousands pour into Antwerp next week for the Tall Ships Race, the city's theatremakers will in fact be heading south to the Avignon Festival, one of the most important events on the European performing arts calendar.

This year, as usual, Flemish theatremakers, choreographers, composers and writers will be on display in abundance. With the exception of the French themselves, no other European territory is as well represented.

Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker, whose work has been performed in the city's atmospheric cloisters since 1983, is renowned there. Her new choreography is based on 14th-century polyphonal compositions from Avignon's Papal court. Introduced in the festival brochure as a "dancer of inexhaustible ardour," her personal appearance this year constitutes an "event" in its own right.

Alain Platel's Les Ballets C de la B has been a regular in Avignon since the much-acclaimed

Bach in 1996. This year, his *Out of Context: For Pina* accompanies a new collaboration with Flemish writer/director Frank van Laecke (dubbed by the local press as "the magician"). *Gardenia*, an exploration of the accumulated hopes, memories and shattered illusions incumbent on growing old will be performed by "mature" dancers. (The piece will premiere in Belgium in September.)

Guy Cassiers of Antwerp's Toneelhuis, meanwhile, is well-respected in Avignon for his visual originality in staging major literary works (Proust, Tolstoy, Duras) and his creative scrutiny of Europe's past and present. Avignon audiences and critics enthused warmly about his exploration of war in *Bezonken Rood*, *Mefisto Forever* and *Wolfskers*. This year, *The Man Without Qualities* opens Germany's Theater der Welt festival before travelling to Avignon and beyond.

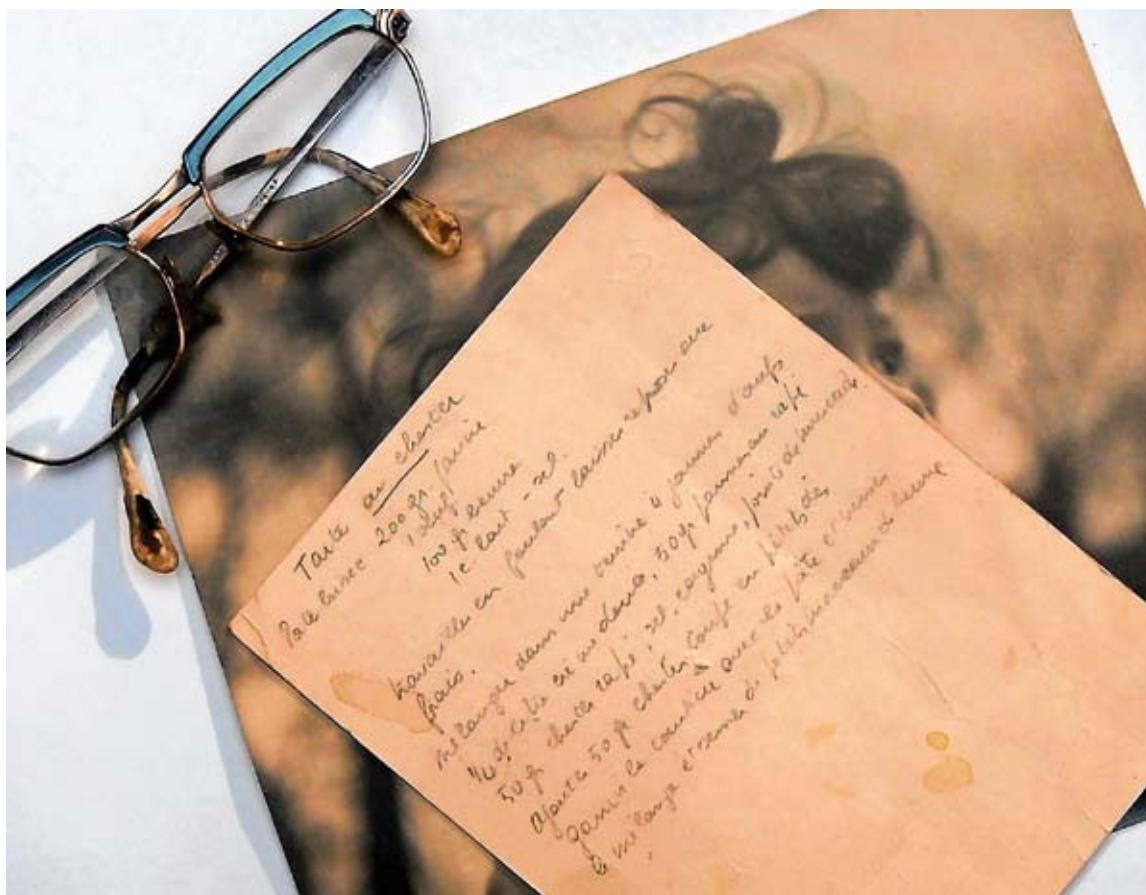
Most Belgians are actually unaware that the Flemish performing arts scene is so celebrated

across the globe and that the work is facilitated by co-productions with major European venues and festivals.

Avignon audiences will also be able to see Belgian Dominique Roodthooft's highly provocative *Smatch* [1], a multilingual, multimedia performance co-produced by Belgium's French-speaking subsidising bodies together with the KVS and the Kunstenfestivaldesarts. The visionary Congolese choreographer Faustin Linyekula, whose magnificent *More, More, More... Future* and *The Dialogue Series iii: Dinozord* were on show recently at KVS as part of the Congo Festival, has been commissioned by Avignon to do an adaptation of Racine's *Berenice*, which will be available for Belgian spectators in March of next year. ♦

→ www.festival-avignon.com

Guy Cassiers' stage adaptation of the novel *The Man Without Qualities* takes to the stage in Avignon



A Nun's Room

ANNA JENKINSON

Jeanne is a nun, probably into her 90s by now, who reads a lot (and not just the Bible), plays bridge by herself and has a soft spot for Belgian beer, Westmalle triple to be precise. At least that's the picture I have in my mind of this fictional character.

I built up this image of her while visiting *Jeanne: A Nun's Room*, a unique installation by Scottish artist Paul Morris in a small, basement room in the EU quarter. "You walk into her room and get to know her; she's a semi-real person," he says. "It's like anyone's room with its own distinctive features and character."

Morris, who has been living in Brussels for eight years, started creating the character more than a year ago. He trawled flea markets, bought items off the internet and newspapers ads and tracked down members of church and state, searching for the details that would bring the room to life.

As you look around the room, you slowly realise how many of Jeanne's belongings there are to discover in this small space, from the unsurprising possessions of a nun to some that may raise a

few eyebrows. Without giving too much away, be sure to poke around a bit, looking underneath objects, opening drawers and generally enjoying the guilty pleasure of voyeurism. Many pieces aren't immediately visible, but every one has a story to tell.

One of the pictures on the wall, for instance, is a painting of a woman on a bridge next to a watermill; this is the object that triggered the whole project. When he found the painting, signed "Jeanne Etienne, 1939", Morris realised he'd found his starting point for developing the character. Creating the room, he says, was "a form of writing," as he decided who this woman would be and what eccentricities she would have.

Not that she only exists as Morris sees her. The installation, which has already shown at two other sites in Brussels, prompts people to "make up all kinds of stories about her," Morris says with a smile.

The installation is now on show at Yaruna, an ethnic clothes designer shop. Morris has worked with the shop's owner before on art projects, and they plan to keep the basement as a permanent exhibition space.

In fact, the next fictitious room is already in the works: as of October, Jeanne's room will disappear and be replaced by one belonging to a young Parisian seamstress. And then, who knows? Maybe Antwerp, says Morris, "somewhere I haven't yet exhibited". ♦

Until 14 October

Yaruna
Waversteenweg 214
Brussels

www.anunsroom.com

MORE EXHIBITIONS THIS WEEK

The Noble Art: Boxing → *Sportimonium, Zemst*

More Force Than Necessary → *In Flanders Fields, Ypres*

Charles van der Stappen → *Museums of Fine Arts, Brussels*



Alsemberg

CC De Meent
Gemeenveldstraat 34; 02.359.16.00
www.demeent.be
JUL 9 21.00 Ten Form Fist

Antwerp

Café Capital
Rubenslei 37 – Stadspark;
www.cafecapital.be
Until SEP 9 18.00-5.00 Bar Jeudi: food lounge, exhibitions, music and dance parties every Thursday night
JUL 9 22.00 Café au lait party

Café d'Anvers

Ververslei 15; 03.226.38.70
www.cafedanvers.com
JUL 8 21.00 Ralphes
JUL 9 21.00 Akira + Phonebone & Kaputnik + Kazzino, more

Rivierenhof open-air theatre

Turnhoutsebaan 232; 070.222.192
www.openluchttheater.be
JUL 8 20.30 Flip Kowlier + The Original Wailers **JUL 9** 20.30 The Scene **JUL 12** 20.30 Dweezil Zappa Plays Zappa **JUL 14** 20.00 The Opposites

Kelly's Irish Pub

Keyserlei 27; www.kellys.be
JUL 9-10 21.30/22.30 Steve Keane

Brussels

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

Piola Libri

Franklinstraat 66-68; 02.736.93.91
www.piolalibri.be
JUL 9 19.00 Coffee or Not

Recyclart

Ursulinenstraat 25; 02.502.57.34
www.recycleart.be
JUL 8 22.00-23.00 Cinemusik: Rajasthan Live Cinema, outdoor screening
JUL 9 Cheb eb el Farah trio (Bel/Mor) 1.00 Omar Souleyman (Syria) 2.00 Maga Bo (Brazil) 3.45 Suckafish P Jones (Australia)
JUL 15 20.00 DJ Quilombo 22.00 Cinemusik: Jupiter's Dance, outdoor screening 23.00 Ambrassband

Ghent

Kinky Star
Vlasmarkt 9; 09.223.48.45
www.kinkystar.com
JUL 10 21.00 Tiger Counter Of Drog Orkestar
JUL 11 21.00 Dóttir Slonza
JUL 13 21.00 I Am Oak

Ostend

Kursaal (Casino)
Monacoplein 2; 070.22.56.00
www.kursaalostende.be
JUL 10 20.00 Status Quo



Antwerp

Buster
Kaasrui 1; 03.232.51.53
www.busterpodium.be
JUL 9 21.30 Thomas Nobels Trio **JUL 9** 22.00 Timescape **JUL 10** 22.00 News from the Stars **JUL 14** 21.30 Root **JUL 15** 21.30 Buster BabL Jam

Café Hopper

Leopold de Waelstraat 2; 03.248.49.33
www.cafehopper.be
JUL 11 16.00 Nadine Nix Band
JUL 12 21.00 The Flying Fish Jumps

Brussels

Café Bonnefooi
Steenstraat 8; 0487.62.22.31
www.bonnefooi.be
JUL 7 22.00 Azuca Trio **JUL 11** 20.30 The Bonnefooi Acoustic Jam **JUL 12** 22.00

DON'T MISS

De Gulden Ontsporing

11 July, 12.00-23.00
Grote Markt, Brussels

Flemish Community Day marks the anniversary of the Battle of the Golden Spurs, when France marched toward Bruges to subdue uprisings in this relatively new part of its kingdom. French forces underestimated the numbers of militia from Bruges, Ghent and Ypres and lost the battle fought on 11 July, 1302, near Kortrijk. These days, the event is marked by much less bloody events, such as fireworks displays and this 12-hour marathon of Dutch-language singers, including Eva De Roovere (*pictured*), Will Tura and Thé Lau.



www.deguldenontsporing.be

Pianobar Bonnefooi with EcilArtex **JUL 13** 22.00 Frederick Leeber and Domien Holthof

Sounds Jazz Club
Tulpenstraat 28; 02.512.92.50
www.soundsjazzclub.be
JUL 7 22.00 Chamaquiendo, salsa
JUL 8 22.00 Julien Tassin Trio (tribute to Jimi Hendrix)
JUL 9-10 22.00 Tootsie & Arakis Duo

The Music Village
Steenstraat 50; 02.513.13.45
www.themusicvillage.com
JUL 7 20.30 Philippe Thuriot, accordion
JUL 13-17 10.30/21.00 Christophe Astolfi Quartet

Viage
Anspachlaan 30; 070.44.34.43
www.viage.be
JUL 10 22.00 The Green Dolphins

Ghent
Charlatan
Vlasmarkt 6; 09.224.24.57
www.charlatan.be
JUL 8 22.00 Kazzen & Koo
JUL 15 22.00 Moiano & Friends

El Negocio
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 9 20.30 Melina Gianni & Guillermo Wulff
JUL 10 20.30 Luis Reis

Café Bonnefooi
Steenstraat 8; 0487.62.22.31
www.bonnefooi.be
JUL 14 22.00 Tounga

Le Bar du Matin
Alsembergsesteenweg 172; 02.537.71.59
http://bardumatin.blogspot.com
JUL 8 21.00 Tokyo Chutei Iki (Japan)
JUL 9 21.00 Boris Viande 'Balkan Brass Boss' (France)
JUL 15 21.00 Nyali (Zambia)

Ghent
Trepunt
Bij Sint-Jacobs 18; 09.225.36.76
www.trepuntvzw.be
JUL 9 21.00 Mixtuur
JUL 10 21.00 Djamel & group
JUL 12 21.00 Walter De Buck



Brussels
St Michael and St Gudula Cathedral
Sinter-Goedeleplein; 02.507.82.00
www.cathedralestmichel.be
JUL 13 20.00 Frédéric Blanc, organ: Bach, Buxtehude, more



Ghent
Vlaamse Opera
Schouwburgstraat 3; 070.22.02.02
www.vlaamseopera.be
Until JUL 10 19.30 Peter Grimes by Benjamin Britten, with Jorma Silvasti (Peter Grimes), Judith Howarth (Ellen Orford). Conducted by Leif Segerstam and Yannis Poussourikas, staged by David Alden (in the original English, with Dutch surtitles)



Ghent
NTGent Schouwburg
Sint-Baafsplein 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

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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

Diamond Museum
Koninkin Astridplein 13-23; 03.202.48.90
www.diamantmuseum.be
Until 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

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
Arduinckai 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

Bozar
Ravensteinstraat 23; 02.507.82.00
www.bozar.be
Until SEP 26 GEO-Graphics: Mapping Historical and Contemporary Art Practice in Africa, African objects from Belgian museums come face-to-face with work of contemporary African artists (part of Visionary Africa)
Until OCT 10 A Passage to Asia: 25 Centuries of Exchange between Asia and Europe, a selection of 300 objects, including funeral urns, jewellery, semi-precious stones, gold and glass, Buddhist and Hindu images, ivory, manuscripts, textiles and archaeological finds

De Elektriciteitscentrale
Sint-Katelijneplein 44; 02.279.64.45
Until OCT 3 Fighting the Box: 20 Belgian Designers, 20 Stories Behind the Products, the relationship between local designers and the international industry

European Quarter
Wetstraat;
www.thehumanrightsproject.org
Until SEP 10 The Human Rights Project, outdoor exhibition of photographs of South Africa by Lukas Maximilian Hüller and Juliane R Hauser

Folklore Museum
Eikstraat 19; 02.514.53.97
www.brussels.be
Until AUG 22 Manneken-Pis: A Very European Member of Brussels, costumes from the wardrobe of the famous Brussels icon, contributed by every member of the EU

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.ieselp.be
Until AUG 21 Médium, work by Belgian photographer Vincen Beeckman

Jewish Museum of Belgium
Minimstraat 21; 02.512.19.63
www.mjb-jmb.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
Until JUL 18 Amen, photographs of ordinary South Africans playing football and their ingenious home-made footballs by Belgian photographer Jessica Hilltout
Until AUG 8 Congo in Limbo, award-winning series by Belgian photographer Cédric Gerbehaye

Royal Museum of the Armed Forces
Jubelpark 3; 02.737.78.33
www.legermuseum.be
Until AUG 31 Andreas Magdanz: Camp Vogelsang, large-format photos of the Rhineland training camp in North Westphalia by the German photographer
Until OCT 30 Lisolo Na Bisu (Our Story) and Tokopesa saluti (We Salute You), objects, documents photographs and audiovisual material reveal 125 years of Belgo-Congolese military relations

DON'T MISS



A Masterful Dilemma

Until 24 October
Design Museum Ghent

During the Gentse Feesten, you can get free admission to all city museums in Ghent. That includes the Design Museum, an oasis of calm right in the heart of all the festival action. This retrospective of Flemish porcelain designer Pieter Stockmans in the year he turns 70 is long overdue: among his numerous world-famous decorative and utilitarian designs is the Sonja line of coffee cups (*pictured*), a 1967 design so popular, there are millions of them across the planet.

► www.designmuseumgent.be

Royal Museum of Fine Arts

Regentschapsstraat 3; 02.508.32.11

www.fine-arts-museum.be

Until SEP 26 Charles van der Stappen (1843-1910), sculptures by the Belgian artist

Until SEP 26 Marcel Broodthaers, modern works with objects from everyday life by the late Belgian artist

Royal Museums of Art and History

Jubelpark 10; 02.741.72.11

www.kmkg-mrah.be

Until AUG 29 Isabelle de Borchgrave's I Medici: a Renaissance in Paper, life-size paper replicas of historical garments

Until AUG 29 Doorsnede (Intersection), 14 contemporary artists show their work among the museum's permanent collections

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

Town Hall

Grote Markt; 02.279.64.31

www.brussels.be

Until SEP 19 The Age of Symbolism in Latvia, paintings, etchings and drawings from turn-of-the-20th-century Latvia, including work by Jānis Rozentāls, Vilhelms Purvītis and Jānis Valters

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 Wangechi Mutu: My Dirty Little Heaven, collages by the New York-based Kenyan artist, Deutsche Bank's Artist of the Year

Yaruna

Waversesteenweg 214B; 02.512.93.12

www.anunsroom.com

Until OCT 14 Jeanne: A Nun's Room, installation by Scottish artist Paul Morris

YUM

Van Volxemlaan 295; 02.502.69.12

www.ccnoa.org

Until JUL 9 For Your Eyes Only, group exhibition organised by the Center for Contemporary Non-Objective Art

Deurle

Museum Dhondt-Dhaenens

Museumlaan 14; 09.282.51.23

www.museumdd.be

Until SEP 19 Biënnale van de Schilderkunst: het sublieme voorbij (Biënnale of Painting: The Sublime Past, a subjective look at painting over the last 100 years (also at Roger Raveelmuseum in Machelen-Zulte)

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

Until OCT 24 Super Normal: Sensations of the Everyday, objects from around the world selected by designers Naoto Fukasawa and Jasper Morrison

Until OCT 24 Piet Stockmans: Retrospective, works by the legendary Flemish porcelain designer

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

Until OCT 3 Xanadu! The SMAK collection presented by Hans Theys

Verzameld Werk

Kortrijk

Museum Kortrijk 1302
Houtmarkt-Begijnpark; 056.27.78.50,
www.kortrijk1302.be
JUL 9-JAN 9 2011 OnGELOOFlijk: van
hemel, hel en halleluja (UnBELIEFable:
From Heaven, Hell and Hallelujah),
religious objects and symbols from the
past 500 years

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 the late artist, a
member of the Young British Artists
movement

Machelen-Zulte

Het Roger Raveelmuseum
Gildestraat 2-8; 09.381.60.00
www.rogerraveelmuseum.be
Until SEP 19 Biënnale van de
Schilderkunst: het sublieme voorbij
(Biennale of Painting: The Sublime Past,
a subjective look at painting over the
last 100 years (also at Museum Dhondt-
Dhaenens in Deurle)

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 JUL 11 South Africa 2010: The
World Cup, poster project with works
by 17 international artists plus video
installations on African football
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

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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
Until OCT 10 More Force Than
Necessary, photos and films by Brazilian
artist-in-residence Rodrigo Braga



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
Until DEC 31 across the country
www.eu2010.be

Antwerp

Parkfeesten Hoboken: Free outdoor
music festival every Wednesday
JUL 7-28 20.00 in Broydenborg Park,
Marneflaan 3
www.hoboken.be

July 11 Celebration: Free concerts
by Flemish groups and musicians in
celebration Flemish Community Day,
organised by the city of Antwerp
JUL 11 19.00 on the Grote Markt
www.antwerpen.be

Tall Ships Race: Starting point of
the internationally renowned sailing
competition, with tours and other events
open to the public
JUL 10-13 at Antwerp's quays
www.tallshipsrace2010.be

Zomer van Antwerpen: Annual outdoor
summer festival with parties and
concerts, circus acts, performances, films,
BBQs and more
Until AUG 29 across the city
www.zva.be

Bruges

Cactus Festival: Music festival featuring
David Gray, Elvis Costello & The
Sugarcane, Macy Gray, Tori Amos,
Heavy Trash and more
JUL 9-11 at Minnewaterpark
www.cactusfestival.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

Best of Belgium: Celebration of
Belgium's presidency of the EU, with
an exhibition match between Flemish
tennis player Kim Clijsters and American
Serena Williams, and a concert of Belgian
bands, including Ozark Henry, Daan,
Toots Thielemans and more
JUL 8 19.00-23.00 at King Boudewijn
Stadium, Marathonlaan 135
www.best-of-belgium.be

Brosella Folk & Jazz: Free outdoor event
with family entertainment, a children's
programme, folk music on Saturday, jazz
on Sunday, plus unconventional musical

CAFE SPOTLIGHT

MELISSA MAKI

The beer collectors

There are plenty of people who collect everyday objects like stamps and coins. Dirk Van Dyck and Leen Boudewijn, owners of the **Bierhuis Kulminator** in Antwerp, have a more unusual hobby: they collect beer.

For over 35 years, this husband and wife duo has sought out, collected and shared unique beers through their specialty beer bar. And theirs is a collection the likes of which most people have never seen. For this reason, beer aficionados from all over the world seek out the Kulminator.

The building that houses the café doesn't look like anything special from the outside, but inside you'll find a cosy, dark atmosphere with classical music, creeping vines and wandering cats. It's the perfect place to hole up with a beer or two while taking in the magnificent collection of more than 500 beer glasses. There's also a lovely terrace out back.

Strong and old beers predominate at the Kulminator, which takes its name from a German beer that, at one time, held the distinction of being the world's strongest beer. Van Dyck and Boudewijn started their business in 1974 and have vintages in the cellar that date back to then. They have a large selection of aged Trappist beers like Chimay and Rochefort. You can even find the elusive and sought after Westvleteren here. Most dates from 2004 and earlier. (I'm told that restrictions on third-party reselling weren't so strict back then.)

It's overwhelming to peruse through the Kulminator's hefty menu of 750 beers. You'll find nine on tap, including a couple of solid regulars like Du Pont's Avec Les Bons Voeux and also more rare brews. One big bonus is that you can purchase any of the bottled beers – at bar price – for takeout.

I recommend trying beers by the De Dolle and De Struise breweries. These two small West Flanders breweries make some exceptional beer, but they don't distribute widely. You can also tell them what you like and ask for a recommendation. Just promise me that you won't commit blasphemy by ordering a Leffe like the American tourists sitting next to us.

Bierhuis Kulminator
Vleminckveld 32
Antwerp



© Melissa Maki

instrument workshops
JUL 10-11 15.00-23.00 at Théâtre
de Verdure, Ossegem Park, near the
Atomium
www.brosella.be

Brussels Beach: A full-fledged beach
with deck chairs, cocktails, food, water
sprays, sports, circus acts, concerts, canal
cruises and more

Until AUG 22 along the Akenkaai on
the canal
www.brusselbad.be

Bruxellons 2010: Annual summer
theatre festival with an emphasis on
comedy

JUL 13-AUG 30 at Château du
Karreveld, Jean de la Hoeselaan 3
02.724.24.24, www.bruxellons.net

**De Gulden Ontsporing (The Golden
Spurs)**: Flemish Community Day
celebrations with a free music festival
on the Grote Markt, brass bands, street
theatre and children's activities
JUL 11 12.00 in the city centre
www.deguldenontsporing.be

Festivaeria: Outdoor summer festival
providing a platform for young artists
with an open stage for musicians, singers,
DJs, dancers, bodypainters, jugglers,
photographers and street theatre artists

JUL 10-SEP 18 at Jubelpark
www.myspace.com/playnewconcept

Midis-Minimes: Lunchtime classical
concerts all summer long

Until AUG 27 at Miniemerkerk,
Miniemerstraat 62, and the Royal
Conservatory, Regentschapsstraat 30
www.midis-minimes.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.recyclart.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

World Cup South Africa: Free live
screening of all World Cup football
matches on big screens, plus Happy Hour
16.00-17.00

Until JUL 11 at Bozar, Ravensteinstraat
www.bozar.be

Dilbeek

Vijverfestival: Free family-friendly music
festival on the banks of a pond in the
park

JUL 10 14.00 at town hall
www.vijverfestival.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,
Godshuizenlaan
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

Until AUG 31 at Groenestaakstraat 37
09.227.99.94, www.parkkaffee.be

Kortrijk

Kortrijk Congé: Free all-night cultural
festival with dance, theatre, film, night
walks, exhibitions and concerts featuring
Omar Souleyman, Daau, Hoquets and
more

JUL 10 20.00-8.00 at Kunstencentrum
BUDA
www.kortrijkconge.be

Leuven

Belevenissen: Outdoor music festival
with free concerts every Friday night

Until JUL 30 20.30-23.30 in six locations
across the city centre
016.27.22.54, www.leuven.be

Colora Festival: World music festival
featuring Bai Kamara Jr, Klezmatic Zirkus,
Capoeira Vida e Arte, more

Until JUL 24 in venues across the city
www.colora.org

Zomer van Sint-Pieter: Lunchtime
classical concerts every weekday

Until AUG 26 at 12.15 in Sint-
Pieterskerk, Grote Markt, and 30CC-
Schouwburg, Bondgenotenlaan 21
www.zomer-van-sint-pieter.be

Lommel

Gracias a la vida: Multicultural music
festival featuring Kraak & Smaak, Lize
Accoe, W Victor, Bottle of Moonshine,
Los Callejeros and more

JUL 10 13.00 at Park Burgemeestershuis,
Stationstraat 2
www.graciasalavida.be

Ostend

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

Until AUG 28 on the beach
www.fuzee.be

Woosh! Festival: Free outdoor music
festival, with Das Pop, Laston & Geo,
Samtex, Customs, Mint & Mish Mash
SoundSystem and more

JUL 14-17 in Langestraat
www.wosha.be

Watou

Kunstenfestival Watou: Second edition
of the arts parours featuring works by
more than 100 artists, writers and poets,
focusing on the link between word and
image

Until SEP 5 in Watou
www.watou2010.be

Werchter</h

SHARON LIGHT

bite



House of Lalibela

When I think of Ethiopian food, I can't help but think of the joke Billy Crystal makes in *When Harry Met Sally*: "Hey, I didn't know that they had food in Ethiopia. This will be a quick meal. I'll order two empty plates, and we can leave."

In reality, my Ethiopian experiences have filled me to bursting, and House of Lalibela in Leuven was no exception.

Seble Abebe de Bie and Daniel Debessay, both originally from Ethiopia, are the owners; they are also cousins. Abebe de Bie moved to Leuven after marrying a Belgian man, while Debessay ran a restaurant in the US state of Minnesota before moving here to open this restaurant three years ago.

The restaurant is named after King Lalibela, who, in the 12th and 13th centuries, attempted to build a New Jerusalem in Ethiopia; the city and its churches carved from rock remain a holy site of pilgrimage.

There are further explanations in the menu: you'll read a brief introduction to *berbere* (a spice mixture) and *niter kibbeh*, a spiced clarified butter that is indispensable for Ethiopian cooking.

The basis – literally – of Ethiopian cuisine is the *injera*, a spongy, slightly sour pancake. A large *injera* covers your plate, and the food you order is arranged on top of it. Using additional bits of *injera* and your fingers, you scoop up bites of the meat and vegetable preparations.

House of Lalibela offers a series of platters, ideal for people trying out Ethiopian cuisine for the first time, or for those who just like variety (and not a bad deal at €16, or €27 for two). I ordered the vegetarian platter, which featured five dishes: two lentil preparations, cooked spinach, a mix of green beans and carrots and a cabbage and potato dish.

The meal conformed to what I have come to expect from Ethiopian food: vegetables seem to either be served raw in a salad, or cooked at length with onions and spices. Although I was told the lentils would be spicy, I tasted more spiced than

spicy. No complaints, even if it was lacking true heat.

Another at my table opted for the beef platter, which involved four incarnations involving traditional spices, including one that was simmered in wine. My other friend initially leaned towards *kitfo*, a traditional Ethiopian dish featuring raw beef mixed with *niter kibbeh* and served with cheese and spinach, but he ultimately ordered lamb.

While the main courses are certainly plentiful enough to be a meal on their own, we also split one starter, *buticha*. Described as "chickpea dip", we expected something hummus-like. It wasn't far off, but it was chunkier than hummus, and it was served hot, with a tangy flavour of garlic and spices. A worthwhile addition to our meal.

House of Lalibela also offers the traditional Ethiopian coffee service. These ceremonies can take place three times a day in Ethiopia and present an opportunity for the community to gather to share news. You are warned that the ceremony can take hours, although I suspect that is more for community gossip than as part of a dinner in Leuven.

The restaurant is decorated with paintings and lampshades that Abebe de Bie makes herself. The space is charming and comfortable, with colourful pillows on the chairs. And the service is friendly and helpful, especially with the inevitable questions that arise from eating this foreign cuisine. It makes for a great introduction and will please those familiar with Ethiopian cuisine, too.

→ www.houseoflalibela.be

Brusselsestraat 59, Leuven

Tues-Fri 19.00-22.00; Sat 18.00-23.00;
Sun 18.00-21.00

★ Authentic Ethiopian food friendly enough for first-timers and quality enough for the initiated

Contact Bite at flandersbite@gmail.com

NEXT WEEK IN FLANDERS TODAY #138

Feature

Georges Rodenbach wrote a novel that made Bruges famous – but not for pretty lace or cute canals. We visit the 19th-century spots of *Bruges-la-mort*

Arts

Bozar's Visionary Africa ensures a full summer programme of music, exhibitions and performance. We take a look at the highlights

Living

Van Volxemlaan is an amazing example of the ability of a neighbourhood to transform. Our journalist tracks the changes that have made this Brussels' area a leader in arts and culture

TALKING DUTCH

ALISTAIR MACLEAN

© ThePeekleFINGER



• ongeval •

A little-known fact is that the word "accident" is one of the oldest in the English language. Whether the Dutch equivalent *ongeval* is equally old is for someone else to answer. Certainly, accidents have always seemed to be waiting to happen: there are buses to be fallen under and ladders to be fallen off.

I got thinking about *ongevallen* when a colleague phoned me the other day from home saying she had fallen over her dog and torn some ligaments. At the same moment, I had in fact been reading about the unfortunate Alexander De Croo under the headline *ADC rolt het ziekenhuis uit* – ADC rolls out of hospital. The young leader of the Flemish Liberals took a tumble, with his horse Chronos landing on top of him: *hij brak daarbij zijn rechtervoet en zijn elleboog* – he broke his right foot and his elbow. And this on top of losing the election.

And, in a recent newspaper, the front page shows the Flemish minister-president, Kris Peeters, letting his stick take the weight months after he broke his hip when he fell from his horse. A quick glance at the calendar reveals that there is only one Friday the 13th this year, and that's in August, so other forces must be at work.

Once you start looking, you find accidents all around. Take the jogger out improving her health who got hit by a train at a level

crossing. She got off lightly: *een armbreuk* – a broken arm and *een gebroken wervel* – a broken vertebra.

Even when you think you're in good hands, accidents are lurking, as a local headline related: *Zieke vrouw valt uit rolstoel in ziekenwagen* – Sick woman falls out of wheelchair in ambulance.

And it's not funny: she was black and blue, her chair is *zwaar beschadigd* – badly damaged – and, to make matters worse, the ambulance service refuses to buy her a new chair.

Too many times you read about "*zwaargewond na een ongeval*" – seriously injured after an accident". Occasionally, the only damage is *blitschade* – dents ("tin damage"). Strangely, hospitals report fewer patients in their A&E departments when the moon is full. (Probably due to the increased light rather than some mystical reason.)

The good news for us as we head for the beach is that in the holiday period *spoedgevallen* – emergency cases – also drop: lying on the beach is a relatively safe non-activity, if you discount sunburn, jellyfish and 13 August.

So, Alexander is on the mend and ready to take to his *rolstoel* to join discussions on the forming of a federal government. As for Chronos, there's no word on his condition after the *ongeval*, but, usually, no news is good news.

THE LAST WORD . . .

Tweet nothings

"Not at all. Want to learn to know you. You to?"

Acting prime minister Yves Leterme meant to send a personal Twitter message, in English, to an unknown follower but sent a message to the entire Twitterstream instead

Look on the bright side

"Since liberalising in 2003, we've lost about 13% of our customers. If Electrabel was really such a problem company, surely we'd have lost more than that?"

Electrabel CEO Sophie Dutordoir, who sees the glass as 87% full

U-turn

"Belgium = Absurdistan"

Unio boss Karel Van Eetvelt, after a lawyer who drafted the law on sales periods won a court case to overturn the same law

And now the good news

"And there I was trying my best for a place in the history books, but nobody will ever read them. On the other hand, from now on there's no need to use unbleached coffee filters."

A reader of *Het Laatste Nieuws* online, informed that some scientists believe mankind will die out in the next 100 years