

Marble palace 6

The newly opened Jain Temple is the largest of its kind outside of India and likely to bring more tourists into the Wilrijk district of Antwerp



Embracing Brussels 8

In the final of our Portrait of a City series, our photo-journalist suggests you stop griping about the capital and start enjoying it for what it is: big, dirty and utterly engaging



Cool classical 13

This year's Klara Festival lives up to its reputation for making classical music bewitchingly hip through its irreverent methods at interpreting Austrian composer Gustav Mahler



© REUTERS/Sébastien Pirlet

#145



In Europe's spotlight

The Flemish region is heading up key Council of Ministers formations during Belgium's presidency of the European Union

LEO CENDROWICZ

August is usually the quietest month of the year, in Flanders as elsewhere in Europe. But this year is different: with Belgium holding the rotating presidency of the European Union for the six months from July to December, Flemish officials have been in a whirl of activity all summer. Thanks to the country's unique federal structure, many of the awesome responsibilities for directing EU business during the presidency will be assumed by Flanders – along with Wallonia and the Brussels region.

► *continued on page 5*

Danneels tapes released to press

Secret recordings reveal talks with victim of abuse

ALAN HOPE

A victim of abuse from within the Catholic church taped meetings he had with Cardinal Godfried Danneels, former archbishop of the Catholic church in Belgium, last spring. Released to *De Standaard* last week, the tapes make it clear that Danneels made a number of attempts to silence the victim of sexual abuse carried out by the bishop of Bruges over a period of 13 years. Danneels, who has repeatedly denied trying to cover up the matter, met with the bishop, Roger Vangheluwe, and the victim in the case, who is in fact Vangheluwe's nephew, in early April, after the victim threatened to go public with his story.

It has now emerged that the victim was secretly taping the meeting. One copy of the tape was sent to investigating magistrate Wim De Troy in Brussels and another to *De Standaard* newspaper, which published transcripts last weekend.

► *continued on page 3*

Restoration shows Antwerp portrait is a true Master

The Royal Museum of Fine Arts in Antwerp (KMSKA) has a new painting by a Flemish master. "Portrait of a Man", thought for more than a century to have been painted by a pupil of Jan Gossaert, now turns out to be the work of Gossaert himself. The news could not have come at a better time; the painting is on loan to the Metropolitan Museum in New York for an exhibition on Gossaert (1478-1532) and will now feature on posters and billboards. It was in fact the Metropolitan that commissioned the restoration work that led to the discovery.

Gossaert, sometimes called Jan Mabuse after his possible birthplace at Maubeuge in Wallonia, was an important figure in the Antwerp Mannerists school of the early 16th century. He is centrally situated between Jan Van Eyck's mediaeval tradition and Rubens' Baroque and was a main proponent of the Renaissance currents coming out of Italy, where he travelled at a time when both Michelangelo and Raphael were working in Rome.

► *continued on page 3*

The portrait shown before and after restoration in New York ►



© KMSKA

OFFSIDE

Sheep ahoy!



Brussels awaits the arrival in about two weeks of a flock of 450 sheep that left Berlin in June to travel here by road. The sheep's arrival will coincide with an international symposium on the contribution made by flocks of sheep to biodiversity on 14 September in Jezus-Eik. From Brussels, the sheep will walk via Luxembourg to Trier, completing their 1,200 kilometre trek, if all goes according to plan, on 17 October.

This year has been named by the UN as the International Year of Biodiversity, after governments decided in 2001 to halt the loss of biodiversity by the end of the decade – a goal which is a long way from being met. As a mark of support (and a critique of the lack of progress), shepherds from different countries assembled the flock for the Berlin-to-Brussels drive.

Flocks are regularly moved to seasonal pastures, extending the range of grazing land and allowing time for renewed growth. That process, called transhumance, has the unintended benefit of allowing the sheep to act as a seed vector, carrying plant seeds over long distances and allowing them to spread to areas where they do not compete with the parent plants. But transhumance is becoming less common, particularly in more developed countries.

The Belgian leg of the drive is under the control of Johan Schouteden, who keeps sheep and cows on Sonnisheide farm in Helchteren, Limburg province. "We'll be trying to travel with the sheep through the peaceful, rural areas of Flanders – through the natural sand paths that are still left in our landscape," Schouteden said. A blog following the day-by-day progress of the trek is at www.helderstocht.be/blog.

Letter to the editor

I read with interest your article about the Indian diamond community in Antwerp (28 July). On one hand, I admire the business acumen of the 550 Indian diamond traders in our city. On the other hand, I am afraid that with this change of protagonists, Antwerp might lose its title of the world's diamond capital since this community is not native to our city and could relatively easily dethrone the centuries-old diamond tradition here and turn the commerce indeed eastwards.

I believe that our authorities have to be reasonably flexible towards this branch of the industry but also regulate more extensively the somewhat hazy commerce.

Professor AJ Malinsky
Department of Theology
University of Antwerp

FLANDERS TODAY

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



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

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FLANDERS TODAY
SEPTEMBER 1, 2010

News in brief

A 12-year-old Antwerp **boy saved his own life** and that of his father's when he took control of their car and steered it to a safe halt after his father suffered a seizure. The boy said the car suddenly began to go faster, and his father was blinking strangely. He steered the car onto the shoulder, used the handbrake to stop it, then called emergency services.

Vittorio Pirozzi, the 58-year-old arrested last month and accused of being a capo of the Neapolitan mafia on the run from a 15-year sentence for drug trafficking, has lodged an appeal against his extradition to Italy. On being arrested, Pirozzi (who denies any mafia connections) said he preferred to sit out his sentence in a Belgian prison out of fear for his life.

This year's **Gordel** – the annual walking, running and cycling event through the Flemish belt surrounding Brussels – will be celebrated with the unveiling of a new rose variety named De Rosa De Gordel, to mark the event's 30th edition. The rose, a cross between Stephen's Big Purple and a floribunda, took five years to develop. This year's Gordel is expected to attract more than last year's 68,000 participants and

features concerts by Helmut Lotti, Natalia and Raymond van het Groenewoud.

Night trains laid on by the rail authority NMBS for the **two U2 concerts** at the King Boudewijn Stadium at the end of September will only travel to Flemish stations, it was revealed last week. The NMBS said the decision to service destinations in Hasselt, Antwerp, Kortrijk and Ostend was taken to reflect the needs of the largely Flemish audience.

Shop staff in Belgium are the friendliest in Europe, according to a survey carried out by the Mystery Shopping Providers Association Europe, which sends out "mystery shoppers" trained to evaluate retail staff's performance.

Four **unwelcome visitors – venomous black widow spiders** – were last week found stowed away on US Army vehicles returning from Africa to Germany via the Port of Antwerp. A pest-control company is seeking the approval of the federal health ministry to use methyl bromide, a poisonous compound, to eradicate the spiders.

As methyl bromide is banned throughout the EU, an alternative will have to be found. Meanwhile the 160 vehicles, which according to an expert could contain dozens more of the creatures, are blocked in the port.

The prosecutor's office in Bruges has begun an investigation into the **drowning of a six-year-old Charleroi boy** last month at Bredene, following allegations that the emergency services on land and at sea failed to work together to reach the boy in time. Among other problems, the coastguard waited 10 minutes to pass the alarm on to the volunteer lifeboat at Zeebrugge. The governor of West Flanders, Paul Breyne, said the individual services would each carry out an internal enquiry, as well as cooperate with the judicial investigation.

A Bruges court has continued the detention of **Luis Maria Zengotitabengoa**, the man alleged to be a senior figure in the Basque separatist movement ETA. He was arrested in Ostend last week on the basis of a European arrest warrant. Zengotitabengoa has applied for political asylum in Belgium, claiming he would be killed if he returns to Spain.

FACE OF FLANDERS

Kato Marnef

Although printed with the words "Buy an azalea for Roosje", it's really eight-year-old Kato Marnef on the poster for a new campaign by the cancer charity Kom op tegen Kanker (Come Up Against Cancer), which is selling azaleas to raise funds from 17 to 19 September.

And Kato is not a child model, she's a cancer survivor. Two years ago, she was diagnosed with germ cell cancer, a rare form of tumour which affects 1 in 250,000 children under 16. The tumour is in Kato's lower abdomen, where it likely formed during development of the embryo.

Kato's illness came to light in April 2008 when she was examined after repeated complaints of stomach pain. The family doctor referred her to the Queen Paola hospital for sick children in Antwerp, where doctors discovered the malignant mass. Chemotherapy started two days later, and for the family – father Ronny, mother Hilde and older brother and sisters – it was the start of a long battle. Chemotherapy was followed by an operation to remove the tumour in June of last year. Then it was a matter of waiting to see if the whole procedure had been a success.

"We agreed with the children that when we were with Kato, we'd have a good time," Ronny explained. "We could do all our crying at home, but we wouldn't allow the little one to notice." While mother and father put their jobs to one side, they helped keep a growing number of fans and supporters informed with a blog of Kato's activities, at www.bloggen.be/katoisziek, where last week good news appeared. "We've noticed that people are still reading this blog," read the post. "We're pleased to announce that Kato is on the poster for 'Buy an azalea for Roosje'. Kato



is doing great – she's skipping through the day! She only has to go every six months now for check-ups, instead of every two months." Kom op tegen Kanker will be selling 250,000 azaleas all over Flanders and Brussels. You can also make a donation at any time to account number 488-666666-84 in the name of Kom op tegen Kanker, with the notation "gift".

Brief news

The Belgian Army is selling 78,400 surplus pairs of men's underpants, as well as 37,700 singlets, all packed in boxes of 100. The sale will take place at the caserne in Peutie near Vilvoorde
 → www.mil.be



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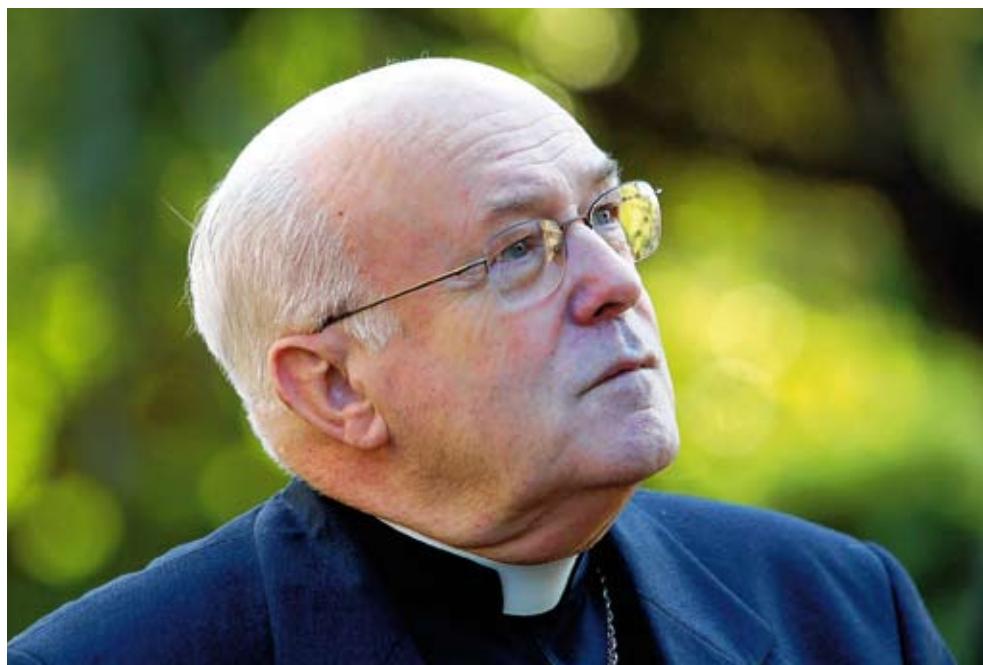
Danneels tapes released to press

Cardinal denies influencing abuse complaint

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At the weekend, Danneels' spokesman, Toon Osaer, said that the Cardinal "regrets" that what was supposed to be a private discussion was taped and then made public. In previous statements, Danneels maintained that he attended the meeting to listen and denied any desire to "cover it with the mantle of confidentiality".

Osaer said that Danneels admitted he had suggested waiting until Vangheluwe retired before going public with the story, but only in his role as a mediator. "He tried to find a consensus that would satisfy everyone," he said. "He had no idea that the victim wanted the bishop's resignation from the outset." It was also revealed last week that 475 files of abuse by clergy gathered by a commission set up by the church must be returned and that their contents cannot be used as evidence. The dossiers were taken as evidence when investigators searched the commission offices in Leuven. At the same time, the Brussels prosecutor, investigating the alleged cover-up of abuse, carried out seizures at the archbishop's palace, Sint Rombout's cathedral and the residence of Cardinal Danneels, all in Mechelen. Those searches were legal, a court has ruled. ♦



© Reuters

Cardinal Godfried Danneels

THE WEEK IN FIGURES



€500,000

aid given by the Flemish government to Pakistan, where millions have been made homeless by heavy flooding. The package consists of €300,000 in emergency aid and €200,000 for longer-term projects

€1,800,000

raised for Pakistan by the 12-12 consortium of aid charities which, along with the Red Cross, will also receive part of the Flemish government package

57,600

Belgians placed on a black list by insurance companies in 2009, 13% more than the previous year. The main reason was failure to keep up the payment of premiums

4.3%

of the total deaths in Brussels caused by deliberate medical action without the express consent of the patient, according to research by the Free University of Brussels (VUB). In Flanders, the figure is 1.8%

46,757

households in Flanders are not connected to the water mains, according to environment minister Joke Schauvliege. The largest number, 22,389, live in East Flanders, followed by West Flanders

The Danneels Tapes: an extract

Danneels (D) and the victim (V) met in the abbey of Steenbrugge on 8 April, apparently at the victim's request, although the tapes suggest he was in fact expecting Archbishop André Léonard, head of the church following Danneels' retirement. Vangheluwe was also present, but left the room to allow the others to speak privately.

V: So, my whole life I've been abused by my uncle Roger. Sexually, and now also emotionally, and I've decided I need to do something about it, that it's my duty to report it to a higher authority.

D: What do you actually want? I know the story; he's already told me. You don't have to tell me all over again, but tell me what you actually want me to do?

V: I'm passing the responsibility on to you. I can't decide; I have this weight on my shoulders, and I want it to be taken from me and handed over to you.... You do whatever you think you have to do, because I don't know how the whole system works.

D: Do you want all of this to be made public, in fact?

V: I'll leave that up to you.

D: Actually, monsignor [Vangheluwe] will be stepping down next year. It would be better for you to wait.

V: No, no, no.

D: If you do it now, there's going to be speculation, you know.

V: Maybe, then it's your responsibility to take care of the speculation.

D: But we can't take care of it.

V: Well, I can't take care of it either, so I'd rather hand it over to you.

D: Well then, I would suggest that we might be better to wait for a date next year when he'd normally be stepping down.

V: No, I don't agree with that. Then he steps down in a blaze of glory; no, I can't have that. If it turns out that you decide to use the cover-up technique as you've done all these years, then I'll have to live with it, but...

D: But I have no say over what Monsignor Vangheluwe does.

V: Who does, then?

D: Nobody, in fact, except maybe the Pope.

V: Oh yeah, what am I doing here in fact? Then I suppose we'd better make an appointment with the Pope?

D: Or with the new archbishop [Léonard].

Translation: Alan Hope

Restoration shows Antwerp portrait is a true Master

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The portrait is oil on wood, measuring 61 x 45cm, and shows a fashionably dressed gentleman, who was long thought, on the basis of a coat of arms, to be Frank Van Borselen, the fourth husband of Jacqueline of Bavaria. Since restoration, however, the arms have been revealed to be a later addition, so that identification is incorrect.

The restoration also removed a thick layer of yellowed varnish, restoring to the painting its original vibrant colours and contrasts. The painting was re-attributed to Gossaert by the exhibition's curator, Maryan Ainsworth.

The painting was originally donated to the KMSKA in 1841 by former Antwerp mayor Florent Van Erbom, together with works by Van Eyck, Memling and Rogier Vander Weyden.

The Met exhibition *Man, Myth and Sensual Pleasures: Jan Gossaert's Renaissance*, runs from 6 October to 17 January before moving to the National Gallery in London. ♦

→ www.kmska.be

New laws on the books

A number of new laws and regulations come into force on 1 September:

Parents will be asked to sign an agreement with their children's school covering parent-teacher contact, time-keeping and truancy

Newcomers to the first primary class may have to take a language test if they haven't been to pre-school and don't speak Dutch at home

Girls born in 1998 will be eligible for a free vaccination against human papilloma virus, a precursor to cervical cancer

Secondary school students will have lessons in media awareness, teaching them how to gather and critically evaluate information

Beer will go up in price by 1.7 to 2%, the main producers InBev and Alken Maes said

Intelligence services will be given new powers to investigate email traffic, telephone calls and bank transactions ♦

FIFTH COLUMN

Money for Brussels

So the talks led by Elio Di Rupo on forming a government have failed, leaving no other option than...getting back to talking with the same parties. The elements of an institutional compromise are already on the table. They include a split of the Brussels-Halle-Vilvoorde(BHV) constituency and a revision of the law defining how the budget is divided between the different levels of government.

Another element involves extra money for Brussels. There is something odd about this. Brussels is the capital of Europe, of Belgium and of Flanders, but more money for this needy city is considered a demand of the French speakers. How has it come about that our three-fold capital has become almost like a foreign body in our midst?

One of the reasons is that Brussels, which is officially bilingual, is seen by many Flemish people as French speaking. This is even embedded in its structures, which offer protection for the Dutch-speaking "minority". Sociologically, French may be in decline, as other languages are on the rise in the capital, but it still serves as the lingua franca. Moreover, the memory lingers of Flemish people being discriminated against for language reasons.

Flemish politicians also resent the idea of Brussels as a full-fledged region. Since Brussels serves as capital to all Belgians, they feel both the Flemish and the French-speaking community should have a say in it. Strengthening the Brussels Region is therefore hard to swallow. Besides, with a stronger Brussels Region, Flanders would find itself up against not one, but two French-speaking entities, which is hardly consistent with the fact that the Flemish make up the majority of the Belgian population.

In recent years, the Flemish have also come to detest the way Brussels is organised, with a regional government and parliament, similar bodies for both communities, 19 communes and six policing zones. How can anything good come from this administrative chaos? They feel Brussels should get its act together before it comes begging for more money. And how can a new federal government demand austerity from its citizens, while showering Brussels with money? As a result, some Flemish parties are uncomfortable with this issue, especially if they feel their voters will have to pay up.

Inevitably, extra funding for Brussels will be part of the final compromise (whenever that is reached), but you can count on the Flemish to make sure they get their money's worth, if only because that is just as Flemish as looking askance at Brussels.



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putting people first

In Europe's spotlight

Globalisation and climate change at the top of Flanders' priorities during Belgian presidency

continued from page 1

It means that Flemish government ministers will be chairing key EU Council of Ministers formations, leading the debates amongst the 27 EU member states. Indeed, with the presidency already seven weeks old, some already have: Flemish environment minister Joke Schauvliege chaired July's informal Environment Council in Ghent.

It is a moment for Flanders to seize the limelight and show its ability to manage the EU's demanding political and bureaucratic agenda, a task that has overwhelmed many full member states before. "It is a unique opportunity to show the world what we can do and who we are," says Flanders' minister-president Kris Peeters (*pictured on the cover*). "I hope that other EU member states will be able to see that we are very competent."

Peeters also wants the presidency to provide a six-month window onto Flanders as a dynamic, export-driven hive of innovation and creativity. "I hope at

the end of the presidency, we will have given a different image of Flanders, that we can change perceptions," he says. Due to institutional reforms over the years, political regions have jurisdiction over various policies: transport, road works, employment, industrial, environmental, spatial and structural planning, agriculture, housing and trade. (The language communities are responsible for education, preventive health care, culture and media.)

In EU configurations, Flemish, Walloon or Brussels region officials – and, on occasion, Flemish and Francophone community officials – represent Belgium according to the policy area. During this presidency, Flanders will represent Belgium in the policy fields of education, youth, sport, environment and fisheries. The overall Belgian presidency programme has been two years in the making, the product of carefully managed negotiations by all the country's parties,

as well as coordinated agreements with the previous Spanish EU presidency and the Hungarian presidency next year. Indeed, an army of bureaucrats has already laid the groundwork, and many of them know the drill, as this is the 12th time that Belgium has taken over the EU baton.

European leadership without a government

Caretaker Belgian prime minister Yves Leterme has downplayed his government's role to the extent that last month he told the European Parliament that most of his agenda is set by the EU. He pointed out that since the Treaty of Lisbon came into effect last year, creating a president of the European Council (former Belgian prime minister Herman Van Rompuy) and a high representative for foreign affairs, Catherine Ashton, the presidency role has been further eroded. That all helps mollify the fact that Belgium has had no formal government in place since the 13 June elections and is unlikely to have one before October. And it means that the presidency will continue with its programme as planned before the unexpected elections, which includes setting up new rules for greater fiscal discipline and economic governance; establishing the EU's first ever foreign ministry, or External Action Service (EAS); and ensuring a result from the global climate change talks in Cancún, Mexico.

Flanders' priorities

But Flanders has its own priorities within the Belgian presidency. Launching the Flemish programme at the end of June, Peeters identified four major challenges for the EU: globalisation, demographic changes, climate change and energy. And he outlined the five general priorities Flanders would contribute to the Belgian presidency programme: the Europe 2020 strategy and its links with the Flemish "Pact 2020"; social inclusion, including the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion; climate, energy and environment; involving regions and young citizens; and sustainable development.

"These challenges also require a stronger role of the regions in the European Union," says Peeters. "Regions are able to provide solutions for the specific problems of European citizens, provide sustainable growth and employment, and thus create a new platform for the European integration process. For me, the future European Union is therefore a European Union of the regions."

But most of all, Flanders has a rare opportunity to show its credentials when it comes to the intricate task of running EU business. If Peeters is right, then the Flemish traditions of organisation, compromise, adaptability and hospitality will help deliver a smooth EU presidency and transform Europe's – and the world's – view of Flanders.♦

"In my opinion, the future European Union is a European Union of the regions"

Kris Peeters



The Flemish ministers heading Europe

Four ministers from the Flemish government will oversee a Council of Ministers during the Belgian presidency, handling fisheries, the environment, education, youth and sports. Here is a brief overview of their responsibilities and the challenges they will have to face over the next few months.

Kris Peeters • Fisheries

As if being Flemish minister-president was not enough, Kris Peeters, of the Christian Democrat party (CD&V), has also assumed the tricky fisheries portfolio. While the fishing sector is a tiny fraction of the EU's economy, it is one of the most sensitive, and Peeters will have to manage the debate on reforming the much-criticised Common Fisheries Policy at the 29-30 November **Fisheries Council** in Brussels.

Peeters has already indicated that he will put sustainable fishing at the heart of his agenda and will try to develop a stronger dialogue between the fishing industry – which typically seeks big catch quotas – and the scientists, who warn that quotas need to be cut to help dwindling stocks recover.

To help foster debate, Peeters has organised other gatherings, like the 2010 **International Fisheries Symposium** in Ostend on 9-10 November, and the **EuroOcean 2010 European Conference on Marine and Maritime Research**, also in Ostend, from 11-13 October.

There are two other **Fisheries Councils**, on 26 October in Luxembourg and on 13-14 December in Brussels. The latter is traditionally the last of the EU calendar, and is an all-night affair as ministers hammer out deals on the next year's quotas.

Pascal Smet • Education and youth

Pascal Smet of the socialist party (SP.A) currently has a sprawling portfolio in the Flemish government, as minister for education, youth, equal opportunities and Brussels affairs. That means he will chair two of the three sessions at the **Education, Youth and Culture Council** in Brussels on 18-19 November.

At a 7 December informal Council in Bruges, ministers will discuss a new work programme for vocational training and education up to 2020. Last month in Ghent, the first **European Youth Work Convention** looked at a wide range of issues covering jobs, and it will feed into the EU Youth Conference on Youth Employment in Leuven from 1-5 October.

Other related presidency events include the **Conference on Learning Mobility** in Antwerp on 5-6 October and a **Conference on Social Inclusion** in Ghent on 28-29 September.



Joke Schauvliege • Environment

The environment has become one of the EU's key policy areas in recent years, covering an ever-more ambitious range of measures. Flemish environment minister Joke Schauvliege (CD&V) has already chaired the July Environment Council in Ghent, which focused on sustainable materials management. This is one of the four environmental priorities for Flanders, and Schauvliege urged her fellow EU ministers to think cyclically about using waste products as raw material for new products with a cradle-to-cradle approach.

Schauvliege will chair two formal **Environment Councils** – on 14 October in Luxembourg and on 20 December in Brussels. Her second priority is climate change; after the disappointment of the Copenhagen summit last December, Schauvliege – who will represent the entire EU internationally – will aim to ensure Europe is better placed to impose an agreement at the 2010 **United Nations Climate Change Conference** in Cancún, Mexico, which begins on 29 November.

The third theme is biodiversity, and Schauvliege will again represent the EU at a global level during the **international conference on biodiversity** from 18-29 October in Nagoya, Japan. (The conference **Biodiversity post-2010: Biodiversity in a Changing World** in Ghent on 8-9 September will feed into the EU's preparations).

And the fourth priority will be improving the transparency, coordination and actual application of current EU environmental legislation.



Philippe Muyters • Sport

Sport has forced its way onto the EU agenda and is now covered in the Lisbon Treaty. Flemish sports minister Philippe Muyters of the nationalist party (N-VA) will not chair any formal Sports Council (they have yet to take place), but he will host an informal ministerial in Antwerp on 21-22 October. Muyters says he wants to start an EU debate on the **role of sport in combating social exclusion**, education and training in the sports sector and the fight against doping in sport.



Into the next world

Officially opened last week, Antwerp's Jain Temple is the largest outside of India

KARISHMA BHANSALI MEHTA

In the late 1960s, a few Indian men with limited means and big dreams came to Antwerp to join the diamond trade. That handful has grown to 500 Indian families who call Antwerp home.

"One day we will no longer exist," says Arun Jogani, "but the world will remember our community and our values." Jogani is talking about the impact he hopes the new Jain temple will have on the city – and on Belgium. Jainism is an ancient Indian religion, known for its promotion of non-violence. Its tenets influenced, for instance, the life and work of Mahatma Gandhi.

The temple project has been spearheaded by the Jain Cultural Centre of Antwerp (JCCA). "The Jain temple will outlive us as a symbol of peace, unity and non-violence," says Jogani. "It will forever join Belgium and India."

A simple idea

In 1984, Antwerp province's governor Andries Kinsbergen, accompanied by an Indian delegation from the city's diamond trade, went on a visit to India. While there, he made the sacred Jain pilgrimage to the Dilwara temples on Mount Abu in Rajasthan.

Awestruck by the beauty and grandeur of the temples, he asked the *diamantaires* why they didn't build a Jain temple in Antwerp. "Your community needs one," he said.

Eight years later, the idea blossomed in the presence of the sacred *havan*, or fire, at the house-warming ceremony of an Indian friend in Antwerp's suburb of Wilrijk. "We thought this would be the perfect way to unite our

community and give something back to Belgium, a country we call home," says Kaushik Bhansali, another of the temple's founders. Bhansali, Jogani and four others took the idea to the community. Overnight, 60 people supported their cause. The JCCA was born and for the first time, the Indian community observed its first Jain religious ceremony, Paryushana, in Antwerp. The festival marks eight days of religious observation, during which some strict Jains fast, consuming only water.

The Making of a temple

That same year, 1992, the JCCA bought a plot of land from a naval company on Laarsstraat in the Wilrijk neighbourhood. "Right from the beginning, we always had a lot of support from the previous governors Kinsbergen and Camille Paulus," says Shreyance Shah, another of the temple's coordinators. "They helped us to navigate all the government departments and made sure we received the permits we needed." Construction finally began on the temple about 10 years ago. Combining traditional Eastern ideology, religious theology and architecture wasn't easy when dealing with a Western mindset – not to mention the adverse weather conditions. Brussels architect Yves Donck was called in. He and Shah made multiple trips to India. "We went to Mount Abu to see the architecture and construction of the temples to get an idea of what a real Jain temple should be like," he explains.

While the cold Belgian climate is not favourable for marble, it was important to use it to retain the authenticity of a temple. Builders



The Jain Temple in Antwerp, pictured here during construction, is the largest of its kind outside of India

ordered the hand-carved and cut stone from Makrana, a town in central India world-famous for the quality of its marble.

Over the last decade, 3,500 tons of Makrana marble has been shipped from Mumbai's Navasheva port to Antwerp. At the Flemish end of the operation, the blocks were assembled like a giant Lego system by some 300 Indian technicians who came to Antwerp on a six-month rotating basis. "Such detailing takes a long time," sighs Shah. "Sometimes the blocks would arrive, but there would be cracks in the marble, so it would have to be sent back. Then came the winter months, and construction would stop again." The temple and adjoining meditation centre is estimated to have cost around €25 million, but the JCCA was helped with funding from Jain communities across the globe.

Bhansali and his fellow JCCA members agree that the biggest task was just uniting people to keep the project going and striking the right compromises. "Every decision required unity from the committee," says Bhansali. "In the process, not only have we united the community, we have also united East and West."

Jain temples are made according to the ancient scriptures known as *shilpa shastras* that lay out the salient features, correct measurements and astrological directions. "We had to stick to the dimensions but also make the necessary adjustments as the temple was constructed outside India," explains Jogani.

The use of iron, for instance, is forbidden in the making of Jain temples, so they had to adapt by using copper instead. While the grills and windows of a Jain Temple normally remain open, there is a glass covering and floor heating to adapt to the local climate.

The meditation centre, a 2,000 square-metre addition to the temple, was built in its entirety by the Belgian contractors Interbuild and also had to be constructed as per the given *shastras*.



The 24 wooden doors of the meditation hall were hand carved in Ahmedabad, India, over three years

Idols in transport

The next step was to bring the *murtis*, or statues of the deities, to Antwerp but, before that, a special ceremony takes place called the Anjan Shalaka, during which the holy collyrium is applied to the eyes of the statues.

"In this ceremony, the priest effectively gives life, or *prana*, to the image in a sacred ceremony that is privy to no one," explains Shah. "Until then, the carvings are just statues." Antwerp's temple is dedicated to the 23rd Jain *tirthankara* (spiritual guide), Lord Parshwanath, and has special portals to place the deities of worship.

Three years ago, 300 Jains from Antwerp's Indian community went on a 10-day pilgrimage to Vijapur in Ahmedabad, where the *murtis* were carved. They celebrated events relating to Lord Parshwanath, including the incarnation of the lord in the holy womb, his birth, his marriage, his renunciation of worldly pleasures, his attaining enlightenment and, finally, complete deliverance of the body, or *Nirvana*.

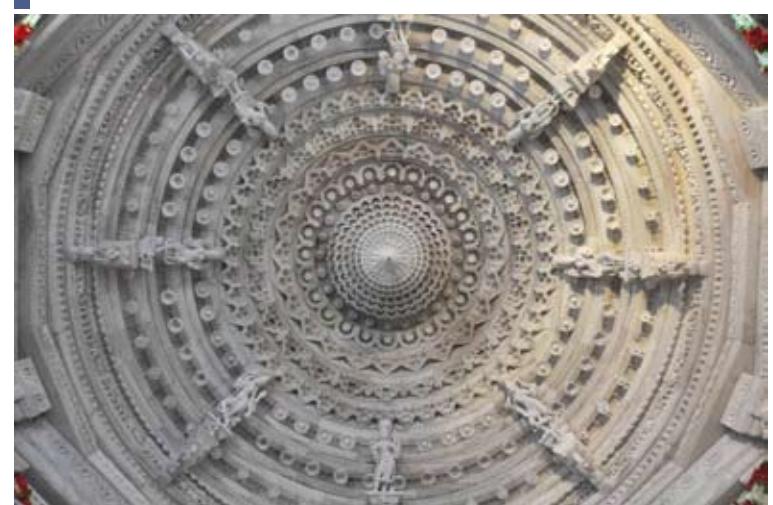
On the 10th day, the "Anjan shalaka" was performed by the head priest of the Jain command in a private ceremony at the hour of midnight. When it was done, he announced to the crowd waiting outside that the Lord was born. "It was only after that that we could bring the deities here," Shah concludes.

As the temple officially opened last week, the sense of elation and pure relief was almost tangible. Not only is it the largest Jain temple outside of India, it has also been deemed the best in terms of craftsmanship outside of India, and the inauguration on 27 August was attended by some 2,500 Jains from Belgium and beyond. Eventually, the temple will be open to the public with specified visiting times.

The important day marked the placing of the idols in their rightful places and the hoisting of the holy Jain flag on the temple's tower. "The temple will finally be open for worship," says Shah, with a sigh of relief. "It took a long time, but it was worth it." ♦

The basics of Jainism

- Non violence
- Respect for all living things
- Vegetarianism
- Benevolence
- Charity



The dome inside the Antwerp temple has 26 arches and resembles that of the famous Dilwara Temples on Mount Abu

Art student Stefan Huygebaert was voted "working student of the year". He was employed this summer at QuasiMundo Bike Tours, guiding tourists through the streets of Bruges. The prize, worth €1,250, is awarded by Unizo, the union for the self-employed



TV broadcaster Exqi closes down

Alfacam didn't have the funds or the programming to get the cable channel off the ground

ALAN HOPE

Exqi Plus, the independent TV broadcaster set up by Alfacam founder Gabriel Fehervari, has closed definitively after struggling for six months.

Fehervari (pictured), whose TV services company Alfacam goes from strength to strength, had long dreamed of his own TV station, and concrete plans had been laid since 2007. Exqi Plus would be the parent channel, gaining a place on the analogue cable alongside Eén and VTM, while sub-channels would broadcast sport and cultural programming.

But the plans never excited the media world as much as they excited Fehervari. A cursory scrutiny of the new channel's finances showed that the plans were too ambitious for the means he had at his disposal. Telenet took a long time to finally agree to admit Exqi to its cable network. Alfacam, a quoted company, was restricted in how much it could invest, and Fehervari and his wife put up an estimated €5 million of their own money – but it was a long way from being enough.

When finally the deadline agreed with Telenet arrived, in October 2009, the vast majority of the

programmes he had promised failed to materialise. Those included a daily news programme, a sitcom and variety show featuring Stany Crets and Peter Van den Begin, who had been poached away from VTM, and a quiz devised and presented by Jan Verheyen, better known as the director of films like *Los* and *Dossier K*. Investors had been hard enough to find. In the absence of programmes, there were no viewers; in the absence of viewers, no advertisers.

"His plan was noble, but there's a price ticket on plans like that," commented Verheyen. "Especially if you want to make them work in a market that's saturated, and where nobody is sitting waiting for a new channel."

The new channel finally appeared in February this year, to a lukewarm response, even from its creator. "What was left over," Verheyen told *De Morgen*, "was a sad, hollowed-out version of the original project." "I've made some wrong decisions in the last 25 years. This is clearly the most awkward," Fehervari said.

Alfacam owns 20% of the doomed broadcaster, and its failure led to a write-off of €4.7 million – mostly



due to Exqi's use of Alfacam facilities, studios and equipment. Alfacam's turnover was up substantially, from €17.1 million in 2009 to €23.3 in the first half of this year. TV services, the sector in which Alfacam has been making a name for itself worldwide, accounted for €20.1 million of that. Most of Alfacam's activity is international – 84% outside Belgium and about 60% outside the EU. Among the major recent contracts were the World Cup in South Africa and the Winter Olympics in Vancouver in February.

Fehervari still holds two worthwhile vestiges of his dream left over from the rubble of Exqi: the frequencies allotted to Exqi FM and the analogue frequency on Telenet's cable, which could be of interest to existing broadcasters like SBS Belgium. ♦

Flemish contractor reforms Wembley

MARTIN BANKS

Footballers are praising Desso, the Flemish flooring and surface company, for its work in re-laying the pitch at Wembley Stadium, the hallowed home of English football. Based in Dendermonde, East Flanders, Desso won the contract to renew the surface, which had been widely criticised as being sub-standard.

The company has gained an international reputation for the quality of its work on some of the world's leading sports arenas, and Manchester United striker Michael Owen appears to be impressed. Owen publicly blamed the poor conditions of the field for his hamstring injury earlier this year, which required surgery and dashed his hopes to play in the World Cup.

After his club's recent Community Shield clash with Chelsea, Owen commented: "As soon as we walked on the pitch, we looked at each other and said: 'what a difference'." The company used its unique "grassmaster" system at Wembley, comprised of reinforced natural grass. Grassmaster is said to offer maximum protection from injury, and Desso has supplied the FIFA-approved system to other leading football clubs, including Anderlecht and Tottenham Hotspur. ♦

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Live, we take care of the rest

New boss for Eddy Merckx Cycles

Kurt Moons, formerly boss of discount shoe retail chain Brantano and most recently CEO of cork flooring manufacturer Santana, is to take over as head of Eddy Merckx Cycles. Merckx sold his company at the end of 2008 to a Belgian consortium but stayed on as honorary chairman and figurehead. One of the investors was Joris Brantegem, son of the founder of Brantano, who took over as executive chairman and has now brought Moons in as CEO to replace Pieter Vansynghe, another member of the takeover consortium.

Eddy Merckx Cycles produces high-end bicycles for export markets in the US, Britain and Japan. Sales this year will touch on €6 million. Moons, 47, was born in Dendermonde and studied law and business at the Catholic University of Leuven.

Brantegem, meanwhile, was reported to have bought a stake in Bozzy, the greetings card company, for an undisclosed sum. Bozzy was set up in 1994 by Guy Van Den Bossche, who still holds a 50% share. Bozzy last year had sales of €8.3 million from its 22 shops in Flanders. ♦



Eddy Merckx with one of his bikes in Qatar earlier this year

THE WEEK IN BUSINESS

Airlines • Hainan

French Chinese airline Hainan is to launch a three-flights-a-week service between Hong Kong and Brussels at the end of the year. The company will also begin freight services on the same route in September and is investing some €30 million to redevelop its Brussels Sodehotel, adding 64 rooms and rebranding it as a five-star Tangla hotel to open in 2013.

Airlines • Brussels Airlines

Brussels Airlines has signed a codeshare agreement with US-based Continental Airlines to develop its services on the Brussels-New York route.

Autos • Audi

The Brussels-based Audi plant will increase production of the best-selling Audi A1 car by 20% to 120,000 vehicles a year to meet higher-than-expected demand for the new model.

Autos • Volvo

Volvo Trucks, the Ghent-based assembling affiliate of the world's second-largest trucks manufacturer, will hire an additional 200 workers to cope with growing demand. The plant assembled 1,000 vehicles in the first half of this year, nearly as many as the whole of last year. Management expects 2010's output could reach up to 25,000 trucks.

Building • Besix

Brussels-based Besix, the country's largest building group, has signed a €60 million contract to build a cooling system for a power station at El Ain El Sohna in Egypt. The company will build pumping facilities and pipelines to bring sea water to the station.

Dredging • Deme

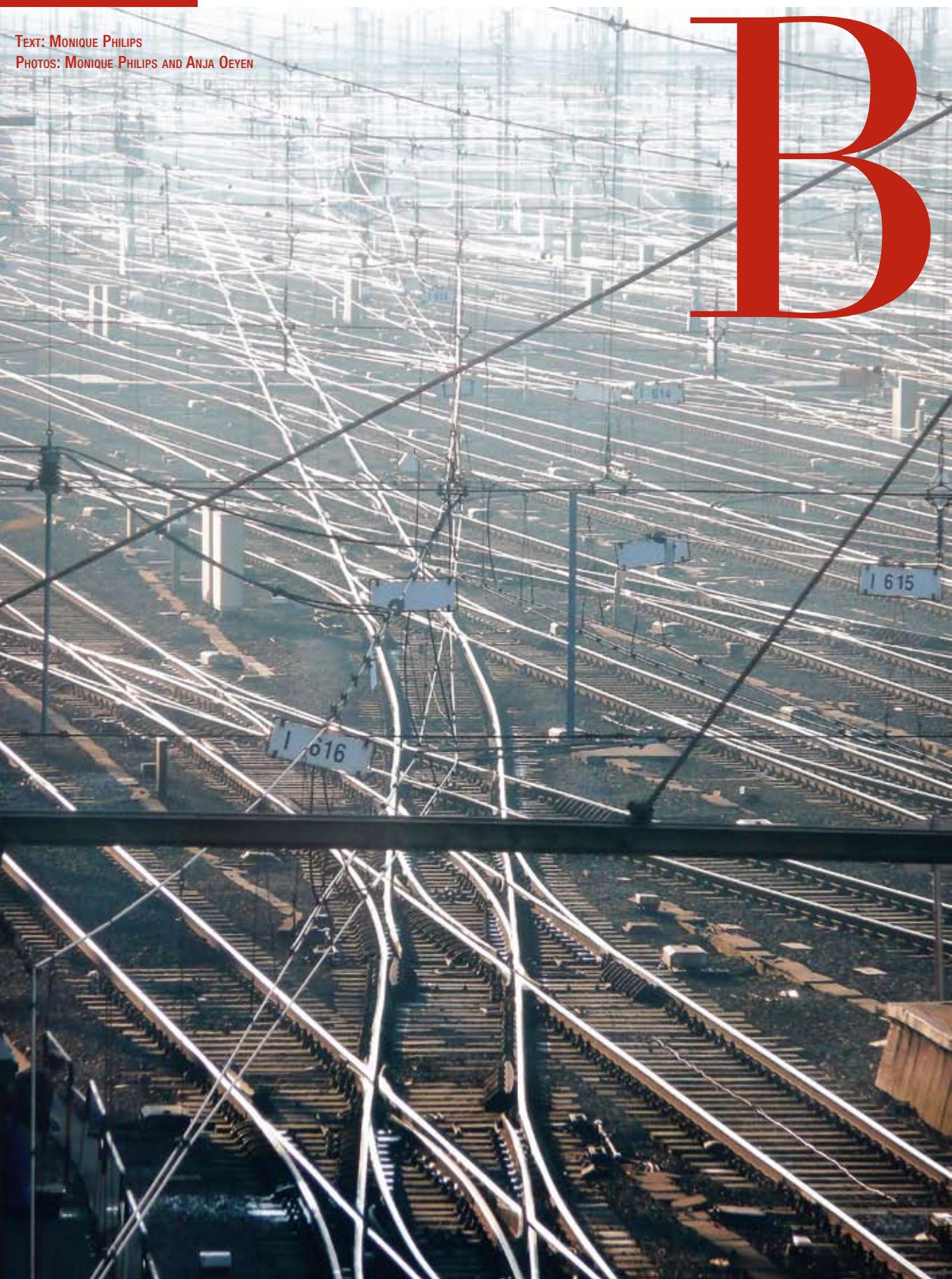
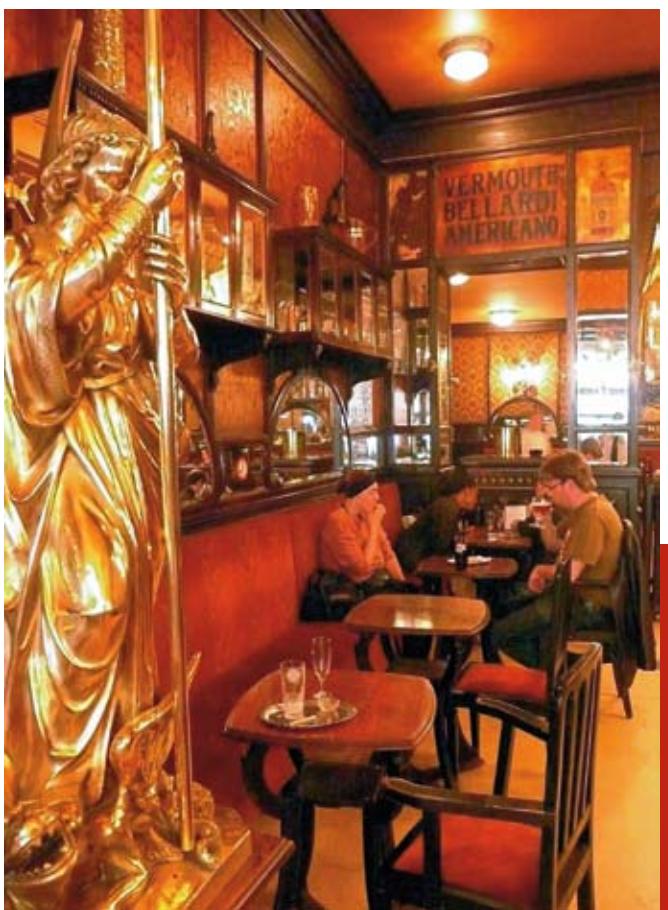
Antwerp-based Deme dredging group has won a €100 million contract to dredge and transport sand over 120 kilometres for the Sochi Olympic village on the Russian shores of the Black Sea. The company also recently signed a €150 million deal in Angola to dredge and develop the liquefied gas facilities of the port of Soyo.

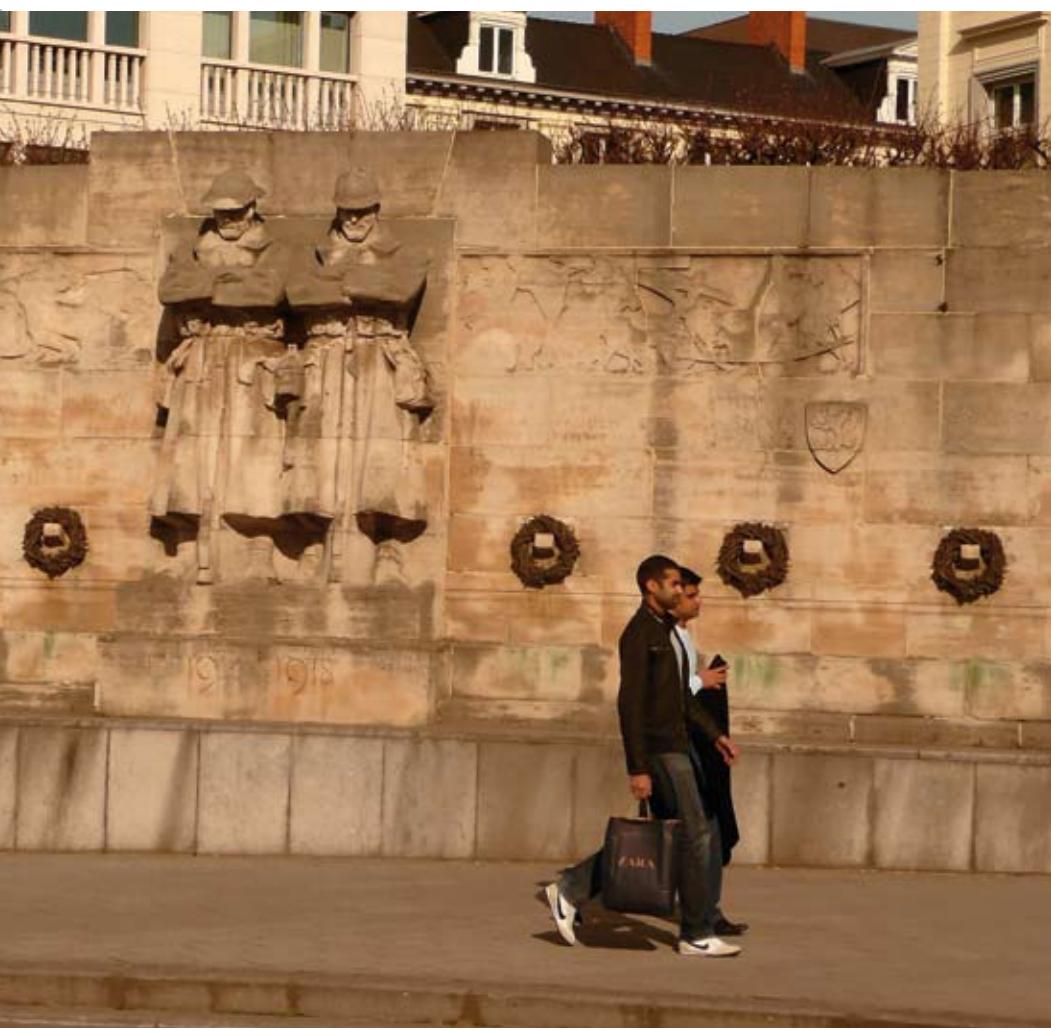
Flooring • Balta

West Flanders carpet group Balta is to take over the floor covering and fitted carpet activities of its competitor Domo, with two locations in East Flanders. The move, which strengthens Balta's position as a European leader in the sector, is sweet revenge for its founder Filiep Balcaen, who was at odds with the owners of Domo group, the De Clerck family.

Retail • Hema

Hema, the Dutch apparel and household appliances retailer, which operates some 75 stores in Belgium, has plans to open a further 10 outlets over the next two years.





RUSSELS

Capital of modesty

Most Flemish don't like their capital. Brussels is too dirty, too noisy, too smelly and too "dark". Never mind its manifold treasures, traffic is murder, and its stations are the pits, so let's not.

Reality check: that is what a big city is like. And we only have one of those. Life is too long not to discover how well Brussels, amidst all the hustle, manages to retain its individuality and colour. In just one visit, you come across some amazing people and incredibly diverse neighbourhoods, all gravitating around a bustling historic centre. The whole world is right here. For cosmopolitans, one-day tourists and its one million residents, only Brussels will do.

Life is too short to attempt cycling in Brussels, but everyone enjoys ambling down the steep streets and concrete stairways from uptown Louizalaan to downtown Grote Markt. And how uplifting a ride on a creaking tram to the Duden Park can be. Or, if you prefer the downside of things, you can descend to the underground Coudenberg palace, the hidden Zenne or the Sewer Museum.

Brussels' hilly cityscape also reflects the ups and downs of our national history. Wars won, battles lost. Lord Byron was accused of chopping off the noses of the statues in Warandepark. "So sorry Sir, it turned out Prince Metternich did it." (The noses have since been restored.)

Temporary imprisonment, meanwhile, was the fate of Paul Verlaine for shooting Arthur Rimbaud in the wrist at a Brussels hotel. Cesare Lombroso wrote his famous "L'uomo delinquente", in which he suggests a classification of criminals by the shape of their heads (physiognomy), right here in Brussels. In Brussels, there's always merriment to be found in madness, beauty in ugliness, harmony in discord, creativity in bureaucracy and a vibrant café culture in its heart of loneliness.

On your journey, you will probably notice its overall mismatched architecture. Gorgeous Art Nouveau townhouses are mirrored in gruesomely shiny HQs. For some, this reflects a typical culture of incompetence and bribery. Others see a charming tolerance of incompetence and bribery. Live and let live is the motto, even if the list of monstrously mismanaged sites grows and grows. "But, hey, did we kill somebody? No. So, what's your point?"

A politician and wise man – he didn't live in Belgium but passed by – once said: "A country with only one language is a poor country." Brussels' inhabitants seem to agree, as they don't mind eating their *biefstuk frites* in an Italian restaurant run by Turks who think you won't detect the waiter's Polish accent. As long as the food is good and the multilingual menu provides enough spelling mistakes to snigger about, we'll be back.

Be sure to enjoy Brussels many sights, museums and palaces and rave about its comic books and surrealism, but don't forget to visit a corner grocery shop or a crooked *frituur* as well. Just open doors to hidden courtyards, wipe your feet and step in.

I'd say that where countless urbanist ploys have failed miserably, starting with King Leopold megalomania, it's the people of Brussels who have succeeded in keeping the city liveable and likeable. They love their town. They enjoy flocking to its squares and discuss the news of the day over a pint of beer and newspapers from all over the world. They might not consider themselves the throbbing heart of European politics, but they do monitor the world's pulse. And when yet another street is torn down, they do react.

Modesty is the problem. When Brussels revamped their canal, for instance, they did a superb job and let the people enjoy it. No big circus. So maybe it's not a problem, modesty. I rather like it. ♦



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Deconstructing Mahler

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ALAN HOPE

Timing has made it inevitable that the star of this year's Klara Festival should be Gustav Mahler, born 150 years ago in July, with the centenary of his death falling next year. It's a daunting prospect for Klara organisers: most of the Austrian's output is either song or some of the largest-scale symphonies ever composed. There's nothing much in between.

The solution has been to introduce a degree of innovation, which is certainly nothing new to Klara, the Brussels leg of Festival of Flanders, the region-wide classical and new music festival. Among the several municipalities that take part with their own programmes, its Brussels and Ghent that really know how to bring the genre to the people.

So, while it's possible to hear Mahler's massive *Resurrection Symphony* by the Rotterdam Philharmonic under Yannick Nézet-Séguin, the same evening you can also catch *Mahler Démécanisé*, in which Flemish pianist Frederik Croene literally takes apart a piano to re-interpret the music of the late Romantic Mahler and the experimental Luciano Berio.

Dancer and choreographer Claire Croizé, a graduate of P.A.R.T.S. dance school, presented her homage to Mahler last year, in fact, in a piece called *The Farewell*, based on Mahler's *Der Abschied*. So this year she brings *Vor deinem Thron*, which features extracts from Bach works, including the *Art of the Fugue* and the *St Matthew Passion*.

Croizé's work is fragile but also rigorous, her stamina remarkable. "My solo dance is not a battle with the music because then I would be the loser," she says. "But it's also not a representation of it either, because that would be meagre stuff." She's accompanied by the local Baroque orchestra B'Rock.

Mahler also steps aside to allow an homage to a Flemish composer. Philippe Boesmans was born in 1936 Tongeren and studied at the conservatory in Liège. Previous work is based on the likes of Shakespeare, Strindberg and Schnitzler, a contemporary of Mahler and another star in the firmament of Vienna; they had both risen out of Leopoldstadt, the then Jewish quarter of the notoriously anti-Semitic city.

The Ensemble Musiques Nouvelles presents *Chambres d'à côté*, the world première of a suite by Boesmans in which the composer steps outside the framework of musical convention. The work is inspired by exile, by ornamentation and by Debussy.

Two of Mahler's most enduring works also form part of the festival programme. *Das lied von der Erde (The Song of the Earth)* was called a symphony by Mahler; it was composed between his Eighth and Ninth but never numbered as such. It is unusual in featuring, alongside a full orchestra, a tenor and alto or baritone soloists throughout, although other symphonies had vocal passages.

Mahler had been very much inspired by a book of Chinese poetry translated into German that appeared in 1908; it struck the composer by its treatment of earthly transience and the constant shadow of human mortality. Just one year before, a heart defect had been diagnosed, and the Mahlers had lost their daughter Maria to scarlet fever and diphtheria. In the same concert, Gavriel Lipkind plays Ligeti's *Sonata for solo cello*.

The Lipkind Quartet, meanwhile, will perform Mahler's Piano Quartet, one of the few exceptions to the song-symphony output.

The *Kindertotenlieder (Songs on the Death of Children)* from 1901-1904 were written by Friedrich Rückert after two of his own children died of scarlet fever. Mahler took five of Rückert's 428 verses and set them to music before his own daughter's death; those he selected reflect the stages of grief: anguished outbursts, a fantasy the child may be revived, resignation and finally transcendence.

The irony that he was composing them at the time of the birth of Maria, never knowing she would become their subject, was not lost on Mahler, who told a friend, "I placed myself in the situation that a child of mine had died. When I really lost my daughter, I could not have written these songs any more."

The song-cycle here, however, has been handed over for reinterpretation by Champ d'Action, a Flemish ensemble set up in 1988 by Serge Verstockt, who, with the help of percussion, electric guitars and singers, will attempt to put a new



© Esther Eggemont/Kara Festival

Living Room Music, a popular part of the Klara Festival, has you visiting your neighbours to hear smaller ensembles

slant on Mahler's tragic work.

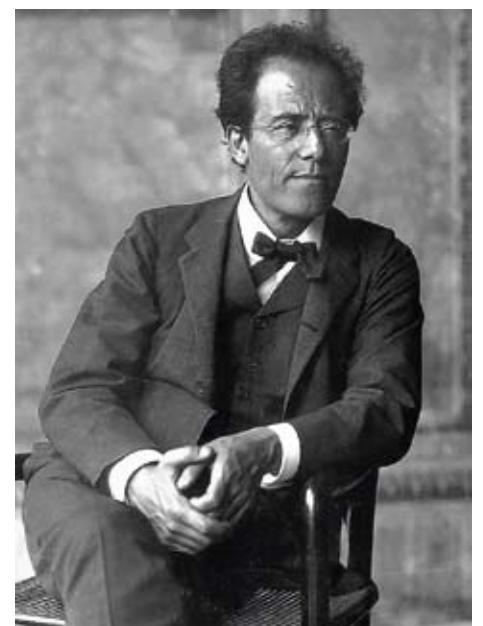
In about 1907, Mahler's heart defect was diagnosed, and he was ordered to refrain from vigorous exercise – one form of which had reputedly occupied him greatly before his marriage with many a young woman who wanted to sing with the opera. Mahler's wife Alma, who described their marriage as akin to being on a boat tossed about by the waves, later began an affair with Walter Gropius, founder of the Bauhaus school. Mahler, in distress, contacted Sigmund Freud for advice.

All of which is to say that the duo Eric Bosgraaf on recorder and Izhar Elias on guitar have all the raw material they could wish for in *Duo di Follia*, their attempt "to shed new light on Mahler's impotency and psychological state".

The evening includes the 1995 title work by Italian composer Gabriele Manca (which sounds considerably more mad than Mahler ever was). The title appears to be a translation into nonsensical Italian of "folie à deux". Other works are featured by composers like Toru Takemitsu and Tomi Räisänen, whose *Stheno* was premiered by Bosgraaf and Elias at last year's Klara Festival, with Bosgraaf on PVC tubes.

Outside of the concert halls, Cinematek screens films that feature Mahler's music,

including Belgian filmmaker Gérard Corbiau's *Le Maître de musique*, Leonard Kastle's *The Honeymoon Killers* and Visconti's *Death in Venice*. ♦



Nineteenth-century composer Gustav Mahler

Klara Festival
7-17 September
Across Brussels

→ www.klarafestival.be

Your own art gallery

Flemish brothers launch a website that makes browsing for original art easy

It can sometimes be difficult to combine your work and your passion, especially if you just graduated with a Master's in Applied Economics. But Laurent Jacobs of Ghent has figured out how to do so and benefit you and me in the process.

The 23-year-old started up a web development company with his brother, and the two have launched Artplace, an online art gallery. Jacobs has always had an interest in art, has a collection of his own and followed a short art course in Paris.

I was actually hooked from my first visit to the site, browsing through the multiple disciplines – painting, drawing, sculpture, etc. You can search in a number of ways – by price, for instance, or time period or artist. It's free to sell a piece on Artplace and

free to sign up to browse. "It's a hobby of mine, and I was keen to do it just because I love art," says Jacobs. Eventually the pair hope to make money through advertisements on the site or by attracting potential clients needing websites.

Artplace launched last spring and has about 250 pieces to date. They are being placed by private individuals as well as galleries, and some finds will surprise you. I came across a drawing by Magritte, for instance, for €900 and a lithograph by contemporary Flemish artist Panamarenko for €500. There is also the painting "4 Clowns in licht van circusprojector" by 20th-century avant-garde Flemish painter Floris Jespers for €12,000, placed on the site by the artist's son.

That's the most expensive piece I saw, but many of the items listed are "price on request". Jacobs says there are pieces listed worth as much as €150,000. There is no limit to the value at the upper end, but €500 is the lowest price allowed to be listed in order to ensure the quality of work on the site. Interested buyers contact sellers directly, so Jacobs has nothing to do with the actual transaction.

About half the works on the site right now are Belgian, and Jacobs is particularly excited by pieces on offer by 20th-century painters Gaston Bogaert and Pierre Alechinsky. But when I go to look, neither artist shows up. "Oh," Jacobs says enthusiastically, "they must have sold!" ♦

→ www.artplace.be



A 1922 painting by Flemish artist Léon de Smet, on offer at Artplace

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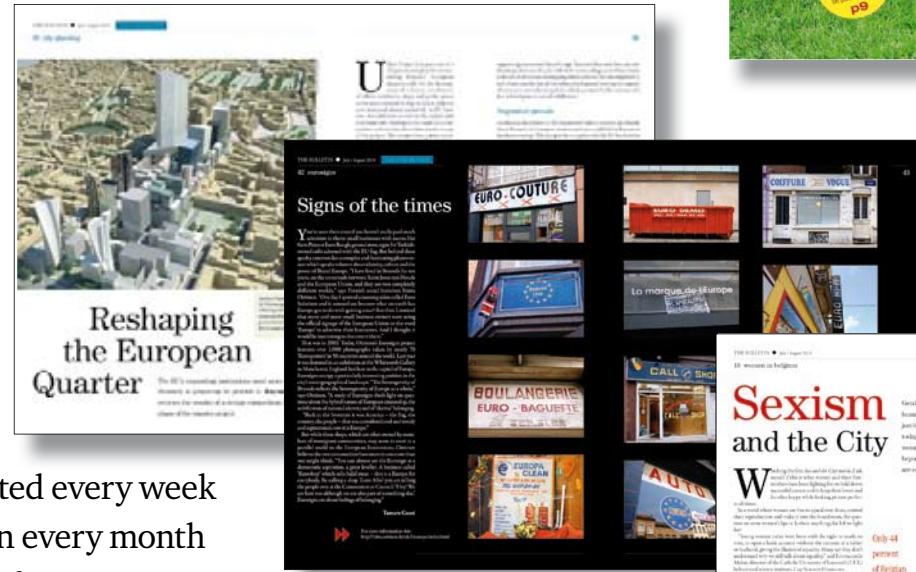
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Agenda

Marc van Cauwenbergh

Paintings by the New York-based Flemish artist
Marc van Cauwenbergh and the Antwerp-based Dutch artist
Wouter van de Koot are on show at Oever 21 gallery through 3 October
→ www.marcvancauwenbergh.net



FLANDERS TODAY
SEPTEMBER 1, 2010



Ostend Film Festival

LISA BRADSHAW

"A pox upon this damn fine weather" is probably what the organisers of the Ostend Film Festival were muttering last year, as the early September crowds tended to stick to the beach under warm, clear skies rather than enter a dark cinema. Determined, I sat in a Saturday afternoon screening with about five other people.

Nothing kills a film festival in Belgium like sun.

You can imagine, then, the cheers that are going up this year, as the clouds become greyer and the air gets chillier. So after you watch the arrival of the cast of the new Flemish film, *Adem* (*Oxygen*), which opens the festival on 3 September, you may not regret having to duck inside to catch the movie, the premiere feature from Hans Van Nuffel.

Adem (pictured) is the story of a Flemish adolescent with cystic fibrosis who spends most of his time in hospitals.

He befriends a man with the same disease, and eventually it turns out that both of them need a lung transplant. The odds of both of them getting a donor on time are slim. The 28-year-old director himself has a mild form of cystic fibrosis, so he puts his own experiences to good use in the film, which is light on melodrama, heavy on dark humour.

With luck, Van Nuffel might be invited back to Ostend next year for

the Flemish Film Awards, which are being given out for the first time this year at the festival. Films released between last August and now are eligible, judged by a jury of directors, actors and producers. To no one's surprise, *De helaasheid der dingen* (*The Misfortunes*) leads the nominations in the nine categories this year with seven, including best director (Felix Van Groeningen), Best Film and Best Lead Actor (Koen De Graeve, the heavy favourite).

Other notable international films are having their Belgian premiere at the festival, including the Cannes Camera d'Or winner *Año Bisiesto* (*Leap Year*) by Mexico-based Australian filmmaker Michael Rowe, in which a young woman acts out violent sexual fantasies in anticipation of a very important date: 29 February. You have to wait until the end to find out why.

Another Cannes winner on the bill is French director Xavier Beauvois' *Des Hommes et des dieux* (*Of Gods and Men*), bestowed with the Grand Jury prize this year for its engrossing portrayal of the monks of Tibhirine, who were kidnapped and beheaded in 1996 during the Algerian Civil War.

On the lighter side, the festival premieres the new 3D animation *Despicable Me*, in which the ultimate evil villain has a hard time keeping to task in the presence of three cute

orphans, and *Dinner for Schmucks*, one of those rather enjoyable male-bonding comedies, this time pairing the dream team of Paul Rudd and Steve Carell in a remake of the 1998 French film *The Dinner Game*, in which rich businessmen take turns bringing the biggest idiot they know to dinner.

Ostend also screens television series and hosts video gaming on the big screen, which at least ensures, even if they won't stay for *Of Gods and Men*, that teenagers will come through the front door. ♦

3-11 September

Kinepolis
and other venues

→ www.filmfestivaloostende.be

MORE FILM THIS WEEK

Zebra Cinema → across Limburg

Brussels Movie Days → *Wolubilis*, Brussels

Mae Busch ("the versatile vamp") cycle → *Cinematek*, Brussels



Antwerp

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Rubenslei 37 – Stadspark;
www.cafecapital.be
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Café Rood-Wit

Gen. Drubbelstraat 42; 03.239.34.68
www.roodwit.be
SEP 4 20.00 BabyDry

De Roma

Turnhoutsebaan 327; www.deroma.be
SEP 4 20.30 Della Bosiers & Ben van der Linden

Jolly Joker

Rijnkaai 14; www.jollyjoker.be
SEP 3 21.00 Poetracks + Schoon
Madammen + The Valerie Solanas +
Meneer Zee + DJs Rebelles de L'Hotel +
Les Filles Font La Fete + Thijs El Bucho
SEP 4 22.00 The Smiths Indeed + Too
Tangled + Veronica Falls + Katia -Rock
Ahoy- Vlerick + Gigolos In Retirement

Openluchttheater Rivierenhof

Turnhoutsebaan 232; 070.222.192,
www.openluchttheater.be
SEP 2 20.30 Ed Kowalczyk
SEP 3 20.30 Sweet Coffee + Balthazar
SEP 8 20.30 Admiral Freebee

Rataplan

Wijnegemstraat 27; 03.292.97.40
www.rataplanvzw.be
SEP 3 20.30 S.W.A.N.

Sportpaleis

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Heavies + Elliott Brood
SEP 9 19.30 Skeletonwitch +
Warbringer + Angelus Apatrida

Ghent

Frontline

Overpoortstraat 37; 09.223.22.27
www.thefrontline.be
SEP 4 19.00 Uganga + Titan + My Name Is God

Kinky Star

Vlasmarkt 9; 09.223.48.45
www.kinkystar.com
Concerts at 21.00:
SEP 3 Yer Beauties SEP 4 Das Munich
SEP 5 John Drain and Marco Farris
SEP 7 Viper Rosa

Vooruit

St Pietersnieuwstraat 23; 0900.26.060
www.vooruit.be
SEP 8 20.30 LCD Soundsystem



Antwerp

Buster

Kaasrui 1; 03.232.51.53
www.busterpodium.be
SEP 1 21.30 Tom Van Dyck Quartet
SEP 2 21.00 Everybody's Dead Dave
SEP 3 22.00 Slips, Trips and Falls SEP 8
4 22.00 Carl Calamar & Band SEP 8
21.00 Framework SEP 9 21.00 Buster Jam.

Café Hopper

Leopold de Waelstraat 2; 03.248.49.33
www.cafehopper.be
SEP 6 21.00 sixTension

De Roma

Turnhoutsebaan 327; www.deroma.be
SEP 2 20.30 Amparo Cortés



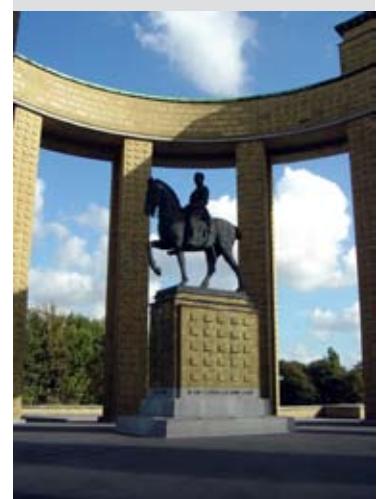
DON'T MISS

Open Monument Day

12 September

Across Flanders

It's the one day a year when rusty doors are pried open, "staff only" signs are taken down and archaeologists climb up from their pits in the earth to show you exactly what they're finding. Discover a side of Flanders normally hidden away on special guided tours and at activities designed to explore a common heritage through monuments and objects.



→ <http://openmonumenten.zita.be>

Den Hopsack

Grote Pieter Potstraat 24;
www.denhopsack.be
SEP 4 21.00 Maggid
SEP 6 21.00 Kris Van Daele invites...



Antwerp

Nova
Schijfstraat 105; 03.259.04.20
www.nova-kiel.be
SEP 2 20.15 Campina Reggae

Ghent

De Site
Muishondstraat; www.reggae.be
SEP 4 16.00 Afro Root Festival



Antwerp

Vlaamse Opera
Frankrijklei 1; 070.22.02.02
www.vlaamseopera.be
SEP 4 20.00 Vlaamse Opera Symphony Orchestra and Choir conducted by Muhai Tang and Yannis Pouspourikas, with Ildiko Komlosi, mezzo; John Treleaven, tenor: Mahler, Saariaho

Ghent

Vlaamse Opera
Schouwburgstraat 3; 070.22.02.02
www.vlaamseopera.be
SEP 3 20.00 Vlaamse Opera Symphony Orchestra and Choir conducted by Muhai Tang and Yannis Pouspourikas, with Ildiko Komlosi, mezzo; John Treleaven, tenor: Mahler, Saariaho

Ostend

Kiosk Leopoldpark
Leopold II-Laan; 059.70.11.99
SEP 6 19.30 Canta Fideles choir



Bruges

City Hall

Burg 12; 050.44.81.11 www.ideefixe.be
SEP 9-18 21.00 Georges Bizet's Carmen performed outdoors, conducted by Eric Lederhandler and staged by François de Carpentries (in the original French with Dutch surtitles)

Brussels

De Munt

Muntplein; 070.23.39.39
www.demunt.be
SEP 9-21 15.00/20.00 Yvonne, Princesse de Bourgogne by Philippe Boesmans, conducted by Patrick Davin, libretto and staging by Luc Bondy



Brussels

Bozar

Ravensteinstraat 23; 02.507.82.00
www.bozar.be
SEP 2 20.00 Sankai Juku dance company in Hibiki, choreographed and staged by Ushio Amagatsu



Antwerp

Fakkeltreter

Reyndersstraat 7; 03.232.14.69
www.fakkeltreter.be
SEP 4-19 15.00/20.30 Fast Forward in Dossier: Ronald Akkerman, directed by Barbara Rubin (in Dutch)

Theater aan de Stroom

Blancefloerlaan 181; 070.22.33.30
www.theateraandestroom.be
SEP 9-OCT 3 times vary
 Fluistercompagnie in Bent, directed by Jean-Paul Van Steerteghem (in Dutch)

Koksijde

CC Casino
 Casinoplein 11; 058.53.29.86
www.casinokoksijde.be
SEP 3 20.00 Freddy De Vadder in Freddy gaat naar de bakker (Freddy Goes to the Bakery) (in Dutch)

Lebbeke

CC De Biekorf
 Stationsstraat 23; 052.25.08.12
www.ccdebiekorf.be
SEP 4 20.00 Wouter Deprez in Je Zal Alles Worden (You'll Become Everything) (in Dutch)

Ypres

CC Ieper - Stadsschouwburg

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Vandenpeereboomplein 31;
 057.239.480 www.acci.be
SEP 8 20.15 Wouter Deprez in Je Zal Alles Worden (You'll Become Everything) (in Dutch)



Antwerp

Contemporary Art Museum (M HKA)

Leuvenstraat 32; 03.238.59.60
www.muhka.be
Until SEP 19 Art Kept Me Out of Jail, performance installations by Jan Fabre

Fashion Museum (MoMu)

Nationalestraat 28; 03.470.27.70
www.momu.be

SEP 8-FEB 13 Stephen Jones & The Accent of Fashion, retrospective of works by the British hatmaker

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

Until SEP 5 Jacky Lecouturier:

POLAROIDS (and others), polaroids by the Belgian photographer

Until SEP 5 Outlandish: A Specter From the Land of If, group show

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

Until OCT 3 Jongbloed! (Young Blood), electronic music, mixed media video, graphic design and photos by nine young artists inspired by the Closing Time exhibition

Bruges

Hospitaalmuseum

Mariistraat 38; 050.44.87.11
www.museabrugge.be

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

Kunstcentrum Oud Sint-Jan

Mariistraat 38; 050.47.61.00
www.miro-brugge.be

GET YOUR TICKETS NOW!

Milk, Inc: Eclipse

24-25 September

1-2, 8 October

Sportpaleis, Antwerp



It's time for this electro-duo's annual concert, which always seems to sell out no matter how many extra shows they add. The ultra-recognisable Regi Penxten and Linda Mertens are Flemish superstars, but, if you're lucky, you might just catch the seldom-seen third member of Milk Inc, Filip Van Dueren, who generally only plays with them during these all-night concert dance parties.

→ www.sportpaleis.be

Until OCT 3 Expo Miró, lithographs, ceramics and manuscripts from the surrealist painter Joan Miró

Brussels

Atomium

Atomium Square; 02.475.47.72
www.atomium.be

SEP 6-NOV 14 Intersections: Belgian Design, parcours of works by young Belgian designers Jean-François d'Or, Nicolas Destino and Linde Hermans

Belgian Comic Strip Centre

Zandstraat 20; 02.219.19.80
www.stripmuseum.be

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

Belvue Museum

Paleizenplein 7; 02.511.44.25
www.belvue.be

Until SEP 12 Facing Brussels, contrasting views of the city by the Nadaar photography collective

Until SEP 19 Brussels: A City with a View, interactive exhibition focusing on Jean-Baptiste Bonnecroy's 17th-century painting Gezicht op Brussel, showing panoramas of the city

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

Until SEP 11 Françoise Clabots, books, objects, prints and drawings

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

Brussels Info Place (BIP)

Koningsplein; 02.563.63.99
www.biponline.be

Until DEC 31 Europe in Brussels: Fragmented Past, Shared Future?, video exhibition looking at the European quarter, from its beginnings to the present day (www.europeinbrussels.be)

De Elektriciteitscentrale

Sint-Katelijneplein 44; 02.279.64.45
www.museumdd.be

Until SEP 19 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

Jewish Museum of Belgium

Minimstraat 21; 02.512.19.63
www.mjbjmb.org

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

Royal Museum of the Armed Forces

Jubelpark 3; 02.737.78.33
www.legermuseum.be

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

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-mrha.be

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 SEP 12 Wangechi Mutu: My Dirty Little Heaven, collages by the New York-based Kenyan artist, Deutsche Bank's Artist of the Year

Until SEP 12 Martin Laborde: The old sow sent them out to... they got into it and rolled down the hill, works by the American and 11 other artists based on the text of the children's story The Three Little Pigs

Yaruna

Waversesteenweg 214B; 02.512.93.12
www.anunsroom.com

Literair Museum

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

Kemzeke

Verbeke Foundation

Westakker; 03.789.22.07
www.verbekefoundation.com
Until OCT 31 Green Summer, ecological projects and art works
Until OCT 31 Stan Wannet: De Hondenmepper, moving installations and robotics by the artist-in-residence
Until OCT 31 Wout Hoeboer (1910-1983): Dandy Dada, retrospective of the surrealist Dutch painter

Kortrijk

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

WEEK IN FILM

Durga Film Festival

2-5 September



Ostend is not the only city with a film festival starting this week: Antwerp's Cinema Zuid is home to Durga, an annual festival of films from India. Durga mixes Bollywood with more art-house fare to paint a complete picture of films shot in India or by Indians around the world. *Heaven on Earth*, the latest film by director Deepa Mehta, best known for the trilogy *Fire, Earth and Water*, is on the programme. Set in Canada, where the filmmaker lives, it follows a tale of arranged marriage and abuse in a South Asian community. Writer-director Dev Benegal, meanwhile, sets his *Road, Movie* in India, where a young man reluctantly agrees to drive his uncle on a six-day journey in the uncle's rickety 1942 truck, which – with projectors, a screen and plenty of films onboard – doubles as a moving cinema (pictured). Many films are in English or subtitled in English
⇒ www.durgafilmfestival.be

Filmotek: Until 11 September

Although most open-air screenings are now over, Filmotek is still going at Atelier 340 in Brussels every Friday and Saturday. The museum is showing international shorts, features and video art, plus some fascinating selections from its archives.

⇒ www.atelier340muzeum.be

Leuven

Museum M

Leopold Vanderkelenstraat 28; 016.27.29.29 www.mleuven.be
Until SEP 12 Angus Fairhurst, retrospective of the late artist, a member of the Young British Artists movement

Saint Michael Church

Naamsestraat 57a; www.gijsvanvaerenbergh.com
Until OCT 31 The Upside Dome, installation by Flemish artist duo Gijs Van Vaerenbergh

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 OCT 24 Boxes Brimming with Life, photo installations by Flemish wildlife photographer Tom Linster

Neerpelt

Musica Toekomstlaan 5B; 011.61.05.10 www.musica.be
Until SEP 5 Good Vibrations: Summer in Your Ears, international exhibition of sound-art installations at various locations between the train station and provincial park Dommelhof

Ostend

Japanese Garden Koningspark; 059.70.11.99 www.krisdewitte.com
Until OCT 3 Kris Dewitte: Set & Still, photos from Belgian film sets by the Flemish photographer

Tervuren

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

Ypres

In Flanders Fields Museum Grote Markt 34; 057.239.220 www.inflandersfields.be
Until OCT 10 More Force Than Necessary, photos and films by Brazilian artist-in-residence Rodrigo Braga



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

De Gordel: 30th edition of the annual biking, walking and running event that takes place in communities in Flanders outside the Brussels ring. Originally a statement of geographical ownership and support for Dutch-speaking families who live in the increasingly French-speaking towns that ring

Brussels, the event has now settled into a popular family activity day
SEP 5 across Sint-Genesius-Rode, Dilbeek, Zaventem and Overijse www.bloso.be

Festival of Flanders: International music festivals fill streets, squares and waterways with guerilla and organised concerts, from classical and mediaeval to traditional world and modern regional music
Until OCT 24 across Brussels and Flanders www.festival.be

Vlaanderen Zingt: Huge group sing-alongs to live music on public squares
Until SEP 26 across Flanders www.vlaanderenzingt.be

Antwerp

Bevrijdingsfeesten: Annual celebration of the city's liberation after the Second World War, featuring a 1940s village, retro market, swing music, dance lessons, reenactments a war vehicles parade and more
SEP 3-5 at Steenplein www.apen.be

De modderen mens: Philosophy festival and grand opening of philosophy house Het Zoekend Hert (The Searching Deer) featuring readings, interviews, concerts, walks, cabaret, poetry, music and retro dance party by Radio Modern
SEP 3-5 at Het Zoekend Hert, Koninklijkelaan 43, Berchem www.hetzoekendhert.be

De Stad van Elsschot: Months-long celebration of 20th-century Antwerp author Willem Elsschot on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of his death, featuring theatre, film and Dicht bij Elsschot, the first public exhibition of his complete archives
Until DEC 31 across Antwerp www.destadvanelsschot.be

FortBom: Theatre festival for all ages, featuring circus acts, poetry, giants, dance performances, barbecues and DJ parties
SEP 2-5 at Fort 4, Fortstraat 100, Mortsel www.fortbom.be

Het Theaterfestival '10: Annual theatre festival bringing together a jury's choice of the most innovative Dutch-language productions from the past season in Flanders and the Netherlands, from children's theatre to dance theatre, from mime to theatrical installations
Until SEP 4 at deSingel, Toneelhuis and Monty www.theaterfestival.be

Klassiek in de Stad: Eclectic mix of classical music, ballet and improvisation
SEP 4-5 at Sint-Jansplein www.klassiekindestad.be

Laundry Day: DJ festival with several stages featuring techno, house, drumnbass, urban, hardstyle, rave, mishmash, electro, minimal and more
SEP 4 12.00 at Nieuw Zuid, Ledeganckkaai www.laundryday.be

Meir Shalev: Interview with the Israeli novelist
SEP 3 20.00 at De Groene Waterman, Wolstraat 7 03.298.75.82, www.borderkitchen.be

Waagstock: Free festival featuring concerts by Buscemi & Squadra Bossa, Fokke, OK Cowboy, more
SEP 4 14.00 at Stadswaag www.waagstock.be

Brussels

Apéros Urbains: Weekly aperitif plus after-parties
Until SEP 3 across the city www.aperos.be

Belgian Beer Weekend: Annual gathering of more than 50 Belgian brewers and the chance to taste their beers
SEP 3-5 on the Grote Markt

www.belgianbeerweekend.be

Ecran Total: Annual summer film festival with classics, reprisals, a Chris Marker cycle and a focus on John Cassavetes
Until SEP 14 at Cinema Arenberg, Koninginngalerij 26 02.512.80.63, www.arenberg.be

Festivaeria: Outdoor festival providing a platform for young artists, with musicians, singers, DJs, dancers, bodypainters, jugglers, photographers and street theatre
Until SEP 18 at Jubelpark www.myspace.com/playnewconcept

International Brigittines Festival: Annual theatre and dance festival promoting new and original choreographies. The theme of the 2010 edition is Societies of the Night
Until SEP 4 at Les Brigittines, Korte Brigittinenstraat 1 www.brigittines.be

Klarafestival: The Brussels leg of the Festival of Flanders, with a focus on Mahler, grand symphonic concerts at Bozar, intimate recitals in private homes, more
SEP 7-17 at venues across Brussels www.klarafestival.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

Elversele (East Flanders)

Mellowtime: Outdoor music festival featuring lyrical and vocal jazz with literary intermezzi
SEP 5 at Da Boerenhof, Landbouwstraat 2 www.mellowtime.com

Ghent

Jazz in 't Park: Outdoor festival featuring more than 20 concerts, plus screening of jazz-related films
Until SEP 5 in Zuidpark www.gent.be/jazzintpark

Knokke-Heist

International Cartoon Festival: Annual festival, this year featuring the work of Flemish cartoonists Jonas Geirnaert and Jan De Maesschalck, plus Press Cartoon prize competition
Until SEP 12 at Rubensplein www.cartoonfestival.be

Oostkamp

Gipsy's in het Park: Gipsy jazz festival and tribute to Django Reinhardt, featuring Basily Boys, Piattos, Philip Catherine Quartet and the Original Seven Gipsy Ska Orchestra
SEP 4 at Beukenpark www.gipsysinhetpark.be

Ostend

Ostend Film Festival: Fourth edition of the festival featuring new Flemish films and TV series, international films, a master selection by Bart De Pauw, video gaming on the big screen, plus the first-ever Flemish Film Awards
SEP 3-11 at venues across Ostend www.filmfestivaloostende.be

Ostend City of Culture: Flanders' first City of Culture, a designation to highlight culture in smaller Flemish cities. Circus, parades, performances, exhibitions and more, all year long
Until DEC 31 across Ostend <http://cultuur.oostende.be>

Watou

Kunstenfestival Watou: Outdoor arts parcours featuring work by more than 100 artists, writers and poets, focusing on the link between word and image
Until SEP 5 across Watou www.watou2010.be

CAFE SPOTLIGHT

O Goiano

Waterloosesteenweg 204A
Brussels (Sint-Gillis)



As you guessed right away, this bar is named after the Brazilian city of Goiana, in the north-eastern state of Pernambuco. You're good. Here are the other key facts about O Goiano: the landlord is Portuguese, the landlady Brazilian, and the cocktails are strong. They also, during the day, serve bar snacks and assorted warm nibbles. But then it all becomes a bit of a blur... If you, like me, hate fake Latino bars trying desperately to re-enact those godawful rum ads, you owe it to yourself to try the real thing. No trendy DJs, no fashion victims throwing their cocktail shakers in the air. Thank Christ. Size-wise, O Goiano is marginally bigger than your average front room. It is located four doors down from O Castiço, mentioned right here a couple of weeks ago, and, conveniently, it also boasts a terrace, which makes for riveting, if painfully loud, conversations held between the two bars. It's the people who live in-between you feel sorry for... almost.

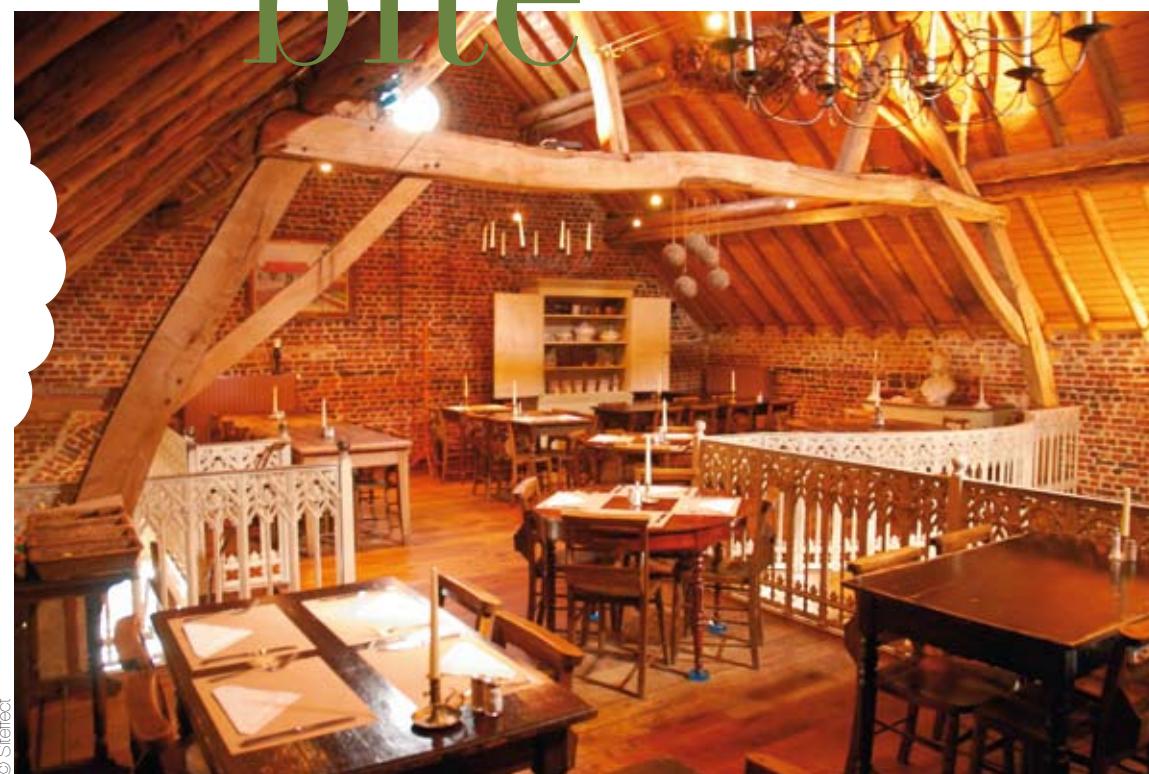
Because, once again, the cocktails are mighty strong. And delicious. And cheap. A recent night out in Sint-Gillis ended up here. "Ended" is the operative word: after two house *caipirinhas*, we had neither the will nor the legs to go elsewhere. A proper *caipirinha* is made with real Brazilian *cachaça*, ie sugarcane alcohol. Like its cousin, cane juice rum, *cachaça*'s alcohol content can vary a great deal. Mark my words: they inherited a good batch here.

Deary me... Question marks littered our journey home, but it transpires that I spent my second *caipirinha* talking to two men, both called Luis(!). One was a hospital porter chilling out after a long day, the other a Portuguese expat living in Bern, who had arrived in the afternoon and stayed in O Goiano since! Both were, like the place itself, unassuming, warm and sincere.

Of course the next day the need to sweat off all that booze resulted to a trip to the nearby swimming pool. On the way back, we bumped into one of our drinking buddies from the previous night. Luis, his name was.

ROBYN BOYLE

bite



© Steffoet

De Voet van Keizer Karel

Tucked away off the busy N8, just east of Dilbeek in Flemish Brabant, is a narrow country road that leads to the village of Wambeek. Follow this road as it winds through corn fields and idyllic, white farmhouses until you reach a large ivy-covered building in a clearing in the trees.

In this protected monument, dating back to the 15th century, a water mill ground grain for the local community until 1983. Making use of the passing stream, the Klapscheutmolen provided milled grain as food for cattle, as well as the ingredients for the neighbouring family De Troch's brewing activities.

Brewery De Troch is still active, and its beers are on the menu at what is today the site of impeccably restored restaurant De Voet van Keizer Karel (Emperor Charles' Foot), referring to the name given to the particular size of brick used to build the original mill.

Inside, the large space has been split up into three levels of seating and filled with wooden tables, church chairs and cross-beams. Old framed portraits on white walls, a majestic open hearth and glowing candles provide for an ultra-cosy atmosphere. Out back, the spacious terrace with its burbling water fountain give a nostalgic holiday feeling on this warm summer night.

Over two Affligem tripels, my companion and I took our time to peruse the extensive menu. All the classic snacks are there, from spaghetti and *croque monsieurs* to salads and steaks. But it was the list of seasonal suggestions that caught our attention, with starters including tuna carpaccio with pesto and olives, a mini-salad with roasted quail and fresh raspberry dressing, zander fish and eggplant *ratatouille* and cucumber gazpacho.

Contact Bite at flandersbite@gmail.com

The suggested main dishes were equally enticing: a prized cut of hanger steak with red pepper sauce and potato cubes with bacon, guineafowl fillet in a tarragon sauce with a witloof-apple salad and thick, crispy potatoes, giant prawns with garlic sauce and risotto rice, or the vegetarian three-colour penne in a white truffle pesto.

My companion opted for the prawns, which were indeed giant, albeit not very numerous, and came swimming in a delicious creamy garlic sauce. My dish with guineafowl was beautifully presented and tasty, but the meat was a bit dry. Fortunately the tarragon sauce made up for the slight overcooking, and the salad was a refreshing side.

Finally, it was time for the finale: fat red cherries topped with a ball of cherry ice cream for across the table, and for myself a scoop of subtle coconut ice cream in a moat of green pistachio *advocaat*, a thick Flemish liqueur made from egg yolks. Placed around the edges of both dishes were sour berries and other fruits, to offset the sweetness of the desserts. This is a whole-experience kind of restaurant, a place where the history, décor and atmosphere is just as important as the honest Belgian cuisine being served.

► Klapscheutstraat 41a, Wambeek (Ternat)
🕒 Thurs from 18.00; Fri from 12.00;
Sat from 15.00; Sun from 11.30
★ Romantic dining
inside a historic monument

→ www.devoetvankeizerkarel.be

NEXT WEEK IN FLANDERS TODAY #146

Feature

We travel to Flanders' most expensive place to live, then check out the cheapest, to see if there's really such a huge difference in lifestyle and attitude

Arts

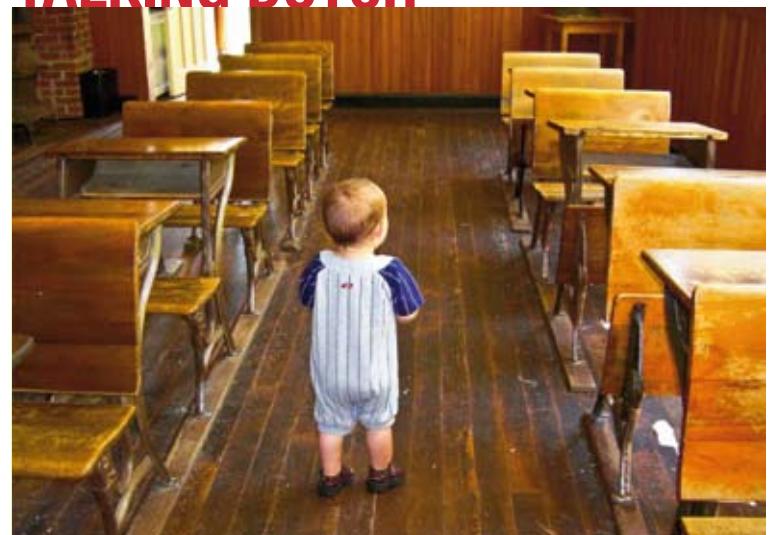
Gabriel Rios isn't exactly Flemish, but we like to think he is: the Puerto-Rican has lived in and around Ghent for many years and made his name here. We talk to the outrageously popular singer ahead of his concert in Antwerp this month

Active

Our journalist dons facemask and jumpsuit to take on the adrenaline rush that is paintball in Flanders

TALKING DUTCH

ALISTAIR MACLEAN



‘peuterinternaat’

The first day of September marks the end of summer, no matter what the weatherman says. Today children go back to school after two months of holiday. In recent days, the papers have been brimming over with advice for parents, though none apparently for the pupils themselves.

It's not like starting a new job, where you are given time to settle in. No, kids should be keyed up as they go *terug naar school* – back to school. Some days ago, parents should have been getting their offspring into a school rhythm: “*Stop de kinderen op hetzelfde uur in bed als tijdens het schooljaar* – Put the children to bed at the same time as during the school year”.

You wonder sometimes if the people who write this stuff have kids of their own. Other advice seems self-evident: “*Zoek boekentassen, brooddozen en fluorjasjes opnieuw bij elkaar* – Look for school bags, bread boxes and fluorescent jackets”.

Yet this next tip is well worth following if your child is going to cycle or walk to school for the first time: “*verken de weg en waarschuw hen voor de gevaren* – check out the route and warn them of any dangers”.

Of course, today is a red-letter day for kids going to school for the first time. Many will already have been to *kleuterschool* – kindergarten – so will have

friends in the big school, perhaps *een grote broer* – a big brother or *zus* – sister.

One thing you can be sure of is that this evening, bar the outbreak of World War Three, the evening news at 19.00 will open with as much as 10 minutes about *de terugkeer naar school* – the return to school, with interviews at the school gate showing parents sniffing back the tears as their Tommeke trots off to his new world.

For some, today means starting at *een internaat* – a boarding school. More than 12,000 pupils will be sleeping away from home this week before going home for the weekend. No doubt a good solution for some, but what about *een peuterinternaat* – a “boarding school” for toddlers?

Well, some *kinderdagverblijven* – creches – will take care of your baby for the whole week, which makes you wonder why you would have kids in the first place. And can you leave them there until the end of the month? Handy if you end up in hospital or prison but, for many, this is *een stap te ver* – a step too far. For *de Gezinsbond* – the Family Union:

“*Dit zal problemen opleveren voor de hechting aan de ouders* – This will cause problems with the bonding with parents”.

Time to spend some quality time with my teacher wife and ask if she's packed her *boekentas*.

THE LAST WORD . . .

Dutch first

“French-speaking children would be better off learning to read Dutch in primary school, and then their mother tongue French afterwards.”

Piet Van De Craen, lecturer at the Free University of Brussels (VUB), commenting on recent research

Cellar snatch

“I trusted him completely.”

Jean-Pierre Bruneau, owner of the three-star Brussels restaurant Bruneau, following the discovery that sommelier had stolen 1,800 bottles of top wine, worth at least €400,000

Team Brussels?

“Why not a team for Brussels and a German-speaking team? Let them fight it out to see who gets what players.”

National team coach Georges Leekens, responding to a proposal to create a Flemish football team

Aid lament

“People give money to Pakistan, but less than 30% gets to the victims.”

Dr Luc Beaucourt, sent by the Flemish government to investigate the situation in Pakistan, who plans to set up his own aid project