

STUDENT GUIDE INSIDE!

The third of our four-part special:
Brussels Free University (VUB)



The Flanders International Film Festival opens with *Madly in Love* – a comedy whose romantic entanglements make for plenty of drama

TRULY MADLY DEEPLY

LISA BRADSHAW

A bomb goes off in a Brussels' shopping centre. A man loses touch with reality when his computer is hacked. Three wise men find a baby abandoned in the woods. And three wise women seduce five willing men under the watchful eye of a pre-adolescent.

Anyone who sees all four of the Flemish films on offer at the Flanders International Film Festival in Ghent cannot help but realise that, no matter how small it is, this region does not fit into any convenient marketing categories.

In fact, what the region's film industry has going for it is diversity, which fits in perfectly with the scope of the country's biggest film festival and its 100 movies from across the globe covering every genre imaginable.

The three women in *Smoorverliefd* (*Madly in Love*), the festival's opening film. It's the seventh time in 37 years that a Belgian film has opened the festival, which always gets the local media even more excited about the red-carpet event. (If you do not attend the opening, you can watch it all on Flemish television.)

If you do attend, you'll see all the stars of *Smoorverliefd*, which are many – Veerle Dobbelaere (pictured left), Marie Vinck, Wine Dierickx, Koen De Bouw, Koen De Graeve, Kevin Janssens, Jan Declair. They will introduce the film, together with director Hilde Van Mieghem (*Denis van Rita*), who mixes up the love affairs of this huge ensemble cast to make an entertaining romantic comedy in the vein of *Love Actually*.

Romantic comedy is not often tackled in Flanders, and the other three Flemish films are reminders of what the region makes often and well: paranoid thrillers and surrealist fantasies. Koen Mortier follows up his first feature *Ex-Drummer* with *22 Mei* (22nd of May), a film that starts with the tragedy that less creative movies would lead up to: a suicide bombing of a crowded shopping centre. The building's security guard, actor Sam Louwyck (*Lost Persons Area*) spends the rest of the film coming to grips with his guilt – and haunted by the victims.

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No sale for Opel Antwerp

Car plant to close definitively in December

ALAN HOPE

Opel Antwerp will close by the end of the year, parent company General Motors (GM) announced last week. The future of the 1,300 workers still on the payroll remains uncertain, as the Flemish government now tries to piece together a rescue plan to save jobs. GM had set itself the deadline of 30 September to find an investor willing to take over the site as a going concern; otherwise it would close the plant and sell off the land and other assets. Until the last minute, GM was talking to two candidates: a Chinese manufacturer and an American investor.

Last Monday GM announced that neither of the two candidates satisfied all of the conditions laid down: a credible business plan that was profitable and solid and ensured sustainable

employment. Opel's managing director, Nick Reilly, had earlier announced that both candidates were "serious parties", but both have now been dropped.

Flemish-minister president Kris Peeters and his government were ready with financial incentives for a new investor. "Antwerp is not in an area where the Flemish government is permitted to give financial or investment support, according to European rules," Peeters said last winter. But what they could do was "give guarantees," he continued. "We will prolong those we have already given to Opel. And a sale and lease back operation can go ahead: we buy the land from GM and rent it back to the new investor. It should also be possible to give training support."

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De Wever pulls the plug on government talks

"Set the counter back to zero"

ALAN HOPE

Bart De Wever, leader of the nationalist party N-VA, this week brought a halt to negotiations to form a government which have been going on for 113 days and called for talks to start again from scratch. De Wever's move means a new record will be set for the length of time the country has been run by a caretaker government but avoids for the time being the prospect of new elections.

Pessimism had been growing at the weekend as it became clear that the high-level working group tasked with pounding out the details of new financial arrangements, including the amount of personal and business taxation that can be levied by the regions, was not on the road to an agreement the N-VA could countenance. De Wever issued an ultimatum

to the French-speaking parties on the question of the splitting of personal taxation, which earned him the immediate criticism of Groen! chairman Wouter Van Besien.

When the French-speaking parties not only refused to meet the ultimatum but appeared to be rowing back on a number of issues already agreed upon, De Wever put an end to talks. One of the issues was how much and what responsibilities were to be devolved from the federal government to the regions. At the time the principles were agreed, it was estimated that about €15 billion of financial responsibility had been handed over to the regions. In the last few days, De Wever claimed, half of that benefit had leaked away.

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OFFSIDE

ALAN HOPE

Is the big city your cup of tea?



Poverty is Not a Game is, ironically, a game launched last week by innovation minister Ingrid Lieten and education minister Pascal Smet. It aims to teach young people the truths about poverty, while eliminating some commonly held prejudices.

The 3D game was developed by GRiN of Antwerp, on a commission from the King Baudouin Foundation, with the support of a number of other groups and the Institute for Broadband Technology.

The scenario is simple. You're 18 years old, have an elaborate haircut, trousers like Tintin used to wear and a burning desire for independence. Despite the protests of your father, you decide to make a life for yourself in the big city. From then on, you have to cope with a number of situations involving your own poverty or that of those around you, like dodging your landlord, surviving on pot noodles and maintaining your elaborate haircut.

It's not clear which city you're in, though it looks in parts like Brussels. The people all walk as if they were trying it for the first time (walking, even in this technologically advanced age, is still one of the hardest things for animators to get right), and everyone has his or her own brightly lit circle to stand in.

Poverty is Not a Game all seems a bit unlikely: the boy (in one of the versions) finds an apartment, a job and even a girlfriend (see picture), whom he takes to dinner before snogging (suggesting his father had nothing to worry about in the first place). Other young people might, however, find their own rite of passage slightly harder, so the game may raise some mistaken expectations.

The game is available in five languages, including English, though the sort of English that has young Jim explain, when asked how long he's been interested in technology: "Computers are just my cup of tea".

Ping, as they're calling it, is influenced by *The Sims*, according to Wim Wouters, head of GRiN. "Everything takes place in a city made up of seven areas. It also has something of *Grand Theft Auto* about it, but then without the violence," he said.

Ping will be distributed to schools on CD-ROM and available to play online at www.povertyisnotagame.com from 20 October.

→ www.grin.be/ping

News in brief

The company running **Midi Station**, the upmarket brasserie next to Brussels' South Station developed by local restaurant guru Antoine Pinto, has been declared bankrupt. The restaurant opened just last year and has failed to reach the target of customers to fill its 2,000 square metres. Euro Immo Star, a subsidiary of the rail authority NMBS, will continue to run the restaurant while it looks for a new top chef.

Sleeping sickness, a disease that kills three million cattle in Africa every year, contributing to severe poverty, could be tackled more effectively with a new drug developed by the Institute for Tropical Medicine in Antwerp. At present, the **sleeping sickness parasite** – related to the one transmitted by the tsetse fly to humans – has built an immunity to the three main medications used against it. The new drug disables the pumping mechanism that the parasite uses to flush the other drugs from its body, restoring their effectiveness.

The musical *Ganesha: A Perfect God* has swept the board at this year's **Flemish Musical Awards**, with five prizes, including Best Musical, Best Director, Best Actress, Best Creative Performance and Best Performance. The *Sound of Music*, meanwhile, took Best Supporting Actress and the Public Prize. *Ganesha*, a small-scale work that some said was not technically a musical, tells the story

of two women in mourning who experience enlightenment on a trip to India.

Beggars in the Brussels metro will be "tolerated", as long as travellers are not harassed, according to a policy letter sent to the transport authority MIVB last week by Brussels transport minister Brigitte Grouwels. Beggars will be banned from the areas behind ticket barriers and onboard the trains, she ordered. "The winter is coming on slowly but surely," Grouwels said. "We can't just leave the poor out in the cold, figuratively and literally."

Members of the crew of the **Belgian dredger Amerigo Vespucci**, who were kidnapped last month in the port city of Douala, Cameroon, have been freed, Cameroon authorities told the BBC. The ship is operated by the Aalst-based dredging company Jan De Nul and also included a Croat and a Filipino. Four Ukrainians were also held, although it is not clear whether they were from the same ship.

Members of the Flemish parliament will now be served **Ordal**, a spring water from Flanders, instead of their usual Chaudfontaine from Wallonia, after an agreement with VLAM, the Flemish marketing agency for agriculture and fisheries.

The Pope should resign following the revelations of **sexual abuse by clergy**, according to the former chairman of the Catholic Church's investigative commission. Peter Adriaenssens, whose committee looked into hundreds of cases, said the problem was not only Belgian but worldwide and that the Pontiff should set an example. "The Pope should not only show regret but also step down from his post," Adriaenssens said in an interview published last week in *De Morgen*. "Then the church would have an historic opportunity to set a moral standard for all other institutions."

Vittorio Pirozzi, the alleged **Mafia boss** arrested last summer after living in hiding for two years in an apartment in Schaarbeek, has been extradited to Italy to serve a 15-year sentence for drug dealing. Pirozzi fought the extradition because he said he feared he would be murdered if delivered to Italy.

Fashion designers from across Belgium joined forces last week to rent a showroom during **Paris Fashion Week**. The cooperation was the idea of the Flanders Fashion Institute and Wallonie-Bruxelles Design/Mode, under the joint title "Les Belges". "Don't look for any political message in the name," said FFI director-general Edith Vervliet. "It's simply the best solution for our communications with the outside world. We are, after all, in Paris."

FACE OF FLANDERS

ALAN HOPE

Luc Allemeersch

If anyone of your overseas visitors should ever ask you how many plants there are in the Brussels region, you can now give them an exact answer: 793 different species, spread across an area of 195 square kilometres.

The reason we know this is all because of one man. Luc Allemeersch recently received the prestigious Van Rompaey Prize for Botany for going out every day into nature and counting the plants that surround us.

The survey is full of interesting information. The total number of species included 66 rare varieties, including spiked rampion (*Phyteuma spicatum*) and red bartsia (*Odontites vernus*).

The area of Rode Klooster in Oudergem is particularly rich in rare species, while the area west of Bosvoorde is the richest in species in general, with an average of 320 per square kilometre – compared to only 99 in the south of Laken, the region's least biodiverse.

According to previous inventories, 166 species have disappeared from the region, many of them prior to 1938, usually involving former grass- or heathland. The census covers only wild plants, so it excludes exotic species you may have in your herbaceous border or growing round the door. The job requires checking out every busy street and every empty patch of ground twice: once in the spring and once in the autumn. In the end, the complete tally took three years to complete.

The idea came from Leefmilieu Brussel, the Brussels Institute for Environmental Management. The Institute for Nature and Forestry Research provided



the digital maps, and the National Botanical Gardens at Meise provided Luc Allemeersch, the man – quite literally – on the ground.

"This is the most complete inventory that has ever been made of wild growth in Brussels," announced the jury, made up of representatives from, among others, the Royal Flemish Academy for Arts and Sciences and the Royal Belgian Botanical Union. "There is no doubt that this is a useful instrument for nature lovers but also for policymakers and those who look after the green spaces."

→ www.floraofbrussels.be/floraofbrussels

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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De Wever calls for new talks

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"The story is over," he told a press conference called on Monday. "Let's just finally admit it honestly. We can't roll around in the mud any longer, we have no time to lose. If people want to put the blame on me, let them. I won't be part of that childish game."

As *Flanders Today* went to press, other major figures were preparing their reactions. De Wever already had an idea of what should happen next. In a triumph of mixed metaphors, he said: "We have to wipe the board completely clean, set the counter at zero and try to start up a new story. We have to do it with open visor and without

taboos, either over the content or over the formula." He gave his backing to the current caretaker government and promised them his active cooperation. "The country has to be reformed," he said, "but it also has to be governed."

To that end, he said, N-VA would provide a "sympathetic ear" to important cases where the government had to act and where a vote was needed in parliament. The government should in the meantime investigate whether it was possible to do this in a slimmed-down manner to speed up decisions.

In one case that arose last week, Yves Leterme's government proved itself quick to react. The issue involved the jobs of some 3,000 people that were under threat because the non-profit organisations that employed them could not renew their contracts, as subsidies run out at the end of the year. The day after the news appeared in *De Morgen* newspaper, Leterme announced that the contracts had been prolonged by six months.

Whether that extension will be long enough to see a new government in power is now anything but certain. N-VA would not, De Wever promised, fall ill with the "old Belgian sickness" of settling for an agreement for agreement's sake. "For us that is not an option and never will be," he said.

Reactions

Caroline Gennez, chair of the Flemish socialist SPA, said her party was ready to talk and called on the N-VA as well as her French-speaking counterparts (PS) to "stop playing strategy games".

Lijst Dedecker chairman Lode Vereeck welcomed De Wever's decision to abandon talks, which he said had been going in the wrong direction from the outset.

Groen! party chair Wouter Van Besien said his party would examine carefully any invitation to take part in further talks. It was now up to De Wever as leader of the largest party to take the initiative, Van Besien said.

The three French-speaking parties at the negotiating table — **PS, Ecolo and CDH**



De Wever: "This story is over"

— resolved to meet on Monday afternoon before giving any public reaction to De Wever's decision.

Likewise, the **CD&V** of Yves Leterme and Flemish minister-president Kris Peeters chose to meet to consider its options before reacting publicly. In a brief statement, chairman Wouter Beke said his party would continue talks in an "open and constructive manner".

On the **financial markets**, meanwhile, the interest on Belgian bonds increased by five

points to 3.12%, a sign that the market is unhappy with the announcement, which signals the continuing inability of the caretaker government to take the measures needed to tackle the budget deficit. The figure is effectively the rate charged by the market to lend money to Belgium. Back in June there was some controversy when it was claimed that the markets feared the arrival of De Wever's party in power. Now they appear to be reacting in the same way to his failure to take power. ♦

THE WEEK IN FIGURES



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newly employed "assistant" postal workers have already given up after only two months on the job, according to Bpost. The assistants work 3.5 hours a day to help relieve the strain on full-time mail carriers, but unions claim they are overworked, causing mail delays

30,000,000

pages of books from the university library in Ghent have been digitised by Google and are now freely available online, via the cultural database Europeana. The more than 100,000 books are all out of copyright and date back four centuries

→ www.europeana.eu

25 cents

per trip per passenger represents the revenue raised by Flemish public transport authority DeLijn. In 2009, DeLijn collected €134 million in fares from 531 million passengers. In Brussels, the MIVB received 71c per trip per passenger

200,000

more overnight stays by foreign visitors to Flanders in the first five months of the year, an increase of 4.5% on last year, tourism minister Geert Bourgeois announced. The coast saw only a 1.8% increase, with visitors to the art cities up 4.7%

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pacemakers installed in Belgium per 100,000 inhabitants, the highest rate in Europe apart from Germany. According to the Health Care Knowledge Centre, there is no medical reason for the rate, which is 25% higher than the average for the rest of the continent

AB gets new director

The new general manager of the Ancienne Belgique, the Flemish rock concert hall in Brussels, will be Dirk De Clippeleir, the AB board announced last week. De Clippeleir takes over from Jari Demeulemeester in March of next year, having beaten about 30 other candidates for the high-profile job.

Following a short spell starting out as promotions manager for *De Standaard*, De Clippeleir worked as a manager at both EMI and Universal Music. In the last few years, he has devoted himself to business coaching.

De Clippeleir, 48, has promised not to introduce any radical changes in policy. "The AB is on a very promising course, and there's no reason to change much of the programme," he said. "Jari Demeulemeester and his fantastic management team have done a great job."

De Clippeleir, who will work with four managers and a staff of 47, explained that the team effort was something that attracted him to the position. "The last three years I've worked on my own, and while that was pleasant, I did miss working in a group situation."

Demeulemeester, meanwhile, retires at the end of February after 22 years as general director of the AB and, prior to that, four years as its artistic director. He promised he would go on being "an advocate and an ambassador for music". ♦

Cash for Concertgebouw

The Concertgebouw in Bruges (*pictured*) is to receive an extra €400,000 in subsidies a year, announced Flemish culture minister Joke Schauvliege last week. The money is intended to allow the Concertgebouw, built in 2002, to join the ranks of the eight existing Flemish cultural institutions: the Flemish Opera, the Royal Ballet of Flanders, the Flemish Radio Orchestra and Choir, deFilharmonie, the Ancienne Belgique in Brussels, the Fine Arts Museum in Antwerp (KMSKA), the Contemporary Arts Museum in Antwerp (M HKA) and deSingel performance hall in Antwerp (which also received an additional €400,000).

The ministry praised the Concertgebouw's "strong reputation" based on the presentation of not only music, but also music theatre and dance, and looked

forward to its further development as a "national and international centre".

The grant provoked some criticism from the managers of other cultural institutions that had been bypassed. The grant to deSingel was understandable because it had just added a new building, they said. But the promotion of the Concertgebouw, at the cost of the other major institutions, was no less than "a small scandal", according to Aviël Cahn, manager of the Flemish Opera.

• Meanwhile, an event held last weekend to raise funds for the Brussels Muntchouwburg brought in a total of €230,000 from a dinner and concert, as well as a sneak preview of an exhibition by artist Isabelle De Borchgrave, which is planned for St Petersburg. ♦



FIFTH COLUMN

ANJA OTTE

Losing face

The decision on the Oosterweel motorway link is the toughest this Flemish government has ever had to take. Its consequences for future mobility in and around Antwerp are huge, as are the costs involved. The choice to be made — a bridge or a tunnel — anyone can understand, but the way every party has taken a stance on this issue made the decision highly symbolic.

On a political level, it comes as no surprise that some parties emerge as losers in this issue. What amazes, though, is the way the injuries are self-inflicted.

Open VLD is an opposition party in the Flemish parliament (and sets out to be one in the federal parliament as well). As the party had long resisted the tunnel option — which the Flemish government decided on in the end — it switched into opposition mode as soon as the verdict became known. The fact that the Flemish government decided to pass on the extra costs to the city and the port of Antwerp infuriated not just Annick De Ridder, the Open VLD member of parliament from Antwerp, but also party president Alexander De Croo, who started sending out a number of tweets lambasting the Flemish government and Antwerp mayor Patrick Janssens. You have to pay up to save Janssens' face, he told the Antwerp population. His party, he announced, would leave the Antwerp majority right away.

Unfortunately, De Croo had not consulted with his two Antwerp alderman. One of them, Ludo Van Campenhout, had always favoured the tunnel scenario, while the other, Luc Bungeneers, simply preferred to stay alderman. In the end, Open VLD did not leave the Antwerp majority, and the one who lost face was De Croo. Meanwhile, Van Campenhout, who surprisingly turned out to be one of the most steadfast politicians in the whole Oosterweel saga, has left Open VLD. He will, for now, remain an independent alderman. He has his eyes set on another party, although it is not clear which one. In the meantime, he has produced one of this year's more memorable quotes, leaving all options open: "I have always been a Flemish nationalist. If I was in the N-VA, Bart De Wever would have to hold me back. On the other hand, my grandmother was a socialist..."

One wonders which party will take Van Campenhout on board after such deep political insights.

It's divine, darling

When Hasselt's fashion museum takes on religion, nothing is sacred

ANNA JENKINSON

Kenneth Ramaekers was given what was arguably the toughest job in fashion this year: create an exhibition to coincide with the Virga Jesse, a veneration of the Virgin Mary.

Taking place over a two-week period last August, the Virga Jesse celebration is thrown every seven years in Hasselt. An important part of the city's cultural heritage, it is a hugely popular affair. As the director of the city's Fashion Museum, Ramaekers was keen to avoid any associations with fusty, dreary outfits.

"Old religious clothes, cast-offs...that's not what we wanted to show," he tells me. "We're a fashion museum. I wanted something more cutting edge, something exciting."

Madonna springs to mind. But Ramaekers had noticed that many designers have worked with religious themes since that 1980s period, and so he and his team set about finding them.

The result, *Devout/Divine – Fashion vs Religion* is three floors of *haute couture* and *prêt-à-porter* fashion by top designers such as Jean-Paul Gaultier, Dries Van Noten and Vivienne Westwood. All the outfits are inspired by religious symbolism, ranging from burqas and cassocks to the Star of David and Hindu gods.

"Even if you don't want anything to do with religion, you can't avoid it"

Far from fusty, the theme is actually topical. "Religion is everywhere; you just have to open the newspaper to see that," says Ramaekers. "Scandals in the Catholic Church, laws to ban the burqa. Even if you don't want anything to do with religion, you can't avoid it."

While acknowledging that religious symbols are usually used in fashion for their aesthetic value rather than as a statement about religious identity, the museum's director is very aware that they can still evoke strong reactions.

Hasselt Fashion Museum itself stumbled upon a few difficulties. For example, the museum had hoped to include an image of Karl Lagerfeld's 1994 "Quran dress," but there had been so much negative reaction at the time that the request proved out of the question. The low-cut evening dress decorated with text from the Quran, and nicknamed "The Satanic Breasts" by the media, provoked world-wide protests and death threats against Claudia Schiffer, who modelled the dress on the catwalk. In response, Lagerfeld agreed to have the dress burned and issued a public apology.

The museum has not had any negative reactions to *Devout/Divine* so far. If Ramaekers had any reservations about any of the exhibition's content, he swept them aside because Catholicism, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism and Buddhism are all tackled head-on.

A standout is the collection of four Gaultier dresses that were part of the French designer's 2007 couture summer collection with a Virgin Mary theme. Symbols of the Sacred Heart of Mary and a chalice are subtly integrated into the elegant gowns. Gaultier's inspiration for this collection was religious art in Catholic churches.

Spanish designer Cristobal Balenciaga used his strong Catholic homeland as an inspiration for the shapes of his clothes. One of his dresses, on loan from the Victoria & Albert museum in London, is a black silk evening dress and cape, simple in design and yet stunning. As Eve Demoen, the exhibition's project researcher, said of the 1967 dress: "It's my favourite. It's so pretty and quite extraordinary."

But rock 'n' roll religion isn't left behind: several pieces from Londoner Todd Lynn's 2009 winter collection are here, including a short, black leather cape inspired by the mozetta worn by the pope and cardinals, and a woman's tailored, knee-length white jacket with a high collar and matching long scarf, based on a priest's liturgical stola. Known for his work with music industry elite, like Mick Jagger and Bono, Lynn's fashions have been placed in church-like recesses, while others, such as Raf Simons' designs – inspired by Catholic school uniforms – are in spaces reminiscent of confessional boxes.

The dominant colours in the exhibition are, perhaps unsurprisingly, black and white. Until, that is, you find the Hindu-inspired designs. Suddenly you're hit by an explosion of colour. One space is

© Patrice Stabile



Virgin summer: Jean Paul Gaultier's 2007 summer collection was inspired by religious art

dedicated to the work of India's Manish Arora, with the mannequins lined up along a catwalk-like podium surrounded by 100 candles in a dimly lit room. The atmosphere contrasts strikingly with the bright, at times garish, clothes made from fabrics full of Hindu gods or decorated with sequins and coloured beads.

And what fashion exhibition would be complete without Belgium's own Walter Van Beirendonck, whose famously wild styles seem to offer something for every theme? His collection of burqas for men is made out of brightly coloured wool, one in blue and black stripes with yellow pompoms around the head, another with red and blue woollen strips plaited together and red pompoms hanging down to the knees.

By changing the burqa's traditional colours and material – not to mention the gender wearing it – Van Beirendonck raises the question of what it is about this item of clothing that many in western society object to. "For me it was a way of commenting on how our society is currently reacting to Islam and other religions," Van Beirendonck writes in the exhibition's catalogue. "My solution was, 'I'll take it out of its context. I'll make it a fashion item, and then no one will say anything about it anymore!'"

Just as Van Beirendonck turns traditional women's religious clothing into men's fashion, Spain's Miguel Adrover transforms typical Jewish male clothing into contemporary creations for women. This is somewhat provocative, as the law of Moses states that men and women may not wear the same clothing. In another ensemble, Adrover incorporates the Star of David.

Given that Buddhism rejects materialism and Buddhists' possessions are restricted to one gown, a needle and a rosary of beads, it's perhaps not surprising that this religion is the least represented. Nonetheless, Gaultier based a 2001 collection on traditional monks' clothing, combining Buddhist and western influences, and Raf Simons used Buddhist elements in his 2004 summer collection, designing loose orange ensembles that evoke monks' robes.

Though you may not see the Quran dress at *Devout/Divine*, you will find other photographed fashions, including Olivero Toscani's "Kissing nun and priest". A video, meanwhile, shows how Sabijn Peeters' "Resurrection" series of t-shirts can be transformed into headwear, while a glass cabinet sports religious-inspired jewellery, such as rosary beads transformed into necklaces, pendants with the Virgin Mary, and brooches depicting Jesus on the cross. ♦

Devout/Divine – Fashion vs Religion

Until 9 January
Hasselt Fashion Museum
Gasthuisstraat 11

➔ www.modemuseumhasselt.be

Holding down the

Hasselt is more out of the way than other Flemish cities and located in a sparsely populated province. It can be a hard sell to artists and visitors alike when it comes to exhibitions and other cultural events.

But Hasselt is equipped with two first-rate infrastructures holding down the cultural fort. Z33 arts centre is the "point of reference" for students from the art and design schools in Hasselt and nearby Genk. In terms of a broader audience, Tim Toubac, in charge of communications, acknowledges that the centre's location poses a challenge. "We are not in Brussels, Antwerp or Ghent. That's a difficulty," he says. So they work very hard to



"Order & Chaos", part of David Huycke's revisit of the ancient



Flanders' designer-with-drama Walter Van Beirendonck

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make sure Z33 can offer visitors "something that they won't find elsewhere". Z33 has been raising its international profile in recent years, working with partners across Europe, touring its exhibitions and this year for the first time exhibiting at the Milan Art Fair. Hasselt's Fashion Museum has its work even more cut out for it. Antwerp's Fashion Museum gets more funding, has far more staff and has an internationally renowned fashion school on the same site. But Hasselt's exquisitely curated exhibitions, which generally start from a historical perspective, are world class and worth a trip to Hasselt all by themselves.



art of granulation, now at Z33



challenges the west to re-think the burqa

"I love the Hasselt Duck"

With its great big rubber duck, Z33 arts centre launched a phenomenon and a precursor to Z-OUT

ANNA JENKINSON

Florentijn Hofman's "Rubber Duck" is making a brief return to the waters of Hasselt. Created last year to launch a project focused on art in the public space, the 12-metre high yellow inflatable duck made its debut in Hasselt and has since been seen bobbing along rivers, canals and ponds from Sao Paulo to Osaka.

The work was commissioned by Z33, Hasselt's centre for contemporary art, to launch Z-OUT, a project at the crossroads of public art, architecture and landscape. It was one of two strategies to get the ball rolling before the full Z-OUT kick-off in 2012.

"We wanted to get people used to the idea of art in the public space and not see it as something threatening," says Z33's Lieve Vanhoyland, a mainstay of the centre (and its previous incarnations) for 30 years.

That said, it wasn't all smooth sailing for "Rubber Duck", who at one point last year got stuck in a storm and was also the victim of vandalism. If anything, these events boosted its popularity with Limburgers, many of whom volunteered to be Rubber Duck-sitters. A Facebook page was also created entitled "I love de eend van Hasselt" ("I love the Hasselt duck"), which now boasts more than 4,500 members.

Z33, meanwhile, whose name derives from its address at Zuivelmarkt 33 on the former site of the Hasselt *begijnhof*, put plan number two into motion. "This year, we went for something less harmless," says Vanhoyland. The result is Philip Metten's *Innercoma*, an exhibition that transforms the Z33's building into an enormous sculpture.

Finding your inner coma

Large structures, including canvas paintings, have been added to the front and back of the building. Linking them is an

indoor passageway, whose walls are filled with a zany, green neon design. "I wanted to turn it inside out, turn everything around," Metten says in a statement. "Normally, the street is the transit zone; in this work, the inside of Z33 becomes a transit zone...I evoked the hustle and bustle of the street on to the inside of the sculpture."

Metten worked with other artists, a graphic designer and a film director for various components of the work. The launch event included two bands playing in front of the gigantic sculpture.

"Philip Metten's work is a foretaste of the possibilities Z-OUT can provide in the public space," according to Z33's director Jan Boelen, referring to the way in which the exterior of the building is used and the artist's concern with the spectator's experience.

Z-OUT is just one of Z33's initiatives as it seeks to achieve its ambitious objective: "To draw the world to Limburg, and show Limburg to the world." Another is being the driving force behind Limburg's selection as the 2012 location for Manifesta, the roving European Biennial of Contemporary Art.

Manifesta in Limburg

Manifesta, which started in Rotterdam in 1996, throws the spotlight every two years on a relatively undiscovered contemporary art space, acting as a counterweight to more dominant artistic centres such as Venice or Basel. The main focus of each Manifesta is a three-month biennial exhibition, but it also includes discussions and seminars over the two-year period to try and establish "a continuing dialogue" between artists, theorists and the public. While Z33 initiated Limburg's bid to host the next Manifesta, the events will mostly take place in the nearby old mining town of Genk. Still, the Manifesta organisation will have offices



Come inside, come inside: The Z33 building itself was part of the *Innercoma* exhibition

at Z33 and the biennial should in fact raise the profile of the whole region.

As if Hasselt's contemporary art centre didn't have enough on its hands, 2012 is also the year it plans to double its exhibition space to about 1,600 square metres. The extra rooms will give Z33 more flexibility, allowing it to, for example, avoid month-long breaks between exhibitions for dismantling and assembling.

New, new new!

Before all these big ideas become reality, though, Z33 will continue with its main calling: putting on exhibitions. Last weekend, two new shows opened at Z33: *Re-thinking Granulation* by David Huycke and *Toegepast*, an annual event started 15 years ago to introduce young design talent.

Huycke, a Flemish silver designer, puts 40 new pieces on show in *Re-thinking Granulation*. The exhibition makes up the final part of his PhD, in which he explored the possibilities of reinventing the ancient technique of granulation, typically used by goldsmiths for decorative purposes. Huycke has concentrated on silver sculptures, looking at the possibilities from a technical point of view as a building block, as well as a means of expression.

Toegepast, meanwhile, which roughly translates as "applied", is the culmination of a year of classes provided for a handful of students selected from the

Belgian and Dutch design academies. It is an opportunity for the young designers to put on their first show.

Among the past designers who have made their debut at *Toegepast* is Michaël Verheyden, who later started his own leather bag and accessories company. Verheyden has maintained his links with Z33 and this summer made a design with a difference: he recycled the fabric from Hofman's damaged "Rubber Duck" into a series of handbags (which had nearly sold out when *Flanders Today* went to press).

As for the new "Rubber Duck" that will stay in Hasselt's canal until 10 October, that won't be its last outing. It is likely to pop up again as a mascot for future Z-OUT projects. ♦

→ www.Z33.be

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© Kristof Vrancken/Z33

You're so fine: Hasselt's famous "Rubber Duck" is on the canal for a few days more

Candidates for takeover “failed to satisfy conditions”

→ continued from page 1

But none of that was enough to bring the candidate-investors up to the standards required. Unions protested immediately that GM had never made a serious or sincere effort to arrange a takeover. The prospect, the ACV Metea union said, had been dangled in front of the eyes of the workforce like a hypnotist's charm. “At the announcement of the closure of the factory on 21 January this year, it became immediately obvious that GM would do anything to send any takeover effort off the rails,” the union said in a statement.

The job of finding a candidate to take over from the start of 2011, given the 30 September deadline, was, the union said, “an impossible task”. Back in August, GM had already called in real estate agents to ask them to begin looking for potential buyers for the grounds, although by law the Port of Antwerp has the right of first refusal.

As *Flanders Today* went to press, unions were meeting with the government to decide on the next step. The ACV union called on the regional government to work together with them on a “new Flemish

industrial project” and demanded the immediate creation of a reconversion group to handle the fallout of the Opel closure. “Give us this factory,” challenged ACV spokesman Walter Cnop. “We’ll try ourselves to develop industrial activities. Accept your social responsibility and give us the factory for a symbolic euro, and we’ll take care of our own future.”

Peeters declined to react to the closure news until he had sat down with the Opel working group, which consists of the unions, the employers’ federation Agoria, the Flemish region, the cabinets of government investment minister Ingrid Lieten and finance minister Philippe Muyters and Peeters’ own staff. They were due to start meeting at 17.00 on Monday.

• The closure of Opel Antwerp brings with it the additional loss of 180 jobs at Johnson Controls in Geel, Antwerp province, which supplies car seats to the Opel plant. “Johnson Controls is 100% dependent on Opel. If it’s finished there, then the factory here will have to close as well,” said local union representative Luc Meyns.



Shocked: Workers learned in January that the Opel car plant would close

Meanwhile in Genk, Limburg province, the management of Ford Motors has guaranteed employment for the 4,500 workers until 2020, in return for their agreement on a new round of economies. The savings plan involves a cut of 12% in salary costs, the closure of the works canteen and the suspension of a bus service. In return, Ford Genk will build three new Ford models. The deal also provides

security for some 2,000 people employed by suppliers in the area.

And in Ghent, Volvo Cars is to take on 270 new workers in response to increased demand, management said. This year’s production will be 40,000 cars more than last year’s. Volvo Ghent took on 200 new workers just three months ago. ♦

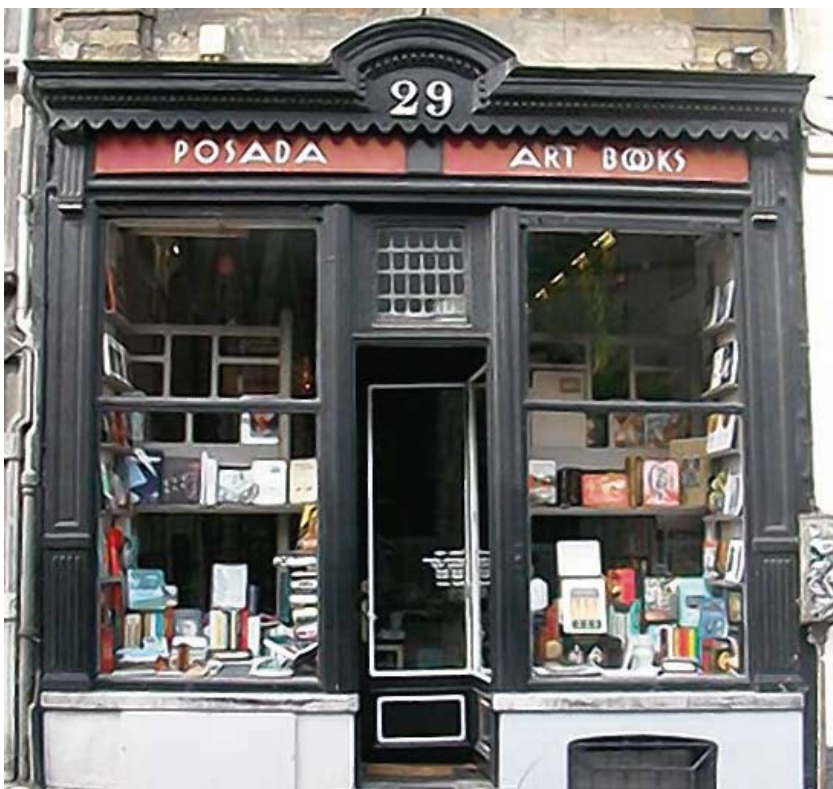
Brussels landmark bookshop up for sale

The seventh most beautiful bookshop in the world has gone up for sale. Posada, the art and antiquarian book store in Brussels’ Magdalenasteenweg is looking for a buyer. “I’m getting old and starting to forget things,” said Dutch owner Martijn Oleff. “I also want more time for my own collection and for some relaxed travelling.”

Posada, named after the Mexican artist José Guadalupe Posada, started 35 years ago after Oleff, by training a laboratory biochemist, saw examples of his ideal bookshop in Barcelona and New York. The shop, located between the Grote Markt and Central Station, was listed two years ago in *The Guardian* newspaper as the seventh most beautiful

in the world, the only one in Belgium to make the rankings. The number one spot went to the Selexyz Dominicanen in Maastricht, a bookshop constructed inside a former Dominican church.

What Posada has that they don’t have is the world’s tallest bookcase, four storeys high in the converted townhouse. The bookcase is eight metres tall and contains some 30,000 books, attainable only via a security ladder. “The best thing would be for someone to take over the whole thing, but that’s doubtful,” Oleff said. “Times are hard everywhere and certainly in the books sector. Don’t forget that art books are a luxury item; that’s the first thing people cut back on.” ♦



Dutch under beer assault

Comedians Henk Rijckaert and Bert Gabriëls (*pictured*), known in Flanders as the presenters of the hit Canvas show *Zonde van de zendtijd* (*Waste of Airtime*), have been recruited by Palm beer for a campaign aimed at turning our Dutch neighbours into, dare one say it, proper beer drinkers. The campaign, by the floridly named Stamenkovits Stibbe Stalenhoeft Schreuder & Orchestra, takes a gentle dig at Dutch food and drink while offering Palm as the alternative. The Flemish beer, brewed in Steenhuffel, is already the best-selling special beer in the Netherlands.

• Meanwhile, the brand names owned by Leuven-based brewer AB InBev are worth a total of more than €23.6 billion, according to a calculation by brand experts Eurobrand. InBev owns world leaders such as Budweiser, Stella Artois and Beck’s, putting it in fourth place for brand names in Europe. The leader is French luxury goods group LVMH, which owns Louis Vuitton, Hennessy and Donna Karan. ♦



Kitchen for sale

If you’re looking to buy the world’s tallest bookcase, see above. But if you’re in the market for a kitchen, chances are Ikea could be high on the list.

One in four new kitchens in Belgium comes from Ikea, and despite selling 35,000 kitchens here last year, the Swedish mega-retailer slashed prices this year by 10% to attract an even bigger market share. “The kitchen is becoming more important in our lives, and that’s what we want to play on,” said Olivier Baraille, general manager for Ikea Belgium.

Experts agree on the main reasons for Ikea’s success: a minimum standard of quality; value for money; simple design that’s attractive to a wide range of customers; and the possibility of building up combinations of elements from various ranges and price categories. On the other hand, the sheer ubiquity of the chain means their furniture is instantly recognisable.

However, Ikea’s constant rise is not a threat to the home-grown kitchen industry, said Chris De Roock of the industry federation Fedustria. Ikea, he explained, competes with the likes of Brico in importing kitchen elements from low-wage countries. The Flemish kitchen industry, on the other hand, offers custom work as part of a total package. Despite the continuing economic crisis – with people putting off decisions on major spending items like house renovations – the sector lost only 0.5% in sales last year.

Luckily for them, we’re a disgruntled lot when it comes to our kitchens. One in four believe our kitchen is too small, and one in five finds it not functional enough, according to Ikea research. Only one in three has the space required to install the open-plan kitchen they dream of, but 47% said the kitchen was the most important part of the house. ♦

THE WEEK IN BUSINESS

Banking • Dexia

The Belgo-French Dexia bank, which specialises in local authorities financing, is said to be considering a strategic alliance with Paris-based Banque de la Poste. The move would significantly reduce Dexia’s dependence on capital markets for the financing of its activities as Banque de la Poste has some €80 billion of surplus deposits.

Electronics • Philips

Dutch electronics group Philips has increased the capital of two of its Belgian affiliates by some €8.1 billion to take advantage of Belgium’s favourable notional interest tax system. The move is expected to help Philips save up to €300 million in taxes a year.

Food • Lotus

Lembeke-based Lotus Bakeries, a world leader in the production of speculoos biscuits, plans to invest €27 million over the next three years to develop its activities on the site and to increase the capacity of its pastry unit in Oostakker by 50%. Meanwhile, Delacre, another local biscuits brand, is expected to be sold by its owner, UK-based United Biscuits, to the Chinese Bright Food Group.

Pharmaceuticals • Omega

Over-the-counter pharmaceuticals producer and distribution company Omega Pharma is in talks to take over the French Laboratoires de la Mer, based in Saint-Malo. The Breton firm is specialised in dermatological and dental products. For Omega Pharma, the move will strengthen its brands portfolio and its distribution capacity in France.

Supermarkets • Colruyt

Supermarket chain Colruyt will increase its hours by four more per week beginning at the end of this month, bringing sales up by 3%, or €140 million a year, the company said.

Telecom • Telenet

Saskia Schatteman, vice-president of residential marketing at telecom company Telenet, has resigned after barely 10 months in the job amid rumours that the workload was too great – a claim supported when three directors were brought in to take up her functions. As marketing director for De Lijn, Schatteman was voted Marketer of the Year, the first woman to win this award, but she was already well known to the public as the chair of the jury on the TV show *De Bedenkers*, where members of the public competed to gain support for their inventions.



A STUDENT GUIDE

OCTOBER 2010

brussels

Welcome to the VUB

It might be in Belgium's largest city, but the Free University of Brussels is the country's cosiest university alternative

PHOTOS: MONIQUE PHILIPS

TANIA RABESANDRATANA

A bit of history

The roots of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB), or Free University of Brussels, date back to 1834, when the French-speaking Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB) was founded. Shortly after Belgium's creation, lawyer Pierre-Théodore Verhaegen established an academic centre independent from any religion or ideology, separate from both church and state. This was largely a reaction to institutions such as Leuven's renowned Catholic university, set up four centuries earlier.

The principle of free enquiry remains at the university's core today; the motto "scientia vincere tenebras" (science will triumph over darkness) advocates independent, critical thinking, driven by evidence, not by dogma, politics, prejudice or greed.

As in other Belgian universities at the time, the language was French. Dutch began creeping in during the late 19th century, and from the 1930s on the Dutch presence

grew stronger. In 1969, the university split into the Dutch-speaking VUB and the French-speaking ULB. This process was comparable to the division between the Catholic University of Leuven and its francophone counterpart in Louvain-la-Neuve at the same period – although the transition was smoother in Brussels.

The two universities' main campuses are located very close to each other in the south of Brussels, with the VUB's university hospital UZ (Universitair Ziekenhuis) in the northern borough of Jette. The ULB and VUB are completely distinct entities, but they are now revisiting their shared past through academic partnerships, in particular the Brussels University Alliance. The sister institutions have even set up a common multilingual master's programme in engineering (in Dutch, French and English).



Tailor-made architecture

The VUB's campus is located close to Etterbeek train station - which is not in Etterbeek but in Elsene district. Its architecture reflects its young history, as there is no old stone in sight. The main administrative building, or "M" building, was designed by architect Renaat Braem; it was inaugurated in 1970 and remains the Flemish architect's last project. Today, the famously egg-shaped building has acquired an irresistible retro flavour and a wealth of details to discover.

The building design was chosen to match the vision of the newly-created VUB. Braem went for a symbolic form that he believed reflected the basic nature of scientific truth: an ellipsis, a dynamic shape that follows the roundness of human motion. He used round shapes throughout the building: the walls are sloped, the entrance door is crowned with a curved overhang, and the entrance hall leads to a spiral staircase. These shapes symbolise freedom of thought, as opposed to linear thinking.

On each floor, Braem painted murals that prolonged his architectural ideas. "It was not financially feasible to hire those painters whom I would have seen as most suited to the work, such as Matta, for example, or the Mexicans," Braem said. "I regret to say that I do not know of anyone in Flanders. So it was up to the architect to do it himself in the end." He adorned each of the five floors with bright colours and symbolic shapes, representing energy, plants and animals and human beings. The building entrance is also decorated with his bas-reliefs.

The M building was meant to be a landmark for the VUB near the campus entrance. So instead of erecting its façade parallel to the street, where passers-by on General Jacqueslaan would just see a thin structure as they approached it to drive past, Braem placed its long axis perpendicular to the busy street, giving drivers a full view of the building as they travel in either direction.



Pioneering research

The VUB's research teams are often small but highly specialised, for instance into the development of bio-fuels. True to its inquisitive spirit, the university has been exploring research avenues in some sensitive areas that others may have approached more gingerly at first. In particular, VUB researchers have developed expertise in medical and ethical issues around the beginning and the end of human life.

Its university hospital's centre for reproductive medicine is very well respected for its work on fertility and hormonal treatment, in-vitro fecundation, artificial insemination and tissue banking. Professor Wim Distelmans, meanwhile, is a prominent figure in palliative care and end-of-life research. His work was instrumental for the drafting and implementation of the 2002 Belgian law on euthanasia.

On a different note, VUB engineers are leaving their mark on the robotics scene: Probo, the "intelligent huggable robot", created a sensation in the international media last year. This research robot is used to study how human beings, in particular children, can interact and communicate with machines. Once perfected, it will be used to comfort children who are staying in hospitals.

The fuzzy, green creature has a long nose, a huggable body, a screen in its belly and a cute, animated face with a range of facial expressions to communicate emotions. More out of sight are a range of sensors, cameras and microphones. Probo is accessible to other researchers who want to investigate how robots can assist therapy, the social and psychological aspects of man/machine interactions or technical aspects of speech and vision.

→ www.vub.be

Small and cosy

With eight faculties, the VUB offers 27 Bachelor study programmes and is home to just over 10,000 students. In comparison to other Flemish universities, these are rather small numbers, which certainly makes for a personalised, cosy campus life. The university employs 2,850 people, plus 3,200 staff members at the university hospital in Jette. More than 1,600 VUB students are from outside Belgium; the university boasts 103 different nationalities on its campuses, with the largest groups coming from the Netherlands, China and Germany. Alongside its three vice-rectors, the VUB has recently appointed the astrophysicist Jean-Pierre de Greve to steer the university's international ambitions over the coming years.



Big Man on Campus

The VUB's rector, Paul de Knop, is a sports sociologist, a rather unusual profile in high-level academic circles. In particular, de Knop is a keen cyclist and recently pedalled 1,000 kilometres to raise money for cancer research. Sportspeople are particularly welcome at the VUB, which caters for athletes who want to combine their training with higher education.

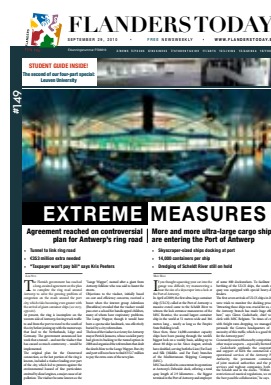


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Student Survival Guide

Getting the best out of Brussels

KATRIEN LINDEMANS

EAT

"I quite like to cook," says VUB student Laurens Defau, 20. "But there are some things you just can't make yourself. For Chinese takeaway, I order at **China Express** (Waversesteenweg 1225) and cheap pizza comes from **Pavarotti** (Kroonlaan)." For more Asian restaurants, try the area around the cemetery in the Elsene (called Ixelles in French) district. "For couscous or tajine in a cosy Moroccan decor I'd recommend **La Khaima** (Waversesteenweg 139)," says Line Martens, 21. "I'm also a fan of the French fries at **Fritkot Bomp** (Kroonlaan 71)."

DRINK

"**De Confrater** (Generaal Jacqueslaan 263) is probably the most famous student bar near the VUB Etterbeek campus, says Laurens. "It's the base of a few student organisations, and there's always something going on. Usually people start dancing on the tables after midnight." And why not? "Another typical student bar would be **Luigi's** (Generaal Jacqueslaan 253), where they have the worst table football ever. It only works with old 20 Belgian Frank coins."

Line, meanwhile, is not really into the typical student bars. "Probably because I don't like beer," she says with a smile. Preferring wine or cocktails, she suggests **Le Tavernier** (Boondaelsesteenweg 445). "They mix a mean mojito: €20 for a jug that serves four. I also go to **Waff**, where they have a chicken in the garden."

Or what about the city centre, where international students can wind down with drinks after a day of sightseeing. "Once I leave the campus, I no longer feel like a student," Laurens says. "I just blend in with the rest of Brussels and go places where Brussels locals go. Dutch speakers in the capital all end up in the same bars: **Roskam** (Vlaamsesteenweg 9), **Monk** (Sint-Katelijnestraat 42), **Walvis** (Dansaertstraat 209) or **Kafka** (Visverkopersstraat 21)."

The **Sint-Goriks** neighbourhood, near Aanspachlaan, meanwhile, is a student haven in the heart of the centre. Packed with pubs, it's hard not to run into someone you know, especially on Friday and Saturday nights.



PARTY

"Most of the parties take place at **BSG** (Pleinlaan 2), where entrance and drinks come really cheap," explains Laurens. One must become a member, though, he points out, or enter with someone who has a membership card. "Sometimes we join the French-speaking students of ULB in their party place **Jefke** (Triomflaan 1)," Line says. "There seem to be parties every day!"

Most bars shut by 4.00, but students determined to pull an all-nighter head to the centre and wind up "quite often," says Line, "in the Irish pub **Celtica** (Kiekenmarkt 55), where you'll find DJs upstairs and live music downstairs every weekend. "On the way home, we queue for coffee and breakfast along with business people on the way to the office."

If your stomach is in the mood for something a bit more traditionally greasy, Line has another answer: "Snack bar **La Petite Couronne** (Kroonlaan 455) is open all night, and has people queuing during the small hours for fries or a durum."



CULTURE

Kultuurkaffee (Pleinlaan 2) is the VUB's cultural hot-spot. You can join them for a drink, a concert or performance, a movie, a debate, a party and much more. Most activities are free.

→ www.vub.ac.be/cultuur

Another great place to soak up some culture is **Rits Café** (Dansaertstraat 70). It's run by students from the Rits school for audiovisual arts, so expect an interesting selection of movies and events.

→ www.ritscape.be

University students can also apply for **culture vouchers** (cultuur waardebon in Dutch), which are accepted in most cultural centres and theatres in Brussels. They are available from the student help service Quartier Latin (see "Know").

Being a student in Brussels means becoming part of a city with around a million people. Universities and high schools are spread across the 19 communes, though for the Dutch-speaking and international students, the main institutions are in Elsene and the city centre. Students have their own bars and go for a bite in student-friendly eateries, but the biggest asset of studying in the capital of Europe is the immense range of things to do and places to go. We checked in with VUB students to get the low-down on the big city.

TRAVEL

Unlike in other student cities, bikes are not the main means of transport in Brussels. "Students usually prefer to have their student room close to the campus, so they can walk wherever they need to," Laurens says. "On the other hand, **public transport** takes you anywhere." Line suggests the Noctis night buses after-hours or **Villo** rental bikes, which you pick up with the swipe of a membership card. "There are bike stands all over town," she says.

A taxi, meanwhile, costs around €15 to get from the centre back to Elsene or Etterbeek. "Or just wait for the first metro," Laurens adds. "It's quite an experience to share a metro with people all dressed up to go to work when you're totally partied out and ready for bed."



VUB Students Line Martens (left) and Laurens Defau in Le Tavernier

AGENDA

Here are two events to put on your social calendar.

Brussel Brost (Brussels Skips School): A big student kick-off event on 10 October at Materialenkaai in the centre, with activities all day and parties all night.

→ www.brusselbrost.be

Sint-Verhaegen Day: Students of VUB and ULB honour their founding father Pierre-Théodore Verhaegen every November in commemoration of the date when the university official opened. This 19 November, they will, as always, parade through the centre of town with a flotilla of honking, decorated trucks...and party straight through to the next day.

KNOW

Compared to other student cities, Brussels is big. There are two places to get answers to questions and get the hang of student life in the capital of not just Belgium, but Europe. **Quartier Latin** (Sint-Michielsstraat 28) mostly helps students find affordable accommodation and get to grips with public transport in Brussels, but it can provide an answer to almost anything and hook you up with culture vouchers, accepted across the city.

→ www.qib.be

Use-It Tourist Office for Young People, meanwhile, has super-fun student maps of Brussels' districts with every piece of information a student needs: where can I eat, drink, shop after 20.00 or do my laundry. The maps are free, and you'll find them in every campus, at the Use-It office (Greepstraat 50) or online

→ www.studentenplan.be





futurspektiv2

physical + digital

10.10. 20.00 Trafó - House of Contemporary Arts
The Brodsky Concerts
LOD / Kris Defoort - Dirk Roofthoof
[THEATRE]

10.10. 20.00 Merlin Theatre - UH Fest
Ignatz
[CONCERT]

11.10. 20.00 Lumen Gallery
OST.MODERN
Photographs of Annemie Augustijns - Exhibition opening
[FINE ARTS]

12 and 13.10. 20.00 Thalia Theatre
Kris Verdonck / A Two Dogs Company - I/II/III/IIII
[DANCE]

14.10. 19.30 Szent István Basilica
Capilla Flamenca - Royne des Flours
Secular works of Alexander Agricola (ca. 1456-1506)
[CLASSICAL MUSIC]

14.10. 21.00 A38 Ship
Grand Mexican Warlock
Triggerfinger
Nemjuci
[CONCERT, ROCK]

16.10. 20.00 and 21.15 Trafó - House of Contemporary Arts
Flat Earth Society - Cheer Me, Perverts!
Aka Moon feat. Baba Sissoko
[CONCERT]

16.10. 22.00 A38 Ship
Laundry day - electro party
[ELECTRO]

18.10. 15.00 ELTE University Department of Dutch Studies
Koen Peeters - Grote Europese Roman
Great European Novel - An introduction by Gondolat Publishing House
[LITERATURE]

19.10. 20.00 SÍN Cultural Centre
Marc Vanrunxt - Lamentatio
[DANCE]

Futurspective2
Physical and digital: contemporary art from Flanders

Budapest, 10-19 October 2010.

A joint initiative of the Flemish government and the leading centres of artistic performance in Budapest on the occasion of the Belgian-Hungarian EU presidency.



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Famous directors and the world's best film composers descend on Ghent

→ continued from page 1

Alex Stockman is also premiering his second film as director in Ghent. *Pulsar* stars Matthias Schoenaerts (*My Queen Karo*) as a guy whose computer is hacked, and the perpetrators appear to be purposely destroying his long-distance relationship. As we see how average lives are increasingly controlled by technology, Matthias gets more and more obsessed with his situation. Finally, the film that has become the biggest surprise – not to mention has the best back-story – is *En waar de sterre bleef stille staan* (called in English *Little Baby Jesus of Flandr*) by Gust Van den Berghe. If you haven't heard of Van den Berghe, don't worry, this is his first film, and it's also his final student project at Brussels film school RITS. Rather than make the required short, Van den Berghe insisted on making a feature. In black and white. With mentally-handicapped actors. His teachers abandoned him, and one can hardly blame them. But he made the film, which was accepted to screen at Cannes this year. It received a standing ovation and reviews that compared the young Flemish director to Bergman and Pasolini. The film, meanwhile, is the story of three beggars who go out singing on Christmas Eve to

earn a little money. On their way home, they witness a birth in a forest and are convinced it is the baby Jesus.

Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome...

All the above films will open later this year in cinemas across Flanders, but the Flanders International Film Festival screens many that may not or that will certainly not have the director on hand to introduce it. In the past, the festival has always had a big-name guest: Kathleen Turner, Woody Harrelson, Andy Garcia. This year they have concentrated on bringing in more directors and composers, which audiences like to see in person, introducing a film or leading a concert.

You'll find all the Flemish directors with work in premiere on hand to talk about their films, but also many from overseas, who are often interviewed in English. **Bent Hamer** will be in the cinema to introduce his new film *Home for Christmas* on 15 October. The award-winning Norwegian director was a big hit at the festival two years ago when he came to present *O'Horten* to a sold-out cinema.



A suicide bomber in Brussels: Flemish director Koen Mortier's *22 Mei* premieres at the Flanders International Film Festival

Hungarian director **Agnes Kocsis**, who serves on the festival's jury this year, will present her new film, *Adrienn Pál*, which won the FIPRESCI award in Cannes, on 13 October. The film follows the story of a nurse who suffers from chronic overeating and eventually runs away from the present by going on a journey to seek the past.

French might be the language **François Ozon** chooses to speak, but don't let that stop you from getting a glimpse of the world-famous director of *8 Women* and *Swimming Pool*. He's in Ghent for the Belgian premiere of his



© Mars Distribution

Legendary French actress Catherine Deneuve joins director François Ozon and Belgian actor Jérémie Renier to introduce Ozon's new film *Potiche*

new movie *Potiche* on 16 October, together with the star of the film, **Catherine Deneuve**. In pure Ozon form, it's a kitschy tale of a woman (Deneuve) taking over her jerk of a husband's business as he lies in the hospital after a heart attack from which no one hopes he will recover.

British director **Paul Greengrass**, meanwhile, will receive the Joseph Plateau Honorary Award this year for a lifetime of work, including *The Theory of Flight*, *The Bourne Supremacy* and *The Bourne Ultimatum*. The ceremony, unfortunately, is not open to the public. ♦

Sounding it out • The best film composers in the world descend on Ghent this month

Because the Flanders International Film Festival is also home to the World Soundtrack Awards, Ghent will be flooded with famous composers in October. **John Barry** will receive a Lifetime Achievement Award and be present for a concert of his music from such films as *Dances with Wolves*, *Midnight Cowboy*, *Goldfinger* and *Out of Africa*. The concert, by members of the Brussels Philharmonic, will be accompanied by film clips from Barry's work. The World Soundtrack Awards themselves are on the final night

of the festival, 23 October, in Ghent's Kuipke stadium. The Brussels Philharmonic will again play soundtracks from films in the presence of their composers, and the list is magnificent: **Alberto Iglesias** (*Volver*, *The Kite Runner*), **Craig Armstrong** (*Moulin Rouge*, *Ray*), **Angelo Badalamenti** (*Blue Velvet* and *Twin Peaks*; a haunting score still easy to recall) and **Stephen Warbeck** (*Shakespeare in Love* and Flemish film *De zaak Alzheimer*). And that's just four of the 11.

→ www.worldsoundtrackacademy.com

Flanders International Film Festival

12-23 October
Kinepolis and other Ghent cinemas

→ www.filmfestival.be

Living up to its name • Finally, a creativity conference that puts activism in the mix

SABINE CLAPPAERT



Women's reproductive rights activist Marleen Temmerman

What do the director of market development for Facebook, the former CEO of Playboy Enterprises, a 75-year-old human rights activist and the world's foremost gynaecologist have in common? They are all women with innovative ideas that impact the way we live and work. Later this month, these women will join others at the Creativity Forum held annually in Antwerp.

The Creativity Forum is an initiative of Flanders District of Creativity, or Flanders DC, a government agency founded in 2006 that works to stimulate business and entrepreneurial creativity in Flanders. In other words, "preparing Flanders for the creative, innovation-driven economy. Cross pollination

between traditional and creative sectors; making the former more creative and the latter more entrepreneurial," says Koen Peeters, communications manager of Flanders DC. Previous editions of the event have featured speakers like John Cleese, Apple co-founder Steve Wozniak and *Wired* magazine's Chris Anderson. This year, all the speakers are female. "We used the financial crisis as inspiration," explains Peeters. "We've all heard it said: if there had been more female thinking at the top, the crisis might have been less severe. We want to spotlight the more right-brained, holistic, long-term thinking of women, giving it a platform to show us innovative ways of looking at securing our future."

Amongst the nine speakers are four

inspirational Belgian women, including Dorien Aerts, online communication consultant for anaXis software; Diane Nijs, developer of the "imagineering" concept – researching the value of imagination in business – and director of the Imagineering Academy in Breda, the Netherlands; sister Jeanne Devos, who was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2005 for her work on behalf of domestic workers in India; and Marleen Temmerman, the Ghent-based professor, gynaecologist, politician and recent nominee to head the United Nation's newly formed UN Women agency.

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Brave new second-hand world

One of the season's hottest fashion tickets is to see what designers have done with your old sweater

STÉPHANIE DUVAL

If you haven't secured your tickets for this year's edition of Second Hand, Second Life, we suggest you get on that. Even after its move to Brussels' Tour & Taxis, which seats more than 2,000, it's remained a solidly sold-out event. Fashion journalists have even been rumoured to ditch their usual blasé attitude and literally fight over the select number of tickets made available to them.

Second Hand, Second Life is this popular because it combines a number of desires: a positive vibe, fantastically creative fashion, shopping and doing a good deed.

About nine years ago, the employees of the poverty-fighting non-profit organisation Spullenhulp began thinking how they could revive their slightly boring image. They were working at the sorting centre in Sint-Pieters-Leeuw, where all of the textiles donated to the 900 containers across Belgium are collected and distributed to those who need them or to one of the 17 Spullenhulp stores.

Imagine all of those gifts, all of those second-hand clothes and household textiles, and it's not hard to understand how the staff thought of re-fashioning them to make people buy them all over again.

This year is the eighth time designers from all over the country have been asked to create one-of-a-kind pieces from the things they find at the Spullenhulp depot. "We always try to have a balance between big names who will attract a lot of attention and young, upcoming talent – and between the northern and southern part of Belgium," explains Frédérique Demeuse of Spullenhulp.

The concept is simple: hold a catwalk show and then auction the pieces afterwards. Second Hand, Second Life not only offers the public a look at what can be done with last year's (or last decade's) clothes, it's a successful fundraiser and a golden opportunity for the media. They look to Second Hand, Second Life to discover new names, and they are never disappointed. Last year also saw the introduction of product designers as participants in the event. Spullenhulp collaborates with the organisation behind Design September to select and work with a group of designers each year. As a result, media attention rose even higher.

And that is one of the main goals of the event, according to Demeuse: "The show allows us not only to raise the necessary funds to strengthen our organisation, but it

also raises awareness around themes like the social economy and the environment. We get to speak about the ways in which we try to help the people who benefit from Spullenhulp, and we try to convince new donors." But the event also appeals to those who already support Spullenhulp: "We invite everyone who works for or with us – from trainees and volunteers to residents – to come to the show and celebrate our solidarity," says Demeuse. Perhaps most importantly, events like Second Hand, Second Life also propose attractive alternatives to mass consumption by showing how used goods can be just as exciting as whatever big, new thing is in fashion right now. "We do hope to attract many more people to our shops to explore the world of second hand," says Demeuse. "Typically, the day after the show our stores are completely overwhelmed."

Though the organisation hopes it will inspire people all year through. Flemish designer Anna Heylen, one of the participants this year, needs no more convincing: "I've been going to Spullenhulp since I was 14 years old – it's where I found my first Chaneles – so I have a very emotional connection to it. Secretly, I dreamed of one day finding my own designs in their racks. Every time I go there, it's a new world that opens up, or rather a unique library of the world. I find it fascinating to see what people donate."

Heylen has been a strong advocate of recycling or "upcycling" for a long time: "I think it is very important to re-use old stuff. I've been using recuperation furs in my collections for years: I cut patterns from the furs to create new unique pieces."

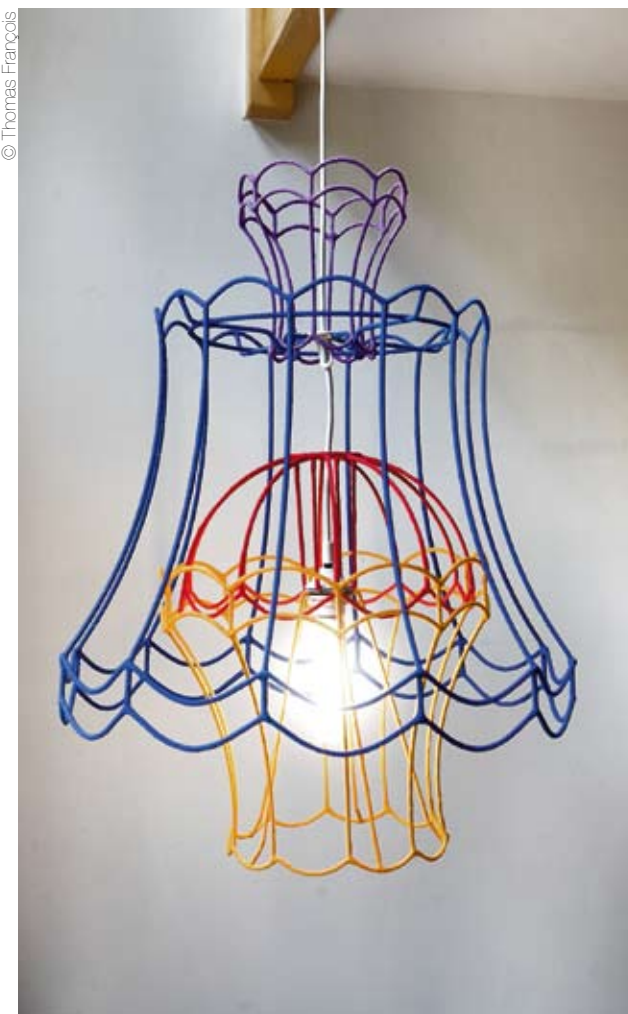
Second-hand materials also inspire Conni Kaminski, also on the catwalk this year. Her style is best described as an elegant, feminine take on deconstruction, and she finds her participation in Second Hand Second Life "a wonderful opportunity to experiment, modify, improve and mix materials to create a new life for discarded clothing. It is a way to allow everyone access to a new, wondrous universe of fashion." ♦

© Thomas François



Old is new again: discover how designers upgrade cast-offs at Second Hand, Second Life

© Thomas François



Living up to its name

→ continued from page 11

Temmerman is a self-proclaimed *duizendpoot* (centipede). "It's a pity there are only 24 hours in a day," she says to me with a perfectly straight face. She sleeps an average of six hours per night and starts her day at 7.00, looking after patients, delivering babies, giving lectures and attending senate meetings. She also regularly ferries between Belgium and Africa, a continent to which she lost her heart while living in Kenya in the mid-1980s. She now heads the non-profit International Centre for Reproductive Health, with headquarters at Ghent University.

"I'm always curious to look over the wall at what the others are doing," she says in regards to her participation in the Creativity Forum. "You can learn so much by looking at worlds other than your own. We can find lots of theoretical knowledge in books, but we can never learn as fast or in as much depth as we do when sharing experiences across industry boundaries. Children always ask: why? They are insatiably curious about everything around them. I am still driven by that same desire. I want to know why something is a certain way and what mechanisms drive its workings."

Temmerman not only wants to change the world, she puts change in motion. The next questions after "why", she says, is "how". "How can we change things? How can we best

achieve what we want to achieve? Finding the answers requires a mind that is open to new ways of thinking and creating – that is how I define creativity."

Temmerman's presentation will be about what the Flemish need to do to put themselves on the world map. "It's known that the Flemish are hard workers, great organisers and have a broad vision of the world. We are able to develop great products – be it chocolate, cheese or academic programmes, yet when it comes to promoting them, we all too often push ourselves off the first row."

Temmerman says that women's social roles lead to creative thinking. "We have to learn to multi-task and combine a million priorities if we do all the things we want to in life. Women are always looking for solutions, and that takes plenty of creative thinking." ♦

Creativity Forum

21 October, 8.30-20.00

Waagnatie
Rijnkaai 150, Antwerp

→ www.flandersdc.be

Second Hand, Second Life

15 October, 19.00

Tour & Taxis
Havenlaan 86C, Brussels

→ www.spullenhulp.be



© Dieter Tellemans

Brussels Nocturnes

SUKI JENKINS

Have difficulty finding time on the weekends to see exhibitions? Then join the night owls for the annual Nocturnes, the popular late-night opening of Brussels museums every Thursday.

This event, now celebrating its 10th anniversary, is truly Brussels, as it is a local tradition to go out on Thursday nights and drowsily turn up to work on Fridays. Nocturnes always means lively streets, happy masses and events throughout the city, as the public takes advantage of this unique and inspiring atmosphere.

Art lovers, students and the curious have a choice of more than 50 museums for a €2.50 entrance fee per venue. It's a mere €1 if you're under 25, and some events are free. Each Thursday features a batch of different museums, so you can choose a date, then a museum (or two), or work the other way around. Drinks, theatre, musical performances and activities for kids are also a mainstay of Nocturnes.

Almost all museums offer guided tours on their nights, often in English and occasionally other languages (Italian and Greek are both on the agenda) in the spirit of the international atmosphere of the city. Many also offer the

chance to meet the curator, sit in on a lecture, see a demonstration or peek behind the scenes.

This month, the Cauchie House – a truly stunning example of Art Nouveau in the city – is open for group tours, which will include the story of the artist-couple who built the house in 1905. The strangely named Brussels Museum of Mill and Feeding, meanwhile, serves breakfast at 18.00 – croissants, eggs, bacon, *churros* and chocolate – to accompany its special exhibition on breakfast. Next month, it invites pyjama-clad kids to a cookery workshop.

Also in November, check out the Kunstberg area, where Bozar, the Musical Instruments Museum and Brussels Info Place (BIP) are all on the agenda. At BIP, you'll hear tales of *Bruksel* (the original name for Brussels, which mean "my home in the marsh") during Stories: Tell Me About Brussels. At Bozar, you're spoiled for choice with guided tours of two exhibitions that couldn't be more different: *The World of Lucas Cranach* is an exploration of the German Renaissance master painter, while *Gilbert & George: Jack Freak Pictures* collects 85 of the Italian-British artist duo's celebrations of the Union Jack.

Some places take real advantage of the darkness: the Museum of Natural Sciences leads you on a torchlight tour of the insects and spiders room, while the Museum of the Black Sisters in the Koekelberg will allow you the one-time-only experience of its panoramic view by night.

Of course you are not limited to the tours or structure; the doors are open, and a jovial spirit is alive in the streets. So put on your coat and scarf and enjoy the longer nights, the nights of the Nocturnes. ♦

Until 16 December

Thursdays, 17.00-22.00
Across Brussels

→ www.brusselsmuseums.be



Antwerp

Lotto Arena

Schijnpoortweg 119; 070.345.345
www.sportpaleis.be
OCT 8 20.00 Daddy Yankee
OCT 10 20.00 Steve Miller Band

Sportpaleis

Schijnpoortweg 119; 070.345.345
www.sportpaleis.be
OCT 6 20.30 Santana **OCT 10** 20.00 Supertramp **OCT 12** 20.30 Michael Bublé
OCT 13 20.00 Sting performs with The Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra conducted by Steven Mercurio

Trix

Noordersingel 28; 03.670.09.00
www.trixonline.be
OCT 6 20.30 The Posies **OCT 9** 20.30 Red Sparowes + Imaad Wasif **OCT 11** 20.00 Biffy Clyro **OCT 13** 20.00 Gnaw + Monno

Ardooe

Cultuurkapel De Schadu

Wezestraat 32; 0479.80.94.82
www.deschadu.wet
OCT 7 20.30 Bigband Roeselare
OCT 9 20.30 Beniwe

Brussels

Ancienne Belgique

Anspachlaan 110; 02.548.24.24
www.abconcerts.be
Concerts at 20.00:
OCT 6 Luc De Vos **OCT 9** Bart Peeters
OCT 8 Roland + Steven De Bruyn + Tony Gyselinck **OCT 11** 19.00 Brian Wright + Sivert Høyem + Tom McRae

K-Nal

Havenlaan 1; 0474.04.00.00 www.k-nal.be
OCT 9 23.00 Solo

Le Botanique

Koningsstraat 236; 02.218.37.32
www.botanique.be
Concerts at 20.00:
OCT 6 Yoav **OCT 8** Catherine Graindorge + Joy

Magasin 4

Havenlaan 51B; 02.223.34.74
www.magasin4.be
OCT 9 20.00 Duflan Duflan + JC Satan + The Black Bug + Digital Leather

VK Club

Schoolstraat 76; 02.414.29.07
www.vkconcerts.be
OCT 8 19.30 Hermutt Lobby + Tixoo + Shadow Huntaz
OCT 10 20.45 Dub Trio + Melt Banana
OCT 14 20.00 The Wedding Present

Vorst-Nationaal

Victor Rousseaulaan 208; 0900.00.991
www.forestnational.be
OCT 11 20.00 A-ha
OCT 12 20.00 Paul Michiels + Joe Cocker

Ghent

Charlatan

Vlasmarkt 6; 09.224.24.57
www.charlatan.be
OCT 12 20.00 Someone Still Loves You Boris Yeltsin

Handelsbeurs

Kouter 29; 09.265.91.65 www.handelsbeurs.be
OCT 13 20.15 Dez Mona

Kinky Star

Vlasmarkt 9; 09.223.48.45
www.kinkystar.com
Free concerts at 21.00:
OCT 8 KS Radio Night: Roosbeef **OCT 9** Roselien **OCT 10** The Dancing Naked Ladies **OCT 12** I Do I Do

Vooruit

St Pietersnieuwstraat 23; 0900.26.060
www.vooruit.be
OCT 7 22.00 James Yuill
OCT 8 22.00 Praga Khan

Kortrijk

De Kreun

Conservatoriumplein 1; 056.37.06.44
www.dekreun.be
OCT 7 17.00 Student Welcome Concert with Customs + Balthazar + The Opposites
OCT 9 20.00 Melt Banana

GET YOUR
TICKETS NOW!

Arno

26 April, 2011, 20.00
Vooruit, Ghent

If you missed out on this seminal Belgian musician's October tour through Brussels (which is now completely sold out), you can still get tickets for his show next spring in Vooruit. The man never seems to run out of inspiration – his latest album, *Brussld*, released earlier this year, is number 19 if you included all the live albums and "best of". But *Brussld* is all original and carries the weight of Arno's 60-plus years in rock, soul and ballads – in French and English.



→ www.vooruit.be

OCT 11 20.00 Blank Dogs

Leuven

Het Depot

Martelarenplein 12; 016.22.06.03
www.hetdepot.be
OCT 9 20.00 Radio Modern: House of Swing, swing ball featuring 5 in Love and The Boppin Benvis Brothers

Ostend

Kursaal (Casino)

Monacoplein 2; 070.22.56.00
www.sherpa.be
OCT 9 20.00 Percy Sledge

Vilvoorde

CC Het Bolwerk

Bolwerkstraat 17; 02.255.46.90
www.hetbolwerk.be
OCT 13 20.30 Bob Geldof



Antwerp

Buster

Kaasrui 1; 03.232.51.53
www.busterpodium.be
OCT 7 21.00 Anna Brag + Kammeniboemski **OCT 9** 22.00 Strange Fruit **OCT 13** 21.00 Balanced Exposure

De Roma

Turnhoutsebaan 327; 03.292.97.40
www.deroma.be
OCT 8 20.30 Jef Neve Trio
OCT 9 20.30 Jean-Marie Aerts, Filip Casteels & Patrick Riguelle
OCT 14 20.30 BRZVLL: Happy Life Creator

Brussels

Art Base

Zandstraat 29; 02.217.29.20
www.art-base.be
OCT 8 20.00 Diminuita Swing Jazz Quartet
OCT 14 20.00 Magic Swing, manouche

Beursschouwburg

August Ortsstraat 20-28; 02.550.03.50
www.beursschouwburg.be
OCT 7 20.30 JazzLab Series #1: Nicolas Kummert
Le Botanique

MORE EXHIBITIONS THIS WEEK

Inside Installations → **SMAK, Ghent**

Treasures of Napoleon → **Diamond Museum, Antwerp**

Public Private Paintings: 2000-2010 → **Mu.ZEE, Ostend**

Koningsstraat 236; 02.218.37.32
www.botanique.be
OCT 12 20.00 Portico Quartet,
experimental classical jazz

Musical Instruments Museum
Hofberg 2; 02.545.01.30 www.mim.be
OCT 12 12.30 Ben Sluijs/Erik Vermeulen
Duo

Sounds Jazz Club
Tulpenstraat 28; 02.512.92.50
www.soundsjazzclub.be
Concerts at 22.00:
OCT 6 Los Soneros del barrio **OCT 7**
Mess Trio **OCT 8-9** Michel Hatzi **OCT**
11 Master Session **OCT 12** Raphael
Debacker Trio **OCT 13-14** Rosario
Giuliano Quartet

The Music Village
Steenstraat 50; 02.513.13.45
www.themusicvillage.com
OCT 6 20.30 Magic Swing **OCT 8** 21.00
Robert Jeanne Quartet with Greg Houben
OCT 9 21.00 John Snauwaert & Dukes
Swinging Trainband **OCT 12** 20.30
Generation Dallas **OCT 13** 20.30 Trioxide



Antwerp

De Roma
Turnhoutsebaan 327; 03.292.97.40
www.deroma.be
OCT 7 20.30 Toumani Diabaté: Ali &
Toumani (Mali)

Zuiderpershuis
Waalse Kaai 14; 03.248.01.00 www.
zuiderpershuis.be
OCT 7 20.30 Orquesta Típica Ciudad
Baigon (Argentina)
OCT 8 20.30 Terrakota (Portugal)
OCT 9 20.30 Debaa (Mayotte)

Brussels

Art Base
Zandstraat 29; 02.217.29.20
www.art-base.be
OCT 7 20.00 Tori Sparks: Unplugged
OCT 9 20.00 Les Offis
OCT 15 20.00 Brrraka

Beursschouwburg
Auguste Ortsstraat 20-28; 02.550.03.50
www.vkconcerts.be
OCT 6 21.30 Ex Purgatorio: Jan Rzewski,
saxophone; Hanna Bardos-Feltonyoi,
soprano (Italy)
OCT 9 20.15 La Chiva Gantiva +
Terrakota. 21.00 SoundBits: Tokota + Earl
Greyhound

Koninklijk Circus
Onderrichtsstraat 81; 02.218.20.15
www.cirque-royal.org
OCT 13 20.30 Celtic Legends

Naamsepoortgalerij
Bolwerksquare 3;
www.muziekpubliek.be
OCT 13 12.30 Broodje Brussel: Mady
Kouyate (Guinea Conakry)

The Music Village
Steenstraat 50; 02.513.13.45
www.themusicvillage.com
OCT 14 12.30 1060

Ghent

El Negocio
Brabantdam 121; 0479 567395
www.mi-negocio.net
OCT 6 22.00 Pablo'n'Co (Brazil)

Vooruit
St Pietersnieuwstraat 23; 0900.26.060
www.vooruit.be
OCT 7 22.00 James Yuill



Antwerp

Amuz
Kammenstraat 81; 03.292.36.80
www.amuz.be
OCT 10 15.00 Jean-Marc Aymes,
harpsichord and organ; Mara Galassi,
triple harp; Jean de Macque, Giovanni
Maria Trabaci, more

deSingel
Desguinlei 25; 03.248.28.28
www.desingel.be
Concerts at 20.00:
OCT 7 Anima Eterna conducted by Jos
van Immerseel: Berlioz, Chopin **OCT**
9 Gunilla Süssmann, piano: Schumann,
Brahms, Mendelssohn **OCT 13** Le
Concert Olympique conducted by Jan
Caeyers: Haydn, Beethoven **OCT 14**
Akademie für alte Musik Berlin: Bach's
Brandenburg Concertos

Bruges

Concertgebouw
t Zand 34; 070.22.33.02
www.concertgebouw.be
OCT 6 20.00 Chorus Musicus Köln
conducted by Christoph Spering:
Schumann
OCT 7 20.00 Orchestre des Champs
Elysées conducted by Philippe
Herreweghe: Haydn, Mozart
OCT 10 15.00 Enaccord String Quartet:
Schubert, Bartok, Mendelssohn

Brussels

Bozar
Ravensteinstraat 23; 02.507.82.00
www.bozar.be
OCT 6 12.40 Mozart Festival 2010:
Mozart, César Franck's Piano Quintet
20.00 De Munt Symphony Orchestra
conducted by Leo Hussain: Schoenberg,
Brahms **OCT 7** 20.00 Mitsuko Uchida,
piano: Beethoven, Schumann, Chopin
OCT 10 11.00 Simoens Trio: Liszt,
Chopin **OCT 11** 20.00 Symphony
Orchestra of Flanders conducted by
Andreas Delfs: Aaron Jay Kernis, Chopin,
Schumann **OCT 12** 20.00 Akademie für
alte Musik Berlin: Bach's six Brandenburg
concertos **OCT 13** 12.40 Jean-Claude
Vanden Eynden, piano: Ravel 20.00
Hélène Grimaud, piano: Mozart, Berg,
more

De Munt
Muntplein; 070.23.39.39 www.demunt.be
OCT 11 20.00 Sally Matthews, soprano;
Simon Lepper, piano: Berg, Canteloube,
more

Flagey
Heilig Kruisplein; 02.641.10.20
www.flagey.be
OCT 9 20.15 Brussels Philharmonic
conducted by Zoltán Kocsis: Mozart, Liszt,
Kocsis, more

Musical Instrument Museum
Hofberg 2; 02.545.01.30 www.mim.be
OCT 10 11.00 Andrew Hardy, violin;
Daniel Blumenthal, piano: Ravel, Ives,
Lekeu

Royal Music Conservatory
Regentschapsstraat 30; 02.213.41.37
www.kcb.be
OCT 7 20.00 Oxalys en Odyssea
Ensembles: Brahms, Ravel, more
OCT 14 20.00 Quatuor Ebène, Akiko
Yamamoto, piano: Mozart, Fauré, Brahms

Ghent

DeBijloke
Joseph Kluyskenstraat 2; 09.269.92.92
www.debijloke.be
OCT 10 11.00 Ex Tempore: Graupner
17.00 Bram Nolf, oboe; Rik Vercruyssen,
horn; Guy Penson, piano: Beethoven,
Schumann, Reinecke

Leuven

Lemmensinstituut
Herestraat 53; 016.233.967
www.lemmens.be
OCT 7 20.00 Cantabile: The London
Quartet, a capella polyphony and jazz,
with a touch of British humour



Ghent

Vlaamse Opera
Schouwburgstraat 3; 070.22.02.02
www.vlaamseopera.be
OCT 6-13 15.00/20.00 L'Amour de loin
(Love from Afar) by Kaija Saariaho,
conducted by Koen Kessels, staged by
Daniele Finzi Pasca (in French with Dutch
surtitles)

DONT'MISS

All My Sons

12-16 October, 20.00

Bozar, Brussels

The American Theatre Company has moved its latest show into larger digs, which is good news for audiences, as the amateur group's performances sell out every time. This 1947 play by Arthur Miller could have been written today: an American family man makes a fortune out of the Second World War but has a son missing in action and another at home and preoccupied – with the war but also with the girlfriend of his absent brother.

→ www.bozar.be



Antwerp

Monty
Montignystraat 3-5; 03.238.91.81
www.monty.be
OCT 8-9 20.00 Campo in Tanzung, dance
theatre by Jan Decorte (in English)

Brussels

Kaaithater
Saintelette Square 20; 02.201.59.59
www.kaaithater.be
OCT 6-7 20.00 Campo in Tanzung, dance
theatre by Jan Decorte (in English)

La Raffinerie
Manchesterstraat 21; 071.31.12.12
www.charleroi-danses.be
Until OCT 9 20.30 Sinfonia Eroica,
choreographed by Michèle Anne De Mey

Théâtre Marni
Vergniestraat 25; 02.639.09.82
www.theatremarni.com
OCT 8-9 20.00 Former dancers and
choreographers of Béjart Ballet Lausanne
in Opinion Public (Public Opinion)

Ghent

Vooruit
St Pietersnieuwstraat 23; 0900.26.060
www.vooruit.be
OCT 6-9 20.00 Ultima Vez in Monkey
Sandwich, choreographed by Wim
Vandekeybus

Leuven

STUK
Naamsestraat 96; 016.32.03.20
www.stuk.be
OCT 13 20.30 Zoo in You've Changed,
choreographed by Thomas Hauert



Antwerp

deSingel
Desguinlei 25; 03.248.28.28
www.desingel.be
Until OCT 8 18.00/20.00 The Brodsky
Concerts: music theatre by Kris Defoort
and Dirk Roofthoof based on the poetry
of Nobel prizewinner Joseph Brodsky (in
Dutch)
Until OCT 9 19.00/20.00 Toneelgroep
Amsterdam in Antonioni Project, staged
by Ivo van Hove (in Dutch)

Fakkelteter Rode Zaal
Hoogstraat 12; 070 246 036
www.fakkelteter.be
Until OCT 17 15.00/20.30 Kurt Defrancq
in Mannen komen van Mars, vrouwen
van Venus (Men are From Mars, Women
are From Venus), directed by Jan Verbist
(in Dutch)

HetPaleis
Meistraat 2; 03.202.83.60
www.hetpaleis.be
Until OCT 9 15.00/20.00 De Blinde
Koning (The Blind King), directed by
Dimitri Leue (in Dutch)

Rataplan

Wijnegemstraat 27; 03.292.97.40
www.rataplanvzw.be
OCT 7 20.30 Toneelgroep NUNC in Alles
Passeert (Everything Passes) (in Dutch)

Zuiderpershuis

Waalse Kaai 14; 03.248.01.00
OCT 6 20.30 Ayiti, directed by Philippe
Laurent (in French with Dutch surtitles)
OCT 14 20.30 Luanda Casella in The
Chicken Factory + Pablo Casella in The
Turner Tapes (in English)

Ardoie

Cultuurkapel De Schaduw
Wezestraat 32; 0479.80.94.82
www.deschaduw.net
OCT 8 20.30 Venus In Flames and
Annelies Verbeke in About Intimacy
(literature and music)

Brussels

Bozar
Ravensteinstraat 23; 02.507.82.00
www.bozar.be
OCT 12-16 20.00 The American Theatre
Company in All My Sons by Arthur
Miller, directed by Carrie Ellwanger (in
English)

Kaaithater
Saintelette Square 20; 02.201.59.59
www.kaaithater.be
OCT 6-7 19.00/20.30 Campo in Tanzung,
dance theatre staged by Jan Decorte (in
English)

KVS Box
Arduinkaai 9; 02.210.11.12 www.kvs.be
OCT 9-23 15.00/20.30 Olympique
Dramatique in In de strafkolonie/Het
hol (In the Penal Colony/The Burrow),
adapted from two short stories by Kafka,
directed by Bart Meuleman (in Dutch
with French and English surtitles)

Théâtre National
Emile Jacqmainlaan 115; 02.203.41.55
www.theatrenational.be
OCT 6-9 20.15 Over de bergen (Over the
Mountains), music theatre written and
staged by Josse De Pauw, music by Corrie
van Binsbergen (in Dutch with French
surtitles)



Aalst

CC De Werf
Molenstraat 51; 053.73.28.12
www.ccdewerf.be
Until OCT 24 Transparant, glass art by
Béatrice Neetens

Antwerp

Contemporary Art Museum (M HKA)
Leuvenstraat 32; 03.238.59.60
www.muhka.be
Until NOV 14 Modern Dialect,
contemporary artists look at the work of
late Flemish architect Renaat Braem
OCT 8-JAN 16 Confluence and
consequence, photographs and tapestries
on the Moscow Circus by Craigie
Horsfield

Diamond Museum
Kon. Astridplein 19-23 (03.202.48.90
www.diamantmuseum.be
Until DEC 31 For Honour & Glory:
Treasure of Napoleon, the pomp and
splendour of Napoleon and Marie-Louise's
jewelry on the occasion of the 200th

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- **50 pairs of free tickets for UGC cinemas in Brussels or Antwerp**
- **15% off for 20 prize winners in Brussels' restaurant La Quincaillerie**



anniversary of their arrival in Antwerp

Extra City
Tulpstraat 79; 03.677.16.55
www.extracity.org
Until OCT 31 The Formative Years, works by German experimental filmmaker and artist Heinz Erigholz
Until OCT 31 (Conditions of Agency), objects, texts, videos and interviews by Dutch artist Falke Pisano

Photo Museum (FoMu)
Waalse Kaai 47; 03.242.93.00
www.fotomuseum.be
Until JAN 16 Boris Becker 1984-2009, photographs by the German modernist
Until JAN 16 Willy Kessels 1930-1960, photographs by the Flemish modernist

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

Brussels
Atomium
Atomium Square; 02.475.47.72
www.atomium.be
Until NOV 14 Intersections: Belgian

WEEK IN FILM
LISA BRADSHAW



Midnight Cowboy

10 October 10.15 & 14.30
MIAT, Ghent

A Museum for Industrial Archaeology might not seem like the most exciting place to see a flick, but the reconstructed Art Deco cinema inside this massive museum in Ghent is worth finding on the fourth floor, between the First World War bunker and the authentic coffee merchants. On the second Sunday of every month, the cinema uses its 1945 Zeiss Ikon projector to screen a classic film.

And John Schlesinger's *Midnight Cowboy* (1969) is a classic in every way, from the set-up (young, naïve stud from rural America travels to New York to become a gigolo to rich Manhattan ladies in need), to the encounter (with a seamy hustler, suffering from a major cough and a desperate need for cash) to the actors (Jon Voight as cowboy; Dustin Hoffman as hustler).

Though it borrows heavily in style (and substance) from its predecessor *The Graduate*, it's still an energetic bevy of one-liners and groovy-man 1960s anti-heroism. It also has some of the most gorgeous music from American film of that decade, with an original score by John Barry, who happens to be making an appearance at the Flanders international Film Festival this month (see page 11).

→ www.miat.gent.be

Design, parcours of works by young Belgian designers Jean-François d'Or, Nicolas Destino and Linde Hermans

Bozar
Ravensteinstraat 23; 02.507.82.00
www.bozar.be
Until OCT 10 A Passage to Asia: 25 Centuries of Exchange between Asia and Europe, a selection of 300 objects, including urns, jewellery, gold and glass, Buddhist and Hindu images, 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)

Clockarium Museum
Reyerslaan 163; 02.732.08.28
www.clockarium.com
OCT 11-NOV 11 10ALOGUE, works by contemporary artists shown alongside Art Deco porcelain clocks on the occasion of the museum's 10th anniversary

De Loge Architecture Museum
Kluisstraat 86; 02.642.24.80 www.aam.be
Until OCT 10 Dynamo Belgian Young Design Awards, works by the young Belgian designers who participated in the Dynamo Prize competition

De Markten
Oude Graanmarkt 5; 02.512.34.25
www.demarkten.be
Until OCT 24 La Sape! Gentlemen from Congo, photographs and films show the dandy style known as "La Sape"

Justus Lipsius
Wetstraat 175; www.spullenhulp.be
Until DEC 31 Fashion & Design: Second Hand Second Life, works by Belgian fashion and object designers made out of recycled clothing, objects and furniture from the Spullenhulp charity

Magritte Museum
Koningsplein 1; (0)2 508 32 11, www.musee-magritte-museum.be
Until JAN 2 The painting The Threatened Assassin comes to the museum on loan from MoMA in New York to hang beside its companion piece The Sécrite Player, bringing Magritte's sole diptych temporarily together

Pavillon Rodin
Auguste Rodinlaan 8; 02.347.44.68
www.maisonbejarthuis.be
OCT 8-NOV 22 Maurice Béjart, parcours libre: Décors et Costumes, works by international designers and artists who have collaborated with the late choreographer Maurice Béjart

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
Until NOV 30 Crazy Flying Machines, drawings by Jean Leclercqz

Royal Museum of Fine Arts
Regentschapsstraat 3; 02.508.32.11
www.fine-arts-museum.be
Until NOV 28 Javier Marín: De 3 en 3, urban installation by the Mexican sculptor

WIELS
Van Volxemlaan 354; 02.340.00.50
www.wiels.org
OCT 9-JAN 30 Francis Alijs: A Story of Deception, installations, paintings, drawings, and documents by the Mexico-based, Antwerp-born artist

Yaruna
Waversesteenweg 214B; 02.512.93.12
www.anunsroom.com
Until OCT 14 Jeanne: A Nun's Room, interactive installation by Scottish artist Paul Morris

Deurle
Museum Dhondt-Dhaenens
Museumlaan 14; 09.282.51.23
www.museumdd.be
Until DEC 5 Thomas Hirschhorn: Too Too - Much Much, installations by the contemporary Swiss artist

Gaasbeek
Gaasbeek Castle
Kasteelstraat 40; 02.531.01.30
www.kasteelvangaasbeek.be
Until NOV 7 Dragon Broodl, collection of works and objects on the theme of dragons
Ghent

Dr Guislain Museum
Jozef Guislainstraat 43; 09.216.35.95
www.museumdrguislain.be
OCT 8-MAY 8 The Weighty Body: Of Fat and Thin, Perfect or Deranged, a history of fasting for personal, esthetic, religious or economic reasons
OCT 8-JAN 27 Bobby Baker Diary Drawings: Mental Illness and Me, more than 150 drawings by the British performance artist illustrate her 10-year journey through psychiatric institutions

Museum of Modern Art (SMAK)
Citadelpark; 09.221.17.03 www.smak.be
Until OCT 17 Coming People, group exhibition of final year projects of students at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts and St Lucas College of Science and Arts
Until NOV 21 Tegenlicht (Backlight), young visual artists and writers confront famous artists from the literary, arts and music scene
Until DEC 3 Inside Installations, 10 installations from the museum's collection

Stadsmuseum Gent (STAM)
Bijloke - Godshuizenlaan 2; 09.269.87.90
www.stamgent.be
OCT 9-MAY 1 (2011) Enlightened City, an examination of how light affects a city through diaries, models, paintings, photographs and installations

Grimbergen
CC Strombeek
Gemeenteplein; 02.263.03.43
www.ccstrombeek.be
Until OCT 21 The Tragedy of the Applause, group show of work by artists of the Ohno Co-operation in dialogue with Canadian artist Jeff Wall

Hasselt
Fashion Museum (MMH)
Gasthuisstraat 11; 011.239.621
www.modemuseumhasselt.be
Until JAN 9 2011 Devout/Divine: Fashion vs Religion, examples of religious symbolism in designs of the past decennia

z33
Zuivelmarkt 33; 011.29.59.60 www.z33.be
Until DEC 12 David Huycke: Re-thinking granulation, sculptures by the Flemish silver designer
Until DEC 12 Toegepast (Applied), works by students selected from Belgian and Dutch design academies

Kasterlee
Frans Masereel Centre
Zaarendijk 20; 014.85.22.50
www.fransmasereelcentrum.be
Until NOV 30 Reunalla/Aan de grens, contemporary Finnish lithography

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

Leuven
Museum M
Leopold Vanderkelenstraat 28; 016.27.29.29 www.mleuven.be
Until DEC 5 The Anjou Bible: A Royal Manuscript Revealed, a rare manuscript from the 14th-century court of Naples
OCT 8-JAN 23 Mayombe: Meesters van de magie (Master of Magic), sculptures and objects from KU Leuven's Congolese collection
OCT 8-JAN 16 Robert Devriendt: Victimes de la Passion, paintings

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

Tervuren
Royal Museum for Central Africa
Leuvensesteenweg 13; 02.769.52.11
www.africamuseum.be
Until JAN 9 Congo River: 4,700 Kilometres Bursting with Nature and Culture, interactive exhibition on the lifeblood of Congo, from source to mouth
Until JAN 9 100 Years in 100 Photographs, outdoor exhibition celebrating the 100th anniversary of the African Museum building
Until JAN 9 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; 057.239.220www.inflandersfields.be
Until OCT 10 More Force Than Necessary, photos and films by Brazilian artist-in-residence Rodrigo Braga



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 Flanders
www.festival.be

Antwerp
Jazz Wilrijk: Free jazz festival in the form of a pub crawl with concerts by Hijaz, Dixieland Streetband, Swing Dealers, more
OCT 9 20.00 at venues across Wilrijk, starting at CC De Kern, Kern 18
www.ccdekern.be

Murga Festival: Latin American-based celebration of music, word, dress and dance, including a documentary and debate a parade and party at Flandriaboot
OCT 9-10 across Antwerp
www.murga.be

Rommelant: Antique and second-hand fair
OCT 9-10 10.00-18.00 at Antwerp Expo, Jan Van Rijswijcklaan 191
03.260.81.22, www.rommelant.be

Bruges
Brugge Centraal: Festival celebrating the art and culture of Central Europe, with dance, theatre, music, literature, film and exhibitions
Until JAN 30 across Bruges
www.bruggecentraal.be

Brussels
Brand New Belgium: A debate about the future of the brand Belgium, led by Marc Reynebeau (in English)
OCT 7 20.15 at Flagey, Heilig Kruisplein 02.212.19.30, www.deburen.eu

Field Works-Office: Site-specific performances by deepblue in Brussels' office spaces
OCT 11-15 times and locations vary
www.kaaitheater.be

Food & Feel Good Fair: Health and beauty, interior decoration, fashion, gastronomy, leisure and family activities
OCT 9-24 10.00-18.00 at Brussels Expo, Heysel
02.474.89.81, www.voedingssalon.be

ING Brussels Marathon: Marathon, half-marathon, mini-marathon and kids' run
OCT 10 9.00 from Jubelpark to the Grote Markt
www.ingbrusselsmarathon.be

Skoda Jazz: The 25th edition of this international jazz festivaln featuring Herbie Hancock, Toots Thielemans, Philip Catherine, Lady Linn, more
Until NOV 30 across Brussels
www.skodajazz.be

Ghent
bis 2010: Building and real estate fair
OCT 9-17 at Flanders Expo, Maaltekoeter 1
09.241.92.11, www.bisbeurs.be

La Fête Fabuleuse: All-night party hosted by KrisKras, tour guide operators for young people with a respect for people, culture and nature. Bring a CD rom or USB stick with your holiday photos on it for big-screen sharing
OCT 8 22.00-5.00 at Vooruit, Sint-Pietersnieuwstraat 23
www.vooruit.be

STAM Grand Opening: Music and festivities in and around the new city museum
OCT 9-10 at Stadsmuseum Gent (STAM), Bijloke, Godshuizenlaan 2
09.269.87.90, www.stamgent.be

Nieuwpoort
Kusttramloop: 10-mile or six-kilometre run along the coast tram line
OCT 9 14.30 from Vismijn, Nieuwpoort (or from Middelkerke) to Ostend
http://125jaarkusttram.delijn.be

DUSK 'TIL DAWN
KATRIEN LINDEMANS

Secret nights...

Dress up casino style and make your way to the top floor of the Brussels Casino Viage, or, as they call it, "an exclusive rooftop paradise", for a unique party this Saturday, 9 October. But before you can do so, you have to request access, James Bond style. (Log on to the website www.secretnights.be and add yourself to the guest list.) Casino Royale starts at 22.00, with DJ Jonathan Loys and guests in the line up. The gambling tables are open throughout the night, with special prizes on offer. Feeling lucky? Then spring for a VIP table.

Viage, Anspachlaan 30, Brussels (inside the gallery, take the escalators all the way to the top)

or Hindu nights...?

If you're not keen on theme parties and just want to dance to rock, Hindu Nights in Ghent is more your thing. The idea of a party with no-nonsense guitar music by the likes of the Arctic Monkeys and Oasis originated two years ago and became an instant hit. It's British indie rock heaven behind the decks on 9 October in Vooruit, where you'll find Drew McConnell (*pictured*), bass player of Baby Shambles, and Dean Mumford, keyboardist for The Rifles. In the "icons bar", meanwhile, Paul Gallagher will spin "nothing produced after 1975". Gallagher, the older brother of the famous Oasis brothers is a heavily sought-after DJ in Belgium after he helped found this event. Belgians are "well into their music," he says. The only hang-up in this ultra-cool party is finding yourself a ticket, which were just about sold out as *Flanders Today* went to press.

→ www.vooruit.be



ROBYN BOYLE

bite



Zorba de Griek

When I miss Greece, my favourite travel destination, I tend to go searching for a place to have Greek food, despite the fact that I almost expect to be disappointed. I've seen too many fake tavernas cluttered with white plaster statues and columns, their walls covered in photos of beaches and drawings of characters from ancient mythology.

Fortunately, I just discovered an exception: Zorba de Griek, established 22 years ago in Ghent. Instead of trying to be authentic through decor, chef and owner Paul Nilsson is through his food. He took over the business from his Greek father, now 83, who still drops by sometimes to play a song or two on the piano.

The setting is contemporary and comfortable; it's a nice place to escape from the often frantic neighbourhood near the city's university hospital. Zorba also does take-away (which probably pleases quite a few hospital staff).

Even though Paul practically runs the place all by himself, he remains calm and hospitable in-between his numerous trips to the kitchen. Our food and drinks arrived in no time at all. An order of *meze* for three people turned out to be a colourful array of various starters, including pink fish roe and *tzatziki* (garlic-yoghurt-cucumber) for on the bread, grape leaves stuffed with rice, fried calamari rings, thick slices of a creamy feta cheese sprinkled with oregano, a crisp salad and grilled prawns and meatballs – quite the impressive spread for a starter.

To continue with the sharing theme, we then ordered one chef's platter and a Greek salad. It was a local version of a Greek salad, with

its lettuce, carrots and more, as opposed to the traditional cucumber-tomato version you find in Greece. Nonetheless, everything was extremely fresh.

We all helped ourselves to the sizeable platter piled high with an assortment of grilled meats, thankfully including more of the same delicious meatballs as in the starter, plus perfectly cooked lamb chops and skewers. Next to that was a heap of white rice livened up with tomato sauce and melted cheese, plus green beans and a couple of potatoes lightly fried in olive oil.

As is the case with so many Greek restaurants in Belgium, vegetarians need not stay away from Zorba de Griek, as there are plenty of meatless options. Try *giouvetsi*, Greek pasta in a creamy tomato sauce or the vegetarian *tas kebab*, stewed Quorn and vegetables.

Finish off your culinary trip with a hot cup of muddy Greek coffee or a refreshing glass of *ouzo* on ice. Either way, your stomachs should be full and your wallets unbroken. Our bill came to about €22 a head, and that included more starters, sides, meat and beers than our table could put away – although we certainly did our best.

📍 Koolmeesstraat 33, Ghent; 09.221.64.07

🕒 Wed-Fri + Sun, 12.00-14.00 & 18.00-midnight; Sat, 18.00-midnight

★ Genuinely good Greek cuisine without all the drama

Contact Bite at flandersbite@gmail.com

➡ www.zorba-de-griek.be

NEXT WEEK IN FLANDERS TODAY #151

Focus

Restoring a painting can easily be more painstaking than creating the painting in the first place, as our journalist finds out when she visits Brussels' world-class Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage

Student Guide

We wrap up our four-part series welcoming students to Flanders with Antwerp University

Arts

A modern Flemish master shows in the US, while an old one pops up again in Belgium: we visit Luc Tuymans in Chicago and James Ensor in Brussels

TALKING DUTCH

ALISTAIR MACLEAN



‘herfst’

Leaves are falling just like embers from the tree outside my window; in colours red and gold they fire the autumn light. Not very original, but it's time to capture the glory of autumn while it lasts. You may think we're having an Indian summer but in fact *het is al herfst* – it's already autumn. (Sorry if it's raining when you read this: wishful thinking at the time of writing.)

The softened *herfstkleuren* – autumnal colours and *gevallen bladeren* – fallen leaves are a godsend for jaded reporters looking for a good lead-in to a story.

Now a few weeks into the football season, some clubs are already parting with their trainers. This allows the sports pages to start a story with *Het is herfst, de bladeren vallen, de trainers ook* – It is autumn, the leaves are falling, as are the trainers, which is almost a haiku. Strange how the dying summer makes us wax lyrical.

Then we have the continuing story of the country's non-formation of a coalition government. Here, too, autumn comes to the aid of the headline writers, who have been stretched to their limits by the non-happenings of recent weeks. When after a tiff, the two political leaders finally met for four hours, the headline ran *De herfst verzoet even de zeden* – The autumn sweetens manners for a moment.

The word *herfst*, which, with its sequence of four consonants is impossible to type, is connected to the English harvest (which has a helpful ‘e’). It's also an unusual word in that it doesn't appear to rhyme with anything, a bit like ‘cushion’ in English.

September is *de herfstmaand* – the autumn month, though autumn astronomically only begins towards the end of the month. And if you were *in de herfst geboren* – born in autumn, you are likely to live six months longer than those born *in het voorjaar* – the early part of the year. I can't see how they worked that one out.

If the season is getting you down, then you may need to freshen up your wardrobe. The *herfstcollecties* have long been in the shops. The colours of course are not exactly cheery: *bruin, donkerrood, grijs en zwart ogen wel wat somber* – brown, dark red, grey and black look rather sombre. But then we have *de accentkleuren: felrood, oranje en paars* – the accent colours: bright red, orange and purple to brighten up the darkness. And this autumn you will have noticed *gebreide stoffen* – knitted material is back, which brings on thoughts of frozen winter.

If retail therapy doesn't kill the blues, then be philosophical and dream on: *Laat de herfst maar komen, Ik blijf van het voorjaar dromen* – Let the autumn come, I will just dream of the spring.

THE LAST WORD...

Rough cut

"Look at me as a diamond. People have seen one aspect of me but turn me around a little, and you'll see a whole other facet to me."

Rik Verheye, 23, an actor on a new TV soap, or "telenovella" as it is called

Tweet nothings

"It bothers me enormously. Let them stop and think for 24 hours before they put out a twitter."

Guy Vanhengel, vice prime minister in the federal government, on his Twittering colleagues, among them his own party leader @alexanderdecroo

Coming clean

"I'd be delighted to share my insights. Every manager can learn from my mistakes."

Pol Hauspie, entrepreneur, speaking for the first time since he was convicted of fraud, on YouTube.

Love actually

"Je t'aime, my little Belgian potato. This is the best thing out of Belgium since mussels and frieten."

Jeremy Clarkson, presenter of the cult BBC car show Top Gear, on the Volvo C30 T5 built in Ghent