

## From here to there (and back)

Van Eyck to Dürer is the Groeninge Museum's most ambitious exhibition in years

p8



## After the rain

## Has Flanders got a serious plan to tackle the next big flood?

DEREK BLYTH

By Wednesday, the flood waters had receded, leaving householders across Flanders mopping out their basements and filling in long insurance claims. The region was slowly returning to normal after the worst floods in 50 years had forced some 2,400 to flee their homes on the weekend of 13 November.

People were stunned by the scale of the disaster and wanted to know what the region's government intended to do to prevent it happening again. Joke Schauvliege, the Flemish

environment minister, found herself at the centre of a media storm after she was reported as saying in a lunchtime TV interview on Sunday, 14 November, that "Flanders has to live with this sort of flooding".

In fact, she never made the comment. It was the presenter who said it, after Schauvliege had observed: "Flanders is going to have to adapt to this sort of flooding."

But the damage was done. In Monday morning's newspapers, the Flemish government was being accused of fatalism. This

looked bad for an administration that takes pride in its good management.

As the anger spread, several political parties called for a debate in the Flemish Parliament on the government's policy on flood control.

And so, on Wednesday afternoon of last week, each party was given seven minutes to state its case. *Flanders Today* was in the public gallery to watch how the government weathered the storm.

► *continued on page 4*

## Unesco recognition for Aalst Carnival

Ancient traditions in Sint-Lievens-Houtem and Geraardsbergen also added to heritage list

ALAN HOPE

The carnival in Aalst, the annual livestock market in Sint-Lievens-Houtem and festivities in Geraardsbergen have been awarded special heritage status by the United Nations' cultural organisation Unesco.

The events are examples of Unesco's "intangible heritage" – events and practices rather than sites and buildings – from around the world. In Flanders, the list already includes the Ommegang giants of Dendermonde, the Procession of the Holy Blood in Bruges and the Ros Beiaard procession, also in Dendermonde. All heritage recognitions

but the Holy Blood procession take place in East Flanders.

Aalst's carnival hardly needs any introduction. The event takes place every year during the carnival period, with the biggest celebrations happening on the days just before Ash Wednesday. (This year, that's 6-8 March.)

But for *Aalstenaars*, it's a year-round occupation. The procession of floats, many of them representing current events, politicians and media figures, attracts tens of thousands of Belgians, while local groups compete for the title of Carnival prince, a post which places

the winner, for local people, on a par with Barack Obama or Nicolas Sarkozy.

"The 600-year-old ritual, drawing up to 100,000 spectators, is a collective effort of all social classes and a symbol of the town's identity in the region," Unesco's citation reads. "Constantly recreated by new generations, the ancient carnival's collective laughter and slightly subversive atmosphere celebrate the unity of Aalst."

► *continued on page 3*



A carnival float portraying Aalst mayor Ilse Uyttersprot

## OFFSIDE

### Me and my portfolio

© Daniel Kucznik



When Abba wrote the classic lines "Money, money, money/ Always sunny/In a rich man's world" the Eurovision-winning superstars can hardly have imagined that, just a few decades later, a fellow Eurovision contestant would go on to prove that pop stars can be traded just like anything else, from coffee futures to sub-prime debt packages.

Last week, investors in Tom Dice learned that the shares they had bought for only €10 were attracting a dividend of €26 – a return on investment of a staggering 260%.

Dice, you will recall, is the Eeklo-born young man who last May represented Belgium in the Eurovision Song Festival in Oslo, achieving a very respectable sixth place. He performed the rather soppy ballad "Me and My Guitar", which appealed greatly to young girls. The single went gold and stayed for 24 weeks in the Ultratop charts, including three weeks at Number One.

Six months ago, the music website Sonic Angel started offering shares in Tom for only €10. The idea is that fans can support the careers of young talent by investing in them. Sonic Angel (an "angel" is a theatre term for someone who puts up the money for a new stage production) uses the money to help finance touring, marketing and recordings.

Within days, the shares were sold out. Tom brought out an album in April this year called *Teardrops*, and his angels were all entitled to download it for free. Their share in Tom also entitled them to a slice of the album's profits. *Teardrops* did very well, and his angels are now going to get €26 per share. "I'm really happy with the news," he said. "I've had a number one hit, I got to make a great album and represent my country at Eurovision. As a musician, there's not a lot more to ask. It's also super that my fans are able to share in my success."

→ [www.sonicangel.com](http://www.sonicangel.com)

## FLANDERS TODAY

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FLANDERS TODAY  
NOVEMBER 24, 2010

## News in brief

For only the second time since the Second World War, the court has withdrawn someone's Belgian nationality. Mohamed R'ha, who is serving a 10-year sentence in Morocco for terror-related offences, was born in Wilrijk, near Antwerp, in 1987 to Moroccan parents; he was naturalised in 1999.

A professor at the University of Ghent has begun a crackdown on students who come late to class and do nothing but send text messages and check their Facebook pages during lectures. Professor Carl Devos has begun barring access to lectures to students who arrive late. "If repeated warnings don't work, you have to take severe measures," he commented.

A Ghent advertising agency that used the music of Bruce Springsteen's 1970's song "Fire" in a campaign has been ordered to pay damages of €100,000 for breach of copyright. The WATF agency said the ruling would drive them into bankruptcy. The electronics company Pioneer, which commissioned the campaign, shares the burden of damages. Pioneer and WATF had been refused permission to use the song but arranged a piece of similar music. Three music experts later said it was a plagiarised version of the song.

A woman in Koksijde, West Flanders, has been ordered to pay child support after her ex-husband

argued that photos on her Facebook profile proved she was lying when she claimed to have no money. The photos showed her on a trip to Rome and in possession of a new laptop.

Flanders' culinary event *Week van de Smaak* (Week of Taste), which has just ended, will not happen in 2011, Flemish culture minister Joke Schauvliege has announced. Instead, FARO, the government agency looking after cultural heritage, will take a year to investigate how the event can be broadened out to involve more partners and become more financially sustainable. Last week's closing event in Aalst, where free onion soup was handed out to all, attracted 10,000 people.

The justice ministry will rent a further 150 cells in the prison of Tilburg in the Netherlands, in addition to the 500 already in use by Belgian prisoners. The extra cells will compensate for the growing number of detainees in Belgium and for the prisoners displaced due to prison renovations. The ministry also intends to extend the use of electronic surveillance to ease congestion. The renting of the new cells will cost €7.9 million.

A former employee of the city of Antwerp who sat at home for five years waiting to be reassigned does not have to pay back the salary he was paid during that time, a court ruled last week. Technician Dirk

Martens, 53, was sent to work for local theatre group Echt Antwaarps Teater. The assignment lasted for 13 years, but when the group decided they no longer needed Martens' services, he was not given any new assignment. Instead, he stayed at home waiting for a call. When the city council finally discovered the situation, they demanded he pay back the €155,000 he had received in salary, but a court last week struck down that demand.

**Yotta** is getting better and should be ready to join her fellow dolphins in about two weeks, according to keepers at the Boudewijn Seapark in Bruges. Yotta, 12, gave birth to a stillborn baby in October and has since been suffering from kidney damage. The dolphin shows have been suspended in the meantime.

### Correction

In the article "The Meteor Hunters" in *Flanders Today* of 17 November, we stated that 300,000 to 400,000 tonnes of "space rock" enters the Earth's atmosphere every year. That figure was out by an order of magnitude: the true figure is 30,000 to 40,000 tonnes, mostly dust. The headline was also a bit inaccurate: the Antarctic expedition involving Steven Goderis is on the lookout for meteorites, not meteors. The article mis-stated his explanation of how meteorites become exposed by winds and the position of his target area, which is in the Sør Rondane mountains. We apologise for these inaccuracies, as well as for attributing our own errors to Steven Goderis.

## FACE OF FLANDERS

### Jacob Jordaens

One thing almost anyone will agree to when it comes to bagpipers: at least they look good, no matter how they sound. Since last week, the Rubenshuis in Antwerp has a bagpiper of its own, in the shape of a painting by and of Jacob Jordaens. The painting was acquired last year by the King Boudewijn Foundation for €114,000 – a reasonable price, considering the artist – and restored to its original state.

Jordaens (1593-1678) is a member of the distinguished Antwerp trio of Old Masters, which also includes Rubens and Anthony van Dyck. However he differed from his two contemporaries in never leaving Antwerp, in having no particular aspiration to imitate the Italian style of painting fashionable at the time and in remaining content to live from his art instead of courting high society ambitions.

As well as being a much sought-after painter, Jordaens was also a designer of tapestries, and his subjects were mainly Biblical and mythological. He also painted a number of subjects drawn from folklore, as well as one mass portrait, "The Triumph of Frederik Hendrik", which shows the prince with about 50 of his relatives.

Jordaens painted a number of self-portraits, including one from 1621-22 showing his wife Anna Catherina and daughter Elisabeth, all richly dressed in ruffs and brocades, in what looks like a very prosperous living room.

The self-portrait now showing in the Rubenshuis, however, dates from 1640-45 and is quite different. The title is "De Doedelzakspeler" ("The Bagpiper"), and it shows Jordaens looking rather more dissolute, dressed in a jaunty feathered cap, a silk shirt with full sleeves and gold buttons and a woollen tabard. He's blowing very hard into the bagpipes, which is ornamented with the head of



© King Boudewijn Foundation

a man from whose mouth the chanter (the part where the fingers form the notes) emerges. It's a lively portrait, comical and devoid of any pretension. The brushwork is vigorous, capturing the sheen of his shirt, the frown on his brow and the wild abandon of his moustache.

"The Bagpiper" hangs in Rubenshuis until 9 January

→ [www.rubenshuis.be](http://www.rubenshuis.be)

## When you gotta go...

The city of Ghent is asking shops and restaurants to allow their toilets to be used by women, even if they are not customers, in response to growing criticism that public facilities are only accessible by men

→ [www.plasactie.be](http://www.plasactie.be)



# Fish drinking and livestock market win UN recognition

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The Houtem Jaarmarkt (annual market) takes place in Sint-Lievens-Houtem, just 15 kilometres southwest of Aalst, on 11 and 12 November and is Belgium's largest and last open-air market for cattle and pure-bred horses. Dealers parade their prize livestock in front of other dealers, farmers, judges and visitors. Selling takes place according to time-honoured tradition, with a handclap marking a sale and a handshake the promise to pay. The market also has an international dimension, with one country or region being a guest each year.

"The Houtem annual market is not something drummed up 30 or 40 years ago," explained Herman De Croo, former minister and speaker of the federal parliament. "It is authentic."

## THE WEEK IN FIGURES



**€180,000,000**

estimated cost of damage caused by flooding across Belgium two weeks ago. Most of the cost will be picked up by insurance, but about 1% will be paid by the government's disaster fund

**17,010**

asylum applications received this year, raising the possibility that the number by the end of the year could exceed 20,000, the highest figure since 2001

**€1.5 million**

in compensation claims received this year by the Flemish government for damage caused to cars due to the poor state of the roads. More than 1,600 claims have been filed by insurers this year – more than double the total for 2009

**40%**

of Belgians think the toilets at their workplace are not clean, according to a survey carried out to mark World Toilet Day last week. Some 13% said they would rather wait until the end of the day rather than use the work facilities

**9,000**

Belgians ordered the new European number plate on the first day they became available last week. On an ordinary day, about 6,000 number plate applications are made

Unesco's statement: "The fair and market have a huge impact on the local community, with private houses turned into public venues where one can enjoy music, drinks and food. For these two days the whole village is transformed into one open, welcoming space." The Krakelingenfeest and the Tonnekensbrand in Geraardsbergen are centuries-old festivities and the high points of the town's municipal life. The Tonnekensbrand dates back to at least 1393, when it was already described as an ongoing tradition.

Both events take place on the last Sunday in February. The feast has pagan origins, linked to the end of winter and the renewal of spring. The first part involves a procession of church and city dignitaries and about 800 extras dressed in a

variety of historical costumes, followed by "druids" who carry jars containing live fish, and others who carry the *krakelingen*, a sort of soft dough confection.

When the procession reaches the highest point of the town, the Oudenbergen, the dean of the local Hunnegem church blesses the *krakelingen*, and then he and the city dignitaries take it in turns to drink wine containing the fish from a 16th century silver goblet. Thousands of *krakelingen* are then thrown to the crowd, one of them containing a slip of paper signifying the holder is the winner of a design created by a local jeweller.

The Tonnekensbrand takes place later in the day, amid a festive atmosphere of music and folk dancing. The name of the feast means "barrel burning", and,

indeed, a symbolic barrel is set alight on top of the Oudenbergen. Surrounding villages often respond by lighting their own beacons, and the people of Geraardsbergen light torches from the flames, which they then carry in procession back to the centre.

According to the city, the two events commemorate a siege of 1381: "Hopeless inhabitants threw their last bread and herring over the city walls to make the enemy believe they had plenty of food...and the enemy left." In fact, the enemy had no trouble taking over the city, but the folk tale persists.

"The festive ritual yields a strong sense of continuity and historical awareness for its participants, evoking historical events and legends passed on from generation to generation," Unesco said.♦

→ <http://whc.unesco.org>

## Awards for KUL researchers

Two researchers at the Catholic University of Leuven (KUL) have been awarded grants worth €2.5 million each by the European Research Council of the EU. Peter Carmeliet of the Vesalius Research Centre, part of the Flemish Institute for Biotechnology (VIB), was awarded the grant for his work on the supply of energy to blood vessels, an important new avenue in the fight against cancer. In cancer, the body's cells mutate and undergo unrestrained growth. If blood supply to the cancer cells could be cut off, the tumours themselves would die. Carmeliet was recently awarded a "Flemish Nobel prize" with five other researchers by the Fund for Scientific Research for work in the same area.

Bart De Strooper, meanwhile, of the department of

development and molecular genetics, earned his grant for research into Alzheimer's disease. De Strooper's work involves the creation in the brain cells of microRNA, which changes as Alzheimer's develops and could lead to the discovery of new drugs to slow or arrest the disease progress.

Both men were described by the European Research Council as being "world leaders" in their respective fields.

The VIB brings together 1,200 researchers from four universities in Ghent, Leuven, Antwerp and Brussels who work on basic research into the molecular basis of human, animal and plant organism, with some 72 different workgroups.♦

## Information released on Wemmel shooting

Police have found a low-calibre firearm in the front garden of a house near the home in Wemmel of Michel De Vleeschouwer, the lawyer who was shot dead along with his wife and son on 14 November. The gun will be tested to see if it is the murder weapon.

According to the only witness, son Nicolas' girlfriend, Ebru S, the shooting was carried out by two men who had come to the house to enquire about a BMW Nicolas was trying to sell. There is no explanation why the two men shot the family.

Ebru was, like the others, shot in the head but survived to alert police and give a description of one of the men, who was said to be a light-

skinned African, well-dressed, with a moustache and a long dark jacket. She also helped draw up an artist's impression of the attacker (pictured). After the shooting, Ebru had surgery to remove the bullet, and her condition is now stable.

Shortly after the killings, police in Luxembourg arrested a man in possession of the keys of one of the two Mercedes stolen in the raid – in the end, the killers left the BMW behind. He claimed to have nothing to do with the attack and now awaits extradition to Belgium.

De Vleeschouwer, his wife Françoise Grumbres, and son Nicolas were buried last weekend at a private ceremony.♦



**eu** **trio.be**

## What the Belgian presidency of the EU is up to this week

The Belgian presidency of the EU will join with Italy, currently holding the presidency of the European Space Agency, for a Space Council on 25 November. Ministers will examine the conclusions of the September conference on space research and African development and the second international conference on space exploration held under the Belgian presidency last month. Space research can offer tools for development in Africa, for example in aiding education,

detecting climate and deforestation issues, and contributing to agricultural improvements. The conference on space exploration will cover the work of two steering groups, one political and one technical, chaired by astronaut Frank De Winne. Its aim will be to outline a common European strategy for space exploration in the fields of international cooperation, education and science, and innovation and industry. The conference will be webcast.

→ <http://webcast.ec.europa.eu>

## FIFTH COLUMN

ANJA OTTE

### The cheese slicer

Flemish political jargon is constantly re-inventing itself, with new metaphors used so widely that we forget that they originally stood for something completely different. Take the cheese slicer. A handy instrument for cutting off slices of cheese, one would assume. But in Flemish politics, everyone thinks of it as a method for budgetary cuts.

Minister-president Kris Peeters (CD&V) came up with the word when he found out that Flanders' budget for this year would not stay out of the red after all, due to a miscalculation in the funds flowing from the federal level. Taking a small slice, or percentage, off each department's budget would be a relatively painless operation, he believed.

Many of the cultural, social and environmental organisations that have seen their income cut would disagree. Moreover, other cuts have become painfully obvious over the last couple of weeks. With everyone in their wellies because of the floods, it was revealed that the Rubicon Fund, set up to avoid future floods, had not received any money in 2010 and would not be getting any in 2011. Other provisions dried up, too. Income-based childcare, for example, was so popular that it ran out of funds. Solar panels, too, proved so successful that the subsidies had to be cut back. Even the school-building fund ran out of money.

As a result, the Flemish government, known for its stability and almost bureaucratic structure, has had to improvise. The job bonus, a scheme for people in work, was first restricted to those with lower incomes and then slashed entirely.

The cheese slicer, meanwhile, is considered a rather blunt policy instrument. By taking off bits and pieces here and there the Flemish government avoids having to make tough choices. This demonstrates a lack of vision, critics say. With the cuts now hitting welfare, education and the transition towards a green economy, the Flemish government can no longer claim that "what we do ourselves, we do better".

The Christian democrat party CD&V, which is currently in charge of both the Flemish and the federal governments, claimed during its election campaigns to stand for "good governance". Prime minister Yves Leterme could not live up to this promise, but his party could blame the French-speaking parties for it. But who, apart from the cheese slicer, is to blame in the Flemish government?

# After the rain

## Schauvliege fights “fatalism” charge

→ *continued from page 1*



Jozef De Borger (right), the mayor of Londerzeel, Flemish Brabant, shows Flemish minister-president Kris Peeters and environment minister Joke Schauvliege (centre) around his flooded town on Monday, 15 November

The first surprise during the debate was the number of ministers present. Normally, you would expect one. But this session called for Joke Schauvliege, Hilde Crevits and Philippe Muyters, as well as minister-president Kris Peeters. Why so many?

Writing in *De Standaard*, commentator Marc Reynebeau noted the slight absurdity of having three different ministers responsible for water management. “For the Flemish government, it makes a difference whether the water is navigable or not. Hilde Crevits is minister for one and Joke Schauvliege for the other. But if the waterway, navigable or not, is habitable along its length, then both of them have to shut up, because Philippe Muyters is the one responsible.”

The administrative complexities sparked off criticism in the debating chamber. One member commented: “If the water is rising to your front door, you don’t have any way of knowing if it comes from a navigable or a non-navigable waterway, so you don’t have a clue which authority to phone.”

### Is it financial?

Bart Martens of the socialist SPA edged towards blaming the floods on government cost cutting. The Rubicon Fund, he said, had been set up to finance water-control projects but had seen its funding frozen in 2009. Martens went on to criticise local councillors for failing to carry out a thorough *watertoets* – a check to ensure that new constructions will not increase the risk of flooding – when granting planning permits. Another member pointed out that a municipality might approve a

two-meter wide asphalt drive, but then turns a blind eye when the entire front garden is turned into parking space. The debate then spilled across the border to the Netherlands, where they appear to be better able to keep their water in check – at least judging from last weekend, when our neighbour to the north was relatively free from serious flooding. “They had disastrous floods in 1953,” said one member, “and they did something to stop it ever happening again.”

### Is it a matter of policy?

The debate turned then to Dutch policies for water management, but this wider perspective became lost as members stood up to outline their own local problems. The speech from the Vlaams Belang member was clearly on this level, although her words were barely audible among the noisy chatter of other members. Finally, Jan Peumans, the speaker of the house, had to discipline them like a bunch of noisy schoolchildren. “Keep that sort of thing to the village café,” he chided.

*“You only get a situation like this once in 100 years”*

### Blame Wallonia

Inevitably, someone eventually found a reason to blame Wallonia for the flooding in Flanders (Kris Peeters had tried to keep language politics out of the debate, but that was like trying to keep the River Dender out of your

living room last Sunday morning). According to a member of Flemish nationalist N-VA, the River Dender (which rises in Wallonia before flowing through Flanders) flooded the Flemish plains because the Walloons had implemented anti-flooding measures so that the river was contained in Wallonia but burst its banks as soon as it crossed into Flanders.

But the hardest criticism fell on Schauvliege because of those words she had never spoken. Gwenny De Vroe of the opposition liberals Open VLD used the statement to mock the government’s policy across every area. “Water in your house? Learn to live with it. On a waiting list for a crèche? Learn to live with it. No money for a school? Learn to live with it.”

Robrecht Bothuyne of the CD&V wasn’t going to let that stand unchallenged. “The populism of Open VLD? Learn to live with it,” he quipped.

### Maybe it’s circumstance

After two hours, Minister Schauvliege stood up to defend her policies. She looked weary. “We are not going to give up the struggle against water,” she said. “Not today, but also not tomorrow.” She went on to talk about emergency meetings held the day before with experts on water control. One expert had helpfully showed her on a weather map how the torrential rain had passed directly over Flanders without seriously touching the Netherlands.

Her team of advisers had also armed her with some formidable statistics. “In the Dender, the peak measurement was 118 cubic metres of water per second compared to 82 cubic metres

per second during the floods in 2002. You only get a situation like this once in 100 years.” She added that the water table was exceptionally high due to heavy rainfall in August and that there had been no flooding areas in places such as Leuven, where the Flemish government had already implemented flood-control measures.

After three hours of debate, the ministers rose to leave, and the people in the public gallery filed towards the exit. We had seen Flemish democracy in action, but it wasn’t entirely clear if it was going to be enough to save us from the next big storm to come our way. ♦

### Parliament visits

Visitors are admitted to the public gallery in the Flemish Parliament in Brussels with a minimum of formality. (A valid ID will get you inside.) The public entrance is at Leuvenseweg 27, beneath the unmissable wooden sculpture by Arne Quinze. The parliament website lists coming debates in the chamber. *Flanders Today* will in future report on major parliamentary debates that are likely to have an impact on people’s lives.

→ [www.vlaamsparlement.be](http://www.vlaamsparlement.be)

# Welcome to the family

The Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences has discovered a brand new species

EMMA PORTIER DAVIS

It's like a storyline from *CSI Miami*: dead bodies sold in the marketplace, and a mystery solved by a team of crack forensic scientists. Only this was a case investigated by scientists in the molecular laboratory at the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences in Brussels.

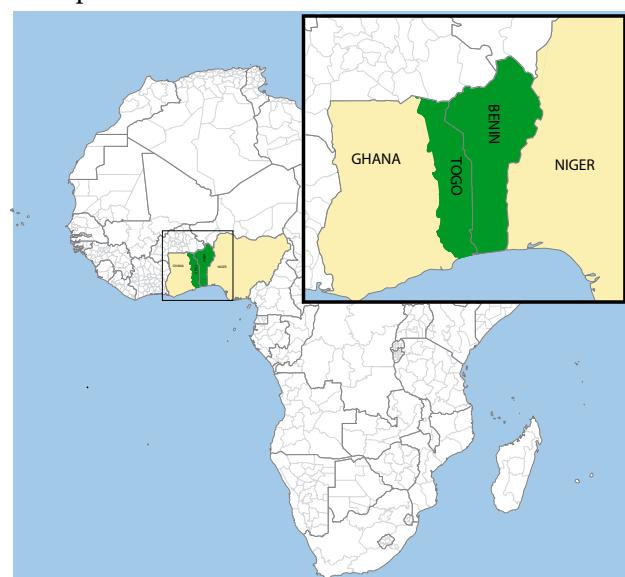
Using DNA analysis and detailed measurements of corpses' skulls, the scientists made a remarkable discovery: They had identified a new species of antelope among the animals sold as bush-meat in West Africa.

Scientists across the globe discover new species every day. But what was so special about the institute's find was the size, explains Erik Verheyen, one of the team. Most discoveries are, unsurprisingly, of smaller species such as fish or rodents; such a large catch happens only every few years.

There are two chief species of antelope – or duikers, as the smaller, bush-dwelling species are called – in West Africa, namely *Philantomba monticola* and *Philantomba maxwellii*. However, scientists spotted that there was some variation in the colour and size among animals purportedly of the latter.

They collected specimens of what had been thought to be *maxwellii* antelope, fishing them out from the carcasses sold on the markets in Togo, Benin and the Niger Delta. "Very few people have seen them alive. They are mainly killed for bush meat," says Verheyen.

At first, the team believed they had found an intermediary species, perhaps a cross breed. Molecular biology carried out in Brussels, however, showed that these specimens contained entirely different genes. Verheyen: "Our analysis established that this was a new species."



Aside from the excitement of discovering such a large species – named *Philantomba walteri* – the institute's find is imperative for the conservation of these animals. They only exist in small numbers and are such a target for hunters that they may already be classed as endangered.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has contacted the institute to find out about its work, according to Verheyen, who describes the plight of the new species as an "emergency situation".

At present, the IUCN's so-called Red List of threatened species does not categorise the two duiker populations in West Africa as being in danger, although it notes that numbers of the *maxwellii* are decreasing. Verheyen says he expects this to change rapidly.

Identifying endangered species is part of the mission of the Brussels institute, whose team of scientists is plotting an ecological history of certain regions, notably in Africa, tracing how different animals have evolved over time and finding clues about the environmental history.

The institute also examines endemic species – species that are found nowhere else. In the case of this region of West Africa, known as the Dahomey Gap, there were thought to be few animals that could not be found elsewhere.

"This area contains few endemics ... this may explain the modest scientific interest for the taxonomy of its fauna. The discovery of this new species should stimulate taxonomic and conservation activities in the region," wrote the team in an article published in the New Zealand-based journal *Zootaxa*.

Verheyen underscores the importance of building these profiles of different regions. "It's important to know about the different species and which ones are endangered," he says. "Then if you study how they have moved around over time, you can also learn how resilient they are."

This is particularly important given the potentially grave environmental consequences of climate change. Increasingly hotter weather in Africa will inevitably lead to more intense droughts and the demise of habitats of some of these species.

By looking at the past and how animals have adapted, scientists can make predictions about the future. However, Verheyen likens this to the science of economics, wryly noting that if we could accurately predict, then we would all be very rich.

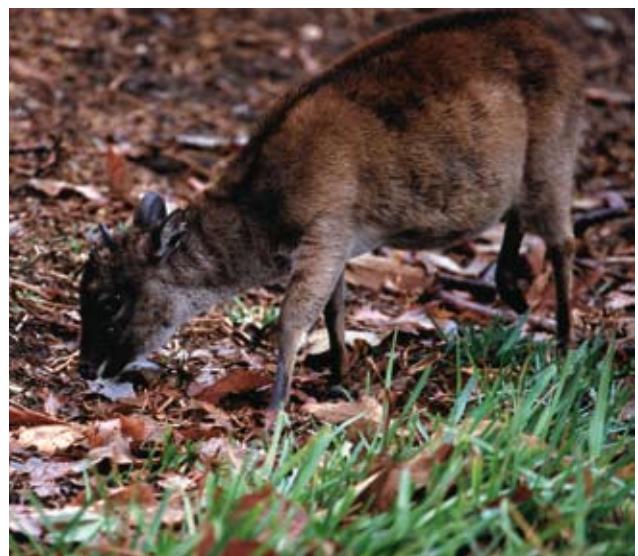
Regardless, there are predictions. "These allow us to define an area which is more important to protect than others; ones where there are animals and plants that are unique," explains Verheyen.

The discovery is timely, with 2010 being the European

Union Year of Biodiversity. The EU, which has failed to meet its target to halt biodiversity loss before the end of this year, wants to highlight the importance of protecting biodiversity for the sake of ecosystems, climate and human needs. Many important medicines, for example, are found in nature.

Verheyen notes that species are being discovered every day but also disappearing every day. The institute's scientists have shown once again how much we don't know. "The discovery of a species of this size shows we have to look a lot harder at our natural environment." ♦

→ [www.naturalsciences.be](http://www.naturalsciences.be)



© Brent Huffman/Ultimate Ungulate Images

There are no photos in existence of the new species of antelope discovered by the Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences; it so closely resembles the *Philantomba maxwellii*, or Maxwell's duiker (above), that it was able to elude biologists until now



Drawing of the newly discovered *Philantomba walteri* by Jan Lebris

## Fish shopping made easy • Delhaize has produced a guide to responsible buying of sustainable fish

ALAN HOPE

In the past couple of weeks we've learned that the Northern bluefin tuna fishing quotas will be cut drastically and that cod numbers in the North Sea and Atlantic are dropping. But, on the other hand, the grey shrimp catch this year at Nieuwpoort was better than ever. It's a good idea, they tell us, to eat more fish – but which fish are good for the environment, and which aren't?

Now supermarket chain Delhaize has produced a consumer guide to sustainable fishing, which advises customers on which varieties of fish come from endangered stocks and which are more sustainable.

In December last year, explains Delhaize communications manager Roel Dekelver, the supermarket signed an agreement with WWF (formerly the World Wildlife Fund)

to work together to promote sustainable fisheries. This means avoiding over fishing of stocks that are in decline, but also staying away from intensive fishing methods, like factory ships, which scoop up everything in the vicinity and use nets that are a threat to dolphins, turtles and other species.

It all makes good commercial sense: for health reasons, people are eating more fish as an alternative to meat, and consumers are more environmentally savvy these days, too, especially younger ones.

The new guide is simple: Each variety of fish is given a rating, which may depend on its source. So those Nieuwpoort shrimp, considered a delicacy by chefs, are actually a second choice for shoppers because the harvest is so limited. The first choice for

shrimp are the ones that come from the west coast of the US or the east coast of Canada – though that evaluation doesn't take into account the carbon footprint involved in transporting the goods from so far away, Dekelver admitted. (Then again, if you buy North Sea shrimp already peeled, they've likely been in a truck to Morocco and back to be peeled by the cheap, albeit expert, workers there.)

The guide also lets you know if the fish has been caught in the wild or farmed, whether it's on sale in Delhaize and whether it's been awarded a label of sustainable fishing from the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC). The guide is available in Delhaize stores or on their website. ♦

→ [www.delhaize.be](http://www.delhaize.be)



Watch out! Those delectable little North Sea shrimps may not be the best choice

# Back to work at Brink's

## Court throws out security firm's bankruptcy application

ALAN HOPE

The application for bankruptcy submitted by security firm Brink's was rejected last week by a judge in the Brussels Commercial Tribunal. The court instead assigned two expert administrators to ensure that Brink's management does not purposely bleed the company dry – making it impossible to continue business – and to work on ways for the company to proceed.

On Monday this week, the picket lines at Brink's facilities were dismantled, ending a strike that has lasted since 27 October. Unions and management agreed last week that the personnel will retain their status as employees. The strike had centred on the company's decision to downgrade the drivers of its cash transports from the status of "employees" to the status of "workers", which would have offered less protection in the event of lay-offs, among other things.

The Brink's facility at Zaventem will stay open for now, while the US-based company looks for a buyer for its loss-making Belgian division. If Brink's does find a buyer – the Belgian Cobeguard and the

Swiss Loomis have already been mentioned – they will probably want to renegotiate the status of the staff, since "worker" status has become the industry standard. Rival security company G4S, which has a 70% share of the Belgian market, applies "worker" status to all staff.

For Brink's, the rejection of the bankruptcy filing by the court means that if they want to close down – the company claims its Belgian division is €14 million in the red, although the figure has been disputed by unions – they will not only have to go through the proper procedures contained in the Renault law, but will also have to foot the bill themselves to lay off the 420 workers. If the bankruptcy had been accepted, the government would have stepped in.

Following the harsh words of the Brussels prosecutor, who argued last week against allowing Brink's to declare bankruptcy, an investigation is now under way to determine if the bankruptcy claim was in fact fraudulent.

Last week, workers gathered in protest in Brussels while the court was



Brink's workers protested in Brussels last week

hearing the bankruptcy application. Union leaders met with federal interior minister Annemie Turtelboom, who said she would review her decision to grant a licence to carry out cash transports to Brink's subsidiary, Diamond & Jewelry Services. Unions had criticised the licence as a means for Brink's to close down its main activities, while starting up again via the subsidiary, which employs about 30 people.

Meanwhile, the situation in the

country's cash machines was expected to take some time to get back to normal. ATMs served by Brink's that cannot be replenished by bank personnel have run out of funds. Large retail outlets are sitting on vast surpluses of cash, which would normally be picked up by Brink's. Staff went back to work on Monday, but the first cash transport was not expected to take place until the middle of the week. ♦

## Job allowance scrapped

Flanders will dispense with its controversial *jobkorting* – an annual bonus paid to all working people in Flanders, which lasted for two years and caused ill feelings among Flemings living in Brussels, who were not eligible. The measure also provoked criticism from the EU Commission because it was available to people who live in Flanders and work in Brussels, but not to those who live in Brussels and work in Flanders.

Introduced in 2009, the allowance was set at €300 for one year and applied to everyone in a job. In 2010, it was restricted to the 600,000 lowest earners in the region and cut back to €125. From next year, it will disappear altogether.

The Flemish government took the decision to end the measure last week, arguing it would save some €75 million and help to tackle the budget deficit. Minister-president Kris Peeters said the measure had outlived its usefulness. "The job bonus was intended as a response to the unemployment trap," he said. "It was supposed to increase the gap between unemployment benefit and a

salary, but we discovered that the system missed the target."

To make up for the loss of the bonus, new money will be made available for income-based childcare in 2011 and 2012. Flemish labour minister Philippe Muyters said he will take measures to stimulate employment.

In a reaction to the announcement, Dirk Van Mechelen, who had introduced the job bonus during his time as minister, said: "The Flemish government is pushing through a tax increase and making the difference between a net wage and benefits smaller, just at the time when the reverse is needed. The battle against unemployment is clearly no longer a priority for them."

The Christian union ACV issued a press release: "Once again, workers are the victims of this government's drive for savings. Workers on low incomes have suffered enough from this financial and economic crisis." The union claimed that the scrapping of the measure took place without consultation and "without any real evaluation". ♦

## Belgian tax burden among highest in the world

Belgium has one of the highest tax burdens in the world for companies, according to a report by the World Bank and Price Waterhouse Coopers (PwC). In a table of 183 countries, Belgium comes in at 151. The bottom countries include Panama, Bolivia, Venezuela and Chad, while the list is headed by the low-tax Maldives, Qatar and Hong Kong.

Belgium's effective tax rate is 57%, compared to a world-wide average of 48% and the European Union average of 44%. Company tax makes up part of the burden, said Frank Dierckx of PwC, but the cost of employing labour is even worse. "Only France and Italy, among European nations, scores worse," Dierckx said. ♦

## THE WEEK IN BUSINESS

### Autos • McLaren

UK-based luxury car producer McLaren will open a showroom on Louizalaan in Brussels early next year.

### Banking • Dexia

Banking group Dexia, which finances local authorities, has sold its Slovak affiliate, Bank Slovensko, to the Central European investment fund Penta. The move was made to meet conditions of the European authorities during the rescue of Dexia in September 2008.

### Economy • US Investments

The flow of US investments into the Belgian economy more than doubled in the first six months of this year compared to the same period in 2009, according to Amcham, the US Chamber of Commerce in Belgium. Some \$7.2 billion (€5.3 billion) was invested compared to \$5 billion (€3.7 billion) for the whole of last year. The Chamber notes that the results could have been even better with a stable political environment and a consistent fiscal legislation.

### Food • Harvest Time Bakeries

Lommel-based Harvest Time Bakeries has inaugurated one of Europe's most advanced frozen bread and bakery products units. The move represents a €19 million investment.

### IT • Econocom

Econocom, a Brussels-based computer and telecommunication equipment supplier and servicing company, has won a two-year, €83 million contract to supply 108,000 workstations to the European institutions.

### Metals • Nyrstar

Brussels-based zinc and non-ferrous metals group Nyrstar is to launch a friendly €296 million takeover bid for the Canadian Farallon mining group, a leading producer of zinc, lead, gold and silver, which operates a large mine in Mexico. The move is part of Nyrstar's strategy to diversify its sources of ore as demand grows. The company will also launch a €500 million rights issue to finance future development.

### Retail • Starbucks

The US-based Starbucks chain of coffee shops plans to open its fifth outlet in Flanders early next year in Brussels' Centraal Station. The company already operates three coffee shops at Brussels Airport and one at Antwerp Central Station.

## People in the news

**Johan Van Dyck**, marketing director of brewer Duvel-Moortgat, was last week named Marketer of the Year by the Marketing Foundation and the readers of *Trends* magazine. Van Dyck has been responsible for increasing the market share of premium beers like Duvel, Vedett and Maredsous. Van Dyck, the jury said, had succeeded in placing each beer on the market in a way to bring out its individual characteristics, allowing his beers to grow in a market that was shrinking overall. This year, the company also took over the Antwerp brewer De Coninck.



**Christophe Coppens**, the hat designer from Sint-Niklaas now at the top of Brussels fashion, has been named as one of three new recipients of the royal warrant, or preferred suppliers to the royal household. Coppens (pictured above) has provided hats and accessories for Princess Mathilde in recent years, as well as outfitting Queen Paola and Princess Claire. "I treat them like all my clients," he said.





# Reel life

The Chronicle of Flemish Cinema is a history of Flanders in 11 parts

LISA BRADSHAW

Eleven seems like an odd number for any kind of a series, but it must have seemed particularly odd to film fans and journalists alike when the Royal Belgian Film Archive announced that the Chronicle of Flemish Cinema, completed in 2006, would contain 11 DVDs. Originally meant as a perfectly normal sounding 10-DVD box set, the final film, *Crazy Love*, was number 11.

In a move the non-existent Belgian government could surely learn from, the editorial team of the chronicle couldn't come to a consensus – so they just added another film. "With 11, everyone was happy," says Erik Martens.

Martens is editor-in-chief of DVDs at the film archives, based in Brussels as part of Cinemathek, which also houses the film museum and cinema. The Chronicle of Flemish Cinema was an initiative of then culture minister Bert Anciaux, who wanted to ensure that Flemish film classics were preserved and available to future generations. To appeal to wider audiences, all films are subtitled in French and English.

Martens and the rest of the team of film critics set out a number of guidelines for the collection, which includes films from 1955 to 1990. There had to be selections from every decade and genre, and no one director could be included twice.

But wait, Antwerp-based filmmaker Harry Kumel clocks in at two: 1971 art house horror *Malpertuis* and 1976 psychological drama *De komst van Joachim Stiller* (*The Coming of Joachim Stiller*).

The reason for this is a peek into the complexities of such a cultural undertaking. The collection was supposed to include Hugo Claus' award-winning *Het Sacrament*, but the negatives of the film were tied up in ownership problems, and, after "10 metres of letters going back and forth", a DVD simply couldn't be produced. They had already announced 11 DVDs, so *Joachim Stiller*, which was actually a television mini-series, took its place.

But *Joachim Stiller* – with its questionable realities and post-war pre-occupations – has its place in the set. It almost serves to bridge earlier historical dramas and the fantastical aspects of contemporary Flemish filmmaking.

## History in a box

The chronicle is, in fact, a fascinating look at the history of cinema in Flanders. "We tried to make a link between the film and the time it was made, so they are historically interesting films," explains Martens. "It's not really a 'best of', but there are films that would be in that kind of list, too. It's a bit of both worlds."

He mentions the film *Louisa*. "It's a very 1970s film; it appeals to a 1970s mind. So you can see it with an historical view."

*Louisa* is indeed a highlight of the chronicle, an example of what you might not know existed – a Flemish costume drama. Dutch actress Willeke van Ammelrooy plays a stifled young



Jan Decleir's first feature film role finds him starring opposite the dynamite Dutch actress Willeke van Ammelrooy in *Mira*

aristocratic woman, who, on the eve of the First World War, runs off with a pair of wandering entertainers and becomes the lover of both. Deeply enmeshed in 1970s imagery and sexual freedom, with landscapes that suggest Flanders is wide-open with possibilities.

*Louisa* was made by Paul Collet and Pierre Drouot, the latter now head of the Flemish Audio-Visual Fund. As a bonus, their earlier film *L'Étreinte* (*The Embrace*), based on erotic French novel *The Story of O*, is included in the DVD. (So, in fact, that makes 12 – a very even number.)

*Mira* (1971) comes just before *Louisa* in the chronicle, and it also stars Ammelrooy, an actress popular both for her sensational looks and subtlety of emotions. Based on a novel by Flemish author Stijn Streuvels, *Mira* was a breakthrough in Flemish filmmaking. "It was the first Flemish film that hundreds of thousands of Flemings came to see," says Martens. "It was the first film that convinced us that there could be a market here."

An almost startlingly direct tale, *Mira* is a woman of surprisingly independent sexuality in turn-of-the-20th century West Flanders. The building of a bridge over the local river has her townspeople in an uproar, but the young Mira is far too enchanted by a love affair with her uncle to

care. The film portrays the long-standing mistrust by rural townships of city folk (such as politicians and surveyors), while succinctly linking material and social progress in an eventually liberating move by its lead character.

From 1971, *Mira* is also notable for being the first feature film starring Jan Decleir and for starting a revolution in local movie-making. "The 1970s was a Renaissance for Flemish film," says Martens. "Films were based on popular novels and often took place in the 19th century, with the beginning of industrialisation. You could call them heritage films." Half the films in the chronicle are in fact from the 1970s.

## First, and best

But the chronicle's first two films are still my favourite with regard to style. *Meeuwen sterven in de haven* (*Seagulls Die in the Harbour*) has no less than three directors: documentary filmmaker Rik Kuypers and film critics Ivo Michiels and Roland Verhavert, who make expert use of black and white, with shadows and dark streets, bright days in wheat fields and the industrial mish-mash of Antwerp harbour.

The 1955 film stars the late actor Julien Schoenaerts (father of actor Matthias, clear in the profile) as a displaced man with a secret. Set just after the end of the Second World War, it turns decidedly *Frankenstein*-esque when a little girl – a war orphan – enters his life. *Meeuwen* is generally referred to as the truly first Flemish film, and it's still, to this day, one of its best.

The chronicle's second film is *De man die zijn haar kort liet knippen* (*The Man Who Had His Hair Cut Short*) by the prolific director André Delvaux, who made films in both French and Dutch. Actor Senne Rouffaer, who died just four years ago after appearing in more than 80 movies, is a perfect bundle of nerves as Govert, a middle-aged man in love with a secondary school student.

As the years go by, the continuing obsession with the now-absent girl essentially ruins Govert's life. And then, years later, he happens upon her again. The film veers into dream-like territory, Delvaux setting the scene for so much psychologically engaged Belgian cinema that was to follow.♦



Julien Schoenaerts stars in one of Flanders' best-ever films, *Seagulls Die in the Harbour*

## The André Delvaux series

Don't miss next week's edition of *Flanders Today* to find out about a new Cinemathek series of films by André Delvaux, largely unavailable until now

# “As I can”

The Flemish Primitives change the world of art before your eyes in Bruges

ANNA JENKINSON

**T**hat the Flemish Primitives – painters living and working in the Low Countries in the 15th and 16th centuries – had an extreme influence on their counterparts across Europe is already well known. Bruges' Groeninge Museum hosted an exhibition illustrating their impact on painters in Southern Europe in 2002, and now it stages the impressive *Van Eyck to Dürer*, looking at Central and Eastern Europe.

The Flemish Primitives are credited with being the first to use oil paint on panels (a mixture called tempera was used before then) and for innovative techniques with oil paint. They created a realism and warmth with their works, with detail that offers a directness similar to photography.

In *Van Eyck to Dürer*, masterpieces by Jan Van Eyck, Hans Memling and Rogier van der Weyden, among others, are shown with work by artists from Germany, Austria, Poland, Hungary and Bohemia. Works have travelled from across Europe and elsewhere, including altarpieces that were exported in the 15th century from Flanders to Germany, paintings by anonymous masters who clearly had access to early Netherlandish art, and pieces by Central and Eastern European artists who travelled to the Low Countries and incorporated elements of what they saw into their own work.

By juxtaposing works by artists of two different regions, the influences of the one upon the other clearly materialise, allowing visitors to see – and not just be told – that the Flemish Primitives did indeed trigger an artistic revolution. In addition, you can see the ripples of influence – from a Flemish Primitive to another artist, and from that artist to the next.

The scope of the exhibition is vast – there is almost an overwhelming number of altar panels, Madonna and Child paintings and crucifixion scenes. Yet curators have arranged the works well, each room having a clear theme. Some focus on a place, such as Cologne – a trading centre and one of the largest cities in mediaeval Europe – others put a particular artist into the context of his time, such as Martin Schongauer of Germany (who was referred to in sources as “the beautiful Martin”).

By breaking up the work in this way, the curators have managed to turn what could have been a confusing experience into one that is visitor friendly, entertaining and illuminating. Information placards (in Dutch, English, French and German) are also very helpful, highlighting one or two of the works in the room.

Arguably, the most influential of the Flemish Primitives was Rogier van der Weyden, and there is a section dedicated to his impact on others. Three of those are his Netherlandish contemporaries Dieric Bouts, Hugo van der Goes and Hans Memling, who, each in his own way, we're told, “transform Rogier's heritage”. These artists in turn influenced those working in Central Europe.

In the case of Bouts, it was his composition and landscapes that travelled eastward, with his style being copied in numerous panels, particularly in Germany. Two of his most extraordinary pieces are the wings of a circa 1450 *Last Judgment*

triptych, “Road to Paradise” and “Fall of the Damned”.

The contrast of the titles is brought out strikingly: one is full of light, with pale-skinned women draped in white cloths, walking on soft green grass in the foreground, as figures ascend a hill towards heaven in the distance; the other is in dark tones, with tortured, skeletal figures falling from the sky, tumbling into the abyss, where cold stones and evil-looking creatures await.

The inspiration that Memling's portraits provided for painters such as Herman Rode of Lübeck is highlighted by having portraits by both men hanging next to each other. As for van der Goes, other influences on him included Van Eyck and Schongauer, and, appropriately, there are also Schongauer prints on display here, and next to them prints by the German Albrecht Dürer. The connections from one artist to the next and the reciprocal influences are almost endless.

Dürer, who was from Nuremberg, travelled to the Netherlands in 1520 when he was already a famous artist. During his stay, most of which was in Antwerp but also included visits to Bruges, Brussels and Ghent, he became interested in early Netherlandish art and met painters, including Jan Provoost.

One beautiful oil painting by Dürer on display is “Saint Jerome”, which depicts the wizened face of an old man with a long white beard sitting at his desk with a finger resting on a skull. Though named after the fifth-century priest and academic, the figure is based on an old man Dürer met in Antwerp.

In the same room is Provoost's “Death and the Miser”, highlighting the link between the two artists, in this case a skull theme in both works. Dürer, in fact, had multiple talents – a painter and printmaker, he also practiced woodcutting, and 12 of them make up *The Large Passion*, also included in the exhibition.

A series of 12 miniatures, meanwhile, from a cycle of the life of Christ is unattributed but thought to come from Bavaria, circa 1432. Curators have wisely provided magnifying glasses so that visitors can examine the wonderful colours and details of this tempera on parchment.

Also exceptionally displayed are manuscript pages with illustrations around the text in bright blues and reds: These are to be found in a cabinet in the centre of the second room, which focuses on Bavarian, Swabian and Austrian works. Here, you find Conrad Laib, a Salzburg artist who, in one of his paintings, borrowed Van Eyck's personal motto “Als ich kan” (“As I can”, a play on “as Eyck can”), reflecting an awareness of Van Eyck's work.

*Van Eyck to Dürer* can be enjoyed in numerous ways: For the connoisseur, new connections will be made and, among the hundreds of works on display, there will certainly be some you haven't seen before. For the novice, there is plenty of information available to put the period and the works into context.

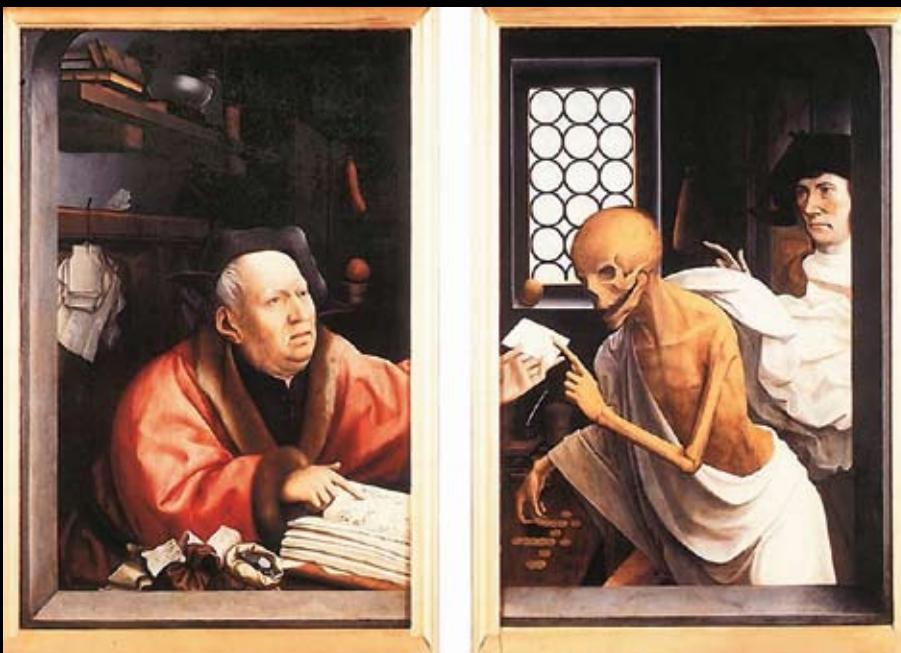
Whichever approach you take, the pure visual impact is extraordinary, with many of these 500-year-old works literally dazzling you with their red, blue, green and gold tones. As I came out of the museum the autumn colours seemed quite dull in comparison. ♦



“Saint Barbara”, the right panel of a triptych, 1438. The exquisite colour and detail in the paintings of Robert Campin set him apart; many historians argue that he is the first great Netherlandish painter.



Exhibition namesake Albrecht Dürer's "St Jerome" from 1521 (left) was probably inspired by the work of Flemish Primitive friend Jan Provoost, such as "Death and the Miser" from circa 1500 (right)



## CULTURE NEWS

Flanders is getting 10,000 trees from the **Avatar Home Tree initiative** of movie studio 20th Century Fox and director James Cameron, named after their 2009 blockbuster film. The initiative calls for one million trees to be planted worldwide. Flanders' will be planted in the areas of Waasmunster in East Flanders and Tongeren in Limburg, in cooperation with Flemish groups Association for Forests and Flanders and Agency for Nature and Forests. The trees will make up part of Flanders' "One Million Trees" initiative, which has already seen more than 700,000 trees planted.

Design Flanders, which promotes the work of Flemish designers, is crossing the border to Wallonia for this year's Design Triennial, ***Belgium is Design. Design for Mankind***. This sixth edition of the triennial is being hosted by the industrial mining complex turned culture centre Grand Hornu, a site celebrating its 200th birthday this year. *Belgium is Design* explores how design affects the social lives and fundamental desires of communities and runs until 27 February.

Tonight begins a brand new television series on één about the influence of Flemings living abroad on food culture. Hosted by Flemish photographer Lieve Blancquaert, the first episode finds visiting the successful Thomas De Geest, who years ago gave up his job at IBM in Belgium to sell waffles from a wagon on the streets of New York City. ***Made in Belgium*** airs every Wednesday at 21.40.

Flanders is making an excellent show of it at the **International Documentary Film Festival of Amsterdam (IDFA)**, the Cannes of documentary filmmaking, which draws to a close on 28 November. Eva Küpper spent seven years completing ***What's in a Name***, the portrait of New York performance artist Jon Cory, while Annabel Verbeke's ***Children of the Sea*** takes a look at a special school for boys in Ostend. Other Flemish films include Olivia Rochette and Gerard-Jan Claes' ***Because We Are Visual***, a poetic look at the world of video bloggers; Tim De Keersmaecker's ***Aperture***, which follows a psychotic man's attempt to create order in his life; and Martijn Payens' ***Mushrooms of Concrete***, about the 750,000 bunkers built in Albania between 1975 and 1989.

→ [www.idfa.nl](http://www.idfa.nl)

Belgium has placed seventh at the eighth annual **Junior Eurovision Song Festival**, held on 20 November in Minsk. Jill & Lauren, a teen duo from Gent, went to Minsk with their song "Get Up". The pair earned 61 points from a combination of traditional Eurovision voting and a professional jury. The winner, with 120 points, was Vladimir Urzumanyan from Armenia.

→ [www.junioreurovision.tv](http://www.junioreurovision.tv)



Flemish Primitive Dieric Bouts' "Annunciation", circa 1480



German painter Michael Wolgemut's "Portrait of Levinus Memminger", circa 1485

© Princes Czartoryski Foundation, National Museum, Kraków

© Groeningemuseum, Bruges

© Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid

### In a name

Don't get confused: the artists working in the Low Countries in the 15th and 16th centuries, painting such masterpieces as "The Arnolfini Portrait" and "The Portinari Altarpiece", are also referred to as "Early Netherlandish" painters and often grouped in with artists from the "Late Gothic". In Flanders, of course, we prefer the term "Flemish Primitives".



Jan van Eyck and his workshop created "The Virgin and Child, with Saints Barbara and Elizabeth of Hungary and abbot Jan de Vos" circa 1442

### Van Eyck to Dürer

Until 30 January  
Groeninge Museum  
Dijver 12, Bruges  
→ [www.bruggecentraal.be](http://www.bruggecentraal.be)

# Local heroes

Flanders has its own label to ensure you're buying regional products made according to tradition

ALAN HOPE

Local cuisine and food products have never gotten more attention in Flanders than in the last few years – the launch of Week van de Smaak, for instance and, this year, its Hoppas campaign, which aimed to give a Flemish colour to Spanish *tapas*. There are more chefs on TV than ever before, and the reality series *Mijn Restaurant!* also promotes the use of local ingredients. Weekend newspaper supplements are full of chefs and critics extolling the virtues of seasonal produce and of traditional ingredients and production methods.

Everyone knows that on a European level, you're no longer allowed to call your fizzy wine Champagne or sell any old mousetrap bait as genuine Wensleydale cheese. That thanks to the rules on Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) and Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) certificates.

Now Flanders has its own equivalent, the *streekproduct* (regional product) label. It's administered by the Flemish Centre for Agricultural and Fisheries Marketing (VLAM), based in Brussels.

The aim of the label is to give recognition to genuine, locally produced products, made according to long-held methods, and to allow customers to see at a glance if the product they're buying has met the label's strict criteria. So, while blood sausage may be something you'll still find in shops all over Flanders, only the ones made in Brussels, Limburg, the Kempen, West Hageland, West Flanders, the Dender area and Pajottenland can use an official designation as *streekproduct*.

*Witlof* (chicory) is grown far and wide, but only *witlof* from Flemish Brabant, Brussels and the Dender area are allowed to use a designation of origin. Each product from each area has a different designation, and it's the producers who are awarded the label, not the product itself.

When producers apply for recognition, the request goes to an evaluation committee, made up of recognised experts in their particular field: one for beer, one for fish and so on. The commission is looking to ensure that the product meets the five criteria for a regional product:

- Made with raw materials from the area (although foreign ingredients are allowed if necessary, such as in speculoos, chocolate or coffee)
- Recognised by the local and wider public as a regional product, often with its own name or recipe (Antwerpse handje, Hasseltse jenever, Geraardsbergse Mattentaart)

- Produced according to a traditional recipe or production method
- Produced in the region
- Must have a regional history going back at least 25 years, though production need not have been continuous during that time – for example if an old beer recipe is revived

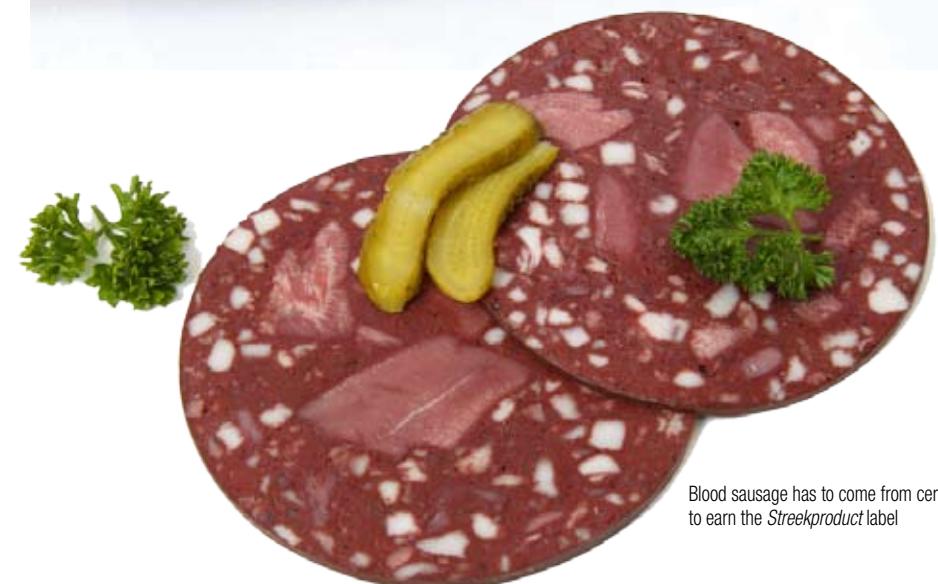
"There are about three or four products that are given recognition in each round," says Annelies Vermandel of VLAM. "Though there are many others that aren't accepted." (Producers can always come back and apply again.) The reward for the producer is the right to carry the *Streekproduct* label and the benefit of VLAM marketing, particularly on their website.

The recognition, though, can lead to divisions. Visiting Aalst recently, I noticed one baker advertising "authentic" *Aalsterse vlaai*, the sweet cake only recently recognised as a regional product. However he wasn't one of the five bakers in the town allowed to use the *streekproduct* label: his *vlaai* may be authentic, but it's not officially recognised.

All of the products awarded the *streekproduct* label are gathered together on a website, where you can search according to region or type of product. Browsing the site is like a stroll down the aisles of a particularly Epicurean supermarket: who knew there were so many ways of delivering the leftover parts of a pig? They also have video clips of producers in action and a newsletter and RSS feed to keep you up to date on new developments.♦

→ [www.streekproduct.be](http://www.streekproduct.be)

Thought to have originated in Ghent, the cuberdon is one of Belgium's most beloved products: the official cuberdon *streekproduct* comes only from East Flanders



© VLAM

Blood sausage has to come from certain areas to earn the *Streekproduct* label



© Wikimedia Commons

It doesn't take a brainiac to know that only Hasselt can make Hasseltse jenever

## Hi, I'm new here

There are currently 130 *streekproducten*, and five of them are new to the fold

**Mumbollen** come from Hoegaarden and Tienen, the home of sugar, in Flemish Brabant. The recipe for the hard candy was originally dreamed up by a schoolteacher, who combined butter, sugar, honey and peppermint oil to create what became a local traditional product. Now the recipe has been taken over by local baker Benny Swinnen, who replaces the honey with glucose, mixes everything up and flattens the *mumbollen* in an old metal rolling-mill, before breaking them up and packaging them in screw-top jars



**Klaaskoeken** from the area around Kortrijk share their traditional origins with neighbouring Hainaut and French Flanders, when they were made only on 6 December for the feast of Sinterklaas (hence the name). Unlike the more widespread speculoos, they're made of light and glazed yeast dough and are always in the shape of animals. Originally made rather large and sold by the kilo, now they're smaller, and the season has extended to the whole September-to-December period. This new *streekproduct* is made at the Santy-Decruynaere bakery in Marke, a municipality of Kortrijk.



Flemish **boerenkop** is something Pieter Breughel might have eaten, so old is the tradition of using every morsel of the slaughtered pig. "Kop" is Dutch for "head", which gives you a hint of what makes up this loaf. The pig's head is not only a source of meat but also that wonderful jelly produced by slow cooking all that bone and cartilage.

Added to that are some vegetables, thyme, bay leaf and a seasoning consisting only of salt, pepper and nutmeg. The idea may put people off, but the taste won't. Products like this, produced by De Koepoort in Haaltert, East Flanders, are increasingly finding their way to the tables of the region's top restaurants.

The Flemish have been lovers of butter since at least the Middle Ages, with specialised butter markets in places like the Westhoek in West Flanders, Mol in Antwerp province, the Pajottenland in Flemish Brabant and Haspengouw in Limburg. The *hoeveboter*, or **farmhouse butter**, of Baliehof in Jabbeke, near Bruges, is lightly pasteurised and then worked with an acid culture for an entire day. Then it is churned, which gives it its rich taste and, now and again, its trademark air bubbles, which are a sign of craftsman-like, rather than industrial, production. Their *karnemelk*, or **buttermilk**, has also been awarded regional recognition.



## More of everything

Every month, we'll tell you about more *streekproducten* and where to find them



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# Agenda

Two series on show this weekend in Antwerp by Flemish photographer Johan Swinnen – *What's the Time in Dhaka?* and *The Mad Photographer* – celebrate the release of his new book  
→ [www.stieglitz19.be](http://www.stieglitz19.be)



FLANDERS TODAY  
NOVEMBER 24, 2010



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## The Anjou Bible

ALAN HOPE

Following the huge success of their inaugural exhibition on Roger van der Weyden last year, the Leuven city museum M has once again joined with Illuminare, the study centre for mediaeval art of the Catholic University of Leuven (KUL), to present a rare and beautiful treasure. The Anjou Bible is a 14th-century illuminated manuscript that has been brought out of storage for a very short time.

The Bible was commissioned in 1340 by Robert of Anjou, a member of the distinguished French dynasty who was then King of Naples. He intended the Bible as a wedding gift for his granddaughter, Joanna, and her husband, Andreas of Hungary.

But by the time it was ready, two years after the wedding, Andreas had been strangled to death, and Joanna, by now the Queen, was the prime suspect. The splendid illuminations still feature Andreas in several places, identified by the falcon on his arm, but his coat of arms was painted over with those of Niccolo d'Alife, the secretary to whom Joanna gifted the Bible when she fled to France.

After that, the Bible was passed on to the French duke and art lover Jean De Berry, before finally making its way via the bishop of Arras to Leuven, where it has stayed ever since.

Robert of Anjou, known as Robert the Wise, was an unusually cultivated king, referred to in the dedication of the Bible as *rex expertus in omnia scientia*. The historian Petrarch, his contemporary, described him as an "eminent king and philosopher", and he was also known as a patron of the arts.

The Bible is made up of 344 bound parchment folios of the books of the Old and New Testaments, richly illuminated in tempera paint and gold leaf. The capitals – the initial letters of the prologues and books of the Bible – depict scenes relating to the text, such as Solomon at the Temple, King David playing a hand organ and many a prophet warning the people of Israel of God's wrath.

The marginal illuminations, on the other hand, depict the life of Robert's court, with portraits of the King, his second wife Sancha of Majorca, Joanna and Andreas. They also stray from the courtly into the comical and even fantastical. As well as jousting, hunting and processional scenes, there's also a running thread featuring naked figures firing arrows and blowing trumpets while riding atop a variety of creatures: lions, camels, a unicorn, an ostrich.

In one margin, a pair of dragons are covering up the repair to a

tear in the parchment; in another, a dragon biting the tail of a bird performs the same function. There's even a war elephant carrying a banner in his trunk, though it seems fairly clear the artist had never seen an elephant up close, possibly basing his portrayal on someone else's less-than-accurate description.

As well as being a crazy mix of the sacred and the profane, the Bible is also a landmark of art history, standing at the border of the Italo-Byzantine style of the Middle Ages and the new search by artists like Giotto – one of Robert's protégés – to find new, more realistic means of depicting everyday life.

After the exhibition, the Bible will be rebound and returned to a special climate-controlled room at the Maurits Sabbe library of KUL's theology faculty. Due to its frailty, it is not expected to be exhibited again, but the entire document can be seen online at [www.bijbelvananjou.be](http://www.bijbelvananjou.be). ♦

### Until 5 December

M  
Vanderkelenstraat 28  
Leuven

→ [www.mleuven.be](http://www.mleuven.be)



## MORE EXHIBITIONS THIS WEEK

Anselm Kiefer → Fine Arts Museum, Antwerp

Van Dürer tot Jan Fabre → Elsene Museum, Brussels

Hareng Saur: Ensor and Contemporary Art → SMAK, Ghent



### Antwerp

CC De Steiger (Boom)  
H. Spillemaekersstraat 9; 03.880.19.14  
www.desteigerboom.be  
NOV 25 20.15 Bos & Voet: Tu y yo

CC Deurne  
Frans Messingstraat 36; 03.360.85.50  
www.ccdeurne.be  
NOV 27 20.30 BJ Scott: Planet Janis, ode to Janis Joplin

De Roma  
Turnhoutsebaan 327; 03.292.97.40  
www.deroma.be  
NOV 24 20.30 Luz de Luna  
NOV 25 20.30 Ernst Jansz sings Bob Dylan (translated into Dutch)

Trix  
Noorderingel 28; 03.670.09.00  
www.trixonline.be  
NOV 24 19.00 As I Lay Dying + Heaven Shall Burn + Suicide Silence  
NOV 25 20.00 Crystal Castles  
NOV 27 20.00 Necro + Mr Hyde + Rauw + Onbesproken + Halve Neuro  
NOV 28 19.00 Kreator + Exodus + Death Angel + Suicidal Angels. 20.00 Drive-by-Truckers + The Strange Boys + The Sore Losers

### Bruges

Cactus @ MaZ  
Magdalenastraat 27; 050.71.68.40  
www.cactusmusic.be  
NOV 26 20.00 Gorgoroth + Cavus + Noctem + Year of No Light  
NOV 27 20.00 Selah Sue. 22.00 Jamaica

### Brussels

Ancienne Belgique  
Anspachlaan 110; 02.548.24.24  
www.abconcerts.be

Concerts at 20.00:  
NOV 24 Efterklang + The Kissaway Trail + Cody + Chimes & Bells  
NOV 25 James Blackshaw + Swans. Radical Slave  
NOV 26 Xavier Rudd  
DEC 1 Funeral for a Friend + Bullet for My Valentine

Atelier 210  
Sint-Pieterssteenweg 210; 02.732.25.98  
www.atelier210.be  
NOV 24 21.00 Noria  
NOV 25 21.00 Andromakers  
NOV 26 21.00 Phantom Buffalo + The Tellers. Vuneru + Black Out

Claridge  
Leuvensesteenweg 24; 02.201.10.31  
www.claridge.be

NOV 27 22.30-5.00 In Flagranti, Bottin, Aguila, RobNzoopisie

Koninklijk Circus  
Onderrichtsstraat 81; 02.218.20.15  
www.cirque-royal.org  
NOV 24 20.00 Dany Brilliant  
NOV 28 20.00 Sylvie Vartan  
NOV 29 20.00 Suede  
DEC 1 20.00 Louis Chedid

Le Bar du Matin  
Alsembergsesteenweg 172; 02.537.71.59  
http://bardumatins.blogspot.com  
NOV 25 21.00 Lisaveta  
NOV 26 22.00 Onda Sonora  
NOV 29 20.00 Dan Miller

Le Botanique  
Koningsstraat 236; 02.218.37.32  
www.botanique.be  
Concerts at 20.00:  
NOV 24 Steve Wynn & The Miracle 3. Chief  
NOV 25 Jill is Lucky  
NOV 26 Jamaica. The Inspector Cluzo. Disiz  
NOV 30 Wallis Bird  
DEC 1 Aidan & The Italian Weather Ladies + Get Well Soon. Hugh Cornwell

Magasin 4  
Havenlaan 51B; 02.223.34.74  
www.magasin4.be  
NOV 24 19.00 Zenzille + Lsdub  
NOV 25 19.00 Year of No Light + Blows

Recyclart  
Ursulinenstraat 25; 02.502.57.34  
www.recycleart.be  
NOV 30 21.00 Lowdjo & Polle Van De Gash + Egon Fisk + more

Vorst-Nationaal  
Victor Rousseauleaan 208; 0900.00.991  
www.forestnational.be  
DEC 1 20.00 Elton John with Ray Cooper

### Ghent

Charlatan  
Vlasmarkt 6; 09.224.24.57  
www.charlatan.be  
DEC 1 20.00 Born Ruffians + I Got You On Tape + Young Rival

GET YOUR TICKETS NOW!

### Clouseau

17-29 December  
Sportpaleis, Antwerp

A quick check has shown us that these concerts are mostly sold out, save for the final one on 29 December. So, if you believe Flanders' most famous Dutch-lyric singing pop duo Koen and Kris Wouters (aka Clouseau) when they say that this is their last round of holiday shows at the Sportpaleis – a tradition for 11 years now – you'd better get your tix mighty quick.



→ [www.sportpaleis.be](http://www.sportpaleis.be)

### Decadance

Overpoortstraat 76; www.decadance.be  
NOV 25 19.00 Venerea CD Release Party + Flatcat + No Parking This Side Wednesday  
NOV 28 19.00 Torche + Kingdom

### Minus One

Opgeestenlaan 455; 09.223.22.27  
www.democrazy.be  
NOV 25 19.30 Misery Index + Grave + Arsis + The Last Felony + The Rotted

### Vooruit

St Pietersnieuwstraat 23; 0900.26.060  
www.vooruit.be  
NOV 24 20.00 Eric Chenaux + Kiss the Anus of a Black Cat  
NOV 25 20.00 Patrick Riguille, John Terra & Band  
NOV 26 22.00 Zornik  
NOV 28 19.30 Amatorksi + SIC-ensemble + Tommigun  
NOV 29 20.00 Marina & The Diamonds

### Hasselt

Muziekodroom  
Bootstraat 9; 011.23.13.13  
www.muziekodroom.be  
NOV 27 20.00 De Jeugd Van Tegenwoordig

### Kortrijk

De Kreun  
Conservatoriumplein 1; 056.37.06.44  
www.dekreun.be  
NOV 24 20.00 M.I.A. + Sleigh Bells  
NOV 25 20.00 A Place To Bury Strangers  
NOV 26 20.00 Swans

### Leuven

Het Depot  
Martelarenplein 12; 016.22.06.03  
www.hetdepot.be  
NOV 25 20.00 Tortoise + Amatorksi

### Ostend

Kursaal (Casino)  
Monacoplein 2; 070.22.56.00  
www.kursaalostende.be  
NOV 24 20.00 Das Pop  
NOV 28 20.00 Buscemi & The Michel Bisceglia Ensemble



### Antwerp

Buster  
Kaasrui 1; 03.232.51.53  
www.busterpodium.be  
NOV 25 22.00 Babl Jam  
NOV 26 22.00 Adrien Volant Trio  
NOV 27 22.00 Exit April  
NOV 30 21.30 JazzNight

De Hopper  
Leopold De Waelstraat 2; 03.248.49.33  
www.cafehopper.be  
NOV 28 16.00 Yvonne Walter  
NOV 29 21.00 Metafour

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## Brussels

### Art Base

Zandstraat 29; 02.217.29.20  
www.art-base.be  
**NOV 26** 20.00 Swingajo Trio

### Bozar

Ravensteinstraat 23; 02.507.82.00  
www.bozar.be  
**NOV 29** 20.00 Bugge Wesseltoft, piano

### Jazz Station

Leuvensesteenweg 193; 02.733.13.78  
**NOV 24** 20.30 Lorenzo Di Maio Trio **NOV 25** 20.00 Rackham **NOV 27** 18.00 Fabrice Alleman, Jean Warland 'Duet' **DEC 1** 20.00 Maracujazz

### Sounds Jazz Club

Tulpenstraat 28; 02.512.92.50  
www.soundsjazzclub.be  
**NOV 26** 22.00 Thiefs

**NOV 27** 22.00 Elmore D

**NOV 30** 22.00 Raf Debacker Trio

### The Music Village

Steenstraat 50; 02.513.13.45  
www.themusicvillage.com

Concerts at 21.00:

**NOV 24** Balanced Exposure **NOV 25** Sabin Todorov-Bernard Guyot Duo **NOV 26** Th Bundle **NOV 27** Paula Dezz Quartet **NOV 30** Crawlin' Kingsnakes

## Ghent

### Vooruit

St Pietersniewstraat 23; 0900.26.060  
www.vooruit.be

**NOV 25** 20.00 Määk's Spirit + Neil Cowley Trio

**NOV 26** Iva Bittová & Vladimir Václavek + Equilibrium + Liesa Van der Aa

**DEC 1** 20.00 RadioKUKAorkest & Ellery Eskelin

## Leuven

### Het Depot

Martelarenplein 12; 016.22.06.03  
www.hetdepot.be

**NOV 30** 20.00 The Jon Spencer Blues Explosion



## Antwerp

### De Roma

Turnhoutsebaan 327; 03.292.97.40  
www.deroma.be

**NOV 27** 20.30 Patricia Guerrero, flamenco

### 't Werkhuis

Zegelstraat 13; 03.236.37.13  
www.tangoarrabal.be

**NOV 27** 20.30 Tango Arrabal (Argentina)

### Zuiderpershuis

Waalse Kaa 14; 03.248.01.00

www.zuiderpershuis.be

**NOV 24** 20.30 Sanjo Project **NOV 25** 20.30 Eva Ayllón **NOV 27** 20.30 Frank London's Zmios Trio **NOV 28** 20.30 Omri Mor + Yom

### Ardooie

Cultuurkapel De Schaduw

Wezestraat 32; 0479.80.94.82 www.

deschaduw.net

**NOV 26** 20.30 You Raskal You

## Brussels

### Art Base

Zandstraat 29; 02.217.29.20  
www.art-base.be

**trio.be**

## Yossif Ivanov & deFilharmonie

**27 November, 20.00**

### Concertgebouw, Bruges

Antwerp-born Yossif Ivanov is one of the finest young violinists in the world, having taken second place in 2005's Queen Elisabeth Music Competition and First Prize at the Montreal International Competition. Having now made his debut in practically every major European city, he plays this concert

→ [www.concertgebouw.be](http://www.concertgebouw.be)

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photographs by the Flemish modernist  
**Until DEC 12** Our Dreams & Nightmares, photographs by the British photographer Rich Wiles

**Royal Museum of Fine Arts**  
Leopold De Waelplaats; 03.238.78.09  
[www.kmska.be](http://www.kmska.be)

**Until DEC 5** MOOI: Over kwetsbare schoonheid (BEAUTIFUL: On Fragile Beauty), works by 12 artists, including Jan Fabre, Wim Delvoye and David Claerbout, on the definition of beauty (for kids ages 9-12)

**Until JAN 23** Anselm Kiefer, works by the contemporary German artist

## Bruges

**De Bond**  
Buiten Smedenvest 1; 050.44.30.40  
[www.cbrugge.be](http://www.cbrugge.be)

**Until NOV 28** Exhibition Models, installations on the question of identity by Teheran-born artist Chohreh Feyzjou, Benin artist Meschac Gaba and Flemish artist Wesley Meuris

## WEEK IN FILM

LISA BRADSHAW



### Night Vision

**Until 23 January**

Cinema Lumière, Bruges

We here at Week in Film are delighted to see that the genre has not been left out of the Bruges Central festival exhibition *Luc Tuymans: A Vision of Central Europe*. Much of the installations in said exhibition are clips from animated films, but the festival went a step further, screening some of those films in their entirety and bringing the filmmakers to Bruges.

Central and Eastern Europeans have long brought dark elements into their animations, hiding their criticisms of communism and Nazism in images not considered "real", while pioneering animation techniques. Contemporary animators have more freedom but haven't given up that sense of symbolism and moody atmosphere. This week, Polish animator Jerzy Kucia, expert at what Flemish film also tends towards – the interplay of fantasy and reality – will present some of his work. Next month, it's the turn of world-famous animator Igor Kovalyov of Ukraine, who also co-founded Moscow's renowned Pilot School of Animation.

Also next month come the American animators known as The Quay Brothers. Based in England, the identical twins are huge in the world of stop-motion animation and have been heavily influenced by Central and Eastern European animators. Their 20-minute film *Street of Crocodiles* (pictured), which won the Audience Award for Best Short Film at the Brussels International Festival of Fantasy Film in 1987, has been named by some critics as one of the best films of all time – animated or not.

→ [www.bruggecentral.be](http://www.bruggecentral.be)

## Groeningemuseum

Dijver 12; 050.44.87.43  
**Until JAN 30** Van Eyck tot Dürer, paintings by Flemish Primitives paired with work by painters from Central Europe who were directly influenced by the Primitives (Part of Brugge Centraal)

## Brussels

### Bozar

Ravensteinstraat 23; 02.507.82.00  
[www.bozar.be](http://www.bozar.be)

**Until JAN 23** Gilbert & George: Jack Freak Pictures, major exhibition of the Italian-British artist duos stylised photographs with British flag iconography

**Until JAN 23** The World of Lucas Cranach, work by the leading figure of the German Renaissance that places him in the artistic context of his time

**Until FEB 13** Ensor: Composer and Writer, autographs, publications, documents and photographs by the Flemish Surrealist master James Ensor

## ING Cultural Centre

Koningsplein 6; 02.507.82.00 [www.bozar.be](http://www.bozar.be)  
**Until FEB 13** Ensor Revealed, drawings and paintings illustrate the imaginary and artistic evolution of the Ostend artist on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of his birth

## Museum van Elsene

Jean Van Volsemstraat 71; 02.515.64.22  
[www.museumvanelsene.be](http://www.museumvanelsene.be)

**Until JAN 16** Paul Delvaux: Starting Points, paintings by the Belgian surrealist shown alongside works by artists who influenced him

**Until JAN 16** From Dürer to Jan Fabre: Masterpieces, paintings from the museum's collection including 19th- and 20th-century works by Ensor, Toulouse-Lautrec, Picasso, Miró, more

## Royal Museum of the Armed Forces

Jubelpark 3; 02.737.78.33  
[www.legermuseum.be](http://www.legermuseum.be)

**Until NOV 30** Crazy Flying Machines, drawings by Belgian illustrator Jean Leclercq

**Until JAN 31** Belgians Can Do Too! Het Belgisch-Luxemburgs bataljon in Korea Belgian military operations in the Korean War

## Royal Museums of Art and History

Jubelpark 10; 02.741.72.11  
[www.kmkg-mrah.be](http://www.kmkg-mrah.be)

**Until NOV 30** The Etruscans in Europe, multimedia tour of the Etruscan civilisation from their conquest of Italy to the rest of Europe

## Royal Museum of Fine Arts

Regentschapsstraat 3; 02.508.32.11  
[www.fine-arts-museum.be](http://www.fine-arts-museum.be)

**Until JAN 9** From Delacroix to Kandinsky, Orientalism in Europe, European Orientalist art during the 19th century with paintings, drawings and sculpture

**Until FEB 6** Jules Schmalzigaug: A Futurist Belgian, retrospective of paintings by the only Belgian artist involved in the Italian futurist movement before the First World War

## Tour & Taxis

Havenlaan 86C; 02.549.60.49  
[www.tour-taxis.com](http://www.tour-taxis.com)

**Until DEC 5** Art in All of Us, photos from an around-the-world trip by Anthony Asaël and Stéphanie Rabemafara ([www.artinallofus.be](http://www.artinallofus.be))

**Until MAY 9** America: It's Also Our History, three centuries of cross-Atlantic relations with frescoes, charts, audiovisual material, installations, objects and artwork

## WIELS

Van Volxemlaan 354; 02.340.00.50  
[www.wiels.org](http://www.wiels.org)

**Until JAN 30** Francis Alÿs: A Story of Deception, installations, paintings, drawings, and documents by the Mexican artist

## Ghent

### Design Museum

Jan Breydelstraat 5; 09.267.99.99  
[www.designmuseumgent.be](http://www.designmuseumgent.be)

**Until FEB 27** Maarten Van Severen: The History of an Icon, models, prototypes, drawings and photographs of the "03" chair by the Flemish designer

**Until FEB 27** Art Nouveau and Art Deco from the Netherlands, a selection of objects from the Drents Museum Assen collection

## Dr Guislain Museum

Jozef Guislainstraat 43; 09.216.35.95  
[www.museumdrguislain.be](http://www.museumdrguislain.be)

**Until 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

**Until MAY 8** The Weighty Body: Of Fat and Thin, Perfect or Deranged, a history of fasting for personal, esthetic, religious or economic reasons

## Museum of Modern Art (SMAK)

Citadelpark; 09.221.17.03 [www.smak.be](http://www.smak.be)

**Until DEC 3** Inside Installations, 10 installations from the museum's collection

**Until FEB 27** Haren Saur: Ensor and Contemporary Art, a highlight of the continuing contemporary aspect of work by James Ensor, shown with work by international contemporary artists

## Stadsmuseum Gent (STAM)

Bijloke - Godshuizenlaan 2; 09.269.87.90

[www.stamgent.be](http://www.stamgent.be)

**Until MAY 1** Enlightened City, an examination of how light affects a city through diaries, models, paintings, photographs and installations

## Hasselt

### Fashion Museum

Gasthuisstraat 11; 011.239.621

[www.modemuseumhasselt.be](http://www.modemuseumhasselt.be)

**Until JAN 9** Devout/Divine: Fashion vs Religion, examples of religious symbolism in designs of the past decennia

## Literair Museum

Bampsalaan 35; 011.26.17.87

[www.literairmuseum.be](http://www.literairmuseum.be)

**Until FEB 26** Niet van de poes! De kat in het kinderboek, a collection of children's books and stories with a cat theme

## Kemzeke

### Verbeke Foundation

Westakker; 03.789.22.07

[www.verbekefoundation.com](http://www.verbekefoundation.com)

**Until APR 10** Certified Copy, works by 20 international artists on the theme of reproduction and cloning

**Until APR 10** Mark Verstockt – A portrait, an overview of the Flemish artist's work on the occasion of his 80th birthday

**Until APR 10** Trou de Ville, group show featuring press releases, e-mails, videos and photographs of 'Guerilla art'

**Until JAN 30** The Cloudknitters – 100 Records, record sleeves decorated by visual artists

## Kortrijk

### Museum Kortrijk 1302

Houtmarkt-Begijnpark; 056.27.78.50

[www.kortrijk1302.be](http://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

### Centrale Bibliotheek

Ladeuzeplein 21; 016.32.46.60

<http://bib.kuleuven.be>

**Until NOV 30** De slaap neemt geen plaats in (Sleep Occupies No Space), photographs, paintings, collages and video on street children in Kinshasa by Flemish photographer and anthropologist Kristien Geenen

## Museum M

Leopold Vanderkelenstraat 28; 016.27.29.29

[www.museumm.be](http://www.museumm.be)

**Until DEC 5** The Anjou Bible: A Royal Manuscript Revealed, a rare manuscript from the 14th-century court of Naples

**Until DEC 5** Matthew Brannon, lithographs and screenprints by the American artist

**Until JAN 9** Ozo - Joke Van Leeuwen, works by the Dutch author, poet, illustrator and performer

**Until JAN 16** Robert Devriendt: Victimes de la Passion, paintings by the Flemish artist

**Until JAN 23** Mayombe: Meesters van de magie (Master of Magic), sculptures and objects from the Congolese collection of the Catholic University of Leuven



**Moussem Festival:** The 10th edition of the annual Arab cultural festival, featuring literature, theatre and music

**Until DEC 4** across Brussels and Antwerp

[www.moussem.be](http://www.moussem.be)

## Antwerp

**Antiquairs Antwerpen:** Annual open-house walking tour via 20 Antwerp antique dealers

**NOV 26-DEC 5** across Antwerp

[www.antiquairs-antwerpen.be](http://www.antiquairs-antwerpen.be)

**Art Event 2010:** International art fair featuring glass, jewellery, paintings,

sculpture, ceramic, video and more works of art for sale, plus culinary corner  
**NOV 26-28** at Antwerp Expo, Jan Van Rijswijkstraat 191  
03.260.81.20, [www.art-event.be](http://www.art-event.be)

## Bruges

**Brugge Central:** Festival celebrating the art and culture of Central Europe, with dance, theatre, music, literature, film and major exhibitions  
**Until JAN 30** across Bruges

[www.bruggecentral.be](http://www.bruggecentral.be)

**Snow and Ice:** Snow and ice sculpture festival  
**NOV 26-JAN 16** 10.00-19.00 in front of the railway station

[www.icesculpture.be](http://www.icesculpture.be)

## Brussels

**Autumn Falls:** New festival organised by European booking agency/promoter Toutpartout with concerts and DJ sets, plus afterparties in smaller clubs and bars  
**NOV 26-28** at venues across the city

[www.autumnfalls.be](http://www.autumnfalls.be)

**Belgian Literature? To Belge or Not to Belge:** Belgian writers discuss what they have in common  
**NOV 24** 20.00 (in French and Dutch) at Passa Porta, A Dansaertstraat 46

02.226.04.54, [www.beschrijf.be](http://www.beschrijf.be)

ROBYN BOYLE

# bite



© Cuberdon & Macaron

## Den Heksenketel

Word-of-mouth is a wonderful thing. Ordering a new beer at the pub the other night led to a discussion about where the beer comes from (Brouwerij De Ryck in Herzele), which in turn led to a great tip for a restaurant where they sell it – Eethuis Den Heksenketel (The Witch's Cauldron) in Erpe-Mere, East Flanders.

Coincidentally, a week later my neighbour told me she took her daughters to Den Heksenketel for waffles on a Sunday afternoon, only to return later that evening with her husband for dinner. I was prompted to finally pick up the phone and make a reservation of my own.

Shaking off the cold as we entered, my companion and I were greeted warmly by the owner, Mike, and seated at a snug table in one of three adjoining rooms. The place looks and feels like the home it once was, complete with a vintage wood-burning stove. The witch theme is all around, with witches, bats and black cats hanging from every available space. It's on the edge of kitsch, but in the most endearing sense of the word.

The next thing we noticed was the stream of classic rock playing in the background – stuff like Mark Knopfler, Tina Turner, Roy Orbison, Creedence Clearwater Revival and David Bowie.

Some of the local beers on the menu include rarities like Saison d'Erpe-Mere, Canaster and Kwibus, and beers with witchy names, such as Helleketelbier and Dulle Teve. In fact, the beer menu alone had us bewitched for a good half-hour. In the end I ordered a Steenuilken, the same beer that indirectly brought me here, and my companion opted for Arend Tripel from the same brewery.

Making a dinner selection proved easier, as I had already set my mind on trying one of their hearty winter stews, in this case lamb with a side of potatoes. (Although both the monthly suggestions also proved tempting: pumpkin-carrot stoemp with sausage and bacon or wild boar ragu).

The chunks of lamb came in an apart cast-iron pot and were so soft I hardly needed to chew. My plate was decorated with a green, leafy salad and some surprisingly scrumptious little potatoes, pan-cooked to a golden crisp and sprinkled with a (house secret) mixture of subtle spices.

Across the table, the chef's fish casserole arrived – a variety of seafood, including mussels, scallops, salmon and cod, under a creamy crustacean sauce. The dish was beautifully presented, topped with a bright red crayfish and fresh fries on the side, with a pot of homemade mayonnaise. The flavours were not overbearing, so the fish remained light and tasty through to the last bite.

Our compliments go to the chef, Mike's wife Lieve. Both Mike and Lieve are trained cooks who started the business just over four years ago. "It was my wife's childhood dream to open a restaurant," Mike told us. "Now we're easing into it, and someday we hope to do this full-time." For now, it's a place to enjoy four days a week...unless, of course, we spread the word.

→ [www.eethuis-denheksenketel.be](http://www.eethuis-denheksenketel.be)

 Schoolstraat 94, Erpe-Mere; 053.83.13.58  
 Thursday to Saturday 18.00-21.30;  
Sunday 12.00-21.30  
 Witches' brews and stews

Contact Bite at [flandersbite@gmail.com](mailto:flandersbite@gmail.com)

## NEXT WEEK IN FLANDERS TODAY #158

### Focus

For anyone who has been a tad confused by Belgium's languages, language communities, language quarrels and language pre-occupations, we'll tell you about a seminar you shouldn't miss

### Arts

Antwerp's museum of contemporary art is sharing a secret: when it opened in the 1980s, it took its cue from literary journal *Artefactum*. Now it devotes an exhibition to the magazine and to Flemish art of the period

### Living

There's an interesting little statistic bandied around about Ghent: it has more vegetarian restaurants per capita than any other European city. In the first of our two-part "Veggie Cities", we check out the veg-heads of East Flanders

## TALKING DUTCH

ALISTAIR MACLEAN



### ‘vissen’

Figures reported could not adequately describe the recent submersion of half of Belgium under a flood: 120,000 zandzakjes – sandbags – were reported to have been used and distraught burgemeesters – mayors – tried to grasp the enormity of the deluge by talking of miljoenen liters water. The sight from the train made a joke of the number of sandbags, and a million litres of water appear like a drop in a bucket. You might think that the only ones having fun these soggy days would be the fish. Yet many little darlings that adorned vijvers – ponds – in gardens have found themselves released by the overstroming – flooding, which has led to the bizarre sight of fish-owners asking neighbours near and far if they noticed any fish in their gardens. I wonder where the law stands on the ownership of fish that simply swam into another pond.

The fish that have recently come in for a really big shock are the carp that populate Flanders' visvijvers – fishponds, and not as a result of the overstroming. These monsters have got used to being hauled out on the end of a hook year after year and have learned to flap patiently as they're weighed and photographed, knowing that they'll be gently released back into the water.

Then along came Eastern Europeans who naively think

that fish are for eating. Anglers have reacted angrily to their friends being fried: *Voor ons is een karper een huisdier* – For us, a carp is a pet; *Je legt je hond toch niet op de barbecue* – You don't put your dog on the barbecue, do you?

The *karpervissers* follow these fish for years: *wij weten wie welke vis waar heeft gevangen* – we know who caught which fish where; *hoeveel hij woog* – how much he weighed; *hoe groot hij was* – how big he was. Such is the fame of some carp that when they die (or now get fried) they are commemorated on the internet. And for that they need a name, which they soon acquire as their life is charted by the *karpervissers*.

But a barbed hook through your lip is no way to treat a pet, you might think. One *karpervisser* dismisses this: *Ik doe ze geen pijn* – I don't hurt them" (I do them no pain); *ik geef ze gewoon een piercing* – I just give them a piercing. They even have cushions to lay the fish on while they're being unhooked.

More than 50,000 Flemish *karpervissers* enjoy catching and releasing their pets. You might think they're all *gepensioneerden die op hun frigobox aan het water zitten* – pensioners sitting at the water's edge on their coolboxes, but in fact carp fishing is hip with young folk. Ah, *de jeugd van tegenwoordig* – today's youth!

## THE LAST WORD . . .

### No panic

"I had a little bit of a warning, but luckily it didn't come to much. It was a small thrombosis. I'll have to keep it in mind in my diet, but it's no more than that."

Jean-Luc Dehaene, former Belgian prime minister, following a recent health scare

### Charm offensive

"There's a great fascination with De Wever. There's an air of mystery hangs around him, a feeling that we haven't yet got all the answers to who he is and what he wants. I think the Walloons are beginning to feel themselves charmed by his humour and his intelligence."

Johanne Montay, a journalist with the French-language station RTBF

### WORD . . .

#### Child rights

"When you have a child yourself and see how vulnerable they are, you realise how important it is that children grow up in a family, and that's what this organisation says: don't take a child who's living in poverty away from its family, but try to help the whole family."

Kim Clijsters, a new ambassador for the charity SOS Kinderdorpen

### Into the breach

"We all know that [smaller cars] are good for us, but that's also true about cod liver oil. And jogging."

Jeremy Clarkson, the BBC host who is now motoring correspondent for *Het Nieuwsblad*