



Any way the wind blows

Belwind's Frank Coenen on a never-ending resource

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Warm fuzzy

The long-awaited second album from the Bony King

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Six min, 40 sec

Pecha Kucha keeps your talk on target

p11

Prometheus and me

Jan Fabre's world of heroes, villains and fire

JACQUELINE FLETCHER

Prometheus-Landscape II reminds me of something Jan Fabre said to me about his work: "I'm avant-garde in the sense that I'm not in tune with the current cynicism in contemporary art. I believe in beauty, and when you believe in beauty, you can't be cynical because beauty doesn't recognise irrationality."

Many detractors of the multi-disciplinary Flemish artist, and they are a legion, might disagree. But it is true: *Prometheus* is about the Titan who stole fire from the gods to save the human race from extinction, and, fundamentally, it is a message of hope. The central image of Prometheus, suspended above the stage, tied up spread-eagled and encompassed by the huge, flaming circle of the sun, evokes De Vinci's man of perfect proportions: beauty, renaissance, a hero reborn in the spirit of resistance.

While the hero of this Greek myth was condemned by Zeus to have his liver pecked by an eagle for all eternity, in Fabre's version, onstage in Brussels this month, our hero's affliction is being obliged to watch helplessly as the human race is duped by false deities, and his sacrifice is reduced to ashes. Ten superb dancers embody the Greek gods – greedy, salacious, mendacious and sadistic – dressed in black costumes evocative of priests and rabbis, lawyers and academics and the wealthy, black-clad merchants from the first golden age of capitalism.

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Belgium loses at Davis Cup

There are two things the 23-year-old *Genkenaar* Ruben Bemelmans can take away from Spain's merciless beating of Belgium in last weekend's Davis Cup: thanks to a contested decision by the team coach, Bemelmans (ATP ranked 144) got to face off against Rafael Nadal (ATP ranked 1), who some are now saying is on the road to being the best male tennis player ever. And he even managed to take eight games from the world leader, losing the match 2-6, 4-6, 2-6. "I did my best, but he didn't give away any free points," said Bemelmans after the clash with the titan. "He moves in an unbelievable way, and even manages to hit the ball deep from an impossible situation."

Bemelmans would normally not have been on the court in Charleroi at all, had it not been for a decision by Davis Cup captain Reginald Willems to pull Olivier Rochus, who he also coaches, in order to preserve his strength for later in the doubles on Saturday – where Rochus and Steve Darcis (ATP 129) lost against Fernando Verdasco and Feliciano López 7-6, 6-4, 6-3.

Flemish player Xavier Malisse (ATP 51), meanwhile, was beaten by Verdasco 4-6, 3-6, 1-6. Sunday's card, involving matches between Nadal and Malisse and Bemelmans and Verdasco, were cancelled thanks to Spain's 3-0 lead by Saturday's close.

Unions take to the streets

Day of action has patchy effect as workers protest at IPA

ALAN HOPE

Trade unions last week promised further disruptions following a Day of Action carried out on Friday, 4 March, which had severe effects on some industry, while leaving other sections of the economy untouched.

Socialist and liberal unions were protesting at the government's refusal to renegotiate the so-called inter-professional accord (IPA), a two-year pact that governs wages and other conditions. The IPA is negotiated by the Group of Ten, representing employers and unions, but the document this time was rejected in large part by union members, although their representatives on the Group of Ten had signed off on it.

When the IPA went to the government, it was slightly adapted, but not to the extent workers desired. Chief among the complaints is a wage-rise cap of 0.3% for the two years, while inflation is running at around 3%.

"If our demand for an increase in purchasing power is not met, we'll be forced to strengthen our actions," said

chairman Rudy De Leeuw of the socialist union ABVV. "The ordinary worker today sent out a strong signal that the accord is finished, and even the compromise proposal can't count on being approved."

In Flanders, the day's actions was characterised by "filter blockades", where drivers are held up at picket lines but allowed ultimately to pass. At the major metal and chemical companies, socialist and liberal unions observed a general strike. The port of Antwerp, meanwhile, was blocked by pickets who managed to stop all road traffic in and out of the port zone. The disruption led to a temporary shipping standstill on the Scheldt. Port authority alderman Marc Van Peel called the action a "hijacking of the port alderman" and put the cost at €1 million an hour.

The federation for the technology industry put the cost of Friday's actions at €20 million; at the Volvo plant in Ghent, where 37 cars rolled off the assembly line instead of an expected 1,044, the loss was put at "millions".

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FACE OF FLANDERS

ALAN HOPE



100 exceptional women

This week marked the 100th anniversary of International Women's Day, celebrated last week by Senate in a gathering of 100 "exceptional women", brought together by federal equal opportunities minister Joëlle Milquet in the presence of Princess Mathilde.

Originally called International Working Women's Day, the event was first proposed in 1910 and first celebrated in Germany in 1911. In 1977, the date of 8 March was set by the United Nations General Assembly. The day is not an official holiday in Belgium, though it is marked in many other countries such as Armenia, Belarus and China, where it is a holiday for women only.

The roll call at the Senate gathering included women from every walk of life: theatre director Eva Bal, ballet choreographer Jeanne Brabants and singer Meera Fé; journalists Annelies Beck and Liesbeth Van Impe; sport stars Ingrid Berghmans and Vanina Ickx; academics Bea Cantillon and Marie Laga; sea captain Evelyne Rogge; union general secretary Anne Demelenne; and politicians aplenty: former Limburg governor Hilde Houben-Bertrand, former minister Miet Smet (pictured) and current ministers Inge Vervotte and Annemie Turtelboom.

There was also a strong presence of women who fight for the rights

of others: Naïma Charkaoui, director of the Minority Forum; Dominique De Vos, chair of the liaison committee for women; Katlijn Declercq, a campaigner against child abuse; missionary sister Jeanne Devos; and Marie-Claire Foblets, a specialist in asylum law at the Catholic University of Leuven.

"These are pioneers who have worked for greater equality in Belgian society, who have paved the way for others and who have fought against discrimination," Milquet said. "They are everyday heroines who deserve respect for what they do – women who have struggled to enter the male bastions, and women whose fight has been groundbreaking and decisive in bringing about renewal."

The meeting coincided with the approval of the proposal to impose a quota on the number of women on the boards of public companies (see p7), and the gathering included Unilever Belgium CEO Dominique Leroy, one of the few senior female company executives in the country, as well as Christine Darville, head of the legal service at the employer federation VBO. The new law was welcomed by Miet Smet, who in the 1990s was the country's first-ever equal opportunities minister. "If we had waited for it to happen naturally," she said, "it might have taken years."

News in brief

A proposal to allow anyone arrested by police the **presence of a lawyer** before questioning would cost about €25 million a year, according to federal justice minister Stefaan De Clerck, speaking in the Senate last week. The new law is being introduced to bring Belgium into line with a judgement of the European Court of Human Rights. About 80,000 people are arrested in the country every year.

A new stricter regime of **body searches introduced last week at Brussels Airport** has been suspended after complaints from airport staff, some of whom had to undergo the searches four or five times a day. Security staff also complained that the searches forced them to make contact with the subjects' private parts. A union representative said some airport workers had been on the point of resigning as a result of the measures.

Animal welfare workers last week **released 400 finches into the wild** after they had been seized from an illegal breeder in Wortegem-Petegem, East Flanders. The birds are thought to have been illegally trapped and fitted with counterfeit leg bands to allow them to be sold.

The passengers of a car that **fatally ran down an 18-year-old** in Torhout, West Flanders, in November 2009 have been given community service and fined for negligence by a court in Bruges, as well as being ordered to pay €3,500 compensation. The court ruled they had failed to alert emergency services after the accident,



for which the driver of the car has already been sentenced to three months suspended and 250 hours of community service.

Volunteers working with the homeless held a memorial service at Brussels city hall last week in remembrance of the **43 people who died on the streets** of the capital in 2010. Cancer and alcohol abuse were the main causes of death, and the dead had an average age of 49. According to a survey by the Higher Labour Institute, six out of 10 homeless people have no more than €15 a day to live on, half have no access to clean drinking water, and two-thirds have no access to washing facilities.

A court in Tongeren last week fined three Limburg men a total of €1,296,000 for the **sale of batteries illegally imported** from Greece. The men brought in nine pallets containing 259,200 batteries, which they then sold in packs of four for 90 cents each. They were also made to pay €129,600 in unpaid environmental tax.

Philosophy professor Philippe Van Parijs (*Flanders Today*, 9 February) has been awarded this year's **Ark Prize for the Free Word** for his "constructive and critical" work on social justice. Van Parijs teaches philosophy and political science at universities in Brussels, Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve, as well as Harvard, and has published widely. Previous winners of the annual Ark Prize include author Hugo Claus, women's rights advocate Marleen Temmerman and writer David Van Reybrouck.

The leader of the Islamist group Sharia4Belgium, Belkacem Fouad, is to be prosecuted for hate speech after giving an interview in which he called for **homosexuals to be put to death**, justice minister Stefaan De Clerck said last week in parliament.

Company bankruptcies went up again in February after falling for several months, according to consultancy Graydon. In a record for the month of February, 870 companies went bust, a rise of 7.6% compared to the same month last year. The increase was biggest in Brussels, where 16% more companies went bankrupt. In Flanders, however, the total fell by 2.1%.

The Utopolis cinema complex in Mechelen has opened its new 50-seat **VIP screening room**, with a separate entrance of its own, where patrons can enjoy tapas and sparkling wine during the film. The management of the complex said the accent was on comfort, and compared the new cinema to business class on an airplane.

Last year saw 269 cases of **poaching in Flanders**, Flemish environment minister Joke Schauvliege revealed last week, including more than 100 cases of hunting of protected species like finches, buzzards and falcons. The largest number of offences took place in West Flanders.

OFFSIDE

Chinese R Us

Every year since 1991, a group of academics at Harvard University in the US have awarded a series of IgNobel prize – parodies of the Nobel Prize – to "research that cannot, and should not, be reproduced". The prizes were later softened to "research that makes you laugh, and then makes you think".

The list of winners over the years has included a chemist who synthesised bright-blue jelly; a physicist who "proved" egg shells were made by cold fusion within the chicken; a biologist who described the effects of ale, garlic and sour cream on the appetite of leeches; and the Stalin World amusement park in Lithuania, which received the IgNobel Prize for peace in 2001.

This year, there's an entry from Belgium – a paper by Dirk Derhaeg, a professor at the Centre for Living Languages at the Catholic University of Leuven, which asks the question: "Do Chinese people really have trouble pronouncing the letter R?"

For those who can't bear to wait, let's jump straight to the conclusion: Chinese who grow up speaking Dutch have no trouble; those who learn Dutch as a foreign language will experience a problem, and may never manage it. More interestingly perhaps, some Chinese go further than they have to, pronouncing an R where there's an L, for example, as in "hotel"



© Shutterstock

which becomes "hoter"; or even where there isn't one, as in "hellor".

Most Asians have a similar problem, with the exception of the Malaysians, Filipinos and Indonesians – for reasons that are not entirely clear. The Japanese, meanwhile, have a tougher time with R than the Chinese do.

In the north of China, there's a sound like the French J in "jus" when it comes at the start of a word, but is pronounced more like an English R when it comes at the end. In the south, however, the R is spoken more like an L, which is probably where our misconception about Chinese pronunciation comes from.

FLANDERS TODAY

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Editor: Lisa Bradshaw

News editor: Alan Hope

Agenda: Sarah Crew, Robyn Boyle

Art director: Michel Didier

Prepress: Corelio P&P

Contributors: Rebecca Benoot, Robyn Boyle, Leo Cendrowicz, Sabine Clappaert, Claire Davenport, Courtney Davis, Stéphanie Duval, Anna Jenkinson, Katrien Lindemans, Marc Maes, Ian Mundell, Anja Otte, Monique Philips, Emma Portier Davis, Christophe Verbiest, Denzil Walton

General manager: Joske Plas

Publisher: Corelio Publishing NV

Editorial address:

Gossetlaan 30

1702 Groot-Bijgaarden

Tel.: 02.373.99.09 – Fax: 02.375.98.22

editorial@flanders-today.eu

Subscriptions:

subscriptions@flanders-today.euor sign up online at www.flanders-today.eu

Advertising: Evelyne Fregonese

02.373.83.57

advertising@flanders-today.eu

Verantwoordelijke uitgever:

Lisa Bradshaw



Bosses describe action as “short-sighted” as Leterme fights on

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Across the country, rail and postal services suffered little disruption, but public transport was severely hit. In Brussels, about half of metros were running in the morning, though the number went down as the day progressed. Trams and buses were operating at between one-quarter and one-half of capacity. In Flanders, De Lijn was disrupted everywhere but Limburg. Few buses turned out in Ghent and in West Flanders, and trams in Bruges, as well as the coast tram, were disrupted.

In Antwerp, unionists blocked shops on the main shopping street, the Meir, while asking for understanding from shopkeepers, whose staff they said would lose 2% of purchasing power each year as a result of the IPA. In Turnhout, the management of Philips set a bailiff on pickets accusing them of hindering them doing business. In Limburg, workers at a paper company and a packaging company laid down their tools for the day. At Audi in Brussels, management closed the plant, while mass gatherings took place on the Engelsplein in Leuven and in front of the National Bank in Brussels.

Unizo, the organisation that represents the self-employed, said the strike was barely felt within small- and medium-sized businesses, but that they nevertheless suffered some effect. The action was “short-sighted and exaggerated”, said Unizo director-general Karel Van Eetvelt.



Demonstrators gather outside the National Bank in Brussels

The organisation urged unions to get behind the original IPA, which their own representatives had helped negotiate.

Criticism also came from Dominique Michel, general-secretary of services sector federation Comeos. “They’re damaging the consumer and those who create jobs,” he said. “Instead of aiming their protest at businesses, they should

be protesting against the government if they don’t agree with the compromise proposal.” Prime minister Yves Leterme was unbending. “The government has agreed its own proposal for an inter-professional accord, and that’s what we’re going to implement,” he said. ♦

THE WEEK IN FIGURES



300,000

people are excused the legal obligation to wear a seatbelt in the car for medical reasons. The government intends to tighten up the system to reduce the numbers over time

3,300

cases of violence registered in 2010 involving personnel of Flemish public transport authority De Lijn. Staff could soon be issued with stab-proof vests

€1,375

fine for a man who threw a drinks can from a moving car before the noses of police in Heusden-Zolder, Limburg, in what the court described as “provocation”

2,872

tonnes of rubbish along the side of Flanders’ roads, enough to fill 360 garbage trucks, according to Flemish transport minister Hilde Crevits. Flemish Brabant accounted for the most with 843 tonnes

198,480

unemployed in Flanders, 14,000 fewer than a year ago. The Brussels region counted 106,203, or a rate of 20.8%

Police chief resigns over luxury trip

The commissioner-general of the federal police, Fernand Koekelberg, resigned at the weekend following controversy over a trip he organised to Qatar to lobby for a post with Interpol. The cost of the trip was estimated at €92,000.

Koekelberg travelled to Qatar at the head of a six-person delegation at the end of last year in order to present his candidature for a post as vice-president of Interpol, the international police organisation. In the event, the job went to a French candidate.

Last month the P Committee, which oversees police affairs, received an anonymous letter alleging that Sylvie Ricour, one of Koekelberg’s secretaries, had made private purchases using police funds. According to the letter,

Ricour had bought four suitcases from luxury goods store Delvaux, each costing €400.

Koekelberg admitted buying the suitcases, but argued they were for the use of any member of the commissariat-general who required to travel. The P Committee investigated and found there had been no irregularity. Nevertheless, the admission was a concern among many police officers, who struggle daily with a lack of resources, manpower and overtime as a result of tight police budgets.

Then N-VA parliamentarian Ben Weyts brought forward a circular that Koekelberg had sent to all police departments, calling for tight spending controls and no spending at all unless absolutely necessary. The news was

leaked to Weyts that the entire trip, including flights in business class, hotels for six people, a reception for 800 guests and “business gifts” to hand out to those attending, had come to at least €92,000.

Federal interior minister Annemie Turtelboom ordered the P Committee to re-examine the facts of the trip and look into the general accounting of the commissariat-general. Koekelberg, however, took the matter into his own hands on 6 March, and tendered his resignation, speaking of “repeated attacks” over the last four years, as well as “assaults” on his honour that had a detrimental effect on the image of the police. ♦

New measures on water

The Flemish government last week agreed two administrative measures to improve the quality of drinking water and improve the system of ground water assessment.

The first measure sets up a system of regulators within the environment and the public health ministries to enforce the agreements on drinking water quality reached between the Flemish Environment Agency, the Flemish Health Care Agency and water providers. The measure also introduces a level of inspection officials who will have mandatory access to necessary buildings and other installations.

The second measure allows issuers of planning licences – in most cases the municipality – to refuse to grant building permission in flood-risk areas. The Flemish government has already ordered a new evaluation of the state of the region’s groundwater, following the flooding that last November. ♦



Former minister Marc Eyskens (left) and comic-strip artist Marc Sleen raise a glass of Nero Beer, a new brew dedicated to Sleen’s eternal cartoon hero. Beer is important to Nero: In the first-ever strip, a detective is investigating a sinister criminal who is bending Belgians to his will using a special beer, and later Nero travels to Rwanda, discovers a beer tree and becomes fabulously rich. The Nero beer is described as silky and subtle with a flavour of grapefruit and a strong aroma of hops. It’s available at the Marc Sleen Museum in Brussels.

→ www.marc-sleen.be

FIFTH COLUMN

Majority or opposition?

When there is a federal government (remember that time?), parliament does two things: it ratifies government decisions, and it legislates. Ratification happens by the governing majority. So does legislating, although every so often there is an alternative majority, when the government parties “agree to disagree”.

With no government, there is very little to ratify. This means parliament can make laws as it pleases, but with what majority? With nine parties still in the running for government, every combination becomes possible, with unpredictable outcomes.

With 27 seats, N-VA is the largest group in federal parliament, but with a good number of inexperienced MPs, it has yet to master the game. The past couple of weeks, N-VA has lost votes on issues such as banking secrecy, climate measures and quota for women on boards. This is obviously not what N-VA expected. Shortly before the vote on banking secrecy, its speaker Jan Jambon even threatened to boycott the ultimate attempt at shaping a federal government if the vote did not go his way.

N-VA is finding it hard to decide whether it wants to be a majority or an opposition party. Being in the majority requires some discipline, not just in voting behaviour in parliament, but also in holding back criticism. This goes against N-VA’s rebel nature. Being an opposition party means you can shout whatever you like – but you are left without any real decision power. This last part sits uneasy with N-VA, too, as prove Jambon’s spontaneous outburst and a recent demand to be heard in the long-term budget talks.

This leads some, including former prime minister Guy Verhofstadt (Open VLD), to the conclusion that forming a government with N-VA is just not possible. It definitely makes the job of CD&V president Wouter Beke, whom the king appointed as yet another mediator to form a federal government, a lot harder.

In the background there is some rivalry between CD&V and N-VA, who have acted as allies so far, to become the definitive number one party in Flanders. CD&V traditionally has strong grassroots, while N-VA depends more on the whims of the electorate. The 2012 local elections might reverse the roles, with N-VA’s Bart De Wever possibly taking over city hall in Antwerp. It is therefore likely that N-VA might stick to this attitude, halfway between majority and opposition, for yet another long year.



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Prometheus and me

Theatre as simple as a sane world view

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But, as Dionysos mocks in naked frenzy, Athena teeters in stilettos, and Pandora sings “come on baby light my fire”, these could be the false gods of the present – Mammon, the Economy – extinguishing our life-force with massive canisters of CO2 and transforming us into amenable materialistic clones.

Fabre’s re-visitation of the Prometheus theme, performed in English, was prompted by recent events: “Over the last couple of years, I’ve kept saying to myself that we’re living in some sort of victims’ society,” says Fabre (*pictured on cover*). “Politicians are saying ‘I’d like to change things, but I can’t.’ Where are our contemporary heroes? Then I was looking at a photo of a group of people after the 9/11 catastrophe, and I asked myself ‘What is a hero? What do we need heroes for?’”

Prometheus, it occurred to him, was a hero. “He gave us fire. It’s the spark of life, but it’s not allowed in most places. So it’s strange that our society, by refusing fire, is refusing risk, refusing passion, refusing a belief in art and beauty. Those are the questions I was asking myself during this production.”

“When the visual arts are only under the control of the brain, they’re not interesting anymore”

In spite of the universality of his imagery, Fabre’s recent work speaks more directly of his social criticism. His 2009 production *Orgy of Tolerance* is, he says “one of the few pieces I’ve made that is direct, and its action is a reaction to the extreme right-wing mentality gaining ground again, and the way people deal with consumption. It was a necessity. I live in Antwerp where we have the Vlaams Belang. Sometimes as an artist I want to be really clear and to make them understand what colour my voice is. It depends on my life at the moment. I always feel the urge to create according to what I’m feeling. It’s an ongoing process of thinking and trying and failing and taking

risks and also not giving the galleries or museums or producers what they expect of me.”

No brain without body

Fabre, 52, is thoughtful, erudite and has an ironic, self-deprecating sense of humour. But he’s often regarded as the *enfant terrible* of European theatre, and critics will no doubt pounce on the conclusion in *Prometheus* that the hero we need is the “authentic creative being” – the artist, bound by mundane constraints, yet compelled to bestow his creative fire on a humanity crushed by everyday banality. When Prometheus cries out that he will continue to resist, this will be taken as a statement direct from Fabre himself.

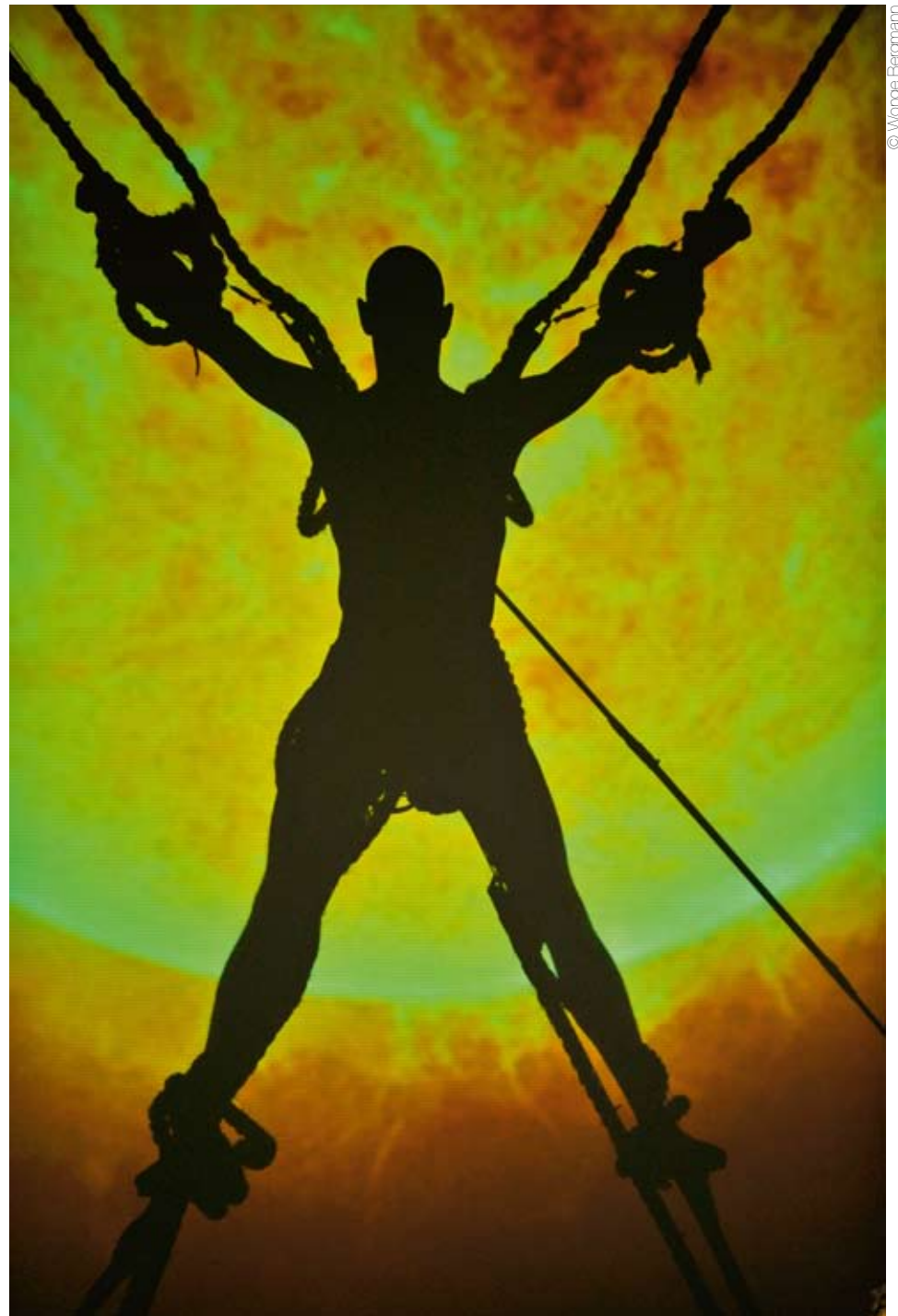
However, while the artist acknowledges his need to retreat and be a hermit from time to time, he is far from the solitary genius. His performance work is created collaboratively through a long process of research and improvisation with his magnificent company of performers, Troubleyn. “I’m very proud of them,” he beams. “I have the best actors and dancers in the world.” It’s an interaction, he insists, in which they all learn from each other.

“The process is like a playful science,” Fabre continues. “I’m very visceral, so when I’m working, sometimes I just trust the knowledge in my body and start doing things, and when I’m finished, it’s almost as if the work is teaching me.”

But the body is also the brain, he notes. “When I’m thinking, I become comical, and when I’m feeling, I become tragic; this duality is crucial. When the visual arts are only under the control of the brain, they’re not interesting anymore.”

There’s also something mediaeval about Fabre’s work, the spirit of the carnivalesque, the topsy-turvy abandon when kings swap places with fools, man merges with beast, and society’s sacred cows are led to the slaughter, braying like asses. Beneath the irony, there’s tenderness and a deep humanity, a world-view far more sane than what passes for morality in our present-day realities.

“I was influenced by the richness of Flemish culture – the Primitives, Hieronymus Bosch – and I also read the writings of Hildegard von Bingen, the mystics of the period. I started to think about the relationship between heaven and earth and the spiritual relationship between life



© Wenge Bergmann

Prometheus-Landscape II is in Brussels this month, then moves to Ghent in May after an international tour

and death.” But, he’s quick to add, “I’m a visceral person. I research the body, bodily fluids, to celebrate the beauty of the human body.”

Excavating cultural memories

Prometheus evoked another image, from another mystic – William Blake. From the English poet’s “The Garden of Love”: “And priests in black gowns were walking their rounds, And binding with briars my joys and desires”. This is the way Fabre’s oeuvre works – through imagery and shared allusions that delve into our cultural memory.

“I re-install images,” says Fabre. “I dust

down images that we’ve forgotten the meaning of. There’s a strong cross-over between the visceral and the mental. The brain is the most important part of the body – the sexiest – but it is an organ of the body, and I also believe that the body is a sort of memory and important material to work with, to research. My work is an investigation into the mind and the body and bringing the two together. I want a fusion between the aesthetical and the ethical.”

As a final word from Fabre, the ironic Flemish visionary and, above all, the servant of beauty: “I get fire from some people, and I like to give it back, too.” ♦

→ www.troubleyn.be

Jan Fabre, in 10 parts

- 1. 1958** Born in Antwerp to a Flemish Communist father and a French-speaking mother from a rich, Catholic family: “a marriage of images and words”. Studied at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Antwerp
- 2. 1975** Started writing. First solo pieces brought instant notoriety for unconventional staging (and burning the audience’s bank notes)
- 3. 1982** *This is Theatre Like It Was To Be Expected and Foreseen*, the spark that galvanised the Flemish theatre establishment
- 4. 1984** *The Power of Theatre Madness* commissioned for the Venice Biennale
- 5. 1989** *The Crying Body* is the subject of debate in the Belgian parliament
- 6. 1996** *The Emperor of Loss*, a witty monologue for Flemish actor Dirk Roefthoofd. Fabre also wrote *The King of Plagiarism* (2005) and *The Servant of Beauty* (2010) for Roefthoofd
- 7. 2003** *The Angel of Death*, created for the magnificent Croatian actress Ivana Jozí. *Another Sleepy Dusty Delta Day* (2008) was also written for her
- 8. 2005** Artistic Associate at the Avignon Festival, precipitated a cultural ruckus among French critics by programming the work of foreign directors and choreographers exploring the body, rather than French works that “were created only for the ear”. It was a controversy that generated volumes and blew a breath of fresh air into an increasingly stagnant tradition. The same year, Fabre choreographed *Quando L’Uomo Principale è una Donna*, a solo piece for a dancer slithering with naked abandon around a stage covered in olive oil, and *A History of Tears*, his first creation as cultural ambassador for the UNESCO Institute for Water Education
- 9. 2008** *The Angel of Metamorphosis*, his sculptures in the Louvre “in conversation” with the Flemish and Dutch Schools. It was the first – and so far only – solo exhibition for a living artist at the Louvre
- 10. 2009** *Orgy of Tolerance*, deliciously satirical, was researched using Monty Python sketches. The same year, *From the Cellar to the Attic - From the Feet to the Brain* filled a five-story building at the 53rd Venice Biennale

Prometheus-Landscape II

16-19 March, 19.00/20.30

Kaaitheater

Saintelettesquare 20, Brussels

→ www.kaaitheater.be

Performance is in English, with Dutch and French surtitles

Finger in the wind

Belwind CEO Frank Coenen talks climate change, scoffs at wind critics and questions government priorities

EMMA PORTIER DAVIS

At 48, Frank Coenen is on the young side to be a chief executive, but within the next couple of years, he hopes to be sitting astride a company with assets of up to €1.8 billion. Sipping a beer in a Brussels cafe, the wind farm founder explains how Zeebrugge-based Belwind, despite the financial crisis, has become a rising star on the Belgian energy scene – and why there is a future in off-shore wind.

FT: What made you start up Belwind?

FC: In 2005, I was contacted by foreign investors who wanted to know about investment opportunities in Belgium in the off-shore wind industry. Energy consulting group 3E told them they could advise on location, but for strategy, business plan and politics, 3E told them to come to me. There is not one other sector where there is so much investment as in off-shore wind. In 2005, when I had these first discussions, I realised what potential there is.

There are many critics of offshore wind. What makes you so convinced about the technology?

At this moment, offshore wind is the only – and I repeat – the *only* answer to produce electricity in quantities that are sufficient to play a role in the western European energy world. To give you an idea, Belwind I, Belwind II and Eldepasco [the three projects that bring off-shore wind to the Belgian coast, see box] will together represent a power plant of 546 megawatts. That's a real power plant. And this power plant is producing electricity from a free source that will always be available: wind.

How will the plan to construct a North Sea grid that would interconnect wind farms from nine countries assist energy developers?

If you look at connections between certain countries, it's already happening. The cable between Belgium and the UK is already under development. However, the full off-shore grid, an integrated grid, is a dream and is still far away – maybe 15 or 20 years away. It's nice to start creating policies, but why not support what is actually happening today? I'm a little bit critical of this. Today we need support to be able to build power plants, and we do not have this support but see our policymakers busy with dreams of the future.

What's your view on alternative clean-power technologies, such as carbon capture and storage and nuclear?

Carbon storage is just non-existent. We are not there yet. It is not competitive at a price or a technology level. As for nuclear, of course many shout that all nuclear power plants should close tomorrow. I would never say such a thing because we cannot do it. We have uranium for what, the next 70 years or so? And then we will have to take care of these plants for the next 50,000 years. It is a power source with which, in the end, we must stop working. It is too dangerous – it really is – it is too contaminating, and the raw materials are too scarce to be used as an energy source.

Off-shore wind is capable of producing a lot of electricity, and it is going to become cheaper. The source is free, and it's eternal. Is it expensive now? I tell you, no. It's €160 per megawatt with current technology. In more than half of the world, electricity costs are above that level. People in developing countries with nuclear power plants pay that already, and they are totally dependent on the evolution of oil and gas prices. We have to invest in new technologies and develop a portfolio of them. Off-shore wind power is, at this moment, the most promising. All the rest are, again, dreams for the future.



But why do you care? In 70 years, we'll be dead anyway. I am a responsible entrepreneur. I'm not going to say we can live without nuclear energy today, and I am not saying wind will provide electricity for everything. But I want to put my energy and efforts into something that is doing something for the future. If I were to develop the new generation of coal-fired power plants....yeah, fantastic [sarcastically gives a thumbs up]. What would I have done? The combustion of this scarce energy source? Not in my time.

We are investing pragmatically in off-shore wind because that energy source is going to produce something like 20% percent of our electricity needs in a very efficient way. Maybe 30% percent. We will be independent from the threat of scarce energy sources. Many, many wars are fought over these energy sources.

What about those who say off-shore wind is not reliable?

[laughs] Thank you for this question because it is one of the biggest lies in the world that if the wind goes down, the lights go out. I'll tell you another story. Belwind has 55 turbines. If one turbine needs repaired, the other turbines remain working, and the power plant as a whole never fails. And other power plants do fail, and they are also stopped for maintenance. Do you see the lights going out then? All grid systems are organised with 'nominations'; we have to estimate how much we can produce, which we can predict. If there is no wind, then we predict nil, exactly as any other power plant will do if it needs to close for maintenance.

Doesn't off-shore wind have a negative impact on birds and other sea life?

If a bird sees a wind turbine, it flies to the left or to the right of it, just like they do with buildings or cars. As for the cables on the seabed, there are hundreds of thousands of kilometres of cables on the seabed for transferring data. Nobody asks questions about those. Stop driving cars, and you'll save the lives of more animals that are killed on the roads.

How do you see yourself in relation to Belwind over the next five years?

I created Belwind, then I was allowed to manage the engineering team and the finance team and the construction, and now I've been asked to manage the operations. I have been lucky to see all the phases of the power plant. So how do I see myself? Well, I will be CEO of a 546 MW power plant. I know with my company, InControl SA, we will be involved in the development of wind farms elsewhere in France, the UK and Germany and probably also in Spain and Greece. We have the know-how, and we can help build up elsewhere.

What do you do with your time when you're not running the company?

Time is lacking. My family lives in Limburg, but Belwind's headquarters needed to be at the coast. If you ask me what do I do, I work. In the weekends I travel to Limburg, or my family comes here. I played golf, but I stopped. For these kinds of projects you need focus, 100% focus. ♦

THE PROJECTS

Belwind (phase I)

Location: Bligh Bank (46 to 52 km off the coast of Zeebrugge)
Megawatts: 330
Financing: €650 million
Constructed: Sept 2009 to Dec 2010

Belwind (phase II)

Location: Bligh Bank
Megawatts: 165
Finance: €650 million
Construction: 2012

Eldepasco

Location: Bank Zonder Naam (Bank Without a Name)
37 km off the coast of Zeebrugge
Megawatts: 216
Finance: €850 million
Construction: 2012

Quota for women directors approved

Within seven years, 30% of boards in Belgium must be made up of women

ALAN HOPE

Women must make up 30% of the directors on the boards of government enterprises and publicly quoted companies or face tough penalties, the Commercial Law Committee of the federal parliament voted last week. The measure, which passed by nine votes to eight, will be endorsed by the full parliament later this month. The measure is supported by Christian democrats, greens and socialists on both sides of the language border. The main opposition comes from liberals.

At present, women occupy 8.5% of the seats on company boards, about one in 12. According to one survey, 89% of companies think a mix of men and women on the board would be "enriching" for the firm. At the same time, however, 81% are opposed to quotas. Two-thirds of small- and medium-sized companies (SME) already have one or more women on their boards, and a woman chairs at about one company in four.

Government enterprises like bpost and Belgacom will come into line next year, before the private sector: "It's best if the government sets a good example," said Bruno Tuybens, a socialist member of the committee. Large- and medium-sized companies will be allowed a transition period of five years. If by the sixth year one-third of the board is not composed of women, any subsequent nomination will be considered void. And if the situation is not remedied by the following year, every decision of the unlawfully composed board will also

be void. For small businesses, the transition period lasts seven years. Companies with no public shares are not affected. During the transition periods, all companies are required to detail efforts made towards the legal goal in their annual reports. "There's more than enough time for businesses to come into line," said Tuybens. "If companies still can't meet the legal requirements after the transition period, we have to be tough."

"Insulting"

N-VA member of parliament Zuhair Demir described the quota as "insulting": "A quota gives the impression that we can't make our own way," she said. "Clearly we need help from above." CD&V counterpart Leen Dierick disagreed: "A quota is the only way to tackle the problem of the under-representation of women," she said.

Employers' federation VBO said the new measure demonstrated a lack of confidence in the business world. The VOB has called on its members to meet the 30% target voluntarily within seven years but considers a law on quotas to be too rigid.

Quotas for women directors already exist in France, Spain and Norway, and are under discussion in the Netherlands, Italy and Germany, where Chancellor Angela Merkel has given businesses a last chance to remedy what she described as "a real scandal" before legal quotas are imposed.



Dominique Leroy, CEO of Unilever Belgium, one of the few top female executives in the country

At EU level, too, an ultimatum is in force: Commissioner for fundamental rights Viviane Reding has promised quotas if there is no substantial improvement in the situation by 2012. Last week she invited companies to sign a pledge to reach a target of 30% women by 2015, and 40% by 2020, with signatories to be made public on the EU website. ♦

Insurance policies dearer

The cost of insurances could go up at the end of next year by as much as 10%, after a ruling by the European Court of Justice (ECJ) in Luxembourg that strikes down any discrimination between men and women.

At present, women generally pay less for the same insurance policies because they are a better actuarial prospect: women are involved in fewer road accidents, for example, and on average live longer.

In 2008, the EU ordered insurance companies to no longer calculate premiums on the basis of gender, but allowed a derogation for life assurance, which Belgium accepted under pressure from the industry. However, the consumer organisation Test-Aankoop brought a complaint to the constitutional court in Belgium, which referred to the ECJ for an opinion. That court handed down its ruling last week.

The insurance industry association Assuralia called the ruling "incomprehensible" and said it ignored the public's interest in making sure insurance premiums were related to risk factors – of which gender is one. "Blindly striving after absolute equality will lead to more expensive insurance for both men and women," said managing director Philippe Colle. "Who does that benefit?"

Belgium has insisted on unisex premiums in car insurance since 2007, Assuralia said, with the result that young women now pay more than they would if their risk was accounted correctly. The same is now likely to happen to life assurance, the association said. Gender is second only to age as a determining risk factor for life insurance.

"To the shame of those who thought to represent the interests of the consumer with their court case, the consumer will lose out by this ruling," Colle said.

The Institute for Equality between Men and Women, meanwhile, called the ruling "a remarkable step forward towards equality". The institute said about 14% of all complaints it received in 2010 of inequality were related to discrimination in the cost of insurance. ♦

Rail authority lists 128 improvements

Rail authority NMBS and its infrastructure division Infrabel last week issued a list of 128 suggestions for improving punctuality on the railways (see *Flanders Today*, 23 February). The majority of the measures are matters of internal organisation, such as an improvement in communication between the different services. A train delay caused by infrastructure problems (Infrabel) is often communicated late or not at all to station masters (NMBS), leaving passengers without information. Other questions include better training for staff and the creation of a culture of punctuality.

In more concrete terms, the authority promises a speedier response to breakdowns and disruption caused by, for example, copper thieves who bring down power lines. Measures include enlarging the existing rapid-response team and increasing service personnel during bad weather periods. That includes clearing railway lines of fallen



New respect for the station clock?

leaves to tackling phenomena that can cause serious delays.

One measure is a direct result of the special parliamentary commission on rail safety: the creation of "punctuality managers" whose job will be to see that all measures are implemented.

The NMBS has set itself a target of 90% of trains on time by 2015, which, according to a study by consultants Arthur D Little will cost €563 million. The official figure for trains on time stands at 85.7%, though that figure is disputed as it doesn't include trains that are less than six minutes late, for example. ♦

Jobs news

Volvo in Ghent is looking for 400 extra workers to cope with increased production expected in May of the S60 and XC60 models. The jobs are mainly production workers, maintenance technicians and engineers.

Companies in the **Ghent harbour** area announced around 1,000 vacancies at a recent jobs fair, including everything from electricians to forklift drivers, welders to cleaners, warehouse staff to ferry operators. ♦

THE WEEK IN BUSINESS

Autos • Sales

February new cars registrations increased nearly 12% to 53,135, reflecting a one-year growth trend in sales. Sales of light vans and industrial vehicles surged 33%, while registrations of new trucks jumped 95% in the wake of Brussels' European Motor Show. Market leader in February was Renault, followed by Volkswagen and Peugeot.

Banking • Equiduct

The Equiduct equities trading platform, part of the Berlin Stock Exchange, is to be available locally through the Brussels-based Keytrade on-line banking system from June this year. The move allows traders and individuals to significantly reduce their equities trading costs.

Biotech • Tigenix

Leuven-based biotechnology company Tigenix, specialised in the local treatment of damaged and osteo-arthritis joints, is acquiring the Spanish Cellerix pharmaceutical group for €58 million. The move will allow Tigenix to become a leading European player in cellular therapy and regenerative medicine.

Energy • Aspiravi

Vlaamse Energie Holding (VEH) is investing up to €10 million in green energy producer Aspiravi, based in Harelbeke, West Flanders.

Metals • Floridienne

Brussels-based holding company Floridienne has sold its 43% stake in the Belgian MCP specialised metals-based chemical company to the Canadian 5N Plus group for some €93 million. MCP Group is a major producer of bismuth, indium, gallium and selenium.

Outsourcing • Valesta

Mechelen-based outsourcing company Valesta, specialised in supplying highly qualified staff to the pharmaceuticals industry, has been taken over by the US On Assignment recruitment company for some €13 million.

Plastics • Solvay

Chemicals and plastics group Solvay, headquartered in Brussels, is to invest €26 million in its French Tavaux production unit to increase production of its fluoropolymer Solef by 50% to meet demand. The additional capacity is expected to come on stream in the second half of 2012.

Supermarkets • Delhaize

Delhaize is expanding its foothold in south-east Europe with the €930 million acquisition of Serbia's Delta Maxi supermarket group. With some 450 stores and 15,000 employees in Serbia, Bulgaria, Bosnia, Montenegro and Albania, Delta Maxi is the area's largest retailer. Delhaize was already a major operator in Greece with its Alfa Beta supermarket chain and in Romania where it owns the Mega Image group.

The athletics of time

Retrospective of video artist David Claerbout at Wiels

CHRISTOPHE VERBIEST

Brussels art centre Wiels follows up their highly successful overview of the work of Francis Alÿs with yet another retrospective of an internationally praised Flemish video artist, David Claerbout. But their work couldn't be more different.

Kortrijk-born Claerbout, who was trained as a painter, is a singular voice in the world of video art and installations. His work seems to be freezing time, or stretching it, a 21st-century counterpart of 19th-century photographer and cinema pioneer Edward Muybridge, famous for his high-speed photographs of movement.

The Time That Remains documents how Claerbout has slowly shifted focus the past 15 years, and how he keeps reinventing himself. In his oldest works, a fixed camera registers the action. In "Cat and Bird in Peace" (1996), a cat on the extreme left and a canary on the right border of the screen are just sitting, almost neglecting each other. On the first screen of "American Car" (2004), the camera is focussed on the back of two people in a car, rain pouring outside. On a second screen (at first hidden by the first one), we see the car as a dot in vast landscape after the rain.

Or take "Kindergarten Antonio Sant'Elia 1932" (1998), for which Claerbout blew life into an old photo from the 1930s: the children are still frozen in time, but the wind quietly moves the two trees.

In a second group of works, Claerbout captures slow movements. In the amazing, almost hypnotising "Long Goodbye" (2007), a woman exits a mansion, then pours a drink and, upon

"discovering" the camera, waves to it. It's shot in one extremely sluggish backward camera movement, slowly revealing the mansion. What makes it really unsettling is the very quick movement of the shadow over the house, as if this one shot covers a whole day.

Almost as amazing is "The American Room" (2009- 2010): A small group of people are attending a *Lieder* concert. The camera moves through the room, but the characters are frozen, as if lifelike mannequins. Or as if a 3D photo has been made of the action, and the camera now moves through that photo. Where in "Long Goodbye", Claerbout squeezes time, in "The American Room", he stretches one moment to its extreme – something he also does in "Dancing Couples (after: Couples at square dance, McIntosh County, Oklahoma, 1939 or 1940)".

Since "Bordeaux Piece" (2004) Claerbout, 41, is also more and more influenced by narrative cinema. The piece, featuring Flemish actor Josse De Pauw, is an ingenious combination of 70 shots that have, with mathematical precision, been filmed over and over again over the course of a month.

But the narrative side is really fully explored in two of the exhibition's best pieces. "Riverside" (2009) is a two-screen installation in which a woman, on the left screen, and a man, on the right, wander through the same valley, although not at the same moment.

And in the flat-out brilliant "Sunrise" (2009) we see, while the day is slowly dawning, a maid arriving at a modern house and preparing it



David Claerbout's "The Algiers' Sections of a Happy Moment", 2008

for the day that will follow. Biking from the house, her face is caught in the celestial first rays of sunlight. She smiles for the first time while classical music underlines this glorious moment, even more stressed by the transition of gray tones to colours.

There's mystery in all of Claerbout's work – from the cat not eating the canary to the possibly intertwined lives in "Riverside" – but mostly they are intriguingly filmed constructions that, while difficult not to admire, don't evoke big emotions. With "Sunrise", he has made his first video with a strong, emotional impact. It's not a coincidence that he never has come closer to cinema, including, unusual for him, non-diegetic sound. I mean, project "Sunrise" in a cinema, and everyone will say it's an amazing short film.

I'm wondering if his next step shouldn't be making a feature film, like another internationally praised Flemish video artist, Nicolas Provost, has just done. Or will Claerbout settle for the safety of the art world, in which he has secured a steady position as, and rightfully so, one of the most innovative video artists of his time. Your guess is as good as mine, but don't forget: only if you've seen *The Time That Remains* are you allowed to guess. ♦

The Time That Remains

Until 15 May

Wiels, Van Volxemlaan 354
Brusselss

➔ www.wiels.org

Putting the past onstage • Congolese choreographer Faustin Linyekula comes back to Brussels

JACQUELINE FLETCHER



After his visit as part of KVS' Congo Festival last spring, choreographer Faustin Linyekula makes a welcome return to Brussels this week, with his acclaimed *Pour en finir avec Bérénice* (*To Have Done with Bérénice*).

Linyekula is a remarkably versatile theatre artist, crossing disciplines and cultural boundaries with ease to create performances as scintillating as they are profound. While it pulsates with movement and engages with original images, he makes no bones about the political thrust of his work and the post-colonial attitudes that give it shape.

Born in the former Belgian Congo in 1974 when the West's puppet dictator Mubuto had consolidated his regime and renamed it Zaire, Linyekula grew up in a country betrayed by the international community. Just at the moment when multi-party elections seemed to be offering a road to democracy, the country became engulfed in a devastating civil war.

Linyekula cites his childhood experiences and his multilingual, multicultural background as the source of his attitude to his work. He learned to question everything, and, throughout the last decade, he has developed a style that passes those questions on. We might leave the auditorium after a Linyekula performance galvanised by the sheer poetry of it all, but weeks later an image or a line of text can tap you on the shoulder and require attention. Through music, movement and poetry, Linyekula gives a voice to the many individuals who have been trapped in history's onward march. He presented two works in Brussels last year: In *More, More, More...Future*, he put a contemporary Ndombolo band together with dance and lyrical texts that spoke volumes about the triumph of the human spirit in the face of disease, terror and famine.

Dialogue Series iii: Dinazord was a more sober affair, bringing together actors, dancers and the Congolese counter-tenor Serge Kakudji with video and poetic texts by Richard Kabako (who died

of plague during the insurgencies) and Antoine Vumilia Muhindo (a political prisoner). It was an expression of grief at lost potential, the struggle for survival and comprehension, leaving one with a huge, multifaceted question. Why?

Linyekula started training in theatre at the French Cultural Centre in Kinshasa before continuing his studies in theatre and literature in Kisangani. When the universities were closed down by the regime, he moved on to the University of Nairobi. He founded Kenya's first contemporary dance company and, after residencies in Europe, he returned to Kisangani in 2001 to create Kabako, a centre for multidisciplinary education and creation in the performing arts.

Since then his work has been performed at prestigious festivals: Tanzwochen in Vienna, Avignon, Dance Umbrella in London, the Kunstenfestivaldesarts in Brussels. *Pour en finir avec Bérénice*, based on Racine's classic, was commissioned by the 2010 Avignon Festival and created in the Studio Theatre of the Comédie-Française, bringing together actors from that most illustrious of theatre institutions with Linyekula's own collaborators in the DRC. Linyekula is both the piece's director and one of its actors.

Praised by the press for its treatment of a universal theme in a contemporary context, *Bérénice* is a new departure for one of the most exciting young practitioners on the international stage. ♦

Pour en finir avec Bérénice

16-19 March

KVS, Lakensestraat 146
Brussels

➔ www.kvs.be

A desire to disappearing

The Bony King of Nowhere releases his second album

CHRISTOPHE VERBIEST

The Bony King Of Nowhere is the stage name of musician Bram Vanparys, a slender Ghent denizen, who will turn 25 next week. Two years after his debut *Alas, My Love*, he's just released his second album, *Eleonore*, a fine collection of folk pop. His curious nom de plume comes from the Radiohead song "There There".

"Five years ago, when I chose it, the naivety of the name fit me perfectly," he says. "That's not the case anymore. But it wouldn't be wise, of course, to change it."

And the name has another disadvantage. "I am The Bony King; it's not a band, as a lot of people seem to think." But, he quickly adds, "I am always working with the same people. They're friends, not hirelings."

Though popular in the Flemish alt-rock scene, Vanparys is a down-to-earth guy. "I don't see my music as art or anything special," he says. "That's why I put a tedious picture of myself on the cover. I have no pretension at all with my music." He chuckles. "I just like doing it; it's a necessity even. But that's where it stops."

But, surely, he knows that his songs affect people. "This might sound weird or apathetic, but that's not the reason why I make music. Don't get me wrong – knowing that a song of mine occupies a special place in someone's life is the biggest compliment I can get. But I don't make music *for* others. I write the songs without pondering about what I'm doing. And subsequently, they exist."

The lyrics of three songs are printed in the CD's liner notes. "They're not necessarily my favourite songs, but I found it important that everyone could follow what I'm singing in those songs. Although now I regret not putting all the lyrics in there."

These three songs deal with, respectively, a father, a lover and a mother. In its entirety, *Eleonore* breathes domesticity, without (mind you!) being corny. The songs radiate a warm lustre.

"I like being home," Vanparys acknowledges. "It's the place where I can be alone and, in all tranquillity, can write my songs. As a songwriter, I get comments constantly – at concerts but also when I'm just walking down the street. I like that, but it also increases the need to seclude myself sometimes."

After finishing *Eleonore* half a year ago, Vanparys started working on the soundtrack for *Les géants*, a new film by Walloon director Bouli Lanners. The singer-songwriter stayed on the set for a week. "The shooting took place on the banks of a river in the Ardennes, and the environment strongly



© Olo Jansse

inspired me," he says. "I lingered and wrote some music on the spot: a few songs and short instrumental pieces."

Writing the latter is not as big a change as it might seem. "I write loads and loads of small sketches; they're done in an hour or so, but I almost never record them."

He's a quick writer, he confirms. "It's easy to come up with a nice riff. A song, that's something different." He immediately corrects himself. "It isn't that difficult at all. Writing a *good* song is. I keep one out of 15 songs, I guess. The rest aren't good enough." Which mean he must be writing a handful of songs every week? "Most weeks, I do," he confirms as if it's nothing out of the ordinary.

So it's no surprise that he already knows what his third album will be like. "Sparsely arranged," he confirms, "three guitars and one voice. No other instruments, no backing vocals. This way the narrative side of the songs is strongly stressed."

But let's first enjoy *Eleonore*. ♦

12 March, 20.00

Rataplan
27 Wijnegemstraat, Antwerp

13 March, 19.00

Cactus Club@MaZ
Magdalenastraat 27, Bruges

For more dates, check the website

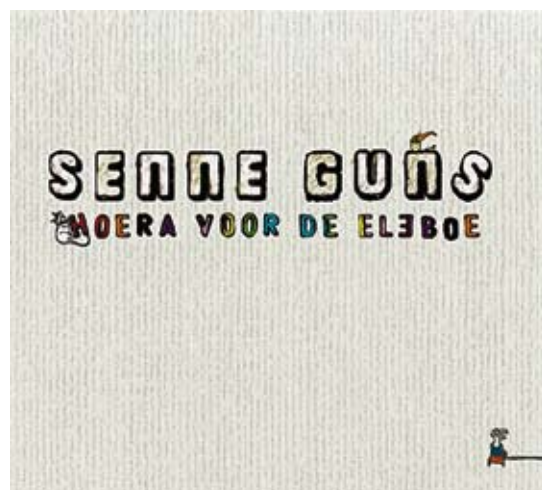
➡ www.myspace.com/thebonyking

New music

Senne Guns

Hoera voor de eleboe

No, I have no idea what an *eleboe* is either. The animal appeared, complete with name, in a dream to Senne Guns. Ghent man Guns, who plays keyboards in post-rock band tomàn, lends his name to a new band, Senne Guns. Hey, who said life should be easy? *Hoera voor de eleboe* (*Hurray For the Eleboe*) is their intriguing debut, halfway Grandaddy and The Flaming Lips, with lyrics ranging from tongue-in-cheek ("Zovele mooie vrouwen"/"So Many Pretty Women") to melancholic ("De nagelstudio"/"The Nail Studio"). In an era where most new Flemish bands that choose for their mother tongue sing it in one of the many dialects from the region, it's good to hear someone using just plain Dutch. And it's even more exceptional to combine it with this spacey pop music. But it works. A golden combination.



Pasmans

Dwaallicht

Last year, Warre Borgmans turned Willem Elsschot's famous novella *Het Dwaallicht* (*Will o' the Wisp*) into a highly praised monologue. He was accompanied by a five-piece band centred around the versatile Rudy Trouvé. Simultaneous with a new series of performances, the soundtrack has released. The band named itself after a character in the book, Pasmans. *Dwaallicht* is a motley collection of songs and a few instrumentals, from doo-wop via swing to blues in the vein of Tom Waits. Sometimes a bit gloomy, but mostly heartfelt.

Anton Walgrave

As You Are

Singer-songwriter or rock musician: His whole career, Anton Walgrave has been hesitating between these two poles. Never has this tension has been more enamouring than on his fifth and most mature album, *As You Are*. He flirts with insanity ("Nobody Moves"), performs an acoustic haunting piece of angst ("Love Is Blindness"), delivers folk pop with a beautiful melody ("All You Have to Do") and revisits new wave ("As You Are" with a machine-gun bass line). I haven't been his biggest aficionado in the past, but this time I'm in. (CV)

VENUE

DEMO[©]
WWW.DEMOCRAZY.BE
Muziekclub Gent

Democracy

Ghent

Twenty years ago, you basically had two rock venues in Ghent. The concert room of Vooruit with its then lousy acoustics, and Democracy. It was a small club in the Reinaertstraat, situated in a quiet neighbourhood, literally next to a series of garage boxes. When the Democracy was sold out, it was a terribly hot place with almost no air – but that probably added to its legend.

Democracy programmed a wide variety of left-of-centre acts. Bands like Faith No More, Afghan Whigs and The Lemonheads played there before going on to bigger venues.

And in December '89, a completely unknown Seattle band played its first Belgian concert for a handful of music lovers. Two years later, Nirvana was the most hyped band on the planet.

At the end of the 1990s Democracy had to leave the Reinaertstraat, and the search for a new location proved to be difficult. So it became an organiser instead of a club, programming concerts at different locations (Vooruit, Minnemeers, Charlatan,...) and is responsible for the summer Gentse Feesten music stage Boomtown. (CV)



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putting people first

With love, from Tokyo

Pecha Kucha comes to Flanders

MONIQUE PHILIPS

In 2003, a years before TED conferences made PowerPoint presentations cool again, Tokyo-based architect duo Klein Dytham invited colleagues to give a presentation – but to stick to a prescribed framework.

Speakers had to bring exactly 20 images to accompany their talks and, out of their control, each image would be projected for 20 seconds on a screen at a steady, unyielding pace, adding up to six minutes and 40 seconds.

The now world-wide phenomenon Pecha Kucha (which means chit-chat in Japanese) was born.

For the audience, it is fantastic. It curtails boring speakers and empowers the good ones. And if you don't like one presentation, you only have to wait a few minutes until the next one. It's addictive and entertaining.

Axel Clissen is one of the initiators of Pecha Kucha Ghent. His team, too, largely comes from an architectural background. Their speciality is finding unique locations in the city to host a Pecha Kucha: a church, an inner garden, a 19th-century ballroom.

What sets Ghent apart from other PKs is the extensive archives on their website. Clissen insists that Pecha Kuchas should be small, highly accessible and local. For him, the whole idea is to bring local people together.

Such evenings can be an excellent place to meet creative people amid a constant flow of inspiring input. The constrictions of the format aren't meant to block creativity, but to challenge it.

Clissen says this format makes presentations more efficient and to the point. "I have yet to see an bad presentation," he says. "Even if we pick the speakers, we are often totally surprised by their subjects. They talk from the heart about the things they feel passionate about."

Which is something the audience at PK Ghent Volume 8, which took place during the city's Lesbian Day last autumn, knows all too well. Poet Johanna Pas, also on staff at Antwerp bookshop Het Verschil, says her more serious and literary text worked well at Volume 8, embedded as it was between lighter topics. "The Pecha Kucha format is no substitute for a deeper informative reading," she says, "but it works well to arouse interest. It was a fun challenge."

Ingrid Pelssers, who works in the Equal Opportunities department of the Flemish Region, agrees it was fun and engaging, but preparing a Pecha Kucha is extremely time-consuming. "First I had to come up with a topic that fit the format, then find the right pictures and then practise. A lot!" she says. "You only get six minutes and 40 seconds to get your story across."

Pelssers' presentation in fact turned out to be one of the day's most popular, as she introduced her very own bucket



© Monique Philips

list: "Things to do before you die: The Lesbian Guide". (Humour and diversity is vital at a PK event.)

In contrast, the latest Brussels edition, linked to a conference for designers and architects, lacked both, and there was little chance to hook up with speakers afterwards. I felt like I'd spent an evening switching TV channels or attending a Star trek convention: excluded and unfulfilled. But then again, I am not a designer. PK can also be used for a specific target group, particularly at professional conferences.

PK was, for instance, applied with great success last autumn at Antwerp's Institute of Tropical Medicine. David Hercot, coordinator of a colloquium on universal health care, organised an essay competition and challenged the 40 attending winners from all over the globe to pour their research essays into a PK format. They were given just a week to prepare.

"We all know this habit of copying and pasting a Word document into a Power Point presentation," says Hercot. "In the Pecha Kucha format, the slides provide visual support while emphasising what you are saying. Another advantage is that you can accommodate more speakers as the allocated time slots are shorter."

So, while Pecha Kucha has its use at conferences, PK evenings for a wider audience depend on diversity in personalities and subjects. The constrictions of the format can increase the impact of the messages and increase creativity. As always, it seems, diversity is the key. ♦

MAKE RESERVATIONS FOR

11 March, Anima Festival Pecha Kucha, Flagey, Brussels

24 March, Pecha Kucha Brussels Volume 17, Hertogstraat 1

→ www.pechakucha.architempo.net

16 March, Pecha Kucha Ghent Volume 9, Gasmeterlaan 191

→ www.pecha-kucha-ghent.org

On how to pronounce Pecha Kucha

→ www.youtube.com/watch?v=gdghID66kLs

STREEKPRODUCT SERIES

ALAN HOPE

Leuvense pâté

Last time we were talking about *pensen*, the ubiquitous black-and-white puddings. Now it just so happens there's a street in the middle of Leuven called Pensstraat, and in the middle of the street (it's only about 50 metres long) is one of the region's star butchers – quite literally.

Beenhouwerij Rondou has come down from grandfather to father to son, and is now run by Filip and Siona Rondou. Their speciality is beef, and, in contrast to many of today's sanitised butcheries, you can still see beef carcasses hanging on hooks at the back of the shop, in various stages of ageing. Rondou has its own herd of about 80 Belgian blue-whites, which have been looked after by the same farmer for three generations.

"The beef industry has moved towards globalisation and only cares about yield," Filip says. "That leads to abuse, plus the flavour is all gone." The topside here is aged four weeks and the entrecote for six weeks.

Rondou also has a wide selection of superior pork, including Pata negra and Berkshire, all of it carefully sourced. However the main *streekproduct*, or regional product, is Leuvense pâté, a recipe Rondou came up with when Leuven was City of Taste in 2009.

Unlike the average pâté, this one is both smooth and chunky; it contains substantial pieces of rabbit meat within the more

usual paste of pork and chicken liver, so it calls for some good crusty bread to support its structure, which would obliterate the more dainty crackers or toast. It also has a flavour of the cognac in which the chicken-livers were marinated. Compared to the run-of-the-mill pâté, this version is a bit like fine port compared to table wine.

Filip (pictured) is rather evangelical about his trade: He consults and supplies top chefs like local boy (and TV star) Jeroen Meus. He also acted as a consultant on the 2009 hit Flemish TV series *Van vlees en bloed* (*Of Flesh and Blood*), which was set in a butcher shop. The hit series' writing duo "came here and hung out about two years before the series was made, just to get a feel for things," says Filip. "When they started filming, the actors came around to learn how to look the part. It's important to get it right when you're boning a piece of meat; you have to hold the knife the right way."

To pass on some of that encyclopaedic knowledge, Rondou has produced a handy book, on sale in the shop, telling you everything you could ever need to know about beef, from where each cut comes from to how it's best prepared. You need never confuse your *dunne lende* and your *dikke bil* again. ♦

→ www.beenhouwerijrondou.be



© Luk Coley/Streekproducten Vlaams-Brabant

Beenhouwerij Rondou is featured on the website of Flemish Brabant's regional specialities, which highlights the best food and drink produced in the region. Visit www.straaffestreek.be

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Here is there, there

ANNA JENKINSON

On a recent Thursday night in Schaarbeek, roads were blocked off, the police were called in, the fire brigade turned up, and residents in the neighbourhood called to complain that their kids couldn't sleep and they'd lost satellite reception.

The cause? Filip Gilissen's large-scale light sculpture being lifted up and over the Sint-Lukas University College of Art & Design. Suspended from the top of a crane and made from about 1,000 light bulbs, the installation read "It's All Downhill From Here On". It could be seen flickering across the city, part of the Brussels' skyline.

"It was just a piece of fiction until last night," Gilissen tells me as we look at the now-empty space. "There were so many things working against us: the license, the budget, the crane not working properly..." But it all came together, and a mini-Times Square was created for a few hours.

The Brussels-based artist, who graduated from Sint-Lukas in 2008, still doesn't quite believe they pulled it off. "I'm not an architect. I'm not an engineer. It was madness really," he laughs.

The next opportunity to see the installation will be the evening of 25 March, when it will be suspended from a crane in front of the Brussels Law Court.

Given the location and the timing, many people will read "It's All Downhill" in terms of Belgian politics. It wasn't really meant to

be political, "but the timing is very right," Gilissen admits. "It highlights the political non-situation." As with most of his work, he wanted the creation to be "a jolting experience", one that raises questions.

Although the light installation has now left Sint-Lukas, an exhibition of three of his video pieces remains throughout the month. The main screen shows an actor in a gold sequined tuxedo walking around the entrance hall of the Royal Museum of Fine Arts Antwerp, shouting "It's All Downhill From Here On!" The actor becomes a combination of variety entertainer, preacher and success coach, highlighting a recurring theme in Gilissen's work: the use of platitudes and excessive kitsch to reflect the thrill and celebration that characterises our success-driven society. But there's also an underlying emptiness and disillusionment.

Gilissen made the two other works during a residence exchange in February between Sint-Lukas and the Woodmill in London. His work, plus pieces by the UK's Annie Davey, are on view at the university's gallery under the title *Here is there, there: BXL-LDN*.

Both Gilissen's London films were shot in public spaces – one in Hyde Park, the other on the London Underground – and continue with the themes of gold, kitsch and ephemeral happiness.

Gilissen always works in gold somewhere: take, for example, his

"The Winner Takes it All" at the 2010 Liverpool Biennial, made out of glitter cannons and 100,000 pieces of golden confetti. "It's not gold on which you can build cities or futures," he says. "It's gold that makes you happy for one night – and then it's gone." ♦

Here is there, there: BXL-LDN

Until 26 March

Sint-Lukas Gallery

Paleizenstraat 70

Brussels (Schaarbeek)

→ www.sintlukasgalerie.be

"It's All Downhill" light installation

25 March, 19.00-midnight

Brussels Law Court

Poelaertplein

→ www.filipgilissen.com



Antwerp

Rataplan

Wijnegemstraat 27; 03.292.97.40

www.rataplanvzw.be

MAR 12 20.30 The Bony King of

Nowhere

Trix

Noordersingel 28; 03.670.09.00

www.trixonline.be

MAR 13 19.30 The Decemberists + Blind

Pilot

MAR 15 19.30 Coliseum + Rise Against

MAR 17 20.00 A Clean Kitchen is a

Happy Kitchen + Soldier Six

Ardoois

Cultuurkapel De Schaduw

Wezestraat 32; 0479.80.94.82

www.deschaduw.net

MAR 11 20.30 Turbo Pascal

MAR 12 20.30 Philip Vermeire

Brussels

Ancienne Belgique

Anspachlaan 110; 02.548.24.24

www.abconcerts.be

MAR 10 20.00 Musth + Steak Number

Eight

MAR 11-13 20.00 Selah Sue

MAR 14 20.00 KT Tunstall

DNA

Plattestein 18-20; 02.512.59.92

MAR 11 20.00 Foxes in Boxes +

Mnemosyne

K-NAL

Havenlaan 1; 0474.04.00.00,

www.k-nal.be

MAR 12 22.00 Agoria album release

party

Le Botanique

Koningsstraat 236; 02.218.37.32

www.botanique.be

Concerts at 20.00:

MAR 9 The Joy Formidable +

Megaphonic Thrift. CW Stoneking

MAR 10 Gruff Rhys. Mr T-Boned

The Carolereigns & Pepper Seed

MAR 11 Hjalmar MAR 16 Tina Dico.

Arbouretum. JD Meatyard

Magasin 4

Havenlaan 51B; 02.223.34.74

www.magasin4.be

MAR 10 19.00 Les Vulgaires Machins

+ Forest Pooky and Rene Cooper +

Corbillard + La Smala Et Moi

MAR 11 19.00 Hip Hop Ladies' Night: La

Mélodie + Thug Angel et 13hor

MAR 16 19.00 Sons Of Otis + Beehoover

+ Zippo

Recyclart

Ursulinenstraat 25; 02.502.57.34

www.recyclart.be

MAR 12 19.00 Tennis' Not Dead!

Schaerbeek Cultural Centre

Lochtstraat 91; 02.245.27.25

www.culture1030.be

MAR 11-12 21.00 10e Nuit des Femmes,

hip-hop ladies' night with concerts, DJs,

exhibition, film, dance, more

VK Club

Schoolstraat 76; 02.414.29.07

www.vkconcerts.be

MAR 12 21.00 Didier Laloy + Perry Rose

+ S-Tress + The Good Darlings + Milann

& Laloy

Vorst-Nationaal

Victor Rousseaulaan 208; 0900.00.991

www.forestnational.be

MAR 10 20.00 Katy Perry + New Young

Pony Club

MAR 11 20.00 Ne-Yo

Ghent

Vooruit

St Pietersnieuwstraat 23; 0900.26.060

www.vooruit.be

MAR 11 21.00 Kid Koala + Kode9 vs The

Spaceape + Tokimonsta + Ghostpoet

MAR 12 23.00 Think!, holebi party

MAR 13 19.30 The Aggrolites, ska + Mr

T-Bone & The Caroloreigns

Hasselt

Muziekodroom

Bootstraat 9; 011.23.13.13

DON'T MISS

The Game is Up!

15-26 March

Vooruit, Ghent

Shakespeare coined the phrase in Act III, Scene III of *Cymbeline*, and this annual performance festival uses it to let you know that everything you ever thought about theatre is over and done. Instead, you'll discover fake advertising by The Billboard Liberation Front, listen to a sermon by Reverend Billy and meet a stranger at a park in *The Bench*. You don't just watch theatre, you *are* theatre. Because, you know, all the world's a stage and all that.



→ www.vooruit.be

www.muziekodroom.be

MAR 10 19.00 Bonecrusher Fest featuring Dying Fetus, Keep Of Kalessin, Carnifex, more 20.30 Hokie Joint

Kortrijk

De Kreun

Conservatoriumplein 1; 056.37.06.44

www.dekreun.be

MAR 12 20.00 Lady Linn and Her

Magnificent Seven

Ostend

Kursaal (Casino)

Monacoplein 2; 070.22.56.00

www.kursaalooostende.be

MAR 11 20.00 Luc De Vos

MAR 12 21.30 Bal Rat Mort



Antwerp

Buster

Kaasrui 1; 03.232.51.53

www.busterpodium.be

MAR 10 21.30 King of Fugazis **MAR 11**

22.00 Guy Celis' Birthday Gig **MAR 12**

22.00 Sofie Dhondt pops it up **MAR 15**

21.30 JazzNight **MAR 16** 21.30 Playtime

Session

De Hopper

Leopold De Waelstraat 2; 03.248.49.33

www.cafehopper.be

MAR 13 16.00 Cruise Control

MAR 14 21.00 Bram Weijters Trio

MAR 15 21.00 Wout Gooris Trio

featuring Sofie

Brussels

Archiduc

Dansaertstraat 6; 02.512.06.52

www.archiduc.net

MAR 12 17.00 Collapse

MAR 13 17.00 Martin Zenker Quartet

featuring Damon Brown

MAR 17 20.00 Nox

Art Base

Zandstraat 29; 02.217.29.20

www.art-base.be

MAR 12 20.00 Alexandre Cavaliere &

Adib Garti play Bossa Nova

Café Bonnefooi

Steenstraat 8; 0487.62.22.31

www.bonnefooi.be

MAR 9 22.00 Roselien Tobback

MAR 15 22.00 Toine Thys invites...

Jazz Station

Leuvensesteenweg 193; 02.733.13.78

www.jazzstation.be

MAR 9 20.30 Timescape Project

MORE INSTALLATIONS THIS WEEK

Inside Installations → **SMAK, Ghent**

Pedro Cabrita Reis → **M Museum, Leuven**

Liam Gillick & Lawrence Weiner → **Muhka, Antwerp**



featuring Fabian Fiorini **MAR 11**
20.00 Sweet & Hot **MAR 12** 18.00 Peer
Baierlein Quartet **MAR 16** 20.30 Nicolas
Kummert

Recyclart
Ursulinenstraat 25; 02.502.57.34
www.recyclart.be
MAR 11 21.00 Fly097

Sounds Jazz Club
Tulpenstraat 28; 02.512.92.50
www.soundsjazzclub.be
Concerts at 22.00:
MAR 9 Chamaquiando, salsa **MAR**
10-11 Enrico Pieranunzi & Rosario
Giuliani Quartet **MAR 12** Brussels
Rhythm & Blues **MAR 14** Master Session
with Erik Vermeulen **MAR 15** Nicolas
Thys/Dries Laheye duo

The Music Village
Steenstraat 50; 02.513.13.45
www.themusicvillage.com
MAR 11 21.00 Gary Smulyan Quintet
MAR 12 21.00 Marka
MAR 16 20.30 Winchovski Quartet

Théâtre Molière
Bastionsquare 3; 02.217.26.00
www.muziekpublieque.be
MAR 12 20.00 Gillian Stevens & Dylan
Fowler + Mogil
MAR 17 12.30 Griff Trio

Woluwe Saint-Pierre Cultural Centre
Charles Thielemanslaan 93; 02.773.05.88
www.art-culture.be
MAR 17 20.30 Charles Loos Sextet

Ghent
Handelsbeurs
Kouter 29; 09.265.91.65
www.handelsbeurs.be
MAR 10 20.15 Mike Zito



Antwerp
Arenbergschouwburg
Arenbergstraat 28; 070.222.192
www.arenbergschouwburg.be
MAR 16 20.15 Hubert Damen

De Roma
Turnhoutsebaan 327; 03.292.97.40
www.deroma.be
MAR 16 20.30 Kimmo Pohjonen, Sami
Kuoppamäki & Timo Kämäräinen: K
Cube
MAR 17 20.30 Melingo

Rataplan
Wijnegemstraat 27; 03.292.97.40
www.rataplanvzw.be
MAR 16 20.30 Mor Karbasi

Zuiderpershuis
Waalse Kaai 14; 03.248.01.00
www.zuiderpershuis.be
MAR 9 20.30 Boubacar Traoré (Mali)
MAR 10 20.30 Bassekou Kouyate &
Ngoni Ba (Mali) **MAR 11** 20.30 Reyes
& Juglares del Vallenato (Col) **MAR**
17 20.30 Cuarteto Ariel Hernandez,
instrumental tango

Brussels

Ancienne Belgique
Anspachlaan 110; 02.548.24.24
www.abconcerts.be
MAR 15 20.00 Abd Al Malik
MAR 16 20.00 Estrella Morente
MAR 17 20.00 Yael Naim

Bozar
Ravensteinstraat 23; 02.507.82.00
www.bozar.be
MAR 13 11.00 Baltic Crossing
MAR 15 20.30 Bassekou Kouyate &
Ngoni Ba

De Kriekelaar
Gallaitstraat 86; 02.735.64.68
http://dekriekelaar.vgc.be
MAR 13 14.00 The Henhouse Prowlers

Espace Senghor
Waversesteenweg 366; 02.230.31.40 www.
senghor.be
MAR 11 20.30 Abdelkader Chaou &
Maurice El Medioni (Alg)

Koninklijk Circus
Onderrichtsstraat 81; 02.218.20.15
www.cirque-royal.org
MAR 11 Salvatore Adamo

La Samaritaine
Samaritanesstraat 16; 02.511.33.95
www.lasamaritaine.be
MAR 16-19 20.30 Duo Vulkanik

Maison des Musiques
Lebeauststraat 39; 02.550.13.20
www.vkconcerts.be
MAR 17 20.15 Sylvester Anfang II +
Woods

Théâtre Molière
Bastionsquare 3; 02.217.26.00
www.muziekpublieque.be
MAR 11 20.00 Mir Mukhtiar Ali
(Rajasthan)



Antwerp

Amuz
Kammenstraat 81; 03.292.36.80
www.amuz.be
MAR 13 15.00 Saori & Yutaka Oya,
piano: music by early 20th-century
composers group Les Six

deSingel
Desguinlei 25; 03.248.28.28
www.desingel.be
MAR 16 20.00 Pentaèdre wind quintet;
Christoph Prégardien, tenor: Schubert's
Winterreise

Bruges

Concertgebouw
't Zand 34; 070.22.33.02
www.concertgebouw.be
MAR 9 20.00 Carolyn Sampson, soprano;
Tuva Semmingsen, mezzo-soprano;
Robert King, organ; members of the
King's Consort: Sainte-Colombe, Marin
Marais, Couperin
MAR 10 20.00 Jan Vermeulen,
fortepiano: Schubert

Brussels

Bozar
Ravensteinstraat 23; 02.507.82.00
www.bozar.be
MAR 9 12.40 Minguet Quartett:
Schumann, Mendelssohn
MAR 11 20.00 Barnabas Kelemen,
violin; Zoltan Kocsis, piano: Debussy,
Beethoven, Bartók
MAR 12 20.00 Ensemble Orchestral
de Bruxelles, Brussels Choral Society,
Philharmonischer Chor Köln conducted
by Eric Delson: Debussy, Vaughan
Williams
MAR 16 12.40 Eva Korniszewski, piano;
Adam Korniszewski, violin: Bartók,
Prokofiev. 20.00 Vadim Repin, violin;
Nikolai Lugansky, piano: Grieg, Elgar,
Franck

Miniemenkerk
Miniemenstraat 62; 02.511.93.84
www.minimes.net
MAR 17 20.00 Collegium Vocale Gent
conducted by Philippe Herreweghe:
Josquin Desprez

Musical Instrument Museum
Hofberg 2; 02.545.01.30
www.mim.be
MAR 13 11.00 Daniel Rubenstein, viola,
conducted by Muhiddin Dürrioglu

Royal Music Conservatory
Regentschapsstraat 30; 02.213.41.37
www.kcb.be
MAR 15 20.00 Per Flauto: Alessandro
Scarlatti, Francesco Mancini, Domenico Sarri

Ghent

Handelsbeurs
Kouter 29; 09.265.91.65
www.handelsbeurs.be
MAR 16 20.15 De Munt Chamber
Ensemble conducted by Peter Tomek:
Stravinsky



Brussels

De Munt
Muntplein; 070.23.39.39
www.demunt.be
MAR 13-30 15.00/19.00 Mozart's
La Finta Giardiniera with De Munt
Symphony Orchestra conducted by

John Nelson/Peter Tomek, staged by
Karl-Ernst & Ursel Herrmann (in
Italian with French and Dutch surtitles)



Antwerp

CarWash Theater
Sergeyselsstraat 42; 0495.41.32.62
www.andwhatbesidesdeath.be
MAR 11-12 19.00/20.00/21.00
AndWhatBeside(s)Death in Undertone,
choreographed by Sidney Leoni

Zuiderpershuis
Waalse Kaai 14; 03.248.01.00
www.alandalus.be
MAR 12-13 15.00/20.30 Fiesta Flamenca

Brussels

Kaaitheater
Saintelettesquare 20; 02.201.59.59
www.kaaitheater.be
MAR 10-12 20.30 Pichet Klunchun and
Myself, choreographed by Jérôme Bel

Théâtre Marni
Vergniestraat 25; 02.639.09.80
www.theatremarni.com
MAR 16-19 20.00 L'assaut des Cieux (The
Assault of the Heavens), choreographed
by Claudio Bernardo

Hasselt

Cultuurcentrum
Kunstaal 5; 011.22.99.33
www.ccha.be
MAR 13 19.00 Royal Ballet of Flanders
in Ballet Menu, choreographed by David
Dawson

Heist-op-den-Berg

CC Zwaneberg
Bergstraat; 015.25.07.70
www.zwaneberg.be
MAR 13-14 14.30/20.00 Ultima Vez in
Radical Wrong, choreographed by Wim
Vandekeybus

Leuven

30CC - Schouwburg
Bondgenotenlaan 21; 016.23.84.27
www.30CC.be
MAR 16-17 20.00 Ultima Vez in
Radical Wrong, choreographed by Wim
Vandekeybus



Antwerp

Arenbergschouwburg
Arenbergstraat 28; 070.222.192
www.arenbergschouwburg.be
MAR 11 14.00 Efteling Theaterproducties
in Sprookjesboom (Fairy-tale Tree),
(musical for ages 3 and up; in Dutch)
MAR 12 20.15 Mannen komen van Mars,
vrouwen van Venus (Men are from Mars,
Women are from Venus; in Dutch)

Fakkelteater Zwarte Zaal
Reyndersstraat 7; 03.232.14.69
www.fakkelteater.be
MAR 11-27 15.00/20.30 De Koepoort 15
by Randall Van Duytekom, directed by
Hans De Munter (in Dutch)
MAR 16 20.30 De Improfeten,
improvisational theatre with live music
(in Dutch)

HetPaleis

Theaterplein 1; 03.202.83.11
www.hetpaleis.be
Until APR 16 20.00 Kakkewieten in
Apocalyps Wauw, staged by Adriaan Van
den Hoof (in Dutch)

Monty

Montignystraat 3-5; 03.238.91.81
www.monty.be
MAR 17-19 20.30 Wunderbaum and
Touki Delphine in Songs at the End of the
World, musical theatre

Stadsschouwburg
Theaterplein 1; 0900.69.900
www.stadsschouwburgantwerpen.be
MAR 12-19 15.00/20.00 Monty Python's
Spamalot, musical (in Dutch)

DON'T MISS

Nachtscènes

12 March, 19.00

Concertgebouw, Bruges

It's March, which means "spring fever",
and classical music is – let's face it – sexy.
So don't miss this weekend's Nachtscènes
(Night Scenes) at the Concertgebouw
in Flanders' most romantic city. Piano
quartet Tetra Lyre and choir Orpheon join
many local and international artists for this
five-hour event that takes place all over the
building in surprise spaces. Explore at your
own pace work of Schumann and Schubert
that are rarely performed because of impractical
set-ups, such as the need for small, intimate
productions. It's a musical, poetic and multi-media
exploration of this important era of German
creativity – Romanticism, of course.



→ www.concertgebouw.be

Brussels

The Warehouse Studio
Waelhemstraat 69a; 0477.408.704
www.europeantheatreclub.eu
MAR 15-19 20.00 ETCetera in Hamlet
Unplugged, directed by Hugh Dow (In
multiple languages, with surtitles in
English and French)

Roeselare

CC De Spil
Spilleboutdreef 1; 051.26.57.00
www.despil.be
MAR 12 20.00 Sweatshop Cie in Sibling,
directed by Matthieu Benayoune + circus
school Ell Circo d'Ell Fuego in JEANS



Antwerp

Central Station
Van Immerseelstraat-Kievitplein;
02.537.68.75
www.artinallofus.be
Until MAR 30 FC De Kampioenen,
exhibition on the comedy show, which
ended this year after 20 years on Flemish
television
Until MAY 8 Art in All Of Us,
photographs of children around the
world by Anthony Asaël and Stéphanie
Rabemiarafa

Contemporary Art Museum (M HKA)
Leuvenstraat 32; 03.238.59.60
www.muhka.be

Until MAR 27 LATT: Graphology,
Chapter 1, drawings in film, photography,
print and computer graphics
Until MAY 22 Liam Gillick and Lawrence
Weiner: A Syntax of Dependency, double
portrait of the New York-based artists
Until AUG 21 Ten Oosten van 4°24' (East
of 4°24'), group show of artists from the
Caucasus, India, China, Iraq, Egypt and
more

De Winkelhaak

Lange Winkelhaakstraat 26; 03.727.10.30
www.fotomuseum.be
Until APR 1 Photo Academy Award
2011, a selection of photographs by the
award winners

Maagdenhuismuseum

Lange Gasthuisstraat 33; 03.338.26.20
www.ocmw.antwerpen.be
Until APR 3 Kanttekeningen, a history of
lace production in Antwerp

Photo Museum (FoMu)

Waalse Kaai 47; 03.242.93.00
www.fotomuseum.be
Until JUN 5 Hungry Eyes, food
photography by Tony Le Duc, Valérie
Belin and Dimitri Tsykalov
Until JUN 5 Julien Maire: Mixed
Memory, works from early film and
projection projects, including the camera
obscura and the magic lantern

Plantin-Moretus Museum

Vrijdagmarkt 22; 03.221.14.50
www.museumplantinmoretus.be
Until MAR 13 Contemporary Past: Peter
De Koninck, etchings by the Flemish
artist

Royal Museum of Fine Arts

Leopold De Waelplaats; 03.238.78.09
www.kmska.be
Until APR 30 Museums in the
21st Century: Concepts, Projects,
Buildings, the most significant trends in
contemporary museum architecture

Brussels

Bibliotheca Wittockiana
Bemelstraat 23; 02.770.53.33
www.wittockiana.org
Until MAR 17 Vasso Tseka, paintings,
drawings, books
Until APR 30 Mikhail Karasik: Onder
druk van tijd (Pressed for Time),
lithographs

Boekhandel Sint-Hubert

Koningsgalerij 2; 02.511.24.12
www.librairie-saint-hubert.com
Until MAY 2 Back in Belgium Baby,
paintings by the Paris-based Belgo-
American artist

Bozar

Ravensteinstraat 23; 02.507.82.00
www.bozar.be
Until MAY 8 Venetian and Flemish
Masters, masterworks from the
Accademia Carrara in Bergamo, Italy,
shown alongside Flemish masterpieces
from Antwerp's Royal Museum of Fine
Arts, spanning the 15th to the 18th
centuries
Until MAY 8 Luc Tuymans:
Retrospective, works by the
contemporary Flemish painter

De Markten

Oude Graanmarkt 5; 02.512.34.25
www.demarkten.be
Until APR 3 Drawing in an Expanded
Field, group show to honour the 300th
anniversary of the Royal Academy of Fine
Arts (also at ARBA and MAAC)

Espace Photographique Contretype

Verbindingslaan 1; 02.538.42.20
www.contratype.org
Until MAR 13 Bernard Descamps:
Convergences, photographs by the French
photographer

Fondation pour l'Architecture

Kluisstraat 55; 02.642.24.80
www.fondationpourlarchitecture.be
Until APR 30 La Villa de Mademoiselle B
(Miss B's Villa), rooms inside a mock villa,
designed by 10 female architects

Jewish Museum of Belgium

Minimnstraat 21; 02.512.19.63
www.mjb-jmb.org
Until MAR 27 David Seymour: Een
humanistisch fotograaf (A Humanist
Photographer), works by the Warsaw-
born Magnum agency photo journalist

Le Botanique

Koningsstraat 236; 02.218.37.32
www.botanique.be
Until MAR 27 De bloeiperiode van
de Albanese fotografie (The Heyday of
Albanian Photography), photographs
from early 20th-century Albania
Until APR 23 Norbert Ghisolan,
photographs by the late Belgian
photographer (1878-1939)

MAAC

Kartuizerstraat 26-28
www.maac.be
Until MAR 19 Drawing in an Expanded
Field, group show to honour the 300th
anniversary of the Royal Academy of Fine
Arts (also at ARBA and De Markten)

WEEK IN FILM

LISA BRADSHAW



Cinema Novo

17-27 March

Across Bruges

Right at this moment in Iran, two men are in prison for making movies. The offending films are being showcased – as they have been in Rotterdam and Berlin – in Bruges at this beautifully programmed world film festival that strikes the right balance between social relevance and entertainment.

Jafar Panahi has just begun his six-year sentence for “conspiring against the ruling system” and is barred from making films or leaving the country for 20 years. A leader in Iran’s New Wave of cinema and winner of numerous international awards, his work indeed questions the ruling system, and Cinema Novo will screen *The Circle*, winner of Venice’s Golden Lion in 2000. Like other Panahi films, it highlights inequality of women in his country through a pastiche of stories about women struggling to get through simple circumstances.

Mohammad Rasoulof was arrested at the same time as Panahi, and the festival will screen his most recent film as director, 2009’s *The White Meadows*, about a man who collects tears, and 2010’s *Gesher*, on which he served as producer.

Cinema Novo puts Brazil in the spotlight this year, an ever-rising star in Central and South American cinema. Selections are taken from 1996 to the present, including the award-winning *Forbidden to Forbid*, director Jorge Durán’s new film about sexual tension among a trio of friends, and *Waste Land*, a new documentary by a trio of directors that follows artist Vik Muniz to Rio de Janeiro’s Jardim Gramacho, the world’s largest garbage dump, in search of waste-as-art. But it’s the local “garbage pickers” (pictured above) who steal the show.

The festival also includes concerts, the exhibition *Congostroom* and a special day dedicated to forest destruction, which includes talks and the screening of two films: *Crude*, about oil pollution in the National Park of Ecuador, and *The Burning Season*, which describes the systematic deforestation of Indonesia for palm oil production.

→ www.cinemanovo.be

Marc Sleen Museum

Zandstraat 33; 02.219.19.80
www.marc-sleen.be
Until APR 4 Marc Sleen and Brussels, special exhibition on the Flemish comic-strip artist’s relationship with the capital

Museum van Elsene

Jean Van Volsemstraat 71; 02.515.64.22
www.museumvanelsene.be
Until MAY 15 Olivier Debré, lyrical abstract (Lyrical Abstraction), retrospective of the French painter

Royal Museum of Fine Arts

Regentschapsstraat 3; 02.508.32.11
www.fine-arts-museum.be
Until JUNE 5 Walter Leblanc, kinetic and optical works by the Belgian artist

Sint-Gorikshallen

Sint-Goriksplein 23; 02.502.44.24
www.sintgorikshallen.be
Until APR 31 Brussels Boutiques: from Art Nouveau to Present Day, a history of Brussels shops and window displays

Ghent

Bank van de Arbeid
Volderstraat 1; 051.42.42.11
www.lannoo-events.be
Until MAY 6 Lieve Blancquaert, Photographer, retrospective of the Flemish photographer’s work over the past 25 years

Museum of Contemporary Art (SMAK)

Citadelpark; 09.221.17.03
www.smak.be
Until MAR 27 Inside Installations, 10 installations from the museum’s collection
Until MAR 27 Adrian Ghenie, paintings by the Romanian artist

Stadsmuseum Gent (STAM)

Bijloke - Godshuizenlaan 2; 09.269.87.90
www.stamgent.be
Until MAY 1 Enlightened City, a study of how light affects a city through diaries, models, paintings, photographs and installations

Hasselt

Fashion museum
Gasthuisstraat 11; 011.23.96.21
www.modemuseumhasselt.be
Until JUNE 5 Alter Nature: The Future That Never Was, a look at the year 2000 from the point of view of designers from the 1960s and a glance at new possibilities in fashion

Kemzeke

Verbeke Foundation
Westakker; 03.789.22.07
www.verbekefoundation.com
Until APR 10 Certified Copy, works by 20 international artists on reproduction and cloning
Until APR 10 Mark Verstockett: A Portrait, an overview of the Flemish artist’s work in celebration of his 80th birthday
Until APR 10 Trou de Ville, group show featuring press releases, e-mails, videos and photographs on guerilla art

Leuven

Museum M
Leopold Vanderkelenstraat 28; 016.27.29.29
www.mleuven.be
Until MAR 20 David Shrigley, drawings and sculptures by the British artist
Until MAY 15 Freek Wambacq, installations by the Belgian artist
Until MAY 22 Pedro Cabrita Reis: One After Another, A Few Silent Steps, sculpture, paintings, photos and installations by the Portuguese artist
Until JUN 12 Gebonden Beelden, rare books

Mechelen

Het Firmament
Brusselpoort; 015.34.94.36
www.hetfirmament.be
Until APR 10 Kopstukken, relics from the top 10 performances in the 42-year history of Flemish theatre group Theater Taptoe

Ostend

Kunstmuseum Aan Zee (MuZee)
Romestraat 11; 059.50.81.18
www.muze.be
Until MAR 27 The Responsive Subject, works by Flemish artist Guy Mees

Tervuren

Royal Museum for Central Africa
Leuvensesteenweg 13; 02.769.52.11
www.africamuseum.be
Until MAR 13 Perspectives on the Congo River Expedition, photographs by Kris Pannecoucke from the Congo 2010 scientific project exploring the river’s biodiversity
Until MAR 25 Madagascar: Meet the People, large-scale panoramic photographs by Wim De Schampelaere of village scenes in the Indian Ocean islandw



Restaurant Week: Enjoy three-course meals at participating restaurants for only €27.50
MAR 14-20 across Brussels and Flanders
www.restaurantweek.be

Antwerp

Circo Roma: Circus festival with workshops and performances by D’irque en Fien, Cir’ulation Locale and Chipolatas
Until MAR 13 20.30 at De Roma, Turnhoutsebaan 286
03.292.97.40, www.deroma.be

Blankenberge

Carnival: Carnival celebrations including parades, concerts, performances, folk games, polar bear swim and more
Until MAR 12 across Blankenberge
www.blankenberge.be

Brussels

Adam Caruso: Lecture by the British architect about his firm Caruso St John whose clients include New Art Gallery in Walsall, Tate Britain and the Victoria & Albert Museum (in English)
MAR 17 19.00 at Bozar, Ravensteinstraat 23
02.507.82.00, www.bozar.be

Beirut: Festival exploring contemporary arts in the Lebanese capital, with exhibitions, performances, workshops and screenings
Until APR 12 at Halles de Schaarbeek, Koninklijke Sint-Mariastraat 22, and other Brussels venues
0900.26.060, www.halles.be

Carnabruelas: Brazilian carnival celebrations with dance and fancy dress competition
MAR 12 21.00 at Tour & Taxis, Havenlaan 86c
www.carnabruelas.com

Festival Tziganiada: Celebration of Belgo-Roma culture with debates on current events, music and dance performances and a photography exhibition
MAR 15-19 at Arthis, Vlaanderenstraat 33
www.arthis.org

Goethe’s Last Love: Between Fact and Fiction: Leading up to the première of the play *Laatste Liefde* (Last Love), author Johan Reyniers speaks with German writer Hans Pleschinski about the delicate relationship between literature and life (in German with simultaneous translation in English)
MAR 15 19.30 at Beursschouwburg, A Ortsstraat 20-28
02.550.03.50, www.beursschouwburg.be

Lick My Typo: Readings by Dutch artists Karl Nawrot and Lesley Moore (in English)
MAR 16 20.00 at Recyclart, Ursulinenstraat 25
02.502.57.34, www.recyclart.be

Marollen Carnival: Venetian-themed carnival celebrations and parade throughout the Marollen quarter
MAR 12 21.00 at Square Bruegel
www.bruegel-marolles.be

Modelma: Interactive fair for hobby and game enthusiasts
MAR 12-14 at Brussels Expo, Heysel
02.474.89.81, www.bruexpo.be

Oek de Jong: The Dutch author talks about his 35-year writing career (in Dutch)

DUSK 'TIL DAWN

KATRIEN LINDEMANS



Pub o’ the Irish

A visit to an Irish pub almost always guarantees a night of good fun. Beer, cider and whiskey, pop music and quizzes, football and rugby, old-fashioned Irish breakfast, lunch and dinner, all of that in a usually cosy bar with a wooden interior, barrels and often stained glass windows. On Thursday, 17 March, Irish pubs across Brussels and Flanders will celebrate St Patrick, Ireland’s most famous missionary, having freed the country from snakes and all that. Dress in green and pop into your favourite Irish pub for a night of booze, pub food and partying with complete strangers, who will be your friends before morning. With about 70 Irish pubs to choose from, this is a small selection. (But a good one.) Head’s up: in student towns, which all of these are, Thursday is the traditional night for students to go out on the town. So this could be one 17 March to remember.

St Patrick’s Day wouldn’t be St Patrick’s Day to *Gentenaars* without **Patrick Foley’s**. They’re offering a free drink to anyone called Patrick on 17 March and have live bagpipe music all day. Watch U2 and Riverdance on the big screen until karaoke takes you into the wee hours. On Sunday, 20 March, the pub serves a full Irish lunch and dinner (including salmon and black pudding). The afternoon features live music and whiskey tasting.

→ www.foleys.be

MAR 10 20.00 at Passa Porta, A Dansaertstraat 46
02.226.04.54, www.passaporta.be

Walk+talk: Austrian choreographer Philipp Gehmacher invites one dancer and one choreographer each night to talk about their work (in various languages)
MAR 15-20 20.30 at Kaaistudio’s, Onze-Lieve-Vrouw van Vaakstraat 81
02.201.59.59, www.kaaitheater.be

Herenthout

Carnival: Carnival festivities including parades, masked ball, more
Until MAR 13 at Karnavalvereniging Peer Stoot, Kloosterstraat 1
www.peerstoet.be

At **Thomas Stapleton** in Leuven, you’ll see footage from St Patrick ceremonies in Ireland. At 20.00, an Irish band will play, followed by a DJ and a party all night through.

→ www.thomasstapleton.be

Kelly’s in Antwerp, meanwhile, plans a full St Patrick’s week, which kicks off with a free comedy show at 19.15 on 16 March. The next day starts with an Irish breakfast at Oud België (downstairs Kelly’s), Happy Stout Hour from 15.00-17.00, live music and bangers and mash food stands all afternoon and evening. Saturday, 19 March is Paddy’s Big Party, a day filled with breakfast, football, bagpipes, live bands, DJs and Irish beef burgers and fries. Unwind on Sunday with Irish breakfast (again) or Sunday roast and live music.

→ www.kellys.be

Finally, **De Valera’s** in Brussels throws a big party on St Patrick’s Day with all sorts of green gifts distributed throughout the night. And if everything goes as planned, there will be green beer, as well.

→ www.flagey.eu

Looking for an Irish pub near you? Visit www.cafe.be

Ostend

The Flemish Primitives: Major Belgian culinary event, featuring demonstrations by top chefs, talks, master classes, tastings, gala dinner and more
MAR 13-14 at Kursaal, Monacoplein 2
www.theflemishprimitives.com

Sint-Truiden

Villarte Vocaal: Jazz festival
MAR 10-12 at Academiezaal, Plankstraat 18
www.villarte.eu

ROBYN BOYLE

bite



Restaurant Week

What was staged in New York in 1992 as a one-time socio-political event, has evolved into one of the world's biggest culinary events. Restaurant Week first came to Belgium in 2007 via Antwerp and was an immediate success, attracting thousands of diners to the city's finest restaurants. Next week is the very first Benelux edition and features 600 of the best restaurants from every corner of the country (2,000, including Luxembourg and the Netherlands).

The initiative comes from on-line restaurant guide DiningCity.com, which manages to pull in more and more participating locations every year. Between 14 and 20 March, top restaurants offer gastronomic meals at affordable prices, giving restaurants the chance to attract new clientele. Diners, in turn, are able to discover new places where they perhaps otherwise wouldn't go due to a restricted budget.

The concept is simple; reserve a table online, then take the reservation code with you to the restaurant. Enjoy a three-course dinner for just €27.50 or a three-course lunch for €22.50 (not including drinks). Interested parties (of maximum eight people) are advised to move quickly, as some restaurants are already fully booked.

There is a small disclaimer – restaurants with 15-16 points in the GaultMillau guide or a Michelin star charge €10 extra; those with at least 17 points or two Michelin stars charge €20 extra. Still, this may be the only chance to experience a starred restaurant without blowing your restaurant budget for the entire year.

Check the restaurant's website or call to find out exactly what they have planned for the special menu during Restaurant Week, although some prefer to keep it a surprise. And don't hesitate to contact them should you have specific dietary needs or are vegetarian; they will accommodate.

Below are some good bets for set dinner menus from participating restaurants.

Restaurant Bellefleur, Antwerpsesteenweg 253, Kapellen (Antwerp province)
03.664.67.19

→ www.blfr.be

Contact Bite at flandersbite@gmail.com

- House-smoked salmon with marinated black radish and cucumber
- Roast suckling pig with green asparagus, whole-grain mustard sauce and celery root cream
- Vanilla ice cream

Resto Mistral, Donkiaan 148, Berlare (East Flanders)
09.367.59.10

→ www.resto-mistral.be

- Duo of smoked eel and ray wing with herbs and fennel
- Pollock (white fish) with spring vegetables and lobster mayonnaise
- Carpaccio of pineapple, cassis sorbet and strawberry-pepper coulis

De Gempemolen (pictured above), Gempstraat 56, Sint-Joris-Winge (Flemish Brabant)
016.48.73.07

→ www.gempemolen.be

- Veal carpaccio with Belgian pickle foam and spring herbs
- Lemon-poached halibut in a mousse of white beer from Haacht and cauliflower-dill purée
- Vanilla parfait with a Gempe orchard pear and almond crisp

Kurt's Pan, Sint-Jakobsstraat 58, Bruges (West Flanders)
050.34.12.24

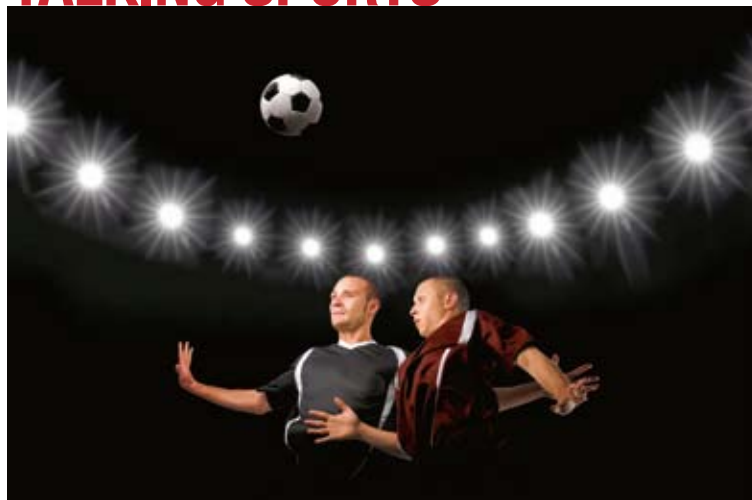
→ www.kurtspan.be

- Vitello tonnato, yellowfin tuna and scallops with capers and yoghurt
- Hop shoots (+ €20 supplement) with poached egg and hollandaise sauce
- Lamb from the polders of Damme with asparagus, morel mushrooms, truffle juice and small potatoes
- OR Fish of the day
- Frozen nougat with forest berries and cookie crisp
- OR Selection of cheese from master cheesemonger Van Tricht with nut bread, jam and balsamic vinegar (+ €8 supplement)

→ www.restaurantweek.be

TALKING SPORTS

LEO CENDROWICZ



How not to be a football role model

Flemish footballers have had an abject month. They failed to make any impression when Belgium was held to a grinding 1-1 home draw against Finland. And Anderlecht, Belgium's last representative in European competition, was cursorily ejected from the Europa Cup after a 5-0 aggregate hammering by Ajax.

But Flemish fans are familiar with such on-field setbacks. No, what makes this a particularly dreary moment is seeing footballers involved in individual acts of bad behaviour off the pitch.

Take, for example, former international goalkeeper Stijn Stijnen. He has been fired by Club Brugge after being linked to comments on a fan website lauding his performance and criticising his own teammates. Stijnen's brother and girlfriend claimed they had posted the 257 comments on a fan website, where they described the goalkeeper as a "hero", "wonderful" and "top", while fellow Brugge goalkeepers and management were blasted.

The second is more serious: Gilles De Bilde, a former Belgian international, was last week in court facing charges of assaulting his wife. The 39-year-old former Anderlecht, PSV Eindhoven and Sheffield Wednesday striker was alleged

to have beaten his wife and daughters in incidents in 2009 and 2010. The trial revealed tensions over De Bilde's affairs with dozens of other women.

Anyone who has seen him in his playing heyday would have little difficulty believing the charges: in one notorious 1996 incident, de Bilde reacted to close marking by walloping the offending defender in the face, breaking his nose, smashing his eye socket and nearly blinding him.

Last week's trial ended in a suspended sentence: De Bilde arrived with his wife, and his lawyer insisted that the two had reconciled. Perhaps as part of his attempted rehabilitation, De Bilde lent his name at the same time to animal rights group GAIA for their campaign against Belgium's continued harvesting of animals for their fur.

Of course, the Flemish are far from the only players involved in daft antics. Last week also saw Chelsea's Ashley Cole reprimanded for shooting an intern with an air rifle, while a player in Colombia was suspended after kicking an injured owl that had landed on the field during a match. But it did, however, show that Flemish footballers are far from being the role models that fans had been hoping for.

THE LAST WORD

IN HONOUR OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY ON 8 MARCH
HET NIEUWSBLAD ASKED FLEMISH WOMEN ABOUT THEIR LIVES IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Family business

"My family is like a company. Everything is all about organisation. My husband and I both have busy jobs, so we work a kind of shift system."

Liesbeth Groffils, 31

Drawing lines

"You don't have to stay home all the time just because you're a retired woman. And you shouldn't become a victim of your grandchildren. The more you look after them, the more it limits your lifestyle."

Magda Soubry, 63

Enough is enough

"Werner was my first love. I'm still in love with him. You know what I notice? Nowadays young girls see their boyfriends every day. They call and text all the time. They're fed up with each other before they ever move in together. In those days, I saw Werner twice a week."

Monika Gheysen, 77

Bed and board

"It used to be that a woman followed the wishes of her man. He's the one who had a say, and whatever he said was right. Any woman who had an ambition to be at the top of a company would have been seen as a troublemaker."

Anna Wagner, 103

NEXT WEEK IN FLANDERS TODAY #171

Feature

Green building is being hyped across Flanders, with homeowners offered subsidies for installing solar panels, heavier insulation and water recycling. But is that making it affordable?

Arts

The Vlaams Radio Koor, or Flemish Radio Choir, has a new director. We talk to him and take a look back at the illustrious 70-year history of this Brussels-based institution

Living

Fortunately, some things never change: Tapestries De Wit in Mechelen is still making wall tapestries, a Flemish tradition for 600 years