

What a Hoet

Jan finally gets his due

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Suddenly sushi

Ghent catches up to the trend

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Art school



revisited

Excitement and uncertainty
over proposed policy reforms

ALAN HOPE

Children learning music, dance and theatre from the moment they enter school. An integrated system of arts education that can handle students from age six to 66, in a wide range of performance and plastic arts. Those are the ambitious aims of a plan to reform Flanders' system of part-time arts education, currently under discussion, which would involve an entirely new role for schools and a massive change to existing art and music academies.

Plans for the reform of arts education in Flanders have been on the table since 2003, when the Court of Auditors pointed out a number of shortcomings in the system. In March, the education ministry of Pascal Smet issued a document for discussion, laying out the broad lines of potential reform. The results of discussions are expected later in the year, while a new decree governing the system would, it is hoped, have completed its legislative process by 2013.

"Part-time arts education has a double social mission," Smet states in his 2009 policy paper on education: "the organisation of artistic education both at an

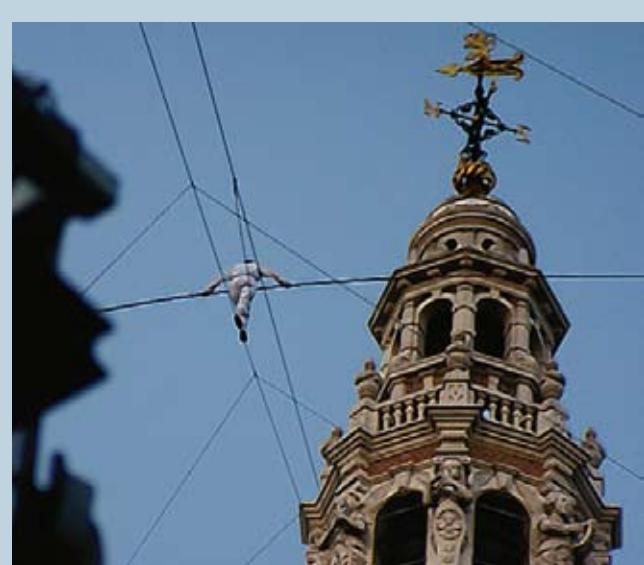
amateur level and in preparation for higher education and the promotion of arts and cultural education in pre-school and primary and secondary schools." The paper continues: "As many children, young people and adults as possible need to be given the chance to take advantage of what's on offer in order to develop their artistic talents. Artists have always been the pioneers of our society, showing us the way forward." Those two aims are again picked up in the new discussion document on arts education.

The broad lines of future policy on part-time cultural education have been released to the people it will affect: the teachers who will carry it out, as well as the trainers of those teachers. And whereas the headlines concentrate on the idea to scrap the one-year course in sight-reading now required before children can pick up a musical instrument, the plan itself is far more ambitious. The response of the sector has been one of interest but with a heavy dose of uncertainty.

 ➤ *continued on page 5*

High wire above Leuven

Tightrope walker Michel Ménin walks from the M Museum in Leuven to the tower of the university library, 62 metres high above the Ladeuzeplein, as part of last week's Circus & Co festival. The two-day show, which attracted 40,000 visitors, is an offshoot of the open-air theatre festival Leuven en Scène, which takes place every two years. Ménin, a renowned French tightrope walker, took up the activity 25 years ago while working at the other extreme, as a professional speleologist.



"A disaster for Flemish growers"

No trace of deadly bacterium in Belgium as vegetable market collapses

ALAN HOPE

According to the federal food safety Agency, fresh vegetables on sale in Belgium contain not a trace of the EHEC bacterium that has killed 22 people and infected many more in Germany. The German outbreak of illness caused by the bacterium – a new and highly virulent mutation of *E. coli* – has caused widespread consumer panic, international embargoes, plummeting prices and the threat of legal action. Last week, Russia imposed a ban on imports of vegetables from the EU in response to the scare, with the head of the Russian consumer protection agency urging consumers to buy home-

grown vegetables. The EU Commission said the ban was "disproportionate" and called on Russian authorities to defend their decision.

The Russian embargo was "a disaster for Flemish growers," according to Farmers' Union chairman Piet Vanthemsche. Flemish producers deliver about €30 million worth of fresh vegetables a year to Russia, and late May and early June is the height of the growing season.

 ➤ *continued on page 3*

FACE OF FLANDERS



© Miriam Devriendt

Jan Hoet

The surprise is not that Jan Hoet won this year's prize of the Flemish Community for general cultural services, but that it took the award committee eight editions to give it to him. The prize is one in a series of culture prizes awarded annually, and might just as well have been invented with Hoet in mind.

Hoet was born in Geel, Antwerp province, the son of a psychiatrist and fervent art collector, who used to take him on visits to artists like Constant Permeke in their workshops. Hoet himself had ambitions to be an artist, trying his hand at painting and drawing a number of comic strips, only one of which was ever published, long after he had widely come to be known as *kunstpaus*, or Pope of Art.

He spent some time as a drawing teacher, but it was as a curator that Hoet was to make his mark. In 1975 he went to work at the Museum of Modern Art in Ghent, which would later be transformed into the City Museum for Contemporary Art (SMAK).

"Hoet was the first to succeed in getting the broader public to talk about modern art," said Flemish culture minister Joke Schauvliege, handing over the prize. He did so with a mixture

of modest means and boundless ambition. The 1986 exhibition *Chambres d'amis* (*Guest Rooms*) is considered one of the most innovative and mould-breaking Belgium has ever seen: works of art were displayed in 50 different homes of ordinary people in Ghent. Hoet only had €150,000 to spend, but it made his name and that of the museum internationally renowned.

He also, according to former prizewinner Eric Antonis, "fought against prejudice and misunderstanding," with an abiding interest in outsider art. He was ubiquitous in the media, often offering his typically prickly opinion on everything to do with art. Since his retirement from the SMAK he has organised exhibitions from Germany to Japan, and even set up another new museum in the German town of Herford.

"Actually, you should have won this prize 20 years ago," the artist Jan Fabre told Hoet when the award was announced in Genk last week, "but never mind. It takes a lifetime to become a young curator." Hoet said he was "delighted" to receive it and especially welcomed the timing. "I'm above all happy that it didn't happen posthumously."

Don't forget

Get the news from Flanders online in English and French at www.flanderstoday.eu



FLANDERS TODAY

JUNE 8, 2011

News in brief

Priests have again taken part in the traditional **Holy Blood procession** in Bruges last week, after last year's decision by the church to stay away in the fallout from the revelation that the then bishop of Bruges, Roger Vangheluwe, had been guilty of child abuse. The historic procession marks the arrival in the city of a relic claimed to be the blood of Christ, brought back from the Crusades by Thierry of Alsace in 1150.

Drivers are advised to seek alternative routes from 18 June to avoid **roadworks on the Vilvoorde viaduct**, part of the Brussels Ring. The 30 year-old viaduct is in urgent need of repair, and works will continue seven days a week until September. Half of the viaduct will be closed in each of two phases, and severe delays are expected.

► www.viaductvilvoorde.be/en

The Ghent University Hospital has given the go-ahead to allow **women to act as surrogate mothers** to male gay couples who wish to conceive, it was announced last week. Two cases are already under way. The rules will be the same as for heterosexual couples: in nearly all cases the surrogate is a blood relative of one of the couple, using an egg from an anonymous donor. Either of the two men may donate sperm cells.

Flemish welfare minister Jo Vandeurzen has scrapped a system that gave **extra home-care help** to families with triplets. Until 1 July, the parents of newborn triplets were allowed a care worker from

family organisation Kind & Gezin for the first three years. According to a ministry spokesperson, a survey showed many families were unhappy with the presence of the care worker. Families already using the system will not be affected.

1 June). The money raised will go to the Agency for Nature and Forestry (ANB), which is coordinating the repair effort. The council also plans a benefit evening to thank the many members of the emergency services who helped fight the fire. The heath remains closed to the public.

An artwork by Jan Fabre made of the shells of thousands of beetles has been found to be **infested with moths**. The work, entitled "The Globe", was on show at the Royal Fine Arts Museum in Brussels, where it has now been hermetically sealed in plastic to protect other works in the collection. Meanwhile Fabre last week caused uproar at the Venice Biennale with the unveiling of a version of the Pietà by Michelangelo showing the Virgin Mary with a death's head, and the body of the crucified Christ replaced by the artist himself.

The premises of furniture superstore Ikea in Ghent were evacuated last week after an **explosive device** consisting of an alarm clock with fireworks attached exploded in the shop. A similar device went off in the Ikea store near Eindhoven in the Netherlands, and one was found in Ikea in Lille in northern France. No one was hurt in the incidents. Local police later searched other Ikea stores in Belgium, but nothing was found. Nobody has claimed responsibility for the makeshift bombs.

Police from the Fugitive and Asset Search Team (FAST) of the federal police last week arrested a 61-year-old Dutchman living in a houseboat in Grimbergen, Flemish Brabant, suspected of being one of the **Netherlands' most notorious drug traffickers**. The man was in possession of fake Bulgarian identity documents and was previously thought to have fled to Brazil.

The municipal council of Kalmthout in Antwerp province is inviting donations from members of the public to pay for the **damage caused to heathland** two weeks ago in a fire described as Flanders' worst-ever natural disaster (see *Flanders Today*,

OFFSIDE

No through road

Belgium may score highly in international surveys of quality of life, but we'll never run out of things to complain about.

First there was a campaign in Dendermonde against so-called cycle terrorists: amateur cyclists who apparently force ordinary people off cycle-paths, each dreaming of being the next Tom Boonen. This could be the first time in history that local people have had the fear of God put into them by marauding gangs of grown men in Lycra shorts, but the menace was enough to have the council bring in fines of up to €120 for groups numbering more than 10.

Motorcyclists are also coming under fire, forbidden to use certain roads in the area of East Flanders known as the Flemish Ardennes, after local residents complained about the threat to their rural tranquillity. According to Bruno Tuybens, mayor of Zwalm, motorcyclists are being restricted to main roads because the cobbles on side roads are too far apart for safety, and there are many potholes.

But who could possibly take exception to the Segway? Bruges city council, that's who. Tourists visiting the postcard city are now able to take a guided tour on the Segway, an electric scooter on which you stand. The usual reaction on seeing somebody try to ride one is to double up with laughter (the tycoon who bought the Segway company died while driving his off a cliff), but tourism alderman Jean-



Marie Bogaert goes further. "Our streets are too narrow, and those things get in the way of pedestrians and cyclists alike," he complained. "There are a lot of activities going on in the streets of Bruges, yet we're the only ones who's being picked on," laments Arend Van Londen, who organises the Segway tours. "Apart from everything else, we're the most environmentally friendly way of getting around," Van Londen says. "It's all a terrible misunderstanding."

FLANDERS TODAY

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Prison pony

A prison in Leuven last week welcomed a new inmate: a Shetland pony named Esmeralda, born to one of the animals in the institution's petting farm



Peeters will back damages claims by growers

→ continued from page 1

Protests from the industry that their produce was safe were later endorsed by the federal food safety agency, which tested an initial batch of cucumbers, tomatoes and lettuce. No trace of EHEC was found on any of the samples. The agency repeated its advice, however, that all raw vegetables should be washed thoroughly or peeled before eating. So far, no infections have emerged in Belgium.

Legal action

Flemish minister-president Kris Peeters, whose portfolio includes agriculture, advised growers to make inventories of their losses, promising that his government would assist with damages claims. That could be against Russia if the EU decides to take action.

Going further back, Flemish growers might latch on to a legal case being brought against German authorities by Spain for blaming their products for the outbreak of disease. These claims turned out to be unfounded, but only after

THE WEEK IN FIGURES



47
storks' nests in the colony that lives in animal park Planckendael in Muizen near Mechelen, a record number for the second year running. The colony was started in 1978 with only six birds. Last year, 66 chicks were born

1,000,000
tickets sold by SMS this year already by Flemish public transport authority De Lijn. That's 150,000 more than in the whole of 2010. De Lijn hopes to see this year's total rise to 2.5 million

1,035
companies went bankrupt in May, the third worst monthly total ever, according to consultants Greydon. The total so far this year is up to 4,502

9,266
jobs lost as a result of this year's bankruptcies, 9% less than in the same period last year

8/10
Flemings have never dumped rubbish illegally themselves, but have witnessed others doing so, according to a survey in connection with a new campaign against fly-tipping. 83% said tougher measures were needed to stop the problem



Tonnes of tomatoes destined for destruction at the vegetable auction in Sint-Katelijne-Waver, near Mechelen

"There's nothing wrong with our vegetables," Peeters told the Sunday discussion programme *De zevende dag*. "So please, keep on buying them." Asked if he would be willing to eat a cucumber, Peeters replied: "Yes, if it would help. But that might look a bit odd to your viewers."

• The EHEC bacterium is a variant of *Escherichia coli*, more familiarly known as *E. coli*, an organism that lives in the intestines and is for the most part harmless. However,

strains exist that produce toxins that can cause gastro-enteritis, kidney disease and even meningitis. *E. coli* is the main danger in faecal contamination, whether it occurs in the slaughterhouse or as a result of poor hygiene in hospitals or schools. EHEC is already known, but the latest outbreak involves a new mutation – EHEC-104. So far all of the deaths have involved people in Germany, apart from one woman in Sweden who had recently travelled to Germany. ♦

University researcher sacked over protest

The Catholic University of Leuven (KUL) has dismissed a researcher who took part in a demonstration against genetically modified crops after she declined to distance herself from some of the violent activities. Two other KUL researchers took part in the demo, but no sanction against them has been taken after they made clear they had not taken part in the clashes.

The research who was let go, Barbara Van Dyck, works in the department of architecture and town planning at the KUL. Van Dyck had been dismissed, the KUL said, because of "an irreparable breach of trust between the institution and her". Van Dyck said in a statement that she "in no way wished to distance herself from the violent character of the action". A number of Van Dyck's colleagues

this week sent a letter of protest at the sacking, which they called "disproportionate" and "an attack on academic freedom". An internet petition had gained over 900 signatures as *Flanders Today* went to press.

The protest on 29 May consisted of about 300 demonstrators calling themselves the Field Liberation Movement, which congregated at a potato field in Wetteren where researchers from Ghent University and the Flemish Institute for Biotechnology are growing genetically modified potatoes. Police had been alerted and were present in riot gear. Most of the protesters, according to reports, were there simply to register their objection to the experiment, but others broke down the fence surrounding the field and clashed with police. About 30

protesters were detained. The Dendermonde prosecutor's office is now examining evidence, with a view to bringing charges against some of those who took part. The charges considered involve up to a year imprisonment, but it is more likely anyone found guilty will be made to pay damages.

Meanwhile, Flemish innovation minister Ingrid Lieten announced last week she would be providing an extra €250,000 to the project to help make good the damage done by the protest. Science magazine Eos revealed the results of a survey in which seven out of 10 people in Flanders regarded experiments with genetically modified organisms positively if they led to advantageous results. ♦

Boy dies of pesticide poisoning

A boy of nine who became severely ill after coming in contact with a banned pesticide has died in hospital.

Aron Dedier was playing outside on 15 May on a farm in Eernegem, a municipality of Ichtegem in West Flanders, where his mother rents a house. After a short time, he came inside, unable to breathe or speak. He was taken to hospital in Torhout, where he slipped into a coma, and was later transferred to Ghent University Hospital. Doctors were able to determine that he was suffering from the toxic effects of malathion, a pesticide whose use has been banned in

the European Union since 2007. The product, which is still an ingredient of home treatments for lice infestations, has a strong, repellent smell. How Dedier came into contact with the product is not clear. Magistrates said they were keeping all options open, including deliberate poisoning. The owner of the farm, who alerted emergency services, said he had no knowledge of the presence of malathion on his land. Police investigating the case have been unable to find any either on farm premises or at the local container park. Malathion is still in use in North

America, both as a pesticide in farming and in public health campaigns. In Winnipeg, Canada, it is still sprayed to combat mosquito infestations, while in 1999 and 2000 it was sprayed over New York City to fight West Nile virus.

The ban came into force in 2007, but farmers were allowed to use up existing stocks until 2008. Since then the public health department has organised twice-yearly visits to collect products that have expired or are no longer legal. In addition, the law requires farmers to store all dangerous products in a secure location. ♦

FIFTH COLUMN

Old Vic

French-speaking *formateur* Elio Di Rupo (PS) had to keep silent last week, after an operation to his vocal chords, but Vic Van Aelst certainly picked up the slack. You might remember Van Aelst as the lawyer who defended Els Clottemans, convicted of murder in the so-called parachute killing.

Some weeks ago, Van Aelst, having joined the Flemish nationalist N-VA, suggested that French should no longer be taught in Flemish schools. "We have to stop weaving the whip that strikes us," he said. "The French speakers will not be satisfied until the cod at the Ostend coast speaks their language as well."

Last week, he declared himself "willing to show solidarity with the Turks, but not with the Walloons". He also complained of the way (the French speaking politicians) Di Rupo, Laurette Onkelinx and Joëlle Milquet "rape our language. ...It hurts my ears!"

Van Aelst's words understandably met with much indignation from the French speakers, who asked his party president Bart De Wever to distance himself. De Wever did anything but. "I would not have used the same words, but Van Aelst has spoken some inconvenient truths," De Wever said.

Van Aelst's loathing of the French speakers is reminiscent of the language conflict in and around Brussels some decades ago, when Flemish people were looked down upon. Many adopted French as their language, if only to enhance their professional opportunities. Others resisted, demanding "language rights", which was a major factor in the emancipation of the Flemish.

Some aspects of this conflict linger on today, such as the lack of Dutch spoken in many Brussels hospitals, which can lead to improper care for Flemish people. Still, much of this is part of the past: The Flemish are no longer a downtrodden people, having given up their language to make a living in a hostile city; Flanders is now the richest region of Belgium.

And, although Dutch is still not compulsory in French-speaking schools, the knowledge of it amongst French speakers has improved; politicians such as Paul Magnette (PS), Melchior Wathelet (CDH) and Charles Michel (MR) are more than fluent in it.

So what are Van Aelst's outbursts all about? They voice frustrations of long ago, but they also echo a growing hostility towards the French speakers. Whether this is the cause or the result of the political turmoil remains unclear, but it is an inconvenient truth for anyone who has to find an agreement between the Flemish and French speakers.



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Art school revisited

New plan aims to fuse different disciplines

→ *continued from page 1*

One of the more controversial ideas concerns the blurring of the four disciplines which currently make up arts education: music, visual art, dance and what is called "word" – basically speech performance, including elocution, theatre and recitation. Not all academies currently provide classes in all four disciplines, but Smet's plan would involve more cross-over tuition, like music theatre or theatrical design.

One of the main problems with this approach, however welcome cross-over tuition may be, is the demand it places on teachers. "Who will decide who teaches what and at what level?" wonders Maggy De Ridder, who teaches music at the academy in Grimbergen, which also offers word and dance. "What are the consequences for rosters and pay and the like? Is there material available for crossover teaching?" She says that there are still many questions that have remained unanswered. "What I see is a framework, and I'm looking for more details. It's all tremendously exciting, but I wonder how we're supposed to realise all of this. It's going to take a number of supermen to make it all happen on time."

"Every step is a step too far. We're jumping into the abyss here"

Johan Jonniaux, director of the academy for music and word in Oud Heverlee, near Leuven, says that they're going to need to concentrate on the teacher's ability, "because until then, every step is a step too far. We're jumping into an abyss here. There's a lot of competence out there, but we're not ready yet for such major changes."

The Royal Conservatory in Brussels will be profoundly affected by the changes proposed because that is where the schools' and academies' music teachers are trained. Director Peter Swinnen joins in with the chorus of doubt over the means of achieving Smet's ambitious aims.

"Teachers are being certified today for a system that is in the process of changing," he says. "We need time to educate the staff who are going to have to implement the system."

The insertion of arts education into the school curriculum involves logistics of connecting an entire school population with the local arts academy so that classes can take place during school hours. Almost 20% of Flemish municipalities don't have any form of arts academy, and in those who do, not all disciplines are currently represented. Only six of the 168 academies in Brussels and Flanders offer all four. As one director commented at a recent information session on the policy proposals, "I've read the document, and I've come to the conclusion that I'm going to need two extra floors built onto my academy".

One part of the plan that struck a chord with the media was to scrap the onerous requirement for children to spend a whole year learning to read music notes before ever being allowed to pick up an instrument. Reactions were divided between those who find the theory of sight-reading to inhibit creativity, and those who are thankful for having learned to read music when they were young.

"Learning to read notes before you play an instrument is difficult and much too abstract," says Johan Lommelen, who teaches violin at the academy in Wemmel. "It's more fun for children to play a string and discover the notes through the instrument."

Ingrid Leys, an official in the education ministry, says that the reality is slightly more nuanced than media have reported. "The precise curriculum still has to be determined, but the requirements of conservatories – practical skill, the ability to read notes and a knowledge of music history – will remain the guiding principle." ♦



Flemish education minister Pascal Smet shakes up the art school scene



Kids of the Municipal Academy of Grimbergen during a dance performance

© Belga

Meanwhile...

A study commissioned by the Flemish education ministry from the Catholic University of Leuven (KUL) has shown that arts education is unrepresentative of Flemish society as a whole. Although it is massively subsidised by the Flemish government, the costs of some disciplines are enough to deter certain groups from enrolling.

There are 157 arts academies in Flanders and 11 Dutch-speaking academies in Brussels. Antwerp province represents almost one-third of the total, with 51 academies, while East Flanders has 35.

A total of 170,337 people took part in some form of arts education in 2009-2010, 2.9% of the population of

Flanders. Most are children and young people, with adults accounting for about 25%. Among adults, the over-65s represent only 6% of the total.

If young people dominate the population of the academies, within that group there are marked differences. Children from families on benefits; from homes where Dutch is not spoken; from poor areas; from technical and professional streams of secondary education – all have a lower chance of taking part in arts education.

About 3% of art students are of a nationality other than Belgian, and among that small group, the Dutch figure heavily: 3,500 of them travelled over the border simply to take arts classes.

The academies take in €14 million in fees from students, compared with total staff costs of €189 million. Although fees haven't gone up in real terms since 2002, the study says, raising them wouldn't make a big difference to the amount of subsidies Flanders is paying.

Aside from class fees, there are other costs associated with arts education, such as acquiring a musical instrument, and purchasing art materials. The average yearly cost to primary school pupils is €114, to secondary students €352, and to adults €291. Music classes are the most expensive of the four disciplines. In effect, the study says, the existence of a flat tariff for all students means that students who opt for cheaper disciplines (like word) are subsidising those in the

more expensive classes. The study makes a number of recommendations:

- increase fees gradually, while introducing a system of reductions aimed at increasing the numbers of students from disadvantaged backgrounds
- stimulate academies to introduce their own equal opportunities policies, including offering additional funding
- make more of an effort to give parents an accurate idea of the hidden costs of arts education, on an annual basis and in the longer term

© Grimbergen Academy



BRUSSELS

One of the nice view over Brussels, 15th floor, close to Brussels centre and European institutions by Métro, 2 minutes from Métro Yser, 2 balconies (one with south view on a farm Brussels centre, one with north view on the canal and the Atomium) quiet neighbours, surrounded by parks.



SCHAERBEEK

exceptional house at 2 min walking distance from the Rogierplace, near all type of transportation, at 5 min from the Dansaertstreet. Large livingroom, 2 bedrooms, 1 bathroom, separate storage/laundry room, 1 toilet, fully furnished kitchen. Nice view and access to large garden.



WATERMAEL-BOITSFORT

Dansaert area, 15th floor, close to Brussels centre and European institutions by Métro, 2 balconies (one with south view on a farm Brussels centre, one with north view on the canal and the Atomium) quiet neighbours, surrounded by parks.



MERQEN

BRUSSELS



Centre Brussels near Dansaert area: Nice apartment DUPLEX 135m², 2008 + parking place 1 car. Livingroom +/-30m², separate diningroom + 16m², fitted kitchen - 3 bedrooms (20m²; 12m²; 12m²) bathroom - showerroom - 2wc. Individual gas heating. Apartment with a lot of light. In good condition. Excellent situation near shops, Dansaert area, metro (Yser) and ring.

WOLUWE SAINT-LAMBERT



ANDERLECHT

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- 1 apt 1 bedroom of 66 m² and 1 flat of 30 m²
- 1 apt 1 bedroom of 66 m² and 1 flat of 30 m²
- 1 apt 1 bedroom of 66 m²

SAINT-GILLES



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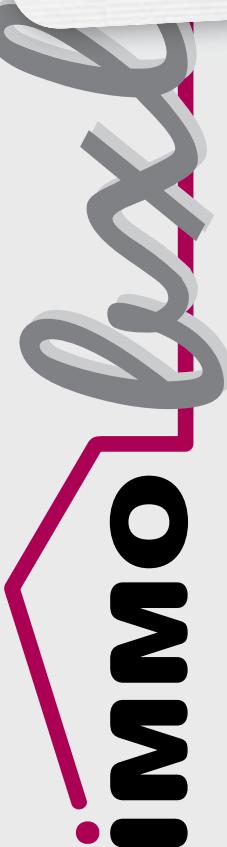
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UCCLE

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BRUSSELS

Facing the nice Parc Cinquantenaire very spacious 4 bedroom house facing the Parc. 3 bathrooms - fully equipped kitchen - garage. One large and nice living room, 2 quiet bedrooms, kitchen is equipped, all in good conditions. Quiet

neighbours, surrounded by parks. A lot of light. In good condition. Excellent situation near shops, theatre, ...



ANDERLECHT

Godeaux - Bemel area, house 3 façades of +/- 240m², completely renovated in 2004, living room 42m², fully equipped kitchen (microwave oven / dishwasher / fridge / ...), breakfast corner, 4 bedrooms, closets, wooden floors, bathroom, toilet, Jacuzzi, 2 shower rooms, garage + space in front of the house, garden, terrace, alarm system, security door, airconditioning.



FOREST

villa 4 facades of 300m², completely renovated in 2000, living room, wooden floors, fireplace, separate dining room, fully equipped kitchen, breakfast area, laundry room, 4 bedrooms, wooden floors, office area, bathroom, shower room, cellar, garden 5 acres, nice terrace, garage 2 or 3 cars, alarm system.

“One in three restaurants threatened”

New system will make casual work and tax evasion more difficult

ALAN HOPE

The organisation representing small businesses in the hotel, restaurant and catering industry in Flanders is to bring a case to the Constitutional Court against a law that obliges restaurants to operate with a new “smart” cash register from 2013.

According to Horeca Vlaanderen, the cash registers, designed to tackle the main methods of tax evasion by restaurant owners, will put one in three establishments out of business by making it impossible for them to employ casual staff, thus increasing costs.

“Look, casual labour is a reality,” said Jan de Haes of Horeca Vlaanderen on VRT radio. De Haes drew a distinction between “dark black”, meaning owners who purposefully cheat the tax system; mistakes that businesses make because the social regulations are so complicated; and “light black”, which involves people who only come to work occasionally when needed and prefer not to be registered and have to pay tax on their extra earnings.

The new system would involve a sort of “black box”, which would register every transaction and would only be

accessible to the inspectors of the finance ministry. One of the favourite methods for restaurants to avoid tax is to take meals paid for in cash off the books. The new system would make that impossible. In addition, the registers can only be operated by wait staff who log into the system with their social security number or identity card, so that their employment is also registered.

“We’ve been asking for years for more flexible rules,” De Haes said, “but since the government drew up the system with the new registers, nothing more has been heard on that question.”

Federal anti-fraud secretary Carl Devlies points out that the restaurant industry received a windfall as recently as 2009 when the government reduced VAT on meals from 21% to 12%. Most restaurants kept their prices the same for customers and banked the difference. The VAT cut was part of a larger effort to wipe out casual labour.

The case before the court will claim that the introduction of the new cash registers is discriminatory because it applies only to restaurants and not to



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cafes. Devlies rejects the argument that casual labour is a necessary evil but is willing to consider the question of discrimination. “It was only the restaurants who received the VAT reduction,” he said. “What is it they want, exactly? Do they want us to repeal that decision? Do they want the new registers introduced to the whole sector? Because I’m happy to discuss it.”

Meanwhile Horeca Brussel, the organisation’s Brussels counterpart, has said it would not support the court action. And chain restaurants like Lunch Garden and Pizza Hut, represented by the Comeos federation, have distanced themselves from the Flemish case. “There’s no excuse for using casual labour,” a spokesman for Comeos said.♦

Flemish pharmacists suspected of tax fraud

Police in Sint-Niklaas, East Flanders, have uncovered a wide-spread system of fraud used by pharmacists across Flanders, worth an estimated €2 million in VAT evasion.

The case traces back to a software company in Sint-Niklaas, which supplied pharmacists with a computer system that allowed them to hide some of their income and so avoid tax, as well as pocketing the VAT customers pay on all purchases. Last week police carried out search warrants at the homes of six people in Sint-Niklaas and Antwerp, all of whom were released after questioning.

The system is estimated to have been used by hundreds of pharmacists. According to the prosecutor’s office in Dendermonde, which is handling the case, the investigation was begun following a tip-off from the tax authorities.

Prosecutor Erwin Dernicourt said the investigation promised to be “a gigantic job” given the number of pharmacists on the software company’s client list – as many as 1,400.

The General Pharmaceutical Union complained that announcements regarding the case had “brought the whole sector into disrepute,” while stressing that the case had nothing to do with the proper treatment of customers by pharmacists. “The customer in each case paid the correct price and in that respect is in no way a victim,” said spokesperson Jan Depoorter.

The software company, meanwhile, has denied being at the centre of the fraud and put the blame on “a number of individual pharmacists who made improper use of our software”.♦

Magistrate faces charges over bank case

The case against two banks that allegedly helped wealthy clients save some €400 million in taxes came to an end last week when the Court of Cassation upheld a decision by the Brussels Court of Appeal in December to stop the prosecution. Federal justice minister Stefaan De Clerck immediately ordered an investigation into the conduct of the investigating magistrate in the long-running case, Jean-Claude Leys, now the advocate-general in Mons, to see whether he had committed any disciplinary offence in his conduct of the case.

The reason given by the court of appeal for throwing out the case was fully accepted by the Cassation Court: The main evidence had been obtained illegally. In addition, magistrates and investigators had conspired to make it appear that the documents were obtained legally.

Those documents contained the names and details of 8,000 account holders of KB-Lux, a Luxembourg-based subsidiary of Kredietbank, now part of KBC. The files contained details of 300 cases in which the bank had set up special arrangements to help wealthy clients escape paying tax.

Adecco to appeal discrimination ruling

Temp agency Adecco will appeal a court ruling that found it guilty of illegal discrimination in employment. The company was ordered to pay damages of one symbolic euro to a trade union and two anti-discrimination organisations that had brought the complaint.

The case dates back to 2001, when an employee reported that Adecco gave a special code to those companies that made it clear they were not looking for applications from people of immigrant

But the documents had been stolen by disgruntled employees of KB-Lux, who first tried to use them as blackmail. They were brought to investigators by an informant who was on a police blacklist indicating he was not to be used.

Investigators proceeded to set up an elaborate cover that would allow the files to be “found” accidentally. When the truth came out, the case was thrown out. Fourteen people, including three customers, six executives of KB-Lux (including CEO Damien Wigny) and five executives of Kredietbank (including CEO Remi Vermeiren) now walk free after a case that has lasted 16 years.

The only person left likely to suffer any consequences from the case – said to be the largest in Belgian fraud history – is the investigating magistrate, now one of the most senior magistrates in the country. Jean-Claude Leys was manipulative and failed in his duty of impartiality, the courts have said. He covered up the falsification of official records, pressurised witnesses and colluded with police in inventing a cover story for the files.♦

THE WEEK IN BUSINESS

Autos • Volvo

The Ghent-based assembling subsidiary of Volvo will hire an additional 100 workers to respond to increasing demand for its XC60 model. The total number of cars assembled in Ghent increased by 25% in the first quarter compared to 2010, while employment jumped by 1,200 over the period to more than 5,000.

Banking • KBC & Dexia

Flanders’ largest bank has paid \$66 million (€46 million) to the World Bank to acquire 5% of the Russian Absolut Bank. The move, which pushes KBC’s stake in the bank to 99%, is expected to facilitate the sale of Absolut. Meanwhile, the Belgo-French Dexia has received a €103 million offer for its Israeli affiliate from the Bank of Jerusalem. Dexia, which is still struggling to meet the terms set by the EU for approving its rescue during the financial crisis, has also sold its American junk bonds portfolio and property assets, taking a book loss of some €3.6 billion.

Banking • Saxo

Denmark’s second largest financial institution, Saxo Bank, specialised in on-line investments and trading, is considering the opening of a Benelux branch based in Brussels.

Bio-tech • Galapagos

Mechelen-based bio-tech firm Galapagos has sold its US Compound Focus affiliate to Evotec for some €12.5 million.

Chemicals • Solvay

Brussels-based chemical group Solvay is investing €16 million to set up the Korean Research Centre in partnership with the Ewha Women’s University of Seoul and to finance research on batteries and photovoltaic cells.

Food • Ardo

The Ardooi-based frozen vegetables producer is considering a €20 million investment in its Geer plant, in Wallonia, to increase capacity and install an automatic refrigeration unit.

Supermarkets • Carrefour

The buildings of six of the Carrefour stores closed last year as part of the French-owned group’s restructuring have been bought by other chains. Four of them – in Sint-Pieters-Leeuw, Ronse, Kuurne and Zwijsen – will be turned into Delhaize supermarkets or Media Markt stores.

Transport • Korean Air

Seoul-based Korean Air is to treble its cargo traffic between Brussels and Seoul to reach nine flights a week by the end of this year. The increase will lead to the creation of up to 300 additional jobs.

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A perfect 10

With a new box set, Mintzkov looks back on a decade of inspiring music

CHRISTOPHE VERBIEST

Over the last decade, Mintzkov, the fivesome from Lier, have released three albums with barbed guitar rock. They're all brought together (with a fourth CD, *Rare Recordings 2001-2011*) in a new box set *10 Years Mintzkov* – a title that is in fact misleading.

"We started 14, 15 years ago," Philip Bosschaerts recalls. Still, the singer, guitar player and lyricist of the band finds the title justified. The box set, he explains, compiles 10 years of recordings. "And *10 Years Mintzkov* sounds better than *14 Years Mintzkov*."

He vividly remembers the band's first show, in September of 1997. "The stage was the back of an open truck. We didn't exactly master our instruments."

At that point, the band was called Mintzkov Luna, and its goal was "having a good time," laughs Bosschaerts. "We were 16, and it was an era of wonderment: With each new chord we learned to play, we made a new song." Hesitantly, he adds: "But I was convinced that one day it would become a full-time activity."

There were decisive moments. "First, our victory in the Rock Rally." This bi-annual contest, organised by the weekly magazine *Humo*, is Flanders' most important rock concours. "It was the confirmation of what we stood for, that we were valid."

Entering a recording studio, though, was another matter. "I still clearly remember the first day of recording our first album in the famous Jet Studio in Brussels. We dreaded it; our producer had to calm us down," recalls Bosschaerts. "But once we settled in, it went quite smoothly."

Looking back on 10 years, does he have any regrets? "One always does, I think. But it's important not to fret about it. As long as you learn from your mistakes, it's OK."

Rare Recordings 2001-2011 has a new song, some unplugged renditions played during radio sessions and some surprising covers collected over the years, like "Rippin' Kitten" by Golden Boy with Miss Kitten and Marianne Faithfull's "Broken English".

"There are a few basic rules when we choose a cover," says Bosschaerts, most importantly, "we have to like the original. And we have to feel like we can alter the song drastically. You won't hear us covering a song by a guitar band, for instance. And it's no coincidence that three of the four covers on the album were originally sung by women."

Covers, he adds, "grab people's attention at festivals, especially when you're always playing for loads of people who don't know you. It's no use, under those circumstances, to play an obscure song. Nowadays we're covering 'Acapella' by Kelis." He smiles: "Another song by a woman."

What's in a name

Googling "Mintzkov", you'll only find references to the band. The name might sound Russian, but actually doesn't mean anything. "We wanted a striking name," Bosschaerts declares. "In the beginning of the band, everyone wanted to know what it meant, but we almost never get asked that anymore." Which means that they have made a name for themselves. What does the future bring? A new



Philip Bosschaerts (foreground) and Mintzkov look back on the wonder years

album, of course. They're working on songs and hope to record them next year. But this autumn, they'll tour sit-down theatres in Flanders with an acoustic show. "We're really looking forward to it: It forces us to rethink our music," explains Bosschaerts. "The dynamics of such a show are completely different from an electric rock show."

It's their second venture into the world of theatres; they also toured them in 2004. "We vowed we would never do it again!" laughs Bosschaerts. "We played a few intimate songs, but it was mostly a rock show. I can tell you, it didn't suit the locations. But we have learned through playing unplugged radio sessions that we can handle an acoustic show this time around." ♦

→ www.mintzkov.be

Genk on Stage

Mintzkov plays as part of Genk on Stage, 24-26 June in the centre of Genk, a two-minute walk from the Limburg city's train station. The line-up of the free outdoor pop-rock festival also includes Lady Linn, Gabriel Rios and Arid.

→ www.genkonstage.be

FESTIVAL SPOTLIGHT



Brosella Folk & Jazz

9-10 July

Ossegempark, Brussels

Last month, we lauded Antwerp's Rivierenhof as one of the best open-air theatres in Flanders, but it's fair to say that the most magical one (albeit not the most practical) is the Groentheater in Brussels' Ossegempark, almost literally in the shadow of the Atomium. Since 1977, it has been hosting the Brosella festival. This free two-day event combines folk (on Saturday) with jazz (on Sunday). Toots Thielemans, who recently turned 89, will headline on the second day. And surely he'll play with the zeal of a teenager. Highly interesting for Brusselsophiles is, on Saturday, Emballage Kado & De Fanfaar. They'll bring contemporary versions of 17th-century folk songs from the capital, sung in the Brussels dialect. Go for it, guys. Or, like they would say: *Geif mo beuzze!*

→ www.brosella.be

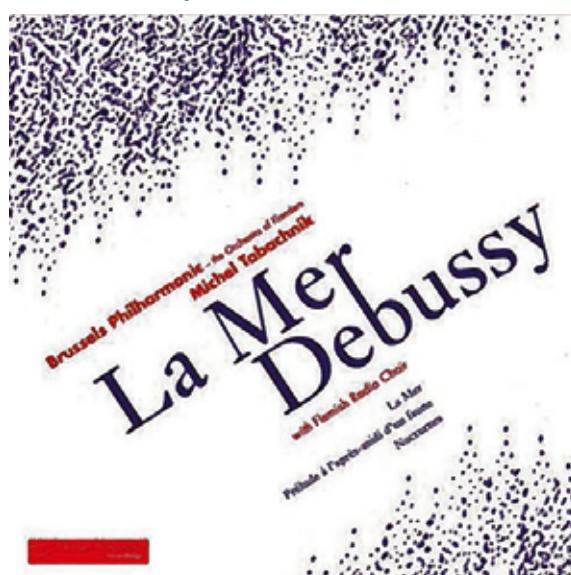
New music

Brussels Philharmonic

Claude Debussy - *La Mer*

The Brussels Philharmonic (previously the Flemish Radio Orchestra) capitalises on its international fame by starting its own label. It will focus on the highlights of the repertoire for philharmonic orchestras (Beethoven's Third Symphony, Tchaikovsky's Sixth), but also on 20th-century music. With works of Claude Debussy, this first release combines both focal points. Swiss conductor Michel Tabachnik guides his orchestra with a solid hand through the nervousness of *La Mer* (*The Sea*). In my mind's eye, I saw the wild billows pounding the Channel coast at Eastbourne where Debussy finished his composition. But the orchestra also skilfully handles the subtleties of *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* (*Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun*).

→ www.brusselsphilharmonic.be



The Neon Judgement

Early Tapes

For a few years now, Onderstroom Records from Rotselaar, Flemish Brabant, has done a superb job documenting Belgian new wave, punk and early electronic music from the 1980s by re-issuing albums that have been largely, but unjustly, forgotten. Leuven twosome The Neon Judgement pioneered, alongside Front 242, electronic body music, though they never attained the fame of their Brussels' counterpart. *Early Tapes* compiles the two cassettes that Dirk Da Davo and TB Frank released in the year after The Neon Judgement's inception: raw guitars combined with primitive synths and drum computers, clearly influenced by New York's Suicide.

→ www.theneonjudgement.com

Birds That Change Colour

On Recording the Sun

Birds That Change Colour, with members from Millionaire and Zita Swoon Group, got their name from Jack Kerouac's poem "San Francisco Blues", but the inspiration for their psychedelic folk pop is British: think *Madcap Syd Barrett*, The Beatles after nibbling acid or The Incredible String Band. *On Recording the Sun*, the trio's debut, contains some delicate songs with summery melodies, although the general atmosphere is autumnal, thanks to intimate folk tunes and a few delicious chunks of psychedelia. A solid first album.

→ www.birdsthatchangecolour.com

The music page

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“M” is for museum

Winner of best museum in Flanders highlights the role of the public

EMMA FIRMIN

To the piano equivalent of a drum roll, the winners of this year's MuseumPrize were revealed at the Cinematek in Brussels on 31 May. And the representatives of “M” Museum in Leuven had the biggest smiles on their faces, walking away with both the public prize and the €10,000 that came with the prize for best museum in the Flanders region.

The prize, an initiative of Openbaar Kunstbezit Vlaanderen, an art magazine, and financially supported by the international law firm Linklaters, recognises the achievements of museums in Flanders, Brussels and Wallonia. The focus of the prize is on accessibility, and nominees are rated by the extent to which they are innovative, actively involve the audience, and make an effort to attract children and groups with a variety of disabilities. They not only compete for the main jury prize, but also for recognition both from the public and from children. The winner in the last category is the Museum of Fine Arts in Ghent.

“It’s impossible to stay in your cocoon and wait for the people to come”

For Luc Delrue, director of “M”, the double win was particularly satisfying. “I don’t think it will happen again anytime soon,” he said. “It’s wonderful to see that both the public and the professional world support you.” The museum has only been open since September 2009, and the jury highlighted the speed with which it has established itself. Delrue is aware that “M” has been criticized for being too popular in its approach, he said, and the award confirms that the right choices have been made internally and

externally. Its public services are central to the way the museum works, and this was duly noted by the jury. Content is not being compromised, Delrue said, but the public role of the museum is that of an equal partner, not of a supporting act. Speaking of museums in general, Delrue believes that they are increasingly aware of the social role they play. “It’s impossible to stay in your cocoon and wait for the people to come.” He thinks that “M”’s refusal to be like an ivory tower is what sets it apart. The idea that a museum should have a certain profile is still too dominant in institutional thinking, he said. Yet, in a society that is so fragmented, he believes that “the time of the profile is finished.”

The jury of the prize, presided over by the baron Jean-Pierre de Bandt, praised the way in which “M” confronted the past and present with its permanent collection and temporary exhibitions. It also highlighted its close cooperation with amateur artists and other cultural players in the city of Leuven. Delrue sees no contradiction in a programme that includes street art, 19th-century Romanticism and a summer music festival (called “M-idzomer”), which includes performances by the likes of John Cale and Gabriel Rios. For Delrue, it’s all about bringing people into contact with the museum, whether they are music fans, dedicated museum-goers or reluctant visitors looking for a drink.

In Brussels, the prize for best museum went to the Museum of Fine Arts of Elsene, the public prize to the Royal Army and Military History Museum, and the children’s prize to the Brussels Mill and Alimentation Museum, reflecting the mixed museum scene in Belgium.♦

→ www.museumprijs.be
→ www.mleuven.be

European prize for Tongeren museum



© Gallo-Roman museum Tongeren



“M” Museum in the centre of Leuven was voted best in Flanders

There were no sacrifices but plenty of congratulatory handshakes and local pride on display, as Tongeren’s Gallo-Roman Museum opened its doors last weekend to celebrate receiving the European Museum of the Year Award (EMYA). Presented by the European Museum Forum (EMF) at an official ceremony on 21 May in Bremerhaven, Germany, the award boasted a diverse shortlist that included Zagreb’s Museum of Broken Relationships and the British Music Experience in London.

The EMF has been operating for over three decades under the auspices of the Council of Europe, and the competition is open to all 27 member states. But with no cash prize to answer funding prayers, what does winning actually mean? For Carmen Willems, director at the Gallo-Roman, the answer is simple: it means a lot. The pedigree of the award within the museum community has the potential to boost both professional and public awareness, and attract the attention of sponsors. “We’re a museum with many temporary exhibitions,” she said, “so we’re always looking for loans. This award will make things easier.”

A quick glance at previous winners of the EMYA neatly demonstrates the adage that size doesn’t matter. Yes, your eyes are immediately drawn to names as Bilbao’s

Guggenheim Museum, but “the overriding consideration is the so-called public quality of the museum,” explains Michael Ryan, member of this year’s award committee, “the way it serves the public, the community and different groups within society.”

The EMF describes the Gallo-Roman as “authoritative but not authoritarian.” For Ryan, a trained archaeologist himself, these words refer to the way the exhibitions at Tongeren “respect the different levels of learning of people of different ages.” A result of extensive research into visitor preference carried out by the museum, this approach prevents multimedia elements, for example, to descend into Las Vegas territory. Videos of curators discussing the different techniques that could’ve been used to make the objects on display are applauded by Ryan as “models of their kind: They don’t tell you that there’s only one answer.”

Whether looking at the daily life of the people of Limburg region 500,000 years ago or exploring the impact of the Romans on the city of Tongeren, this open-ended narrative is something that struck the jury and is echoed by Willems. “We are rewriting history,” she said. “Every excavation reveals something new.” (EF)

→ www.galloromeinsmuseum.be

© Karel Rondou

SINT-TRUIDEN, PEARL OF LIMBURG

The fruit capital of Flanders has more to offer than apples and pears

ANNA JENKINSON

First impressions of Sint-Truiden all depend on your approach into town. If you come by car along the Luikersteenweg, nicknamed *Chaussée d'Amour*, you may be surprised to discover that the road is lined with bikini-clad women standing in windows, waiting for clients. The approach from Naamsesteenweg, on the other hand, takes you past the apple, pear and cherry orchards for which the area is renowned. Women in windows or men on tractors, take your pick.

In fact, I'd recommend arriving by train as the station is located close to the centre of town. Be sure to bring your bicycle or to rent one at the station, because exploring the surrounding countryside is an absolute must.

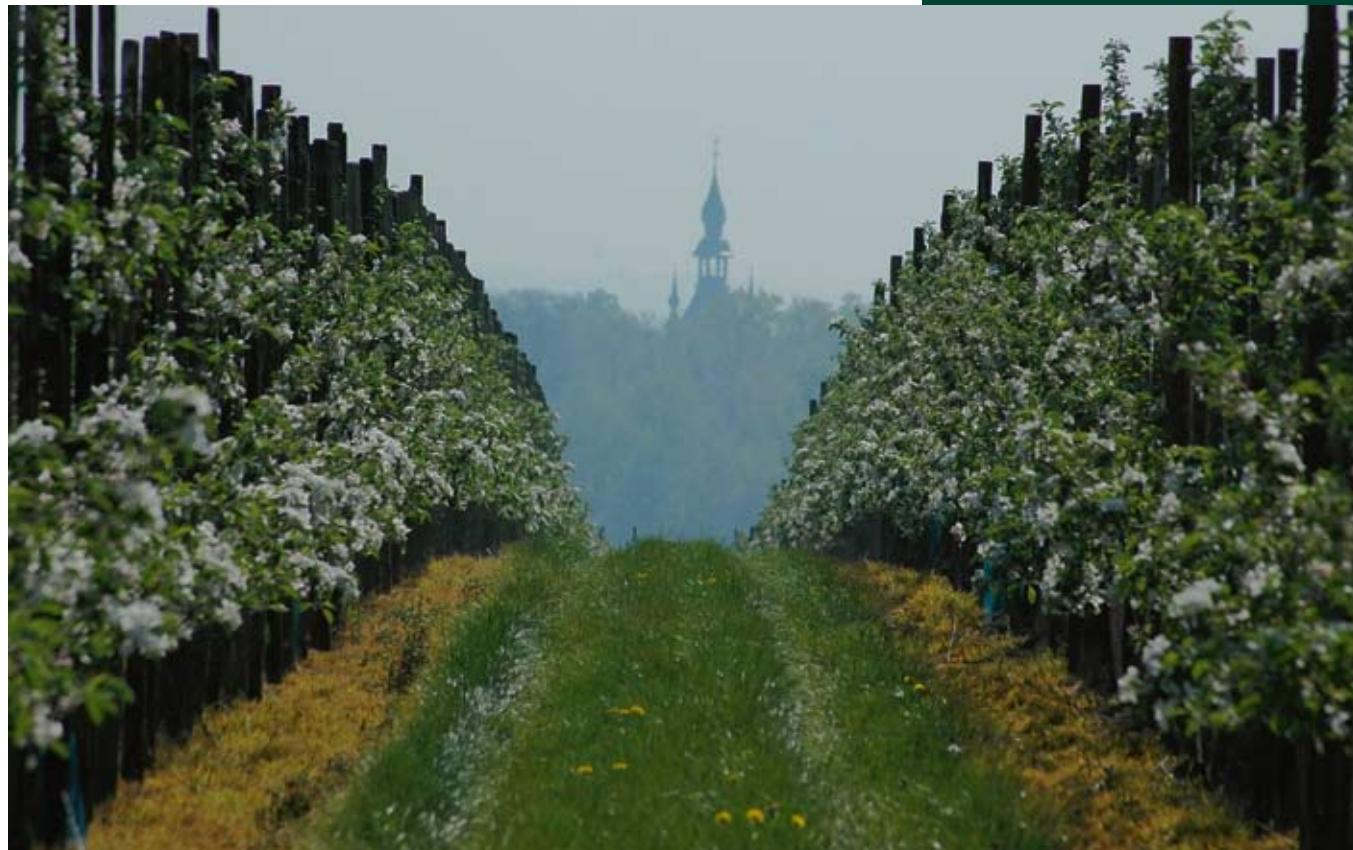
So how should you plan a day in and around this mediaeval town in Limburg province? A good place to start is the Grote Markt, Belgium's second-largest central market square (after Sint-Niklaas), where on Saturday mornings you find a weekly market. Its trading history stretches back to around 1060 AD, when the open space in front of the Benedictine abbey was allowed to develop into a commercial marketplace. It is home to impressive 18th and 19th-century mansions and the even older town hall. Don't forget the tourist information office where you can stock up on maps with walking and cycling routes and buy tickets to go up the nearby abbey tower.

Climbing the 196 steps of the 38-metre high tower is well worth the effort, as from the top you have a panorama view over the Grote Markt, out across the town's many churches to the orchards and fields beyond. Information boards around the viewing platform indicate all sorts of sights ranging from monasteries and the football stadium to the more curious Ziekeren psychiatric centre. The boards also show you the direction to other Belgian towns and where to find the highest point in Sint-Truiden - De Heide, a glowing hill, which, at just 82 metres, is a barely perceptible rise on the skyline. The tower is among the oldest parts of the former abbey complex, dating back to the 11th century. Over time, other sections have been built, destroyed and restored. You can also visit an underground crypt, an 18th-century Abbot's wing and a 19th-century octagonal auditorium known as Academy Hall, which is used for chamber music, choral music and chamber opera performances.

Monument-o-rama

In total, Sint-Truiden boasts some 250 listed monuments. If you keep your eyes peeled, you'll notice on the pavements round brass markers that guide you in the direction of the most noteworthy ones such as the Franciscan friary or Sint-Gangulfusk, the oldest church in town built by abbot Adelard II (1055-1082).

Another impressive monument is the church of the *begijnhof* on the northern edge of town. *Begijnhoven* were enclosed communities founded in the 13th century by women who dedicated their lives to God, without retiring from everyday city life. Many of them, including the one in Sint-Truiden, have been included in the UNESCO World Heritage List of cultural and natural heritage, but this one is special. Halfway



Fruit is everywhere in Sint-Truiden, and so is blossom, if you're there on time

through the 19th century, a series of 38 murals and pillar paintings dating back to the 13th century were discovered behind a thick layer of whitewash. Scenes depicted include the crowning of the Virgin Mary and rats running up the cloak of Sint-Gertrudis of Nijvel (she is to be invoked against rats and mice). There are no signs to explain who is who or what is what, but the volunteer at the front desk is more than happy to show you a recently hand-written notebook, which, after some deciphering, sheds a bit of light on the meaning of the murals.

You'll notice brass markers that guide you to the most noteworthy monuments

Across the road from the *begijnhof* church you will find the Festaerts studio, named after Kamil Festaerts, a watchmaker from Sint-Truiden who is most renowned for his astronomical clock. Every hour, the figures and bells of the six-metre high mechanism come to life, and can be admired during a 40-minute show.

Just a few hundred metres further up is Speelhof castle, built in the 16th century as a countryside second home of the town's abbey. Covering an area of 36 hectares, the castle and its grounds are worth a visit for their peaceful atmosphere. A wander through the woods, along the stream or in the rose

garden are all relaxing ways to spend an hour or two. Cutting through the estate is a cycle path (number 189), lined with Boskoop apple and Conference pear trees. If you're feeling tired and want a sit-down, the Afspanning 't Speelhof café in the middle of the grounds is the place to go. Surrounded by little but greenery and nature, its terrace is arguably the best in town. There's also a playground to keep the little ones happy.

Fruity Sint-Truiden

While you're out and about on the outskirts of town, you may want to visit one of the many fruit orchards. After all, Sint-Truiden is located in Flanders' fruit-producing region of Haspengouw. The fruit growers offer a range of activities for visitors, including guided tours, workshops for children, auctions, romantic picnics and evening walks. The offer varies depending on the day or the month, so it's worth checking online in advance.

There are all sorts of places to enjoy the local food and drink, but one that's particularly worth noting is Kerkom Brewery, about six kilometres south of Sint-Truiden, on the Naamsesteenweg. You can go on a tour of the brewery, which was founded more than a century ago, or simply take a seat in the inner courtyard and taste the local Bink beers. Blond and brown beers are available all year round, and there are various others such as the Bink Adelardus Dubbel and Tripel, named after Adelardus, one of the city's first abbots. Given the strength of the beer, you may want to take heed of a poster hanging on the wall inside: it is a notice from King Leopold II to all those present and all those visiting in the future, spelling out the law against public drunkenness.

As you head back to the centre of Sint-Truiden, look out for the temporary art installation "Het Dorp", a life-size replica by local artist Gert Robjins of the church and presbytery in the village where he grew up. It will remain on view until 30 October.

My first impressions of Sint-Truiden were a little different than I had expected (I came by car along the Luikersteenweg), but they were quickly replaced by impressions of a town rich in cultural heritage, surrounded by beautiful spots for bike rides and picnics. The moral of the story: don't be too quick to judge. ♦

Holiday at home

If you've decided to forgo a big summer holiday this year, that doesn't mean you have to spend summer days at home. This month in Flanders Today, we'll show you the best places in Flanders to while away a week



Apples and pears dominate the scene at the Saturday morning markets

The former abbey tower, 38 metres high, offers a panoramic view of the city and its surroundings

The astronomical clock of local watchmaker Kamil Festaerts comes to life every hour

→ www.toerisme-sint-truiden.be



One of Sint-Truiden's many church towers, seen from one of its many apple orchards

WHAT TO SEE

- Panoramic view of the city and surroundings from atop a former abbey tower
- UNESCO-classified *begijnhof*, with murals and pillar paintings
- Countryside castle in the middle of the woods and rose gardens
- Orchards of the fruit capital of Flanders
- Kerkom brewery with all kinds of special local beers



Murals and pillar paintings decorate the age-old *begijnhof*

travelling in Flanders

Invasion of the sushi restaurants

A critical review of seven sushi places in Ghent



© Umit Tayan/Shutterstock

COURTNEY DAVIS

Ghent is finally on par with the other big-league cities when it comes to offering sushi. In the past few years, the number of restaurants offering this healthy, fresh Japanese fare has nearly doubled. To help you make a selection, here is a brief introduction to the now wider range of choices out there.

EXPERIENCE: *Zenchibar*

► www.zenchibar.be

With Buddha statues, a tree-filled terrace, and wooden floors and ceilings, the entire atmosphere of ZenChiBar is very... well, zen. This well-designed restaurant, tucked away around a corner of the Patershol district, has chosen the appropriate name. As they explain on their website; Zen is a life philosophy, Chi is the Asian concept of "energy" contained within every element in the universe and Bar is a place to have a drink and relax. While they have lovely set menus, their focus is more on overall Asian food and less on just sushi.

FANCY: *Amatsu*

► www.amatsu.be

One of the first on the sushi scene, the year 2007 saw Amatsu open its doors to a steady stream of discerning clientele. Noted as authentic Japanese cooking in Michelin's 2011 guide, Amatsu is pricey but worth it. The menu highlights the diversity of Japan's well-known dishes such as Unadon – grilled eel for €34. For sushi, there are a limited amount of Western classics like the California roll. Alternatively, trust the chef and go for a tasting menu created of either sushi (€43) or sashimi for (€47).

QUALITY: *Ocean Sushi*

► www.oceansushi.be

One of the three restaurants to open in 2010, the Chinese owners of Ocean Sushi are friendly and have created an airy place with a comfortable atmosphere. The menu is pretty basic, but what stands out is the balance between quality and price. It isn't too expensive, the portions of sashimi are just right, and the quality is what you want in a seafood restaurant.

PRE-MADE for PICK UP: *Sushi Food*

► www.sushi-food.com

Located next to Sint-Baaf's cathedral in Ghent, this small shop has prepared dishes ready to take away. While relatively basic in its offerings of rolls and sashimi, this is the best solution when the weather is hot and cooking is unbearable. Eight to 12 pieces make up the single portion packs which range from €12 to €14, or double the price for dinner for two.

INVENTIVE: *Sushi Palace*

► www.sushipalace.be

The third and most recent sushi restaurant to open its doors, Sushi Palace in the Oudburg, has been consistently busy thanks to its well-priced sushi and inventive rolls. Here the hand rolls combine some of the most surprising ingredients for fun and creative results. The Nepalese owners know what they're doing – make sure you try the €9 inside-out dragon roll with spicy tuna on the outside filled with red snapper, salmon and more tuna.

DELIVERY: *Ikura Sushi*

► www.ikurasushi.be

Right down the road from its Oudburg neighbor is a less busy, less cozy version that also opened up last year. However, with outdoor seating, different opening days and best of all, delivery service, it remains competitive. The prices are pretty impressive with options like the Ikura Bridge featuring an amazing deal of 46 pieces of sushi and sashimi for only €50.

QUANTITY: *Sapporo*

► www.sapporo-gent.be

If you want to eat as much as you can, opt for all you can eat in the suburb of Sint-Martens-Latem. You order from an extensive menu, three items at a time. Sushi, sashimi, tempura, and meat off the grill means you can introduce yourself to some unfamiliar items or simply get greedy and eat as much as possible. However, the portions are small, and the quality of the rolls aren't top notch. But with a price tag of only €25, it's a fair deal.

This week, *Flanders Today's* Bite joined a sushi workshop and rolled her own. See page 16.

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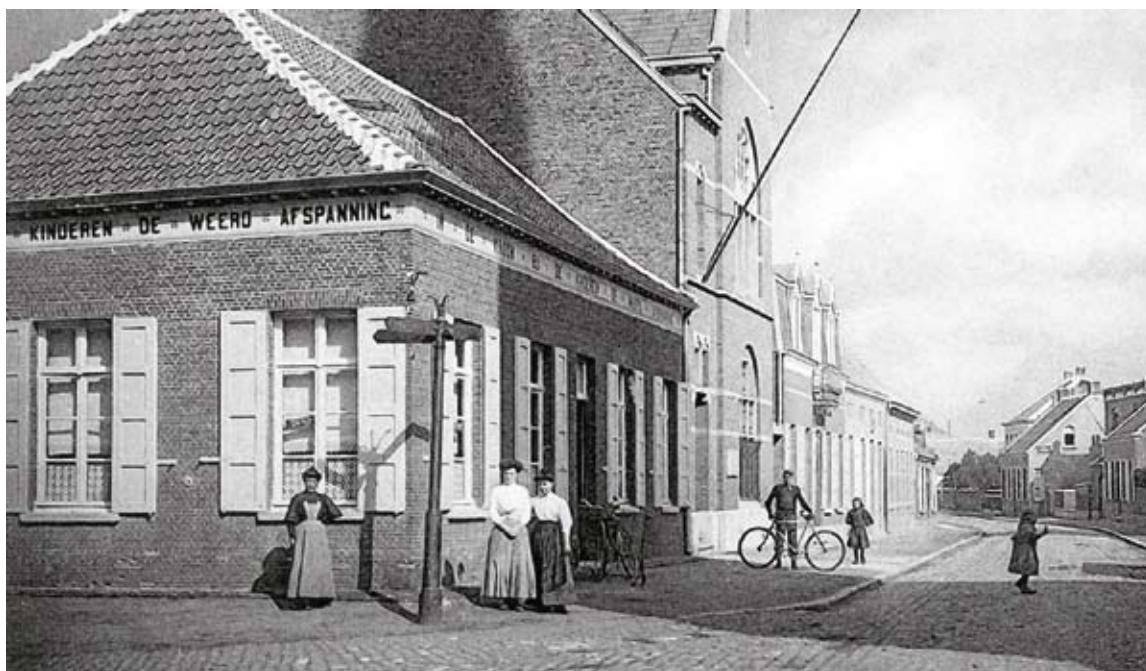


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Drinking in history CAFÉS IN DE ANTWERPSE POLDER

MARC MAES

Every year, the Koninklijke Heemkundige Kring van de Antwerpse Polder, or Royal History Circle of the Antwerp Polders, stages an exhibition at the Polder Museum in the tiny village of Lillo. A visit to the remains of what once was Lillo-Fort, the museum and a free ferry ride across the River Scheldt to the threatened village of Doel make for a whole day out.

The History Circle was founded in 1959 with the task of safeguarding the heritage of the polder region. The annual exhibitions cover a variety of elements of the history of the northern Antwerp polders, its people and its culture.

And pubs certainly have a long history in Flanders. After making the decision to cover the history of the region's drinking holes, curator Hugo Vermeiren admits to a "luxury problem", with a wealth of material to choose from. They limited themselves to the period from the turn of the last century to 1965, "the year in which the last remains of villages like Wilmarsdonk, Oorderen and Oosterweel were destroyed to make way for the port expansion."

Pictures, postcards, newspaper cuttings and anecdotes on cafes of the region's tiny villages fill the Polder Museum. Most of the old café's (or *staminees*) were part of other activities, like a farm, a barbershop, a bicycle repair shop or a blacksmith or

cobbler, who served drinks for an extra dime.

"What struck us most was the evolution of the social role of the café," says Vermeiren. "The café was the social centre of the village community where people came to play cards or *vogelpik* (darts). ... There was no TV, and only few people had a radio. Cafés were also an important meeting place for associations like football teams and cycle clubs, "and the forum to discuss local politics," continues Vermeiren. "Today, café's have become more consumption oriented."

The Polder Museum hosts a detailed reconstruction of a typical polder café of the period. "The Leuvense stove was the centre of the café," explains Vermeiren, pointing to the design that was so popular in the earlier part of the 20th century. You'll also find a 1939 version of the Wet Vandervelde (law on the abuse of alcohol) and an authentic Ariosa organette, an early version of a record player, with a disk filled with holes that, when placed on a turntable with a special needle, played accordion music. Then there are the *constateurs*, or pigeon clocks, to register the results of pigeon competitions.

Alida De Bie, mayor of Stabroek, remembers that her grandparents' farm, the Groene Swaen - still in the village centre today - used to be a tavern where the local council held

its meetings. "One of the most beautiful places in the polder was Het Havenhuis, with Jeanne Quick as the landlady. That café was in Berendrecht at De Frederik," she says, referring to the fortification built by Dutch prince Frederik of Orange in 1628.

Public broadcaster VRT re-ran the TV series *Terug naar Oosterdonk* (*Back to Oosterdonk*) last month, a bit of luck for the History Circle, who profited from the attention for long-gone polder villages and traditions. "The series depicts the life in the polders just before the port and industry took possession of the area," says Vermeiren. "The first episode was broadcast the week the exhibition opened - a very nice coincidence." ♦

Cafés in de Antwerpse Polder (1900-1965)

Polder Museum
Tolhuisstraat 10-16, Lillo

→ www.poldermuseum-lillo.be

Group rates and guided tours available. The Lillo-Doel ferry runs weekends and holidays until 25 September

MORE HISTORY ON SHOW THIS WEEK

Zusters van Liefde Museum → Ghent

Museum of Flemish Student Life → Leuven

America: It's Also Our History! → Tour & Taxis, Brussels



Antwerp

De Roma
Turnhoutsebaan 327; 03.292.97.40
www.deroma.be
JUN 10 20.30 Ballroom & The Ballroom Orchestra
JUN 11 20.30 Amsterdam Klezmer Band

Kelly's Irish Pub
Keyserlei 27
www.kellys.be
JUN 10-12 20.00 Noel Shannon + Lynn

Trix
Noorderingel 28; 03.670.09.00
www.trixonline.be
JUN 9 20.00 Danzig
JUN 11 18.00 Mono + Flying Horseman + Microphonics + Low Vertical
JUN 15 20.00 Converge + Rise and Fall + Oathbreaker

Bruges

Het Entrepot
Binnenveld 4; 050.61.02.48
www.het-entrepot.be
JUN 11 19.00 Bring Me The Horizon + Architects

Brussels

Ancienne Belgique
Anspachlaan 110; 02.548.24.24
www.abconcerts.be
JUN 10 20.00 Amon Tobin **JUN 12** 20.00 Ducktails + Julian Lynch + Big Troubles **JUN 13** 20.00 Chic & Nile Rodgers **JUN 14** 19.00 Down + Duff McKagan's Loaded

Fuse

Blaesstraat 208; 02.511.97.89
www.fuse.be
JUN 11 23.00 Boubastar + Dawi + DC Salas

Le Botanique

Koningsstraat 236; 02.218.37.32
www.botanique.be
JUN 8 20.00 The Cave Singers + Bachelorette

Magasin 4

Havenlaan 51B; 02.223.34.74
www.magasin4.be
JUN 11 20.00 Stoner Rockfest: Ramon Zarate + Horses on Fire + Naughty Mouse, more
JUN 16 18.00 Vader + Krisiun + Resistance + Essence

Piola Libri

Franklinstraat 66-68; 02.736.93.91
www.piolalibri.be
JUN 8 19.00 Another Belgian Band

Recyclart

Ursulinenstraat 25; 02.502.57.34
www.recycleart.be
JUN 10 22.00 Kumbia Queers

VK Club

Schoolstraat 76; 02.414.29.07
www.vkconcerts.be
JUN 9 20.00 Afterhours + Perturbazione
JUN 16 21.00 Molotov + Romano Nervoso

Vorst-National

Victor Roussealaan 208; 0900.00.991
www.forestnational.be
JUN 9 20.00 Katie Melua
JUN 12 20.30 Duran Duran

Ghent

Bij De Vieze Gasten
Reinaertstraat 125; 09.237.04.07
www.deviezegasten.org
JUN 10 20.30 Derek, Guido Belcanto & De Propere Fanfare + Place Musette

Charlatan

Vlasmarkt 6; 09.224.24.57
www.charlatan.be
JUN 9 22.00 I.C. Revisited

Dok

Koopaardijlaan 13
www.dokgent.be
JUN 10 21.00 Ducktails + Julian Lynch + Big Troubles

Handelsbeurs

Kouter 29; 09.265.91.65
www.handelsbeurs.be
JUN 13 20.15 The Golden Palominos

Kinky Star

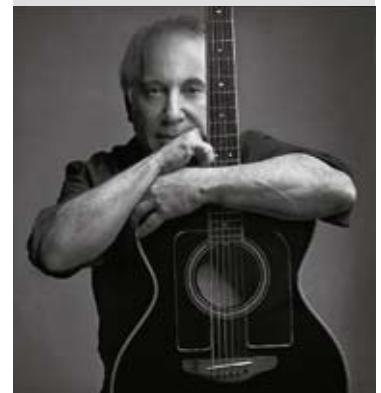
Vlasmarkt 9; 09.223.48.45
www.kinkystar.com

GET YOUR TICKETS NOW!

Paul Simon

5 July, 20.30
Vorst Nationaal

There are still tickets left for this American master of pop rock, one of the world's most recognised songwriters whose 1986 album *Graceland* helped fuel the anti-apartheid movement and inspired musicians to take up global political causes in greater numbers.



→ www.vorstnationaal.be

JUN 11 21.00 Benito Band
JUN 12 21.00 Negative Pegasus
JUN 14 21.00 Bearwolf

Vooruit

St Pietersnieuwstraat 23; 0900.26.060
www.vooruit.be
JUN 9 21.00 The Raveonettes + Giana Factory

White Cat

Drongenhoof 40; 09.223.22.27
www.white-cat.be
JUN 9 22.00 Azer
JUN 10 22.00 Nils
JUN 11 22.00 Soultrain

Kortrijk

De Kreun
Conservatoriumplein 1; 056.37.06.44
www.dekreun.be
JUN 11-13 15.00 Sinxen Vlas Vegas 11

Leuven

STUK
Naamsestraat 96; 016.32.03.20
www.stuk.be
JUN 12 20.30 True Bypass + Gianni Marzo

Sint-Niklaas

OJC Kompas
Driekoningenstraat 48; 03.776.72.70
www.ojckompas.be
JUN 12 19.00 Born To Lose + Silver&Gold + Lucky Sinners + Forgotten Sailors



Antwerp

Buster
Kaasrui 1; 03.232.51.53
www.busterpodium.be
JUN 9 21.30 Jazzy Blues & Bluesy Jazz **JUN 10** 22.00 Born **JUN 11** 22.00 Guy Davis **JUN 14** 22.00 The Magical Mystery Band **JUN 15** 21.30 Gaspard Vangindertael

Café Hopper

Leopold de Waelstraat 2; 03.248.49.33
www.cafehopper.be
JUN 12 16.00 Nadine Nix Band
JUN 13 21.00 Marc Sperber Project

Brussels

Art Base
Zandstraat 29; 02.217.29.20
www.art-base.be
JUN 10 20.00 MuZiek de Singe

Jazz Station

Leuvensesteenweg 193; 02.733.13.78

Agenda

www.jazzstation.be
JUN 9-10 20.00 Trias
JUN 11 18.00 Kris Defoort Trio

Le Caveau du Max
 Emile Maxlaan 87; 02.733.17.88
 www.lemax.be
JUN 9 20.30 Les Violons de Bruxelles

Le Cercle des Voyageurs
 Lievrouwbroersstraat 18; 02.514.39.49
 www.elercledesvoyageurs.com
JUN 16 20.00 Thomas Champagne Trio

Sounds Jazz Club
 Tulpstraat 28; 02.512.92.50
 www.soundsjazzclub.be
 Concerts at 22.00:
JUN 9 Fred Delplancq Trio **JUN 10** Jazzy Strings 'special manouche' **JUN 11** Marta Mus Band **JUN 13** Master Session **JUN 14** Notebook **JUN 16** Igor Gehenot Trio

The Music Village
 Steenstraat 50; 02.513.13.45
 www.themusicvillage.com
JUN 8 20.30 Wawaron Quartet

Théâtre du Méridien
 Terhulpssteenweg 200; 02.663.32.11
 www.theatredumeridien.be
Until JUN 11 20.00 Nathalie Loriers Trio

Théâtre Molière
 Bastionsquare 3; 02.217.26.00
 www.muziekpublique.be
JUN 8 20.00 Hazmat Modine



Antwerp

Toneelhuis/Bourla
 Komedieplaats 18; 03.224.88.44
 www.toneelhuis.be
JUN 14 20.00 Axl Peleman: Volksliedes (Folk Songs)

Zuiderpershuis
 Waalse Kaai 14; 03.248.01.00
 www.zuiderpershuis.be
JUN 10 20.30 Anibal Velasquez

Ardooie

Cultuurkapel De Schaduw
 Wezestraat 32; 0479.80.94.82
 www.deschaduw.net
JUN 10 20.00 Shanti Tribe (India)
JUN 11 20.30 The Antler King

Brussels

Art Base
 Zandstraat 29; 02.217.29.20
 www.art-base.be
JUN 9 20.00 Kawa Brothers (Rajasthan)
JUN 16 20.00 Altland, klezmer and sevdalinka

Le Botanique
 Koningstraat 236; 02.218.37.32
 www.botanique.be
JUN 10 20.00 Tamikrest (Mali)
JUN 15 20.00 Tom Russell

Ghent

Vooruit
 St Pietersnieuwstraat 23; 0900.26.060
 www.vooruit.be
JUN 8 20.00 Wye Oak
JUN 15 22.00 Free Birds That Change Colour

Brussels

Bozar
 Ravensteinstraat 23; 02.507.82.00
 www.bozar.be
JUN 10 20.00 Orchestre National de Belgique conducted by Carlo Rizzi: Ravel
JUN 12 11.00 Park Min Young, flute; Anne Van den Bossche, piano; Joseph Jongen, Raymond Moulaert, Gabriel Fauré
JUN 15 20.00 La Petite Bande conducted by Sigiswald Kuijken: Haydn, Mozart

Chapelle de Linthout
 Oude Lindelaan 2; 0477.65.65.01
 www.laudantes.com
JUN 9 20.30 Laudantes Consort conducted by Guy Janssens: Cristobal de Morales, Thomas Tallis

Ostend

Kursaal (Casino)
 Monacoplein 2; 070.22.56.00
 www.kursaalostende.be
JUN 9 20.00 National Orchestra of Belgium conducted by Ion Marin: Ravel
JUN 11 20.00 Kamermuziek: Schubert, Mozart, Brahms



Brussels

De Munt
 Muntplein; 070.23.39.39
 www.demunt.be
JUN 11-30 15.00/18.00 Les Huguenots by Giacomo Meyerbeer conducted by Marc Minkowski, staged by Olivier Py (in French with surtitles in French and Dutch)



Antwerp

Stadsschouwburg
 Theaterplein 1; 0900.69.900
 www.stadsschouwburgantwerpen.be
JUN 15-16 20.00 Malandain Ballet Biarritz in Roméo & Juliette, choreographed by Thierry Malandain

Brussels

Kaaistudio's
 Onze-Lieve-Vrouw van Vlaekstraat 81; 02.201.59.59
 www.kaaitheater.be
JUN 9-10 20.30 Solid Gold and Jolie, choreographed by Ula Sickle

Ghent

Vooruit
 St Pietersnieuwstraat 23; 0900.26.060
 www.vooruit.be
Until JUN 11 20.00 Akram Khan Company in Vertical Road, choreographed by Khan



Antwerp

Fakkelteater Zwarte Zaal
 Reyndersstraat 7; 03.232.14.69
 www.fakkelteater.be
JUN 10-19 15.30/20.30 De Speling in La Nonna by Roberto Cossa, directed by Jean-Francois D'Hondt (in Dutch)

Klokhuis Theatre

Parochiaanstraat 4; 03.231.76.87
 www.vlaamsfruit.be
JUN 11 20.30 Winterjong in Slapen is voor dromers (Sleeping is for Dreamers; in Dutch)

Monty

Montystraat 3-5; 03.238.91.81
 www.monty.be
JUN 15-18 20.30 Maatschappij Discordia and 't Barre Land in Repertoire, scenes from 33 different plays (in Dutch)

Theater Het Appeltje

Lange Nieuwstraat 81; 03.231.71.81
 www.vlaamsfruit.be
JUN 9-11 20.30 Pieter Van Nieuwenhuyze in Pak mij eens stevig vast (Hold Me Tightly), musical (in Dutch)

Toneelhuis/Bourla

Komedieplaats 18; 03.224.88.44
 www.toneelhuis.be
Until JUN 10 15.00/20.00 Bloed & rozen: Het lied van Jeanne en Gilles (Blood and Roses: The Song of Jeanne and Gilles) by Tom Lanoye, directed by Guy Cassiers (in Dutch)

Ardooie

Cultuurkapel De Schaduw
 Wezestraat 32; 0479.80.94.82
 www.deschaduw.net

JUN 12 15.00 A Muse in Zout: Een muzikale vertelling (Salt: A Musical Story; in Dutch)

Bruges

Biekorf
 Sint-Jakobsstraat 20; 050.44.30.40
 www.ccbrugge.be

JUN 10-11 21.00 Een Erte voa Brugge, written and directed by Peter De Becker, comedy (in Dutch)

Brussels

KVS Bol
 Lakensestraat 146; 02.210.11.12

www.kvs.be
Until JUN 16 20.30 Weg by Josse De Pauw (in Dutch)

Ghent

Theater Tinnenpot
 Tinnenpotstraat 21; 09.225.18.60
 www.tinnenpot.be
Until JUN 11 20.00 Multatuliteater Gent in Hedda Gabler, directed by Eric Meirhaeghe (in Dutch)

JUN 15-17 20.00 Pieter Van Nieuwenhuyze in Muzikaal Verteltheater (in Dutch)

Waregem

CC De Schakel
 Schakelstraat 8; 056.62.13.40
 www.ccdeschakel.be
JUN 10-11 20.00 Han Solo: MultiKul, stand-up comedy (in Dutch)



Aalst

Netwerk Centrum for Hedendaagse Kunst
 Houtkai; 053.70.97.73
 www.netwerk-art.be
Until JUN 19 Sander Buyck: West Bank Walls, photos of Palestine by the Flemish photographer

Antwerp

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

Extra City

Tulpstraat 79; 03.677.16.55
 www.extracity.org
Until JUL 3 Museum of Display, a series of presentations that look at definitions of 'art' and the 'institution' within the scenario of a fictional museum, with works by various artists

Fashion Museum (MoMu)

Nationalestraat 28; 03.470.27.70
 www.momu.be
Until AUG 14 Unravel: Knitwear in Fashion, a wide variety of knitted garments and accessories from across the centuries, with a focus on high fashion pieces and their vernacular interpretations

Koningin Fabiolazaal

Jezusstraat 28; 03.203.42.04
 www.provant.be
Until JAN 8 2012 The Moderns, top pieces from the Royal Museum of Fine Arts (KMSKA), including works by Emile Claus, James Ensor and Marc Chagall

Maagdenhuismuseum

Lange Gasthuisstraat 33; 03.338.26.20
 ocmw.antwerpen.be/Maagdenhuismuseum
Until JUN 26 Armoede... of kansen voor iedereen? (Poverty... or Opportunities for All?), images of poverty in Antwerp, from the middle ages to today

Middelheim Museum

Middelheimlaan 6; 03.828.13.50
 www.middelheimmuseum.be
Until SEP 25 Erwin Wurm: Wear me out, open-air display of performative and living sculptures by the Austrian artist

Museum aan de Stroom (MAS)

Hanzestedenplaats 1; 03.338.44.34
 www.mas.be
Until DEC 31 Masterpieces in the MAS: Five Centuries of Images in Antwerp, the first temporary exhibition in the new museum shows how Antwerp and Flanders significantly influenced 16th- and 17th-century Western European imagery

Plantin-Moretus Museum

Vrijdagmarkt 22; 03.221.14.50
 www.museumplantinmoretus.be
Until AUG 28 Inzichten en Vergezichten (Insights and Panoramic Views), the book and designs of Anne-Mie Van Kerckhoven, designer of the light panels for the new MAS Museum

Silver Museum Sterckshof

Hooftvunderlei 160; 03.360.52.52
 www.zilvermuseum.be
Until JUN 12 Van haarnaald tot schoengesp: Accessoires in goud en zilver (From Hairpin to Shoe Buckle: Accessories in Gold and Silver), 14th- to 20th-century European accessories

Bibliotheca Wittockiana

Bemelstraat 23; 02.770.53.33
 www.wittockiana.org
Until OCT 1 Le Fonds Michel Wittock: de la passion au don (The Gift of Passion), collection of remarkable bookbindings from the Renaissance to the present day

Bozar

Ravensteinstraat 23; 02.507.82.00
 www.bozar.be
Until JUN 12 Maurice Frydman: Plasticités, works made from plastic materials by the Brussels-based artist

Until JUN 12 Jordi Colomer: What is

DON'T MISS

Blood and Roses

8-10 June

Toneelhuis, Antwerp

Theatre director Guy Cassiers and novelist Tom Lanoye make one dynamic Flemish duo in this new production specially written for next month's prestigious Avignon Festival in France. But we get to see it first. Joan of Arc and Gilles de Rais fought on the same side in 15th-century France but couldn't have been more different – she a spiritually led freedom fighter, later made a saint, and he a sexual predator, guilty of the murder of many young boys. But they were both condemned by religion and burned at the stake. It's a tale told by three vocalists, with a new composition by Dominique Pauwels based on the principles of early mediaeval and polyphonic music, which also served as inspiration for the story.



Blankenberge

Belle Epoque Centrum

Elisabethstraat 24; 050.42.87.41
 www.belleepoque.blankenberge.be

Until SEP 16 Hasseltse keramiek, Art Nouveau drip glaze pottery

Bruges

Raakpunt

7 Sint Jakobsstraat

www.raakpunt.be

Until JUN 30 Decors, work by Flemish

photographer Peter De Bruyne

Site Oud Sint-Jan

Mariastraat 38; 050.47.61.00

www.expo-brugge.be

Permanent From Pablo Picasso to Joan Miró, permanent exhibition of more than 100 works by Picasso, plus works by Henri Matisse, Marc Chagall, Joan Miró, more

Stadshallen

</div

ISELP
Waterloosesteenweg 31; 02.504.80.70
www.iselp.be
Until JUN 9 Laurence Dervaux, installations by the Belgian artist

Jacques Franck Cultural Centre
Waterloosesteenweg 94; 02.538.90.20
www.cjacquesfranck.be
Until JUN 19 Untitled 5.11, installations by contemporary American artist Peter Downsborough

Jewish Museum of Belgium
Minimstraat 21; 02.512.19.63
www.mjib-jmb.org
Until AUG 28 After Images, multidisciplinary show by contemporary American artists

Le Botanique
Koningsstraat 236; 02.218.37.32
www.botanique.be
JUN 8-AUG 14 Sarah Moon: Coincidences, photos by the British fashion photographer and filmmaker

Marc Sleen Museum
Zandstraat 33; 02.219.19.80
www.marc-sleen.be
Until SEP 25 Nero, Yuri Gagarin and Other Astronauts, space travel in comic strips

Museum of the National Bank of Belgium
Wildewoudstraat 10; 02.221.22.06
Until JUN 15 Geld en je leven (Money and Your Life), interactive exhibition encouraging youngsters to reflect on their relationship with money (12-16 years)

Royal Museum of the Armed Forces
Jubelpark 3; 02.737.78.33
www.legermuseum.be
Until SEP 4 1945-2002: Belgian soldiers in

LISA BRADSHAW



Zet de zomer in 9-23 June Vooruit, Ghent

Zet de zomer in, or ease into summer, with some terrific film programming at arts centre Vooruit, which this year sets aside its Summer Films series in favour of KASKrakers, a selection of short films and documentaries from Ghent's arts academy. You'll find new work, such as Wannes Destoop's much-heralded Cannes winner *Badpakje 46* (*Swimsuit 46*) and Dries Maesens' *Sorry*, in which two men bump into each other and get a bit *too* polite in their responses. But you'll also see older films by now well-known directors, such as *50cc* by Felix Van Groeningen (*De helaasheid der dingen*) and *Cinema Central* by Elias Grootaers (*Not Waving, But Drowning*).

That happens later in the month, but first Vooruit screens the cult film classic *Taxi Driver*, which catapulted director Martin Scorsese and actor Robert De Niro (pictured) into international celebrity and transitioned Jodie Foster from childhood star to risk-taking adult.

→ www.vooruit.be

Germany, rare photographs documenting 60 years of diplomatic relations between the two countries
Until OCT 16 War&Game(s), photographs by Virginie Cornet and toys from the period of the First World War

Royal Museum of Fine Arts
Regentschapsstraat 3; 02.508.32.11
www.fine-arts-museum.be
Until JUN 26 A selection of the most important artworks from the 19th- and 20th-century collection, including Salvador Dalí, Giorgio de Chirico and Paul Delvaux
Until SEP 4 Art and Finance in Europe: 18th-Century Masterworks in a New Light, 20 major works by Francesco Guardi, Benjamin Wolff, Léonard Defrance, more

Sint-Gorikshallen
Sint-Goriksplein 23; 02.502.44.24
www.sintgorikshallen.be
Until JUN 29 Bruxelles Urbanitude, photos of urban landscapes in Brussels by Alain Trellu

Tour & Taxis
Havenlaan 86C; 02.549.60.49
www.tour-taxis.com
Until JUN 19 Zes miljard mensen (Six Billion People), photo project by Yann Arthus-Bertrand
Until JUL 4 America: It's Also Our History!, three centuries of cross-Atlantic relations with frescoes, charts, audiovisual material, installations, objects and artwork
JUN 8-19 Ivan Good, paintings of Ostend by the Flemish artist

ULB - Campus de Solbosch
Paul Hegerlaan 22-24; 02.650.37.65
www.ulb.ac.be/culture
Until JUL 16 Les Voyageurs du Savoir (The Travellers of Knowledge), interviews and portraits of international students

Villa Empain
Franklin Rooseveltlaan 67; 02.627.52.30
www.villaempain.com
Until SEP 25 Of Women's Modesty and Anger, rituals, wigs, clothing, make-up and more constraints that determined the life of women for centuries

WIELS
Van Volxemlaan 354; 02.340.00.50
www.wiels.org
Until AUG 14 Charlotte Beaudry: Get Drunk, paintings, drawings and videos by the Brussels-based artist
Until AUG 14 Nasreen Mohamedi: Notes-Reflections on Indian Modernism, paintings, drawings and photographs by the Indian artist

Ghent
Design Museum
Jan Breydelstraat 5; 09.267.99.99
www.designmuseumgent.be
Until JUN 13 Fantasy Design, works by young people from Belgium, Denmark, Finland and Spain
Until JUN 13 L'Objet Sublime, more than 300 ceramic works from 1875-1945 France

Dr Guislain Museum
Jozef Guislainstraat 43; 09.216.35.95
www.museundrguislain.be
Until SEP 4 In the Margin: Belgian Documentary Photography, work that documents the deviant, the extraordinary, the unnoticed, the 'other'

Museum of Contemporary Art (SMAK)
Citadelpark; 09.221.17.03
www.smak.be
Until JUL 3 Michaël Sailstorfer: Raum und Zeit (Space and Time), sculptures by the German artist
Until SEP 18 Jorge Macchi: Music Stands Still, paintings, sculptures, installations and video by the Argentinian artist

Gaasbeek
Gaasbeek Castle
Kasteelstraat 40; 02.531.01.30
www.kasteelyangaasbeek.be
Until JUN 26 Jan De Vliegher: Schatzkammer, paintings by the Flemish artist

Hasselt
z33
Zuivelmarkt 33; 011.29.59.60
www.z33.be
Until AUG 21 Kris Verdonck: EXHIBITION #1, installations and videos by the Flemish theatremaker and artist

Kemzeke
Verbeke Foundation
Westakker; 03.789.22.07
www.verbekefoundation.com
Until JUN 12 Tom Woestenborghs: Salvation

Can Be Found in the Illusion of Involvement, installations, prints and drawings by the Flemish artist

Kortrijk
Benedengalerie
Hazelstraat 7; 056.23.98.50
www.cultuurcentrumkortrijk.be
Until JUN 12 Dirk Braeckman, photos by the Flemish artist

Leuven
Museum M
Leopold Vanderkelenstraat 28; 016.27.29.29
www.mleuven.be
Until JUN 12 Gebonden Beelden, rare books
Until SEP 25 Pieter-Jozef Verhaghen: In het spoor van Rubens (In the Footsteps of Rubens), paintings by the 18th-century Flemish artist

Machelen-Zulte
Het Roger Raveelmuseum
Gildestraat 2-8; 09.381.60.00
www.rogerraveelmuseum.be
Until JUN 19 Tussenruimte: Het onzichtbare zichtbaar maken (Space In-between: Making the Invisible Visible), paintings by Flemish artist Roger Raveel on white frames

Mechelen
Speelgoedmuseum (Toy Museum)
Nekkerspoelstraat 21; 015.55.70.75
www.speelgoedmuseum.be
Until JAN 8 2012 Het circus kan beginnen! (Let the Circus Begin!), figurines, clowns and maquettes

Meise
National Botanic Garden of Belgium
Nieuwelaan 38; 02.260.09.20
www.plantentuinmeise.be
Until OCT 2 Groene Omzwervingen (Green Detours), works made of leaves and flowers by Sandrine de Borman following her year as artist-in-residence
Until NOV 6 Kriebelbeestjes van het bos (Crawling Bugs in the Woods), photographs of insects by Barbara Cook

Ostend
Kunstmuseum Aan Zee (MuZee)
Romestraat 11; 059.50.81.18
www.muzee.be
Until SEP 4 Jean Brusselmans, paintings from the 1930s and 1940s by the Flemish artist

Tervuren
Royal Museum for Central Africa
Leuvensesteenweg 13; 02.769.52.11
www.africamuseum.be
Until SEP 4 FetishModernity, exhibition created by six European museums exploring the notion of modernity
Until SEP 4 Artists in Residence: Sammy Balaji & Patrick Mudekereza, arts, sciences and collections

Turnhout
De Tweede Helft
Gratalkker 5
www.twintigplusnuldrif.be
Until JUN 12 Tom Woestenborghs: Salvation Can Be Found in the Illusion of Indifference, installations, prints and drawings by the Flemish artist

Ypres
In Flanders Fields Museum
Grote Markt 34; 057.239.220
www.inflandersfields.be
Until NOV 13 Tribute to Donors, a wide selection of donated works, including paintings, drawings and photographs



Roller-Bike Parade: Weekly roller skating and cycling parades
Until SEP 23 19.00 in Antwerp, Brussels, Hasselt and Koksijde
www.belgiumrollers.com

Antwerp
Climate Change: What Are We Discussing?: British professor Mike Hulme delivers the third lecture in the series on climate change (in English)
JUN 9 17.00-19.00 at University of Antwerp, Hof van Liere, Prinsstraat 13
www.ucsia.org

Felix Poetry Festival: Third annual festival featuring readings by international poets
JUN 14-17 at FelixPakhuis, Godefriduskaai 30
www.felixpakhuis.nu

Bitzen (Limburg)
Sage van de Biesenburcht: Annual mediaeval family festival featuring period villages, costume, music, food and activities
JUNE 12 10.00-18.00 at Landcommanderij Alden Biesen, Kasteelstraat 6
www.sagebiesenburcht.be

Brussels
Apéros Urbains: Weekly aperitif every Friday in different areas of the city with live music, and after-parties at Fuse, K-Nal and Vaudeville
Until SEP 2 17.00-23.30 across Brussels
www.aperos.be

D Festival: Contemporary dance and performance festival (previously Danse Balsa Marni)
Until JUN 23 at Théâtre Marni, Vergniestraat 25
02.639.09.81, www.theatremarni.com

Millenium Festival: International documentary film festival
JUN 8-14 at Flagey, CIVA and Vendôme
www.festivalmillenium.org

Polymor Films: Four evenings of poetic and political film screenings by members of the Brussels-based film collective
Until JUN 17 20.00 at Bozar, Ravensteinstraat 23
www.polymorfilms.be

Pot Belge: Bilingual poetry evening with francophone and Dutch-speaking writers, including Vincent Tholomé, Pascal Ledercq, Andy Fierens and Michaël Vandenbril, presented by Antoine Boute
JUN 8 20.00 at Passa Porta, Antoine Dansaertstraat 46
02.226.04.54, www.passaporta.be

Duffel
Oostfeesten: Annual free outdoor folk festival with concerts, plus a rodeo bull and activities for kids
JUNE 12 13.30-2.00 at Kapelplein
www.oostfeesten.be

Genk
Saka Saka: Annual world music festival featuring concerts, market, workshops, food and more
JUN 12 13.00 at Rondpunt 26, Europalaan 26
www.sakasaka.be

Ghent
Ham Sessions: Annual music festival featuring jazz, folk, world and more
JUN 12-13 15.00 at Ham 12, in the city centre
www.hamsessions.be

Kalmthout
Straatfeesten: 35th annual street festival, featuring Jack De Marseille, Nobody Beats The Drum, Nid & Sancy and more

JUN 10-12 in the city centre

www.straatfeesten.com

Knokke-Heist
International Photo Festival: Annual photography festival, with a theme this year of "Future Portraits" and featuring work by Robert Wilson, Valérie Belin, Marc Trivier, World Press Photo and more
Until JUN 13 across Knokke-Heist
www.fotofestival.be

Kortrijk
Sinksen11: Festival for all ages featuring street theatre, circus, concerts and more
JUN 11-13 on the Grote Markt
www.sinksen.be

Leuven
Terrasfilms: Free open-air film screenings
Until JUN 27 at Stuk, Naamsestraat 96
016.32.03.20, www.cinemazed.be/terrasfilms

Olen (Antwerp province)
Gladiolen: Outdoor music festival, featuring Absynthe Minded, Das Pop, De Jeugd Van Tegenwoordig, Willow, Lady Linn & Her Magnificent Seven, more
JUN 10 & 11 at Festivalterrein Boekel
www.gladiolen.be

CAFE SPOTLIGHT



Nosh Naamsestraat 14 Leuven

Cafés are truly magic. You go there in the evening, enjoy the company of your friends, the music, the atmosphere and, crucially, the beverages. An excess of the latter will, more often than not, make you feel terrible the following day, and this is where the magic happens.

For cafés also exist in the shape of *eetcafés*: places where, on the dreaded "morning after the night before", you can indulge in feel-good food and enjoy the peace and quiet, while you swear blind that you will never, ever touch another drop of alcohol so long as you shall live.

M'lady and I had some business to attend to in Leuven but were paying the price for the liquid fun from the previous night. And lo, bang in the centre of town, we stumbled across Nosh, the kind of place that serves exactly what the doctor ordered. On top of "traditional" breakfast stuff like croissants, Nosh specialises in two types of yummy treats: *wentelteefjes* and bagels.

The former are also known as French toast or eggy bread – the ultimate grandma-style comfort food, available here with six different toppings. But we plumped for the latter instead, and here it wasn't just the fillings we had to select, but also the type of bagel we wanted: plain, poppyseed, multigrain, onion... Enough to give you a headache, which is the last thing you need after a heavy night out. M'lady had the New Yorker (cream cheese, smoked salmon and capers on poppyseed), while I opted for a smoked onion bagel stuffed with a cheese omelette. We washed them down with a strong coffee and freshly squeezed orange juice and slowly started feeling reinvigorated.

Our breakfast cost €11 each, very reasonable I thought, and there is an even heartier menu for €15: hot drink, orange juice, one bagel, two pastries and... a glass of cava! Well, there's always a next time, isn't there?

→ www.nosh.be

bite

ROBYN BOYLE

Sushi workshop

Once I attended a party in San Francisco where the hostess prepared her own sushi. The little rolls made for perfect nibbles with a glass of wine and were lovely to look at, giving the whole evening an elegant feel. All the guests were pleased and impressed, to say the least.

I never thought it was something I would attempt myself, but, thanks to a recent sushi workshop, I discovered that making your own sushi is in fact fun and simple to do.

Summer is the perfect time to indulge in this hugely popular delicacy from Japan. Natural, often raw ingredients such as fish, shrimp, eggs and vegetables combine with seaweed and sticky rice to make a light, healthy and incredibly tasty dish.

In my circle of expat friends, sushi has an almost addictive quality; it is something we regularly crave and seek out. But, as we live in Flanders, where sushi restaurants have a reputation for being a bit pricey, we don't get to satiate our sushi longings all that often.

That was until a friend introduced us

Contact Bite at flandersbite@gmail.com

to Sumo Sushi, a creative workshop by a young Flemish woman named Charlotte Van Schuylenbergh, or Madame Sushi as we call her. You can register for a group workshop at her home in Aalst or ask her to come to you.

And so we found ourselves gathered around a long dining room table one Friday night with friends in Ghent. Charlotte was already present, place setting, chopping and smiling all the while. She set the relaxed tone for the evening so that it really felt more like a friendly dinner party to which the dull word "workshop" does no justice.

Still, I had little confidence in my ability to create the perfect sushi roll. But after watching Charlotte demonstrate, I dipped my hand in the lemon water, grabbed a handful of sticky rice and diligently started pressing it onto the thin sheet of seaweed before me.

We started with the classic *maki* roll: seaweed on the outside, ingredients inside. The table was filled with platters of colourful filling options, from cucumber, spring onion and

yellow radish spears to slices of raw tuna, salmon, crab and *tamagoyaki*, or sweet Japanese omelette.

A bit of strategically placed crab and cucumber went into my purposefully simple first attempt. With my thumbs under the little bamboo placemat, I began rolling the seaweed over the rest. Seconds later, I removed the mat like a magician's silk to find that I had done it correctly. There it was, one long, tight and flawless sushi roll, ready to slice into about eight pieces. The best part about the workshop is its eat-as-you-go policy. Every time you make a roll, you get to reap the rewards straight away. Take a piece between your chopsticks, dip it in the wasabi-infused soy sauce and enjoy. And did we ever; the sushi was fresh and savoury. In-between bites, we cleaned our palates with spicy-sweet pickled ginger and a glass of cold *sake*, Japanese rice wine.

The next challenge was to make *temaki*, a cone-shaped roll with its contents popping out the open end. This also went very easily and was my favourite, probably because you eat it with your hands, which allows



you to take satisfyingly large bites as you would with a pita or fajita.

Whoever said sushi is not filling never followed one of Charlotte's workshops. We went on to make *uramaki*, inside-out rolls dipped in roasted sesame seeds. With the rice on the outside and the seaweed and ingredients curled up on the inside, you might think this one would be more difficult to make. But it's not, as long as you know how to do a small manoeuvre with a piece of cling film.

After this, we made *nigiri*, an egg-shaped mound of rice with a chunk of fish or egg resting on top. We made these look like pretty little packages by wrapping a thin strip of seaweed around each one.

In the end, we had an entertaining, educational and delicious experience for €48 apiece. And to top it off, every one of us took home a box filled with leftover sushi to enjoy for lunch the next day.

→ www.sumosushi.be

TALKING DUTCH

Groentjes

I don't know about you, but I'm staying away from *groente*, vegetables. Or, as the Flemish like to say, even among adults, *groentjes*, as if they were something cute and cuddly, like "veggies". Whenever a stern-looking somebody dressed in white declares on public television that "*er absoluut geen reden voor paniek is*", that there is absolutely no reason to panic, I panic.

Cute and cuddly they aren't, of course, I knew that long before. To call them *groentjes* is just a trick to make eating them sound like fun. Any kid will testify that it is quite the contrary. They are to humans what water is to cats: unpleasant but necessary. And they're also very confusing to translate.

Take the *paprika*. Who'd have thought that in Dutch it refers to the bell-shaped fruit from Hungary (it is a fruit, apparently, "used as a vegetable", according to my Penguin dictionary), and not to a sweet and spicy condiment? Ask your local grocer for a sweet pepper, and he wouldn't know what to give you. Try asking him for *capsicum*.

Or take the *aubergine*, as we continentals are used to saying, which in English is also known as eggplant, melongene, brinjal and guinea squash. Or the *courgette*, which Americans and Italians call zucchini. Even among Dutch speakers, things are not always perfectly clear. "*Wilt u daar ajuintjes bij meneer?*", the friendly lady at the hamburger stand once asked a visiting Dutchman, "would you like some onions with that?" Little did she know that in the Netherlands, they don't say *ajuin*, they say *ui*. Of course in Flanders, you can also say *ui* for onion, which only adds to the confusion, really. The worst, though, is *witloof*, a type of endive that was accidentally discovered in Brussels in 1830 during the secession war with the Netherlands,



as the legend goes, when a local farmer covered his chicory roots with earth to keep them from being stolen. Several months later, he found fresh leaves growing from the roots, white for the lack of sunlight.

Today, this typically Belgian vegetable (very tasty from the oven, wrapped in ham and covered in cheese sauce) is known abroad as "Belgian endive", which to Dutch speakers sounds like *andijvie*, a green leafy vegetable mostly used in salads. *Andijvie* is often found in the traditional Flemish dish *stoemp*, derived from *stampot*, one of the more delicate concoctions of the cuisine of the lowlands: boiled potatoes and *groentjes*, mashed into one big happy family, preferably served with sausage and gravy.

PHILIP EBELS

THE LAST WORD . . .

Pressing question

"Why does the Flemish administration so often get involved in municipalities when it comes to staff matters?"

A grou Antwerp mayor Patrick Janssens asked his first question in seven years as a member of the Flemish parliament

Cooking pot

"Cannabis burgers are meat replacements and a symbol of what hemp has to offer the eco-kitchen."

The first legal cannabis burgers – minus the active drug ingredient – went on sale last week

Share the wealth

"I'm going to surprise you. Personally, I'm in favour of regular wage increases. As long as we can stay competitive and can afford higher salaries, I say the unions are right."

Top businessman Luc Bertrand explains his unconventional economic view

Patience, please

"There's no reason to form a government too hastily."

Bart De Wever this week, 12 months into the political crisis

NEXT WEEK IN FLANDERS TODAY #184

Feature

Are you a scaredy-cat when it comes to cycling in Brussels? You are not alone. That's why a new business has just been launched to coach people on how to get around on two wheels in the big, bad city

Focus

The title Vlaams Bouwmeester is bandied about in the Flemish press often. What exactly does the regional "building master" do?

Living

The series "Travelling in Flanders" takes us to Geraardsbergen. Apparently, it's home to more than just a hellish hill in the Tour of Flanders