



## Smurfy record

Brussels goes blue for day

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## End of the line

Fate of Doel sealed

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## Port of call

An unmissable summer in Antwerp

13



PHILIP EBELS

Famous people, like hamburgers, often look nothing like the picture. In real life, they're less polished and choreographed and actually look remarkably like, well, people.

Philippe Muyters, a certified celebrity after he became Flemish minister of finance, budget, work, town planning and sports two years ago, is not the stern accountant he might have you believe he is. Wearing a maroon shirt, no jacket and trousers that are just a bit too short, he looks and talks more like a friendly high school teacher. He even smiles – something he doesn't often do in photos. But then again, there wasn't much to smile about until recently. "I've had a rough start," says Muyters, over the hiss of a can of Coke Light being opened. "I was new to politics and needed some time to settle in. But things are going better and better."

### Welcome to politics

Muyters was what the Flemish call a white rabbit – a public figure unexpectedly joining the ranks of politicians, as if pulled out from inside a magician's top hat, to the astonishment of the audience. He had been the managing director of VOKA, the Flemish chamber of commerce, lambasting government policies from a business perspective.

The magician's name was Bart de Wever, leader of the Flemish nationalist N-VA, who, after the regional elections of 2009, picked up the phone and asked Muyters to come on board.

"I had been on the sidelines for years," Muyters explains, "telling the government what to do – and what not to do. I simply couldn't decline. I wouldn't have dared to utter another word of criticism." Plus, he says, these are interesting times to be a politician. "There was an economic crisis. I really had the feeling that I could make a difference."

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# New kid on the block

Philippe Muyters, the industry man turned Flemish minister, talks about his first two turbulent years in office

## Tia, take three

Just as the clouds seem to be gathering over Kim Clijsters' comeback, Olympic high-jump medallist Tia Hellebaut is contemplating one of her own – the second comeback in her career.

Hellebaut retired first in 2008, shortly after winning gold in Beijing, with the news that she was expecting a baby with her partner and trainer Wim Vandeven. She was following in the footsteps of Flemish sports stars like Clijsters and sprinter Kim Gevaert.

Hellebaut's daughter Lotte was born in 2009, and Hellebaut waited until her 32nd birthday in February 2010 to announce a comeback in time for the European Championships in Barcelona. She admitted she had her sights set on the 2012

London Olympics. She was also, she said, inspired by the comebacks of both Clijsters and Wallonia tennis player Justine Henin.

By August, she was pregnant again and retiring again. Saartje was born in February, but since it turns out she's a very easy baby – according to Mum – Hellebaut is once more seizing her chance. "I gave birth a second time by Caesarean, so we had to start very carefully," she explained on her blog. "Luckily it all went faster than after Lotte was born, so I quickly had the feeling I wanted to do more. I hope to start back with normal training in mid-September, and the first competition won't be until the winter. After that, it's all eyes on London."



Tia Hellebaut and her daughter Lotte

© Beiga

## Tougher against gay-bashing

Near-fatal attack in Brussels provokes strong reactions

ALAN HOPE

The justice system will take tougher action on violence against gays, justice minister Stefaan De Clerck promised last week, following an incident in which a Flemish man narrowly escaped being strangled to death in a homophobic attack in Brussels.

During the early morning hours of 13 June, the man, known only as Bart, was on his way home from an evening out when he was jeered at and jostled near the Stock Exchange on Anspachlaan. He fled in the direction of a group of people standing outside a nearby pita restaurant, where he was tripped, attacked with chairs and choked.

The staff of the restaurant called the police. One of the attackers was arrested and said later by police to be of Guatemalan origin. Two others, identified by CCTV camera images, are being sought.

The incident immediately provoked a strong reaction from gay politicians and community leaders. Pascal Smet, Flemish minister for equal opportunities and youth, accused bands of youth of acting like "the morals police" – a reference to the *mutaween* in Saudi Arabia, whose job it is to publicly enforce a strict interpretation of Islam.

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## FACE OF FLANDERS

ALAN HOPE



© Rob Stevens/KUL

## Alfons Vansteenwegen

A retired professor from the Catholic University of Leuven (KUL) has been awarded a gold medal for services to sexual health by the World Association for Sexual Health at its congress in Glasgow.

Emeritus professor Alfons Vansteenwegen was a pioneer in teaching couples therapy and studying sexual relations. He was a practising therapist, chairman of the Institute for Family and Sexological Sciences at KUL and a director of the European Federation of Sexology.

Vansteenwegen has spent his life in Leuven; born there in 1941, he graduated in philosophy before going on to study theology and psychology, the subject of his PhD. He worked as a psychotherapist and couples therapist, as well as a professor of systems and communication theory, couple and family therapy and sexology. He's been a visiting professor in Peru, Switzerland and South Africa and has published more than 300 journal articles, as well as a number of widely translated books for specialists and the reading public alike.

His best known is *Liefde is een werkwoord* (Love is a Verb), published in 1989 and now in its 38th edition. The thread running through his work: How can we be satisfied with what we have? "A lot of people suffer because of the idealisation of sex and relationships," he explains. "Everything has to be perfect, but that's impossible, and so a lot of couples are unhappy in a relationship which in fact is 'good enough'... A relationship doesn't function on momentary feelings, and if you base your couple on that alone, you'll split up before the level of good enough is ever reached."

The gold medal, he said, is a recognition of the work of his institute, which this year celebrates its half-century. "The institute is the only one of its kind at university level in the Dutch-speaking world. Other European institutes were only set up in the 1970s, so the institute, which was started in 1961, really played a pioneering role."

## News in brief

Members of the family of Patrice Lumumba, the first prime minister of the independent Republic of Congo who was murdered in 1961, have **filed a complaint in Brussels against 10 Belgians for war crimes**, torture and murder. The accused have not been named, but are thought to include police officers, government officials and former ministers. If the court accepts the charge of war crimes, the trial can go ahead as there is no statute of limitations. Lumumba was killed under mysterious circumstances in the autonomous province of Katanga. His body has never been found. The family claims the order for the assassination came from Brussels.

The city of Ghent last week became the first in the Benelux to apply for **its own internet domain extension** – .gent – to the international domain agency ICANN. The agency recently opened up name extensions to allow more possibilities, as demand has almost exhausted traditional extensions such as .com and .org, as well as national extensions like .be. The city aims to provide residents will email addresses in the form [forename@name.gent](mailto:forename@name.gent).

The **dolphins at Boudewijn Seapark** in Bruges are being kept in a tank that is too small by legal standards and show signs of stress as a result, according to a new report by the Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society presented to the European Parliament last week. The report found 14 of the 27 EU member

states failed to conform to EU rules. The report also criticised the park in Bruges, home to Belgium's only dolphinarium, for continuing to use the animals in "circus-type shows" rather than emphasising education and conservation, a charge denied by the park's management.

A 53-year-old man from Ingooigem, West Flanders, has been sentenced to a **life-long alcohol lock** on his car by a court in Bruges. The man was severely under the influence of alcohol when he caused an accident three years ago in which a motorcyclist was killed. The alcohol lock is fitted with a breath-test that will only allow the car to start after a negative breath sample.

The Flemish government has plans to develop a **star system for holiday parks** in Flanders, the office of tourism minister Geert Bourgeois said last week. The classification system will be worked out by an expert committee and award stars on the basis of the level of comfort offered to clients. Only those parks with a classification will be allowed to use Flemish government tourism channels for promotion.

Brussels' municipality of Schaarbeek last week engaged two new employees, Taram and Vouziers, **Ardennes draught horses** who will help pick up rubbish. The two horses will also pull a coach that takes schoolchildren and seniors on trips.

Five of Flanders' main **art and architecture schools will merge** next year into a single academy. The five are the Lemmens Institute in Leuven, Narafi and Sint-Lukas in Brussels, and the two Sint-Lucas academies for architecture and fine arts in Brussels and Ghent. The new school, with nearly 4,000 students spread over six campuses, will operate under the new structure beginning in the autumn of 2012.

Two areas of Flanders are facing a **serious shortage of dentists**, as practitioners in Limburg and the Kempen area of Antwerp province are attracted away to work in the neighbouring Netherlands, the Union of Flemish Dentists has warned. The numbers of dentists in Belgium as a whole has been falling year upon year to a total of only 7,800 now. Working in the Netherlands, the union says, offers dentists better hours. The union is calling for more group practices to ease the pressure of work on dentists and more use of dental assistants.

The Brussels municipality of Vorst last week inaugurated a **new street named after jazz legend Toots Thielemans**. The street is part of a new housing project of 250 apartments, on which Thielemans' nephew, an architect, worked. The practice of naming a street after a living person (other than the sovereign) is forbidden, admitted Vorst mayor Magda De Galan, "but we took the risk because Toots will last forever".

ALAN HOPE

## OFFSIDE

## Monkey business

Now that we've finally settled the question of who is The Very Smartest Person in The World (it's comedian Bert Kruismans, according to the VRT quiz show of the same name), it's time to find out which of our cousin primates is smarter – chimps or bonobos?

We'll have the results by the end of the summer after two months of very clever marketing by the Antwerp Zoo and the animal park Planckendael near Mechelen. Starting on 30 June, the nine chimpanzees from the zoo and the seven bonobos from Planckendael will be competing against one another in contests of intelligence, dexterity and creativity.

The clash is intended to attract visitors to the zoo and animal park, of course, but it also has a serious aim. This year the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA) has called on its members to put the spotlight on apes – the problems they face and the urgent need for conservation measures. Chimps and bonobos, together with their fellow apes gorillas, orangutans and gibbons, are all listed as either endangered or critically endangered, with threats ranging from loss of habitat, hunting, disease and trade.

This week's test is pretty simple: get a nut from a simple maze. Next week, the apes have to complete a puzzle. Every week, the tests get harder.

The public can win tickets to the park or brunch by correctly forecasting the winner of each leg



© Shutterstock

of the tournament. As for the apes, they can look forward (win or lose) to renovated living quarters in both parks.

*Flanders Today's* tip: watch out for Djanoa the bonobo, who loves to play with puzzles and has already been training on the maze.

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

## FLANDERS TODAY



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## Number of complaints of homophobic violence “tip of the iceberg”

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According to Bruno de Lille, Brussels' secretary of state for equal opportunities, violence against gays is not on the increase in Brussels. De Lille had previously written in an opinion piece in *De Standaard* of his reluctance to embrace or even hold hands with his partner in public because of possible reactions. A campaign that his department has been running since April aims to encourage the victims of homophobic violence to make an official complaint.

Last year the Centre for Equal Opportunities received 215 complaints of harassment from gay people, a figure described by director Jozef De Witte as “not very high”. But many victims find it too difficult to take the step of making a complaint, he dares, and the number of official complaints was likely “just the tip of the iceberg”.

De Lille also disputed the common view that those responsible for most of the violence and intimidation are Muslim youths. “There is no link to religion, more to a macho culture,” he said. “We see that, too, with Eastern European suspects. People who make insulting remarks to women often do the same thing to homosexuals.”

De Clerck's call for tougher treatment of those who resort to homophobic violence and intimidation was echoed by Annemie Turtelboom, the federal interior minister

whose responsibilities include the police. Turtelboom said she was “shocked” by reports of the attack, “especially in a country where gay people have so many rights. Homophobic violence absolutely cannot be tolerated”.

Last weekend on the Grote Markt in Antwerp, some 6,000 people blew whistles for a full minute in a symbolic rejection of homophobia. “The noise was deafening,” said one of the organisers, radio presenter Sven Pichal. “We've heard many stories in recent days from people who were confronted with homophobia but never made a complaint. Since there are so few people who go public, it makes us think the problem is being underestimated.”

The “whistle concert” – a pun on the Dutch word for “to make catcalls” – coincided with the week-long Antwerp Pride event, which attracted an estimated 60,000 people. In Brussels, meanwhile, some 300 couples took place in a kiss-in on the Grote Markt to protest at intimidation of gay people on the streets of the city. “We're sick of all these hate crimes,” said organiser Neil Verduyck. “We're here, and we have the right to love who we want to – and to let it show.” ♦



“We have the right to let it show”: A kiss-in in Brussels drew 300 couples last weekend

© Belga

## THE WEEK IN FIGURES



**7,117**

nuns in convents in Flanders. More than half of those in contemplative orders are older than 75. One in eight in the bishopric of Antwerp is over 90

**€14 million**

lost to Flemish vegetable growers because of an embargo imposed by Russia after the E coli outbreak in Germany, according to the Farmers' Union. The embargo was lifted last week

**€2,475**

fine imposed on a couple from Zwevegem, West Flanders, accused of stalking their two sons in an effort to stop them marrying and splitting up the family farm. The parents were also ordered to pay €120,000 in damages

**26**

bodies currently in mortuaries because police are unable to trace the identity of the deceased, according to the Missing Persons unit of the federal police

**43,600**

passengers are scheduled to take a flight out of Brussels Airport on 1 July, a record number for the airport in Zaventem. July's average is expected to be 35,000 per day

## Confusing rulings prompt changes

Federal interior minister Annemie Turtelboom has prepared a set of seven proposals for the reform of the Council of State, the country's highest administrative court. The proposals follow a series of questionable rulings concluding in last week's decision that a city worker in Antwerp who failed to turn up for work for five years had been wrongly dismissed.

The role of the Council of State is to balance the interests of the public with the interests of the state and to ensure that the actions of government on all levels are in keeping with the law.

In recent months, the council has handed down a number of contested rulings: work on a new tramline between Deurne and Wijnegem by Antwerp was shut down when it was three-quarters complete because of complaints by a local resident; overturn of a ban on the display of firearms in shop windows in Antwerp, introduced after a man murdered two people with a newly purchased gun; an attempt by local authorities to impose a curfew was scrapped.

In the most recent case, a man who was formerly a theatre technician for the city of Antwerp finished his last job, then spent

five years at home awaiting new instructions, while drawing a salary. When he was sacked after the case came to light in 2005, he challenged the dismissal and last week heard that he was not only entitled to keep the money he had been paid between 2000 and 2005 but was also entitled to a salary from 2005 until now, as well as being found a new job. He is now working at a municipal swimming pool.

Several of Turtelboom's changes would allow the council a period in which the original fault could be set right – something it at present has no power to do. That would allow, for instance, for the tramline works to continue instead of being immediately suspended. The council should also give more weight to the public interest in general than to the objections of a single citizen and make provisions for payment of damages, rather than striking down laws and regulations entirely.

“I hope a majority can quickly be found in the federal parliament so that these important changes in the law around the Council of State can be approved,” said Flemish minister-president Kris Peeters. ♦

## True blue

Precisely 4,617 people in 12 countries painted their faces blue and donned fuzzy smocks last weekend to break the Guinness world record of most people dressed up as Smurfs at one time. They were successful; the previous record was 2,510 Smurfs. The record attempt coincided with the anniversary of the birth of Peyo, otherwise known as Pierre Culliford, the creator of the world-renowned blue woodland creatures. A new CGI blockbuster film of their adventures is due to release in August.

## Unesco recognises heritage in Flanders

The Last Post played at sunset at the Menin Gate, beer culture, lace-making and carillon music are among the phenomena approved last week by Unesco as official Flanders' immaterial heritage.

Immaterial heritage includes a country or region's traditions and customs, apart from material heritage like buildings and structures. Among events previously approved by Unesco are the carnival in Aalst, Flemish sign language and the Holy Blood Procession in Bruges.

The latest entries are the nightly playing of The Last Post, a piece of military music composed for bugle to mark the end of the day, and adopted as a daily ceremony in Ypres in 1928 to mark the dead of the First World War. Since then, the ceremony has attracted tens of thousands of visitors.

The beer culture dates back to the days when farmers brewed their own beer from the rich harvests of grain available in Flanders, later transferring brewing to local guilds and abbeys. Each strove to maintain the particularities of their local produce, something which still continues today even when brewing has become largely industrial.

Bell towers were once emergency beacons in the flat Flemish landscape but about 500 years became associated with churches. They are known to have been played musically since at least 1510, and the carillon tradition reached its peak in the 17th century. Now, Mechelen houses an internationally-renowned carillon school, to which specialists flock from around the world for master classes and the chance to play live.

Also among the events recognised by Unesco: the seven-yearly Coronation Festival in Tongeren, which dates back to 1479; cock-crowing in East and West Flanders, where the cock who crows the most in one hour on a Sunday morning wins; lace-making by hand, which became a local speciality in the 18th, when Flemish lace, each town with its particular patterns and techniques, was sought the world over; and the Hegge procession, which takes place once every 25 years to commemorate the legendary theft of a chalice and some communion wafers, later miraculously recovered at the entrance to a rabbit hole. The next is due to take place in 2012. ♦



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# New kid on the block

## Cutting back on spending “was painful”, says budget minister

continued from page 1

Still, it wasn't an easy decision. “I had been asked before, and I had always declined. I had even promised my wife when we married never to go into politics. But this time, it was an offer I couldn't refuse.”

So there he was, the loud-mouthed know-it-all, suddenly at the mercy of perhaps even louder-mouthed know-it-alls: the press. “Miscast Muyters” was one of the more friendly headlines that appeared several months after he took office.

People openly questioned his dossier knowledge, accuracy and, basically, competence for the job. “That was very tough,” he admits. “But much of it was speculation. If they would have judged me on the basis of results, okay, but they didn't. I guess I was an easy victim. Not fun at all. My family also got to read the stories.”

Baptisms fade, though, and Muyters seems at ease talking about it on a rainy Friday afternoon in his office on the 11th floor of the Phoenix building in northern Brussels, whose grimy skyline fits the reminiscence of the moment. “True,” says Muyters, not able to suppress a fiery grin, “it's a big portfolio, and I have relatively few people working for me. But I think we're doing well. It took us six months or so to get a good grasp of things, but we now have very clear ideas about where we want to go with every single dossier.”

### A conservative revolutionary

Muyters was on Flemish TV the day before our interview, standing around in Antwerp Central Station among people in T-shirts handing out flyers and sitting on what seemed to be a wide variety of chairs. It was the kick-off event of a new publicity campaign to get more people over 50 to work. “That number today is far below the European standard,” he says. “Only one-third of people over 55 in Flanders have a job, and only 15% of people over 60.”

Why? “I think it has become something of a tradition,” he explains. “There was a time when the government gave older employees the possibility to retire early to make room for the then many unemployed



Muyters and N-VA colleague, Flemish tourist and civic integration minister Geert Bourgeois

young people. But the situation has changed. Today, Flanders has one of the lowest youth unemployment rates in Europe. But one of the highest for people over 50.”

Hence, De Juiste Stoel, or The Right Chair, the name of the campaign. “You'll feel better and will want to work longer if you sit on a chair that suits you – if you do the job that suits you,” explains Muyters. “Not only according to your diploma, but also according to the competences that you may have acquired elsewhere.”

Elsewhere? “Yes, elsewhere. For example, at home, with your family. Being a father – we're among men here – teaches you things that you don't learn anywhere else. Those are competences that can be useful

to an employer but are often overlooked. I think we should focus less on diplomas and more on personal competences.”

That sounds almost revolutionary, especially coming from a member of a proudly conservative party. Very 21st century. “Yes, well, that's the direction I think we should be going. Some companies have already begun to adapt their human resource policies. And I think we should support it.”

*“We should focus less on diplomas and more on personal competences”*

He tells about a big chain of hotels that, like many of its competitors, used to have difficulties finding traditionally qualified staff. Until they realised that parents whose children have grown up and left the house would be perfectly suited. “And it works!” exclaims an enthused Muyters.

### Or a revolutionary conservative?

Muyters has earned his conservative stripes, though, watching over the Flemish government's finances. They were in the red when he began in 2009 by €2 billion – on a total annual budget of €25 billion. This year, they are expected to run a small surplus. “It was very hard,” he admits. “We've tried to pinch every penny. Everybody has had to give a little.”

It is a policy that has come to be known as the *kaasschaaf*, or cheese slicer, for its indiscriminate way of cutting back on

spending. “It was painful,” Muyters says. “There's enough that needed to be done – our schools need money, the roads need fixing – but had to wait. I know that we've let many people down, but it was a deliberate choice. We wanted first to have our budget in order and then see how much we would be able to spend extra. Others have done it the other way around [ie Brussels and the federal government]. Had they done otherwise, then they wouldn't have had the budget deficits they have today.”

The sky turns dark, and rain hits the floor-to-ceiling windows. “It has been a very interesting two years,” says Muyters, looking back. “Yes, I have regrets sometimes. But I would make the same decision today. I have learned much more than I had in my last five years as an industry representative. And I'm still learning. I can recommend to everyone to one day go and try to do something different.”

Muyters gets up and walks to a whiteboard at the other end of the room. On it, there are acronyms, arrows, triangles and quadrangles of all size and colours, violently interconnected. It represents the labour market, he says, and starts to explain which is which. Right. Of course. To a simple journalist, it seems like something from another planet. But Muyters, who turns 50 later this year, seems to know what he's talking about – and to sit in the right chair. “For the moment,” he says, “yes”. ♦

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

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



Philippe Muyters and his wife, who appears to have forgiven him for going into politics



#### BRUSSELS

One of the nicest 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 farmbrussels centre, one with north view on the canal and the atomium.) quiet neighbors, 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



#### 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 gaz heating. Apartment with a lot of light. In good condition. Excellent situation near shops,Dansaert area, metro(Yser) and ring.

#### WOLUWE SAINT-LAMBERT



#### ANDERLECHT

Two steps away from the House of Erasme, in a commercial district, this building located on 2 a13ca proposes: commercial ground floor with workshop 143 m<sup>2</sup>  
- 1 apt 1 bedroom of 66 m<sup>2</sup> and 1 flat of 30 m<sup>2</sup>  
- 1 apt 1 bedroom of 66 m<sup>2</sup> and 1 flat of 30 m<sup>2</sup>  
- 1 apt 1 bedroom of 66 m<sup>2</sup>

#### SAINT-GILLES



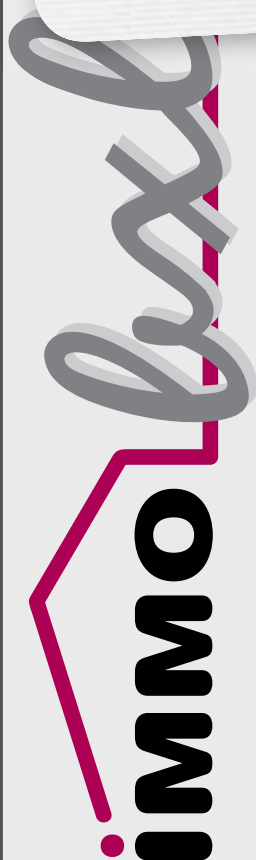
luxurious 1 bedroom apartments for sale with a view over Brussels. All the apartments have been completely renovated and are equipped with a wooden

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#### UCCLE

which has been totally renovated and reconstructed and was sold to the European Commission. There are different luxurious 1 bedroom apartments for sale with a splendid view over Brussels. All the apart-

ments have been completely renovated and are equipped with a wooden floor, fully equipped kitchen (microwave oven / dishwasher / fridge /...), videophone, complete bathroom with shower, new window frames with double glazing, security door, airconditioning.



#### 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

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



#### ANDERLECHT

Godeaux - Bemel area, house 3 façades of +/- 240m\*, completely renovated in 2004, living room 42m\*, 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 300m\*, 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 5acres, nice terrace, garage 2 or 3 cars, alarm system.

## Research independence questioned

### Flanders works more with industry than anywhere

ALAN HOPE

Research at Flemish universities receives proportionally more funding from business and industry than any other region in the world, according to a report prepared by Ecom, an inter-university group that monitors the economics of research and development (R&D). Universities in Flanders, led by the Catholic University of Leuven (KUL), receive 15.3% of their research funding from private business, compared to less than 10% in Wallonia, 6.8% in the Netherlands and only 2.9% in Japan. Only Germany comes close, with 14%. In the US, the figure is less than 5%, but US universities are more likely than European universities to receive donations from private individuals and foundations. They also receive huge amounts of funding from the Defense Department, whose budget is larger than those of many European countries. The revelation has raised concerns about the danger of dependence on private

funds to the scientific independence of the universities. Companies could, for example, impede on the publication of negative research results or sway the direction of research away from the public interest to the interests of their shareholders. An example is "orphan illnesses" – rare but severe conditions with too few sufferers to make the search for a remedy profitable.

In fact, the Industrial Research Fund this year paid out €16.7 million to encourage universities to tailor their research to industrial requirements.

According to André Oosterlinck, rector emeritus of KUL, the concerns are not new. "Since the 1970s, when I was a young professor, the Flemish universities have chosen to work together with business. We were even encouraged to do so by the Flemish government. The university is a business, and our mission includes seeking out contacts with



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industry. The Flemish parliament and the government require us to look for added value. What's more, if we don't do it well enough, we get even less subsidy." He also pointed out that all outside partners have to go through the university rather than strike deals with individual professors and that safety

mechanisms exist to prevent interference in the universities' research task. "The companies may partly determine the focus of our research," he said, "but in no way do they have an influence on the independent scientific mission of the universities." ♦

## End of the line for Doel

The fate of the tiny village on the edge of Antwerp harbour, where residents have been fighting eviction for years, now appears to be sealed. According to a discussion document circulating among the ministers of the Flemish government, Doel will later this year be re-zoned from residential area to harbour territory. As *De Standaard*, which revealed the contents of the document, revealed, that will finally allow the last residents to be bought out of their property in preparation for the annihilation of the village. According to the document, chances are that Doel would be excavated to provide materials for the construction of the Oosterweel connection – another controversial project in the Antwerp area. Following the construction of that link, intended to close the circle of the Antwerp ring-road, what's left of Doel would be transformed at some later date into a new dock. The excavation of Doel for the Oosterweel connection, explained minister-president Kris Peeters in the Flemish parliament, is only one of four possibilities being discussed, and no decision has been reached.

The decision to re-zone Doel would seem to signal the end of a conflict between the 180 remaining residents of the village and the Flemish government and Port of Antwerp. Under the plan, Doel will disappear entirely; its three listed monuments – a 17th-century windmill, the organ in the parish church and the village's oldest building, dating back to 1614 – will be transported to other locations and reconstructed.

The plan also includes a new element: the compulsory purchase of an area of about 1,600 hectares around Doel, including polder land, to be reserved for further extension of harbour facilities. In the photo, these are marked out in green, purple and blue. Doel is shown as an island among the three areas. The yellow line marks the Dutch border. The land in question, according to Jan Creve, one of the leading activists against the destruction of Doel, includes 385 homes in the towns of Ouden Doel, Saftingen and Rapenburg.

"The Flemish government's document reads like a horror story," commented Creve. "Yet the truth is this is bitter reality." ♦



### Awards news:

#### Brussels transport, neuroscience and Duvel

The Brussels public transport authority **MIVB** has been granted a Recognised for Excellence label by the European Foundation for Quality Management in recognition of its management strategy and its results. Director-general Alain Flausch said he was "very proud".

**Michel Moortgat**, CEO of brewers Duvel Moortgat, was last week presented with the fourth-ever Michael Jackson beer award, named after the late influential beer critic. Moortgat, 44, was described as "a charismatic leader who has led his brewery to unprecedented heights in the last 10 years". Moortgat was recently named manager of the year by *Trends* magazine.

**Professor Bart De Strooper**, head of the Centre for Human Genetics at the Catholic

University of Leuven and the department of developmental and molecular genetics of the Flemish Institute for Biotechnology, has been awarded the UCB Prize for neuro research, worth €100,000, by the Queen Elisabeth Medical Foundation. De Strooper carries out research into Alzheimer's disease, in particular the creation of microRNA in the brain cells, which changes as Alzheimer's develops and could lead to the discovery of new drugs to slow or arrest the disease's progress. Two other researchers from the neurophysiology department of the medical faculty at Leuven were also awarded prizes: Professor **Wim Vanduffel** and professor **Rufin Vogels**. Professor **Christine Van Broeckhoven** of the University of Antwerp, whose research into dementia recently won her a European Inventor Award, was also among the winners. ♦

### New laws as of 1 July

- The **smoking ban** extends to all cafes, ending the exception for establishments that serve no food. All restaurants and bars are now smoke-free.
- **Premium SMS services** have to inform clients of the exact cost of the service and warn them automatically if their bill rises above €10 at any time. A maximum tariff – in most cases €2 – is also applied.
- The laws on **banking secrecy** are made more flexible, allowing tax authorities a simpler procedure for gaining access to the bank details of suspected fraudsters.
- The entire centre of Antwerp becomes a **Zone 30**, where the speed limit is 30 km/h. The measure previously applied only in the historic centre, but has now been extended.
- New machines offering **games of chance**, such as bingo machines in cafes, must be equipped with an electronic identity card reader to prevent access by minors. The rule extends to existing machines in 2015.
- Subsidies on the fitting of **solar panels** are cut, from €330 per megawatt-hour to €240 for installations over 250 kilowatt peak output, and to €300 for those under that output. ♦

## THE WEEK IN BUSINESS

### Airports • Macquarie

Australia's Macquarie group is selling 39% of its 70% stake in Brussels Airport to Canada's Ontario Teachers Pension Plan (OTTP) fund for €626 million plus an 11% stake in Sidney's airport. The Australian firm paid €735 million in 2004 for the 70% percent stake.

### Banking • Citibank

US-based Citibank is said to be seeking a buyer for its Belgian retail operations. The bank, which operates some 200 branches throughout the country and claims half a million clients, is expecting offers from several bidders, including Deutsche Bank, France's Credit Agricole and the local Argenta group.

### Banking • Van Breda

The local Van Breda bank, owned by the Antwerp-based Ackermans Van Haaren group, is to acquire the Antwerps Beroepskrediet (ABK). The move ends a bidding war with France's Credit Mutuel that started in December last year.

### Chemicals • Tessenderlo

The local chemical group has sold its PVC activities to Britain's Kerling for some €110 million. Tessenderlo had been seeking a buyer for the business as it sought to concentrate on its food additive, agricultural and water treatment activities.

### Chocolates • Godiva

The Godiva chocolates group, owned by Turkey's Ülker company since 2007, is to open up to 15 new stores in Belgium over the next three years.

### Food service • Starbucks

The US coffee bar chain, which inaugurated its fifth outlet in Belgium last week in Brussels' Central Station, will open its sixth in Ghent in October.

### Hotel • Sandton

The Dutch-owned Sandton hotel group is opening the doors on its Sandton Grand Hotel Reylof in Ghent on 1 July. The four-star hotel, built inside an existing 18th-century hotel, is the group's third in Belgium.

### Media • Euronews

The Lyon-based Euronews TV broadcaster is developing its Brussels bureau activities by transferring up to 20 staff members from France to Brussels to ensure better coverage of EU developments.

### Waste • Van Gansewinkel

The Dutch Van Gansewinkel waste management group is to take over the local operations of France's Veolia Environnement and its 450 employees. The move follows Veolia's decision to sell its Belgian operations barely five years after buying its way into the market with its acquisition of Biffa in 2006.

# SLEEPING BEAUTY

Wind-bent trees and contemplative serenity awaits in the small town of Veurne

MONIQUE PHILIPS

The first time I visited the yellow-bricked, fairy-tale town of Veurne, six kilometres inland from both De Panne and the French border, I was a toddler. I stayed with my grandparents on the coast, and I remember splashing around in puddles with my fancy yellow plastic boots and eating a delicious meringue pie under a cosy, damp canopy on the Grote Markt.

This time around, so much older and wiser, I did exactly the same thing.

But, I also took a guided tour of the city hall. Trees Vanneste is a charming, multilingual city guide. She doesn't mind at all Veurne being a stopover for day tourists from the coast or Calais. "And most of them are grandparents," she tells me. "We firmly believe in so-called soft recreation. We could rent out quads, of course, but why would we want to spoil the quiet pleasures that we offer for passing fads?"

Far less spoiled for tourists than Ghent or Bruges, small Veurne welcomes its visitors by river – you can moor in the little harbour, and more and more people do so – and by land. You can park your car right in the Grote Markt, for free. Two modest shopping streets – the Ooststraat and the Zuidstraat – branch off the main square.

But be sure also to stroll through the small city park and along the Zwarte Nonnenstraat, where you'll be amazed by the number of well-preserved 18th-century buildings, stately reminders of the Austrian period.

## Golden walls

There's a reason why the architectural beauties of Veurne have survived the two wars that have swept the rest of this countryside bare. Ieper and Diksmuide were virtually destroyed. "Alles kaput," as Vanneste translated for the benefit of the German tourists in our small group of visitors. But Veurne, or Furnes as it was then called, was saved by the flooding of the Ijzer River. It remained free and suffered almost no damage at all.

So Veurne's main story isn't the Great War but the glorious 17th century and the reign of Habsburg sovereigns Albert and Isabelle (1598-1621), when the city bloomed and the uniform square with its pretty gabled houses was built. Veurne had been hit by the decline of the cloth trade earlier, pushing out the young and leaving the town in the hands of the elderly – hence the nickname Veurne Sleepers. It has remained a sleepy town, but Albert and Isabella have handsomely made up for it.

Underneath the belfry on a corner of the main square, you find both city hall and viscount hall, a former country residence. These two buildings – one façade in yellow brick, the other in bluestone – in fact merge together on the inside. And what an inside! All features have been exquisitely

preserved. Ancient oak floors, ceilings, walls and furniture all breathe history. Only the marriage hall is still in use for communal business, with its sturdy, 17th-century chairs. Small animals hidden among the flowers on the golden walls peek out at you. The golden, leather wall panelling has been crafted in the so-called Cordoba style and is made to last. "Which it probably will," says the guide.

## Border country

The heavy wooden floors creak as we make our way through doors more than wide enough to allow 17th-century dress fashions to easily pass through. The city hall used to double as a justice palace, and the large, upstairs courtroom is as impressive as the Spanish lions that adorn the benches. The adjoining chapel brings home the reality of the death sentences passed here. Both the judges and the condemned were expected to contemplate their life's decisions.

Surprisingly, it is here that two modern paintings take place of honour. They were a gift by the artist who painted them: Paul Delvaux. The famous 20th-century surrealist painter spent the last 20 years of his life in Veurne, in a pink house in the Zwarte Nonnenstraat. (You can visit the museum devoted to him in nearby Sint-Idesbald.)

Back outside, clouds fill the skies above Veurne's nearby wetland, known as De Moeren, that straddles the border with France. Once a swamp, it lies below sea-level, is smooth as a pool table and great for cycling. It is equally restful to throw out a fishing line in its 17th-century system of ditches and dykes, while windmills dot the far horizon.

Take a break and taste the local produce at a farmhouse or in one of the tiny villages that surround the area on either side of the border. Such as Zoutenaai, Belgium's smallest village, with 17 inhabitants.

Don't rely on the names of the villages, though, to tell you what side of the border you're on. They all have Flemish roots. This area is where France and Flanders share plenty of history – and present for that matter. Foremost Europeans, the people of Veurne frequently visit France and vice versa. After all, a glass of Picon tastes the same on either side of the border.

## Original sin

If you're into more punishing experiences, you can register as a penitent and join the annual procession of penance. About 800 residents of Veurne take part in this parade, when they re-enact scenes from the Old and New Testaments. Penitents are dressed in brown cloaks that guarantee anonymity. They either pull along floats or carry 25kg wooden crosses.

It is no coincidence that the balaclava-like hoods are reminiscent of Spanish religious festivities. The Spanish monarchy was highly revered in these parts and extremely Catholic. Since 1646, the procession passes through Veurne's crowded streets to the sound of the carillon every last Sunday of July. The penance aspect makes it unique in Flanders, since most religious processions focus on parading relics. Feel free to register and join the procession either as a festive extra or as a repentant sinner.

Easier perhaps is a climb up the Sint-Nicolas church tower, where you can take in a magnificent view.

Sitting far below under a soaked canopy in the Grote Markt on a rainy day isn't such a bad thing, either. By now, I'm reading the little booklet put together by the city on the remarkable women who lived Veurne's history.

The town's patron Saint Walburga supposedly helps against rages and rabies. From 1580 to 1655, 29 women accused of witchcraft have been burned at the stake here. Later, there were black nuns, white nuns, grey nuns and even blue nuns until an emperor abolished all the orders.

Marie Curie came to demonstrate her mobile Röntgen (X-Ray) machine. Marie De Grave founded the Paulinakring, a network of women active in the war effort.

Sculptor Sophie Nyns was a good friend of Paul Delvaux and of the sculptor George Grard. And Marie Mortelé was



Beauvoorde castle in the nearby village of Wulveringem

a woman who couldn't help but wash her face whenever she saw water.

I had visited Veurne before, but after seeing that wonderful city hall and reading up a bit, I noticed details I hadn't before – beautiful shell motives in quite a few façades, for instance, referring to the nearby coast. And, rather than the horrors of the Great War, Albert and Isabella are omnipresent.

I'm hooked. "Another meringue, please." ♦

→ <http://tourism.veurne.be>



The annual procession of penance is unique in Flanders



© Monique Philips



© Tourism Veurne

## Beauvoorde castle

The old 12th-century castle was re-designed and re-built by Sylvian Boullain, the architect of the sovereigns Albert and Isabella, in the early 1600s but was in ruins when viscount and historian Arthur Merghelynck fell in love with it while touring the countryside in 1875. Its 19th-century appearance now harbours a beautifully restored 17th-century interior. A park and an extensive orchard complete the picture.

Merghelynck was very interested in genealogy but didn't feel it beneath him to marry a waitress. As mayor he gained a warm place in the locals' hearts, more so when in his will he left the castle to the Royal Academy of Dutch Literature, thus opening it up to the public.

Mystery games in the castle can be arranged for youngsters and for groups. The summer exhibition, *Beauvoorde à la Carte*, examines the importance of 17th-century cartographers.

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

## Town crier champion

Belgium has 14 official *bellemannen*, or town criers, but Joris Goens from Veurne has recently been declared Belgian Champion for the sixth time. Town criers used to roam the streets, bell in hand, to announce public declarations. Goens will open official festivities throughout the summer in Veurne.

## Don't miss

- 17th-century city hall and viscount hall
- Ooststraat, Zuidstraat, Noordstraat and Weststraat
- Beauvoorde Castle
- De Moeren, ideal cycling country
- Procession of Penance, 31 July at 15.30
- the booklet *Verrassende Veurnse Vrouwen (Surprising Women of Veurne)*, for sale at the tourist office, for lively accounts on various periods of Veurne's history

## Holiday at home

If you've decided to forgo a big 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



© Tourism Veurne

## Eating and sleeping

On Wednesdays, Veurne's **Grote Markt** hosts a market with local produce. In a province with more pigs than people, local food includes plenty of it. But there are sweets, too, and beer.

**Potjesvlees** is a kind of meat pie in aspic served cold, made of veal, chicken and rabbit

**Sausage of Veurne** is similar to white tripe, but the herbs and veal result in a different taste

Sweet-tooths can have their pick at bakery **De Hollander** from sugar bread, meringue pies or Kletskoppen cookies. Further afield you can get some yummy rhubarb pie at the Warandehof farm

Among the **local beers**, you will find Boeteling, Veurns Slapersbier and Sporkinbier

De Loft used to be a stove factory, hence the attractive industrial look, but has been converted into a comfy **child-friendly hotel**. A garden terrace welcomes you on the ground floor. Upstairs is an art gallery. Located on the edge of town, they also rent bikes and sell biking maps of the area to non-guests.

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



© Monique Philips



© Monique Philips



© Tourism Veurne



## Be like a baker

Located in a 17th-century farmhouse, this museum invites you to put your own baking skills to the test during one of the various workshops on offer for kids and adults. After contemplating the history of bread, waffles and chocolate, you can hop on a bike on rolling pins to knead the dough. You get to eat your own self-baked goodies (or the ones from the cafeteria). The summer exhibition *Gekneed als bakker (Kneaded as a Baker)* tells the tale of bakery families.

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

A guided tour of the city hall is highly recommended

# Brothers in beer

## Regional breweries join forces to preserve Flemish Brown

JAKE SHAW

Last month, an historic event took place: A new blend of lambic beer was introduced to the public by Wallonia's first-ever lambic brewer.

This story is not about Belgium's southern half, though, nor is it about lambic beer. It is about a different beer – the Oud Bruin, known in English as Flemish Brown – the brewers of which may draw some hope from the apparent comeback of lambic.

The deep-golden Lambic and the reddish Flemish Brown beers look nothing alike, but they do share several traits. Both originated and continue to be produced almost exclusively in a small, specific region: lambic in the area west of Brussels known as Pajottenland, and Flemish Brown in a stretch of land surrounding Kortrijk in West Flanders. Both beers are aged in oak barrels for months on end, which leaves them both with sour and acidic tastes.

And, finally, both beers have faced difficult times, with decreasing interest and brewers consequently lowering or completely stopping production.

"It may sound astonishing," says Pierre Zuber, owner of Délices et Caprices beer shop in Brussels, "but when I opened my store 15 years ago, lambic beers were on the verge of disappearing. We dreaded the day they were going to vanish."

Today, he says, it's the Flemish Brown ales that are on their way out. "We hope to reignite the passion. We've seen this with the Lambic beers; it's more or less the same thing."

### A risky beer

Brewers of Flemish Brown are looking to share at least one more trait with their lambic brethren: a renewal of interest in both the brewing and drinking community. And while the recovery of Lambic beer does offer a blueprint, Peter Verhaeghe, co-owner of Brouwerij Verhaeghe in Vichte, along with his brother, Karl, need only look to his family lineage for proof of survival.

"Beer is a traditional drink in Belgium, and tradition means not only making it during good years but also during bad," says Verhaeghe. "In past generations we've had two World Wars – not a good time to do business. Our fathers have had problems of their times, and we have our own."

During the Second World War, the Verhaeghe brewery



The brewery of the Verhaeghe family in Vichte, West Flanders

refused to brew beer for the occupying German soldiers, who responded by tearing apart their brewing kits and using the scraps for weaponry.

*"Big breweries are the meat; we are the salt and pepper"*

But even before invading armies threatened the brewing of beer, Flemish Brown has faced challenges inherent to the brewing process. A "risky beer", in the words of Zuber, Flemish Brown goes through three separate fermentation stages. The final occurs when the beer is aged for 12 to 18 months in oaken casks.

"Each cask gives its own taste," Verhaeghe explains. "It's a question of time but also of trying to obtain consistency. There are many circumstances you can't control. The nature of the casks, the size of the casks — there are so many elements that make it a difficult beer to control."

### Oak as preservative

This beer-aging method was developed centuries ago when West Flanders was part of France. Wine makers would use oak barrels to impart acids into the wine that would act as natural preservatives. Hops, the modern-day natural preservatives found in beer, weren't available in West Flanders at the time, and brewers adopted barrel-aging to ensure a healthy product.

"It's a very old and historical tradition that has been preserved for many centuries," Verhaeghe says. Other brewers, he adds, have tried to find shortcuts. "During the last down period, people were making copies of Flemish Brown beers. They were commercially successful but didn't have the same quality."

Most notably, brewers skip the barrel-aging process, the key component of a Flemish Brown, and use stainless steel tanks instead. This alternative saves both time and money, and the result is a beer that may look but doesn't taste like a true Flemish Brown.

### "The association"

That is why not long ago, Flemish Brown brewers founded an association. "We sat down at a table with the other brewers in the region and agreed to following certain rules," Verhaeghe says. "If somebody wants to brew a Flemish Brown, they have to do it according to those rules to ensure a certain quality. They won't be able to make a cheap copy."

The association, formed by breweries Verhaeghe, Bockor (in Belegem), Bavik (in Bavikhove) and Rodenbach (in Roeselare), doesn't have a formal title – "It's a complicated name," Verhaeghe laughs, "so we just call it the association" – but it does have a mission statement: to preserve the tradition and integrity of the Flemish Brown. It defines the rules to be followed to brew traditional Flemish Brown and enforces the regulations on area brewers.

"I think big breweries have their place in the world", Verhaeghe says, "but we have to be the salt and pepper for these companies. They are the meat. We have to give some flavour to their dishes." He believes that every region in the world has something special. "We don't need just one beer or one product to monopolise the market. ♦

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

## CULTURE NEWS

The Hercule Poirot prize for detective fiction has this year been awarded to Antwerp thriller writer **Rudy Soetewey** for his novel *Getuigen* (*Witness*). Soetewey was previously nominated three times for the prize, awarded by *Knack* magazine. Previous winners include Jef Geeraerts, Stan Lauryssens and Pieter Aspe.

*The Adventures of Tintin: The Secret of the Unicorn* will have its **world premiere on 22 October in Brussels**, it was announced last week. The film, based on Belgian comic-strip hero Tintin (known in Dutch as Kuifje), was directed by Steven Spielberg. Paris and London both tried to secure the premiere, "but Tintin was created by Hergé in Brussels," said a DreamWorks Studios spokesperson. "Tintin is not only a national hero in Belgium but such a huge symbol that Brussels is the only appropriate place for the premiere of the film."

As part of the week-long Belgian Economic Mission to the US, which finishes up on 30 June, Flemish composer Dirk Brossé conducted a **Transatlantic Friendship Concert** at the New York Times Building on 24 June. Brossé led the Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia in music by Philip Glass, Leonard Bernstein and George Gershwin, among others, in the presence of Prince Philippe and Princess Mathilde. Brossé is currently serving a four-year tenure as musical director of the Philadelphia orchestra.

Brussels lighting designer **Nathalie Dewez is the Belgian Designer of the Year**, awarded by the Interieur Foundation and the magazines *Weekend Knack* and *Le Vif Weekend*. Her sculpture-like fixtures also garnered her the annual award from the French auctioneers Pierre Bergé & Associates. "She literally brings light to life," said Dieter Van Den Storm, artistic director of Design Biennale Interieur.

→ [www.n-d.be](http://www.n-d.be)

As part of the European Year of Volunteering, Brussels' volunteer organisation Het Punt is publishing a *Gazet v/d Vrijwilliger* (*Gazette for Volunteers*), and the latest edition is specifically **aimed at foreigners living in Brussels**. The normally Dutch-language publication is this time mostly in English and includes information on how to volunteer your time in the capital and beyond. You can pick one up at various venues around town, including the Het Punt office, Brussels Info Place and Flagey.

→ <http://hetpunt.vgc.be>



# Sing it, Sinatra

Bart Moeyaert reaches back to a simpler time in a masterpiece of young-adult fiction

REBECCA BENOOT

During an especially hot summer, three kids spend their time sitting on a wall overlooking the Melkweg, a desolate road where an old lady (who they nickname Nancy Sinatra) walks her dog every evening at 18.00.

Oskar, Bossie and Geesje have a great time making up stories about her, until one evening neither she nor her dog Jeckyll shows up. This event gives new meaning to their lazy days.

The multiple-award winning Bart Moeyaert is a poet, a novelist and has also dabbled in a bit of theatre. Most of his books are suitable for all ages, but because of his diverse oeuvre, critics often find it hard to label him and frequently refer to him as one thing or the other. "It's the first time I've explicitly said that it is a novel for children," he tells me, "and, for the first time, interviewers have told me that it's surely suitable for adults, as well. Whenever I've said that my novels are for all ages, they always used to disagree and brand it."

*De Melkweg* – the name of the road in the book, but also meaning "milky way" – is an atmospheric little gem that is, indeed, a good read for all ages. Despite its young protagonists, the novel deals with hefty themes such as death, loneliness and the transience of everyday life. It also addresses subjects like young love, absent parents and the complex relationship between brothers.

Filled with powerful emotions, this is a beautiful book, inside and out. The cover was created by British painter Ben McLaughlin. "I'm always on the

lookout for a cover or a designer that suits the story because the content is only half of the work when creating a book," says Moeyaert, 47.

Including some familiar rites of passage, *De Melkweg* uses a boots theme (suggesting Sinatra's famous "These Boots Are Made for Walking") as a message that being a child isn't always easy, but it's important to follow your own path, to keep on going. "Children may not know who Nancy Sinatra is," says Moeyaert, "but they can now easily find out thanks to YouTube, and this will make their reading experience richer. The same goes for adults: A lot of people think they know her, but how many have actually listened – really listened – to her songs?"

*De Melkweg* is being hailed by Flemish critics as a modern-day masterpiece. Moeyaert, former city poet of Antwerp and a prolific writer of more than 30 books, has hit a chord through a mix of pop culture references and timeless issues. The novel's distinct lack of technology suggests not necessarily a simpler but a more innocent type of childhood that resonates with adult readers.

"I like to go back to basics, which in this case was playing outside" he explains. "I guess this is due to Astrid Lindgren and Annie MG Schmidt who I used to read growing up. They also portrayed a time when children built tree houses and played with beetles. These are remnants of my own childhood."

## Between the lines

A lot is insinuated in *De Melkweg*, leaving the reader to fill in the blanks

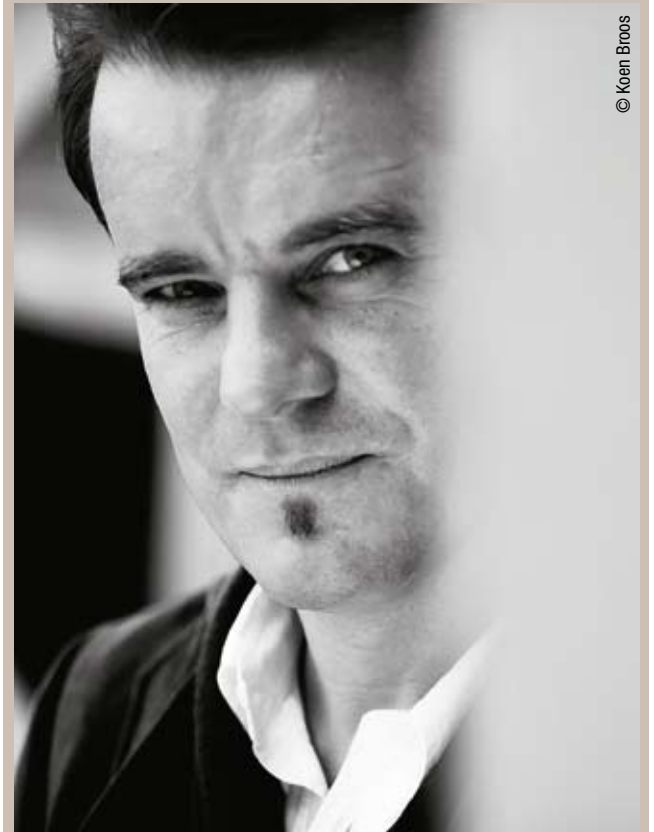
– characteristic of Moeyaert's style. "Some authors are convinced that by adding a lot of detail and dialogue, they give the reader a clear picture of reality, but how often do you actually focus on these details in every-day life? How often do you have profound life-changing discussions? I think reality is best represented by saying or showing as little as possible."

This type of suggestive storytelling fits perfectly with one of the key subjects in the novel – imagination, something children and novelists have in common. "Escaping to your imaginary world is a method of self-defence, a way to save yourself from the harsh reality," claims Moeyaert, "My thoughts, for example, are my second life. It's a world where no one else can enter, where I am safe, and that's something the children also do in this novel."

Moeyaert has won all Flanders' literary prizes at some point in his 28-year career, including the coveted Golden Owl, the Inter-provincial Literature Prize and the Flemish Culture Prize for Youth Literature. Several of his books have been translated into English, and this year he was nominated for the Swedish Arts Council's prestigious Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award (his ninth time). He has been nominated four times for the Hans Christian Anderson Award and has won Germany's White Raven twice.

"Being nominated for an international prize means that my own country thinks I am worthwhile, which is the biggest compliment." ♦

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



© Koen Broos

"My thoughts are my second life. It's a world where no one else can enter, where I am safe"

## Fresh fiction

Young Adult Fiction (YA) has been taking the world by storm thanks to international authors like Suzanne Collins, John Green, JK Rowling, Cory Doctorow and Stephenie Meyer. Aimed at adolescents, these novels always have a young protagonist and deal with issues such as first loves, friendship, drugs, socio-cultural conflicts, etc.

This genre is particularly booming in the US and the UK, but Flemish publisher Manteau has jumped on the bandwagon and created the new YA imprint Edge. What makes Edge unique is the close collaboration with its target audience, who'll be involved in both the selection process and the marketing of new books. The first titles are being released this month.

In the meantime, you can already enjoy some genuine Flemish YA.

### Catwalk

Dirk Bracke · Davidsfonds Fontaine

Together with Bart Moeyaert, Bracke is the popular Flemish author of adolescent fiction today. *Catwalk* looks like a glossy magazine and tells the story of Polly, a young girl who is approached by a talent scout who wants to turn her into a model. Much to the dismay of her overprotective stepfather, she pursues her dream but soon realises that dreams don't come cheap. *Catwalk* takes you down a road full of glitter and glamour, jealousy and competition and shows us that not everything is as picture perfect as it seems.

### Galgenmeid

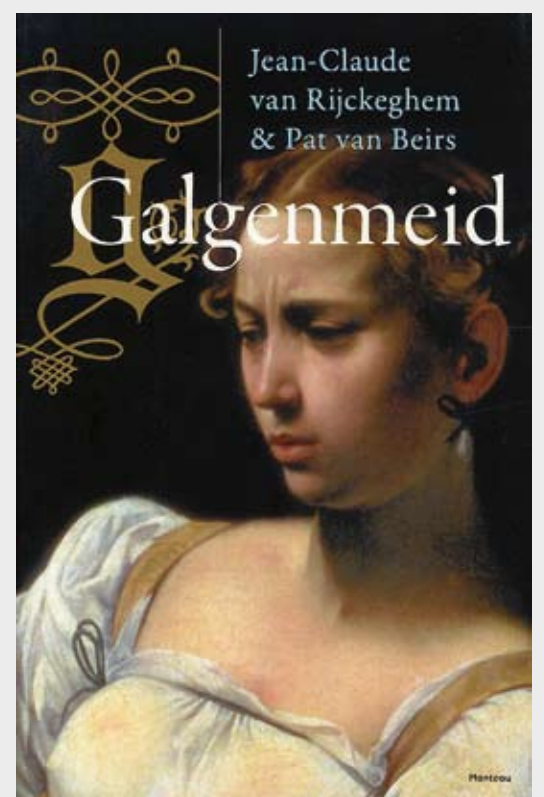
Pat van Beirs & Jean-Claude Van Rijckeghem · Manteau

*Galgenmeid* (Gallows Girl) won this spring's Boekenleeuw, an award presented to the best children's book by a Flemish author. It is an elaborate, eloquent historical novel set in 16th-century Flanders, where Gitte Niemandsdochter ("nobody's daughter") was dropped off at an orphanage when she was five. She grows up to be a thief and a grifter but manages to escape the gallows thanks to her powers of persuasion. Gitte soon learns that she is in fact not nobody's daughter, but the daughter of a Spanish Duke. He decides to use her as a spy at the start of the war between Flanders and Spain.

### Eksternacht

Pieter Gaudesaboos, Mieke Versyp & Sabien Clement · Lannoo

The latest collaboration between the three authors who won the Golden Owl Prize for Youth Literature in 2009 (for *Linus*) is a collection of three monologues saturated with the Flemish vernacular. It's a book about doomed marriages in fact – due to unrealistic expectations, skeletons in the closet or simply because it's just not meant to be. Filled with irony and glorious illustrations, it is a raw yet poetic and certainly contemporary look at the pitfalls, passion and potential of this age-old institution.



# New at BSB in September 2011

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## Cost-cutting panic or investments in human capital?

In times like these, where we have to do more with less, there are two types of managers. **Those who cut costs** across the board, and **those who even now choose to continue to invest** prudently. Which type are you? The financial crisis and the uncertain economic situation are confronting managers with new challenges, but all too often they are also driving them to take decisions that are infused with panic and doom-and-gloom. But the ones who are forward-thinking and keep to their own course don't slam on the brakes – instead, they invest in the future.

### Knowledge determines your competitive power

An organisation that wants to maintain and strengthen its competitive position in the global economy must be powered by a well-oiled knowledge engine. Your workforce is your greatest capital and lifelong learning is an absolute necessity. The acquired knowledge flows back into your company and your knowledge capital grows larger and larger, increasing your competitiveness. This will keep you competitive in the rapidly changing economic context. We call this 'learning with impact'.

### Investing in training: costs versus benefits

Too often, training is still regarded as a cost instead of an investment. However, companies that view their personnel policy from a strategic standpoint continue – even when the economy becomes a serious challenge – to invest in training programmes for their most strategic employees. Investing in talent and training now guarantees you a significant jump on the competition when the economy gets going again.

### Vlerick, your partner in tailor-made training programmes

Those who have participated in a Vlerick training programme are undoubtedly better prepared than other employees to take on today's challenges. Via in-company programmes – focused on the development of individual employees as well as on organisational development – Vlerick Leuven Gent Management School offers you a collaborative project fully tailored to your needs. Thanks to in-depth knowledge of both local and international economic environments and years of

experience in training management talent, the School can develop a specially adapted management training programme for every organisation, in each phase of its development, targeting the most diverse aspects of its business.

**More info on our management programmes?**

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**Vlerick Leuven Gent  
Management School**

## Sunshine, Sangria and the Scheldt ZOMER VAN ANTWERPEN

REBECCA BENOOT

During the annual Zomer van Antwerpen (Summer of Antwerp), the city by the Scheldt offers its residents and thousands of tourists who flock to the great multi-cultural metropolis countless days of music, theatre, movies and, this year, one giant botanical airship.

Annual favourites such as the free concerts on numerous city squares, the summer bar with palm trees, cocktails and sandy beach, the late-night sessions with DJs and urban cinema at the Scheldt will naturally return.

This year's programme is also filled with some astonishing acts that will keep you entertained until the wee hours, which is the perfect moment to retire to the Nulsterren Pension, a low-cost, highly valued bed and breakfast created especially for the summer festival in the swanky Zurenborg neighbourhood.

The Tower Sessions, for example, housed in a huge wooden tower reminiscent of Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, should definitely be on your to do/see list. The Tower Sessions offer stand-up comedy and concerts in a unique location for the humble price of €2. Out of the hundreds of events, don't miss these highlights.

### The Botanical Expedition

Looking like something out of a Jules Verne novel, the Aeroflorale airship (pictured) has been chartered by the La Machine company and travels the world

looking for rare plants. This turn-of-the-century contraption filled with scientists lands on 1 July in Antwerp, where they'll start investigating the appearance of *Helianthus annuus* (aka sunflowers) that seem to pop up in the centre of Antwerp each year. Quirky yet breathtakingly beautiful, they'll be lavishing us with botanical facts and exotic tales.

### The Brothers Perdu

Theatre companies Froe Froe and De Roovers join forces for an open-air spectacle that mixes dolls with actors. In this engaging story, two brothers fall in love with the same girl and try to win her heart through music. Sumptuous, burlesque and a tad macabre.

### The Dinner Club

Have you ever been to a fancy party and didn't know what to wear? Which fork to use first? At a total loss when they start playing the rumba? The Swedish Poste Restante has found the answer: The Dinner Club, a series of sophisticated workshops teaching you the ins and outs of contemporary etiquette, after which you get a chance to test your latest tricks at and elegant three-course dinner, followed by a little dancing.

### Hector Mann & the Fizzy Pop Lemonade Factory

Hector Mann is living the dream: a gorgeous wife, two kids, big

house and manager of the Fizzy Pop Lemonade factory. But one day he accidentally drinks a potion that makes him invisible to everyone (except the audience). Theatre group SkaGen is making an old-fashioned, slapstick movie that will be shot in front of a live audience in a converted truck full of wildly gesticulating actors, an overenthusiastic pianist and even special effects.

### Pffffff

The Zomer van Antwerpen wouldn't be complete with a circus or two. In *Pffffff* seven men compete for the love of one lucky young lady. In this very funny spectacle, they each try to outdo the other with bigger and bolder stunts. Non-stop stunts, live music and an electrifying beat-box duel.

Parties, concerts, movies and the Botanical Expedition are free, but you have to order tickets for the rest. Don't dawdle; performances during Zomer in Antwerpen sell like hotcakes. ♦

1 July to 28 August

Across Antwerp

→ [www.zva.be](http://www.zva.be)



## MORE FESTIVALS THIS WEEK

**Beleuvenissen** → *Squares across Leuven*

**World Festival Izegem** → *Cultuurhuis De Leest*

**Festival of Emotions** → *Festival terrain, Kortrijk*



### Antwerp

#### Buster

Kaasrui 1; 03.232.51.53  
[www.busterpodium.be](http://www.busterpodium.be)  
**JUN 29** 21.30 D-Turn  
**JUN 30** 21.30 The Bobby James Family

#### De Roma

Turnhoutsebaan 327; 03.292.97.40  
[www.deroma.be](http://www.deroma.be)  
**JUN 30** 20.30 Colin Benders & Eric Vloeimans: Kytcrash

#### Deurne Openluchttheater Rivierenhof

Turnhoutsebaan 232; 070.222.192  
[www.openluchttheater.be](http://www.openluchttheater.be)  
Concerts at 19.00:  
**JUL 1** Zule Max + Murga **JUL 2** Pieter Embrechts & The New Radio Kings **JUL 3** Manu Chao La Ventura + Murga Armada **JUL 5** Dinosaur Jr. + Drums Are For Parades **JUL 6** Rumer + Jim Cole **JUL 7** James Walsh + Jonathan Jeremiah

#### Trix

Noordersingel 28; 03.670.09.00  
[www.trixonline.be](http://www.trixonline.be)

**JUN 29** 19.30 Boyssetfire + Valient Thorr + Antillectual

### Ardoie

Cultuurkapel De Schadu  
Wezestraat 32; 0479.80.94.82  
[www.deschadu.net](http://www.deschadu.net)  
**JUL 1** 20.30 Notropil

### Brussels

Ancienne Belgique  
Anspachlaan 110; 02.548.24.24  
[www.abconcerts.be](http://www.abconcerts.be)  
**JUL 5** 20.00 Fat Freddy's Drop

### Fuse

Blaesstraat 208; 02.511.97.89  
[www.fuse.be](http://www.fuse.be)  
**JUL 2** 23.00 Lessizmore: Tale of Us, Frivolous Live, Maayan Nidam, Pierre, Issa Maiga

### LR6

Hoogstraat 204; 02.830.21.27  
**JUN 29** 21.00 MNSQ by Tana

### Viage

Anspachlaan 30; 070.44.34.43  
[www.viage.be](http://www.viage.be)  
**JUL 1** 20.30 George Benson

### Vorst-Nationaal

Victor Rousseulaan 208; 0900.00.991  
[www.forestnational.be](http://www.forestnational.be)  
**JUL 5** 20.30 Paul Simon

### Ghent

Dok  
Koopvaardijlaan 13  
[www.dokgent.be](http://www.dokgent.be)  
**JUN 30** 21.00 Eefje De Visser

### Handelsbeurs

Kouter 29; 09.265.91.65  
[www.handelsbeurs.be](http://www.handelsbeurs.be)  
**JUN 30** 20.15 NEeMA

### Vooruit

St Pietersnieuwstraat 23; 0900.26.060  
[www.vooruit.be](http://www.vooruit.be)  
**JUN 29** 19.30 Wu-Tang Clan: Rebirth Tour  
**JUN 30** 23.00 Daily Dubstep, party

### Kortrijk

De Kreun  
Conservatoriumplein 1; 056.37.06.44  
[www.dekreun.be](http://www.dekreun.be)  
**JUL 2** 22.00 King Kong Club: Dimitri Andreas + Mainro + Black Francis



### Brussels

Art Base  
Zandstraat 29; 02.217.29.20  
[www.art-base.be](http://www.art-base.be)  
**JUL 2** 20.00 Diminuita Swing Jazz Trio

### Sounds Jazz Club

Tulpenstraat 28; 02.512.92.50  
[www.soundsjazzclub.be](http://www.soundsjazzclub.be)  
**JUN 29** 22.00 Chamaquiando, salsa  
**JUN 30** 22.00 Igor Gehenot Trio  
**JUL 1-2** 22.00 Tchalâs Band

### The Music Village

Steenstraat 50; 02.513.13.45  
[www.themusicvillage.com](http://www.themusicvillage.com)  
**Until JUL 2** 21.00 Thomas Champagne Quartet  
**Until AUG 27** 21.00 Brussels Village Festival, jazz & Latino festival



### Brussels

Art Base  
Zandstraat 29; 02.217.29.20  
[www.art-base.be](http://www.art-base.be)  
**JUN 30** 20.00 Necati Çelik (Turkey) **JUL 1** 20.00 Gabriela Torres, tango from Buenos Aires **JUL 3** 18.00 Pankaj Mishra & Sandip Banerjee (India) **JUL 7** 20.00 Nirali Kartik, classical Indian vocals (India)

### Fiesta Club

Werkhuizenkaai 20; 02.248.20.88  
[www.fiesta-club.be](http://www.fiesta-club.be)  
**JUL 3** 23.00 Will.I.Am from the Black Eyed Peas



### Antwerp

Vlaamse Opera  
Frankrijklei 1; 070.22.02.02  
[www.vlaamseopera.be](http://www.vlaamseopera.be)  
**JUL 1-9** 15.00/20.00 Giuseppe Verdi's Aida conducted by Dmitri Jurowski, staged by Peter Konwitschny (in Italian with surtitles in Dutch)

### Brussels

De Munt  
Muntplein; 070.23.39.39  
[www.demunt.be](http://www.demunt.be)  
**Until JUN 30** 18.00 Les Huguenots by Giacomo Meyerbeer conducted by Marc Minkowski, staged by Olivier Py (in French with surtitles in French and Dutch)



### Brussels

La Tentation  
Lakensestraat 28; 02.223.22.75  
[www.latentation.org](http://www.latentation.org)  
**JUL 2** 20.30 Tango Cabaret, featuring tango, circus acts and folklore, plus performances by dance duo Dante and Monik



created by six European museums exploring the notion of modernity  
**Until SEP 4** Artists in Residence: Sammy Baloji & Patrick Mudekerezan, arts, sciences and collections



**Roller Bike Parade:** Weekly roller skating and cycling parades  
**Until SEP 23** 19.00 in Antwerp, Brussels, Hasselt and Koksijde  
[www.belgiumrollers.com](http://www.belgiumrollers.com)

**Theatre at the Cinema:** The Cherry Orchard, live via satellite on the big screen from the National Theatre of London  
**JUN 30** in Kinepolis cinemas in Brussels and Flanders  
[www.kinepolis.com/theater](http://www.kinepolis.com/theater)

### Blankenberge

**Sand Sculpture Festival:** International sand sculpture festival with a Disneyland Paris theme  
**Until SEP 12** at Koning Albert I-Laan 116  
[www.zandsculptuur.be](http://www.zandsculptuur.be)

**Scavenger Hunt:** A special walk to discover the seaside town, with prizes to be won  
**Until OCT 15**, start at tourist office, Leopold III-plein  
050.41.22.27, [www.blankenberge.be](http://www.blankenberge.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](http://www.aperos.be)

**Cathedral Concerts:** Organ concerts  
**JUL 5-AUG 30** Tues, 20.00 at St Michael and Gudula's Cathedral, Sinter-Goedeleplein  
[www.cathedralestmichel.be](http://www.cathedralestmichel.be)

**Imagine Festival 2011:** International all-style music competition for young artists  
**JUL 1-2** 15.00/18.00 at Le Botanique, Koningsstraat 236  
[www.imaginefestival.net](http://www.imaginefestival.net)

**K-Nal (F)estival:** First-ever summer festival with music, photography and culinary adventures  
**JUL 1-AUG 27** Thurs-Sat at K-NAL, Havenlaan 1  
0474.04.00.00, [www.k-nal.be](http://www.k-nal.be)

**Midis-Minimes:** Short lunchtime concerts covering a wide range of repertoires, from world music to Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic and contemporary  
**JUL 1-AUG 31** at the Royal Music Conservatory, Regentschapstraat 30  
[www.midis-minimes.be](http://www.midis-minimes.be)

**Plazey Festival in the Park:** Free family-friendly festival with concerts, circus workshops and children's theatre and activities  
**Until JUL 3** 13.00/18.00 at Elizabeth Park, Koekelberg  
02.412.00.50, [www.plazey.be](http://www.plazey.be)

**Recyclart Holidays:** Free summer activities on Thursday & Friday evenings featuring concerts, screenings, communal bread making, workshops and more  
**JUN 30-AUG 5** at Recyclart, Ursulinenstraat 25  
02.502.57.34, [www.recyclart.be](http://www.recyclart.be)

### Leuven

**Zomer van Sint-Pieter:** Lunch-time concerts, a sister event to the Midis-Minimes festival in Brussels  
**JUN 30-AUG 26** at Saint Peter's Church, Grote Markt  
[www.zomer-van-sint-pieter.be](http://www.zomer-van-sint-pieter.be)

### Marke (West Flanders)

**Festival van de Verwondering (Festival of Emotions):** Performing arts festival with a focus on circus and humour  
**JUL 1-3** at OC Marke, Hellestraat 6  
[www.humorologie.be](http://www.humorologie.be)

### Ostend

**Geronimo Stilton's Fantasia:** Giga Grote Musical under a circus tent on the beach  
**JUL 4-17** 17.00/18.30/19.00 at Kursaal (Casino), Monacoplein 1  
070.22.56.00, [www.sherpa.be](http://www.sherpa.be)

## Summer Music Festivals

**Basilica Festival!:** Limburg leg of the Festival of Flanders, featuring classical, jazz, contemporary, carillon concerts and musical cycling tour  
**Until JUL 9** across Limburg  
[www.basilica.be](http://www.basilica.be)

### Antwerp

**Sfinks Mixed Festival:** Open-air festival of world music, dance, film and circus featuring AfroCubism, Emir Kusturica & The No Smoking Orchestra, Alpha Blondy & Solar Sytem, Hindi Zahra, Bomba Estéreo, Ballet Royal du Cambodge and Khaira Arby  
**JUL 29-31** at Molenveld, Boechout  
03.455.69.44, [www.sfinks.be](http://www.sfinks.be)

### Bruges

**Cactus Festival:** 30th anniversary edition of the pop and rock festival with a family atmosphere, featuring Bryan Ferry, Lamb, Mogwai, KT Tunstall, Hooverphonic, Arsenal, Cold War Kids, Lyle Lovett, Kate Nash, Triggerfinger and more  
**JUL 8-10** at Minnewater Park  
[www.cactusfestival.be](http://www.cactusfestival.be)

### Brussels

**Brosella Folk & Jazz:** 35th edition of the music festival, featuring concerts by international folk and country groups on Saturday and jazz ensembles on Sunday, plus kids' village and workshops  
**JUL 9-10** at The Green Theatre, Ossegem Park  
[www.brosella.be](http://www.brosella.be)

**Bruksellive:** Free festival in the shadow of the Atomium featuring The Cinematic Orchestra, Vismets, STIJN & friends, Benji B, SX, Drums are for Parades, Phaeleh, Title & Delvis, Onda Sonora, Head full of Flames and more  
**JUL 30** at The Green Theatre, Ossegem Park  
[www.bruksellive.be](http://www.bruksellive.be)

**Brussels Summer Festival:** Tenth edition of the annual festival featuring a diverse music programme by Jamie Cullum, Caravan Creek, The Hong Kong Dong, Xaman-Ek, Baden Baden, Ian Kelly, Tailors of Panama, Harvey Quinnt, more. Plus film screenings, open-door museum events, street theatre, sound and light show  
**AUG 12-21** in venues around the city  
[www.bsf.be](http://www.bsf.be)

**Central Park Festival:** New festival for Brussels' university and college students with some 20 rock bands plus DJs on two stages  
**JUN 29** at Jubelpark  
[www.centralparkfestival.be](http://www.centralparkfestival.be)

**Royal Park Music Festival 2011:** Series of free Sunday jazz concerts featuring Marc Lelange & guests, Wim Eggermont Kwartet, Michel Mainil Quartet, Fanny Bériaux and South London Jazz Orchestra  
**JUL 3-31** Sun, 11.00 & 15.00 at Warande Park  
[www.travers.be](http://www.travers.be)

### Dranouter

**Folk Dranouter:** Flanders' purest folk festival featuring Kayam, Band of Gypsies, Zule Max, Ozark Henry, The Leisure Society, Kayam, Grant Lee Buffalo, Rodrigo y Gabriela, The Jayhawks, Sons of Noel and Adrian, An Pierlé & White Velvet, Salvatore Adamo, Ben Harper and more  
**AUG 4-7** at Festivalterrien Dranouter, Koudekotstraat  
[www.folkdranouter.be](http://www.folkdranouter.be)

### Ghent

**Gent Jazz Festival:** Annual jazz festival featuring Angus & Julia Stone, BB King, Steven De Bruyn, Tony Gyselincx & Roland, Gotan Project, Sing The Truth, Jef Neve Trio, Raphael Saadiq, Mavis Staples, Sonny Rollins, Daniel Lanois' Black Dub, Morcheeba and more  
**JUL 7-17** at De Bijloke, Godshuizenlaan  
[www.gentjazz.com](http://www.gentjazz.com)

**Gentse Feesten:** Ghent's infamous annual 10-day, 24-hour-a-day street party featuring a dozen stages in outdoor squares with live music all day and night, plus Ten Days Off, a massive techno festival in the arts centre Vooruit. Also a Dutch-language theatre festival, a street-theatre festival and a puppet buskers festival  
**JUL 16-25** throughout the city centre  
[www.gentsefeesten.be](http://www.gentsefeesten.be)

**Sint-Baafsabdijconcerten:** Five concerts bring Baroque, classical, world sounds and jazz to the beautiful abbey, featuring viola da gamba player Philippe Pierlot, violinist

Lorenzo Gatto, pianist and harpsichordist  
Alexei Lubimov and Palestinian oud player  
Moneim Adwan  
**JUL 17-21** at Saint Bavo's Abbey  
[www.debijloke.be](http://www.debijloke.be)

### Gooik (Flemish Brabant)

**Gooikoorts:** International folk music festival featuring De Garre & Bruno Deneckere, Anxo Lorenzo, Angles, Igriczek, Luigi Lai, Ewen Henderson & Mike Katz, Geest van de Kesterheide, Arnaud Degimbe & Luc Pilartz, Theodosii Spassov, Battlefield Band and more  
**JUL 1-3** at Festivalterrein, Dorpsstraat  
[www.gooikoorts.be](http://www.gooikoorts.be)

### Hoogstraten (Antwerp province)

**Antilliaanse Feesten:** The world's largest Caribbean festival featuring Machel Montano, Fally Ipupa, Manoline, Kuenta y Tambú, Sonambulo, La Pinata and more  
**AUG 12-13** at Festivalterrien, Blauwbossen  
[www.antilliaansefeesten.be](http://www.antilliaansefeesten.be)

### Leuven (Flemish Brabant)

**Marktrock:** Free Belgian rock and pop festival featuring Intergalactic Lover, Willow, Gorki, K's Choice, Zornik, The Galacticos and more  
**AUG 12-14** at Oude Markt, Leuven  
[www.marktrock.be](http://www.marktrock.be)

### Lokeren (East Flanders)

**Lokerse Feesten:** 40ck festival featuring Lady Linn & Her Magnificent Seven, Balthazar, The Heartbreaks, Roger Daltrey performing The Who's Tommy, 2ManyDJs, Arsenal, Daan, The Subs, Sharon Jones & The Dap-Kings, North Mississippi Allstars Duo, Goose, Kelis, Primal Scream, Das Pop, Ozark Henry, Joe Cockar, Robert Plant & The Band of Joy, Paolo Nutini, Gabriel Rios, Triggerfinger and more  
**JUL 29-AUG 7** at Festivalterrein Lokeren  
[www.lokersefeesten.be](http://www.lokersefeesten.be)

### Peer (Limburg)

**Blues Peer:** Classic blues festival featuring Belgian Blues All Stars, The Black Crowes, Triggerfinger, The Paladins, Last Call, Charlie Cruz & The Lost Souls, Brian Setzer's Rockabilly Riot, Ray Manzarek & Robby Krieger of The Doors, King King and The Catsmokes and more  
**JUL 15-17** at Festivalterrein Peer, Deusterstraat  
[www.brbb.be](http://www.brbb.be)

## FESTIVAL SPOTLIGHT

### Rock Werchter

30 June to 3 July

Werchter festival grounds

This weekend, the small – and normally very quiet – village of Werchter, just north of Leuven, will host one of the biggest and most famous rock festivals on the planet. During four days, no less than 61 world-famous bands will perform for a crowd of nearly 80,000. The green fields around the festival site turn into one humongous camp site, with some of the visitors – if they arrive late – having to walk one hour to get from their little tent to the centre stage. But it's worth it: Not only does Werchter offer a glimpse of tried and true bands such as Queens of the Stone Age, Underworld, Portishead or the ever-enchanting PJ Harvey, it also features newcomers like James Blake, Aloe Blacc and Flanders' own Selah Sue. And, of course, the festival cannot do without modern-day heroes Coldplay and Kings of Leon. But there is more to it than that: Werchter has been voted “best festival” four times in five years by the International Live Music Conference of concert

### Puurs (Antwerp province)

**Simmerdown Festival:** Free world festival featuring children's activities, international buffet, concerts by Skatchou Bottos, Pura Vida, Kajhem Orchestra and Luci Carton, plus fair-trade bar and world market  
**JUL 1-2** at Speeluin JOC WIJland, Fortbaan  
[www.simmerdown.be](http://www.simmerdown.be)

### Tienen (Flemish Brabant)

**Suikerrock:** 25th edition of the rock festival featuring De Jeugd Van Tegenwoordig, Zornik, Moby, Basement Jaxx, Heather Nova, Soulsister, Tom Jones, Tom Dice, Natalia, The Baseballs, Triggerfinger, Iggy & The Stooges, Deep Purple, Roxette and more  
**JUL 28-31** in the centre of Tienen  
[www.suikerrock.be](http://www.suikerrock.be)

### Vorselaar (Antwerp)

**Na Fir Bolg:** Annual folk and rock festival featuring Broes, The Buckshots, Seatsniffers, Sebi Lee, The Pale Boys, Flushed Harmony, Circle J, TBC, Hannelore Bedert, Corvus Corax, die Könige der Spielleute, Gorki, Roselien, 't Kliekske, 't Winkelcollectief, 3 Daft Monkeys, Harmonie Vorselaar, The Popes, Eva De Roovere and more  
**JUL 1-3** at Festivalweide Sassenhout  
[www.folkfestival.be](http://www.folkfestival.be)

### Werchter (Flemish Brabant)

**Rock Werchter 2011:** Flanders' biggest summer rock and pop festival featuring Kings of Leon, The Chemical Brothers, Coldplay, Eels, The Black Eyed Peas, Iron Maiden, Linkin Park, Arctic Monkeys, Queens of the Stone Age and more  
**JUN 30-JUL 3** at Haachtsesteenweg, Rotselaar  
[www.rockwerchter.be](http://www.rockwerchter.be)

**TW Classic 2011:** 10th anniversary of the pop and rock music festival featuring Gabriel Rios, Bryan Adams, Shakira, Simple Minds, Texas, James Blunt, The Faces featuring Mick Hucknall and Selah Sue  
**JUL 9** at Festival Park, Werchter  
[www.twclassic.be](http://www.twclassic.be)

## GET YOUR TICKETS NOW

### Theater aan zee

28 July to 6 August  
Across Ostend

In the surge of summer music madness, Ostend bravely stages a theatre festival, resplendent with new and previous work. Theatre at the Sea is the perfect few days to catch up on Flemish theatre you might have missed, such as Muziektheater Transparant's *A New Requiem* or *Ruhe*, but also new work, like Dimitri Verhulst's *Ginds, tussen de netels* (*There, Between the Nettles*). Much theatre is in Dutch, but there are also English-language highlights, like the sexually charged *Kein Applaus Fr Scheisse* by Brussels duo Florentina Holzinger and Vincent Riebeek and *Tanzung*, Jan Decorté's dance work with six poems in English (*pictured*). And some performances are wordless, particularly those that involve a bit of a walk around the outdoors. There's music, film and dance, too.



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

DAAN BAUWENS



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professionals, leaving behind the legendary festivals Roskilde, Glastonbury and Isle of Wight. The success of Werchter even prompted the organisers of the award to change the rules: now, no festival can be awarded three times in a row, just to give other festivals a chance. Werchter also enjoys an immaculate reputation among artists: U2's Bono, who has seen the Flemish Brabant site grow from a scout meeting to a mega-event, thinks of it as the “best festival in the world”. Radiohead waited until the 1996 edition to play “Paranoid Android”, its fabulous departure from conventional rock, in public for the first time.

But Werchter also hails a local season: it's the festival for kids celebrating the beginning of the *grote vakantie* (summer holidays). It is not an uncommon sight at Flemish secondary schools to see them arriving at their last day of exams wearing their sloppy festival clothes and carrying their camping gear. How unfair to expect a good exam result, when all they want to do is get the adrenaline pumping.

*Four day combi passes to Werchter are still available, as are day tickets for Sunday (The Black Eyed Peas-A-Trak, Iron Maiden, more)*

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

# bite

ROBYN BOYLE

## Gentse Waterzooi

Ghent is proud to lay claim to this classic dish, and for good reason. *Waterzooi* is a delectably creamy, hearty stew with perfectly balanced elements. But it can seem a bit mysterious at first. Is it made with fish or chicken? And what's with the funny name?

Hundreds of years ago, when Ghent's canals were lined with watermills, a bit of grain from the mills escaped into the water. This naturally resulted in the waterways teeming with fish. So the original *waterzooi* was a vegetable stew based on fattened-up freshwater fish.

But with industrialisation came increasingly polluted waters, and the fish became scarce. Hence the turn towards readily available and affordable chicken (which everyone had running around in their gardens). Today, we are blessed as to be able to choose whether we should like our *waterzooi* with chicken, fresh- or even saltwater fish.

As for the name, *zooien* in Old Dutch means to cook slowly. And that's exactly what I did. Preparing *waterzooi* is by no means difficult, but it does require a good dose of patience. Well worth the wait, I might add.

### Ingredients:

1 kg whole chicken, cleaned, or whole thighs  
1 leek  
1 celery  
1 bunch fresh parsley  
3 large carrots  
2 medium onions  
4 cloves  
2 dl heavy cream  
Few sprigs fresh thyme  
Few bay leaves  
Salt and pepper  
Slab butter  
2 egg yolks

For the bouillon: Remove the less desirable parts of your leek, celery and parsley (leaves, stems, etc) and throw these into a large pot with one roughly chopped carrot and one whole onion pricked with the cloves. Add thyme sprigs and bay leaves, along with the raw chicken – skin, bones and all. Season with salt and pepper. Fill with water until all ingredients are just covered and let simmer for a good 30 minutes, or until the meat is falling off the bone. Then remove the chicken and allow to cool. Use a sieve to separate the veggies from the bouillon and set the bouillon aside for later. Throw away veggies.

While your bouillon is cooking, melt the butter in another large pot and add the best



parts of the vegetables. This includes the other onions, two carrots, the white part of the leeks, celery and parsley leaves. These can be sliced into fine strips or roughly chopped into bite-sized pieces, according to your preference. Slowly sweat the veggies in the butter. Once the veggies are tender, remove the chicken meat from the bones and add to the pot, together with the freshly made bouillon. After the stew has had several minutes to warm up, it's time to add a thickening agent: beat together the egg yolks and heavy cream,

then add slowly to the pot, stirring all the while.

Season to taste with salt and pepper and ladle into deep bowls. For the finishing touch, garnish with a bit of parsley and serve with small boiled potatoes.

I find that a strong blonde Belgian ale is the best pairing for this dish, such as a Gentse Tripel (to stay with the Ghent theme), but I admit that a crisp glass of dry white wine goes nicely, too.

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## TALKING SPORTS

LEO CENDROWICZ

### Can Flemish fliers flash in the Tour de France?

Every summer when the Tour de France comes around, there are hopes that a true heir to Eddy Merckx will emerge from Flanders. This year is no exception, but, although there are some promising and exciting Flemish riders amongst the more than 200 starters at the Passage du Gois on Saturday, it looks unlikely than any of them will ride into Champs Elysée with the yellow jersey on 24 July.

Let's start with the revelation of the season, Philippe Gilbert. The 28-year-old achieved a remarkable triple victory in April when he won the three "Ardennes Classics" in a just one week: the Amstel Gold Classic in southern Netherlands, the Flèche Wallonne, and the 255.5km Liège-Bastogne-Liège. Just last week, Gilbert took the gold medal at the Belgian cycling championships, a 241km race in Hoogdele-Gits, West Flanders.

However, despite his eye-catching talent, the Omega Pharma-Lotto cyclist is essentially a classics specialist; he can excel in one-day races. The Tour de France is a three-week grind is so gruelling that the top contenders these days train for it and nothing else all year round. Which means that the best Gilbert can probably hope for is to claim key stages along the way, and to perhaps win points in the green jersey classification for the best sprinters.

The same goes for Quick Step's Tom Boonen, perennially on the verge of a comeback but completely eclipsed by Gilbert in recent months. Boonen, once Flanders' great cycling hope, won the green jersey in 2007 but was briefly derailed after testing positive for cocaine use in 2008 and 2009 and has struggled to regain his form. Likewise for Jurgen Roelandts, from Asse, who was the leading Belgian in the green jersey



rankings last year, coming in ninth, and 120th overall.

The most likely highest finisher overall will be Flemish time-trial specialist Jurgen Van Den Broeck (pictured above). Last year, the 27-year old was the surprise element in the Tour de France, finishing fifth overall – and becoming Belgium's first top-five Tour de France finisher since Claude Criquelion in 1986.

But the Herentals-born cyclist faces almost insurmountable obstacles this year with Spanish current holder Alberto Contador and Luxembourg's Schleck brothers.

There are more Flemish riders in the Tour: Francis De Greef, 26, was the top Belgian in the white jersey rankings for younger riders last year, coming in 11th, and 72nd overall. Kevin De Weert, 29, came in 18th overall; Johan Vansummeren, 29, was 30th; and Jurgen Van de Walle, 34, was 63rd.

But Flemish absentees this year include Mario Aerts, who has retired aged 35, while Stijn Devolder, the two-time Tour of Flanders champion failed to meet the fitness requirements.

## THE LAST WORD...

### TMI

"As a journalist, I wanted to read, for example, someone like Vincent Van Quickenborne, who has made Twitter his core business. But I don't have to constantly be told where he's hanging out, do I?"

VRT news anchor Lieven Verstraete has given up tweeting after a month

### Making do

"The microphones work, there's enough room and the food's not bad."

British prime minister David Cameron thinks a new building in Brussels for the European Council is an extravagance, as the old one is still fine

### Football for humanity

"I know I can do a lot of good for mankind, but nobody understands me, and that's enormously frustrating."

Flemish businessman Roland Duchatelet, new owner of Standard football club

### Pop Smurfology

"That was a totally different era, when there was a very strong separation of genders in Belgium. This was a consequence of Catholic education. To show boys and girls having an adventure together was not done."

Willem De Graeve, director of the Comic Strip Museum in Brussels, explains to the BBC why there are so few girl Smurfs

## NEXT WEEK IN FLANDERS TODAY #187

### Feature

What happens when the big research guns of Flanders put their heads together in one place? Energyville, the energy network that plans to turn Flanders into a series of green cities by 2020.

### Arts

This might be hard to believe, but there's more happening in the arts this summer than music. We'll tell you about new exhibitions by Flemish artists Rik Wouters and Paul Joostens

### Agenda

One million people are about to tromp through Ghent for the largest music and street theatre festival in the world. The phenomenon of the Gentse Feesten