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On a mission

Flemish minister-president Kris Peeters sells Flanders to American investors at an economic mission to the US

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A yellow jersey, briefly

LEO CENDROWICZ

Team Omega Pharma-Lotto, based in Waregem, West Flanders, briefly bought Flanders back to the top of the cycling world last Saturday when star rider Philippe Gilbert claimed the first stage of the Tour de France. Gilbert, whose exploits in this spring's one-day classics have been a revelation, seized the race leader's yellow jersey with victory in the 191.5-kilometre stage from Passage du Gois to Mont des Alouettes, overlooking Les Herbiers. Although he lost the yellow jersey by the second stage, Gilbert maintained both the green jersey for sprint points and the king of the mountains white jersey with red dots.



Philippe Gilbert kisses his Omega Pharma-Lotto jersey after winning the first stage of the Tour de France

» www.omegapharma-lotto.be

Di Rupo ready with proposals

Latest attempt to form a government might be the last

ALAN HOPE

An increase in retirement ages, a tougher new benefits system for the unemployed and a plan to save €21 billion by cutting spending and tackling fraud – just a few of the items included in the list of proposals presented to the king this week by French-speaking socialist Elio Di Rupo, the latest in a long line of politicians to take on the job of trying to form a federal government. Di Rupo was received at the royal palace in Laken on Monday, 4 July, where he laid out his proposals. He then passed his 100-page "note" to the eight other parties in the negotiations, before announcing them to press and public late on Monday afternoon. The other parties, who will use Di Rupo's note as the basis for negotiations, are expected to take two or three days to study the document, sure in the knowledge that a failure to reach an

agreement at this stage – 386 days after the election – risks bringing them once more in front of the voters.

Di Rupo's main areas of reform:

On the **economy**, Di Rupo has a plan to save €22 billion by 2015, with the aim of achieving "a responsible federal budget that will keep the country out of the hands of speculators". The plan accounts for savings in three roughly equal categories: cuts in spending, including a plan to limit growth in health-care spending; increases in income, including a tax on speculative investments and a cut in the tax relief companies can claim on certain kinds of interest payments; and an anti-fraud plan to ensure the treasury gets more of the money owed to it.

» *continued on page 3*



ALAN HOPE

Peter De Clercq

There's probably never been a better time to be a Flemish chef, what with all the attention Flanders is getting in the US (see p 5) and the constant presence in the local media of chefs both old and new (see p 11).

Still, it was a surprise last week to find *The New York Times* singing the praises of Peter De Clercq, chef and owner of the Elckerlyc grill restaurant in Maldegem, East Flanders. De Clercq started out grilling sausages at street fairs in Knokke and has gone on to write a book on barbecuing and to win the World Barbecue Championships in Jamaica in 2003.

Featured on his menu you'll find entrecôte grilled over oak and grapevines or pork ribs (from the restaurant's own farm) grilled over slivers of wood taken from the barrels used for Timmermans gueuze. The fire is also stoked with things like olive pits, cherry wood and beechwood, not to mention something called "fire

spices". You can even have grilled *frietens*.

"Grilling is a monolithic cooking method, producing a similar taste in everything you cook over the fire," De Clercq told the *Times*. "We look to differentiate each dish by spicing not just the meat, but the fire."

He is also a consultant to other chefs keen to try their hand at barbecue: De Clercq was one of the first to adopt the Green Egg, a stylish, covered grill that can also be used indoors. Two of those odd-looking beasts can now be found in the kitchen of Peter Goossens' Hof Van Cleve, arguably the best restaurant in Belgium.

Last month, De Clercq was named a food ambassador for Flanders, though his own trip to New York was only on paper. As a result of the honour, the mayor of Maldegem intends to compete for an industry award as the most food-friendly town in Flanders.

→ www.peterdeclercq.be

FLANDERS TODAY

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FLANDERS TODAY

JULY 6, 2011

News in brief

Schools in Flanders can expect "explosive growth" by 2020, according to family organisation Kind & Gezin, with an additional 31,000 pre-schoolers and 34,500 school-aged children between six and 12. Births in 2010 were up 1.7% to 71,200.

Federations representing the café sector and the self-employed have complained that the federal government is failing to keep its word on promised compensation to the industry for the introduction of a total smoking ban in cafés, which came into effect last Friday, 1 July. In return for the cost of the introduction of the ban, café owners are asking for VAT on drinks to be cut from 19% to 12%, as was done for meals when smoking was banned in restaurants.

Belgium does not have the legal right to publish a **Most Wanted list of criminals** for public use, federal justice minister Stefaan De Clerck said last week. Such a list would be a breach of the privacy according to the European human rights convention, particularly as it concerned wanted persons who were still to stand trial, De Clerck said.

Belgians can now **give blood until the age of 71**, after the Senate last week raised the maximum age from 65. The change had been requested by the Flemish Red Cross, who

pointed out that there is no medical reason to prevent healthy older people giving blood.

Lighting will be switched off permanently on half of Flanders' motorways on 15 July, mobility minister Hilde Crevits announced last week. At present, lighting goes off between midnight and 6.00, except on more hazardous stretches of road, such as on- and off-ramps and interchanges. Those will continue to be lit under the new plan. Other parts of the network will have lighting turned on temporarily in case of tailbacks, accidents, roadworks or extreme weather. The change is being implemented to save both money and energy.

The singer in a British pop group who **died at last year's Pukkelpop festival** in Hasselt committed suicide by hanging, a coroner in Northampton, England has ruled. Charles Haddon, 22, frontman of Ou Est Le Swimming Pool, was discovered at the foot of a telecommunications mast, from where it was assumed he had jumped.

A man accused of taking part in the **seizure of a Flemish dredging ship** off the Somali coast in 2009 has been sentenced to 10 years in prison by a court in Brussels. Omar Mohammed Abdiwahad, known as Pirate 001, assisted in holding crew members of the Jan de Nul dredger

hostage for 71 days until a ransom of nearly €2 million was paid. He later attempted to seize another ship in the area.

Human remains discovered in a car pulled from the Ghent-Ostend canal at Lovendegem, East Flanders last week, could solve the mystery of a disappearance almost 30 years ago. Police were this week awaiting the results of DNA tests on skeletal remains found in the Fiat 127, thought to belong to a woman who vanished in the Ghent area in the early 1980s.

Belgium's fathers are behind on their **child support payments** to the tune of €200 million, according to Davo, the government agency in charge of enforcing alimony payments. Many women are now employing bailiffs to recover back payments, leaving the agency with the most difficult and intractable cases. However the agency's power to force fathers to pay are more limited in Belgium than in some other countries, Davo said.

Correction

A news article in our last issue (29 June) reported a number of activities in Flanders being approved by Unesco as part of Flanders' immaterial heritage. In fact the seven activities – including lace-making, beer-brewing and the playing of the Last Post at the Menin Gate – have been included by the culture ministry in Flanders' heritage inventory, the first step leading towards possible recognition by Unesco. We apologise for any confusion caused.

OFFSIDE

Funny business

Flemish people are being funny 25% of the time on average. And it can now be officially confirmed: Men spend more time trying to be funny than women. Although there is a proviso: "It's a question of quantity, not quality," according to Bert Oben, a researcher at the Creativity, Humor and Imagery in Language research group at the Catholic University of Leuven (KUL).

The reason men are more occupied with being funny, according to Oben, is because they are engaging in a sort of hierarchical behaviour that involves teasing each other back and forth until one emerges as the winner. Women not only do not participate in this ritual, they also take little interest in it as spectators.

The CHIL group set out to compile a reference corpus of humour in Flanders, in much the same way as linguists compile structured corpora of texts or audio speech. Students have gone out over the past four years among family and friends with hidden recording equipment to gather samples of spontaneous conversation. More than 10,000 samples were gathered.

To their surprise, it turned out that fully one-quarter of all spontaneous conversation samples involves humour. The most frequent category is teasing among willing "combatants". In second place come anecdotes, those funny stories some people can turn into masterpieces of performance. Also very popular is broad comedy and so-called toilet humour. "It was



extraordinarily rich working material," Oben enthuses. The work will go some way to explaining the universal structure of humour. "There's no objective definition of humour," Oben told the university newspaper. "What's funny for one, isn't funny for someone else. But the core of the concept is that humour exists wherever people come together. There are no exclusive universal formulae for good humour, but there are rules that we adapt according to the company we're in. A lot of people seem to have a good grasp of them."

© Shutterstock



Reform package tackles pensions and benefits

→ *continued from page 1*

On the troubled issue of **state reform**, Di Rupo proposes splitting the electoral district of Brussels-Halle-Vilvoorde into three parts and allowing French-speaking residents of the six municipalities with special rights for French speakers to vote for either the Flemish list for Brabant or the bilingual Brussels list. Brussels region would also be given more power over areas like tourism, mobility and security. The other regions would also be given more autonomy over certain areas, though a complex new proposal for the financing of regional budgets is likely to be a sticking point in the negotiations.

In the **socio-economic** area, Di Rupo (*pictured*) tackles pensions and benefits, with unemployment benefits rising slightly for the first three months, then figured according to the number of years worked, before finally after six months falling to below the level they are now. The unemployed will also find it more difficult to turn down a job offer. This is just one of the areas Di Rupo hinted at, prior to revealing his proposals, that would "be difficult for his own party to swallow".

Whether or not the legal retirement age goes up, the possibility of taking early retirement will become more difficult, being restricted to those who have worked a minimum of 35 years. The note also contained proposals on health-care costs, energy policy, asylum, migration and justice.♦



© Reuters

THE WEEK IN FIGURES



15%

more than the EU average paid by Belgian consumers for food and non-alcoholic drinks, according to figures from Eurostat

€36,291

in compensation paid by the Belgian state to the children of a Jewish couple deported to Auschwitz in 1943

1,228

babies born in 2010 to girls under the age of 20, a record low number. About 300 of the babies were born to minors under 18

13%

of all pregnancies are unplanned, according to family organisation Kind & Gezin. A full 30% of all third and subsequent children are also the result of unplanned pregnancies

382,000

tonnes of combustible waste produced by households in Flanders in 2010, according to environment minister Joke Schauvliege, announcing a subsidy for a new incinerator in Houthalen-Helchteren, Limburg province

Reforms to come after more rail chaos

Federal minister for public enterprises, Inge Vervotte, intends to proceed as quickly as possible with the reform of the rail authority NMBS, following a day of disaster on the railways on Monday, 27 June.

On the warmest day of the year so far, thousands were left stranded in overheated trains, crowds of passengers built up at stations, Ghent city officials went into emergency mode, and a number of people had to be hospitalised suffering from heat and dehydration. Meanwhile, the green party Groen! has called for the resignations of the three CEOs of the rail authority. A breakdown of overhead power lines at Oostkamp, near Bruges, on the main Ostend-Brussels line was the cause of the chaos. Ten people were taken to hospital in Blankenberge after suffering the effects of heat waiting for a train. Would-be passengers, many of them children returning from an end-of-term school trip, were also kept waiting at stations in

De Panne, Torhout, Bruges and Ostend. The Red Cross and local fire services were called in to help distribute water to the crowds.

One of the main problems was that passengers were often stranded on trains between stations. Many trains are equipped with air conditioning, but that failed to operate when the power was cut. Those trains have windows that cannot be opened, and safety rules make it impossible for train staff to open the doors of a train standing outside of a station. Temperatures inside the trains were said to have reached 45 degrees. The mayor of Ghent triggered the municipal disaster plan, placing emergency services on alert and setting up a crisis cell in the city hall. Trains heading through Gent-Sint-Pieters station were held to allow passengers to obtain water and medical assistance if required. Three children were taken to hospital

with symptoms of dehydration. Elsewhere, the Eurostar travelling from London was blocked at Halle for 90 minutes because of a broken-down NMBS train. It was later towed into Brussels South station almost two hours late.

Aside from the problems of the state of the rail infrastructure, one of the main complaints from passengers and politicians was the lack of information provided by the rail authority. "Passengers were left to their own devices," complained the public transport users' group TreinTramBus.

- Passengers affected by the chaos on the rails on 27 June can apply to the NMBS for compensation via their website, although some incidents will be considered *force majeure*, with no compensation paid. At the beginning of June, all season-ticket holders received a free first-class ticket as an apology from the authority in return for a recent record of late trains.♦

Most cafes observing smoking ban

Only five of the 150 cafes inspected on the first day of the total smoking ban were in breach of the new rules, the federal economics ministry announced. Last week, at the stroke of midnight on 30 June, all cafes, regardless of whether they serve food, were ordered to ban smoking on the premises.

Most did so, albeit reluctantly. Many bars had opted to stop serving food when the law was changed back in January 2010, imagining they had until 2014 before a total ban came into force. That deadline was advanced, however, by the Flemish League Against Cancer, which brought a case to the Constitutional Court arguing the two-tier approach was discriminatory.♦

The industry federation representing the cafes is still lobbying the government for some form of compensation for its members, who now face the choice of either investing in a separate smoking room or the loss of clients.

Last week the Neutral Union for the Self-employed (NSZ) attacked the idea of a tip-line set up by the public health ministry to allow members of the public to report cafes where smoking was still being allowed. "Snitching is not in our nature," commented Alain Van Hiel, lecturer in social psychology at the University of Ghent.♦

FIFTH COLUMN

Wake-up call

Minister-president Kris Peeters (CD&V) is a proud man. He is proud to be the leader of the Flemish government, responsible for areas such as education, mobility, economy and media. Unlike the federal government, which has been awaited for over a year, the Flemish government is up and working. Peeters hopes to benefit from this obvious mark of leadership.

But even proud leaders need to sleep sometimes. And that is when things get out of hand... Having just returned from the US economic mission, Peeters suffered from jetlag on Wednesday of last week. After a reassuring text message from one of his ministers, he decided to go to bed, without awaiting the result of a vote in the Flemish Parliament on a new electoral bill. The vote eventually took place in the small hours, in a state of total chaos, leaving the Flemish majority in tatters.

The bill was the work of Geert Bourgeois (N-VA), minister of interior affairs. Among other things, it aimed to reduce the number of provincial councillors, making for a leaner local government. To do this, a two-thirds majority is required, leaving the coalition of CD&V, SPA and N-VA at the mercy of the opposition.

The Open VLD liberals declined to support the bill, as their additional demands were not met. In the end, the bill was passed with the help of Vlaams Belang – quite unusual, as this party is routinely isolated because of its far-right views. The vote was remarkable in another respect too. All coalition governments are based on trust, and trust simply evaporated with the Wednesday vote.

N-VA no longer trusts Peeters' CD&V, as a number of its MPs were deliberately absent from the vote, hoping for a negative outcome. The explanation lies in CD&V's strong grassroots position in the provinces, but it is really no way to behave as the leading majority party. SPA, on the other hand, casts a distrustful eye at N-VA, which it suspects of making a deal with Vlaams Belang, a party the socialists actively loathe.

CD&V, meanwhile, fears that both N-VA and SPA are out to destabilise the Flemish government and, with it, Kris Peeters, the leader on which the Christian-democrats set all their hopes for the future.

That must have been a rough wake-up call for the minister-president. Filip Dewinter of the Vlaams Belang, which is crumbling itself, could not have dreamed up a better nightmare scenario.

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On a mission

Kris Peeters sells Flanders to American investors and politicians

WOUTER VAN DRIESSCHE

Flanders in Action. Of all things, it is the government slogan that adorns the T-shirt right in front of me. It is Friday morning, half past seven. Flemish minister-president Kris Peeters is jogging through Central Park, New York. A drizzle doesn't stop him from running five miles, the Flanders in Action logo on back and front.

Sharp tongues might have criticised the slogan for not being a strong brand, but Peeters promotes it with everything he has and doesn't leave an occasion unattended to get Flanders in the picture here in New York.

He does so with remarkable creativity. "As you can see, my region is represented by a lion," he says whenever he presents a dignitary with a gift, wrapped up in Flemish paper. His jacket pin is a marriage of the stars and stripes and the Flemish lion – not the Belgian tricolour, as is the official one of this Belgian economic mission. Foreign trade is a regional responsibility within the federal system, and Peeters is determined to exploit it to the fullest.

It is one of Peeters' top priorities to put Flanders on the map of global business. He is investing €165 million in foreign policy this year alone. He has been on economic missions to Chile, Brazil and the United Arab Emirates, where he is often welcomed as nothing less than a head of state. Many countries seem curious to learn about rich and confident Flanders.

Not so in the US. American protocol treats Peeters as something like a governor. "It is difficult to explain our Copernican revolution [*a shift of power to the regions*]," says one Belgian diplomat. "The Americans just translate their federal structure to ours. Flanders is like California, but then smaller. If they've even heard of it. Most have never heard of Belgium. Our strongest brand is Brussels, by far."

It is one of the reasons why Peeters for the first time decided to tag along with prince Philippe, who leads the Belgian Economic Mission to the US. The prince is supposed to open doors that would otherwise remain shut – like the doors of the White House, for example, where Peeters is meeting with vice-president Joe Biden. "I don't care who opens the doors," Peeters says, "as long as I get in."

"Modesty gets you nowhere"

The US is important to Peeters. He was there in 2009 to cut the ribbon of the region's new permanent representation, Flanders House, on the 44th floor of the prestigious New York Times Building. Rent: €50,000 per month. "You have to be able to impress," says its director Kris Dierckx. "Otherwise, people here don't take you seriously. Nobody knows us here. But we're not going to change that by doing nothing. Americans like to see a winner's mentality. Ambition. Modesty doesn't get you anywhere here."

Flanders House isn't shy when it comes to ambition. It's sponsoring a concert by top Flemish composer Dirk Brossé, a walking dinner and an early celebration of the Flemish



Flemish minister-president Kris Peeters, prince Philippe and federal foreign affairs minister Steven Vanackere meet with US vice president Joe Biden (speaking). On the right side of the photo is US ambassador to Belgium Howard Gutman

© Dirk Waem / BELGA

community holiday (11 July). Three hundred lucky people are invited on a boat cruise on the Hudson River. West Flemish chef Vincent Florizoone has been flown in to cook; there are 16 different types of beer. The festivities make the state-like reception of the prince at the Waldorf Astoria look kind of dull. "This is the image of Flanders that I want to convey," Peeters says. "Quality, professionalism, innovation, style, confidence."

"This is the image of Flanders that I want to convey: Quality, style, confidence"

The biotechnology sector, for one, seems convinced. Peeters pays visits to pharmaceutical giants Pfizer, Roche and Johnson & Johnson, who all have large subsidiaries in Flanders. They all talk of Flanders Biotech, not of Belgium Biotech. Peeters charms them all with a gift from, yes, the interior design company Flamant.

A long way to go

Flanders is doing well and doesn't mind showing off. Yet, compared to American standards, it has a long way to go, according to Christophe Vandaele from Bruges, who came to New York in 1994, flat broke. After sleeping in the streets for a time, he held down three different jobs at one time. Today, he manages an €80 million investment fund.

"I've been wanting to do business in Flanders for a long time," he says, "but I don't see any opportunities. Too many rules and regulations. And much too expensive. There's no 'can-do' mentality. It takes 48 hours to open up a business in the States. It costs \$1,050, to be exact. In Flanders, you're discouraged before you begin. There's no dynamism. That I think is a much bigger challenge to Flanders today than getting people to know the name of the region."

Diplomats echo the frustrations voiced by Vandaele – off the record, of course. They aren't diplomats for nothing. "The different services that Flanders needs to promote internationally work *next* to each other rather than with each other," says one. "It's tragic. ... How can Flanders be big overseas if it only makes itself smaller by parcelling everything out?"♦

Economic mission spans three US cities

PHILIP EBELS

Belgium has one of the most interconnected economies in the world. It was the first country to undergo an industrial revolution on the European continent, and its central geographic location has helped it develop into a hub of international trade.

Networks need oiling, though, and to make sure that it doesn't run dry, the Belgian government and industry often go on economic missions abroad to shake hands, stage business-to-business seminars and bring in much sought-after contracts.

Last week, the largest Belgian delegation ever of some 300 business people from more than 200 companies were in the US. Leading the mission were Belgian ministers of economy, prince Philippe and princess Mathilde and US ambassador to Belgium Howard Gutman. Everyone on the mission went from New York, to Washington to

Boston. Representing Flanders was minister-president Kris Peeters (also minister of economy), who presented an entire programme specifically to promote Flanders.

The trip, from 22-30 June, was planned two years beforehand, and the ministry of foreign affairs spent more than a year preparing for it. The nine-day programme included visits to multinational companies with large subsidiaries in Belgium, as well as a walk through Central Park and stops at the Bierbeek-born waffle-seller and the local shop of Belgian eatery Le Pain Quotidien. The royal couple and ministers also paid homage to the fallen at Ground Zero and took a meeting with US vice-president Joe Biden. The prince and federal foreign affairs minister Steven Vanackere later also spoke with senators (and former presidential hopefuls) John Kerry and John McCain.

"A very interesting meeting," was all Vanackere had to say about the hour spent with Biden, who reportedly praised Belgium's military efforts in Libya and Afghanistan and communicated that his administration was not worried about Belgium's lack of a federal government.

Belgian economic missions have attracted a lot of interest from international business in the last year. "The last couple of destinations have been especially interesting," says Patrick Deboeck of the federal ministry of Foreign Affairs. "We've deliberately chosen for upcoming markets. We were in India last year and in Russia earlier this year. And we'll be going to China later this year."♦

Trading black gold for green

New research centre EnergyVille plans to turn Flanders into a green energy hotspot

ANDY FURNIERE

The old mining city of Genk has chosen a green path. In a grand opening last month, the first researchers officially moved into EnergyVille, a new centre of experts that will produce technology for renewable energy. The founding organisations – the Catholic University of Leuven (KUL), the Flemish Institute for Technological Research (VITO) and nano-tech research centre Imec – aim to become the European hotspot for innovative energy research. The project is part of an European initiative.

For now, about 30 researchers can work in the former studio of the famous Flemish ceramic designer Piet Stockmans. In two years, approximately 200 researchers should be able to work in advanced laboratories in a new building at the science park on the Thor site, a former mining area. "Soon, the whole of Europe will envy Genk for its expertise in the green energy sector," said Flemish minister of innovation Ingrid Lieten at the ribbon-cutting ceremony on 15 June.

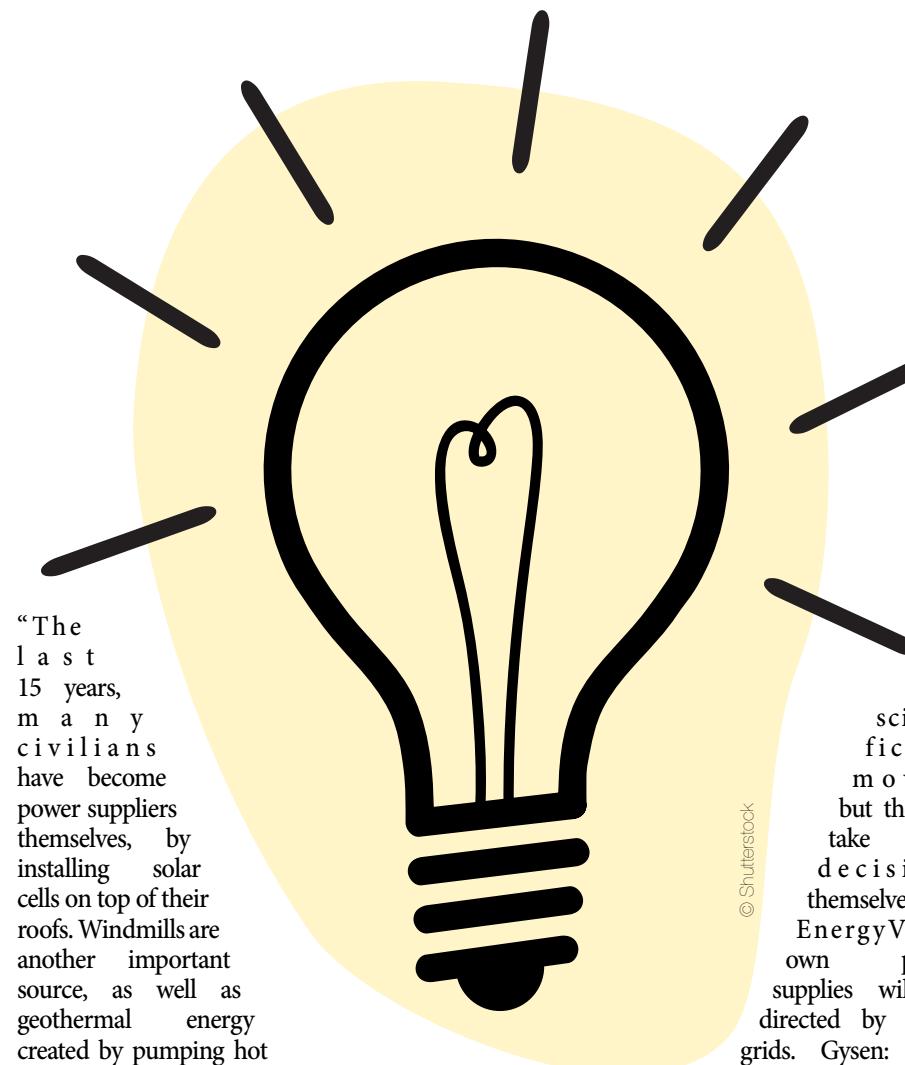
So what will EnergyVille do exactly? Simply put, it will develop technology to transform energy production in cities so that it does not have a negative effect on the environment. "Flanders is almost becoming one big city," says KUL professor of energy technology Ronnie Belmans. "That makes it the perfect laboratory to experiment with green technology for cities." This focus is in accordance with the plan of the Flemish government to turn Flanders into a green urban region by 2020.

SIM-card for cars

Key to reducing the carbon footprint of cities is to base transport and electricity production on renewable energy sources and to use the energy as efficiently as possible. The priorities for EnergyVille are the development of systems for a more user-friendly electric car and of so-called smart grids, more efficient energy grids that guide different flows of power supplies to the consumer.

"The electric car that we have in mind has to be able to charge up at any place, always at the lowest price," explains Belmans. "You can compare our system to a SIM-card in a cell phone; it provides more comfort to the user."

The same has to be the case for the new smart grids. "These intelligent energy grids have to organise a more differentiated power supply now that the big plants are not the only source of energy anymore," says Bert Gysen of VITO.



"The last 15 years, many civilians have become power suppliers themselves, by installing solar cells on top of their roofs. Windmills are another important source, as well as geothermal energy created by pumping hot steam or water from deep below the surface of the earth."

"The whole of Europe will envy Genk for its expertise in the green energy sector"

Electricity suppliers are already experiencing problems with distributing energy. That is why several pilot projects have been set up in Flanders to improve their services, including by EnergyVille. Their Linear Project, for instance, focuses on making household devices run more efficiently on renewable energy.

Gysen says that it's important for the new systems not to demand too much from the user. "A washing machine must be able to figure out by itself how it can fulfil its task at the lowest price," he says. "These are not robots out of a

science fiction movie, but they do take some decisions themselves."

EnergyVille's own power supplies will be directed by smart grids. Gysen: "The building has to be a model of our vision." Wim Dries, the mayor of Genk, intends to make the whole Thor terrain carbon-neutral, the science park as well as the industrial site. EnergyVille will investigate heating and cooling techniques that rely on renewable energy such as solar cells and windmills.

Limburg a strategic choice

EnergyVille is part of a European objective for more innovation. It is sponsored by the European Institute of Innovation & Technology (EIT), an initiative of the president of the European Commission José Manuel Barroso that funds the instalment of so-called Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs), around different themes.

Because of its urban character, the Benelux region proposed to work on the theme of "smart energy cities" and received €2 million in funding. The theme corresponds to the European 20-20-20 goals. These state that the emission of greenhouse gasses have to be reduced by 20% by 2020 (compared to 1990),

that energy efficiency has to be increased by 20% and that 20% of all energy has to come from renewable sources. By 2050, the EU aims to have an 80% reduction of greenhouse gasses and an electricity production based completely on renewable energy.

Essential for KICs is that they incorporate research centres, universities and industry. The KUL will provide courses and doctorates that correspond to the work of EnergyVille. Industry is represented by companies such as electricity distributors Eandis and Elia.

The choice for Limburg province is not random, declares Stijn Bijnens, CEO of investment company LRM, which finances part of the infrastructure of EnergyVille. "Limburg may be situated at the eastern edge of Flanders," he says, "but it is located right in the middle of the technology triangle of Eindhoven, Leuven and Aachen."

A second reason is the large amount of space available, compared to the rest of Flanders. The Thor-site in Genk has a surface of about 100 hectares. "Twenty hectares are preserved for EnergyVille," explains Bastiaan Zwijnenburg, business developer of the Thor-terrain, "and we hope that the rest will be taken up by other research centres and companies, attracted by the international, green image of EnergyVille."

There will be more people working in EnergyVille than the 200 researchers. "It is difficult to estimate how many exactly, but we are counting on thousands of jobs," says Zwijnenburg. Many will be for skilled workers – good news for the province, which has long suffered from something of a brain drain.

But also, EnergyVille means a transition for a region with a long history of coal mining. Wim Dries: "Genk is leaving behind its image of a smoky city for that of a city where you breathe healthy air."

The governor of Limburg, Herman Reynders, repeats a statement the province already made two years ago: "Limburg wants to be the first carbon-neutral region in the world by 2020." Whether it will be still a big question mark, admits Gysen. "But it is a healthy ambition, and EnergyVille can be a big contribution." ♦

► www.energyville.be

Looking to Limburg

EnergyVille is "a good step to stimulate education in renewable energy and to cooperate with industry," says Sara Van Dyck, energy specialist of the Bond Beter Leefmilieu, the Flemish umbrella organisation for the environment. "There is indeed a big drive in Limburg to improve the environment. The municipalities are working together to be more energy efficient, and there is a centralisation of knowledge."

Concrete measures are being taken in the province, such as the transformation of a coal plant to a plant that works on biomass – organic materials such as wood, waste, manure and alcohol fuels.

This is important, notes Van Dyck, because Flanders needs to redouble its efforts to reduce its carbon footprint. Flemish minister of the environment Joke Schauvliege, for instance, recently proposed a plan to buy extra carbon credits, which would allow Flanders to emit more carbon dioxide than it is allowed by the Kyoto Protocol.

"It is also not certain that all the oldest Belgian nuclear centres will be closed by 2015 or that all of them will be shut down by 2025, although this was the plan in 2003," Van Dyck says. "There is still a need for mentality change." ♦



Innovation minister Ingrid Lieten cutting the EnergyVille ribbon

Airport baggage dispute in court

Current handling contracts frozen indefinitely

ALAN HOPE

A commercial tribunal in Brussels has issued an embargo on Brussels Airport to prevent it signing new freight and baggage handling contracts with third parties, following a complaint from Aviapartner. As reported last month, Brussels Airport Company (BAC) decided to end the contract with Aviapartner. Aviapartner, together with Flightcare, handles freight and baggage at the airport. Aviapartner's place would be taken by Swissport, said BAC.

Flightcare is a former subsidiary of Sabena, the national airline taken over in 1995 by Swissair, which was once linked to Swissport. Sabena went broke in 2001, and a court battle still rages over Swissair's culpability in the bankruptcy.

The decision to suspend Aviapartner's licence from November came as a shock to the company and to unions. BAC gave no explanation,

and Aviapartner was convinced that the airlines it serviced, the clients of BAC, were keen for the company to stay on. Aviapartner, like Swissport, is present in many countries, but the latter company has no experience in baggage handling.

Unions were partly reassured by Swissport's acceptance of its obligations under Belgian labour law, which obliges any company taking over from another to also take on its staff. However, while that covered about 750 jobs in freight and handling, it did not apply to some 600 jobs in administration and check-in.

Aviapartner filed suit, claiming the proper procedures for the award of contracts had not been followed. The commercial tribunal in Brussels found the suit had grounds, and an examination of the case will follow. In the meantime, BAC cannot sign any new contracts with Flightcare or Swissport. Aviapartner will carry on



© Boga

Aviapartner employees are uncertain about their future after the surprise announcement at Brussels Airport last month

operating at Zaventem under the terms of its old contract. It is unclear how long the court battle could last.

"Our priority is to ensure the continuity of service at the airport," a BAC spokesperson said. BAC later said it

would appeal the suspension of new contracts. Swissport has already filed an appeal. ♦

Governor scraps summer jobs for poor

The governor of East Flanders, André Denys, last week took the unusual step of overturning a decision by the federal government's Centre for Equal Opportunities by declaring that the policy of reserving municipal student jobs for the less well-off was indeed discrimination.

Denys was responding to a controversy surrounding the decision by the municipal council of Zottegem to reserve its summer jobs for young people from families with low incomes. Responding to a complaint from the breakaway liberal party on the council, the centre ruled that the policy was not discriminatory.

However Denys thought differently. The policy was, he said, a form of "reverse exclusion" and gave more importance to the applicants' family circumstances than their suitability for the job. It also went against the constitutional principle that all are equal before the law, he said, and he ordered Zottegem to scrap the policy. The council went further and scrapped

all 16 student job vacancies it had planned to fill this year.

"The federal plan for tackling poverty states that work has a contribution to make towards the integration into society of disadvantaged groups," reacted Zottegem mayor Herman De Loor. "As a municipality we have a redistributive function to fulfil, and that is what we were doing. We were approaching the problem from a socialistic vision of society, and the governor from a liberal vision."

Meanwhile a study by Randstad employment agency revealed that two out of three students will find a job during the summer holidays this year, up 4% over last year. About 420,000 students across the country will be working at least part time, 45% of them finding work through an agency. The average student will earn €1,900 during the period, €150 more than in 2010. ♦

Brussels and Washington, DC become "Power Cities"

Brussels and Washington DC will work together to promote business tourism, after the signing of an agreement last week in the US as part of the Belgian economic mission. The two capitals joined in a "Power Cities" initiative to share information and know-how, as well as to promote each other's city as a destination for business travellers. Brussels was recently named the world's second most important city in the world for congresses and conventions.

Last week Brussels mayor Freddy Thielemans met DC mayor Vincent C Gray in Brussels to discuss the initiative and to share experiences relating to security issues; both cities share problems caused by the presence of international events and a large foreign diplomatic population. Thielemans also took the opportunity to try to interest his DC counterpart in the new congress centre to be constructed on the Heizel plateau. Brussels aims to extend the link with Washington to create an international network of congress cities, including Singapore, Sao Paolo and Abu Dhabi. ♦

Peeters responds to business criticism

Flemish minister-president Kris Peeters, fresh from an economic mission aimed at selling Flanders to the Americans, has responded to criticisms that the effects of his government's policies were not being felt by business. The critique came earlier in the week from Voka, which represents some 16,000 businesses in Flanders and Brussels, on the basis of a survey of 1,000 of its members.

"In a number of areas, some progress has been made," commented Jo Libeer, Voka's director-general. "Yet we have concluded that a number of important dossiers are progressing too slowly or showing little in the way of results."

Voka would like to see more progress on: rising energy costs, investment in infrastructure to prevent traffic congestion, administrative complexity when dealing with local and regional government, the lack of suitable skills among school graduates and the lack of concrete

effects on business of Flanders' innovation policy.

Peeters pointed to his government's influence on Flanders' strong economic growth, from minus 3.5% in 2009 to plus 2.3% now; the increase in foreign investment in Flanders, with 108 new projects in 2010 worth a total of €360 million; and his efforts to balance the region's budget. Peeters noted that in order to bring balance the budget, his administration had been forced to make €2 billion in savings. "It's actually positive that they're now saying industry didn't feel the effects," he told VRT's *Terzake* news programme.

Liber acknowledged the government's "discipline" in achieving a balanced budget. "But our survey shows clearly that the manoeuvring room offered by the new budget has to be dealt with in the right way in order to support the growth of our economy and ensure our welfare." ♦



Losing patience: Jo Libeer of Voka

THE WEEK IN BUSINESS

Banking • Delen

The Antwerp-based private bank Delen, part of the Ackermans and Van Haaren holding company, has paid €67 million to buy up to 70% of the London-based wealth management firm JM Finn. The move is Delen's first venture outside of continental Europe and will broaden the bank's customer reach.

Banking • KBC

Flanders' largest banking and insurance group has sold its 80% stake in the Polish Kredyt Bank and the Warta insurance company for some €2.5 billion. The move helps KBC meet demands from EU regulators to restructure its balance sheet following its 2009 rescue by authorities. Meanwhile, Dexia, faced with similar EU pressure, has sold the life insurance activities of its Turkish affiliate Denizbank to the US Metlife group for €162 million.

Brewing • SABMiller

South African SABMiller, the second largest beer group in the world after Flanders' AB InBev, has acquired the international distribution rights for Augustijn beer, produced by the Van Steenberge brewery in Ertvelde, East Flanders. The beer will be distributed worldwide under the St Stefanus brand. Meanwhile, the Duvel Moortgat group is building a 25,000 square-metre distribution centre in Puurs to meet growing demand for its Duvel and Vedett brews.

Buses • Van Hool

Lier-based coach and bus builder Van Hool has won a €68 million contract from the Scottish Stagecoach group to supply 140 double-decker buses for the US market.

Chemicals • Solvay

Brussels-based chemicals and plastics group Solvay is investing €120 million in a new PVDF polymers production unit in Changshu, China. The facility, to open in 2014, will help the company meet fast-growing demand from the Chinese automobile industry.

Energy • Fluxys

Gas transport and handling company Fluxys is to acquire 25% of the new €1 billion GNL natural gas terminal in Dunkirk, France. The move will allow the company to link the new site to its own terminal in Zeebrugge and offer a total handling and storage capacity of some 22 billion cubic metres of gas.

Food service • Exki

The Brussels-based bio fast food and salad bar has plans to open two outlets in New York next year to test the US market. If successful, the company expects to open 40 branches in the US over the next decade.

Social networks • Facebook

The world's leading social network site has opened a lobbying office in Brussels to better interface with European authorities on social media regulation and developments.

A portrait of the young man as an artist

The early work of Rik Wouters is on show in Mechelen

CHRISTOPHE VERBIEST

Rik Wouters was 33 years old when he died, corroded by a vicious cancer, in Amsterdam on 11 July 1916. Some 200 paintings, 1,500 drawings and 35 sculptures remain – an oeuvre for which he scarcely received recognition during his lifetime. Now this fauvist is considered one of Flanders' key artists of the early 20th century. But internationally, there's still a long way to go, even though his work was present, albeit minimally, at the big fauvist overview a dozen years ago in Paris.

And it won't be the new exhibition in his birthplace, Mechelen, that will convince the disbelievers. True, *Rik Wouters & Co: Beeldhouwers in Mechelen (Sculptors in Mechelen)* at the congress centre Lamot isn't an exhibition exclusively devoted to Wouters. But he is the main focus, at least with works he made until 1912, the year he definitively chose painting over sculpting.

Wouters started, as a 12 year old boy, in the workplace of his father Emile, a well-respected joiner. The exhibition opens with some woodcarvings of Wouters Sr. There are also woodworks by Boudewijn Tuerlinckx, Karel Bonaugure en Nante Wijnants, friends of the young Rik, who also had a try with wood (though he wasn't very fond of it).

In fact, the most remarkable works of the young Wouters at this exhibition are not his early explorations in sculpting – besides wood, he also worked with plaster and later bronze – but a self-portrait from 1902 and another beautiful charcoal drawing from 1901: "Portret van Theo Blickx" ("Portrait of Theo Blickx"). The latter forms an intriguing duo with an undated charcoal by Blickx: "Portret van Rik Wouters".

The exhibition prides itself in re-establishing the Mechelen roots of the artist and includes Wouters' views of the Mechelen skyline, not his most famous works. Still, his three portraits of the city's most famous landmark, the Sint-Rombouts Cathedral, are mostly

interesting for academics and art historians.

At the end of the exhibition, Wouters' illuminating 1912 trip to Paris is mentioned. He went to the city, at that time the thriving art capital of the world, to discover the works of Paul Cézanne. The influence of the French pioneer of modernist painting is blatantly clear in four portraits Wouters painted of his soul mate, Ernest Wijnants, during the summer of the same year.

And then we are sent home with the dry reflection that "after the sculptor, also the painter Rik Wouters definitely found his way. But that's another story."

Of course, the evolution of Wouters as a painter is not the scope of this exhibition. But it still feels like an aborted affair, especially since most of what's on display of Wouters' friends and contemporaries might have a didactic quality, but artistically makes you yearn for more, much more, by the master himself.

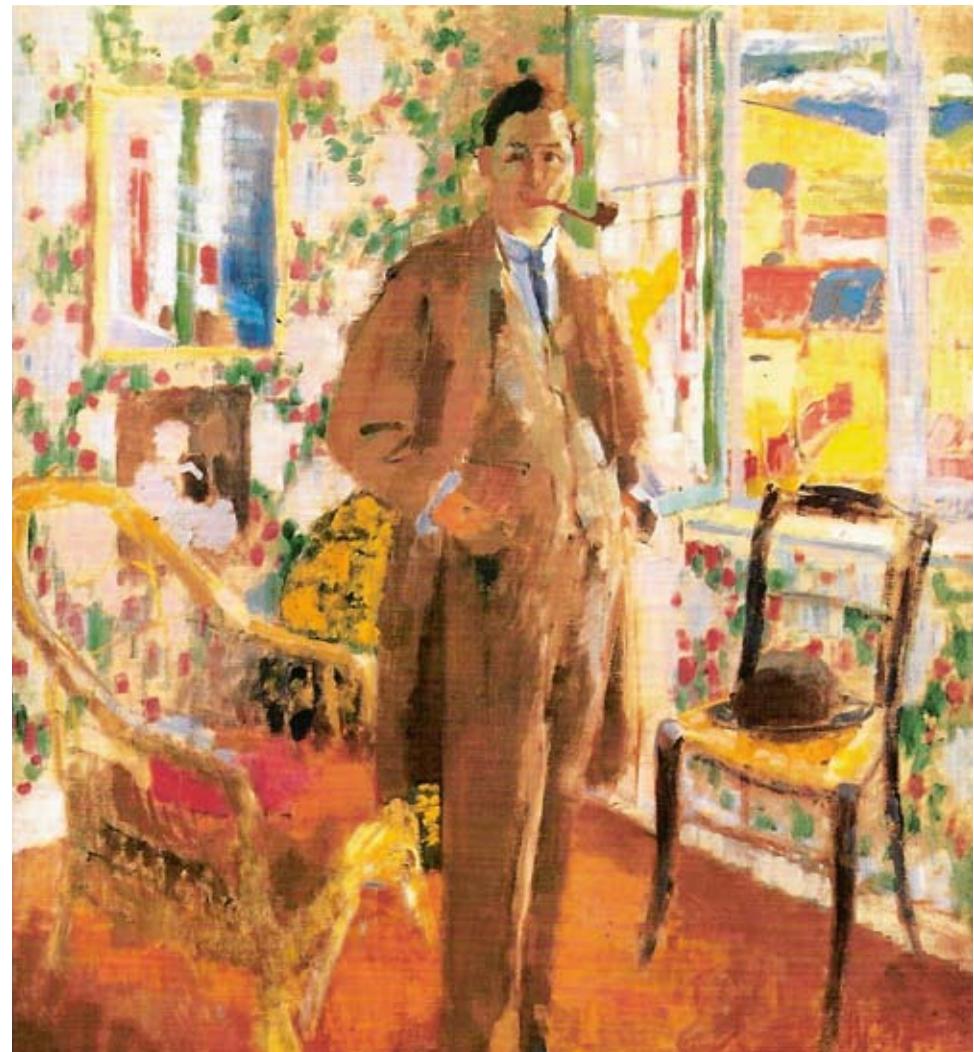
Good news and bad news

Still, there is some beautiful art to admire at Lamot. Besides the charcoals, highlights are three centrally exposed sculptures. "Dromerij" ("Reverie"), "Houding" ("Posture") and the amazing "Huiselijke zorgen" ("Domestic Worries"). They show Wouters the sculptor at his best, combining strength with delicacy.

Another highlight is the "Zittend naakt" ("Sitting Nude") by Nante Wijnants: a portrait in melancholic brownish tones, punctuated by the flashy red of the chair.

What's shown at *Rik Wouters & Co* would have been an interesting start of a larger retrospective on Wouters, but, as it is, it's more appropriate for Wouters completists than for art lovers who still need to discover him. The latter better wait for the next exhibition *Rik Wouters & Co: Hoogtepunten* (see sidebar).

I don't know who's responsible for the layout of the exhibition – the respected curator Kurt De Boodt or the often



One of several portraits by Rik Wouters of Ernest Wijnants

highly praised designers and architects B-Architecten – but the lighting effects don't help matters. Some parts of the exhibition are bathed in a kind of half-light, then suddenly become brightly lit, before the light fades again. Last and really least, *Rik Wouters & Co* occupies a room within another room – created from the ugliest plywood possible. Surely, father and son Wouters would turn in their graves if they knew the setting in which their works are presented.♦

**Rik Wouters & Co:
Beeldhouwers in Mechelen**
Until 18 September
Lamot, Van Beethovenstraat 8
Mechelen
→ www.rikwouters.be

Wouters: waiting for the highlights

On 24 September, the exhibition *Rik Wouters & Co: Hoogtepunten* (*Rik Wouters & Co: Highlights*) opens in Mechelen's Schepenhuis. This is not, as the title suggests, a best-of the artist but the collection of the Royal Museum of Fine Arts in Antwerp (KMSKA). During the KMSKA's closure for renovations, some of its masterpieces are on show in other venues. The KMSKA's works of Rik Wouters – probably the strongest collection of his art – travels to his birthplace. Nineteen sculptures, 26 paintings and 55 works on paper will be on display, and some of them belong to his best work like "Vrouw aan het venster" ("Woman at the Window") and "Zelfportret met sigaar" ("Self-portrait with Cigar"). Don't miss it, but you also don't have to hurry: The collection will stay in Mechelen until the reopening of the KMSKA, in 2017.

Castle au naturel

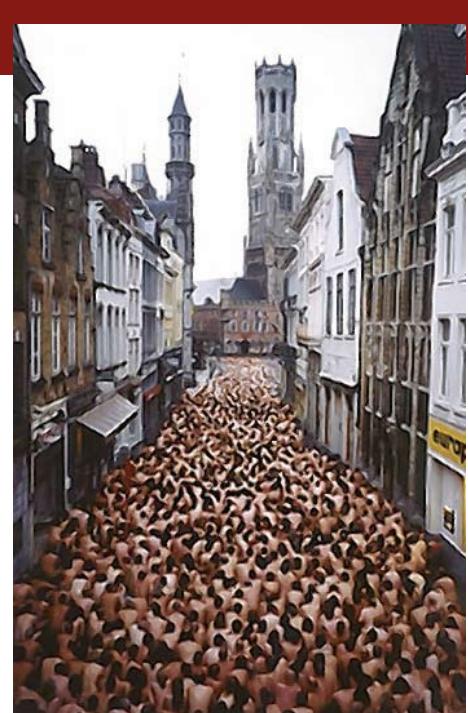
Spencer Tunick is back in Flanders

Anyone planning to visit the grand Gaasbeek Castle this Thursday, 9 July, be warned: Thousands of naked Belgians will fill the grounds of the 19th-century attraction in the Flemish Brabant town just a few kilometres southwest of Brussels. And that's because Spencer Tunick is in town.

The American artist specialises in photographs of huge numbers of naked people, often in recognisable spaces, such as New York's Grand Central Station or the Frida Kahlo Museum in Mexico City. Tunick will set up an installation made up of local volunteers on the grounds for a shoot that will be part of the castle's autumn exhibition *Sleeping Beauties*. It's not the first time Tunick has been to Flanders: He photographed our nude brethren in Bruges in 2005 as part of the Corpus Brugge Festival (pictured).

Visitors will be welcomed to the castle on Thursday but – sorry – not in the area of the shoot.

→ www.kasteelvangaasbeek.be



Speaking the language

FeliXart coaxes out the dialects of avant-gardist Paul Joostens

BJORN GABRIELS

These days collage is omnipresent in mainstream culture – advertisements and the likes of Facebook and YouTube are soaked with it. But a century ago, it was experimental, and the multi-faceted technique was embraced by a strain of young artists, seeking new ways to express themselves and to see the world.

One of the most prolific artists of the Belgian avant-garde, Paul Joostens, moved across diverse styles and fields of art. Born in 1889 Antwerp, he completed a traditional education in the arts, and his early paintings were influenced by cubism and futurism, supported by the avant-garde circle of writers and artists around him, like Paul van Ostaijen, Jos Léonard and the brothers Oscar and Floris Jespers. Joostens' literary ambitions pushed him to mingle collages with peculiar, often illustrated, dada-like poetry and prose. He would also gain quite a reputation with his so-called *poezeloezen*, eerie drawings and paintings of frail young girls.

Often called "the first collage artist of the Belgian avant-garde", Joostens used various materials and methods of assembling throughout his entire career. His collages include mechanical abstracts, photo montages with pictures of film stars and work inspired by the atomic fears of the late 1940s and '50s. Joostens' diverse body of work interweaves text and image, traditional pictorial elements with magazine

clippings or snapshots, and the mechanisms of modern art with a highly personal narrative. Reasons enough for FeliXart Museum in Drogenbos, just outside Brussels, to show a selection of Joostens' collage work. Over the last five odd years, FeliXart has made itself a centre for local historical avant-garde and abstract art. The museum not only presents and reflects upon the work of its namesake, Felix De Boeck, but also sheds light on his fellow innovators and the winding paths of abstract art up to today.

According to Joostens, art started where nature stopped

The permanent De Boeck collection has already crossed paths with the work of Belgian abstract art pioneers Karel Maes and Maurice Carlier. And next year another *Antwerpenaar*, Jan Yoors, will be on show, in a retrospective of his large tapestries. But now it's Joostens' turn. Although it seems strange that Joostens, who once stated that art started where nature stopped and that the sheer sight of trees made him feel sick, is now exposed in the rural environment of Felix De Boeck's hometown. That "painter-peasant" nurtured his sense of light while cultivating his crops. Joostens, on the other hand, came straight out of the Antwerp

bourgeoisie and relished city life. But both found themselves at the forefront of the local avant-garde and were early adopters of abstract art. The language of abstract art is a major focal point for the FeliXart Museum. Still, their approach wilfully nuances the notion of "pure" abstract art, making way for figurative themes – both traditional and modern – in works that are at first glance perceived as nonrepresentational. The Drogenbos team doesn't shy away from an educational task, informing and involving larger audiences, so they too can savour art that is often labelled "difficult".

This view explains the central place curators Simon Delobel and Sergio Servellón give to the sole figurative painting by Joostens on display here, "Kroning met zelfportret" (Coronation with Self-Portrait, 1931). The oil on canvas is directly related to a 1917 photograph that depicts Joostens sitting next to a large collage constructed of coloured paper snippets. Painting and photograph share the composition of a central Madonna figure surrounded by admirers. Unfortunately, this immense collage work was later cut into pieces, and only a handful of fragments, dispersed across collections, remains. Over the years, these fragments have been misinterpreted by Joostens devotees and keen vendors as very early abstract collages. At FeliXart, the combination of a



cubistic figurative painting, a monumental photograph print and some of the remaining collage fragments gives visitors an apt entry point into Joostens' oeuvre. It shows how he put the collage technique to work and the major influence Gothic art had on him. For the time being, this city slicker has found a perfect home in Drogenbos. ♦

Paul Joostens: De Collages

Until 31 July
FeliXart Museum
Kuikenstraat 6, Drogenbos
→ www.FeliXart.org

Coming up roses

For the first time in history, Avignon hosts a Dutch-language play on the main stage

JACQUELINE FLETCHER

Under a clear blue sky, the mediaeval city of Avignon on the banks of the river Rhone is welcoming thousands of performers and visitors to one of the most prestigious festivals on the international cultural calendar.

As usual, the Flemish will be there in force. Over the last decade or so, the Flemish have made their mark on the official Avignon Festival (the "In", staged entirely in the Cour d'Honneur, the courtyard of the Pope's Palace), with writers, directors, choreographers and performers who have become familiar faces to dedicated festival crowds.

In 2011, for the first time ever, a Dutch-language production will be performed in the Cour d'Honneur, with French surtitles projected onto the ancient walls. Written by Tom Lanoye and directed by Guy Cassiers, *Bloed en Rozen* (*Blood and Roses*), an epic tale of war and religion, premiered at Toneelhuis in Antwerp earlier this year and will return for a second run in January after an international tour.

It is the story of two contrasting personalities: Jean d'Arc, the simple peasant girl who led her people in battle before being tried and burnt at the stake by the English, and her companion, the aristocrat Gilles de Rais, who turned

to magic and sank into sexual perversity before being condemned like his compatriot to the flames. Lanoye's superb language blends seamlessly with Cassiers' stunning visuals, and videos merge unobtrusively with a cast of fine actors.

Anne Teresa de Keersmaeker's new work will also premiere at Avignon this year. For *Cesena*, De Keersmaeker collaborates with Antwerp-based Björn Schmelzer and his early music ensemble Graindelavoix. Schmelzer's experiments with the physical and spiritual reflection of the voice rhymes well with De Keersmaeker's choreographic style, which, as one lyrical French critic put it, is "the pure embodiment of the music".

To enhance its theme of light emerging from darkness, *Cesena* will be staged in the first glow of dawn (4.00) with 19 dancers and singers in the Cour d'Honneur. ♦

Avignon Festival

6-26 July
Pope's Palace, Avignon

→ www.festival-avignon.com



The early bird gets *Cesena*: Anne Teresa de Keersmaeker's new work premieres at 4.00

© Ann Veronica Janssens



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Food 2.0

Three young Flemish chefs open up online

COURTNEY DAVIS

Volta, a restaurant that opened in Ghent in November of last year, is packed for lunch on a Friday afternoon. There are only four empty seats in a sea of 70 chairs, and one of them is for me.

Located in a not very noteworthy area of town, Volta is a destination in itself. A former warehouse, it has an enormous lofted ceiling, rugged metal light fixtures and exposed brick walls that could easily feel cold if it weren't for the addition of thick curtains, wooden accents and chairs with a '70s retro vibe.

This is Olly Ceulenaere's brainchild three years in the making. Originally from a tiny town in West Flanders, this 31-year-old chef is making waves in local food circles. I had met him once before when talking with his friend Jason Blanckaert, chef at Ghent's Michelin-starred c-jean. Back then and still now, Ceulenaere is understated to a fault.

He has a hard time, for instance, describing himself or his style of cooking. Despite the three-week wait for a lunch reservation and tables for dinner fully booked until October, Ceulenaere has never become overconfident. Rather, he's constantly looking to improve and fine-tune his dream restaurant until it matches his vision.

For now, lunch is an up-tempo, more casual affair, with a daily set menu of starter and main for €24 illustrating a love for fresh, local produce. In the evening, things are different, with a seven-course tasting menu offered to a smaller number of patrons, for the surprisingly reasonable €58 each. "We follow the seasons," says Ceulenaere. "We talk with producers and use ingredients with lots of flavour."

Open kitchen, open mind

One thing that strikes me are the many student chefs in the kitchen. "It's important for everyone to share knowledge – to let people learn," Ceulenaere explains. "I was once there, too. And it helps the evolution of creative cooking."

"My cooking style is different from the others because I'm different. My cooking is me"

This also explains the open kitchen. A mesh curtain separates it from the diners so there is some access to the hustle and hum of work. "I want an open, honest kitchen," confirms Ceulenaere. "Everything we do should be transparent. I want people to see us and what we're doing – to get them involved in the process and the ambiance of good food."

These basic tenets behind Ceulenaere's cooking are also at work at Blanckaert's c-jean, as well as at Kobe Desramaults' award-winning restaurant In De Wulf in Dranouter, West Flanders. This should come as no surprise: It is these three chefs who make up the Flemish Foodies, which is set to revolutionise Flemish cuisine.

Kobe Desramaults opens new restaurant

Kobe Desramaults just opened a new restaurant in Ghent, meaning the presence of all three Flemish Foodies in the same city is complete. It's called De Vitrine, which means "showcase" (perhaps playing on the bistro's vicinity to the red light district).

In 2005, Desramaults became the youngest Michelin-starred chef in Belgium at 25, with his West Flanders countryside restaurant In De Wulf. Here in Ghent, sampling his rustic yet refined fare is more accessible, both in location and price. Tiny tables jutted against each other make intimacy with your neighbours mandatory. With a five-course dinner menu for €45 and lunch for €25, De Vitrine is likely to follow in Volta's footsteps. Book now, while you still can.

→ www.de-vitrine.be



From left: Flemish Foodies Olly Ceulenaere, Jason Blanckaert and Kobe Desramaults

© Piet De Kersgieter

You are what you cook

It all began three years ago when food photographer Piet De Kersgieter and writer Jasmine Verspeet approached their friend Blanckaert about the project, who then invited Ceulenaere and Desramaults. To increase De Kersgieter's visibility as a professional photographer, he would take photos of dishes created by the chefs and post them online. He now considers himself a friend of all three. "In the formal, stiff world of gastronomy, we're grateful to be part of this alternative movement," he says.

Alternative is one word to describe the Flemish Foodies. Creative and groundbreaking also works. But, interestingly enough, relaxed might be the most accurate moniker of all. Friends for years, the chefs get together every Monday, when their restaurants are closed, to talk shop. Whether discussing how to work with a particular ingredient or lamenting restaurant woes like lazy dishwashers, the three of them are friends who inspire each other.

When asked to describe either friend's cooking style, Ceulenaere stumbles for a bit, looking down at an imaginary plate and gesturing, "A dish from Jason is very recognisable." He pauses. "I don't know, it's just him."

His own style is different than the others, he says, "because I'm different. My cooking is me. We are three different people with different histories, different memories. We've had different work experiences and childhoods."

And all that is expressed in their food. "Presented with the same ingredient, we would all do different things with it," he continues. "Even with the same recipe, we would produce different dishes."

Share and share alike

The Flemish Foodies website has grown by leaps and bounds, featuring sharp, mouth-watering photos of beautifully prepared, original dishes. Some eventually make their way onto a restaurant's plate. The post of 24 June by Ceulenaere featuring broccoli, cauliflower and radishes in a garlic dip with almonds was included in the starter of my Friday lunch menu.

The site has grown to include other well-known Flemish chefs who think the same way about food. "When we do Flemish Foodies, there are no rules, no constraints. There are no paying customers or expectations, and no limits. It is this way of thinking that allows us to go further."

The people who share the same respect for ingenuity and creativity in the kitchen are equally respected in the Flemish food scene. Bruges-based chefs Gert De Mangeleer (of Hertog Jan), Dominique Persoone (of The Chocolate Line) and Filip Claeys (of De Jonckman) are just a few of the respected celebrity chefs included on their site, offering recipes and opinions. With the name-dropping comes an active fan base, with more than 300 hits a day on the site.

Despite the popularity and repeated solicitations, they have no interest in making it commercial. "It is about getting inspired," Ceulenaere explains. "A couple of times a week, we get together, drink a beer and talk. We've been doing it for 10 years; only now it has a name. When it stops being fun, we'll stop doing it."♦

→ www.flemishfoodies.be



© Piet De Kersgieter

In an out-of-the-way former warehouse sits Volta, the newest hangout of Olly Ceulenaere

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Feest in Brussel

More than 30 bands in one day on the Grote Markt in Brussels to celebrate 11 July, the Flemish Community holiday
 → www.abconcerts.be



FLANDERS TODAY
 JULY 6, 2011



Dispositions deconstructed INSIGHT

JORIS VERDONCK

With Antwerp's Sinksenfoor carnival in full swing on its doorstep, it's tempting to walk past the Photography Museum (FoMu), whose fare doesn't typically include burgers and beignets. But its latest show, the enigmatically titled *Insight*, is thrilling and fulfilling, too. Divided over three floors, *Insight* showcases four photographers whose work invites us to scratch the veneer of the commonplace. Elinor Carucci, the only non-Belgian in the bunch, presents stark portraits and close-ups that convey a strange sort of tenderness. Head-on photographs of Carucci and her family (*pictured*) frame their relationships in brutally honest and often carnal ways: naked bodies, marked (or decorated) by the vicissitudes of life, cuddle up against clothed loved ones – scenes that intimate both the vulnerability and vitality of love. Recurring flashes of red, mirror effects and other such tell-tale signs reveal that the Italian's aesthetically enhanced naturalism is never truly bare-boned.

Jacques Sonck, meanwhile, is famous for his portraits of humanity at its most wonderfully diverse. Most of the artist's so-called "Archetypes", comprising a pseudo-Darwinist archive of faces and lifestyles, do the opposite of what it says on the bill. With an almost scientific rigour, Sonck's pictures canvas all kinds of unusual handicaps

and deformities, playing them off against the ordinary and mundane.

His skill is undeniable, but this showcase – philosophically poignant though it may be – might be a little too close to the Antwerp fairground for comfort. More often than not, however, Sonck's black-and-white renderings manage to subtly deconstruct their subject's stereotype. That's when his photographs assume a compelling power, debunking prejudices by locating the bizarre in the banality of everyday existence.

The installation of Elke Andreas Boon is heavy on different media effects to boost its impact. Boon's celebration of a life of spirit and imperfection in pictures is hit and miss: randomly interspersed among nondescript paintings of infliction are grungy self-portraits that have a madcap quality about them, but also portraits of children in various mannered poses and a mixed bag of frequently serialised photos. Some are otherworldly and engaging, others a tad lacklustre.

While Boon's self-proclaimed "humanism" isn't always particularly lucid, when her free-flowing realism and weirdness do gel together, the fragile blend makes for an intriguing encounter with stories suspended in a true sense of belief.

But it's the spectral dreamscapes of Alexandra Cool that are the highlight of the exhibition. Her

first series of pictures shows clay busts Cool made of Alzheimer patients. The result, staring the illness squarely in the face, is a chiaroscuro gallery of ghosts who appear to rise out of the wall only to disappear again.

Equally haunting is "Moments of Writing", in which Cool has used her pinhole camera to record writers in the moment of creation. The camera and slow shutter speed yields vaporous stills that look like impressionistic charcoal drawings. This makes the scribes seem simultaneously real and illusory, a perfect visual metaphor for the elusive process of literary composition. The third section, "Stills of Water", bring the same type of brooding Gothicism to a collection of Corsican landscapes, capturing a mood that welcomes the invisible into the eye of the beholder.

All in all, *Insight* offers both a worthy antidote and a weird accessory to the neon-lit phantasmagoria outside, asking us to think twice before we take the plunge into preconceived ideas. ♦

26 June to 25 September

Photo Museum
 Waalsekaai 47, Antwerp

→ www.fotomuseum.be



MORE PHOTOGRAPHY THIS WEEK

Lieve Blancquaert → City Park, Turnhout

No Title, No Theme → Fifty One Fine Art, Antwerp

Hans Vandeweghe: Framed → CC De Steiger, Menen



Rock & Pop

Antwerp

Deurne Openluchttheater Rivierenhof
 Turnhoutsebaan 232; 070.222.192
www.openluchttheater

Concerts at 19.00:

JUL 6 Rumer + Jim Cole **JUL 7** James Walsh + Jonathan Jeremiah **JUL 8** Eva De Roovere **JUL 9** Black Country Communion **JUL 11** The Pogues

Het Stadsmagazijn

Keistraat 5-7; 03.292.63.80
Until JUL 29 Croque Musique, terrace
 concerts with lunch

Kelly's Irish Pub

Keyserlei 27
www.kellys.be

JUL 9 20.00 Steve Keane

Brussels

Fuse
 Blaesstraat 208; 02.511.97.89
www.fuse.be

JUL 9 23.00 Lovers Do album release party:
 Bruno Pronato live, Pierre, Deg

Recyclart

Brussels - Chapelle train station
 25 Rue des Ursulines ; 02.502.57.34
www.recycleart.be

JUL 7 23.00 Los Hermanos Brothers

JUL 8 22.00 Rat Ka Bay Bal. 23.30 The National
 Fanfare of Kadobostany + Al Jawala + Moishe
 Moishe Moishe

JUL 14 22.00 Viudmoth

Vorst-Nationaal

Victor Roussealaan 208; 0900.00.991
www.forestational.be

JUL 8 20.30 Ricky Martin

Ghent

Dok
 Koopvaardijlaan 13
www.dokgent.be

JUL 8 21.00 [sic]electric

JUL 9 21.00 The Rott Childs

Kortrijk

De Kreun
 Conservatoriumplein 1; 056.37.06.44
www.dekreun.be

JUL 9 22.00 Unsane + Tina C + Hong Kong
 Dong + Lyenn + Ronse Hard Crew



GET YOUR
 TICKETS NOW

Night of the Proms

28 October to 5 November
 Sportpaleis, Antwerp

Tickets are on sale now for this autumn event that sells out just about every year, and certainly will again with the announcement that Seal will headline the event that marries pop musicians and classical orchestras. Also on the bill is the Italian soprano quartet DIV4S.



→ www.notp.com



Opera

Antwerp

Vlaamse Opera
 Frankrijklei 1; 070.22.02.02

www.vlaamseopera.be

Until JUL 9 15.00/20.00 Giuseppe Verdi's Aida conducted by Dmitri Jurowski, staged by Peter Konwitschny (in Italian with surtitles in Dutch)



Theatre

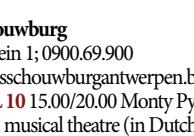
Antwerp

Fakkeltreter Rode Zaal

Hoogstraat 12; 070.246.036

www.fakkeltreter.be

JUL 7-8 15.00/20.30 Luc Caals gaat efkes proberen (Luc Caals is Going to Give it a Try), comedy (in Dutch)

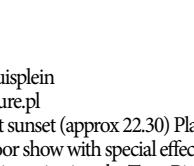


Stadsschouwburg

Theaterplein 1; 0900.69.900

www.stadsschouwburgantwerpen.be

Until JUL 10 15.00/20.00 Monty Python's Spamalot, musical theatre (in Dutch)



Brussels

Flagey

Heilig Kruisplein

www.culture.be

JUL 6-7 at sunset (approx 22.30) Planet Lem, free outdoor show with special effects and multimedia projections by Teatr Biuro Podrózy



Antwerp

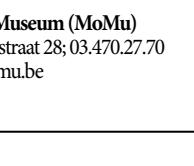
Contemporary Art Museum (M HKA)

Leuvenstraat 32; 03.238.59.60

www.muhka.be

Until AUG 21 Ten Oosten van 4°24' (East of 4°24'), group show of artists from the Caucasus, India, China, Iraq, Egypt and more

Until SEP 18 Collection XVIII: If you shoot a bullet in a vacuum, will it keep travelling forever?, selected works and films by British artist Emily Wardill



Fashion Museum (MoMu)

Nationalestraat 28; 03.470.27.70

www.momu.be

Agenda

Until AUG 14 Unravel: Knitwear in Fashion, a wide variety of knitted garments and accessories from across the centuries, with a focus on high fashion pieces and their vernacular interpretations

Koningin Fabiolazaal
Jeuksstraat 28; 03.203.42.04
www.provant.be

Until JAN 8 2012 The Moderns, top pieces from the Royal Museum of Fine Arts, including works by Emile Claus, James Ensor and Marc Chagall

Middelheim Museum
Middelheimlaan 6; 03.828.13.50
www.middelheimmuseum.be

Until SEP 25 Erwin Wurm: Wear Me Out, open-air display of performative and living sculptures by the Austrian artist

Museum aan de Stroom (MAS)
Hanzestedenplaats 1; 03.338.44.34
www.mas.be

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

Photo Museum
Waalse Kaai 47; 03.242.93.00
www.fotomuseum.be

Until SEP 25 Insight, photos by Elke Andreas Boon, Elinor Carucci, Alexandra Cool and Jacques Sonck

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

Blankenberge

Belle Epoque Centrum
Elisabethstraat 24; 050.42.87.41
www.belle.epoque.blankenberge.be
Until SEP 16 Hasseltse keramiek, Art Nouveau drip glaze pottery

Bruges

Site Oud Sint-Jan
Mariastraat 38; 050.47.61.00
www.expo-brugge.be
Permanent From Pablo Picasso to Joan Miró, permanent exhibition of more than 100 works by Picasso, plus works by Henri Matisse, Marc Chagall, Joan Miró, more

Brussels

Atomium
Atomium Square; 02.475.47.72
www.atomium.be
Until DEC 9 Belgium & Immigration: Understand Better So We Can Better Understand One Another; interactive exhibition on migration to Belgium

Autrique House

Haachtsesteenweg 266; 02.215.66.00
www.autrique.be

Until DEC 31 Victor Horta: A Lost World, works highlighting decisive moments in the career of the architect born in Ghent 150 years ago

Belgian Comic Strip Centre

Zandstraat 20; 02.219.19.80
www.stripmuseum.be

Until OCT 2 The Publiart Adventure, comic strip in advertising
Until JAN 15 2012 Bob De Moor & De Zee, comic strips by the Antwerp artist and Hergé colleague, who was passionate about the sea

Bibliotheca Wittockiana

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

Bozar

Ravensteinstraat 23; 02.507.82.00
www.bozar.be
Until SEP 4 51N4E: Double or Nothing, sketches by the Brussels architecture firm
Until SEP 11 Jeff Wall: The Crooked Path, works by the Canadian photographer together with prose responding to the work

Until SEP 11 Young Belgian Painters Award 2011, works by the 10 finalists in the prestigious art competition

Until SEP 18 The Power of Fantasy: Modern and Contemporary Art from Poland, works by more than 30 contemporary Polish artists

Until SEP 25 Beyond the Document, works by 14 contemporary Belgian photographers

Brussels Expo
Belgiëplein 1; 070.25.20.20
www.kingtutbrussels.be

Until NOV 6 Tutankhamun: His Tomb and His Treasures, reconstruction of the Ancient Egyptian king's tomb, with over 1,000 replicas of funerary objects, including amulets, coffers, chairs, weapons, musical instruments and more

CIVA
Kluisstraat 55; 02.642.24.71
www.civa.be

Until SEP 25 Transforming Landscapes, the work of Norwegian architectural firm Reiulf Ramstad

Until OCT 2 Brussel, een sterk staaltje van engineering (Brussels, Engineering Prowess), the world of engineers in the Brussels region

Charliermuseum
Kunstlaan 16; 02.218.53.82
www.charliermuseum.be

Until SEP 30 A Hard Existence, paintings of farmers, fishermen, servants and other manual labourers by late 19th- and early 20th-century artists

City Hall

Grote Markt; 02.279.64.24
www.brupass.be

Until SEP 25 Barok onthuld (Baroque Unveiled), a new way of looking at sculpture in Brussels and Belgium

Costume and Lace Museum

Violettestraat 12; 02.213.44.50

Until DEC 31 Hand-made clothing and accessories from before the invention of the sewing machine, including patterns, hats by Brussels milliners, men's waistcoats and women's corsets

De Elektriciteitscentrale

Sint-Katelijneplein 44; 02.279.64.45
www.deelektriciteitscentrale.be

Until AUG 21 Jane Alexander: Security - Surveys (from the Cape of Good Hope), sculptures, installations, photographs and videos by the South African artist

Flemish Parliament - De Loketten

IJzerenmarktstraat 99; 02.552.40.43
www.vlaamsparlement.be

Until JUL 11 Raoul De Keyser: De dingen die ik zie (The Things I See), drawings and paintings by the influential Flemish artist

Fondation pour l'Architecture

Kluisstraat 55; 02.642.24.80
www.fondationpourlarchitecture.be

Until AUG 28 Anne Heringer: Building Differently, plans, sketches and photographs by the German architect

House of the Dukes of Brabant

Grote Markt 19
www.this-is-belgium.be

Until AUG 30 This is Belgium - A Signature of Excellence, chronological interactive journey through Belgium's history and heritage by way of the country's best brands

ISELP

Waterloosesteenweg 31; 02.504.80.70
www.ieselp.be

Until JUL 9 Laurence Dervaux, installations by the Belgian artist

Jewish Museum of Belgium

Minimstraat 21; 02.512.19.63
www.mjib-jmb.org

Until AUG 28 After Images, multidisciplinary show by contemporary American artists

Le Botanique

Koningsstraat 236; 02.218.37.32
www.botanique.be

Until AUG 14 Sarah Moon: Coincidences, photos by the British fashion photographer and filmmaker

Marc Sleen Museum

Zandstraat 33; 02.219.19.80
www.marc-sleen.be

Until SEP 25 Nero, Yuri Gagarin and Other Astronauts, space travel in comic strips

Museum van Elsene

Jean Van Volsemstraat 71; 02.515.64.22
www.volsemstraat71.be

www.museumvanelsene.be

Until SEP 4 Explosition: Graffiti art in Brussels, 25 years of urban art including works by both pioneers and contemporary artists

Press Club Brussels

Froissartstraat 45; 02.213.00.40
www.europeandemocracy.org

Until JUL 15 Voices on the Rise: Afghan Women Making the News, a photojournalism project presenting the challenges and achievements of women in Afghanistan

Royal Museum of the Armed Forces

Jubelpark 3; 02.737.78.33
www.legermuseum.be

Until SEP 4 1945-2002: Belgian soldiers in Germany, rare photographs documenting 60 years of diplomatic relations between the two countries

Until OCT 16 War&Game(s), photographs by Virginie Cornet and toys from the period of the First World War

Royal Museum of Fine Arts

Regentschapsstraat 3; 02.508.32.11
www.fine-arts-museum.be

Until SEP 4 Art and Finance in Europe: 18th-Century Masterworks in a New Light, 20 major works by Francesco Guardi, Benjamin Wolff, Léonard Defrance, more

ULB - Campus de Solbosch

Paul Hegerlaan 22-24; 02.650.37.65
www.ulb.ac.be/culture

Until JUL 16 Les Voyageurs du Savoir (The Travellers of Knowledge), interviews and portraits of international students

Villa Empain

Franklin Rooseveltlaan 67; 02.627.52.30
www.villaempain.com

Until SEP 25 Of Women's Modesty and Anger, rituals, wigs, clothing, make-up and more constraints that determined the life of women for centuries

WIELS

Van Volxemlaan 354; 02.340.00.50
www.wiels.org

Until AUG 14 Charlotte Beaudry: Get Drunk, paintings, drawings and videos by the Brussels-based artist

Until AUG 14 Nasreen Mohamedi: Notes-Reflections on Indian Modernism, paintings, drawings and photographs by the Indian artist

Ghent

Design Museum

Jan Breydelstraat 5; 09.267.99.99
www.designmuseumgent.be

JUL 9-OCT 16 Esprit Porcelaine, contemporary porcelain from Limoges

JUL 9-OCT 16 Die Essenz der Dinge: Design and the Art of Reduction

JUL 9-OCT 16 Johanna Dahm: Rings, ring designs by the Swiss artist

Dr Guislain Museum

Jozef Guislainstraat 43; 09.216.35.95
www.museumdrguislain.be

Until SEP 4 In the Margin: Belgian Documentary Photography, work that documents the deviant, the extraordinary, the unnoticed, the 'other'

Museum of Contemporary Art (SMAK)

Citadelpark; 09.221.17.03
www.smaik.be

Until SEP 18 Jorge Macchi: Music Stands Still, paintings, sculptures, installations and video by the Argentinian artist

Hasselt

Het Stadsmuseum

Guido Gezelstraat 2; 011.23.98.90
www.hasselt.be

Until AUG 28 Hasselt aan Zee: Een eeuw marineschilderkunst (Hasselt on the Sea: A Century of Marine Paintings), works by 20th-century artists inspired by the sea

z33

Zuivelmarkt 33; 011.29.59.60
www.z33.be

Until AUG 21 Kris Verdonck: EXHIBITION #1, installations and videos by the Flemish theatremaker and artist

Koksjide

Nationaal Visserijmuseum

Pastoor Schmitzstraat 5; 058.51.24.68
www.visserijmuseum.be

Until SEP 4 Zerotica: Over liefde en lust aan de kust (Zerotica: On Love and Lust at the Coast), works on the theme of passion and the sea by Paul Delvaux, Leon Spilliaert, Aloïs Boudry and Edgard Tytgat, among others

Museum van Elsene

Jean Van Volsemstraat 71; 02.515.64.22
www.volsemstraat71.be

SUMMER MUSIC FESTIVALS

Camera Belgica: Weekly evening entertainment including museum visits and outdoor film screenings
Until AUG 25 Thurs, 20.00 at Belfue Museum, Paleizenplein 7
www.belfue.be

Cathedral Concerts: Organ concerts
Until AUG 30 Tues, 20.00 at St Michael and Gudula's Cathedral, Sinter-Goedeleplein
www.cathedralestmichel.be

Feest in Brussel: De Gulden Ontsponing (The Golden Spurs): Flemish Community celebrations with free concerts organised by Ancienne Belgique
JUL 11 12.00 on the Grote Markt and Steenstraat
www.deguldenontsporing.be

Open-Air Cinema: Free open-air film screenings
JUL 6-AUG 31 Wed 22.00 at Wolubilis, Paul-Henri Spaaklaan 1
www.wolubilis.be

Kizombalove: Multicultural festival with free dance workshops, DJs, children's activities, book market and concert by Raymond van het Groenewoud
JUL 9 14.00-22.00 at Vismarkt
www.curieus.be

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

Midis-Minimes: Lunchtime concerts covering a wide range of repertoires, from world music to Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic and contemporary
Until AUG 31 at the Royal Music Conservatory, Regentschapsstraat 30
www.midis-minimes.be

Ommegang: Annual historic parade and pageant reenacting the entry into Brussels of Charles V and his court in 1549, featuring period costume, brass bands, horses and falconry displays
JUL 7 21.00 across downtown Brussels, pageant on the Grote Markt
02.512.19.61, www.ommegang.be

Poland's EU Presidency: Poland takes the six-month helm of the European Union Council for the first time, featuring a major programme of cultural events
Until DEC 31 across Belgium
www.culture.pl

Recyclart Holidays: Free summer activities on Thursday & Friday evenings featuring concerts, screenings, communal bread making, workshops and more
Until AUG 5 at Recyclart, Ursulinenstraat 25
02.502.57.34, www.recycleart.be

Kortrijk:
Kortrijk Congé: Water-side festivities including free concerts, swimming, boat parties, comedy and more
JUL 9-10 at Koning Albertpark
www.kortrijkconge.be

Leuven:
M-idzomer: Festival of concerts, comedy, dance, literature, exhibitions, more
JUL 28-31 at M Museum, Vanderkelenstraat 28
016.27.29.29, www.m-idzomer.be

Zomer van Sint-Pieter: Lunch-time concerts, a sister event to the Midis-Minimes festival in Brussels
Until AUG 26 at Saint Peter's Church, Grote Markt
www.zomer-van-sint-pieter.be

Ostend:
Geronimo Stilton's Fantasia: Giga Grote Muusical under a circus tent on the beach
Until JUL 17 17.00/18.30/19.00 at Kursaal (Casino), Monacoplein 1
070.22.56.00, www.sherpa.be

Watou (West Flanders):
Kunstenfestival Watou: Third annual arts festival with artists and curators bring together word and image through a variety of media
JUL 9-SEP 11 at venues across Watou
www.watou2011.be

Basilica Festival: Limburg leg of the Festival of Flanders, featuring classical, jazz, contemporary, carillon concerts and musical cycling tours
Until JUL 9 across Limburg
www.basilica.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

MAfestival: During its stopover in Bruges, the Festival of Flanders explores the theme of "Testament". Guests include the Blindman ensemble, harpsichordist Christophe Rousset, singer Lucilla Galeazzi and cellist Roel Dieltiens
AUG 5-13 across Bruges and Lissewege
www.mafestival.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

Brusselslive: Free festival in the shadow of the Atomium featuring The Cinematic Orchestra, Vismets, STIJN & friends, Benji B, SX, Drums are for Parades, Phaeleh, more
JUL 30 at The Green Theatre, Ossegem Park
www.brusselslive.be

Brussels Village Festival: Jazz & Latino festival with 45 live concerts featuring one band every week
Until AUG 27 Tues-Sat at The Music Village, Steenstraat 50
02.513.13.45, www.themusicvillage.com

Royal Park Music Festival 2011: Series of free Sunday jazz concerts
Until JUL 31 Sun, 11.00 & 15.00 at Warande Park
www.travers.be

Sint-Gillis Loves Funk: Free concerts including Cavanna, Désiré Niemere & band and J to the C
JUL 10 17.00-23.00 in the cafés at Voorplein
www.pianofabriek.be

Dranouter

Folk Dranouter: Folk festival featuring Band of Gypsies, Ozark Henry, The Leisure Society, Kayam, Grant Lee Buffalo, Rodrigo y Gabriela, The Jayhawks, An Pierlé & White Velvet, Salvatore Adamo, Ben Harper, more
AUG 4-7 at Festivalterrein Dranouter, Koudekotstraat
www.folkdranouter.be

Eeklo

Helden in het Park: Free outdoor world music festival
JUL 28-AUG 18 at Heldenpark
www.helden9.be

Geel

Reggae Geel: Reggae festival featuring Herb Alize it, General Degree, Kingstep, The Mighty Jah Observer, Blackboard Jungle Sound, Jah Shaka, more
AUG 5-6 at Festivalterrein Geel, Zandstraat
www.reggaegeel.com

Ghent

Gent Jazz Festival: Annual jazz festival featuring Angus & Julia Stone, BB King, Steven De Bruyn, Tony Gyselinck & Roland, Jef Neve Trio, Mavis Staples, Sonny Rollins, Morcheeba, more
JUL 7-17 at De Bijloke, Godshuizenlaan
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 massive

techno festival Ten Days Off. Also a Dutch-language theatre festival, street-theatre festival and a puppet buskers festival
JUL 16-25 throughout the city centre
www.gentsefeesten.be

Sint-Baafsabdijconcerten: Five concerts bring Baroque, classical, world sounds and jazz to the beautiful abbey
JUL 17-21 at Sint-Baaf's Abbey
www.debijloke.be

Lokeren (East Flanders)

Lokerse Feesten: Rock festival featuring Morrissey, Lady Linn & Her Magnificent Seven, Balthazar, Roger Daltrey, Arsenal, Daan, Goose, Primal Scream, Das Pop, Ozark Henry, Joe Cocker, Robert Plant, Paolo Nutini, Gabriel Rios, Triggerfinger, more
JUL 29-AUG 7 at Festivalterrein Lokeren
www.lokersefeesten.be

Peer (Limburg)

Blues Peer: Classic blues festival featuring Belgian Blues All Stars, The Black Crowes, Triggerfinger, The Paladins, Brian Setzer's Rockabilly Riot, Ray Manzarek & Robby Krieger of The Doors, more
JUL 15-17 at Festivalterrein Peer, Deusterstraat
www.brbf.be

Tienen (Flemish Brabant)

Suikerrock: 25th anniversary edition of the rock festival featuring De Jeugd Van Tegenwoordig, Zornik, Moby, Heather Nova, Soulsister, Tom Jones, Tom Dice, Natalia, Iggy & The Stooges, Deep Purple, Roxette, more
JUL 28-31 in the centre of Tienen
www.suikerrock.be

Werchter (Flemish Brabant)

TW Classic 2011: 10th anniversary edition of the pop and rock festival featuring Gabriel Rios, Bryan Adams, Simple Minds, Texas, James Blunt, Selah Sue, more
JUL 9 at Festival Park, Werchter
www.twclassic.be

WEEK IN FILM



Ecran Total Until 13 September Arenberg Cinema

Cinephiles summering in Brussels are a lucky bunch. Whereas one can find open-air cinema all over the place, only Brussels has that, plus Ecran Total. It's not only the longest-running film festival in the country, it's one of the most diverse, drawing from both recent and classic cinema and selling a selection of books and DVDs in its home at the centrally located Arenberg.

Ecran, with films grouped into themes, could be considered a revivalist festival, though one of its best sections is films never before (or not yet) released in Belgium. You'll find *Aurora*, the latest from Romanian director Cristi Puiu, in which the director himself stars as a remorseless serial killer (*pictured above*), and *Film Socialisme*, the latest esoteric head-scratcher (and I mean that in a good way) from Jean-Luc Godard. Don't be surprised to see Rainer Werner Fassbinder's name on the programme, too: His 1976 television movie *I Only Want You to Love Me* never saw international theatrical release.

Ecran also reprises some excellent recent cinema, including British artist Banksy's ironic *Exit Through the Gift Shop* and Debra Granik's award-winning tale of backwoods secrets *Winter's Bone*. Iranian-French graphic novelist and filmmaker Marjane Satrapi (*Persepolis*) is given carte blanche, and she offers us John Huston's *Casino Royale* and Arthur Penn's *The Chase*, among others. There's also an homage to British writer/director Peter Watkins (*Gladiators*, *Punishment Park*) and to Luchino Visconti.

→ www.arenberg.be

Bruxelles fait son cinéma 10-20 July Across Brussels

Meanwhile, head out of doors to find Bruxelles fait son cinéma, which stages screenings from an old-fashioned mobile cinema – once popular in Mediterranean countries – in unlikely squares around the city. Among them, you'll find Canadian director Ruba Nadda's *Cairo Time* (2009), in which Patricia Clarkson plays a magazine editor flirting with domestic disaster in Egypt, in Schaerbeek's Jamblinne de Meuxplein, and the Oscar-nominated *Hors-la-loi* (*Outside the Law*, 2010), about the French-Algerian war, at the Social Cohesion Centre in Molenbeek.

→ www.liberationfilms.be

FESTIVAL SPOTLIGHT

DAAN BAUWENS

Ghent Jazz Festival

7-17 July

Bijloke, Ghent

Ten days before the craze of the Gentse Feesten kicks in and sets the city and its inhabitants on fire, those who prefer to take it a bit easier can be found at this world-renowned jazz festival in the recently renovated Bijloke site, an old abbey and one of the most intimate spots in this area at the edge of the city centre.

In the midst of the usually quiet abbey gardens will be international jazz legends like 80-year-old tenor saxophone colossus Sonny Rollins and 85-year-old blues master BB King (*pictured*).

Being on the progressive side, the festival also boasts new forms of jazz. On 16 July, you'll find the Parisian collective Nouvelle Vague, famous for their daring bossa nova covers of new wave and punk. The day after are London's legendary trip-hop bands Morcheeba and Red Snapper.

There's also room for the *crème de la crème* of Flanders' very own jazz scene, including Steven De Bruyn, Jeff Neve and Roland. Every year, up-and-coming local musicians get the chance to perform: Jazz pianist Christian Mendoza, for example, has been in constant demand on national and international stages ever since his appearance last year as the festival's opener. This year, the Nathan Daems Quintet will try to do the same. Go and see them: They are absolutely brilliant and defy the rules of jazz as we know it.

There is one act that music lovers from Ghent and abroad are most anxious to see: Daniel Lanois' Black



Dub. Lanois is a producer, working with countless stars, including Bob Dylan, Neil Young and Peter Gabriel. He is best known for his work, together with Brian Eno, on U2's groundbreaking album *The Joshua Tree*. Just a few years ago, he discovered Trixey Whitley, a 20-year old girl from Ghent with a magical voice. Now they are touring the world's stages together.

→ www.gentjazz.com

bite

ROBYN BOYLE

Bozar Brasserie

When famous Flemish architect Victor Horta built Brussels' Fine Arts Centre (which we now lovingly know as Bozar) in the late 1920s, he foresaw a ground-level space for a few shops, a bakery and a restaurant. Last year David Martin (Michelin star chef of La Paix in Anderlecht) seized the opportunity to resurrect the original brasserie – granted with the necessary modern overhaul. Since last December, there is a stylish place to dine for the more than one million yearly Bozar visitors.

I decide to meet there with two friends before a concert. It was a bit too close to the starting time, but fortunately the service is quick and efficient. We first order a round of beers, which, somewhat oddly, is served in wine glasses. We hungrily attack the basket on the table filled with fresh, crusty slices of French bread and salted butter.

Next, we are treated to a taste teaser – a frothy blend of white asparagus, orange concentrate, carrot and crunchy quinoa seeds, which works quite nicely.

One of my dining companions is not overly hungry after all this and orders a squid salad starter as his main. Our other friend, clearly a butcher's son, doesn't have to waste any time making

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his selection: *Américain préparé*. I go for something more varied (and cooked): milk-fed veal from the Corrèze region of France in a grain mustard sauce. The colourful salad consists of Romaine lettuce hearts floating atop Japanese *amazu*, a sweet vinegar dressing, and topped with tender chunks of squid, crunchy strips of black radish and decoratively rolled carrot slices. Everything is very fresh, but they could have been a bit more generous with the squid. I love the exotic tang of this dish, its different textures and varying levels of crispness.

Our butcher's son, meanwhile, has a platter of *Américain* in front of him that is definitely bigger than his stomach. But he manages to eat all of the minced raw beef mixed with salty capers. He likes how simple they've kept the dish, providing just fresh-cut fries and a bowl of salad to go with.

I'm also pleased with my super soft strips of veal. These are buried under a pile of seasonal veg: yellow string beans, black beans, white asparagus and carrots. A moat of creamy foam surrounds the whole of the dish, while a few little leaves of peppery watercress decorate its sides, and three lightly fried potato croquettes



© Philippe De Gobert

teeter on top. The visible mustard grains provide just the right amount of bite to an otherwise too-mild dish. The portion is overwhelming, but I happily clear my plate anyway.

We have to run off to catch the concert, but otherwise we might stick around to try their fresh *profiteroles* in coffee with salted butter caramel.

The bill comes to a reasonable €69 for the three of us.

→ www.bozar.be

► Ravensteinstraat 23, Brussels;
02.503.00.00
🕒 Daily, 12.00-23.00
(closed between 22 July and 18 Aug)
€ Mains: €19-23
★ A classy place to eat and drink your fill
between art exhibition and concert

TALKING DUTCH

Festival fever

It's official: *de zomer is begonnen*. Summer has begun. How do I know? Not because school is out and kids run around when they should be doing long division. Not because temperatures are up, and girls look pretty, rosy-cheeked and scantily clad. Not even because I've met my next-door neighbour for the first time the other day when we both poked our heads out the window, drawn from our caves by the awakening sounds of life.

Hello.
– Hello.
Beautiful out.
– Yup.

No. I know because I can't stop reading and hearing about *zomerfestivals*, summer festivals. They're everywhere, even inside this very newspaper (see page 15). There's no escaping it. The innocent and unsuspecting citizen may fall victim at any time of day, anywhere, when he least expects it. Standing in line at the supermarket, walking the dog or poking his head out the window, he'll be deftly reminded of the fact that other, cooler people are having fun somewhere.

Festivals exist around the globe – even the word has a universal ring to it – but in Belgium, they thrive. It is home to the best festival in the world (Rock Werchter). Last year, the Flemish vote for the favourite neologism was the less than flattering *tentsletje*, or tent slut, "meisje dat bv. op een festivalweide met verschillende mannen seksuele betrekkingen in haar tentje heeft" (www.woordvanhetjaar.vandale.be), girl who eg at a festival has sexual relations with several men in her tent. (Feminist groups protested,



PHILIP EBELS

understandably, but to no avail.)

It's like religion, according to a full-page cartoon in a recent weekend newspaper. *De zanger is als een priester*, the singer is like a priest; *de band zijn ceremoniemeesters*, the band his masters of ceremony. *Het bier-drinkende publiek zijn als de gelovigen*, the beer-drinking audience is like the faithful, *het Coca-Cola promotieteam de ongelovigen*, the Coca-Cola promotion team the unfaithful. *Enzovoort*. Et cetera.

I personally haven't decided yet. I've already missed the best festival in the world, again. I might go somewhere else, though, to one of the four alternatives listed in this newspaper two weeks ago. *Wie weet, misschien komen we elkaar tegen*. Who knows, we might run into each other. But then again, I might not go at all. I might just retreat back into my cave and not poke my head out anymore, until the season is over.

THE LAST WORD . . .

Domestic secrets

"Herman doesn't know how to change a light bulb, I think. And he leaves all the gardening to me." Geertrui Windels, wife of EU council president Herman Van Rompuy

Say it, sister

"My biggest failing? That I'm not a man." Socialist party president Caroline Gennez will not be seeking re-election in the autumn

Purple reign

"It's like bungee jumping without knowing if the elastic will hold. It's not every day you can bring someone like that over." Pascal Van De Velde organised the two Prince concerts this week in Ghent

What's in a name?

"Schellebelle becomes Schellybellywood"

De Standaard headlines news of a film by actor Johan Heldenbergh set in his hometown of Schellebelle and starring many of his neighbours

NEXT WEEK IN FLANDERS TODAY #188

Feature

If you're the type to leave a lucrative career to become an obsessive art collector, you're the type to convince the world of the worthiness of a long-forgotten period in Flemish painting. Lisa Bradshaw talks to Jef Rademakers

Business

Microsoft opens another innovation centre – this time in Flanders. We'll tell you about the specialised health-care software coming out of Kortrijk

Focus

The university hospital in Ghent recently released its long-awaited opinion on surrogacy and gay couples. We look at the regulations around the issue and just how easy – or difficult – it is for two men to have kids of their own