

## Streekproduct turns 10

Flanders' label of authenticity for local products celebrates 10 years with special awards



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## Fighting the pear fire

A drone is being developed to help Limburg fruit growers fight a deadly bacteria



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## Like a good neighbour

Ideas for celebrating the annual day that makes friends out of neighbours

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# High-tech home for babies

**Leuven's new neonatal department pairs meticulous monitoring with a home-like environment**

Andy Furniere

From the LED lighting to the chairs at the bed, everything at the new neonatal department at Leuven's University Hospital has been designed to help parents bond physically and emotionally with their – sometimes very frail – newborns. The hospital's administrators first made plans for the new department 10 years ago, after a trip to the US.

**B**abies who come into this world too early or are born with disorders can now get stronger with their parents at their side in their own, quiet room at the new neonatology department in Leuven.

Parents, meanwhile, needn't worry that the convenience of a private room will make it more difficult for the nurses and doctors to administer care. The innovative design of the intensive care facilities ensures that the families' privacy doesn't impede meticulous monitoring by the medical staff.

The Leuven University Hospital's (UZ Leuven) neonatology staff and patients moved into the new building in early January, but the news was communicated to the public only months later. Hospital administrators wanted to give all parties time to adjust to the new surroundings in tranquillity – just one of many things the staff did carefully and slowly.

"The start of the process dates back about 10 years, when a visit to the specialised Annual Gravens Conference in the US state of Florida proved very inspirational," says Gunnar Naulaers, head of the neonatal department.

The department's previous infrastructure was built in 1976, one of the first departments to be established at UZ Leuven. Although it was regularly renovated over the decades, a complete redesign eventually became necessary.

During the brainstorming process, the hospital not only consulted engineers and architects, but also closely involved doctors and nurses and asked parents what they thought in surveys and tests in mock-up rooms. Essential to the development of the final concept was the principle of "family-centred care".

Family-centred care, in short, recognises that each family is unique and that parents are experts on the child's abilities and needs. It reflects a shift from the traditional focus on the biomedical aspects of a child's condition to an increased concern for the consistent

# Residents protest as discussion on Antwerp Ring continues

## Doctors publish open letter in support of a new plan for Oosterweel link

Alan Hope

**C**overing the entire Antwerp Ring could save lives, according to a group of doctors who published an open letter at the weekend in *Het Nieuwsblad*. The idea, proposed by an activist group called Ringland, would reduce noise and air pollution and should ideally be extended to all motorways in the country.

The Ringland plan involves turning the Ring essentially into a tunnel, so noise and other pollution can be reduced (*pictured*). According to research, up to 99% of vehicle emissions could be filtered. A similar system is in place in Madrid. In Antwerp, the project would create green space equivalent to about 500 football fields.

The doctors' letter refers to research showing

that children living within 500 metres of a motorway have reduced lung capacity than those living further away; mortality in general is higher among those living within 100 metres, and deaths from heart and lung disease are twice as high. People living within 500 metres have more sleep disturbances, anxiety and depression, and the effects of motorway pollution extend up to 1.5 kilometres from the road.

Antwerp, the doctors point out, has 12 schools and 75 daycare facilities within the zone where average concentrations of fine particulates exceed European limits. Meanwhile, the direct and indirect costs of air pollution in Belgium have been estimated by the European Environment Agency at €5 billion a year.



capacity for the sake of a few minutes of time gained, we need to put health first."

According to Antwerp mayor Bart De Wever, the proposal is a matter for the next Flemish government to consider after the elections this month. The government has already taken steps to complete the Ring with the Oosterweel connection, which includes a partial enclosure of the Ring where the viaduct now passes the Sportpaleis. "That will take time and has to take place step by step," said Flanders' mobility minister Hilde Crevits.

Last weekend, an estimated 10,000 people cycled or walked in a demonstration in Antwerp in favour of the enclosure of the Ring, which was also presented to the general public this week at an event in the Roma theatre.

## Historic farmhouse at Bokrijk destroyed by fire

A historic farmhouse dating from the 19th century was destroyed by fire last week at the open-air museum in Bokrijk, in Genk. The building was one of the oldest in the park. The museum opened to visitors as usual on the following day, which was the 1 May holiday. The fire was spotted by a security guard early on Wednesday morning. But by the time units arrived from the fire brigades in Genk and Hasselt, it was too late to save the building. No one was injured, and the fire did not spread to other exhibits in the park.

Bokrijk is an amusement park and open-air folk museum, consisting of a number of buildings of historic interest, including agricultural buildings, an old school and a working windmill, as well as 35,000 objects relating to rural life in earlier times, such as tools, cultural and decorative objects and



vintage toys.

The farmhouse with attached barn was originally in Houthalen and was dismantled stone by stone and reconstructed in Bokrijk. It was the second building to be installed in the park after its opening in 1958. "We've lost a piece of our heritage today," said Igor Philtjens, who is responsible for tourism in Limburg province. AH

## Warm spring comes with plenty of mosquitoes

One of the less pleasant side-effects of the mild winter and spring weather is starting to make itself felt: an increase in the mosquito population. According to Patrick Grootaert of the department of entomology at the Royal Institute for Natural Sciences, "the spring weather is especially decisive for the immediate future". Eggs are already laid, he told VRT, "and the larvae are developing now in standing water. Thanks to high daytime temperatures – normally these would remain under 15 degrees – the larvae grow quickly and the mosquitoes develop faster than usual."

According to research from the Netherlands, plants are currently an entire month ahead of where they were at the same time last year. The mild winter has not, however, had the anticipated effect of bringing migrating birds home sooner, according to Marc Herremans of



nature conservancy organisation Natuurpunt. "Since this was the second-mildest winter on record, you would expect nature to be ahead of schedule in every area," Herremans said. "So you see the trees in bloom, although it isn't May yet. But most migrating birds are not early, and certainly not those from Africa." The reason, he said, is because the birds get the signal that it is time to leave according to conditions there, not here. AH

## No new leads from Swiss investigation into bus driver's GSM

An investigation into a second mobile phone owned by Geert Michiels, one of the drivers of the bus that crashed in Sierre, Switzerland, in March of 2012, has produced no new evidence, the Swiss prosecutor in charge of the case said.

The lawyer for a group of parents of the victims filed a successful motion with the court, forcing Olivier Elsig, prosecutor for Valais canton, to follow up with an investigation of the phone. Elsig had already closed his investigation, which found that the crash,



Schoolchildren in Leuven release hundreds of white balloons during a ceremony marking the one-year anniversary of the bus crash

in which 28 people were killed, including 22 children from two schools in Flanders, had been caused by human error.

The children were on their way home to Leuven and Lommel after the traditional sixth-year ski holiday. Both drivers and four members of the schools' staff were also killed, and the prime minister declared a day of national mourning.

The parents of some victims allege that Michiels, 35, may have crashed the bus deliberately. Michiels, who was behind the

wheel when the accident happened, had been taking medication for depression. Elsig said he had considered and rejected that hypothesis for lack of evidence.

In a written statement, the driver's widow said she had breathed "a deep sigh of relief" on hearing that the second phone offered no further evidence, referring to the "unjust allegations" made against her husband. AH

## THE WEEK IN FIGURES

25 years

in prison for Morgan Schreurs, now 40, found guilty of the murder of Jane Heupgen in Zaventem in 1999. Schreurs evaded arrest for 12 years until his description was circulated by Interpol. He was arrested in Croatia

€350,000

ordered to be paid by Kapelle-op-den-Bos, Flemish Brabant, to two residents because the town hall was built four metres too high when it was constructed in 1984, allowing staff a view into their garden

6,690

French nationals crossed the border for work at the end of last June, 3.7% more than a year before. West Flanders has a serious shortage of workforce, creating opportunities for French workers

312

cases of tuberculosis registered in the Brussels-Capital Region in 2012, down from 374 two years earlier. Brussels has more than four times as many cases as either of Belgium's other two regions

11,000

jobs in the construction industry have been lost because of unfair competition from foreign firms, according to the Building Confederation and sector organisation Agoria

## WEEK IN BRIEF

Brussels-City has introduced **free wireless internet in the Grote Markt**, mayor Yvan Mayeur announced last week. The service will be extended to Muntplein and De Brouckereplein by July, and thereafter to Rouppeplein, Bockstaelplein and Vossenplein by October. The Grote Markt connection Bru Wifi does not require a password, but users are limited to two hours a day.

Eight yacht harbours and nine inland swimming sites have been awarded the **blue flag of water quality** by the environmental organisation Bond Beter Leefmilieu at a ceremony in Nieuwpoort. The 17 winners are all previous holders of the flag, which is awarded for water quality, environmental education and information, ecological management and safety. Three of last year's winners lost their flag this year.

The province of East Flanders will take over the museum dedicated to the work of the **late painter Roger Raveel** in Machelen-aan-de-Leie on 1 July. The province will pay a one-off renovation cost of €250,000, and €250,000 annual running costs. The agreement with the Raveel estate brings an end to a series of legal disputes over the artist's legacy.

**A taxi driver accused of raping** a Danish au pair in 2012 has been released from prison to await trial, the Brussels prosecutor confirmed. The man was arrested in February when security footage showed him with the woman at a cash machine. At the time, police were investigating allegations that 29 women had been raped in and around the Ter Kamerenbos by men posing as taxi drivers. The man was recognised by former colleagues, and turned himself in. The man admits sexual relations with his accuser, but claims she consented.

TV station VIER will review its code of conduct on the use of animals after complaints from animal rights organisation Gaia regarding a cookery show in which star chef **Piet Huysentruyt pulled the legs off a live lobster**, cut it in two with a knife and threw it, still wriggling, onto a grill. The broadcaster met Gaia for what both sides later said had been a "constructive dialogue".

**Two bus drivers face disciplinary action** by public transport authority De Lijn for blocking traffic in the middle of Zandhoven, Antwerp province, after a long-running personal feud. The two drivers met in Liersebaan from opposite directions and could not pass, but both refused to back down. It took the intervention of De Lijn inspectors and police to break the stand-off. "Passengers were taken hostage for half an hour," a De Lijn spokesperson said. "Both of them risk a sanction, potentially even dismissal."

The first part of a **new city park on the site of Tour & Taxis** in Brussels is due to open on 8 May with a barbecue, fireworks and a concert. The new three-hectare park is situated under the Jubelfeestlaan and Jean Dubrucqlaan bridges, once a notorious spot for illegal rubbish dumping. Later, sections of the park will be constructed next to railway line 28 on the main T&T site.

Brussels Airlines will allow the use of tablet computers and **smartphones during the whole flight**, including take-off and landing, starting on 1 June. Last year, the European Aviation Safety Authority followed its US counterpart in introducing more flexible rules for electronic equipment. Air France and Lufthansa already allow the use of tablets and smartphones in flight mode. Laptops and notebook computers, however, are not affected by the change.

"Stairway to Heaven" by the British group Led Zeppelin has again been voted **most popular classic song of all time** by the listeners of Radio 1, after a marathon 10-hour show broadcast on 1 May. The choices for numbers two and three – "Born to Run" by Bruce Springsteen and "Like a Hurricane" by Neil Young – also remain unchanged. Jacques Brel was the only Belgian in the top 10 with "Ne me quitte pas" at number 10.

Sixteen passengers were slightly injured when **two trams collided in a tunnel** in Brussels. The accident took place between Zuidstation and Lemonnier, and tram traffic on the route was disrupted between 12.40 and 18.20.

Police in West Flanders have warned of the appearance of a **dangerous new form of the drug ecstasy**, or MDMA. The pills are thought to have been behind the death of a 16-year-old in Ostend last weekend. The dealer who sold the pill, as well as a go-between, have been detained in connection with the death.

Dirk Bisschop, the 58-year-old **mayor of Damme, West Flanders**, died last week in an auto accident. A passenger in the car was also seriously hurt. The accident took place in Moerkerke, when Bisschop lost control of his car and drove into a ditch. Bisschop had been mayor of the town since 2000.

The city of Kortrijk **introduced its own currency** last week. The FIK Jetong has a value of €1 and is valid in the two bars run by the city during the annual Sanksenfeesten, which takes place from 6 to 9 June, as well as at events held later.

## FACE OF FLANDERS

Alan Hope



© Bart Debaere/Van Halewyck

### Kris Daels

He was once known only as Alpha 20, and he's been described as Belgium's James Bond. Inaccurately, as it happens: Alpha 20 wasn't a spy, he was an undercover cop. But apart from that, his life story is every bit as remarkable as that of 007, with the added bonus of being true.

Last week the Court of Appeal in Ghent cleared Kris Daels, aka Alpha 20, of breach of professional confidentiality in a case dating back to 2009.

Daels started his career at the age of 22 in 1986 as a member of the Special Intervention Squad, an elite group not known for their kid-glove treatment. After 10 years of booting down doors, he turned to undercover investigations for the Criminal Intelligence Section in Bruges, charged with infiltrating the world of drugs dealers and human traffickers. He was responsible for putting an end to an international drugs ring. At one point he managed to get himself put behind bars for a week to thwart the planned contract killing of a Dutch magistrate. According to the book, he was no stranger to break-ins to plant bugging devices, car chases, gunfights, Hell's Angel parties and visits to brothels – all in the line of duty.

His success irked some colleagues and superiors, and he was removed from the section. But he had learned a little too much about the unsavoury off-duty habits of some superiors, and his career in what was by now the federal police came to an end.

When his book, *Alpha 20: Undercoveragent bij de federale politie*, co-authored by VRT journalist Wim Van Den Eynde, came out in 2009, he was charged with breach of confidentiality for having revealed the details of certain types of surveillance techniques employed by security forces.

He was found guilty in first instance, but appealed. The oath of confidentiality, lawyer Filip Van Hende said, "applies only to what is confidential, not for information that is general knowledge or contained in literature available to everyone." The court of appeal agreed.

Daels said he was careful to avoid just what he was being accused of when working on the book. "If I found I was breaching my oath of confidentiality, I scrapped the passage," he said. "If I hadn't co-authored the book, it would have been more shocking still."

## OFFSIDE

Alan Hope

### Protecting the fish thief

The headline was an eye-catcher: "Unique nesting island for fish thief," and of course sounded an alarm at Offside, where we're vigilantly on the lookout for the latest in seagull news.

But the *visdief* is not a seagull, it's the bird otherwise known as a *zeewaluw* – a word worth remembering if you play Scrabble with a Dutch speaker. Though referred to as a swallow in Dutch, the *Sterna hirundo* is a tern, known in English as the common tern.

Anyway, the unique nesting island is in Kleit, a district of Maldegem in East Flanders. The nesting island is entirely man-made and is simply a series of shallow sandboxes that float in the area's creeks and lakes, intended to provide temporary brooding places for the fish thief to lay eggs and eventually hatch them.

The common tern is on its way back to these parts from a winter in Africa, and the floating nests are safe from martens, stoats and the like, which normally prey on its eggs.

Meanwhile, the wildlife along the waterways of Limburg and Antwerp provinces will be assured better protection thanks to an agreement signed last week by the Nature and Woodland Agency (ANB) and De Scheepvaart, the



company that manages the inland waterways of the two provinces. As well as an important transport system, the canals also form an ecological habitat for numerous plants and animals. The various nature reserves along the waterways tend to be small, isolated terrains in the midst of industrial areas, increasing their vulnerability. "This agreement is an additional guarantee to allow further development of these nature areas," commented ANB administrator-general Marleen Evenepoel.

## FLANDERS TODAY

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**Picking an opponent**

In a two-party system, it is obvious who is whose political opponent. In a coalition system, however, there are more options. And in Belgium, with its separate language groups and constituencies, it becomes even more complex.

Take N-VA, the nationalist party that is set to win the elections in Flanders. N-VA's favourite opponent is the French-speaking socialist party (PS) of prime minister Elio Di Rupo. To N-VA, PS stands for everything that is wrong in this country: a lack of enthusiasm, high taxation and big government. N-VA would rather see a federal government without PS and its Flemish counterpart, SPA.

Unsurprisingly, N-VA is the favourite opponent of both PS and SPA. The latter accuses N-VA of being cold-hearted, warning the electorate of N-VA's plans for the wage index, which automatically links wages to the cost of living, and unemployment benefits, which N-VA wants to cut after two years of unemployment. SPA also warns the electorate not to vote for the eco party Groen and the extreme-left PVDA. A vote for these parties only divides and weakens the left, says SPA.

For CD&V and Open VLD, it is not all that clear who the opponent is, although there is no ignoring the seemingly almighty N-VA. Open VLD in particular has had a difficult time standing out, as N-VA has more or less taken up a liberal economic programme.

Minister-president Kris Peeters' CD&V, too, finds it hard to battle with N-VA. The Christian-democrats, which stand at some 20% in the polls, is always perturbed when it is not in the leading position. Its tendency towards moderation and compromise also plays to its disadvantage, compared to N-VA's outspoken attitude.

With Peeters' political future at stake, his party is also frustrated by what it calls N-VA's inability to be trustworthy, following the events of last week, when N-VA president Bart De Wever stressed that his party would maintain some of the current structure of secondary education that was changed in the 2013 masterplan, to which it had already agreed. This spoke directly to parents' (and the CD&V electorate's) fears around the reform of secondary education.

All this attention suits N-VA just fine: "all against one" elections are always a recipe for success. However, after the elections, the party still has to forge coalitions at both the federal and Flemish levels. Not easy, if you have few friends left.

# Fietsersbond encourages government to listen to cyclists

## The cycling union's latest report points to needed structural changes

Derek Blyth

Flanders is making huge efforts to get more people to cycle and to improve its cycling infrastructure, but investments could be better targeted, according to the Flemish cyclists' union, Fietsersbond, which released its latest report last week.

Fietsersbond claims that the government isn't listening to cyclists when it carries out infrastructure projects. "The government has invested heavily in new cycle paths and infrastructure, but it has failed to find out what cyclists want," the union said.

The latest report is based on a survey of 4,000 cyclists in Flanders. It states that they mainly want to see fewer cars on the road, potholes in cycle lanes repaired and dangerous intersections eliminated or altered. The biggest complaint from cyclists is that roads in Flanders are dangerously congested. "A lot of cyclists tell us that there are too many cars, trucks and motorbikes



© Courant van Antwerpen

on the roads and that they drive too fast and too close to cyclists," said Bea Vanelslander of Fietsersbond. "They aren't just worried about their safety, but also about their health because they are exposed to noise, fine particles and exhaust fumes."

Flemish cyclists are also unhappy

about the state of the roads. "Potholes and bumpy road surfaces make it impossible to cycle comfortably and reduce cyclists' safety," said Vanelslander.

The government of Flanders invests €100 million every year on cycle lanes and infrastructure. Fietsersbond finds the amount

sufficient but said that it isn't being invested in the right areas.

The report singles out three cycle routes as exemplary – the Guldensporenpad from Kortrijk to Zwevegem, the Kanaalroute that runs along the canal from Vilvoorde to Brussels and out to Halle and the route that follows the high-speed train line between Brussels and Leuven. These routes are successful because they are separated from cars, with smooth tarmac surfaces and relatively few intersections, said the union.

Flanders' transport minister, Hilde Crevits, said she was not surprised by the report. "I am the first to admit that we still have a lot of work to do," she said. "But the current Flemish government had invested more in cycle infrastructure than any previous administration. Following advice from Fietsersbond, I increased the budget from €60 million to €100 million."

► [www.fietsersbond.be](http://www.fietsersbond.be)

## Van Rompuy publishes book on euro crisis years

Flemish politician Herman Van Rompuy, Belgium's former prime minister and current president of the European Council, has published a book of essays called *Europe in the Storm* in which he describes his five years at the head of the EU.

Van Rompuy focuses on the financial crisis when the euro zone looked in danger of collapsing because of the banking situation and escalating debt in countries such as Greece, Italy and Spain. Van Rompuy's role

in chairing meetings of EU leaders meant he sat at the heart of the crisis.

In the book, he describes the "moment of truth" arriving at a summit of EU leaders in Brussels in June 2012, when he chaired negotiations deep into the night and finally pushed leaders into agreeing on fundamental financial reforms. "It marked a watershed," he writes. "After more than two years of dealing with countries' problems through ad

hoc firefighting, leaders had finally come to the realisation that we were not just facing a series of country-specific problems, but a systemic crisis that required a systemic response."

This could be seen as a turning point in the history of European unity, he says. "They rallied unanimously around the need for action for Europe as a whole. We now had a compass."

Earlier this year, the 65-year-old



Herman Van Rompuy presents his new book in Brussels announced that he would end his political career on 1 December, when his mandate as EU president comes to an end. DB

## Brussels city council calls for change in Zaventem flight paths

Brussels city council has called on federal transport secretary Melchior Wathelet to change flight paths into and out of Brussels Airport. The routes were changed on 6 February to spread the aircraft over a wider zone, but the result is that more aircraft are flying over densely populated areas of Brussels.

The motion submitted to the secretary of state was signed by a large majority from almost all Brussels parties. It called on Wathelet to hold new discussions on flight routes and select routes that go over the least populated areas around the airport.

The motion also pressed the minister to set up an independent body to control flight paths, ban flights between 23.00 and 7.00 and require airlines to pay into a fund to provide sound insulation for homes affected by aircraft noise. Brussels environment minister Evelyne Huytebroeck sharply criticised Wathelet's plan earlier this month. "His plan for spreading out flight paths has caused chaos in Brussels airspace," she said. "This was a disastrous political decision which has had a negative impact on the lives of hundreds of thousands of Brussels residents." DB

## Electronic voting for more than half of Flemish electorate

The elections on 25 May will see electronic voting machines installed in 151 of the 308 municipalities across Flanders. The remaining 157 municipalities will use the traditional method involving a paper list of candidates and a pen to mark preferences.

Some 58% of Flemish voters will have access to computer-based voting; everyone in Brussels will vote electronically.

More than eight million residents across the country are expected to vote on election day, including nearly 129,000 Belgians registered abroad and 68,771 EU citizens resident here. Voting is compulsory for all Belgians, but non-Belgian EU citizens can opt out. Less than 10% of EU citizens living in Belgium are registered to vote. DB

## "Green waves" could cut traffic jams on many roads

The government could decrease congestion on Flanders' regional roads by co-ordinating traffic lights to allow a more continuous flow of traffic, or "green waves", according to the motoring organisation Touring. Touring recently carried out a survey by sending drivers to test traffic lights on 100 regional roads. "It went fine on precisely seven roads, but on all the others, our drivers had to brake, queue and wait," said Danny Smagghe of Touring.

The organisation said that there had been a slight improvement since they last carried out a survey three years ago, when just three roads had co-ordinated lights. But some areas have got worse in the meantime, due to new traffic lights. For example, the journey time between Diest and Geel has increased from nine to 21 minutes, according to Touring.

Touring calculated that each intersection where lights are badly co-ordinated represents 6,250 hours of extra time spent in traffic annually, and that each lost hour represents an extra cost of €10 for a car and €45 for a truck. The organisation also argued that a system of smart traffic lights could cut pollution by 8%.

Flemish mobility minister Hilde Crevits said that she recognised that the situation could be improved, noting that the government was taking steps to deal with the problem. Pilot projects involving smart traffic lights have already been launched in Leuven, Ghent and Antwerp, she said. DB

# High-tech home for babies

## New UZ Leuven neonatal department puts newborns and parents at ease

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role of families in the child's development. "The progress in technology has been essential in improving specialised hospital care," says Naulaers, "but measures to reduce stress and improve the bonding process between parents and newborns also make a big difference."

The result of all this out-of-the-box thinking is a department that is unique in Europe, since every baby (except twins) will lie in a separate room with all the necessary medical equipment. With one room, one of which is kept vacant for emergency situations, the department has space for 40 babies.

Another distinctive feature of the new department is the separation of "flows", or the activities of medical and logistical staff, and parents and visitors. Parents have a personal badge with which they can access their baby's room 24/7 through a separate hallway, where staff members are normally not allowed. Visitors are also welcome for the larger part of the day.

While Naulaers shows me around, I notice that parents and visitors have put their shoes by the doors. We've apparently entered a comfort zone. The hallway features several cosy sitting areas sporting large windows, where one person, clearly at ease, is on the phone when we walk past. A room with a kitchen, TV and play area for children is also available for parents and visitors.

"In case of a critical situation or if they temporarily don't have a place to stay close by, parents can also spend the night in our two hotel rooms in the department," explains Naulaers, as he opens the door to one of the well-furnished rooms.

The service also includes a soberly furnished mourning space, where parents can discreetly receive visitors. According to Naulaers, the department loses about 30 babies a year, or 5% of the approximately 600 babies they deliver annually.

In the hospital's rooms, babies lie in a neonatal incubator, the youngest often under a blanket that protects them from the light. "Babies born three months too early, for example, still need the darkness that they would have experienced living in the womb," Naulaers explains.

Thorough insulation of the rooms ensures that newborns aren't alarmed by outside noises and can sleep undisturbed. "That's a big improvement on the previous conditions," says Naulaers, "when babies often lay in incubators with five other babies and regularly woke up because of crying or alarms going off."

Along with reducing stress for both babies and parents, the building's new design also strengthens the early relationship between both. "It's not always easy for parents to bond with their baby if it is in a very weak condition," explains Naulaers.

To overcome possible intimacy barriers,



© photos: UZ Leuven



Leuven's new neonatal department offers every baby, even preemies, a private room – a first in Europe



positively affects the child's survival chances and development.

Specialised staff members are on hand to assist parents with kangaroo care, determining the most comfortable position for the child. They also offer parents advice on breastfeeding and talking or singing to their babies. "Noise is a negative factor, but babies do need to hear voices, especially those of their parents," says Naulaers, "which they already know a little from inside the womb."

The colourfully painted, 24-square-metre rooms get plenty of natural light. Parents can also adjust the colour of the extra LED lighting according to their preferences and are free to decorate the room with personal objects.

"We also installed a screen so parents can watch TV and use the internet," says Naulaers. "Keeping in touch with family and friends via e-mail or social networks can be important for parents who would otherwise feel isolated because they spend most of their time in the hospital."

Although parents are able to stay in a home-like environment at the hospital, the child's medical situation is at the same time constantly monitored. Three teams of four nurses are in charge of the monitoring. They work in three connected central spaces, surrounded by three circles of 12 single rooms each – a panoptical design. The rooms' doors are made of glass, and nurses check on the babies every hour.

Three monitoring and communications systems have also been implemented. The first relates the babies' health indicators – their respiration rhythm and heart rate for instance. These are monitored in both the

central "islands" and in the individual rooms. Nurses use an intercom system to talk to each other in the central island or in the rooms, and all the doctors and nurses wear beepers. Finally, parents can ring a bell to request help. This will set off an alarm in the central island, where an attention light indicates that assistance is required.

For their breaks, doctors and nurses can go to the second floor, which has a relaxation area and a kitchen. The second floor also houses the offices of the medical and nursing staff, meeting rooms, changing rooms, restrooms, sleeping rooms for doctors on call and the administrative offices.

In June, the team will start examining the concrete statistics to ascertain whether – and how much – their approach has indeed increased babies' survival chances and sped up their development. Naulaers, for his part, is convinced the outcome will be positive; similar American precedents, among other indicators, have demonstrated positive results.

► [www.uzleuven.be/neonatologie](http://www.uzleuven.be/neonatologie)

*“It's not always easy for parents to bond with their baby if it's in a very weak condition*

the department encourages, for example, "kangaroo", or skin-to-skin, care. "The single rooms are furnished with comfortable chairs ideal for parents to rest with their child against them, skin to skin," says Naulaers. Research has shown that the contact between the naked skin of babies and parents

in June, the department's staff will travel to Harvard University in the US to learn more about a special type of music therapy, with recorded music adjusted to make it sound like it would from inside the womb.

The rooms' furnishings were designed to make things as comfortable as possible for parents.

## WEEK IN BUSINESS

## Air ▶ Emirates

The Dubai-based airline, the Gulf state's largest carrier, is to launch a daily Brussels-Dubai flight from 5 September using a Boeing 777 aircraft. The service is expected to create up to 400 jobs at Brussels Airport.

## Air ▶ Vueling

The Spanish low-cost carrier has introduced six new services linking Brussels Airport to Lisbon, Porto, Venise, Ibiza, Majorca and Santiago de Compostela.

## Building ▶ Frisomat

The Antwerp-based specialist of prefabricated industrial buildings is to invest a further €3 million in its Smolensk production unit next year. The move will allow the company to develop its activities in Russia and increase its distribution network.

## Distribution

## ▶ Ocean Marée

The Brussels-based wholesale distributor of seafood products has been taken over by the ISPC restaurant and catering sector supplier with headquarters in Ghent.

## Hotels ▶ Motel One

The 490-room German-owned two-star hotel inaugurated last week on Koningstraat in Brussels is the second largest in the city. Room prices start at €79 including breakfast.

## Insurance ▶ Metlife

The Brussels-based life insurance company is to be acquired by the French Credit Mutuel Nord Europe. The move will allow CMNE to strengthen its BKCP bank and its Beobank activities acquired from Citibank last year.

## Telecom ▶ Mobistar

The French-owned telecommunications operator is to take over and operate the 33 You Call retail outlets located in local Carrefour hypermarkets. The You Call chain was declared bankrupt in March.

## Textiles ▶ Ontex

The Zele-based nappies producer, owned by the Texas Pacific and Goldman Sachs Capital Partners investment funds, is to float slightly less than 50% of its equity on the Brussels stock exchange in June. The company, Europe's private label market leader, hopes to raise up to €500 million. It was already quoted between 1998 and 2003 when it was taken private in a €1 billion deal.

## Streekproduct label turns 10

## Exemplary regional products win special awards to mark 10th anniversary

Alan Hope

Flanders' quality label for traditional regional products celebrated its 10th anniversary with the award of special prizes to five products, each representing one of the aspects of the *streekproduct*, or regional product, system. The awards ceremony was hosted by the Economic Council of East Flanders at Ghent's Groot Vleeshuis, which sells East Flemish products.

To date, 167 products have been awarded the label, based on five criteria: The product must be made with ingredients particular to the region; must be accepted by local people or a wider public as particular to an area; must be made in a traditional, artisanal manner; must be prepared in their area of origin; and must have been in existence for at least 25 years.

The award, depicting a giant fork, for local ingredients went to dairy producers Sioen from Passendale,



© courtesy Vlaam

From left: Chantal Ghysen of the Economic Council of East Flanders, Guy Claessen (witloof), Herman Vangramberen (blood sausage), Gerard Dessel (Rodenbach), Peter Destrooper (lukken), Ambroisine Sioen (butter) and Frans De Wachter of Vlam

West Flanders, for their Westhoek farmhouse butter, made from the milk of West Flemish red cows.

The *streekvork* for local renown went to growers Minoort-Henderickx

of Erpe-Mere, East Flanders, for their *witloof*, still grown according to traditional, labour-intensive methods. The prize for traditional craftsmanship went to Vangramberen

butchers of Boutersem, Flemish Brabant, for their West-Hageland black blood sausage, a recipe based on the sausages once made in every farmhouse kitchen in the area, stripped of modern influences like exotic spice mixtures.

The prize for area of origin went to biscuit baker Jules Destrooper of Lo-Reninge, West Flanders, for their *lukken*, delicate wafer biscuits rich with local butter. Finally, the award for tradition went to Rodenbach brewery of Roeselare, West Flanders, for its beer typical of the area. The sour ales matured in oak vats are currently experiencing something of a revival.

The 10th anniversary is a time to look forward, said Frans De Wachter, director-general of Flanders' Agricultural Marketing Board (Vlam), which runs the *streekproduct* system. "There is a great deal of room for expansion," he said.

## Brussels city personnel to strike on 8 May

Unions representing staff of Brussels-City plan to strike on 8 May, in protest at the city's new parking policy. The action concerns office staff as well as workers in the municipality's various services.

The unions are angry at the new parking policy, which means an end to free parking cards for members of municipal staff, or a local alternative where applicable. They also complain that the managers of a variety of services have given insufficient support to members of staff.

The action will take place on Thursday morning, following a general meeting of the three unions concerned, and there will be a procession from Ruijningskaai, home to the department of roadworks, to the town hall on the Grote Markt. At the same time, a picket line will be set up at Ruijningskaai. AH

## EnergyVille and Circuit Zolder collaborate to improve electric mobility

Energy research park EnergyVille and Limburg racetrack Circuit Zolder signed a letter of intent in which they agree to increase and improve their co-operation into research on electric mobility. This means that EnergyVille will be able to use the infrastructure at Zolder to carry out certain tests with electric vehicles. The partners also agreed to search for projects and companies that work towards the development of electric mobility and to organise events together.

The letter of intent was signed during the awards ceremony for Clean Car of the Year and Clean Truck & Van of the Year at Zolder, in the presence of Flemish innovation minister Ingrid Lieten and the governor of Limburg province, Herman Reynders. The collaborative effort was launched under the banner of Smart Lab Clean Mobility.

"This agreement provides the



opportunity to take our technology outside the lab and test it in real life – a vital bridge between idea and finished product," said EnergyVille CEO Ronnie Belmans. Jacques Heynen, chair of the board at Circuit Zolder, declared that Smart Lab Clean Mobility was essential for the further development of Circuit of Zolder as a centre for research on green innovation and mobility. "We want to be a host where researchers feel at home, and this is not possible without the support of various partners," he said. Andy Furniere

## Hof Van Cleve on world's best restaurant list

The country's top-ranked chef, Peter Goossens of Hof Van Cleve in Kruishoutem, East Flanders, saw his restaurant slip 20 places in the world's top 50 restaurants list, published annually by Britain's *Restaurant* magazine. Goossens (pictured) was 25 on last year's list, and came in at 45 this year. Nonetheless, Hof Van Cleve remains Belgium's only restaurant in the top 50.

The list climbs from 50 to a less-publicised 100: Kobe Desramaults' In de Wulf of Dranouter, West Flanders, rose from 72 to 61; Hertog Jan in Bruges, under Gert De Mangeleer, rose from 78 to 65. Like Hof Van Cleve, Hertog Jan has three Michelin stars.

Copenhagen's Noma returns to the top of the chart after being ousted last year by El Celler de Can Roca in Girona, Spain. El Celler drops to

number two, followed by Osteria Francescana in Modena, Italy, in third.

While guides like *Michelin* and *Gault-Millau* are based on the opinions of professional food reviewers, *Restaurant* uses a pool of 900 voters, including chefs, industry professionals, critics and bloggers, divided into regions. They're headed in the Benelux by Dirk De Prins, former editor of the Flemish *Ambiance* magazine. AH



© Jean Pierre Gabriel

## Theme park and giant mall among plans for first phase of Brussels' Neoproject

Brussels-City presented plans for the development of the Heizel site, the so-called Neo project, last week. The first phase of development includes an 81,000 square-metre shopping mall with 200 stores and 30 restaurants, which would make it the largest in the country, attracting an estimated 15 million visitors a year.

The project has been designed by architect Jean-Paul Viguier and the Brussels-based firm Art&Build. The centrepiece is the Europea complex around the Koning Boudewijn stadium, which remains in place

for the time being until a new national stadium is constructed nearby. Part of the complex is a new theme park based on the cartoon character Robbedoes, under the operation of the French leisure group Compagnie des Alpes, which runs numerous ski resorts as well as Walibi and Bellewaerde parks in Belgium.

There will also be a miniature science park for children, and Kinepolis cinema will be expanded. The fate of water park Océade and Mini-Europe has yet to be clarified. AH

# Protection from the skies

## Drones could help prevent the spread of fire blight among fruit trees

Toon Lambrechts

Tree diseases can wreak havoc in fruit orchards, and the disease known as fire blight is notorious in Flanders. To detect this disease more quickly, the Fruit Test Centre in Sint-Truiden and the Flemish Institute for Technological Research (Vito) are working on a new detection system. So don't be surprised if you see drones flying around the next time you visit the Limburg countryside.

Fire blight, also called pear fire, is every fruit grower's worst nightmare, as it can affect a whole orchard in no time. The bacterial infection manifests itself in black discoloration of the trees' leaves and blossoms. When an orchard is affected, grubbing up – pulling trees up by the roots – is often the only option. And it has to be done as early as possible because fire blight is so contagious.

This rapid spread of the disease makes early detection essential. There are already warning systems, but Vito and the Fruit Test Centre are developing a new detection system that would use drones to track potential outbreaks of fire blight.

Stephanie Delalieux of Vito is one of the people behind the project. "Drones give us the opportunity to monitor much larger areas than the current field tests," she says. "In time, this system would be able to cover an entire province."



Drones like this one are being developed by Vito and the Fruit Test Centre to detect disease in Limburg's orchards

Right now, she continues "everything is still in the development phase, but eventually we want to offer farmers and growers a pool of data where they can see if blight has been detected nearby. This will allow them to intervene at a very early stage."

The leaves on trees that are affected by fire blight shrivel and darken, but in the beginning, only a few leaves on the top branches change colour. How can a drone detect these small

sources of infection between the endless rows of fruit trees?

"The drones provide extremely detailed images; we can focus down to just one centimetre," explains Delalieux. "Currently we are working on a way to sort out all that information. It's not an easy task, to say the least. A black twig against a black surface is barely noticeable. That's why we are developing hyperspectral sensors that show us more than just a visible image and

use a mathematical algorithm to facilitate the searching."

An outbreak of fire blight is a disaster for farmers; a fruit farmer forced to destroy an entire orchard of trees can lose several years of income. The disease primarily affects pear and apple trees, but also many wild and garden plants.

And there's also an export risk. "The fruit region of Haspengouw in Limburg is looking at China as a potential market for pears," says Delalieux. "In China, fire blight doesn't exist, and they want to keep it that way. If we want to export pears, we need to guarantee they are free from any contamination. With this project, we will be able to define large safe zones."

Are there already drones flying around Flanders' fruit trees? Not yet, says Delalieux. "At the moment, we are working on experiments inside greenhouses, performing tests with trees we have infected ourselves. In the next phase, the drones will fly out over plantations where we know there are pockets of infection. Once our drones are operational, there will be a follow-up project to make the data that our drones have detected accessible to fruit farmers. Apart from the technical issues, we also need permission from several government agencies. You can't just go out and release your drones into the sky."

## WEEK IN INNOVATION

### "Brain scan can help predict suicide"

There is increasing evidence that suicidal tendencies can conceivably be seen through a brain scan. Professor Kees Van Heeringen, director of the Unit for Suicide Research at Ghent University, analysed recent research on suicide and brain functioning with an American colleague. Using brain scans, they noted that people with depression who have tried to kill themselves react more intensely to negative images, such as an angry face, than depressive people who have never felt suicidal. The size of certain parts of the brain also differs in those with suicidal tendencies.

### Extra dementia support announced

Flemish welfare minister Jo Vandeurzen has presented a plan to guarantee more support for people who care for those with dementia at home. Professional and non-professional carers will be able to expand their expertise. There are about 100,000 people with dementia in Flanders, of whom 65% are cared for at home. "We see that the carers are often unsure about the correct methods," said Vandeurzen. "So with all the agencies involved, we have examined ways to increase knowledge and competences in the care for people with dementia." The result is a transition plan, which will be carried out from September. It will provide an educational kit to non-professional carers, and the organisers will also expand the skills of professionals through workshops. Specialists will be available to give advice at nine expert centres, and consultation platforms will be established to detect gaps in care.

### UHasselt establishes open-innovation forum

Hasselt University (UHasselt) has founded the online community MOOI (Managing & Organizing Open Innovation), an initiative to help companies embed "open innovation" in their organisational structure. "If you want to be successful as a company, you need to join forces with different partners and innovate together," said Professor Wim Vanhaverbeke of the business-economic sciences faculty. Open innovation is a long-term strategy in which businesses work intensively with other companies and institutions to develop new products and services. "Recent research has demonstrated that products developed by several partners are much more successful," said Vanhaverbeke. AF

## Brussels to test CityDepot goods delivery system

The Brussels-Capital Region will begin a test project in September for intelligent and sustainable retail supply, similar to a system already operating in Hasselt, mobility secretary Bruno De Lille announced. The operators of Hasselt's system, CityDepot, in conjunction with Antwerp-based logistics specialists TRI-VIZOR, would also run the Brussels project. The project aims to tackle the problem known as "the difficult last mile" in retail supply. International companies use every means at their disposal to ship products quickly and efficiently, with ships carrying cargo between distribution centres in ports, and railways and container lorries transporting to inland centres.

distribution centre on the edge of town – in the case of Brussels, to the International Road Transport centre of the Port of Brussels, located at Tour & Taxis, which is accessible by water and road.

The goods are then sent to their destinations using a variety of more sustainable modes of transport, including small lorries and even specially equipped tricycles (pictured), depending on the weight and size of the shipment. City and town centres thus avoid the presence of heavy lorries, which add to exhaust levels and traffic, plus block streets or sidewalks when parked.

"Goods transport is a challenge for many towns and inner cities," said Marc Schepers, CEO of CityDepot. "Lorries and goods vehicles are



CityDepot transport would deliver goods from lorries, parked at the edge of town

points in the city, representing a large number of retail outlets, are considered difficult to supply. At the same time, 80% of all routes suitable for goods transport are being used, meaning Brussels is virtually saturated by goods traffic.

The new project would replace the current haphazard delivery conditions with the Urban Distribution Centre, to be operated by CityDepot/TRI-VIZOR after a round of competitive bidding. "The system is as simple as it is efficient," De Lille said. "By grouping the various sorts of goods at a central location outside the centre for later transportation by ecological vehicles

and bikes, we can provide a benefit for retailers and the transport industry, as well as for the people of Brussels."

By removing the burden of goods traffic, he continues, "we create more space, more breathing room for people. Less traffic means a more pleasant and more agreeable city to live in, to work in and to shop in."

The Brussels test project, which will run from September until next March, is part of the LaMiLo project (Last Mile Logistics) supported by the EU, and includes partners from other EU cities such as London, Paris and Nijmegen, the Netherlands.

Alan Hope

*"Less traffic means a more pleasant and agreeable city to live in"*

The last step, however, is often the most difficult, as lorries negotiate narrow city centre roads and hordes of traffic to deliver to the retailer at the end of the chain. The new system helps alleviate the problems associated with the last mile. Road haulers deliver to a

a burden on accessibility and on quality of life, but at the same time the goods have to find their way to the retailers. The biggest challenge is to make urban distribution sustainable and efficient."

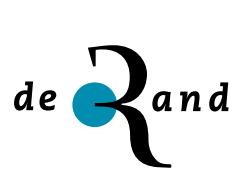
According to a study by Brussel Mobiliteit, 45% of all delivery



# YOU'RE INVITED!

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The Bulletin invites you to 10 days of concerts, events, seminars and activities that symbolise the ever growing presence of the international community in Brussels



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Opening event - The Welcome Festival at Bozar  
Exhibitions and concerts by choirs of the international community

### MAY 13

Seminar - "How to start your own business"  
Tips and information to help you clear all the hurdles

### MAY 14 - 15

European Business Summit  
European Associations Summit

### MAY 15

Association of Belgian Relocation Agencies meeting

### MAY 17

Walks in Brussels - "The best kept secrets of the city"  
With tireless city explorer Derek Blyth

### MAY 19

"Brussels meets Europe" lunch organized by the British Chamber of Commerce  
Vlerick Business School seminar - "How to become a winner in your market"  
Followed by a networking cocktail

### MAY 20

The Brussels Metropolitan Night  
The networking event that brings together the movers and shakers of the city.

### MAY 22

@Seven Party  
A celebration of the Greek Presidency

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# Inspection reports on the state of secondary schools

## “Education Mirror” identifies problems and successes of Flanders’ schools

Andy Furniere

**E**xams administered in secondary education do not sufficiently measure students’ knowledge and skills that are prioritised in the official learning plans. That’s one of the conclusions of the *Onderwijsspiegel*, or Education Mirror, the annual report on the state of Flanders’ educational system by the inspection committee of the education ministry. This problem becomes particularly clear when looking at French courses in the first two years of secondary education, said the report.

The inspection committee has, however, an overall positive impression of the educational system. The report notes that 51% of the 558 evaluated schools last year received a positive score immediately. Only 2% received a negative score, while 47% received a positive report after a second evaluation. Schools that passed a second evaluation demonstrated “the will to improve,” concludes the report.

One major problem identified by the committee is that exams don’t focus enough on evaluating the so-called *eindtermen* – the final requirements to graduate from secondary school. This limits the capacity of students to choose the right programme in higher education, adapted to their strengths and needs.



to oral interaction. In eight out of 10 schools, for instance, only French is used during French courses. According to the report, this means that the education method is increasingly focused on communication skills.

The report also finds room for improvement. In 40% of schools, for example, the methods used to teach French need to be improved. Teachers, say the committee, are too focused on theoretical learning and are not teaching practical applications of grammar and vocabulary in terms of both speaking and writing. Because of this, teachers are missing opportunities for vocal interactions in the classroom.

An efficient evaluation of knowledge and skills is also what’s missing in first-year French courses. On average, the evaluation methods of about six out of 10 schools don’t provide adequate information on whether or not students are reaching the *eindtermen*.

According to the report, the inadequate evaluation methods undermine both the teachers’ guidance and the students’ needs. The French course is furthermore often a factor in orienting students towards a certain study choice. Because of the limited evaluation, many schools lack a good basis for a solid certification and orientation of students.

Viaeene also reacted to the oft-heard complaint about the administration necessary to pass an evaluation by the inspection services. A major survey of teachers by publisher Plantyn recently showed that about seven out of 10 teachers point to administrative obligations as the most annoying aspect of their jobs.

“Schools and teachers don’t have to produce huge numbers of documents to pass our evaluation,” says Viaeene. “But thorough planning is a crucial element for the success of schools and teachers. It’s only when there is no efficient plan that administration becomes a burden.”

Viaeene points to the *leerlingvolgsysteem*, a set of tools through which teachers can regularly determine students’ progress through a series of tests. “You could see that as a potential burden, but it is actually a treasure trove of data that a school can use as an instrument to increase its efficiency.”

► [www.tinyurl.com/onderwijsspiegel](http://www.tinyurl.com/onderwijsspiegel)

requirements is and what they are precisely evaluating through their exams.

According to Flemish education expert Raf Feys of the magazine *Onderwijskrant*, the problem in fact lies with the learning plans and the *eindtermen* themselves, not with teachers and exams. “The learning plans are minimal and formulated very chaotically,” he says in an interview with the daily newspaper *Metro*. The learning plans, he says, are particularly vague on linguistic subjects.

The *Onderwijsspiegel* also reports on specific analyses, such as the evaluation of French courses in the first year of secondary school during the academic years 2011-2012 and 2012-2013. The report concludes that more than half of all schools’ departments have taken initiatives to professionalise their programmes with regard to reaching new *eindtermen* and learning plan goals.

In most schools, sufficient attention is being paid to reading and listening skills, states the report, which also confirms an increased dedication

## WEEK IN EDUCATION

### Construction starts on “School of Tomorrow”

Flemish minister-president Kris Peeters and education minister Pascal Smet have laid the first stone of two new buildings for the Sint-Eduardus Institute in Antwerp. It is the first project of the public-private partnership Schools of Tomorrow, which is carrying out renovations and construction in the education sector. The two buildings will house modern classrooms, labs, a refectory and a sports hall for the school’s 700 students. They should be ready by the start of the 2015 school year. Schools of Tomorrow is a consortium made up of the government of Flanders, BNP Paribas Fortis and AG Real Estate. The private partners finance the design, construction and maintenance of the schools for 30 years, during which time the schools pay the partners a usage fee. After 30 years, ownership transfers to the schools.

### EhB launches innovation degree

The Erasmus University College at Brussels (EhB) has launched the new Bachelor’s idea and innovation management degree, which is based on four pillars: innovation, creativity, entrepreneurship and people skills. This combination has been developed to help students fulfil the demands for three job profiles: screeners, innovation facilitators and bridge-builders. Screeners are professionals who determine trends, opportunities and needs inside and outside companies. Innovation facilitators are responsible for the development process from idea to implementation, and bridge-builders bring parties from different disciplines together to develop innovative collaborations.

### New campus for Howest students

Last week, it was announced that West Flanders University College (Howest) in Kortrijk had sold its Hiepso campus to the Kortrijk-Kuurne-Ledelege zone’s police department, which will move in by 2017. It is part of Howest’s plan to establish one integrated campus in the area of the city where it has already several buildings. The new campus should be ready by the academic year of 2017-2018. “We don’t want to establish an ivory tower, from which we look down on the city and inhabitants,” explained general director Lode De Geyter in *Het Nieuwsblad*. “We are striving towards a campus which is a meeting place for students, lecturers, alumni, companies, external partners and local inhabitants.”

## Q&A

**Patrick Vandelanotte** is with the Grip advocacy group for persons with disabilities, which recently filed a complaint with the Council of Europe against Flanders’ lack of inclusive education

### What is the problem in Flanders’ schools?

There has been no progress in the mainstreaming of children with intellectual or multiple disabilities. The figures, which indicate a high segregation rate, are among the worst in Europe. Yet inclusive education is understood as a right in the European Social Charter and the UN Disability Convention. Together with international human rights organisation MDAC [Mental Disability Advocacy Centre], Grip has filed a complaint with the Council of Europe against the Belgian state.

### But won’t the situation in Flanders improve thanks to the

### recent M decree?

The M decree could be a small step in the right direction. We are glad that schools will now be obliged to carry out “reasonable adjustments” to mainstream students into regular education, such as providing special software for students with dyslexia, or employing a sign language interpreter for deaf students. But more measures are urgently needed.

### Like what?

First of all, we’re asking for a clear policy plan for the next five years to make mainstreaming the rule and enrolment in special education the exception – instead of the reverse, which is the situation

today. This shift will require some investment, but much could be done with the current budget if it were simply invested in different ways. We also feel it is necessary to introduce a stronger enrolment right for children who can’t follow the general curriculum but need an adjusted curriculum in regular education. This would strengthen the legal position of parents of special needs children.

### When do you expect the Council of Europe to issue its ruling?

The decision-making process will probably take about three years. The verdict cannot result in binding penalties, but it could be a symbolic disgrace. We also expect



the responsible UN committee to demand a clarification of the situation in Flanders during an upcoming meeting in September.

► [www.gripvzw.be](http://www.gripvzw.be)

WEEK IN  
ACTIVITIES

## Iris Festival

The Brussels Capital Region celebrates its 25th anniversary with a special edition of this annual city-wide party. Free concerts on the Paleizenplein, a European village, Kids Zone with creative workshops, street theatre and more. Institutions on the Kunstberg will be open with special programmes and performances. **10 & 11 May, across Brussels city centre, free**

► <http://irisfeest.be>

## Food Truck Festival

Food trucks are the hip new way to have a culinary experience that's equal parts grassroots and gourmet. Organised with the Iris Festival, this gathering of 40 food trucks from the Benelux and France is the first of its kind in Belgium. **9-11 May, Keizerinlaan, Brussels**

► [www.brusselsfoodtruckfestival.be](http://www.brusselsfoodtruckfestival.be)

Beervelde  
Garden Days

Held on the grounds of a castle in East Flanders, Beervelde is the oldest garden show in Belgium. The theme for the spring edition is Brazil. Kids can take part in a gardening contest. Also: cooking demos, flower arranging and even llamas. **9-11 May, 10.00-18.00, Park van Beervelde, Beervelde-Dorp 75, €10**

► [www.parkvanbeervelde.be](http://www.parkvanbeervelde.be)

## Run Across Bruges

A 15-kilometre run through the streets of Bruges. There's also a 5km fun run and a 1km kids' run. Register until 9 May at the Bruges Running Centre or on the day of the race on the campus of Ter Groene Poort (Spoorwegstraat). **11 May, €7-€30**

► [www.sport.be/runningtour/2014/nl](http://www.sport.be/runningtour/2014/nl)

Koekelberg  
Spring Festival

Neighbourhood festival in the Elisabeth Park at the foot of Koekelberg Basilica with different activities each day. The weekend kicks off with fireworks on Friday night. Saturday evening: buffet, music and dancing. Sunday is the free family festival with barbecue, children's entertainment, pony rides and more. **9-11 May, buffet and party €37.50**

► [www.koekelberg.be](http://www.koekelberg.be)

## Thai Festival

Come experience a bit of Thailand right here in Flanders. Thai massage, Thai boxing, traditional dances, live music and delicious Thai food. **10 May, 16.00, Stadsfeestzaal, Demervallei 14, Aarschot, €10**

► [www.thaiunlimited.eu](http://www.thaiunlimited.eu)

# Good friends make good neighbours

**Day of street parties should unite communities and create lasting bonds**

**Kelly Hendricks**

You don't have to be a sociologist to see it: We live in a society where initiating relationships with others has never been so complicated.

"We as a society have become naturally more withdrawn over time, indifferent to even those who live next door," explains Serge Vanderheyden, president of the non-profit Immeubles en fête, which is organising Dag Van de Buren, or Neighbours' Day. "What's more, our current social structure based on anonymity often leads to mistrust and suspicion of others."

To counteract such trends of isolation and exclusion, Belgium's first Neighbours' Day was launched in Brussels in 2003. The event was based on an idea developed by the Parisian Atanase Périfan in 1990, who organised a number of "friendship challenges" in Paris. These involved anything from organising Christmas dinners for those with no family to carpooling and community day-care. The first "apartment parties" followed in 1999, and arrived here four years later.

Since its launch, Neighbours' Day has flourished: Last year, more than 550,000 participants met in neighbourhoods across the country to strengthen community ties. For Vanderheyden, this growing success shows the need for even more neighbourhood parties in our society.

"Officialising neighbourhood meet-ups seems to wash away all doubt about participating," he explains. "It's that 'everybody's doing it' factor;



neighbours feel part of a nationwide movement."

Périfan adds: "People today need a pretext in order for things which may seem natural to work." In this way, the two agree that Neighbours' Day exists because people, tired of being anonymous, "want to learn how to live together again."

As Neighbours' Day's partner support grows, Vanderheyden notes a change in how private partners are contributing: "Instead of using the event as a marketing tool, they are recognising its community value and investing in the project."

Property agency Immoweb will, for example, send food trucks to send to a lucky few neighbourhood parties. The largest community investor is, however, the coffee brand Douwe Egberts, which is donating up to €2,000 to 50 neighbourhood initiatives. Participants should visit the Douwe Egberts website and

propose a project that would benefit their neighbourhood.

"The idea has really taken off," says Vanderheyden. "Thousands of propositions pop up daily, everything from planting flowers to holding a pétanque tournament in the street. "Obviously, one event is not enough to bring a neighbourhood together,"

► [www.lafetedesvoisins.be](http://www.lafetedesvoisins.be)

## SOME MEET-UP IDEAS

The idea of a **buffet** dates back to the very first Neighbours' Day, with every neighbour cooking something special for others to discover. Learn about different cooking traditions and get to know the cook behind the dish.

Why not work with neighbours and the local commune to **close your street** and have a party? You could rent a bouncy castle for the kids and hold a pétanque tournament.

Alternatively, those living in an apartment complex without a street available could plan a **floor-by-floor apartment party**. Drinks on the ground floor, hors d'oeuvres on the first floor, main course on the second floor and dessert on the third!

For more ideas or to find activities in your neighbourhood, visit the website.

## BITE

## World Fair Trade Day

Oxfam, the worldwide development organisation famous for its efforts to find solutions to poverty and improve the working conditions of farmers and labourers in the developing world, is especially

active this time of year in Flanders and Brussels. In a continued effort to encourage consumers to opt for fair trade products, Oxfam is gearing up for World Fair Trade Day, which this year falls on 10 May.

Oxfam put out a call for people across the region to come up with ways to celebrate World Fair Trade Day and submit them via

the website. Schools, companies, neighbourhoods and individuals, too, responded *en masse*.

Bpost, for example, has organised a fair trade lunch for 1,300 of its employees.

The City of Hasselt set up a fair trade cooking competition between its different departments. Triodos Bank will hold a fair trade breakfast quiz at its headquarters in Brussels.

Public events include the Zuid Poll, an election in Leuven and other cities on the day, inviting people to cast their vote to put fair trade in the South on the permanent political agenda. There

are numerous fair trade picnics going on the same weekend, most notably in Bruges, where the city has teamed up with Oxfam World Shop to lay on a family-friendly lunch in Sebrechts Park.

Ghent's Oxfam World Shop, meanwhile, has plans for a pop-up coffee bar, complete with snacks, live music, chocolate tastings and a talk over tea with Andrés González Aguilera of Paraguayan sugar cane co-operative Manduvirá.

There are thousands of fair trade events going on across Flanders and Brussels. Have a look at the website to find one near you, or take your pick of our suggestions:

## GHENT

**Pop-up Koffiebar:** Chocolate tastings, tea with Paraguayan Andrés of the Manduvirá collective, an intimate acoustic concert by Koot'n Kazan and an exchange shop. Bring an old book, piece of jewellery, decor, etc, to exchange for an item in the shop.

**10 May, 12.00-20.00 at Oxfam Wereldwinkel, Lammerstraat 16**

**ZOERSEL (Antwerp province)**  
**World Fair Trade Day:** Eat your fill of pancakes and take part in the Zuid Poll

**10 May 10.00-17.00 at Oxfam Wereldwinkel, Handelslei 47**

## BRUGES

**Fairtrade Picknick:** Enjoy a range of tasty fair trade products for just €6 (free for kids under 10)

**10 May, 11.30-14.00 at Sebrechts Park**

## ASSENEDE (East Flanders)

**Bio Eco Markt:** Market offering local, organic and artisanal products, from farm-fresh dairy (ice cream, buttermilk, chocolate mousse) to honey and beer, plus a Mother's Day Breakfast buffet filled with fair trade and local products

**11 May 10.00-17.00 at Ter Walle, Stroomstraat 8**

► [www.fairtradeday.be](http://www.fairtradeday.be)

# Ypres' first city brewery

The city of Ypres finally has its own brew with the launch of the blonde Kazematten

Alan Hope

The city of Ypres sits in the middle of one of Flanders' most productive brewing areas, in a corner of West Flanders famous for hop-growing, red-brown ales and the coveted Westvleteren, one of the world's best beers. Yet the city has lacked one thing over the last couple of centuries: a brewery it could call its own. That's now changed, thanks to a team that includes some of the region's foremost brewing families. Together they've launched the Kazematten brewery, inside the very 17th century fortifications of the city. *Kazematten* is Dutch for casements, a fortified gun emplacement.

Ypres' Houten Paard casements were constructed around 1680 by the great French military architect Sébastien Le Prestre de Vauban, fortifications engineer to Louis XIV. Vauban also upgraded the fortifications of cities such as Calais, Lille, Luxembourg and Maastricht. Two years before, Ypres had been invaded by Louis and remained under French rule until 1697, though it was besieged and overrun again in 1794.

Vauban included casements in most of the fortifications around Ypres, for various purposes. Two were fitted



with ovens and served as the bakery for the garrison; others were used for storage or as workshops. One now houses a small museum. During the First World War, British troops in Ypres used the casements as mess accommodation for officers, as well as a command post and a field hospital, the whole known by the soldiers ironically as Hotel Ramparts.

The new Kazematten brewery is installed there now, and the name of the new beer, *Wipers Times*, also comes from the First World War. "Wipers" was the British Soldiers' pronunciation of the name of the city of Ypres as it appeared on maps. *The Wipers Times* was a satirical newspaper they printed in the office in one of the casements of Hotel Ramparts, with an old printing press they found.

The paper was a lampoon of the situation the men found themselves in, with fake advertisements offering the front-line and No Man's Land for sale, poetry, in-jokes, including pot-shots at officers (who are not named but would have been easily identifiable), and adverts – genuine ones in this case – for local brothels.

*Wipers Times* was chosen as the name of the new beer as a tribute to the PBI – the soldiers' own abbreviation for themselves,



© Courtesy Brouwerij Kazematten

standing for Poor Bloody Infantry. The blond beer of 6.5% alcohol is top-fermented and brewed using four grains and one locally grown hop. It's finished with four herbs, including the medicinal herb known as Blessed Thistle.

Kazematten will also take over the brewing of the Grotten beers previously produced by Sint-Bernardus in Watou. The Grotten Santé was created by Pierre Celis, the doyen of Belgian brewers, who revived the recipe for wheat beer

historically brewed in and around his hometown of Hoegaarden in Flemish Brabant. The beer is an experiment in finding out what happens to the flavour when it is stored at a low temperature over a long period, conditions the casement brewery suits perfectly. "Pierre's dream is becoming a reality," said Marco Passarella, marketing manager for Sint-Bernardus. Another four varieties will be added to the Grottenbier range later.

The new brewery has a capacity of 750 hectolitres, and it is expected, Passarella said, to brew daily. The entire brewing, maturation and kegging process takes place in the casements. However for reasons of space, bottling will be done at Sint-Bernardus.

The new brewery (like Sint-Bernardus) also caters to visitors, with tours lasting 60 or 90 minutes on reservation for groups of 15 or more.

► [www.kazematten.be](http://www.kazematten.be)

## Brussels art pop-up store focuses on 100% local talent

For the better part of May, the old Solvay building in the Elsene district of Brussels will be transformed into a pop-up shop showcasing some of the country's most promising talents, with exhibitions, concerts, movies and more.

The store-wide focus will be on a group of up-and-coming creative minds across eight disciplines, all of them handpicked by some of Flanders' biggest artistic talents, among them fashion designer Tim Van Steenbergen and musician Mauro Pawlowski.

First organised in 2012, the National Pop-Up Store idea came after Adeline d'Ursel and Alexandre Moens' research into the challenges for cultural entrepreneurs while working for consulting firm Kurt Salmon. In their study, the two concluded that the local creative sector lacked communication and branding skills. "The study showed that Belgium had a great creative scene that continued to grow despite the crisis," d'Ursel says. "But being creative doesn't equal being entrepreneurial, a crucial skill to develop your business."

That insight was the impetus for the first National Pop-Up Store. The two united 65 artists for a temporary event that would attract 3,000 visitors in 10 days. The founders' choice for the pop-up format proved a cunning one. "The fact that it was a pop-up store with limited duration convinced people to come over," says d'Ursel.

Not long after the first edition, the organisers' mailboxes were flooded with invitations from abroad. While it was impossible to accept every invitation both logically and financially, d'Ursel and Moens did take their concept to China last year for the Industry Festival in Shanghai, where there was also a



Author Maud Vanhauwaert, one of the artists represented in the National Pop-Up Store in Brussels

Belgian pavilion. "It was a great experience where our pop-up store drew lots of attention," d'Ursel says.

While the concept has remained largely the same, the scope

has drastically expanded. "The number of participating artists has almost doubled and since we've changed locations, we now have three times as much space," says d'Ursel. The new location at the former Solvay buildings in Brussels also includes parking space, a garden and a cinema. "Since the building will be razed in the near future, we were given the freedom to customise certain areas for our pop-up store," she says.

The success of the first National Pop-Up Store also helped the organisers convince big names in the local creative scene to participate in this edition. They opted for eight "ambassadors", among them Van Steenbergen and Pawlowski, as well as writer Saskia De Coster and director Fien Troch. "Every one of those picked a couple of names from their sector, with an impressive list of Belgian creativity as a result."

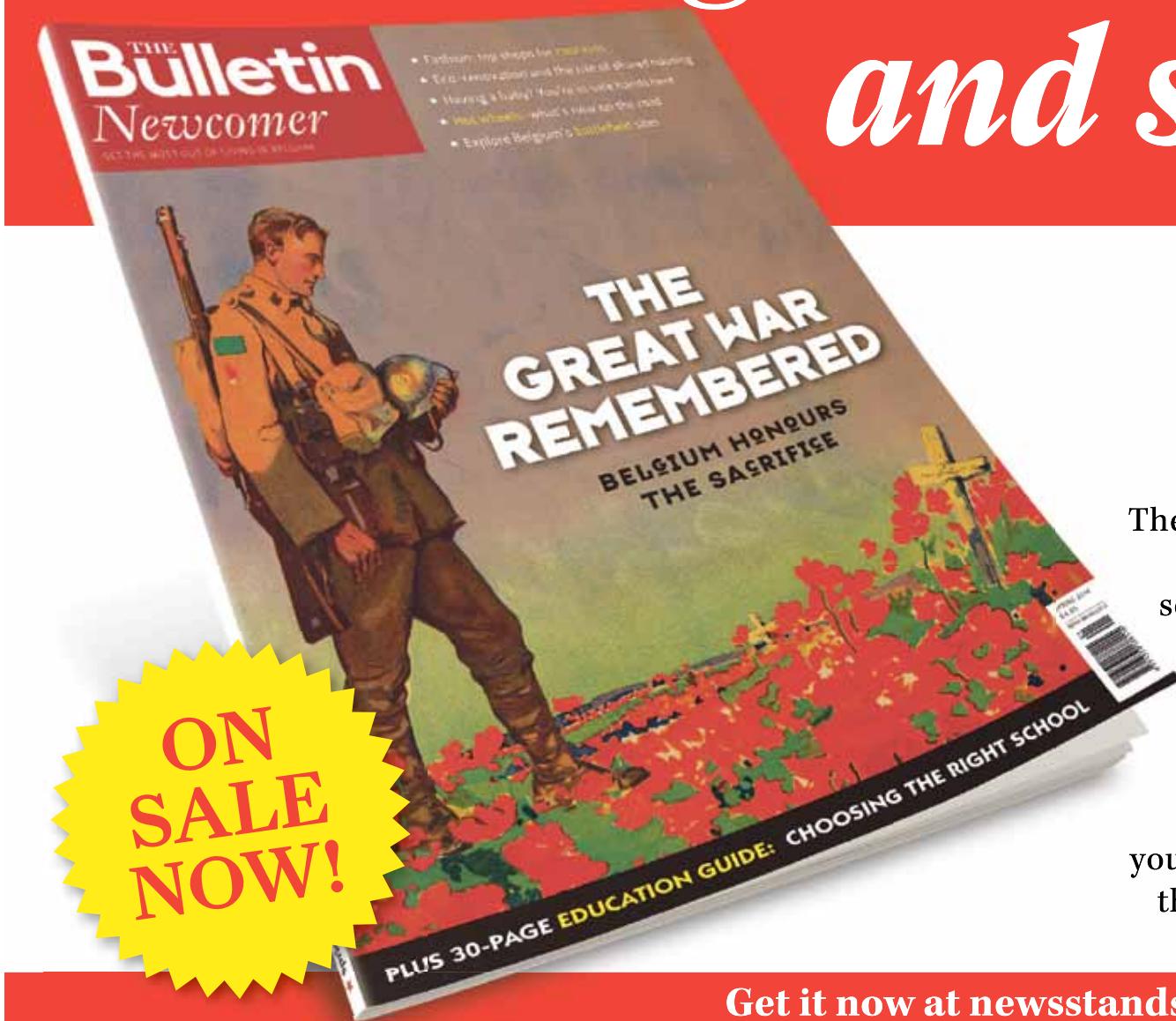
And while some disciplines were easier to showcase than others, the organisers tried to incorporate all of them in the event. "The first time, there wasn't much room for design since visual arts took up nearly all the space," d'Ursel remembers.

"For this year's opening show, we'll have mannequins dancing on a catwalk in the middle of an art gallery. The show will be videotaped from several angles and streamed throughout the night. And at the pop-up restaurant, Michelin-starred chef Maxime Collard will present his food as artworks with description tags – just like in a museum." **Katrien Lindemans**

9-25 May

National Pop-Up Store  
Prins Albertstraat 44, Brussels  
► [www.nationalstore.be](http://www.nationalstore.be)

# Latest guide to life and schools



The Bulletin Newcomer is the new-look definitive magazine on settling in Belgium, with an extra 30-page Education Guide. Mixing essential practical information with lifestyle features on property, having a baby and top fashion tips for your kids, it's your guide to making the most out of living in Belgium.

Get it now at newsstands or at [www.thebulletin.be](http://www.thebulletin.be)

The advertisement features a man in a business suit sitting in a dark-colored business class seat on an airplane. He is holding a glass of red wine and looking out of the window. The background shows the interior of the aircraft. The Brussels Airlines logo, a red stylized 'B', is in the top left corner. The word 'BUSINESS' is written next to it. In the top right, the text 'Better than the real thing' is displayed. In the bottom right, the text 'Indulge in the best wine cellar on board' is followed by the website 'brusselsairlines.com/experience'. The Brussels Airlines logo is also in the bottom right. The bottom of the advertisement features the text 'brussels airlines' next to the red 'B' logo, and 'A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER' with a small gold star icon.

# Thinking with the heart

**Jan Fabre's new exhibition follows a fruitful dialogue with an acclaimed Italian scientist**

Tom Peeters

The human body has always been of major interest to Flemish artist Jan Fabre, together with his lifelong quest for beauty and a fascination with insects. All these concerns have now found their way to the brain – according to the artist, our sexiest organ – at an intriguing exhibition of new work.

**O**f course, Jan Fabre answers in the affirmative to the question that makes up the title of the exhibition at the Daniel Templon Gallery in Brussels: Do we feel with our brain and think with our heart? "My whole work is precisely about that!"

Researching and questioning the brain is but an "organic" development in Fabre's career as a theatre director and a visual artist, he explains. "I researched the skin, the skeleton, the organs and the bodily fluids. It's not a surprise my next step would be the brain." He arrived here five years ago, pushed by a fruitful meeting with the Italian neurophysiologist Giacomo Rizzolatti, who received worldwide acclaim after discovering mirror neurons, the scientific explanation for empathy.

The two met at an international congress on the brain in Ostend, where Fabre (*pictured below*) was invited to give a lecture about his work. They hit it off and decided to work together.

In a playful video, the result of their

collaboration, they discuss what connects and what distinguishes them. "The link between a good scientist and a good artist is that they both dare to jump into the unknown," Fabre tells me. "A scientist who does not take risks is nothing more than an accountant. No risks, no poetry!"

This said, the disappointment you sometimes notice in Fabre's eyes when he speaks to Rizzolatti is real, like when the scientist stipulates that science "just like art" can only speak of things that are real.

I mention that mirror neurons were only discovered by chance – when the researchers in Rizzolatti's laboratory in Parma saw a monkey's neurons respond to someone picking up a banana. But Fabre keeps emphasising the importance of instinct and intuition, and the intelligence needed to translate and research these.

His fascination is sincere, not least with possible future steps in brain research. Today scientists can make scans of our brain, using this information for research. But will we ever be able to *feel* what happens in our brains? Can the abstraction of registering be replaced by really feeling it?

Rizzolatti's answer is a very clear "no". But Fabre is not convinced.

"I did some experiments with actors and dancers," he says, "and I noticed that, through repetition, you can register and evoke a certain state, emotion or pain with a specific colour. So for me this path isn't totally blocked."

Entering the field where the imagination of the artist surpasses that of the scientist, visitors cannot ignore the Carrara marble brain sculptures at Fabre's first solo exhibition in a Brussels art gallery. There's a giant brain with a large corkscrew planted in it. The smaller ones are decorated with fruit and peanuts, referring to Rizzolatti's experiments with monkeys, but also with insects and scissors, addressing Fabre's own back catalogue and personal life. One sculpted brain even looks like a toaster. "Well, my brain easily boils over," Fabre says, winking.



What's on your mind? Jan Fabre's insects meet his brains in gallery exhibition

It's not the first time Fabre has worked with Carrara marble. Three years ago his *Pieta*, a group of five marble sculptures and a very personal interpretation of Michelangelo's masterpiece, caused controversy at the Venice Biennale. And last year he exhibited marble effigies at the Paris headquarters of the Daniel Templon Gallery. Carrara is special in that it's the world's whitest marble. Fabre's reason for using it is, again, very personal: "My thoughts about the

human brain are related to the idea of a post-mortem phase of life. Twice in my life I was in a coma and the only thing I can remember is the white, milky tunnel I entered. This white marble reminds me of that. For me it's like breast milk. It represents something pure and virginal."

**Until 31 May**

Also, his marble gisants – reminiscent of the ancient cemetery memorials displaying a sculpted body on a coffin – were associations with the same white, unknown path. "Let's call it the bridge between life and death," Fabre says. Connecting the personal with the universal, his gisants were a homage to his parents, art and science.

"My parents really resembled two scientists I was very much inspired by – the biologist and zoologist Konrad Zacharias Lorenz and the neuro-anatomist Elizabeth Caroline Crosby. After more than 30 years, my biggest heroes in the visual arts are scientists and my parents." But why has science always been so important to him? "I have always been an artist who enjoyed 'looking over the wall,'" he explains. "I am not a multimedia artist, nor a hybrid artist, I really consider myself a consilience artist."

In other words, as an artist connecting the dots between art and science, between the physical and the spiritual world, between the consciousness and the subconsciousness, between the past and the future.

"When I was young, my father and my uncle gave me these books about insects. They got me fascinated by the behaviour of insects – their colours, their symbolic value. You know, in the late 1970s, we wanted to travel to Venus and Mars, but we were living here among creatures we hardly knew. For me this secret world was a way to look over the wall and wonder myself: 'What's happening there?'"

This voyage of discovery has now led him to the human brain. Unlike Rizzolatti, Fabre feels it has an aesthetic value, with a form, a colour, a metaphorical sense. "The brain is not only the most important part of our body, but also the sexiest," he says. "I always said: No imagination, no erection. So without a brain, neither eroticism nor beauty can exist."

**Galerie Daniel Templon**  
Veydtstraat 13a, Brussels  
► [www.danieltemplon.com](http://www.danieltemplon.com)



## MORE VISUAL ARTS THIS MONTH

### Tim Etchells: And For The Rest/Order Cannot Help You Now

British visual and performance artist Tim Etchells is all over Brussels during this month's Kunstenfestivaldesarts. The public poster campaign *And For The Rest* gives a voice to those – mostly undocumented people and the homeless – who can't vote on 25 May, filtering provocative phrases into demands for social change. The artist also plundered the Argos archives for works

that question the way language articulates our demands for change. *And For The Rest*, until 24 May, public space Brussels; *Order Cannot Help You Now*, until 29 June, Argos, Brussels

► [www.kfd.be](http://www.kfd.be)

### Made in New York

In the coming months, the private Charles Riva Collection focusses on contemporary paintings and photos by eight American artists associated with a New York scene trying to cope with emerging (digital) technologies. A work by

Christopher Wool, the veteran of the movement, combines the principle of silk-screening with street art. The younger generation is represented by artists such as Kelley Walker, Seth Price and Josh Smith, emphasising the recycling of images or questioning the status of reproduction. *Until 15 October*, Charles Riva Collection, Brussels

► [www.charlesrivacollection.com](http://www.charlesrivacollection.com)

### Isabelle Cornaro

Talented French artist Isabelle Cornaro's first solo exhibition in

Belgium is highly recommended. She graduated as an art historian, and that resonates in her installations (*pictured*). Giving the objects she collects at flea markets a new context – arranging and structuring them in different patterns, reminiscent of certain art styles – she challenges our perception of reality, which is clearly dictated by both culture and history. *Until 3 August*, M Museum, Leuven

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



## WEEK IN ARTS &amp; CULTURE

## Rimpelrock becomes Summer Swing

Hasselt's annual Rimpelrock ("wrinkle rock") music festival, catering to the over-50s, has been renamed Summer Swing. The popular event, founded by organisers of the Pukkelpop rock festival, is now being billed less as a festival for older people and more as a family event. The festival is increasing its traditional one stage to three. Local performers already on the programme of the pop stage are Lady Linn, Zornik and Ozark Henry, who all appeal to younger as well as older audiences. The ambiance stage has more of a sound Rimpelrock festival-goers are used to, including crooners De Romeo's and Will Tura. The family stage, meanwhile, caters to the under-16s, with boy band 5th Avenue, teen singer Ian Thomas, De Bende with Mega Mindy and K3. Summer Swing takes place on 11 August.

► [www.summerswing.be](http://www.summerswing.be)

## More towns receive cultural subsidies

Thirty-nine more municipalities across Flanders have been approved for cultural funding as part of the government's Local Culture Policy (LCP). The policy encourages smaller communities to continue or to launch cultural initiatives and to strengthen their infrastructure. LCP already counted 34 towns, which brings the new total to 73.

In order to be approved for part of the nearly €95 million available, city councils must have a cultural policy and a long-term agenda that matches the needs of the community. "In terms of cultural participation, the local level is essential," said culture minister Joke Schauvliege, "and I'm pleased to see that there are always new cultural initiatives." Some communities will be able to build their first cultural centres thanks to the funding.

## Wabliet publishes 1,000th issue

Last week marked the 1,000th issue of *Wabliet*, the weekly newspaper in simple Dutch read by thousands of Dutch learners across the country. Launched nearly 30 years ago as a newspaper for those with literacy problems, *Wabliet* is read by a wide variety of people and is promoted in Dutch classes for its easy-to-read language. *Wabliet* covers local and international news, with a focus on politics, migration, the economy and the environment. *Wabliet*, which counts 45,000 readers, also publishes books for adults in straightforward Dutch and assists organisations and companies with communication techniques.

► [www.wabliet.be](http://www.wabliet.be)

## Lace: for better or worse

## Show in Bruges focuses on the fine fabric for which the city is famous

Katrien Lindemans

The city of Bruges is known for many things, but lace is one of the first that comes to mind – particularly in the minds of tourists. An exhibition on show at the city's Folklore Museum explores the different aspects of lace – from heritage to tourism to fashion. The lace show is part of *Snapshot*, a series of photography exhibitions focusing on Bruges' intangible cultural heritage. Previous editions have tackled subjects such as the local carnival, brass bands and the rivalry between Club Brugge and Cercle Brugge football clubs.

*Snapshot 9: Kantje Boord* is all about lace, as seen through the lens of Antwerp photographer Karin Borghouts. Her idea was to capture the entire history of lace in just a few pictures. "Quite a difficult task since I usually take pictures of buildings and interiors," she says. "And while I normally work with a wide-angle lens, I had to switch to a macro to capture the finesse and details of lace."

*Lace is a delicate topic*

Borghouts admits that she did not have any particular affinity for lace, but she does have memories tied to the fabric. "I remember my mother-in-law making some lacework back in the 1980s, when the craft became popular again," she says. Her inspirations for *Kantje Boord* were varied. She picked up ideas from Martine Bruggeman's book *Lace in Europe* and visited several folklore museums, including Bruges' Gruuthuse. She also watched lace being made by hand in some of the



© Karin Borghouts/Musea Brugge

city's ateliers, as well as by machines in a lingerie workshop in Calais, France.

Borghouts snapped over 1,300 pictures, 10 of which made it to the walls of the Folklore Museum.

The exhibition is titled *Kantje Boord*, a pun meaning something like "the fine line", with the Dutch words *kant* (lace) and *boord* (border). Borghouts says the title was only chosen halfway through the selection process, "but it fit the bill perfectly. Lace is a delicate topic. It's, for instance, quite difficult to differentiate between hand-made and machine-made lace."

Another duality Borghouts points

to is that black lace is worn both during mourning periods and as erotic lingerie.

The top floor of the Folklore Museum shows intricate lacework made by the Fine Arts Academy, the Lace Centre and Kant-Act, a local lace club. In addition, the exhibition also tells the story of Sophie, a young girl who lived in 1890s Bruges. Day in, day out, she made lace for the city's wealthier residents for a pittance. At

Until 19 October

## Folklore Museum

Balstraat 43, Bruges

► [www.tinyurl.com/snapshot9](http://www.tinyurl.com/snapshot9)

## MORE ON LACE AND THE FOLKLORE MUSEUM

Located in a 17th-century house, the Folklore Museum offers insights into daily life in Bruges throughout the 19th and early 20th century. Every small room has been carefully decorated, with the interiors of, for instance, a classroom, tailor shop, chocolatemaker and pharmacy. At the sugar factory, visitors can watch boiled sweets being made. And in The Black Cat bar, they can actually sit down and have a drink. A real black cat even roams around the museum garden.

► [www.tinyurl.com/folkremuseum](http://www.tinyurl.com/folkremuseum)

You can also visit the *100% Ambachtelijk* (100% Artisanal) exhibition at the Gruuthuse Museum. Not only is this city palace of the Gruuthuse lords a stunning place to visit, it also brings together a collection of lacework from the 16th and 17th centuries. The exhibition runs until 29 June, after which the museum will close for renovations.

► [www.tinyurl.com/gruuthuse](http://www.tinyurl.com/gruuthuse)

## Keeping Toots Thielemans' legacy alive in Europe

Toots Thielemans, the jazz giant from Brussels' Marollen district, has conquered the world with his harmonica. But now that he's retired, it's time to introduce his musical sons and daughters to the rest of Europe.

Throughout the month of May, the Austrian capital Vienna is hosting five Sons of Toots evenings featuring Flemish and Brussels jazz with both household names and up-and-coming voices performing at the Vienna jazz club Porgy & Bess.

The artists on the bill offer a mix of talent, perseverance and originality, with personal styles that seem to point to a natural dislike of borders. Antwerp graphic novelist and painter Philip Paquet is an excellent example. A big jazz fan, he wrote and illustrated a graphic novel about – and in collaboration with – the Oscar-winning Brussels Jazz Orchestra (BJO).

Those black-and-white (and sometimes red) illustrations, as well as selected drawings from his other books, are on view in a concurrent exhibition at the Porgy & Bess club. Paquet's raven black comic novels tell the bittersweet story of jazz by zooming in on the lives of Louis "Satchmo" Armstrong, Charlie Parker and Miles Davis.

Working with BJO and trumpeter Bert Joris,



© www.jacky.be/page

Paquet noticed how few words jazz musicians had to exchange to get the score right. The same Joris, who won the annual Jazzmozaïek Award just last month, will close the Sons of Toots shows, while Paquet will start the series off.

On the other evenings, senior jazz performers such as guitar virtuoso Philip Catherine (pictured) and saxophonist Fabrizio Cassol, frontman of the avant-garde trio AKA Moon, will demonstrate that their music knows no boundaries.

Born in London but raised in Brussels by his

English mother and Belgian father, Catherine played from an early age with the big international names who visited the city's jazz clubs. He continues to learn his trade, he always says, and today emphasises how much younger musicians have to teach him.

In the 1990s, Cassol went on a research trip to the Central African Republic with Greek bassist Michel Hatzigeorgiou and Belgian drummer Stéphane Gall to study the rhythms of the pygmies. They went on to mix the tribal melodies of the rain forests with their Balkan-influenced sound – the birth of AKA Moon.

Sons of Toots also keeps its finger on the pulse with its selection of young Flemish jazz musicians. Saxophonist Robin Verheyen moved to New York to cross-fertilise with the local, cosmopolitan scene. His younger colleague, drummer Lander Gyselinck, has also been spending a lot of time in America's jazz capital. Finally, there's Teun Verbruggen, also a drummer, who will be performing with Too Noisy Fish in Vienna.

Tom Peeters

Porgy & Bess  
Riemergasse 11, Vienna  
► [www.flanders.at](http://www.flanders.at)

5-24 May

# The dangerous innocence of Ultima Vez Talk to the Demon

6-10 May | deSingel, Antwerp

► [www.desingel.be](http://www.desingel.be)

**C**horeographer Wim Vandekeybus has been looking back and celebrating the first 25 years of his dance company, Ultima Vez, by re-enacting various milestone productions, such as his 1987 debut *What the Body Does Not Remember*, which is still touring, just like the more recent *booty Looting*.

But there's no past without future. So, it was time for something new: *Talk to the Demon*. The familiar fear and danger are all over the choreography, which tackles "the social and public media, particularly how they manipulate and misuse children's emotions and thoughts".

The one thing that is atypical for Vandekeybus is that, unlike most of his other work, music plays no leading role here, making *Talk to the Demon* perhaps one of his most naked pieces. In the past, Vandekeybus has worked with A-list



*Spiritual Unity*, a synthesis of the last five years of Ultima Vez, was clearly a reminder of that. In *Talk to the Demon*, though it's a piece for adults, Vandekeybus says, a child is the "architect" of what is happening, and adults are just acting around it. The demon he describes is an inner demon, one we create ourselves to fight the conflicts in our head. "And the child sends out a demonic innocence, making us adults look like weirdoes or clowns."

It's this utterly instinctive and impulsive child – not limited by rules and conventions, open to and at ease with its internal demons – that Vandekeybus gives centre stage among six of his dancers, because it's only by talking to our demons and accepting them, giving the danger a place in our heads and our lives, that we will survive. "The good doesn't exist without the bad. It's a matter of balance." Tom Peeters

musicians such as David "Eugene" Edwards, Mauro Pawlowski and Roland Van Campenhout, balancing the movements of his dancers with sound.

Last year's December Dance world premiere of

## CONCERT

GET TICKETS NOW

### Milow

23 November, 20.00 | Ancienne Belgique, Brussels

► [www.abconcerts.be](http://www.abconcerts.be)

Milow has come a long way. The Flemish singer-songwriter, born Jonathan Vandenbroeck, self-released his first album in 2006. Since then he's climbed the European charts with hits like "You Don't Know" and "Ayo Technology" (the latter borrowed from American rapper 50 Cent) and, in the process, become a giant on the tour circuit. Milow's fourth album, *Silver Linings*, has just hit stores, which means another European tour through festival season and beyond. No need to panic if you don't have tickets for his performance at the long-sold-out Rock Werchter; Milow is scheduled to headline a much more comfortable concert at the AB in the autumn. **Georgio Valentino**



## FAMILY

### Zinneke Parade

10 May, 15.00 | Across Brussels | ► [www.zinneke.org](http://www.zinneke.org)

Every Zinneke Parade is an adventure two years in the making. The folks behind the artsy, homespun biennial parade keep busy in between by organising hundreds of events, from discussions to workshops and masterclasses to performances, exhibitions and installations in public space. All of these contribute in some way to the success of the following edition



## VISUAL ARTS

### Bert Prins

Until 17 May | Ludwig Trossaert Gallery, Antwerp

► [www.galerieludwigtrossaert.com](http://www.galerieludwigtrossaert.com)

There's something deliciously retro about pop art. Its stylised forms and palette of bold and bright comic-book colours transport us to the 1960s, when American painters like Andy Warhol pioneered the form in an attempt to reconcile art and everyday life. It's not just about nostalgia, however. Pop art is still a contemporary concern. Flemish painter Bert Prins, for example, has developed a style that owes much to the pop tradition while it addresses enduring modernist themes: urban life, work and leisure. Prins' third exhibition of pop-art paintings is titled in true serial style Belgian Pop-Art III and features dozens of new canvases. **GV**



## EVENT

### The Bulletin Brussels International Days

11-20 May | Across Brussels | ► [www.xpats.com/bbid](http://www.xpats.com/bbid)

The Bulletin Brussels International Days packs tons of expat-orientated business and pleasure into 10 days. The event kicks off on 11 May with a free, day-long Welcome Festival at Bozar. If you're new in town, the building itself is one of the main attractions. Not only is it an architectural jewel, conceived by Victor Horta, but it's also one of the city's leading contemporary institutions of art and culture. Get to know it. Then there are informative presentations designed with the newcomer in mind. If that's not enough, the International School of Brussels (ISB) and the International Chorale of Brussels will serenade you with special choral and symphonic performances, including a programme of Broadway favourites. Finally there's also an exhibition

of paintings and sculptures by the visual arts section of ISB. **GV**



## CONCERT

### Antwerp

**Israel Nash:** The American singer-songwriter and guitarist from Missouri brings a concert for fans of alt-country and Americana in the style of Crosby Stills Nash & Young, Ryan Adams and Jonathan Wilson, but with a twist of psychedelica and even gospel; with Flemish opening band Mad About Mountains

**8 MAY 19.30 at Trix,  
Noordersingel 28-30**

► [www.trixonline.be](http://www.trixonline.be)

## VISUAL ARTS

### Brussels

**Condroz:** Collection of works of art from various media, united around a theme of fate, choices, free will and pre-destination

**9-18 MAY at De Markten,  
Oude Graanmarkt 5**

► [www.demarkten.be](http://www.demarkten.be)

## MUSIC FESTIVALS

### Machelen-Zulte (East Flanders)

**Leiepop 2014:** Concerts by Daan, Vive La Fête, Flip Kowlier, Coely, The Happy, The Amazing Flowers, Frères Deluxe, Bonbonne Gaas and Tout Va Bien, among others

**9-10 MAY at Festivalterrein  
Leiepop, Leihoeckstraat 62**

► [www.leiepop.be](http://www.leiepop.be)

### Ypres (West Flanders)

**Rockabilly Mayday:** Get-together for fans of greasy quiffs, retro markets, old-timers, motorcycles, live Rockabilly music and plenty of food and drink

**10-11 MAY at De Klepper,  
Kanteelpad 4**

► [www.facebook.com/Rockabillymayday](http://www.facebook.com/Rockabillymayday)

## EVENT

### Overijse

**Flower Market:** It just so happens that this 34th annual market falls on Mother's Day, the perfect reason to come out and enjoy the large assortment of trees, plants, flowers and herbs on offer

**11 MAY at Markthal,  
Stationsplein 1**

► [www.overijse.be](http://www.overijse.be)

## FAMILY

### Gavere (East Flanders)

**Boerderijstraat (Farm Street):** Afternoon of free fun-filled activities for kids (ages three and up), including the chance to hold baby ducks, pet goats and donkeys, run through an obstacle course made with bales of hay and take a horse-and-buggy ride

**11 MAY 14.00-18.00 at  
Gemeentelijke Magazijn  
Gavere, Brandweerstraat 1**

► [www.gavere.be](http://www.gavere.be)

# Talking Dutch

## Take the test

Derek Blyth

I don't know about you, but I still have to make up my mind on how to vote on 25 May. The election posters have started to appear in front of municipal buildings and along rural roads, but you often don't have a clue what the different parties are proposing.

Occasionally there will be a slogan, but it might not amount to much more than a vague feel-good word like *verandering* (change) or *voortgang* (progress). It doesn't really help the voter who wants to know which party is in favour of clean pavements or safe cycle lanes or whatever it is they want to see.

But there's no need to panic. You just need to join the thousands of people who have done a *stemtest* (voting test). *Als u na dit weekend nog geen enkele onlinestemtest hebt ingevuld, behoort u stilaan tot een minderheid in Vlaanderen* – if, by the end of the weekend, you still haven't filled in an online voting test, then you are part of what is becoming a minority group in Flanders, reported *De Morgen* recently.

There are various tests you can take. You can complete *De Stem van Vlaanderen* on the VTM website (*pictured*) or *De Stemtest* on the website of *De Standaard*. (Only the latter requires no personal information from you.) About 1.5 million people have taken one of these tests.

*Doe nu de Stemtest* – do the voting test now, it says on *De Stemtest*'s Facebook page. *En ontdek meteen welke partijen het dichtste bij u staan* – and find out straight away which parties are right for you.

How could I resist? So off we go. On *De Standaard*'s version, I have a choice between Flemish, Brussels, National or European elections. I click on the final one, *Europese verkiezingen*. First question: *De Europese Unie mag niet verder uitbreiden* – the European Union should not expand any further. Three options – *eens* – agree; *oneens* – disagree; *geen mening* – no opinion.

Well, that's a tricky one to start with. I'm not sure what to say. Maybe yes. But then again maybe no. But that's not a problem, because there is another button to press. *Lees*



*de argumenten pro en contra* – read the arguments for and against.

So I click that. Oh, boy, there is a lot to say on both sides. But one point sounds sensible – *De uitbreiding van de Europese Unie is een motor voor de verspreiding van vrede, democratie en mensenrechten* – The expansion of the European Union is a way of spreading peace, democracy and human rights. You can't argue with that. So I hit *oneens*.

Now I am hooked. And I am not the only one. *Het is ongelooflijk, zelfs om drie uur 's nachts zitten honderden mensen de test in te vullen* – it's incredible; even at 3.00, hundreds of people are filling in the test, said Professor Stefaan Walgraeve of Antwerp University, who helped to create *De Stem van Vlaanderen*.

So what does it mean? That Flemings have no idea who to vote for? *Verschillende factoren dragen bij tot onze drang om de stemtest in te vullen* – various factors have played a part in our urge to fill in the voting test, said Walgraeve. *Elke dag worden we gebombardeerd met politiek nieuws. Kranten, tv, radio, sociale media: het houdt niet op* – Every day we are bombarded with political news. Newspapers, TV, radio, social media: It never stops. *Zo'n stemtest biedt het voordeel van de duidelijkheid* – The voting test offers the benefit of clarity. OK. But it's also fun, like clicking "Like" on Facebook.

## VOICES OF FLANDERS TODAY

**Rachel Hosie** @rachel\_hosie

Chips, anyone? I may have written a blog about the best frites in #Brussels... <http://handbagsandcupcakes.blogspot.be/2014/05/maison-antoine-best-frites-in-brussels.html> ... pic.twitter.com/FyuNZ8qYVV

**Thomas Mucha** @thomaswmucha

An awesome @GlobalPost franchise rolls on. 28 reasons you should move to #Brussels right now. <http://glpo.st/S5IZoV> pic.twitter.com/iYJBBLeyVW

**EtienneMarc** @EtienneMarc

"No European capital has been quite so ruined by motor vehicles as #Brussels" <http://www.theatlanticcities.com/commute/2014/01/europes-most-congested-city-contemplates-going-car-free/8027/> ... ##mobility

**jannes van loon** @jannesvanloon

This is #belgium: "attention, the train departs from another station" ... #belgiansolutions pic.twitter.com/v4n0R6cgzT

**Sandra Geluykens** @sgeluykens

"@Jody\_Robbins: I had no idea military cemeteries could be so peaceful and pretty. @VisitFlanders #flanders #Belgium pic.twitter.com/0ALDZwnYvw"

 In response to: UHasselt establishes forum for open-innovation managers

**Cyril Tirache:** Beyond organisational adjustments, the main issue is to change the mentalities. It is required to convince the staff that what is coming from outside the company can be as good as, and sometimes better than, what is internally produced. Taking advantage of the MOOI Forum to exchange experiences and best practices on the best way to foster such a cultural change might be very useful.

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# Poll

The government has allocated €60 million to help companies pay emission fees and encourage them to stay in the region. What do you think?

a. If it prevents them moving to countries with lax environmental regulations, it's worth it for the local economy

17%

b. Aid might be needed, but it should be limited in time to force companies to decrease their emissions

50%

c. Companies should take care of their own emissions fees without burdening the taxpayer, regardless if they end up leaving

33%

The government of Flanders announced that it would contribute up to €60 million a year to companies faced with heavy charges for polluting emissions, in an effort to prevent them from taking their business to some foreign territory with less onerous requirements.

Exactly half of you thought this was fair, as long as it was limited in time. Unfortunately, the lesson of history is that the minute the government tries to stop the subsidy, we're back at square one, facing the same threat.

A two to one majority of the rest of

you were for calling their bluff. The principle is that the polluter should pay, not the taxpayer. If companies want to up sticks and go somewhere else, let them. Of course you, unlike minister-president Kris Peeters, will not then be blamed for all that unemployment if they do.

## THE LAST WORD

### Phone physicians

"An anonymous telephone call can't replace the relationship of trust between a doctor and a patient. In my view, Test-Aankoop is overstepping its authority." Maaike Van Overloop, chair of the doctors' association Domus Medica, on Test-Aankoop's new service offering a health advice hotline

### Career change

"I never fought for the job of CEO. I would be just as happy slicing ham in a butcher's." Sophie Dutordoir, then CEO of Electrabel, in an interview last year. Last week she opened her own delicatessen in Overijse

### EU elegance

"Be honest, I haven't had such a bad career for a grey mouse. Imagine if I'd been outspoken and flamboyant."

Herman Van Rompuy, whose term as president of the European Council ends in December, in reference to a memorable outburst by British MEP Nigel Farage in 2010

### Red vs Orange

"We already have 436 Belgians booked to stay in our campsite during the groups round. There are only 200 bookings for the Dutch campsite."

The director of De Oranje Camping confirms that fans of the Red Devils are far more visible in World Cup enthusiasm than their Dutch counterparts

### Next week's question:

The government has approved a request to allow shops in the centre of Antwerp to open on Sunday. Are you in favour?

Go to the Flanders Today website to let us know! Just click on VOTE at [www.flanderstoday.eu](http://www.flanderstoday.eu)

