Kidnapping raises new security fears in the Antwerp industry

A diamond dealer and his family were held hostage for 18 hours last weekend in their home in Wilrijk, outside Antwerp, by three men who made off with a suspected €4.5 million in stones. The two men, who were reported as speaking Italian, posed as policemen to gain entry to the home of Pankaj Malani, an Indian who heads the Antwerp diamond trading firm Karo Impex. After resisting for hours, he was forced to go to his office while the gang stood guard over his family – a so-called “tiger kidnapping”. The robbery took place on Friday, 5 March, but only became known after news leaked out on the website of Flanders Today.

This week, the once-ailing city is opening Flanders’ largest fully integrated shopping mall in the heart of its centre

“I

In 2006, the new version of the Belgian edition of the board game Monopoly downgraded the price of the shopping street Lange Steenstraat in Kortrijk. Although it wasn’t the impetus for the re-vamping of the city’s centre, it was a sure sign of its decline. But Kortrijk was already busy with plans for a new mall to give the shopping district a much-needed boost. In 2007, construction started on a project that would change the city’s commercial heart completely. Expected to make the area vibrant once again and bring people back to the centre of Kortrijk, it opens on Thursday, 11 March, with the name K in Kortrijk. At 34,000 square meters, K in Kortrijk is bigger than the floor space of all the existing shops in the commercial centre put together. The planning and construction of this shopping giant took seven years. Back in the 1960s and ’70s, Kortrijk was the most popular shopping city in western Flanders. In the 1980s, people became more mobile and were attracted by other shopping paradises, such as Lille and Brussels. By the year 2000, Kortrijk suffered from as much as one in three empty commercial spaces in its shopping district. Something had to be done, and that’s why Stadstwikkelaarsbedrijf Kortrijk, or City Development Kortrijk (SOK) was founded. With the aid of a master plan, Kortrijk bought a few empty houses in the centre and started renovating the neighbourhood. Through a project promoting living above shops, SOK hoped to avoid the further deterioration of the shopping streets. The city also purchased the empty primary school Onze-Lieve-Vrouw van Bijstand in the Wijngaardstraat and had its eye on the secondary OLV Bijstand school across the street. The school was no longer used but owned and inhabited by the nuns of Heilig Hart. In 2003, SOK and the nuns agreed on a plan to launch a study to redefine the purpose of the property. The site got a lot of attention from possible project developers, and SOK started a competition to gather the best ideas. It’s for Kortrijk...
News in brief

Unions representing the Flemish public transport authority De Lijn have proposed a savings plan aimed at cutting €30 million in costs, in an effort to avoid redundancies. The plan includes cutting services early in the morning and late at night on lines where few people travel. They also propose adapting weekend timetables and cutting the distances empty buses have to travel at the start and end of service. In addition, longer-term projects like marketing campaigns will be reduced or postponed.

A Senegalese prostitute who is thought to have been a Belgian cyclist Frank Vandenbergoucke last year on the night he died has been cleared of any involvement in his death. The woman, who has already spent five months in custody in Senegal, will be prosecuted for the theft of his mobile phone. Vandenbergoucke died of a double pulmonary embolism, a local coroner ruled. However, at the family’s request, no toxicological analysis was ever done and no explanation offered for needle marks on his left arm.

Users of the public transport system in Brussels can now check bus and tram routes, as well as timetables, on Google Maps, according to a new agreement between the transport authority MIVB and Google. Simply zoom in on Map or Satellite mode, and bus, metro and tram stops appear. Click on the icon to find out when the next two services are due to arrive or for more information on routes and itineraries. The new service, called Google Transit, is only available for Brussels but talks with the Flemish authority De Lijn are expected to follow.

A British philosopher who taught at the Catholic University of Leuven (KUL) has left his post after a university commission found ‘an extremely serious problem’ surrounding some 30 published journal articles. Professor Martin Stone, an authority on the transition from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance, is alleged to have committed plagiarism. The KUL has written to the editors of the journals concerned alerting them to the investigation. One of the complaints against Stone came from a member of the Finnish parliament, who recognised entire passages in one of Stone’s articles from his own doctoral thesis.

Four people were injured last week when a digger breached a gas pipeline in the industrial zone next to the village of Sperire-Halkin in West Flanders. Flames reached 20 metres high, but the fire service had the blaze rapidly under control. One man was seriously injured and transported to the military hospital at Neder-Over-Hembeek.

The national rain authority NMBS last year paid €69 million to external consultants, an increase of almost €27m on 2008. The costs of infrastructure agency Infrabel went up from nearly €14m to more than €23m. The majority of consultancy spending goes on strategic projects and information infrastructure. According to Infrabel spokesperson Frédéric Petit, a large part of the agency’s spending last year went towards the project to implement the automatic braking system ECTS. It was exactly the failure to implement this system which led to the Bavaria rail crash that killed 18 people last month.
"The school doesn’t know, and they don’t need to know," says mother-of-three Sandra Carlier of her difficult financial situation. “I pay the rent as regular as clockwork, but other bills have to wait until the money is there. Sometimes the children come home and tell me, ‘Mama you haven’t paid the school bill’. They ought to leave my children out of it.”

"Poverty has an effect on most aspects of a child’s life, from clothing to diet. Schools are often ready to step in to help — for example, by contributing to the cost of extra-mural activities so that all children can take part. But schools report that parents are often reluctant to admit to having problems. Teachers are advised to look out for warning signs such as increased absenteeism."

"Robberies of diamond dealers are as good as non-existent in Antwerp," said a spokesman for Van Campenhout. Just last week, the city agreed to stop all postal and courier services into the diamond quarter from 22 March, following a suspect envelope which showed signs of contact with explosives. Meanwhile, two men who tried to carry out a tiger kidnapping in Ghent last summer, which led to the murder of a 32-year-old Turkish diamond trader, were arrested and charged. The dealer was shot in the back while grabbing with the two robbers, while his wife was wounded in the arm. The robbers, both from Brussels, escaped with about €2,000.

Two men shot a Brussels woman dead last Friday, 5 March, as they tried to hijack her car following a failed robbery. The men tried to hold up a jeweller’s shop in the Brussels commune of Ukkel with a fake gun. When the jeweller produced a real gun in self defence, they took it from him and ran off. The gun was later used to kill Frédérique Lévêque, who took too long to give up her car keys. Both men have been arrested; neither has a prior criminal record. One of them was reported to work as a security agent for the Brussels public transport authority MIVB.

Police searched 28 addresses across the country last week, including in Brussels and Antwerp, in a raid on suspected activities of the Kurdistan Workers’ Party (PKK). Eighteen people were detained; Twelve were later released. The others were accused of links to the PKK, which figures on lists of banned terror organisations compiled by the UN, the EU, NATO and the US. The PKK hit the headlines in 1998, when founder Abdullah Öcalan was snatched by Turkish agents in Kenya and taken to Turkey for trial. He was sentenced to death, but the sentence was later commuted to life in prison. Claims by Kurdish demonstrators that the Belgian police were acting on instructions from Ankara were categorically denied, as was a claim that Turkish state security agents were present at the raids. However, a spokesman for the federal police said there may have been Belgian officers of Turkish origin present. Police now allege that the PKK, or its successor Kongra-Gel, is using intimidation to extort funds from Turkish businesses based in Belgium. Another allegation, first heard in 2004, that they are training Kurdish youths as young as 15 in terrorist camps in Germany, has also resurfaced. Police seized documents claimed to be forged papers, as well as about €250,000 in cash. Later in Brussels, at the weekend, a Turkish kebab shop on Ansaraphaan close to the stock exchange was smashed up and patrons attacked while Kurdish demonstrators marched past.

More than 200,000 teachers in Flanders will receive a guide to help them spot and tackle the problems of poverty in the classroom. A new campaign launched by Klasse, the magazine for teachers, parents and pupils. One in five Flemish children lives below the poverty line. The campaign’s goal is not to tackle poverty itself, but to raise teachers’ awareness of the problems it can cause in schools. Poverty is known to have an effect on most aspects of a child’s life, from clothing to diet. Schools are often ready to step in to help — for example, by contributing to the cost of extra-mural activities so that all children can take part. But schools report that parents are often reluctant to admit to having problems. Teachers are advised to look out for warning signs such as increased absenteeism.

The listed terrorist organisation is alleged to have “extorted money from businesses”

Teachers made aware of effects of poverty

According to Linda van den Barge, professor of dentistry at the University of Ghent, “There’s not much that can be done,” she said. © Mark Dankers

Belgians are serving jail sentences in foreign countries, mainly for drug offences. The majority are in France and Spain, followed by Morocco, Belgium and the United Kingdom.

Police seize cash from PKK

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"The school doesn’t know, and they don’t need to know," says mother-of-three Sandra Carlier of her difficult financial situation. “I pay the rent as regular as clockwork, but other bills have to wait until the money is there. Sometimes the children come home and tell me, ‘Mama you haven’t paid the school bill’. They ought to leave my children out of it. Sometimes I get the feeling the school doesn’t trust me.”

Families living in poverty are more likely to be single-parent families or of immigrant origin. Parents are likely to be poorly-educated themselves — educational level is one of the most important predictors of poverty, which makes tackling the problem, according to Klasse, even more important: education is often the child’s only chance of escaping a poor background.

Language problems can also cause problems for children — for example by making it difficult or impossible for parents to help their children with homework or other assignments. Children fall behind their classmates, leave school without qualifications, earn low-paid jobs and the whole cycle begins again.

The Klasse campaign aims to encourage schools to strengthen the connections with parents, so that existing or potential problems can be identified as early as possible. Parents from higher income families are also targeted. "There is still a great deal of prejudice surrounding poor families," explains Michel Van Laere of Klasse. "The impact of that should not be underestimated since it makes poor parents feel as if they ought to cover up their problems even more than they already do."

Typical Freya

“I would like to make a first name for myself.” With that quote young Freya Van den Bossche, daughter of socialist heavyweight Luc Van den Bossche, entered the political stage in 2005. Since then, under her byname, she has become the country’s most popular female politician. Even her own father said that she was too much, too soon. Maybe that is the reason why many people do not take her seriously. Throughout her career, Van den Bossche always had to face up to rumours about her intellec- tual capacities. There was nothing more, however, than the fact that she even more hostile after she did not answer when quizzed about her secret love child.

After the socialist party sp.a lost the federal elections, she refused to become opposition speaker. She was not sure she could handle this, she wrote in an embarrassing note, which a journalist found and made public. In 2009, however, she was appointed Flemish minister for energy and housing.

In the past decade, Van den Bossche has made headlines around the world. She has made headlines and gone out of sight again, not just because of her high-speed career, but also because of her diameter, chaotic personal life, which included a glamorous but short-lived Thai wedding. After her former partner became the godfather of her youngest child, a news site posted a poll asking the public whether this was “a good idea,” “a bad idea” or “typical Freya.”

Recently she was (anonymously) criticised for her absence from the Flemish government following the birth of her youngest child. She has been criticized before for returning to work too soon after a previous birth. Somehow, whatever she does, Van den Bossche can’t go right.

Last week, Van den Bossche had to defuse a potentially explosive situation. It had to do with huge demands attached to the sale of social apartments in Vilvoorde. She was given the solution in the nick of time, but, according to government sources, she was not really bungled it. Whether there is any truth to this is hard to know, but it seems that the image she has created, Typical Freya.

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All you need to know about banking services on arriving in Belgium

Take advantage of our ING Expat Convenience Services
+32 2 464 66 64 - expat@ing.be - www.ing.be

Many banking services are available to expatriates living in Belgium but there is nothing you need to know about making such arrangements. That’s a task for the ING Convenience Services experts. Your bank accounts and cards can be ready for you the moment you arrive in Belgium. ING’s Expat Services have 40 years of experience to help make your stay in Belgium as financially smooth as possible.
When you eat a pack of frieten (fries), you might not think of acrylamide as being at the top of the list of the sins you’re committing. But it ought to be. Acrylamide is a synthetic compound used in the manufacture of polyacrylamide, a kind of plastic used as a thickener in waste-water treatment.

Recent research has shown that it also exists in a natural form as a by-product of cooking conditions on frozen frieten, despite initially positive effects in the lab. However, fresh potatoes could be treated with additives, and all traces of acrylamide were gone after several days. Freshly cut frieten can be kept for up to 15 days without any ultimate negative effect on the taste of the end product.

Testing a variety of additives to reduce the production of the compound

In the first case, Professor Bruno De Meulenaer explained, the degree of cooking seemed to have more influence on the production of acrylamide than the sort of potato. The browner the frieten, the more of the compound they contained.

In the second case, no discernible effect could be determined in normal cooking conditions on frozen frieten, so the variety could be avoided in the preparation of frieten

• Looking into whether one batch of potatoes produced more acrylamide than another, so the variety could be avoided in the preparation of frieten

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K is for Kortrijk

Between the shopping mall and the Sint-Jans Tower, the old downtown Kortrijk has virtually disappeared

Out of the four presented options, Kortrijk fell for the most radical. Competitor Foruminvest claimed that Kortrijk was the perfect region for commercial purposes; the city has enough visitors, they argued, just not enough shops to keep them interested. Foruminvest suggested a complete tabula rasa – to knock down existing structures and start from scratch, building Flanders' largest fully integrated shopping mall in the heart of the city, including trendy apartments and plenty of parking. To measure the interest of chain stores, the city contacted umbrella organisation Retail Forum Belgium. Chains “were definitely attracted to the mall since they were not yet present in Kortrijk, as the available shopping surfaces were just not big enough,” says Trui Tydgat, director of SOK. “It’s almost unbelievable, but Kortrijk has, for instance, no HM or Zara; instead you’ll find a lot of small boutiques. A new shopping mall in the city would definitely attract to the mall shoppers and inhabitants. The coldest winter Flan-

Pretty complex

Before K in Kortrijk was even built, the city had to adapt to it. Roads were redefined and tunnels dug to ensure smoothly outgoing traf-

cic. One of the entrances of K in Kortrijk was built with natural stones and wood and has a gigantic glass dome, allowing daylight in. A special design fund should ensure new design investments in the future. “Convincing the existing shop owners of the advantages of the new mall wasn’t too difficult, as they also felt that something had to be done,” says Tydgat. “But when the works took a lot longer than planned, they got less enthusiastic.” For more than that, the exis-
ting owners of K in Kortrijk was an unfinished mess, with dug up roads and mud every-

All shops in Kortrijk are part of the new Business Improvement District. Every year, they will pay a certain amount of tax money to improve the neighbourhood or organise joint events, such as the coming of Sinterklaas. The official opening event of the mall on Thursday will include the existing shops as well. In the weeks leading to the opening, shopping bags with discount vouchers were distributed, valid in most shops in Kortrijk. The city plans on incorporating more design in public spaces, starting with designed benches along the river.

The new Kortrijk

Five years ago, Kortrijk was a sleepy, grey city. But now it’s hard to ignore. From the redesign of its signature museum to the luxurious setting of VTM series Akin Restaurant and De Rodenburgs, Kortrijk seems to have recaptured people’s imaginations. To get this attention, the city did not have to invent anything. All it did was seriously brush-up its three main assets: design, history and commercial interests.

DESIGN Kortrijk has a tradition of innovation and design. Did you know that most of the interiors of the pavillons at Expo ’58 were designed by furniture manufacturer De Coene from Kortrijk? Every two years, the city features Europe’s second-biggest design fair, Interior. Study option “Industrial design” at the Provincial Industrial College in Kortrijk attracts students from all over Belgium. And (in)famous installation architect Arn Quirize chose Kortrijk as his company headquarters.

HISTORY 1302 is a hugely important year in Flemish history, the date of the Battle of the Golden Spurs, which took place near Kortrijk. This victorious Flemish resistance against the French got its own museum in 2006, partially located inside the 13th-century abbey. Now the beautiful-ly designed, interactive Kortrijk 1302 Museum describes seven centuries of Flanders’ history, attracting 23,000 visitors a year.

COMMERCIAL Shopping mall giant K in Kortrijk will give the commercial district a boost and should put Kortrijk on the shortlist of best shopping cities in Bel-

Stats: 24,000m² - 1100 parking spots - 8 stores - 85 shops - 40 flats

www.k-in-kortrijk.be

Fast facts

• The new mall’s original name was ‘Shopping Sint-Jan’, after its location in the city. After the competition, everybody agreed that ‘K in Kortrijk’, referencing as it does the city itself, was a better idea

• For more than 40 years, shopping streets in Kortrijk have been car free. The city even claims to be the first in Belgium to have a pedestrian only commercial district

• Neighbour Tim Vandendriessche followed the construction of K from day one and regularly posted information and pictures on his blog: www.kinkortrijk.blogspot.com
### Students should learn finance, says Febelfin

School students need training in financial and economic matters because most people’s knowledge is sadly lacking, according to a survey by the financial industry federation Febelfin. The federation set a series of test questions for a sample of the population last September, and the results just released show that young people between the ages of 18 and 24 scored only 44.5% overall. Unlike other age categories, this group earned a failing grade.

The median is a curious one, Febelfin said, because the habits instilled in young people are carried through into adult life, and mistakes made early on can have long-lasting effects. “If you ask me, children from the age of 12 ought to know what a savings account is, and from the age of 15 they should know the difference between shares and bonds,” said Febelfin chairman Stefan Decarne. The federation would prefer to leave it to the government to determine the exact means of achieving the goal.

The terms of the leaving certificate of education in the Dutch-speaking system are to be adjusted from next year to include a measure of “financial literacy,” the office of education minister Pascal Smet said.

### Dredgers are the best employers

Dredging company Jan De Nul, based in Aalst but active across the world from Iraq to the Panama Canal, is the best employer in Belgium for the second year running, according to a survey carried out by employment agency Randstad among 12,000 people aged 18 to 65. The survey asks respondents to rate a number of characteristics of an employer and to score 172 specific companies according to how they respond to the criteria. Top of the wish-list of the survey’s participants was job security. Jan De Nul repeated its victory of last year, but perhaps more remarkable was the company that came in second place to the dredging giant – another dredging company, Deme from Zwijndrecht on the North Sea.

### Bankruptcies kept on growing in February

February saw a record number of bankruptcies in Belgium, according to research bureau Graydon. Some 807 companies went bust, bringing the total for the first two months of the year to 1,617, a 3% increase on the same period a year ago.

However, the number of jobs lost fell from 4,053 in 2009 to 3,691 – though the bare figures do not show whether that’s a result of companies on the brink of failure shedding staff before finally going under.

Not all parts of the country are the same: in Antwerp, the number of failures went up by 21%, whereas in Mechelen, the worst rate was recorded in Dendermonde (up 43% to 30 cases) and the best in Mechelen (down 56% to 18 cases) and Leuven (down 50% to eight cases). The sectors mainly affected were business-to-business services, the car trade and garages. The road haulage industry, with an increase of 5.5%, showed a major increase. On the plus side, some sectors that are traditionally sensitive to fluctuations in the economy, like construction and catering, saw better results than expected.

### VRT faces cuts

The Flemish public broadcaster could cut more than 10% of its workforce

As many as 300 people employed by the Flemish public broadcaster VRT – about 11% of its entire workforce – could lose their jobs in a coming round of spending cuts, according to unions in a memo released last week. The management of the VRT is due to present its spending plans to the board of directors on 15 March.

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The drive to save money has already shown further in 2011. It is estimated that he will call for savings of at least €65m. In addition, in order to bring spending sustainably under control, changes are likely to follow to reduce the vast bureaucracy that the VRT, as a state institution, still carries, and to radically alter the outdated working conditions.

### A selection of the questions put by Febelfin.

You put €100 in a savings account with an interest rate of 2% a year. What is the balance after five years, if nothing is deposited or withdrawn?

b. More than €102
c. Exactly €102

Family insurance:

a. Is only useful if I have children or pets
b. Is only useful if something happens at home
c. Also useful in other situations

A variable rate of interest is:

a. The interest I pay on a loan, which can be adjusted
b. The interest I pay on a loan, which is linked to the health index
c. The interest I earn on my account, adjusted annually

Answers: a, c, and a

### Autos • BYD

Build Your Dreams, the Chinese electric car producer, will sell its first car in Belgium from 2012. The cars will be imported and sold by the Moorkens dealerships in Ghent. The BYD proposal by General Motors to take over the Opel plant in Antwerp to produce its cars for the European market.

### Energy • Octa+

Octa+ is to enter the gas and energy distribution market for private customers. The company currently operates 185 discount petrol stations across Belgium.

### Pharmaceuticals • UCB

UCB, the Brussels-based pharmaceutical company, is banking its future on three new medicines – Cimzia to treat Crohn’s disease, Neupro for Parkinson’s and Vimpat for epilepsy. The new drugs are expected to deliver revenues of €3 billion over the next 10 years.

### Power • Electrabel

The government must repay €16 million paid by power generator Electrabel in taxes on 30 disused plots of land. Electrabel argued that technical limitations made the land unsuitable to build generating capacity.

### Research • Myrrha

The MOL-based Myrrha project to build a new nuclear research reactor is on track following the federal government’s decision to invest €384 million over 10 years. The new reactor, worth €960 million in total, is designed to develop new technologies in the treatment of nuclear waste and will produce radio-isotopes for medical use.

### Telecom • Telenet

Telenet, the Mechelen-based cable and telecommunications company, will launch the country’s first super-fast, fourth-generation, mobile broadband network. Tests will start in May. The firm also plans to invest €150 million over the next five years to renew its cable network and has signed an agreement with Norway’s Norkring to launch a digital Herrenzug network. Finally, the company is believed to be interested in pitching for the licence to launch the country’s fourth mobile telecommunications network.

### Travel • Thomas Cook

Thomas Cook, the country’s largest holiday charter airline, is adding a seventh aircraft to meet demand from Brussels Airport. The company will also hire up to 50 new staff.

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**Business**

**The Flemish Today**

**MARCH 10, 2010**

**60,000,000**

Pairs of shoes sold in Belgium annually, according to Peter Vavedin of Ambiors, one of the remaining Flemish manufacturers. Women buy eight to 10 pairs, he says, and men three to four.
When science meets fiction

Flemish patient is the first ever to live with a donated trachea in her throat – that she first had to carry in her forearm

Emma Harslngen

modern medicine sometimes sounds like science fiction. Linda De Croock probably did not imagine she would be a case for futuristic surgery when she had a car accident 33 years ago. Modern medicine sometimes sounds like science fiction. Linda De Croock probably did not imagine she would be a case for futuristic surgery when she had a car accident 33 years ago. She spent months in an intensive care unit, with a tube down her throat to help her breathe. This damaged her windpipe, or trachea, to such an extent that doctors placed a mesh tube inside it to keep it open and allow her to breathe properly. 'I had fever and felt out of breath all the time,' recalls De Croock, now a 54-year-old mother of two. 'I was so tired I had to lay down half of the day.' The mesh tube, or stents, caused permanent infection, so De Croock had to take high doses of antibiotics. Also, she coughed profusely because mucus accumulated in her throat. In 2006, she desperately searched the internet for solutions and found Professor Pierre Delaere, a specialist of head and neck surgery at the Gasthuisberg Hospital of the Catholic University of Leuven. For more than 20 years, Delaere has been investigating efficient ways to reconstruct the trachea and larynx – the cartilaginous structure at the top of the trachea that contains the vocal cords.

'Originally, I suggested to Linda a straight reconstruction, using her own tissue,' the surgeon explains. But doctors feared her trachea was too damaged, and she would not have enough healthy tissue available. 'The danger was that if we took out the stents, everything collapsed. We couldn't afford to make her worse.' Delaere needed a plan B: a trachea transplant.

The genius idea

Organ transplants are nothing new. But unlike organs such as the liver or heart, the trachea does not come with a large blood vessel, so reconstructing the vital blood supply is a tricky affair. That is where the unusual idea came in: transplanting the donated trachea into the patient's forearm first. There, large blood vessels and a thin, well-vascularised tissue under the skin would help the trachea restore its own blood supply. It would then be ready to be implanted in place of the damaged bit. Professor Delaere's team had tested this new procedure in rabbits. When he suggested to try it out, De Croock was not put off. 'This was my only solution,' she explains. 'I trusted the professor.' So the Flemish woman Aalst became the world's first patient to undergo this pioneering kind of tracheal transplantation.

A peculiar procedure

De Croock carried the donor's trachea in her left forearm for eight months; it was a bit painful, but she had no problem in her day-to-day activities, such as eating or getting dressed. When the trachea had grown a good blood supply and enough of her own mucosal lining, Professor Delaere traded her damaged windpipe for this new, healthy one. Like with any transplantation from a donor, De Croock had to take immunosuppressant drugs to prevent her body from rejecting the graft. She has now been off the medication for more than a year, so it is safe to say that the operation was a success. Her voice is normal, and she can travel and play light sports. "I feel good," she says. "Every day I am happy when I realise that I can breathe normally."

Delaere, meanwhile, has already repeated the operation. An 18-year-old Flemish man only had to keep the donated trachea in his forearm for six weeks, so the whole process was shorter (and, hence, cheaper) this time around. The surgeon hopes to refine the procedure with more operations and study the long-term outlook. Hopefully, other patients the world over will be able to benefit from the technique, too.

Organ donations in Belgium

Linda De Croock was put on a waiting list for several months until a compatible donor was found because the demand for organs is higher than their supply. If you are a Belgian national or have lived in Belgium for more than six months, the law allows the removal of your organs after your death unless you have previously stated your refusal or if your immediate family objects to it. You can find out more and download the organ donation form at www.belgium.be/en/health/organ_donations

Any other options?

Scientific research has other tricks up its sleeve, but not all are fit for the tracheal case – yet! Why not make some artificial tissue?

Of course, it would be fantastic to create a man-made trachea so we could have a brand new organ without relying on organ donations. However, the tracheal cartilage has a very specific structure. According to Professor Pierre Delaere, who performed the groundbreaking surgery, it is difficult to reproduce the material and its elasticity, as well as the protective layer with its blood supply. More work to come for tissue engineers.

How about stem cells?

Could we not grow a new trachea from them?

In 2006, a team from Barcelona performed a tracheal transplant on a young woman who had suffered from tuberculosis. They kept only the donor's cartilage and removed the donor's cells on the surface. Then, they grew a mucosal lining in the lab, using stem cells from the receiving patient. Because these were the patient's own cells, she did not take any immunosuppressant therapy. This procedure was spectacular, but the long-term outlook remains to be confirmed. Professor Delaere notes that no blood supply was restored. Also, the area transplanted was further down the windpipe, in the bronchus area.


The trachea is removed from the donor

The trachea is implanted in Linda De Croock's forearm. After a few weeks, the donor's mucoosa inside the trachea is replaced by De Croock's mouth mucosa

After several months, the trachea is transplanted into De Croock's throat and the blood supply restored. She can stop taking immunosuppressant drugs

“We couldn’t afford to make her worse”, Dr Pierre Delaere

Focus

march 10, 2010
Turkish delights

Bruges’ international film fest looks at the reflective side of new cinema from Turkey

**PETER KEEREMAN**

Peter Keereman has a simple answer when asked why Turkey is the focus of this year’s Cinema Novo film festival, which starts this week in Bruges. “Turkish cinema is hot,” the programmer says. “Turkish film directors receive a lot of attention. In the last edition of the Berlin Film Festival, the Golden Bear went to a Turkish movie.”

It will be a while before that film, *Honey* by Semih Kaplanoglu, arrives on Belgian screens, but the film to Cinema Novo we can see the director’s previous film, *Milk*. This tells the story of a young man with ambitions to write poetry whose tenuous grip on reality is threatened by hunger, hyperinflation and the suggestion that his widowed mother may remarry.

Other prize winners in the festival’s Turkish selection include *The Wrong Rosary* by Mahmut Fazil Coskun, which picked up a Tiger award at the Rotterdam Film Festival in 2009, and *Pandora’s Box*, which won awards in San Sebastian in 2008 for director Yessim Ustaoglu and actress Tsilla Chelton. The first is a gentle tale about an unassuming housewife who moves to Istanbul, who falls for his equally shy neighbour Clara, a Christian. The second recounts the tradition of women who pass on their family’s heritage from generation to generation.

There is a chance for one of two recent Turkish films to take home a prize in Cinema Novo’s own international competition. 10 to 11 by Pelin Esmer is about a compulsive collector who finds himself in conflict with his neighbours, while *Men on the Bridge* by Asli Ozge concerns the lives and longings of three men who work on the Bosporus Bridge.

The world in Bruges

Cinema Novo is a wide-ranging festival, with the ambitious goal of introducing the public to new films from Africa, Asia and Latin America. So as well as films from Turkey, its prize competition includes work from Armenia, Mexico, Chile, South Korea and Iran. None have plans to be shown in cinemas in Belgium, and the Camera Novo prize comes with an €8,000 incentive for the distributor who picks up the winner.

*Men on the Bridge* is on a ground this year, but one must see double bill brings together two unexpected perspectives on the continent. *Nora*, by Alla Kogan and David Hinton, presents an autobiographical performance about growing up in a quintessential family of women in a strict community and not a change of circumstance and not a change of country to village squares and school buildings. But it was shot in Mozambique rather than Zimbabwe, since Chipuamire’s home country has not been so welcoming in recent years.

The second part of the film is *Saint Louis Blues* by Dyana Gaye, which turns a journey by seven characters sharing a “bush taxi” in Senegal into an all-singing, all-dancing musical that draws strongly on the style of Jacques Demy. The result is unexpected, yet extremely pleasing. Both films have English subtitles.

Other highlights in a packed festival include a collection of films critical of contemporary life in Iran. *No One Knows About Persian Cats* has already come out in Brussels and deserves to be seen for its energetic portrait of the underground music scene, filmed on the run by Bahman Ghobadi. Also shot guerrilla-style was *My Tehran for Sale* by Granaz Moussavi, about an aspiring actress who longs to escape the city for Australia.

The selection is completed by life-on-the-streets drama *Tehran* by Nader Takmil Homayoun and *About Elly* by Asghar Farhadi, which concerns a man in search of an Iranian wife after his marriage to a German woman fails. The festival’s closing film is also from Iran: *Women Without Men* by Shirin Neshat and Shoja Azari goes back to 1953, when the Shah seized power, to tell the story of four women trying to break out of unhappy lives.*

**CINEMA NOVO**

**11-21 March**

Lumière et Ciné Liberty

Bruges

www.cinemanoovo.be

* The boycott of *Alice in Wonderland* by both Kinopolis and the Federation of Belgian Cinemas ended nearly as quickly as it began. As a result, the new Tim Burton film, which releases this week, can be found in all the country’s biggest cinemas. The boycott was called in protest at Disney’s plans to release the DVD of the live-action blockbuster only three months after its release in cinemas, rather than the usual four months. Disney has now managed to convince Belgium, as well as Italy, the Netherlands and the UK, which were also boycotting, that this is a special circumstance and not a change in policy for all films.

**CULTURE NEWS**

**The Armory Show in New York**

Last week, one of the most important fairs for contemporary art in the world, Zeno X from Antwerp had already sold half of its shipped works on the first day of the four-day event; Baronian_Francey from Brussels fared just as well. It was the first time January was chosen for Ghent’s Hoet Bekaert: “If we sell all our works, we’ll just cover our costs,” said Delphine Bekaert (who paid $9,000 for a 3.7 x 3.7 metre space). “But we really want to take part in international events, we are ambitious, and Ghent is too small.”

The VRT tragically did *Van vlees en bloed* (Of Flesh and Blood), about a family of butchers, dominate the fifth of the Flemish Television Stars, the annual TV awards ceremony, which took place last weekend in Hamme. The seven programme series was awarded Best Fiction Programme and the public prize for Most Popular Programme. The show’s Koen De Graeve and Sien Eggers won Best Actor and Actress.

www.vlaamsetelevisieacademie.be
The sound of silence
A lesson from Gerhagen, the quietest place in Flanders

Do you know what silence is? The question was posed to me as I was about embark on a walk through Gerhagen – a natural area that was just recognised as "the quietest place in Flanders."

It's an interesting question to contemplate. When you really pay attention, you’ll notice how adept we've become at tuning out every-day noises: the bell that rings every time a tram passes on a nearby street, the rumbling of cars as they drive by, the whooshing sounds of jet engines from above.

Noise is one of the most pervasive and yet under-acknowledged forms of environmental pollution that we encounter. According to the World Health Organization, more than half of all Europeans face daily exposure to potentially damaging noise levels. Noise pollution increases stress levels and has been linked to a variety of health problems, from insomnia to hypertension. There’s also evidence to suggest that it may impair children’s learning.

In the last decade, the EU has started to take heed of the health hazards of noise and to regulate noise pollution. Back in the 1990s, the Flemish government began to recognize the value that quiet spaces have for the health and well being of its citizens and started working to protect them.

A small municipality in Limburg was even further ahead of the curve. For more than 40 years, volunteers with Werkgroep Ecologie Tessenderlo (WET) have been diligently working to protect and promote the Gerhagen nature reserve.

Gerhagen is a 1,000-acre protected area and the so-called "green lung" of Tessenderlo, a municipality in the province of Limburg, the Flemish Land Agency, Regional Landscape Lower Kempen, the municipality of Tessenderlo and WET have been collaborating to bring public awareness to this designation. Gerhagen now has two special walking paths and an exhibit to get people thinking more critically about sound.

The paths of silence

There are two marked stiltepaden (quiet paths) through Gerhagen, both beginning at the Bosmuseum (Forest Museum). The green route is 3.5 kilometres, and the blue one is six. You can pick up a stiltepakje (quiet backpack) at the Bosmuseum to help enhance your experience. Included are items as they are known as they are used: a map and pamphlet guide you through the walks. The pretty pine forest is peppered with oak and birch trees, and I was struck by the stillness of the woods and the soft, sandy soil, which made for pleasant walking (and no doubt helps to dampen noise).

If you take the longer route, you can stop and reflect at each of eight designated stilte- en rustplekjes (silence and rest places). Your favourites were 3 and 8: the former is an area where you can pick up a stilterugsakje (quiet backpack) at the Bosmuseum to help enhance your experience. Included are items as they are known as they are used: a map and pamphlet guide you through the walks. The pretty pine forest is peppered with oak and birch trees, and I was struck by the stillness of the woods and the soft, sandy soil, which made for pleasant walking (and no doubt helps to dampen noise). The latter is a wonderfully comfy hammock that is strategically placed near the end of the trail.

As you walk along, what becomes immediately clear is that even the quietest forest is by no means "silent." I heard the usual forest sounds, like birds chirping and wind rustling through the trees, but also – unavoidable in a small, industrialised country like Belgium – is the faint din of planes and cars. Still, considering the sometimes extreme noise levels in green spaces within cities, it is a particularly peaceful place. For me, getting away to Gerhagen certainly had a calming effect.

The Bosmuseum

WET runs the Bosmuseum at Gerhagen, which features a number of impressive exhibits on the flora and fauna of the area. Most intriguing is the "Van ei tot ei" (From Egg to Egg) collection of birds’ eggs – from the hummingbird to the eagle, all died of natural causes.) You can also learn about birds’ habitats, migration patterns and the threats they face. Most of the birds featured are native to the area.

The mission of WET is to teach people about nature and to preserve nature for future generations. Volunteers guide monthly walks from the Bosmuseum through Gerhagen based around different topics such as flowers, mushrooms and birds.

A map and pamphlet guide you through the walks. The pretty pine forest is peppered with oak and birch trees, and I was struck by the stillness of the woods and the soft, sandy soil, which made for pleasant walking (and no doubt helps to dampen noise).

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How quiet is quiet?

Just how quiet is "the quietest place in Flanders"? Call us sceptical, but we wanted to measure for ourselves. When we visited Gerhagen, we took a sound pressure level (SPL) metre. The results? They’re not lying – it’s quiet. The loudest area we sampled (on a platform at Gent-Sint-Pieters while a train was approaching and a voice was booming from the public address system) was a whopping 32 dBA louder than the quietest place in Gerhagen.

A note on decibels:

- decibel (dB) = perceptible difference in loudness

- dB(A) = weighted decibels, the standard scaling of dB measurements to approximate the frequency response of human hearing

- 10 dB difference = a doubling or halving of the perceived loudness (so, this being a logarithmic scale, the difference between our lowest measurement in Gerhagen (25 dBA) and the highest measurement in Ghent (75 dBA) is not 3x, as it would be with a linear scale; rather, it’s an increase of 50 dB, or five doublings, or 32x as loud.

Urban sound levels:

- 60-65 dBA...riding on a tram in Ghent
- 75 dBA...travelling the stiltepad
- 58 dBA...on a moving IC train
- 54-55 dBA...on a moving IC train

Stiltepad sound levels:

- 30-36 dBA...starting the stiltepad
- 34 dBA...rope walk (sounds: plane landing nearby, highway, tractor)
- 35 dBA...sitting log (sounds: jets overhead, dogs barking in distance, wind through leaves, peeping bird)
- 32 dBA...booms (sounds: distant road, doves barking in distance, wind through leaves, peeping bird)

25 dBA...near the end of the walk, lowest reading. Very still.

Then, a plane takes off...32 dBA

http://wet.gerhagen.be
Never-ending illusions

Travel to Machelen-aan-de Leie to visit the Roger Raveel Museum, the second in our series on out-of-the-way art museums

The Flanders Today

March 10, 2010

T he Flemish village of Machelen-aan-de Leie in East Flanders is very proud of its best-known inhabitant: 88-year-old artist Roger Raveel. As well as the Roger Raveel Museum, specially designed to house his work, the village also boasts a walking path named after him (the Roger Raveel wandel-route) and a restaurant that makes the most of the Raveel connection by having a book about him take pride-of-place on the fireplace and a menu that highlights the life of the famous local.

And why not, Raveel is arguably one of the most important Belgian artists since World War II. From about 1960, he was the central artist in a new figurative movement that emerged in Belgium, leading a group of artists that included Etienne Elias, Raul de Keyser and Reinier Lucas-van Pernath (and whose joint creations included a three-dimensional work of art in the underground vaults at Beervelde estate near Ghent).

Not that Raveel has stopped working today. Just last year he assisted with a project for Muziektheater Transparant’s A New Requiem. Having read the text, Raveel was inspired to start drawing, and the resulting set of sketches form part of the music-theatre production and illustrate an accompanying book.

For an overview of how Raveel’s work has evolved throughout his career, a trip to the museum in Machelen-Zulte is ideal. The works on display fill 10 rooms and are arranged chronologically, showing the development from the early, deceptively simple paintings of people in bold primary colours, such as “Gele man met karretje” (“Yellow Man with Cart”) through a more abstract period, such as “Voetbalveld” (“Football Field”) from 1952. My eye was immediately drawn to the deep, bright blue sky at the top, and then the houses and fields in reds, yellows and blues that feature along the skyline. It took a while before I noticed the football pitch in the middle of the painting.

With the pitch painted a pale shade of green and the goalposts pushed off to the right by a black-and-white vertical stripe, the subject of the painting’s title only slowly comes into focus – a curious effect given the pitch actually takes up a third of the canvas.

The use of vertical stripes that run to the edge of a painting – and sometimes even beyond – is a feature that recurs in Raveel’s work. The eye is led beyond the edge of the canvas in a way that suggests the picture keeps on going. The artist calls this “making the painting flow out into the surroundings.”

Raveel has also painted objects, and “Illusiegroep” (“Illusion Group”) is particularly fun. It’s made out of three pieces, each a few metres from the next in a line. In the middle is a wooden frame and at each edge a life-size, cut-out figure. The illusion part comes in with the use of mirrors and square frames cut out of the figures. If you stand at one end, you are facing a black cardboard figure of a man with a mirror on his lower half and a square cut out of his top half. You see the figure, with your own feet and lower legs reflected in the mirror, while simultaneously looking through the square gap to the second and third parts of the set, on which there are more mirrors and illusion tricks.

If you are feeling a little dizzy trying to conjure up this image, rest assured it’s just as disorienting to look at the actual work. Raveel certainly achieved his aim of making viewers question how they see things and making them aware of their position within and outside of an artwork.

Mirrors are a feature incorporated into several of the pieces on display in the last two rooms of the collection highlighting his work from the 1980s and ‘90s. Sometimes, the effect is playful, such as in “Zie hier een mens” (“Look, Here is a Person”), where viewers stand in front of the painting and see reflections of parts of their body become part of the picture. Sometimes the result is more disturbing, as in “Het graf van Pernath” (“Pernath’s Grave”), where the mirror is in the buried grave at the bottom of the work. (“Het graf van Pernath” is also a poem by the late Flemish writer Hugo Claus, in reference to Hugues C Pernath, the Flemish poet who died an untimely death in 1975.)

On the one hand these pieces seem quite a departure from Raveel’s earliest works, and yet the bright colours are there, as are the vertical lines and the typical thick borders outlining objects in the paintings.

Once you leave the museum, be sure to wander past the church and down to the lake where you can see a wall installation created by Raveel in the 1990s. Again, there’s no missing it’s his work, as the wall, almost 40 metres long, is decorated with mirrors, figures and white squares and rectangles with thick black borders.

Once you’re there, it would be a shame not to go on the walk and end up at the De Afspanning restaurant for a truly Raveel experience. •
Managing successfully within a globalised world

“Vlerick really gives you added value; it is a true learning experience”

Tariq Malik Del Campo successfully completed the International Management Programme in October 2009.

Tariq Malik Del Campo: “Shortly after I moved from Spain to Belgium in 1991 I started working for Ericsson Belgium. As manager of the Ericsson training department I was responsible for organising training sessions for both employees who needed technical training as well as customers who were offered end-user training. Since 1997 I have been working for Ericsson Sweden.

Because of my career origins as training manager education has always been close to my heart. Keeping myself updated academically and developing adequate skills is the only way to remain competitive and self-confident in a rapidly changing and ever more international business environment. This globalisation is what kept me on my toes and drew me in my mid-life back to the books. I realised that what got me to the point I was in my career was not enough to successfully keep me there.

The high recommendations of a friend who was following a management programme at Vlerick Leuven Gent Management School and the excellent Financial Times rankings were what attracted me to the School. Because of my international working environment I chose to follow the International Management Programme. Not only did it offer me the possibility to refresh some of the principles I had learned previously in an MBA course, but also to view disciplines such as strategy, HR Management and leadership from a completely different angle. The hands-on experience and real case studies combined with simulations and role modelling, proved to be an extremely effective and rich way to learn and develop. Vlerick really gives you added value; it is a true learning experience.

As for the future, time will tell how I can experiment with this newly gathered knowledge and where it will take me on a career level. However, the programme has certainly made me feel more comfortable in handling the international relationships and differences in doing business. Finally, by taking this course at a later stage in my career I was able to blend together my collected experience in the business world with this fresh knowledge in a way that I feel has leveraged my performance.”

We want to hear from you!

Since its launch in October 2007, Flanders Today has seen a spectacular increase in the number of readers and subscribers and now has a weekly circulation of 24,000 copies.

We regularly receive feedback and comments from our readers, but we would like to know more about you and gather information on your needs and expectations regarding Flanders Today. We would also like to know your level of satisfaction with the newspaper, along with its e-newsletter and website.

Your opinion really matters and helps us to shape the content. So please go to www.flanderstoday.eu/survey to fill out the readership survey. This should take no more than 10 minutes and will help us to make Flanders Today an even better newspaper.

If you complete the survey, you can also participate in a competition for the chance to win one of three vouchers of Vlaanderen Vakantieland (worth €100 each), one of five yearly subscriptions to Brussels Unlimited and The Bulletin (worth €85 each) or one of 10 Bongo gift boxes (worth €25 each).

Thank you and good luck!

Lisa Bradshaw
Deputy Editor

Derek Blyth
Editor-in-chief
More Experimental Film This Week

17-21 March Across Ghent → www.courtsiane.be

Antwerp
Kelly’s Irish Pub
Keverlrei 27; www.kellys.be
MAR 13 21.30 The Lowland Paddies

Petrol
Herbouweldek 21a, 03.226.49.63
www.petrolfabrik.be
MAR 12 23.00 Techno Nr2 + Robert Hood + Will Orbit + Dave Copp + Pierre
MAR 13 21.45 Sweet Coffee + Bacemini + Liza Acceo + Merdan Tagik + Louis Katorz

Queen Elisabeth Hall
Koningsplein 26, 0900.26.060 www.qehc.be
MAR 11 20.00 The Four Tops & The Temptations
MAR 17 20.00 Mariza

Trix
Noorderinge 28, 03.670.09.00 www.trixonline.be
MAR 12 20.00 Anti-pop Consortium
MAR 14 14.00 Pagaï fest 2010 feat. Funt.nl + Elverette + Domremy + Varg + Arkena + more MAR 16 20.00 The Album Leaf + Retribution Gospel Choir
MAR 17 20.00 Marble Sounds

Brussels
Ancienne Belgique
Anspachlaan 110, 02.549.24.24 www.abcconcerts.be
MAR 10 20.00 Freaky Age
MAR 11 20.00 Maate Mécanique
MAR 15 Robert Francis

Belle Vue Café
Heinroosplein 43, 03.412.29.07 www.vkconcerts.be
MAR 17 21.00 Limited Addiction + Lucky Dragon

Beurschouwburg
August Ortsstraat 20-28, 02.550.03.50
www.beurschouwburg.be
MAR 13 21.40 Cecilia::Eyes + Alkalys

Fuse
Bleuzestraat 208, 02.511.97.89 www.fuse.be
MAR 12 23.00 Deadfish party with Modgøii

Jacques Franck Cultural Centre
Watersteengracht 94, 02.538.90.20 www.ccjacquesfranck.be
MAR 13 20.30 Bai Kamara Jr

Koninklijk Circus
Onderdrijnstraat 8, 02.218.20.15
www.circque-royal.be
MAR 10 20.00 The Ultimate Phil Collins Show
MAR 11 20.30 Michael Gerigo
MAR 17 20.00 Maasrane sings Nonogram

Le Bar du Matin
Alembergsesteenweg 172, 02.537.71.99
http://lebarumatin.blogspot.com
MAR 11 21.00 Normo
MAR 15 21.00 Tiny Legs

Le Botanique
Kонингstraat 236, 02.218.37.32
Concerts at 20.00
MAR 12 Le Double + Caesare Bricca + InnerMountain + ‘Go MAR 14 Might Be Wrong’ + Isaiah Wool + Why? MAR 16 Hadoardat + MAR 17 Cocoyor + JP Natal + Rickey Lee Jones

Le Do’s à Moelle
Emile Madaan 153, 02.267.10.90 www.maatmole.be
MAR 13 21.00 Stone Rock & Gogo by Punpon

Magasin 4
Haverlaan 5IB, 02.223.34.74
www.magasin4.be
MAR 11 19.00 Sener + Shargah
MAR 12 21.00 SAT (Fonky Family) + Mamba + Raeyems

Maison des Musiques
Lebeaustraat 39, 02.581.13.20
www.vkconcerts.be

18 May, 20.00 Sportpaleis, Antwerp
The tickets to Lady Gaga’s Monster Ball tour on 17 May in Antwerp sold out within hours, so the queen of...um, sex pop? Rowdy rock? Sparkly spandex...has graciously scheduled another. Tickets go on sale on Friday, 12 March, at 9.00, so have that website loaded and then Just Dance to the Paparazzi with your Pokerface.

What we see is inseparable from how we see, according to Bradford Butler, one of the guest artists at the Courtsiane festival in Ghent. Fans of experimental film and media art will enjoy the Vooruit’s most ambitious Courtsiane yet, with a bulging programme that belies the mere five days of festival.

The art centre in Ghent stages this annual event, which takes place inside its walls and at the city’s Sphinx cinema and Film Plateau. Courtsiane uses Butler’s approach in its programming: how can we escape the deeply embedded social and cultural narratives we replay in our heads every day to allow ourselves to see and interpret information in different ways?

With this sentiment as a guide, the films – most of them shorter than 60 minutes – are screened together according to themes. The seven films of ‘Reveal the Hidden’, for instance, includes a Danish movie that tries to visualise blindness (“to be watched with eyes open or shut”), a Belgian film featuring a woman explaining the mysterious of glass jars found buried in the American desert that contained the abuse they were suffering at the hands of family members.

“ ‘That Dimension’, meanwhile, is a series of films on actions that are unclear and blend reality and spirituality. A Letter to Uncle Boomeree is a Thai/British film that shows a group of young soldiers digging up the ground – but are they exhuming or burying? Another demonstrates the way American Peter Rose experiments with lightness and darkness as he seeks out deserted places in large cities and performs bizarre light ceremonies.

‘Time and Time Again’ features two films, the 15-minute Atlantis from France and the 53-minute Not Waving But Drowning by Elias Grootaers. The young Flemish filmmaker has already made an impression with the award-winning Lines, which followed three aging railways workers in the Belgian countryside, and is back with this film, which follows the experiences of Indian refugees as they are pulled from containers aboard a ship in Zeebrugge. More poetry than documentary, the film follows them as they wander about the harbour terminals, losing all sense of time and place. The title is taken from the poem by Stevie Smith: ‘It was much further out than you thought /And not waving but drowning’.

Courtsiane also includes an exhibition of video art and several special guests, including American David Gatten, who brings along the first four parts of his nine-part series Secret History of the Dividing Line, American Morgan Fisher, who introduces his own work plus the programme he has curated; and Irish-born David O’Reilly, a master of animation.

Liz Biezunski

Maison des Musiques
Lebeaustraat 39, 02.581.13.20
www.magasin4.be
Havenlaan 51B; 02.223.34.74
MAR 12 20.00 SAT (Fonky Family) + Mamba + Raeyems
MAR 13 21.00 Tiny Legs
MAR 15 21.00 Stone Rock & Gogo by Punpon

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The art centre in Ghent stages this annual event, which takes place inside its walls and at the city’s Sphinx cinema and Film Plateau. Courtsiane uses Butler’s approach in its programming: how can we escape the deeply embedded social and cultural narratives we replay in our heads every day to allow ourselves to see and interpret information in different ways?

With this sentiment as a guide, the films – most of them shorter than 60 minutes – are screened together according to themes. The seven films of ‘Reveal the Hidden’, for instance, includes a Danish movie that tries to visualise blindness (“to be watched with eyes open or shut”), a Belgian film featuring a woman explaining the mysterious of glass jars found buried in the American desert that contained the abuse they were suffering at the hands of family members.

“ ‘That Dimension’, meanwhile, is a series of films on actions that are unclear and blend reality and spirituality. A Letter to Uncle Boomeree is a Thai/British film that shows a group of young soldiers digging up the ground – but are they exhuming or burying? Another demonstrates the way American Peter Rose experiments with lightness and darkness as he seeks out deserted places in large cities and performs bizarre light ceremonies.

‘Time and Time Again’ features two films, the 15-minute Atlantis from France and the 53-minute Not Waving But Drowning by Elias Grootaers. The young Flemish filmmaker has already made an impression with the award-winning Lines, which followed three aging railways workers in the Belgian countryside, and is back with this film, which follows the experiences of Indian refugees as they are pulled from containers aboard a ship in Zeebrugge. More poetry than documentary, the film follows them as they wander about the harbour terminals, losing all sense of time and place. The title is taken from the poem by Stevie Smith: ‘It was much further out than you thought /And not waving but drowning’.

Courtsiane also includes an exhibition of video art and several special guests, including American David Gatten, who brings along the first four parts of his nine-part series Secret History of the Dividing Line, American Morgan Fisher, who introduces his own work plus the programme he has curated; and Irish-born David O’Reilly, a master of animation.
Since then, security in the Antwerp diamond quarter headed by Leonardo Notarbartolo were later arrested, the possible Italian identity of the thieves recalls the big-family – a so-called “tiger kidnapping”. The robbery took to go to his office while the gang stood guard over his posed as policemen to gain entry to the home of Pankaj €4.5 million in stones.

From the study that tested finances, using a recent

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Concerts at 20.30:

MAR 12

www.senghor.be

MAR 14

www.cafehopper.be

MAR 10

www.hetdepot.be

Het Depot
Steenstraat 50; 02.513.13.45
Charles Thielemanslaan 93; 02.773.05.88
Radoni’s Tribe
MAR 13

20.00 The Four Tops and The

MAR 12

20.30 Homage to Wannes Van
de Veíl

De Roma
Tuinboutesbaan 327; 03.292.97.40
www.droma.be
MAR 10

20.30 Boubacar Trarér

Zuidperdsephemester
Waalse Kaai 14; 03.248.24.24
www.zuidperdsephemester.be
MAR 13-14 20.00 Brad Mehldau and Josh Redman

Espace Senghor
Westerzeestraat 366, 02.230.31.40 www.senghor.be
MAR 12 20.30 Ernst Reijser & Molla Sylia

Jazz Station
Leuvensesteenweg 193, 02.733.13.78 Concerts at 20.30
MAR 10 Wolfke Mar 11 Marc Lelangue
MAR 13 Eve Beuvens & Mikiel Godej
MAR 17 Radonis Tribe
Le Caveau du Max
Emile Maximil 47, 02.733.17.88 www.lecaveau.be
MAR 11 19.30 Trio Hito Cero

Sint-Pieters-Woluwe Cultural Centre
Charles-Diethelmanslaan 93, 02.773.05.88 www.art-culture.be
MAR 12 20.30 Beverly Jo Scott
The Music Village
Steenstraat 30, 02.513.14.45 www.themusicvillage.com Concerts at 20.00:
MAR 10 A musical support to Tibet
MAR 11 Adam Rafferty MAR 12 Alan Copper Quartet MAR 13 Ali Ryerson MAR 13 Cocorico MAR 16 Teodora Einaiche

Ghost
Handelsbeurkers
Kouter 29, 09.265.92.01
www.handelsbeurkers.be
MAR 13 20.15 Carmen Souza

Antwerp
Buster
Kaarsru 1; 03.232.51.53, www.busterpub.be
MAR 11 22.00 Buster jam with Jo Caisters
MAR 12 22.00 The Gearband
MAR 12 23.00 Viren Bebbin

De Hopper
Leopold De Waethstraat 2; 03.248.49.33 www.dehopper.be
MAR 14 16.00 Phil & Quill Project
MAR 15 21.00 Thelousion 4
MAR 16 21.00 Pierre Andoerant Quintet

Brussels
Ancienne Belgique
Anspachplein 110, 02.548.24.24 www.ab.be
MAR 13-14 20.00 Brad Mehldau and Josh Redman

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ANTWERP
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MAR 12 22.00 THE GEARBAND
MAR 12 23.00 VIREN BEBBIN

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WWW.DEHOPPER.BE
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MAR 15 21.00 THELOUSION 4
MAR 16 21.00 PIERRE ANDOERANT QUINTET

BRUSSELS
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ANSPACHPLEIN 110, 02.548.24.24
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Theaterplein 1; 0900.69.900,
Stadsschouwburg
Until MAR 14
20.30 Janine Bischops and
www.fakkelteater.be
Reyndersstraat 7; 03.232.14.69
Fakkelteater
20.00 Troubleyn in De
MAR 17
20.30 Veldhuis & Kemper in
MAR 17
20.30 Salomee Speelt in Date
(in Dutch)
Béatrice Grognard
Egyptian Night), choreographed by
in de Egyptische nacht (Dreams in the
19.30/20.30 To the Ones
by Olivier Battesti
MAR 11
20.30 Cie Dessources in
MAR 13
20.30 Les Ballets C de la B in
Théâtre les Tanneurs
20.30 Laurent Chetouane in
www.beursschouwburg.be
Frida Kahlo y su mundo,
Mundos Mexicanos, 25
Mexican Modernisms,
Until MAR 27
James Lee Byars: From
Follies, multi-media installation
Through Biosphere 2, or Anastylosis of
photography, video and slides
Transient Wonders, Everyday Bliss,
Until MAR 27
Rinko Kawauchi:
Werfstraat 13; 02.229.00.03
Brussels
2009: Borders, contemporary African
photographer Carl De Keyzer
Until MAR 14
Foto Museum
Antwerp
Arenbergzicht
28, 070.222.192
www.arenbergzicht.be
MAR 10-13 20.15 Kommt Foo in Wolf
(in Dutch)
MAR 12 20.30 Salome Speelt in Date
Me! in Amsterdam, staged by Noëmi Schlosser
De Roma
Tuinstraat 332, 03.292.97.95, www.deraoma.be
MAR 13-20 Vélka Winkel & Keer in We Motten Praten (We Need to Talk),
cabaret (in Dutch)
Boula
Klopgracht 18, 03.224.88.44
www.troniehuis.be
MAR 13-11 20.00 Troudbell in The
Keizer van het Verre (The Emperor of Loss), directed by Jan Fabre (in Dutch)
Fakkeltheater
Rodestraat 7, 03.232.14.69
www.fakkeltheater.be
MAR 12 & 21 20.30 Janine Bishops and
Saartje Vandendriessche in Dem Oorlog (The War), written and directed by Peter Perceval (in Dutch)
Until MAR 14 20.30 Yves Caussier and
Gunter Renard: La Face de Calamityau (by Caussier (in Dutch)
Stadsschouwburg
Theaterplein 1, 0100.09.900,
www.stadsschouwburgwopen.be
MAR 17-28 The Sound of Music (musical, in Dutch)
Zuidperrontheater
Waalbrug 30, 02.248.80.00, www.zuidperrontheater.be
MAR 13-26 11.00 Van den Berghe en
Airts began in the 1914 wood-panelled interior
of Silence, installations by the New Y ork-
Naamsestraat 96; 016.32.03.20
www.mnh.be
MAR 12 20.30 Amstel Concerts
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photography biennial
Brussels
Arcos Centre for Art and Media
Werfstraat 13, 02.229.05.03
www.arcoscinema.be
Until APR 11 Kumi Oguro, photographs
Leuven
STUK
Naamsestraat 96; 016.32.03.20
www.1leuven.be
Until APR 21 Alfred Isao. The Sound of Silence, installations by the New York-
based Chinese artist
Bozar
Ravensteinstraat 23, 02.507.82.00, www.bozar.be
Until APR 11 Asian Modernisms, overview of post-colonial architecture, performance documentaries and contemporary music performances
Until APR 11 Mundus Mexicanos, contemporary Mexican photographers
Until APR 18 Frida Kahlo y su mundo, works by the famous Mexican artist on loan from the Dokters Olmedo Museum
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FACE OF FLANDERS

Sugar Jackson

Flemish athletes have soared to the top in tennis, cycling and even the high jump, but who knew there was boasting champion in the Ghana-born, Antwerp-based boxer Osei Bonu “Sugar” Jackson, 29, won the International Boxing Council (IBC) world welterweight title in 2005 and followed it up two years later with the European Boxing Union (EBU) crown. But he made his biggest headlines recently when he was embroiled in a doping row. It was only last month that the Flemish Doping Tribunal finally cleared Jackson’s name over his failure to provide details of his whereabouts last year for random, out-of-competition drug tests.

Jackson said he never received the letter telling him he was one of Flanders’ 713 top athletes, and therefore subject to the system. But (like Wickmayer and Malisse) he has now been given a call-up to a small Belgian section includes a few beers and cactus. And Mexicans are busy pickling jalapeno peppers and cabbage, Iranians pickle garlic, shallots and aubergines, and Indians pickle mudfish, but who knew there was Finnish athletes have soared to the top in tennis, cycling and even the high jump, but who knew there was boasting champion in the Ghana-born, Antwerp-based boxer Osei Bonu “Sugar” Jackson, 29, won the International Boxing Council (IBC) world welterweight title in 2005 and followed it up two years later with the European Boxing Union (EBU) crown. But he made his biggest headlines recently when he was embroiled in a doping row. It was only last month that the Flemish Doping Tribunal finally cleared Jackson’s name over his failure to provide details of his whereabouts last year for random, out-of-competition drug tests.

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The boxing world is famously split between fight and title organisations, and Jackson’s EBU and IBC belts are not considered majors. In 2006, when he was five years into his pro career, he was still making a living as a computer design specialist. But Jackson still believes he can make it. His website opens with the sounds of the song “The World’s Greatest” from the biopic Ali. It also offers fans the chance to buy a life-size bronze bust of Jackson. “I’m prepared to go anywhere to make it happen,” he said in 2006. “I’m a professional boxer and ready for anyone.”

Night of the Eight V: Sugar Jackson vs Randall Bailey, 19 March, Lotto Arena, Antwerp

I have been sorting through boxes of slides I took years ago and came across myself looking eerily like one of my sons. Time has left not too much of a mark, I like to kid myself, but it has cruelly thinned me out on top. A side effect of this is that I don’t spend much time or money at the kapsalon – hairdresser. And people talking about bad hair days leave me cold if only!

So when my eyes fell on a piece of mundane local news about the opening of a new kapsalon, I was surprised to find myself reading on. The proud owner is a young man called Nassim, who made his way to Belgium from Iraq to escape the misery of the war there. The article begins tantalisingly: Achter de twee blauwe ogen die schucher naar me kijken, schuilt een woelig verleden – Behind the two blue eyes that look at me shyly hides a turbulent past.

Exotic World

Growing up in Ohio, one of my favourite outings was to an unbelievably large warehouse called Jungle Jim’s, an international market often called a “theme park for foodies”. At more than 2.5 hectares, it was easily the most amazing and diverse international collection of food that I have ever seen.

Imagine the change in mindset needed to adapt to Brussels: a typical shopping outing can take me to as many as five stores to pick up everything I need. And for anything remotely exotic, good luck.

It was a pleasure, therefore, to discover Exotic World in Leuven. Although only the size of a typical supermarket, I had yet to see so many countries represented in one place since moving to Belgium.

The store, located on Brusselsestraat in the centre of town, is certainly not concerned with aesthetics – products are neatly arranged on the shelves, but the shelves themselves, along with the lighting and flooring, clearly prize function over form.

It can also be a bit confusing to navigate. Indian spices showed up next to the local Ducros brand herbs: Indian dried goods (beans, chickpeas) were nearer the rice section; and Indian foods that didn’t fall in either of those categories appeared elsewhere in what I could only assume was the “Indian” section. Moreover, you’ll need to bone up on your languages, as the names and alphabets are diverse and not always translated.

But what fun! Exotic World is full of products I had never heard of and that required subsequent internet research: from durian (a Southeast Asian fruit), to pontjajar (a tropical tuber), to pickled radish.

Exotic World features goods from far and near – even very near. A small Belgian section contains a few beers and liqueurs, Wilders jenever from Haacht and Delhaan homemade mayonnaise from Overijse.

I can only hope that someone out there is reading this article, exclaiming: “Pickled mudfish! I’ve been looking for random, out of competition drug tests.

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