**Spirit about to explode?**

An emergency meeting of the party executive committee and the mandatories of Spirit ended inconclusively on 16 May. Figurehead Bert Anciaux, who is also the Minister of the Government of Flanders for Culture, caused commotion in the small party by calling for an alliance with the VLD and those in favour of an alliance with the SPA. Between the two is a ‘middle group’ that wants the party to go into the elections on its own. The Gordian knot will be cut at another emergency meeting on Whit Monday (FF).

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STEVEN SOMERS • HET LAATSTE NIEUWS • 17 MAY

An undecided but extremely emotional match in which various leading players cried their heart out is a fitting description of the emergency consultations. Of particular note was the role played by Minister of the Government of Flanders Paul Van Grembergen and the former VU chairman Fons Borgignon, who firmly continued advocating the path of carrying on as a separate party. However, there is no longer an absolute majority in favour of this. ‘That would be totally implausible’, was how one member of parliament summed up the collective feeling. ‘Too much damage has already been caused by that interview’. ‘I continue to stress that I shall abide by the group’s decision’, repeated Anciaux. In the meantime it has become clear that the pronounced liberal preferences of various senior party figures has severely jeopardised Spirit’s future. Senator Van Quickenborne and member of the Flemish Parliament Margriet Hermans are waiting for the decision of the party’s executive committee, but have in mind a move to the VLD. Loyal Anciaux soldiers, such as senator Patrick Vankrunkelsven and member of the Flemish Parliament Sven Gatz are now living in agony, because they are considering the same move.
Anciaux wants to go to the elections with the Sp.a

Spirit’s big gun (in terms of votes), Bert Anciaux, who is also Minister of the Government of Flanders for Culture, is once again stirring things up in the political landscape. In an interview with Het Laatste Nieuws on 14 May, Anciaux called on his fellow party members to go to the elections in an alliance with the SP.A and the Christian labour movement ACW. In making this call, Anciaux was not toeing the party line because an evaluation of the direction in which the party ought to go was only to be made in June. With Anciaux’ statement, the whole debate on an independent course or the formation of an alliance has been thrown open in double quick time. The reactions of Spirit’s other chief party members have been mixed. Chairperson Annemie Vande Casteele shares Anciaux’ analysis, but wants the decision to be taken in June, as agreed. Senator Patrick Vankrunkelsven is undecided between the SP.A and the VLD. Ideologically he is closer to the SP.A, but the VLD’s open party structure appeals to him more. Senator Vincent Van Quickenborne continues to see greater benefit in an alliance with the VLD. Paul van Grembergen (Minister for Home Affairs in the Government of Flanders) wants Spirit to steer an independent course and, if necessary, go into the elections in a cartel with another party. The other senior party figure, Nelly Maes, is not favourably inclined towards co-operation with the SP.A.

Anciaux confessed that the events of the last few weeks, more specifically Le Pen’s success in France and Fortuyn’s success in the Netherlands, prompted him to take this step. Together with the socialists and the Christian workers’ movement, he wants to provide an answer to the feelings of impotence and frustration prevalent in poorer town districts. ‘For if we don’t provide it, the extreme right will push forward the answer’, according to Anciaux. However, Anciaux’s option to conditionally link Spirit to the SP.A is not only due to sincere commitment but also to cool calculation, according to De Standaard (15 May).

STEVEN SOMERS • HET LAATSTE NIEUWS 14 MAY

Anciaux: ‘We have been working on Spirit for a few months now. I still believe most firmly in the basic principles of our party, but the thing is that at the moment we have set ourselves, and the further development of our party, as our objective. However, there is a catastrophe in many people’s minds. There is fear, intolerance, uncertainty and frustration. The last thing these people expect is a party concerned chiefly with itself and its own continued existence. I think that we, as Spirit, should be saying, ‘we have a responsibility to assume today, and we shall do our bit towards tackling this proliferating unrest’. That is more important than trying to build your own more certain existence. If the whole neighbourhood is in flames, you don’t waste time bothering about the fine architecture of your own little house. You go and help put the fire out. Spirit can surpass the 5% threshold perfectly well on its own, and that is a brilliant victory for our new party. But will that put out the fire? We should be building a project with the people in the street, with the workers and the underprivileged. They are the socialists and the ACW’s traditional electorate. However, Anciaux immediately criticised his potential new alliance partner: ‘What Spirit offers is also a criticism of the SP.A. The extreme right has been eating away at the socialist movement for years now, and the socialists only have themselves to thank for that. The policy of putting ‘own people first’ in appointments is 100% ivory towers and business as usual. Spirit aims to shake things up in their camp. And take note that Spirit will be the louse in the fur of this alliance’

BART BRINCKMAN • DE STANDAARD • 15 MAY

The bar of Anciaux’s ambitions is higher than Spirit can jump, at least in the initial years. Basing itself on the most optimistic premises, Spirit is counting on scarcely four seats in parliament in the next parliamentary elections. Only an advanced co-operation with another party can keep Anciaux from oblivion. VLD, Agalev and SP.A have put themselves forward. For Anciaux, the VLD has been ruled out, which is probably down to ideological reasons. More importantly, however, is chairman De Gucht’s refusal to form a cartel. Spirit can join as a kind of political club, but under no circumstances will the VLD chairman tolerate separate decision-making structures.

However, Anciaux is making Spirit’s continued existence as a separate group a sine qua non condition. Agalev immediately comes into the picture. Sociologically, the Spirit/Anciaux and Agalev voters (the ‘intellectual double-income households’) are closer together. There are also good relations between the various mandates, especially in Europe. But Anciaux fears that he would not really be able to make the difference at Agalev.

What is more, he wants to ‘win back’ the voters in disadvantaged districts with a ‘positive project’. Agalev is not in a position to do this - not that the SP.A is ideally placed to do it either. But both the electorate and the history of the two parties differ intrinsically. For Spirit, that is the guarantee of a high added value and therefore the preservation of its own identity. Moreover, increases in scale herald the prospect of a role as a medium-sized party. And finally, from an ideological viewpoint, Anciaux feels comfortable with socialist solidarity-based thinking or the equal opportunities baseline.
Focus on Flanders • 11 May - 17 May 2002 • Number 18

**ECONOMY**

**Gabriels popularizes expansion support**

The Flemish Government will launch a revamped expansion support policy in the autumn. The Minister for Economic Affairs and Foreign Trade Jaak Gabriëls (VLD) wants to earmark more government funding for investment projects undertaken by SMEs and start-up entrepreneurs, and in particular make the allocation criteria more transparent. He wants to do away with the old-style subsidy allocation system, whereby the company that lobbied most effectively gained most. In so saying, he could not refrain from directing a broadside at his CVP predecessor Eric Van Rompuy (FF).

Johan Rasking • De Standaard • 14 May

Minister Jaak Gabriëls wants to take a new broom to the ‘old-style’ Flemish expansion support. He refers to the ‘empty promises’ made by the last CVP Minister for Economic Affairs, Eric Van Rompuy. ‘He went around visiting companies like Father Christmas but his big bag was empty’, says Gabriëls. ‘He promised support but did not have any money, nor for that matter permission from the European Commission. I have had to clean up hundreds of dossiers’.

Under the old system of expansion support, no distinction was made between investment projects presented by SMEs or large companies, or by start-up enterprises or established concerns. A new framework decree should change this situation. Every year EUR 100 million will be available for expansion support to ‘large enterprises in regional development zones’ and to ‘SMEs all over Flanders’. A further EUR 50 million will also go towards ‘training cheques’, another SME-friendly measure.

In the new expansion support policy, the Government of Flanders will no longer ‘make any value judgement of the investment project. The subsidy will be granted on the basis of the company’s profile and economic viability. Partial self-financing of the project by the company bears witness, for example, of belief in the concern’s own capabilities’. The VLD minister wants to popularise expansion support. ‘Many more small companies should be eligible for it. They can do a great deal even with small subsidy amounts, and that goes for start-up concerns, too. The funds are intended for economic projects, with an environmental or social component.’ The support given will be expressed in terms of an investment percentage, and this will range from 7.5% to 31%, depending on the size of the company [SMEs receive more] and irrespective of whether it is located in a regional support zone or not.

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**ECONOMIC SUPPORT**

**The importance of investment funds**

FF Editor

The year 2001 was not a great year for the Belgian Association of Collective Investment Institutions (BVICB). The collective investment fund assets sold on the Belgian market nonetheless increased by 3.9% to EUR 147 billion - a figure representing more than 56% of gross national product. Eight percent (EUR 11.65 billion) of those assets is invested in Belgian shares. Therefore, the influence of the investment funds, and of the decisions to buy and sell taken by the managers, ought not to be underestimated, according to De Standaard (15 May).

The year 2001 was largely dominated by the comeback of funds that invest in fixed-interest securities, such as bond and monetary funds. The weakening of the stock markets eroded the capital of the share funds (-7%) and prompted many investors to invest in ‘safer’ products such as bond funds (+10%), ‘click funds’ (with a capital guarantee,
SN Brussels to break away from Virgin Express?

SN Brussels Airlines, the successor to the bankrupt Sabena, currently has a code-sharing agreement with Virgin Express, which expires at the end of March 2003. According to that agreement, SN Brussels pays for a fixed number of seats on flights to Rome, Barcelona and Madrid. Conversely, Virgin Express buys seats on SN Brussels flights to Stockholm, Copenhagen and London Heathrow. According to a memo from the management that was leaked in De Morgen (13 May), SN Brussels does not want to extend the co-operation agreement with Virgin Express. However, the memorandum does not meet with the approval of managing director Peter Davies. He will only be deciding on the contract in October, and apologised to the Virgin Express CEO Neil Burrows. Some of the members of the SN Brussels management are drawing encouragement from the good figures that the new airline is able to show after four months in operation (seat occupancy of 49% and lower losses than predicted), and want to break away from Virgin Express. Reportedly, complaints about the service on Virgin flights have been on the increase. In the meantime, Virgin Express has concluded a commercial agreement with the Antwerp-based Van Gaver Airlines. VG Airlines passengers to and from American destinations can fly to and from 14 European destinations with Virgin Express. For its part, SN Brussels Airlines will be co-operating with Finnair for flights serving Helsinki, Geneva, Lyon, Bologna, Milan, Turin, and Venice, and with the French airline Air Littoral for flights serving Bordeaux, Lyon, Marseilles, Strasbourg and Toulouse (FF).

Opinion

KAREL MICHIELS • DE STANDAARD • 15 MAY

SN Brussels Airlines’ communication anything but charms me, let alone tempts me into buying a ticket. Barely half a year after Sabena’s dramatic downfall, SBNA appears to be adopting the same arrogant, disdainful tone as its predecessor, and regards itself as far superior to the more inexpensive airlines. Business is allegedly going so well that SNBA even wants to terminate the co-operation agreement with Virgin Express in the autumn. The reason? A few customers are reported to have complained about the service on Virgin flights. Pampered businessmen still appear to be prepared to pay ridiculously large sums of money for a ticket. The company foots the bill, and can put it down as a tax-deductible item. Everyone’s better off that way, aren’t they? It depends on how you look at it. Virgin boasts 80% seat occupancy on its flights, whilst the SNBA flights are not even half full, like Sabena. The environmental costs per passenger on SNBA flights are therefore considerably higher than those of Virgin. What is more, the days of limitless expense accounts are over, and businessmen, too, are increasingly aware of the interaction between environment and transport. But none of this probably interests the directors and managers at SNBA much. They continue to profile themselves as the airline of the demanding customer, of the moneyed classes who prefer not to rub shoulders with the riffraff populating Virgin and Ryanair flights.

Ubizen shares take a nose-dive

The Leuven network protector Ubizen (RISC Technology) saw its share lose almost 20% of its value on 13 May. Investors reacted unfavourably to the disappointing results for the second quarter which were announced by Ubizen’s chief executive Stijn Bijnens. In particular the negative EBITDA of EUR 0.67 million and Bijnens’ announcement that this figure would only move into the black in the second half of the year, and not before the third quarter, prompted investors to dump their shares, in the opinion of De Financieel-Economische Tijd [14 May]. Turnover increased from EUR 28.1 to 30.7 million, but this can largely be put down to the consolidated acquisition of the French company Adhersis, which accounted for EUR 7.5 million in turnover. The improvement in the gross margin from 36% to 47.2% was also attributable to the consolidation of Adhersis.
The two core concepts of the Flemish employment policy, the ‘active welfare state’ and ‘lifelong learning’, have taken on a negative undertone. The Minister of the Government of Flanders for Employment Landuyt (SP.A) in De Financieel-Economische Tijd (14 May). The ‘active welfare state’ does not mean that everyone has to work or that elderly people have to work longer, but that everyone feels good and feels involved in society, on the basis of a job. For many employees, ‘lifelong learning’ evokes unpleasant memories of school days, but it offers the job seeker or employee opportunities to strengthen his/her position in [professional] life.

Under the motto ‘If you keep up, you go further’, the Authorities of Flanders are encouraging Flemings to develop in line with the changes in the labour market. An advertising campaign in newspapers and weekly magazines is aimed at familiarising people with the ‘keep-up line’ (bijblijflijn), the call centre of the Flemish Employment and Vocational Training Agency (Vlaamse Dienst voor Arbeidsbemiddeling - VDBA) and the website www.bijblijven.be. Information is available about work [vacancies], training courses and ‘working less’ [the time-credit system, the four-day week, and so on].

‘Keeping up’ reflects the positive approach of the ‘active welfare state’ and ‘lifelong learning’, according to Landuyt. In the minister’s view, it all boils down to employees and job seekers cultivating an attitude whereby they constantly ask themselves how they can develop in tune with the changes in the labour market and take steps towards a successful, meaningful and happy [professional] life.

\[\text{One number and website for all questions relating to work and training}\]

\text{FF Editor}

\[\text{Dewael and De Gucht support nuisance tax}\]

Paul Van Grembergen (Spirit), the Flemish Minister for Home Affairs, will be holding consultations with the VLD mayors of Lokeren and Mechelen who want to introduce a ‘nuisance tax’. The talks will focus on the precise description of the concept of ‘nuisance’. Mechelen and Lokeren see the tax as a means of combating petty crime, because the public prosecutor’s offices usually dismiss such cases. Individuals picked up by the police would have to pay a tax. However, Minister Van Grembergen was of the view that it was the federal government’s job to bring action against petty crime, and compared the mayors’ initiative to that of ‘sheriffs in the Far West’. According to Van Grembergen, the concept of nuisance cannot be characterised as a taxable matter. This did not go down very well with VLD chairman Karel De Gucht and the Minister-President Patrick Dewael (VLD) (FF).

\text{Mark Deweerdt} • \text{De Financieel-Economische Tijd} • 16 May

The mayor of Mechelen, Bart Somers, reacted angrily to the announced suspension. He received the support of the VLD chairman Karel De Gucht, who called the nuisance tax a ‘simple, understandable, enforceable and socially clear answer to a major social problem’. De Gucht was amazed at the opposition to the measure. Minister-President Dewael, who expressed very strong feelings about the ‘sheriff’ comparison, summoned Van Grembergen yesterday to discuss the matter. It was agreed that Van Grembergen would look at how the concept of ‘nuisance’ could be more clearly defined, and would invite the mayors of the municipalities concerned for talks. Dewael sees the nuisance tax as a good instrument for combating petty crime. Van Grembergen’s spokesman said that Dewael acknowledged that there was a legal vacuum surrounding the concept of ‘nuisance’ and said that Van Grembergen would be looking into how this could be solved, in consultation with the mayors.

\[\text{Flanders should invest more in research}\]

According to Marc Luwel, the former scientific policy advisor to the Minister of the Government of Flanders for Education, Marleen Vanderpoorten (VLD), Flanders must urgently invest in research. In the coming decade, at least one third of Flemish professors will retire, and it is not certain whether Flanders will attract top-quality people to replace them. He believes the payment and employment conditions universities are able to offer are far from competitive (FF).

\text{Guy Tegenbos} • \text{De Standaard} • 14 May

Luwel is advocating an increase of EUR 60 to 70 million, for a period of six to seven years. The Flemish Government does not have a fixed programme for the increase of its research budget. The fact that the retirement of professors is reaching a peak now is logical. The professors who are now 55 to 65 years old, began their careers in the nineteen sixties and seventies, a period of great ‘university expansion’, as it was referred to back then. They number 1,162 and account for a third of all Flemish professors. The figures from the Flemish Inter-University Board refer to the situation as at 1 January last year. The situation has become even more acute since then. Luwel points out that their replacements will determine whether Flanders stays in Europe from an academic and research point of view, or lags behind. Luwel is not confident.

\[\text{Age of Flemish University Professors}\]

\text{Source: Luwel & Van}
Durant saves her skin

Isabelle Durant is still the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Transport in the Liberal/Socialist/Green coalition government, although it was a close shave. ‘We’ve survived the crisis’, said the Flemish Green Agalev member of parliament Lode Van Oost at the end of the parliamentary debate on 8 May, in which Durant was cross-examined on her role in Christian Heinzmann’s resignation. Heinzmann did not even last a full week as managing director of the Belgian national railway company, the NMBS/SNCB. The opposition parties had bayed for her resignation, not so much because she had made a mess out of the recruitment procedure, but because she had refused to accept a letter of resignation from Heinzmann and subsequently had her office draw up a letter of resignation itself. In this second letter, all criticism of the government had been removed, and the brutal attitude adopted by the trade unions and the senior management of the NMBS/SNCB towards Heinzmann were given as the reasons for his resignation. Or rather, that is Heinzmann’s version of the facts. According to Durant, this second letter of resignation was drawn up in consultation with Heinzmann. The Flemish opposition parties did not conceal their disgust. At the end of the parliamentary debate, their attitude towards the minister was merciless. According to Frieda Brepoels of the N-VA, the government got entangled in its own web of lies and deceit. According to CD&V parliamentary party leader Yves Leterme, the Greens had an alliance with the Liberals to get rid of the former NMBS/SNCB boss Etienne Schouppe and to politicise the railway company as they saw fit. Moreover, CD&V transport specialist Jos Ansons believes the crisis has caused irreparable damage to the railway company. According to Ansons, not a single member of the senior management dares to take any initiative in the wake of the government’s damage operation, with the result that thousands of dossiers are now frozen at all levels.

Recent Belgian history has shown that forcing a minister to stand down requires various elements to bring about a negative dynamic, reports De Morgen (11 May). A slip needs to be made (the resignation of Heinzmann), an error needs to be made in the crisis communication (the tug-of-war surrounding the letters of resignation) and a party in office must openly withdraw its support for the minister (the SPA). And finally the question needs to trouble public opinion. This was also the case, seeing that Flemish newspapers called for Durant to stand down or wondered what prompted the government to continue its support for Durant. Although Verhofstadt’s private office denies it, the Prime Minister’s role was decisive in the background of the whole Heinzmann case, according to most newspapers. The opposition parties were peeved at his absence from the crucial parliamentary debate on 8 May.

Opinion

BART STURTEWAGEN • DE STANDAARD • 10 MAY

In terms of power politics, it was an open-and-shut case from the word go. The idea of the responsible minister, Isabelle Durant, stepping down did not survive long. After all, the Prime Minister himself had placed his full weight behind her handling of the issue. Together, they devised the formula that would cushion Christian Heinzmann’s resignation, her candidate for the top job at the NMBS/SNCB. They decided that a head-on attack of the managers and the trade unions in the company would divert attention from the political mess they had created. The foolish Heinzmann was obviously not a serious party in this struggle. The man never understood the farce in which he was playing, and this is where the miscalculation lurked. He does not even know when he has to keep quiet. Thanks to him we now know things that were not intended for public consumption.

BART EECKHOUT • DE MORGEN • 11 MAY

Isabelle Durant survived the last week, and for this she chiefly has Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt (VLD) to thank. At all crucial moments in the Heinzmann affair, the Prime Minister’s office had at least one finger in the pie. Flitting in and out of the sliding panels of the Liberal/Socialist/Green reality is the recurring figure of Luc Coene, president of the Chancellery (and Verhofstadt’s former principal private secretary) - and Verhofstadt’s all-round fixer. There is no questioning Coene’s political intellect. However, his highly individual working method, characterised by direct interventions, informal telephone calls and discreet tête-à-têtes, have occasionally caused him to overplay his hand. This is what happened in the NMBS/SNCB saga.

The politically ignorant Heinzmann lost the pedals completely, thus allowing Durant to save her skin. Durant’s removal from the government would also cause the smouldering dissatisfaction among the members of Ecolo over the government’s work to flare up once and for all. Since a Green crisis would have also swept Agalev along, the entire government would immediately risk being brought down. With the finishing line (i.e. the elections of 2003) in sight, and a whole series of important reforms (company law, electoral law, and youth law) still in the offing, that scenario would easily equal Verhofstadt’s worst nightmare.

PAUL GEUDENS • GAZET VAN ANTWERPEN • 13 MAY

The NMBS/SNCB story of the last week is the purple-green government’s biggest blunder thus far. Durant should have stood down. That is the view of probably everyone, except herself - and Guy Verhofstadt. The Prime Minister continues to talk about the new managing director (the new rara avis) who is on the way, regarding the modernisation of public enterprises, and regarding the fact that citizens are entitled to efficient and decent administration. The words ‘excuse’, ‘ethics’ and ‘political accountability’ do not appear in the Liberal/Socialist/Green coalition’s vocabulary.
Trade Unions are tired of accusations by politicians

**FF EDITOR**

In his Rerum-Novarum speech to celebrate the Christian workers’ movement, the ACV’s chairman Luc Cortebeeck lashed out at the upper echelons of the liberal VLD. He feels that the VLD purposely wanted to harm the trade unions and tried to shift the blame for the NMBS/SNCB crisis to the unions. He also believes the Green and socialist governing parties have not done enough to defend the unions. He is calling for the government to apologise to the unions. The next day it was Roger van Hove’s turn, of the socialist railway union, to express his displeasure at what he called the ‘criminalisation’ of the trade unions by the Minister for Transport Isabelle Durant (Ecolo) and the ‘highest authority in this country’ (Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt). Shifting the blame for Christian Heinzmann’s resignation as managing director to the trade unions was one bridge too far, he said. In the meantime, the former railways managing director Etienne Schouppe announced that he was again considering submitting his candidacy for the job of managing director. The CD&V supports his candidacy. Roger van Hove of the socialist trade union pointed out the railway company has enough skilled staff to manage the company. ‘The NMBS/SNCB has other good managers in addition to Etienne Schouppe’, according to Van Hove in De Morgen [11 May]. Applicants have until 17 May to submit their candidacy.

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**SP.A links passenger plan to appointment of NMBS Managing director**

**FF EDITOR**

The fact that Durant would not get much support from the Flemish Western Europe. This gave rise to a ‘subjective’ series of photos with recognisable images of allotments, access roads, front gardens, road infrastructure camouflaged by green, and so on. On the basis of the specific situation in the ‘Flemish Rhombus’, the team tested a number of techniques to enable the slumbering potential of negative space to shine forth. With a series of operations such as shift, overlay, insert, hide, frame, found, connect, array and add [computer operations], the team structured and rearranged the chaotic condition of the sprawl. Landscape fragments were added or connected to each other. The hide principle perhaps best illustrates De Geyter’s clever strategy. He proposes camouflaging buildings or groups of buildings in a landscape area with green structures, so that large landscape sight lines are created at certain points. Another simple but effective method, which has both an environmental and a visual landscape value, is the connect principle whereby natural river valleys serve to connect open areas with each other, something that is wholly in

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**Being creative with sprawl**

Sprawl typifies the environmental congestion in Flanders. By sprawl, we mean the ribbon development along provincial roads, residential allotments, industrial zones next to meadows and fields, and detached houses dotted about in the landscape. Architect Xavier De Geyter and his colleagues do not want to stare blindly at the ugliness of it all. According to them, town and countryside planning experts these days are not in a position to tackle sprawl, because they keep swearing by old patterns and antitheses: city versus countryside, closed versus open. However, De Geyter and his team concluded that 60% of space in urbanised areas is still made up of open spaces, for example former industrial zones, motorways, green spaces, parks, gardens, sports fields, agriculture and roadside verges. De Geyter calls this unplanned open space ‘negative space’, in the sense of space that forms a kind of photographic negative of the built-up area. He feels that there is still a great deal to be done with this negative space. The result is ‘After-sprawl’, which he presents in a fascinating exhibition in De Singel in Antwerp (FF).

**KOEN VAN SYNGHEL • DE STANDAARD • 14 MAY**

De Geyter’s research began with the study of satellite photos, on which the built-up areas and the infrastructure were very clearly discernible. By reversing these photos, i.e. by looking at their negative, a new kind of map appeared with the negative or non-planned open space. An atlas grew out of the project’s map material allowing a comparison to be made of the characteristics of the so-called Flemish Rhombus [the area between Ghent, Antwerp, Leuven and Brussels] with Greater London, the Ruhr Region in Germany, the three-city triangle of Basel/Zurich/Bern in Switzerland, and the region surrounding Venice in Italy. They also travelled to the sprawl areas in

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**CULTURAL POLICY**

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the spirit of the Flanders Structural Plan. Of course the After-Sprawl exhibition does not offer an all-embracing town and country planning strategy or theory that could immediately be applied to Flanders in ready-made form. The proposals are too heavily, and too simply, based on formalistic principles for that. However, this does not detract from the fact that this study, far more than the Flanders Structural Plan, shows in concrete form that Lebensraum [living space] that appeals to the imagination is feasible in Flanders. Architects, in this case Xaver De Geyter and his team, demonstrate that society is better served with imagination and the power of project thought than with the legal and political bull surrounding conventions, greenhouses and second-residence houses built in areas intended for other purposes.

After-Sprawl - De Singel - Antwerp. www.desingel.be

**Diary**

**MUSIC, DANCE & THEATRE**

**• Until 17 May:** Kunstenfestival des Arts, Brussels; info: 070/222.1999 www.kunstenfestivaldesarts.be

Until 27 May: **Méditerrâne**, Film Festival, Filmuseum, Antwerp; info: 03/233.85.71 www.filmuseum.brus.web

• 23 May: Flanders Royal Philharmonic Orchestra with piano concerto by Prokoviev and Symphonic dances by Rachmaninov, De Bijloke, Ghent; info: 09/225.65.82 www.de-bijloke.be

**• 22 May:** Orfano wear, Goods, private room, I'm all yours, soft Antwerp; info: 03/248.28.28

**• 23 to 25 May:** Ghent; info: 09/225.65.82 www.debijloke.be

Bach, Händel and Telemann; De Bijloke, Heyerick Bijloke, Ghent; info: 09/225.65.82 www.de-bijloke.be

**• 24 May:** Brussels Jazz Marathon: Monsieur Dubois and Skeem, Ancienne Belgique, Brussels; info: 02/548.24.24 www.abconcerts.be

27 May: Neil Halstead, Ancienne Belgique, Brussels; info: 02/548.24.24 www.abconcerts.be

30 May: Royal Philharmonic Orchestra of Flanders with lute; Kasprzyk with van Beethoven and Brahms, Koningin Elisa- bethzaal, Antwerp; info: 0800/21036 www.kfw.be

30 May: Van Berg Quartet, PSK, Brussels, info: 02/507.82.00 www.psk.pha.be

• 31 May to 30 June: Damnation de Faust, De Munt, Brussels; info: 070/233.939 www.demunt.be

• 29 May: Elton John & Band, Sportpaleis, Antwerp; info: 0900/26060

• 6 June: Sonic/2quatre #5: stuttersmouthface with Christof Migone, Vincent Barras, Brandon Labelle, Caroline Bergvall, Kaaitheater-studios, Brussels; info: 02/201.59.59 www.kaaitheater.be

**EXPO**

Until 23 June: Retrospective exhibition Jannis Kounellis, SMAK, Ghent, info: 09/211.17.03 www.smaik.org

• Until 2 June: About the Head, exhibition, Museum Dr. Chislain, Ghent; info: 09/216.55.35 www.fracarita.be

Until November: Living Tomorrow, where visions meet, the house of the future, Vil- vorde; info: www.livtrom.be

• Until 30 June: Bruges 2002 Impact, 1902 Revisited: The Flemish Primitives at Bruges, exhibiti- on, Arentshuis, Bruges; info: 070/223.32.02 www.brugge2002.be

Until 30 June: Jan Van Eyck, The Flemish Primitives and the South, Groeningemuseum, Bruges, Until 15 September: In situ: exhibition on different locations with Manon De Boer, Messieurs Delmotte, Robert Devriendt, Job Koelewijn, Ugo Rondinone, Joe Scanlan and Joelle Tuerlinckx, Until 2 June: The snake, sculptures on 12 locations in Bruges, Until 21 July: The modular museum and Schone Aassicht 2, Kolenkraai, Bruges, Until 15 September: Home theatre, Concertgebouw, Bruges

• Until 26 May: Rik Wouters, exhibition, KMSK, Antwerp, info: 03/238.78.09 www.antwerpen.be/cultur/kmska

• Until 26 May: Rik Wouters, exhibition, PSK, Brussels, info: 02/507.84.66 www.pskpha.be

• Until 15 June: PsK, Brussels; info: 02/279.64.34

• Until 26 May: James Welling: Abstract, exhibition, PSK, Brussels, info: 02/507.84.66 www.pskpha.be

• Until 14 July: Silver work by the De Vecchi Family, Provincial Museum Sterckshof-Zilvercentrum, Antwerp, info: 03/360.52.50

• Until 3 June: The Brueghel Firm, exhibition, Royal Museums of Fine Arts, Brussels; info: 02/508.32.11

• Until 1 June: Surrealism with Emile Salkin (Bel), Desmond Morris (GB), Ergin Inan (Turkey) and Clavis Touilfe (Fr), exhibition, PPMK, Ostend; info: 059/50.81.18 www.ppmk.be

• Until 16 June: Affinity and Individuality, exhi- bition Holland-Belgium between 1890 and 1945, Museum of Fine Arts, Ghent; info: 09/200.20.07

• Until 9 June: After Sprawl, the contemporary city, exhibition, De Singel, Antwerp, info: 03/248.28.28 www.desingel.be

• Until 33 June: Desire in a cage, Jane Graverol, Rachel Baes and surrealism, KMSK, Antwerp; info: 03/238.78.09

• Until 5 June: A gallery of grand pianos, 60 pianos from the historical collection of Chris Maene, Bijloke, Ghent with concerts, Bijloke, Ghent; info: 09/266.70.40

• Until 31 August: Kunst-stoff/ff: exhibition on contemporary art and design, Broelmuseum, Kortrijk

• Until 9 June: After Sprawl: study about the contemporary city, exhibition on architecture, De Singel, Antwerp, info: 03/248.28.28

• Until 28 July: The ritual art of the Lega, ethics and beauty in the heart of Africa, exhibition, KBC-galley, info: 02/492.85.68

• Until 27 May: Postkarte Berlin, art and Berlin, Goethe-Institut, Brussels, info: 02/502.57.34 www.recyclart.be

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