Brussels’ defence summit

The meeting of France’s President Chirac, Germany’s Chancellor Schröder and Luxembourg’s Premier Juncker with the Belgian Premier Verhofstadt in the Egmontpalais in Brussels produced a number of concrete plans to give a new impetus to European defence. But according to De Standaard (30 April), the summit’s final text as yet makes no mention of a headquarters (in Tervuren). There is reference to a European rapid intervention force, and the acceptance by the European Convention of a European Union of Security and Defence. According to Verhofstadt, the first results of a common defence policy will be visible by 2005. The initiative is explicitly not being presented as a competitor to military consultation within NATO, but as a second European pillar within NATO. However, the more Atlantic-minded European Member States and NATO are reacting with suspicion. According to De Financieel-Economische Tijd, the initiative is lacking a healthy dose of realism (30 April) and De Standaard deprecates the fact that the initiative-takers did not opt for a broader support beforehand involving more EU Member States (FF).

Opinion

BART STURTEWAGEN • DE STANDAARD • 30 APRIL

The very fact that the summit took place less than three weeks before the elections, was certainly for Belgian domestic purposes a success in itself. True, the most inspired ideas that the Belgian Government had pushed to the fore for approval were weeded out by the French and Germans, but there was a press conference, there was a photo opportunity and there was a text, albeit with all cutting remarks removed.

The biggest risk was that the initiative would emphasise the division of Europe into two camps, whereas now the war in Iraq is over it should be a time for patching up differences. By rejecting a real military headquarters – Verhofs-tadt had suggested Tervuren as a location – that danger has largely been averted. The four national and government leaders did their best to stress what their initiative was not. It is not intended as an act of distrust towards America and its allies. The four now have to go out to remove it and make European converts to their plans. That shows how unfortunate it is that efforts were not made from the outset to widen support. After all, greater effort is required to introduce a common European defence policy. Without that Europe can only look on powerless as its Member States draw up in disorder a battle array during international crises, after which the moaning about the lack of efficiency can begin again.

INTRODUCTION

Two-and-a-half weeks before the elections on 18 May the campaigns are gradually getting up to cruising speed. The last few weeks are of vital importance in convincing floating voters. They can decide whether a party wins or loses, claims the Gazet van Antwerpen (28 April). That is a dogma in which many politicians also believe. The elections are won or lost in the campaign. Even parties that can boast a successful policy can lose the elections. As a rule the party that manages to press home its theme as the election theme can build up an unassailable lead. In the current poor economic climate the major political families (Liberals, Social Democrats and Christian Democrats) are assuming that the voter will choose certainty and henceforth the party that manages to come up with the most convincing answer to the economic crisis. VLD Leader and Premier Guy Verhofstadt believes that cutting corporation tax and personal income tax is the best way of giving a boost to the economy. The Christian Democrats of the CD&V also explicitly took the socio-economic line at their election meeting in Ghent. There, Chairman De Clerck called for a cut in wage costs and for a basic employment pact between employers and workers. The second priority for the CD&V is reducing government debt. The Social Democrats of the SPA are also in favour of cutting taxes, but for them this has to be linked to results in the field of employment. Just before Labour Day on 1 May Chairman Stevaert put himself forward as a fierce defender of the early retirement system, which has been criticized severely recently. Stevaert also wants to do away with unfair lump-sum taxes and has a plan to collect taxes more efficiently. But if the socio-economic theme actually has to take centre stage, the nuisances of the current political scene have to be neutralised as much as possible. This explains not only why draconian measures were taken against fowl pest, but also why a solution was feverishly sought to the prison ward strikes and why in Antwerp the new bench of Aldermen is being installed without the new candidate mayor Patrick Janssens. Because as long as the nuisances are to the fore, one party stands to gain certainly, namely the Vlaams Blok, which is proud of the fact that it does not even need to campaign to win elections.

Frank Vandecaveye | editor in chief
Antwerp's bench of aldermen begins with outgoing mayor

VLAAMS BLOK BOSS PHILIP DEWINTER APPARENTLY IS USING EVERY TRICK IN THE BOOK TO DELAY JANSSENS APPOINTMENT

The original plan was that at the meeting of the City Council on Monday 28 April Patrick Janssens, former Chairman of the SPA, would take the oath as mayor, and with him two new aldermen, Robert Voorhamme (SPA) and Ludo Van Campenhout (VLD) would be appointed. However, the oath was never taken. The Vlaams Blok lodged a complaint against Patrick Janssens because his name appears in four files being investigated for fraud, among other things as chairman of the non-profit organisation Technopolis and vice-chairman of the intermunicipal company Cipal. The consequence of this is that the appointment may be delayed for weeks. This is because before Flemish Internal Affairs Minister Paul Van Grembergen (Spirit) can appoint Janssens he must first seek the advice of Provincial Governor Camille Paulus. And before this advice is forthcoming, Paulus first wants greater clarity on Janssens’ possible involvement in these affairs. He has therefore asked for further clarifications from Antwerp Procurator-General Christine Deckers. By constantly lodging new complaints against Janssens the far-right party is forcing the Procurator to repeatedly postpone the advice she must give Governor Paulus. Moreover, the party also intends contesting the nomination of Patrick Janssens as mayor in the Council of State. Until further notice, there is no point waiting. On Tuesday 29 April the coalition partners decided to install the new bench of aldermen without Patrick Janssens. From next week, outgoing Mayor Leona Detiège (SPA) will head the new team. According to the coalition partners there is no sense in waiting, as it is impossible to guess how long Janssens’ appointment will remain blocked (FF).

Opinion

KARL VAN DEN BROECK • DE MORGEN • 28 APRIL

Three weeks before the elections Antwerp still does not have a mayor, despite the whole country thinking his appointment was a formality. According to Janssens himself, that is the fault of Vlaams Blok boss, Philip Dewinter. He apparently is using every trick in the book to delay Janssens’ appointment. According to Professor Dujardin, lecturer in administrative law at VU Brussels, the delaying manoeuvres should not detract from the fact that the appointment of the mayor is a political decision. Flemish Minister Van Grembergen (Spirit) is the only one authorised to do this. As an alliance partner of Janssens the Spirit Minister would undoubtedly be accused of being ‘biased’ if he were to appoint Janssens without unanimously positive advice from the Justice Department. But if Professor Dujardin is right, the sword of Damocles still hangs over Janssens’ head. Because he was pushed to the fore before Leona Detiège had actually submitted her resignation, other parties could attack his appointment in the Council of State. After all, they did not have the chance to put forward their own candidate. In short: Antwerp is caught up in an inextricable legal tangle. Both the population and the City Council are being held hostage. If Van Grembergen waits until the court has dealt with all the complaints against Janssens, this administrative immobility will continue. If he appoints Janssens anyway, if necessary without waiting for the court’s advice, Janssens’ appointment threatens to be thwarted by an administrative complaint. That would render Janssens’ team partially powerless. The only person to profit from all this is Philip Dewinter.

USA POLICY

After a day of negotiations the negotiators of the SPA, VLD, Agalev and CD&V asked Leona Detiège on Tuesday evening if she was still prepared to start the new team. She said yes. The bench will convene a new City Council on 9 May, where alongside the oath-taking of the aldermen – with newcomers Ludo Van Campenhout (VLD) and Robert Voorhamme (SPA) – the amended administrative agreement will be submitted.

That addendum is to be implemented immediately. This means the swift installation of an integrity bureau, the crisis managers Eddy Bruyninckx and Pieter Crombecq, and an investigation of municipal management. All politicians and civil servants are also waiting to sign a code of professional ethics.

To take the wind out of the Vlaams Blok’s sails the majority also decided on Tuesday to re-submit Patrick Janssens’ act of nomination. Filip Dewinter said he would contest the new mayor’s current nomination in the Council of State, because a city council cannot nominate a new candidate if the current mayor has not stepped down. Detiège will only formally tender her resignation if signals are received from the court that the investigation against Patrick Janssens is complete, and his candidature can count on a positive recommendation. Until then Janssens will remain a council member.

In the City Council on Monday evening Agalev and the CD&V had pressed for a quick new start to the college. According to Agalev Alderman Erwin Pairon, the team now realises that that is a good thing. ‘We first had to discuss the principle together with the new mayor. But if we hear that it could take months, there is no point waiting. On Tuesday evening the coalition partners expressedly thanked Leona Detiège for her gesture. ‘She is doing it for the good administration of the city, and deserves every respect,’ says Pairon.
Minister Verwilghen concludes preliminary agreement with prison wards

On 29 April, Justice Minister Marc Verwilghen (VLD) concluded a preliminary agreement with the unions of the prison wards of the Saint-Gilles and Forest prisons. In Sint-Gillis prison there will be a further 18 wards, and in Vorst 15. From now on the maximum number of prisoners in Sint-Gillis will be 620, and in Vorst 600. In addition, the Justice Department is releasing 11,000 euros to repair the monitoring and alarm systems in Vorst. On 30 April the trade unions in Vorst submitted the preliminary agreement to a general meeting and agreed to finish the strike.

The day before, on Monday 28 April, the negotiations between Minister Verwilghen and the prison officers’ unions had broken down. They were not satisfied with the measures approved by the Council of Ministers at the instigation of Justice Minister Marc Verwilghen. The Council decided to increase the number of places for electronic monitoring by 50% to 450 and take on 141 extra members of staff and have a number of eastern Europeans tried in their own country.

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The failed prisons policy of minister Verwilghen

On Monday 28 April Marc Verwilghen, who during the prison officers’ strike was heavily criticised by the opposition parties (Vlaams Blok, NV-A and CD&V), once again went through all the interventions during his policy at a press conference: an additional 1,326 places were created in prisons, the budget rose by 31%, the number of prison wards rose from 5,000 to 6,000. In addition, work punishment was introduced and mercy requests were no longer granted. Nevertheless, the number of prisoners rose as never before whilst he was minister, despite Verwilghen’s well-intended ‘front-door policy’ to limit the influx into prisons. Gazet van Antwerpen is investigating how this is and why Verwilghen’s policy failed on that point [FF].

JOHN DE WIT • GAZET VAN ANTWERPEN • 28 APRIL

The number of imprisonments on remand rose enormously over the past ten years. Since 1990 their number rose by 53%, as did the average period of confinement, from 1 month 28 days to 3 months 1 day. The existing alternative punishments are only used as an alternative to freedom, not to confinement. Under pressure from public opinion, examining magistrates still see imprisonment on remand as a punishment, claimed Hilde Tubex, researcher at the Free University of Brussels. The Parliament and Verwilghen did nothing about the abuse of this temporary imprisonment. Nevertheless, if imprisonment on remand lasted as long now as it did in 1980, as many as 800 cells would become free every day. The introduction of a maximum period of 12 months would be enough to achieve this target. But political reforms are slowing down the search for substantiating material.

The number of long-term prisoners in prisons is also on the rise. Between 1980 and 1997 there was a six-fold increase in the number of convictions with a sentence of 5 to 10 years and a four-fold increase in the number of life imprisonments. Obviously crimes have become more violent since 1980, but ordinary criminal judges have also become much stricter. Pressure from public opinion and sharp rises in solitary confinement by Parliament have much to do with this. In the moral sector in particular, punishments have increased in severity since 1995. Verwilghen also created an extra-strict regime for sex-offenders, and was quick to repeal judicial decisions, sometimes dubiously.

Verwilghen wanted to limit the influx of prisoners into prisons and impose a prisoner quota on each prison, so that examining magistrates would be forced to reconsider their confinement policy, but his bill was not ratified. He did, however, manage to get community service limited to 300 hours as an alternative. But community service is not imposed often enough. Also, it is not an alternative to confinement but to freedom and is only imposed for minor offences.

There has been no discussion of prisons policy. Since April 1995 people have been saying that Parliament must hold a debate on crime and punishment. Should the punishment first and foremost be useful, prevent recurrence and make society safer, or is revenge more important? Where are the priorities when sentencing? The debate never took place and Verwilghen did not submit a working paper. He did, however, submit a working paper on the rights of detainees [the Dupont report], but the discussion was postponed until the next legislature. Parliament is not interested in this problem. In theory Verwilghen had a brave policy that would limit the prison population, but in practice it came to nothing. However, the responsibility for this debacle lies with all government parties.
Drastic measures against spreading fowl pest

The Federal Council of Ministers also decided to increase the compensation for affected chicken farmers from 70 to 90% of the market value of the destroyed animals.

On 25 April the Federal Government wheeled out the big guns in the fight against fowl pest, after a day earlier two new sources were confirmed, one in Bree in Limburg and one in Meer in Antwerp. It delineated a super-buffer zone to the east of the Lower Scheldt and the Albert Canal. The Federal Agency for Food Safety (Federaal Agentschap voor de Voedselveiligheid) hopes this will prevent the feared disease from also contaminating the large numbers of poultry farms in East and West Flanders. Milk and animal feed may no longer be transported across this water border, and even chicken farmers can no longer cross. However, the pest not only spreads through contacts, but also on the wind or via wild birds, says Minister for Public Health Jef Tavernier (Agalev), which does not look optimistic to him. Meanwhile, in the areas under supervision around the contaminated farms the clear-up continues unabated. The Federal Council of Ministers also decided to increase the compensation for affected chicken farmers from 70 to 90% of the market value of the destroyed animals. The cost of the crisis is now put at between 10 and 20 million euros (FF).

Three parties are involved in financing the costs associated with the fowl pest: the European Commission, the Belgian government and the poultry sector. The European Commission is paying half the total bill, both for the clear-up and to compensate the affected poultry farmers for the market value of the destroyed animals. Following the intervention of Europe, Minister Tavernier is proposing splitting the remaining bill into a clear-up part for the government and a part for paying compensation through the poultry sector fund.

By extending the buffer zones in Limburg and Antwerp to the Scheldt and the Albert Canal, the Food Agency wants to keep the chance of the major centres of poultry rearing in West and East Flanders also being affected to a minimum. The extension to these two major waterways has created a single large buffer zone, which for administrative purposes is divided into Limburg, Antwerp-east and Antwerp-west zones. In this zone the Agency wants to prevent the outbreak of new sources of contamination with strict measures.

The country is divided into four types of area. Belgium to the southwest of the Scheldt and the Albert Canal is the least strictly regulated area. But poultry and hatching eggs are not allowed to travel there. The animals can, however, be taken for slaughter. Eggs for consumption may also be transported. The buffer zone is the second type of area. This is governed by stricter rules, such as ban on entering poultry farms. The transport of eggs for consumption is much more strictly regulated, and dactylos animals such as pigs and horses may not be transported from farms that also keep poultry. Milk can also be collected according to strict rules, and dogs and cats on poultry farms must remain indoors.

Within the buffer zone there are two supervision zones, which form the third type of area. They are located in a 10-kilometre radius around the two sources of contamination in Antwerp and the five sources in Limburg. In the Limburg supervision zone, all animals on poultry farms are being destroyed. In Antwerp this is currently being done in a radius of three kilometres. But the Managing Director of the Food Agency, Piet Vanthemsche, is not precluding the possibility of also destroying animals in the whole supervision zone in Antwerp. The strictest rules apply in the fourth type of area, which is in the zone of one kilometre around the contaminated farms. There all poultry, therefore also that kept by private individuals, is being destroyed.

WWW.FAVV.BE
Moonlighting blossoms

At least 6% of wages are still paid illicitly

1.7 billion euros: that is the amount lost in social-security contributions each year through moonlighting. At least 6% of wages are still paid illicitly, and so no social-security contributions are paid on these wages. This is evident from calculations by the Higher Institute of Labour Studies (Hoger Instituut voor de Arbeid, HIVA) of the Catholic University of Leuven. The study carried out by Prof. Jozef Pacot and An Marchal, which was presented at an international colloquium on moonlighting in Leuven, only charts fraud in salaried work based on the fraud and so-called ‘mistakes’ discovered by the 1200 social inspectors. Self-employed work, work carried out in households and the purely illegal economy are not included. International studies show that overall, the black economy accounts for as much as 22% of the entire Belgian economy. The various pressure groups each have their own answer to the problem (FF).

JAN SCHEIDTWEILER • DE MORGEN • 29 APRIL

In the last period of government, moonlighting was on the table of at least three ministers and one government commissioner. Finance Minister Reyniers (MR), Employment Minister Onkelinx (PS), Social Affairs Minister Vandebroucke [SPA] and Government Commissioner for Combating Fraud Alain Zenner had to try and stem the illegal job circuit. Onkelinx and Zenner took part in consultative forums in which they examined how moonlighting in the hotel and catering industry and the building trade, two sectors with an abundant underground economy, could be curbed. Onkelinx decided that from the middle of last year the Labour Inspectorate would introduce 500 extra control days. For some specific sectors, such as security services or cleaning, the Federal Government then tried to reach a better settlement via joint ventures. Minister Vandebroucke said that he wanted to adopt a tougher approach to moonlighting if he got the opportunity in the next government. ‘If we succeed in collecting contributions correctly, the burden of social-security contributions of those who pay correctly can also be fur-

Vandebroucke highlights four points for consideration: firstly, the government should strive to simplify the complicated legislation that creates uncertainty. In addition, better information is required on the duty to pay contributions, along with a more targeted approach to actual fraud through better co-operation by the inspection teams, and a genuine policy of prosecution must also be introduced. According to him, this is not a priority for the courts. According to Unizo, the association of independent employers, employers currently sometimes pay illicit wages ‘at the request of their own employees’. Unizo is calling for a round table on moonlighting with social partners and the authorities concerned. On top of this, the ‘dishonest use of unemployment benefits and other social benefits must also be examined closely. Thus it was that last weekend the Antwerp Centre for Social Policy (Centrum voor Sociaal Beleid) announced that for the long-term unemployed and cohabiting women, unemployment benefits was sometimes seen more as a welfare benefit than as an incentive to look for work.

JOHAN VAN GEYTE • GAZET VAN ANTWERPEN • 29 APRIL

The government is trying to tackle moonlighting via all manner of cheques. Thus, on 1 May a system of service cheques is being introduced. In Flanders these may only be used to pay for domestic help. The cost to the user of one cheque is 6.20 euros. Each family can order up to 500 service cheques each year. For each hour worked the family must hand over a service cheque to the employer. The Federal and regional authorities are contributing 17.36 euros, giving the cheque a value of 23.56 euros. Flemish Agriculture Minister Vera Dua wants to launch a green cheque under the same regulation for help in horticulture. The government is also entering into covenants with the various commercial sectors. Among others, the building sector has already entered into such a covenant with the government.

WWW.HIVA.BE

Tropicana creates 300 jobs in Zeebrugge

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fter all the bad tidings on the job market of late, there is finally some good news. A new packing plant at fruit-juice producer Tropicana in Zeebrugge, a subsidiary of Pepsi Cola, is hopefully to create 300 new jobs (FF).

DE STANDAARD • 29 APRIL

The American fruit-juice producer Tropicana yesterday opened a new packing plant in Zeebrugge’s inner port. The plant will initially provide one hundred new jobs. The Tropicana fruit juice packed in Zeebrugge will be distributed across northern Europe. Zeebrugge was chosen because of the location of the port in relation to the sales area and Tropicana’s other sites. The fruit-juice producer has a site in Brgloon, amongst other places. That is where Looza fruit juice is packed. In France there is a packing plant near Paris. The new site has a capacity of 100 million litres. In an initial stage, three production lines have been installed. The same building has the capacity for two further lines to be added. In time, the site should provide three hundred jobs.

WWW.TIE-BRUGNES1
Asset bankers Degroof and De Buck join forces

**With De Buck Vermogensbankiers yet another asset manager will disappear, after, among others, De Maertelaere and Dewaay**

Bank Degroof is taking over De Buck Vermogensbankiers from Ghent. The take-over will be via a share swap, with the De Buck Van Overstraeten family swapping its 67.5% participation for Degroof shares. De Buck manages 500 million euros’ worth of client funds, but last year suffered a loss of 0.5 billion euros. Degroof manages 10 billion euros, of which 8 billion belongs to private clients. The net profit for the previous financial year was 11 million euros. With De Buck Vermogensbankiers yet another asset manager will disappear, after, among others, De Maertelaere and Dewaay (FF).

TOM PEETERS • DE FINANCIEL-ECONOMISCHE TIJD • 30 APRIL

‘We are giving up our independence to consolidate a major independent player on the Belgian market,’ said Managing Director Jean-Marie de Buck van Overstraeten on Tuesday. He is part of the eighth generation of the family that established the asset bank in 1784. The take-over is part of Bank Degroof’s continued efforts to expand. The bank has already taken over the asset manager Bearbull and the stock exchange companies Van Goethem, Bonnewijn Rentwart and Riga. De Buck has offices in Ghent, Bruges, Hasselt, Hoei, Leuven and Roeselare. ‘By taking over De Buck we are expanding our managed assets and developing our network in Flanders,’ says Lionel Giot, Director of Bank Degroof. Jean-Marie de Buck points to the capital losses of recent years and the need for sufficient size. ‘Degroof certainly has the latter, but there’s more,’ says De Buck. ‘For us, this operation is part of an ‘industrial’ project with Degroof. We are developing a Personal Banking division at Degroof. This involves asset management for a somewhat wider public. Together with Bonnewijn Rentwart and the Degroof’s existing activities in this area, you have a solid foundation for Personal Banking.’ It would involve managed assets of around 2 billion euros. The name De Buck will disappear. The De Buck van Overstraeten family will become a minority shareholder in Degroof with less than 15% and will get a seat on the board of Bank Degroof. In addition to the family, around 200 private shareholders held 32.5% of De Buck.

WWW.DEGROOF.BE
WWW.DEBUCK.BE

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Never-before-seen discounts in car sales

To turn round their falling sales, car manufacturers are engaged in a price war with benefits that have never been offered before. Discounts of up to 21% and more are no longer unusual, and Opel is even launching the country’s first interest-free car loan. FEBIAC, the Belgian Federation of the Car and Two-wheeler Industries, says that importers and dealers cannot keep this up for long (FF).

PASCALL WEISS • HET NIEUWSBLAD • 30 APRIL

‘The sector saw an unusually sharp drop in sales: -12% in the first three months of 2003,’ says Joost Kaesemans of FEBIAC. ‘This is mainly due to the slack economy. People are putting off costly car purchases, and in the car sector that sort of thing is quickly felt.’ Potential buyers are therefore being snowed under with offers. Opel is launching 0% finance: buy a car on credit and don’t pay anything extra. The system is already a great success in the USA and it is hoped it will now attract extra buyers here. Competitors such as Citroën are offering a discount equivalent to the rate of VAT, i.e. 21%. Even a prestigious name such as BMW is giving discounts of up to 3,400 euros. FEBIAC has a piece of advice: buy a car now. ‘Because this price war cannot last. Importers and dealers will not be able to keep it up. Profit margins are so small that they are hardly making any money.’

WWW.FEBIAC.BE
VLD still biggest party in Le Soir Opinion Poll

According to the latest opinion poll by the French newspaper Le Soir, the VLD is still the biggest party in Flanders. The VLD gets 22.1%, followed by the CD&V with 21.4%. The SPA-Spirit cartel remains the third-biggest party, with 20.5%. In this poll the Vlaams Blok gets 17.2% and Agalev 9.5%. Here too, the N-VA fails to reach the electoral threshold of 5%, with 4.1%. The poll is based on telephone surveys between 15 and 19 April involving 2,353 people across the whole of Belgium. Compared with the poll by VRT/De Standaard [see FF 15], which was carried out in March, the number of undecided voters in Flanders seems to have fallen significantly. Only 18% have not yet decided whom to vote for.

WWW.LESOIR.BE

8th edition of Kunstenfestivaldesarts in Brussels

JUST AS IN PREVIOUS EDITIONS, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR FRIE LEYSEN INITIALLY CHOSE ARTISTS WITH A VISION AND A GOOD DOSE OF NERVE, RATHER THAN ON THE BASIS OF REPUTATION OR SPECTACLE VALUE

From 2 to 24 May the eighth KunstenFESTIVALdesArts is being held in Brussels. Thirty projects, twenty of which are world premières, and artists from thirteen countries, will again offer a particularly fascinating overview of the international arts scene. Just as in previous editions, Artistic Director Frie Leysen initially chose self-willed artists with a vision and a good dose of nerve, rather than on the basis of reputation or spectacle value. The most striking this year are two major thematic lines in the programme. Three presentations, a salon and a film programme will concentrate on the literary legacy of French author Marcel Proust. And under the title ‘Mi Buenos Aires Querido’ (literally: ‘My beloved Buenos Aires’), four plays from Argentina and the current artistic scene in Buenos Aires are prominent at the Kunstenfestival des Arts. The strength with which artists continue to work without any public aid and their experiences and criticisms of social situations create an insistent dynamic and have for several years captivated Artistic Director Frie Leysen. Since 1998 Argentine artists have repeatedly been invited to Brussels. This year, with Maquïna Catani and Federico Léon, and recent South American films are being shown in the Filmuseum between 16 and 24 May. Finally, on 17 and 18 May De Bottelarij is being converted into a Salon Argentino. A prominent guest later in the first week of the festival is the German Director Christoph Marthalm, who staged Franz Schubert’s lieder cycle ‘Die schöne Müllerin’ with the Schauspielhaus Zürich. In the Hallen van Schaerbeck Marthalm will integrate the 20 lieder for the miller’s wife in a much broader score of movement, text and song. Where Schubert’s drama plays out in the melancholy mood of the brook to which the boy entrusts his obsessive secrets, Marthalm has opted for the set-ting of a petit bourgeois and closed salon. There is no sign here of the

JEF AERTS • TIJD CULTUUR • 30 APRIL

From Friday 2 May to 24 May, Kanal 20 is the place to go to see the installation of the Mexican visual artist Gustavo Artigas. And those who fancy an alternative and above all artistic tour of the capital can sign up for ‘Taxithéâtre’ from Théâtre 27 by the German artist Anne Marina Pleis. On Saturday there will then be several new premières, including striking dance productions. The Kaaitheater is showing ‘Sonic Boom’, the latest effort from Wim Van dekeybus and his Ultima Vez, a co-production with Toneelgroep Amsterdam. Until 7 May Les Bains is presenting ‘De retour aux bains - 100 rencontres à Bruxelles’, a choreographical installation by Benoît Lachambre. From Brussels is the Francophone theatre collective Transquinquennal, which is putting on the first presentations of ‘In God We Trust’ in Les Tanneurs, in which it goes looking for the ‘recipe of success for Truth and a [clear] Con-science’ among contemporary American writers. Finally, at 10 p.m., the first presentation of the Buenos Aires section will also begin with ‘Open House’ by Daniel Veronese (founder-director of El Pereferico de Objetos).
romanticism of murmuring water and the wind in the mill. The inert ugliness of an everyday existence and the ecстат-ic call of love create an unbearable ten-sion in which music and theatre must go hand in hand.

Kalandyr, Kaaitheaterstudio’s, Brussels
www.kaaitheater.be
• 16 May: The Go Between, Botanique, Brussels, info: 02/548.37.32
• 10 May: Orishas, Cactusclub, Bruges, info: 050/33.20.14
• 10 May: Luciainda Williams, Handelsh- beurs, Ghent, info: 09/265.91.65
• 10 May: Ten Vrede with Willem Vermande-ro, Geoffrey Oryema, Lee Scratch Perry & Mad Professor, Gorzan Bregovic and Urban Trad, Diksmuide, info: 051/50.02.86
• 12 May: Bruce Springsteen, Koning Boudewijnstadion, Brussels, info: 0900/266060
• 22 May: Ibrahim Ferrer, Vorst Nationaal, Brussels, info: 0900/00991
• 13 May: San Francisco Symphony Orchestra conducted by Michael Tilson Thomas with Hilaary Hahn, PSK, Bru-sels, info: 02/507.82.00 www.bozar.be
• 15 May: Berliner Philharmoniker con-ducted by Mariss Jansons, PSK, Brus- els, info: 02/544.08.33 www.bozar.be
• Until 18 May: The Warburg Ballet by Koen Thyes, video-art, SMAK, Ghent, info: 09/221.17.03
• 9 May: Prometheus Ensemble with Mozart and Haylerge, Flaggey, Brussels, info: www.flaggey.be
• 10 and 13 May: Daian, the revenge of Cupido, Barock opera by Reinhard Keis-er conductor: Florian Heyerick, direc-tor, Gabriele Rech, Flanders Opera, Antwerp and Publickstheater, Ghent, info: www.operastudio.be 09/233.24.30
• 10 May: Omar Sarmimi and Ensemble Al-Kandi (Syria), De Singel, Antwerp, info: 03/248.28.28 www.desingel.be
• 14 May: Rotterdam Philharmonisch Orkest conducted by Antonino Pappano with Ian Bostridge (tenor) with composi-tions by Bartok, Witten and Elgar; de Singel, Antwerp, info: 03/248.28.28 www.desingel.be
• 12 to 16 May: King Lear by W.Shake-speare and The Antichrist by Roemi, Yvorvalk Ghassemi, and theatre compa-ny Arahoon (Tadzjikistan), De Singel, Antwerp, info: 03/248.28.28 www.desingel.be

EXPO
From 22 March to 17 January: Jacques Brel, ‘The right to dream’, exhibition, Schilddaaplaasstraat 50, Brussels; reserva-tion required; info: www.jacquesbrel.be

KunstenFESTIVALdesArts
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