Antwerp door-to-door inspections violate privacy laws

The plans of the city of Antwerp to begin door-to-door inspections in September in problem neighbourhoods will have to be reviewed. X-stra, as the project has appropriately been labelled, will send out intervention teams that visit every property in a street. That team will contain someone from the OCMW (Public Social Welfare Centre), the Registry Office, the Housing Department, social services and the Security Services. Once residents have given their consent, this team inspects the residents for shortcomings with regard to living conditions, employment, harassment, etc. All data will be stored in a new database and passed on to government services that can help with abuses, such as the OCMW and the Alien Affairs Department. But the project has failed to stand up to the scrutiny of the Privacy Commission. According to the Commission, it cannot be reconciled with the privacy laws. However, Security Alderman Grootjans (VLD) is determined to push the project through, if necessary with some modifications (FF).

The Privacy Commission asked the City Council what law allowed such door-to-door inspections. All the laws the Council listed appear insufficient. ‘Services such as the OCMW and the reception centres each have their own law that gives them powers of inspection, but they cannot carry out these inspections in teams or combine their data into a single database,’ says the Commission.

X-stra also has ‘two faces’: a social objective and a repressive or security objective. ‘These objectives are legally irreconcilable and cannot be implemented simultaneously,’ warns the Commission. ‘The City Council is also too vague about the objective of x-stra. People do not know what the consequences are if they let the x-stra inspectors in. And given this vague objective the detailed gathering of data must seriously be called into question.’

And there are more objections. ‘The database must not contain any legal data, such as ‘the child has already been in trouble with the police’. The city must be given explicit authorisation to mix data from the Population and Aliens Registers with other personal data. People must also be able to withdraw their consent to x-stra at a later date.

INRODUCTION

According to a survey by the OECD carried out in 2002, 65.1% of Belgians feel positively about their healthcare. The same survey revealed that this was only 43.9% among residents of the then 15 EU Member States.

The relative satisfaction of the Belgians does not come as a surprise. In Belgium a patient barely pays for 15% of medical services, 75% is paid for by Social Security and only 10% by private insurance companies. It is all the more remarkable because in recent years Belgian healthcare has managed to come apart at the seams. The ageing of the population has meant there is an increase in the number of patients requiring care. Also, patients are much quicker to visit the doctor and demand the best treatment. It goes without saying that such a development goes hand in hand with increased spending in costs, which required government intervention. In its latest issue Knack devoted a dossier to hospital policy, which has brought its staff costs under control and managed to limit its financial burden due to the falling interest rate. In 2003, Belgian hospitals even failed to make a loss for the first time in years, even though their joint turnover has risen by one third since 1997 to 11.4 billion euros. In the longer term the reasonably healthy state of the hospitals is also down to the expansions and mergers which the government forced upon hospitals ten years ago. Hospitals with fewer than 150 beds were no longer recognised and of the 400 or so general hospitals in 1973, there were barely 115 left in 2003 with an average of around 400 beds. In the more recent past, joint ventures have also been sought. The new information and communication technology is helping here. Collaboration between specialists and care staff via computer networks at different sites is on the up. And more and more hospitals are beginning to allocate tasks within a network, with hospitals specialising in a specific medical field (scanning, cardiology, neurology, etc.). This has led to the creation of a number of large networks, such as Antwerp Hospital Network, which groups together the municipal and OCMW (Public Social Welfare Centre) hospitals of the whole of Antwerp. The OCMW hospitals of Brussels grouped together in the IRIS network and the university hospitals of Ghent and Leuven have also built up their own network. All these measures have improved the efficiency of healthcare substantially. And yet cost increases cannot be avoided. With the increasing ageing of the population, more and more beds will always be needed for more and more patients. And consequently more staff will also be required. And there lies the rub. The sector is struggling with a shortage of nursing staff, so the job has to be made more attractive, which again means increased staff costs. Creative solutions such as extending home care or stricter prescribing patterns for medicines in hospitals must ensure that this cost is not (provisionally) passed on to the patient. But no single solution will satisfy everyone. This is clear from the reaction of the pharmaceuticals industry to the proposal of Social Affairs Minister Demotte (PS) to finance the medicines budget of hospitals on the basis of an average consumption per clinical picture.

Table and graph p.7

Frank Vandecaveye | editor in chief
Is flemish media shifting boundaries in Dewael affair?

On Wednesday evening Home Affairs Minister Patrick Dewael (VLD) announced the end of his marriage. He had a relationship with VRT radio journalist Greet Op de Beeck, who had become particularly popular last year thanks to her appearance on a TV quiz. The official announcement was intended to put an end to the wild rumours that had been circulating about the relationship. In his communiqué the minister regretted that some people might be tempted to make an advantage of his divorce. He had a relationship with VRT radio journalist Greet Op de Beeck, finds it ‘totally unacceptable’. He claims that boundaries have wrongly been shifted. Politicians must be called to account for their policies, not their private lives, he believes. Het Laatste Nieuws also argues that a relationship between a VRT journalist and a politician also throws up questions of professional ethics. But according to the VRT, at no time did Greet Op de Beeck break any code of professional ethics. Nevertheless, it was decided in consultation that she would be given another job within VRT, to remove any semblance of partiality (FF).

Opinion

BART STURTEWAGEN • DE STANDAARD • 26 AUGUST

In the land of the ‘Flemish Celebs’ (BV’s), the laws of Flemish Celebrity Land apply. One of these is that relationships belong to the public domain. Flemish Celebs make agreements with the media on this matter. Then they can retain some control over content, style and timing of the news. If they fail to do so, then accidents happen. This is the case with TV celebs and film-stars. Why should it be different for politicians and journalists if they allow themselves to be swept along by the Flemish Celebs Carousel? Isn’t that all that needs to be said about Minister Patrick Dewael and VRT radio journalist Greet Op de Beeck?

Negotiations on noise pollution test for federal government

An advance-guard engagement over night flights, is what De Standaard is calling the proposals of Flemish Environment Minister Kris Peeters (CD&V) and Federal Transport Minister Renaat Landuyt (SP.A). The dossier on noise pollution around Zaventem airport will be one of the important political dossiers of the autumn, but has currently reached an impasse. In a remarkable gesture of good will, Minister Peeters said he was prepared to grant a significant reduction in the number of night flights from 2008. Logical, added Renaat Landuyt, because in 2008 the courier firm DHL is moving its headquarters to Leipzig, so the number of night flights will drop automatically. Nevertheless, Peeters’ proposal has its merit, because it has partly broken the trench warfare between the Flemish and Brussels governments, claims De Standaard. Landuyt himself immediately came up with a controversial counter-proposal, namely a moratorium on building in the wide vicinity of Zaventem. He immediately got tit for tat from Flemish Spatial Planning Minister Dirk Van Mechelen (VLD) and his fellow party member, the Mayor of Zaventem Francis Vermeiren, who refused to co-operate on such a measure (FF).

Opinion

BART STURTEWAGEN • DE STANDAARD • 22 AUGUST

By offering a prospect of less noise pollution, Peeters hopes to find a way out of the deadlocked talks on night flights and give a more constructive approach a chance. The stakes are high enough: an estimated 60,000 jobs, 10% of employment in Brussels, are depending on it. By his federal colleague in Transport, Renaat Landuyt, was obviously right in his reaction. The problem with night flights in and around Zaventem will not occur in 2008, it is happening now. If no compromise can be reached in the coming weeks between the various governments involved - the Flemish, the Brussels and the Federal - then there is a risk of a complex legal situation arising. In the first case a blockage of activity at the airport cannot be precluded. Because in that case the unworkability of the Belgian federal model would be displayed for all to see, political tension could also escalate sharply. If the Federal Government cannot successfully play the part of mediator and broker of solutions, it will lose its relevance and therefore also its chances of survival. By refusing to bring its noise standards into line with Flemish ones, the Brussels Government has Zaventem in a stranglehold. The Belgian federal model has no hierarchy of standards. Federal and regional governments each have their own set of powers and are not accountable to each other. Now uneven coalitions are in power at these various levels, there is no longer even an informal hierarchy. The success or failure of this model will depend on political will and federal loyalty. This will be a matter for the political leaders of the parties in government. Will they manage to find a compromise, despite the asymmetrical coalitions?
Vandenbroucke wants
second wave of democra-
tisation in education

HIS LIST OF POLICY INTENTIONS IS HEADED BY A POLICY OF EQUAL
OPPORTUNITIES IN EDUCATION

By 2009 the education sector will receive an extra budget of 600 million euros, says Flemish Education Minister Frank Vandenbroucke (SPA) in an interview with Het Laatste Nieuws and Knack (24 August). The minister has set aside 215 million for new Collective Labour Agreements for teaching staff. Het believes people in education are entitled to the same increase in purchasing power as people in the care sector, where a new Collective Labour Agreement has already been signed this year.

But his list of policy intentions is headed by a policy of equal opportunities in education. After the first democratisation in the 1960s it is time for a second wave of democratisation, he believes. Flemish pupils score particularly well internationally for languages and mathematics, but children of less well-educated parents and immigrants need extra support. The gulf between immigrant and native Flemish pupils is even bigger than in any other country. Of foreign school-leavers, 42% have no secondary education diploma, compared with only 16% for children of European origin. According to Vandenbroucke, that explains why unemployment among the immigrant population is so much higher here than in other European countries.

As a matter of fact the Flemish labour market could also do with more young talent, claims Vandenbroucke, who is also responsible for employment within the Flemish Government. Within ten years this market will have 183,000 fewer people in work below the age of 49 and the number of over 50s (+190,000) and over-65s (+387,000) is increasing faster and faster. So we need all pupils for the labour market, says Vandenbroucke. He therefore wants to invest in schools, training and lifelong learning. But at the same time keep people over the age of 50 in work with outplacement regulations and bonuses (FF).

MISJIE VERLEYEN • KNACK • 24 AUGUST

Vandenbroucke: ‘Education is all about equal opportunities in life. The first gate you must pass through equally is the gate to the labour market. If that doesn’t work, and we’re not doing very well at present, then we’d better stop talking about equal opportunities. A modern social policy invests in people, rather than - as previously - standing ready with benefits for when it goes wrong. It’s shortsighted to say that we have the best education and therefore don’t need to change anything, or that we have the best social security and simply need more money for it […] The demographic shift is much more pronounced in Flanders than in Wallonia and Brussels. The Flemish labour market will dry up over the next ten years unless we keep people over the age of 50 in work. The Flemish Government has instruments - training, outplacement, a reinsertion fund and a back-to-work bonus of 150 euros a month for older people out of work. These measures must be strengthened.

Youth unemployment also has to be tackled, as it is a waste of talents and possibilities. In Flanders this is a persistent problem in larger towns and cities. There many young unemployed people - Flemings and foreigners - fall through the net for VDAB (Employment Office) support. I therefore want to invite those towns and municipalities where youth unemployment is higher than 25% to take initiatives together with the VDAB, business and companies. To achieve success, you have to be clear about your rights and obligations, however hard that sounds. Because young unemployed people in these towns and municipalities often have to deal with personal and social problems, and often have no qualifications, they require intensive support, but also strict monitoring. Anyone who refuses support will have their benefit stopped.

We know from a number of children that they need more support: children of less well-educated parents, children with a different language at home, children of parents with a social wage or benefit. The importance of language in all this was demonstrated by the international Pisa study into the skills of children in the areas of maths, reading and science. As part of this study, five thousand fifteen-year-old Flemings were tested. In general they are the best in the world. Pupils who speak Dutch at home perform much better than the world average. But those who do not speak Dutch at home perform worse than in our neighbouring countries and the rest of the industrialised countries. […] As far as language education to young immigrant people is concerned, we have failed. They often fail in higher education because they do not know enough Dutch. That cannot continue. If a pupil obtains a diploma in a subject that allows them to move on to higher education, they must have a good enough command of Dutch to succeed there.’

WWW.MINISTERFRANKVANDBROUCKE.BE

focus on Flanders • 20 August - 26 August 2005 • Number 31
**Mega-chains, not consumers, profit from cheap Chinese imports**

*The federations of the Belgian textile sector and of the Belgian clothing manufacturers are backing the ban on imports from China*

The federation of the Belgian textile sector, Febeltex, and the federation of Belgian clothing manufacturers, Creamoda, are backing the European ban on imports of the European Commission that has been in force since 12 July for ten categories of clothing. Nevertheless, almost 85% of Belgian clothing production has already been decentralised, mainly to Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean area. Since the decision on the import ban the EC has already blocked millions of pairs of trousers, sweaters, blouses and bras in European ports because the import quotas had been reached. Creamoda and Febeltex think this is a good thing, while the mega-chains from Scandinavia and the Netherlands such as Hennes & Mauritz clearly do not. They are behind the open letter that the trade ministers from Sweden, Finland, Denmark and the Netherlands have sent to European Commissioner Peter Mandelmark and the Netherlands have sent to ministers from Sweden, Finland, Denmark and the Netherlands have sent to European Commissioner Peter Mandelmark.

**ERIK BRUYLAND • TRENDS • 25 AUGUST**

The ministers claim that the new import restrictions are out of touch with the reality of modern trade, of which outsourcing of production is an essential part. ‘Orders were placed long before there was any indication that quotas would be reintroduced,’ write the four. They also do not believe that the ‘reintroduction of quotas on clothing and textiles from China can save Europe’s remaining textile industry.’

It is this last point in particular that infuriates Pierre Van Mol, Director of the Clothing Textiles division of Febeltex, ‘By placing mass orders in China, large-scale distributors gambled on the “tactic of the fait accompli”. Large-scale distributors knew, for example, that the quota for trousers would be raised from 40 million pieces in 2004 to 316 million pieces in 2005, eight times as many,’ claims Van Mol. He maintains that these chains were clearly aware of the risk beforehand, since the accession protocol of China to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) of December 2001 states in black and white that exemption clauses are possible until 2008. According to Van Mol, Belgian clothing manufacturers mainly import from Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean area, and very little from China. ‘This off-shore production from their own factories or in making-up charges keeps the Belgian clothing industry alive. Now the large-scale distributors are going over the heads of the European clothing manufacturers and buying directly from Chinese factories, that can only be to the detriment of Creamoda members and their off-shore production. But also of Belgian fabric manufacturers such as Uco or Utexbel who supply these factories.’

Last year, clothing consumption in the European Union rose by just 2%. Van Mol offsets this against ‘the mass imports from China’.

Figures from Eurostat show that on average Chinese export prices are around half those of other Asian countries. ‘Although the share of imports from China for ladies’ coats doubled - at an export price that is around half that of competing production countries - prices to the consumer have hardly fallen at all. It is large-scale distributors, not the consumer, who are profiting from China,’ concludes Van Mol. ‘In the meantime these same large-scale distributors are killing our industry.’ And he emphasises once again that it is not a question of protectionism, but of distortion of competition.

**WWW.CREAMODE.BE**

**WWW.FEBELTEX.BE**

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**Bonus makes construction workers work longer**

On the eve of the resumption of the debate on the end of careers between the Federal Government and the social partners, the Building Confederation is calling for bonuses to encourage construction workers to work longer. Two out of three construction workers who can take early retirement at 58 choose to do so despite a bonus of 2,000 euros to work longer, the Confederation concludes (FF).

**JOHAN RASKING • DE STANDAARD • 25 AUGUST**

In 2004 the social fund of the construction sector paid out 396 bonuses to construction workers who wanted to continue working beyond their 58th birthday and therefore did not take early retirement. Around 600 workers were eligible for the scheme. The reward amounts to a maximum of 4,000 euros, over a period of two years, in other words up to the age of 60. The system was introduced with the approval of the construction trade unions. That itself is remarkable, according to Managing Director de Müelenaere, who admits that the construction trade has a tradition of early retirement schemes. ‘They are justified, because construction workers are involved in hard work and often begin their careers at an early age. Hence the early retirement option at 58, and 56 in the case of disablement.’

The construction sector finds it ‘unrealistic to think that the construction trade will escape policy measures designed to curb early retirement schemes’. But rather than a policy of dissuasion, de Müelenaere sees room for a policy of encouragement: ‘Reward those who work longer, rather than penalise those who stop earlier. The bonus system in construction proves such as scheme works.’
The facts that the government again abolished certain measures, such as energy credits and the fund for renewable energy, once the oil price had stabilised in the mid-80s, displayed a rather narrow-minded, short-term vision. The government again abolished certain measures, such as energy credits and the fund for renewable energy, once the oil price had stabilised in the mid-80s, therefore displayed a rather narrow-minded, short-term vision. ‘Our homes are still extremely poorly insulated. Next year the government is introducing a new standard for insulating homes, but in the Netherlands this new standard has already been in force for two years.’

According to Claeys, the fact that the government again abolished certain measures, such as energy credits and the fund for renewable energy, once the oil price had stabilised in the mid-80s, therefore displayed a rather narrow-minded, short-term vision. ‘Our homes are still extremely poorly insulated. Next year the government is introducing a new standard for insulating homes, but in the Netherlands this new standard has already been in force for two years.’

Claeys claims the fact that consumer behaviour has changed little may indicate that as yet they are not feeling the consequences of the oil price in their purses. At the same time, says Claeys, there are small signs that the consumer is in fact aware of the situation. ‘The sale of wood-burning stoves has risen and companies that provide advice on request on energy-saving modifications are doing well.’

Claeys is angry with energy companies for not doing more to inform the public. The government is also failing in its duty, claims Claeys. ‘By lowering excise duties Verhofstadt created the illusion that everything can be fixed by tinkering with the problem a bit. While the oil price will not fall in the immediate future and so the problems will only get worse.’
Did Suez damage the interests of Electrabel minority shareholders?

The company Electrabel and its minority shareholders were indeed disadvantaged by the French holding company Suez, which has a narrow majority interest, it appears from a ruling by Brussels Commercial Court. Suez damaged the interests of the electricity group and its minority shareholders and the demand of the minority shareholders for an expert to be appointed to assess the damage of five years’ policy under majority shareholder Suez was therefore well-founded, the Court found. At the time the matter was taken into court by the American minority shareholder Knight Vinke, which assumed that Electrabel would have been better off investing in industrial projects rather than continually lending the destitute Suez money at a low rate. But since Suez’s bid for the full 100% of Electrabel, Knight Vinke has stopped all legal action. This is because the American investor welcomes the takeover. When the takeover prospectus is published, Electrabel’s Board of Directors will have to express an opinion on whether the takeover is in the interest of Electrabel employees, shareholders and debtors. With a majority of Suez directors it is easy to predict that this opinion will be positive, claims De Standaard (FF).

PASCAL DEN DOOVEN • DE STANDAARD • 23 AUGUST

The company had asked the Court to order the American fund manager Eric Knight - who exposed the abuses of Suez at Electrabel - to pay 5 million euros in caution money before Knight could proceed any further. For this, Electrabel fell back on an old provision, which imposes caution money on foreigners wishing to take legal action in Belgium. But such caution money is not required if there is an international treaty between Belgium and the country in question and if the legal action is well-founded. The Court stated, among other things, that Electrabel’s demand ran contrary to the free movement of services and capital in Europe, and contravened the Human Rights Convention.

The Court’s most striking argument, however, maintained that the proceedings had revealed that the minority shareholders around Eric Knight of Knight Vinke were in the right when they asked Electrabel to appoint experts. These experts should have assessed the damage of Suez’s interventions in Electrabel over the past five years. It is a matter, among other things, of showing all the conflicts of interest between Suez and Electrabel in that period and how these were handled. And of highlighting the billions that Electrabel missed out on because it was unable to invest its surplus liquid assets in industrial projects, but had to provide loans at a low rate to Suez, which until recently was in dire financial straights.

If Electrabel was able to develop industrially, then Suez only allowed that in the European region with its low growth. Knight Vinke claimed that Suez acted as if it held 100% of Electrabel, whereas 49.9% was actually held by others. The Court had set aside 9 November to hear the arguments on the substantive issues. Suez, clearly hurried by Knight Vinke and their solicitor Mischael Modrikamen, is setting the matter via a bid for Electrabel. Knight Vinke welcomes that and has stopped its legal action.

WWW.SUEZ.COM
WWW.ELECTRABEL.BE

Risk of anaemia for Bel-20

According to Bloomberg, Electrabel is the eleventh Belgian company to have been the subject of a take-over bid in the past year. Belgian companies are attractive to investors thanks to high dividend incomes, relatively low prices, healthy balances and also due to the many take-overs that are in the offing. But the Bel-20 risks becoming anaemic, warn some investment advisors in De Standaard (20 August). Since March this stock exchange index has had just nineteen members, because KBC absorbed its parent company Almanij. Now Electrabel is also threatening to disappear from the stock exchange after being taken over by Suez. Of the 160 companies listed on the Brussels stock exchange, none is now big enough to replace the companies that have left the Bel-20. Finally, fund manager Van Geeteruyen at stock market house Petercam is warning of a possible merger of the two mainstays Dexia and Fortis. Together they account for 30% of the stock market value of the Bel-20. If the market shrinks further, the Bel-20 risks receiving less attention from international investors, warns Jan Vertomme, fund manager at Puilaetco Bank.

![Net profit of Belgian Hospitals](source: Federal Administration Public Health)
FF EDITOR

‘The memory of a Killer’ is the title of the English-language version of the Flemish film ‘De Zaak Alzheimer’ (The Alzheimer Case), which is being launched on the American art-house circuit, in other words the cinema for better films. The film will be shown in 90 American cities (De Standaard, 25 August), something that rarely happens with a Flemish film. The film’s American première will be in the Lincoln Plaza Cinema in New York and the Music Hall in Beverly Hills. Sony Classics, the distributor, has devoted a poster campaign, a trailer, a website and a press campaign to the film. ‘De Zaak Alzheimer’ has already been shown in France, Germany, Spain and Scandinavia, in each case in at least 40 cinemas. In Flanders the film reached 1 million viewers, 750,000 of them in the cinema and 250,000 on DVD. On top of this it was seen again by a million people in a TV version of three episodes. But despite its great success, the revenue from the film has still not yet repaid the by international standards moderate cost of 2.5 million euros. ‘De Zaak Alzheimer’ proves that making films in Flanders is therefore only possible with subsidies, even if they do extremely well, concludes De Standaard.

MUSIC

For flemings, the summer festival is the fair of yesteryear

THE ROOTS OF THIS UNSTOPPABLE TRENDS FOR FESTIVALS LIE IN THE MID-70S, IN THE POST-60S ERA

It is impossible to imagine Flanders without its summer festivals. No country or region has more festivals than Flanders. Rock Werchter, the Ghent Festivities, the Loker Festivities, Pukkelpop, the Sfinks Festival, the Dranouter Folk Festival have become events that mobilise masses of people. Now almost every self-respecting village has its own music festival. The roots of this unstoppable trend for festivals lie in the mid-70s, in the post-60s era, when one or two youth centres inspired other organisers to put their shoulders to the wheel. No town, municipality or even parish is too small to meet its own music festival: from Zevergem to Molenrock in Grembergen. And generally the tent is never far away. Now many of these festivals are mass events run on a professional basis, and a good relationship with the local authorities and police goes without saying. All in all it remains a unique sociological phenomenon. The festivals have become the fairs of yesteryear (FF).

THOMAS DIERCENKS • DE MORGEN • 20 AUGUST

The small-scale music festivals quickly evolved into major events with thousands of visitors. Beer tents expanded into covered stages with professional sound towers, sponsors joined the party, the festivals grew in number of days and the posters became longer and longer. ‘It’s a vicious circle,’ explains Jan Cools - pioneer of the organisation of the Loker Festivities. ‘The better your poster, the more people you attract. Lots of people attracts sponsors, so your budget is bigger and you can book bigger names.’ Dranouter now attracts 80,000 visitors, each evening 15,000 festival-goers head to the Loker Festivities and a festival such as Sfinks is run with more than 1,500 volunteers.

The success of these festivals also inspired other organisers to put their shoulders to the wheel. No town, municipality or even parish is too small to meet its own music festival: from Zevergem to Molenrock in Grembergen. And generally the tent is full. ‘Flemings have always liked doing things in groups,’ says Patrick De Groote of Sfinks. ‘It used to be simple fairs, cheese and wine evenings, Breughel parties, you name it. Now festivals have taken over this socially binding role. The feeling of belonging is very important, especially if the festival is being held in your own village.’

Alain Kroon of the Dijle Festivities compares music festivals with the circus of days gone by. ‘In the end it’s the same groups who travel around and who the whole village goes to watch. For many people in Mechelen the Dijle Festivities are an annual meeting place, especially for the older generation who have been coming to the festival for thirty years.’ But it is certainly not just for the beats that half of Flemings heads off to the festival fields, says Marnique Deswarte of Dranouter. ‘The group feeling is definitely important, but festivals are still the perfect free ports. From the moment they enter the site, people are free to do as they wish without being watched by someone. Also, there’s always a bit of a holiday atmosphere at festivals, a summer feeling where people are released from their daily environment for a few days. Festivals are more than just music, the whole atmosphere around them is at least as important.’
CULTURE

MUSIC, DANCE, THEATRE

• Until 11 September: The summer of Poetry, Watou, Nous le passage, Watou [near French border], info: www.poeziezomerswatou.be
• 1 to 9 September: Die Zauberflöte by WA Mozart, director: William Kentridge, De Munt, Brussels, info: www.de.munt.be
• 3 September: Bijlokeestival with Chen Lei-ji [Chinese classical music], Olla Vogala, B’Rock, Absynthe Mind, De Bijloke, Ghent, info: www.bijloke.be
• 3 September: Fête Congolaise (independance day), Zuiderpershuis, Antwerp, info: www.zuiderpershuis.be
• 2 September: Paul Van Nevel and Huelgas Ensemble, Renaissance music with the influence of the contrapunto alla mente; concertgebouw, Bruges, info: www.concertgebouw.be
• 4 September: Yves Sailens tenor – Inge Spinette piano with Schumann
• 7 September: Rozazz, 10 years [Techno]; De Vooruit, Ghent, info: www.vooruit.be

EXPO

• Until 4 September: Lili Dujourie, exhibition, Centre for fine arts, Bozar, Brussels, info: 02/548.24.24
• 7 September: Frotting Blues; Brussels, info: www.abconcerts.be 02/548 24 24
• 8 September: Azucar Negra [Cuba], concert, Zuiderpershuis, Antwerp, info: www.zuiderpershuis.be
• 8 to 10 September: Johan Simons, Paul Koek, NT Gent, 2T Hollandia, Sentiments after Milch und Körbe by Ralph Rothman, Theatre, De Singel, Antwerp, info: www.desingel.be 03/248.28.28
• 9 September: London Synfonietta, with compositions by Luciano Berio, Concertgebouw, Brugge, info: www.concertgebouw.be
• 9 and 11 September: Belgian National Orchestra with Mikko Franck, conductor and Nikolai Znaider, violin with Concerto by Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy Konzert and Richard Strauss Eine Alpensinfonie, op. 64, Bozar, Brussels, info: www.bozar.be
• 9 September: Muyesse e/ Chehat, Ethiopia, concert Zuiderpershuis, Antwerp, info: www.zuiderpershuis.be
• 10 September: Pastora Galvan, dance and musical theatre, Spain, Zuiderpershuis, Antwerp, info: www.zuiderpershuis.be
• 10 September: The Walkabouts, Brussels, info: www.abconcerts.be 02 548 24 24
• 10 and 11 September: Young Talents, part one and two, Bijloke, Ghent, info: www.bijloke.be
• 10 September: Rozazz, 10 years [Techno]; De Vooruit, Ghent, info: www.vooruit.be

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from the Dutch treasure room, KMSK, Antwerp, info: www.kmsk.be
• Until 2008: Art at the Frontline 1914-1918, Royal Army and Military History Museum, Antwerp, info: 02 737 78 33 www.klm-mra.be
• Until 31 December: Art nouveau and Design 1830-1958, Royal Museum for Art and History, Cinquantenaire, Brus-

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