GUIDO TASTENHOYE, MP for the Vlaams Belang, has taken up the cudgels for a family of asylum-seekers, causing agitation within the right-wing party. Tastenhoye asked the CD&V mayor of Schoten to settle the residence order of a family from Kazakhstan ‘politically’. However, this approach is difficult to reconcile with the party line. After all, the party believes that asylum-seekers should be held in secure institutions while their applications are being examined and expelled as soon as this application is rejected. Last week the party raved against the HOP demonstration, which called for residence permits for foreigners whose applications for asylum took years to deal with. The Vlaams Belang is against any form of residence regularisation. By party standards Tastenhoye had made a serious error: the family he chose to defend had already been expelled in 2001, received no clemency from the Council of State in 2005 and then started new proceedings. The party is extremely irritated by the media interest in the Tastenhoye affair.

BART BRINCKMAN • DE STANDAARD • 24 FEBRUARY

Yesterday various Vlaams Belang members praised the ‘warm-heartedness’ of Guido Tastenhoye. The Antwerper also received the explicit backing of his fellow townsman and Flemish Parliament member Jurgen Verstrepen. Party leaders reacted rather peevishly to the news. ‘The Vlaams Belang continues to call for the humane but firm expulsion of illegal immigrants whose applications have been rejected. Asylum-seekers whose case is ongoing cannot claim regularisation,’ said Belang chairman Frank Vanhecke.

Chamber Parliamentary Party Leader Annemans is not minded to ‘string up’ his fellow party member. Nevertheless, it must remain a one-off. ‘There is simply nothing good about this. Tastenhoye is creating confusion over the Belang’s line regarding asylum-seekers. Belang members must not use political channels to regularise dossiers. Such things must be left to the administration.’

In front of the cameras of the television programme Villa Politica Tastenhoye stressed that he had still not done anything wrong. He still stuck to his guns, even though he had had his knuckles rapped.
Leterme wants better ‘packaging’ for Flemish government policy

Flemish Minister-President Yves Leterme (CD&V) has asked Guillaume Vanderstichelen of the advertising agency Duvalle Guillaume to help set up ‘a mobilising campaign’ on the Flemish Government’s socio-economic policy. Vanderstichelen has to think up a ‘suitable packaging’ for the government’s policy. At the end of last year Leterme announced that his government wanted to make its policy’s coherence more visible. In so doing he was answering the criticism that Leterme I lacked a clear project (FF).

Filip Rogiers • De Morgen • 23 February

It is expressly not the intention to come up with a successor to earlier projects such as ‘Flanders-Europe 2002’ (Van den Brande government) or ‘Colourful Flanders’ (Dewael, later Somers government).

On the contrary, Leterme wants to show that his government is breaking with trends. ‘In the past few years we’ve woken up a little from the misplaced assumption that we do better what we do ourselves,’ he said at the end of December. In his own words Leterme is breaking with the tradition of the ‘stack decision-making’ of previous Flemish governments: these issued decree after decree, as powers were created by successive state reforms. ‘There wasn’t enough focus: what is more or less important, knowing that the government can’t do everything and that funds are limited.’

According to Leterme, his team has lined up its priorities: there will be targeted investment in innovation, the job market, developing talent, education and a ‘different style of government’. ‘Only communication is and will remain a problem,’ Leterme also acknowledged yesterday. His team is now therefore addressing this issue. ‘It has to be more than a PR campaign by ministers all wanting to peddle their wares. It must be sustainable for a period of five to seven years.’

Sports and Gambling

Trainer Paul Put was hub of corruption at SK Lierse

The current main sponsor, the loan company Krefima, has terminated its contract with the club

Paul Put, former trainer at top-flight team SK Lierse, has revealed that he sold two Lierse matches ‘under threats from the gambling mafia’. Himself, his wife and his child were apparently under constant threat of death. Put could do little else but confess. The five former Lierse players, who had already confessed themselves, pointed out Put as the man who had given them the bribe money. When the news was announced on 17 February, Put’s current club, Excelsior Moeskroen, immediately sacked its trainer.

After the three Lierse players, Deman, Mandelier and Fassotte, two other former players, Mitu and Leforge, who now play for Anderlecht, were shown the door by their club. The players thought they were doing Lierse, which had got into financial difficulties, a service by throwing matches. The gambling mafia’s contact, Zheyun Ye, had promised to invest money in the club, but added that he first had to win big through gambling. Some players also stated that they had been threatened by the mafia.

SK Lierse is also starting to experience the adverse effects of the affair. The current main sponsor, the loan company Krefima, has terminated its contract with the club. Krefima does not want its name associated with fraudulent practices (FF).

Mark Eeckhout • De Standaard • 20 February

Every day it becomes clearer in the Lierse affair that former trainer Paul Put himself, and no one else, made sure that six of his players sold games to the gambling mafia.

On Friday Put himself stated to his former employer Excelsior Moeskroen that the affair involved two games and that he had given all the money to his players. According to our information, however, far more games were involved and Put himself pocketed most of the money. How much Put received is not clear. His players admitted that they received amounts of between 5,000 and 10,000 euros. Chinaman Zheyun Ye and Put met in the Antwerp hotels Astrid Plaza and SAS Parkhotel. There they made arrangements as to the result by which Lierse had to lose to allow Ye to win big. The players apparently used their bribe money to hold regular parties on the Antwerp disco boat Nano sur L’eau. If they failed to do what Ye asked, they would be threatened by his bodyguards.

Players who did not implement the system the way Put wanted were also penalised on a sporting level. Meanwhile Paul Put himself and his solicitor Chris Masson are saying nothing. ‘We will react once we have had chance to examine the dossier. At this point Paul Put has not even been questioned by the police,’ says Masson.

The expectation is that over the next few days and weeks the gambling scandal will shift to take in other clubs. At Germinal Beerschot the players Luciano, Cruz and Messoudi admitted months ago that they had been approached by Ye, but stated that they had not accepted any money. In the coming days and weeks Sint-Truiden and La Louvière can also expect a visit from the courts.

WWW.LIERSE.BE
WWW.FOOTBEL.COM

WWW.footbel.com
Legal action against company that refuses foreign employees

The Centre for Equal Opportunities and the Fight against Racism has issued a writ against the company Feryn to appear before an industrial tribunal after it emerged that the firm, which makes swing-up doors, had made insufficient effort to comply with an agreement with the Centre designed to prevent discrimination against foreigners when making job offers. The company made headline news when it announced that it refused to recruit foreign workers because the firm’s customers complained about the fact that foreigners were fitting their swing-up doors. That statement led to a meeting with the Centre and the employers’ organisation Unizo, at which Feryn undertook to draw up a diversity plan, pass on all vacancies to the Flemish Public Employment Service (VDAB) and under no circumstances continue to exclude qualified candidates on the basis of their origin. However, the firm failed to keep its promise. It neglected to announce vacancies via the VDAB and although it did draw up a draft diversity plan, this was deemed inadequate by the Region’s Socio-Economic Council. After that the company made insufficient effort to comply with it anyway is all to do with enlightened self-interest. Voka and Unizo realise all too well that if they do not take the initiative themselves, they will be forced to do so by the government. And time is pressing. Because as and when the borders are opened to workers from the new EU Member States, the current army of unemployed foreigners is unlikely to get a look in.

It’s true that the high level of unemployment among foreigners is partly the result of a lack of integration and education. But it is also unmistakably the result of discrimination, sometimes open, mostly hidden. This discrimination means that foreigners barely get a look in on the job market, even if they are educated and a model of integration. Why then should other foreigners take the trouble to get an education? We urgently have to break this vicious circle.

WWW.ANTIRACISME.BE

Opinion

STEEFAAN HUYSENTRUYT • DE TIJD • 21 FEBRUARY

Employment remains the best means of integration. If there is not an urgent increase in employment among foreigners, it is just a question of time before we experience something like the riots seen in the suburbs of Paris at the end of last year.

Employers’ organisations are well aware of the problem and are trying to do something about it. Their own supporters do not always thank them for actively supporting diversity on the shop floor. The fact that they go through with it anyway is all to do with enlightened self-interest. Voka and Unizo realise all too well that if they do not take the initiative themselves, they will be forced to do so by the government. And time is pressing. Because as and when the borders are opened to workers from the new EU Member States, the current army of unemployed foreigners is unlikely to get a look in.

It’s true that the high level of unemployment among foreigners is partly the result of a lack of integration and education. But it is also unmistakably the result of discrimination, sometimes open, mostly hidden. This discrimination means that foreigners barely get a look in on the job market, even if they are educated and a model of integration. Why then should other foreigners take the trouble to get an education? We urgently have to break this vicious circle.

WWW.ANTIRACISME.BE

Checks on young unemployed people bear fruit

Since the National Employment Office (RVA) has been closely monitoring young long-term unemployed people, they appear to have started making more of an effort to find a job. And with success. 5% of them have actually found a job since 2004. Of the 47,000 young people below the age of 30 who were eligible, only 850 unemployed were actually suspended because they refused to co-operate. In addition, the benefit of 4,837 unemployed people was suspended because they failed to turn up for an interview with the RVA (FF).

WIM WINCKELMANS • HET VOLK • 22 FEBRUARY

The approach is bearing fruit. According to RVA boss Karel Baek, that is down to the new measures. Of the 47,000 young people who were eligible, it emerged that two thirds could demonstrate that they were making sufficient efforts to find a job. With the others the RVA entered into an agreement in which the unemployed people promised to make more of an effort. Employment Minister Peter Vanvelthoven (SP.A) believes it is important that the new system does not end up being a mechanism of exclusion. The 4,837 unemployed people who were suspended because they failed to turn up for an interview got their benefit back as soon as they showed themselves willing to attend. Of the young people penalised, 22% of them appeared to have found a job within four months of their benefit being scrapped. It is striking that it is mainly men who are excluded. Furthermore, a greater percentage of unemployed people appear to make little effort in Flanders than in Wallonia.

WWW.RVA.BE

VBO calls for diversity

Only a few days after the announcement of action against the company Feryn, the Federation of Belgian Enterprises (VBO) launched the campaign ‘more diversity pays’. VBO Chairman Daoust called on business not to discriminate when recruiting staff. Finding a job is a crucial step towards social integration, says Daoust, and this places a social responsibility on business. He is urging companies to put positive campaigns into operation, but warns that unilateral government measures risk being counter-productive. For example, he is rejecting the idea of making anonymous applications compulsory or discriminating positively in favour of foreigners.
All poultry to be confined to hutches from 1 March

THE COMMITTEE ALSO JUDGED THAT A DECISION TO INTRODUCE A GENERAL VACCINATION WAS ONLY WORTHWHILE ON A EUROPEAN SCALE

From 1 March all poultry throughout Belgium must be confined to hutches. This will apply to both private individuals with just a few free-range chickens and to large poultry farms. Of these farms, around 10% allow their chickens to roam freely out of doors. The confinement order previously only applied in sensitive nature areas where a great many migratory birds alight.

With his decision Minister for Public Health Rudy Demotte (PS) is going beyond the advice he received from the scientific committee of the Influenza Commissariat.

The committee also judged that a decision to introduce a general vaccination was only worthwhile on a European scale. However, animal and bird parks such as Antwerp Zoo, Planckendael (Mechelen), Het Zwin (Knokke) are optimising to vaccinate. In this way they can allow their storks, flamingos, cranes and ostriches to roam freely and remain on show to the public. On 22 February an advert appeared in all newspapers to inform the public about bird flu (FF).

KATRIEN VERSTRAETE • DE TIJD • 21 FEBRUARY

Some countries - such as the Netherlands and France - are considering a large-scale vaccination of poultry to counter the spread of the dangerous H5N1 variant of the bird flu virus. Yesterday European agriculture ministers had not yet decided to allow vaccination. The European Commissioner for Public Health, Markos Kyprianou, wants veterinary experts to draft a European framework for vaccination. Countries that submit a vaccination plan to Europe must comply with these common EU standards.

Yesterday the Belgian scientific ‘Influenza’ committee met, headed by virologist Marc Van Ranst. It advises the Federal Minister for Public Health, Rudy Demotte (PS), and bird flu co-ordinator Piet Vanthemsche. According to the committee, vaccination is extremely labour-intensive and covers up the disease. Birds that are vaccinated cannot become sick, but can carry the virus and help to spread it. There will also be severe restrictions on the sale of products made from vaccinated animals.

Van Ranst is not entirely precluding large-scale vaccination in Belgium. ‘It may be an option if bird flu becomes endemic.’ In other words, if the virus is broadly present among birds and poultry for a long time. ‘In any case we’d like to see extensive vaccination of poultry at a European level,’ says Minister Demotte.

WWW.FAVV.BE
WWW.INFLUENZA.BE

BIRD FLU

Belgian Trade Surplus

PUBLIC INVESTMENTS IN BELGIUM

,next page

In 1997 Walter Fiers of the University of Ghent submitted a patent for a discovery that could be the first step towards a universal flu vaccine. Fiers concentrated his research on the protein M2, which in contrast to the key proteins in the virus did not change annually and tested this successfully on mice. A vaccine with the M2 protein as the inoculant could mean that you would be protected for life against all flu variants after a few vaccinations. But apart from the small American-German company Apovia, the pharmaceutical groups did not appear willing to finance further research in the Flanders Institute for Biotechnology (VIB). Tests on humans will not therefore start until 2007. According to De Morgen (23 February), which has the news from Bloomberg, American pharma giant Merck is conducting the same research with the M2 virus and has already begun testing it on humans. However, the VIB, which holds the patent, has not yet been contacted by Merck.
Belgian trade surplus collapses

In 2005 the surplus on the Belgian trade balance fell by 91% to 0.7 billion euros, reports De Tijd (21 February). That is its lowest level since 1992. In 2004 the surplus was still 8.2 billion euros. The trade balance records imports and exports of goods, not services. Belgium mainly exports machines and equipment, chemical products and transport equipment. Its main trading partners are Germany, France and the Netherlands. The collapse of the surplus is mainly due to the sharp rise in oil prices. According to figures from the Institute for National Accounts (Instituut voor Nationale Rekeningen, INR) to November and the forecast for December, on which De Tijd based its calculations, imports of 'mineral products' (including in particular oil) rose by 37%. Nevertheless, according to the paper, there is no doubt that the deterioration in Belgium’s competitive position has also played its part (FF).

WOUTER VERVENNE • DE TIJD • 21 FEBRUARY

Exports rose in value by 8% to 212.8 billion euros, but imports rose sharply by 12.3% to 212.1 billion euros. This represents Belgian trade's worst performance since 1992, when there was a deficit equivalent to 1.3 billion euros on the trade balance. However, the figures for before 1995 relate to the Belgo-Luxembourg Economic Union (BLEU). The collapse in the surplus is largely a consequence of the sharp rise in the price of oil. Detailed figures from the INR show that imports of mineral products rose by 37% to 29.52 billion euros over the first eleven months of 2005. Exports of mineral products rose by 20% to 15.86 billion euros. Belgium imports crude oil and exports refined oil products. Belgium imported much more from oil-producing countries such as Norway (+78%) and Russia (+36%).

Yet there is little doubt that the weakened competitive strength of Belgian business has also played its part in the collapse of the trade surplus. That is evident from the volume of imports and exports, which does not take account of the much higher price of oil products. Over the first eleven months the volume of exports rose by only 1.8% compared with a rise of 4.6% in the volume of imports. KBC economist Bart Van Craeynest recently calculated that in the past ten years Belgian companies have lost around one fifth of their sales area. Guy Quaden, Governor of the Nationale Bank, also pointed out last week that Belgium’s share of the market on exports fell due to the sharper rise in wage costs in Belgium.

Why Belgium’s share of the world market is falling

According to De Tijd (22 February), Belgium’s share of the market is falling for 3 reasons. Firstly, wage costs are rising faster here than in our three main neighbours, the Netherlands, France and Germany, while these are our main trading partners. Secondly, Belgian industry specialises in the production of semi-finished products. More than 60% of exports consist of semi-finished products. And it is precisely that sort of product that is more vulnerable to strong competition from low-wage countries such as China than other goods. Finally, Belgium exports little to regions of economic growth. Only 10% of exports go to Asia, and a large portion of that is diamonds destined for India and Israel.

Low government investments threaten economy

In its annual report on 2005 which the National Bank presented last week, it warns that the governments (regional and national) are still investing little compared with other EU countries. Barely 1.8% of Gross Domestic Product went on government investments last year, compared with 3.1% in the Netherlands and 3.3% in France, and the average of the 15 old European Member States is 2.5%. Only Germany performs worse, with 1.3%. In the 1970s government investments here represented 4% of GDP. Then there were extensive investments in infrastructure works such as Zeebrugge port or the building of motorways. In the 1980s this fell back sharply as a result of the reorganisation operations in government finances. During the state reform of 1988-1989 powers such as Education, Ports and Roads were largely transferred to the Regions. Since then public investments have mainly been a matter for the Regions, Communities and Municipalities (FF).

MARK DEWEERDT • DE TIJD • 20 FEBRUARY

If the difference with the main competitors persists, there is a chance that the lagging investment efforts will undermine the whole economy, says the Nationale Bank. After all, Belgium can only play the trump card of its geographical situation if it has a sufficiently well-developed public infrastructure. Meanwhile the Flemish Government which, according to what Minister-President Yves Leterme (CD&V) said in his first September Statement (2005), wants to be a government of investment, is doing something about it. In its multi-year budget 2006-2009 it has set aside more than 3 billion euros for investment. Via public-private partnerships (PPPs) it wants to invest heavily in roads and ports, but also in schools, social housing and the redevelopment of brownfield sites.

Separate from this there are the road infrastructure works in and around Antwerp, the so-called Masterplan, including among other things the Oostereel Link to complete the ring road, which are costing an estimated 3 billion euros. Wallonia has no comparable investment plans. Actually the region does not have the resources for such a plan.

WWW.NBB.BE

TABLE PAGE 4
VLD launches attack on socialist mobility policy

As Chairman of the mobility study day, Dedecker was able to lash out again at the ‘Socialist ministers for immobility’

At a study day in Ostend the Liberal VLD announced that it had had enough of the Socialist monopoly of public transport, mobility and traffic. Since Steve Stevaert took transport under his wing in the Flemish Government in 1998, the SPA has dominated the debate on road safety and mobility with free buses, call-up buses, super-fines and more investment in the railways. Enfant terrible of the VLD Jean-Marie Dedecker was the only one who raised any objection, with a call for the speed limit to be increased and attacks on the Socialists’ costly free policy, which according to him is unable to produce sufficient results. As Chairman of the mobility study day, Dedecker was able to lash out again at the ‘Socialist ministers for immobility’ and the ‘Socialist directors of public transport companies’. The result is that we are all standing still (in queues), claims Dedecker. He is therefore calling for greater investment in roads and a two-tier ring road, with one carriageway ‘on stilts’, around Brussels. VLD Chairman Bart Somers and Euro-MP Dirk Sterckx distanced themselves from Dedecker and told a much more subtle story (FF).

LIESBETH VAN IMPE • DE MORGEN • 20 FEBRUARY

‘I don’t believe you will persuade more people to use public transport by hounding them out of their cars,’ says Sterckx, at the same time pointing a finger at the Socialists, who will be anything but taken by an argument on de liberalisation of public transport. Sterckx does call the major investments in De Lijn [buses and trams] and the NMBS [railways] ‘right’, but at the same time wonders whether ‘we can sustain this’. The questions from the floor also went in different directions, but in each case the undertone was the same: the current policy (of the Socialists) is inadequate.

Party Chairman Somers called the proposal for the two-tier roads ‘not the VLD’s position’ and more than anything he wanted to combat the caricatures in the debate. ‘No either-or situation, but a both-and situation’, and that too is an attack on the SPA. ‘The queues approach is too one-sided with the promotion of free public transport,’ he said. Not that Somers is shunning all caricatures. For example, in his argument both ‘empty buses’ and ‘over-full trains’ are a waste of money and in many Belgian stations he feels he is ‘in Uzbekistan’, even though many of these stations have had a facelift in recent years. But Somers is calling for reasonableness and compromise and that is an obvious charm offensive aimed at the ‘one million hardworking Belgians who sit in queues’ and who, as the Chairman knows, would rather continue going to work in their cars in the future too.

WWW.VLD.BE

Tuybens defends investments in free public transport

Over the past year the railways company NMBS carried a record number of passengers and also posted a record turnover. On domestic travel the NMBS clocked up 7,796 million passenger-kilometres, an increase of 6.4% compared with 2004. This pushed turnover up to 450 million euros. That is 11.2% more than in the record year of 2004. The number of passengers rose by 5% to 173.4 million. Over ten years the increase was as much as 30%. Turnover from international passenger traffic also rose, from 204.9 to 217.5 million euros.

The Socialist State Secretary for Public Enterprises, Bruno Tuybens, is trying to use these figures to silence the fault-finders from Liberal and Christian Democrat corners. The fact that more people are travelling for free does not mean that the railways are losing money, he says (FF).

GORIK VAN HOLEN • DE MORGEN • 23 FEBRUARY

For Bruno Tuybens (SPA) the message is clear: the controversial free policy works. In the run-up to the elections the mobility policy is gradually growing into one of the main points at issue between the political families. Just this weekend the VLD drew a bead on the SPA’s free policy. The CD&V’s Jef Van den Bergh also wondered publicly whether the millions the government is investing in free train subscriptions are actually getting people onto public transport.

Yes, says Tuybens. ‘And what’s more: turnover also rose spectacularly. The fact that more people are travelling for free doesn’t therefore mean that the railways are losing money.’ Nor is it the case that this growth in turnover is down to the money the government is pumping into free commuting, says the State Secretary. Last year turnover rose by at least 45 million euros, while the government’s contribution via the free policy rose by only 7 million euros, from 2 to 9 million. ‘Sales of ordinary tickets also rose sharply,’ mentions Tuybens, who meanwhile intends to continue the policy. After federal civil servants and workers from the private sector who thanks to the intervention of their employer can travel to work for free, schoolchildren and students now also benefit from cheaper rates. ‘The intention is ultimately to allow them to travel for free too,’ says Tuybens.
The VLD’s plan to tackle queues: parking spaces and road investments

FF EDITOR

Public transport must be different and better. The VLD wants better station areas with more parking spaces and the VLD wants to do away with the ‘obsession with low prices’ of the socialists and wants to talk about quality.

The car will remain the main form of transport for going to work and we had better reconcile ourselves to that fact, says the VLD. We therefore have to invest more in our roads infrastructure. All the levers for this infrastructure, including those of the railways, must be in Flemish hands on Flemish territory.

The party is also arguing in favour of home-working and the decentralisation of the workplace. Finally, the VLD wants to invest the revenue from the road sticker mainly in new roads and maintenance and not in public transport, which is what the SPA wants.

EXHIBITION

The Vienna Werkstätte and photos of the Palais Stoclet in Bozar

REGRETTABLY THE REAL PALAIS STOCLET IS NOT CURRENTLY ACCESSIBLE TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC.

From 1890 in Europe there arose a style in architecture and consumer design which was christened ‘art nouveau’ in Belgium and France and was characterised by an organic line and the use of glass and iron as metals. In the German and Austrian variant, the ‘Jugendstil’, the line was more functional, more sober and geometric. In Vienna in 1903, Josef Hoffmann, Koloman Moser and Gustav Klimt christened the Vienna Werkstätte. Hoffmann was a pupil of Otto Wagner, the central figure of the Vienna Secession. The Werkstätte were workshops where all disciplines of applied art were practised. Their products - tableware, jewellery, furniture, vases - were intended for the interiors of luxurious upper-class houses. The Werkstätte gave priority to aesthetic considerations in their geometric designs. Their main aim was to bring aesthetics back into daily life. Therefore they also strove for an aesthetic environment, a ‘Gesamtkunstwerk’ ('synthesis of the arts') that covered all aspects of interior architecture: from floors and walls with multicoloured marble inlay work to carpets and furniture in exotic woods. Remarkably enough the ultimate Gesamtkunstwerk of the Werkstätte can be found not in Vienna, but in Brussels, the Palais Stoclet in St Pieters Woluwe. Hoffmann built the house (1905-1911) for Adolphe Stoclet. Regrettably this jewel of interior architecture is not currently accessible to the general public. The palace stands empty and the four Stoclet sisters, the heiresses, no longer allow any form of cultural tourism. Some of the sisters apparently plan to sell off parts of their inheritance, but the Brussels Region wants to protect the structure of the building as a whole. However, anyone wanting to get an idea of the interior of the Stoclet house can view detailed models, old photos and plans at the exhibition ‘Yearning for Beauty’ in the Palace of Fine Arts. Austrian artist Heimo Zobernig has produced a self-willed display with 1,500 beautiful objects and documents of the Werkstätte (FF).

JAN VAN HOVE • DE STANDAARD • 22 FEBRUARY

In their quest for new forms Hoffmann and Moser took inspiration from the Arts and Crafts movement from Scotland and also from the Belgian art nouveau. Thus the exhibition includes an elegant Henry Van de Velde bureau that was displayed in 1900 at the Secession in Vienna.

To once again give beauty a place in daily life, Hoffmann and Moser wanted to design all the parts of a building and its interior in the same spirit. The most successful works of the Vienna Werkstätte are therefore the major projects such as the Sanatorium Purkersdorf or the Stoclet house, which form a coherent whole and were conceived by the designers as a Gesamtkunstwerk.

The style of the Vienna Werkstätte evolved over the years and that becomes abundantly clear at the exhibition. In the first display cases, mainly full of silverwork, you see examples of the delicate geometric style that Hoffmann and Moser practised at the beginning of their career. At that time they were clearly under the influence of Japanese art, which enjoyed great success in Europe and was noteworthy for its austerity and refined forms. But towards the end the exhibits in ‘Yearning for Beauty’ become increasingly more colourful and the decoration more exuberant. Over time, more and more series products also appeared between the officially commissioned tours de force which were produced by subcontractors after the designs of the Vienna Werkstätte.

Anyone who views the splendour on display in the Palace of Fine Art will be able to imagine that the Vienna Werkstätte also aroused fierce opposition. That is particularly evident in the case of the jewellery, but also a coffee pot, a flower box or a desk lamp were given an elegant form and a costly design by Hoffmann and his companions which made it perfectly obvious that the pieces could only be intended for wealthy clients. With his choice of crafts Hoffmann ultimately chose the wrong route to bring beauty to a broad public. People such as Henry Van de Velde and later the Bauhaus designers would manage this much more successfully. They chose industrial design and made artistic designs for items produced by machine and distributed on a large scale. Acquaintance with his work is definitely worth the while.

UNTIL 28 MAY, BOZAR, BRUSSELS
WWW.BOZAR.BE
**CULTURE**

**MUSIC, DANCE, THEATRE**

- **24 February to 21 March**: Martin Arnold (Vienna, 1959) has established himself as one of the most brilliant of today’s experimental filmmakers, Bozar, Brussels; www.bozar.be 02/507.82.00

- **25 to 28 February**: Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker/Rosas: Raga for a rainy season/Love Supreme, dance; De Munt, Brussels; info; www.demunt.be

- **27 February**: Hélène Grimaud piano with Frédéric Chopin, Johannes Brahms and Sergey Rachmaninov, Bozar, Brussels; www.bozar.be 02/507.82.00

- **28 February**: Liars, AB, Brussels; info: 02/548.24.24 www.abconcerts.be

- **1 March**: Scottish Chamber Orchestra with Piotr Anderszewski piano and Alexander Janiczek, leader with Igor Strawinsky and WA Mozart, Piano concert no. 12, Bozar, Brussels; www.bozar.be 02/507.82.00

- **1 March**: Trio Joubran, Concert, Palestine, Zuiderpershuis, Antwerp; info; www.zuiderpershuis.be 03/248.01.00

- **1 March**: Two Gallants, AB, Brussels; info; www.abconcerts.be 02/548.24.24

- **2 March**: Mancini & Colbourn Trio and Juliana Hatfield, AB, Brussels; info; www.abconcerts.be 02/548.24.24

- **2 March**: Octurn with Magic Malik flute, Special guest and Gilbert Nouno electronics Special, Bozar, Brussels; www.bozar.be 02/507.82.00

- **2 March**: Cheikh Lô, Concert, Senegal, Zuiderpershuis, Antwerp; info; www.zuiderpershuis.be 03/248.01.00

- **3 March**: Edda, sung mythology from Iceland with Sequin, Bozar, Brussels; www.bozar.be 02/507.82.00

- **3 March**: Patricia Kopatsjinskaja (Moldavia, violin) with von Webern, Bartok, John Cage, van Beethoven, Handelsbeurs, Ghent; info; www.handelsbeurs.be

- **3 March**: La Finta Giardiniere by WA Mozart, Opera Fuoco, Concertgebouw Bruges; info: 070/33.33.02

- **4 March**: La Finta Giardiniere by Pasquale Anfossi (contemporary of Mozart), La Cappella de’Turchini, Concertgebouw Bruges; info: 070/33.33.02

- **4 March**: Mââk’s Spirit (jazz), Flagey, Brussels; info; www.flagey.be 02/548.24.24

- **4 and 8 March**: Haydn Sinfonietta Wien with Manfred Huss, Alexi Lubimov and Ronald Brautigam with Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach Concerto for 2 keyboards, Joseph Haydn Scherzando, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart Concerto for 3 keyboards and orchestra, Johann Christian Bach Symphony for double orchestra, Brussels Conservatory and Concertgebouw, Bruges; info; www.bozar.be and www.concertgebouw.be 070/33.33.02

- **5 and 7 March**: Monnaie Orchestra and Choir conducted by Pier Giorgio Morandi. Maxim Piers choir leader with Cristina Gallardo-Domas soprano, Carlos Ventre tenor - Stefano Antonucci bass with Giacomo Puccini, Capriccio Sinfonico, Le vili, Concert, Bozar, Brussels; www.bozar.be 02/507.82.00

- **5 March**: Burst, AB, Brussels; info; www.abconcerts.be 02/548.24.24

- **7 March**: Death Cab for Cutie, AB, Brussels; info; www.abconcerts.be 02/548.24.24

- **7 March**: The Sedan Vault, AB, Brussels; info; www.abconcerts.be 02/548.24.24

- **7 and 9 March**: Musical theatre Transparant and Centro de Experiencacion Teatro Colon, Jacob Lenz by Wolfgang Rihm, De Singel, Antwerp; info; www.desingel.be 03/248.28.28

- **8 March**: Tête Allinho & co, Cabo Verdo, Zuiderpershuis, Antwerp, info; www.zuiderpershuis.be 03/248.01.00

- **8 March**: The house of the hidden music pieces, Dick Vander Harst, Amparo Cortes, Oxalis with Mozart and Carmen de la Isla; De Singel, Antwerp; info; www.desingel.be 03/248.28.28

- **8 March**: The King’s Consort conducted by Robert King with Claire Booth soprano and James Gilchrist, tenor: Henry Purcell, Benjamin Britten and Georg Friedrich Händel, Bozar, Brussels; www.bozar.be 02/507.82.00

- **9 March**: Fred Firth and Marc Ribot (guitar), De Singel, Antwerp, info; www.desingel.be 03/248.28.28

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**EXPO**

- **Until 2008**: SMAK exhibitions: Franky DC, Henk Visch, Stefan Dheedene and Phil Collins, SMAK, Ghent; info; www.smak.be 09 221 17 03

- **Until 23 April**: Eugenius John, In Flanders Fields Museum, Ypres 057/239.220

- **Until 24 June**: Kijkdozen en denkmodeller (Showcases and models of thought), Jan Fabre, exhibition, Flemish Parliament, Lokettenzaal, Brussels; info; www.vlaamsparlement.be

- **Until 21 May**: Theo Van Rysselberghe, exhibition, Bozar, Brussels; info; www.bozar.be 02/507.82.00

- **Until 23 April**: The Collection XIV, exhibition, Mukha, Antwerp; info; www.mukha.be

- **Until 30 August**: Noli me tangere: Maria Magdalena in multiple, Library of theology, Louvain, www.theo.kuleuven.be

- **Until 28 May**: Yearning for Beauty, The Vienna Werkstätte, exhibition Bozar, Brussels; info; www.bozar.be

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