

Together

magazine

EAT & DRINK

Tuck in to our
gastronomic special

INTERVIEW

Belgian accessory
specialist
Christophe Coppens

TOUCHY

Water, water
everywhere?

BRUSSELS

ON THE MOVE
Belliard reborn

PEOPLE

IN BRUSSELS
Nouri al-Maliki
Kate and
Gerry McCann
Nick Cave

COMPETITIONS

Two one-week stays
at CERAN LINGUA,
courtesy of
Fortis, plus five pairs
of super-stylish
sunglasses to be won



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Cheers!

WRITER: JÉRÔME STÉFANSKI

Now also available for 2€ in around 30 select bookshops near the EU institutions and in bordering communes, *Together* is growing and evolving all the time, thanks to our team's creativity and your invaluable comments, received *en masse* at info@togethermedia.eu

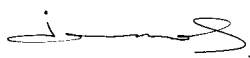
Our original values, however, remain unchanged: innovation, freshness and spice, to integrate the European community into the local life of Brussels. Values that are also key to leading website *Expatica.com* and so, following several months of flirtation between the two media, it would appear that a perfect partnership is on the way! Keep it here for updates...

In our latest edition, dedicated to the joys of gastronomy, our two 'life coaches' Joséphine Overeem and Muriel Troonen allow you to discover how best to **eat and drink in moderation**, an increasingly important issue in our hyper-stressful working lives. Drinking responsibly and the damage, both personal and economical, caused by alcohol abuse in Belgium and the wider EU is also a subject explored by our editor James Drew, in the wake

of European Health Commissioner Androulla Vassiliou's recently renewed pledge to the European Alcohol and Health Forum. Alex Hewetson, our oenology specialist, invites you to try some of **Brussels' most prestigious wine bars**, while Cillian Donnelly considers the very lucrative '**frietkots**' business and Ludivine Nolf takes a look at the **explosion of snack bars in Brussels**, a phenomenon frequently marred by **poor hygiene** standards in these establishments. Colin Moors presents an analysis of **three Belgian cuisine success stories**; Quick, Comme Chez Soi and Exki, while, for myself, it was a great pleasure to take part in our recent **exclusive fashion shoot at Brussels' Bloom Hotel**. An artistic, glamorous and creative blend, then, fashioned with a master's touch...

And we'll be seeing you again very soon – on 10th June, we present our extraordinary **Summer Special** – hot, hot, hot!

Between now and then, enjoy a meal in one of the **many delightful restaurants** at your disposal in our beautiful Capital of Europe, a selection of which are also offered for your delectation in our Eat&Drink special section. Cheers!



Jérôme Stéfanski
Publisher



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To CERAN LINGUA INTERNATIONAL with Fortis!

WRITER: JÉRÔME STÉFANSKI

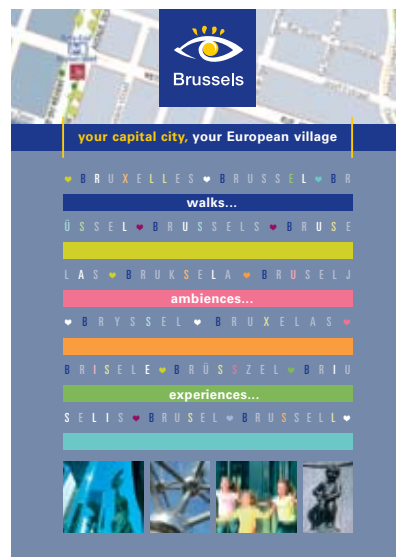
Fortis is delighted to offer two *Together* readers a week of intensive language training at the prestigious CERAN International Language Centre in Spa.



As part of its mission to respond to the needs of the expatriate community in Belgium, Fortis' Expat department has commissioned a special survey in collaboration with *Expatica.com* and expat magazine *Together*. The goal of this nationwide project is to highlight the benefits of the Belgian financial system and the most suitable banking and insurance schemes available for expats. And, for two lucky winners, there's the chance of a week's residential language immersion courses at CERAN LINGUA INTERNATIONAL Centre.

HOW DOES IT WORK ?

To take part, go to www.expatica.com/fortissurvey between 27 May and 30 June – no commercial obligation involved. You'll find questions on various topics, such as Belgium's tax system, banking products, investments and what you expect as an expatriate from a bank.



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The competition begins at midnight on 27 May and ends at midnight on 30 June, under the supervision of a bailiff. The complete rules can be obtained on request from: Together Magazine-Fortis Survey, Rue d'Alost 7, (Centre Dansaert C2), 1000 Brussels.



The magnificent setting of the prestigious CERAN International Language Centre, Spa

TO BE IN WITH A CHANCE OF WINNING ONE OF THE CERAN PRIZES, EACH WORTH €2,395, DON'T DELAY. TAKE PART IN THE SURVEY TODAY AT WWW.EXPATICA.COM/FORTISSURVEY

There are no questions concerning personal financial circumstances and absolute confidentiality is guaranteed. At the end of the survey, you'll be tested with two brain-teasers - two randomly picked readers who answer correctly will win the prizes. The results of the survey will be sent free of charge to all respondents in September.

THE LUCKY WINNERS

The winners get to stay for a week of their choice at the CERAN Centre in the Ardennes, near Spa. There, they will enjoy a full-immersion programme in their selected language (French, English, Dutch, German, Spanish or Japanese). For more than

30 years, CERAN has been a leader in linguistic instruction, with phonetic teaching, one-to-one and small-group lessons, a 'language laboratory' and writing workshops. In addition to the educational package, the winners will enjoy full-board, quality accommodation. The course is called the P GROUP PROGRAMME and further details can be found at www.ceran.com

Good luck! Bonne chance! Guddorakku! Buena suerte! Veel Geluk! Viel Glück!

www.expatica.com/fortissurvey
www.fortisbanking.be
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Fortis: Calling all expats

WRITER: JÉRÔME STÉFANSKI

Take part in
the survey
today at:
www.expatica.com/fortissurvey

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Fortis, the international banking and insurance specialist, has a huge portfolio of domestic and foreign clients, offering personalised services to individuals, companies and institutions. *Together* talks exclusively with the group's Specific Markets Manager Bert Van Wemmel about the new Fortis Survey (and competition) aimed at expats.

An Applied Economic Sciences graduate from the University of Leuven, Bert Van Wemmel is an expert in his field and has been instrumental in the group's evolution, working with Fortis for more than 20 years. He now specialises in offering services for well-appointed, discerning customers: expats.



INTERVIEW

Together Magazine: What do expat clients mean to Fortis?

Bert Van Wemmel: It's an expanding market that's constantly changing. At Fortis, we take particular care to be receptive to expats' wishes, because we know that they need very specific products and services – this is why we've launched our Expats Survey.

What is the philosophy behind it?

We want to create a privileged relationship between expats and Fortis. Our goal is to show them that we are listening and are ready to help them throughout their stay in Belgium, with tailored banking and insurance products. But before that, we must understand exactly what they want. That's why our survey is internet-based. We need responses from the public, regardless of whether or not they are already Fortis customers. And two lucky survey participants will win a one-week language course, full board, at the prestigious CERAN institute in Spa in the Ardennes.

What do you offer expats at present?

As with all our other customers, we are there to listen to them and provide them with the best personalised solutions. We also offer general products and services such as Fortis Expat Line, the only helpline of its kind in Belgium. Not to mention a network of specialized agencies mainly in Brabant-Wallon, Vlaams Brabant, Brussels and Antwerp. And we keep our existing and prospective customers informed of our activities via our Fortis Expat Welcome Pack, which we distribute free of charge to the many multinational and Belgian companies that employ expats.

J.S.

VICHY

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* Hydrating, anti-wrinkle, eye-contour and other products. Source IMS Europe 7 (France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, Germany, Austria). Cumulative sales at end of June 2007.

A vision of style

WRITER: JAMES DREW

1. MK 720
2. FS 444
3. FS 445
4. FS 451

Together teams up with optometrist **davidrose** for the chance to win five pairs of stylish shades to create your Summer style.

Established in Brussels Leopold district in December 2007, **davidrose** is fast gaining a reputation as the name to trust when it comes to the very best in spectacles and sunglasses.

And we couldn't let Summer start without offering our readers the chance to make an impression on the beaches and terraces when the season's in full swing. And it's not just any sunglasses that are up for grabs. **davidrose** is offering two pairs of Michael Kors and three pairs of Fendi sunglasses – that's more than 1,000€ of clearly superior shades.

So, fancy winning some class glasses? All you have to do is go

to www.together-magazine.eu and answer the three questions below:

1. **davidrose** is located nearer to :
A. The European Parliament
B. The European Commission
C. NATO
2. How many pairs of glasses is **davidrose** displaying in his shop window between 27th May and 15th June?
A. 10
B. 20
C. 24
3. What is the weight in grammes of a copy of *Together*, excluding wrapping and aftershave/perfume sample?

davidrose
Rue de Trèves, 16
1050 Brussels
T. +32 (0)2 512 66 10
davidrose.optique@gmail.com



Colour of models offered may differ from those shown.
Competition organised under the supervision of a bailiff. Full rules available on request.
Organiser: Together Magazine, Rue d'Alost, 7, 1000 Brussels.



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FLASH

DEFENDING BRUXELLOIS IDENTITY

A new political party, Pro Bruxsel, has been formed via the collaboration of three Brussels civil associations - Manifesto, Aula Magna and Bruxsel.org, which, for several months, have addressed the future of Brussels-Capital. According to the group, prospects have deteriorated as a result of the 2007 Belgian political crisis - Pro Bruxsel's prime objectives are to stimulate support for being Bruxellois and ensure the succesful co-education of the capital's foreign communities.

FIGURE: 6,000

That's the number of children, aged 6-17, who are at present not attending school in Brussels. It's cause of 'great concern' for French Community Education Minister Christian Dupont that so many minors are not registered in either French, Flemish or private schools.

NEWS

Beautiful city boasts beautiful people

WRITERS: FEDERICO GRANDESSO & JÉRÔME STÉFANSKI

More movers and shakers – those who've visited recently, and those who're on their way...

IRAQ LEADER

Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki (left) visited the European Parliament last month, to attend a Foreign Affairs Committee meeting. Speaking about progress in his home country, al-Maliki underlined two key points - the need for technical expertise and implementing the return of Iraq's 4 million refugees.



SUPERB SERVICE

French ex-tennis star turned pop singer Yannick Noah gave a concert that lasted five hours recently. According to fans, the show, which started around 20h, was interrupted only by a ten-minute pause, after which the singer apparently returned to the stage stoned, for more French and international music until 1h05, when the fun finally ended 'for safety reasons'...

FRENCH ARRIVAL

French Justice Minister Rachida Dati came to Brussels last month to present her country's justice priorities for its upcoming EU Presidency. Dati also met the new French Commissioner for Justice and Home Affairs, Jacques Barrot, who is set to replace Italian Commissioner Franco Frattini.



SPANISH FLYING VISIT

Fresh from the recent elections, Spain's FA Minister Miguel Angel Moratinos (left) paid a visit to the EU's institutions in April, to announce to EU officials the agenda and priorities of the upcoming Spanish EU Presidency in 2010.

KATE AND GERRY MCCANN

On 10th April, Kate and Gerry McCann, parents of Madeline who disappeared from her hotel room in Portugal last year, visited the European Parliament to lobby for a EU-wide 'missing child' alert system. The McCanns want a pan-European device similar to the ETAS-Plain system in France and Switzerland. According to Gerry McCann: "Such a system prevents any kidnapper from travelling long distances and thus increases the chances of finding a kidnapped child."



CAVE - IN!

At the beginning of May, celebrated Australian rocker Nick Cave (front) and his group The Bad Seeds ignited Forest National with a truly memorable concert...

TOP: IRENE KHAN

Amnesty International Secretary-General Irene Khan visited Brussels during April - during her meetings with Pöttering, Solana and Rehn, Khan discussed war crimes in Croatia and international concerns over the implementation of EU human-rights commitments.



FLOP: THE BACKSTREET BOYS

Nick Carter (pictured) and the three remaining The Backstreet Boys went back to work at the end of 2007, producing a new album under the imaginative title of *Unbreakable* – and just whose bright idea was it to reform the group and disturb the peace? Whatever...they were in Brussels at the beginning of May for a truly average show at Forest National, and just think what many much-more deserving young artists would give for that chance...

OPEN YOUR EYES...

As Summer gets into gear, there will many chances to catch a glimpse of the beautiful people set to visit our beautiful city, such as legendary singer **Mark Knopfler** and Dire Straits who arrive at Forest National on 3rd June, or **Lavigne Avril**, at the same venue on 21st June. During the Brussels European Film Festival (28th June-6th July) many actors, directors and other cinematic luminaries will grace Europe's capital, including **Jesper Asholt** (Danish star of *The Art of Crying* (2006)), **Csaba Bollók**

(Hungarian director of *Isaka's Journey* (2007)), French actor **Bernard Campan** (*La Face Cachée* (2007)), even **Luc** and **Jean-Pierre Dardenne**, Belgian brothers and two-time winners of Cannes Palme d'Or. **Duran Duran** are en route for the Cirque Royal on 18th and, as usual, EU heads of states will attend the European Council from 19th-20th June. So, don't miss your chance to meet them at your leisure in Brussels' restaurants, hotels and stylish bars...

A thirst for a simple solution

WRITER: KIMBERLEY LOVATO

Some 40 percent of the world's population has no access to clean water – and the crisis goes to the heart of war and peace, eating and drinking, living and dying. While the stricken areas may seem far removed from our rain-soaked existence in Belgium, the crisis is, in fact, closer than you may think...

When most of us think about water shortages, we likely relate it to a problem close to home, within our own neighborhood or region. Unless we can't turn on our showers or water our flowers, we are not concerned about water supply, if we think about it at all. We have confidence that when we turn on our faucets, water

will pour and if not, the local authority will rectify the situation in a matter of hours.

WATER WRONGS

But, focus on the global picture, in particular Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East: "We have closed our eyes to the severity of the situation and it's coming home to roost," says Lionel Platteuw, executive director of the European Water Partnership (EWP), an independent non-profit organization dedicated to the promotion and co-ordination of initiatives to address European and worldwide water issues.

Based on UN data, Platteuw estimates that in wider Europe, some 40 million people lack access to adequate drinking water and around 85 million live without basic sanitation - numbers that seem inconceivable.

"Our goal as an organization is to be an educator and facilitator, and to help members come to terms with the issues that face us today."



South Australia
© Dieter Telemans

"The link between Europe's deteriorating water resources and economic stability, health and migration can no longer be ignored," stresses Platteuw, "and the topic of water now finds itself at the top of many political agendas."

EWP, whose members are European government bodies, private enterprises, NGOs, financiers and universities,

works closely with the European institutions, as well as being the European Regional coordinator for the World Water Forum (WWF), the world's largest water-related event. Among the topics on the agenda in March 2009, at Istanbul, will be the explosion in technology as a means of bringing clean water to the masses.

'OUR GOAL AS AN ORGANIZATION IS TO BE AN EDUCATOR AND FACILITATOR, AND TO HELP MEMBERS COME TO TERMS WITH THE ISSUES THAT FACE US TODAY'

WET PROFITS

The market potential for investment here is enormous, says Platteuw. In a report from the Nordic Innovation Centre in Oslo, Christian Gron, a project leader with DHI Water & Environment in Denmark, estimates that water technology is an emerging billion-euro market.

Countries such as Israel, where water is a precious commodity, have already invested deeply in advanced technology. After several years and hundreds of millions of dollars, 60 percent of the country's sewage water is recycled and, in 2004, Israel opened what was then the world's largest desalination plant.

New ventures are sprouting up to develop technologies for the global market, and demand is growing rapidly in the public and private sectors.

The ecological catastrophe in the Aral Sea
© Dieter Telemans



Lake Tana,
in Ethiopia

© Dieter Telemans



In early 2006, Spain's state-owned water company, Acuamed, announced that it was seeking offers from companies interested in building an 82€ million desalination plant in Almeria, in the south-eastern region of the country.

SEA CHANGE

In April of the same year, France's Veolia Water was awarded the contract for a new seawater desalination plant in Bahrain. The contract, worth 275€ million, was won following an international call for potential suppliers. The plant is estimated to supply a production capacity of 273,000 cubic metres of drinking water per day using the thermal process known as 'multiple effect distillation' (MED), the evaporation and condensation of seawater in a series of vacuum chambers.

THE PHOTOGRAPHS

Celebrated Belgian photographer Dieter Telemans took these remarkable shots as part of a project on the theme of water, which were shown in Aquamass's showroom by Founder and Director Jean-Pol Piron from 21-24 May 2008. Maison Aquamass celebrates its 30th anniversary in 2008, 30 years during which the *marque* has gained a distinguished worldwide reputation with its innovative bathroom designs, which blend style with 'wellness'. More information available at www.dieter telemans.com and www.aquamass.be.



Water transport
in Mali

© Dieter Telemans

**COUNTRIES
SUCH AS ISRAEL,
WHERE WATER
IS A PRECIOUS
COMMODITY,
HAVE ALREADY
INVESTED DEEPLY
IN ADVANCED
TECHNOLOGY**

Some years ago, American giant General Electric paid 1.1\$ billion for Ionics, a leading player in desalination, water reuse and recycling.

As well as this, Germany's Siemens acquired US Filter Corporation for 1\$ billion as part of its strategy to expand in the waste-water-treatment area.

While Platteuw acknowledges that

technology has its place and value, he asserts it can't be implemented independently, without understanding its impact on the environment as a whole. "EWP believes that communication, organization and integrated and holistic solutions are the real keys to breaking down barriers and solving water issues," he says. "Talking about it is the essential first step." The approach may be simple, but the problem remains multi-faceted and the solution soaked in complexity.

K.L.

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YOU RENT A LOT MORE THAN A CAR.

Lobbying: A word in your ear

WRITER: CILLIAN DONNELLY

Place du Luxembourg's exterior conceals influential relationships between lobbyists and MEPs

© M. Van Hulst/BITC

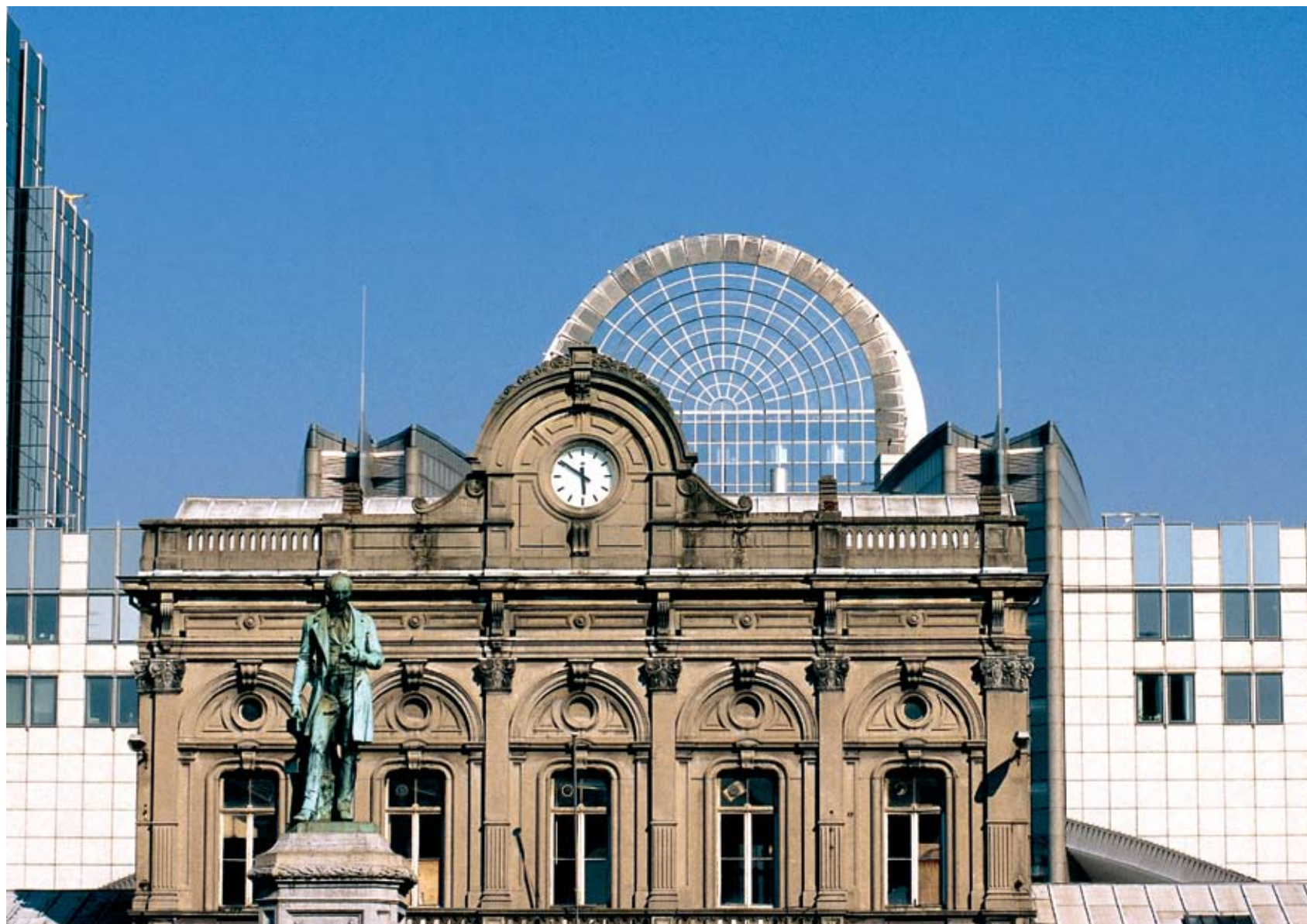
Brussels is not simply an international city; it is also a political arena and, while many expats work for political groups, MEPs, or for an EU institution, the work of lobbyists, whose job it is to affect legislation, is also essential to the city's role on the world stage.

It is estimated that there are around 15,000 accredited lobbyists and 2,500 lobby organisations in Brussels, which regularly meet with decision-makers in the Commission and Parliament to persuade those in power to listen to the arguments of the particular interest group that they represent, in the hope of bringing about a favourable outcome in any future legislation.

Since March 2005, the EU has been grappling with how to deal with the influx of lobbyists in Brussels, with calls by Parliament to have a mandatory public register of lobbyists common to all institutions, an enforceable code of conduct, and the introduction of a "legislative footprint" on all reports; that is, a list of all lobbyists who provided significant input.

A QUESTION OF INFLUENCE

So what is a lobbyist, exactly? MEPs suggest it is anyone "influencing





Capitol Hill, Washington DC: The symbol of 'Made in America' lobbying

the policy formation and decision-making processes of the European institutions". As well as public- and private-interest groups, NGOs, think-tanks, trade unions, employer associations and lawyers can be thus defined. As former MEP Alexander Subb puts it: "Anyone who comes into my office and tries to influence a piece of legislation is a lobbyist in my eyes."

"Lobbying is about education," says Jeffrey Seisler, CEO of Clean Fuels Consulting and experienced Brussels and Washington lobbyist. "That is, the education of policymakers.

'LOBBYING IS EDUCATION. THAT IS, EDUCATION OF POLICYMAKERS. INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE BECOME A FORM OF LEADERSHIP'

Information and knowledge become a form of leadership. My approach is not to use financial resources, but to help policymakers and elected officials to do a better job for those who elect them."

A successful lobbyist, he continues, is one who works with legislators to affect not only the way that law is written, but also implemented. Ultimately, a good lobbyist can be a vital component in the development of better policy.

SAME YET DIFFERENT

As two political centres, Brussels and Washington have much in common, not least the political lobby groups, but there are also vital differences in the way the systems operate, says Seisler, who acknowledges that the "grey area between lobbying and bribing" still exists in the US capital, with lobbyists regularly offering cash or other gifts in order to see the emergence of a 'satisfactory' new law. Brussels lobbyists, Seisler maintains, do not suffer from the same "negative tinge that lobbyists in the US are often accused of".

This somewhat aggressive strategy may have something to do with the legislative timeframe, which is much shorter in



Aaron Eckhart plays a spokesman for a large US tobacco manufacturer who's also trying to be a role model for his young son in Thank You For Smoking – a recent satire on the tobacco industry's powerful lobbying machine

© Fox Pictures

the US, where it can take as little as two years for a law to travel from concept to Presidential Signature, than in Europe. In Brussels, it takes a minimum of three years to create a Directive. In the US, Congress has a two-year cycle, whereas the Commission is appointed for five years. This, believes Seisler, leads to "more stability" in the EU.

There are further differences, explains Seisler, who is also vice president for government relations at the International Association for Natural Gas Vehicles. "In the US, a legislator has a relatively narrow

constituency to whom they directly report, which allows for more direct contact. With the European Parliament, the direct visible effect is much

'YOU WORK IN THE SAME TOWN AND DEAL WITH THE SAME ISSUES. THIS IS SIMILAR IN BRUSSELS AND WASHINGTON'

less clear than it would be for a legislator in the US."

CONCENSUS BUILDING

"The European Parliament has a supernatural aura, which makes MEPs seem one step removed from the people that elect them. Europe is more amorphous than the US, which means, for an MEP, that building the kind of US-style relationships is more difficult."

And it is precisely this kind of personal relationship that underpins a successful lobbyist. Often, says Seisler, the lobbyist and the lobby end up as social friends. "It's somewhat inevitable; you work in the same town and deal with the same issues. This is similar in Brussels and Washington, and lobbying is about access, also, so you can't replace those personal aspects of the job."

Finally, Seisler believes that the history of both Europe and the US contributes much to the political attitudes that govern both lobbying and



The US firearms lobby is one of most powerful in the world

the political process. "The US has a relatively short history compared to Europe. Because you have short terms of office, legislation can be created quickly, and because the President can change every four years, often laws get changed according to personal preference."

"Europe is built on consensus-building. It is the foundation of European governance. Of course, it takes much longer to create alliances

here than in Washington, so people are careful about changing laws in a hurry. Here, they take the longer view. I think this is consistent with the historical view of Europe."

C.D.

www.lobbying-europe.com

RED IS HOT



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*An alcoholic's
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Rue de la Loi,
Monday, 3pm*

Think drink: Curbing EU alcohol abuse

WRITER: JAMES DREW

In April, European Health Commissioner Androula Vassiliou renewed the Commission's commitment to the European Alcohol and Health Forum, established in 2007, in tandem with another EU-health initiative, Wine in Moderation, which was launched in March.

As with most of life's pleasures, alcohol is an excellent servant, but a very poor master. In a cosmopolitan city such as Brussels, where many EU institution employees think nothing of consuming large quantities of alcohol on a daily basis, it is easier than you might think to get drawn into a worsening spiral that begins with frequent social heavy drinking but can end in poor health, psychological and financial problems and, at worst, family break-ups and an early grave.

'THE PROBLEM REPRESENTS AN INTOLERABLE LEVEL OF HUMAN SUFFERING'

NO HALF MEASURES

Speaking on 16th April, Health Commissioner Androula Vassiliou put Europe's alcohol-abuse problem into sharp focus:

"Harmful and hazardous alcohol consumption is a key health determinant - I think we all agree on the need to reduce alcohol-related harm and on the fact that this is something we all need to contribute to. The problem represents an intolerable level of human suffering, which is only partly self-inflicted, since alcohol is an addictive substance and harmful alcohol consumption also causes harm to those who do not drink themselves."

Since the launch of the European Alcohol and Health Forum in 2007, it has acted as a common platform for actors at European level to implement their plans to contribute concretely to the reduction of alcohol-related harm.

Vassiliou welcomed the pledges made by 46 businesses and non-governmental organisations to curb alcohol abuse - to date, the forum has received 78 commitments from companies and health groups ranging from midwives and doctors associations, European temperance societies, public health NGOs, Heineken International, Bacardi-Martini and Moët Hennessy to retailers such as the Delhaize group and Ahold N.V.

Vassiliou added: "We shall be ambitious; more can and should be done to achieve results. We need to continue this good collaborative effort and I look forward to seeing these commitments translated into concrete action." The Commissioner



*Binge drinker*

stressed that she particularly expects the alcoholic beverage industry to market their products responsibly, and not to target adolescents.

BINGE ACTION

The Forum, which meets twice a year and is chaired by the Commission's Directorate General for Health and Consumer Protection, has established two Task Forces (on marketing and youth-specific aspects of alcohol) which have already produced recommendations for further action by the Forum members. The Forum will also establish a Science Group, which – at the request of the Forum – will provide scientific advice and guidance on matters under discussion.

Its aim is to promote:

- Strategies aimed at curbing under-age drinking;
- information and education programmes on the effect of harmful drinking and on responsible patterns of consumption;
- possible development of efficient common approaches throughout the EU;
- adequate consumer information;
- actions better to enforce age limits for alcohol consumption
- interventions promoting effective behavioural change among children and adolescents, and;
- co-operation to promote alcohol responsibly and prevent irresponsible commercial communication and sales.

THE RIGHT SPIRIT

Commissioner Vassilious's outlook is not entirely pessimistic, however: "This is of course not to say that there is nothing positive to say about alcohol. Drinking in moderation is no problem for most people and can contribute to enjoying life. However, from a public-health point of view, the costs, unfortunately, outweigh the benefits."

Alcohol consumption with restraint is key to the European wine sector's pan-European programme, Wine In Moderation, which was launched in Brussels on 18th March, 2008.

With wine's integral place in European life and culture, the programme, supported by key EU competent authorities and stakeholders, is seeking further to promote the wine and wine products enjoyed by millions in Europe and around the world, with the emphasis on the benefits that moderate consumption can bring both to social lives and health.

DRINK TO LIVE

As programme spokesman George Sandeman explained: "The wine sector is a strong, long-standing advocate for responsible and moderate consumption. The wine culture provides best practice for sensible consumption patterns; but we can and must do more. The entire wine chain must be mobilised to reinforce moderate and sensible consumption patterns as a cultural and social norm."

**'DRINKING
ALCOHOL IN
MODERATION
IS NO PROBLEM
FOR MOST
PEOPLE AND CAN
CONTRIBUTE TO
ENJOYING LIFE'**

Scientific studies demonstrate that consuming moderate amounts of alcohol reduces mortality from coronary heart disease as well as from other causes by 25-30 percent - the relative risk of dying is lowest among light to moderate

drinkers yet greater among abstainers, but the risk increases dramatically with each drink above moderation.

J.D.

If you feel that you have a drink problem and wish to seek help, Brussels Alcoholics Anonymous meetings are listed at www.aa-europe.org/countries/brussels.htm www.wineinmoderation.eu

BOOZE BLUES

- The average amount of alcohol consumed on a weekly basis by the Belgian population (15 years and older) is 3.19 glasses (250ml) of beer, 1.53 glasses (125 ml) of wine and 0.24 glasses (30ml) of strong alcoholic beverages (brandies, whisky, etc).
- Harmful and hazardous alcohol consumption is a net cause of 7.4 percent of all ill-health and early death in the European Union, and has a negative impact on labour and productivity.
- Hazardous alcohol consumption causes more than 10 percent of EU female deaths and around 25 percent of male deaths in the 15-29 age group – equivalent to one in four deaths among young men and one in ten among young women.
- One in ten Europeans usually has five or more drinks in one session, which is the widely accepted definition of binge drinking for men.
- The total tangible cost of alcohol to EU society is estimated at 150€ billion, equivalent to 1.3 percent of the EU GDP.

Eurobarometer on Alcohol (2007)



Pleasure or pain?

YOUNG DRIVERS 'STIGMATIZED' BY SCHOUPE

Motoring organisation Responsible Young Drivers (RYD) has expressed its anger over Belgian Secretary of State for Mobility Etienne Schouppe's proposal to reduce the authorized blood-alcohol content for young motorists to 0.2 parts per thousand.

According to Responsible Young Drivers Director Johan Chiers: "RYD would actively support a reduction in authorized blood-alcohol content to 0.2 parts per thousand for ALL drivers, but police studies, undertaken during recent BOB anti drink-driving campaigns, show that it is in fact 30-40 year-olds who fail breathalyser tests most frequently. So why target young people? Etienne Schouppe's proposal goes

against recommendations established by the 2007 Road Safety Working Group apply stricter alcohol-blood content restrictions only to learner drivers, before they obtain their driving licence. Young people are indeed more often involved in accidents than older drivers, but Schouppe himself, in a recent interview with *Het Laatste Nieuws*, correctly identified the cause of this problem, inexperience, which can be solved only by better education. A reduction in the authorized blood-alcohol content will simply not decrease the number of accidents. Responsible Young Drivers would ask Schouppe to introduce more positive policy, begin with working towards road safety with young people instead of stigmatizing them."

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No RER before 2016

WRITER: LUDIVINE NOLF

Envisioned as a way to ease congestion in the capital, the Network Regional Express train (RER) was originally intended to arrive by 2011. In fact, the project will not be operational before 2016 at least, and could even be delayed as long as 2020. Few will be surprised to hear that Brussels' excessive and sluggish administrative procedures are being blamed...

As expected by many, the Network Regional Express train (RER), originally expected by 2011, will not in fact be operational before at least 2016. Its installation will allow citizens living in a 30-kilometre radius of the capital to leave their cars at home and take the train, which would stop in an as-yet unspecified number of Brussels' areas.

It was during a March 2007 Brussels Parliament meeting that Luc Lallemand, administrator-delegate of Infrabel, which manages the SNCB infrastructure, announced the four-year delay, which defers the introduction of the congestion-easing measure for the capital to 2015-2016. Lallemand pointed the finger of blame at Brussels Region's administrative sluggishness, with particular regard to the delivery of town-planning certificates necessary for the work to begin.

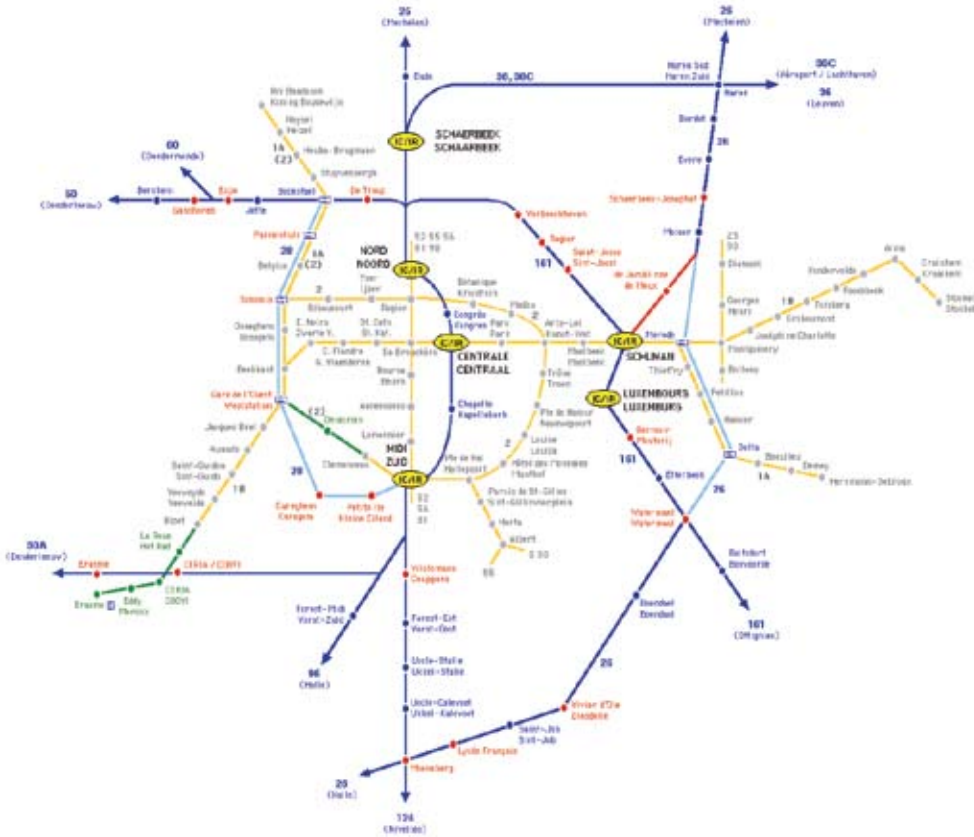
GETTING BACK ON TRACK

Some weeks ago, the Brussels Parliament, shaken by the sense of panic coming from Infrabel, decided to adopt an emergency resolution motion, which deplored the "lack of overall vision of the various parties concerned with the improvement of mobility by railway in and around Brussels" and requested that Brussels Region collated an inventory of the urban works in progress. It also exhorted negotiations to establish where the RER stops would be located, in order to ease congestion on the inter-Brussels roads. More than ever, RER, and the development of a grid system at a suggested radius of 30 kilometres seems essential, particularly if the statistics published by Network Regional Express are taken into account, which postulate that some five percent of Brussels' residents will live on the city's periphery by 2015.

TOWARDS A BRUXELLOIS EXODUS ?

Requested by Beliris, the study proposes two 2015 scenarios, both with and without the RER. "According to this model, the total increase of household moving to the periphery because of the RER will be 17,725 households (4.8 percent of total households), 70 percent of which will be middle-class households," according to Alternatives 161, the residents association would be based in Watermael-Boitsfort.

"The potential departure of many households will bring a fall in housing prices. Offering the population a new transport system that's more powerful



The Brussels Regional Express Railway
Copyright: Planitram Brussels

than what already exists will reduce commuting time and encourage a larger number of people to move further away from the city."

However, according to Secretary of State and Head of Town Planning Francoise Dupuis (PS): "This study does not take account of measures and policies for the population maintenance in Brussels Region and of the positive repercussions that the RER would bring."

FORET DE SOIGNES: SIX HECTARES THREATENED

Alternatives 161 added: "We were favourable to the four-track extensions of line 161 in the Forêt de Soignes, but only if certain essential compromises were observed, such as the implementation of two, even three natural reserves in order to compensate for the increasing depletion of the forest. We shared our feelings with Brussels Region at the time of the public

investigation, but they were not taken into account."

ASBL Brussels-Nature considers the town-planning license delivered by Francoise Dupuis for the construction of the RER with Watermael-Boitsfort as "worrying" for the animals living in the Forêt de Soignes, with six hectares threatened by the project. Brussels-Nature estimates that only the construction of the nature reserves would compensate for the "amputation".

"Without reserves, the species' limited gene-pool problems are likely to multiply," says Brussels-Nature's Mario Ninanne. "They will be too insulated, by the Brussels Ring, motorway and the railway. SNCB already expropriated a part of the forest during the 1980s for a third line which never came about. Reserves are imperative." An official objection was introduced by the Watermael-Boitsfort commune in April 2007, and the Dupuis cabinet has declared itself as remaining "open to any negotiation". L.N.

End of road for Belliard carbuncle

WRITER: LUDIVINE NOLF

Work on a four-year project, a 9,000m² complex of apartments and high-rise offices, is nearing conclusion at Ilot Froissart, east Brussels. Its name? Bell Art.

The saga of the 'broken teeth' construction site, which has blighted the Belliard district for more than 20 years, is reaching an end. Indeed, the district, which was still a shambles but a few years ago, is today a small island of luxury worth its weight in gold, thanks to its strategic position in the heart of the EU district. Sliced up by speculators, abandoned by investors, the buildings constructed in the 1970s between Rue Belliard, Froissart and Chaussée d' Etterbeek were finally taken in hand once more in 2004.

Some 110 private and six trade residencies, including 5,000m² of office space and 4,000m² of retail space should be ready to accommodate their first tenants by September.

'THE GOAL WAS TO REJUVENATE LIFE IN THE DISTRICT'

The proposed duplex apartments, where individual prices are likely to exceed the 400,000€ mark, will also offer a basement car

park and terraces with excellent views over Parc Léopold.

IDEAL FOR FAMILIES

Four years on, the building site is nearing the end of its gruelling redevelopment, much to the delight of property developers Allfin Company, who snapped up what they saw as a good bargain at the outset. However, they took care, co-operating closely with the Etterbeek commune, not to confine themselves solely to constructing offices or 'hotel' apartments.

"The goal was to rejuvenate life in the district," explains Etterbeek Mayor Vincent De Wolf (MR). "The 110 residential apartments all comprise between two and three rooms, which will allow families to settle here."

The mayor also points to the future revitalisation of Place Jourdan, located 300 metres away, adding that three houses still have restoration in progress. Recently purchased by planners, they are presently under application for a town-planning licence and will also be completely renovated from an architectural perspective.

EU TENANTS SOUGHT?

Property costs are increasing in Brussels, and this now also appears likely for Rue Belliard. The 110 high-class apartments on Rue Froissart were never likely to be cheap - to live there, prospective buyers will need to have nearly



*Bell Art:
The project
at Ilot Froissart*

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500,000€, owing to the properties' location at the heart of the EU district, near both Parc du Cinquantenaire and Parc Léopold. With living areas between 60-148 m², the apartments

are likely to be much sought-after by EU civil servants, which might dent the commune's coffers, as foreign EU citizens working for the institutions are not liable to pay IPP...

L.N.



More snacks, less hygiene

WRITER: LUDIVINE NOLF

'Rue des Pitass'

© Together Magazine

Brussels' health inspectors are being increasingly confronted by poor hygiene standards in the city's many snack bars; closures have doubled during the past three years in Schaerbeek, for example. We examine this worrying trend...

Brussels snack bars are normally small establishments, handy for grabbing quick ready-made meals on the go such as sandwiches, frites and pitas. No professional qualifications are necessary for ownership; frequently, the proprietors are not professional chefs. But this lack of experience can lead to serious problems, given that knowledge of legal hygiene standards is minimal. In Brussels, the majority of problems are caused by kebab and pita outlets - more ill-health complaints are recorded by customers visiting such establishments, with their enticing aromas, than any other kind. Just in April, Brussels-North police closed a snack bar on Chaussée Haecht, but two other establishments, on Rue Général Eenens and Place Lehon, opened during the same month.

TEMPERATURE TRAINING

Poor hygiene standards generally result from the non-observance of guidelines concerning food-storage temperatures. Pre-frozen products, such as meat, must be stored in freezers at an average temperature of -18°C, but in many

establishments, mere refrigerators are used to keep dairy ice creams, while meat is kept at only -7°C, which poses a risk for adults with sensitive stomachs. Formal hygiene training for snack-bar owners could be the answer...

'RUE DES PITAS' RAVES

Fortunately, poor hygiene standards are not prevalent in all of Brussels. Marché aux Fromages, for example, baptized 'Rue des Pitass' by Bruxellois, is one of the most lively downtown areas. Located a stone's throw from Grand'Place, the street offers a wide choice of fast-food eateries, with Le Plaka, Le Minos and Yasmina being among the most popular. With the passing of the years, such institutions have gained their favourable reputations via locals and tourists alike. More discrete, but equally enjoyable, are Mont Liban on Rue de Livourne in Ixelles and Le Petit Noeuf Gourmand on Rue des Celtes in Etterbeek, which have also withstood the test of time and increasing competition, such as from the 20 percent increase in Brussels snack bars that's taken place over the past two years.

SNACK ATTACK

At the end of 2007, 3,121 'fast-food restaurants' were listed in Brussels, according to statistical bureau Van Dijk. According to daily newspaper *La Capital*, in its 9th April edition, 3,017 were operational at the end of 2006, which is 18.8 percent more than in 2005 (2,540). By 2007 Schaerbeek's tally had grown from 234 in 2005 to 327, a rise of some 40 percent, but Brussels-City (637) is the clear leader, followed by Ixelles (353), Schaerbeek (327), Anderlecht (269), and Molenbeek (200). Haren (6) is at the foot of the group, behind Neder and Boitsfort (26).

L.N.

FLASH

PROFITABLE IMMIGRATION?

Economic immigrants earn the Treasury around 23,000€ per household per year, according to research by Immigration and Political Asylum Minister Annemie Turtelboom. An immigrant family of two working adults and two children contributes approximately 44,000€ to public finances social security, yet costs the state only 21,000€ in social allowances, family benefits and education.

FIGURE: 133,000

That's the number of Belgians who have legally opened a foreign bank account, subsequently declaring all deposits made in their income tax return. Flemish deputy Dirk Van der Maelen (SP. A) said: 'It's a shame that Finance Minister Didier Reynders didn't provide the authority with this information, particularly as he has known about it for two years!'

BUSINESS

The Property Barometer



In partnership with renowned free weekly newspaper *Vlan*, we are proud to present The Property Barometer, THE assessment of real-estate fluctuations in Europe's capital.



This study is based on the asking prices of private individuals and estate agencies in their advertisements published in *Vlan*'s Brussels edition over a ten-week period (9,588 adverts). Obviously, prices at which properties are sold can vary. Check out thousands of adverts on www.vlan.be, in *Vlan*'s property section and in *Vlan.be Immo Magazine* – your real estate rendez-vous, twice per month, in 90,000 homes.

AVERAGE PRICE PER SQUARE METRE (FIGURES IN RED INDICATE FORMER AVERAGE PRICES)	APARTMENTS		HOUSES
	RENT	BUY	BUY
1000 BRUXELLES (CENTRE)	9.77 € ↗ 9.55	2,408.80 € ↗ 2,371.92	1,916.59 € ↗ 1,873.68
1020 LAEKEN	8.71 € - 8.71	2,128.79 € ↗ 2,005.23	1,882.53 € ↗ 1,762.01
1030 SCHAERBEEK	10.07 € ↗ 8.97	2,039.70 € ↗ 2,006.81	2,141.72 € ↗ 1,647.09
1040 ETTERBEEK	9.39 € ↗ 9.23	2,399.80 € ↘ 2,573.13	2,222.78 € ↗ 1,750.23
1050 IXELLES	9.82 € ↗ 9.35	2,791.21 € ↗ 2,739.72	2,327.36 € ↗ 2,235.37
1060 SAINT GILLES	8.66 € ↗ 8.64	2,357.61 € ↘ 2,359.93	2,992.06 € ↗ 2,520.87
1070 ANDERLECHT	7.40 € ↘ 7.63	1,974.45 € ↗ 1,829.57	2,592.00 € ↗ 2,047.14
1080 MOLENBEEK ST JEAN	7.95 € ↘ 8.11	1,639.96 € ↘ 1,716.08	1,991.67 € ↗ 1,741.13
1081 KOEKELBERG	9.10 € ↗ 8.47	1,819.99 € ↘ 1,871.19	1,483.22 € ↗ 1,479.25
1082 BERCHEM STE AGATHE	8.65 € ↘ 8.87	2,761.64 € ↗ 1,823.70	2,914.63 € ↗ 2,804.68
1083 GANSHOREN	9.36 € ↗ 8.83	2,229.73 € ↗ 2,119.93	2,984.12 € ↘ 3,107.14
1090 JETTE	9.11 € ↗ 8.86	1,944.48 € ↗ 1,879.61	1,815.95 € ↗ 1,575.38
1120 NEDER OVER HEMBEEK	7.30 € ↘ 8.10	1,961.59 € ↘ 2,052.63	1,570.28 € ↗ 1,328.11
1140 EVERE	7.61 € ↘ 7.75	2,194.86 € ↗ 1,995.81	2,170.61 € ↗ 1,800.43
1150 WOLUWÉ ST PIERRE	10.78 € ↗ 9.39	2,673.81 € ↗ 2,582.74	2,589.61 € ↘ 2,709.51
1160 AUDERGHEM	9.94 € ↗ 9.84	2,480.93 € ↘ 2,514.87	2,299.48 € ↘ 2,455.00
1170 WATERMAEL BOITSFORT	9.43 € ↘ 9.70	2,653.40 € ↗ 2,486.21	4,060.44 € ↘ 4,182.06
1180 UCCLE	9.18 € ↘ 9.42	2,646.27 € ↘ 2,694.86	2,177.55 € ↘ 2,597.20
1190 FOREST	8.47 € ↘ 8.77	2,168.95 € ↗ 2,159.22	2,320.64 € ↘ 2,825.20
1200 WOLUWÉ ST LAMBERT	10.28 € ↗ 10.06	2,683.71 € ↗ 2,569.75	2,345.15 € ↘ 2,679.66
1210 ST JOSSE TEN NOODE	8.39 € ↘ 8.46	2,031.47 € ↘ 2,243.64	2,105.21 € ↗ 1,586.53

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Joining the Sunday Jette set

WRITER: JAMES DREW

Ibrahim Errami

© Together Magazine 2008

We pay a visit to one of Brussels' liveliest outdoor shopping arenas...

Chock-full of shops and the birthplace of René Magritte, so thus a destination of choice for art and history (as well as shopping) lovers, the bustling commune of Jette (it has around 43,000 inhabitants) in north-west Brussels is located some five kilometres from the city centre, and is home to Poelbos nature reserve, as well as to Parc Roi Baudouin – with the Atomium gleaming down at visitors from every angle.

In addition to its daily markets, selling regional farm produce, flowers and plants, the Quartier du Miroir plays host every Sunday to one of Brussels' biggest markets, with nigh-on 300 stalls hawking food, clothing, flowers and plants, jewellery and, with particular reference to this edition's article, fabulous natural cosmetics. Join us for a visit to the stall of Ibrahim Errami, purveyor of fine 'Argane Souss' products. Fear not – all will be explained...

'I AM HAPPY TO RECOMMEND MY PRODUCTS; I AM CONFIDENT THAT THEY WILL DO MY CUSTOMERS GOOD'

HEALTH – IN A NUTSHELL

The popularity of Ibrahim's stall was self-evident when *Together* (myself and photographer) arrived on a cold

but bright Sunday morning; despite only opening at 9h30, our man was already deep in animated conversation with a line of ladies, all enthusiastic, who had come to pore over the soaps, creams, oils and other skin-care products that are Gérard's trade and passion – and have been a part of his family's business for generations.

Of Moroccan descent, but Brussels-born, Ibrahim's expertise centres on the fruit of the Arganid Spinoza tree, the Tafiylht nut, which only grows in one part of the world – south-west Morocco. The skin- and health-revitalising properties of Tafiylht powder and oil-based products have long been recognised – the resulting 'Argan' oil is a bountiful source of antioxidant and anti-cholesterol agents (though not when heated, as Ibrahim explains), while the creams, shampoos and other essential oils reserved for external use revitalise and heal skin naturally.



Ibrahim in conversation with a shopper

© Together Magazine 2008

In fact, such is the reputation of his products, earned over two years as a stall-holder at Jette, that Ibrahim frequently finds himself under cross-examination similar to that which a health-care specialist might face: "It's very easy to be a charlatan in this business," he explains. "I have to explain to some customers that, if their doctor has advised they seek natural remedies for skin complaints, I am happy to recommend my products; I am confident that they will do my customers good. However, I will not offer a medical diagnosis. That's a doctor's role."

Still, with his array of exotically titled Argane Souss potions such as Eau de Rose Orit, Papayo and Roob, coupled with his friendly, welcoming personality and obvious expertise, Ibrahim is nigh-on fighting off women who obviously want what he has to offer. By way of example, one lady kept him talking for a good

20 minutes during our visit, while a patient(ish) and reasonably good-natured queue formed – but our 'skin magician' never once seemed stressed.

"I love the social aspects of my job – it's as much a pleasure to me as knowing that my customers keep coming back," he beams. **J.D.**

www.arganesouss.be
www.argane.be

JETTE MARKETS

Daily – from Monday to Saturday, food, flowers and plants, 6-12h, Place Reine Astrid, 1090 Brussels.
Sunday – 6-13h, food, clothes, flowers and plants, jewellery, cosmetics, Place Reine Astrid, Rue Léopold I, Rue Timmermans, Avenue de Jette.

www.jette.irisnet.be

Laurence Everard: In search of the sun

WRITER: JÉRÔME STÉFANSKI

Sold in more than 600 outlets across the world, the Belgian brand 'Mais il est où le soleil?' ('But Where Is The Sun?') has now been established for eight years. During this time, its co-founder, Laurence Everard, has sparked a revolution in the closeted confines of female 'ready to wear' garments. *Together* meets this self-made femme, who is keeping her place in the sun...

“ If I'd known then what I know now, I might never have started!" If Laurence Everard is allowing herself a realistic backward glance over the past ten years, she still seems to take great pride in her achievements, and she can be proud that she made good on a daring gamble. Proud to know that fans of her brand are multiplying on a daily basis. Finally, proud to have created at least 35 jobs in Belgium, and to have contributed

to the economic development of Asian countries.

'I HESITATED BETWEEN SPARE PARTS FOR CARS AND FASHION'

'I WANTED A PRODUCT!'
It's with a half-smile and perhaps a

touch of self-derision that Laurence admits: "I hesitated between spare parts for cars and fashion, but one thing was for sure, I wanted to develop a product!"

An actress by education, nothing at first seemed predestined for this young woman with such vocational leanings. However, while talking with Laurence, the origins of her entrepreneurial temperament become clearer. Family legend has it that her grandfather, a persevering industrialist, recovered from three bankruptcies, one of which was in the Wall Street Crash of 1929. The patriarch started again from scratch every time; her grandfather's story has always fascinated Laurence, as the product of a family of entrepreneurs. However, when she reached 18, she did not yearn for the wooden benches of business school, but rather towards treading the boards: "The theatre taught me an essential thing that informed my understanding of business: if you want something more than anything, and you're prepared to fight for it, you will get there. Anything is possible. The theatrical medium is a poor universe in which every actor must move heaven and earth to move the machine forward. At the time, it's very hard work, but afterwards, you realize that you've created exceptional things from bits of string."

At that time, Laurence would never have imagined that she would sell kilometres of 'string' in her future career...

TWO DECISIVE MEETINGS

Gradually, Laurence began to move out of the limelight and towards more commercial activity in the telemarketing



Laurence Everard

© Stephen Papandropoulos

sector of a company in which she was a shareholder. By the end of the 1990s, eager to broaden her horizons, she sold her shares and travelled to Asia, visiting China, Thailand, the Philippines and India, where she met a scarves manufacturer. The business chemistry is immediate – visions of creating and selling scarves grow quickly in her mind: "I knew nothing about fashion then," she explains, "but I was attracted by the beauty and quality of the Indian creations and by the country's cultural wealth." Upon her return to Belgium, she met designer Val Pollet and convinced her to join forces with her on her project. Without hesitation, they launched their new venture - Laurence took responsibility for operation and administration, while Val was made production and innovation controller. As Laurence admits: "It was a very frustrating time, particularly as we didn't have an investor!"

A FAULTLESS ROUTE

In January 1998, Laurence and Val created the SPRL Késar, scarf manufacturer for prestigious brands such as Sarah Pacini and Caméléon. Thanks to the quality of their fabrics and daring designs, the orders from

quality labels grow increasingly bulky - the duo's first taste of success. Two years later, the decision is made to end Késar's very lucrative subcontracting activities and to launch its own brand – thus, 'Mais il est où le soleil?' is born.

AN INTERNATIONAL BRAND

Today, after having conquered Belgium, France, Great Britain, Ireland, Switzerland and Holland, the brand is aiming to reach Europe's two largest: Germany and Russia. Such 'internationalization' is based on a simple and effective marketing strategy: the systematic use of independent local agents: "We set great store by the image conveyed by our flagship operations. These 'made-to-measure' establishments allow us to communicate the core values of our remarkable product. For this reason, we now want to internationalize our own points of sale with the logo: "After Brussels and Antwerp, it's Paris. But where is the sun?". The opening of their 150m² store, to be found at Saint-Germain-des-Prés, is planned for April 2008. Believe it or not, 'Mais il est où le soleil?' will be in 'La rue des Quatre Vents'...

BIOGRAPHY

Name: Laurence Everard

Nationality: Belgian

Position: 'Mais il est où le soleil?' co-founder

Birth date: 17th January, 1959

Astrological sign: Capricorn

Civil status: Co-habitant

Children: Two boys (aged six and eight)

Commune of residence: Uccle

INTERVIEW

Together ‘Mais il est où le soleil?’ - six words for one brand. What are the origins of the name?

Laurence Everard: *It comes from a graffito that was scrawled on a wall that Val and I regularly passed in Saint-Gilles.*

You claim not to aim your product at ‘fashion victims’. So, whom do you target?

We aim at women of all ages who are well informed on the latest styles, but do not want to be dictated to. Our fans are the very opposite of fashion victims - they are women who read magazines, who know what is ‘in’, but who also know that what may work for Madonna may very well not work for them! All things considered, our clients are active, creative women who like fashion and style but who are also ‘realistic’.

At a time when customers are ever-more concerned about where products come from and the working conditions in which they are made, doesn’t producing your scarves in Asia sit uneasily with your public image?

Not at all. Did you know, for example, that it is not yet obligatory to cite clothing’s country of origin on labels?

MY FAVOURITE BRUSSELS RESTAURANT

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Rue de la Source, 73
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T. +32 (0)2 538 01 13

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1000 Brussels.
T. +32 (0)2 219 95 32.
www.cafewalvis.be

Mais il est où le soleil?

Spring-Summer 2008

However, all of ours do. I like to publicise this fact, because I am proud! I am proud to guarantee a volume of work for Asian companies and thus to contribute to their workers’ incomes. In our choice of suppliers, we never go for one-off deals. This enables us to maintain long-standing relationships and to control the conditions under which our clothing is manufactured.

But surely delocalizing production delocalizes labour?

Indeed, but our activities have allowed us to create 35 jobs in Belgium, in sectors such as marketing, logistics, sales and design. I am honest, and I know that we would never have seen such growth if we had not delocalized production to India and China. In addition to the obvious economical aspects, India and China are also favourable for the quality and variety of fabrics that they produce. India is the country of the pashmina and embroidery - the most beautiful fabrics are made there.

What opinion do you have on Brussels as an economic centre?

Brussels is a fantastic capital. It is an international city, with a human scale, where everything seems possible, unlike in metropolises such as Paris or London. It is the ideal city for start-up entrepreneur. In addition, the Brussels-Capital Region offers many subsidies for young business people.

How does a businesswoman like you juggle family and professional life?

Like all active women, I have to be very organized. So that I miss nothing, I have two identical offices: one in the company’s headquarters, the other at my home. This enables me to return home early to enjoy time with my children, then to work again once they are asleep. On Sunday, I like to stay in pyjamas with them before taking them to the swimming pool.

What sort of boss are you?

I believe that I’m a boss with a human side. For example, my employees are not

afraid to tell me when they are pregnant: in fact, they do so happily, because they know that I am very respectful of the balance between their private and professional lives. It’s one of the reasons why I believe so strongly in tele-working. With an average of five men to 30 women who stay at home, needless to say that every year brings its batch of new babies and that it is very important for young mothers to be with their loved ones. J.S.

‘MAIS IL EST OÙ LE SOLEIL?’ FACTS:

Launched: 2000

Initial investment: 6,250€

Expected turnover for 2008: 12€ million

Belgian employees: 35

Foreign employees: 10 independent agents

Countries in which the brand is sold

- Belgium: 95 outlets

- Two dedicated stores: Brussels and Antwerp (20 percent of total sales)

- France: 250 outlets
1 dedicated store in Paris (Due to open in April 2008) (50 percent of total sales)

- Great Britain: 55 outlets

- Ireland: 45 outlets (Great Britain and Ireland represent 15 percent of total sales)

- Switzerland: 20 outlets (3 percent of total sales)

- Holland: 40 outlets (5 percent of total sales)
Also outlets in the following countries: Germany, Italy, Spain, Kuwait, Greece, Austria, Luxembourg, Norway, Sweden, USA, Japan (5 percent of total sales)

Outlets worldwide: 600

Available sizes: 36-46

Average price: 250-350€ for 4 items

Asian values, Asian spirit

WRITER: DAVE DERUYTTER

Our correspondent assesses the continent's unique features in an increasingly globalized world.

One might ask whether people and cultures are becoming more equal because of the increasing exchange of ideas, cultures and values synonymous with globalization.

But this trend towards equality - the Earth is flat - is in fact only happening to a limited extent. Only a tiny portion of the globe's 6.5 billion people travel abroad, and even fewer do it with the aim of learning new cultures, languages or habits. The typical Belgian can not live long without his *steak-frites* or chocolate - the same goes for most nationalities or culture concerning their own specialities.

ONLY A TINY PORTION OF THE GLOBE'S 6.5 BILLION PEOPLE TRAVEL ABROAD, AND EVEN FEWER DO IT WITH THE AIM OF LEARNING NEW CULTURES, LANGUAGES OR HABITS

COMFORT ZONES

Many Americans may politely eat *nouvelle cuisine*, even compliment it, before heading for the nearest hamburger joint. Japanese tourists, on the other hand, will eat spaghetti in Rome; not in one of the many delicious local restaurants on

offer, but rather at 'Mitsukoshi', their own department store.

Let's face it - the average human being is not as adventurous as we think, or would like him or her to be. On the contrary, people seem even to be more inward-looking than previously. Even the borders between the world's many religions have sharpened, rather than blurred, in recent years. For myself, I must admit that travelling the world as an expatriate had, at first, the effect of confirming everything that I felt was good about Europe before I began to embrace global diversity in full, which required an active effort to seek out the best aspects of other cultures.

On the economic front, the news is better, in certain business sectors at least. Consumer electronics, for example, has indeed seen a convergence of industry norms and standards, because there is an economic advantage of scale in so doing. On the other hand, in the energy/power sector, norms for electric plugs and even voltage and Hertz values have retained worldwide differences for many decades. Luckily, power transformers on almost all electronic equipment are now 'intelligent', in order to detect power grid differentials and adapt to them.

Financial globalization has certainly proceeded at a fast rate, to the benefit of investors who wish to diversify their assets, but it has also increased the risk of not always being aware of what exactly it is in which they are investing, as has happened with the sub-prime crisis, for example. It is clear that further economic integration would be to consumers' benefit but, if implemented too quickly,

it would not aid economic growth. It is a complex balancing act in which, at least in the service sector, the internet is a powerful tool.

FAST LEARNERS

Against this backdrop, Asia has been developing at high speed in recent years - in fact, it is the fastest-growing and most stable of all the world's developing regions. It has taken advantage of the opening-up of world trade and the availability of global industry standards to all, but it is perhaps misleading, by

the same token, agreed, to group all Asian countries in the same category. Japan, for example, has not been a 'developing country' for many years, and even South Korea can no longer be classed as a club member. Taiwan is a borderline case, while the city-states of Hong Kong and Singapore are now highly developed, largely because of the crucial role they play in the international trade, logistics and finance of the region.

No doubt, the Far East and south-east Asia have their cultural differences.

Multi-faceted Asia...



*Prosperity:
Skyscrapers
in Shanghai*

So what, if anything, brings them together?

Well, there does seem to be a strong collective will to improve the lives of Asian people and that will is with the locals, who want to work hard to advance. Work ethics are strong, perhaps too strong, but do the workers have a choice? Certainly, working conditions of many Asian employees are far from being as good as those in the West, but they are improving, hand in hand with increasing commercial added value. Given the very low base from which they started, and the gigantic pool of workers available, particularly in China and India, it will indeed take decades before the average salary cost of a worker reaches western levels.

However, a work ethic and low salaries are not the only reasons why Asian economies have raced ahead as fast as they have in recent years - other developing regions can claim similar advantages. The difference is the constant push towards service in Asia - the customer really is king, and Asian people have a strong sense of responsibility towards this ideal.

Given such conditions, conservative yet dynamic government is also helping to create the right climate. No wars, plus the presence of Uncle Sam, both militarily and economically as buyer of their goods (along with the EU) have helped enormously, while countries such as China and India have also focused on the right goods to produce and sell to western markets - a true mercantile spirit.

So, where does the work ethic and sense of responsibility originate?

VALUE JUDGEMENTS

Many Asian people speak of 'Asian values' - the strong bond between family members that also exists in Italy, the US and many other western countries, and the same goes for Asia's widespread deep religious beliefs. There is also very

probably an element of 'struggle for life': no work is no money, no food and no shelter, emphasized by the less-generous social-security systems when compared with Western Europe and the US.

Last but not least, the dream of selling to an additional 3 billion Asian customers drives many western companies east, boosting foreign investment in the region and bringing not only employment but also a knowledge transfer that is to the benefit of local companies.

Where will it go from here?

With luck, Japan will serve as an example of how not to manage a situation when the bubble bursts. The country stayed too dependent on exports for too long after having become a developed economy, and expanded its real estate and financial-asset markets to such high levels that the result was a prolonged period of deflation, from which it is still recovering today. Japan remains an economic powerhouse, but it may have neglected to invest in fundamental scientific research in favour of economical and industrial analysis. The country has not developed technological innovations such as the internet, Windows or Google - it is here that its challenge for the future lies.

Pupils have a habit of outperforming their teachers in the end - Indian and China have many great scientists who are already now working in foreign fundamental research centres. Will 'brains on legs' and 'Home is where the heart is' bring them back home in the long run? Only time will tell, but time is still on their side.

D.D.

THE JOURNALIST

Dave Deruytter works for a large international Benelux bank and spent several years in Asia.





Poverty: Crowded houses in Beijing



DON'T GET FLEECE BY AN UNREGULATED FINANCIAL ADVISER

Unfortunately expatriates are often the target for unlicensed financial salesmen usually offering offshore products that are of questionable benefit.

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FLASH

NOTHING TO WEAR?

ASBL Modo Bruxellæ, of 'Made in Belgium' fame, is holding an end-of-range 'mode market' on 6th and 7th June. Beautiful brands will be available, including Cathy Pill, Jean-Paul Knott, Girls from Omsk, Miss Jean, Nicolas Dehon, Nicolas Woit, Nine and Céleste, Raphaël Charles, Shampoo & Conditioner and Valerie Berckmans.

De Markten

Vieux Marché aux Grains, 5

1000 Brussels

FIGURE: 2€

That's the very reasonable price at which you can now purchase your *Together* from one of the 30 Brussels newsagents that now stock expats' favourite magazine. Of course, parting with your pennies will only be necessary if you are unfortunate enough to miss the free distribution of our pride and joy, via our charming hostesses in the environs of the European institutions...

LIFE- STYLE

Six of the best

WRITER: JÉRÔME STÉFANSKI, MURIEL TROONEN & FEDERICO GRANDESSO

As ever, we present our choice of the latest head-turning Belgian boutiques. From gourmets to fashionistas, there's something for everyone...

BEAUTIFUL BIASETTO

Since Maison Renders closed its doors, sweet tooths in the south of Brussels have been sour. However, they can smile again because the Brussels-born Biasetto brothers, master pastry cooks, have launched a daring initiative - their concoctions will always be manufactured in Italy, with only the "finishing touches" added in their Padoue outlet. Open every day, this latest gourmand heaven is already the talk of the town; with pastries and viennoiseries of this quality, it's little surprise. Be warned, however: the welcome is not always warm!

Biasetto
Chaussée de Waterloo, 1201
1180 Brussels
T. +32(0)2 375 93 55

BALTHAZAR MEETS LOUISE

Moving on from their men-only outlet, Balthazar now occupies a new 200 m² store, offering such prestigious brands as Paul Smith, Erotokritos, Adriano Goldsmith, HTC, Like Boys, New York Industrie and John Smedley. Architect Gonzague Hervy has provided a beautifully illuminated experience on the ground floor, with intimate comfort in the basement, which is reserved exclusively for accessories.

Balthazar Men+Women
Avenue Louise, 294
1050 Brussels
T. +32(0)2 647 77 37

NEW HEADSTART FOR MAISON ROGIER

A real event for Brussels – celebrated hairdressing salon and hairdressing salon for celebrities Maison Rogier will be relocating to Rue de Namur, where great-and-good clients, from princesses to leading businesswomen, will henceforth rub shoulders. Its reputation is already in place...

Maison Rogier
Rue de Namur, 86
1000 Brussels
T. +32(0)2 512 36 37
www.maisonrogier.com

M.A.C: PERFECT BRUSHWORK

The make-up professionals' choice outlet of the make-up is now to be found in Brussels. Pure packaging, plus an incredible pallet of original colours and formulas are the outlet's most alluring features, with private make-up consultations also available.

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www.mac-addict.forumpro.fr

NO CONCEPT

Patricia Donadi's new shop gathers all high-chic labels - the perfect Bash, Aridza Bross bag, or Vandevos dress. A gift for all!



1. Balthazar
Men+Women

2. Be Positive

3. M.A.C:
Perfect
Brushwork

4. Rue Blanche

No Concept
Avenue Louise, 94
1050 Brussels

RUE BLANCHE

Designer Marie Chantal Regout has imbued the latest Rue Blanche address with a beautiful contemporary edge, but it is at the same time a very cosy environment in which young artists' collections, benefiting from the state-of-the-art video projection system, can now be admired.

Rue Blanche
Rue L. De Waelstraat, 37
2000 Antwerp
T. +32(0)3 233 51 71
www.rueblanche.com

BE POSITIVE

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Rue du Parnasse, 1
1050 Brussels
T. +32(0) 2 512 12 32
www.be-positive.be

J.S., M.T., F.G.

HATS OFF TO CHRISTOPHE COPPENS

WRITER: MAGALI EYLENBOSCH

Christophe
Coppens at large
© Christophe Coppens

Christophe Coppens is, first and foremost, a discrete, delicate and impassioned man, specialising in accessories that provide the final detail, that can make all the difference to a look and style. As much for gentlemen as for ladies, a Coppens *objet d'art* is always a pleasant surprise...

Born in 1969 in Sint-Niklaas, Christophe Coppens was educated at the Conservatoire de Bruxelles, where he originally studied theatre before being bitten by the fashion bug. Without hesitation, he traded in treading the boards for the catwalks and, since his very first collection was shown in 1990, fashionistas the world over have raved for his creations.

His accessories display a subtle mixture of humour, high spirits and elegance. For his first shop, in the Dansaert district, he gradually introduced a range of accessories, beginning with bags, jewels, scarves and, since 2004, neck-ties and other must-haves for gentlemen.

Progress was swift and, in 2007, a Tokyo workshop was opened. His many and varied collections need more space, so Christophe Coppens decides to refit his existing Brussels outlet, to henceforth concentrate solely on female accessories, while the 'Coppens Salon' will be reserved for his male collections, presented in an intimate 'living room' environment. Several world famous brands are looking to work with Coppens - Levis and Cagoule in particular. Together met him between two plane journeys, and he spoke to us about his past, his work and his new projects.

INTERVIEW

Why did you choose the hat as your starting point?

I studied theatre with the Conservatoire de Bruxelles and, for one of the plays on which I worked, I was responsible for stage design and costumes, so I needed accessories. It was precisely at this time that I learned about hats and, since then, my collections have evolved and I approach the world of fashion accessories as a whole.

What do accessories represent to you?

Many things at the same time! In particular, my goal is to accentuate women and men. [laughs]. I just try to bring out their personality... and I always work with relatively traditional and simple foundations. I like the old artisanal techniques, combined with an innovative and contemporary approach.

What do you think of today's fashion trends?

Everything that's happening at the moment is very exciting - things are moving in all sorts of directions. It's very stimulating for a designer.

In today's world, there seem to be many undercurrents, rather than a simple 'flow of fashion'...

Yes, perhaps that is the mood of the moment. Everything's à la mode, but not... The important thing is to underline personality and to adapt fashion without really following it. But there is still a broad outline that shows the way to go.

So, do you follow fashion trends and dictats?

Yes and no! It must be acknowledged that it is difficult to completely avoid other



Coppens
Spring-Summer 2008
© Christophe Coppens

influences. I absorb much - I am extremely curious. Books, photographs, collections, films... all are of interest to me and generate inspiration, but trends are omnipresent. For fabric manufacturers, colours and à la mode are of obvious importance - it is here that everything takes shape. I try hard to mix trends with other influences to produce work that is more personal to me. [Laughs]

Do you have magic moments of inspiration ?

Not really, because I'm always working. I work on all my collections at the same time: women, men, haute couture, unique pieces or Deco. Everything is done bit by bit, at the same time. To begin, I record my ideas and concepts and, when the deadline arrives, I create.

And teamwork?

At its foundation, I manage the creative aspects, then I delegate work to my team. We have several manufacturers who prepare samples for us to test.

Do you believe that the Belgian market offers enough opportunities for young designers such as yourself?

Yes, we are rather spoiled in this country. We have excellent schools, strong support and competitive spirit - there are many ways of making your own way! However, this is still not enough - behind every success story, there is always a lot of work. It is up to the designer to impose his or her vision - today, it's very easy to make a name for yourself, but to stay the course is quite another thing. I will not lie to you - every day must be seized.



So, tell us about this private salon that you have in your boutique...

Visitors are only accepted by appointment. Clients come for certain special occasions, such as a marriage or a cocktail party. They can come and buy some of the unique models on display in the salon, or place special orders and, right then and there, a tailor-made work of research is carried out. It's a little like a laboratory!

Today, you're working in haute couture in Paris. How's that going?

There are two perspectives. On the one hand, Paris haute couture shows items that are not necessarily intended to be sold, but it's still right and proper to show what you can do! [Laughs]. And then there are the Paris fashion week prêt-à-porter showrooms, where we show

collections for purchasers and customers from all over the world.

Is designing for men more difficult ?

No, on the contrary, it's very stimulating! I love the concept of 'taking away', rather than 'adding', because a man can very quickly start to look too disguised or stereotypical. The work's foundations are always extremely traditional, and the approach is always more reserved and delicate.

So, any more Christophe Coppens news?

Yes, since last season, I have my latest collection, Christophe by Christophe Coppens. It is a mixed, fun, coloured range that's a little bit trashier than its predecessors, with a much younger approach!

M.E.

FUTURE LOOK

photos
ANTOINE FONTAINE

styling
GEOFFREY MASURE
@ TOUCH
by DOMINIQUE

make-up
STEVEN RAES
FOR GUERLAIN
AND L'ORÉAL
PROFESSIONNEL
@ TOUCH
BY DOMINIQUE

models
@ DOMINIQUE
MODELS AGENCY

him
MATTHIJS KIMPE

her
ELLEN
VAN DER PLANCKEN
assistant photographer
OLIVIER DONNET

art directors
LENNERT VEDTS
@ PRODUCTOR
VINCENT
VAN MEERBEECK
@ PRODUCTOR

Glasses:
RAY BAN

Jacket:
VERONIQUE
BRANQUINHO
from Stijl



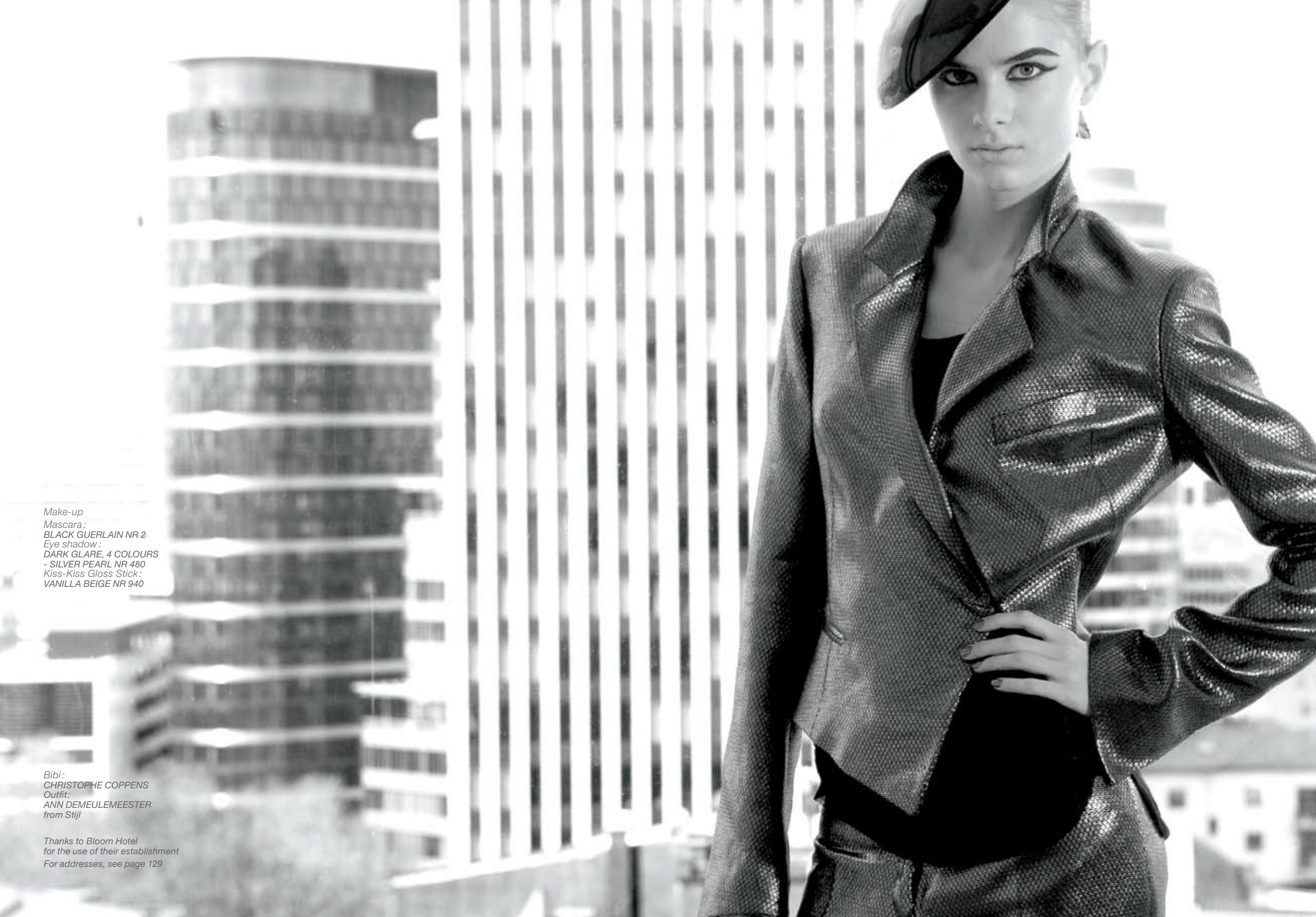
Outfit:
MAISON MARTIN
MARGIELA



Him:
Shirt:
RAF SIMONS
Trousers:
TIM VAN STEENBERGEN
from Stijl
Her:
Dress:
TIM VAN STEENBERGEN
from Stijl
Champagne:
RUINART CUVÉE ROSÉ







Make-up
Mascara:
BLACK GUERLAIN NR 2
Eye shadow:
DARK GLARE, 4 COLOURS
- SILVER PEARL NR 480
Kiss-Kiss Gloss Stick:
VANILLA BEIGE NR 940

Bibi:
CHRISTOPHE COPPENS
Outfit:
ANN DEMEULEMEESTER
from Stijl

Thanks to Bloom Hotel
for the use of their establishment
For addresses, see page 129



Cracow: History comes alive

WRITER: LUDIVINE NOLF

*Above:
Take a ride
through
history*

© Ludivine Nolf

*Right:
Auschwitz*

© Ludivine Nolf

There is barely 70km between Cracow and Auschwitz in Poland, but the Nazi era is in stark contrast with a city that's full of charm today – an ideal weekend-trip destination that's well served by leading low-cost airline Wizz Air...

Poland has only relatively recently opened its doors to tourists from Europe and elsewhere: Among the cities available to visitors who want to learn more about this former satellite country of the former USSR, the birthplace of Pope Jean-Paul II, is Cracow, a destination to which low-cost airline Wizz Air flies regularly.





Echoes of the past – the Jewish cemetery in Cracow

© Ludvine Nolf

Cracow, with its 750,000 inhabitants, deserves to be better known. One of Poland's oldest cities, it offers a magnificently well-preserved architectural heritage, a dynamic urban scene and Slavic charm that puts other European capitals to shame.

BETWEEN TRADITION AND MODERNITY

If you're not too tired by your night peregrinations (the low-cost airline flights are only available after dark and it's two hours by bus to Cracow from Katowice airport), head without hesitation into the heart of the old city, to discover its galleries, pubs and restaurants. The atmosphere, while retaining an air of mystery, nevertheless lifts your mood – even more so when it comes to shopping, as Cracow is a fashionista's dream to rival the best of Spain and Italy. The shopping centre, located a few hundred metres from the main station, is the perfect example of the contrast between modernity and history in

Cracow. And diverse hotels, clustered in the area, allow you to reach the town centre on foot. Unmissable!

A WALK IN THE JEWISH GHETTO

Formerly a city within a city, separated from Cracow, the Jewish district offers the chance for a quiet stroll along its small streets. Soaked with history and tradition, the district is well known for its excellent coffees. Huge and impossible to avoid, the beautiful, poignant Jewish cemetery is strewn with tombstones lost in flowers, ivy and other climbing plants.

AUSCHWITZ

A stopover in Cracow must include a visit to Auschwitz concentration camp, less than 70 kilometres from the city. Buses go there twice a day, allowing visits of several hours to the camps of Auschwitz and Birkenau. The ghosts of horrors long past...

L.N.

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W!ZZ

CLOSE-UP COVERAGE

EAT
&
DRINK

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

WRITER: JOSEPHINE OVEREEM

*A shadow
of your former self?*

Our life coaches examine healthy eating – from a psychological, emotional and physical perspective.

There he was, sitting in last year's bright April sun. We'd known each at least 25 years and, back when I first met him, he was certainly slimmer. Today, his belly goes almost as high as his chin – he looks like he's seven, eight months pregnant.

Nonetheless, he stubbornly orders a beer for apéro, scampi à l'ail for entrée and another beer with his the main dish – frites américain with mayonnaise. For dessert he takes les trois mousses au chocolat, in defiance of God knows who. He knew that I was unhappy to see him short of breath after he'd walked up the stairs to my office, me running in front of him, but he silences my unspoken thoughts with: "A little of what you fancy does you good."

SHOCK TREATMENT

However, two weeks later his wife calls me, in shock: he's had a heart attack. He survived by the skin of his teeth:



if he'd arrived half an hour later, he would have died. On release from the hospital his doctor not only prescribes him the expected pills, but also demands that he hires a personal coach for physical exercise and consult a diet expert.

"We can't do everything for you," his doctor explains. "You have to contribute your 'grain of salt'. Frankly, if you have a second attack like this, we can't guarantee that you'll survive and, even if

you do, you'll never work again."

Not working any more, hardly able to sustain any physical effort (he has not always been the most ardent of husbands, but his wife seems to comply: she maintains sex is 'not her thing any more') – he knows, in fact, that he's losing his taste for life. So he accepts a programme of careful physical rehabilitation and, grumbling, he begins his new life plan: eating to survive.

After just a month, another desperate phone call from his wife: his blood is not good. Still much too much cholesterol, yet he eats almost nothing. Is that so? I invite him to the lake again and yes - he eats exactly the same food as last year. After the meal, I say nothing. He gets uneasy and finally blurts it out.

'DROWNING MAN'

"So what? I hate vegetables and fruit and whole wheat cereals and skimmed milk. I love the taste of fat and sugar." But I can see that this huge man is almost in tears. I also notice how scared he looks – like a man drowning. I can't coach him - we're too close. In fact, I don't think anyone could - he's too sensitive under his fat and so scared. But did he not once tell me how his Grandma used to give him lots of fatty, sweet food to keep him quiet while his parents entertained downstairs? Is, perhaps, for him, comfort food in fact the motherly love of which he received so little?

Even if he did not undergo a trauma in the classic sense of the word, I suddenly remember how one of my other clients recovered in a similar case of emotional neglect after only two sessions of EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing). Initially developed by Francine Shapiro in 1989 to help shell-shocked veterans recover from post-traumatic stress disorder, it now has evolved into an elegant therapy aid

that might also be helpful in a case of early emotional neglect such as that of my friend.

So, without further ado, I ask my friend if he'll give it a go. I send him some information and suggest a well-known, reliable psychiatrist who works with EMDR.

The miracle happens - he makes an appointment. I hear nothing for weeks, until I bump into his wife at the supermarket. So, how's he doing? She points to her cart, loaded with colourful fresh food, rich in anti-oxidants. "And he loves it! He's losing weight. He's stopped grumbling. "And, she blushes, "you know, we're doing it again. It's been so long..."

He needed just three sessions to replace the comfort-food association of (self)-love with that of healthy food. "Come and have dinner with us, and see for yourself," she says.

That night, he winks at me while serving me a plateful of lovely grilled vegetables. When I leave, he says: "My secretary, you remember, when they broke into her house and stole her car keys and her car? I've sent her to the psychiatrist too. She's sleeping again."

I walk back home, whistling. It is not always this easy but when it is, it feels fine. Very fine.

J.O.

THE WRITER

Josephine Overeem, 62, is a professional 'life coach'. She works both with companies to instil a lasting coaching culture and also offers individualised therapy. Her motto: "There is always another choice."

TOWARDS A HEALTHY WORKING DIET

WRITER: MURIEL TROONEN

In 1987, Michel Montignac launched the first of his successful diet books. Subsequently, he left his top job as a pharmaceutical industry manager and built a food holding, using his knowledge to create and sell products that couldn't be found in the usual stores.

The reason for his success? As readers of his books will see, he applied simple common sense and, for the first time, looked at the problem from a consumer's perspective: how can one lose weight and feel healthier while maintaining a normal business life? If you have a stressful and demanding professional life, and if you want to perform in your job, you can't be expected to follow a complex diet. It will prove almost impossible to prepare your menus

in advance, to refuse all business lunches or to eat at the same time every day.

This is valid for drinks too. You're not obliged to celebrate every success with Champagne or cocktails. One glass will do. And watch the beer, responsible for

much extra weight. It might also be useful to remember that colleagues or clients are not always the same as 'friends'.

TIPS FOR THE HIPS

Watch out for unhealthy, high-calorie 'comfort' food and drinks, such as muffins, beer, cocktails, chips and chocolate. Set between one and three diet rules that you can and will adhere to. If you go OTT once in a while, immediately return to your rules for the next meal.

And do some exercise to speed up the process. This is especially recommended if you want to recover fast from a hang-over...

- *The Montignac diet Eat for pleasure - stay slim forever*
- *Dine Out and Lose Weight*
- *The Montignac Method Just for Women*
- All available on www.amazon.com

**IF YOU HAVE
A STRESSFUL
AND DEMANDING
PROFESSIONAL
LIFE, AND
IF YOU WANT
TO PERFORM
IN YOUR JOB,
YOU CAN'T BE
EXPECTED
TO FOLLOW A
COMPLEX DIET**

THE WRITER

Muriel Troonen, 40, is a professional life and job coach. She works with people to develop happiness in their private lives and jobs. Her favourite expression: "Be kind to yourself."

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ZOOM-ZOOM



La Friterie Antoine,
Place Jourdan:
Quality frites

© Brussels International -
Th. Poelart

REGULATING YOUR REPASTS

WRITER: CILLIAN DONNELLY

While Brussels is recognised by its expat community as a city rich in good food, Belgium, like anywhere in the European Union, is subject to much regulation in the sector. We take a look behind the scenes...

Diverse laws concerning hygiene, labelling and transportation, among others, all directly relate to how we consume, and are served, the food we eat.

Take, for example, *frites*. A prized treat by locals and expats alike, the humble *frite* is an immense source of pride to local vendors, who take great care in the preparation of each batch, maintaining a consistently high-quality product that has come to distinguish Belgium as the place that elevates the oft-maligned 'chip' to something approaching an art form. But small *frites* producers have recently come under threat from EU and local laws that might spell doom for the small stalls (*frietkots*) that we know and love.

STALLING BUSINESSES

Mobile stalls, which can be found in town squares across the country, are finding it increasingly difficult to meet the abundance of health and safety regulations with which they must comply, forcing many a seller to establish permanent premises to continue operating and, thus, contributing to the steady decline of this most Belgian of traditions.

Such 'micro enterprises', defined as any business with up to nine employees, are finding themselves increasingly unable to meet some or all of the regulatory

demands placed upon them. Recent EU laws on hygiene, that exclude micro enterprises, have been welcomed by the Belgian authorities, but other businesses are also finding it difficult to operate within the current regulatory framework.

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which typically employ between 12 and 15 people, have also complained of both the administrative and practical burdens put upon them by over-regulation. Unlike micro enterprises, SMEs in Belgium, and elsewhere, have to comply with an increasing amount of paperwork, all of which needs to be filed to the relevant authorities to ensure compliance with all applicable laws.

"It is not simply an administrative burden," says Ludger Fischer of SME organisation, UEAPME, "but also a practical one. You lose a lot of time on this, because one of your staff has to do this kind of desk work. And then they also find it difficult to keep their hands clean, going from one type of job to another."

Fischer maintains that some of the ideas currently put forward by the European Commission are "not helpful" for small-food businesses such as *frite* shops or bakeries. "The larger types of establishment", he continues, "are in a position to hire a specific expert for administration work. Not so for *frietkots*".

It is perhaps no wonder that several concerned voices have been raised suggesting that Belgium is currently more favourable towards the creation of larger restaurants, instead of the traditional *frites* stall.

But it is not just *frites* production that is being affected by changes in the law, fresh bread, it appears, is also changing its pallour.

BREAD LINE

Two years ago, a food scare centred on the formation of acrylamid in baked and fried products forced the industry into a rethink. Acrylamid is an enzyme that occurs naturally on foods cooked at particularly high temperatures; *frites* and bread being particularly susceptible.

"This by-product appears on things such as *frites*, and it was believed to be dangerous," Fischer explains, "which would have been very bad for certain foods."

Luckily, he says, a national crisis was averted when, following laboratory tests in Sweden, it was discovered that the substance did not in fact have cancer-causing properties. "Here, we have to be thankful to science. It was through this research that it was discovered humans are equipped with the enzymes to destroy acrylamid."

This should have been the end of it, but caution still prevails. "At nearly all bakeries in Belgium, they are not baking the bread at the same high temperatures, around 180 degrees. They want to be on the safe side, and avoid acrylimid. But there is a problem: now most bread here is too pale. It's blonde!"

The continental loaf, it seems, may never be the same again.

AS ITS FAME AND IMPORTANCE SPREADS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, BELGIANS ARE KEEN TO PROTECT THE IDENTITY OF THEIR CHOCOLATE

CHOC AWAY?

If *frites* are one great source of pride in Belgium, then chocolate is most certainly another. Indeed, the *Maison Chocolat*, as the country is sometimes monikered,

not only takes enormous satisfaction in its world-famous product, but is also sensitive to many of the associated legal issues, such as the serious world issue of child labour.

Justly famed around the world, chocolate accounts for 13 percent of global turnover within the Belgian food industry as a whole, as well as 17 percent of exports and providing 13 percent of domestic employment. Europe's biggest supplier of industrial chocolate or chocolate made for use by smaller manufacturers, Barry Callebaut, is, unsurprisingly, located here.

For their part, Belgians still tend to regard chocolate as something of a treat, a product for the high end of the market and, as its fame and importance spreads throughout the world, they are keen to protect the identity of their chocs. For example, the Royal Belgian Association of Biscuit, Chocolate, Pralines and Confectionary (CHOPRABISCO) is campaigning to stop the illegal use of the descriptive term 'Belgian' on foreign chocolate products aiming to capitalise on the country's reputation for quality.

With this in mind, one of the big issues that faces the industry in the near future is that of "origin chocolate". Like cheese and wine, the industry is pushing for laws defending a product's exclusive rights to the name of the country or region in which it was produced.

Capitalising on the current up-market taste for fine-flavoured cocoas and chocolate products, the Belgian industry is keen to protect its historical image as the world's premier manufacturer - and anyone who has experienced the delights of the country's artisanal labours will surely concur.

C.D.

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BELGIUM GOES 'BONGO' BANANAS

WRITER: JAMES DREW

Bongo, a real success story

© Bongo

The country's leading supplier of getaway-breaks, Weekendsk, has revealed that, according to its figures, more than half a million Bongo vouchers were purchased in 2007, already double the number sold in 2006...

At Weekendsk's request, TNS Dimarso recently carried out a survey of more than two thousand Belgians, concerning the Bongo brand and its success compared with its competitors.

Although only available for 15 months, the popularity of the gift tokens, which are exchanged for weekend or daily leisure activities, is growing rapidly -

a fifth of all Belgians aged 18 to 64 have already bought a Bongo, and two thirds of all those questioned were aware of the gift tokens, which are particularly popular with young people and women. Sales turnover doubled in 2007, compared with

2006 - some 40€ million was spent on the vouchers.

Six Bongo users out of ten chose an activity lasting a day (such as Lazy Sunday, Healthy Lunch, Sauna for Two), while four out of ten plumped for a weekend (Weekend in Paris, Cycling Weekend, City & Shopping).

And, since the launch of 'Bongo-starred' restaurants (approved by Michelin) in February, the choice of restaurants has already risen to 45, a number that's sure to increase.

Owned by leading getaway-break provider Smart&Co since October 2007, the Bongo bonanza is seen as evidence of the growing public desire for 'experience' gifts, which offer personal enrichment and growth experiences. "We are seeing a real need to learn, know and try out, which is one of the main reasons for the success of our products," stated Axel Bernia, Smart & Co CEO. "Our objective for 2008? To offer ever-more Bongo opportunities with new getaway opportunities, to continue making quality leisure time accessible to all!"

Weekendsk offers more than 1000 weekend-break formulas and, with Bongo, is Belgium's leading 'getaway' operator. Smart & Co operates in twelve countries, with an annual turnover of 146€ million.

J.D.

www.weekendsk.com
www.bongo.be



BELGIAN VITTELS

WRITER: COLIN MOORS

Where is the money to be made in Brussels dining? Is it *haute cuisine*, hamburgers or health? *Together* presents a compact profile of a success story from each category...

COMME CHEZ SOI

Quite possibly the single most famous restaurant in Belgium, Comme Chez Soi is renowned for producing an elegant and sumptuous dining experience. In 2007 it lost one of its famous three Michelin stars - rumour has it that when a new chef starts work, the Michelin guide will automatically deduct a star to allow him or her to earn it back. Despite this



small setback, it remains popular to an almost ridiculous degree. If you want a table at short notice, forget it - the cuisine is high French, the welcome warm and the waiting list long. One noted food website was moved to point out: "It's likely easier to enter the kingdom of heaven than to get a seat here, so book as far ahead as possible."

The restaurant began in 1926, when Georges Cuvelier decided life in the coal mines was not for him and set up a small restaurant in Brussels. The story has it that one of his regular customers remarked "in your restaurant, we eat like we do at home" and so the name Comme Chez Soi was adopted. It has been an 82-year success story, and the restaurant itself has remained largely a family business. The emphasis is on quality, and this seems to be the key. In 2006, however, their chef, Pierre Wynants, struck a deal with the Delhaize supermarket chain, allowing them to market "premium" ready-made meals using their famous name as a selling point. There is obviously still room for manoeuvre in a crowded ready-meals market if the brand is respected.

COMME CHEZ SOI - THE FACTS

2007 Figures

Turnover: 3,062,000€

Staff: 33

Profit: -34,000€

Negative profit brought by amortisation spending of 258,000€ of which 209,000€ due to investment of 1,307,000€ on a new kitchen and equipment in 2006. Real profit at 2007 year-end was 19,000€.



QUICK

While on a visit to the United States in 1968, Baron Vaxelaire had the idea of opening a business in Belgium providing "restauration rapide". He sent a team of people to the US to investigate the business and report on their findings. Just three years later, the first two Quick restaurants were opened in Schoten and Waterloo. As a part of the very large GIB group, which also has activities in the supermarket, DIY and self-service restaurant sectors, Quick has the financial leverage to expand rapidly in this market. As at January 2007, there were 82 restaurants in Benelux, 320 in France and other restaurants as far afield as Andorra and Morocco.

FACED WITH INTENSE COMPETITION FROM THE LIKES OF MCDONALD'S AND BURGER KING, QUICK IS NOT ONLY HOLDING ITS POSITION, BUT EXPANDING

Around a quarter of their outlets are owned by the company itself, with the other three quarters being franchised. However the enterprise is set up, it is certainly achieving its aim. The financial year of 2006 saw a turnover of

807€ million – an increase of six percent on the previous year, coming from combined sales of 180 million meals.

Their focus is similar to the other big-name burger outlets – low-cost food, served as fast as possible. To this end, their promotions tend to be what we have come to expect from a burger chain – tie-ins with movies and youth brands, periodic "specials" and with the usual range of beef, chicken and fish burgers always available. As a reaction to demand from health professionals they, like McDonald's, have produced a chart to inform their customers of the nutritional values of every meal they serve. In a market as competitive as theirs, they need to be every bit as good as their nearest rivals. Faced with intense competition from the likes of McDonald's and Burger King, Quick is not only holding its position, but expanding.

QUICK-THE FACTS

2007 Figures

Group sales: 865.3€ million (71 percent sales and franchising products). 7.2 percent rise on 2006

France and international sales: 714.9€ million (70 percent sales and franchising products)

Benelux sales: 150.4€ million (78 percent sales and franchising products)

Group profits: 62.7€ million (2006: 42€ million)

Restaurants

Group: 423 (Franchises: 322)
Company owned: 101

France: 332 (Franchises: 244)
Company owned: 88

Benelux: 82 (Franchises: 69)
Company owned: 13

International: 9 (All franchises)

EXKi

Developed as the antithesis to all the low-nutrition, high-salt, high-fat fast-foods available on the high street, EXKi's philosophy is straightforward, and summed up by their motto "natural, fresh and ready", and the belief that fast food no longer needs to mean unhealthy eating. The name itself is pronounced the same as the French exquis – exquisite or delightful. The restaurants have a simple, fresh look and the "i" of the logo is represented by a carrot, just to be sure there can be no confusion about the company's credentials. EXKi began originally as a project between three school friends - Frederic Rouvez, Nicolas Steisel and Arnaud de Meeûs. In their own words, they "wanted to do something together". As they all had a common interest in the pleasures of dining, it was almost inevitable that their "something" would be a restaurant. Spotting a niche in the market created by the rising demand for healthy, organic food, they set about turning their idea into reality and only a year after the original idea, they opened their first EXKi at Porte de Namur in January, 2001. A second restaurant opened in November of the same year in the much busier Rue Neuve. Today, along with the restaurants located in Belgium, they have launched others in Luxembourg, France and Italy.

One of the more interesting features of the business is their marketing and advertising strategy – there isn't one. Nicolas Steisel, interviewed in an online business magazine, said: "We've always said that we'd have no budget for marketing as such. Our marketing strategy consists of the way we do business." By making sure they hire the right people, those who are enthusiastic and welcoming, and by making sure the word-of-mouth reaction to their restaurants was favourable, the business grew with practically no advertising at all.



2004 showed the group's first net profit, and the profits are up between 10-20% per restaurant every year, but because of the labour-intensive method of producing the food, and the high cost of raw ingredients, Nicolas only admits to making what he calls "a very reasonable profit".

With the Belgian people having such a love of food and the many and varied winning combinations on the market, there appears to be no limit to what is possible in the Belgian catering industry.

C.M.

EXKi SA

2006 Figures Restaurants

EXKi has 16 restaurants, two master franchises (Wallonia-Luxembourg & Italy) and has created more than 150 jobs directly, in addition to approximately 70 indirect jobs created due to the growth of its suppliers and via the franchise.

Turnover (2006) group

restaurants: 10,795,000€

Turnover (2006) franchise

restaurants: 3,659,000€

Profits before tax: 70,000€

Profits after tax: 71,000€

BOCCONI: CREATIVITY MEETS HAUTE CUISINE

WRITER: JAMES DREW



Vincenzo Regine,
Bocconi's
Master Chef

Under the guiding hand of young dynamo chef Vincenzo Regine, Bocconi Ristorante Italiano, to be found in the Hotel Amigo near Brussels' Grand'Place, is fast gaining a reputation as THE Italian dining room of choice. Together presents a profile of the chef and restaurant, plus an exclusive Regine recipe to try...

THE RESTAURANT

Open in the luxurious environs of Hotel Amigo since 2003, Bocconi Ristorante Italiano has already established itself not just as a dining adjunct to a luxury hotel, but also as one of the best, if not THE best, Italian fine-dining experiences in Brussels.

With a menu that includes delights ranging across the entire spectrum of Italian and Mediterranean cuisine, and a wine list hand-selected by Chef Vincenzo Regine, the dining experience on offer is further accentuated by the warm ambience of the restaurant and the attentiveness of the service.

There's more about the gastronomic giant that is Vincenzo in a minute, but for now, a little further encouragement – Bocconi is set to launch a convivial *haute cuisine*

concept, an Italian Sunday brunch by the name of *Sapori Domenicali*.

The idea is simple – every Sunday, from 11h30-14h30, the traditional breakfast is enriched with Mediterranean flavours. A buffet of pure choice is offered, including seafood, the finest Italian meats and an assortment of delicious pasta dishes. And the price per head? A mere 55€ for adults, 35€ for the bambini. Mwaaah! www.ristorantebocconi.com

THE CHEF

As soon as Bocconi's Vincenzo Regine, 29, starts talking, you can feel the depth of his passion for his profession. Of course, his Italian heritage (he was born in Ischia) helps enormously - he was brought up surrounded by the purest cuisine traditions of the south Italian island, off Naples.

So how does Vincenzo define creative cuisine? He answers without hesitation: "For me, creativity must always begin with the colours. People eat with their eyes, and a beautiful dish speaks to the very soul."

Of course, it goes without saying that the wide variety of delicacies on offer are made using only the freshest ingredients, but what separates Bocconi from the countless Italian restaurants vying for supremacy in the capital of Europe and beyond is Vincenzo's absolute insistence on using ingredients direct from Italy, supplied by genuine artisanal producers, many of whom the chef has



The warm ambience
of Bocconi Ristorante
Italiano

known since childhood. As he explains: "These people do it small, but do it very well. It's simple, really – I'm trying to offer diners the very best in Italian cuisine, and I'm not going to be able to achieve that unless I use genuinely sourced Italian produce."

And his insistence on working with all things Italian goes a step further – the 19 kitchen staff under his watchful eye also hail from his home country. One must assume that he knows wherof he speaks – lauded as 'Master Chef 2007' in Belgium, under the auspices of *Deltas de la Gastronomie 2007* and *Campioni del Mondo 2007* by *Ciao Italia Benelux*, he is an artisan from whom most chefs could learn a thing or two about Italian cooking.

But don't take our word for it – discover for yourself, *pronto!*

Bocconi Ristorante Italiano
Rue de l'Amigo, 1-3
1000 Brussels
T. +32 (0)2 547 47 15
www.ristorantebocconi.com

Breakfast:
Weekdays - 6h30-10h30
Weekends - 6h30-11h00

Lunch:
From Monday to Sunday
12h - 14h30

Dinner:
From Monday to Sunday
19-23h

THE RECIPE

SLICED RED TUNA AND DICED TOMATOES WITH PAN-ROASTED ASPARAGUS AND FENNEL

Serves 4

- 600g fresh red tuna fillets
- 12 asparagus spears
- 1 large bunch of fennel
- 1 large tomato
- 1 sprig of basil
- extra virgin olive oil
- 4 bay leaves

Cut the tuna into four portions of 150g each, boil four litres of water with 30g salt for each litre. Place the asparagus in the boiling water and allow to cook for 5 minutes. Drain and soak to cool in iced water. Peel and set aside. Rinse the fennel and cut into four equal portions. Boil for six minutes, dry and set aside. Clean the tomatoes, cut in four, de-seed and finely dice each quarter. In a pan, heat a few drops of oil and, when very hot, cook the slices of tuna for four minutes on each side. In another pan, mix the asparagus and fennel and at the last minute add the tomatoes and grate the basil over the mixture. Add to the pan with the tuna. Then place one slice of the tuna on each plate, cut in two halves with three spears of asparagus and decorate with a bay leaf, with oil drizzled lightly around the edge of the plate.

TASTES OF SUMMER

WRITER: JÉRÔME STÉFANSKI

Gastronomical delights to charm your palate...

1. GODIVA

Celebrated luxury chocolatier Godiva offers a truly refined cornet. With chocolate pleasure layered over delicious strawberries, Godiva's 'Dippings' will be the sweet-tooths' delight this summer. 5.30€ per cornet. www.godiva.be

2. RUINART

Ruinart's sumptuous presentation box, containing a half-bottle of Ruinart Rosé and two beautiful engraved flute glasses. So glamorous! Price upon request. www.ruinart.com

3. DUCHY ORIGINALS

Succumb to these lime and chocolate candies from Duchy, which was given the royal seal of approval in 1992 by the UK's Prince of Wales as a top-of-the-range organic manufacturer. 125g: 2.75€. www.duchyoriginals.com

4. ONE SECOND MINTBLAST

The new 1" Mintblast guarantees fresh breath throughout your working day, thanks to its triple-action technology: an ice-cool liquid centre, with two layers of refreshing, crunchy coating. Wow! www.onesecond.eu

5. THE CAPE HERB & SPICE COMPANY

The South-African herb and spice specialist offers an impressive, seductive

range of aromatic, delicious salts, flavoured with delights as diverse as lemon zest, fennel seeds, Japanese wasabi, mixed herbs and peppercorns, seaweed, smoked jalapenos, sun-dried olives, or simply natural.

100g: 5.90€
www.capeherb.com

6. CHAI & BAR

To be found in the Tour&Taxis complex, Chai&Bar offers early-Summer wine promotions. Merlot tops the list, with a selection of beautiful Saint Emilion and Pomerol vintages, not forgetting, of course, the establishment's excellent-quality Bordeaux bargains.

Examples:
Château Tertre Roteboeuf 1999: 119€
Château Bellevue 2001: 36.50€
Château Cheval Blanc 2001: 249€
www.chai-bar.be

7. LEGENDS OF TEXAS BARBECUE COOKBOOK

In 256 pages, illustrated with rare photographs and filled with recipes and old-timers' anecdotes, author Robb Walsh brings to life the history of the barbecue, a Texan speciality that will make for many happy Summer times. 15€
www.amazon.co.uk

8. FORTNUM & MASON

Present your pastoral picnics with pride, thanks to Fortnum & Mason, official suppliers to the British Royal Family. No detail is overlooked - this hamper combines practicality with refinement. 200€. www.fortnumandmason.com



9. LEON DE BRUXELLES

The famous defender of Belgian gastronomy, Chez Léon, has been serving around 1,000 diners some 800kg of mussels every day for 150 years and, recently, it has added a 100-percent Belgian lager to its menu, which is also now to be found in supermarkets, hotel minibars and also onboard Brussels Airlines planes. Cocoricoooooooooooo! www.chezleon.be

10. HENNESSY

With Hennessy's Paradis Extra, one leaves the world of merely 'very good' Cognacs behind, to enter the realm of a truly exceptional vintage offering pleasure without equal - heady and sensual, a mixture of spice notes and the soft scent of dried flowers. To be enjoyed in moderation, naturally. 70cl: 450€
www.hennessy.com

11. TEXTURAS

Thanks to the 'Texturas Ferran Adria' range from famous chef el Bulli, you will control your cuisine at a molecular level, allowing you incorporate such modern techniques and ingredients as hot jellies, caviar with melon, spherical ravioli and many more. Products available at: Mmmmh! Chaussée de Charleroi, 20 1060 Brussels From 15€. www.texturaselbulli.com

12. MARTINI

Now sold in eight-packs, the new 20cl Martini Minis will be THE drink of Summer. Available in Bianco or Rosso, they're a new way of enjoyed this celebrated Italian aperitif, far removed from the cocktail glass and traditional olive preferred by Mister Bond... www.martini.com

J.S.

A WEEK IN THE LIFE OF A GO-GO GLUTTON

WRITER: JÉRÔME STÉFANSKI

There are already 1,000 restaurants in Brussels, and the tally is growing all the time. Difficult, then, for an enthusiastic eater such as our publisher to avoid eating out all the time, but work must occasionally intrude. Here, then, for your pleasure, are seven days' gastronomic adventures with a young man forever on the move, who has one eye always on his belly...

MONDAY

7h45 TOUT BON

To start a new working week on the right foot, my first stop is at an establishment claimed, by some, to offer 'The King of Breakfasts'. Located in the heart of the Léopold district, a short stroll away from the European Parliament, Tout Bon offers much to enjoy - it's clean spacious, has attractive decor, a friendly welcome, a wide variety of quality dishes. Open from 7h, the breakfast menu offers several set options, all comprising a lesser or greater quantity of cereals, fruit juice, breads, cakes, yoghurts, delicious spreads, jam and honey, cold-cuts, fresh fruit - pleasure without

measure, in other words! Think of it as a more prestigious take on the Pain Quotidien formula (which used to occupy the same premises). And the icing on the cake? The pleasant terrace is available at the first glimpse of sun! Only one drawback - the quality and comfort on offer come at a price. Count on spending 10-15€ per person, but it is a very generous breakfast.

Tout Bon
Place du Luxembourg, 68
1000 Bruxelles
T. +32(0)2 230 42 44
www.toutbon.be

13h00 THE FOODMAKER

My Tout Bon morning feast made a restaurant lunch impossible - anyway, deadlines are fast approaching, so I don't have the time to break bread with my colleagues. I chose to meander back across Parc du Cinquantenaire for a visit to The Foodmaker, there to enjoy a sandwich going by the funny name of 'Funny Fish', mixing fresh salmon, yoghurt, onion, dill and slices of a Granny Smith apple. Washed down with a Coke Light, I'm less than 8€ out of pocket. Beat that...

The Foodmaker
Rue Linthout, 246
1040 Bruxelles
T. +32(0)2 732 05 05
www.thefoodmaker.be

20h00 PARENTS-IN-LAW

One thing's for sure: all their alleged flaws are forgotten when they serve up the grub - the father-in-law is a barbecue ace, while the mother-in-law is queen of gratin Dauphinois and mixed salads. Another thing's for sure - I'm in for a great evening!

Send an email to jerome@togethermedia.eu, and he'll forward you their address. No, really...



7h45 MONDAY TOUT BON

© Tout Bon

TUESDAY

11h30 'BREAKFAST' IN BED

Look, anyone can make a mistake... a great bash yesterday evening, but I think I ate too much, and indigestion struck. Well, to tell the truth, there may also have been a somewhat excessive amount of excellent rosé imbibed, and, despite the two Irish Coffees that I also enjoyed (to aid digestion, naturally), I found myself still in bed at 11h30 the next morning, drinking litres of water to ease my, er, 'indigestion'. Unfortunately, I had to take the day off. At least I won't have to suffer the idiotic English 'humour' of my editor, James, today - every cloud has a silver lining... (*And revenge is a dish best served cold* - Ed)

Jérôme's bed
Ladies (and/or Gentlemen), send an email to jerome@togethermedia.eu, and you will be promptly informed of the address of the publisher's bed...



13h00 MONDAY THE FOODMAKER © Foodmaker

WEDNESDAY

9h ESPRESSAMENTE ILLY

Today, I'm in a hurry again - but my day-off yesterday did me the world of good! I grab my gear and head for the town centre, with a brief stop en route to enjoy



9h WEDNESDAY ESPRESSAMENTE ILLY © illy.com

a creamy Cappuccino at Illy. When it comes to 'designer coffee', there's none better...

Espressamente Illy
Sheraton Brussels Hotel
Place Rogier, 3
1210 Brussels
T. +32(0)2 224 31 11
www.illy.com

12h45 COCO EAT&DRINK

An important advertiser wants to take lunch with me to prepare his future marketing moves, and I've got just the place to go. If you want to 'talk' to expats, first, you gotta eat where they eat. Coco, the renowned brasserie on Place du Luxembourg, should in fact be paying me so for the free publicity I give for their Irish entrecote steak! On the other hand, Coco do allow me to distribute my magazine in their establishment, so maybe we're about even...

Joking aside, for those poor souls who have not yet tried the steak here, there's no time to lose! In fact, if you had but an hour left to live, you'd be 22€ out of pocket (but what would that matter?), but you could do far worse than make sure you tried this meat masterpiece - succulent, impeccably seasoned and complemented by an unusual, but oh-so delicious, pepper sauce. A must. And, while we're here, a big hello to the Coco Eat&Drink team and good luck for the summer season!

Coco Eat&Drink
Place du Luxembourg, 10
1050 Bruxelles
T. +32(0)2 230 22 30
www.cocoeat.be

21h ASPRIA

After two hours of cycling, body-building and swimming, I deserve a good meal. The Aspria's advantage is that it's all under one roof: there's a crèche (little ones are not yet on the scene in my case), a swimming pool, sports hall, business lounge and, most importantly, a restaurant. So, without any qualms whatsoever, I enjoy a large goat's cheese salad and soda, with a tab of less than 20€, in a restaurant that's on a par with Brussels' best.

Aspria
The View Building
Rue de L'Industrie 26-38
1040 Bruxelles
T. +32(0)2 508 08 12
www.aspria.be

THURSDAY

9h15 TRAFFIC JAM

This morning, the roads of our beautiful capital are clogged with traffic. Never mind - I had thought ahead and left my apartment with an apple, banana and a delicious, crunchy cereal LU Breakfast Yoghurt to hand. Only 2.29€ from the supermarket...

For info on traffic, go to www.rtlinfo.be, unless you're stuck in a jam...

15h45 AT THE OFFICE

The morning traffic congestion threw my work out of sync, so I had to make up for lost time... but at the end of the afternoon, I suddenly realized that I'd forgotten to eat lunch, such was the

huge burden of the articles left to bang into shape. Three days to deadline - no time to complain! Welcome to the 21st century, where modern Man is willing to give his life to meet a deadline...

At the office - Together Magazine
Rue d'Alost, 7
1000 Bruxelles
T. +32(0) 475 41 63 62
www.together-magazine.eu

20h30 BAR ESPACE 53

This evening, I enjoy an unusual dinner organized by my friend Eliza Laterza of Eurolunch, bringing expats and Brussels together for a James Bond, 007-themed evening. A success, as ever, and a chance for me to chinwag with some really charming people. The name's Stefanski – Jérôme Stefanski...

Bar Espace 53
Autoworld
Parc du Cinquantenaire
1040 Bruxelles
T. +32 (0) 476 626 121
www.eurolunch.eu

FRIDAY

9h AU VATEL

I am in good form this morning, looking forward to a promised sunny weekend that's begun as it should. With a light heart, I head for Place Jourdan (but not for frites), to choose a breakfast for my team at the office from Au Vatel, which is Brussels' best bakery, bar none and is a family-run establishment, that specializes in orders for hotels and the European institutions.



WEDNESDAY ASPRIA

© Aspria.be



20h30 THURSDAY BAR ESPACE 53 © Espace 53



20h35 FRIDAY L'ARTEA

© L'Artea

Au Vatel

Place Jourdan, 27
1040 Bruxelles
T. +32(0)2 230 25 00

12h15

RESTO PRESTO

There's an important meeting at the office at noon that's likely to drag on. Thankfully, our secretary had softened the blow the day before by calling Resto Presto and ordering a delivered business buffet. Number 55 on the menu comes highly recommended – Fontainebleau/ Salmon on a mesclun bed/Shrimps tartare with celery and vanilla dressing/ Brown mushroom salad with foie gras and caramel balsamic dressing/ Strawberries and cream /Bread roll. A delight!

Resto Presto

Rue Marconi 19a
1190 Bruxelles
T. +32(0)2 230 00 70
www.restopresto.be

20h35

L'ARTEA

The weekend has arrived! To celebrate a very positive working week, I take Chaussée de Waterloo to Uccle, to take my partner to Artéa. This Italian gourmet restaurant is easy to enjoy: refined decor, divine cuisine, an impressive selection of wines and an owner with enough charm to take your breath away (ladies, beware). Its romantic environs and ample terrace will seduce you, I am sure! For my part, I plumped for Crevettes aux crevettes grises (16€), le Filet de Bar Sauce aux Scampi, Tagliolini au Citron (22€) and finally the celebrated Moelleux au Chocolat with vanilla ice cream (7€), all accompanied by a robust 2006 Chianti.

L'Artea

Chaussée de Waterloo 940
1180 Bruxelles
T. +32(0)2 372 09 79
<http://sites.resto.com/lartea/>

23h45

LA PATINOIRE

We are near the Jeux d'Hivers, which, like every Friday, is closed, so, we think, why not take a final drink at La Patinoire (the terrace will be open from May onwards)? Cosy ambience, even if certain pretentious Bruxellois clients are a touch exasperating! As a useful guide to what you're letting your wallet/purse in for, a Coke costs 8€...

La Patinoire

Bois de la Cambre
Chemin du Gymnase, 1
1000 Bruxelles
T. +32 (0)2 649 70 02
www.lapatinoire.be

So, that was a full week, in every sense. With all this eating out, I didn't have the time or, I must admit, the inclination, to cook for myself chez moi. Last summer, when a young IKEA salesman convinced me that his superb fully equipped kitchen was a must-have, I knew at the same time that it was going to be tricky to realise its full potential. So, it's decided (hopefully) tomorrow, being Saturday, I'll go to Delhaize (or steal from the supermarket, depending on the state of my finances) to make a picnic to enjoy by the waters at Mellaerts de Woluwe. After all, where there's life, there's hope...but then again, if you live on hope, you'll die of hunger...

J.S.



Haute-cuisine like momma made it.

resto
HENRI

Vlaamsesteenweg 113-115
1000 B-Brussels
T. 02 218 00 08

RAISING THE BAR

WRITER: ALEX HEWETSON

Right: Winery
© sensum.be

Our wine expert takes a tour of a choice selection of Brussels' essential going-out venues – wine bars.

In countries such as the UK, the wine bar has been established for hundreds of years, mostly in the City of London, specifically around Fleet Street, where under-published journalists hide behind glasses of the house Bordeaux and complain about heartless editors. But in a country where bars sell beer and wine, where restaurants and bistros are happy to serve you anything on their list without expecting you to eat, the wine bar as a distinct entity is quite new to Brussels, and there are now a few that have been open for a while. So, join me for a glass and a tour of some of these hostleries, where the grape is lord and master.

WINERY

Let's start in Place G. Brugmann, where, with a name like Winery, they're unlikely to be selling Bruges lace, right? The concept is a bar that doubles up as a wine shop - the decor's simple, with high narrow tables and stools. They always have about three whites, reds and fizzes open to drink by the glass, but the best thing is to buy a bottle and drink it sur place; you'll pay 5€ for corkage, which means you can enjoy a wide range of styles without decimating the wallet.



I always head for their New World selections and you can get a really distinctive white or red for about 15-20€, including corkage. They also do a tasty range of charcuterie, tapas and cheeses to accompany your choice and the staff are polite and friendly and always ready to help you choose your tipple.

Place G. Brugmann 18,
1050 Brussels
T. +32 (0)2 345 4717
www.wineryonline.be
Open Monday-Saturday, 11-20h,
closed Sundays



Above:
Parachute Parc
© sensum.be

Right:
Scirocco
© sensum.be

PARACHUTE PARC

To be found near the Jardins Tenbosche, this is a recent arrival. All wines by the glass are the wines of the month; I tried a Nero d'Avola for 5€, which isn't too bad. For around 30€, they had a Clos de Lolol Carmenere /Cabernet Sauvignon 2003 from Chile - this has real depth and power to it, and it's worth investing in a bottle if there are two of you. In the whites section, I noticed a Domaine des Terres Dorées white Beaujolais Chardonnay, which looked very interesting. The bar has its wines well displayed, with two Magnums of Deutz Champagne standing as sentinels on either side of the cabinet. At lunchtimes, they also do a competitively priced 10€ lunch.

Rue Washington 151-3,
1050 Brussels
T. +32 (0)2 346 6829
Open Monday-Saturday, 12-14h, 19-23h,
closed Sundays

SCIROCCO

My next stop is across Avenue Louise (don't get squashed by a tram) - Scirocco is an Italian wine bar and restaurant, with a pleasant view onto a garden below. The bar counter is a touch antiseptic, but the wine list is very warm and full of Italian sun. They are happy to serve a number of wines by the glass; I got my fingers round a glass



of Barbera, which was fruity and pleasant, if not very deep. The prices range from 20-300€ a bottle, with the list clearly divided into the Italian wine regions. My pick of the menu was Tre Rose, Vino Nobile de Montepulciano for 30€. If you make it as far as dessert or want a sweet apero, try the Moscato Passito di Pantelleria, made from sun-dried Muscat grapes on a small island just off the Tunisian coast. Rich overtones of almonds, overripe melons and vanilla pods – it's a great wine that's not often found 'by the glass'.

Chausée de Vleurgat 50,
1050 Brussels
T. +32 (0)2 640 3242
www.scirocco.be
Closed Saturday afternoon and Sunday

PIOLA LIBRI

My next choice is to be found on the other side of Schuman, past the EU enclave, and is highly original. Another Italian establishment, but it's a bookstore as well as a wine bar, so in true decadence you can buy a copy of Boccaccio's *Decameron* and splash



Barolo all over it. Wander up to the shelves of wine on display, pick out what you want and the enthusiastic patron will tell you, in a lovely Italian accent, the region it's from and what its attributes are. If you choose to drink on the premises, the price also includes a wide choice of delicious antipasto, and you can go back for more whenever you wish. We had a 2000 Dolcetta D'Alba for 24€, which was splendidly fruity and velvety smooth, with a hint of chocolate. All told, it's a really exciting and unusual combination of two of my greatest loves - wine and books.

Top:
Piola Libri

© sensum.be

Bottom:
Oeno Tk

© sensum.be

Rue Franklin, 66-68
1000 Brussels
T. +32 (0)2 736 9391
www.piolalibri.be
Open Monday to Saturday, 11-20h

OENO TK

The final stop on this tour is the Oeno Tk in Ixelles just behind the Trinite church on the corner of Rue Africain. Like the Winery, this is also a shop - for 6€ corkage you can drink a bottle sur place, which is always the best idea and works out much cheaper. They have a good range of wines; if you feel like splashing out to the tune of 50€, they also have some great Rhônes and Burgundies. I usually choose their Rasteau - with corkage included, it's around 17€. They offer tapas to accompany the wines, which are interesting but tend to be a little on the small side.

Rue Africaine, 31
1060 Brussels
T. +32 (0)2 534 6434
www.oenotk.be
Open Monday-Tuesday 11-20h
Wednesday-Saturday 11-22h30
Closed Sundays.

Managed the whole tour in one night? Feeling guilty? Well, I'm sure the nearby Trinite Church offers late-evening confession, just don't drink the altar wine - heavenly it is not!

More wine bars available on
www.sensum.be

A.H.



Friday May 30 th

You are invited to the famous « soirée des compilations Hôtel Costes » with

Stéphane Pompougnac & Lorenzo Ottati

Balroom Léopold III - Concert Noble, rue d'Arlon 82 - Brussels
www.lessoireesdescompilations.be



Summer starts...

WRITER: MAGALI EYLENBOSCH

THE BACKSTAGE

On 25th April, the third edition of The Backstage event was organised in Brussels by Ubiquity Concept. Showcasing an insider's view of fashion, the event held court at Tour & Taxis and was attended by almost 2,000 guests. The highly colourful show by the GIRLS FROM OMSK design team wowed the audience, promoting fashion from a different angle. But the centre piece was a transparent 200m³ cube, inside which make-up artists, hair stylists

and designers exhibited their work, accompanied by frenetic rhythms from DJs Lorenzo Ottati, L Fêtes and Miss Luna.

The next edition of The Backstage will be held at Tour & Taxis on 24th October.

The Backstage
Tour&Taxis
Avenue du Port, 86c
1000 Brussels
www.thebackstage.be



© Yvan Barbera



FEMME D'EUROPE AND GAI MATTIOLO - FASHION AT THE EP

There was an unusual catwalk at the European Parliament for a fashion-show organized by Italian Maison Gai Mattiolo and the international association Femme d'Europe, which has financed around 1,700 humanitarian projects all over the world. After

the show, Mattiolo sold a selection of garments from the next Spring-Summer collection in a charity auction.

Gai Mattiolo Fashion Show
European Parliament
Rue Wiertz, 60
1047 Brussels
www.gaimattiolo.it



Left:
Bertrand Baguette
at work

Right:
Baguette and
Brian Morris,
Aspria CEO

TO SPA, WITH ASPRIA!

For two years, Aspria has sponsored young F1 driver from Verviers, Bertrand Baguette, 21. During the weekend of 3rd and 4th May, Baguette went for a spin on Spa-Francorchamps circuit, for the World Series Renault. A splendid occasion, then, for Aspria to invite gym members, clients and VIPs. And the cherry on the cake? Baguette moved

from fifth to first in the rankings, winning his race on Saturday. Congratulations are in order, but it's hardly surprising - Aspria, of course, are also responsible for the driver's fitness regime...

There are three Aspria Gyms in Brussels – more information available at www.aspria.com

UPCOMING PARTIES

Les soirées des compilations de l'Hôtel Costes > 30.05.08

Stephane Pompougnac and Lorenzo Ottati await you in the heart of the European district Concert Noble, with a new Les soirées des compilations de l'Hôtel Costes season!

Concert Noble
Rue d'Arlon, 82
1040 Brussels
www.lessoireesdescompilations.be

La Terrasse de l'Hippodrome 13.06.08 > 21.07.08

For 5 years now, as soon as the sun makes its return to Brussels, we have impatiently awaited the reopening of this exceptional terrace. 13th June sees the inauguration of the 2008 edition, set to run until 21st July. The ideal start to your soirée...

Chaussée de La Hulpe, 51-53
1180 Brussels
www.terrasse2008.be

Energy Noce-Finale 13.06.08

The final evening of the celebrated Noces Royales – unmissable to Mirano.

Mirano Continental
Chaussée de Louvain, 38
1210 Brussels
www.noces.be

Anarchic Party 20.06.08

The ideal evening to celebrate the start of summer...santé!

K-Nal
Avenue du Port, 1
1000 Brussels
www.anarchic.be

La terrasse

DE L'HIPPODROME



DU 13 JUIN AU 21 JUILLET

www.terrasse2008.be

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The GMT+7 gallery



THAIS THAT BIND

WRITER: COLIN MOORS

France Dupin de Beyssat and Xavier Lambert have a secret they want to share – Thailand. *Together* caught up with them at their gallery, GMT+7, where they were keen to dispel some of the preconceptions about the country's art, people and culture.

Opened three months ago, GMT+7 art&design Gallery is dedicated to the promotion of contemporary Thai artistic scene and the recognition of Bangkok as a genuine hive of creativity. But GMT+7 is not only a gallery: it is the window of SoiWat.org, an NGO funded by France Dupin de Beyssat and Xavier

Lambert two years ago in order to promote the contemporary Thai artistic scene in Europe, exhibiting pieces in various media, including photography, fashion, design and other art forms.

The diversity of their exhibitions illustrates the ethos behind *SoiWat*

and GMT+7 perfectly. As Xavier explains: "There is a popular misconception that the real Thailand is only to be found in the countryside and that Bangkok is a haven for cheap tourism and famous-name copies. In fact, designers in Bangkok have a unique freedom of expression and autonomy rarely found in the West, where so many designers are tied to major labels that will stifle their creativity."

UNDERMINING THE STEREOTYPE

Xavier tells me: "It's true that Thailand has suffered from a dated preconception for a long time. The truth is that because the markets in India and China are now able to undercut Thai manufacturers, much of this trade has now been farmed out to the lowest bidder and a lot of it has left Thailand completely, which leaves no choice for designers but to focus on the high-end market."

By showing the work, supporting cultural events and the production of artefacts, France and Xavier are offering the European public a unique opportunity to discover an innovative and active scene. And by bringing the artists to Brussels as much as possible, an excellent new opportunity is provided to meet artists and designers.

**'DESIGNERS
IN BANGKOK
HAVE A UNIQUE
FREEDOM OF
EXPRESSION
AND AUTONOMY
RARELY FOUND
IN THE WEST'**

C.M.

FOR ART'S SAKE

BLURRED IDENTITIES, SHARP FOCUS

Photographer
Punsiri
Sirivechepan,
GM+7's latest
acquisition,
draws attention
to fashion via his
iconoclastic choice
of models - a far cry
from 'heroin chic'...

WRITER: COLIN MOORS
PHOTOGRAPHER: PUNSIRI SIRIVECHEPAN

THE ARTIST

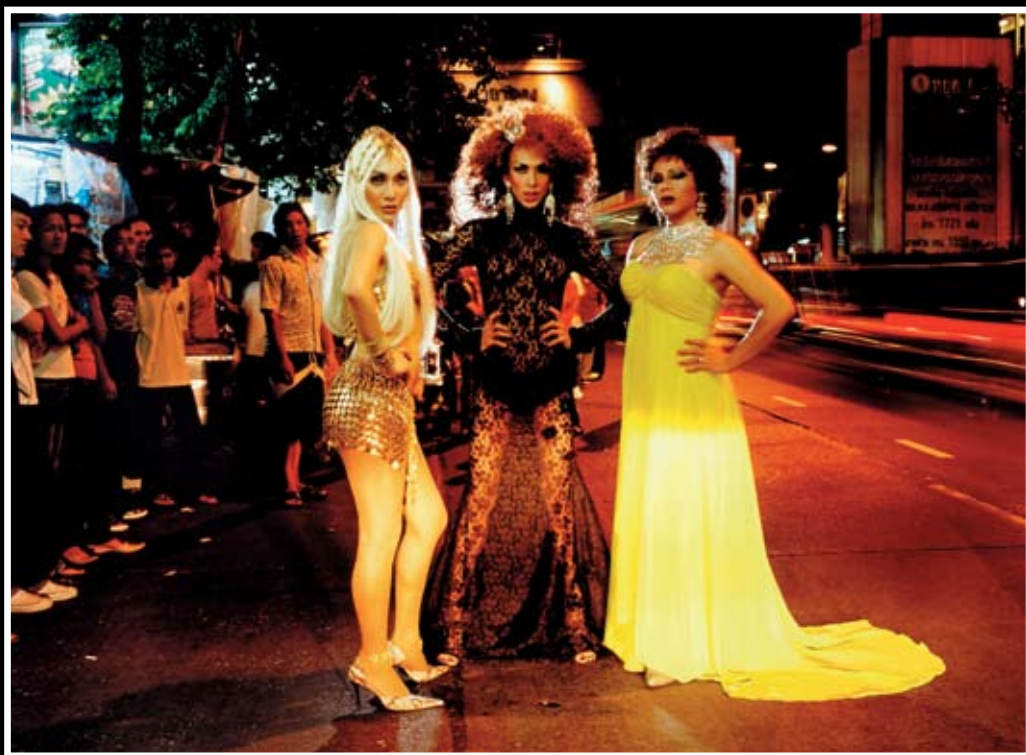
The result of these East-West links and the support of Thailand's Ambassador to the EU have led to 2008 being a year in which GMT+7 will bring 14 different exhibitions to Brussels, covering light installations, fashion and paintings, all by artists who are well respected in their homeland. The latest of these is an exhibition by fashion photographer Punsiri Sirivechapan. A fine arts graduate of the University of Silpakorn in Bangkok, with a Master's from the Academy of Arts in San Francisco, Sirivechapan quickly became interested in the theme of identity. It can take many forms – race, sexuality and age, for example, all of which has become very much his motif in his 15 years as a fashion photographer. He is, by his own definition, extreme in his art: "I would rather my style be hated than not be noticed," he says.

REAL PEOPLE, REAL ART

The work is certainly unusual. True to his belief, he constantly plays with and explores the idea of blurring the boundaries of identity. The majority of his subjects do not fit the 'top model' mould; instead, he prefers to draw them from the streets of Bangkok and photograph them either in the studio or urban surroundings. His models have been Thai girls wearing black face makeup and brown wigs to make them appear African, as well as Bangkok street girls, transvestites and, on several occasions, people who just look interesting. The effect of exhibiting fashions using these people as a canvas creates a jarring antithesis to the usual tall, skinny and young models of the catwalks. In fact, you may not notice at first that the clothes are the subject matter – but this works very well, as his photographs are so fascinating they use the models as a focal point, then the eye is drawn to the clothes or jewellery being modelled, as if by accident. As France explains: "Punsiri does not present ideal, aesthetic models but instead creates characters that are extraordinary, that we cannot relate to because their characteristics are contradictory."

The exhibition runs until 30th June - check www.gmt7.org for more information. **C.M.**





Together's 'To Do' list

WRITER: JAMES DREW

Summer starts with our round-up of the best events, indoors and out, coming your way soon...

WALERA MARTYNCHIK 22.05 > 26.06

A retrospective of a renowned Belarus artist's work, informed by his time spent living under the Soviet regime.

From adolescence onwards, and in order to maintain a free spirit under the Soviet totalitarian regime, Martynchik chose to produce intense work - during the exhibition, the artist invites us to discover how he succeeded in escaping from Soviet ideals, by retreating into his inner subconscious zone.

Galerie Ivana Morozoff
Rue de la Longue Haie, 4
1000 Brussels
T. +32 (0)2 502 10 27

MARY J. BLIGE – GROWING PAINS 01.06, 20h

Widely regarded as the 'Queen of Hip-Hop Soul' and cited as the successor to legends such as Patti LaBelle and Aretha Franklin (as well as winning eight Grammys, she was the recipient of the World Music Legends Award for combining hip-hop and soul like no other singer during the early 1990s), Mary J. Blige arrives in Belgium on a European leg of her *Growing Pains* tour. No pain, no gain, as the singer herself cites as a personal motto, but it's more likely to be

a question of pure pleasure for her Antwerp audience.

Antwerps Sportpaleis/Lotto Arena
Schijnpoortweg, 119
2170 Merksem, Antwerps
T. +32 (0)3 400 60 00
www.maryjblige.com

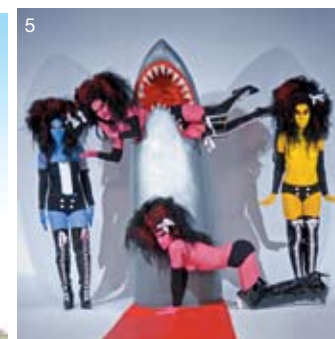
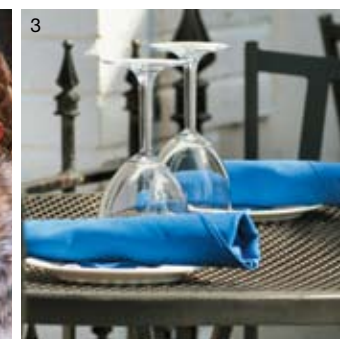
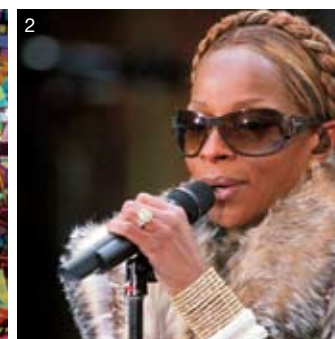
RESTAURANT WEEK 02 > 08.06

The first edition of gastronomic website *diningcity.com*'s Restaurant Week in November 2007 was such a resounding success that the only logical approach was to go for an *encore*. So, this year, Brussels is also getting in on the act – you can now book a three-course dinner for 25€ or three-course lunch for 20€ at more than 60 trendy restaurants in Antwerp and Belgium's capital. *Bon appetit!*

DiningCity.com
Columbuslei, 25
2900 Schoten
T. +32 (0)479 84 83 36
www.restaurantweek.be

P.A.R.T.S 04 > 06.06

As a new generation of dancers and choreographers graduates from P.A.R.T.S., the international dance school headed by Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker, a group of seventh-generation students, comprising 20 dancers and choreographers from 13 countries, present a selection of their own work in Kaaitheaterstudio's.



1. Walera Martynchik's work
© Walera Martynchik

2. Mary J. Blige
© Greenhouse.be

3. Restaurant Week: Brussels and Antwerp join forces to offer great gastronomy
© Stock Xchng

4. Porte de Hal: Historic reopening
© Stock Xchng

5. It's Not Only Rock 'N' Roll, Baby!
© Kristy Leibowitz

6. Florian Böhm's Wait for Walk
© Florian Böhm

Kaaitheaterstudio's
Rue Notre-Dame du Sommeil, 81
1000 Brussels
T. +32 (0)2 201 59 59
www.kaaitheater.be

PORTE DE HAL 06 > 08.06

An historic symbol of Brussels, Porte de Hal is set to reopen its doors to the public, following extensive restoration work which began in 2007. Behind its newly dazzling white frontage, visitors will be able to discover, via a new permanent exhibition, the history of the building and its occupation through the centuries, and also of its links to the defence of Belgium's capitals, its legends and folklore.

Porte de Hal
(Royal Museums of Art and History)
Boulevard du Midi
1000 Brussels
T. +32 (0)2 741 73 00
www.mrah.be

IT'S NOT ONLY ROCK 'N' ROLL, BABY!

17.06 > 14.09.2008

It wasn't just a question of hitting the high notes - under the stewardship of Curator Jérôme Sans, founder and former director of Palais de Tokyo in Paris, Bozar's expo brings together, for the very first time, important (and hitherto often unshown) works by musicians from the 1970s to the 21st century, including luminaries as diverse as Yoko Ono, The Kills, The Residents, Brian Eno, Chicks on Speed and Pete Doherty. In collaboration with the Rock Werchter Festival, the collection highlights another side of rock music: artistic expression of a different kind. The stage is set!

BOZAR
Rue Ravenstein, 23
1000 Brussels
T. +32 (0)2 201 17 13
www.bozar.be

**MIKE KELLEY –
EDUCATIONAL COMPLEX
ONWARDS, 1995-2008**
Until 27.07.08

For the first time in Belgium and the first time worldwide for ten years, Wiels presents a retrospective dedicated to Mike Kelley, one of the most significant artists of the past 30 years. The exhibition will comprise a large selection of his recent works – installations, videos, photographs, sculptures and paintings – on loan from some of the most prestigious international collections. It has been conceived as a history, in which every work forms a chapter, and will allow visitors to understand how and why the Detroit-born artist, who has previously worked with other luminaries such as Paul McCarthy, Jim Shaw and Tony Oursler has, since 1995, made use of the notion of 'autobiography' to explore the forms of power and the power of forms.

WIELS

*Avenue Van Volxemlaan, 354
1190 Brussels
T.+32 (0)2 347 30 33
www.wiels.org*

WAIT FOR WALK
30.05 > 06.09.08

Florian Böhm is the German photographic mastermind behind *Wait for Walk*, a visual project depicting people waiting for the green light at street crossings in New York. Sounds boring, doesn't it? It isn't, not at all – a collection of genuine 'moments in time' captured forever and presented for your pleasure at The Young Gallery in Brussels. Worth crossing the street for...

Young Gallery

*Avenue Louise, 75b
1050 Brussels
T.+32 (0)2 374 07 04
www.younggalleryphoto.com*

IN BRIEF

Essential info on more exciting events...

**WORLD FOLKLORE
FESTIVAL OF SAINT-
GHISLAIN**
25.05 > 04.06

Hall de Maintenance

*Rue de Chièvres
7330 Saint-Ghislain
T. +32 (0)65 71 00 10
www.festifolk.be*

**47TH INTERNATIONAL
FESTIVAL OF MILITARY
MUSIC**
06 > 10.06

*7000 Mons
T.+32 (0)65 33 55 80
www.mons.be*

FESTIVAL OF WALLONIA
08.06 > 12.10

The Festival of Wallonia is one of the major events in the Walloon musical life, as six festivals come to together to invite you to discover the architectural and musical heritage of the region. This year's theme – classical music.

*T.+32 (0)81 73 37 81
www.festivaldewallonie.be*

FETE DE LA MUSIQUE
21.06

Annual summer music festival, with many concerts organized throughout Brussels, with the Grand'Place show the highlight of the day.

www.conseildelamusique.be

**BRUSSELS EUROPEAN
FILM FESTIVAL**
28.06 > 06.07

*Place Flagey, 7
1050 Brussels
T.+32 (0)2 533 34 20
www.fffb.be*

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subscribe to **Together** at **www.together-magazine.eu**



Together
magazine

The future's bright...

WRITER: JAMES CHRISTIE



Summer loving or raised temperatures? Our astrologer gives us the benefit of his starry-eyed predictions...



CANCER

22ND JUNE > 22ND JULY

Some of you will look in the mirror and think "Oh dear I'm getting old" – in which case it's about time you started acting your age. Those of you who seek to turn back time embark on a most foolish endeavour! This is very relevant around the 17th - 21st June when your heart and your ego want to run away with your common sense. Friction with children causes irritation during the late days of April.



LEO

23RD JULY > 23RD AUGUST

Your single-mindedness and sense of purpose are enviable traits but other people probably think you're being a bit of a pain in the ass. Do not surrender! Keep on doing things your own way, and let those others catch you up if they can! New bank accounts being opened at this time to hold new money. The 14th to the 18th June sees you dealing with insurance companies while the 23rd to the 28th sees you looking at property.



VIRGO

23RD AUGUST > 22ND SEPTEMBER

Are people talking about you behind your back? If you're not listening to what they're saying to you face to face, this may well be so! While you are entitled to your own opinions and do need to express them, this is not a time to be stubborn or

to resist the inevitability of change. Look for some enlightenment around the 19th and again on the 23rd, when overtures of friendship and assistance come from a rather unexpected source.



LIBRA

23RD SEPTEMBER > 20TH OCTOBER

An exciting but confusing month, especially for Librans under forty, who will find they have to juggle career and personal priorities, frequently attempting to be in two places at the same time. While there is some good business energy in the wind, romantic and sexual agendas seem to dominate the calendar, and this could be a wonderful time for new love affairs, engagements and weddings. High days and hot spots – June 12th, 14th and the 16th-20th.



SCORPIO

23RD SEPTEMBER > 20TH OCTOBER

March's bright energy pulsates into June and a lovely feeling of co-operation and camaraderie helps you to hit targets and score some spectacular goals. Having said that, apply some common sense and caution around the 17th when a heaven sent opportunity seems just a little too good to be true. Some concern over the health and welfare of elderly relatives creeps in around the 20th.



SAGITTARIUS

22ND NOVEMBER > 21ST DECEMBER

A busy month where all family affairs are concerned but, purely on a personal level, rather a reflective period. You may value what you have but there's nothing wrong in wanting a bit more –

or indeed, wanting something a little bit different! By the month's end you'll be locked into more practical trains of thought and there could be a lot happening between the 20th and the 29th that ties in with the acquisition of new skills and anything to do with education.



CAPRICORN

22ND DECEMBER > 19TH JANUARY

You'll be feeling very lethargic throughout the month, without little energy or enthusiasm for anything. Maybe you deserve some kind of a rest, but the fact of the matter is that there are still things to be done that cannot be done without your input and attention. Bills to be paid, tax returns to be sorted, etc. You've probably got until the 16th or 17th to get your act together because after that time other people will be looking to you!



AQUARIUS

20TH JANUARY > 18TH FEBRUARY

May will have knocked your work schedules out of sync and the first days of June see you negotiating your way around new work routines. Physical tiredness suggests the need for a holiday, but there's not much joy here if you've just had one! International banking has a major role to play between the 15th and 22nd and a new romantic interest makes your heart beat a little faster from the 25th onwards.



PISCES

19TH APRIL > 20TH MARCH

Throughout the whole of the month you become increasingly aware of the fact that there have to be some fundamental changes made to your lifestyle. There will be some good advice

from third parties although you might not like what you hear. The 14th to the 18th sees you reviewing recently made decisions and the 23rd-24th augers well for new business ventures. Emotional agendas take precedence on the 27th.



ARIES

21ST MARCH > 19TH APRIL

Minor niggles with job routines, relationships and motor cars cause you to lose sight of the big picture but there are some major shifts in career direction looming that enable you to bring that "big picture" more sharply into focus. Divided emotional loyalties cause problems mid-month and there is a lot going on in connection with new homes and major home improvement schemes. Emotional tensions will surface around the 23rd.



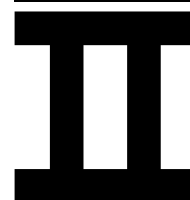
TAURUS

20TH APRIL > 20TH MAY

Too much to do and not enough time to do it in! Other people around you cause frustration and disappointment by failing to share your sense of urgency. Finances are not strong, but the 15th June is a red letter day for trying something new - and making a major success of it! Although it may cause some pain, a couple of major bills do have to be paid before the month's end. Family reunions are likely in the last ten days and you'll be finalising travel plans around the 27th-28th.

J.C.

For details about private readings please contact James Christie via www.magepublishing.co.uk or call +33 (0)561 94 06 78.



SIGN OF THE MONTH GEMINI

21ST MAY > 21ST JUNE

A rather grumpy mood prevails during the first week but energies change around the 12th or 13th June when other people will be going out of their way to please

you. Business links with North America have a role to play in your career profile between the 17th and 27th and all aspects pertaining to communications and networking are valid throughout the whole of the month.



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FINAL TOUCH

When was the last time that you thought about
how fantastic it is to turn a tap on and have clear,
clean water gushing out?

Sounds laughable? Think on...

Every day, we benefit from labour-saving devices
that we take for granted but, when we actually
take a moment to think about them, are revealed
as the mini-miracles that they really are.

Electric lighting, central heating, taking a shower,
making a call, surfing the internet, catching
the Metro... amazing inventions that are now as
commonplace to us as the daily newspaper.

Perhaps what is needed is a return of the faculty
that we possessed as children, one that is
invariably blunted by the vagaries of adulthood -
in a word, AWE.

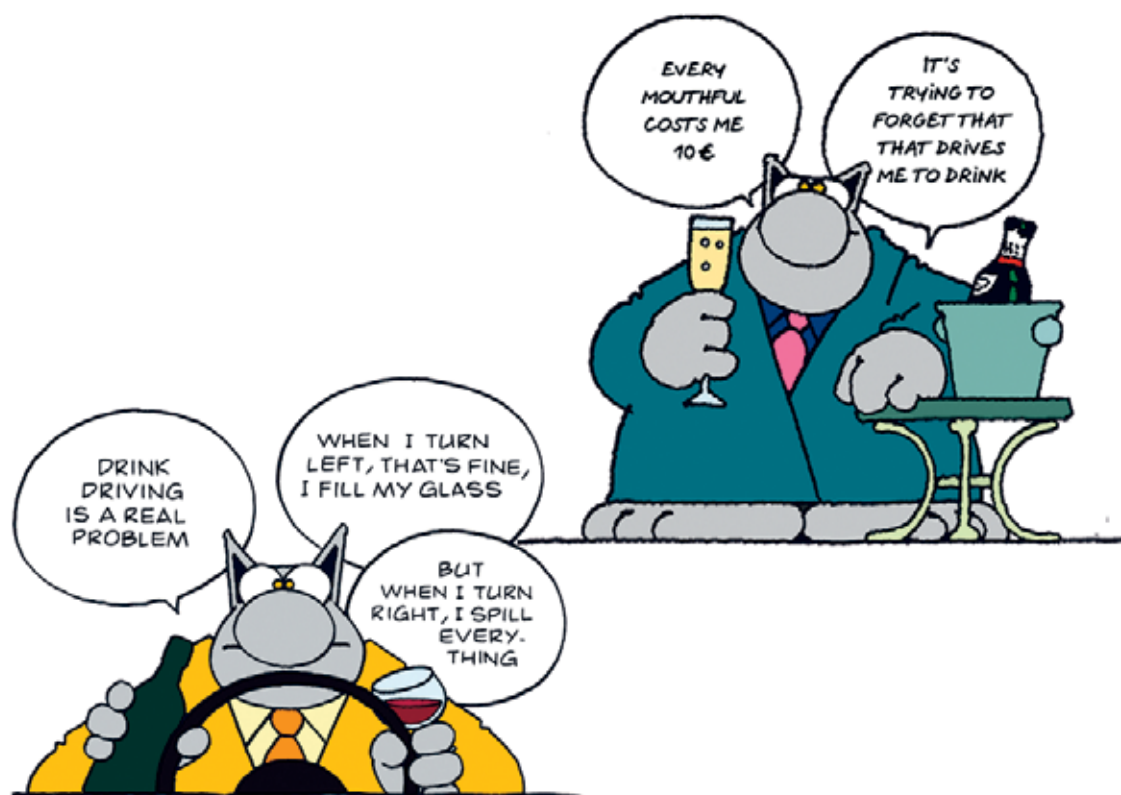
More than perhaps - it's imperative that we take
a little time every day to recultivate this state of
wonder, because such clarity will let us see the
world through different eyes, and shake off the
mundanity of taking life for granted...

Skander Le Grand

Next issue: 10th June SUMMER SPECIAL!

Eat&Drink

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