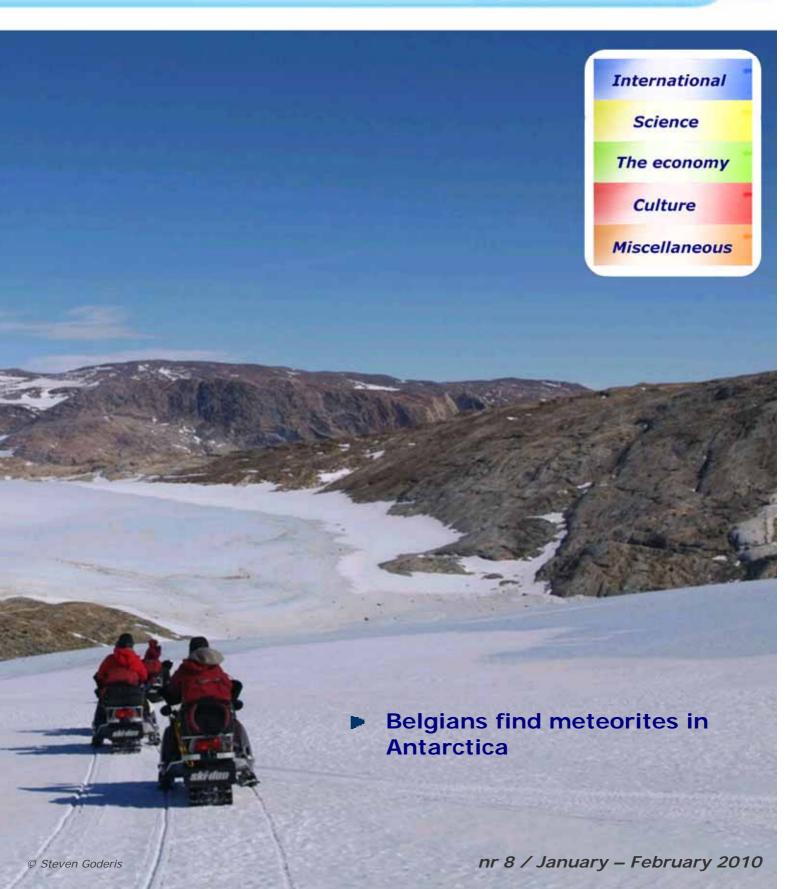


Belgium Unlimited

News from Belgium



Belgium on the international stage

▶ Belgium helps victims of major earthquake in Haiti

An earthquake with a force of 7 on the Richter Scale hit Haiti on 12 January 2010. The epicentre was about 15 km from the capital Port-au-Prince. There were thousands of victims and enormous damage. The Belgian government decided to dispatch a First Aid and Support Team (known as B-FAST) to Haiti to provide help for the victims.

B-FAST (Belgian First Aid and Support Team) is a rapid, inter-departmental intervention structure used to send emergency aid to countries hit by natural or man-made disasters. B-FAST works with professionals from the federal and local governmental services as well as with volunteers.

In the evening of 13 January, a military aeroplane took off for Haiti with an Urban Search & Rescue Team (USAR), including in particular tracker dogs and a medical intervention team with a field hospital. The sixty or so strong B-FAST contingent was accompanied by a Belgian consul to provide consular support for Belgian nationals on location. The Belgian USAR team managed to save the lives of 3 people by freeing them from under the rubble, but essentially came across many lifeless bodies. The field hospital played host to 126 surgical interventions and 3 successful childbirths, while providing medical care for 760 people.

A new B-FAST medical team took off on 23 January to relieve the first team. This new team provided care for 1,200 people in the field hospital and to 1,800 people during visits to orphanages. As in the case of the previous team, there were 3 successful childbirths and a great deal of materials were distributed in orphanages and hospitals.

On 5 February, this second team returned to Belgium, together with the military personnel that had been sent to Haiti on 17 January to protect the Belgian field hospital and the consular team in Port-au-Prince. The field hospital has continued to function and is now staffed and managed by a medical team from Puerto Rico, assisted by local personnel.

In the meantime, three other members of B-FAST went to Port-au-Prince where they were integrated in a Referral Hospital Emergency Response Unit set up by the German Red Cross. They will be relieved on a monthly basis to secure a permanent presence until the end of May. This hospital will attend to the broader medical needs of a population of about 250,000 inhabitants. Priority is now focused on rebuilding and the rehabilitation of the critically injured.

At federal level, Belgium has to date released nearly €3.5 million to help the stricken population. Another €6 million has been allocated to the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), a humanitarian fund established by the UN to enable more timely and reliable humanitarian assistance to those affected by natural disasters and armed conflicts. Finally, €661,750 was allocated to B-FAST. Additional amounts for Haiti are being considered.

More than €19 million in voluntary contributions was collected from private individuals, companies, organisations and governmental authorities in a solidarity action (*Haïti Lavi 12-12*), set up by the Belgian Consortium for Emergency Situations. The action was brought to a close on 15 February.

Furthermore, 14 Haitian children, who had been assigned to adoptive parents in Belgium before the earthquake, were evacuated to our country. The adoption files were identified by the Belgian adoption supervisory authorities. The Federal Public Service Foreign Affairs has from the outset of the Belgian action in Haiti done everything possible to facilitate the administrative formalities and to prepare the evacuation of these children.

Finally, the cultural world in Belgium threw itself into the breach for Haiti. Various artists and cultural organisations have organised activities all the proceeds from which have gone to the victims of the natural disaster in Haiti.

http://www.diplomatie.be







▶ Deployment of two Belgian military personnel from the AWACS capacity in Operation Active Endeavour

On 22 January 2010, the council of Ministers decided to deploy two Belgian military personnel from the NATO AWACS capacity in the NATO anti-drugs operation *Active Endeavour* in the Mediterranean.

They are part of the AWACS radar aircraft crew and take part in the international fight against terrorism in the Mediterranean.



End of assignment for Belgian military personnel in Kosovo

The Belgian participation in KFOR, the NATO led peace keeping force in Kosovo came to an end in February–March 2010. Our country made a considerable contribution during more than 10 years to this first NATO peace keeping assignment in Europe. At its height, no fewer than 1,200 Belgian soldiers took part in this operation.

The last Belgian detachment amounted to 205 people. The majority of the contingent, 130 soldiers, returned to Belgium on 2 February. The installations in place were fully dismantled and returned to Belgium in February. Two liaison and monitoring teams (LMT), consisting of 18 people, have continued to work in the Zvecan and Leposavic regions, supported by 5 people in Novo Selo and 1 liaison officer at headquarters in Pristina. This presence too will come to an end on 31 March 2010.

http://www.mil.be



© Malek Azoug

Command and logistical support vessel Godetia has departed to take part in the Africa Partnership Station (APS)

The command and logistical support vessel *A960 Godetia* will sail for two months off the coast of West and Central Africa on a mission where training and defence diplomacy take centre stage.

An important part of the mission entails taking part in the American African Partnership Station (APS) programme. The aim is to train instructors from Cameroon, Congo, Benin and Togo so that they can in turn transfer the knowledge acquired.



The ultimate aim is to enable these countries to combat illegal fishing, human trafficking and piracy actively in future.

Belgian and American trainers will train twenty instructors in all. The APS section of this mission runs from 1 to 23 March.

The ship is moreover transporting 200 m³ aid supplies totalling 35,000 kg to the African coastal countries from various non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

The A960 Godetia is expected to return on 9 April 2010.

http://www.mil.be





▶ Belgium makes record contribution to the UN World Food Programme

In December 2009 Belgium announced a new donation of \leq 10.6 million to the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), thereby crowning a record year during which it donated a total of \leq 26 million to fight hunger in the world.

The Belgian contribution to the WFP in 2009 is the highest ever – nearly 50% higher than in 2008, when €18 million were donated.

€9 million of the Belgian donation will be used for urgent food aid to people suffering from the extreme drought in Kenya, Somali and Sudanese refugees in Kenya, malnourished children and vulnerable rural people in Niger, people in conflict zones in Pakistan and Yemen, flood victims in Laos and people faced with the high food prices in Ethiopia.

In addition to the contribution for food aid, nearly €1.6 million of the Belgian donation will go to the UN Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS). UNHAS flies relief workers to very difficult to reach areas.

UNHAS was forced to discontinue its service to a number of regions because of lack of funds, but thanks to Belgium, UNHAS will continue to fly to Chad, Niger, Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia.

Without these flights, relief would be unable to reach hundreds of thousands of vulnerable people nor could medicines, clean water, food and other vital services be brought to them.

http://www.dgcd.be



Science

World first: University of Antwerp develops a mini supercomputer for scarcely €6,000

The Vision Laboratory of the University of Antwerp has developed the most powerful personal computer for scarcely €6,000.

The FASTRA II can process 12 billion operations per second. There are computers with an even higher processing capacity, but they cannot be carried under one's arm and they cost a few million euros.

The FASTRA II is currently being used to conduct very sharp threedimensional CT scans of bone structures, but can also be used to visualise nano materials that are used to produce solar cells.

Such visualisation would take weeks of computing time on a normal PC; with the computing power of the FASTRA II, it takes just a few minutes. Furthermore, the mini supercomputer provides a minutely detailed image, thanks to its thirteen graphic cores.

When the FASTRA II is placed on the market after some time, doctors as well as researchers will be able to use it to generate highly improved three-dimensional images themselves.

http://fastra2.ua.ac.be http://www.ua.ac.be/main.aspx?c=*NEWS&n=71502&ct=67682&e=218154



 World first: Doctors at the Leuven University Hospital and the Catholic University of Leuven perform first trachea transplant with complete recovery of blood supply
 Operations on the trachea are usually carried out to alleviate strictures. In some

Operations on the trachea are usually carried out to alleviate strictures. In some strictures, a trachea transplant is the only solution for the patient. But such a surgical intervention is not self evident. A transplant is successful only if the blood supply is restored to the new organ and if rejection phenomena are suppressed. Medicines to counter rejection often have serious side effects.

A team of doctors from the Leuven University Hospital and the Catholic University of Leuven (*Katholieke Universiteit Leuven*), headed by Professor Pierre Delaere, performed a vascularised trachea transplant successfully. They were able to restore the complex blood supply of the trachea and to prevent rejection phenomena. This is a world first which was submitted to the authoritative The New England Journal of Medicine.

The Leuven team performed a "double" transplant. First, the doctors implanted the donor trachea in the patient's forearm. The blood supply of the trachea was gradually taken over by the vascular system of the forearm. Once the blood supply had been restored, the doctors replaced the donor's mucous membrane partly with the patient's own cheek mucosa.

The patient had to take anti-rejection medication during the first months. Once the blood supply had been restored and the mucosa partly replaced, the donor trachea was sufficiently recognised as self by the immune system. After eight months, the doctors were able to discontinue the medication and to transplant the trachea to the neck. The blood vessels developed in the forearm were attached to the blood vessels of the neck. The team has in the meantime treated two patients successfully, a 55 year old woman and an 18 year old man.

http://www.uzleuven.be http://www.kuleuven.be/cltr

▶ Successful hunt for meteorites on the South Pole

Geochemist Steven Goderis of the *Vrije Universiteit Brussel*, the Dutch-speaking Free University of Brussels, and 1st sergeant major Jesko Kaczynski of the 3rd paratrooper battalion in Tielen searched the Balchenfjella region in the Eastern Sør Rondane for more than a month, some 200 km from the Belgian polar station Princess Elisabeth.

They were looking for what are known as "black stones," evidence of the formation of the planets in our solar system some 4.56 billion years ago.

Meteorites fall regularly everywhere on the Earth, but only in Antarctica is it possible to find so many of them. Captured in the ice masses that are driven to the edges of the continent, these valuable pieces of evidence of the Earth's history are pushed up when the ice collides with mountain chains or other obstacles. When the wind then blows the ice and snow away, the meteorites are slowly exposed and can be easily recognised from their black colour.

Furthermore, the Antarctic meteorites are often very well preserved thanks to the extreme aridity and encapsulation in ice. The ice sheets around the Princess Elisabeth polar station are among the richest on the continent and constitute the perfect backdrop for the scientific project initiated by Professor Philippe Claeys of the Dutch-speaking Free University of Brussels.

Claeys and Goderis worked on the project together with Dr Vinciane Debaille and Professor Nadine Mattielli of the Department of Earth Sciences and the Environment of the *Université Libre de Bruxelles*, the French-speaking Free University of Brussels. The project is financed by the Council for Scientific Policy, with logistical support by the International Polar Foundation and Alain Hubert, and is conducted in partnership with Hideyasu Kojima of the Japanese National Institute of Polar Research.

A total of 635 meteorite fragments were found, varying from a few grams to more than 5 kg in weight. Most of them are ordinary chondrites, the most common type of meteorite on earth, but a few very rare pieces were also found.

All these meteorites will not only enable researchers from the VUB, ULB and the NIPR to reconstruct the formation and evolution of our solar system and planets, but will also be studied by scientists from around the world.

The general public will also be able to admire the finds of the expedition, because the meteorites found in the polar ice will be put on show once the research study is completed, probably at the Royal Belgian Institute for Natural Sciences.

http://www.vub.ac.be http://we.vub.ac.be/~essc













Belgo-American physicist Wim Leemans wins Ernest Orlando Lawrence Award 2009 of the US Department of Energy

Wim Leemans graduated as an electronic engineer from the *Vrije Universiteit Brussel*, the Dutch-speaking Free University of Brussels (specialising in Applied Science), and also earned a Master's Degree in 1987 and a PhD in 1991 in electronics from the University of California in Los Angeles. In 1991 he joined the US Department of Energy's Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory. He then proceeded to set up the Lab's Accelerator and Fusion Research Division, which he still heads there.

In the beginning of this year, Wim Leemans won the Ernest Orlando Lawrence Award 2009 given by the US Department of Energy in Washington DC. His groundbreaking work with laser plasma particle accelerators is extremely important, not only for the future of particle accelerators, but also for medical and other applications.

The Lawrence Awards are the highest distinction conferred by the US Department of Energy. Winners receive a gold medal and a monetary prize of USD 50,000. The Awards were created by President Eisenhower in 1959, in honour of Ernest Lawrence, Nobel laureate and inventor of the cyclotron, the precursor of today's particle accelerators.



Nor was this the first time that Leemans was thus honoured. He won the American Physical Society's Simon Ramo Award for outstanding doctoral thesis research work in plasma physics and the 2005 US Particle Accelerator School Prize for Achievement in Accelerator Physics and Technology. Leemans is a Fellow of the American Physical Society and of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE); he has been the president of the International Committee for Future Accelerators panel on Advanced and Novel Accelerators since 2000 and was co-winner of the 1996 Klaus Halbach Award for X-ray Instrumentation. He is a member of the Department of Natural Sciences at the University of California in Berkeley and assistant professor of Physics at the University of Nevada, Reno.

http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2009-12/dbnl-blw121609.php http://www.er.dbe.gov/Lawrence/ & http://loasis.lbl.cpv/

University of Ghent develops tasteless quinine and makes it available free of charge to combat malaria among children

Researchers at the pharmacology department of the University of Ghent (faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences) headed by Professor Jean Paul Remon, have developed a form of quinine suitable for children. Quinine has an extremely bitter taste, so it has been very difficult to administer it to children up to now.

Thanks to the tasteless form of quinine developed by the researchers at the University of Ghent, quinine can now be easily given to children. This form of quinine can be administered either as a syrup or a tablet, whereby it is very easy to adjust the dose in accordance with the age of the child.

The University of Ghent will make this technological development available to African children free of charge.



© Nick Vermeulen



Doctors from Liege manage to get a patient in vegetative coma to communicate

Doctors at the Coma Science Group of the *Centre de Recherches Cyclotron* at the University of Liege, headed by Professor Steven Laureys, and of the *CHU (Centre Hospitalier Universitaire de Liege)*, have worked together with the Medical Research Council's Cognition and Brain Sciences in Cambridge to develop a new method that enables patients who cannot move or speak to communicate with the outside world through new brain scan technologies.

Thanks to functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), brain activity could be recorded in a patient that had lapsed in a vegetative coma for five years after a traffic accident. The patient was able to answer simple, closed sentences with "yes" or "no" simply by thinking.

The scanner confirmed that not only the patient was not in a vegetative coma, but also enabled him to come into contact with the outside world for the first time in five years.

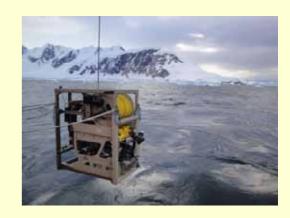
The results of the research were published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

http://reflexions.ulg.ac.be/cms/c_9428/laureys-steven http://www.ulg.ac.be/cms/c_417281/lire-les-pensees http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/04/health/04brain.html http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/life/health-fitness/health/Thought-reading-for-zero-awareness-patients/articleshow/5538505.cms

Scientists at the University of Ghent study a segment of unexplored seabed in Antarctica

On 2 January 2010, three young researchers (Lieven Naudts, Katrien Heirman and Dries Boone from the Renard Centre of Marine Geology of the Department of Geology and Soil Science) embarked on a two-month expedition to Antarctica. They conduct research there under *Larissa*, a large-scale international project that will explore the rapid and impressive changes that have taken place in recent years in the region of the Larsen B ice shelf, from different lines of approach. Spanning a surface of 3,250 km², this ice shelf broke into thousands of pieces in scarcely six weeks in 2002. It is generally assumed that this disintegration is a direct consequence of global warming, which is being felt more intensely in this part of Antarctica.

The scientists from the University of Ghent were the only non-Americans to be invited to take part in the expedition. They are studying the seabed using *Genesis*, the underwater robot of the University of Ghent. This robot is a Remotely-Operated Vehicle (ROV) that can be used to visualise and to map the seabed down to a depth of 1,400 m. *Genesis* can carry out different types of measurements and even take samples. The team is studying how and how rapidly the ecosystems on the seabed have reacted to the sweeping change in their environment. Attention will be focused in particular on ecosystems that draw energy from the conversion of methane from the seabed. The entire expedition is being followed by the National Geographic Society.





Culture

Theatre production from Belgium gets raving reviews abroad

Pubers Bestaan Niet [Adolescents do not Exist], a co-production by the theatre performance company Ontroerend Goed and the youth theatre house Kopergietery – both from Ghent – has garnered enormous success in Belgium and abroad. The show, which casts an astonishing glance on adolescence through the eyes of thirteen teenagers, has in the last two years toured in Belgium, but also in other countries under the English title Once and for All We're Gonna Tell You Who We Are So Shut Up and Listen, including Edinburgh, London, Milan, various cities in the Netherlands, Glasgow, Lisbon, Montreal, Christchurch, Melbourne, Sydney, Dublin, Modena, Los Angeles, New York and Toronto.

In August 2008, *Once and for All* ... won the *Fringe First Award* bestowed by *The Scotsman*. When the company toured Australia in 2009, Cate Blanchett was so impressed with the show and the actors that arrangements were made for a co-production with the *Sydney Theatre Company* (run by Blanchett's husband) for the show *A History of Everything*.

On 7 January 2010 *Once and for All ...* premiered in New York, to a favourable review in the *New York Times*. There were daily performances until 17 January 2010 as part of the *Under the Radar Festival*.



http://www.ontroerendgoed.be/

http://www.kopergietery.be/details.php?vsID=3

http://www.undertheradarfestival.com/index.php?s=2#17

http://www.guardian.co.uk/culture/2008/aug/14/edinburghfestival.onceandforall

 $\underline{\text{http://living.scotsman.com/13870/Theatre-review-39Once-and-for.4397413.jp}$

http://www.timeoutsydney.com.au/theatre/event/11102/once-and-for-all-were-gonna-tell-you-who-we-are-so-shut-up-and-listen asox

http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/culturemonster/2009/11/once-and-for-all-were-gonna-tell-you-who-we-are-so-shut-up-and-listen-at-freud-playhouse.html

http://theater.nytimes.com/2010/01/11/theater/reviews/11once.html





Gustave Van de Woestyne Retrospective 27 March–27 June 2010

Ghent, Museum of Fine Arts

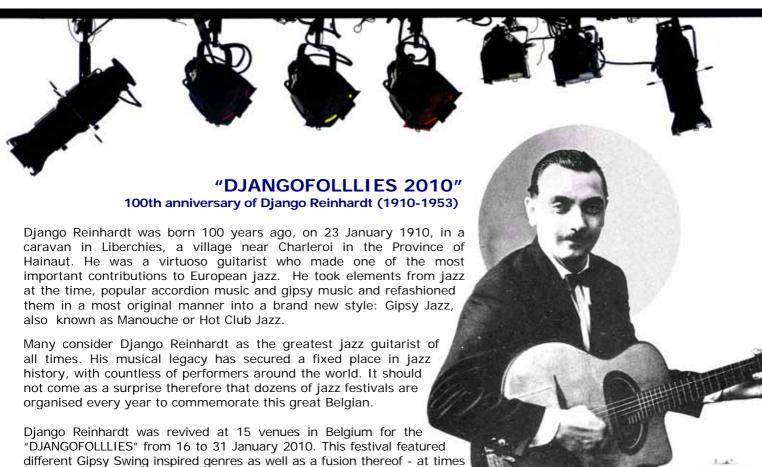
This retrospective exhibition sheds light on one of the most original and intriguing Belgian artists of the 20th century. Gustave Van de Woestyne (1881-1947) started his career in the art colony of Sint-Martens-Latem, a rural village on the Leie not far from Ghent, where he painted symbolist works. He then went through an expressionist and a realist phase, but in essence always remained a symbolist.

Thanks to his self-willed art, he is one of the Flemish artists that have attracted the most attention from international art lovers. And yet, in spite of the few exhibitions devoted to him, his work is not sufficiently known.

This exhibition will cover the different periods of his work: the symbolism from his period in Sint-Martens-Latem and Leuven, the work created in Wales and in London during World War I, the expressionism of the 1920s and 1930s, and the later work in the spirit of the new realism.

© Marc Danval

http://www.mskgent.be



outdoor BROSELLA Folk & Jazz festival, with a project where the French *Paris Swing Orchestra* will cooperate with the Belgian "Django-ambassadors" of the De Cauter family in general and Koen De Cauter in particular. World famous solo guitarist

Stochelo Rosenberg will make a guest appearance and the English group Django à la Créole has also been invited.

by young talent, at others by seasoned veterans, but always in fine form together on stage. Jamming and improvisation sessions also found their

The annual commemorative festival will be held in May in Liberchies, the place where Django Reinhardt was born. On 11 July, the famous musician will

again be honoured at the Green Theatre in Laken during the 34th edition of the

rightful place during this festival dedicated to Django Reinhardt.

Belgian art where you don't expect it

Just outside of Rhyolite, Nevada (USA), once a booming mining town and now a spectacular ghost town off the road leading to Death Valley, California, a group of prominent Belgian artists, led by the late Albert Szukalski, created an art situation consisting of seven outdoor sculptures that are colossal not only in their scale, but in their placement within the vast upper Mojave desert.

The Goldwell Open Air Museum, a sculpture park where Riley and Suzy McCoy welcome the visitors at the Information Center, exhibits works of art by the original Belgian artists, as well as new pieces by contemporary American artists.

Albert Szukalski (born 1945 in Poland - died 2000 in Antwerp, Belgium) was known for many years in Europe as the sculptor of "ghosts". In 1984 he came to the Nevada desert to create what is perhaps the most unique piece of his career. Originally designed to endure a mere two years, *The Last Supper* sculpture has not only stood the test of time, but has lived on to become the "genesis" piece of the Goldwell Open Air Museum. Working essentially from Leonardo Da Vinci's fresco of *The Last Supper* within the desert environment, Szukalski succeeded in blending the two disparate elements into a unified whole. Maintaining the staging of the figures in Leonardo's work and placing it in the American Southwest allowed the artist to meld Western Artistic tradition with the vast landscape of the New World. Albert Szukalski followed up *The Last Supper* with two other pieces at the site, *Ghost Rider* in 1984 and *Desert Flower* in 1989.

Dr. Hugo Heyrman (born 1942, Antwerp, Belgium) is the creator of *Lady Desert: The Venus of Nevada*, a sculpture which refers back to classical Greek sculpture while maintaining a firm presence in the highly technological world of the 21st century. *Lady Desert: The Venus of Nevada* becomes then an example of a modern sculpture that helps us re-experience and re-interpret a subject firmly rooted in the Western Fine Art tradition. The human figure, especially the female, is as fresh today in Hugo Heyrman's sculpture, with its computer generated beginning, as it was millennia ago in Greece.

The Greek story of Icarus is the jumping off point for Antwerp artist **Dre Peeters'** (born 1948) wood sculpture *Icara*, Icarus as female. The hot and sunny environment of the American Southwest is a natural location for a sculpture that takes as its beginning the story of the headstrong youth who flew too close to the sun with wax wings, which subsequently melted, plunging him back to earth. The Greek myth fits well into the dry desert reality; the female form of *Icara*, arms/wings spread wide, eternally poised at the zenith of her flight, caught between the earth below and the desert sky above.



Among the artists that have contributed work to the museum, probably the one who felt most out of place in the desert was Belgian artist **Fred Bervoets** (born 1942 in Burcht near Antwerp). His "portrait" sculpture of Shorty Harris (an early miner in Death Valley and its environs) and a penguin has elicited countless questions. The miner makes sense, but why the Antarctic bird? Word has it that Bervoets wanted to include in his sculpture an indication of how "alien" he felt in the Nevada desert. The penguin was the most out of place entity the artist could think of to represent his own feelings of displacement under the Mojave sun, a self-portrait then as a penguin in the desert.

http://www.goldwellmuseum.org http://www.rhyolitesite.com



► Floralies of Ghent 2010 (17-25 April 2010)

From 17 to 25 April 2010, the halls of Flanders Expo will play host to the 34th edition of the Floralies of Ghent, an event held only every five years. The organisers expect some 300,000 visitors over three days. The Floralies of Ghent feature 4.5 hectares of walled garden, the world's largest, 2 km of a winding course, 305 exhibitors, 24 world famous flower arrangement artists, 440 m² of pond surface, 8 spectacular fountains, foreign participants, and much, much more.

Flowers are a symbol for joy, luck, cheer and friendship. Visitors wind their way through an enchanting decorative garden and discover themselves the language and emotion of flowers. Atmosphere, scents, colours, creativity and contemporary floral art are the ingredients of the Floralies of Ghent 2010. Ornamental plant growers show their skill, ability, gems, etc., whilst dynamic landscape architects, international florists, creative designers and artists combine flowers and plants to create the ultimate emotion.

More than ever before, visitors will discover contemporary creations that show what can be done with simple flowers and plants. There are future-oriented visions of landscape architecture on show, as well as ornamental plant products used surprisingly in various luxury products such as perfumes and wellness.

In the place of a butterfly garden, featured in the previous edition, a gigantic aviary will do the honours this year. *Parc Paradisio*, from the greater Mons region, will provide lots of exotic birds.

Ecology too is on the programme. A recycling garden will show you how you can use all waste from nature and the garden to make a fine garden. And there will be more to see than compost heaps. For instance, you weave fences using prunings.

http://www.floralien.be/index.html

► Symbolism in Belgium 26 March - 27 June 2010

Brussels, Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium

This exhibition outlines the development of symbolism from romantic painting to the end of the 19th century, in the broadest registers: portrait, landscape, stories at the boundaries of dream and reality, doubt, the fleeting moment, religion, etc.

At the core of the exhibition is the close connection between poetry and plastic art and the penchant for total art: *Gesamtkunstwerk*.

In addition to famous names such as Fernand Khnopff, Félicien Rops or Jean Delville, works by known artists who made strong contributions to the spirit of the *fin de siècle* – in which Brussels played an important role – will also be on show.

http://www.fine-arts-museum.be



The economy & Business

▶ DEME to build the London Gateway Port together with Laing O'Rourke



On January 8th, 2010, Port operator *DP World* has committed itself to the foundation stage of its *London Gateway Project* on the river Thames. The new port development project is located at the former *Shell Haven* installations about 25 miles downstream of the City of London.

The dredging works will start in March 2010 and have to be completed by end 2014. A significant number of heavy-duty dredgers of the *DEME* fleet will be involved in the execution of this project.

The new *London Gateway Port* will be a state-of-the-art fully automated deepwater container port for the latest generation of container vessels. The entire project (quay walls, superstructure, dredging and reclamation, connecting road systems) will be funded by the client *DP World*. The dredging and reclamation works include some 29 million m³ of capital dredging in the river Thames over a distance of approx. 100 km.

Dredging International, a division of the DEME Group, completes dredging operations in Estonia

The Belgian company *Dredging International*, a division of the *Dredging, Environmental and Marine Engineering* (*DEME*) group landed a contract in 2009 for works in the first phase of the *Muuga Port Eastern Development project* to expand Muuga harbour in Estonia.

This harbour is located some 17 km from the country's capital Tallinn and is one of the deepest and most modern harbours in the Baltic region.

The works got under way on 1 December 2009 and were completed on schedule in mid January 2010, in spite of particularly adverse weather conditions under which they had to be carried out.

http://www.deme.be

© DEME



Belgium most globalised country in the world for fourth year in a row

According to the KOF index 2010, which is calculated by the Swiss *ETHZ* (*Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich*), Belgium is the most globalised country in the world, for the fourth year in a row.

The KOF index measures the economic, social and political degree of globalisation and is calculated on the basis of 24 variables.

Belgium third most productive country in the world

According to a study by the American research institute *The Conference Board*, work productivity in Belgium ranks third in the world, up from fourth place a year earlier.

http://www.conference-board.org/

Belgian engineering and consultancy firm develops computer model for predicting floods

Under an EU LIFE project and in close cooperation with the Egyptian government, the Belgian engineering and consultancy firm *Soresma* has developed a computer model that predicts floods.

The operational model uses a (radar) forecast of where and how a great deal of precipitation will fall to calculate the potential flooding risk and to warn the local water control authority.

Thanks to this application, fatalities could be avoided in January 2010 during the heavy flooding in the Red Sea and in the Sinai desert in the test area around Nuweiba.

Thanks to the forecast of the Belgian computer model, the area could be evacuated in good time.

Egypt is reported to want to extend the system to all risk areas in the country, while other countries too have shown interest in *Soresma*'s technology.

http://www.soresma.be/ http://www.flaflom.org





Belgian company takes charge of planning and organization of conferences and other events in Belgium and abroad

Ovation is a specialist event management company, which focuses on the planning and organization of meetings, conferences and events for others in Belgium and abroad. The company not only offers consulting to its clients, but it also fully takes care of the logistics of a meeting or event. *Ovation* offers a wide range of services, such as, for example: arranging conference venues, hotel reservations, transportation to and from the airport, on-line registration of participants, audiovisual support at the conference, organization of cocktails, dinners and other social and networking events etc.

In 2008 *Ovation* organized the 62nd Conference of the International Fiscal Association (IFA) in Brussels (1,800 participants), in 2009 it was in charge of setting up the Climate Change Copenhagen Summit. In 2010 *Ovation* will be fully or partially in charge of organizing the Cable Congress, the SPIE Photonics Europe Conference, the Molecular Imaging in Radiation Oncology (MIRO) Conference, the 2010 World Congress on Osteoarthritis (OARSI) and the International Society for Pharmaceutical Engineering (ISPE) Conference. All of these meetings will take place in Brussels and host 500 to 1,000 participants each.

Furthermore, *Ovation* will organize the *European Association for Cranio-Maxillo-Facial Surgery* (EACMFS) Congress in Bruges (1,500 participants), the United Nations Global Compact Leaders Summit in New York, the European Petrochemical Association (EPCA) annual meeting in Budapest, the 2010 FIDI Network of International Quality Movers Annual Conference in Melbourne and the International Liver Cancer Association (ILCA) 4th annual conference in Montreal.



▶ Belgium attractive for Japanese investors

The Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce (BJA) conducted an analysis of all available international studies on the investment climate and came to the conclusion that Belgium has countless winning assets for foreign investors.

In the 17 studies that were examined, Belgium always came across as one of the best countries for foreign investors, as it scored well in very many areas.



Belgium's strong points include in particular: labour regulations, the average wage developments in logistics, its attractiveness as a distribution country, the quality of the research institutions and capital tax, thanks to the notional interest deduction.*

The *BJA* hopes that its report entitled *Belgium and its* neighbours' business climates compared will arouse interest in Japanese companies to invest in Belgium.

* When a company takes out a loan for its economic activity, it can deduct the interest paid. Thanks to the notional interest deduction (Act of 22 June 2005 on the introduction of tax deduction for risk capital, applicable since tax year 2007), all companies liable for Belgian corporate tax can deduct an amount (a notional interest) from their taxable income equal to the interest that they would have paid in the event of outside financing.

http://www.bja.be/pdf/statistics/BJA%20Investment%20Publication%20-%20under%20embargo%20until%202%20Feb %202010.pdf

Australian company Ansell Healthcare opens new distribution center in Belgium

Australian company Ansell Healthcare, a global leader in barrier protective products that holds leading positions in the natural latex and synthetic polymer glove and condom markets, has chosen Genk (Limburg Province) to open a new European distribution centre for its medical and surgical gloves for healthcare workers.

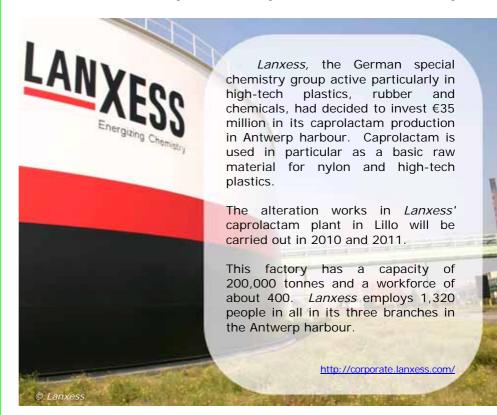
The centre is fully operational since January 1st, 2010. The Belgian transport and logistics firm *Groep H. Essers* handles the logistics activities. One year earlier, *Ansell* opened a new distribution center for its industrial gloves in Aalst (Oost-Vlaanderen Province).



Ansell's European headquarters has been based, for some time now, in the city of Anderlecht near Brussels. As for distribution, the city Antwerp plays a crucial role for the Australian company: over 95% of Ansell's products enters Europe though the Port of Antwerp.

http://www.anselleurope.com/ansell/ansell-healthcare-news/ansell-healthcare-press-releases-1/index.cfm?l=10621 http://www.ansell.eu

► German chemical company Lanxess invests €35 million in its caprolactam production in Antwerp



Swedish company Atlas Copco moves its financial centre from Sweden to Belgium

The Swedish group *Atlas Copco*, world leader in the production of compressors, electricity generators and materials for construction and mining, has set up a financial subsidiary in our country, under the name of *Atlas Copco Finance Belgium*. This new financial centre is established in Wilrijk near Antwerp, and was formed in November 2009 with a capital of €100,000, increased to €2.3 billion on 15 December.

The group's financial activities are thus organised and centralised in Belgium. This is no accident, given the financial expertise and the share in the group's turnover generated by the industrial activity in Belgium.



© Atlas Copco

Atlas Copco Airpower, the most important compressor factory of Atlas Copco's Compressor Technique division is in fact established in Wilrijk, where at the end of 2008 it employed about 2,800 workers.

In addition, the Swedish group has a distribution centre in Hasselt, a Customer Centre in Overijse, and a European hub for hiring out machinery in Rumst. The group employs a total of some 3,000 people in Belgium.

But there is also a financial reason for opening this new financial subsidiary in Belgium. *Atlas Copco* used to have a coordination centre in Belgium, but it was closed because the favourable tax system for such centres was abolished in 2010.

Belgium nonetheless remains fiscally attractive for foreign investors because of the notional interest deduction, whereby notional interest can be deducted from the taxable income.

http://www.atlascopco.be

▶ Le Jan De Nul Group gains project in Iraq

Iraq

Jan De Nul Group signed a contract with GCPI (General Company for Ports of Iraq) for deepening the Umm Qasr Port, situated in the most southern tip of Iraq, near the border with Kuwait. This commercial port is Iraq's gate to the Arabic Gulf and Iraq's lifeline for import of mixed cargo and bulk goods.

Through the years, the port slowly silted up and *Jan De Nul Group* now has to deepen it to -12.5 m. The contract is worth €52 million and for 8 months, it will put 1 small and 1 medium sized trailer hopper dredger to work.

Extension of concession contract in Argentina

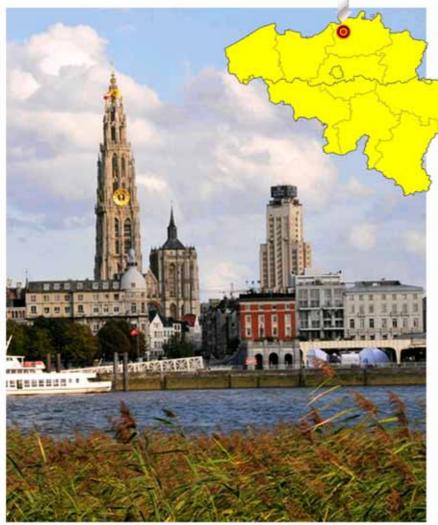
Argentina



On January 21, 2010 the Argentine President signed the decree that extends the concession contract of *Jan De Nul Group* and its Argentine partner *Emepa* for the dredging and signalization of the Parana River and Rio de la Plata.

Jan De Nul Group was awarded the concession in 1995, but this contract has now been extended for a period of eight years, from 2013 to 2021. The concession is unique in the sense that a private company maintains the navigational depth and collects toll from the ships that navigate the fairway.

http://www.jandenul.com http://www.sandandgravel.com/news/article.asp?v1=12482



Antwerp at a glance

Belgium in top 10 in logistical efficiency

A study by the World Bank that ranks 155 countries shows the places where goods can be transported the easiest from one port to another and across borders. The *Logistics Performance Index* (LPI) is based on the assessment of six criteria according to which a country is given a score from 1 to 5.

With a score of 3.94, Belgium ranks 9th. In 2007, the year in which the World Bank launched this index, our country ranked 12th.

http://www.lloyd.be http://info.worldbank.org/etools/tradesurvey/mode1b.asp #ranking



► Agfa Graphics signs contract with Singapore Press Holdings Ltd

Belgian company *Agfa Graphics* has signed an agreement with *Singapore Press Holdings Ltd (SPH)*, Southeast Asia's leading media organization, to upgrade the complete pre-press production at SPH's Print Centre in Singapore. With this contract the Singapore Print Centre will switch from analogue to digital pre-press production.

With 17 newspaper titles in 4 languages, SPH Print Centre has one of the most complex operations in the newspaper industry. The equipment supplied by *Agfa Graphics* turns SPH Print Centre into one of the largest single newspaper computer-to-plate sites in the world The agreement also includes a two years' supply of :N92v violet photopolymer plates.

Signing ceremony © Agfa

http://www.agfa.com http://www.sph.com.sq

Miscellaneous



© Rob Walbers for Rock Werchter

Rock Werchter big winner at the first European Festival Awards

The famous Belgian music festival *Rock Werchter* came away with no fewer than three prizes at a ceremony in Groningen (Netherlands): Best Line-Up, Promoter of the Year, and Artists' Favourite Festival.

Rock Werchter had earlier (in 2008) been cited as the best rock festival in the world for the 4th time in 5 years.

Two other Belgian festivals were crowned in Groningen: the *Dour Festival* as the best medium-sized festival, and the *Cactus Festival* as the best small festival.

http://eu.virtualfestivals.com/latest/news/7146



Belgium 8th on the list of best countries to live in

International Living, a magazine that examined the living situation in 194 countries, ranked Belgian eighth in the list of countries with the best quality of life (according to the *Quality of Life Index*). The assessment is based on criteria such as: the cost of living, cultural and entertainment possibilities, environment and climate, safety, healthcare, infrastructure and the economic situation.

Belgium's high score - 78 out of 100 - is attributable in particular to the versatile face of Brussels, which is described as "the greenest capital of Europe" with an incredible offer for the many expatriates who live there. In addition, our country scores very high in terms of free time and recreation, infrastructure, and healthcare.

http://www.internationalliving.com/Internal-Components/Further-Resources/quality-of-life-2010



Agenda

EVENTS IN BELGIUM

For general touristic information about Belgium:

http://www.visitbelgium.com/

http://www.agenda.be

http://www.opt.be/accueil/fr/index.html

http://www.wallonie-

tourisme.be/contenus/agenda culturel/fr/181.html

http://www.cfwb.be/index.php?id=portail_theme_culture

http://www.visitflanders.com

http://www.cultuurweb.be/CNETPortal/Home2.aspx

http://www.opbrussel.be/

CURRENT EXHIBITIONS AND EVENTS

It's our Earth II. From Kyoto to Copenhagen.

10 September 2009 - 28 March 2010 Brussels, Tour & Taxis

http://www.expo-terra.be

I Medici: a renaissance in paper, an exhibition by Isabelle de Borchgrave.

20 November 2009 - 18 April 2010

Brussels, Royal Museums for Art and History, Cinquantenaire Park

http://www.isabelledeborchgrave.com

Frida Kahlo y su mundo.

16 January - 18 April 2010 Brussels, Bozar

http://www.bozar.be

El Greco.

4 February - 9 May 2010

Brussels, Bozar

http://www.bozar.be

Ambiorix, king of the Eburones.

5 December 2009 - 13 June 2010

Tongeren, Gallo-Roman museum

http://www.galloromeinsmuseum.be/index.php

Whales and dolphins.

14 October 2009 - 29 August 2010.

Brussels, Museum of Natural Sciences

http://www.natuurwetenschappen.be

Visiting Ensor.

13 February - 29 August 2010 Ostend, MU.ZEE

http://www.muzee.be

UPCOMING EVENTS 2010

Bruges Central. City festival 2010.

28 September 2010 - 31 January 2011

With, inter alia:

Van Eyck to Dürer.

29 October 2010 - 30 January 2011

Groeningemuseum

Luc Taeymans. A vision of Central Europe.

22 October 2010 - 23 January 2011

Arentshuis, Belfort, Hallen, Memling in Sint-Jan Hospitaalmuseum,

Forum+ (Concertgebouw), Grootseminarie

Wim Delvoye. Knockin' on Heaven's Door.

14 October 2010 - 23 January 2011 Brussels, Bozar

A Passage to Asia.

25 Centuries of Exchange between Asia and Europe.

25 June - 10 October 2010 Brussels, Bozar

Congo - several exhibitions and activities on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the independence of the DRC.

Different cities in Belgium With, inter alia:

Congo River (Tervuren, R.M.C.A.).

The Congo: 50 years of independence (Tervuren, R.M.C.A).

Sacred Kings in Africa (Brussels, Bozar).

Africa Festival (Brussels, Bozar). Congo@Leuven (Leuven, M).

Lucas Cranach and his time.

20 October 2010 - 23 January 2011 Brussels, Bozar

L'Europe des Alternatifs.

5 October 2010 - 16 January 2011

Brussels, Belgian Comic Strip Centre

Ensor

14 October 2010 - 13 February 2011. Brussels, Bozar

Ensor and contemporary art.

16 October - 13 February 2011

Ghent, Fine Arts Museum and the Municipal Museum for

Contemporary Art (SMAK)

MUSIC

Ars Musica (Festival for Contemporary Music).

2 March - 2 April 2010. Brussels, different locations

http://www.arsmusica.be

International Organ Festival.

25 April - 9 May 2010. Leuven, different locations

http://www.leuven.org

Queen Elisabeth international music competition - piano.

3 - 29 May 2010

Brussels, Conservatoire Royal & Palais des Beaux-Arts

http://www.cmireb.be

http://www.festivals.be

http://www.a-z.be/muziekfestivals.html

MISCELLANEOUS

Ghent Flower Show / Floralies (takes place every five years).

17 - 25 April 2010. Ghent, Flanders Expo

http://www.floralien.be

Ros Beiaard procession (takes place every ten years).

30 May 2010. Dendermonde

http://www.rosbeiaard.be

Flower carpet on the Grand-Place (takes place every two

years).

13 - 15 August 2010. Brussels

http://www.bruxelles-tourisme.be

Virga Jesse festivities (take place every seven years).

13 - 29 August 2010. Hasselt

http://www.virga-jessefeesten.be

FAIRS

http://www.beurskalender.be

http://mineco.fgov.be/enterprises/fairs/home_nl.htm

CONFERENCES

http://www.conferencealerts.com/belgium.htm

http://www.conference-service.com/conferences/be/index.html

http://www.epsilonevents.com

FILM FESTIVALS

http://www.insidefilm.com/europe.html

Belgium Unlimited

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