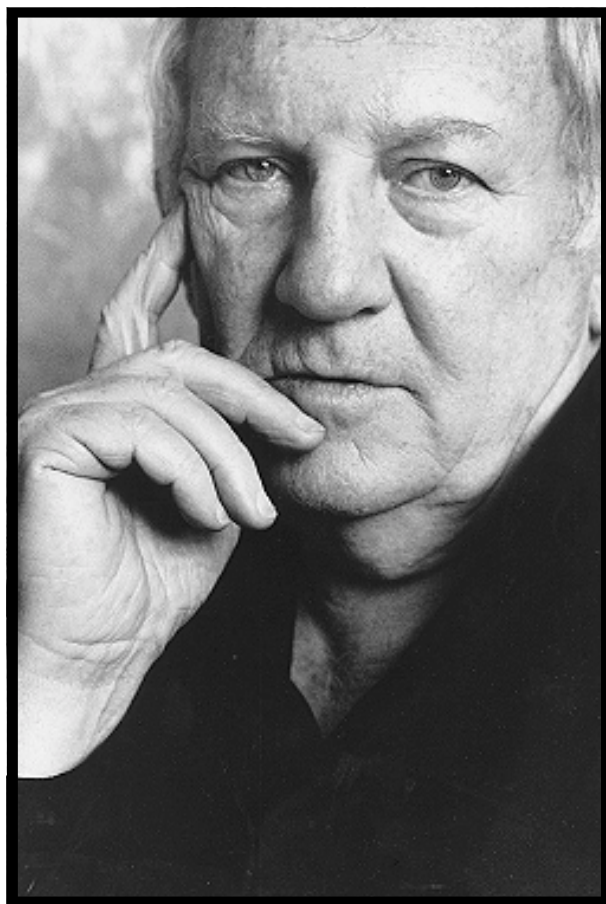


# Belgian Events

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Hugo Claus who died last month at the age of 78



Claus' most famous work

### Return to Antarctica

A little over a century ago, Captain Adrien de Gerlache de Gomery sailed the *Belgica* on a scientific mission to the Antarctic. The expedition's findings – meteorological, magnetic and geological measurements, as well as records of over 1,200 animal species and 500 plant varieties – were a scientific breakthrough. Several islands, straits and peaks were discovered and have names of Belgian persons or places.

Sixty years later, in 1957, Belgium returned to the continent as part of an international programme to set up 12 observation posts. De Gerlache's son, Gaston, headed the expedition setting up the King Baudouin Research Station, inaugurated the next year. One Belgian geologist stayed on the ice for the next three years until the National Centre of Polar Research ran out of money, closing in 1961.

Now, the Belgians are at it again, aiming to bolster Belgium's legacy in Antarctic research and pick up where the King Baudouin station left off. On 20 March 2008 the first phase of the construction of Belgium's new Princess Elisabeth Antarctic Base was completed. Called after Crown Prince Philippe of Belgium's eldest daughter, it will be the world's first-ever "zero emission" polar research station, utilising a highly energy-efficient design and running entirely on renewable wind and solar energies

The second and final phase of the Princess Elisabeth's construction will last from November this year until March 2009. During this time, all the functional systems of the station, such as energy management and waste treatment, will be installed. By March 2009, construction is expected to be completed and all station systems operational.

Research carried out at the base intends to raise public awareness and understanding of the fundamental mechanics of our climate, helping us to respond in a sustainable manner to the challenges associated with climate change.

[www.antarcticstation.org](http://www.antarcticstation.org)



Princess Elisabeth Station

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### **Presentation of new Belgian passport**

At the beginning of the year Minister De Gucht presented a new Belgian passport to the press. The minister stressed that the adoption of this new type of passport reflected Belgium's desire to remain at the forefront of technology regarding the security of ID and travel documents.

Since 1 February, all Belgian nationals applying for a passport receive a new document with new built-in security measures. Compared with the version introduced in 2001 which established a strong reputation for Belgium, this latest generation of passports represents a technological and graphical step forward. The change will not impact on the time taken to issue passports, the prices charged for them or the duration of the passport's validity. Old passports will remain valid until their expiry date. The new passport is also in line with the European and international standards set by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO).

The design of the new Belgian passport was motivated by the desire to meet three objectives: to facilitate checks at the first level (i.e. requiring no instruments), to enhance data protection and to come up with a more pleasing design.

#### 1) A 'self-checking' passport

The passports introduced in 2001 had a page of pictograms indicating how the document should be checked. The new passport goes further, being 'self-checking'. In addition to the pictograms it also has an external polycarbonate sheet, which, when placed over the photograph of the passport holder like a decoder, reveals the holder's initials. This technology also enables anyone in possession of a passport to verify its authenticity in a matter of seconds which facilitates and thus speeds up first-level checking.

#### 2) Enhanced data protection

Substituting photographs is the most common method to forge official documents. The new passport uses several personalisation technologies that make it impossible to substitute photos, because the holder's likeness is reproduced in five separate places using five different technologies:

- Colour personalisation on the data page
- Black-and-white personalisation on the polycarbonate sheet
- Micro-perforation of the photo on the polycarbonate sheet
- Invisible personalisation on the pictogram page
- Electronic personalisation on the microchip.

The use of such multiple procedures provides better protection of the data and lowers the risks of falsification.

#### 3) A more pleasing appearance

The passport's design has also changed, with room made for buildings of symbolic value to the country's regions and provinces, including the buildings housing the staff of its respective minister-presidents, followed by the town halls of the capitals of Belgium's 10 provinces.

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**Hugo Claus, death of a heavyweight novelist**

Hugo Claus

The hugely versatile and constantly challenging Belgian author and artist Hugo Claus's life came to an end with a characteristic act of defiance and great self-assurance. He made use of Belgium's laws on euthanasia, according to his friends and family, with a moment of calm and dignity, "choosing the exact moment of his death".

Claus had been stricken by the onset of Alzheimer's, and the loss of facility with words had been especially hard to bear for one whose career had ranged with great verbal dexterity and imagination across fiction, poetry, the theatre and translation as well as film and art. His reputation was formidable not only in Belgium but in the rest of Europe and beyond, especially following the publication and translation into many languages of his 1980s novel *The Sorrow of Belgium*. He was nominated many times for the Nobel prize for literature. And his poetry had a strong international following too, with the writer and Nobel laureate J. M. Coetzee praising work which had a "verbal concentration, intensity of feeling and intellectual range" that brought Claus into "the first rank of European poets of the late 20th century".

Although his reputation spread so far, Claus's literary work was rooted in the Flemish society in which he grew up in the deeply troubling period surrounding the Second World War. He was born the eldest of four sons of a printer in 1929 in Bruges but did not have a happy childhood. Relations with his family were difficult — he later described his family as "suffocating" — and his work would be coloured by a dislike of authoritarian father figures, as well as an acute ear for the tensions and hypocrisies of bourgeois domestic life. Nor did he find the strict Catholic boarding schools to which he was sent a congenial environment. He ended up, as one critic termed it, a "visceral nonconformist".

Although he received a good educational grounding, he left school aged 16 and soon moved to Paris, earning a living working in a sugar factory (which he later portrayed in a play) while frequenting artistic and literary circles. Before long he had published his first volume of verse. As a painter and sculptor he associated himself with the CoBrA group of Abstract Expressionists based in Copenhagen, Brussels and Amsterdam, which emphasised the spontaneous and dynamic rather than a more formalist approach.

His horizons were further widened by travel to Italy and the US, and his interest in the English-speaking world was reflected in his translation of writers as varied as Shakespeare, John Donne and Dylan Thomas.

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However, Claus's focus returned constantly to his Belgian origins. He was aware that Belgium, so much mocked by outsiders, was not the most fashionable of subjects, but claimed this helped his writing as he was never restrained by any sense of grandeur. Within Belgium itself, he was determined to use his art to challenge the cosy consensus and denial of suffering which he had observed in the societies in which he had grown up.

"I am a person who is unhappy with things as they stand", he once said. "Each day we should wake up foaming at the mouth because of the injustice of things." In political terms he was on the left, visiting Cuba approvingly in the 1960s. But he was as much, if not more, concerned with social rather than political issues and taboos. As well as sexually explicit verse, he wrote of repressed homosexuality. And in his 1970 play *Friday*, also staged in London, he portrayed the consequences of incest and adultery.

Claus's international literary reputation was secured by the publication in 1983 of *The Sorrow of Belgium*. Its inspiration was strongly autobiographical but the coming of age of the novel's leading character, Louis Seynaeve, and the relationships of others were interwoven in a loose, impressionistic style with reflection on how Flemish society had responded to the temptations of Nazi ideology and the confusion of identities that the war had intensified so disturbingly. Claus knew from his youth how appealing the fascist Flemish youth movement had been, how far collaboration and compromise had seeped into his society. Admiring critics compared the novel in its daring form, scope and historical subject matter with Günter Grass's German equivalent, *The Tin Drum*.

Claus's later work also engaged with another potent aspect of his country's unresolved past — the brutal Belgian colonial adventure. In *The Rumours*, a deserter who has fought in the Belgian Congo returns to his Flanders home in the 1960s and prompts all kinds of disruption in a village epidemic of gruesome death. Along the way Claus relished the portrayal of characters such as an alcoholic village priest and an over-amorous postman, though he was capable, too, of writing with compassion with those he saw as caught up in events or bewildered by what life could bring.

The Belgium in Claus's writings displayed deep fractures as well as dark secrets. However, he resisted the easy lure of the political nationalisms or sub-nationalisms that so plagued his native country, past and present. He publicly opposed recent proposals to split the country into its Francophone and Dutch-speaking parts. Following his death, the outgoing Belgian Prime Minister, Guy Verhofstadt, said of Claus: "With every text and poem, he was an emotional beacon in our dark world".

Hugo Claus was born on April 5, 1929. He died on March 19, 2008, aged 78. Claus is survived by his third wife Veerle De Wit and a son from his marriage to actress Sylvia Kristel.

*From The Times, March 23, 2008*

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## Series of Lectures 'About Belgium'

The Embassy of Belgium in London, the Anglo-Belgian Society, the Royal Anglo-Belgian Club and the Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce are organising a series of lectures on the history of Belgium. Renowned Belgian and British historians will cover major events related to Belgian history in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century. Participants will include journalists, academics, politicians, diplomats, business representatives and a wider interested public. The first lecture will be given by

### **British historian Dr. Philip Mansel entitled 'London Brussels and the Creation of Belgium 1830 – 1839'**

Belgium is often dismissed as an unreal country, with no clear identity. In fact since its golden age in the fifteenth century, Brussels, Ghent, Bruges, Antwerp and Liège have constituted one of Europe's cultural and economic magnets and produced Van Eyck, Brueghel, Van Dyck, Rubens, among others.

After the sixteenth century this identity was heightened by a shared experience of Counter-Reformation Catholicism and of Spanish and, after 1713, Austrian rule.

The figure of the Belgian as a hard-working bon vivant, strengthened by years of foreign rule, was already established.

The Southern Netherlands, as they were then called, enjoyed a certain degree of autonomy since they were not ruled by adjacent countries but from distant Madrid and Vienna until the French revolution.

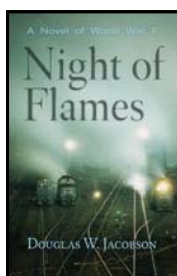
Belgium finally showed its national identity and achieved statehood in 1830, when the Belgians rose and fought for independence from the Northern Netherlands with whom they had been merged after Waterloo.

Dr. Philip Mansel shows that, from the beginning, independent Belgium was linked to France and Britain who repelled a Dutch reoccupation in 1832.

Belgium's success as a nation was expressed in its liberal constitution, widely imitated in Europe and elsewhere, and its monarchy. Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, widower of the Regent's daughter Princess Charlotte, was chosen by Europe as first King of the Belgians. King Leopold I and his secretary Baron Stockmar guided his niece Queen Victoria in her first years on the throne.

*More information on the lectures will be available from the Embassy's website and the texts of the lectures will be published.*

## New Novel



The bravery of Belgian Resistance fighters provides the background for a new novel set in World War Two by American debut author Douglas Jacobson. The main characters in *Night of Flames* are a university professor in Krakow and her husband, an officer in the Polish cavalry. Separated at the outbreak of the war in Poland, they end up working unbeknownst to one another in the dangerous world of the Belgian Resistance.

Jacobson focuses on two out of dozens of Resistance organisations in Belgium during World War II, The Comet Line, which operated an escape route from Belgium through France to Spain and The White Brigade, which was active in Antwerp, primarily near the port, and in West Flanders. They and other Resistance fighters did all they could to sabotage the Occupation. They blew up trains and railroad depots and smuggled to London documents containing information about German factories, ammunition depots and defence installations.

"During my research I spoke to several former Resistance fighters in Belgium and Poland," says Jacobson. "I asked why, given the huge risks, they became involved. All of them told me the same thing: they felt they had to do something, no matter how small, to oppose the Occupation. They didn't think about the dangers until afterwards. These were ordinary Belgians who put their lives on the line. They were remarkably brave."

*Night of Flames* by Douglas Jacobson, McBooks Press

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### More Belgian troops to Afghanistan

Belgium will deploy 140 more troops and four F-16 fighter bombers in Afghanistan within this year, Belgian Defence Minister Pieter De Crem announced on February 1st.



Around 400 Belgian soldiers are already in Afghanistan, most of them maintaining security at Kabul Airport. A Belgian Officer is responsible for the safe area surrounding it and has other troops under his command.

The move to reinforce the Belgian contingent came in response to a NATO call for more troops to be deployed in Afghanistan. Starting from September, 100 Belgian troops will reinforce Dutch troops stationed in the southern Afghan province of Uruzgan.

The F-16 jets will be deployed in Kandahar from September 1. The Belgian troops responsible for the safe area around Kabul airport will be reinforced with twenty more soldiers and twenty military instructors are also to be sent to Afghanistan after October 1 to help train Afghan military personnel. They will be based at either Kabul or Kunduz. As a result of the extension, the Belgian contribution to the NATO military effort to Afghanistan will rise to 500 men and women and 30 million Euros in 2008.

Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs Karel De Gucht, recently justified Belgium's military engagement in Afghanistan in Parliament. According to the Minister, our country's assistance is essential in ensuring our own safety in view of the rise of radical Islam.

Apart from Belgium's military presence in Afghanistan, our country has about 300 servicemen stationed in Kosovo, another 400 in Lebanon and some 100 Belgian troops form part of the EU-mission in Chad.

### From Bond to Belgium



The 11,000-tonne Falklands veteran HMS Fearless is being dismantled in a Belgian shipyard in Ghent following 39 years of active service and a brief retirement.

Britain's Royal Navy, which decommissioned HMS Fearless in 2002, sold the warship last year to Van Heyghen Recycling, a subsidiary of the Galloo group. The Belgian company was selected out of a total of 30 candidates to carry out the scrapping. Van Heyghen is planning to recycle ninety-nine percent of all its material;

some 7,000 tonnes of the ship's parts, 6,700 tonnes of which will be recycled for steel.

"We can manage two of these ships a year. HMS Fearless will take a team of fifteen around a year to dismantle," said Peter Wyntin, director of ship breaking at Van Heyghen Recycling.

HMS Fearless featured in *The spy who loved me* as the ship that rescued James Bond and Anya Amasova at the end of the film. It first found active service at Aden in Yemen. Later, it became the forum for talks between British Prime Minister Harold Wilson and his Rhodesian counterpart Ian Smith following Rhodesia's (now Zimbabwe) unilateral declaration of independence in 1970.

The ship's last major action was in the 1982 Falklands War off the coast of Argentina, where she was home to British amphibious forces commander Mike Clapp, although she also visited Hong Kong for the 1997 handover of the city to the Chinese authorities.

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## The Belgian Navy in WW2

In May 1940, the Belgian “Corps de Marine” participated in the evacuations from Belgian ports and from Dunkirk. An armed patrol ship escaped to England where it served as “HMS Kernot”.

A handful of mavericks came to Britain to join the fight on the side of the Allies.

As from September 1940, a “Belgian Section of the Royal Navy” was created. The officers and men of this Section manned two antisubmarine corvettes of the “Flower “ class, “HMS Buttercup” and “HMS Godetia”, later joined by “HMS Zinnia”.

The corvettes took part in the harsh Atlantic convoys until December 1944. They were also present off the coast of Normandy on the first day of the landing.

There were also three patrol ships: the “Phrontis”, “Electra” and “Kernot” and a squadron of minesweepers who returned to Ostend in October 1944 and immediately started clearing the navigable passes in front of the Belgian coast in order to prepare for the allied landings on the Isle of Walcheren. The minesweepers then took part in the clearing of the Scheldt before entering Antwerp on 28 November 1944 ahead of the first convoy of supply ships.

Although most Belgian sailors served in the Belgian Section of the Royal Navy, a large number of officers, petty officers and sailors also served on board various ships of the Royal Navy.

On their return, these sailors resurrected the Belgian navy. Belgium having regained its sovereignty was now in charge of clearing the navigable channels in its territorial waters.

On the other hand, the tasks carried out before the outbreak of the war by the “Administration of the Navy’ became important again; fishing guards, coast surveillance, rescue at sea, curbing contraband.

On 1<sup>st</sup> February 1946 the “Belgian Section of the Royal Navy” became the Belgian Navy consisting of all the volunteers and conscripts who wished to serve in it.

To this day various Belgian Navy Ships have proudly carried the names “Zinnia” and “Godetia” in memory of their forebears in the Royal Navy, like Belgian Air Force Squadrons 349 and 350, who still use their RAF crest and motto.



BNS Godetia

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The Belgians are well known to take their food seriously. According to the Brussels-based English language weekly *The Bulletin*, the following restaurants are to be considered among the best in Brussels.

***De Hoef***

218 Rue Edith Cavell/straat – Uccle/Ukkel – 02 374 34 17

***Le Doux Wazoo***

71 Rue du Relais/Pleisterplaatsstraat – Ixelles/Elsene – 02 649 02 95

***Comme Chez Soi***

23 Place Rouppe/plein – Brussels – 02 512 29 21

***Les Dames Tartine***

58 Chaussée de Haecht/steenweg – Saint-Josse/Sint-Joost – 02 218 45 49

***La Clef des Champs***

23 Rue de Rollebeek/straat – Brussels – 02 512 11 93

***Les Brasseries Georges***

259 Avenue Winston Churchill/laan – Uccle/Ukkel - 02 347 21 00

***Le Stelle***

53-57 Avenue Louis Bertrand/laan – Schaerbeek/Schaarbeek – 02 245 03 59

***La Scala***

132 Chaussée de Wavre/Waversesteenweg – Ixelles/Elsene – 02 514 49 95

***La Citronelle***

1377 Chaussée de Wavre/Waversesteenweg – Auderghem/Oudergem –  
02 672 98 43

***Le Pacifique***

115 Boulevard Général Jacques/laan – Ixelles/Elsene – 02 640 52 59

***Blue Elephant***

1120 Chaussée de Waterloo/sesteenweg – Uccle/Ukkel – 02 374 49 62

***Ventre St Gris***

10 Rue Basse/Diepestraat – Uccle/Ukkel – 02 375 27 55

***Bon Bon***

93 Rue des Carmélites/Karmelietenstraat - Uccle/Ukkel – 02 346 66 15

***L’Air du Temps***

181 Chaussée de Louvain – 5310 Noville-sur-Méhaigne – 081 81 30 48

***Chez Oki***

62 Rue Lesbroussart – Ixelles/Elsene – 03 644 45 76



## DID YOU KNOW?

### Fewer health tourists

The number of foreign patients treated in Belgian hospitals has continued to fall, reaching 2001 levels, according to the National Health Insurance Institute (Inami/Riziv). In 2006, 16,598 patients with foreign medical cover were treated, down from 17,105 in 2005 and 21,492 in 2004. According to the institute, 10,379 patients came from the Netherlands, 3,371 from Luxembourg and 1,659 from Italy. It noted that there were relatively few British patients despite Belgium being presented as a major destination for 'health tourists' in the British press.

### KOF Index of Globalisation 2008

According to the KOF Index of Globalisation 2008, Belgium and Austria are the world's most globalised countries. The index shows that globalisation is still on the rise, driven by increased economic and political globalisation, while social globalisation stagnates.

The KOF Index of Globalisation, provided by the KOF Swiss Economic Institute, measures the economic, social and political dimensions of globalisation. The index allows comparing degree and changes in globalisation over a large number of countries and more than 30 years. It is available for 122 countries over the period 1970–2005, and is calculated on the basis of 24 variables. The method employed in the calculations allows direct comparison of a specific country's degree of globalisation over time.

The economic dimension of the KOF Index measures long distance flows of goods, capital and services as well as information and perceptions that accompany market exchanges. In addition to actual flows of trade and foreign investment, it captures the degree to which a specific country restricts capital and trade flows.

The social dimension measures the spread of ideas, information, images, and people, while the political dimension captures diffusion of government policies.

According to the new calculations, Belgium and Austria are on top of the globalisation ranking since 2001. On the bottom of the 2008 ranking are Burundi, Myanmar, and Rwanda. Countries at the bottom of the ranking consistently score lower across all three dimensions: The degree of globalisation in the ten least globalised countries is about one third of the ten most globalised ones.

Regarding economic globalisation – and in line with the results for previous years – Singapore shows the highest score. Luxembourg ranks second, followed by Belgium and Malta – all of them small open economies. Least globalised in economic terms are Niger, Burundi, and Iran.

The social globalisation ranking is headed by Switzerland, Austria, Singapore, and Belgium, whereas Myanmar, Mali, Niger, and Bangladesh are at the bottom of the ranking. According to the political sub-index of globalisation, France is the world's most globalised country. The USA, Russia and Italy are also among the most politically globalised countries, whereas the Bahamas, Burundi, Barbados and Belize show the lowest political globalisation score.

[www.kof.ethz.ch](http://www.kof.ethz.ch)

### New terminal at Charleroi

On January 29 a new terminal opened at Charleroi airport. Brussels South Charleroi Airport (BSCA) has seen passenger numbers rise from 210,727 in 1998 to 2.5 million last year. Key to its development was the introduction of Ryanair flights to Dublin in 1997 and six new destinations in 2001, the same year the Irish low-cost carrier made BSCA its main continental hub. Other airlines that serve the airport include Wiz, Blue Air and Jet4you.



## Jenever gets EU protection

The drinks industry has welcomed an EU decision to give the name 'Belgian jenever' official protection. Jenever is a juniper-flavoured liqueur from which gin evolved.

A new EU regulation affords geographical recognition to the drink, which means that the use of the name – known as geographical indications (or 'appellation') in international intellectual property law – is restricted in a similar way to trade marks.

The designation 'Belgian jenever' and 'Belgian grain jenever', plus other names such as Balegemse jenever, Hasselt jenever, 'O' de Flander and Peket de Wallonie, now enjoy worldwide protection.

Jenever is thought to have been invented by a Dutch chemist and was first sold as a medicine in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century. Some eight million litres are sold in Belgium each year.

## Belgian managing partner in London law firm

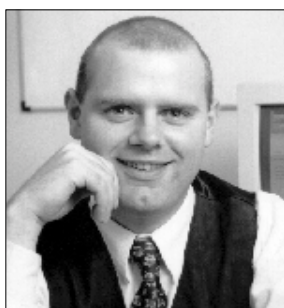


The London Head Office of the international legal practice Allen & Overy recently announced that Wim Dejonghe is becoming their Managing Partner with effect from 1 May 2008 for a four-year term.

Wim Dejonghe joined Allen & Overy as a partner in 2001 having previously been a partner at Loeff Claey's Verbeke since 1993. He has practised law in the United States and in Spain. He received his law degree from the University of Louvain (KUL) in 1984 and subsequently worked as an assistant at its International and European Law Department. He is Managing Partner of Allen & Overy's Brussels and Antwerp offices and is Co-Head of the Global Corporate Department.

Allen & Overy is an international law firm with a network of 28 offices in 20 countries with over 5,000 staff, including some 2,600 lawyers and over 470 partners.

## Professor Stefaan Simons



Last month, Professor Stefaan Simons, son of previous Belgian press correspondent Roger Simons, was awarded a medal for services to education in Kazakhstan by the Kazakh Minister of Education and Science.

Professor Simons is Director of University College London's Centre for C02 Technology and its Special Advisor on Kazakhstan. The medal is partly in recognition of Professor Simons' work over the past 15 years at the Kazakh National Technical University (KazNTU) in Almaty, developing modern chemical-engineering courses, and partly for the work UCL is doing as a whole in educating Kazakhstan's brightest students. It currently hosts 59 Kazakh scholars through a scholarship programme.

Professor Simons holds an honorary professorship at KazNTU since 2006



## QUEEN ELISABETH INTERNATIONAL MUSIC COMPETITION OF BELGIUM **VIOLIN 2009**

The Queen Elisabeth International Music Competition of Belgium is holding a competition from 4 to 30 May 2009 for violinists. This competition is for musicians who have completed their training and who are ready to embark upon an international career.

### **I. TIMETABLE**

15 January 2009 deadline for sending applications  
9 March 2009 announcement of the names of the candidates selected  
29 April 2009 the candidates arrive  
30 April 2009 drawing of lots  
4>9 May 2009 first round  
11>16 May 2009 semi-final  
19>22 May 2009 master classes  
25>30 May 2009 final  
2 June 2009 awards ceremony  
starting in June 2009 concerts given by laureates

For more information [www.cmireb.be](http://www.cmireb.be)

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### **Transnational Giving Europe**

The King Baudouin Foundation's Centre for Philanthropy has developed together with other leading European organisations the Transnational Giving Europe network.

The TGE network enables donors, both corporations and individuals, resident in one of the participating countries, to financially support non-profit organisations in other Member States, while benefiting directly from the tax advantages provided for in the legislation of their country of residence. With TGE, fundraising organisations can ensure income tax deductible gifts for their foreign donors and launch tax efficient fundraising campaigns in other TGE countries.

TGE covers 9 countries in Europe: Belgium, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. Extension to new countries is on its way and solutions do exist in other countries.

For more information on how to benefit from the TGE advantages, please contact [tge@kbs-frb.be](mailto:tge@kbs-frb.be). Additional information on cross-border philanthropy in Europe can be found at [www.givingineurope.org](http://www.givingineurope.org)

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**The Anglo-Belgian Society (ABS)** promotes Anglo-Belgian friendship and culture. Membership is not expensive and application forms can be obtained, with all enquiries, from the Hon. Secretary, Mr Patrick Bresnan, [www.anglo-belgiansoc.com](http://www.anglo-belgiansoc.com), [secretary@anglo-belgiansoc.com](mailto:secretary@anglo-belgiansoc.com)

**The Royal Anglo-Belgian Club (RABC)**, situated in the heart of London, an ideal meeting place for Belgians living in or traveling to London, as well as for British with Belgian connections. Information and application forms from the secretariat, RABC, 60 Knightsbridge, London SW1X 7LF, tel. 020/7235 2121 or fax 020/7245 9470, [www.ra-bc.com](http://www.ra-bc.com), [secretary@ra-bc.com](mailto:secretary@ra-bc.com)

**The Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce (BLCC)** For information on membership or on any of the events organised by the Chamber, contact the Belgian-Luxembourg Chamber of Commerce, Hesslewood Rise, 105 Ferriby Road, Hessle, HU13 0HX, tel. 0870 246 1610, fax. 0870 429 2148, [www.blcc.co.uk](http://www.blcc.co.uk), [info@blcc.co.uk](mailto:info@blcc.co.uk)

**The Young Chamber.** Patrice Bataille, tel. 079 50495171. All Belgians welcome to meet in informal atmosphere. [www.theyoungchamber.org](http://www.theyoungchamber.org), [info@theyoungchamber.org](mailto:info@theyoungchamber.org)

**Brussels Capital Region**, Christian Mouvet, Economic and Commercial Attaché tel. 020/7235 8949, fax 020/7235 8650, [info@brusselstrade.co.uk](mailto:info@brusselstrade.co.uk)

**The Walloon Region of Belgium**, Didier Denayer, Economic and Commercial Attaché tel. 020/7235 0903, fax 020/7235 0585, [www.wallonia.co.uk](http://www.wallonia.co.uk), [london@awex.co.uk](mailto:london@awex.co.uk)

**Walloon & Flemish Trade Office (Birmingham Branch)**, Frank Compennolle, Economic & Commercial Counsellor, The White House, 111 New Street, Birmingham B2 4EU tel: 0121 616 1962, [Birmingham@awex.co.uk](mailto:Birmingham@awex.co.uk)

**Belgian Tourist Office, Brussels-Wallonia**, 217 Marsh Wall, London E14 9FJ, tel. 020 7531 0391, [www.belgiumtheplaceto.be](http://www.belgiumtheplaceto.be), [info@belgium-tourism.net](mailto:info@belgium-tourism.net)

**Flanders House**, 1A Cavendish Square, London W1G OLD, houses the services of the Representative of the Flemish Government Tel: 020 7299 3592

and **Flanders Investment and Trade**, Ben De Smit, Economic and Commercial Attaché

Tel: 020 7307 7710, [fitlondon@fitlondon.org](mailto:fitlondon@fitlondon.org)

and **Tourism Flanders-Brussels**

Tel: 020 7307 7730, [info@visitflanders.co.uk](mailto:info@visitflanders.co.uk)

**Flanders Investment and Trade (Scotland Branch)**, Ishbel McFarlane, Trade Commissioner, Conference House, 152 Morrison Street, Edinburgh, EH3 8EB, tel: 0131 200 6080 [edinburgh@fitagency.com](mailto:edinburgh@fitagency.com)

**Vlaamse Club in Londen (VCL)**, organises activities for Flemish and Dutch-speaking people in the London area, thus creating a meeting place and a network opportunity for the many Flemings in the UK, [www.vlaamseclublonden.com](http://www.vlaamseclublonden.com), [info@vlaamseclublonden.com](mailto:info@vlaamseclublonden.com)

**Vlamingen in Surrey** organise meetings and events for Flemish people living in the Surrey area. Contact: Brit Deckers-Beckers, Chase Manor, Kingfield Road, Woking, GU22 9AA, tel. 01483/726 760, [Britbeckers@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:Britbeckers@yahoo.co.uk), [www.vlamingeninsurrey.co.uk](http://www.vlamingeninsurrey.co.uk)

**Vlamingen in de Wereld**, representative in the UK: Mr Johan Serneels, 61A Providence Square, London SE1 2EB, [johan.serneels@uk.ing.com](mailto:johan.serneels@uk.ing.com)

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**Orde Van den Prince** promotes the unity of the Dutch language and culture, stimulating cooperation between Flanders and the Netherlands. Bimonthly meetings in London. Enquiries: Bruno Stalmans at [BRUNOSTALMANS@aol.com](mailto:BRUNOSTALMANS@aol.com), tel. 01483-893522

28 March – 9 May	Exhibition of Belgian artist Didier Mahieu's contemporary art work 'La Tentation du Vide', Economist Plaza, 25 St James's Str, London SW1 <a href="http://www.contempart.org.uk/economist">www.contempart.org.uk/economist</a> tel: 020 7831 1243
April – November	Celebrations in Belgium to mark the 50 <sup>th</sup> anniversary of Expo 1958 <a href="http://www.erfgoedbrussel.be">www.erfgoedbrussel.be</a> ; <a href="http://www.atomium.be">www.atomium.be</a> ; <a href="http://www.anno-expo.eu">www.anno-expo.eu</a> <a href="http://www.aam.be">www.aam.be</a>
3 – 4 April	Belgian dance group Les Ballets C. de la B. perform 'Patchagonia' at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, Southbank Centre <a href="http://www.southbankcentre.co.uk">www.southbankcentre.co.uk</a>
9 – 13 April	RABC: Art Tour to Perugia
9 April	ABS: Talk by David King 'Victor Horta and Art Nouveau'
10 April	Lecture by Dr Philip Mansel 'London, Brussels and the creation of Belgium 1830 -1839' at the residence of the Belgian Ambassador, Belgrave Square, 6.30pm
18 April - 1 May	Belgian Film 'Private Property' (Joachim Lafosse) at BFI, Southbank
18 - 24 April	Belgian Film 'Private Property' (Joachim Lafosse) at Renoir Cinema
27 April	VIS: Spring walk near Teddington Lock, Walton
1 May	VIS: Ladies night
2 - 8 May	Belgian Film 'Private Property' at Filmhouse, Edinburgh
6 May	RABC: First Tuesday drinks with European Ombudsman Mr Diamandouros
8 – 12 May	RABC: Art Tour in Florence
9 - 15 May	Belgian Film 'Private Property' at Cinema City, Norwich
16 - 22 May	Belgian Film 'Private Property' (Joachim Lafosse) at IFI, Dublin
18 May	VIS: Children's activity
23 - 29 May	Belgian Film 'Private Property' at Pictureville, Bradford
9 June	BLCC: Executive Marquee at the Stella Artois Tennis Championships
11 June	BLCC: Golf day at Denham Golf Club
20 June	VIS: Royal Ascot Ladies Day

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Reactions and contributions by outsiders are welcome