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Magazine

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# GRAPHIUS MAG 11



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**Bob Delbecque**  
Let's make a new deal.



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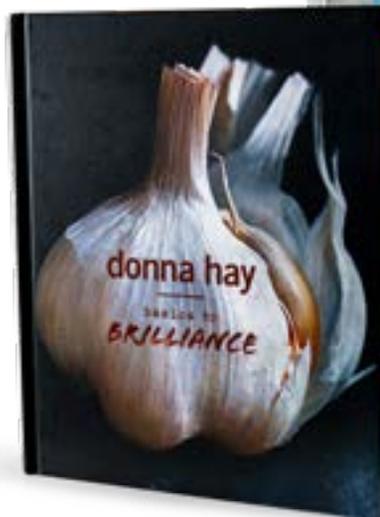
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Download **BLIPPAR** in the App Store or Google Play and make an internet connection via the indicated pages.



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# GRAPHIUS GROUP AND DRUKKERIJ LOWYCK: A MATCH MADE IN HEAVEN

Having a long-term vision is essential in safeguarding the future of any company, of that much we are strongly convinced at Graphius Group. That's why we were so proud to announce on 27 May our acquisition of Drukkerij Lowyck in Ostend. The knowledge and expertise that we have gained through this move will really strengthen the entire group and especially Etiglia, our labelling and folding-boxboard division.





The acquisition of Drukkerij Lowyck was a no-brainer for Graphius Group. "We had already been planning to scale up our packaging activities", explains Graphius CEO Denis Geers, "because we strongly believe we can add value to this growing market. With a new R&D department and an investment programme of 4m euro, we want to develop cardboard alternatives to the plastics that are still frequently being used in packaging."

**If Graphius was to realise this objective, it had to make a choice.**

Denis Geers: "We had the option to invest the funds ourselves in the necessary equipment for processing printed cardboard. But then we'd still be missing the requisite experience and know-how. So, the option to form an alliance with another printer was much more interesting. After

evaluating our options carefully, we decided to enter into talks with Drukkerij Lowyck. It soon became clear that they would be the ideal partner."

Steven Lowyck (CEO): "In recent years, Drukkerij Lowyck has expanded its industrial packaging activities significantly with regard to both food and non-food applications. In addition to our commercial printed matter, we also make folding boxboard packaging such as snack boxes, fruit and veg boxes, sleeves, praline boxes, etc."

**A boost for Etiglia**

Stijn Glorieux, commercial manager for Graphius' label and folding-boxboard division Etiglia, is excited about the change: "The acquisition of Lowyck is an important step in the further expansion of Etiglia. Now we

can do the entire process for folding boxboard in house, which means that, aside from the significant expansion of our production capacity, we can also offer a better service to our clients."

And so the plan is to let the Etiglia flag fly both in Beersel and in Ostend. "Now Etiglia has two production sites, Etiglia Labels in Beersel and Etiglia Packaging in Ostend. We're also readying the Ostend site for BRC certification. By the end of the year we aim to be able to assist any modern food company with their packaging."

Steven Lowyck: "We're seeing the evolution toward cardboard packaging in every sector, but the food industry in particular is forging ahead. We're keen to encourage our clients to make the

switch and the best way to do this is for us to offer products that are both 100% recyclable and of the highest quality. By joining forces we're increasing the possibilities exponentially."

### Win-win situation

In addition to its diverse clients for packaging materials, Drukkerij Lowyck also boasts a strong position in the commercial printing sector. This means a nice complement to Graphius' expertise and an expansion of Lowyck's capacity – truly a win-win situation.

Steven Lowyck: "This consolidation is a step forward for both printers. The fact that we can now incorporate

the extensive finishing possibilities offered by Graphius Group into our commercial print service is a huge advantage. Our clients will also be able to enjoy the fruits of this merger. As a middle-sized player, it's not always possible to be continually investing in better-performing equipment but with the takeover by Graphius Group we can ensure long-term continuity for our clients and our employees."

Philippe Geers, CFO at Graphius: "It's extremely important to us that there is added value for all parties involved. We are launching into this collaboration with great enthusiasm because it allows us to improve together. And we worked

well together right from the get-go; we had that all-important click immediately."

Steven Lowyck nods approvingly: "Absolutely. Like many printing houses, we started out as a local printer, specialised in birth announcement cards and memorial cards. Since then we've grown to become a middle-sized company and we can now say that we're the biggest printer on the Belgian coast. This has only been possible to achieve by staying true to our values. It's paid off so far, so we're also taking this new step very consciously and carefully. It's a new challenge and we're going to give it our all."





“We could talk about the importance of museum catalogues?” OK. But who do we talk to? Someone with the requisite know-how, of course. Someone like Manfred Sellink, who has sat in the director’s chair at Ghent’s Museum of Fine Arts (MSK) since April of this year. Having made a name for himself both inside and outside of museum circles, Sellink’s CV is formidable: doctor in art history (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam), director of Antwerp’s Royal Museum of Fine Arts (KMSKA), head conservator of the Bruges Museums, Senior Conservator at Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen (Rotterdam) and, since 2012, guest professor of Museology and Cultural Policy at the University of Ghent.



"I've always been interested in the way a university publishes its research results," Sellink tells us. "How they present knowledge, insights, stories, etc. to a broad readership. Printed matter has always intrigued me, too: the typography, the design, the paper. It's an honour to publish quality publications, whatever they may be: museum newspapers, news bulletins, research reports. In every museum I've ever worked, I've fought against the squashing of the museum magazine. I always felt it should maintain a high standard, both in terms of content and design, that it should be based on

research and expert insights.

I've always had that passion for paper and print. And I've always been a major bookworm. My home library comprises around 7,000 books, neatly spread out over three rooms. It's no coincidence that my partner shares this interest. It's in her family's blood. Her father worked in printing, as did her grandfather, who had a printing house and distributed resistance publications during WWII. All my life I've been surrounded by the scent of paper, ink, the studio ... I grew up on it."

The **art**  
 behind the **art book**  
 Manfred Sellink



There's no getting around Bruegel. Nor should there be. With the catalogue **Bruegel: The Complete Paintings, Drawings and Prints** you introduced to the general public 63 of the master's drawings. You already mentioned the great attention you pay to the colour accuracy of reproductions. At which point in the production of a catalogue can you relax about that?

"I find it important to compare reproductions with the original, with the right brightness. You can never get it truly exact; in the end it comes down to intuition. For a catalogue based on works from the museum it's a bit easier to compare the prints. Having spent so much time with them, one is more qualified to assess their colours. That's just a matter of practice. It's often been of service to me in assessing prints, even when the works were not readily available for comparison. The skill of the photographer plays a huge role in the process. An image is worth nothing if it is poorly reproduced. If you combine all this with a critical gaze, expert insight, professional equipment, etc., then you end up with quality. And you have to set aside the time for it, because putting together a catalogue is not something you throw together in a couple of weeks."

#### **The importance of paper.**

"I've always been really serious about the choice of paper. What kind of paper? What weight? I find it important but I notice that not many other conservators pay much attention to it. The paper determines what your catalogue is going to look like, how it will feel. It's not only museums that neglect to pay attention to this; even publishers can be lacking in this area. For me, a catalogue just has to be right. It begins with the

choice of the works and ends with the meticulous editing of the text. Every part of the production deserves equal attention. Design, typesetting, layout, photography, colour correction ... for me these are always essential matters. How does a book fall open? Are the colours properly saturated? Are the photos sufficiently spaced and correctly cropped? I'm not saying a catalogue has to cost the earth to produce, but it does demand the necessary care and attention. That way, the book is much more inviting to read and its contents all the more credible."

#### **Is it possible to go too far? Should Bruegel's drawings be printed on paper made from sixteenth-century oak?**

"Sounds like a weighty book (*he laughs*). For the Bruegel catalogue, we selected five kinds of paper together with the publisher in Vienna. After a couple of print tests, we made our choice. The choice of paper depends on whether you're working with colour or only black-and-white images. There's a difference in tonality. What I've noticed in recent years is that art-book publishers are tending to warm up the colours. They add a touch more red or blue to make the images 'pop'. I do understand why they do it but I've always stood against it. I think the work itself needs to be the reference, the way the general public would perceive it during the exhibition. I remember epic discussions with publishers in the mid 1990s on the reproduction of ink drawings. Such drawings often have marks or irregularities that publishers seek to retain. They can have up to three, four hundred years of wear and tear, from fungal damage to the occasional wine spill. It all becomes part of the drawing. Why remove it?"

## Every part of the production deserves equal attention.

**So, you can't put a catalogue together in a couple of weeks. How long does it take?**

"We started work on the 2018-19 Bruegel exhibition in 2012. That's a normal turnaround time for an exhibition of that scale. You start thinking about the publication early on. It used to be done differently. One would begin working on the catalogue just a year before the exhibition. You have to draw up a tender, talk with the right partners, find a designer, contact a printer, a publisher, determine the budgets, etc. It all takes time. Ideally you would begin three years in advance. That gives you sufficient time to go over every step in detail. It's all very precise work. The photography only comes into it late in the process, because developments in the field of photography, image processing and digitisation happen so fast, you want to be able to avail of latest possibilities. Or it may be the case that the artworks are still being restored and you can only photograph them at the last minute. Certain developments do allow one to work faster these days. For example, you can discuss corrections quickly and easily online, but time still remains a crucial factor. I'm not keen on working hastily. The calmer you can work, the better."

**At the end of the journey, you have a new catalogue in the museum shop. Surely the average visitor is not going to appreciate all the work that went into it?**

"No, but nor do they need to. You could compare it to a ballet production that's had months of work invested in it. On the night of the show, the viewer



**I believe it's always worth the effort, because it leads people to read and enjoy the book all the more.**

doesn't see the months of hard work that went into it. It's the same with a catalogue. It still has to be just right. Another example: say you're at a gig and you see the band is struggling to keep on top of their act, that might have a certain charm to it. But if they were playing effortlessly, they would exude quality. People can tell when a catalogue is done right. Honestly, I believe it's always worth the effort, because it leads people to read and enjoy the book all the more. Perhaps I'm too optimistic about it. It's the same with an exhibition: the Bruegel exhibition ended up having 400,000 visitors, but how many of them knew that seven years' time and work went into it?"

#### **Seeing the light.**

"Something people barely think about, if at all, is that the presentation of an artwork guides the way we look at it. Lighting is of crucial importance in this. Change the lighting, people will experience the same painting in a completely different way."

#### **Lighting is one thing, but what about acoustics? Museums are usually quiet places, which benefits the experience.**

"Some museums are old, some have been housed in old buildings for decades. It's not always easy to optimise the acoustics, even though it's an important aspect of the museum experience. When I worked for the Groninger Museum, years ago now, we attempted to improve the acoustics by installing tiles on the ground. A small intervention, but it

helped. And what kind of audio guides do you use? In Bruges I introduced a microphone for guides so that they didn't have to speak so loudly and disturb the other visitors. You really have to stop and think about all the many different aspects. It borders on absurdity. The success of an exhibition depends on a lot of different factors, including the utterly banal. Catalogue, exhibition, toilets, cloakroom, acoustics, lighting ... it all contributes to the comfort of the exhibition."

#### **As a director, what do you hope that people take away from an exhibition, aside from the aesthetic experience?**

"The notion that people visit museums purely for the aesthetic experience has long been discredited. Personal experience is more important. Emotion, feeling, relating, the social



aspect of it ... these things are more important. Or the feeling of having to see an exhibition, of being au courant. People are often out to learn something, too. Personally, I'm driven by the desire to get people in touch with their sense of wonder, to enrich people's lives. For me, a good exhibition leaves you with more questions than answers. It's okay if it's a little challenging. Of course, the simple enjoyment of art is also fine by me."

**Do you feel people should prepare themselves before visiting a museum, plan what they want to view? So as to be one step ahead of 'museum fatigue' ...**

"No. As an exhibition maker it is your duty to plot a certain route that will lead people from one space to the next. In doing so, it's important to

build in opportunities for breaks and to spread the works out over the different spaces. In this way, you avoid bottlenecks around certain artworks that tend to draw all the attention. I have no complaints about people moving through one hall more quickly and remaining in another for a longer time. A lot of research has been done over the past ten years into how long people view a work: barely five or six seconds. Our viewing behaviour has also changed enormously in recent decades: in the past, guided tours would last two to three hours. Today, an hour and a half is the standard, including for the older generation. You would think that only younger visitors would start to be fatigued after a good hour, but the same is true of seniors. The pace is faster for everyone. It's important to stay abreast of these things as an exhibition maker, to keep

your finger on the pulse of things. Things change. That's the way it is."

**We have the impression catalogues aren't as in-depth as they once were, either.**

"That's true. There was a time when catalogues could never be thick enough. For important artworks you'd have ten pages with countless additional entries and footnotes, comparative images. But did it hold people's attention? Not sure. Today there's a different ratio of illustrations to text. There is certainly less text, which means less space in which to say what you have to say. As a result, the texts have to be completely to the point. I'm a big fan of the evolution from catalogues to readers. That's a boon for consumers and publishers alike."

**A lot of research has been done over the past ten years into how long people view a work: barely five or six seconds.**

**Do visitors still buy art books?**

Less than in the past, but I don't believe this spells the end of the art book, even if the pick-up rate is on the decline. At the Jan Van Eyck exhibition it was one in ten, for example. Of the 340,000 visitors, around 35,000 bought a book. This shows you have to approach the book differently. There is definitely a shift. And that is

reflected in the content. Today entries are often grouped together, works are discussed together and you can read certain parts of a book in one sitting. The purchasing behaviour of the visitor has influenced the design of art books. I see certain museums stubbornly clinging to and investing in the classic approach, with the risk that they'll be lumbered with a pile

of unsold books in the long term. Museums that are truly in touch with current trends think critically and, for example, seek to combine an art book with their online content. Books are no longer designed to set things in stone forever; I think that's a very positive development. I think there's plenty of life yet in the art book."





# FRESHLY PRINTED

## SOCIALLY INCAPABLE MICHAEL

We've been commissioned by publisher Borgerhoff & Lamberigts to make some special books in the past, but this publication is really ... something. This is due, in part, to cartoonist Tom Borremans' Socially Incapable Michael, a character who has made frequent appearances on Belgian TV. He's just a special kinda guy!

The content and concept of the publication are of course entirely down to the publisher and cartoonist, but the literal making of the book was entrusted to Graphius' relatively new graphic platform L.capitan. This unique publication was first printed and finished as a normal book before coming face to face with our saw and cast-iron cutting die. An unprecedented job, with unprecedented results. What will they think of next?

Borgerhoff & Lamberigts, Ghent, 263,5 X 298,5 mm,  
184p offset white 140, R/VQ, sewn binding, flush cut with die.



## AUTUMNAL ART

This is a book to dig out when the squirrels start burying their winter stash. Publisher Plume de Carotte in sunny Toulouse has always cared about the environment. Choosing a printer is something they don't take lightly; the printing house mustn't be too far away and it must share their eco-conscious approach. Enter Graphius.

And this is another book that, due to its format (landscape), construction and subject, demands that extra bit of care and attention.

Installations and photos by the artist Marc Pouyet, which he combines with autumn leaves and their colours.

Plume de Carotte, Toulouse,  
180 X 120 mm, 384p, machine-coated,  
half-matt recto/verso Q, FSC-certified,  
paper band

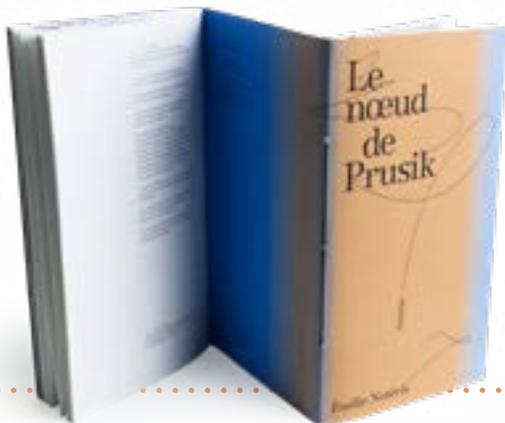


## 2020 END OF YEAR BOOK, LEEDS ARTS UNIVERSITY

When the students of Leeds Arts University enshrine their 500 final-year works in print, you don't just get a colourful yearbook, you get a truly remarkable publication.

The first thing that catches the eye is the black edge staining. Then your fingers immediately reach for the cover, embossed with each of the students' names. A fluorescent red ribbon bookmark indicates where you left off. The smart choice of format turns this diverse publication into an inspirational object.

**Peter & Paul Testone Factory, Sheffield,**  
145 x 180mm, 564p, offset wit 140g,  
R/V0, sewn binding, cover 2.4 mm greyboard covered and  
embossed on front and back, ribbon bookmark and black  
edge-staining.



## ZIG-ZAG COVER WITH PAMPHLET STITCH

Some clients want the moon, and they get it. Just take a look at the brochure Graphius printed for Extrapole. The first page literally reads: "There are no new ideas. Only new ways of experimenting." That's certainly the case here.

A zig-zag folded cover sandwiching two separate inner booklets that are finished with a beautiful pamphlet stitch in coloured thread. This loopy stitching playfully alludes to the title, Le Noeud de Prusik - 'The Prusik Knot'.

**Extrapole, Paris,** 2 X 68p Freelifel vellum 100g, R/V 2, 6 page cover Freelifel Vellum 260g, R/V 2.  
Folded cover, folds collected and thread-bound with pamphlet stitch.

## MUSÉE DE LA VILLE DE STRASBOURG

For some years now, the Museum of the City of Strasbourg has been publishing a beautiful series of neatly presented catalogues, Le Cabinet de L' Amateur, which covers the most diverse range of subjects. The look and feel of the catalogues is always consistent: 16 pages, self-cover, large format, strong graphic design and printed on thick paper. Their pamphlet-stitch finish with coloured thread and paper band give these attractive catalogues a certain cachet. A strong, simple concept, sold at a reasonable price.

**Musées De Strasbourg, Strasbourg,** Le Cabinet de L' Amateur,  
240X 350 mm, Lessebo Design White 240g 1.3,  
recto verso Q + 5° colour, sewn binding.





# THE SAMPLE ROOM IN AMSTERDAM

Esther Krop is the woman behind 'De Monsterkamer' in Amsterdam. The name is Dutch for 'The Sample Room' and for paper lovers, it's heaven on earth.

Ester Krop: "De Monsterkamer offers an up-to-date overview of all the graphic papers available. It's also a place where designers can come for free advice and inspiration. In short, it's a combination of a showroom and a meeting place, with an extensive online component. What's special about it is we pair print samples with paper samples to offer physical examples: after all, the best way to judge a paper is to look at its real applications. There aren't any other initiatives doing this, as far as I'm aware."

**Clients must be thrilled to visit. What an abundance of choice!**

"That's for sure. People who visit De Monsterkamer for the first time are always really amazed. For those who appreciate paper, it is a paradise here, like being a kid in a candy store. We regularly get enthusiastic emails or letters of thanks from people we've advised."

**Clearly Japanese!**

"The most special product in our collection is a Japanese 2 g paper. This is not suitable for most printing applications, but it's a very unique specimen. The paper is so thin that you can practically see through it."

Paper is of central importance in Japanese culture: origami is a respected art form. And making paper is a tradition that dates

back to 610 BCE there. A very long time ago, if you consider that book printing only came to Europe in 1453.

"Yes! There's a reason the Japanese are considered the best papermakers in the world. The nice thing about paper is that every kind has its own special qualities. A paper is only as good or bad as its application. Today there are interesting experiments and developments in 'bio-based' paper, such as paper made of straw, grass, hemp, wool or potato starch. But an 'ordinary', uncoated, wood-free design paper, on which you can print beautiful photos, is actually just as special."

**De Monsterkamer organises various activities throughout the year. Can you talk about one or two of your favourites?**

“Love to. For years now, we’ve had a monthly ‘Drop in + special guest’ event. These are evenings when a famous designer or publisher comes and gives a talk. There were events when visitors could ‘try out’ De Monsterkamer and meet people from their field. We would often go for dinner afterwards. The Drop-in evenings were really popular and the setting had a lot to do with it: being in a small room like that, among the books and the paper, really gets people talking and looking closely at the print samples. We have occasionally organised larger events with multiple

organised evenings where they have invited speakers like Connie Palmen or Tessa van der Waals. Unforgettable events! The place was packed.”

**Paper’s tactile intimacy**

“I think paper will always have its place. Print has so many specific qualities that you can’t imitate on a screen that I’m not at all worried about it disappearing. At least not in the niche of special print, where the feel of the paper, the printing quality of the images, the binding and the finishing are all crucial. Furthermore, a book informs the reader in a completely different way than a screen does: it’s a more intimate, concentrated experience. It’s nice to

## A book captures text and images, of course, but it can also sequester CO<sub>2</sub> – for centuries in some cases.

well or better digitally. Thankfully, with De Monsterkamer I have a different focus. People who come to me for advice are on a very meticulous and patient search for the right paper and often have plenty of money and time to invest in their quest.”

**What can paper do that other materials – like plastic, for example – can’t?**

“Paper is a natural product, and you can feel that. It has a certain warmth, unlike plastic, which is synthetic. Paper is more biodegradable. Artificial materials tend to disintegrate into smaller and smaller pieces, but don’t degrade completely. This leads to the spread of microplastics, a problem not to be underestimated. In the permaculture garden where I regularly work, we use a lot of unprinted-on brown cardboard in our composting. It ends up nourishing the soil. So, sustainability is one area where paper takes the cake over plastic.

A book captures text and images, of course, but it can also sequester CO<sub>2</sub> – for centuries in some cases.”



Esther Krop next to her samples

© De Monsterkamer, Justina Nekrašaitė

speakers and over 200 participants, like Backstage at the Best Cared-for Books, Paper & Environment and Paper & Print. Our partner companies are also able to organise activities at our location. Winter & Company, for example, a producer of cover materials, has already

know that a book will live a long life, while digital media is so ephemeral.

“I do realise that a lot of printed matter will also disappear, eventually. And there are things where the content could be presented just as

# Worldly FLAVOURS

A question that stumps many households on a daily basis: what should we cook for dinner? Thankfully there's always Australian cooking sensation Donna Hay to provide some inspiration. And those who'd rather eat out or take away need look no further than the Bib Gourmand. But what's that, exactly?



### Donna, good on ya

To passionate home cooks, Donna Hay needs no introduction. Hay is an Australian chef of international renown. Let's just say she's got at least 27 cookbooks to her name (we lost count a while ago), of which she's sold around 6 million copies worldwide.

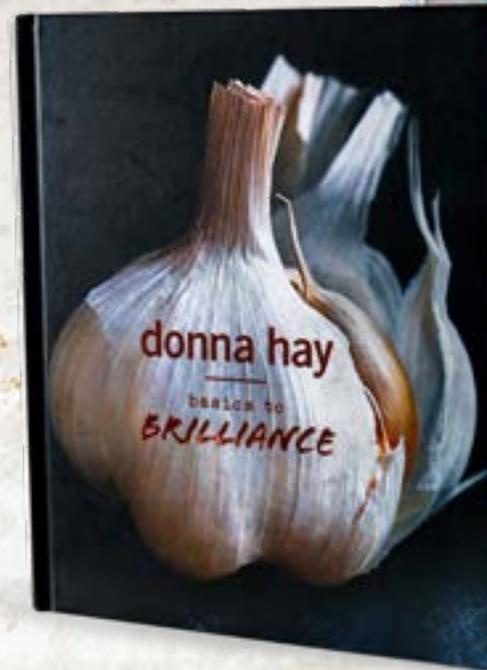
The reason her cookbooks are so popular is not only to do with the simplicity of her recipes, but also the gorgeous styling of her dishes: you can practically taste them with your eyes alone. How best to describe Donna Hay's style? Well, it's eclectic, for sure. Which is not surprising when you consider what a melting pot of different cuisines the Australian kitchen is. Seduced by the diversity of flavours the world has to offer, Hay samples from Italy, Greece, Japan and the Middle East.

"There's no such thing as typical Australian cuisine", she recently remarked. "Australia is still a land of opportunities and food is no exception. There's some very inspiring things happening here."

### Piece of cake

If there's one thing that Donna Hay wants to communicate with her audience, it's that cooking doesn't have to be as hard as some celebrity chefs would have you believe. Forget twenty-ingredient dishes that are ingenious but microscopic: Hay offers easy-to-prepare dishes for people with little time who still want to eat a healthy, balanced diet.

"Let's face it: we all have busy lives and the thing that often gets neglected is our diets. You just need to know the right shortcuts. If I've said it once, I've said it a thousand times: if you've got eggs, you've got a meal.



### Basics to brilliance kids

Uitgeverij Unieboek, Amsterdam,  
230 x 297mm, 240p, Maxi Offset 140g

### Basics to brilliance

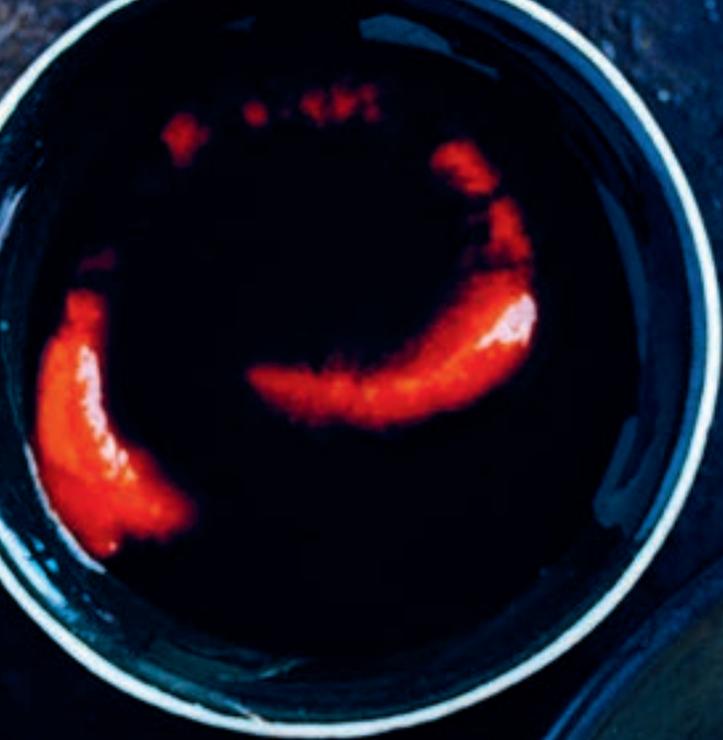
Uitgeverij Unieboek, Amsterdam,  
220 x 265mm, 400p, Maxi Offset 140g

When I'm short on time, I can throw a spinach omelette together in no time. My kids love them, too."

Hay has been a fixture of the cookbook section of bookstores for almost 30 years at this stage. When her first cookbook came out, it was still more or less a man's world.

"A woman without any classical cooking training who wants to publish a cookbook? Why would anyone be interested in that? That was a common criticism I received from chefs who had a 'real' education, but I wasn't deterred. My goal was to introduce people to delicious, easy cooking, not to get gold stars and kudos from the industry."





# Tasty, tasty and not pricey



A restaurant has to be pretty special to get into the Bib Gourmand. The what? you may be asking. Some claim that a mention in this publication is the equivalent of half a Michelin star, but that's not quite true. There is some overlap between the Bib Gourmand and the Michelin Guide, but the criteria are completely different.

The Bib Gourmand shines a spotlight on restaurants that serve exceptionally tasty food at great-value prices. In concrete terms, you're looking at a three-course meal with a choice of two dishes per course for no more than €37. Bonus fact: Bib – short for Bidendum – is the Michelin Man's nickname.

For the 2021 edition of the Bib Gourmand, inspectors visited 162 Belgian and Luxembourgish restaurants. Undercover, of course. A number of restaurants in our fair city of Ghent were among those celebrated this year, including Bodo and De Lieve. Hats off to them!

## **Bodo**

Bib Gourmand had the following to say: 'The sober, Scandi-inspired interior is also typical of the food at Bodo. The chef plates up traditional dishes that are big on flavour but free of fuss. How wonderful it is to begin with a toothsome rillette before moving onto a delicious fish dish ... Bodo, keep on keeping it simple – it suits you!'

"It's always a morale booster when your restaurant gets some positive recognition," says Lore Moerland, Bodo's owner and chef. "Bodo was awarded a mention in the Bib Gourmand before. It's always good for business, even if that's less the case under the current circumstances. People tend to really appreciate the certainty that they won't be disappointed by the food, which may be a little bit pricier than average but offers excellent value nonetheless."

## **Like so many restaurants, Bodo has also launched a take-away service. Has that been successful?**

"Yes, but it demands quite a different approach to cooking. We've become quite adept at it, because you don't want to send people home with a dish that requires hours of finishing in their home kitchen. The feedback has been positive, in any case, and we're delighted about that, of course."



# THE WORLD FROM YOUR

A stack of several books with white pages and dark covers is arranged on a dark, highly reflective, possibly metallic or polished fabric surface. The books are slightly fanned out, showing the edges of their pages. The lighting is dramatic, creating strong highlights and deep shadows, emphasizing the texture of the paper and the sheen of the surface. The overall composition is clean and modern, with a focus on the physicality of books and the contrast between light and shadow.

During the first lockdown, the Amsterdam-based, Belgian graphic designer and globetrotter Barbara Duriau started a 'little' project called 'View from my window'. One single photo – taken from her apartment window – turned out to be enough to spark an international phenomenon. This in turn led to the publication of a remarkable book of captioned photos.

# WINDOW

VIEW  
FROM  
MY  
WINDOW

Barbara Duriau, Amsterdam,  
170 x 240mm, 396p, Arctic Volume White 150g



**Maria Scarvalone** 📍 Brooklyn, New York | USA | April 17 | 6:08 pm



**Tammy D. Switzer** 📍 Santa Fe, New Mexico | USA | April 13 | 10:04 am



**Tania Shah** 📍 Mumbai | India | April 12 | 11:52 am

March 2020. The hashtag #stayhome dominated television screens in homes across the world. Lockdown, quarantine, working from home. We got used to it faster than we thought we would. For many, the world was reduced to the same still life, viewed through the same window, day after day. And this gave Barbara Duriau an idea.

“The idea was simple,” she recalls. “We were all going to be locked up at home for weeks with the same view from our windows. But what was the view for people on the other side of the world? And what if I asked them to take a photo and share it with others in lockdown via a Facebook group? This would allow people to connect, to break through their loneliness and enjoy a safe form of escapism. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March, I photographed the

view from my window, posted it on Facebook and ‘View from my window’ was born.”

What began as a small, solitary act ballooned into a project of global influence.

How does Duriau explain this sudden success? “There wasn’t one particular trigger. After making the Facebook group, I invited a few friends to participate: one from Miami, three from Texas and one from Australia. They in turn invited their Facebook friends and before I knew it, it had exploded. Photos were streaming in from everywhere. At a certain moment we had twenty administrators poring over the photos, checking for compliance with our group rules. It was non-stop, day and night: while I was sleeping,



Tara Bisogna 📍 Arco | Italy | April 26 | 8:38 pm



Steven J. Whitfield 📍 Cairo | Egypt | April 28 | 6:00 pm

my friends in Texas took over the reins. In the morning I would discover the captivating images that had been sent in from New Zealand, Australia, etc.”

“I had hoped that people would like the idea, but what ended up happening exceeded my wildest expectations. In the first week alone, the group had amassed fifty thousand followers. Just a month later we were up to two million.”

#### Whirlwind

Barbara Duriau could never have imagined that her idea would have such an impact. From her quiet corner of the social media sphere, she was catapulted into a whirlwind of attention. Did that ‘little idea’ have an impact on her life? And how!

“I’ve never worked so hard as I did last year,” she says. “Fifteen-hour days, including weekends. The photos just kept coming. After a while it started to take its toll. I couldn’t relax anymore, physically or mentally. My head was constantly abuzz with it. Bugs on Facebook, hate messages, jealousy among members, people who thought that I was earning loads of money from it, while I wasn’t earning a penny ... One day I wrote an open letter so that everyone would know that there was a flesh-and-blood person behind

## “The book is a photographic testimony of a period we will all remember.”

the page, someone with emotions. I had seriously underestimated the work required of an admin, as well as the speed at which the page would take off.”

#### From Facebook to photo book

“I quickly realised I couldn’t let these photos and captions remain only virtual. I decided to make a selection to publish as a book. I see ‘View from my window’ as a book created by a whole community. For me, at least, this is a photographic testimony of a period we will all remember. Each image is a snippet from someone’s life at a time when life as we knew it was truly being tested.”



Marina Hayes 📍 New York City, New York | USA | April 14 | 6:30 am



Laura Majors 📍 Denver, Colorado | USA | April 23 | 7:56 pm

Out of 200,000 photos, Duriau selected 260. The obvious question is: how on earth do you whittle such a large number down to just 260. What were the selection criteria?

"I started saving photos early on in the project. When I began to put the book together in June of 2020, I already had 1,500 to choose from. My background in graphic design helped in making the selection. The quality of the photos made the selection easier, since in many cases the resolution of the image was too low to print. I then categorised the photos into chapters quite intuitively. From 'Deserted streets' and 'Tomorrow is another day' to 'All you need is love'. Of course, I contacted everyone whose photo I wanted to include in the book, to get their permission. Had some nice reactions, too. They were all honoured that their image would end up in a book. I found the cover photo pretty quickly, an image from Utne, Norway. This photo had it all: the window, the experience, the colour, the openness ... simply a gorgeous and powerful photo."



Rebecca Ellen 📍 Chicago, Illinois | USA | April 26 | 10:58 am

Many photos are accompanied by a caption from the photographer. For Duriau, this lends the book an extra dimension. "The accounts shared together with the photos are often very emotional and powerful. Sometimes they are more important than the photo itself."

One such story is shared by a couple in Chicago, accompanying a photo taken from their apartment window. It reads: "This is my view out at the South

Loop. Our neighbourhood is filled with signs and symbols of hope and love and solidarity. I am filled with the same, especially being so lucky to be quarantined with a wonderful man who asked me to marry him and posted the response in Post-Its on our window." The Post-Its are arranged to form the words "SHE SAID YES".

# LET'S MAKE A NEW DEAL

don't sit on your hands!

Never waste a good crisis: the famous quote by Winston Churchill is as relevant as ever thanks to the global pandemic. While some sit on their hands, others see opportunities. Motivational speaker Bob Delbecque is in the latter camp. He took advantage of this societal lull to publish the inspiring cartoon compilation *Make a New Deal*.





"In a crisis, a lot of people remain stuck in that initial fear, but it's only by letting go of this that you can move on. That's what led me to this publication. Through cartoons I give tips on how to think and act differently." Waste a good crisis? Not while Bob's around.

His most recent book is a seamless continuation of his pre-pandemic work as a motivator of bosses and employees alike. Bob – which he reminds us is also short for 'Best of Belgium' – is a self-proclaimed 'energiser', someone who gives others the energy they need to bring their plans to fruition. A can-do kind of guy, in short.

**"I see great opportunities in every crisis."**

"The idea to put out a book of cartoons came from a client. He found the cartoons I used so inspiring that he sent them to everyone at his company. They raised and aided the discussion of certain topics. And I got a lesson out of it too: listen to your clients. **Make a New Deal** fits perfectly within my professional vision, in



the sense that I often see great opportunities in any crisis. Silver linings and all that."

**For a year now, your usual focus of hosting live business conferences and giving 'power talks' has had to be put on the back burner. But, in line with your own philosophy, you've moved your activities online. You're going with the flow of things. How long does it take, actually, to write a conference?**

"A good couple of days. I first have to get myself completely in the head of the client or management. Then I interview the employees and the customers, and I ask the client for feedback. This the best way to design a conference that's tailored to the client. Of course, I also get inspiration from podcast interviews with famous entrepreneurs, but it's my own clients that tend to offer boundless inspiration time and again."

**Is it fair to say Bob Delbecque is the Belgian counterpart to the American motivational speaker Tony Robbins?**

"First of all, thank you for the compliment! Tony reached more than six million people across the globe with his comeback programme after the first lockdown. Just enormous numbers. I certainly have a lot of admiration for his achievements and his way of thinking. One of my favourite sayings of his is: 'The number one secret to happiness is not fame, is not money or freedom, it's progress!' Only progress leads to success. A lesson I'm quite familiar with, of course, as a proud Ghentian; our motto is *nie neute, nie pleuje* ('don't moan, don't give up'). But, to answer your question, I would have to simply say that Tony is Tony and Bob is Bob. That reminds me of another good tip. In these times of change and transformation, just be yourself, because everyone else is already taken."



Thanks to my team, I write  
"SUCCESS stories" every day!

#### Make a New Deal.

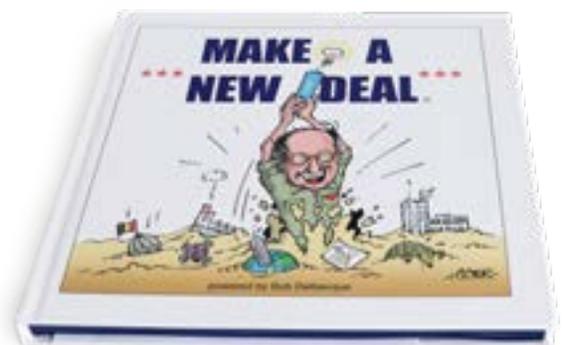
"I'm really content with **Make a New Deal**. It's a great hardcover edition, stained edges, 100 pages full of one liners, inspiring stories and cartoons. It's been a great success so far, just like the New Deal of the former American president Teddy Roosevelt: with his New Deal in the 1930s, he was able to connect and inspire the American people to fight for a promising future. This attitude is indispensable for companies seeking to counter periods like this and continue to grow.

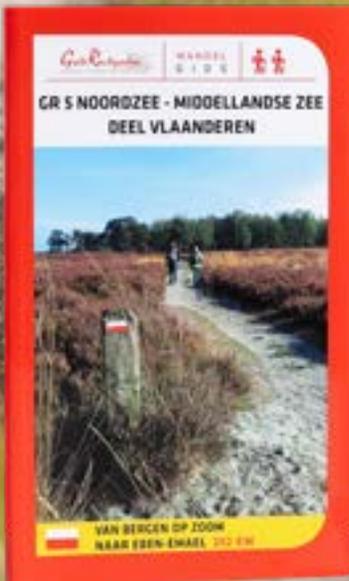
"The book is like my calling card, a nice, tactile object that can transport people to another world. In that sense I have to echo

the sentiments of Graphius CEO Denis Geers. He is also of the opinion that tactility is making a comeback, that print is back in and that books can offer a nice form of escape, away from the demands of the everyday."

#### How did you experience the past year?

"It was the nicest vacation I ever had! Early spring was the ideal moment to walk and cycle more. I even dusted off my guitar and I've never read so much as I did this past year. Still, I didn't stop working entirely. I resolved to call three clients every day during the first lockdown, just to ask how it was going with them. You wouldn't believe how much positive energy I got from that."





**DON'T LEAVE  
HOME WITHOUT IT**  
 DISCOVER FLANDERS  
 ON FOOT WITH THE GR GUIDES

Grote Routepaden vzw, Antwerpen,  
 125 x 210mm, 192p , Maco Gloss 90g

**Belgium is a nation of keen ramblers, who, weekend after weekend – and during the week when possible – wrap up warm and fan out across the country to feel the burn in their calves, to enjoy fabulous views, adventurous trails and gastronomic odysseys. And in each of their rucksacks is, no doubt, a Grote Routepaden guide – the hiker’s equivalent of the Michelin Guide.**

2020 will go down in the annals of history as the year the world reckoned with Covid-19. And in 2021 the battle rages on. Lockdown, quarantine: these are terms that have slipped into our daily vocabulary. For many, this new reality led to the discovery (or rediscovery) of the joys of hiking, with people donning their walking boots like never before.

“We certainly noticed it here”, exclaims Isabel Hoogewijs, coordinator and spokesperson for Grote Routepaden, East Flanders. “Our guides flew off the shelves this past year. At one point we even had trouble keeping up with demand. We couldn’t print them fast enough.”

**The coronavirus pushed people outside.**

“Yes and our membership grew spectacularly as a result. We could barely keep up with the orders for Belgian hiking guides.”

**You would think that people today would be more inclined to reach for a hiking app than a traditional guidebook. But the opposite seems true.**

“That’s right, our guidebooks, like physical newspapers, retain their utility. Now you can find everything – or almost everything – in digital form, but many hikers still opt for ‘something tangible’. You use a guidebook before, during and after a hike: when planning your route, you can find info about distances, public transport, whether or not dogs are permitted, etc. In every guide you have a planner where you can prepare your treks according to time, preference and personal ability. Once you’re out in nature, you can also turn to the guide for info on all the sights there are to see along your way. And even though our routes are well marked, it could happen that you overlook a sticker or that it’s gone missing. The route descriptions in both directions, coupled with the detailed maps, help hikers to get back on track. Plus, once you’re back in the comfort of your home, the guide serves as a nice souvenir – in some cases still immaculate, if you only use photocopies during hikes, and in other cases completely dog-eared and annotated.

**Which guides were the most popular in 2020?**

“All of them! (chuckle) Generally speaking, 2020 was a good year for the guides, but the following two did stand out: Treinstapper (Train Hiker) with hikes from station to station along GR routes. Even the more seasoned GR hikers are enthusiastic about this approach. The second

most popular guide was the GR 5, whose success was linked to that of the fictional TV series of the same name. We noticed that many fans set out to hike from the Hook of Holland to Nice.”

**Compact and durable.**

“The ultimate hiking guide? I don’t know if it exists,” Isabel continues, “but it would be a handy, pocket-sized book that can withstand some punishment. It has to be able to survive a downpour or a coffee spill. It’s also nice if you can be sure your guide is up to date. There’s nothing as annoying as suddenly realising, too late, that a route has changed and doesn’t match your old guidebook. It’s for that reason that we print a limited number of copies of each guide. Reissues are additional work but worthwhile.”

**We’re now deep into 2021. Spring is in full swing and summer’s not far off. What’s on the cards for you?**

“A lot of new editions, to be sure. Of existing guides for which the routes have to be adjusted, for example. That requires a lot of effort from our volunteers. It shouldn’t be forgotten that Grote Routepaden exists by the grace of 250 volunteers and their contributions. The largest group of whom consists of markers who maintain the signage. But there are others, too, who are part of the management or have a coordinating role. We also call on the services of designers, cartographers and editors, of course. We couldn’t make our topographical guides without them.”

**‘Top-quality’ guides you mean!**

“That’s for the users to decide!”

# G-SNOW

## The coolest paper in town



For some, paper is just what you shove in the printer, for others it's an art form. People in the latter group follow the paper industry's developments closely, because new kinds of paper come on the market every year, offering superior quality, eco-friendly credentials and new publishing possibilities. One such newcomer is a paper by the name of G-Snow from Arctic Paper. An ultra-white, coated paper with excellent scoring and folding characteristics.

The Swedish paper producer Arctic Paper is known for its quality papers. Such as the wide range that come under its G-Snow label: an uncoated assortment in brilliant white with a high a CIE value of 140. This paper has a smooth surface and an increased stiffness due to its high bulk. In other words, it's a cut above the rest – the ultimate of its kind – guaranteeing extraordinary printing results. Not only is its production Co2-neutral, it's available from stock and FSC-certified to boot. AAA-quality. No kidding.



"When it comes to paper, printers attach a great deal of importance to a quality print result, not to mention reliability, problem-free processing and a broad range of applications," says Stephen Serry, sales director at the Belgian company **Papyrus**, a market leader in paper, facilitatory products and industrial packaging.

"**G-Snow** offers the ideal in paper quality. **Papyrus** distributes **G-snow** in various sizes and weights, varying from 115 to 250 g/m<sup>2</sup>. Non-standard formats can be supplied on demand."

#### **What sets G-Snow apart?**

"**G-Snow** stands out with its smooth and reflection-free surface. It's unique to the touch, giving print projects a very distinct identity. The high volume and strength of the paper ensures stiffness even at a lower grammage."

#### **Wood-free. Intense colours.**

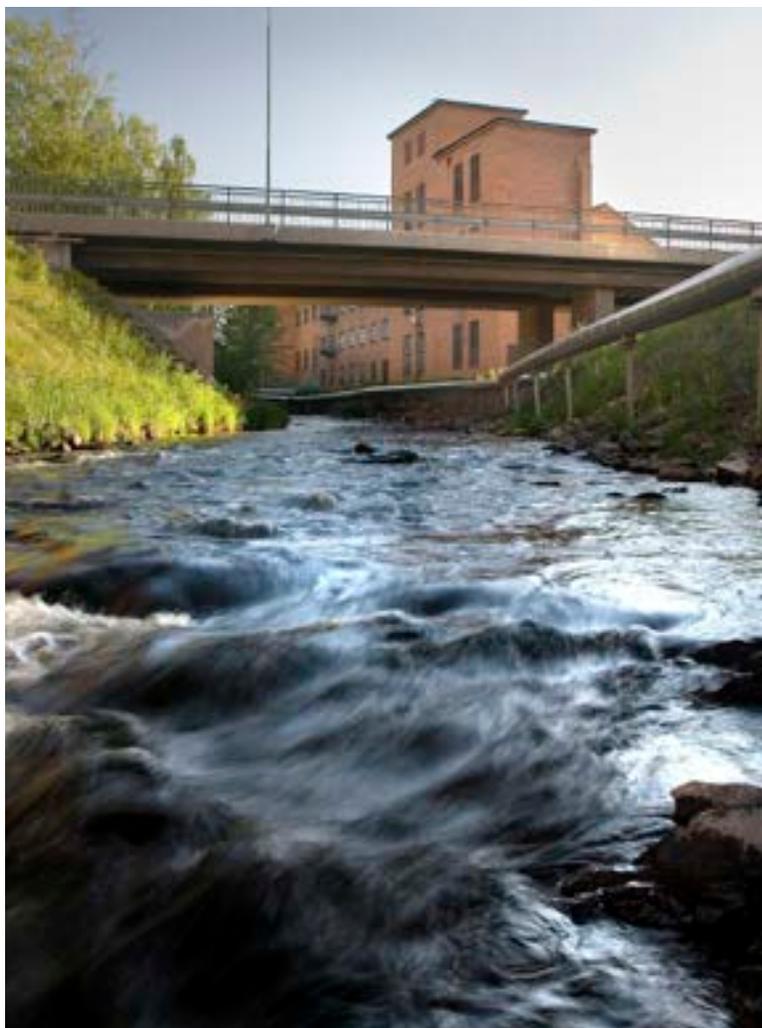
"**G-Snow** is a wood-free paper with an ultra-white finish," Serry continues. "The colours and contrast really pop and details are precise. **G-Snow** delivers consistent processing, quick ink absorption and high image quality. It gives perfect print results even on large print runs, and it does so more efficiently and without the

stress. For professional printers that means a lot of time saved."

#### **For which applications does G-Snow really shine?**

"It's ideal for business reports, high-quality catalogues, art books, flyers, exclusive newsletters and brochures. You can expect beautiful results combination with Amber Graphic since the whiteness is the same for both.

"It's no secret at the company that my absolute favourite paper in the coated range has for years been the famous **G-Print**," shares paper consultant Trudie Brandse of **Papyrus Groep Nederland**. "It's a beautiful,



matt paper with the added advantage that it doesn't break.

"It's what I always advise for self-cover brochures, especially those with full-surface printing on the spine. Other papers can tend to crack when scored and folded. You don't have that with G-print. That's an enormous advantage. It's also very well suited for maps with full-surface printing."

#### **What makes G-Print so resistant to cracking?**

"G-Print is a single-coated paper, made from extra-long fibres that are coated in one go with the aid of a squeegee. The main advantage of this is that the coating of the paper is less inclined to crack when scored and folded. The paper feels more robust. That's another plus. And thanks to the matt surface, this paper has the brilliance of a machine-coated paper combined with a basic look and a nice feel."

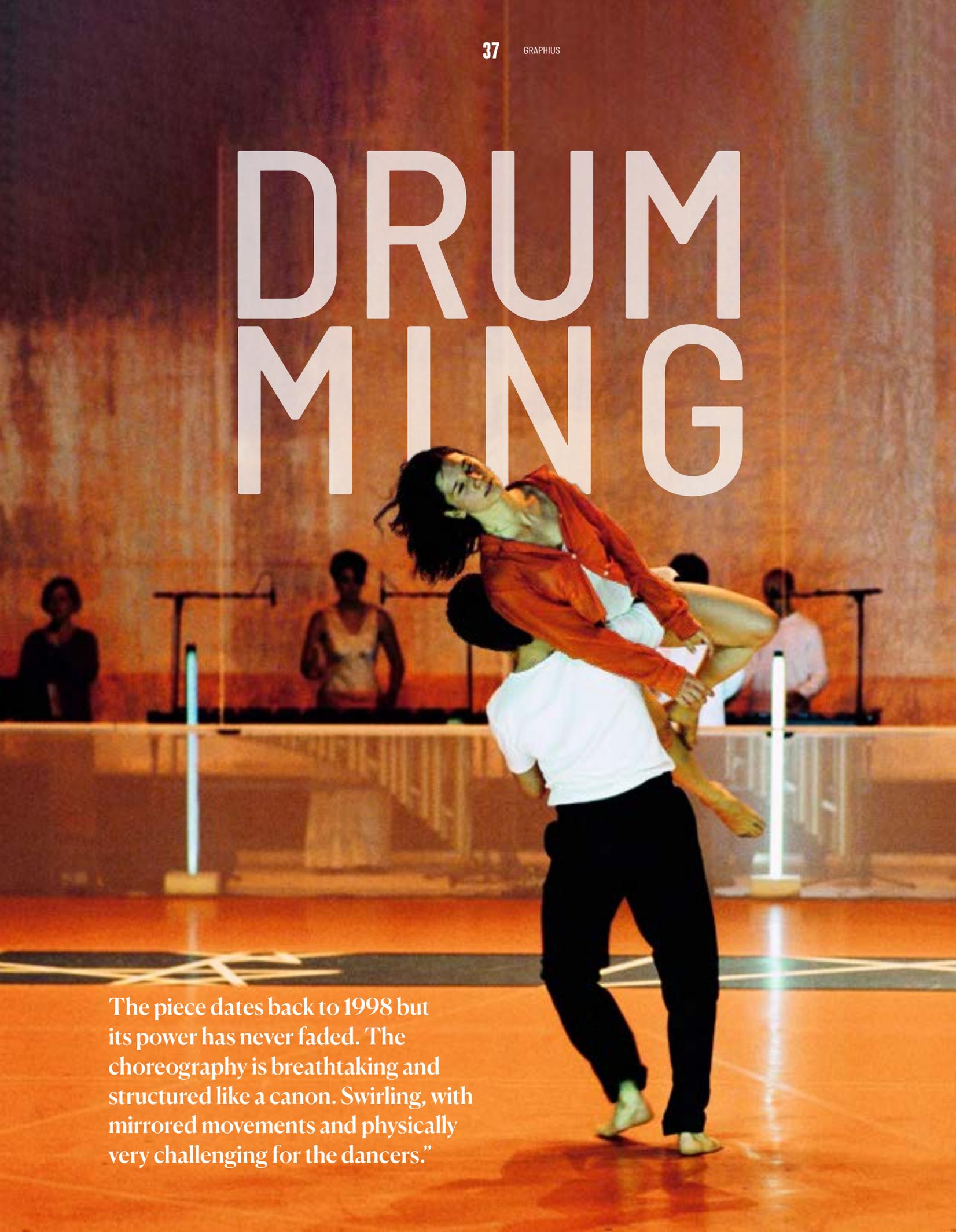
#### **The best of both. G-Print and G-Snow.**

"Clients would sometimes tell me they found the G-Print paper really beautiful, but they were looking for a whiter, clearer paper – usually for a publication with a lot of images or photos. That's when G-Snow comes into its own. The same advantages as G-Print, except much whiter. G-Snow offers crisp image reproduction on printing projects with a lot of photos and images. Legibility also remains very good thanks to the matt surface. That can sometimes be a problem in glossy productions: everyone has at some point had to turn and tilt a glossy brochure so that it doesn't catch the light too much. With G-Print and G-Snow you have the advantage that both image and text remain clear and attractive to the eye. Your text doesn't have glare to contend with."

Sofie Jacobs, paper consultant at Papyrus for Belgium and Luxembourg, echoes her Dutch colleague:

"Without a doubt, G-Snow is an asset to Papyrus's range of coated, matt papers. As with G-Print, the quality of the paper offers better readability for both text and images. G-Snow's high CIE value affords a strong, beautiful whiteness with no hint of grey or blue. This is clear to see when you compare it with other white papers. The global demand for high-white papers is undeniable. G-Snow is selected for its basic house-style quality by companies around the world and across multiple sectors, from the automobile and pharmacology sectors to the growing food industry."

# DRUM MING



The piece dates back to 1998 but its power has never faded. The choreography is breathtaking and structured like a canon. Swirling, with mirrored movements and physically very challenging for the dancers.”

Drumming? Is Graphius Magazine aiming to give Pitchfork a run for its money? Not quite. Drumming is the title of a dance production, and accompanying book, from the world-renowned Belgian ensemble Rosas. Under the leadership of Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker, Rosas has danced itself to international acclaim over the last decades. The magnificent book Drumming was published last year by leading art book publisher Mercatorfonds, another Belgian behemoth.

Frankly, we're just impressed we managed to schedule a chat with the busy Bernard Steyaert, CEO of Mercatorfonds. But if you want to talk real achievements, this man's got a list as long as his arm. As the son of a diplomat, Steyaert is a man of the world. His life as an expat shaped him and led him to a remarkably eclectic career. For two years he ran the Italian fashion house Prada. He's worked for the prestigious Christie's auction house, and before that he was an auctioneer in Amsterdam. And the Mercatorfonds, then?

"That was always part of my life," he revealed to the Brussels-based media platform BRUZZ in 2018. "My father would always give his international liaisons an art book from the Mercatorfonds collection as a gift. There was always an art book of some kind on the coffee table."

So you can imagine what a pleasure it must have been for Steyaert to take over at Mercatorfonds in 2005, together with two other partners. He had wanted to do so sooner, but the bank that had presided over the publisher (Dexia) was holding out. It was only in 2005, when Dexia sought to focus on its core business,

that Mercatorfonds became free for the taking. Since then, the publisher is like Steyaert's child, and one that he seeks to guide through the 21<sup>st</sup> century with a lot of love. Today Steyaert can look back on an impressive career with clients like the Metropolitan in New York, the National Gallery and the Royal Academy in London. They come to Mercatorfonds for the high quality standards the publisher maintains. As did Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker, who felt Steyaert's team was the right fit for the publication Drumming – not to mention their seven previous collaborations.

"Drumming can be regarded as a retrospective, an ode to the piece that has enraptured people all over the world for the last 20 years," says Steyaert. "In all that time, the costumes and the music have remained unchanged. What has changed, however, are the performance venues, the dancers, the colours and the lighting. For me, Drumming is more than a dance production, it's a Gesamtkunstwerk that unites many disciplines: the superb choreography of Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker, the costumes of Dries Van Noten, the scenography of Jan Versweyveld, the music of



the genius Steve Reich ... The piece dates back to 1998 but its power has never faded. The choreography is breathtaking and structured like a canon. Swirling, with mirrored movements and physically very challenging for the dancers. It's a big ball of energy."

**Kaleidoscopic book**

"The book seeks to be a kaleidoscopic representation of all the photos of the piece and all the locations where it has been performed over the years. It's all brought together here in a big tome of a book.

**"Furthermore,  
a beautiful,  
deluxe edition  
like Drumming  
immediately grabs  
your attention.  
A DVD does not."**

Drumming is a deluxe publication with fun little details, like a mirrored page that refers to the invisible mirrors in the piece itself. Because of the size of the book, it really emanates a certain power, like the production itself."

Drumming was not the first collaboration between Mercatorfonds and Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker. "We had already worked together for Violin Phase in 2011," Steyaert recalls, "a solo production in which the choreographer herself dances; it is one of the four parts of Fase, Four Movements to the Music of Steve Reich. We produced a very beautiful photo book based on that production. In 2014 came A Choreographer's Score: Drumming & Rain, a quite 'academic' publication that went into detail about the choreographic principles at the foundation of Drumming & Rain. The photo book Drumming, published in 2020, is the eighth book by Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker / Rosas in collaboration with Mercatorfonds."

**For posterity**

"The photos in Drumming are really important," says Steyaert. "It's a testimony in pictures. Saving these images for posterity is fundamental for Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker. The legacy of Rosas should be accessible to all. Students, dance aficionados and professional dancers alike ... everyone should have access to her creations. That's also the reason she publishes so many didactic books, accepts so many interviews and so frequently offers insights into her creative process. Likewise, the price of Drumming is deliberately kept low so that it's not prohibitively expensive."



But a book about dance ... ? "It really works," insists Steyaert. "It's nice as a supplement to the work and totally complementary to the DVDs. Furthermore, a beautiful, deluxe edition like *Drumming* immediately grabs your attention. A DVD does not," he laughs. "Personally, I'd much rather receive a book as a gift than a CD or DVD. At the end of the day, they're just discs. Whereas *Drumming* is a real masterwork in my opinion. It's really not so easy to depict dance through photos. So I have enormous admiration for the graphic designers and the photographers Herman Sorgeloos and Anne Van Aertschot for creating this triumph. It's really an exceptional result."



Mercatorfonds, Brussel,  
240 x 335mm, 128p, Munken Print 150g

# VALKE VLEUG WINE ESTATE

## Where winemaking is truly an art

Can a glass of wine turn a bad day around? We think so. Not that we encourage binge drinking, but a fine glass of wine after a heavy day can certainly put the wind back in your sails. And especially a wine from the Belgian wine estate Valke Vleug in Liezele. A winery with a strong identity and vision. In early 2021, the wine estate launched its first bottles of 'cool climate' wines. But what are cool climate wines, exactly? We were only too happy to go and find out.



© Koen Van Damme

Valke Vleug winemaker and co-founder Pieter Raeymaekers. “There was no talk of grapes or winemaking here until 2016. Jan Van Lancker got the ball rolling: after purchasing an old, dilapidated farmhouse on this spot, the ideas and dreams soon began to grow and grow. We met practically by chance, started to talk and the rest is history. For me, as a passionate winemaker, it was a childhood dream come true.”

“I knew I had to find the right partners to realise my dream,” Jan Van Lancker chimes in. “I’m not a wine expert myself, but I am fascinated by winemaking and nature. After a few introductory classes in viticulture I was sure I wasn’t cut out for it. My brain and the chemistry involved are not a good match.”

But Raeymaekers and Van Lancker dared to dream big from the start. They combined their dreams and out of them grew Vinetiq, the first wine boutique in Belgium specialised in ‘cool climate’ wines. When the experienced wine merchant Johan Stoffels got involved, the vino

triumvirate was complete. The three are building a fine collection of cool climate wines from across the globe, while in Liezele the first of their own vines are beginning to blossom. Currently, they’re cultivating wine on four hectares of land. That’s good for 17,000 grapevines and 9 different varieties. They’ve also established a burgeoning web shop, [vinetiq.eu](http://vinetiq.eu), and the first ‘Vinetiq Taste-in Store’ in Antwerp.

**Winemaking. In Belgium. Given our capricious climate, it might not seem like the most self-evident pursuit ...**

“It’s never easy, not even in the famous wine regions. But today, in 2021, it’s safe to start calling Belgium a wine country. It’s becoming viable to pursue professional wine cultivation here because the temperatures have risen in recent years and the vines are able to get the warmth they need and the requisite hours of sunlight. In fact, viticulture has always existed here.

Just it’s always had its ups and downs for various reasons. These days you can find cool climate vineyards all over the world. In Europe they are mostly found in Belgium, France (Loire, Champagne, Elzas, Bourgogne to Beaujolais), Austria, Germany and Northern Italy. Winegrowers that seek to cultivate ‘fresher’ wines, specifically seek these places out – places where the temperature is lower due to wind, altitude or cool water currents and there are large temperature differentials between day and night. Typical of cool climate wines is that the grapes grow more slowly, which in turn influences the flavour of the grape: the lower temperature halts the vine’s sugar production. The result is that the flavours in the grapes come into their own more. And you can taste that in the glass, although consumers may not yet have the terminology to describe it: elegant, fraîcheur, tension, balance, fruit definition, lightness ...”

## A bold challenge

The first Valke Vleug wines were launched in January of 2021. However, the Pinot Auxerrois 2019 and the Pinot Noir 2019 were sold out from the off.

“Yes, a huge success. I think people responded to our story. Making cool climate wines is an adventure, a challenge. It’s a way of cultivating wine that calls for a lot of know-how, talent and a dash of boldness. I would even dare to compare it with art, because those who can persist beyond the inevitable trials and tribulations usually end up with an outstanding product. One that does not allow itself to be pinned down by rigid rules. We have a number of basic principles, such as our natural approach and working within the cool climate ‘canvas’, but we do not want to be pinned down by strict, predetermined production rules or rigid specifications. These do not always guarantee quality. And that’s what we’re striving for: excellence. Consumers are gradually finding their way to those more distinctive wines, in which the character and love that goes into them co-determine the taste experience. Once Belgian

wine drinkers have more experience with these wines, they will be sold on them. In the meantime, I like to say: ‘Cool things happen on the edge.’”

Recently we’re seeing an evolution in wines: natural wines are gaining in popularity, orange wine is a hype and cool climate wines seem set to assume a strong position.

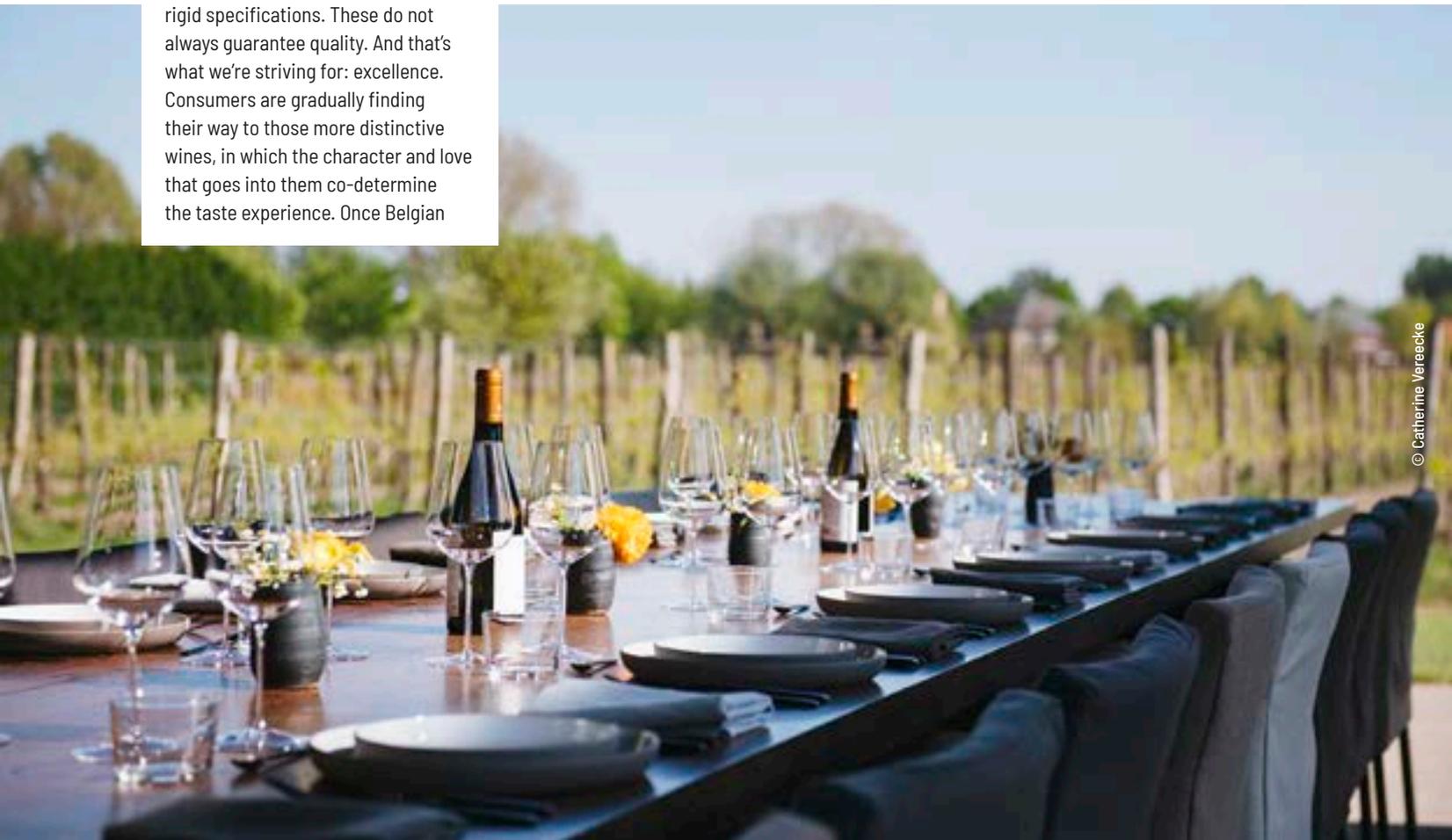
“Climate change presents winemakers with a challenge: in the old wine regions you’re getting wines with a higher percentage of alcohol. These days you can easily find wines of up to 15, 16 percent. Wine drinkers are getting tired of heavy, unbalanced, robust wines and are looking for something new. Cool climate wines offer a nice alternative. They are gastronomically interesting and therefore very much sought

**Typical of cool climate wines is that the grapes grow more slowly, which in turn influences the flavour of the grape: the lower temperature halts the vine’s sugar production.**

after by sommeliers in the finer restaurants. As temperatures rise, cool climate winemakers are on the safe side.”

**All wine starts with a grape. At wine estate Valke Vleug you grow nine different varieties. How does a Valke Vleug grape differ from those of, say, Vaucluse?**

“Where to begin? You choose the plant to suit the environment. Vines for cooler regions have a shorter ripening





**Once Belgian wine drinkers have more experience with these wines, they will be sold on them. In the meantime, I like to say: ‘Cool things happen on the edge’.**

cycle and reach the desired flavour and ripeness earlier, with lower sugar content and slightly higher acidity. You need vines that can take a few knocks, that don't kick the bucket after an unexpected frost, for example. 2020 was a challenging year: extreme cold in the spring and a heatwave in the summer. Some nights we had to place candles all along the vines to fend off the frost. The weather conditions here are unique and very changeable. A vine can take some punishment and can even produce better grapes when challenged, but you can only push them so far. Too little or too much sun, heatwaves, more or harsher frosts that continue until well into spring, hail storms ... all these things have an influence on the quality and quantity of the yield, making it potentially erratic or uncertain. It doesn't get any less nerve-racking with the

years. It remains crucial to find the right balance, which calls for precise work. With precision, combined with the skill of the winemaker, who can read the signs of nature, you stand to get very nice results."

**Precision. As with the architecture of the estate. Everything at Valke Vleug seems to be well thought through, with a focus on details, minimalism, serenity and engagement.**

"That's right. Especially in terms of dedication, because as a cool climate winemaker, you're working very closely with the vines. You have to know the natural dynamic of the vineyard like the back of your hand. You can be more hands-off with vines in the South of France, but in Belgium there are a lot more factors at play that can affect the harvest. You have a lot more choices to make

as you go about your business in the field. Returning to the essence of wine cultivation is a must in order to look ahead and course-correct as necessary."

**Architecture embedded in the landscape**

**Visitors to the estate are surprised by the sleek, modern architecture. The winery is an architectural gem by internationally renowned architect Vincent Van Duysen. Why him?**

Jan Van Lancker: "I was familiar with his work from my time in real estate. When I was looking for an architect for the new winery, I automatically gravitated toward Vincent. I felt it was important that the building should not detract too much from the surrounding environment. International wineries

are often embedded in their natural environment. Here the landscape is different, with flat, open landscapes dotted with trees, typically Flemish. I wanted to go further than just respecting the landscape. I wanted the building to be an homage to the typical approach here, the 19<sup>th</sup> century rectangular farmhouse with inner courtyard. The only other thing the architect had to take into account were the technical requirements of winemaking.”

**Valke Vleug exudes boldness and vision. Nothing is an accident here.**

“Everything has to be right and firm decisions have to be made. For example, I chose acacia wood for the grapevine support posts, rather than the usual, functional metal posts. I was inspired to do so by what I saw in France. I know I’ll have to replace them every ten years, but we’ll cross that bridge when we get to it. If something doesn’t feel right aesthetically, I won’t do it. I don’t believe ‘the bigger the price, the better’, I’m just concerned with quality. Everything we do must be of immaculate quality. That includes the labels and packaging: we taste with our eyes, too, after all. All the research on the topic confirms this. The choice of cork, the sealing wax, the stamping of our emblem in the wax, the type of bottle, the label and the box ... we source all these things from premium suppliers. For the design of the label, we turned to a French agency that has experience with champagnes and wines of the highest level. We called on the expertise of Stevens Print / Graphius to translate the precision of the design work into functional packaging with the right look and feel. The type of paper, the texture and the embossing were assessed with a

keen eye for detail. The box, too, was custom made by Graphius.”

### **Living the dream**

Vinetiq and Valke Vleug Wine Estate make a great tandem, with Vinetiq offering cool climate wines from all over the world and in doing so helping to spread the word. “We only sell our product via smaller wine merchants,” says Raeymaekers. “We know the people we’re working with. That not only makes communication easier, we can also learn from the exchange. And the more knowledge we gain, the better we can inform our customers about cool climate wines.”

“On several occasions last summer, guests were immersed in all the various facets of the wine experience, focusing on music, art and gastronomy in addition to the product itself. An integral approach to appeal to all the senses.”

“Valke Vleug is a canvas,” concludes Van Lancker. “A marvellous and inspiring place that, thanks to the modesty of the building, accommodates a diverse range of activities. It is a hedonist’s playground. I’m very happy here, living my dream, day after day.”

**If something doesn’t feel right aesthetically, I won’t do it. I don’t believe ‘the bigger the price, the better’, I’m just concerned with quality. Everything we do must be of immaculate quality. That includes the labels and packaging.**



# Storied walls

The typical Flemish living room in 1970: oak furniture, shag carpets and almost psychedelic wallpaper. Thankfully that time is far behind us now. Masureel, the Belgian producer of quality wallcoverings, has followed and co-determined the evolution of interior design for generations. And how many companies can boast a pedigree that goes back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century?

After a dip in popularity, wallpaper enjoyed somewhat of a renaissance two decades ago. New techniques, fresh patterns, daring and innovation brought cladded walls back into favour with interior designers, creatives and families alike. Now wallpaper is firmly back in and Masureel is here for it, standing for class, timelessness and innovation. A Belgian company with an international reputation.

"Since the beginning, Masureel has held an international position as a leader in the printing of interior fabrics and quality wallcoverings, both woven and non-woven," beams CEO Guy Verstraete. "Thanks to Masureel's consistent attention to innovation,

quality and creativity, it has grown over the years to become a strong company with its own identity and a variety of successful brands. We now distribute our products in over 70 countries."

**Flanders has always had a good reputation with regard to wall coverings. This goes back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century. As does Masureel's own history. Is that still apparent in the company today?**

"Certainly. Masureel has a very rich family history with its roots – as with many companies in the Kortrijk area – in flax cultivation. With enormous respect for these roots, today Masureel is committed to bridging the gap between artistry and industry, with deference to the history and characteristic landscape of Hulste. The old farmhouse, the factory buildings, the renovation of the family estate, the gardens ... all are imbued with the grandeur of our rich family history. One of the more recent projects is the renovation of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century



Masureel family residence, a design by Rosalie Masureel. This residence has been the home of generations of Masureels. After a number of years laying vacant, it's time to restore it to its former glory."

**Wallpaper has enjoyed a renewed popularity in recent years. At interior design fairs you see one fabulous design after another. Where does Masureel get its inspiration?**

"Passion is always our driving force. With every new collection we aim for the virtually unattainable. That's how high we set the bar. For every brand we have a rich archive of textile designs and an extensive art collection to draw upon. The indefatigable creative drive of our designers and our commitment to applying the latest technologies are what keep Masureel innovating and excelling in colour, design and texture. Every collection is produced entirely in house, from the design phase to the finished product. Colour, texture and design – it always starts with these."

**Laboratory: from digital playground to finished design**

"Masureel makes use of an in-house laboratory to come up with new designs," reveals Guy Verstraete. "There we transform the digital image arising from the creative process into a producible item. Our colourists develop every shade of colour we need, first for lab tests and then as part of the chosen designs that make up a new collection."

Masureel works with dyes and chemicals. This implies a certain responsibility with regard to your ecological impact ...

"Absolutely. We strive for a minimal impact both in our production facilities and in terms of the materials we produce. We don't use any solvents, all our printing pastes are water-based, and we haven't used formaldehyde in a long time. Our facilities recycle as much wastewater as possible and the drainage is in compliance with strict environmental standards. We have attained both the FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) and CE (European Conformity) eco labels.

The technology isn't quite here yet to produce completely biodegradable wallcoverings but Masureel is taking the necessary steps in the direction of ecological innovation. It is already feasible to use recycled materials for wall coverings; new possibilities are within reach with the introduction of organic chemicals. Masureel attaches enormous importance to quality and creativity, but that won't stop us from offering alternatives to PVC wall coverings."

**The story behind the wallpaper**

**You might say that art is the common thread in the life and work of Masureel. The Masureel art collection itself is impressive.**

"That's for sure. The Masureel art collection contains works from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, lyrical abstraction, minimalism and conceptual art ... right up to the most recent works of contemporary artists. Central to the collection is Belgian constructivism, with artists from the 1920s like Jozef Peeters, Marthe Donas, Prosper De Troyer and Victor Servranckx. All artists who broke with convention and developed a new visual language with a solid basis in line, form and colour. It's an artistic movement

**"Our art collection was created with a focus on people, in all their facets, and it remains an inspiration for the fusion of art and industry."**



For this wall covering from the Agatha collection we made a contemporary version of an Ancient Egyptian art style. The face in profile is distilled into a single line. There is a play of light in the drawing that adds a luxurious vibe.



that ran parallel with the rise of modern-day industry and the drive to innovate. It's in their time that many artists turned to industrial processes in order to literally shape a new society. In this sense they align perfectly with the Masureel philosophy. The collection was created with a focus on people, in all their facets, and it remains an inspiration for the fusion of art and industry.

**In 2021 wall coverings are not only used to decorate the wall; they are used to help create an experience, to lend a space a certain tactility. Masureel remains loyal to print in its marketing. Why is that?**

"Images help us to show what we have to say, how we want to say it. To set the tone of our story, we have to choose the right photography, prints that complement our product range. Printed matter is the ideal form of communication for communicating our passion to clients."





A POWERFUL HOUR OF ART <sup>HET</sup> **KUNST  
UUR.**



From the Flemish Primitives and Bruegel it's just a stone's throw to the Latem school. And, from there, it's just a hop, skip and a jump to Tuymans, Dillemans, Decordier and Borremans. Historically, they may be centuries apart, but geographically they've never been closer.

Het Kunstuur, the exhibition of 32 exquisite Belgian artworks from the period 1887-1938, forges a path from past to present. And it's all thanks to the brothers Joost and Hans Broulon.

Hans Broulon? In Belgium he's known – alongside Gert Verhulst and Danny Verbiest – as one of the founders of Studio 100. But to reduce Broulon's legacy to his being one of the creators of Plop the Gnome would do him a disservice. With Het Kunstuur (literally

'the art hour') he has shown himself to be a passionate art lover and collector. The initiative was inspired by his grandfather, fine art painter Jos De Bie.

"He painted desolate summer and winter landscapes, in the style of (...) Valerius De Saedeleer. We lived next-door to him and there wasn't a day that went by that we didn't visit his atelier and peruse his art books. Our passion for art started there."



**“Het Kunstuur’s biggest draw? More than half the paintings are from private collections, so they don’t often see the light of day.”**

**When Mechelen became a Mecca for art lovers**

The first edition of Het Kunstuur took place in 2019 in Mechelen’s Holy Ghost Chapel. Hans Bourlon and his brother Joost were given the run of the former chapel for a period of five years. The idea to exhibit works of the highest calibre from the period 1880-1950 proved popular, thanks not least to the project’s unique approach.

With Het Kunstuur, instead of simply hanging the works on the wall in the conventional manner, each painting is accompanied by a text written by a Flemish writer of greater or lesser renown. The writers are invited to express their personal appreciation of the work and to talk about its effect on them. This, combined with the historical setting, the striking lighting design and the music composed for the event by Dirk Brossé, all results in a captivating hour of art. Het Kunstuur’s biggest draw? Over half of the paintings come from private collections, so they don’t often see the light of day.

The period 1887-1938 proved highly fruitful for Flemish painters. The Latem school and their contemporaries in particular. Visitors to Het Kunstuur have been spoiled



with works by formidable figures such as Gustave Van de Woestyne, Prosper De Troyer, Constant Permeke,... All marvellous works, a number of which have become firmly embedded in our collective memory. Then there are others of which we recognise the style, but fail to remember the name. In any case, the small scale and the approach of Het Kunstuur ensure visitors an experience not soon forgotten.

#### (No) comment

For art aficionados and Latem-school acolytes, this exhibition is one of the highlights of the year. Especially with one the featured masterworks, *Het Hanengevecht* ('The Cock Fight') by Emile Claus, being exhibited in public for the first time since its rediscovery. The painting shows 35 or so Waregem notables crowded around a cock fight. But that's not the only story this painting has to tell. At the start of the First World War, Claus sold the

painting. With a plan to flee to London, he needed the money. It was at that point that the artwork disappeared without a trace. Hans Bourlon had heard about the painting and resolved to try and track it down. After a lot of detective work, he found it hidden at a castle in the Flemish town of Potegem, near Waregem. In an interview about the discovery by the Belgian broadcaster VRT, he commented: "The work had been rolled up in the cellar for years. Turns

out they were worried the Germans would confiscate it during the Second World War. The artwork was hidden behind the wall panelling. It was practically a black smear, no colour at all. So we had it restored." With the painting returned to its former glory, its 100-hour restoration proved to be worth every minute.

**Do the reflections of the Flemish writers really add something to the exhibition, beyond some anecdotal charm?**

The answer is yes: more than that, they lend a certain levity to the works.

A dash of 'local colour', if you will. Take the text of Ostend-born Arno Hintjes, for example, who has nothing but praise for fellow Ostender James Ensor.

Ensor may be known for his famous mask motif, but Hintjes is enchanted by one of his maskless paintings: *The Drunkards*. The two titular drunks are depicted, as you might expect, in a state of serious intoxication. "(Ensor) is sort of like my mentor," Hintjes reflects. "This is one of my favourite paintings. I like to pronounce the title in its original Dutch, except in

a drunken voice: *de droenkaars*. It's stronger than his masks, I think. (...) Yes, I've also gotten a bit too friendly with *Lady Alcohol* at times, but *pour se cultiver, on doit se mouiller*. I think it's fantastic how Ensor paints the feet and also that hand – you can tell it wasn't posed."

Studio 100, Schelle,  
210 x 280mm, 64p, Arctic Volume 150g

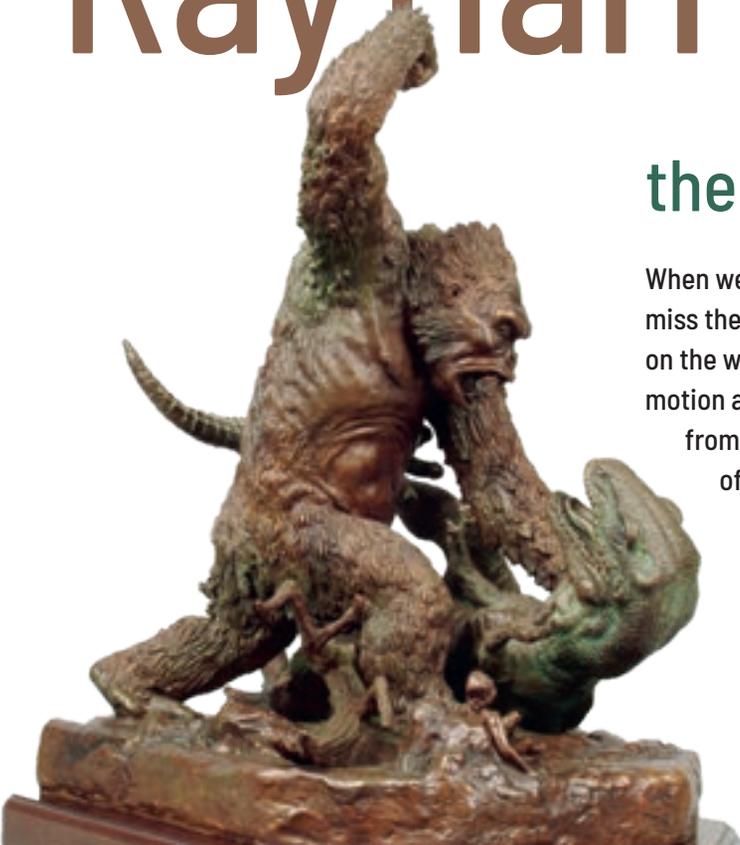




# Ray Harryhausen

the godfather of stop motion

When we heard that, due to Covid travel restrictions, we'd have to miss the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art's retrospective on the work and life of one of the world's most respected stop motion artists, Ray Harryhausen ... our cry of grief could be heard from miles around. But the book *Ray Harryhausen - Titan of Cinema* goes a long way to making up for our loss.



When we realised we couldn't travel to Scotland for the retrospective, we had to take a lie down. Under normal circumstances, we're not the caterwauling, dramatic type. But as a film-mad, special effects geek, this writer was devastated.

Suffice it to say that Harryhausen changed the face of cinema (literally) single-handedly. And as a book, *Ray Harryhausen – Titan of Cinema* is an historical document that beautifully details the life of the eponymous genius, with a particular focus on his marvellous special effects and stop motion work. This fabulous compendium – written by and with anecdotes from his daughter Vanessa Harryhausen – belongs in

the personal library of every film aficionado and every CGI or special-effects artist.

### Talking owls and looks that could kill

An overview of all the films Harryhausen contributed to? We'd better not start. But you've undoubtedly seen at least a few of them. Many have come to be considered classics. Bubo, the talking owl in *Clash of the Titans*? That's his work. And the wrathful Medusa from the same film? But of course.

On the complexity of his Medusa model, Harryhausen said: "it has many joints, any joint that a real person would have inside the body,

**“Titan of Cinema is an historical document that beautifully details the life of the eponymous genius, with a particular focus on his marvellous special effects and stop motion work.”**

even down to the fingers.” The difference of course, is that Medusa also has snakes for hair. “Each snake has a joint, it's not just a wire inside. It gives an opportunity to





make microscopic movement. Similar to a cartoon, with each frame of film I shift the position of every portion of this creature. Finally, after you have thousands and thousands of still pictures, it gives the illusion that the thing is moving on its own."

Other fantastical films that bear Harryhausen's unmistakable mark include *Jason and the Argonauts* (with its memorable skeleton fight), *It Came from Beneath the Sea*, *20 Million Miles to Earth*, *One Million Years* (whose poster, featuring a scantily clad Raquel Welch, may have overshadowed Harryhausen's effects) and the *Sinbad* series

of films. His influence can't be overstated: directors such as Peter Jackson, Tim Burton, George Lucas, Steven Spielberg and studios such as Aardman Animations are all indebted to Harryhausen's oeuvre.

### **Puppet master**

The film world of today would scarcely be recognisable to Harryhausen, who made his first forays into motion pictures in the 1950s. Nowadays even non-fantasy movies are bloated with CGI (Computer Generated Imagery): in the post-production phase, entire cities are added, actors are de-aged, and monsters are made to jump out of

the screen in 3D. When Harryhausen started out, CGI hadn't even been dreamt of. If a director wanted a monster in the shot, he would have to call on the skills of real craftspeople. Handwork, patience and buckets of creativity were the key.

"It all started because I saw a film, the first issue of *King Kong*, way back in 1933." Harryhausen relates in a BBC interview from 1981. Here, of course, he refers to the special effects of Willis O'Brien, the reigning king of stop motion before Harryhausen. "I felt this is what I wanted to do. I started making my own models. And then I



got a 16 mm camera and did some experimentation in my garage.”

And he would never tire of stop motion. Every day he worked on his craft and made a few experimental animations, receiving help from his parents. Harryhausen’s father would make the armatures for the models, his mother the clothes. The young Ray’s years of hard work paid off when he was invited to work with Willis O’Brien’s team, thus realising a childhood dream. What’s more, O’Brien was so swamped that Harryhausen was entrusted with the responsibility for *Mighty Joe Young* (1949), another film that

centres on a gigantic ape. In 1953 it was time for Harryhausen’s real baptism-of-fire moment. *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms* marked his solo debut, in which a gargantuan dinosaur sets cities ablaze – a year before *Godzilla* would do the same in East Asia. Harryhausen coined the term ‘dynamation’ to describe the technique used on this picture, which involved the integration of live action footage with stop motion.

#### Humble hero

Despite the oodles of acclaim he received for his work, Harryhausen remained humble, even after friend and writer Ray Bradbury presented him with the Gordon E. Sawyer for Technical Achievement (a lifetime achievement award) at the Oscars in 1992.

Typical of Harryhausen, aside from his unbridled imagination, was that he took his work very seriously, but not himself. His daughter Venessa movingly attests to this in *Titan of Cinema*: “Once animation on the films had been completed, Dad would allow me to play, from an early age, with the very models that had been seen on screen. Our house was filled with items from Dad’s films, and so alongside my regular childhood toys, I was able to have fun with dinosaurs and other creatures – this was the norm for me.” It’s insights like these that make Venessa Harryhausen the perfect

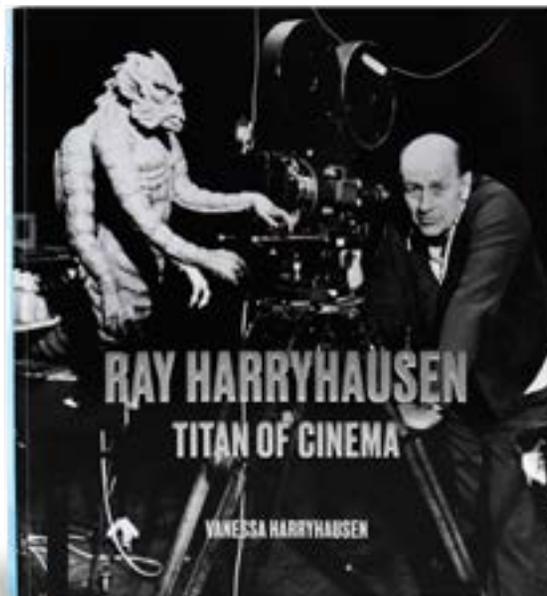
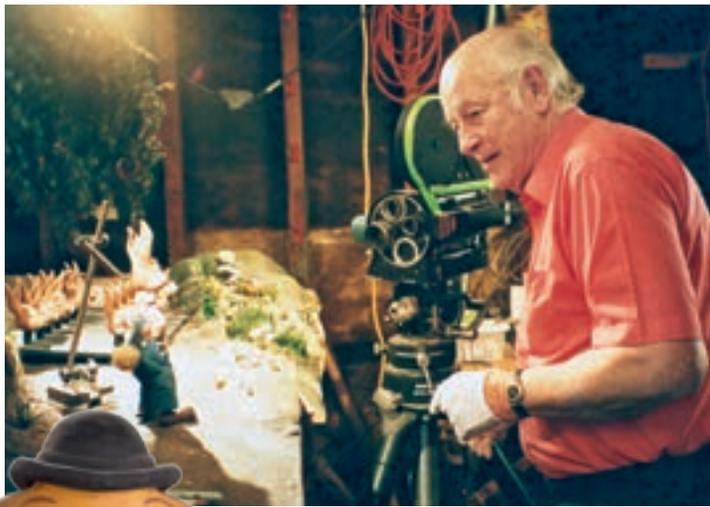
“Similar to a cartoon, with each frame of film I shift the position of every portion of this creature. Finally, after you have thousands and thousands of still pictures, it gives the illusion that the thing is moving on its own.”



person to guide us through Ray's extraordinary life and career with this publication. "The 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth has given me the motivation to record the stories that reveal the kind, funny, fascinating family

man behind these creations. (...) I so admire all of Dad's achievements and am proud to see what a legacy he has left. (...) I still feel that what he created on screen was magical - from the initial seed of an idea in a

drawing that sprang from his huge imagination, to building a model which he then brought to life through animation."



National Galleries of Scotland, Edinburgh, 220 x 260mm, 208p, Perigord Mat 150g



## A MUSEUM FOR ALL SEASONS

2021 marks the tenth year that Antwerp's Royal Museum for Fine Arts (KMSKA) has been closed for thorough renovations. The goal is to bring the city museum well and truly into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. After some delays, the end of the construction works is finally in sight and museum director Carmen Willems is eagerly looking forward to the reopening. "We haven't pinned an exact date on it yet," she says, "but I can't wait to invite visitors to the new KMSKA 2.0. I'm certain that art lovers will be pleasantly surprised. We have some new acquisitions and experiences to look forward to, in addition to our collection from before, which is now in peak condition."

Carmen has led the KMSKA since 2017, first as its business director and later as the successor to former director Manfred Sellink (also interviewed for this edition). Having held the position of director of the Gallo-Roman museum in Tongeren, and previously having worked for the Province of Limburg's tourist board and the mayoral office of Tongeren, she's got the credentials to ensure that Antwerp's Museum for Fine Arts is in good hands.

For now she's got a lot on her plate. "The end is in sight, though there's still a number of important tasks yet to complete: the furnishing of the office area, the gold decoration of the Rubens and Van Dyck halls and the fine-tuning of the climate control system, both in the historical part of the museum and in the new part. We want to present the artworks to the public under optimal conditions, and creating the ideal indoor climate is essential to that."

"One of the big shortcomings of the old museum was that we couldn't present some of our best pieces, because they would have suffered too much from excessive temperature fluctuations and humidity. That can be highly detrimental to historical artworks. The ideal temperature in a museum space is 20°C at 55% relative humidity. The adjustments we're making will remedy this shortcoming. In the new museum space we will have a class-A climate control system. In the old part we're installing a class-A and class-B climate system in the middle of the halls."

#### **Silver linings ...**

"The museum having to close for so long was not great news for most art lovers," Willems admits. "But there are some advantages to this: being closed has allowed our restorers to conduct a thorough inspection and restoration of 171 of our 8,000 artworks.

The remaining works received a conservation treatment, putting them back in peak condition. Thanks to the new climate control system we are now better placed to borrow from other museums around the world. The KMSKA has the necessary certification to exhibit works under optimal and safe conditions. This is a great step forward. Thanks to the museum's closing, we've also been able to lend some of our collection to other institutions. This has really put the KMSKA on the world map, with all the goodwill we've garnered from museums around the world. We look forward to reaping what we've sown in that regard."

#### **Is it correct that there's no date yet for the reopening, yet there is already an opening exhibition planned?**

"Yes, for the first temporary exhibition we will be presenting a collection of 'tronies' at the KMSKA. Tronies are a specific kind of portrait study featuring characterful faces of the kind you see in the works of Rubens and the like. They are very fragile."

#### **With such a thorough renovation, one would hope the museum is set for the future now.**

"I should hope so," Willems laughs. "This renovation brings the KMSKA completely up to date. It will have

cost 100 million euro in total, which may seem like a gigantic sum, but compared with similar renovations internationally, it's cheap. (The renovations of Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen in Rotterdam and the Centre Pompidou in Paris are estimated to have cost double, ed.) Historically, it's the first big renovation here in 200 years. The KMSKA is totally ready to offer an extraordinary museum experience. The space open to the public has grown by a third, which only stands to benefit the presentation of the collection and the visitors' experience of it."

#### **What makes a good museum, in your opinion?**

"First of all, it should be a warm place, a place that engenders connection, wonder and enrichment. Those are the areas around which we build the museum experience here. We want to really grab visitors and offer each individual a unique, total museum experience. The architecture, the programme, the reception ... it's all part of it."

#### **You sometimes hear that people are too intimidated by museums.**

"I understand that. Before the renovation, if you wanted to visit the museum here you had to climb a monumental staircase. Now there is a second entrance at ground level. Now people can just walk in and there is – literally – no barrier to entry. You arrive in a hospitable space where you can deposit your coat, buy a ticket and pick up an audio guide. Then it's on to the collections via the spiral staircase. And, from there, a whole dream world unfolds before you."



**So the new KMSKA is, once and for all, shaking off the stuffy image many other historical museums still bear?**

“Absolutely. It’s 2021. Museums can no longer be simply a collection of artworks. They must dare to interact with visitors and with broader society. For example, the KMSKA will make space for artists in residence, with whom we will engage in co-creative projects. These artists will enter into dialogue with the museum and the works on display. In this way we want to reach different target groups, including people who have never set foot in a museum. The KMSKA is a contemporary museum, one that lives and interacts with the city of Antwerp. What will certainly remain, is the great knowledge of our collection’s researchers and the academic research. We would also like to set up projects that invite people to look at art in a different way. An example of this

**Museums can no longer be simply a collection of artworks. They must dare to interact with visitors and with broader society.**

A woman with blonde hair, wearing a dark blazer, a striped t-shirt, and dark jeans, stands on a modern staircase. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. The staircase has light-colored steps and wooden handrails. The walls are white with recessed lighting strips. The overall atmosphere is bright and contemporary.

is Radio Bart: one of our staff is blind and has previous experience as a radio presenter. He invites visitors to look at a piece from the collection and to describe it. He awakens in them an emotional experience and gives people the time and space to develop their own interpretation on the spot."

**The notion that books are on the way out is a fallacy that has been disproved time and again by reality itself.**

**One of the highlights of the museum is its Ensor collection. The KMSKA has a lot of work by the Ostend-born artist.**

"Yes and Ensor represents a turning point between the art works before and after 1880, the divide between classical and contemporary. We use it as a point of reference on our time line. We present the art before 1880 in the historical museum and art after 1880 in the new part of the museum. So you have two worlds in one museum. The interaction between the building and collection is really exciting to me."

**Books: the more the merrier**

The team of the KMSKA consider the art book an essential part of its activities, a beautiful way to complement to its digital content. Carmen Willems a passionate proponent of print.

"The notion that books are on the way out is a fallacy that has been disproved time and again by reality itself. People continue to buy books, especially now. Corona has only served to stoke the general interest in books. I see print as adding great value. Today you notice that people are getting a bit sick of all the online reading. They want to hold something in their hands again, to be able to flick through the pages, hear the paper rustle and smell it. I'm a voracious reader myself, although I sometimes struggle to find the time. And now I live in both Antwerp and Tongeren, I notice that it's taking me longer to get through books. I've got different books on the go at each location, you see. One of the novels in which I'm enjoying losing myself at the moment is *Wildevrouw* ('Wild Woman')



Scan this page with your smartphone and BLIPPAR will take you to the renewed KMSKA.



by Jeroen Olyslaegers. I recently really enjoyed *De Geniale Stad* ('The City of Genius') by Koen De Vos, in which he takes a closer look at 15<sup>th</sup> century Florence. I also enjoy art books, as you might expect. Whether it's a monograph or a tome on the oeuvre of Rinus Van de Velde, Rodin or any other classic artist, I like to get stuck in and learn a thing or two."

**The KMSKA collection comprises 8,000 works. As the museum's director, you have the enviable position of being able to view them whenever you want.**

"You'd think so, wouldn't you?," Willems chuckles. "I'm far from having seen them all. I am able to visit our storage facility, and I can follow the restorations closely, but not all the artworks are available to view. Of course, I do have a good overview of all the works that are publicly presented here, and it always remains a pleasant surprise to see them here physically. Let's just say

we have a lot more up our sleeves for visitors to enjoy in future."

**Which work from the collection are you most connected to? A hard question to answer, no doubt.**

"Indeed. There is no single work that I covet. It depends on the mood I'm in. But if I have to name one, I am very intrigued by Fouquet's *Madonna*: it dates from 1454, but has such a contemporary quality to it that it could pass for a modern work. It's one of our most prized pieces, and a unique work, since only six paintings by Fouquet have survived the ravages of time."

Those who can't wait to visit the museum can already get a sneak preview on the website of the KMSKA, where you can follow the renovation almost in real time. Particularly impressive is the film that shows how the modern architectural interventions flow seamlessly into the historical grandeur of the museum.

# THE ROUGH-STUFF FELLOWSHIP ARCHIVE

Inspiring cycling  
in the Alps



**'Max Leonard writes and makes books'. Sometimes the interviewee introduces themselves best. Leonard, the industrious and creative fellow behind Isola Press, has indeed attracted attention in recent years for his work as a writer, 'maker' and publisher of books. And when he came knocking at Graphius with The Rough-Stuff Fellowship Archive and Rough Stuff Cycling in the Alps, we were taken by the man's passion for his craft, and his great love for both old-school cycling and the Alps.**

**Cycling pioneer Fred Wright and his historic account**

Rough Stuff Cycling in the Alps – a reissue of the almost forgotten publication by cycling pioneer Fred Wright – really kindles the imagination. Fred Wright was a kind of outsider, who from the early 1980s spent all his holidays riding solo over forgotten passes across the mountains of Europe. Later, he began to write down his adventures and collect together the routes of similarly minded riders. The resulting guide contains the collective knowledge of generations of cyclists – pioneers who crossed these rugged mountain ranges via unknown paths, hiking trails, gravel roads and sometimes even glaciers. It was self-published in 2002 – and quite professionally thanks to his experience working





for Cambridge University Press. All in all, the booklet encompasses 300 mountainous trips, sometimes reaching altitudes of 3,000 metres.

“A remarkable historical document,” Leonard reflects. “The book is edited to a professional standard, but he had the book printed and bound at a copy shop. He only ever made around 100 copies. The first version of Rough Stuff Cycling in the Alps is a real forgotten gem.”

**Fate smiled on you. You found an original copy and decided to publish a new edition of it via Kickstarter. Why?**

“I wanted to republish it because I wanted to know the routes, but I couldn’t find it anywhere. And I thought it would be useful to the growing number of people interested in ‘gravel’ riding or bikepacking. It was working on Fred’s book that led me to the RSF, because some of the routes in Fred’s book were contributed by RSF members, but the two are not linked in other ways. Mind you, the RSF were pioneers of riding off-road, but Fred was not a member. Yet, Fred was a die hard, for sure. He didn’t seem to care about his gear, though he always seemed to have a nice shirt on (laughs).”



Did you ever get the chance to talk to Fred?

“Yes, and when we told him we wanted to put out a new edition of his book, he seemed really chuffed. Fred is now 82 and lives in the south of England. He didn’t know that there was still such a community of cyclists who are passionate about his kind of ‘rough-stuff’ cycling but he was really pleased that all that collected

knowledge he put in his book did not to go to waste, and is being passed on to a new generation. Fred grew up in Indian Kashmir, before India and Pakistan were divided. His father was sent there in the hope it would help treat his tuberculosis. The Wright family lived there in a tent on the banks of the Sindh River in the mountains leading to Ladakh. That’s where he first developed his love for the mountains.”

Where does your own love for cycling come from?

“A lot of my love of cycling comes from my love of France. I’ve spent my life going on holiday to France and went on to study French. I lived there, both in the mountains and in

the South. I love the combination of Northern Europe and the Med. France is the only country that straddles the two cultures. So, I’m a huge fan of the Tour de France and Paris-Nice, ‘the race to the sun’. Sorry, Belgium! The classic, one-day cycle races aren’t really my bag. So a lot of it is about the landscape and the stories and histories we tell of the famous mountain passes – I’ve never been a competitive racing cyclist, something you can probably see from the subject of my book *Lanterne Rouge*, about the last man in the Tour de France. Like many cyclists I started out road cycling and then my interest moved to off-road, or ‘gravel’ – the kind of cycling in *Rough Stuff Cycling in the Alps*. It’s the solitude, being off



the beaten track in these amazing mountains, that speaks to me.”

**For you it's a small step from cycling to books.**

“There’s something similar about writing books and going on a long bike ride – the persistence and determination to get to the end! With books, I think it’s important to try and make the most beautiful physical object. When you print photos they become more valuable, easier to keep track of. JPEGs can be deleted and CDs and DVDs won’t last forever. Books remain, for me, the best and most enduring ‘PDF’ – portable document format.”

**Hence, Isola Press.**

“Exactly. I founded Isola Press in 2016 when I was working on Higher Calling for Yellow Jersey. There is a section in that book about the bunkers, which had become my obsession, but I thought that a photobook would do

the subject more justice. Since I had prior experience as an author for Laurence King and Thames & Hudson, I decided to go for it. Also, working with big publishers takes a long time. If you work in a very small team – 3 or 4 people, you can take decisions quickly and not compromise. So I get to choose formats, paper, etc, and nobody tells me off for blowing the budget (laughs). My books work because they exist in communities of people with similar interests and passions. And if you know more about the people buying your books, it makes communicating with your target readers that bit easier.”

**Say you were given carte blanche to make whatever book you wanted and money was no object ...**

“It would depend on the subject of the book. I don’t want to make expensive books and use materials for the sake of it. For example, the first edition of the bunker book had a thick, grey





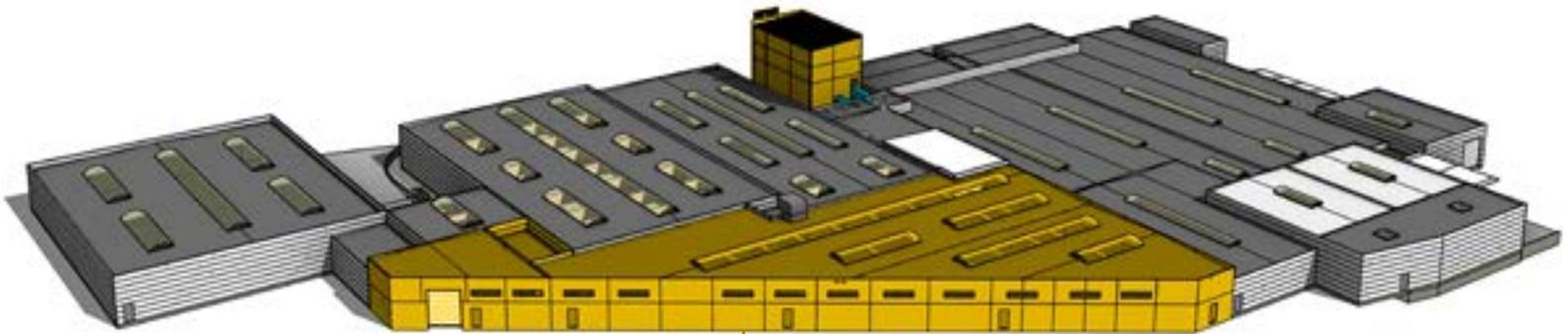
©The Rough Stuff Fellowship Archive

cover reminiscent of concrete bunkers. Any other publisher would have shot down that idea for being too expensive. For later publications I worked with Gardapatt Kiara paper, a premium paper that combines very well with Kodachrome slides. So it's not so much the budget that determines the appearance of a publication as what the publication requires."

Isola Press, London,  
210 x 270mm, 208p,  
Gardapat Kiara 150g



# GRAPHIUS NEWS



## Ghent facility extension

After years of negotiations with the government, our extension has finally been approved. The works that were started in February will be completed in August.

In September, the 2000 m<sup>2</sup> of additional space will be used to optimise our internal logistics and further automate our bookbinding department.

## Welcome to our Parisian robot

A robot has joined the team at PPO GRAPHIUS Paris: the automatic arm has recently been tasked with removing the sewn book blocks from the sewing machine and stacking them on pallets. This allows the human operator to concentrate entirely on the quality of the end product, while the machines do a faultless job.

Scan this page and BLIPPAR will show you our robot arm in action.





## Drill installation at Graphius Ghent

Printing a hundred thousand school books is one thing, finishing them is another. To efficiently serve this important market, GRAPHIUS Ghent is installing an in-line drilling and packing line for finishing. Depending on their thickness, one or more books can be drilled at the same time and then collected via the infeed before being wrapped in plastic.



Scan this page and BLIPPAR will show you our drill installation in action.

## Label cutting machine for Etiglia in Brussels

To be able to process the growing number of labels, Etiglia has installed a cutting machine from the Swiss company Blumer. The DG-35 XL cuts up to 7,000 labels a minute in sizes ranging from small to medium and lays them on a transport conveyor, ready for packaging. The labels are held steady in the die using counter-pressure. Rather unique is its ability to stamp out labels in the format 238 x 383 mm. There are only 5 of its kind in the world!



Scan this page and BLIPPAR will show you our label cutting machine in action.

# Times we won't forget



March 2020 and March 2021 – two months, a year apart, linked by one thing: Covid-19. The coronavirus pandemic was also the backdrop for four publications that present shocking, sometimes unimaginable images of what has been going on behind the scenes of Belgium's hospitals.

# 'UNE ÉVIDENCE, MALGRÉ TOUT'

Lille University Hospital

For the publication *Une évidence, malgré tout* ('Self-evident, after all'), photographers Anouk Desury and Thierry Thorel documented the daily lives of nursing staff at the University Hospital in Lille.

In February 2021, each of the 15,000 personnel received the unique photo book together with their pay cheques. It's a tribute to the remarkable collective effort of all the people who have faced the pandemic head-on.

*Une évidence, malgré tout* is an ode to the care sector and expresses appreciation for all those who work day in, day out, for people who – for whatever reason – end up in hospital. This haunting book offers a window into a world that many of us only know from outside reports, causing us to stop and think about the fragility of life.



"The intention was to capture the impact of the pandemic very truthfully: the goings on at hospital as well as the staff's personal battles," explains Eric Le Brun, the man behind the book's publisher, Light Motiv. "When the hospital saw the images, they decided at once to make a book out of them. In February 2021, each of the 15,000 personnel received the unique photo book together with their pay cheques. It's a tribute to the remarkable collective effort of all the people who have faced the pandemic head-on."



Light Motiv

Light Motiv Editions, La Madeleine, 245 x 295mm, 96p, Condat Matt 300g

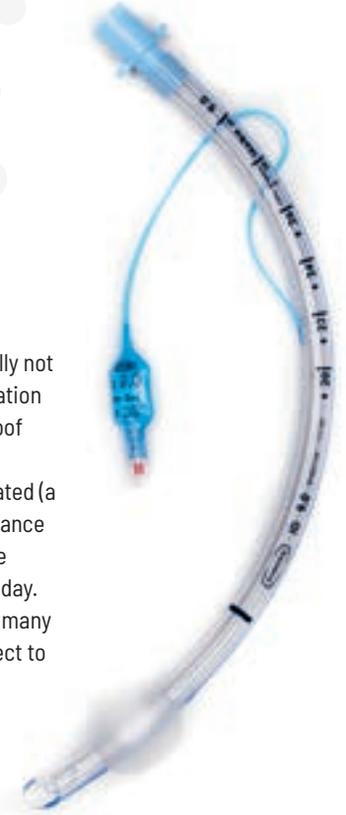
# 'MERCII'

University Hospital Brussels

For the Ghent-based photographer Lieve Blancquaert, 2020 will always be a unique year in her oeuvre. It was the year she was permitted by University Hospital Brussels to document a year of this institution in crisis.



a sign of appreciation. Especially not in healthcare, where the motivation is largely intrinsic. The best proof of this: numerous nurses from 'unaffected services' have donated (a large part) of their 'health insurance premium' to colleagues who are working on the front line every day. Why a book instead? It's one of many small gestures. A beautiful object to keep and covet."



Bedankt UZ Brussel  
Borgerhoff & Lamberigts, Gent, 100 x 145mm, 160p, Arena 120g

The result is a 15-minute video montage and the photo booklet *Merci* ('Thanks', published by Borgerhoff-Lamberigts), of which the hospital's 4,000 staff members each received a copy as a token of, well, thanks.

"We look for all kinds of ways to show thanks and appreciation," says Marc Noppen, CEO of University Hospital Brussels. "We've made dozens of

such gestures in the past because we don't believe in a pecuniary reward as a show of appreciation. There's extensive literature showing that it doesn't work. A financial reward is nice to receive but is not viewed as



Scan this page and watch the video with BLIPPAR.



# 'DE HELDEN VAN VANDAAG'

Clinic St. Jean, Brussels

CEO Hadewig De Corte was facing a crisis and decided to keep a journal from day one, first as a blog and then as a little book.

'As well as offering a touching personal account, De helden van vandaag ('Today's heroes') gives an insight into how Clinic St. Jean has been coping during the pandemic and the kind of challenges the staff are facing.

Hadewig De Corte: "Apart from serving as a little 'thank you' for everyone's efforts, it's also a nod of recognition, a way to share the situation we have ended up in as a hospital, a sort of morale booster for the staff. This is completely separate from any financial compensation or salary bonus. The profits from the sale of the book go completely toward our projects set up to promote the staff's well-being during this period."



De helden van vandaag  
Kliniek St. Jan, Brussel, 185 x 250mm, 160p,  
Lessebo Design Bright 115g



## 'TRACES'

**Iris Hospitals South, Brussels**

Traces combines 200 testimonies of the staff of Iris Hospitals South with beautiful, expressive photos – sometimes resembling portraits painted by the Flemish Primitives – by photographer Gaël Turine. The book's delightfully down-to-earth design is by Chiquinquirá García.

"The photo book shows a remarkable combination of extreme dedication, fighting spirit, solidarity, pain and sorrow ... Here and there are little eruptions of justified anger, because the caregivers themselves often lack the care they need. We are overloaded each day with statistics and the words of specialists, but these stories from the hospital show a completely different dimension," says writer Caroline Lamarche.

It was a very unique assignment for photographer Gaël Turine: "It was an extraordinarily moving project with huge societal importance. It was a really successful collaboration, too; I felt privileged to be able to photograph these people."



Traces

Beltza, Brussel, 208 x 328mm,  
160p, Symbol Tatami 150g

# CONGRATS!

Ghent-based graphic design agency Ronny & Johny win prestigious Henry van de Velde Award

**Beautiful, creative and inspiring print will never go out of style. That's not wishful thinking on our part, it's just true. Just take a look at the annual Henry van de Velde Awards, Belgium's most important design prize. This year, the prize for most eye-catching graphic design work went to the Ghent-based agency Ronny & Johny for their work on the identity and graphics for the HORST Arts and Music Festival.**

Graphius also shares in this recognition: the two gents entrusted us with the printing side of things. Ronny Duquenne and Johny Van de Vyver have been working as Ronny & Johny since 2008. For five years now, the duo has provided graphics for the HORST Arts and Music Festival, which brings together architecture, music and art in an immersive experience.

"Delighted with the recognition," Ronny enthuses when we ask for his reaction. "We've been working in the cultural sector for some time now, but it's always nice when your work gets noticed. I think our stars are in

alignment, because last year we also won second place at the Red Bull Elektropedia Awards in the category of Best Artwork with our design for HORST."

#### Posters as collector's items

"For some time now, we've seen a shift taking place in print," Ronny continues. "We also notice that in the cultural sector there is a lot less attention being paid to printed promotional material like flyers and posters. These days much more effective campaigns have been launched on social media. That does mean that you have more breathing space when designing printed materials, though; you can go a bit further, precisely because it's

supplemented by social media. The posters we made for HORST became collector's items, for example. That was less the case a few years back."

#### Your work for HORST has been celebrated. The jury loved the visual identity you came up with.

"Yes indeed. What was special about that project was that we added a fifth colour and replaced magenta with fluorescent magenta on top of the standard CMYK, thus aligning it with the online content. The choice of fluorescent magenta was a good fit with the festival and allowed the evening photography to come more into its own. It made the posters a real must-have, the HORST book too."



Ronny en Johny grafisch ontwerp, Gent,  
180 x 260mm, 160p, Munken Polar Rough 120g

# LOCKDOWN WEIGHT GAIN

We don't know if it's something to do with the pandemic, but we've been seeing fatter books recently. We have selected four that impressed us not only for their girth but also their finishing, layout and contents.



## WE'RE BLUE IN THE FACE BUT IT'S WORTH IT

Once a designer goes with Graphius, they don't go back. That's what Johnny Graf found out for himself. Thankfully, not all our assignments are as tricky to realise as Doing Fashion Paper N° 7, the end-of-year publication for the students of the Northwestern Switzerland University of Applied Sciences and Arts. The book is printed in reflex blue, silver and black with spot varnishing. The icing on the cake: flocking on the cover and blue stained edges.

**I.O.**, Basel, 125 x 180 mm, 796p Condat matt 100g, black, reflex blue, silver and varnish, sewn binding. Cover with flocking on the spine and cover, front and back.

## LE PAVÉ DE PARIS

Short and stubby, this charming book by Emmanuel Guibert has gained an additional 32 pages in weight since its first edition in 2004. Printed on FSC-certified paper, it's a difficult product to make, but a joy to read. Its illustrator, Frédéric Lemerrier, signs every copy. Truly a collector's item.

**Dupuis**, Marcinelle, 125 x 140 mm 512p, Munken Polar 150g, recto/verso Q, sewn-binding hardcover.





## THE DEVIL'S IN THE DETAIL

With an alcohol content of 6.66°, Duvel's latest beer is a mischievous one – it'll sneak up on you. And at Duvel they've also come up with **666** devilish reasons to drink their new beer and bundled them all in a bright-yellow firecracker of a book.

Each of the **666** reasons is funnier than the last. Try making something like this for the web and you'll soon realise why print is often the better way to go.

**Moortgat nv**, Breendonk, 180 X 180 mm, 456p  
Munken Lynx Rough 150g, 1.4, recto Verso Q in LED UV,  
paper-band cover with scratch-resistant laminate,  
3 mm greyboard, sewn-binding and front cover embossed.

## WRITTEN IN STONE, MADE OF PAPER

In Cambridge there's a granite monument inscribed with the rules of football. The game has conquered the world since the rules were drawn up in 1848. To memorialise this, the city of Cambridge commissioned Neville Gabie and Alan Ward to design the monument, based on which a matching souvenir was also produced in the form of an 800-page book. A special sleeve was designed to slide over the little book to increase its likeness to the monolithic monument.

**Cambridge City Council**, Cambridge, 60 x 139 mm,  
800 p, Maxi Offset 120g, FSC, recto/verso Q,  
exposed sewn-binding, trimmed to size.





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