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Culture

10:09 08/02/2024

The iconic beetle car goes on parade in Brussels on Sunday, while a slew of new exhibitions open around the country. Although the capital has to wait until next week to fully get into carnival mode, folklore celebrations kick off already in Wallonia and Flanders.

Start your Valentine week off right with the 15th anniversary edition of the Love Bugs Parade. Autoworld's annual event sees Volkswagen Bugs (or Beetles if you prefer) gathering under the Cinquantenaire arch before heading out in a revving, beeping show of Bug pride, driving en masse through the streets to the delight of spectators. The parade is led by a Volkswagen Porsche as professor Ferdinand Porsche created the Bug – Volkswagen's very first car. *11 February, cars on show from 10.00, parade starts at 14.00*



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Welcome to the final instalment of Don't Call it Art Brut, a year-long project featuring pieces from the Art et Marges museum's collection. Throughout the run, entirely new exhibitions are staged. This time, Brussels-based Eric Croes puts his sculptures on show together with artists producing similarly surreal works. Another section is dedicated to Marion Oster, whose fabulous shrines mix European and African traditions. Finally, the museum introduces us to Norbert Moutier, who between the ages of five and 19 produced thousands of comic strips. They were saved from obscurity by an alert art teacher, who discovered them at a flea market. *Until 21 April, Rue Haute 314*



Since the 1980s, digital technology has revolutionised photography and rendered it accessible to almost everyone. Exploring this evolution via a critical dimension are eight Belgian artists in the collective exhibition *Matière critique. Explorations Photographiques* at ISELP. The show examines the use of image in a society that is inundated with a never-ending flow of visual material; the artists here favour a different approach, applying a slower process to their creative work. It's part of the capital's PhotoBrussels Festival. *Until 23 March, Boulevard de Waterloo 31*



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Let yourself be whisked back to the Brussels of centuries past during FestiVita!, the capital's festival of early music. There are no less than 16 concerts, a banquet, the coveted Renaissance ball, a musical fairy tale for kids and an exhibition on how violins are made. It's a unique way to explore how musicians in a pre-technological world wrote, performed and revolutionised their craft. *10-18 February, St Michael and St Gudula Cathedral & Cercle Royal Gaulois*



Women in Iran have moved beyond the margins of the film industry to occupying a central role in portraying a feminist perspective of their society. In Bozar's recurring series on the country's cinema from 1979 to the present day - made by women and non-binary filmmakers - Iranian artist filmmaker Maryam Tafakory presents a selection of her films along with a performance talk. Tafakory is internationally renowned for her textual and film collages that interweave poetry, documentary, archival and found material. *10 February 19.00, Rue Ravenstein 23*



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Following a long period of renovation, Théâtre Les Tanneurs finally shows off its new restaurant and foyer in a festive opening. The family-friendly free event includes theatre visits (reservation necessary), book readings for children, a puppet show and a concert by MetX Moving Combo. All afternoon, visitors can enjoy a badge-making workshop, pancakes and hot drinks. The Marolles theatre also boasts a new performance room and co-working space. *10 February 14.00-18.00, Rue des Tanneurs 75-77*

OUTSIDE BRUSSELS



It's carnival time in Belgium! In Flanders, there is of course Aalst Carnival, recognised Unesco heritage for its long-standing activities that mark the period before Lent. Occasionally courting controversy for its infamous bad taste, it includes the biggest parade of floats in the country and the *Voil Jeanetten* procession of men dressed as



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women – but not like women you have ever seen. Vilvoorde also has a well-known Carnival celebration, with its light parade on the evening of Fat Tuesday. If you're headed to the coast, check out carnival celebrations in Knokke-Heist, with a children's dress-up party, the Merfolk Ball and a big parade on Sunday. *Aalst 11-13 February, Vilvoorde 10-18 February, Knokke 10-13 February*



Belgium's most illustrious carnival tradition is in Binche, with the feted folklore celebration marking the 20th anniversary of its prestigious Unesco listing. The pinnacle of the three-day party is Tuesday's parade of more than 900 Gilles, a select brotherhood of men dressed in distinctive heralded costumes and painted wax masks, later swapped for rare ostrich-plumed headgear when they pelt onlookers with oranges. A firework finale on Monday night is another highlight. Binche has a museum dedicated to its famous carnival, which is open all year round. *11-13 February, Binche town centre, Hainaut province*

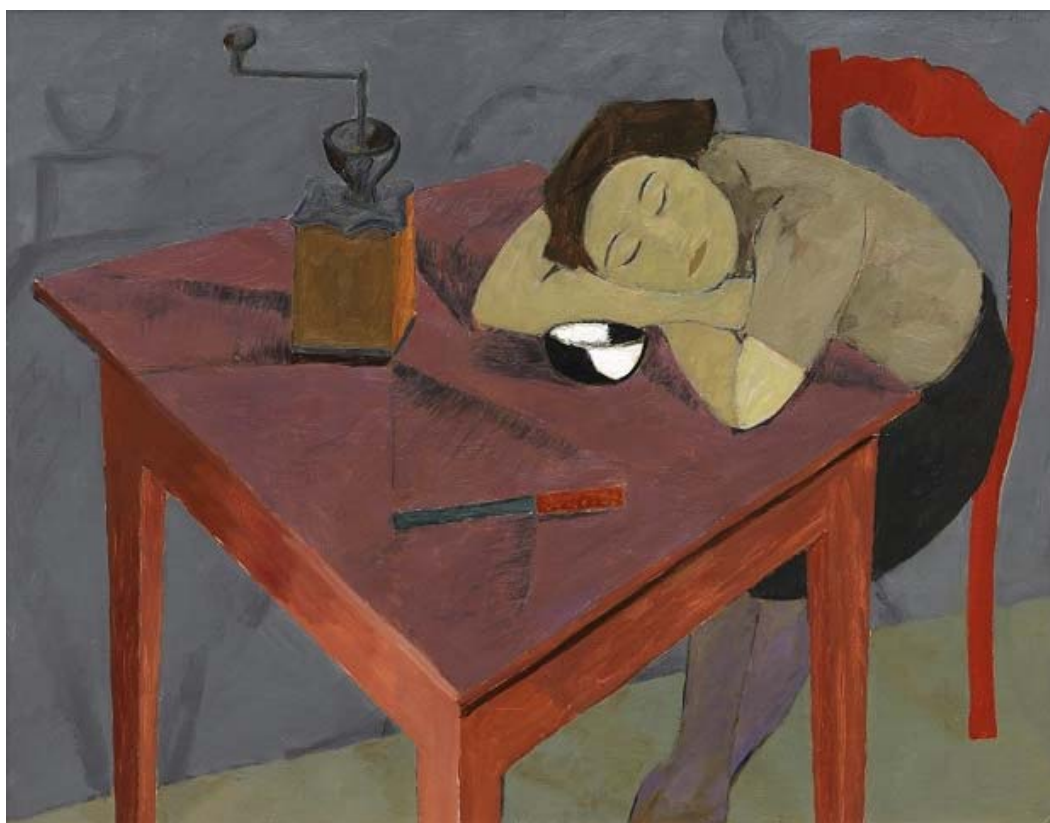


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Known as the Cwarmê in local Walloon dialect, Malmédy's four-day festivities, replete with cross-dressing and satiric antics, form the oldest carnival traditions in Belgium. The arrival of the Grosse Police on Saturday kicks off a series of parades that continue until midnight on Shrove Tuesday. Saturday's procession sees 1,500 transvestites representing the 15 traditional masks of the Cwarmê and the dance of the Haguete and the Harlequins. On Shrove Tuesday all the carnival societies take to the streets and the event comes to a close with the burning of the Haguète! *10-13 February, Malmédy town centre, Liège province*





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Anyone who has visited an exhibition of work by 20th-century Belgian artist Roger Raveel knows that his wife was more than his model when it came to his work. Hence the title *Zulma: Muse and Manager*, the new exhibition at the Roger Raveel Museum. From supporting them financially to tirelessly promoting his work to serving as the unmissable subject in some of his most famous paintings, Zulma was instrumental to this major oeuvre of local art. Opening day includes a talk by the curator and a reception. *11 February to 5 May, Gildestraat 2, Zulte, East Flanders province*



Feel sorry for the kids of today who don't know what it's like to place the needle in the groove or hold liner notes in their hands? Then you might feel at home at the Vinyl and CD Fair, a traveling marketplace of albums. There is also music memorabilia and collector's items. The fair takes place this week in Hasselt before moving on to Leuven, Ghent and several other cities before finishing up in Brussels in May. *Until 12 May, across Flanders & Brussels*



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Belgium's occupation during World War One sparked a global wave of sympathy of support with US citizens among those enlisting in Allied armies to help fight at the front. *Americans in Flanders Fields* recounts their presence before and after the official US participation in the war. The exhibition is part of a project (Names & Places, 1917-1919), the result of a partnership between the museum, the US Smithsonian Institution and the United States Embassy in Belgium. *Until 31 May, In Flanders Fields Museum, Grote Markt 34, Ypres*



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The Bastogne War Rooms are inaugurated this weekend in the Ardennes town forever associated with the WWII Battle of the Bulge. The new memorial site is housed in the basement where Brigadier-General McAuliffe's uttered his famous retort "nuts" to a German demand to surrender on 22 December 1944. His response is said to have boosted morale of the 101st Airborne Division and besieged civilians during the final offensive by the German army. With immersive scenography the new space takes visitors on a historical journey of this significant wartime episode. *Pictured: McAuliffe (right) being decorated by General Patton. From 10 February, Route de La Roche 40, Bastogne, Luxembourg province*



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Swiss fashion photographer and graphic designer Peter Knapp was responsible for the artistic direction of Elle magazine from 1959. He drew on all his skills and talent to create a coherent layout and typography for the publication that introduced uninhibited read-to-wear for increasingly liberated women. Discover his work and other archive documents from this fascinating period in women's magazines in *Peter Knapp. Mon temps* along with a series of other equally high-quality exhibitions at Charleroi Photo Museum. *Until 26 May, Avenue Paul Pastur 11, Charleroi*

Discover more upcoming events at [The Bulletin's events page](#).

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Written by *Sarah Crew and Lisa Bradshaw*

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