

wallonia and brussels

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magazine

# LET'S INNOVATE

DYNAMIC RESEARCH  
BOOSTS OUR ECONOMY

Food of the future:  
Cooking Lab serves up  
smart gastronomy

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**Safran Aero Boosters**  
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## Editorial

Why does Wallonia shy away from shouting about its research exploits? The region is a success story in biotechnology, healthcare and aerospace, to name just a few of its speciality areas. In our File, we explore how scientists in French-speaking Belgium are fuelling the economy via their innovation. Many companies at the forefront of their fields are university spin-offs and start-ups, with nearly every province boasting a science and technology park. Business parks are another source of fruitful collaboration; in Louvain-la-Neuve, foundation stones are being laid for China's first business incubator in Europe. From this Walloon Brabant base, high-tech companies from the Asian super-economy will be able to test their innovative technologies on the European market. Meanwhile, marketing strategies developed in local universities are being used to develop tourism and social projects at the ancient Villers-la-Ville Abbey. Applying the latest business ideas to a medieval monastery is a perfect example of Wallonia playing to its strengths: combining the old and the new.





06

## 04 BIG PICTURE

A triumphant homecoming for Namur's golden girl, Nafi Thiam

## 06 NEWS

Headlines from around the region

## 08 BUSINESS

BioTurnkey gets pharma products to market faster

## 10 INNOVATION

Walloon SME's probiotic could help reduce obesity

## 12 INVESTMENT

China's business is welcome in Wallonia



14

## 14 FILE

Discover the innovators and entrepreneurs making concrete economic gains from the region's research expertise

## 20 TOURISM

A new visitor centre revives a centuries-old attraction

## 22 GASTRONOMY

Science and food meet in a clever and public laboratory



25

## 25 DESIGN

Creative partnerships were fostered at Milan Design Week

## 28 PANORAMA

Meet the mouse promoting the Wallonia.be brand abroad

## 30 AGENDA

Cultural highlights around Wallonia and Brussels

# She's a champion

Namur-born Nafissatou Thiam put in the performance of a lifetime to win Olympic gold in the heptathlon in August, shortly before her 22nd birthday. She broke personal best after personal best and was the best in three out of the seven events – high jump, long jump and shot put – to steal the crown from the defending Olympic champion and favourite, Britain's Jessica Ennis-Hill. It all came down to the final event, the 800m run, where she pulled off her fifth personal best to clinch the title.

Since her triumphant return to Belgium, the University of Liège student has been entertaining home crowds. She was cheered by more than 500 locals, schoolchildren and dignitaries in her home village of Rhisnes, near Namur. After her Olympic exploits were broadcast on a big screen, the mayor praised her humility and courage and awarded her the title of honorary citizen of La Bruyère. In September, she

finished the season in style by winning the high jump at the annual Memorial Van Damme athletics meet in Brussels (pictured). Thiam, daughter of a Belgian mother and Senegalese father, trains with the RFCL club in Liège under coach Roger Lespagnard.

➤ [WWW.NAFITHIAM.COM](http://WWW.NAFITHIAM.COM)





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## Stable conditions

Liège Airport played its part in the success of equestrian events at the Olympic games in Rio de Janeiro in August and the Paralympic games in September. Wallonia's air freight hub delivered 250 horses to the Brazilian city in seven flights: five for the Olympics and two for the Paralympics. The horses came from France, Spain, Sweden and Russia as well as Belgium. Equine transport has become one of Liège's freight specialities. In 2015, it managed the transit of around 3,000 horses with the help of its Horse Inn, a new stabling block that contains 55 horse boxes.

➤ [WWW.LIEGEAIRPORT.COM](http://WWW.LIEGEAIRPORT.COM)



## The odd couple

Twin sisters Daphné and Christelle Debauxe are the force behind an innovative US label of children's shoes. The women, from Genappe in Walloon Brabant, exploit their special relationship in the concept of online brand George et Georgette: mismatched shoes that complement one another, just like twins. Approaching their 35th birthday, they decided on a joint venture that took a year to develop and much of their savings. It recalled childhood memories when their mum would buy them the same shoes but in different colours, which they would then sometimes swap. "There had to be a social side to make the project even more motivating for us. We also wanted to make the packaging original and useful," says Christelle. The result is a cardboard shoebox with cutout handles that can be recycled and filled with essential items for homeless organisations. And the inspiration behind the slightly retro name? "We were looking for the name of a couple and we have a tendency to push the idea of duality to the smallest detail. Our grandmother was called Georgette, so maybe there was some favouritism," she says.

[WWW.GEORGEGETTE.COM](http://WWW.GEORGEGETTE.COM)

## Business briefs

**Liège company AMOS** is behind the mirrors currently orbiting Jupiter. The company, which operates from Liège Science Park and is a spin-off of the University of Liège, specialises in manufacturing giant professional telescopes and optical instruments. It is also an expert in the space sector. Its latest venture is part of the Juno mission, Nasa's New Frontiers programme, which is studying the relatively unknown but large gas planet Jupiter.

➤ [WWW.AMOS.BE](http://WWW.AMOS.BE)

**Namur digital agency Dogstudio** has won the contract to create the web experience for the centenary of the birth of former US president John F Kennedy. The news follows another major signing: the website contract for the Museum of the Science and Industry in Chicago. "What an honour to have been chosen and what a fantastic project ahead," said Dogstudio account director Nicolas Moies-Delval. The company is now planning on opening a Chicago office at the beginning of 2017.

➤ [WWW.DOGSTUDIO.BE](http://WWW.DOGSTUDIO.BE)

**Charleroi aerospace company Sonaca** has joined forces with French company Fives-Michelin Additive Solutions (FMAS) to make 3D titanium pieces for the aerospace industry. The collaboration will enable clients to benefit from the expertise of both companies. With the partnership, they plan to become market leaders in additive manufacturing within the aerospace field. "We are extremely happy to work with FMAS," said Sonaca CEO Bernard Delvaux. "Their reputation and the performance of their machines, drawing on many years of industrial practice, is a remarkable asset," he added.

➤ [WWW.SONACA.COM](http://WWW.SONACA.COM)

## Walloon engineering to keep Lima's metro running smoothly

Walloon global railway company Alstom has signed a €200 million contract to supply new Metropolis trains in the Peruvian capital, Lima. Alstom's Charleroi site will be responsible for the traction elements. The order will deliver 120 carriages and 20 train sets for line 1 of the Lima metro and 19 new carriages to complete the existing trainsets already in service on the same line. Delivery of the 139 metropolis cars is scheduled to be completed by 2019. The metro line 1 is 34km long with 26 stations. Passenger numbers have been rising since the line opened in 2011 and currently stand at around 320,000 per day. "With this new order, even more passengers will be able to use a metro system that is reliable, comfortable and respectful of the environment," said Alstom Latin America vice-president Michel Boccaccio.

➤ [WWW.ALSTOM.COM](http://WWW.ALSTOM.COM)



## Namur hosts Wallonia's first food festival

The W Food Festival will be held next summer at Namur Citadel. Organised by Wallonia chef collective Generation W, the event will be a showcase of the region's gastronomy, honouring its chefs and their local suppliers. The public is invited to discover their cuisine. On the weekend menu: show cooking, demonstrations, workshops and activities for all the family. The Monday is reserved for professionals and students in the first Wallonia international gastronomy congress, with guest chefs from abroad. As well as masterclasses, there will be workshops for students. For this first edition, artisan beers from Wallonia's microbreweries have been chosen as the flagship product. Entrance price is fixed at €5 and a family pass is planned. There will be an additional charge to taste chefs' dishes, but these will remain affordable in keeping with the philosophy of the event. Led by the media-savvy two-Michelin-star chef Sang Hoon Degeimbre, Generation W has been championing the region's culinary and artisan talent in a series of national and international events. One of its missions is to transform Wallonia into a food-lover's destination. Another is to place artisans centre stage. One of the collective's founding fathers, chef Jean-Luc Pigneur, says, "Our philosophy is that the chefs are really there to show off the producer, as we've perhaps forgotten that we are reliant on their produce." Generation W also pledges to encourage culinary exchange and innovation, so one of the event's highlights will be the Smart Gastronomy Lab (see pages 19 to 21).

➤ [WWW.GENERATIONW.BE](http://WWW.GENERATIONW.BE)

# Quality control

BioTurnkey dramatically cuts the time it takes to get biotech and pharma products to market

BY SENNE STARCKX

**T**ime is money. If there's one economic sector to which this credo applies, it's the pharmaceutical industry. Every year that an experimental medicine or treatment spends in the optimisation processes, in clinical trials or in regulatory procedures means a year of possible revenue is lost. And now the lifetime of medical products on the market is shortening, it's crucial for pharmaceutical companies to reduce their lab-to-market time.

Progress in medicine doesn't only depend on the ingenious minds of geneticists, chemists or molecular biologists. Putting aside the fundamental science in drug development, many forget that after a promising medicine or treatment has come through all the clinical trial phases, there are still many hurdles to be cleared.

Every pill or liquid sold at a pharmacy or administered in a hospital has to meet stringent specifications. But not every product can be tested separately. That's why authorities like the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the European

“

If there's not a viable business approach behind it the discoveries will rarely make it to the market

FRANÇOIS LESAGE

Medicines Agency (EMA) – responsible for the safety and effectiveness of medicines – issue guidelines that a pharmaceutical manufacturer must meet to ensure that their products are of high quality and don't pose any risks. These guidelines are better known as good manufacturing practices, or GMPs.

Hardly a day goes by without the creation of a biotech spin-off or start-up promising a new, often revolutionary treatment for some specific disease. This is the fruit of the knowledge-driven culture at Wallonia's universities and research institutions, something for which the region is well-known. But the valorisation of that basic R&D into commercially viable products in a global and over-performing life science market is something different.

“Many companies that are established in accordance with the classic cleanroom building model are struggling when they have to face the GMP challenge,” says François Lesage, CEO of the joint venture BioTurnkey. “These firms have always believed in good laboratory practices, but the fact





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is that their business model not only extends the development time, it also can't guarantee that their treatments can be produced in a GMP environment later – a vital condition for commercial success." In short, what's the use of a new treatment if every pill has to be manufactured and tested individually, involving vast amounts of time and labour?

BioTurnkey was created this year by a Belgian investment group (consisting of 4 For Cells and Wisetree Invest) and the American biotech company Incell. Lesage came over from Masthercell, a company based in Gosselies which he co-founded in 2011 and which specialises in the industrialisation of cell therapy products – by helping pharmaceutical companies to adopt GMPs.

While Masthercells's list of clients concerned cell therapy developers, BioTurnkey is aiming at companies active in personalised and regenerative medicine. "In personalised – or targeted – medicine, patients are separated into groups, with medical products and interventions tailored to the individual,

based on the predicted response, the risk or the specificity of the disease," explains Lesage. "So in the R&D process the focus very often lies on short-term discoveries, driven by science. That is of course wonderful from the perspective of a fundamental researcher, but if there's not a viable business approach behind it the discoveries will rarely make it to the market."

So Lesage wants to see a thoroughly business-driven science approach. "From the early days, just after the proof of concept phase, companies or research divisions should ask themselves: What if I have to treat thousands of patients?" The answer leads to the core business of BioTurnkey: GMPs from day one.

What do GMPs look like? One of the products BioTurnkey is offering to its clients is the Biooptimizer isolator. This is a kind of 'glove box' in which medical research can be performed without having to build an expensive cleanroom. Lesage: "Our isolators are pre-approved, so companies don't lose more time in the approval process. And they're structured as a combination of

building blocks and hundreds of pre-written standard operating procedures, enabling faster qualification at a fraction of the costs while meeting the highest regulatory requirements."

The fact that BioTurnkey is a European-American joint venture is definitely an advantage, now that bodies like the FDA and the EMA are harmonising their regulatory frameworks. And given its presence in the US – in San Antonio, Texas – and in the heart of Europe – at Novalis Science Park in Marche-en-Famenne – BioTurnkey has access to the two largest markets in modern medicine. "We're growing steadily towards each other, like a bridge that's built starting from both sides of the river," says Mary Pat Moyer, CEO of Incell and chief science officer of BioTurnkey. Moyer made a week-long visit to BioTurnkey's offices at Marche in September. "Our unique business model will reduce the time and costs required to commercialise new and innovative tissue, cell, device and drug products that have traditionally taken as long as ten years or more to get to market."

➔ [WWW.BIOTURNKEY.COM](http://WWW.BIOTURNKEY.COM)

# Fat chance

Probiotic discovered here could lead to better obesity prevention

BY ELLIE MEARS



Scientists in Namur province have made a major breakthrough in the fight against obesity, a condition that affects 12 per cent of Belgian adults and 600 million people worldwide.

This summer, researchers at Vésale Pharma, an SME specialising in the research and development of probiotics, announced the discovery of a new probiotic strain that could dramatically reduce the risk of severe weight gain. The strain, known as *bifidobacterium animalis lactis* VES002, was originally tested for its anti-inflammatory properties. However, when Vésale Pharma sent the strain to the Pasteur Institute in Lille for further tests, scientists there made a startling discovery: the strain is also highly effective in preventing obesity in mice.

Researchers at the Pasteur Institute divided the mice into three groups. One group was fed normal food and their weight remained stable. Mice in the second group were fed rich, fatty food over a number of weeks and grew to between three and four times their original weight. However, a third group of mice that ingested the specially fermented VES002 strain gained far less weight than the second group, despite receiving the same type of rich food.

“The VES002 strain is fermented in a very specific way,” explains Johan Quintens, director of research development at Vésale Pharma. “We found it had a significant influence on the development of these fat mice, compared to all the other strains we tested. You can clearly



There's a difference  
in activity that can  
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this probiotic

JOHAN QUINTENS

see that the mice that consumed these probiotics alongside a rich diet stayed a lot leaner than those that ate only the highly calorific food. There's a difference in activity that can only be explained by the presence of this probiotic."

The researchers also investigated the strain's impact on related symptoms in the mice, such as fatty liver, which is linked to the development of cardiovascular disorders and type 2 diabetes in humans. As well as putting on less weight, the mice treated with VES002 appeared to be better protected against such disorders.

So why is the VES002 strain so effective compared with other probiotics? "The most plausible explanation we've found is that the treated strain produces a change in the whole microflora, or bacteria present in the large intestine of the mice," says Quintens. "There were some bacteria present in the obese mice that were absent in those mice that had taken the treated VES002 strain."

In the same way, the microflora found in the intestines of obese people often differ from those found in people of a healthy weight. According to Quintens, this could help explain why some people find it much harder to keep the weight off than others. "We know there are some people whose metabolism means whatever they eat, they'll stay fairly slim. Others say they put on weight even when they consumer relatively little."

Vésale Pharma is keen to test the VES002 strain in humans, to see if it

has the same protective effect against obesity. Trials are scheduled to start in the next few months, and will likely continue for two years or more. Should the trials yield a positive result in humans, Vésale Pharma expects to start marketing anti-obesity products shortly after their conclusion.

According to the World Health Organisation, worldwide obesity has doubled since 1990, affecting around 13 per cent of adults across the globe. An adult is defined as obese if he or she has a body mass index (BMI) of over 30. Within Europe, a BMI of between 18.5 and 24.9 is considered healthy. As developing countries such as China gain greater access to high calorie foods and switch to a more sedentary lifestyle, the rate of obesity worldwide is set to increase further. This will open up huge markets for firms such as Vésale.

The WHO states that obesity is largely preventable, citing a healthy diet and exercise as the best medicine. Will the marketing of anti-obesity medicines encourage people to seek a quick fix rather than improve their diet and do more sport? Quintens is unequivocal. "Obesity has been defined by the WHO as an illness," he says. "It's dangerous for people's health. The product that we plan to develop is not aimed at people wanting to slim a bit before going on holiday. It's for the real pathological cases. It will also help formerly obese people who've gone on a diet to keep the weight off."

➔ [WWW.VESALEPHARMA.COM](http://WWW.VESALEPHARMA.COM)



# Welcome China

Construction to begin in Louvain-la-Neuve on China's first business incubator in Europe

BY RENÉE CORDES

**H**ow do you lure more Chinese innovation to Europe? Build an 'intelligence valley' where high-tech companies can set up shop, work side-by-side with industry peers and researchers and develop their technology for the European market. That's the vision behind the future China-Belgium Technology Center (CBTC) business incubator in Louvain-la-Neuve, set to be ready in 2018.

Building work was due to start in October, several years after Wallonia's Export-Investment Agency AWEX and the Walloon Science Parks Association opened the China Welcome Office in Mons and a Belgian Welcome Office in Wuhan, to help companies expand into each other's markets.

The CBTC will do the same on a much grander scale for some 200 companies active in fields such as green technology, electronic commerce, and the Internet of Things network connecting objects like home and car electronics and remote health monitoring systems to the internet. Half of the companies will be Chinese, the other half from Europe.

Chinese investors will provide €200 million in funding for the project via the United Investment Group. Investors are the Hubei United Development Investment Group and JuXing International Technology, a consortium of the Wuhan Eastlake International Business Incubator (Whibi) and Wuhan

## THE FACTS

**What?** The China-Belgium Technology Center (CBTC) business incubator

**Where?** An 8.3-hectare site at Louvain-la-Neuve Science Park near the N4

**Who?** UIG-Europe. Investors are Hubai United Development Investment (90% shareholder) and JuXing International Technology (10% shareholder), an investment consortium of the Wuhan Eastlake International Business Incubator (Whibi) and Wuhan Technology Investment

**When?** Completion scheduled for 2018.

## THE FIGURES

**€200 million** Total investment amount.

**97,000 square metres** Area of business incubators + hotel

**200** Number of companies expected (50/50 Chinese/European)

**1,600** Jobs to be created (60% Belgian, 40% Chinese)

Technology Investment. "We're all confident that the CBTC is the best opportunity for Chinese companies to explore the European market in a great environment and find new business opportunities," said Zhang MinRong, general manager of UIG Europe.

On the Belgian side, AWEX played a key role in getting government support for China's first business incubator on European soil. "As the first Chinese technological showcase of its kind in Europe, the CBTC will tighten the bonds between European companies – particularly in Wallonia – and Chinese companies," CEO Pascale Delcomminette said in June.

After several years of planning, the project is moving ahead quickly. Building work will start later this year, four months after construction began on a public road that will traverse the entire CBTC site. It will be strategically located inside the Louvain-la-Neuve Science Park with access via the E411 highway on one side and the national N4 road on the other. Architecture firms from both countries are collaborating on the design and planning: from the Belgian side, Brussels' Bureau Architecture Engineering Verhaegen.

Most importantly, proximity to the Catholic University of Louvain (UCL) will allow companies to work with the academic community – and with each other – to test their technologies and get



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them ready for the market. With that goal in sight, Wuhan University and Huazhong University of Science and Technology, also in Wuhan province, are already collaborating with UCL on research.

The ultimate aim of the CBTC is to foster commercial and technology partnerships between Chinese and European companies. Philippe Barras, managing director of the Louvain-la-Neuve Science Park, said the location was chosen for three main reasons: proximity to Brussels, UCL's status as

a world-class university, and the fact that there is already an existing science park with some 4,000 researchers active in new technologies, life sciences and ICT. The CBTC will also complement a small community of Chinese students studying in Brussels and Louvain-la-Neuve and will work closely with the China Welcome Office in Mons.

Besides helping Chinese companies gain a foothold in Europe, the CBTC aims to open doors for start-ups from Wallonia and Europe in China, a market that has huge commercial potential but is tough for newcomers to crack on their own.

Within the incubator, firms will have access to offices, laboratories and a service centre with rooms for seminars and dining. There will also be a 160-room hotel for Chinese visitors here on short assignments as well as the public. Companies that choose to set up in the incubators will also get business support and advice, including paperwork and finding housing.

Of the 1,600 jobs expected to be created, about 60% will go to Belgians and the rest to Chinese, all providing a boost to the local economy. "The arrival of foreign companies brings a whole new international dimension to the region," said Paul Magnette, minister-president of the Walloon region, in June. "That will generate sustainable employment opportunities."



# Innovation for the economy

The region's research strengths are being transformed into economic success stories

BY IAN MUNDELL

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In 25 years of writing about science and research for daily paper *Le Soir*, Christian Du Brulle often found himself telling international stories. "Eight out of ten articles were just saying: Look how bright they are on the West Coast of the US, or in Germany or France," he recalls. "But when I left *Le Soir* I realised that exactly the same things were happening in Belgium and maybe people were a bit too shy to mention that they are publishing research or making advances in specific fields." His

response was to set up Daily Science, a news website that highlights the work of scientists in French-speaking Belgium. "The aim is to show how dynamic the research and innovation being done in Wallonia and Brussels is," he says.

➤ [WWW.DAILYSCIENCE.BE](http://WWW.DAILYSCIENCE.BE)

This also gives him a good overview of the region's research strengths. "Biotechnology and healthcare is one big area, where there is university

and fundamental research on one side and applied research on the other," he says. "The other as far as research is concerned is aerospace."

In biotechnology, notable academic centres include GIGA, the Interdisciplinary Cluster for Applied Genoproteomics, at the University of Liège, and the Biopark Charleroi Brussels South, a life sciences campus run by the Free University of Brussels (ULB) at Gosselies. The private sector





◀ Safran Aero Boosters

is dominated by GlaxoSmithKline's vaccine business, which employs more than 7,000 people in the region, but also includes companies such as Baxter, Pfizer, UCB and Ion Beam Applications.

In aerospace, the universities of Liège, Mons and Louvain-la-Neuve are all active, while the companies, concentrated around Charleroi and Liège, include Safran Aero Boosters (formerly Techspace Aero), Sonaca and Thales Alenia Space Belgium.

## Support from the region

While well-established, these sectors still need support from the regional government, and feature among the six pôles de compétitivité or competitiveness clusters established in 2005-06. These clusters unite large and small companies with public sector researchers, with the aim of supporting strategic research, building up critical mass and boosting the international profile of a particular sector.

Six clusters have emerged from this process: BioWin in healthcare; Skywin in aerospace; MecaTech in mechanical engineering; GreenWin in sustainable technologies; Wagralim in food and agriculture; and Logistics in Wallonia in transport.

Looking back at a decade of activity, in February this year, it was found that clusters had produced 415 innovative products, services or processes, filing nearly 180 patents and selling more than 20 licences. Participating companies had seen their value increase substantially more than the average for their sectors, with employment levels also outstripping norms.

The competitiveness clusters intersect with the region's seven science and technology parks, each managed by an economic development agency and at least one university. These are based in Louvain-la-Neuve, Gembloux, Mons, Liège, Marche-en-Famenne, Charleroi, and Enghien. The latest figures show they host 670 companies, including 80 spin-offs.

Meanwhile, digital technology is covered by a dedicated policy

tailored to this fast-moving sector. Launched in 2015, the Digital Wallonia strategy contains initiatives to help digital companies grow and develop international business, as well as plans to build up the region's infrastructure, support digital skills and education, and extend the use of digital in the public sector.

➤ [WWW.DIGITALWALLONIA.BE](http://WWW.DIGITALWALLONIA.BE)

## Global innovation

Overseas collaboration is supported by Wallonie-Bruxelles International's research and innovation unit, which works to build networks and promote partnerships in international research projects. It operates a Trends Observatory, which monitors developments in research and innovation, and a Research & Innovation Platform which gathers the main



▲ UCB's Bio Pilot Plant

academic and commercial stakeholders of Wallonia and Brussels in order to define common priorities. Meanwhile, a network of six scientific liaison officers work to build research collaborations with Germany, Brazil, Canada, the US, Switzerland and the Scandinavian countries.

➤ [WWW.WBI.BE/FR/INNOVATION-FRANCOPHONE](http://WWW.WBI.BE/FR/INNOVATION-FRANCOPHONE)

Around the same time that competitiveness clusters were being established, efforts began to help innovative companies in Wallonia to internationalise. Building bridges beyond Europe was a priority. "In Europe, a framework for collaboration was already in place, for example through the EU research programmes. That was not so much the case with countries such as China, the United States and India," says Philippe Lachapelle, who is in charge of technology partnerships at AWEX.

He started with the US, then as now the world leader in innovation. Conversations with innovative American start-up companies, such as university spin-offs, revealed that they faced challenges similar to those at home: each occupied a very specific niche, which obliged them to internationalise if they were to be successful, but they often lacked the information and support necessary to enter foreign markets. "So I thought that if we could put all our problems together, we might find a solution."

Texas A&M University was selected as a good partner, since it had strengths in all the areas targeted by the competitiveness clusters. "We made contact with them and we clicked immediately," Lachapelle recalls. "We decided to work together: we

## Case study: Fleye, your personal flying robot

Fleye began with Laurent Eschenauer's enthusiasm for drones. "I saw that they were fun little flying machines, but eventually they would become truly autonomous flying robots," he says. But this presents a problem. "If there is no pilot in the loop, then it has to be safe by design." With exposed rotors and sharp corners, most drones do not fit the bill.

To find a solution, Eschenauer hooked up with aerospace engineer Dimitri Arendt. Working in their spare time, they

devised a drone shaped like a ball, with all the rotors inside. No harm is done if it bumps into something, and if it gets too close you simply push it away. With the addition of a camera and an on-board computer, it began to look like a viable product: a safe, personal flying robot. So they wrote a business plan.

Support from The Faktory, a start-up accelerator and investment fund based in Liège, allowed them to build a prototype and launch a crowd-funding campaign. Then, in January 2016, they took their prototype to CES, a giant consumer technology trade show in Las Vegas. "This was very important for us as a way of supporting the campaign, and to validate the market potential by talking to distributors and investors," Eschenauer explains.

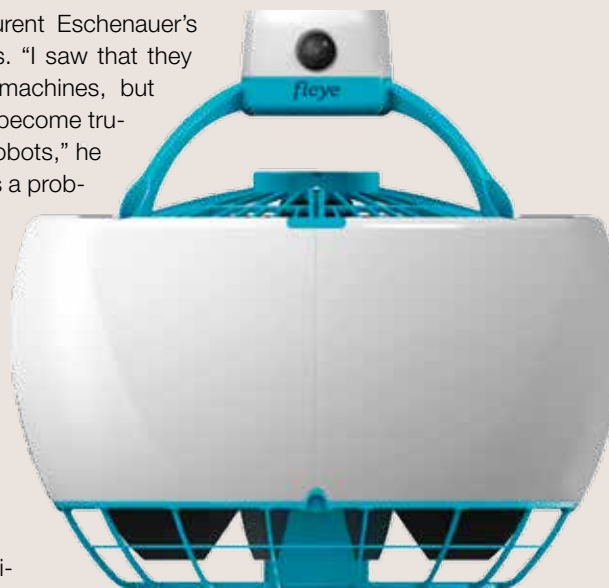
US customers were needed from the outset. "That's where the mass market for drones is, and we were really happy that we managed to find 50% of our revenue during the campaign from the US."

Although Fleye might look like a digital start-up, its roots are in Wallonia's aerospace industry. "We are talking about a very complex electro-mechanical product, and a very challenging aerospace design in order to make it efficient, to reduce noise and to make it stable."

Local expertise has played an important role. "We are doing a lot of tests in the wind tunnel at the University of Liège, and we are using Sirris for rapid prototyping and the thinking around materials and structures." The university has also provided a steady stream of student interns.

The product is due on shelves this autumn, so the focus now is manufacturing. This has meant sourcing materials and finding partners as far away as China. But that is not a problem. "This connected world is now a reality, and you can tap into that to find both your customers and your suppliers," Eschenauer says. "Then it is about integrating things to make the product a reality. With technologies like rapid prototyping, 3D printing, agile software development, that can be done very quickly, with a very small team."

➤ [WWW.GOFLEYE.COM](http://WWW.GOFLEYE.COM)





## Case study: iTeos: helping the body fight cancer

iTeos is a drug discovery company, specialising in cancer immunotherapy. It was spun off from the research of Benoît Van den Eynde, a professor at the Catholic University of Louvain (UCL) and director of the Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research in Brussels.

His work involves tumours that resist the body's natural defences by using enzymes that inactivate the response of the immune system around them. Blocking these enzymes, he thought, might give the immune system a chance of fighting back.

In 2006 the BioWin cluster supported the Cantol programme, to explore options for blocking one of these enzymes, called IDO1. This brought together the Ludwig Institute, universities UCL and ULB, plus companies Euroscreen and GlaxoSmithKline Biologicals.

Meanwhile, Van den Eynde identified another target enzyme, TDO2, and suggested creating a company to explore its potential. "In 2010 he reached out to me and proposed a spin-off to leverage these discoveries and continue work initiated under the Cantol programme," recalls Michel Detheux, the chief executive of iTeos, who was then working at Euroscreen.

A first spin-off grant from the Walloon government paid his salary for the first two years, while iTeos was taking shape. The region also put up €6 million in research funding, on condition that private sources contributed a further €3 million. "That was a big incentive for new investors in the company."

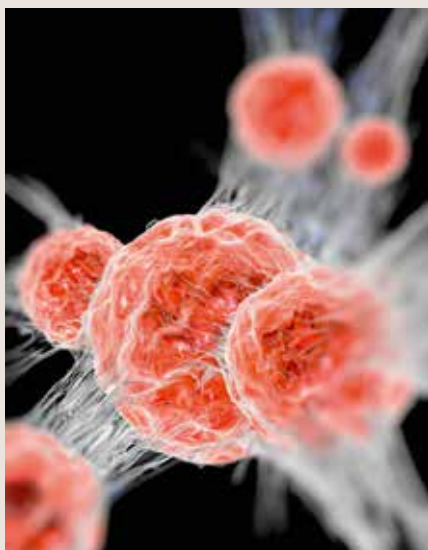
The company established itself at the Biopark in Gosselies, near Charleroi. "It was important for iTeos to invest in science, rather than in building facilities, and we found fully equipped laboratories, academic expertise and in vivo facilities here," Detheux explains.

By 2014 the company had candidate drugs to block both IDO1 and TDO2, and struck a €24 million upfront deal with pharmaceutical giant Pfizer, plus investment to develop the drugs further. The IDO1 candidate began phase one clinical trials this summer, just 15 months after the deal was signed. "This proves that we are able to develop a clinical candidate in a very efficient way."

iTeos has five other drug programmes in its pipeline, and is beginning the search for new investment – up to €45 million – to take this work forward.

It also has an agreement with US antibody specialist Adimab to develop new antibody drugs, and recently joined a €8.3 million EU research project for nano-particle immunotherapies. "European grants such as this are the perfect tool to build the next generation of the pipeline and also to expand our network," says Detheux.

➔ [WWW.ITEOSTHERAPEUTICS.COM](http://WWW.ITEOSTHERAPEUTICS.COM)



©SCIENCE/BELGA

would help innovative companies from Texas A&M get access to the European market, and they would help our companies get access to the US market."

With the addition of Tsinghua University in China, this collaboration developed into the Open Worldwide Innovation Network (OWIN). "We all put \$25,000 on the table to bring this network to life. It helps the companies belonging to the network find a home on the different continents. It speeds the growth of these companies, it gives them the resources to tackle much more quickly something it would have taken them years to do on their own."

The first area of support is information about the foreign market, which helps companies decide if they are ready to make the leap. Even if they decide to wait, the experience can be useful. "They might not go to the United States, but they change their business here as a result of understanding the American way of doing things," says Lachapelle.

When a US venture is launched, for example, the association with one of the country's top universities helps raise its profile. Beyond that, Texas A&M has put money into some of the joint ventures, and helped with strategic decisions such as recruiting executives. Ten Walloon companies have now put down roots in the US through OWIN, including Lisam and Taktik in software, Vésale Pharma in human health, and Revatis in veterinary medicine.

In May 2016 OWIN expanded with the addition of Australia's Queensland government, and Lachapelle would like to see this growth continue. "We are looking into Japan and Chile at the moment, and we have been

approached by other countries, such as Korea.”

Another initiative has been the creation of a Brussels chapter of the TiE Network. With its origins in Silicon Valley, this initiative promotes entrepreneurship through mentoring, networking and education. “Experienced entrepreneurs decide to give their time to younger entrepreneurs, to answer their questions and give them advice that allows them go a step further on the lonely path of being an entrepreneur,” says Lachapelle.

➤ [WWW.OPENIWIN.COM](http://WWW.OPENIWIN.COM)

➤ [WWW.BRUSSELS.TIE.ORG/EN](http://WWW.BRUSSELS.TIE.ORG/EN)

## A different take

Wallonia has also been exploring the notion that innovation is not necessarily the result of technological development, but also comes from new ideas about how to organise a business, connect with customers or form new partnerships. Fostering new enterprises in this ‘creative economy’ requires a different kind of support, hence the Creative Wallonia programme.

Launched in 2010, the first strand of the programme encourages creative thinking, with initiatives in schools and workshops in cities around the region. “If you want to have these new types of innovation, you have to have a population which is open to creativity and which can master creativity,” says David Valentiny, director of Creative Wallonia Engine, the agency which now runs the programme.

A second strand supports new practices in innovation, for example by developing co-working spaces and start-up accelerators to help people with creative ideas explore their



▲ Do Eat edible plates

business potential. The third strand provides finance for new projects. Creative Wallonia Engine took up the programme in 2015 and has overseen a strengthening of its local presence, with hubs in Liège, Tournai, Namur, Louvain-la-Neuve, Charleroi, Mons and Luxembourg. “Each of these hubs is a micro-Creative Wallonia at the city level, with people on the ground who can help project leaders, start-ups and creatives,” says Valentiny.

As of March 2016, Creative Wallonia had supported around 40 start-ups, 30 of which were still active. “But ninety percent of the participants were still entrepreneurs, if not with the start-up proposed during the acceleration phase, then with another start-up,” Valentiny says. The start-ups are capitalised to the tune of €27 million, a good return on the €1.25 million invested, and around 325 new jobs have been created.

Success stories include Beauty Dash, an internet platform that connects people planning luxury weddings or fashion events with make-up and hair artists, and Koaletc, a platform that helps charities coordinate their fund-raisers. Then there is Do Eat, which has designed edible plates for finger food, giving events a novel twist and reducing waste.

And as with technology, start-ups in the creative economy are international from the outset. “You do not expand your business as before, in a succession of concentric circles, beginning with your neighbours, then the district, then the city,” Valentiny explains. “Now you go directly to the whole world, and you do business with people wherever you can see an opportunity.”

➤ [WWW.CREATIVEWALLONIA.BE](http://WWW.CREATIVEWALLONIA.BE)

# Rising from the ruins

Travel through 850 years of history at Villers Abbey thanks to new visitor experience

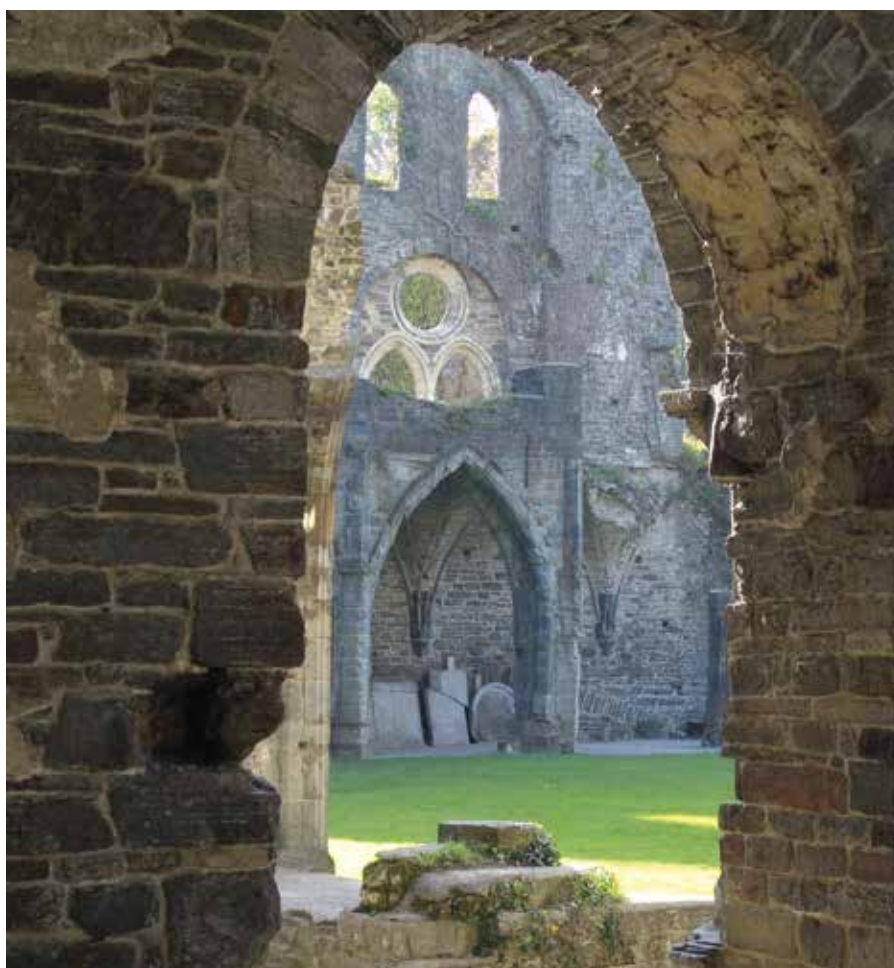
BY SARAH CREW

While the romantic ruins of Villers-la-Ville abbey are familiar to many as a dramatic backdrop to outdoor theatre and music, audiences rarely appreciate the full grandeur of this outstanding example of monastic architecture.

Now, a new entrance and interpretation centre provide historical context and an overview of the site, the most complete Cistercian abbey in Europe and Belgium's most visited ruins. In addition to the annual summer theatrical programme, they are the setting for activities for all ages, including tours, workshops, exhibitions and festivals on themes as varied as cars, medieval life, horticulture and beer.

Nestling at the bottom of a valley in the Walloon Brabant countryside, Villers-la-Ville was a major spiritual hub with an estate of 10,000 hectares in its heyday of 1267, when around 400 monks and lay brothers lived and worked within its walls. Abandoned in 1796 during the French Revolution, the abbey was ransacked and neglected before it was bought by the Belgian government in 1893.

Today, its former grain mill, a fine building dating from the 13th century but largely rebuilt at the end of the 19th, houses a brasserie and the abbey's management offices. The latest refurbishments, inaugurated this summer, have renovated the southern wing, which now serves as the single entrance point. Visitors pass through a reception and shop before walking through a room presenting



the Cistercian order. Interactive panels provide information on the abbey's importance accompanied by the sound of Gregorian chants. A second room on the upper floor contains a large-scale model of the abbey as it was in 1300, constructed out of shale, one of its original building materials. It has facilities for children to learn about the abbey and the role of monastic life in medieval times.



Leaving behind the modern scenography and tasteful stone and wood interior, visitors head outdoors across a walkway above a running stream and new electricity-generating mill wheel. From here, and the gravel path with a timeline of the abbey and wider history, you can glimpse the walled abbey below. Above lies a grassy hill, part of the new extension and the best vantage point. A flock of sheep and two heritage ponies graze on the hill, an additional tourist attraction and a reminder of former farming life at the abbey.

"It's a revolution in providing for the tourists who for 200 years have entered the site by the road," says historian Michel Dubuisson, assistant director of the non-profit Villers-la-Ville. "The importance of this new circuit is threefold. This medieval enclosure returns the site to how it was in the Middle Ages; the route obliges you to go through the visitor centre, walk along the hill and enter the abbey near the archaeological remains of the old gateway through which pilgrims once passed; and as in English sites such as Fountains Abbey, visitors have a view of the whole valley."

Another bridge links the hill to the abbey grounds. There may be something haunting about this abandoned scene with trails of ivy and fallen stones, yet strolling among the ruins is a restful experience that lends itself to contemplation. Under a miraculously intact roof, the towering nave of the church is imposing, with beautiful vaults, arches and rose windows that echo Romanesque and Gothic architecture. Other impressive buildings such as the

## The Cistercian order were monks who preferred to settle away from the world

former refectory and cloisters are open to the skies. It's worth spending some time walking around the grounds and gardens. Climb the steps to the chapel of Notre-Dame de Montaigu and peer over the ancient walls to view the abbey vineyards that produces Villers-La-Vigne wine.

Green living remains a key philosophy at Villers, and two new gardens have been added. "This has always been important for the Cistercian order, as they were monks who preferred to settle away from the world, which is why there are such beautiful Cistercian sites all over Europe," says Dubuisson. "There was also a European dimension to the Cistercian order, which developed a democracy at the heart of their movement. Villers is one of the most complete sites because there are traces of not only the monastic buildings, the church, the cloister, the monk's refectory, but also secondary buildings such as the mill, hostelry and brewery."

Developing the tourist site and the Villers Abbey brand is an important part of the

strategy, explains director Patrick Fautré. "We work with other sites that share the same centre of interest, such as the Folon Foundation in La Hulpe. The long-term objective is to have enough activities at Villers for people to spend the whole day here."

It currently attracts 35,000-40,000 visitors a year, rising to more than 100,000 with partnership events. Three-quarters of visitors are Belgian, the remainder principally from France, the Netherlands, Germany and the US.

"We are positioned according to three platforms: social, economic and sustainable," says Fautré. "As part of a social European project that provides training to people in difficulty, we provide six months of restoration experience. The hill was also renovated by a disabled group. For the economic aspect, we promote regional products in our boutique, particularly hop-based. These include cosmetics, artisan beer and an aromatic teddy bear that helps calm small children. There are tisanes made from plants from our medieval-inspired garden and Cistercian abbey wine."

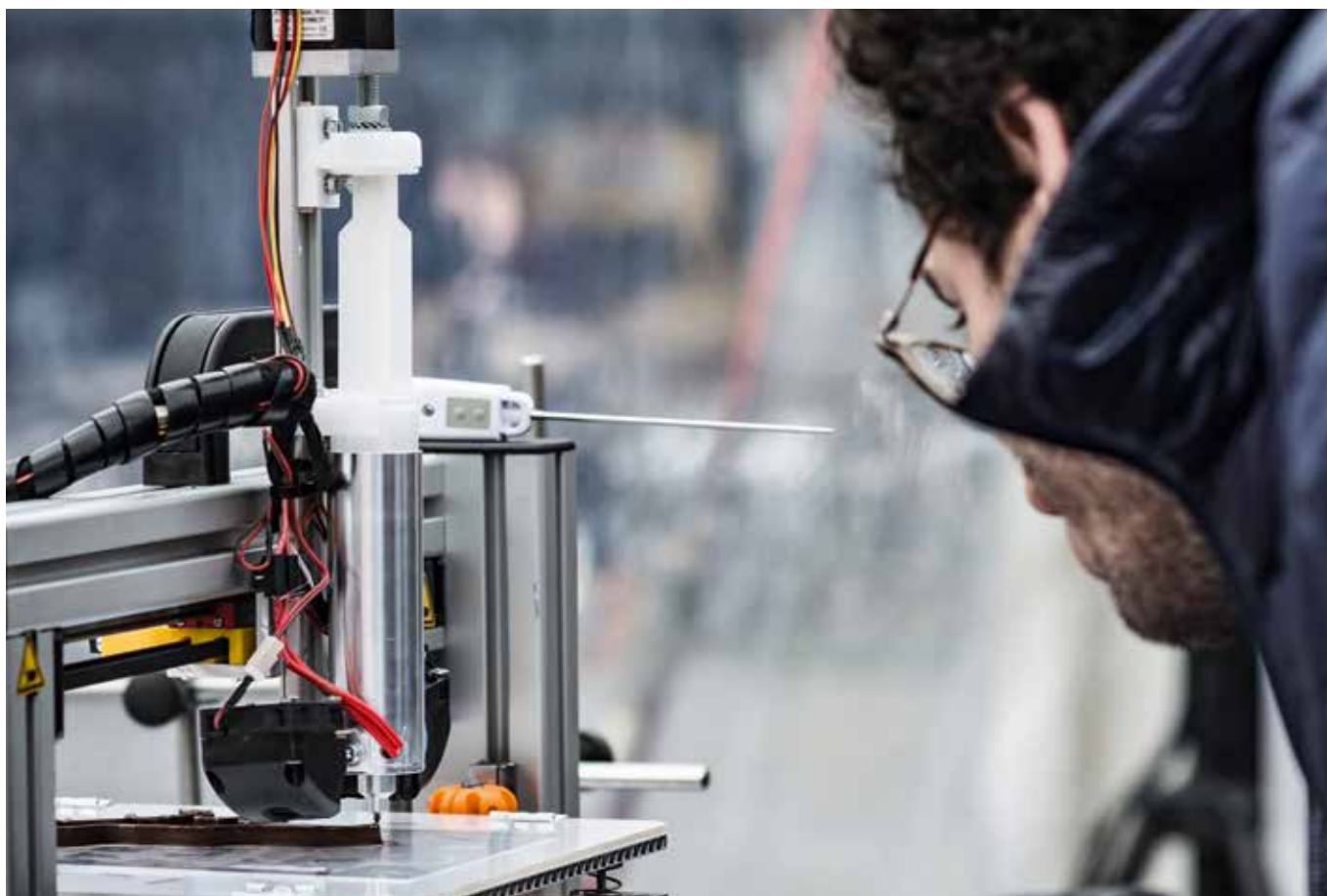
The abbey's microbrewery operates from a former laundry house. In partnership with a local brewery, they produce four traditional beers. Two are brewed on site, inspired by recipes from the abbey's archives, the blonde Abbaye de Villers V and triple Abbaye de Villers IX. The other two are new brews, Lumineuse and Ténébreuse. Reservations are needed for visits to the brewery.

➤ [WWW.VILLERS.BE](http://WWW.VILLERS.BE)

# What's cooking?

Chefs and scientists prepare food of the future at Cooking Lab in Gembloux

BY ANDY FURNIERE



**T**he Cooking Lab isn't the kind of laboratory where you have to be careful and not touch anything because risky chemical experiments are being carried out all around you. On the contrary: visitors are invited to experiment with the newest innovations in gastronomy. Not just top chefs, but anyone with a bright idea for a tasty dish.

The lab, in Gembloux at the Agro-Bio

Tech campus of Liège University (ULg), is a co-creation workspace installed as part of the wider Smart Gastronomy Lab (SGL) project. The SGL was started in January 2015, after a call from the Walloon government's Creative Wallonia programme, with the ambition of spicing up the region's gastronomic culture.

It was founded by ULg researchers Dorothee Goffin and Eric Haubruge.

Among the partners are Generation W, a collective of Walloon chefs, and the Namur co-creation lab Trakk. It is also supported by the Economic Agency for the Province of Namur and the non-profit KIKK, which bridges art, technology, business and culture through live events and educational projects.

Until April, the project was managed from Trakk, but now it has a temporary base on the Gembloux campus. The construction of a larger building on the campus has already begun and should be finished by the end of 2017.

The current facilities include a professional kitchen and a place for workshops. The Cooking Lab holds regular workshops on the newest trends in food culture, such as the use of algae. There are purely informative workshops, and entrepreneurs can also set up workshops to test the reactions to their developed products. Every Friday afternoon, the lab opens its doors to all visitors, who can freely use the facilities to carry out their own experiments.

These facilities go way beyond your everyday kitchen appliances like mixers – think more high-tech equipment like an ultrasonic probe, normally used in chemistry labs to break down cells and bacteria. “You can also use this device to extract the flavours of ingredients in a few seconds without having to touch them, which is more efficient,” says Gaëtan Richard, scientific manager of the SGL. “It can boost the variety,

quality and popularity of flavoured water, for example.”

While the ultrasonic probe costs about €5,000 and is too expensive for general use in kitchens, other scientific equipment has become more affordable since its introduction. “Take the immersion circulator, which used to be an expensive tool only used for chemistry experiments and now costs about €200,” says Richard. “More and more high technology will move from the lab to the kitchen.”

An important focus of the SGL is the most Belgian of all food products – chocolate. But not chocolate as you know it. Here, it can be shaped into the most fantastic forms using 3D printing technology. This project is the brainchild of Richard, who is qualified as both a chemist and a chef. “3D printing of chocolate has already been done, but not in the way we do it, with the highest attention to the quality of the chocolate,” he says. With other experts, he modified a 3D printer for plastics so that it could be used for chocolate.

The Cooking Lab will soon launch a start-up to commercialise the production of 3D-printed chocolate products, for products such as company logos, under the name My Choco Factory. If business is good, profits may be used to found another enterprise, which will sell user-friendly 3D chocolate printers.

The SGL also focuses on lacto-fermentation,

▼ 3D printed chocolate







a technique that allows food to be preserved for months and enriched, by putting it into a mixture of salt and water. The process is based on the fact that bacteria that could be harmful to us can't tolerate much salt, while there are healthy bacteria that can. It's not just an easy method, but is also economical and sustainable as you don't have to store your food in the freezer.

With Lacto Research, a ULg spin-off, the SGL will develop user-friendly kits for people to carry out lacto-fermentation efficiently. In the Cooking Lab, there also workshops organised on the method.

A third project started up by the SGL is that of hippocratonomy. Don't feel bad if you haven't heard the word before,

▲ Chocolate by Galler

it's a new term coined by chef Arabelle Meirlaen from Namur and ULg professor Vincent Castronovo. It's a contraction of Hippocrates and gastronomy and is a research domain based on the properties of food that can prevent and even cure certain diseases.

"To give an example, eating several brazil nuts a day can significantly decrease the risk of developing prostate cancer," says Richard. "Of course, you need a balanced diet for your general health, but you can also battle a specific condition by adapting your diet to it." This project is still in the start-up phase but should lead to a website, book, workshops and conferences on the topic.

While the SGL is already active, its scope will expand considerably when its new building is ready, by the end of next year. Its new headquarters are also in Gembloux, just 500m from the current location. This new Cooking Lab will be about four times bigger. The extra space will be used to set up a restaurant with about 40 places, whose menu will feature the experimental dishes developed by professional and amateur chefs in the workshop. Visitors will also be able to buy the innovative food products. "We will ask visitors about their preferences concerning the categorising of food products in a shop environment," says Richard. "These insights will help food shops to promote their goods more efficiently."

The building will also include space for an incubator, where start-up companies in the culinary sector can steadily grow and profit from the multidisciplinary expertise served up at the Cooking Lab.

➤ [WWW.SMARTGASTRONOMY.BE](http://WWW.SMARTGASTRONOMY.BE)

# Design matters

Cross-linguistic collaborations were the fruit of Milan Design Week

BY GEORGIO VALENTINO



▲ TimberGroup

In the past 11 years, Brussels' Design September has grown from a week-long taste of a burgeoning industry to a full-on feast of made-in-Belgium design, spanning the entire capital for an entire month. This year the event welcomed home a unique furniture exhibition whose original objective was to promote Belgian design abroad.

Belgian Matters made its debut at the 55th edition of Milan's prestigious Salone del Mobile in April. The project paired designers and specialist companies from all three of Belgium's regions. The idea was not just to showcase national talent but also to encourage innovation by introducing otherwise unlikely partners. The final project boasted 13 design dyads, each with a designer to dream the dream and a producer to make it real. The relationships forged here cross linguistic, geographic and disciplinary lines. Many of the participating companies, from manufacturers to industrial producers to research groups, are not involved in furniture design at all.

The concept is itself a collaboration between several regional design organisations operating under the national umbrella Belgium Is Design, as well as the art magazine *DAMN*, which has been promoting contemporary design in Belgium and abroad for over a decade.

Belgian Matters was very much an experiment, but it was a successful one. The project generated three rooms of cutting-edge prototypes, using materials of all stripes. These were unveiled at the Palazzo Litta in the context of Milan Design Week's group

event *A Matter of Perception: Tradition & Technology*. They were showcased on home turf as one of the marquee events of the 2016 edition of Design September.

French-born, Brussels-based designer Julien Renault was one of the 13 ambassadors tapped to represent his local scene in *Belgian Matters*. Renault has been living and working in the capital since 2009. In the past several years he has distinguished himself as a product developer, design archivist and photographer for various international brands, including Alain Berteau's Brussels label *Objekten*.

"For *Belgian Matters* I decided to work with TimberGroup, which is a small Belgian company specialised in the use of reclaimed wood from Europe, the US and Canada," Renault says. "Together we developed a bench and chair for our new *BOARD* collection. I also overhauled their visual identity with a fresh logo, website and catalogue, as well as photography."

Renault and his partners at TimberGroup had just five months to brainstorm, design and prototype their collection. Renault's contemporary designs were terra incognita for TimberGroup, whose work with recycled wood from dismantled farmhouses had always gravitated towards the rustic and historical. For his part, Renault had to get familiar with TimberGroup's raw material of choice. Recycled wood has its own character that cannot be suppressed but must rather be incorporated into the design.

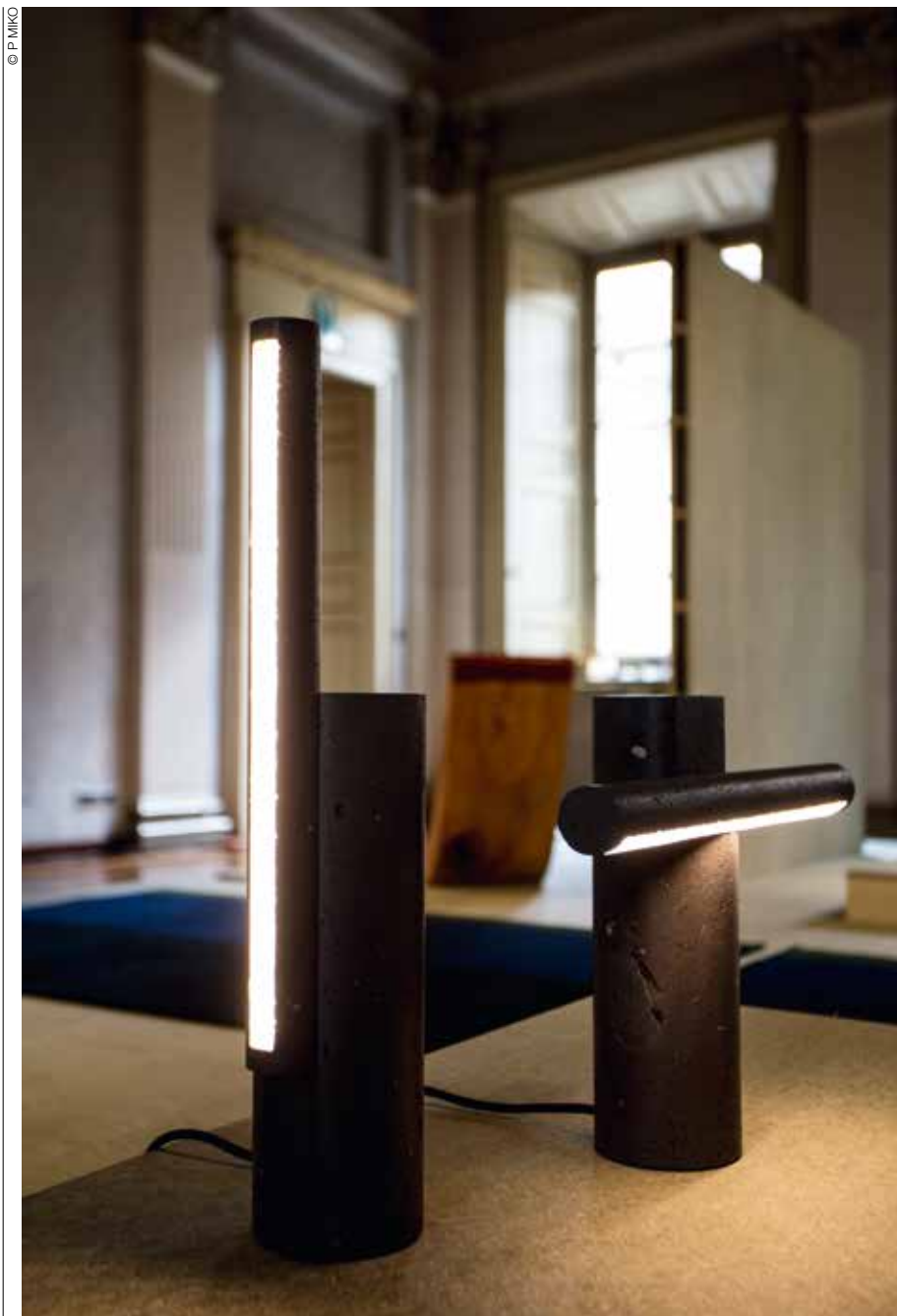
"It was a lot of work," Renault says. "Everything was done very quickly

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We were very happy to see the result and receive such positive feedback from our peers

JULIEN RENAULT





▲ LeviSarha's Drill lamps

and we didn't know how it would be received until we arrived in Milan. Fortunately, it was a success. We were very happy to see the result and receive such positive feedback from our peers. It was an important step for us."

It was just one step for Renault and TimberGroup, who have decided to put the BOARD prototypes into production for Design September.

"I knew from the start that I wanted to continue this collaboration beyond

Milan," says Renault. "We are still working closely together. We've added a table to the collection and started production on the whole collection. Milan was all about the process, and it is important for people to see all the work that goes into such a project. Now, in the context of Design September, we will launch the finished collection at Homepage<sup>2</sup>."

The 12 other Belgian Matters collaborations spawned prototypes in marble, leather, porcelain, tubes, textiles, glass and even volcanic rock. Franco-Belgian design duo LeviSarha teamed with stonework firm Marcel Ziemons – based in Raeren, one of Wallonia's German-speaking municipalities – to create two Drill lamps fashioned from core samples of basalt. The rock was extracted from Belgian soil.

Belgian Matters was only one of 100 design-related events throughout September. They ranged from exhibitions to lectures to open houses to pop-up shops, not to mention the annual Commerce Design Brussels competition and a new edition of Brussels Design Market, which touts itself as Europe's biggest vintage market.

Renault himself was involved in several other Design September events. He and fellow designer Alain Berteau teased their new designs for veteran Brussels brand ABV at Château d'Eaux in the Bois de la Cambre. And Renault also had a hand in designing the award-winning Happy Guesthouse, where textile designer Kim Vande Pitte presented her latest creations.

➔ [WWW.BELGIUMISDESIGN.BE](http://WWW.BELGIUMISDESIGN.BE)



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# Mouse on the move

**T**his little mouse key ring is being snapped all around the world. Made from wood by Liège cabinetmaker Christian Dalimier, it's playing a special role in a two-part competition run by Wallonia.be. The first part invites people to look for the five spots of the Wallonia.be logo in everyday situations and post them on Twitter with the hashtag #WalloniaEverywhere. Everyone who takes part – and also becomes an

ambassador for the Wallonia brand – will receive their own mouse. They are then asked to slip it in their bag and photograph it in an unusual location in Wallonia or abroad. The most surprising photo will be rewarded with a city break in Europe. To take part in the competition or become an ambassador for Wallonia.be, see the website.

➔ [WALLONIA.BE/EN/AMBASSADORS](http://WALLONIA.BE/EN/AMBASSADORS)

1 Strawberries from Wépion 2 Brittany, France 3 En route to Aranjuez, Spain 4 Statue of Georges Simenon, Liège 5 Aranjuez, Spain 6 London Underground 7 Grand Prix of Spa-Francorchamps 8 Athens 9 Milan 10 Concon, Chile



8



9



10



## EXHIBITIONS



## INTERSECTIONS #4

Two Belgian design institutions join forces for *Intersections #4: CID & Friends*. Hosted by the Atomium's recently inaugurated design museum Adam, the exhibition presents pieces from Wallonia's Centre of Innovation and Design CID, which has been collecting cutting-edge furniture, lighting and industrial design since 1984. *CID & Friends* includes 150 items from CID's permanent collection.

**WHAT?** INTERSECTIONS #4

**WHEN?** UNTIL 5 FEBRUARY

**WHERE?** ART & DESIGN ATOMIUM MUSEUM, BRUSSELS  
[www.adamuseum.be](http://www.adamuseum.be)



## MINEUR AUJOURD'HUI DANS LE MONDE

Is the mine of the 21st century really any different from that of 60 years ago when, on 8 August 1956, Marcinelle was the scene of the biggest disaster to hit the Belgian coalmining industry? Of the 274 people working on that morning, only 12 survived. This exhibition looks at the job of mining, as decried as it is revered in regions where it's part of history. Photographs and films examine a range of themes including safety and the environmental impact, as well as daily life for those working in the industry. A separate photo exhibition looks at the impact of the industry on the town of Marcinelle.

**WHAT?** MINEUR AUJOURD'HUI DANS LE MONDE

**WHEN?** UNTIL 11 DECEMBER

**WHERE?** BOIS DU CAZIER  
[www.leboisducazier.be](http://www.leboisducazier.be)



## HOMOMIGRATUS

The phenomenon of migration is inseparable from human nature. We have been migrating since the dawn of time, creating the world we know today. Whether trekking thousands of miles across continents or to a new city in the same country, migration is always an uprooting. *HomoMigratus: Understanding Human Migrations* offers a new perspective on this phenomenon, as well as giving a voice to immigrants of various ages and origins.

**WHAT?** HOMOMIGRATUS

**WHEN?** UNTIL 11 DECEMBER

**WHERE?** MUSEE DE LA VIE WALLONNE LIÈGE  
[www.provincedeliege.be](http://www.provincedeliege.be)

## MUSIC



## ARS MUSICA

Inaugurated in 1989, Ars Musica is a city-wide, biennial showcase of contemporary classical music. The 2014 edition unfolded at over a dozen Brussels concert halls of all shapes and sizes. Some 60 concerts by the world's top composers and performers brought Belgian audiences up to speed on the latest innovations in an ancient art form. This edition promises to be even bigger, with its focus on contemporary Japanese composers and their ever-evolving relationship with European and American counterparts.

**WHAT?** ARS MUSICA

**WHEN?** 12-27 NOVEMBER

**WHERE?** ACROSS BRUSSELS  
[www.arsmusica.be](http://www.arsmusica.be)

## EVENTS



DAVID HAMILTON

## ANTICA NAMUR

The largest antiques fair in Belgium is celebrating its 40th anniversary with the theme Grand Cru. Among the 120 exhibitors, expect to find outstanding examples of vintage crystal by Val Saint-Lambert, Art Deco carafes, wine objects, paintings featuring wine and many other sparkling pieces. Antique lovers, amateur and professional, descend on Antica Namur for its eclectic exhibits from prestigious antique houses and passionate collectors. Belgian painter and costume and set designer Thierry Bosquet revamps the entrance of Namur Expo for the anniversary edition and the event includes an exhibition by British photographer and film director David Hamilton.

**WHAT?** ANTICA NAMUR

**WHEN?** 11-20 NOVEMBER

**WHERE?** NAMUR EXPO  
[www.antica.be](http://www.antica.be)



## SALON HABITAT LIÈGE

Wallonia's premier home show, with almost 250 exhibitors showcasing more than 1,000 brands. Whether you're in the market for a new garage, a swimming pool or just refreshing some tired furniture, there's inspiration for the entire home: carpentry, security, decoration, landscaping, sustainable energy and much more. On 2 December, the show stays open until 21.00.

**WHAT?** SALON HABITAT LIÈGE

**WHEN?** 26 NOVEMBER-4 DECEMBER

**WHERE?** HALLES DE FOIRES DE LIÈGE  
[www.salonhabitat.be](http://www.salonhabitat.be)

## PERFORMANCE

### BATTLEFIELD

Thirty years ago, Peter Brook's production of the Mahabharata helped to redefine theatre. It not only made the ancient Sanskrit epic available to a global audience, it also proved that theatre could be forged from the elementary ingredients of earth, fire and water. Today, using only four barefoot actors and a percussionist, the award-winning director evokes the aftermath of a war between members of the same family. In English, with French surtitles.

**WHAT?** BATTLEFIELD

**WHEN?** 24-30 OCTOBER

**WHERE?** THEATRE JEAN VILAR

LOUVAIN-LA-NEUVE

[www.atjv.be](http://www.atjv.be)

## FAMILY



### HALLOWEEN AT THE CITADEL

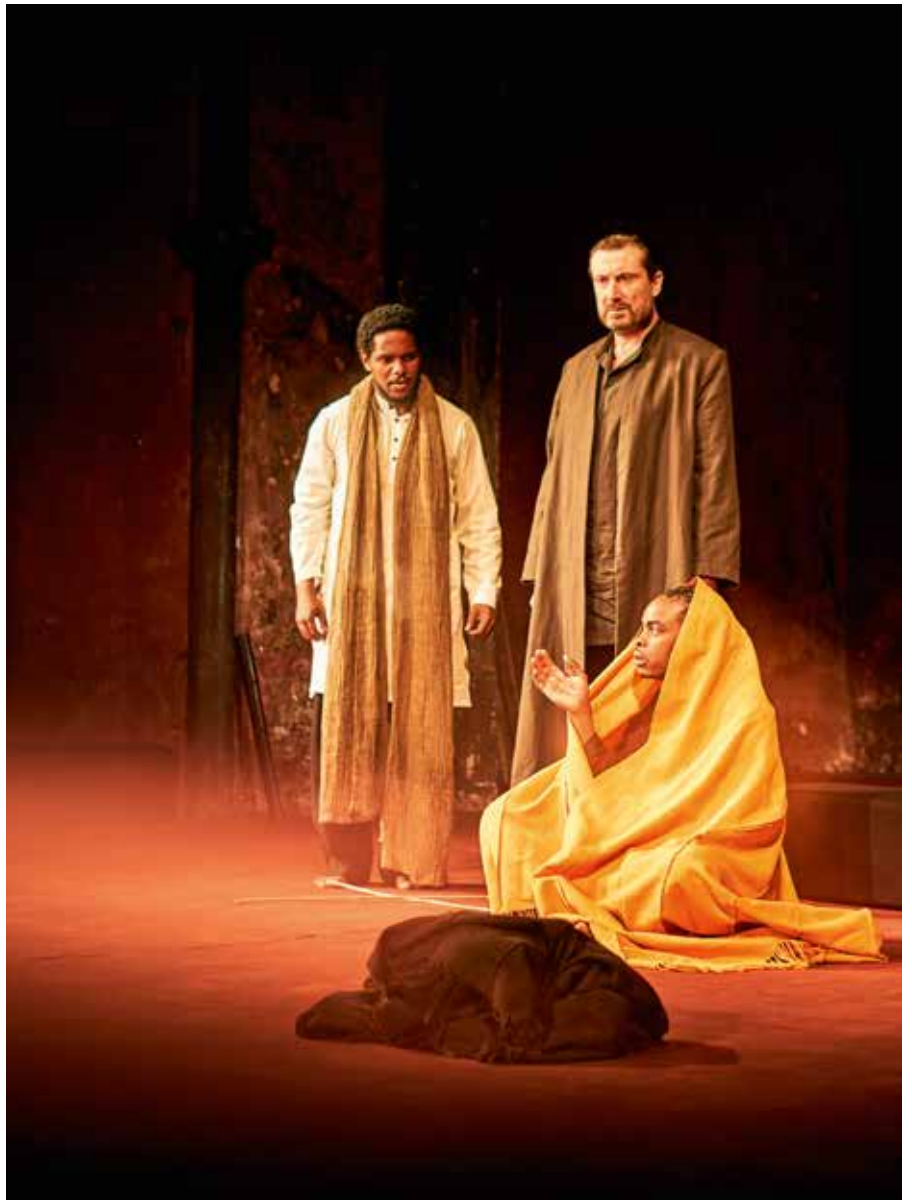
Halloween at the Citadel takes the young ones for a spooky romp through history. Namur's ancient fortress is the perfect setting for an interactive performance of epic proportions. The premise: mad scientist Henri Parker creates a time machine to meet humankind's greatest heroes and villains in the flesh. In the process he opens a Pandora's box of crazy costumed characters. The annual event is one of only a few to use the Théâtre de Verdure, a restored Belle-Epoque amphitheatre normally closed to the public.

**WHAT?** HALLOWEEN AT THE CITADEL

**WHEN?** 29 OCTOBER-1 NOVEMBER

**WHERE?** CITADEL, NAMUR

[www.citadelle.namur.be](http://www.citadelle.namur.be)



## BROOK INTO BATTLE

Paris-based British director Peter Brook is one of theatre's greatest storytellers. In returning Indian epic The Mahabharata to the stage – albeit a tightly pared-down version – he shows that theatrical magic requires little artifice. This tale of a warring family is brought to life by a small cast of multi-ethnic actors, barefooted and wrapped in shawls or scarves. For 80 minutes, they converse with other members of the family, calmly contemplative as they speak about the devastating war. The causes of mass slaughter are morally complex.

Brook himself believes political leaders need to be asking these questions: Obama, Hollande, Putin and other presidents on the political stage. "For me, the theatre is the possibility during an hour or two, in one concentrated place, with the public, to enter into a shared experience that leaves each nourished by his own reflection. When we watch the news, we are angry, disgusted, furious; but in the theatre, we can face all this and exit more confident, more courageous, saying that we can face life," says Brook. For the 92-year-old, this exceptional and distilled work may well be his swansong.

# Feel inspired



Wallonia, a world of opportunities

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WITHIN ONE DAY \_\_\_\_\_

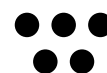
Very high density of   
**UNIVERSITIES** and **higher**  
**education establishments**

**6** **COMPETITIVENESS**  
\_\_\_\_\_ **CLUSTERS** in  
LEADING-EDGE sectors

an exceptional   
**QUALITY**  
**OF LIFE**

Highly skilled  
AVAILABLE  
**WORKFORCE** 

**70%** \_\_\_\_\_ of business  
turnover comes  
from **EXPORTS**



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