



EVENTS IN FLANDERS 2023 -2024

Landscapes - Feel Flanders Fields

28 April 2023- 31 August 2024

Flanders Fields- various locations EXHIBITIONS and COMMEMORATIVE EVENTS

From April 2023, Flanders Fields begins a grouping of commemorative events entitled "Landscapes" as a special theme year, inviting visitors to reflect on how its landscapes still bear the scars of war over one hundred years later. Stories of how the current landscape was sculpted are covered in detail in the [For Evermore Expo](#) in the In Flanders Fields Museum. Meanwhile, the Nieuwpoort over Water spectacle tells the stories experienced following the historic flooding of the River Yzer. The Forgotten trail, immersive experience via sound and light show will emulate a scene in the town of Poperinge anno '14-'18. Meanwhile *Witnesses of the Landscape* by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission will explore the stories of 25 well-known and lesser-known cemeteries. [Landscapes](#) begins in April 2023.

Dirk Bouts City Festival

29 September 2023 – 14 February 2024

M Museum Leuven - CITY ART FESTIVAL

Dieric Bouts (1410-1475) was one of the most important Flemish Masters. The painter moved to Leuven and married the affluent Catharina Van der Bruggen in 1448. He remained in Leuven until his death. While in Leuven, he painted 'The Last Supper' and 'The Martyrdom of Saint Erasmus', two of Bouts' most important works that can still be seen today in their historical setting at St Peter's church. To celebrate this fact, the city of Leuven will host a city festival themed about its most famous painter with its city M-Museum hosting a prestigious art exhibition bringing together famous works of art by Bouts from galleries and museums around the world, including the National Gallery amongst others.

Turning Heads: Rembrandt, Rubens and Vermeer

20 October 2023- 21 January 2024

Antwerp Fine Arts Museum (KMSKA) – ART EXHIBITION

Dr Nico Van Hout, Head of Collections Research at the Royal Museum of Fine Arts Antwerp (KMSKA) explores the varied use of heads by Rubens and his assistants. A study head or *tronie* is a depiction of a face and a tool that Rubens used to vary the figures included in a densely populated painting, such as a scene from the Bible. Rubens and his assistants painted study heads for themselves to experiment with skin tones and the effect of light and shade on human faces. Several studio assistants sometimes painted the same model from different angles. Unlike a portrait, the identity of the model in a head study was irrelevant and frequently unknown. But in fact, certain head studies crop up more than ten times in different works, indicating that they were reused on a large scale. Rubens' studio operated at a pace that was astonishing and much higher than previously thought. This major [exhibition](#) opening in the KMSKA in October will examine 60 tronies by Dürer, Bruegel, Rubens, Van Dyck, Jordaens, Hals, Brouwer, Rembrandt, Sweerts, Vermeer and many others. It is the first of its kind and will be created in collaboration with the National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin, www.kmska.be

Rare and Indispensable

31 October 2023 - 25 February 2024

MAS museum- Antwerp

Magritte, Bacon, Ensor, Moore, Jordaens, Rubens ... These are just some of the world-famous names on display at the MAS in autumn 2023. '[Rare and Indispensable](#)' brings a unique selection of masterpieces from the Flemish masterpiece list. Works of art you would otherwise have to travel all over Flanders to see, or which were never even publicly accessible, will be temporarily brought together in one museum hall. All in honour of the 20th anniversary of the 'Flemish Masterpiece Decree'.

**From Scribbles to Cartoons
Drawings from Bruegel to Rubens
17 Nov 2023-18 February 2024**

Museum Plantin-Moretus shows the 85 most beautiful old drawings from Flemish collections. The whole is a stunning and representative overview of drawing in our region in the 16th and 17th centuries. It is a unique opportunity to see some special drawings next to each other, such as the sketchbook of 12-year-old Rubens. Other notable works by Frans Floris, Pieter Bruegel, Anthony Van Dyck or Jacques Jordaens can be seen too. [From scribble to cartoon | Museum Plantin-Moretus \(museumplantinmoretus.be\)](https://www.museumplantinmoretus.be)

**The Six Days of Ghent
14-19 November 2023
't Kuipke Stadium -Ghent
CYCLING EVENT**

The Lotto Six Days of Flanders-Ghent is a cycling event which takes place at the Kuipke cycling track located in the Citadel Park in Ghent. An annual event since 1922, takes part on the covered track with two teams. The two riders with the highest number of rounds after a period of six days, or who obtained the most points from each individual auxiliary competition, wins.

**Christmas Beer Festival
Essen – Antwerp Region
16-17 December 2023- BEER FESTIVAL**

Organised every year for just two days, visitors can taste around 170 different Belgian Christmas beers and the listing is regarded as one of the best in the world. Attracting about 3000 visitors, the station provides a shuttle bus for visitors from Essen train station to the venue. <https://en.kerstbierfestival.be/festival>

**ROSE, ROSE, ROSE, À MES YEUX!
James Ensor and the still life in Belgium 1830-1930
16 December 23- 14 January 2024
Muzee Ostend – ART EXHIBITION**

The most original figure of late 19th century Flemish painting, Ensor is known for his unique portrayals of grotesque humanity, painting individuals as clowns or skeletons or replacing their faces with carnival masks. Painters have been creating still-life imagery since the 17th century. Ensor painted many still lifes throughout his life. He starts with very well-painted but traditional decorative still lifes. But delved into experimentalism and renewed the notion of the still life, both in the way he painted and in the subject matter. By animating the objects, he painted in a ghostly manner or by painting objects in a dreamlike style (e.g., by drawing nymphs fluttering around a bouquet of flowers). His still lifes, painted from 1880 to 1939, demonstrate Ensor's stylistic development, from dark and classical to colourful and expressive, from bright and ethereal. With about 40 works, this exhibition will compare Ensor's work from nineteenth-century academic painting and the modern art of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In this exhibition, about 30 works by Ensor from public and private collections from home and abroad will come together to honor this city's most famous resident artist.

2024 onwards

**James Ensor- Inspired by Brussels
22 February – 2 June 2024
KBR – Royal Library of Belgium- ART EXHIBITION**

2024 marks the 75th anniversary of James Ensor's death and to mark it, the [KBR](https://www.kbr.be) will be bringing together a diverse collection of 250 of Ensor's paintings, drawings and prints in the Palace of Charles de Lorraine, a hidden gem in the heart of Brussels.

**Re-opening of the Hof van Buysleden Museum
February 2024
Mechlen.**

After a closure, this wonderful city [museum](#) re-opens with its permanent exhibition and redesign of the Renaissance gardens.

Self Portraits – James Ensor

21 March – 16 June 2024

James Ensor House – Ostend – ART EXHIBITION

To understand James Ensor and his art, a visit to his original home is essential. The house where he worked and lived from 1917 until his death has been preserved in its original state and is well worth the visit. The self-portrait is of essential importance in Ensor's work and occupies a special place in his work. The first three known painted self-portraits by James Ensor date from 1879. His best-known self-portrait is undoubtedly Self-Portrait with Flowered Hat (Mu.ZEE, Ostend), painted in 1883 and updated around 1888. By adding a flowered hat, he referenced Rubens' famous self-portraits. Between 1900 and 1932, Ensor stopped his self-portraits. Prompted by his increasing notoriety, it is not until 1932 that he painted a further dozen self-portraits, of which perhaps Ensor and the 1935 masks are the most typical of his work.

Re-opening of the Winter Garden Art Nouveau Building

St Katelijne-Waver near Mechelen

March 24 – OPENING

[The Winter Garden](#) of the Ursuline Nuns is a hidden gem, found just outside the city of Mechelen. A truly magnificent art nouveau building was conceived in 1900 this former international girls boarding school. The Winter Garden is part of a magnificent, listed complex, which is a stunning mix of architectural styles including Art Nouveau with neo-Gothic elements, neo-Empire style and Art Deco. There will also be a new cycling route that will connect this heritage site to nearby Mechelen

Beaufort Along the Coast

30 March 2024- 3 November 2024

Various places along the Belgian Coast - OUTDOOR SCULPTURE FESTIVAL

Every three years the Belgian Coast hosts [Beaufort](#) Visitors can look forward to a number of installations on display across the promenades, in the dunes, on the beaches. The contemporary art by the sea Triennial is a free event that is open to everyone and is aimed at lovers of culture, residents, domestic and foreign tourists. With its selection of qualitative works that can also be integrated into the public space in the long term, the arts project gives the Belgian Coast extra appeal. As well as the new pieces being exhibited for Beaufort visitors can also enjoy former installations being collated into a permanent sculpture park dotted all along the coastline.

Bruges Triennial

13 April -1 September 2024

Bruges- various places – OUTDOOR SCULPTURE FESTIVAL

[The Bruges Triennial](#) takes place from May to September and is a unique art and architecture trail in the centre of Bruges. The exhibits featured during the Triennial use the landscape of Bruges to promote a special theme, yet to be revealed. Artists and Architects will be invited to create work around both popular as well as lesser-known venues in the centre of the city. Works of art, installations and meeting places will be put up in the city centre. They will create an easy to navigate route that brings people together in unexpected spots in this compact but delightful city.

Opening of the Rubens House Experience Centre

Summer 2023

Antwerp- OPENING

With the current works taking place at Rubens House, it means that the main house cannot currently be visited due to its renovation over the next few years. But a brand new building is emerging to the side of Rubens's historic home, garden and studio. This will accommodate the reception area, the new museum café, the research centre and the internationally acclaimed Rubens Library: the place to be for any research on Rubens and his contemporaries. This new [Rubens Experience Centre](#) is due to open in April 2024. Furthermore, a new baroque garden will feature plants from Rubens' time featuring historic plant families, following contemporary colour advice from fashion designer Dries Van Noten. All will be revealed at the opening.

Toer de Geuze

4-5 May 2023

Pajotteland – Flemish Brabant region

One aspect that we believe sets Belgium apart from other great beer countries is the sheer range of diverse types and styles of beer...there really is something for every taste and occasion! One of our unique and most distinct styles is undoubtedly gueuze, and every two years, the brewers and blenders of the Senne Valley in the Pajottenland, to the west of Brussels, open their doors to visitors for the [Toer de Gueuze](#), to celebrate this delicious drink. [Toer de Gueuze](#) is a biennial event, when the lambic breweries and gueuze blending houses open their doors to the public. The breweries and blending houses receive guests arriving by their own transport but a special tour bus usually visits various breweries and blending houses to provide a thirst-quenching and insightful tour around the production of this unique beer.

Ostend, Ensor's imaginary Paradise

15 June – 30 September 2024

The Venetian Galleries- Ostend- EXHIBITION

In 1900, Belgian King Leopold II commissioned architect Henri Maquet to design the first royal gallery: an L-shaped, closed and covered walkway between the royal villa and a large octagonal salon. Nowadays it is known by the name 'Venetian Galleries', referring to Venice's classicist architecture. When the Belgian royal family decided they would no longer use their coastal residence, Ostend was given the concession of the entire complex and resolved that the building be used for cultural purposes. The city renovated the Venetian Galleries between 1998 and 1999 and converted them into exhibition space. More information to follow about this Ensor inspired exhibition to follow.

Tournée Trappiste

June 2024 TBC

Vleteren- BEER FESTIVAL

[Tournée Trappiste](#) is a relatively new festival, highlighting the beers produced by the Trappists. Trappist monks brew trappist beer. Fourteen monasteries - six in Belgium, two in the Netherlands, and one each in Austria, Italy, England, France, Spain and the United States - currently produce Trappist beer, as members of the International Trappist Association, which approved the initiative of the organisers to honour their products during this festival. Each Trappist brewery will have a stand where, besides the beers, also cheese and wine are offered. The organization strives to offer all existing Trappist beers, cheeses, and wines in the world. A sales booth will sell beers for takeaway, glassware, chocolate, mustard, and more tasty Trappist products. There will be three food stands (meat, fish and veggie), where each chef will offer two dishes, each containing at least one Trappist product.

Beer Passion Week

Jun/JUL 2024 TBC

Antwerp – Groenenplaats – BEER FESTIVAL

The "Bierpassieweekend" ([Beer Passion Weekend](#)) is the ideal occasion for beer connoisseurs and zythologists to discover Antwerp's dazzling array of beers. The Groenplaats, will host over forty breweries who will bring over two hundred different beers to the occasion. Entrance is free and visitors need only purchase an affordable €3.00 tasting glass to sample the 200 speciality beers on offer.

Gentse Feesten (Ghent Festivities)

July 2024 TBC

Ghent, inner city – CITY FESTIVAL

Every year this long-established, ten-day cultural event takes over Ghent's historic city centre. There is free music on all the central squares and hundreds of other activities, plus six international-level festivals: 10 Days Off, MiramirO, the International Puppet Buskers' Festival, the 'Jeugdcircusfestival', Boomtown and Gent Jazz Festival. www.gentsefeesten.be

Ommegang

July 2024 TBC

Brussels, City Centre – RELIGIOUS PROCESSION

This great folkloric procession is one of the most important events in Brussels history and culture. Because the Ommegang recreates a famous celebration organised in 1549 on the Grand'Place in honour of Charles V and his son Philippe II. The whole of the royal court parades before your eyes in all its finery: more than 1,000 extras in period costume, dozens of horses, carts and giants. Horse-drawn

carriages and flag throwers are also at the party in the magical setting of the Grand'Place. www.ommegang.be

Ghent Jazz Festival

July 2024 TBC

Ghent – MUSIC FESTIVAL

This Gent Jazz Festival is spread over two weekends, one weekend for the pure-bred jazz fans and during the second weekend, there is room for more fusion artists. Since its first show in 2001, when it was called Blue Note Festival the festival became loved amongst fans as it welcomes over 35 000 people each year. Gent Jazz Festival is also member of the International Jazz Festival Organisation. www.gentjazz.com

Brosella Folk & Jazz

July 2024 TBC

Laeken, - JAZZ FESTIVAL

The Brosella Folk & Jazz festival has grown into a hugely successful international music event since its inception in the year 1977. This unique two-day free festival is held in the fairy open-air Green Theatre, near the Atomium. The wide variety of high-quality music, the charming place, and the original program for children with street theatre, circus and music, are the ingredients for an enjoyable and unforgettable weekend. www.brosella.be

Reie Festival

August 2024 TBC

Bruges

The [Reiefestival](#) is a new arts festival that connects heritage and history with contemporary performing arts. The festival takes place at various open-air locations on and around the canals of Bruges and will run over several days in August. It focuses on new creations and covers a different theme each year.

Jazz Middelheim

August 2024TBC

Antwerp, Park 'Den Brandt' – JAZZ FESTIVAL

Jazz Middelheim is one of the oldest festivals on Belgian soil and takes place over a weekend. Jazz Middelheim highlights the greats of jazz and unknown and experimental projects which come together in a great musical event <https://jazzmiddelheim.be/en/>

MAfestival – Flanders Festival

August 2024

Bruges, various locations – EARLY MUSIC FESTIVAL

The Festival of Flanders – Bruges, also called the MAfestival, is one of the most important early music festivals. It focuses on the historical informed practice of early music and is currently leading in terms of renewing and extending the concept. Besides an international ten-day festival marked by a selection of the world's most exciting performers, MAfestival also organizes a competition for young musicians and an exposition that focuses on historical instruments, instruments made to historical examples and musical accessories. www.mafestival.be

Laus Polyphoniae

August 2024 TBC

Antwerpen, AMUZ – EARLY MUSIC FESTIVAL

The Laus Polyphoniae festival in Antwerp takes a theme and engages its music with styles from the Middle Ages, Renaissance, and early baroque. It brings a unique take on traditional concerts with invited artists from around the world. www.amuz.be

Bruges Beer Festival

14-15 September 2024

BMCC- Bruges – BEER FESTIVAL

Bruges has a renowned reputation as a beer city, thanks to its rich brewing traditions and its many 'brown' beer pubs. Besides, also the [Bruges Beer Festival](#), where some 80 Belgian breweries present more than 500 beers, contributes to the city's beer fame. The attending breweries represent a mix of

long-established names and interesting newbies in the craft beer scene. A variety of food trucks provides hot and cold meals on the spot, while many local restaurants will offer beer inspired menus. The festival organizers use to spice up the event with lectures, debates, culinary sessions, etc.

Belgian Beer Weekend

September 2024 TBC

Brussels Grote Markt- BEER FESTIVAL

A chance to sample, blonde, white, amber coloured, fruit and strong beers. All available to sample the whole weekend around the Grote Markt and the Beurs. www.belgianbeerweekend.be

Ghent Festival of Flanders

September 2024 TBC

Ghent various locations – CLASSICAL MUSIC FESTIVAL

Ghent Flanders Festival provides the annual cultural season with a grand “OdeGand” event. This is an ode to Ghent, its magnificent façades, fairy-like canals, and lots of cosy little places. An entire day of music in every one of Ghent’s cultural venues and along its canals, brought to you by international and national artists who will perform anything between tango, jazz, and, of course, classical music... attracting over 55,000 visitors each year www.gentfestival.be

Beer and Hop Festival

September 2024 TBC

Poperinge- FOOD AND DRINK FESTIVAL

This year, the Beer and Hop festival enters its 25th year. Starting on a Friday, the festivities start with a musical event followed by the crowning of the new hop queen on Saturday evening. On Sunday, an international hop parade takes place with more than 50 groups, 2,000 extras and dozens of horse-drawn carriages travelling through the streets of Poperinge.

Satire, parody and pastiche

James Ensor House- Ostend

19 September 2024- 12 January 2025- EXHIBITION

To mark the 75th anniversary of James Ensor's death in 2024, The James Ensor House in Ostend is planning an exhibition where all his techniques are represented: oil paintings, works on paper, prints, but also documents and photographs. Loans from Mu.ZEE, Ostend, KMSK, Antwerp, the KBC Collection, the Ensor Foundation and various private collections at home and abroad will feature. James Ensor's works are characterised by humour and caricature. Other works stand out for their more "classical" approach and meticulous execution. These refer to old masters such as Bosch, Bruegel, Rubens, and Watteau. He above most modern artists, was the expert in adapting his specific subjects in each case.

In Your Wildest Dreams- Ensor Beyond Impressionism

28 September 2024 – 18 January 2025

Fine Arts Museum Antwerp KMSKA – ART EXHIBITION

This will be the KMSKA’s first “blockbuster” exhibition to coincide with a special programme of exhibitions and events focused on James Ensor. This particular exhibition will aim to focus on two crucial aspects of Ensor’s art: how a Belgian avant-gardist sought to go ‘beyond impressionism’ to depict his ‘wildest dreams’. It will show works of art which provided Ensor’s sources of inspiration and works from well-known contemporaries. With the largest collection of Ensor’s work, the KMSKA will shine a light on the deepest aspects of one of Belgium’s most famous artists.

James Ensor’s Search for Light

28 Septe

mber 2024 – 5 January 2025

Plantin-Moretus Museum- Antwerp- EXHIBITION

How did Ensor make prints? What techniques did he use? In what ways did he experiment with this medium and from which old masters, did he draw inspiration? Ensor used a whole range of materials and techniques and this exhibition provides an insight into the ways in which Ensor made prints, and

his particular technical experiments with this medium, an approach that has not been previously been addressed. The Plantin-Moretus Museum shows this history through a refined selection of preparatory drawings, copper plates and prints. As well as items from its own print collection it will also display loans from private collections for this exhibition.

Cindy Sherman Anti Fashion

28 September 2024 – 2 February 2025

FOMU – Photo Museum Antwerp – EXHIBITION

This exhibition examines the themes extracted from James Ensor's works in a contemporary artistic context. Like Ensor, American artist Cindy Sherman (US, 1954) is known for her critical and ironic commentary on social conventions through masquerades. For almost fifty years, the theme of fashion has run like a thread through the work of Cindy Sherman. The exhibition Anti-Fashion focuses on this and illuminates her photographic work from a new perspective. Sherman uses her many assignments for magazines such as Vogue and Harper's Bazaar and her close collaboration with famous designers, as a constant source of inspiration. But also influences the fashion world and provides important insights into the interplay between fashion and art. Her photographs show figures that are anything but attractive and thus contradict all the conventions of haute couture and the usual notions of beauty.

Metamorfosis Ensor, Maskerade & Make-up

28 September 2024 – 19 January 2025

ModeMuseum – EXHIBITION

Ensor's ideas around masquerade, (false) coquetry, the playful, the grotesque and the ephemeral are still applied to today. Throughout history, makeup has often been compared, with some suspicion, to wearing a mask. Today, makeup has become a multi-million-dollar industry. It is also a means of personal expression, artistic experimentation, and freedom. Belgian makeup artists are at the forefront of the world, working with major international fashion houses such as Chanel, Dior and Balenciaga. With their avant-garde concepts, they have pushed artistic boundaries and challenged prevailing ideals of beauty over the past three decades. This exhibition presents works by make-up artists and artists who delve deeper into themes such as the representation of women, physical and digital facial filters, disturbed body images, and the ritual of makeup.

UCI Gravel World Championships

5-6 October 2024

Brussels to Leuven

The region of Vlaams Brabant in Belgium will host the 2024 UCI Gravel World Championships. The races will take place in the "Brabantse Wouden", a forest region south and east of the capital city Brussels. After the start in Halle a first loop is made before entering the Hallerbos, Zoniën Forest and the Meerdael Forest before finishing in Leuven. Amateur gravel riders will have to qualify through mass events spread across five continents and over a full year to take part in this race.