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**PRESS RELEASE**  
**Brussels, 17 January 2019**

## **Brussels pays tribute to Bruegel in 2019**

**Brussels and Bruegel are inextricably linked. To celebrate the 450<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of the great Flemish master, several exhibitions and original activities will be on offer to visitors throughout the year. A great opportunity to (re)discover the colossal work of the greatest Flemish painter of the 16th century**

### **Bruegel and Brussels**

Brussels and Bruegel are inextricably linked. The artist spent most of his life in Brussels and is also buried here. Furthermore, several of his works are exhibited in the capital's museums.

Pieter Bruegel (circa 1525-1569) is considered by far the greatest Flemish painter of the 16th century. He is famous for his landscapes and his scenes of peasant life ("genre painting"). Back in the 16th century, Habsburg collectors had already recognised the exceptional quality and originality of Bruegel's imagery and began buying his works. The artist also owes his popularity to his incredible, often moralizing compositions, with their host of characters. His works are captivating and invite the viewer to consider their content and their complexity. Paintings like "Netherlandish Proverbs", "Children's Games", "Dull Gret" (or Mad Meg), "The Wedding Dance" and "The Land of Cockaigne" are internationally famous.

Bruegel came to Brussels in 1563 to approach potential customers. He got married in La Chapelle church and moved to Marolles. In the 16th century, Brussels was one of Europe's biggest political centres. Charles V had one of his main residences at the Palais de Coudenberg in neighbouring Mont des Arts. Brussels was a veritable hub for artists and a new urban nobility.

Brussels was a great source of inspiration for Bruegel: two-thirds of his works were painted there. His powerful patrons lived in Mont des Arts, a short walk from his house. Today it houses a significant part of Bruegel's work: after the Kunsthistorisches Museum of Vienna, the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium have the largest collection of Bruegel's paintings, and the Royal Library has no less than 90 engravings. All these treasures will be exhibited in 2019. After his death, Bruegel was buried in the church of La Chapelle in Marolles, where his epitaph can be found.

Brussels was duty bound to dedicate several events to this world-famous artist on the occasion of the 450th anniversary of his death. In 2019, several organisations programmed guided walks on the theme of Bruegel, visiting all those places linked to his life and to the fascinating era he lived in.

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## EXHIBITIONS

### Royal Museums of Fine Art of Belgium

On the occasion of the 450th anniversary of the death of Pieter Bruegel the Elder, the Royal Museums of Fine Art of Belgium are celebrating the Flemish master through a number of projects:

**The permanent collection:** visitors can (re)discover the largest permanent collection of Bruegel the Elder's works in the world in the Old Masters Museum.

'**Bruegel Unseen Masterpieces**' reveals to the public the hidden secrets of Pieter Bruegel the Elder's works. Through a wide range of activities accessible online and on-site, this brand new initiative encourages you to immerse yourself in Bruegel's paintings, learning every detail about each painting and experts' assessments of them. The Royal Museums of Fine Art of Belgium initiated this event with the Google Cultural Institute, in view of the 450th anniversary of Bruegel's death, in 2019. This innovative project brings together the top international museums, mostly European, around the figure of Bruegel. It is the materialisation of an in-depth analysis of the changes taking place in the museology field in this, the digital era.

#### Cultural and teaching offer:

- Series of conferences on Bruegel the Elder.
- Visitor guide
- Creative itinerary for children
- Guided tours for all target groups (schools, cultural groups, families, vulnerable groups)
- Workshops and internships

Date: 2019-2020

Further information: [www.fine-arts-museum.be](http://www.fine-arts-museum.be)

## BOZAR

### Bruegel and his times at the Palais de Beaux-Arts:

#### BERNARD VAN ORLEY. BRUSSELS AND THE RENAISSANCE

Bernard van Orley (1488-1541) had one of the biggest studios of his time and played a key role in Brussels artistic life in the first half of the 16th century. He is thus considered an important link between the Flemish Primitives and Pieter Bruegel the Elder.



## ENGRAVING IN BRUEGEL'S TIME

The *Engraving in Bruegel's time* exhibition, a partnership between BOZAR and the Belgian Royal Library, paints a picture of the production of engravings in the southern Netherlands in the time of Bruegel, whose pictorial work is but a small part, but which, as the master's reputation would have it, puts many of his other images and illustrations on paper, which are true gems, in the shade.

Date: From 20/02/2019 to 26/05/2019

Further information: [www.bozar.be](http://www.bozar.be)

## Halles Saint-Géry

### BERNARD VAN ORLEY IN SAINT-GÉRY

Official painter of Margaret of Austria, then of Mary of Hungary, Bernard van Orley (before 1490-1541) lived and worked in Saint-Géry where he was the head of one of the biggest studios of his time. This exhibition highlights Van Orley's establishment in his district – Île Saint-Géry and its outskirts –, a true microcosm of artists which, in the first half of the 16th century, was visited by Albrecht Dürer and saw its church raised to the rank of parish church in a context of nascent Protestantism.

Date: Early March – May

Further information: [www.hallessaintgery.be](http://www.hallessaintgery.be)

## Palais du Coudenberg

### BERNARDI BRUXELLENSI PICTORI

Bernard Van Orley was one of the outstanding artists of the Brussels court in this first half of the 16th century. The principles of the Renaissance were developing in the Burgundian Netherlands where the patronage of Margaret of Austria then of Mary of Hungary favoured the emergence of the talent of Pieter Coecke van Aelst and Pieter Bruegel.

Alongside the monographic exhibition presented at BOZAR, the Palais du Coudenberg invites you to travel back in time to 16th-century Brussels, through enlargements of drawings and projections.

Date: From 22/02/2019 to 04/08/2019

Further information: [www.coudenberg.brussels](http://www.coudenberg.brussels)

## Rouge-Cloître Art Centre

### BERNARD VAN ORLEY. ROUGE-CLOÎTRE AND THE SONIAN FOREST IN THE 16th CENTURY

The Art Centre pays tribute to Bernard Van Orley, an artist intrinsic to Brussels heritage of the 16th century and author of the Hunts of Maximilian tapestries. In them, the detailed representations of the buildings, including Rouge-Cloître and the hunting estates, contribute to the richness of the background, just as the vegetation and flora are direct testimony to what was, at the time, the Sonian forest. The exhibition also presents some hitherto unseen archaeological objects from this rich historical site.

Date: From mid-March to 20/12/2019

Further information: [www.rouge-cloitre.be](http://www.rouge-cloitre.be)



## Porte de Hal

### BACK TO BRUEGEL – EXPERIENCE THE 16<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

Built in 1381, the Porte de Hal, which is part of the second set of ramparts that surrounded Brussels, will open a virtual door to Bruegel's world. The chance for visitors to discover the burning issues of the 16th century as if they were there: Catholicism against the Reform, the exploration of the world, war and peace, culture, art and more, all in a single building that this Flemish Master himself would have seen daily and crossed when he was working and living in Brussels. From the Porte de Hal, 3D glasses give you an idea of what Brussels looked like in the 16th century (360°).

The mythical Porte de Hal, a vestige of Brussels' medieval walls, opens onto the world of BRUEGEL the painter. A surprising dive into a virtual reality version of his world-famous paintings. Four of the master's works come to life and plunge the visitor, for a moment, into the daily life of the time. Journey to the middle of the 16th century, amidst authentic treasures from the New World, arms and armour, musical instruments and other works of the Royal Art and History Museums.

Date: From 22/06/2019 to 21/06/2020

Further information: <http://www.kmkg-mrah.be/fr/expositions/back-bruegel>

## Atomium

### BRUEGEL AT THE ATOMIUM

Bruegel and Brussels are inextricably linked. As well as benefiting from international recognition, the painter has become, in Belgium too, one of the icons of Belgianness, due to his legendary pugnacious, good-natured approach. On the occasion of the 450th anniversary of his death in 1569, the Atomium is proposing an exhibition that plunges its visitors into the middle of the picturesque and colourful world of this artistic genius.

Date: From mid September 2019 to mid September 2020

Further information: [www.atomium.be](http://www.atomium.be)

## Belgian Royal Library

### BRUEGEL IN BLACK AND WHITE

The Royal Library has a complete, unmatched collection of Bruegel's work "on paper" (90 graphic works) and is preparing to take it out of storage for a very special exhibition in this, the year of Bruegel. The "Bruegel in Black and White" exhibition promises to be a unique experience. The exhibition will be held in the Palace of Charles of Lorraine, one of the rare treasures of 18th century Brussels.

Date: From 15/10/2019 to 16/02/2020

Further information: [www.kbr.be](http://www.kbr.be)

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## Mini Europe

### BRUEGEL IN THE GRAND-PLACE

In a model of the Grand-Place in Brussels, visitors meet the painter Pieter Bruegel the Elder, who is working on one of his masterpieces: "The Fall of the Rebel Angels", a canvas on which the archangel Michael is fighting six monsters.

Date: Until 31.12.2019

Further information: [www.minieurope.eu](http://www.minieurope.eu)

## EVENTS

### Carolus V Festival

As part of the Carolus Festival, the annual Ommegang presents a breathtaking panorama of folklore, magic and entertainment. More than 1400 artists will help you relive the procession in 1549 in Charles V's honour. There will also be conferences, guided tours and an exhibition.

Date: May – August 2019

Further information: [www.carolusfestival.brussels](http://www.carolusfestival.brussels)

### Bruegel special Family Day

A day that plunges you into Bruegel's time awaits you in Le Coudenberg, Charles V's Brussels palace. A programme guaranteeing indulgence, fun, disguise and wonder: cookery workshop, games, introduction to music, dance, firing the crossbow, tastings and visits.... An unforgettable day stepping back in time with the family to relive the Renaissance at the Palais du Coudenberg.

Date: 2 June 2019

Further information: [www.coudenberg.brussels](http://www.coudenberg.brussels)

### Church of La Chapelle

#### VLAAMSE MEESTER IN SITU

The church stands in the district where Bruegel lived and where he has his epitaph. A copy of a Rubens adorns the epitaph. For the occasion, additional information and a video give more information about the place, Bruegel and Rubens.

Date: From 02/06/2019 to 30/09/2019

Further information: [www.vlaamsemeestersinsitu.be](http://www.vlaamsemeestersinsitu.be)

### BRUEGEL. THE GREAT ESCAPE

Never have Pieter Bruegel the Elder's works been so alive. Four hundred and fifty years after his death, ten characters have escaped from the paintings of this Flemish master. They have met to pay tribute to the man who painted them.

Further information: [www.toerismevlaanderen.be](http://www.toerismevlaanderen.be)

Date: until the end of 2019

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## GUIDED TOUR

### **The Times of Bruegel (FR)**

The visitor sets out to meet the Brabant painter and engraver Pieter Bruegel, diving into the Brussels of 1563 in the Marolles district. A guided tour from the Church of La Chapelle, where he rests, to the collection of the Oldmasters Museum, which has the tenth biggest Bruegel collection in the world after Vienna.

Date: 23 March 2019

Further information: [www.cap-eria.eu](http://www.cap-eria.eu)

### **City Run Bruegel (FR, NL or EN)**

A race through the streets of Brussels passing through Bruegel's haunts.

Date: Year round

Further information: [www.cityruns.net](http://www.cityruns.net)

### **The Brussels spirituality pilgrimage (FR and EN)**

A mysterious pilgrimage of mad people was held on Saint John's day in Molenbeek. This pilgrimage was immortalised by engravings by Hondius and Bruegel the Elder, then by a painting by Bruegel the Younger. Visitors relive the spirituality pilgrimage and community life in the centre of Brussels, on both sides of the canal, starting from the city's ancient ports.

Date: Saturday 22 June 2019

Further information: [www.alterbrussels.org](http://www.alterbrussels.org)

### **Brussels in Bruegel's time by bike (FR and EN)**

This guided bike ride invites you to discover Brussels through the life and works of Pieter Bruegel.

Dates: Saturdays 25/05/2019 (FR) and 27/07/2019 (FR/EN)

Further information: [https://www.provelo.org/fr/individual\\_tours](https://www.provelo.org/fr/individual_tours)

### **Bruegel the Elder and the secret of the two keys (FR)**

Exploration of Bruegel's works and of his fascinating world, peopled with hollow trees, athanors, proverbs, dances, blind people and monkeys, to dive into 16th-century Brussels, where he lived and painted his most beautiful paintings. As a true alchemist, wouldn't he have known the secret of the two keys?

Dates: Sundays 14 April, 14 July and 8 September 2019

Further information: [www.bruxellesbavard.be](http://www.bruxellesbavard.be)

### **Historical walk through a Bruegel painting (FR)**

Visit to Pajottenland, a few kilometres to the west of Brussels: a region with varied, enchanting landscapes that has inspired a number of artists and is worthy of Bruegel's most beautiful paintings. A 7-km walk to visit some of his most significant works with the history of this region as a backdrop. It partly follows the route of the "Bruegel wandelpad" trail.

Dates: Sundays 23 June and 25 August 2019

Further information: [www.bruxellesbavard.be](http://www.bruxellesbavard.be)

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## **Walk through a Bruegel painting (FR)**

A 14 km country walk in the Pede valley, the Vogelenzang reserve and a corner of Pajottenland where Pieter Bruegel often placed his easel. His paintings demonstrate how the landscape has evolved: fields separated by hedges and ditches, meadows, marshes, sunken paths sewn with pollarded willows and garden cities - La Roue and Bon Air - make for a charming painting...

Date: Sunday 13 October 2019

Further information: [www.bruxellesbavard.be](http://www.bruxellesbavard.be)

## **The World of Bruegel in black and white**

Everybody knows Bruegel as an internationally famous painter, but he is also known for his engravings. In 2019, visitors are invited to admire Bruegel's etchings up close at the KBR in the exhibition "The World of Bruegel in Black and White", accompanied by a guide.

Date: Sunday 23 November 2019

## **MURALS**

### **Bruegel route**

Visit.brussels is joining forces with the Farm Prod collective to honour Pieter Bruegel by developing a street art trail in the very city centre. The route runs past institutions and locations that have a story to tell about Bruegel (a historic link, a permanent collection, etc.). There will be eleven wall paintings of different sizes on show, produced by artists from the collective as well as renowned guest artists. Come and discover the different wall paintings and literally see Bruegel in a different light! Further information: [www.cap-eria.eu](http://www.cap-eria.eu)

**Further information on the theme year: [www.bruegel.brussels](http://www.bruegel.brussels)**

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