

the Bulletin

Newsweekly of Europe's capital

April 17 2008 No. 15 €3

Back to the Fifties

The spirit of 1958 revisited

The King and I

An artist lays bare her royal roots

Going green

Hints on how to save the planet by our eco warrior

Including

WHAT'S ON

The definitive guide to entertainment in Brussels and beyond

Education guide



Depot Bruxelles X

LIFESTYLE

38 Guide Your guide to reliving the 1950s – without donning the hairdo

40 Eco Warrior Green dream or carbon colossus: our new column sorts the noxious gasses from the hot air

42 Food and wine Our guide to which wine to bring to a dinner party; and the best place for *anguilles au vert*

44 Nightlife Be chic but anarchic in the same evening – that's what the flyer says

44 Money matters The basics of playing the stock market

46 Community news Happenings



Where to pick up vintage 1950s gear: see page 38

WHAT'S ON

48 Diary

60 Films

63 Television highlights

65 Television

NEWS

7 This week What the top bosses earn; the Channel Tunnel turnaround; Sablon/Zavel revamped; Tom Boonen wins cycling race; new clues in search for manga killer; McCanns come to Brussels; what was in the news in 1958

12 Europe at a glance Our essential round-up of European Union news



Madeleine McCann's parents visit Brussels: see page 8

PLUS

74 Jobs

78 Classified ads

84 Services

85 Letters

86 Backchat The lighter side of life as an expat

87 First person A life in the day of a communications teacher

ARTS

16 Feature 50th anniversary special on the 1958 World's Fair

19 Fashion 1950s' elegance revisited

20 Books Fabulous or fiasco? Expo 58's architecture reassessed

22 Events Previews

23 Music Review of Luigi Cherubini's *Médée* at La Monnaie/De Munt and two concerts by the national orchestras in the Ars Musica festival; previews

29 Interview We meet the legendary Belgian band dEUS

30 Films Reviews of *Rescue Dawn*, *Dans la vie*, previews

33 Drama Review of *The Goat, or Who is Sylvia?*

34 Interview We talk to artist Delphine Boël, the King's unacknowledged daughter

35 Art fairs The mother of all contemporary art fairs



Blue Sky, Vicious Rumour, by Delphine Boël: see interview page 34

ARTS

DRAMA

INTERVIEW

Art that's fit for a king

If you can't get the Palace on the telephone, you can try sending a message in a bottle. Delphine Boël has put hers in a show for all to see. The Bulletin pays a visit

Art and the crown make strange bedfellows, writes Delphine Boël in her just-released book, published simultaneously in French (*Couper le Cordon*) and Dutch (*De navelstreng doorknippen*). An heir to the throne, she says, can never know whether his or her art is admired for its intrinsic merits or simply for its author's royal status. Delphine doesn't have that problem. The alleged love child of King Albert II, who denies her, has made the crown and her own experience as royal *persona non grata* the principal subjects of her rollicking, acerbic art for the better part of a decade.

"[French artist] Louise Bourgeois uses thread: her parents restored tapestries. My background is the Belgian flag and crowns," she says with a laughing smile, as she welcomes The Bulletin into her studio. She has a solo show opening, a book coming out in a few days, and a baby due in a few weeks. She's radiant, immensely pregnant, dressed down and naturally glamorous in her habitat of brightly coloured paintings, large, glittery sculptures and multiples that are about to be transferred to the exhibition. The studio is on the ground floor of the comfortably lived-in house she shares with her partner and their four-year-old daughter.

"The gallery asked me to write something about each of the works in the show," she says in lightly accented English. "Since my art is about my life, the catalogue became an autobiography." And how. The book is clearly an attempt to set the record straight. Since 1999, when her identity was publicly disclosed in Mario D'Amico's unauthorised biography of Queen

Paola, misinformation about the illegitimate princess has proliferated. In one of her collages, the words 'Why speak the truth to the press they will write what they want' are superimposed over copies of a widely circulated article, riddled with errors, about Delphine and her family history.

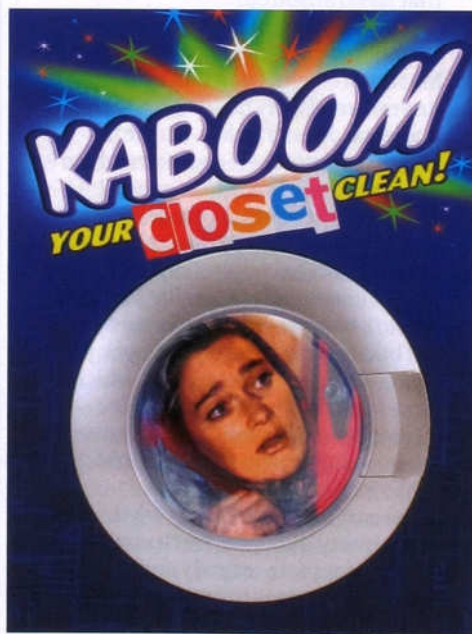
Vibrant, funny and down to earth, she seems to have come to terms with all of that. Born in Brussels in 1968, she moved to London as a child, graduated

hot pinks, apple greens and sky blues in the exhibition runs an undercurrent of black, yellow and red. The national colours grace the phallic extension given to a reproduction of the Mannekin Pis; of a flag emblazoned with the phrase 'Truth can set you free'; and are found in the artist's recurrent handprints. Her face, though, is the exhibition's leitmotif: photographs of Delphine at all ages are embedded in many of the pieces. Written phrases ('This system is corrupt, be happy'), sometimes painted in an archaic, psychedelic style, speak in a tone that is at odds with the defiantly cheerful colours.

Not afraid of committing indiscretions or breaking taboos, and certainly not averse to indulging in cheeky touches of vulgarity, the artist points to chinks in the splendid veneer of the royal house. She also has a go at the media and, in *Problème de Luxe*, a pink neon word piece, herself.

"I've done enough of this now, but I had to work through it," she says. "No more flags." What next, then? "Maternity will be one of my next themes," she answers, hands on her belly.

Once past her *succès de scandale*, she plans to develop her art independently from her identity as a royal outcast. For now, we can see the show and read the book. ■



A photomontage message to His Majesty

from the Chelsea School of Art and moved back to Belgium in 2004. Why did she return?

"It was hormonal," she says. "I was expecting my first child, and I needed to give her roots. So I came back. Then reality hit. It was very uncomfortable. I'm famous here because of a scandal."

Beneath the upbeat sea of dominant

De Latemse Galerij, 6 Dorp,
Sint-Martens-Latem, until May 12,
Wednesday to Monday, 11.00 to 18.00,
tel 09.281.14.29,
www.guypietersgallery.com
Couper le Cordon/De navelstreng
doorknippen, Wever & Bergh, 2008, €25