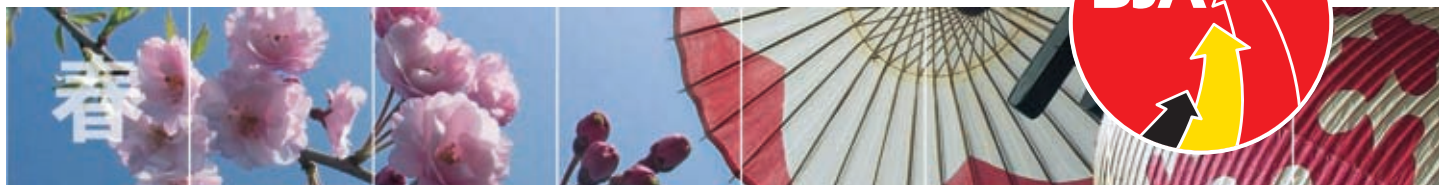


Belgium-Japan Association

& Chamber of Commerce ASBL- VZW



Trade Flows & Cultural News

Number 78 - March 2008

EDITORIAL

The destiny has knocked on the door...

by Mr Kazushi Ono, Music Director of La Monnaie/ De Munt

It was the prelude of Verdi's "Forza del Destino" (Force of the destiny)", which I conducted the orchestra of La Monnaie, Royal Opera House of Belgium for the first time in September 1999. The concert was a gala, with many young singers singing arias speciality from the various operas. As is always the case with such a night, the orchestra opened the night with the prelude of "Forza del Destino".

At the very beginning of this piece Trumpet and Trombone repeat E three times. This three repeating sound mean nothing more than the destiny. Just like one knows from the Beethoven's Symphony #5, it is the sound of the destiny's knocking you on the door.

I have soon learnt, that this very night, the destiny knocked on my door. Thanks to this encounter, I had been appointed to the music director of La Monnaie from the 2002-2003 season, succeeding Antonio Pappano, who took the position at the Covent Garden.

It didn't take long to realize how lucky I am, that I had been destined to work with this orchestra. The splendid sound of the orchestra was really a revelation! Consisted of many nationalities, Belgian, French, German, Italian, Russian, American and Japanese, this orchestra has an incredible rich texture of the sound. I always have the opinion, that the orchestra is a mirror of the society, in which it resides. The orchestra of La Monnaie in fact symbolizes exactly our multicultural circumstances in Brussels!

When we play Italian pieces, the orchestra has the capacity to show the lightness and brightness of the Italian caprice, passion and compassion of the Italian love. When we play German pieces, the sound could gain the touch of the solemnity and serenity of the German spirit.

In autumn 2005 La Monnaie has made a highly successful tour to Japan, thanks to the great help of the many members of BJA, Nihonjinkai, the former Japanese Ambassadors to Belgium, HE Mr Sato, HE Mr Naito, the former Belgian Ambassador to Japan, HE Mr Branders. We brought symphony concerts and Mozart's opera "Don Giovanni" to Japan. Mozart was born in Salzburg, hence a German speaker, though this opera was written in Italian. Personally I thought this piece was an ideal representation of the multicultural, multilingual and open nature of the Belgian opera house. The presence of Her Majesty the Empress of Japan was a highlight of the friendship between Belgium and Japan.

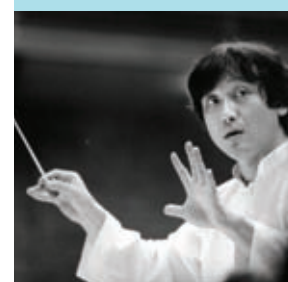
During my six year-term as a music director of La Monnaie, there are many other unforgettable memories. In terms of Belgian-Japanese friendship, the collaboration with the great Belgian contemporary artists is certainly worth mentioning.

Jan Fabre, known in the 80's as an "Enfant Terrible" on the scene and the grand maestro in the contemporary art, I have done Wagner's "Tanhaeuser" together. I went to his exhibition in Ghent and he came to see my conducting.

His "Tanhaeuser" made a furor. In the sensual "Venus" scene, he put real 20 pregnant women on the scene and projected the "real baby" on the scene live. In the run of performances, you could see the baby growing.

With a greatest contemporary dancer and choreographer Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker I have done the piece of Toshio Hosokawa, "Hanjo", based on Mishima. It was a happy marriage of the two worlds in common: sudden explosion of ephemeral passion and restricted and selected beauty of music and movements.

continue reading on p.13 >>



Mr Kazushi Ono

In this issue

- 2 Japanese Business Etiquette and Manners Seminar
- 3 New Year Cocktail Reception
- 4 Visit to the 86th European Motor Show
- 5 Friendship Committee News
- 7 Sayonara & Welcome letter
- 8 Facts & Figures on Japan - Osaka Prefecture
- 9 Seasonal item and Haiku
- 10 Interview - Mr Kenta Kamiki
- 11 Newsletter
- 16 Succes Story - Havelange
- 18 Embassy of Belgium and its activities in Japan
- 19 From old to new embassy
- 20 Personalia

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BJA REPORT

Japanese Business Etiquette and Manners Seminar

22 November, Hotel Le Meridien, Brussels

The distinguished panel in action.



Mr Hayashida joined the team of ITIM/Result, Mrs Vroman and Mr Smit, to enjoy some more statistical info on cultures.



Mr Masaki enjoying the company of two ladies.



Mr Bellis, Ambassador Branders, Mr Kuruma and Mr Fujita sharing stories of cultural difference in mind and body language.



Mr Nijssen on stage.



Mr Ishida enriched the audience and afterwards some guests with his precious insights.

On 22 November, the Membership Committee of the Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce had the pleasure of organizing a business seminar concerning Japanese Business Etiquette and Manners. More than 140 participants attended this instructive seminar.

After a welcome word by Mr Thomas Leysen, CEO of Umicore and President of the BJA, four guest speakers gave their presentations. First of all, Mr André Nijssen, Managing Director of Advice & Training Center and Mr Chris Smit, General Manager Belgium of ITIM/Result gave a theoretical approach of intercultural communication with Japanese business people. The last two speakers, Mr Kazuo Kuruma, President of Kaneka Belgium and Mr Tatsuhiro Ishida, Business Partner of Acerta Consult were more concrete by giving the audience practical experience and advice to succeed in doing business with Japanese people.

After a short coffee break, Mr Masaki, Head of Brussels Representative Office of Japan Management Association Group (JMAC), led a panel discussion with HE Ambassador Jean-François Branders, former Belgian Ambassador to Japan, Mr Thomas Leysen, CEO of Umicore and President of the BJA, Mr Jean-François Bellis, Managing Partner of Van Bael & Bellis, Mrs Michiko Kurita, Managing Director of Multilines, Mr Mitsugu Manabe, President of Sumitomo Benelux, Vice-President of the BJA and President of the Nihonjinkai and Mr Piet Steel, Vice President, European Affairs of Toyota Motor Europe.

Following kind closing words by Mr Manabe, President of Sumitomo Benelux and Vice President of the BJA, a networking cocktail where participants exchanged opinions and experiences about Japanese business etiquette, ended the event.



New Year Cocktail Reception

21 January 2008, Sofitel Brussels Europe

In honor of HE Mr Azusa Hayashi, Japanese Ambassador to Belgium, the Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce had a great pleasure in inviting the members to celebrate the New Year.

To this first BJA event of the year, over 180 members and their guests joined at the Sofitel Brussels Europe, one of the newest BJA company members. Mr Thomas Leysen, the President of the BJA opened the evening by wishing the guests a healthy and fruitful year. Mr Bart Van Cauwelaert, General Manager of Sofitel Brussels Europe, welcomed the guests with his short speech and ensured that they enjoy his beautiful venue and high quality services throughout the evening. Before the traditional 'Kagamiwari', HE Mr Azusa Hayashi extended his New Year greetings by expressing his sincere hope for a continuous growth on the relations between Belgium and Japan. The guests enjoyed the evening with pleasant conversations over delicious sushi while listening to fine melodies performed by harpist, Mrs Ingrid Procureur and flutist, Mr Gérard Noack.



Asserting a splash to a fruitful 2008!

Mrs Procureur and Mr Noack brought Belgian and Japanese melodies on the flute and harp.



Starting the year in good company: Baron Snoy, Director at Marsh, Mr Tanguy Van Overstraeten, Partner at Linklaters LLP and Mr le Hodey, were flanked by BJA's present and former BJA President, Mr Leysen, CEO of Umicore and Mr Willame.



BJA REPORT

Visit to the 86th European Motor Show

24 January 2008, Brussels Expo

On Thursday, 24 January, a Japan Day was celebrated at the 86th European Motor Show – Brussels 2008 organized by FEBIAC (the Federation of the Belgian Automobile and Cycle Industry). Thanks to the courtesy of Mr Pierre-Alain De Smedt, President of FEBIAC and Mr J.A. Moorkens, Honorary Vice-President of the BJA, the Belgium-Japan Association & Chamber of Commerce had the pleasure of inviting 100 members for a group visit.

Mr Léon Barbier, Honorary Director of the BJA, expressed his warm welcome to the participants and guided the group through 10 Japanese automakers' stands at the Auto Salon. While some members were carefully examining every detail of those beautiful cars, others took place behind the wheel or in the massage chairs in the back of the car. Half way through the visit, the group was invited by Toyota Belgium – Lexus Division for a VIP cocktail. While having refreshing drinks, the members enthusiastically exchanged comments about those Japanese dream cars.

The visit ended with a networking cocktail offered by the Committee of the Motor Show in honour of HE Mr Azusa Hayashi, Ambassador of Japan in Belgium.



Mr Barbier, Honorary Director, explained carefully the environmental focus of the Auto Salon to Mr De Witte of Deloitte, BJA Board Member.



HE Ambassador Hayashi and Mr and Mrs Mahler enjoying a glass, after seen numerous new exquisite models of automobiles.



The members listened attentively, before entering the VIP lounge of Toyota Lexus where they could enjoy a glass of champagne.



Mr le Hodey, BJA Vice-President, thanked Mr De Smedt, President of Febiac and Mr Moorkens, BJA Honorary Vice-President, for their continued kindness in welcoming the BJA delegation at the occasion of the Japan Day.



Belgian Beer tasting evening

26 October 2007, Brussels

10月26日、ブルッセルの午後8時は既にかなり暗い。Chausée de Wavre を Port de Namur から小走りで15分、かじかむ手を握りしめ、人気の少なくなつてゆく道を進む。

分岐点でさらに暗い路地へと進むと、思い出したかのように、客を入口へと案内する張り紙を発見。2,3歩戻つたところにある扉はとてつとバーの入口には見えない。怪しい思いをぬぐい切れないうま、扉をあけると、不思議な風景が目に入つて来た。進んでゆく中では見たこともない何百種類もあると思われるビールとグラスの数々、ビールに対するベルギー国民のこだわりが感じられる。

その奥に、酒屋の装飾にはこだわらないと見られる、テーブルと椅子だけが並べられた試飲場に、総勢50名たる参加者達が既にビールを囲んで談笑をしていた。

会場の雰囲気とは裏腹に、火のついた暖炉のような雰囲気がそこにはあった。皆の笑顔で心が温まり、会話に花が咲く。新しいビールがテーブルに次々と出される度に、これが好きだの悪いだの語つては、席替えが自然と行なわれ、新しい人々との出会いを皆楽しんでいるようだ。

結局、BJA-FCのイベントはこれが醍醐味ではないか。温かい気持ちで、交流を深めること。

こんなエピソードもあった。お酒を嗜まない私がコーラを酒場のおじさんに頼むと、「マダム、ここはバーじゃあねえんだよ。ビール屋なんだよ!」と今回のイベントの主旨を全く理解していないコメントが返つて来た。

びっくりしつつも、そのかわりに私は感心したのと同時に、ついプツと噴出しそうになった。なんだか、日本の頑固職人を思い出させたからだ。

あと、2杯ソフトドリンクを頼んで私はおじさんの反応を見ては楽しんだ。

ビールの愛情とこだわりを持つおじさんの酒場「ピアマニア」で、この日からベルギービールに誇りを持つようになった。

交流を深めること以外にも、ベルギー文化に触れられたことが私は嬉しい。

Haruko Watanabe



I did expect a lot of this event. Belgium, being the country with the largest diversity on beers, of course you must have a try!

And we did more than just have a try. At each round three different beers were presented. Meanwhile tasting, you had a 2 pages info, which provided with an introduction of the beers including background and characteristics among other information. The introduction was an excellent platform to start conversation.

By nine o'clock, everybody was talking, laughing and having fun. Even the owner, who had a quite strict character, lost sense of time. Before we knew, it was midnight.

It felt like having a drink with friends on a Friday evening, telling experiences of the week and making plans for the weekend.

I had the feeling the event did not only exceed expectations, I am quite sure it was a friends' appointment.

Truly a success for the Friendship Committee.

Jessica Garcia Riveros

Annual visit to the Brussels Christmas market

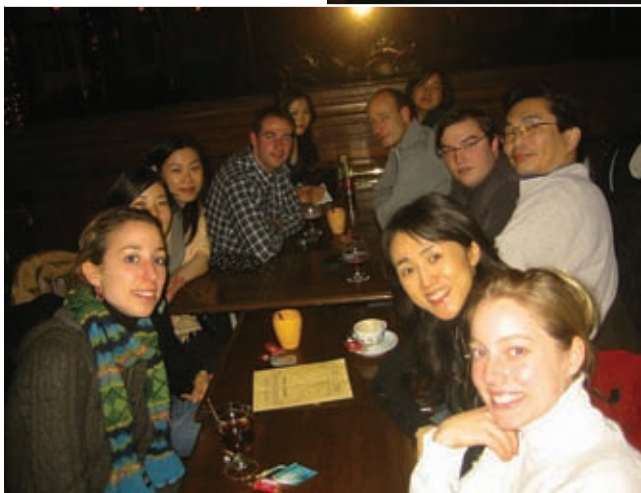
9 December 2007, Brussels

On 9 December we indulged in some hot wine at the annual Brussels Christmas market, and visited the numerous stalls which offered us a chance to buy gifts for our families. In the evening, we gathered in the warmth of a cozy brasserie to have some more hot drinks and lively conversations. Being together at this wonderful event to strengthen our friendships made us fully enjoy the spirit of Christmas! This was especially true for Takumi, who recently returned to Japan after having given us so much friendship and commitment as one of the FC's Organizing Members. We hope he will have many nice memories of his time in Belgium and wish him all the luck in the future!

Caroline Rausch

今年最後のイベント、クリスマスマーケットでは40名以上もの参加者をお迎えすることができました。みんなでグランプラスの大きなクリスマスツリーから出発して、小さな木の小屋がずらりと並んだ通りの中を、あちらこちらと寄り道しながら歩いていきました。小屋の中の店に所せましと並べられた品物を見て楽しんで、また買って楽しんで。頭の上に飾られた賑やかな光のデコレーションが、寒さを少し和らげてくれました。マーケットの中心地、聖カトリヌでは、クリスマスマーケット定番のグリュウワインやホットチョコレートで体を温めました。そして、広場の賑やかな人ごみの中で、もう少しクリスマスの雰囲気を感じました。観覧車やメリーゴーランド、スケートリンクまでありましたね。楽しんだ方もいらっやったでしょうか??ひと通りマーケットを満喫したあとは、カフェの暖かい部屋の中でみんなでゆったりとくつろぎました。私にとって最後になってしまったこのイベントを、とても楽しむことができました。この一年間、最初は一参加者、途中からはスタッフとしてずっとイベントに参加させていただきましたが、その中でたくさんの方と出会い、貴重な時を共有することができたことを、本当にうれしく思っています。ありがとうございました。またきつとどこかでお会いしましょう!

Takumi Tanaka





Sayonara letter - Welcome letter

by Mr Olivier van Beneden and Mr Pierre Brauwerts

Dear Friends,

After more than 40 activities and welcoming more than 1250 participants, the time has come to turn the Chairmanship of the Friendship committee to new leadership. It has been a pleasure to be the Chairman of the Friendship Committee for more than 5 years, and I leave full of good memories and wonderful friendships.

When I first joined, we faced the challenge of reviving the Committee after a long period of inactivity. Our first task was to make the committee known to people outside the BJA, and to try to attract as many participants as possible. We worked very hard, built a specific BJA Youth Committee website, made presentations to Japanology students in Leuven, wrote articles in Japanese magazine, and posted adds in Japanese restaurants.

The Committee quickly regained its popularity. The regularity and diversity of events attracted many people, both Japanese and European. Soon the Youth Committee had reached its objective: to create opportunities for Japanese and Europeans to meet in an informal way.

Many friendships were created between Japanese and Belgians during our activities, some longer-lasting than others (one Japanese -Belgian couple who met on one of our activities got married a year later ...). Last year, we officially decided to change the name of the Youth Committee to "Friendship" Committee to welcome people of all ages.

What the Friendship Committee has achieved has been the result of great team work. I cannot thank enough Pierre, Takumi-san, Magali, Hans, Fabienne, Anja and Matsumoto-san, to name only a few, for everything they have done.

Pierre Brauwerts, who has been in the Committee for over 4 years, will take over the Chairmanship. There is no doubt that his kindness, his dedication to the BJA and his deep attachment to Japan will continue to make the Friendship Committee what it has always been known for: a place of encounter and friendly exchange.

Being a member of the BJA for more than 10 years, I will continue to support the Association through my involvement in this and other Committees.

Thank you again for all the nice memories,

Best regards,

Olivier van Beneden

A word from Mr Pierre Brauwerts

About 8 years ago, while living in Liège, I had some opportunities to organize small events together with a few Japanese friends and friends from Liege. But there were not enough things in relation with Japan available in Liège, I was looking for such opportunities in other regions.

On 31 January 2003, one of my Japanese friends from Liège invited me to join the event organized by the BJA Youth Committee. When I took part as a participant for the first time, I really enjoyed the friendly atmosphere and the cultural discovery. I was also very impressed by the dedication of the 6 organizing members at the time.

During the following event, the Committee was looking for someone who could build its website. So I began to help the Committee by developing the website, and in August 2003, the Youth Committee site www.bja-yc.be became official. Since then more than 140.000 visits were made to this site and I have been constantly working to improve its quality.

It was in August 2004 when I organized an event for the first time for the Youth Committee. It was 'Hanabi (Fireworks Contest) and Sand Sculptures Festival' event and thanks to the weather god, the event ended with a huge success (it rained heavily for weeks until noon on that day, but then we had a sunny afternoon during the event). On this day I was also able to build new friendship with some Japanese participants who are now one of my best friends today.

Having now an experience in organizing more than 12 events since then, I can say it is worth taking my time for as these events offer an excellent opportunity for people to meet informally, to learn about each other's culture, and to train Japanese, Dutch or French language skills.

continue reading on p.13 >>

FACTS & FIGURES ON JAPAN

Osaka Prefecture: Small prefecture, great opportunities

by Mrs Tiene Vertriest, Business Development Manager of Yamagata Europe and Editorial Committee Member

Most people know Osaka prefecture from its capital, Osaka City, and Kansai International Airport (KIX). However, since August last year, Osaka City is probably best known by the Belgian public through the excellent results of our Belgian women's team on the 4x100 m of the IAAF World Athletics Championships. In this article I would like to focus on the prefecture that brought our Belgian athletes their success and determine whether this region has as much to offer to our Belgian investors.

Osaka City is considered the second city of Japan and, with a population of 8.8 million, or roughly 7% of the entire population of Japan, it is the third most populated prefecture after Tokyo and Kanagawa prefectures. Few people probably realise that Osaka prefecture is the second smallest prefecture after Kagawa. It only lost the status of being the smallest in 1994 when Kansai Airport was built on an artificial island in the middle of Osaka Bay. Covering an area of approximately 1,890 square kilometres (2004), the prefecture covers only 0.5% of the nation's entire land area. That size doesn't matter is proven by the following figures: With a GDP of about 39,116 billion Yen (2005), Osaka prefecture produces as much as Belgium and accounts for about 8% of the nation's total GDP.



This economic success has its roots deep in the history of the city because Osaka has been a major port and mercantile centre from the beginning of Japanese recorded history. Continental culture was introduced to Japan via the Korean peninsula around the 5th century AD and Osaka became Japan's centre for trade with Korea and China, a role which it shares today with Kobe and Yokohama. In the 7th century, Osaka was the first capital of Japan, modelled after the capital of China, before it was moved to Nara and later to Edo. Since Osaka being a political and cultural centre was so important as a window to the world, the Shitennoji temple was built near Osaka Bay in the 6th century to impress visiting dignitaries from China. This temple can still be visited today. Another icon and proof of the economic importance of the region in a later stage of history is Osaka castle, dating from the 16th century.

Today, Osaka Bay plays an important role in the economy of the Kansai region as it has major ports such as Osaka Port and Sakai Port. Together with the port of Kobe, the area

serves as an overall hub for sea, land and air transportation with direct connections to Greater Osaka and other main areas of the country. This thriving logistics network is also directly linked to Kansai International Airport, which plays a major role as international distribution base as Itami Airport plays as a domestic network base.

Major industries in Osaka Prefecture include metal production facilities, electrical appliance manufacture, machine equipment, textile production facilities and plastic product manufacture. Businesses that maintain international competitiveness include Matsushita Electric Industrial Co., Sharp Corp. and Sanyo Electric Co. Ltd. Osaka Prefecture also has a high concentration of Universities and R&D institutes. Developing industries are biotechnology related, and research and educational facilities are readily available, including Osaka University for biomedical research, the National Cardiovascular Centre and the Osaka Bioscience Institute. Many pharmaceutical manufacturers are also clustered in Osaka prefecture including Takeda Pharmaceutical Co., Japan's largest pharmaceutical company.

The government is making every effort to attract investment by enhancing its incentive programmes aimed specifically at high-tech companies and improving its business environment in order to become more attractive as a location for overseas business. Examples are the research facilities at Saito that are highly subsidised by Osaka City and the prefectural government. The Osaka High-Tech Bay plan was adopted to attract both Japanese and foreign businesses in advanced fields such as IT, biotechnology and nanotechnology to the littoral areas by offering large subsidies.

Osaka has always been home of creative and innovative businesses. Amongst unique products invented at Osaka are instant noodles and cup noodles (Nissin), ATM machines at railway stations, the first calculators (Sharp), etc. Today small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) processing unique management and incorporating high technology are clustered in Osaka-City and make up nearly 99% of all enterprises in the region.

There are also Belgian companies present in Osaka prefecture such as UCB, Agfa Gevaert and ABX Logistics. It, however, goes without saying that the available base of intellectual infrastructure and industrial concentration are producing many business opportunities for more Belgian investment. Osaka City is a vibrant city, rich in cultural heritage, historical sites, arts and festivals. Our Belgian athletes have proven they can be successful so let's go back for more!



SEASONAL ITEM: SPRING 春

Wait until Spring ... hanami!

by Mr Dirk De haene of Oskar D and Editorial Committee Member

No need to explain here about Hanami nor its effect on everyday life in Japan. For those still a bit unsure about this yearly cherry blossom celebration, images say more than words, and certainly when it's video, try this link for 'the real spirit of hanami': www.youtube.com/watch?v=nkxgl2BCqss.

But unfortunately we're not living in Japan here, and although the generally used blue plastic sheets are hard to find here, don't underestimate the Belgian sakura viewing possibilities and its positive effects on you. We usually call it a pic-nic, are not that well organised and don't tend to start singing so easily. Of course, we can't always rely on fine weather, but when lucky try out the following locations for a good hanami; they are among my personal favorites.

The (now rather popular because of the Flemish television series 'Katarakt') region of 'Haspengouw' in Limburg covers several beautiful spots:

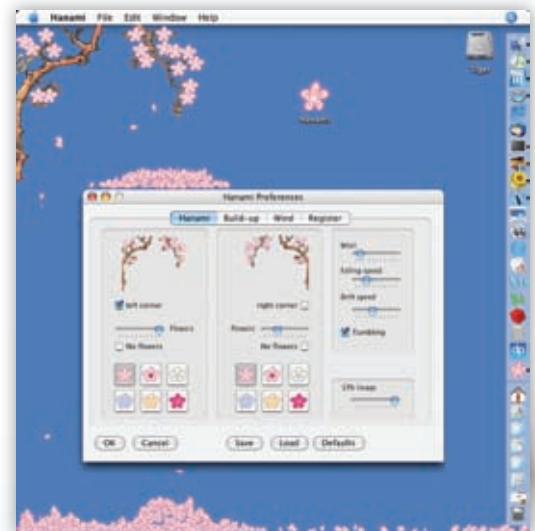
- (Landcommandery) Alden Biesen - www.alden-biesen.com
- Around Borgloon and its castles - www.borgloon.be

This website gives you lots of information for cycling, walking or even staying for the night:

www.bloesemfeesten-haspengouw.be

If you're looking for a good place not too far from Brussels, you can go to Watermael-Boitsfort (www.watermael-boitsfort.be). If however you feel that hanami is unlikely without some Japanese surroundings, go for the Japanese garden in Hasselt (www.hasselt.be) or Ostend (<http://cultuur.oostende.be>). In Hasselt they even organise a cherry blossom party on 6 April.

But, suppose our fine Belgian weather isn't that inviting or you have this terrible deadline, you can still fill your desktop with falling cherry blossoms. Simply install this 'screensaver' <http://dropmix.xs4all.nl/rick/Hanami>, get a cool Kriek out of the fridge and you can even sing without bothering anyone! Enjoy!



春風の花を散らすと見る夢はさめても胸の …

西行法師

*the Spring wind
scattering blossoms
I saw it in a dream*

Saigyō Hashi

INTERVIEW - A JAPANESE VIEW OF BELGIUM

Mr Kenta Kamiki, Managing Director Takenaka Belgium NV

by Mr Kris Sierens, Managing Partner of BeforeTheHype and Editorial Committee Member



‘Belgium is a very nice country to live in’ is the opinion of Mr Kenta Kamiki. He should know, since he has lived all around the world. For him, Belgians enjoy a happy and stable life. They understand that thinking ahead, in terms of goals, is the best way to handle business.

Kenta Kamiki has lived abroad in many countries. He joined Takenaka in 1982 and six years later took his first overseas assignment in the UK. He also worked in the Czech Republic, Los Angeles, and Chicago. Belgium became his new base in 2003. Communication is always important for Mr Kamiki and he tries to learn some local words. Nevertheless it is not so easy here with its multiple languages. Where he lives in Watermaal-Bosvoorde, he has to say ‘bonjour’ but in the office its ‘goedendag’. He has seen first hand that the multilingual skills of the Belgians enable them to accept other cultures more easily.

His first impression of Belgium was the beautiful countryside. Even in Brussels, he sees it as a city with a more human scale. Kamiki likes to walk in Ter Kameren or in one of the other woods. As an architect, he enjoys the historical buildings a great deal. He finds Bruges particularly beautiful. Brussels, he notes, has some of the same character as Paris and London. He does find it a pity though that so many old buildings have gotten lost or been unable to achieve new purpose in modern daily life.

Takenaka came to Belgium in 1975, to carry out work for Toyota on its first operation in Europe. Once the project was realized, operations continued. The combination of design and construction is certainly an added value of Takenaka, although Belgians are not used to that concept. Trust between all parties has to be a priority, because quality must be guaranteed. And there will then be less time needed to realize a project. The core staff at Takenaka in Brussels has had to learn this philosophy, but it can take up to ten years to reach this vision. The office employs twenty Belgians

and three Japanese. Mr Kamiki makes sure there is a good integration. Open communication, quick reactions and a Friday drink helps make this possible.

Belgians aim at a well balanced work-life ratio, although within the company everybody shares the same company goal. Because Kamiki has lived on different continents he knows the difference. Americans, he feels, go for new things, but they act first instead of thinking things completely through. Europeans, on the other hand, refer to wise old men, with experience in history. That is why they have a better understanding of the idea of a goal.

Belgium is wonderful country, but Belgian law is not always that easy. For instance if you want to end a project ahead of schedule and you want to do overtime, then there are difficulties. There is also the problem of driving, which he finds dangerous for all Japanese people.

It is a shame that Japan doesn’t know Belgium as well as it should, because it is a great place to live. In his leisure time, Mr Kamiki likes to walk in the forest and do some bird watching. He also likes to visit cities and nature reserves with his family, although the weather isn’t always conducive for that. In that regard, Belgium is comparable with the UK. However the food is certainly much better here. Belgium is well known for beer and chocolates, but the food here is really excellent, with an optimal balance between quality and price. Mr Kamiki especially likes special mushrooms and asparagus. His daughter adores the many small museums in Belgium, and he also enjoys pictures and drawings.

For Belgian business people aiming at the Japanese market, Mr Kamiki has an important tip. First understand the customer’s point of view very well, even before adding value. Japanese clients expect the highest quality and anything less is not good enough.



LOYENS TO BE LOYENS & LOEFF

From 1 January 2008 Loyens will be known as Loyens & Loeff. The move confirms the firm's position together with Loyens & Loeff Holland and Loyens Winandy Luxemburg as the leading law firm in the Benelux. The Luxemburg branch will also take on the name of Loyens & Loeff in 2008.

The growing importance of the Benelux as a destination for international companies and investors as well as being the financial hub for other countries of the European Union offers a wealth of opportunities for Loyens & Loeff. As a matter of fact the firm is the largest of its kind in the Benelux that offers a fully-fledged integrated range of corporate and tax law services. Thanks to this expertise, Loyens & Loeff is in the position to offer the best possible advice to both national and

international companies and investors in transactions and in the setting up of structures. This cross-border approach results in an optimum use of the many possibilities arising from differences in regulations in the three countries.

Success story

Today, Loyens & Loeff employs some 822 staff in 14 countries including 119 lawyers in Belgium. The firm first saw the light of day in 2000 in the Netherlands as a result of the merger between the tax consultants, Loyens & Volkmaars with the lawyers of Loeff Claeyss Verbeke. It was in 2001 that the move was made to establishing a fully integrated law firm with the addition of partners and associates from De Bandt, van Hecke Lagae & Loesch.

Source: www.loyens.com

NEW SCHOOL COMPETITION SEEKS CREATIVE IDEAS ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Toyota Motor Europe (TME) and Eco-Schools International Programme have launched a new European competition, challenging schools to come up with creative ideas to reduce energy consumption within their local communities. National juries in six European countries will award a total of 120,000 euro in grants to the most innovative proposals, giving students the opportunity to turn their ideas into a working community project. One school in each country will be crowned the National Winner for the best use of their grant, and short-listed for the pan-European title.

The competition will target up to 300,000 students from around 1,800 schools in Italy, Norway, Finland, Denmark, Turkey and Portugal. The theme of the 2007-2009 competition is Climate Change – Let's Save Energy! It is the second time Toyota has hosted a competition as part of the Eco-Schools' Environment and Innovation Project, which encourages students to identify and tackle environmental problems in partnership with their school and community.

Toyota Motor Europe and Eco-Schools hope to leverage the success of the first

competition held by the Environment and Innovation Project, which awarded a UK primary school the top prize for their innovative idea to reduce local traffic congestion earlier this year.

The Toyota Fund for Europe (TFE) and Eco-Schools, an international programme of the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE), have been working together since 2005. The Environment and Innovation Project was originally launched as a pilot programme to promote innovative thinking and environmental education in schools across Europe.

Source: www.toyota-media.com

JOINT VENTURE FOR CHEMICAL TERMINAL - MITSUI, ITC AND RUBIS

The Japanese chemical concern Mitsui, its daughter company Intercontinental Terminals Company (ITC) and the French firm Rubis are to form a joint venture to build a brand-new, bulk liquid chemical terminal in the Port of Antwerp.

The Port of Antwerp is Europe's largest chemicals cluster. Collaboration between chemical groups in the port area is one of the main pillars of the port's success. The joint venture between the three companies will strengthen their position in Europe and increase their customer base.

The new terminal will have a capacity of 110,000 square meters of storage facility for chemical fluids, gases and petroleum products. Mitsui and ITC will together acquire a 50 pct share in the new company. Rubis will hold the other 50 pct.

The joint venture has plans to expand the terminal to a capacity of 400,000 square meters. The initial phase of the works will be finished around the second half of 2009. Some 50 new jobs will be created in the process.

Source: www.express.be

news from the members

AGC FLAT GLASS EUROPE CHOOSES ZEEBRUGGE TO LAUNCH A WORLD FIRST IN MIRRORS

AGC Flat Glass Europe (formerly Glaverbel) announced a world first with its 3rd generation ecological mirror glass: Mirox 3G. This innovation is the summit of 30 years of experience and worldwide leadership in mirrors for the plant in Zeebrugge (Belgium). Experience that goes well beyond what is reflected in the mirror!

Unique mirror glass: ecological and antibacterial

AGC Flat Glass Europe unique Mirox 3G is the product of continuous, advanced research in mirror technology. As such it is the first mirror glass to meet the requirements of the European Union's RoHS (Restriction of Hazardous Substances) directive. This directive is aimed at reducing the amounts of hazardous substances (such as lead) used in industrial production processes. Thanks to a patented process, AGC Flat Glass Europe will soon be the only company whose entire output of mirrors is RoHS-compliant, guaranteeing the same high quality in all its production units.



The total absence of formaldehyde, copper and lead makes this mirror glass the most ecological in the world. It also offers higher quality, with greater resistance to scratches, corrosion, humidity and chemical attack by cleaning products.

Mirox 3G can also be treated according to AGC's latest invention, the antibacterial glass introduced in September this year. The presence of silver ions in the top layers of the glass eliminates 99.9% of bacteria that come in contact with

the surface. This gives the 3G mirror glass an important role to play in all places where hygiene is of particular importance (hospitals, hotels, sports complexes etc.).

Zeebrugge: 30 years of worldwide experience in mirrors

Ever since it began producing mirror glass in 1977, the Zeebrugge plant has never ceased to innovate and develop, becoming not only a producer of high-quality mirrors exported

all over the world but also a pioneer in mirror technology, with a major advance of strategic importance every 10 years or so. In 1987, at this site the company built the largest, most modern production line in the world, with mirror glass being produced in large sheets measuring 6 metres by 3.21 metres. In 1997 the Zeebrugge plant presented two innovations: ecological mirror glass (second generation) and

varnished glass. This new type of mirror glass, Mirox New Generation Ecological, was the first to be made without copper in the production process, as well as having a drastically reduced lead content. And with its Lacobel varnished glass the company turned resolutely towards a new product that is still highly regarded for interior decoration uses. And now at last, in 2007, it has introduced the most environment-friendly mirror in the world.

As the originator of the mirror technology, Zeebrugge naturally provides support with development of mirrors elsewhere within the group, in its plants in the Czech Republic, Russia, Italy and Spain.

Source: www.agc-flatglass.eu

NYK LOGISTICS STORES PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCTS IN ANTWERP

In the Antwerp port area, NYK Logistics (Belgium) offers temperature-controlled and licensed storage space for goods from the pharmaceutical industry. It offers its customers both local and European distribution and services.

Of the 34,000 square meters available at one of its warehouses in Melsele

on the left bank of the River Scheldt, 4,000 square meters has been fitted out as cold storage with different temperature zones for products from the health industry. NYK Logistics holds a Good Distribution Practices (GDP) license and a license for repackaging pharmaceutical products.

With this initiative NYK Logistics is,

for the first time, targeting the health industry. Up till now, the concern mainly focused on the storage and distribution of electronics and parts for the automotive industry.

Source: *Flanders Investment & Trade*
www.investinlanders.com

PARTNERSHIPS IN MUSIC

The Chamber Orchestra of Belgium (Belgische Kamerfilharmonie) was recently founded, and focuses on a repertoire from the classical and early romantic periods, however, it seeks to place these styles within a more current context in order to combine them with contemporary classical music.

Through a careful choice of innovative concert programmes, the Chamber Orchestra of Belgium preserves musical traditions by performing standard repertoire for chamber ensemble. However, it also endeavours to bring impetus to this repertoire by programming high quality new works

in an accessible and well-considered manner.

The orchestra is composed of a permanent nucleus of renowned and experienced section leaders who are joined by a dynamic and talented group of musicians from across the country.

In parallel to its season concert series, the Chamber Orchestra of Belgium also promotes partnerships with a strong social dimension. These consist of three main pillars :

- Partnerships with Young Composers
- Partnerships with the Community
- Partnerships with Kids

The Chamber Orchestra of Belgium strives to be a “Centre for Music” and more than just an orchestra. There is after all space and the need for a high quality chamber orchestra which, profiles itself as a modern and flexible ensemble working with internationally renowned soloists and conductors.

The very first concert will take place on 8 April in “de Singel” in Antwerp. You are more than welcome to join this event.

belgischekamerfilharmonie@telenet.be
www.belgischekamerfilharmonie.be

continue reading from p.7 »

I believe it would be a shame for both Japanese and Belgians who are interested in Japan to miss out such opportunities to meet each other.

The relation between Belgium and Japan is strong but can always be stronger, so from now on I would like to help building a bridge between the two countries!

Having to receive this opportunity to succeed Olivier who has accomplished a great work for now called ‘Friendship’ Committee, I hope to continue the excellent work done by his team, just to mention few names, Hans, Ann, and Magali from the initial team then later Beniko, Caroline, Elisabeth, Hanne, and Takumi-san. And I can always rely on the assistance of Anja, Matsumoto-san, Céline at the BJA office. So for those who might have participated in one of our past events, please join again to enjoy building new friendship!

I would also like to make the BJA Friendship Committee known more among the Japanese community in Belgium and Belgians who are interested in Japan. It is a continuous challenge especially with Japanese people as every year some return to Japan and some arrive newly to Belgium.

And most importantly as a new Chairman of Friendship Committee, my main aim is to rebuild the team by recruiting more new members. The Committee needs more enthusiastic members to join the team who would be eager to take a part in delivering more exciting events in the future.

So please come and join us. We are looking forward to see you at one of our next events!

continue reading from p.1 »

Again by the “Force of Destiny”, my door has been knocked again. I have been appointed to be Principal Conductor in Opera de Lyon, in France. A great Luck for me is, that the general director there is, Serge Dorny, a great Flemish talent of my generation.

So the destiny has been decided, that I could keep my affinity

and affection to Belgium this way.

At La Monnaie, coincidentally, my last production in June this year will be “Forza del Destino” of Verdi. I feel more than happy and privileged, if any of you will have a chance with me to share the enigma of the destiny expressed in this Italian masterpiece.

はい

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yes

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The **YES program** enjoys the support of the Embassies of Belgium and Luxembourg in Japan and of the representatives of the three Belgian Regions.

Detailed information can be found on www.bja.be

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Source: EU Delegation Email Bulletin – 22/11/2007



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www.investinwallonia.jp

SUCCESS STORY

A Belgian-Japanese Success Story: Havelange

History and Profile

The history of Havelange goes back to just after WWII when Albert Havelange started a business of buying and selling second-hand army equipment in the docklands of the Brussels Port. Among the dozens of trucks, trailers, jeeps and cranes, there were also a few Clark forklifts, made in the USA.

But the real forklift story dates back to 1963 when the company started importing forklifts from the Japanese company TCM. Not an evident choice because nobody in Europe knew these Japanese forklifts. But it seemed to be a good decision, since it was quickly apparent that TCM forklifts had an excellent price-quality ratio and were successful on the forklift market.

At the start of the 1970s Armand Havelange took over and turned the family business into a modern “full service rental company”. Thanks to its excellent after sales service Havelange became one of the leading companies in this sector and builded up a significant rental fleet.

At the beginning of the 1980s Havelange Forklifts was also the exclusive importer of Baumann side-loading trucks and Loc electric pallet trucks and warehouse stackers. The sales range was also expanded to include loading ramps, scissor lifts, telescopic ladders, ladder lifts, and more, currently allowing Havelange to provide a proper solution to any need for internal transport material and logistics services.

After the death of Armand Havelange, the company was taken over by the families Thermote & Vanhalst in 2004 after a few turbulent years.

The start of relations with Japan

Japanese manufacturer TCM, part of the Japanese Hitachi Group, does not have its own production entity in Europe. They were looking for a partner for the assembly of their forklifts sold into the European market. Thanks to the fact that Havelange, located in Brussels, has been the exclusive distributor of the TCM brand for Belgium and Luxembourg since the early 1960s, and as well as having excellent contacts with TCM Japan, a project was developed so that Havelange would stock and customise the TCM forklifts for the European market.

The new project called ‘PDI or Pre Delivery Inspection’ started at the end of November 2005. Concretely, this means that Havelange prepares all TCM forklifts (approximately 3,000 units a year) made in Japan for the European market following client needs. In doing so Havelange not only meets

the wishes of clients on the Belgian market, but also of all other European clients.

In its Brussels warehouse Havelange has some 300 TCM forklifts, without options and/or other accessories. The forklifts arrive as semi-finished products in the harbours of Antwerp and Rotterdam. Then they are customised in the European logistics centre of Havelange and assembled following the wishes of end users.

Innovative Belgian first

The innovative side of the PDI programme is that the European “Supply chain” of forklifts, made in Japan, is an extension of the Japanese factory of TCM in Europe. The forklifts are prepared, without unnecessary detour, at Havelange on behalf of the Japanese manufacturer for its European clients. Thanks to the PDI, the forklifts almost go directly from the plant in Japan - with a stop at Havelange - to the end customer.

The PDI project is a Belgian first. Never before has a Belgian family business handled the organisation of European distribution activities of a Japanese manufacturer. The collaboration between Havelange and TCM is also uniquely Belgian with a European touch.

For TCM Japan the development of the PDI project has a few tangible advantages. First, it offers expansion possibilities



for the Japanese plant at a relatively low investment cost. Moreover, the collaboration also means an even bigger production capacity. Since the forklifts are 'finished' at Havelange following the demand of European clients, TCM Japan can in fact deliver 'standard forklifts' for the European market.

The collaboration with TCM in the form of the Pre Delivery Inspection System ensures an increase in turnover for Havelange as well as a privileged position within the forklift market. Continuously having 300 forklifts in stock is quite a unique situation in the Belgian market.

Havelange's performance is evaluated using the TCM plant in Shiga as a benchmark. Thinking and working and following Japanese standards also offers the advantage that production techniques such as Kaizen, Kanban, JIT and SILS are more often used to increase performance.

The future

Both TCM Japan and Havelange want to expand the PDI project. Currently, the 3,000 forklifts for the European market represent about 15% of the Shiga plant's total capacity. A share of 25% - or an increase to 5,000 forklifts - should be possible considering the fast-growing Eastern European forklift market.

The launch of the PDI programme fully anticipates the current trend where logistics often replace industrial production, with as a consequence that distribution centres evolve to semi-production centres guaranteeing added value. Moreover, the more production disappears or is moved, the more important efficient logistics becomes. For Havelange, as logistic centre in Brussels, this means leading the future.

More information: www.havelangeforklifts.be



ARTICLE

Embassy of Belgium and its activities in Japan

by the staff of the Belgian Embassy in Japan

At the outset I would like to thank the Belgium-Japan Association and Chamber of Commerce for this opportunity to introduce the Embassy of Belgium and its activities in Japan. Broadly speaking, the general nature of these activities is not much different from the one in any other Belgian embassy. Diplomats deal with political, economic, consular, administrative, defense and more and more with global issues. In Tokyo, in addition, they devote a lot of energy to the time-consuming issue of building a new embassy. Exchanges in the cultural, academic and scientific fields also rank high on their agenda.

Bilateral political relations with Japan are excellent. So is the level of policy dialogue between both countries. Political cooperation and exchange of views on multilateral and global affairs have in fact intensified when on January 1st, 2007 Belgium followed in the footsteps of Japan by becoming a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council. Consequently, the Embassy, several times a week, sends reports about Japanese positions concerning global, multilateral and regional issues. Japan's own bilateral relations with neighbouring countries, its defense policy, its evolving position in Asia and in the multilateral arena, and domestic political developments in Japan are regular topics of Embassy reporting to 'headquarters' in Brussels. As a result, reporting on political and geopolitical developments can be considered as one of the Embassy's 'core business' in Japan.

In the economic field, the Embassy focuses its main attention to macro-economic developments in Japan since reporting, on a regular basis, about the general economic outlook for Japan remains another one of its major missions. Monetary and fiscal policies, in-depth analysis of the Nikkei-index, general tendencies in trade and investment, Japan's foreign trade policy as evidenced in its dealings with the greater Asian region, with the European Union/European Commission and within the framework of WTO, the important issues of energy security and supply of raw materials, are only a few examples of topics dealt with in the Embassy's regular reporting about economic developments in Japan.

In the bilateral economic field, trade and investment are well on track. Belgium has long been a favorite destination for investment by Japanese companies. Even though promotion of investment and trade are competences devolved to the Regions, elaborating a dense network of contacts with 'corporate Japan' represents another main activity of the Embassy in particular at the level of the head of mission. In close consultation and cooperation with the representatives of the Regions, the Embassy regularly makes courtesy calls to Japanese companies having established production units, distribution centers or European headquarters in Belgium. In

the course of 2007, about 20 such calls were made across Japan, but in particular in the Kansai region, allowing to collect useful information about the investment and general business climate in Belgium. In this context, it should be stressed that the offices of the regional representatives (FIT, AWEX, OFI, Brussels Region) act as an integral but autonomous part of the Embassy. Weekly coordination meetings, on Friday, contribute to streamlining of activities and to genuine interaction.

In addition to its 'diplomatic' tasks, the Embassy offers consular services to the public, both Japanese and Belgian. Tasks include providing information on Belgium and Belgian law, helping stranded Belgian tourists or persons facing arrest or deportation, and acting both as a registrar and a notary. Belgians living abroad (close to 800 of them in Japan) can vote at the Embassy, obtain passports, ID's and administrative documents, register changes to their civil status, report the birth of their children and obtain Belgian nationality for them, subscribe powers of attorney, etc. Furthermore, the Embassy can advise Belgians on formalities for registration in Japan, eventually marrying a Japanese citizen, and obtaining the necessary documents for life in Japan.

The Embassy delivers more than 600 visa a year, mainly to Japanese citizens who plan to settle in Belgium: investors, specialists, technicians, students, scientists, journalists. The Embassy is glad to help these persons with the necessary formalities. Quite often, the Embassy's "customers" keep calling from Belgium for advice. Also, the consular services of the Embassy supervise the internal management of the Embassy: personnel affairs, accountancy, logistics, building management, etc.

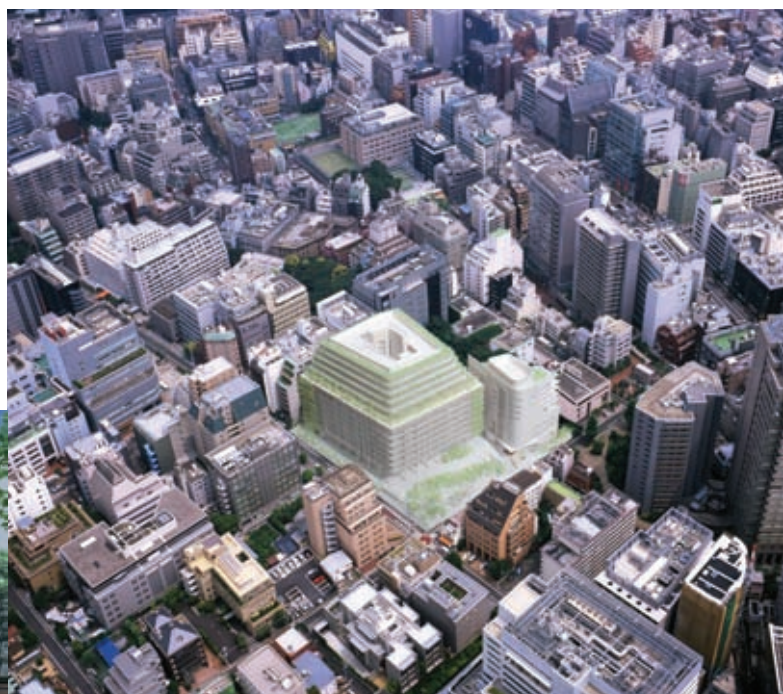
The cultural exchanges between Belgium and Japan have been particularly fruitful over the past years. Japan offers an unrivaled quality and wealth of cultural infrastructure, a curious and well-informed public and large organizations, private and public, with a keen interest in the arts. Artists from Belgium performing ancient music, contemporary dance, fashion and of course painting from all periods are very much appreciated in Japan. Every year at least one and very often more major exhibitions on ancient or modern Belgian painting are held all over Japan. Thanks to the positive cultural context in Japan, most of these exchanges take place and develop without the intervention of the public authorities, and this is a most welcome situation. The Embassy in Tokyo though is in touch with most of the major upcoming projects and lends its support or assistance where required. Many of the cultural events are also perfect occasions for inviting friends or acquaintances of the Embassy thereby showing surprising facets of life in Belgium. Another important tool of exchange in this context is the academic exchange. Apart from the very

From old to new embassy – the reconstruction of the Belgian Embassy in Tokyo

by the staff of the Belgian Embassy in Japan

frequent exchanges between Belgian students or teaching staff and Japanese universities, a valuable academic scholarship programme for posts-graduate specializations has been in place since 1973 and is managed by the Embassy. After the beneficiaries of this programme return to Japan and take up increasingly important positions in Japanese public life, they turn out to be our best ambassadors!

The website of the Belgian Embassy in Japan can be viewed on: www.diplomatie.be/tokyo



The Belgian Embassy in Tokyo is currently the object of a major reconstruction project, aimed at modernizing and upgrading the facilities of its diplomatic representation in Tokyo.

The buildings of the Belgian Embassy in Nibancho have been constructed towards the end of the 1950's after a design of Japanese architect Shiro Asabuki. After 50 years however, the Belgian government felt that these facilities no longer fully met the high standards of prestige, security and safety expected from its political and diplomatic representation in Japan and that it was time for a new and fresh image. Different options were studied and in the end the Belgian government decided to remain in Nibancho and build a new and modern embassy complex on the same grounds that had been home to the Belgian representation for the last 80 years.

As a result of its decision, the Belgian government launched a public tender in March 2006 to select a candidate to buy a part of the embassy grounds and simultaneously build an embassy complex on the remaining land. Among 7 competing groups, the Belgian government selected the Japanese consortium "MTOB", consisting of the developer Mitsubishi Estate Company, the contractor Takenaka Corporation and the architect Noriaki Okabe. After several months of negotiation, an agreement was formally closed on 14 December 2006.

MTOB's project had the distinct advantage that it not only combines functionality with a beautiful (white) exterior design, but that also respects its surroundings and the

neighbourhood by opting for a harmonising design that creates substantial open space for the public.

The new embassy facilities will no longer be dispersed over an area of 8.500 m², since the offices (chancery), the residence of the ambassador and housing of diplomats and staff will be integrated into a unique white 8-storey tower. Although the previous garden will not be preserved in its authentic form, a new and beautiful garden will be created at the east side of the new embassy building.

Since the new embassy building will not be ready before the end of 2009, the Belgian Embassy is currently renting property to accommodate its diplomatic and consular missions for the duration of the works. The temporary offices (chancery) are located in Shibakoen, close to Tokyo Tower, while the residence of the ambassador is located in Hiroo'o, in the vicinity of other European embassies.

After a year of negotiating, fine-tuning of the embassy design, administrative proceedings and neighbourhood consultations, the premises of the embassy in Nibancho were vacated in October of last year and the actual demolition work is ongoing at the moment of writing. The construction works are estimated to start in the coming months. If all goes according to plan, Mr Johan Maricou, Belgian ambassador in Tokyo, will set foot in the new premises at the end of 2009, 80 years after Albert baron de Bassompierre took possession of our first embassy on these grounds.

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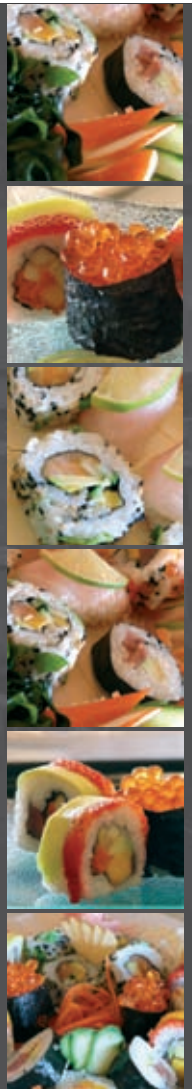
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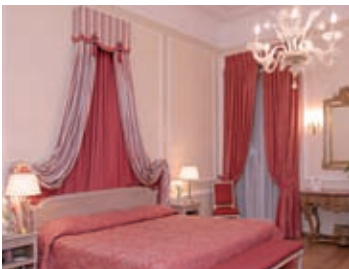
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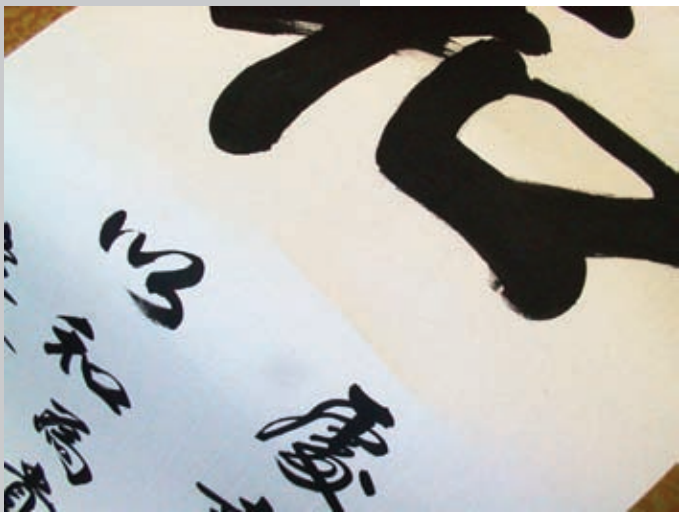
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divisions of our Japanese customers and striving for ever-higher levels of quality have resulted in our automation of the "human processes" wherever possible. Our drive to satisfy customers has accelerated the development of multiple tools that have proven to improve the workflow and reduce costs. These have now been assimilated into our integrated Total Quality Approach. This is what allows us to be successful in providing thorough and efficient services to a highly demanding market.

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- 11-points autofocus
- Penta-prism viewfinder
- Compatible with the new generation of lenses with ultra-sonic driven autofocus
- ISO 100 to ISO 1.600
- High-rigidity stainless-steel body
- Weather-resistant
- Dust Removal
- In-body Shake Reduction with opto-magnetic 3-D sensor
- 2.5" low-reflection LCD screen with 210.000 pixel resolution



More info? Visit www.pentax.be

K10D

SR Shake Reduction

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