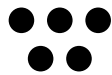
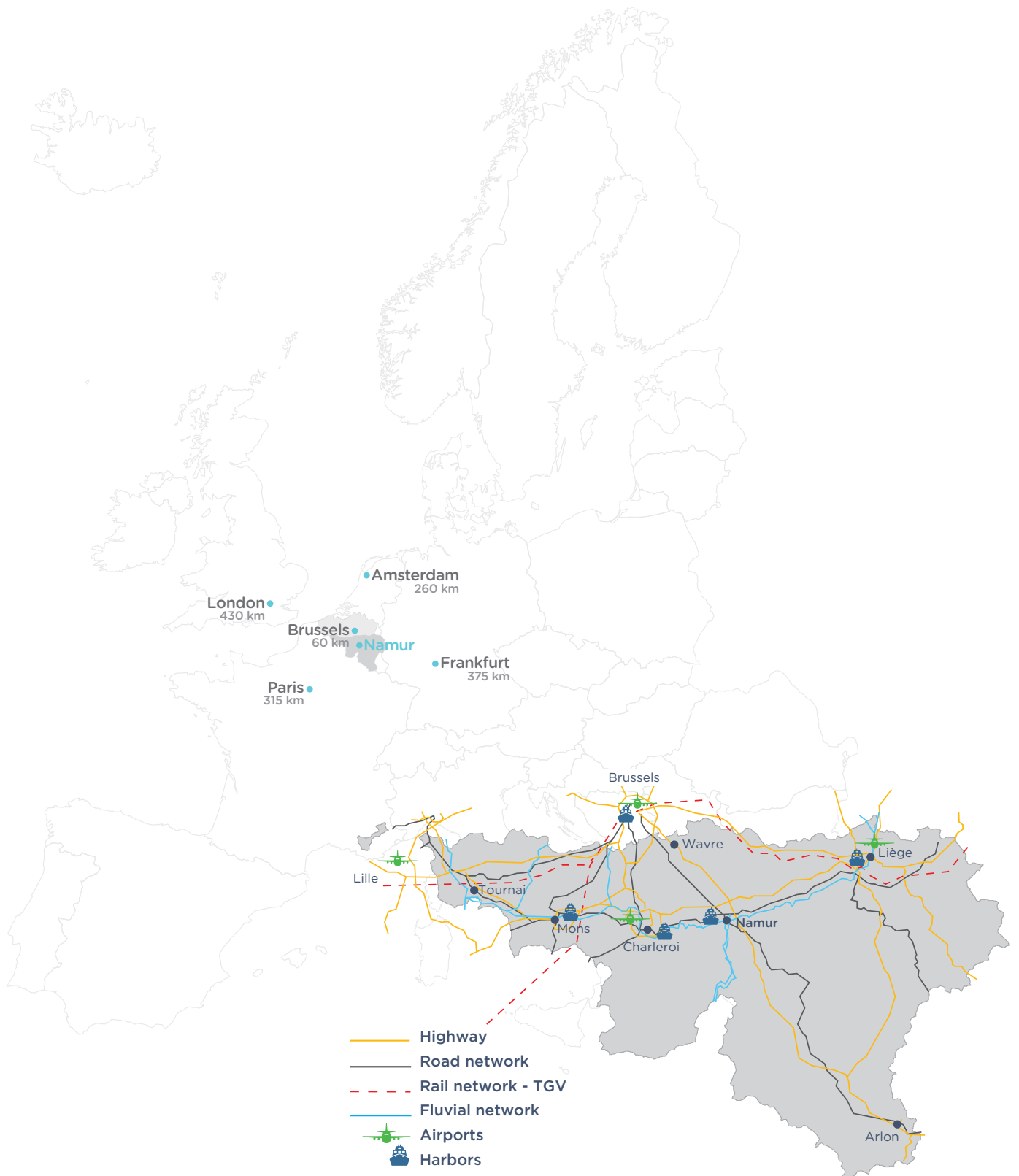


# Feel inspired



Wallonia.be



Abundant and alive.  
Established, rooted.  
A land of variety. A thousand landscapes.  
*A territory, a world.*  
Millions of people. A focus for memories.  
Scenic, open.  
Vibrant and attractive.

# Wallonia

*The world is my stage,  
Wallonia is my home.*

FRANCO DRAGONE

# Feel inspired

## Wallonia is all about sharing.

Wallonia is all about meeting, sharing, a relationship.  
A hand outstretched, a welcoming smile, a friendly look.

Dialog, exchange, proximity, collaboration, cooperation,... In Wallonia it's not just the density of the population that brings people together: it's a whole tradition of openness and friendliness that makes this community of over 3,500,000 people a gigantic social network anchored in reality, connected to the world and warmly open.

This fantastic openness is second nature to the Walloons. Wallonia has always been shaped by innovative men and women, daring explorers, inventors of the impossible, inspired artists who have delighted the world, inspired forerunners who have built empires and ingenious minds that have transformed the

world. Today, Walloon ideas, products, creations, inventions and talents continue to amaze the world in every sector. Wallonia is first and foremost inspired by sharing.

The Walloons, and people who have become Walloons over time, are not rich except in what they share: they have built a model of multicultural development where different understandings and emotional blending have succeeded in spreading, enriching their territory, opening themselves to mutation and progress and sharing future challenges together.



Like Franco Dragone, the creator of spectacular and innovative international shows (Las Vegas, Quebec, Macao, Paris, Abu Dhabi,...), hundreds of Walloon companies, artists, comedians, writers and designers share their inspiration and broadcast their creativity throughout the world.



Research centres and science parks structure the landscape of a Wallonia devoted to innovation.

Walloon companies live and die by exports, with remarkable results. 70% of their turnover is derived from exports: this is more than double the European average and this performance is in constant growth. Walloon know-how is recognised globally and contributes significantly to making Wallonia a region that is conquering international markets, especially in the areas of advanced technology and niche sectors where quality is a priority.

Wallonia's internationalisation is also due to its great attractiveness to companies wishing to relocate here: in under 15 years, Wallonia has welcomed over 1,000 foreign companies who have set up shop in the region, representing a considerable performance clearly on the same scale as its degree of openness to the world. What's more, these foreign companies can count on a truly hands on approach from the local authorities who understand the issues and are able to take appropriate decisions quickly. An outlook that is specifically expressed by a wide range of tax measures favourable to companies.



Rennequin Sualem had the genius to design a machine to supply water to the fountains of the Chateau of Versailles.



Georges Nagelmackers founded the Compagnie internationale des Wagons-Lits, then the Orient-Express and the Trans-Siberian Express.

It's on this openness and formidable capacity for exchange and sharing that Wallonia has been built. **In particular, over the centuries, this has given rise to remarkable personalities who have made a great contribution to shaping the world and improving living conditions:** inventors, scientists, artists, writers, musicians, designers, industrialists,...

But Wallonia does not just live in the past: **it provides day to day support for, stimulates and defends Walloon successes right across the planet.** With foreign representation that is the most developed in the world in relation to the size of its population (nearly 110 offices covering 120 countries), and highly effective financial and promotional support, Wallonia responds perfectly to the requirements of modern and sustainable internationalisation.

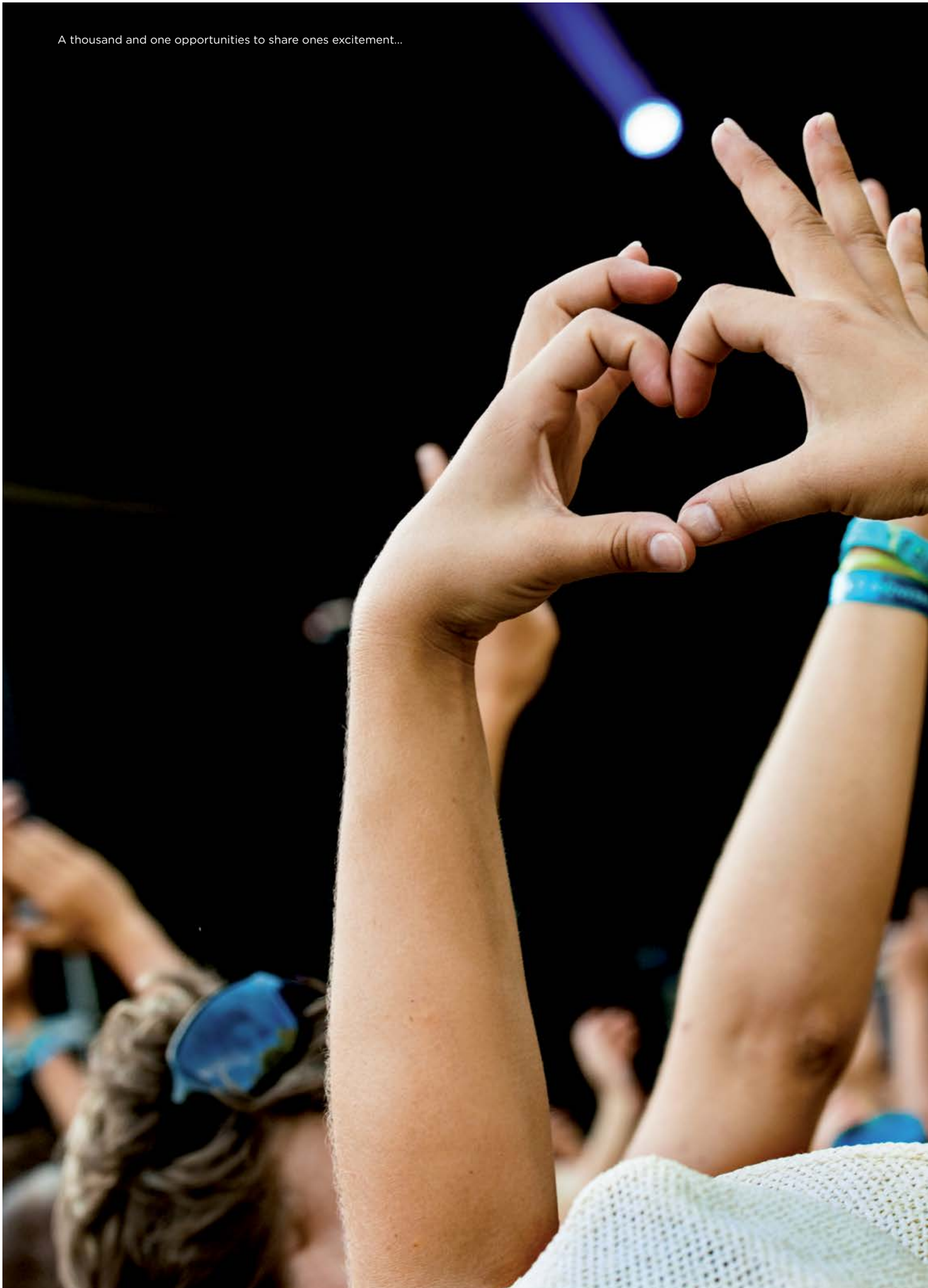
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*Did you know that it was a Walloon, Pierre Minuit, who was the first governor of New York? And Pierre De Lannoy, the first elected mayor of New York? Also, did you know that the forerunner of molecular biology, the pioneer of microbiology, the inventors of the Marly machine which brought water to Versailles, the inventor of the dynamo, the inventor of the method of preserving blood, or that one of the main originators of the Big Bang theory, that the inventors of the internal combustion engine, the electric arc furnace, the manufacture of zinc metal, the centrifugal cream separator and even roller skates and bathroom scales were Walloons!*

*Ernest Solvay, a friend of Einstein, invented sodium carbonate and laid the foundations for what has become a leading international company. Edouard Empain, built the Paris underground and the city of Heliopolis. Georges Nagelmackers, founded Wagons-Lits and the Orient-Express. The Delhaize brothers were the inventors of popular retail distribution and Nestor Martin designed heating appliances and revolutionary enamelled stoves,...* And these are just a few evocative examples of what Walloons have accomplished in terms of scientific and entrepreneurial prowess right across the world.

---

A thousand and one opportunities to share ones excitement...







*From Wallonia, the world is at your fingertips,  
even the other end.  
That's why we export nearby and far away.*

JEAN GALLER / THE OFFICIAL SUPPLIER TO THE BELGIUM ROYAL COURT

# Feel inspired

## Wallonia, where all the world meets...

Wallonia is first and foremost a territory, a land and a terroir. 17,000 km<sup>2</sup> of intensity and serenity, nature and industry, towns and villages, business parks and science parks: a region structured by comprehensive, effective and interconnected transport networks.

Travelling through Wallonia is an easy passage through a territory where you can breathe and where distance has been abolished. Europe in concentrated form, a land of contrasts with a thousand shades, where inspired locations never end.

You can do business in Wallonia with a density and intensity unlike anywhere else: available space, quality infrastructure, a high level of skills and proximity to research

centres make Walloon soil a sustainable location for development and fertile ground for innovation.

Wallonia's doors are wide open to the world, not just giving access to hundreds of millions of consumers in just a few hours, but each year also welcoming millions of tourists, students and expats who truly blossom here.



From airports to country roads,  
from high speed railway lines to navigable waterways,  
Wallonia combines all types of mobility at all times.



The density and fluidity of its means of communication are the very essence of its history.

With a little over 200 inhabitants/km<sup>2</sup>, Walloon territory is a manageable size and [enjoys a favourable geographic location](#). Also, through its direct connection to Brussels, Wallonia benefits from its close proximity and [immediate access to the European Institutions as well as all the international organisations and associations](#) located there. And, as stressed by numerous international experts, this location at the heart of Europe's transport networks makes it [one of Europe's most attractive regions, especially for distribution centres and logistics platforms](#).

[In fact, Wallonia benefits from the densest road and motorway network in Europe!](#) An enormous asset making movement very easy over the whole of its territory and offering optimal connections to the main countries of Europe. So, in just 4 hours by road you can reach nearly 60 million people. [And in one day, an area of 370 million consumers can be reached](#), and twenty of Europe's major cities.

The same is true for the railways. Wallonia is served by several major European lines (Thalys, Eurostar via Brussels, TGV, ICE) and is also one of the rare European stopping points for high speed freight. It occupies a leading place in Europe with regard to the density of its rail network.



In Liège, one of the world's most beautiful train stations, truly sculpted into the urban space by Santiago Calatrava.

Wallonia also boasts a [remarkable network of navigable waterways](#): over 450 km of waterways are regularly used for commercial navigation, the centrepiece of the European network, with a direct link to the world's largest seaport hub (Antwerp-Rotterdam, Ghent, Zeebrugge). In this respect, it is significant to note that the [Autonomous Port of Liège is Europe's third inland port](#) in terms of size, in the heart of the Rhine-Escaut-Meuse basin.

[Both regional airports have a very important place in the aviation sector](#): Liège Airport and its cargo activity, ranking in 7<sup>th</sup> position in Europe and Charleroi BSCA airport, which transports 6 million passengers each year to one hundred destinations throughout the

world. Road, rail, river or air networks, Wallonia is developing additional [platforms](#) (6 logistics parks and 11 multimodal facilities) which combine existing road-rail-air-water networks in an optimal manner thus multiplying their effectiveness.

Finally, Wallonia can boast an additional asset which is altogether remarkable compared with other European countries: access to over [200 business parks](#) offering all the relevant facilities, resources and skills required to develop an economic activity based on sustainable growth.



In Wallonia, sustainable mobility is also synonymous with performance and competitiveness. Strépy-Thieu funicular lift is the world's largest boat lift.



Happy to be in Wallonia,  
at the heart of Europe

WILLIAM ECHIKSON / GOOGLE

# Feel inspired

Wallonia,  
creative and innovative,  
inventive and creating.

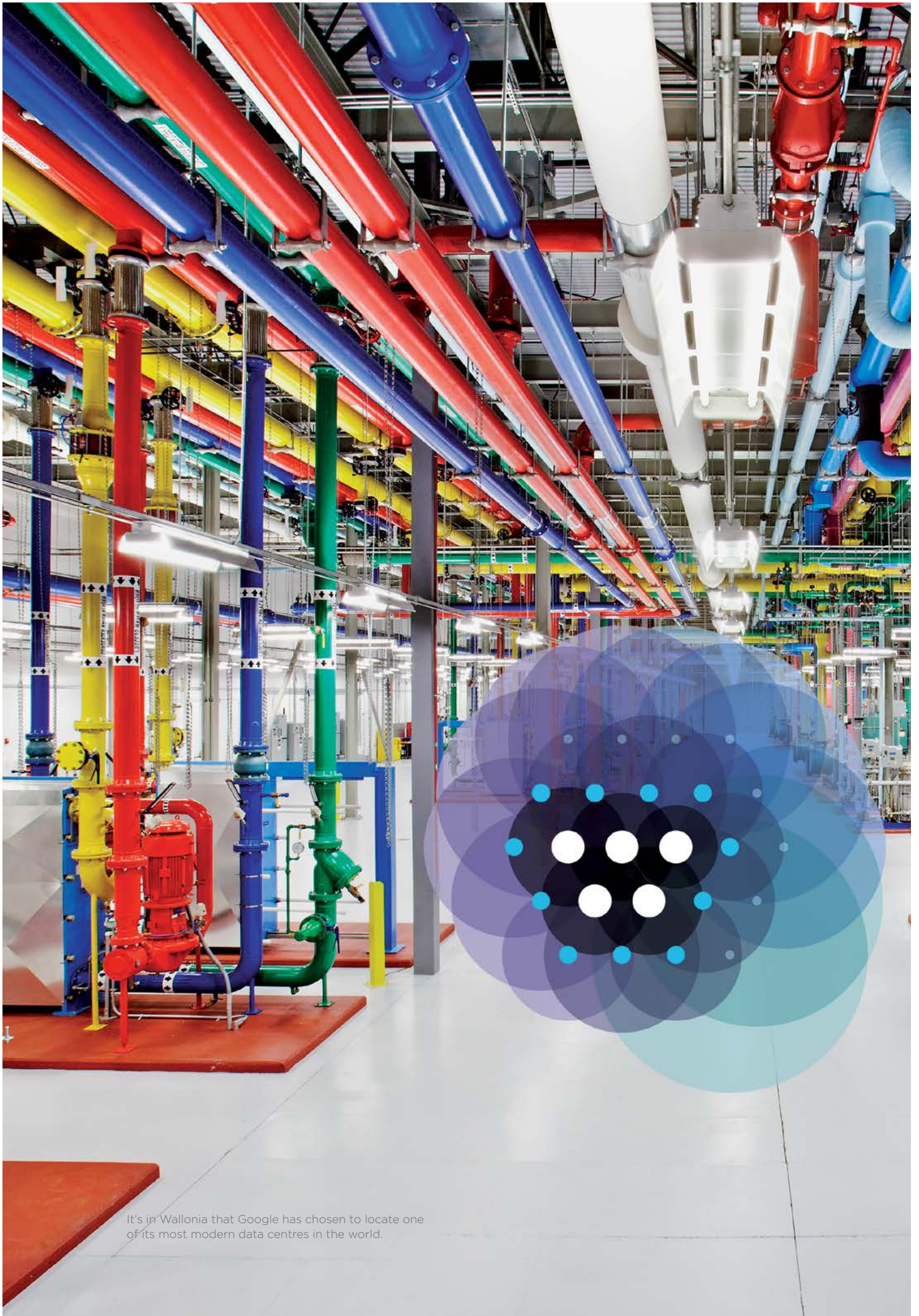
Above all, Wallonia means a climate,  
an environment that is particularly favourable  
to new ideas, imagination and innovation.

As a region that naturally excels in creativity,  
Wallonia is a place of meetings, exchange and  
sharing of expertise, an inspired location  
where multiple top level skills combine and  
regularly result in global innovations.

These countless talents, whether remarkable  
or ordinary, that mark Wallonia's history could  
never have come to the fore without a system  
of education and training that is rigorous,  
demanding and varied.

And the Wallonia of talents is also rich in  
diversity: it flourishes in the numerous high-  
tech laboratories where science is created  
and humanity develops as well as in these  
places where the fertile imagination of  
designers, artists and creators transforms life  
and reinvents the world.





It's in Wallonia that Google has chosen to locate one of its most modern data centres in the world.



Open to the world, Wallonia and Brussels schools and universities welcome over 27,000 foreign students each year.

Whether we are talking about basic research or applied research, Wallonia is well-known and recognised as a region **at the cutting edge of technological development**. And first and foremost, it owes this to the **quality and density of its higher and university education**: 130 colleges, 9 university centres grouped into 3 regional education authorities (in Wallonia and Brussels), which attract tens of thousands of students, among whom are many foreign students and doctoral students. At least **13,000 researchers work in the French-speaking universities** and **700 doctorates** are awarded each year. **Numerous international distinctions and awards** have in addition been awarded to researchers and scientists from the Wallonia-Brussels Federation, including recently, in 2013, the Nobel prize for Physics to François Englert.

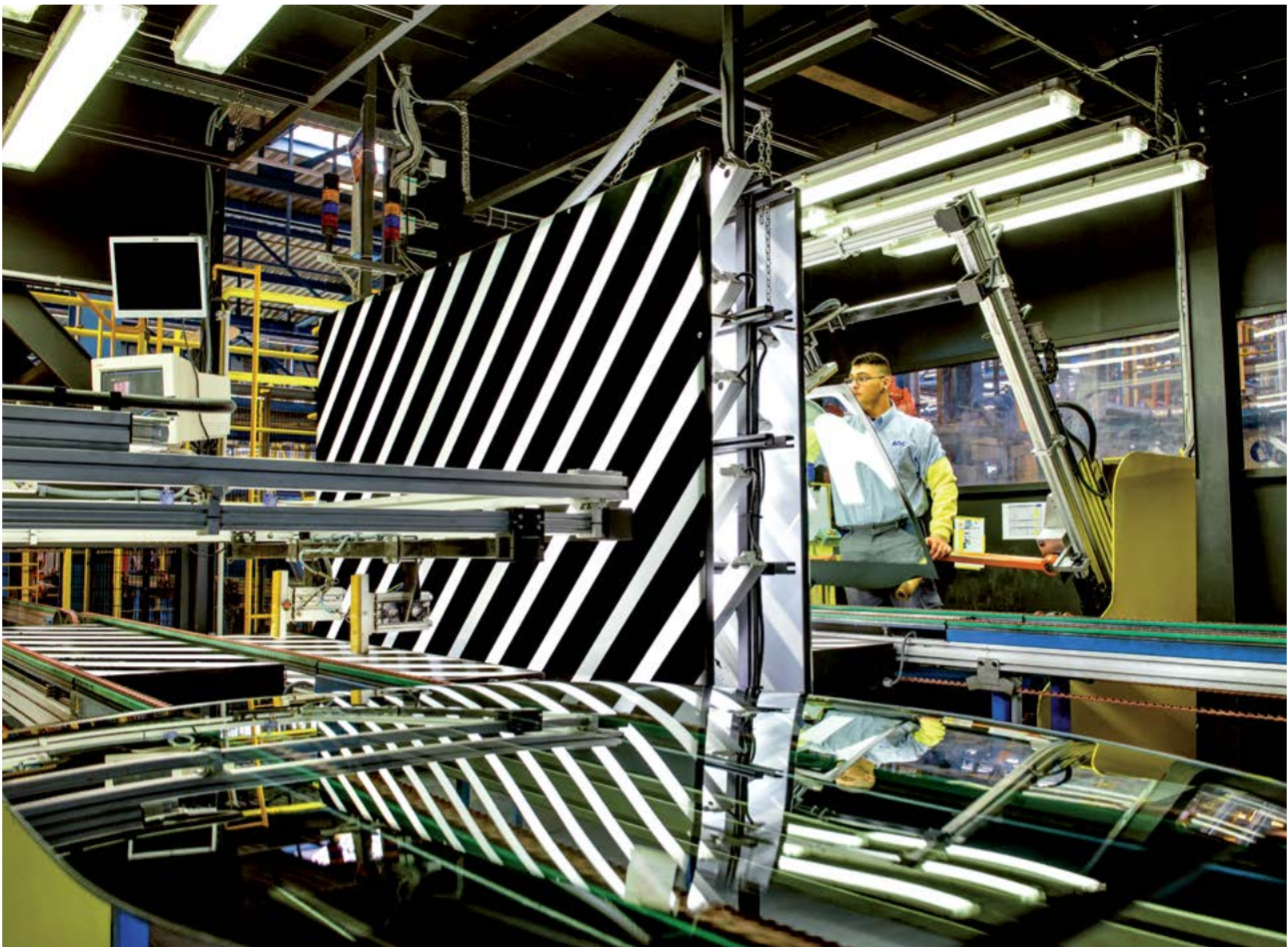
This technological know-how makes an effective contribution to the creation and development of cutting-edge companies on an international scale. As a result, over **200 spin-offs have been created** based on university research and now constitute **real technology jewels seeking to conquer international markets**.



Basic and applied research benefits from resources and skills that drive a remarkable innovation dynamic.

This knowledge transfer looked after by 6 Knowledge Transfer Offices distributed throughout Walloon (and Brussels) territory, harmoniously supplements a vast interconnected system that mutualises means, skills and resources. So 300 public and private research centres, almost 20 centres of excellence and 6 science and technology parks make cooperation between researchers, innovative start-ups, SMEs and large industrial groups possible, for the benefit of economic development.

This fluidity of the system and this great proximity to promoters of innovation is successfully embodied in the Competitiveness centres, a major focus of Walloon economic development policy. Biotechnology and health, mechanical, aeronautical and space engineering, green chemistry and sustainable materials, agro-industry, transportation and logistics: a fast developing series of sectors where Walloons are proving successful and which make Walloon competitiveness centres a valuable example in this area. And this strategy is proving even more effective to the extent that it perfectly combines with a group of more specialist and highly competitive clusters and business networks, especially in the areas of eco-construction, sustainable energy, the plastics industry, image and sound techniques and Information and Communication Technologies.



Walloon industry has conquered the world by positioning itself as a leader in very many niche sectors.

Wallonia gives itself the resources for its innovation policies. It [invests heavily in excellence centres](#), which are leading the region in the path of employment and growth. It is also proposing a set of [financial measures to support R&D and investment](#) and is providing the financial means to promote the creation, development and growth of companies with great technological potential.

It is not surprising therefore that Walloon industry has conquered and continues to conquer the world, with [many world leaders in their sectors](#). It is not surprising either that an impressive number of foreign enterprises have relocated here to benefit from this know-how and the remarkable skills of researchers and technical staff.

In 2013 Wallonia was designated as a «European Creative District» by the European Commission, among 44 other candidate regions: it's not just the international recognition of its enormous creative and innovative potential, but also the fact that this highlights the role that creative and cultural industries can play in adding value to its economy through design, creativity and the contribution of trans-sectoral collaboration.



If Walloon companies are so competitive at international level, it's also because they benefit from the performance and productivity of a very high-tech workforce.



A UNESCO World Heritage site, Grand-Hornu is a place where Wallonia's industrial history dialogues with the avant-garde nature of its artistic and digital creation.



My roots ARE IN SOUTH-KOREA  
but WALLONIA GAVE ME WINGS.

SANG HOON DEGEIMBRE

# Feel inspired

## Wallonia: the art of living and a way of being

Wallonia is always a particular emotion,  
an unexpected atmosphere, an unlikely meeting.

History has shaped the warm and passionate character of its people. A history that is lively, rich and fruitful. A history of struggles and conquests, of discoveries and creations, of toil and of masterpieces. A history written in stone and memory and which inspires daily life.

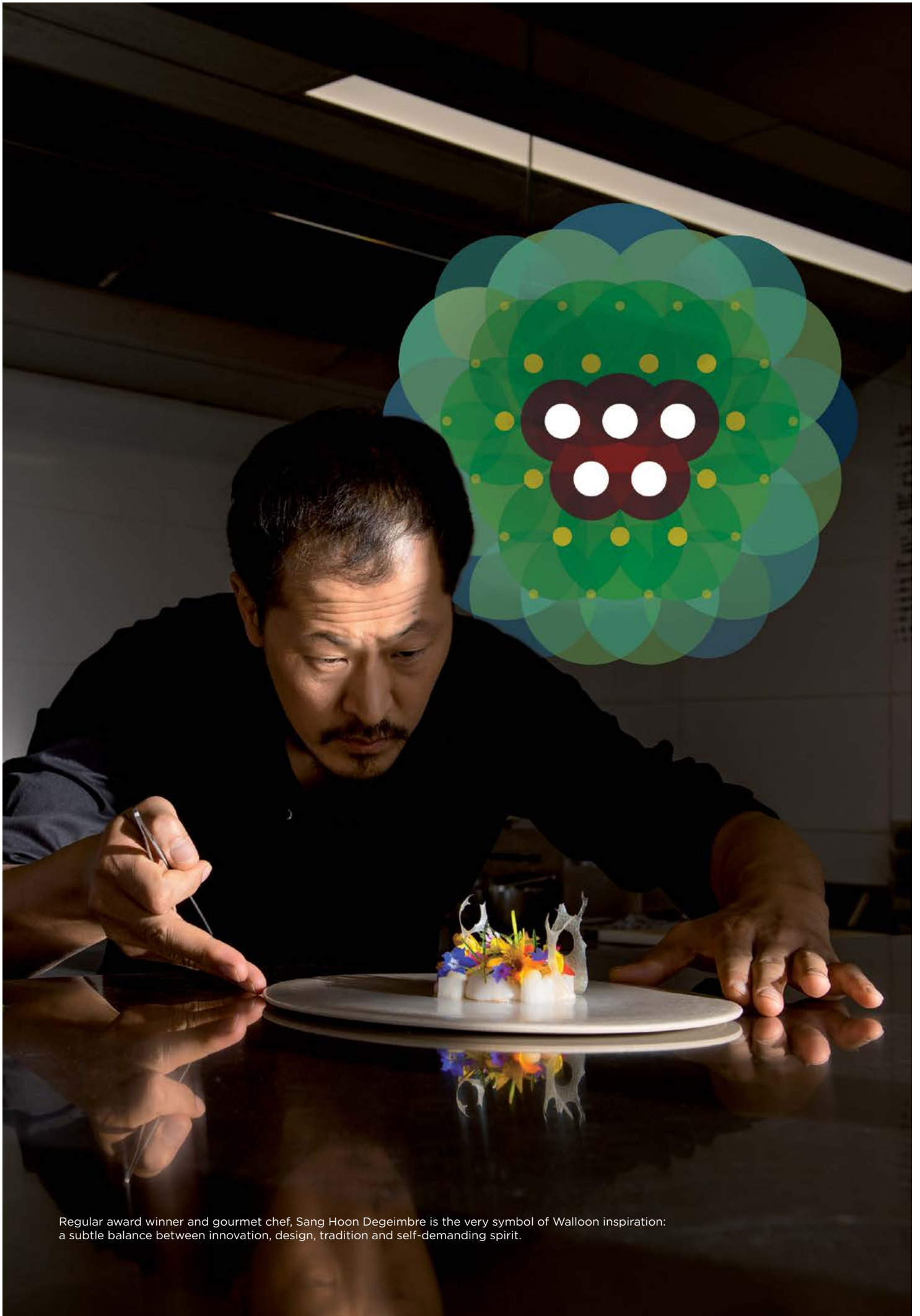
Wallonia shares a certain idea of existence, an original view of the world, always with humour, and this discreet cordiality and

reasonable passion that makes Walloons so idiosyncratic and appealing.

Also and above all, great cultural ferment and vital artistic passion animate Wallonia, like an ode to diversity, talent and personal development.

Festivals here retain all their meaning. Rejoicing and celebration mark work and days, with enthusiasm and generosity.





Regular award winner and gourmet chef, Sang Hoon Degeimbre is the very symbol of Walloon inspiration: a subtle balance between innovation, design, tradition and self-demanding spirit.



Walloon creation is like its territory: an inspiring space open to the world, dense and fertile, fluid and audacious.

Wallonia is animated by a **magnificent heritage, rich with a thousand architectural treasures**: castles, churches and cathedrals, abbeys and historic mansions, all bearing witness to the genius of the architects of their time...

Through the centuries, **hundreds of artists, painters, musicians, sculptors and writers, often at the forefront of their generation, have contributed abundantly to artistic and cultural change in Europe**. The trace of their presence, the magnitude and importance of their creations can be found everywhere, in museums and theatres, as well as in bookstores, cafes and on the streets.

This inventive and inspired tradition is obviously alive in the art schools, studios, academies and concert halls, but also on the stage, in high-tech film and post-production studios: all these artists achieve impressive

performances, recognised and **regularly rewarded throughout the world**.

Wallonia forms a fascinating mosaic of places to live, places to work, places to relax and places to party. Very many sites and cultural events have been recognised by **UNESCO as being of world heritage value, tangible and intangible**. The famous Gilles de Binche are but one evocative example. Walloon towns and cities are cities of art and history, cities of tourism and culture, cities of folklore and rejoicing, but also modern townships and metropolises where students, artists, creators, shops and businesses harmoniously coexist.



A tourist destination ideal for doing business.

A taste for good food, local products, multiple flavours, original recipes: Wallonia is a fine food mecca. We can no longer count the initiatives designed to revive certain forgotten culinary practices or create surprising recipes totally in line with tradition and the requirements of quality.

Well-being, relaxation, health, nature,... Wallonia is one of Europe's best preserved regions. Its contrasting landscapes, plateaus and fertile plains, valleys and forests, rivers and lakes, captivate spirits, give rest to bodies and revive the soul. The pure water that can be found here in abundance is a perfect symbol of this: hasn't the word «spa» become an international synonym for thermal treatments and well-being?

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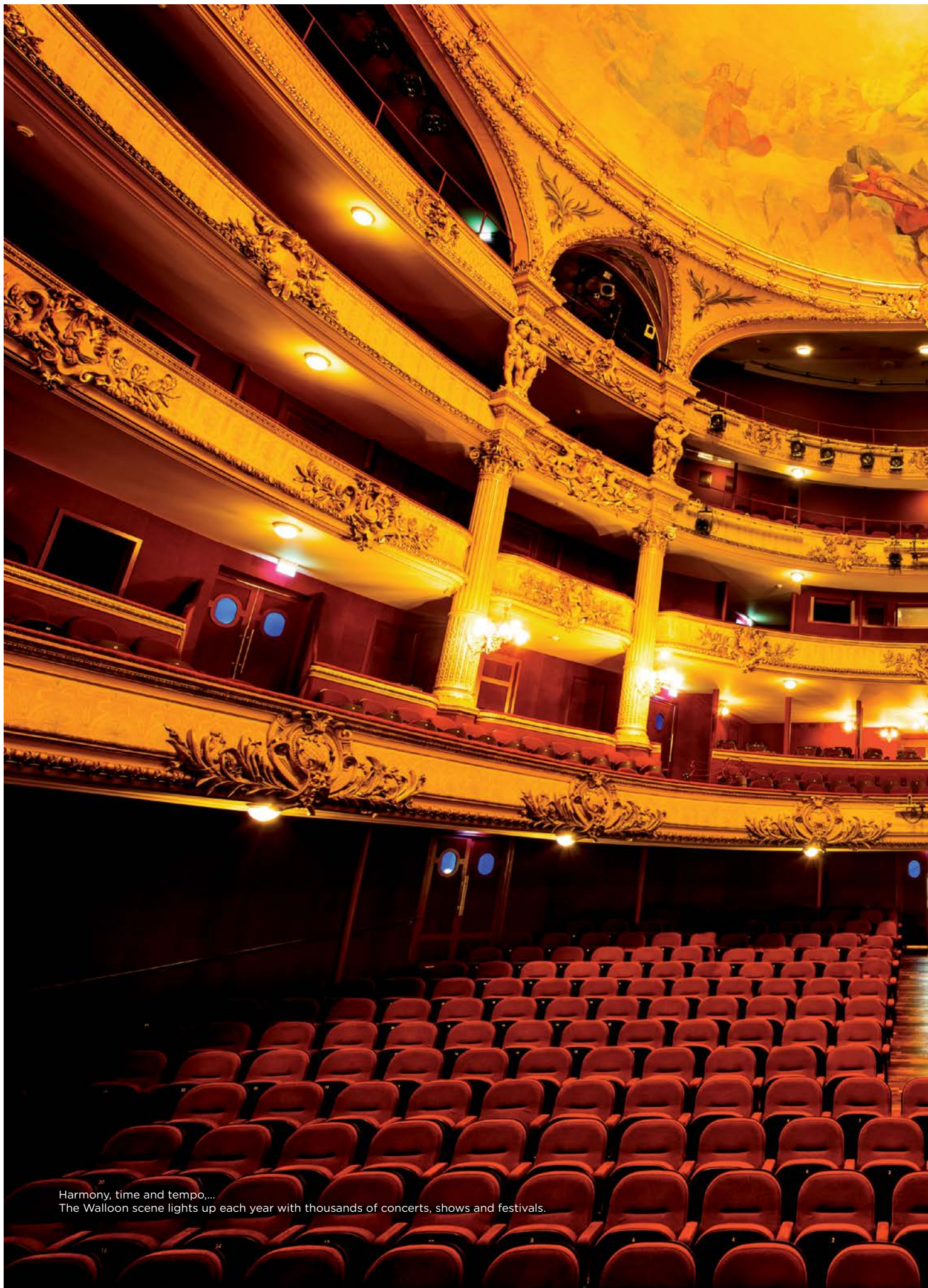
*The Walloon collective imagination is full of real or imaginary, ancient or modern characters. This incredible fertility is embodied in particular in comic strips which saw Tintin, Spirou and Pilote, heroes like Les Toniques Bleues, Cédric, Blueberry, Buck Danny, Martine, Ric Hochet, Cubitus, Achille Talon, Jugurtha, Comanche, Jerry Spring, Valhardi, Fantasio, Yoko Tsuno, Gil Jourdan, Robin Dubois, Léonard, Natacha, Dan Cooper, Tif and Tondu, or Marc Dacier come to life in the newspapers.*

*But it is also manifested in the works of Roger de la Pasture, Paul Delvaux, Jean-Michel Folon, Félicien Rops, René Magritte and Gustave Serrurier-Bovy... and the works of musicians who are part of western musical history like Lassus, Du Mont, Dufay, Grétry, Franck, Vieuxtemps, Ysaÿe, or even Adolphe Sax, inventor of the saxophone.*

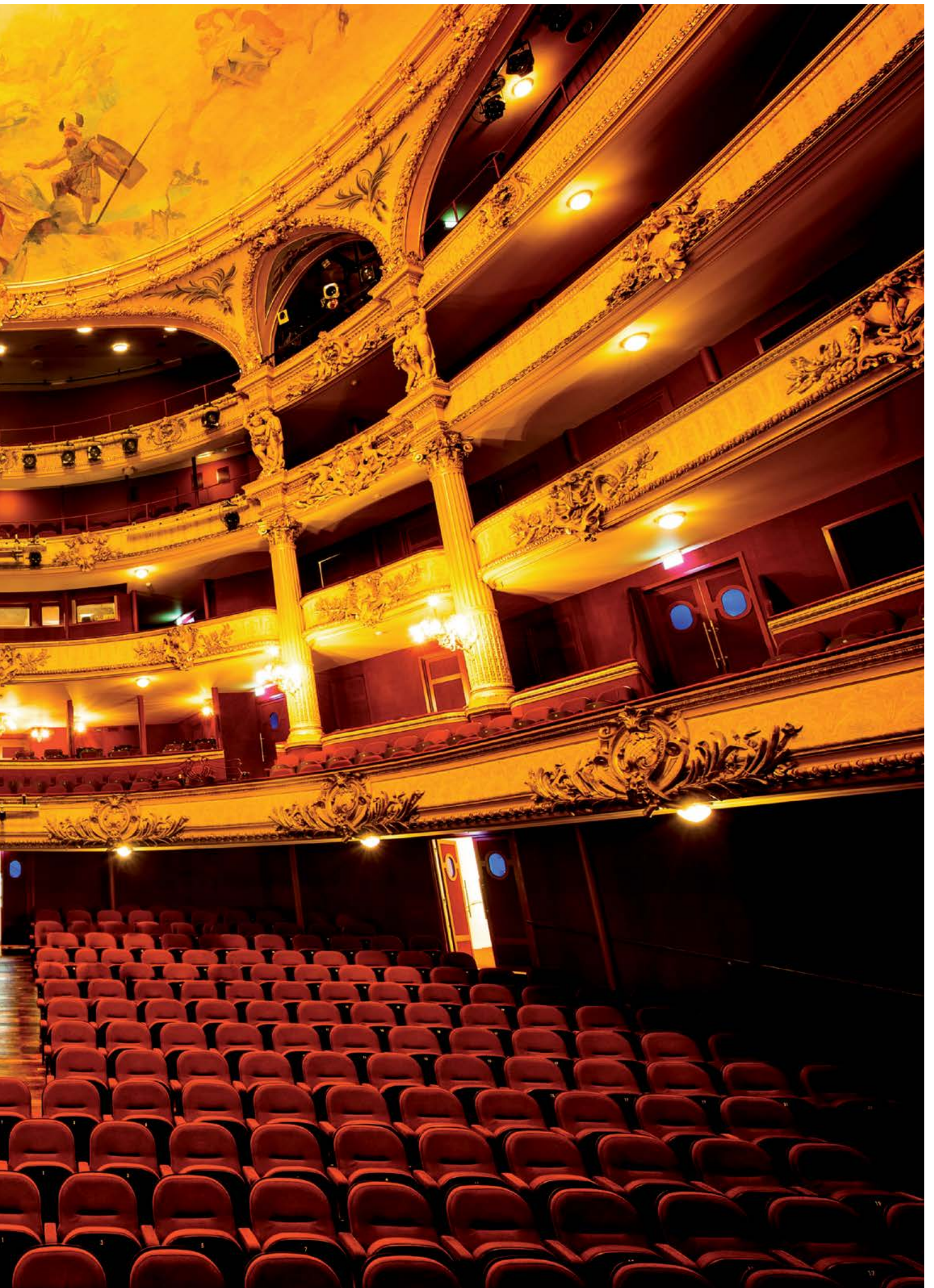
*World famous authors as well like Charles De Coster (and his Legend of Thyl Ulenspiegel), Henri Michaux, Georges Simenon, one of the most read and most translated authors in the world with his Commissioner Maigret in particular, or even Henri Vernes, creator of Bob Morane.*

*Not to mention internationally recognised and prize winning film directors and cinema actors and actresses like the Dardenne brothers, Cécile de France, Emilie Dequenne, Bouli Lanners, Marie Gillain, Olivier Gourmet, Benoît Poelvoorde, or Déborah François.*

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Harmony, time and tempo...  
The Walloon scene lights up each year with thousands of concerts, shows and festivals.



A land of variety. A thousand landscapes. A territory, a world.



Page 4	Quotation from Franco Dragone Founder / President / Artistic Director Franco Dragone Entertainment Group
Page 5	A moment from the show «The House of Dancing Water» / Macao Photo by Mehdy Nasser © Franco Dragone Entertainment Group
Page 6	Axis Parc / Mont-Saint-Guibert © Awex / photo by Pascal Broze
Page 7	Portrait of Rennequin Sualem © Work belonging to Madame Gevaerts - Diffusion Institut Destrée Portrait of Georges Nagelmackers © Nadar - Gaspard-Félix Tournachon
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Page 24	Quotation from Sang Hoon Degeimbre Founder / Leader / L'Air du temps
Page 25	Sang Hoon Degeimbre Founder / Leader / L'Air du temps © Awex / photo by Pascal Broze
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Pages 28-29	Opéra Royal de Liège © Awex / photo by Pascal Broze
Page 30	The Giant's Tomb, Semois valley © Awex / photo by Pascal Broze

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### Wallonia-Brussels International

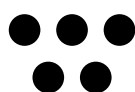
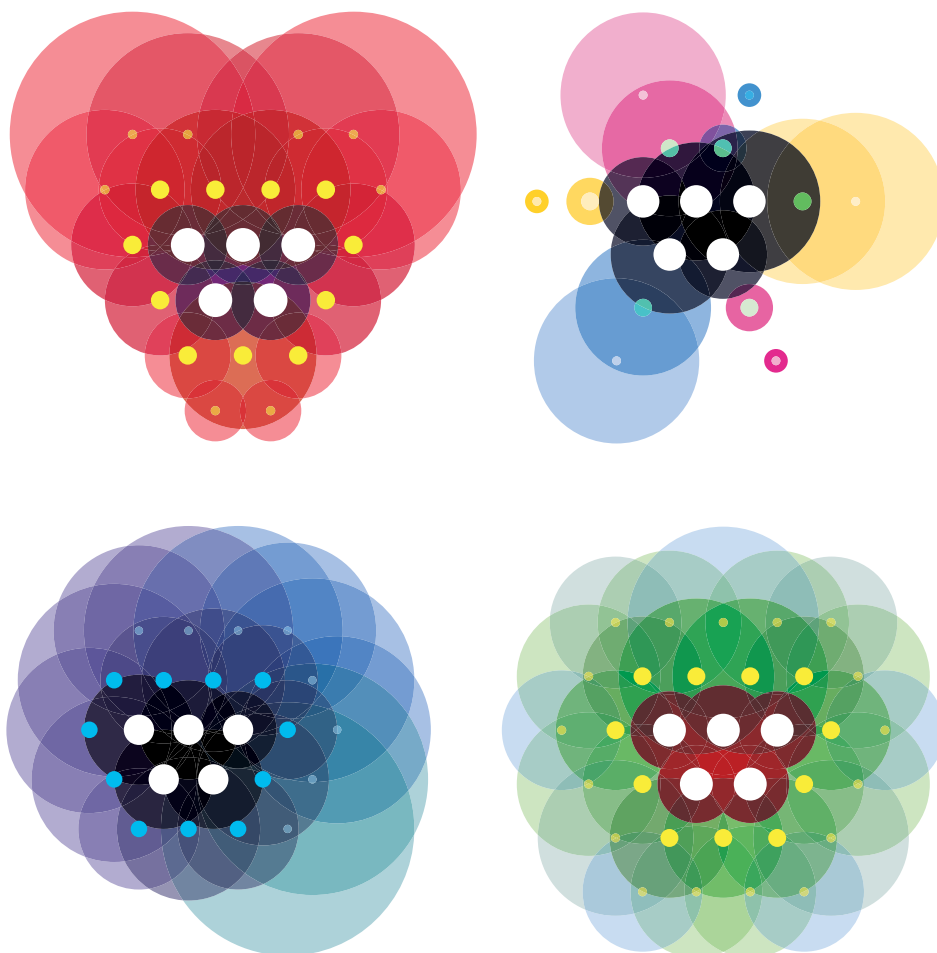
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