

## THE BELVUE MUSEUM GETS A YOUTHFUL MAKEOVER

### A TOTALLY NEW LOOK AT BELGIUM AND ITS HISTORY PLANNED FOR 2016.

2015 sees the start of an exciting new project at the BELvue Museum, Brussels, managed by the King Baudouin Foundation. The current permanent exhibition tracing the history of Belgium will give way to a totally new exhibition on Belgium and its history, which will open its doors on 21 July 2016, Belgium's National Holiday.

As a centre for democracy and history, the BELvue Museum was keen to involve young people in the development of the new exhibition. The museum decided to commission a team of youngsters, aged under 25, to participate in creating the concept and layout for the new exhibition.

In November 2015, the BELvue Museum's permanent exhibition will close its doors to the public and undergo a total transformation. Since the museum's inauguration in 2005, the exhibition has traced key moments in Belgium's history, from the 1830 revolution up to the present day.

The concept of the new BELvue is still in development, but there will be a rather different approach. The new exhibition will be organised around issues that are important for our society but which also represent the particularity of Belgium. "Our country has a young and tumultuous history and our society is witnessing rapid change. We feel it is important that a museum about Belgium also reflects the society in which we live" says An Lavens, Manager of the BELvue Museum.

During the renovation work, the BELvue will host a number of temporary exhibitions, as well as continuing to organise activities around the theme of democracy and justice.

#### A museum for and created by young people

Although the actual development of the new trail has been awarded to the Tijdsbeeld & Pièce Montée company, the BELvue wanted to involve young people in the project right from the start. "Whether we are talking about the museum itself or about activities associated with the museum and its exhibitions, 40% of our visitors are young people. Young people are thus our main target group and it seemed only natural for us to involve them in re-designing the new BELvue Museum" explains An Lavens.

The call was launched in spring 2014 and the team *Bande du BELvue Bende* was duly formed. The team comprises some twenty youngsters, French- and Dutch-speaking, all aged between 18 and 25, and they soon set to work. They meet once a month to brainstorm and develop ideas for the concept of the new BELvue Museum. They visit other museums, interview people in the street and canvas visitors to the museum for their

thoughts and impressions. The team members even built a life-size model room of their ideal museum over one weekend!

The team's thoughts and ideas will be discussed with the BELvue's own team, the museum's Scientific Committee and Tijdsbeeld & Pièce Montée. Once the concept of the new museum trail has been finalised, the *Bande du BELvue Bende* will develop further ideas for the museum's activities, targeted at people of their own age.

Members of the *Bande du BELvue Bende* have already been integrated into the museum's own team and enjoy being in contact with current visitors to the museum. At present they are preparing activities for visitors who will come to the BELvue for Museum Night Fever on 7 March 2015, the annual late night opening event for museums in Brussels. A great opportunity for each and every one of the team to meet some of the thousands of youngsters expected to visit the BELvue on that evening.

**For further information about the new BELvue Museum and the *Bande du BELvue Bende*, visit [www.belvue.be](http://www.belvue.be) and go to the BELvue 2016 menu.**

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