Let it snow
**“ROOT”**

KONSTANTINOS SEIRINAKIS

Dull, decayed now and forevermore.

All when I attempt to find the point where nihil ceases to be.

There where there are no cracks in the sky, aether, void;
Devoid of Oxygen and Vitriol.

Wandering within the hollowed nest wherever could a reward,
on not eternally blazing, be.

When “everything” has reached its conclusion, the Dark Hour will still not be deceased.

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**Main Articles**

Noel 1916  
This is the season... to spend money  
Christmas around the world  
Our own personal filter for the world  
I’ve got nothing to say.  
Real people  
Christmas and the environment  
Big boss interview

**Anything else to add?**

Poem  
Music recommendation  
Short articles  
Music fun facts  
Christmas recipes

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**Covers by** Reagan Verschelde  
**Layout** Reagan Verschelde / Valentina Skačková / Merlijn Draisma

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"Let it snow – a holiday issue?"

Finally, the holiday season has arrived! Who else can agree with me that the holiday season is the best time of the year? The decorations, the music, the excitement, advent calendars, the cold weather, warm boots and fluffy ear muffs. Sipping warm tea or hot cocoa at home, while it rains outside (maybe even snows, if we’re lucky). People walking around in ugly Christmas sweaters and cinnamon-like smells at home. Sweet cookies, stored well away so no one can secretly eat them. It’s wonderful!

But not everything is holly jolly during this time of the year. As the days get darker, it can be hard keeping a good mood. Waking up in the dark, going home in the dark. And on most days the sun doesn’t even come out between the clouds. And then on top of the dark season there are plenty of tests and exams to study for. However, some things can make the dark season and the grey weather somewhat more bearable. For example holiday light decorations. They always give me a feeling of coziness during the dark and cold season. Not only the ones on my street but also the ones I’ve noticed at school, for example above the bridge to the canteen. Every morning when I walk into school, I now take a different path just to walk underneath the decorations. Do you enjoy them as much as I do? Holiday lights are not the only thing that can bring us joy during the dark season. There are plenty of traditions and customs that provide an opportunity to celebrate with loved ones, enjoy good food and have fun. You will read about some of them in this issue, for example in the article “Christmas Traditions around the world” on p.6. Do you know about Croatian or Estonian traditions?

If you are wondering whether all of these celebrations take their toll on our environment and what you can do about it, you may be interested to continue reading on p.20 about the environmental impact of Christmas. And before you stock up on cosmetics to offer, you may want to read about the commercialization of Christmas (p.6).

This issue is, however, not only about the holidays. The preparations for next year’s Spring Fest have started. On p.24 you will find the yearly Big boss interview, or are you maybe enjoying scary movies? Or not enjoying them at all and wondering why your friends love them? Then flip the pages to p.17 Whatever tradition you will follow this holiday season, whether you will be celebrating Christmas, Hanukkah or simply enjoying a good time with family and friends, I wish you a wonderful time and a happy New Year!

And, of course, I wish you fun reading this issue!

Charlotte Wiemann  
Editor in Chief
Noël 1916

“Jules ! Jules ! Réveille-toi ! Papa a écrit !”

JOHANNA GASPAR

Aujourd’hui, lundi 25 décembre 1916, en vient de recevoir une lettre de mon père, probablement en train de se battre quelque part, dans le froid mordant et la neige glacée.
Cela m’a fait penser, y a-t-il seulement de la neige là-bas ? Le feu ne la fait-il pas fondre, les traces de pas disparaitraient et les corps sans vie qui tombent les uns après les autres ne la colorent-ils pas d’un rouge sombre et funeste ?
Mon père me manque. Il y a exactement trois heures, en 1913, lorsque je m’étais levé à Noël.
Il y a exactement trois semaines. J’ai l’étrange pressentiment que je n’aurais cette chance et que jamais elle ne mettra cet énorme poids sur mes épaules.
Je la vois sombrer en sachant que la seule chose que je puisse faire, c’est espérer le retour de papa. Je ne peux rien faire pour elle car je ne peux rien faire pour elle car je sais bien que jamais elle ne s’occuperà de moi, jamais elle ne mettra cet énorme poids sur mes épaules : elle tient à ce que je puisse jouir d’une enfance aussi normale que possible, mais elle ne sait pas comprendre que jamais je n’aurais cette chance et que quoi qu’elle fasse, elle ne parviendra pas à changer ça.

“Jules ! Jésus ! Jésus ! Lis-nous la lettre, je sais pas comment et où !”

Réveille-toi ! Papa a écrit !
Bon, maintenant que Jules est là, tu peux ouvrir la lettre, ma chérie.

“Le temps va vite et si nous ne faisons pas attention, nous risquons de perdre le temps de Noël et de l’oublier. Le jour, la mort ; la nuit, la mort. Personne. Pas même papa.
Quelqu’un peut se battre à tout moment, dans n’importe quelle direction et en n’importe où, néanmoins, pourvu qu’ils y parviennent. Le jour, l’ombre ; la nuit, la mort.

C’est tout ?”

Louis.
Silence.
“C’est tout !”

La question de ma sœur est valide, cette lettre, par rapport à celles que l’ont précédée, est relativement courte.
Je retourne la feuille et jette un coup d’œil dans l’enveloppe pour me assurer que rien n’a échappé à ma vigilance avant de répondre d’un hochement de la tête.

Personne. Pas même papa.

Ma mère me sourit mélancoliquement. Elle n’est pas ici. Je la vois renoncer au temps, se réfugier dans des souvenirs de temps meilleurs.

Quant à moi, je caresse le papier, pensif.
Je vois là quelques petits cœurs, larmes éparpillées sur cette feuille à moitié vide, qui, à elles seules, disent plus que toutes les lettres au monde réunies. Dans ces cendres d’eau salée qui avaient laissé une marque éternellement nette sur sa feuille, je lis de la douleur et du désespoir et de l’espoir : en un mot comme en cent, je lis un quotidien et de la joie, du désespoir et de l’espoir : en un mot comme en cent, je lis un quotidien.

Je prends machinalement ce papier si précieux de la main de ma sœur tandis que celle-ci s’installe confortablement sur les genoux de maman. Je le déplie et comme à celle-ci se fait tourner autour de lui et de comment, même la nouvelle de la lettre qui descendent les marches avec une lenteur angélique qui contraste avec les cernes que je vois sur sa mâchoire et de comment il m’avait soulevé, avec cette légèreté et de comment il m’avait soulevé, avec cette légèreté et de comment il m’avait soulevé, avec cette légèreté.

De quoi est-ce que je me souviens avec une précision choquante de ma mère ne dort plus. Je l’entends pleurer le lendemain de Noël, ses yeux rouge violets sur son visage endormi, une peur que je n’avais plus ressentie si profondément depuis des semaines. J’ai l’étrange pressentiment que mon père est mort et tandis que je me débats avec cette pensée obscurcissante, une question cruciale résonne sans cesse dans ma tête : mon père vit-il seulement encore ou est-il, comme chaque fibre de mon corps semble me le dire, mort ?

La voix veloutée de ma mère retentit, un regard qui semblait ne rien voir d’autre que du premier coup de plusieurs secondes et j’y vois mon père se défaire dans mon ventre : ma mère adorait, aimait, souhaitait du bonheur pour ses fils. Quand le colis lui est parvenu ; pourtant, je ne le veux plus.

Personne. Pas même papa.

La question cruciale résonne sans cesse dans ma tête : mon père vit-il seulement encore ou est-il, comme chaque fibre de mon corps semble me le dire, mort ?

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Marie me fixe un instant avec des yeux grands ouverts, puis saute à terre et déclara qu’elle va monter faire un cadeau à papa. Je la suis du regard tandis qu’elle disparait à l’étage et m’assis en soupirant.”

“Les biscuits... Ils devaient être périmés quand le colis lui est parvenu ; pourtant, je suis sûre qu’il les as mangés.”

Marie.

Personne. Pas même papa.

La nouvelle de cette lettre m’avait soulagé, sa vue m’avait réconforté mais son contenu m’avait fait que revivre en moi une terrible endormie, une peur qui je n’avais plus ressentie si profondément depuis des semaines. J’ai l’étrange pressentiment que mon père est mort et tandis que je me débats avec cette pensée obscurcissante, une question cruciale résonne sans cesse dans ma tête : mon père vit-il seulement encore ou est-il, comme chaque fibre de mon corps semble me le dire, mort ?

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Isn't the holiday season a wonderful time? Your body thinks that too. Serotonin and dopamine levels spike during Christmas.

Sociology

THIS IS THE SEASON... TO SPEND MONEY

So, how do companies use this to their advantage? Well, the reptilian brain has two important characteristics: it's self-centered and very emotional. Two things that are very present in Christmas ads. They give you ideas of things you might want for Christmas, and they create that wonderful Christmas feeling we all love. While researching this topic I stumbled across a heartwarming Mercedes-Benz commercial about a boy having a date at the cinema while a snowstorm raged outside, but his dad saved the day by driving him in a Mercedes. The girl came late but did come thanks to – wait for it – her father driving a Mercedes. I suppose they wanted to show that their cars drive perfectly in any conditions, but mostly I just saw a cute little story in which Mercedes-Benz was the hero (because their cars are apparently amazing?). It made me want to buy one, and I am nowhere near obtaining a license. So (unless you are the Grinch) they are easily able to pique your interest. That is not exclusive to the holiday season, is it? Let us dig even deeper into why Christmas is the most wonderful time of the year to sell your products.

Studies show that around 90% of the first products a person buys during the holiday season have been commercialized. So how do they do this? They give you ideas of things very present in Christmas ads. They give you ideas of things we think of as "automatic". It makes us breathe, tells us that we need to eat or drink, but apart from those functions, it is not deeply intellectual. For big corporations, this stupidity is a golden virtue. The more "stupid" (aka, prone to listen to their reptilian brain) and less rational a person is, the easier it is to convince them they need a product. So, slowly companies started noticing that Christmas is a great time to sell their products. Now, the only problem was, during the late 1990s and early 2000s, when Christmas ads became increasingly more popular and common, many people decorated their homes only on the last advent Sunday and took their trees down on the 6th of January, so the holiday season only lasted about two weeks. But, of course, after some time companies started getting greedy. They were asking themselves: Why can't this period last longer? Why can't this period be extended? So, slowly companies started noticing that Christmas is a great time to sell their products.

With the exception of 2020, the most chaotic year of our lives, for the past seven years, the average sum of money spent during the holiday season has been constantly rising or staying the same, but never falling. With it being around $1000 in 2015 and the predictions for 2023 being around $1500. Of course, some of that is connected to inflation, but for example, in 2022 online sales rose by 7.4% and in store sales by 6.6% during the week of December, leaving only 1% that put their trees up in late December. The most popular day for taking trees down still is the 6th of January, but now, the average Brit keeps his tree up for 37 days. And a survey a couple of years ago showed that in the U.S. 87% of religiously unaffiliated Americans (atheists, agnostics, etc.), 76% of Asian-American Buddhists, 73% of Hindus and 52% of U.S. Jews celebrate Christmas, so it definitely isn't an exclusively religious holiday anymore. Great news! This makes the consumer's market so much larger and could help corporations earn even more money than ever before!

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But, all this time, we've only been talking about physical products. Let's not forget that Christmas movies and music exist. Don't you just love listening to Mariah Carey's "All I Want For Christmas"? Well, I'm sure she's quite grateful that all love it so much, considering in 2022 she's made about 60 million dollars from the song alone and keeps making about 3 million dollars every year. Concerning Christmas movies, the highest grossing one is "The Grinch" (2018) grossing $826.760.632 worldwide and "Home Alone" (1990) following with $476.646.675.

With this information, we can safely conclude that Christmas, once a religious Christian holiday, celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ, is now a big not-so-religious holiday bringing people of any religions, ethnicities and nations together. I think that while it is nice that the holiday is so inclusive nowadays, it has sadly become mass-consumeristic. One of the problems stemming from excessive amounts of shopping is that many products nowadays such as Christmas ornaments, decoration and sweaters still have child labor or unethical conditions involved in production. Workers' rights are completely overlooked and ignored. This is not a problem connected only to Christmas, yet an important issue very well worth mentioning. Another unpleasant truth: with giving and big feasts organized on Christmas come more and more waste. During the holiday season, the average household produces 14% of waste (about the weight of a professional basketball player), 8.8 kg of that being food, 3.07 kg of clothes, 38 Christmas cards and 3.2 sq m of wrapping paper.

Let's ask ourselves a question: is it truly impossible to have a good, a great, a wonderful time rocking around the Christmas tree without spending short of 2000 euros?
Christmas around the world

Christmas is a celebration that connects the whole world. Yet every country has its own traditions. How is Christmas celebrated in the far and not so far corners of the EU?

CLARA SCHMITZ

Estonia

Christmas is called “Jõulud” in Estonia. The Estonian name for Christmas comes from the term “Yule” and is widespread in northern European countries. Yule is part of the Christmas season, a festive and happy time in Estonia. Originally, it comes from paganism and was already celebrated before the Christian Christ mas in honor of the god Odin from Norse mythology. Over time, the festivals eventually merged together.

In Estonia, we have few traditions. One of these consists of the “Päkapikud” (very small elves), who come regularly from the end of November to the end of December to secretly observe children’s behaviour. They bring small presents with them to delicately hide in your shoes, which are placed on your window ledge on Saturday nights. On one occasion, they might bring a big present, such as an advent calendar. Otherwise, they’ll gift you some well-deserved sweets and beware; those must not be taken for granted, as, if you’ve been behaving badly, you will be punished by receiving a mere onion.

A second part of the Yule rituals is to clean the whole apartment (or house) before St. Thomas’ day, the 21rst of December. The children are visited on Christmas Eve by “błužvans”, (old Santa Claus), and must sing songs or recite poems before receiving the presents. Christmas dinner usually consists of pork with sauerkraut, baked potatoes, white sausage and black pudding, potato salad with beetroot and pâté - a very complete and filling menu! Therefore, there is no need to clean up after the big Christmas meal: you can just leave the meal leftovers and enjoy the rest of the evening.

Like in Germany, Christmas markets are also very important in Estonia, the most famous of which is in Tallinn, where a fairytale Christmas market is held every year on the Town Hall Square. In the heart of the Christmas market is the most famous Christmas tree in Estonia. A legend tells that it was the first Christmas tree in Europe as it dates back to 1441; what a fairytale!

CLARA SCHMITZ

EU?

MAZAL STIEBER

Autriche

Surez-vous que la boule à neige a été inventée en Autriche ? La famille Perzy fait tourner la manufacture viennoise dans laquelle la première Schneekugel est née depuis plus de quatre générations. A l’origine, la boule à neige, vénérée dans la boule, était en fait de la semoule ! Désormais, la boule à neige est incontournable dans les boutiques et sur les marchés de Noël. Tiens, en parlant de ça... impossible de fêter Noël en Autriche sans faire un tour sur un des nombreux marchés de Noël. Sur la place de l’Hôtel de Ville, au Palais du Belvédère ou encore devant le château de Schönbrunn, rien qu’à Vienne, le choix est grand ! Parmi ceux de la capitale, celui du Rathaus (l’Hôtel de Ville) a ma préférence pour sa grande patinoire et son histoire (il existe quand même depuis plus d’un demi-siècle !).

Et puis, on ne peut pas parler de traditions sans s’arrêter un instant sur la nourriture : en Autriche, ce sont les Linsen Augen (des biscuits aux formes diverses, le plus souvent garnis de confiture d’abricots) et les Vanillekipferl (des petits sablés à l’amande et à la vanille en forme de croissants) qui sont mis à l’honneur durant la période de Noël. D’ailleurs, un autre classique comestible de Noël se trouve égale ment sur les marchés : Le Glühwein (vin chaud aux épices) se boit après un tour dans le froid de l’hiver parmi les échoppes des marchés de Noël. Les épices varient : cannelle, muscade, gingembre et bien sûr, des agrumes... Une petite gorgée et vous êtes repartis pour une heure de plus sous la neige !

Mais en Autriche, on ne fête pas seulement le jour de Noël : le 4 décembre est célébrée la Sainte-Barbara. Les familles disposent, dans un vase rempli d’eau, des rameaux d’arbres fruitiers tels que le cerisier ou le pommier ; si les branches sont en fleur le soir du réveillon, c’est un signe de chance et de bonheur pour l’année à venir !

Pour finir sur une touche de lumière, une dernière consommation dans les familles autrichiennes est celle de la couronne de l’Avent. Chaque dimanche du mois de...
Croatia

En Croacia, en Navidad Eve, people commonly eat codfish. It is prepared in a sauce with potatoes, garlic and parsley. The fish first has to be dried, then it is soaked and cooked. While it’s a very tasty dish, the smell of it won’t leave the house for another month. But even so, Croatians from all over the country enjoy it with their families every Christmas, making the holiday even better.

España

La Navidad empeza en España el 22 de diciembre, con la Lotería de Navidad. Pero las celebraciones familiares comienzan el 24 y el 25 de diciembre con la llegada de Papá Noel. Esos días se queda a comer con los familiares, condoro normalmente. Se celebra la misa de Navidad y se cantan villancicos a las puertas de las casas. El 28 de diciembre se celebra el Día de los Santos Inocentes, en el que se gastan bromas.

En Nochevieja, el 31 de diciembre, se vuelve a cenar con la familia y luego, en los últimos segundos de la noche, se escuchan las campanadas de un reloj y se toman las 12 uvas de Año Nuevo. Es la tradición más conocida de la Navidad Española.

Italia

Algunas familias, a medianoche del 24 de diciembre, cantan canciones de Navidad; otras van a la misa para recibir villancicos; y, otras se encuentran en la plaza para felicitar.

El 25 de diciembre algunos niños encuen-

tra debajo del árbol unos regalos de Papá Noel.

Los platos típicos italianos en Navidad son:

Antipasti (embutidos); Insalata di rinforzo (ensalada); agnolotti (cordero); fettuccias con cotechino; y panettone (un dulce alto y con anís en el centro).

Bulgaria

La Navidad en Bulgaria es una época importante del año porque la familia se reúne para cenar la noche del 24 de diciembre. Se come cordero y se bebe vino.

La Nochevieja se celebra el 31 de diciembre. Se come Banitsa, una comida típica búlgara en la que se meten papélitos con deseos para el año siguiente y, a medida que te la vas comien-

do, vas encontrando uno o dos papélitos.

También se come Vaclava. Survala: consiste en un plato tradicional que dan los niños de 4 a 12 años, por una zona determinada, con unos platos de madera y cascabeles llamados survalka. Los niños llenan a las casas, entran y golpean las espaldas de los propietarios con su survalka; les desean Feliz Año Nuevo y salud y, a cambio, los anfitriones les ofrecen regalos o dinero.

En Rumanía la Navidad se celebra junto a la familia y con comida tradicional servida (una mezcla de carne y repollo) y cantando (una mezcla de nueces y pan con chocolate). Estos son los platos más tradicionales. También es típico cantar villancicos a las personas y que te den regalos; hay carnavales (una mezcla de vestidos y bailes) y bailes folclóricos.

En la noche en que viene Papá Noel, los niños se duermen pronto y si se despiertan durante la madrugada no habrá regalos para ellos.

La Navidad se celebra el 25 de diciembre y un poco antes, el 6 de diciembre, también se celebra San Nicolás.
Human intelligence has fascinated people for centuries. It is seen as a positive, and affects the way we perceive the world. To measure this property of people, scientist developed the ‘Intelligence Quotient’ or IQ. Unfortunately, governments and extremist groups around the world were quick to embrace IQ – what could do wrong?

A world clouded by IQ

The test was standardised in the USA, with 7-10 types of abilities being measured, to minimise distortions of the S-Factors. Every few years, the test was adjusted so that the mean was always 100, with 66% of people scoring between 85 and 115. The test spread like wildfire, and is still commonly used today.

As time passed, a correlation between IQ and overall success in life was identified. For instance, people with high IQs usually had slightly larger brains - giving a scientific basis for the Big Brain meme. More obviously, IQ was linked to better academic performance and scoring higher on all school examinations - with two thirds of a student’s grade being predicted with an IQ test... taken 5 years earlier.

A moral of intelligence

Governments around the world were obviously far too eager to embrace the new tool, and used it as a Nazi model. In some American states, laws were passed that enabled forced sterilisation of those who did not meet a certain threshold for IQ. ‘Imbecile’ and ‘moron’ were considered scientific terms in those times, and people grew resentful of such people. Even the American Constitution saw people with lower IQs as unfit to live. As a result, 60 000 people were forcibly sterilized in the US alone. Adolf Hitler was inspired by this, and it was used as a Nazi model.

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I’ve got nothing to say. Breaking out of a creative rut

I feel like I have nothing important to share with you. Whatever I write about, someone knows more about it than I do, someone would come up with a better analogy to explain it, and someone would write about it better than I ever could.

BEATRIX BUTTERS

S o what is the point? An article takes a lot of time and effort, and if it is not even enlightening, then why bother? People can just read the Economist if they want the latest on the war between Palestine and Israel. They can whip out the New Scientist if they want to read about recent scientific developments. Who am I to think that my article will be original or better than I ever could.

This mindset has led me into an unpleasant creative rut. The best way to describe it is as an extreme form of procrastination. I do not want to use my thoughts to create anything because I do not find my thoughts original or worthy of sharing. The rut is so sound like low self-esteem or burnout, but regardless of the diagnosis, many of us have suffered similar thoughts as I was ArgumentException: Exception thrown while processing some kind of data structure. I sense that the experience of creative ruts among teenagers goes undiscussed. Among artists[1], I sense that the experience of creative ruts among adults is also a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it can be a great form of entertainment. The more you write, the more you ‘work’, the more material you have to accumulate through ‘working’. The more ideas you have, the more you can do. On the other hand, when starting with a creative project, perfectionism can set the bar too high. I notice this in myself: if I do not achieve my (often unrealistic) expectations, I am discouraged and stop trying. The problem is that I anticipate that whatever I create will not live up to my expectations, so I give up before I even start. And, after a while of not doing anything, you’ll stop producing creative ideas. Hence the creative rut. As Picasso once said: ‘Inspiration exists, but it has to find you working’. What I want to say is that, if you are a creative person, you should be ‘working’ on something to be productive.

This is worth trying to maintain your creativity. As Picasso suggested, ‘working’ at something is a great way to improve your craft. If I am not sure where to start, I have a few tips I use myself. Avoid spending time on social media, AI is sometimes an escape from creative work. I use the ideas fed to us by AI chatbots like ChatGPT without questioning them, we lose an opportunity to be creative and make something ourselves. Free up time, but choosing how we spend that extra time is up to us.

If there is something I have learnt from writing this article, it is that creative ruts are multifaceted. You could end up in one because of your environment, personality or mental health, but probably due to a combination of the three. I did not tackle the topic of burnout in this article, but that is another thing worth looking into if you think you are in a creative rut. Avoiding creative ruts is hard when you have so many tools at your disposal (social media, AI, etc.). Nonetheless, I think it is worth trying to maintain your creativity. As Picasso suggested, ‘working’ at something is as possible as possible. Most of us would agree that creating something you are proud of is truly one of the most rewarding experiences. I hope that some of this resonated with you because I think that, for someone who has ‘nothing to say’, I have tortured you long enough.
Real people, real lives, a real planet

Palestine and Israel are at war, thousands are dying, and even more are suffering. In my opinion, the “victim” of the war isn’t Israel, it’s not even Palestine.

VERONICA JARA

People love scary movies and series like “Stranger things” and “Wednesday”. What is the hype of those scary things? Why do some people that get scared easily still watch it?

MICHAELA ALELVJENSE

Scary movies, series lots and lots of people love to watch it. Millions of people watch scary things. Some people find it nothing those scary movies and series. But, why do people like it all those scary things like “stran-gear things”, Wednesday and more”? The reason is because, if you watch or do something scary it gives you a kick (not a real kick). Hormones are released in the brain if you watch or something scary. They give after a good feeling that you did it. The most important thing to remember all those stuff in films and series are not real its just in the movie. So there is no problem to get spooked sometimes with films and series. If you don’t like scary movie there is no problem with that you can just watch a serie like “friends”.

Learning from failure

ALICIA WÖHLBIE

Did you ever get a bad grade? It doesn’t really matter. Especially in the younger years. What you should do is, do not try to forget that you got a bad grade, but to learn from your mistakes. The first step you could take is to look at your test or your project. Try to understand what mistake you made. Was it a careless mistake or did you not understand the topic? The important thing is to learn quickly from whatever mistake you made and not to give up. Mistakes are not necessarily bad; they show you what to do better the next time. And if you do not understand yourself which mistake you made you can always ask a friend or teacher.

You need to take away the fear of failure. Failure is an event not a person! Don’t forget, every person makes mistakes. Even Michael Jordan made mistakes and now he is considered one of the best basketball players of all times. When he was at school, he was removed from his 9th grade basketball team. He couldn’t do anything. So, what he did, was to train harder to come back bigger, better, and stronger, cause that’s what lead him in the right direction and made him a He was rejected by his school’s basketball team ceed.

There is no loosing, just learning; no mistakes, just opportunities; no problems, only solutions. Failure is the mother of all success. Failure is a part of success! Sometimes we win and sometimes we learn for the future.

A sentence in Latin that I really like and will never forget: errare humanum est = to err is human.
On that note...

Whether you play one or not, whether you know what “bow” and “etherophone” are, everyone is a little curious about instruments. Are you ready for some of your most common questions to be answered?

CRISTINA RODRÍGUEZ FERRÁNDEZ

What is the most difficult instrument to play?
One of them is the violin; it is one of the most difficult instruments to play because you need to have excellent control of the intonation (the accuracy and clearness of your pitch), have great technique of using your bow and master the placement of the fingers.

What is the most common instrument to play?
The guitar has probably been the most popular for a long time!

What is the least popular instrument?
The theremin, known as the theremin or etherophone, a kind of electronic instrument, is one of the only instruments that is “played” without touching the instrument.

What is the instrument you recommend for getting started?
The piano or keyboard, because of its versatility and because it has many advantages, for example the keys being black and white, making it easier to remember them.

What is the most tiring instrument?
The drums because they put all your four limbs into practice.

What is the newest instrument?
One of them is the laser harp, created in 1982, in which the strings are replaced by huge lasers. You can play it by temporarily blocking one laser from reaching the ground with your fingers for example, which will make it play a note.

What is the instrument with the most strings?
One of them is the harp. It can have up to forty-seven strings, but this number can vary. For example, the traditional harp typically has between thirty-two and thirty-three strings, whereas King David’s harp or kinnor had only ten to twelve strings.

If you want to know more about musical instruments, I recommend you visit the Museum of the instruments of Brussels, where you will be able to see the ones mentioned above and discover many more!

Avez vous du sang sur les mains?

En Europe une loi a été votée en 2013 pour que les produits cosmétiques fabriqué en Europe arrête d’être testé sur les animaux.

LES PRODUITS FINIS EN EUROPE NE SONT PAS TESTÉS SUR LES ANIMAUX MAIS NOUS NE POUVONS PAS ÊTRE SÛRS DES INGRÉDIENTS QUI LE COMPOSENT. EN CHINE LES PRODUITS DE BEAUTÉS SONT ENCORE TESTÉS SUR LES ANIMAUX NOTAMMENT LES MARQUES L’ORÉAL, CHANEL ET LANÇÔME.

Aujourd’hui les marques des produits cosmétiques ont différentes alternatives pour tester les produits de beauté.

La première alternative est la méthode « in vitro » : ce sont les produits qui sont testés sur des cellules humaines ou animales qui sont copiées au laboratoire et ensuite envoyés aux marques pour qu’ils puissent tester les produits de beauté.

La deuxième possibilité (méthode « in vivo ») : c’est que les tissus d’animaux vivants sont fabriqués au laboratoire et ensuite envoyés aux marques de produits de beauté pour qu’ils soient testés sur place.

La dernière méthode est « in silico » : ce sont des scientifiques qui recréent informatiquement des modèles de cellules et comparent alors les molécules déjà connues ou pas. A peu près toutes les marques de cosmétiques ont un laboratoire pour ces genres d’expériences.

Pour savoir si les produits cosmétiques sont testés sur les animaux ou pas, il suffit de regarder l’étiquette du produit car les marques sont obligées de noter « non testés sur les animaux » ou « cruelty free ». Il y’a aussi des applications ou site web qui vous permettent de vérifier si les produits cosmétiques sont « non testés sur les animaux » et aussi si les produits chimiques utilisés dans le produit sont nocifs ou pas, comme par exemple : Cruelty free, Think dirty, EWG Healthy living, Code check ou encore leaping bunny, qui est un site web.
Environment

The Environmental impact of Holiday Celebrations

What a scary title, no? As a Christmas-lover myself, that sounds like something I do not want to know about. Will knowledge about this topic ruin my Christmas spirit? Will it ruin yours? Spoiler alert: don’t worry, it won’t.

CHARLOTTE WIEMANN • ILLUSTRATION BY REAGAN VERSCHELDE

Christmas is known as this cheerful holiday where hearts glow. Children running around, excited for the special day, Christmas songs blasting everywhere and lights glimmering outside in the dark. From another perspective Christmas is known for giant amounts of consumption. We go “Christmas-shopping” to buy a bunch of things: that one little item for your room, another something for your dad, not to forget about gifts for your grandparents and aunts and uncles. Then try each for siblings, cousins, or friends as well. Of course, we want to give these presents in a pretty state, so we use glossy paper, ribbons, and tape to wrap them up nicely. What else is there to buy? Starting with a Christmas tree, the list goes on all the way from shiny lights and those extra special napkins to ugly Christmas sweaters for all members of the family. Personally, I’m already looking forward to the giant selection of Christmas cookies my grandma always bakes and the delicious dishes we eat around Christmas time. And that’s by far not everything. But those things are necessary, no? Could we really let go of those wonderful things? Christmas without a Christmas tree? Sounds like an awful Christmas to me. How can we jump into the holiday joyfully without feeling guilty about our spendings? Will we have to take nasty measures? But wait a minute - are they even necessary? Let’s look at some numbers and facts first.

During Christmas time, we produce about 20% - 30% more waste than during other seasons of the year. Almost one in five unwanted gifts will land in the trash this year. So those useless gifts really are horrible. Think about the immense amounts of money that get invested in gifts annually only to be thrown away a couple weeks after.

Each year we throw enough wrapping paper away to circle the world nine times. All that paper just for us to rip it away in a few seconds. Even though a lot of this paper is recyclable, the glossy kind with fancy designs and glitter will land in the general waste.

Even though they are tiny, Christmas light bulbs have a significant impact on our energy consumption. People in the United States, for example, use 6.63 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity each year to power holiday lights. That’s enough energy to run 14 million refrigerators. Admittedly, in the US Christmas decorations are at another level than in Europe but I’m sure that you could also run a lot of refrigerators with the energy used by European Christmas light bulbs.

According to a British study the total food waste goes up by 30% during Christmas, compared to the waste created during the rest of the year (which is already way too much). In the UK, over one in seven consumers buys more food and 66% of people admit to throwing the rest in the bin. I didn’t find numbers for Belgium, but I wouldn’t be surprised if the figures are similar. For the preparation and storage/packaging of holiday meals, UK consumers use almost 4,500 tons of tin foil each Christmas and plastic waste generated by UK consumers during the holiday season equals the weight of 3.3 million Emperor Penguins. An average emperor Penguin weighs 23kg. Let’s do the math together: calculate that by 3.3 million, 76,400,000kg of plastic only for the UK. Imagine how many more zeros we would have to add to the worldwide plastic waste.

Those facts are terrifying. But cutting away something as important as Christmas decorations still sounds devastating. So, what can we do? How can each of us contribute to bringing those numbers down? Of course, we can’t change everything, but small efforts from each one of us will eventually add up and pay off.

Let’s start with our first concern: unwanted gifts. The solution to this issue is quite simple: I’m sure we all have that one aunt who gives us this awfully boring book every Christmas, which we never actually read. Wouldn’t it be better for both you and the auntie if she gives you a book you would be really interested in and look forward to reading? Wouldn’t that make her feel way better about her present as well, seeing you enjoying it? So don’t be shy and send her a list of books you crave, so that you can get what you desire and at the same time save the environment, at least a little bit. And if you want to go a bit further, what about enjoying the reading of a used book – a book that someone else has loved to read before? For cases other than books, you can always opt for a gift card and the recipient can choose what will be best to get for themselves.

Simple solutions for wrapping waste exist as well. Many of you must know what I’m talking about when I say, “Amazon gift bags”. You know, those reusable ones made from tissue. My family adores these, and it makes me proud to think about when I say, “Amazon gift bags”. You know, those reusable ones made from tissue. My family adores these, and it makes me proud to think how much waste we have avoided reusing them and again and again, long after that one Amazon gift was delivered. Another option would be to use the paper from a read-through newspaper. Instead of throwing it away, wrap your present in it.

To reduce energy consumption through Christmas decoration, you can simply try not to go overboard and very importantly not to leave your Christmas lights turned on, when you aren’t even there to enjoy them, so turn them off when you leave the room. The Belgian city Liège has taken more thoughtful measures this year. Street decoration is limited to 45 days instead of 50 and turned-on hours are reduced by 2. Even though that might not sound like a lot at first, a small effort goes a long way.

Let’s look at food next. What are sustainable solutions for this problem? The main problem seems to be the food we throw away after purchasing it. But no one benefits from that. Spending your money and throwing it away without proper use. Instead of going grocery shopping blindly we can plan how much food we will need and buy according to our prior calculations.

To make that food stay edible for a few more days we need to package it and keep it cold to prevent any kind of mold. Instead of using tin foil or similar items such as plastic wrap for this purpose, we should opt for reusable Tupperware. As we can use it plenty of times, we will eventually even save money. So, it’s a win-win. We use what we spend our money on, and we can even save some money over time, while saving the environment.

I hope I didn’t ruin your Christmas spirit at all too much. Instead, I hope this has encouraged you to consider a greener way of celebrating Christmas. It’s hard to believe that small differences like gift cards and wish lists, tissue gift bags and newspaper wrapping paper, minimalistic decorations, and Tupperware instead of tinfoil can make a difference for our environment. But all these small actions, taken together, can have a considerable impact.
PLÄTZCHEN

Baking „Plätzchen“ (Christmas biscuits) is a very common German tradition. The family gathers together to bake them, often with Christmas music in the background to underline the festive spirit.

ELA LESEMANN

The word “Plätzchen” goes back to the Latin word “placenta”, meaning “cake”. There are many theories as to when Plätzchen were invented and by whom. However, most people believe that a form of these biscuits existed before Christ was born, only that they did not have the name yet.

Now, how can we differentiate a biscuit and a Plätzchen? History defines a clear separation. In the past, nobles often liked to eat small pastries with their coffee and tea. These were not necessarily nutritious but very sugary and were called Plätzchen. On the contrary, when English travelers were on ships for a long time, there was a certain kind of ship’s rusk. This pastry was very nutritious and long-lasting and was called biscuit. There are many types of Plätzchen for example cinnamon stars, gingerbread men, and „Butterplätzchen“.

Here’s a recipe for Butterplätzchen:

Ingredients:
- 2 egg yolks
- 375g of flour
- 125g of butter
- 125g of sugar

Method:
Mix the ingredients, and knead them into a dough. Chill the dough in the fridge for 30 minutes. Then, roll it out onto a flat surface, and use cookie cutters in shapes of your choice - I usually use Christmas-related forms such as stars or bells.

Be careful not to spread the dough too thin, or the Plätzchen will cook too quickly and burn.

If you want to decorate your Plätzchen with sugar or chocolate sprinkles, don’t forget to brush them with egg yolk to make the sprinkles stick.

Bake at 200° for roughly 10 min until they turn golden and crispy. Enjoy!

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CHRISTMAS RECIPES

PANAGIOTIS KAROLIDIS

How to make hot cocoa (delicious and easy)!!!

Place a milk of your choice in a saucepan over medium-low heat. Using milk instead of water, makes this hot chocolate extra creamy and flavoursful. Whole milk or 2% milk is better, but you can choose any milk that you want (you can even use unsweetened almond milk).

Whisk in cocoa powder and sugar, and heat until warm.

Once the milk is warm, add chocolate chips, whisking until they melt into the milk.

For extra flavour add a splash of vanilla extract (this step is optional).

Serve immediately, topped with your favourite garnishes: marshmallows, whipped cream, chopped chocolate, crushed candy canes marshmallows and/or more.

Christmas Hot Chocolate {Seriously Rich & Creamy Cocoa!!} | PWWB

How to make gingerbread man cookies

Ingredients:
- 1 tsp mixed spice
- 1 tsp Coles Bicarbonate Soda
- Plain flour, to dust
- 150g (1 cup) pure icing sugar, sifted
- 8-10 drops red liquid food colouring
- 8-10 drops green liquid food colouring
- Smarties, to decorate

Step 1
The first step is to preheat the oven to 180°C. Brush 2 baking trays with melted butter to lightly grease them.

Step 2
Use an electric beater to stir the butter and sugar in a bowl until pale and creamy. Add the golden syrup and egg yolks and beat until combined. Stir in the flour, ginger, mixed spice, and bicarbonate of soda. Turn onto a lightly floured surface (so it is not sticky) and knead it until it is smooth (tip use a rolling pin so it does not get stuck on your hand). Press dough into a disc. Cover it with plastic wrap and place it in the fridge for 30 minutes to rest.

Step 3
Meanwhile, place the egg white in a clean, dry bowl. Use an electric beater to beat until soft peaks form. Gradually add Icing sugar and beat until stiff peaks form. Divide the icing among 3 bowls. Cover 1 bowl with plastic wrap and place in the fridge. Add red colouring to the 2nd bowl and stir until combined. Then add green colouring to remaining bowl and stir until combined. Cover with plastic wrap and place in the fridge.

Step 4
Place the dough between 2 sheets of baking paper and roll it out until it’s about 4mm thick. Use a gingerbread man cutter to cut out shapes. Place them on trays about 1cm apart. Repeat this till there is no dough left.

Step 5
Bake them in the oven for 10 minutes or until they turn brown (that way you know they are ready). Remove them from the oven (be careful it’s hot). Transfer them to a rack to cool, and continue to climb

Step 6
Place prepared icings in small plastic bags. Cut a small hole in a corner of each bag. Pipe icing over gingerbread men to decorate. Finish with smarties (you can use them as buttons).

Sources for more delicious recipes theseE websites
https://www.taste.com.au/recipes/gingerbread-men/3a04ab1d-a84a-424f-800a-7ebc9e92fa09
(https://celebratingsweets.com/homemade-hot-chocolate/)
Can you introduce yourselves?

AR: My name is Aristides Fraguoulis. You can call me Aris. I'm in the S7 German section. I've been in this school since maternelle, and it's a great pleasure to finish off my school career by becoming one of the big bosses.

AD: Hello, I'm Adrian Bernabeu. I'm in the S5 French section, and I've been in this school since S1.

J: I'm Josephine (or Fien for friends!), from the S7 Dutch section.

C: My name is Caroline Gombalova, I'm in the french section, in S7.

How have you taken part in SPRINGFEST in previous years?

AR: So personally I started my Springfest experience in S1. It was just a small thing with Mr Tauche.

C: I was Big Boss last year, and the previous years I was lights manager and IT member.

We went on stage with him and we sang the Eye of the Tiger like. We were very small kids back then and it was really cute. I clearly loved this experience and it motivated me to become part of Springfest again. Then of course, all the COVID years came, unfortunately.

But then in S5, just thought I'd go for it, and I became a crew member, then a crew manager in S6 and now this year, I'm a Big Boss.

What motivated you to become a Big Boss?

AR: I was, like, always admiring all the people who were organising Springfest, since I first experienced it in primary. And it became kind of like a dream of mine, to be on this stage one day. So, in S5, I thought, OK, I'll just apply as a crew member to take the first step towards that. Then I became crew manager last year and this invited me to go the last step (smile).

AD: For me, it's firstly a learning experience. I learned quite a lot already and there's a lot of things I can still learn. And second reason: Caroline suggested it, she thought that I would be a good fit... and I thought she might be right (laughs). So I went for it.

J: I was crew managers with Aris last year and we enjoyed it a lot, being very involved in Springfest, and I think it motivated us.

How did you get the Big Boss position?

J: In reality, it's just an interview you can apply for, and then you just talk about yourself, your motivations and your skills, and then they decide after that. But I think it does help if in previous Springfests you've already had some sort of higher position. So, for example, we've all been managers before, which really helped.

C: Little tip, prepare a Power point presentation, it makes you look more professional (smile).

Who is in charge of what in the team?

AR: So I'm responsible for the organisational team. So crew, stewards (which, btw, is the new name of security), and some of the activities, so the haunted house, the escape room and the sports tournaments.

AD: I take care of the other activities, so games, workshops, the new science fair and couple more teams and IT too. But we help each other out a lot: I'll probably be working with Haunted House and escape Room, for example. Oh, and it turns out I also take care of the T-shirts this year. So that's kind of fun (laughs).

J: I am responsible for all the teams that are participating in the Act, and then Caroline is responsible for the teams that help backstage during the Act. So that'd be make up and costumes. And then Fashion Show.

C: And the Music Festival.

How much time do you devote to your job as Big Bosses?

J: I think first of all, it's safe to say that it really depends week to week. Because in the past few weeks before the holidays, we had to do a lot of interviews for manager positions, so that took a lot of our time. I feel like none of us had, like a single lunch break or a single 15 minute break where we weren't working except for Adrian maybe. We do have at least one meeting a week with our team.

AD: I would personally estimate between three and four hours of work per week so far.

C: It mostly depends on whether there is an issue to solve or not.

I could spend zero time on Springfest one week, and have every second be about Springfest another. On average, it must be around 2-3 hours of sending emails, interviews, checking up on my teams, finding rooms, informing teachers, replying to messages...

AR: It'll be much more after the pre-bac when the rehearsals start.

What is your favourite part of SPRINGFEST?

J: My favourite part is the Act and it's my part (smile). I just love seeing how everything falls into place somehow, even though at the beginning it may seem difficult. I always love seeing the finished product on the day itself and it's awesome that we can do that with just students and a few teachers.

C: Same as Fien: the final part of preparations, when we see everything we did come together. I remember last year, I cried; it was beautiful to see this project we'd worked on for a year being all grown – kind of like a baby. Springfest is our baby.

AR: When I was in primary, I admired the security and crew team. I don't know, maybe it was also because they were all Greeks (laughs) but seemed really hardworking (more laughs). I mean, of course, every single team is hard working, but this stuck in my mind, you know, and from then on, I thought, well, I also want to be like one of them.

AD: On my side, I'm quite excited for the science fair this year, I've seen what they are planning and it's quite interesting.

The theme is “dare to dream”; how did you come up with it?

AD: So first, we had to find a theme and we wanted to make it broad and easy to work with and then we had multiple ideas, all kind of shady...

(Aris laughs)

AD: …according to some people. But we had to consider the 25th year of the EEB3, and management wants us to work together with the lower school years, at least by having a common theme. We found that out of the theme ideas we had, ‘Dare to Dream’ was the easiest one to implement in all of secondary, primary, and maternelle.

J: And we just thought it sounded nice, too.

What was your biggest dream as a child?

AR: Relating to school or like outside of school as well?

J: And we just thought it sounded nice, too.

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J: And we just thought it sounded nice, too.
One of the two big themes that the school wants to take care of this year is sustainability. How do you plan to make Springfest more “eco”-friendly?

J: Something we’ve been doing for a few years now is reusing the décor from previous Springfest editions, and just paint over the cardboard frames.

AR: For the fashion show, a big subject is only using second-hand or deadstock fabric for the designs.

AD: We’d also like to make the food and drinks healthier this year.

What are your best memories of Springfest when you were younger?

AR: Oh, there are a lot!

AD: I’ll go first! I remember a specific moment in S1 or S2, I was just waiting in line for the bumper cars…(pause). Yes, I remember now, I was speaking with friends, I was having fun. It’s not a big event or anything, but just being with my friends, doing activities together, walking all around school; it was just really, really fun.

J: Well, I always loved just watching The Act because, of course, in primary we got to see it with all our primary friends. But I always went the evening before with my mum. I thought it was really cool to be, first of all, at school that late - that was crazy to me. Also, there was something different about seeing the opening ceremony together with all the parents.

Also, I don’t know if you guys remember Wonderland, which was in the gyms. My brother made that happen, so he was able to make sure it’s going to get integrated into the Act’s storyline. We’re already thinking about how that could work, and we have very talented acting managers, so I’m sure they’ll come up with something great. And then I guess we’ll try to include it in the activities, maybe the workshops.

AD: Yeah, on the side of activities, we may try to present a game related to the 25 years of the school, like maybe questions about it and stuff.

If you dreamt of school as a child, then sure. But it can be anything (smile).

AR: To be honest, I’ve always dreamt of becoming a doctor one day, so I devoted myself to that. I want to study medicine next year. And that’s what we want to tell with this message of DARE to dream: we want to tell students that you can dream of anything and fulfil your dreams.

AD: I remember when I was small, I used to dream of becoming an inventor, to create and build stuff...

And I guess it translates into me wanting to be an engineer now, except I didn’t know that job existed at the time (smile).

J: Wow, you guys were, like, really smart kids, I just wanted a house full of cats, truly. But you know, it’s OK. I might still get that. I guess in terms of jobs, I really wanted to be like a vet ‘cause I love animals. But I also had a small Springfest dream, thanks to my older brother. He was always talking to me about it as he was a manager for a couple of things, but he never became big boss. He was always telling me you have to become big boss. And I did (smile).

C: My biggest dream as a child was to be a spy (laughs).

What are some changes or new additions you would like to see in SPRINGFEST this year?

AD: This year we’re introducing the science fair: chemistry, biology, physics and maybe even ICT experiments that will be shown to the school.

We’re also planning on getting even bigger teams, for food and drinks and crew.

C: And we’d love to have more activities, just like during the “old” Springfest.
to sneak me in with my friends. That was really fun!

C: My best memories were probably all the activities. And the food. And how the OC was inside. Just how everything was open for everyone.

AR: Personally, I think my best memory from Springfest was also the Opening Ceremony. More specifically, I just loved that, for example, there were always student music bands playing and they were also involved in the Act in this way. I’m very much a “music”-person, so it was great to see! But then, I’ve always admired the stunt team with all their crazy jumps. In general I just love, like everything in Springfest!

J: It’s so difficult to pick a favourite.

Interview

Any stereotypes in the group? As in, the bubbly one, the one that’s always late to meetings...

C: Stereotypes... The one that’s often late to meetings (or sometimes just won’t show up): probably Adrian (smile). The bubbly one... I think Fien, whom I love – I can’t say anything bad about her. Aris is the one who always manages to stay serious.

J: Will say - not to throw anyone under the bus – but Adrian missed a couple of meetings... (laughs). I think Fien because she was also my comanager in crew last year, and I think I know her pretty well now. Fien is someone who wants to do things in a perfect way. And she’s the only person I know that actually manages that. To do those things perfectly.

AR: But I think that in the end, we all love each other. Maybe you should interview us after Springfest, and then it will be crazy (smile).

Are you more of a daydreamer or a down to earth person?

J: I don’t think I’m a big dreamer. I mostly only zone out when I’m very tired. I think I’m quite down to earth in my daily life. But what I will say is that I am the person with the wildest dreams. It’s insane, I dream every night and it’s crazy, sometimes I’ll wake up and I just don’t believe that this is my real life and that I’m capable of dreaming these things up. But in the conscious world, I’m more down to earth.

AD: Daydreamer, I often get distracted in my own thoughts and just think about anything, really.

AR: I think I’m also like quite a daydreamer. I can say that because during classes that are sometimes boring (laughs), I often end up and I think like, what can I become one day?

C: I’m both. To be fair, I think everyone daydreams from time to time, but some people just keep their head in the clouds (smile). I don’t tend to daydream that much in school... though in some classes...

What are you most excited about in this year’s Springfest?

J: First of all, I’m always excited for Springfest, but this year especially, I think it’s going to be really exciting to see how it will all get bigger. People are more interested in Springfest, and we just want it to keep growing. So, I think that’s exciting, but I’m always just excited for the food because it’s always so good! And I think the fashion show is a really underrated part of Springfest, which I always really enjoy.

AR: Personally, I’m looking forward to the whole event because it’s our last Springfest (because we’re in S7) and so we want to really make the best out of it since we’re also the key organisers.

AD: Well, if you go study in the VUB, you’ll definitely hear it! I’ve heard people there complain about the noise... (laughs) So to answer your question, I’m looking forward to the Science Fair!

AR: And I will say one more thing: I love everything about Springfest. But my favourite part really is just the behind-the-scenes working with all these people and seeing how much work really goes into it. The vibes are always the best.

You may have moments of stress, but it’s so exciting to see like a project for which people really want to give their all. I think you can just feel it. And I think it’s just amazing vibes and energy!

If you were a fairytale character archetype, which one would you be and why?

AD: The crazy wizard.

J: I want to have a golden egg (like in Jack and the Giant Beanstalk), so whichever archetype has a golden egg.

C: I want to be Bibble. But I doubt people know who Bibble is. I guess I’m a fairy who’s like, specialised in animals. Or like Snow White, you know: animals listen to her when she sings (smile).

AR: Well, I’m not sure... maybe the others can suggest something?

J: Obviously the evil stepmother. Let’s be real. And I think Mrs Roig would be the fairy godmother because she’s just so sweet and helps people.

AR: Mr Wustenberghs can be called Prince Charming, because he’s, like, so nice. And he has an idea for everything. And he’s handsome.

Springfest has changed massively over the past few years, to become a much more school-centered event. What do you think of this change?

AD: There’s more separation. I remember, when I was in S5/S6, we could go up to the primary, and there were food trucks. Honestly, I preferred the “Old Springfest”. But I also understand why we can no longer do what we did 3-4 years ago. I want to make Springfest as close as we can as to what we had.

AR: To summarise, I think that there are two factors that led to the big change.

First of all, COVID. Springfest was online for a while, and then very restricted back in school. This led to the separation of the secondary...
**Interview**

Springfest into two days.

Sure, we felt more “united” when the Act was in the gym, but that wouldn’t be possible today.

J: I think from a logistics like point of view, it’s impossible, but I don’t mind the separation into S1-S3 and S4-S7. It makes Springfest feel more personalized. However, I do agree that it used to be really fun that you’d be able move freely between primary and secondary.

AR: We’re doing our very, very best to organize a Springfest which is pleasant for everyone!

 Anything you’d like to say to people that are thinking of applying/ have applied?

J: If you’re thinking of applying, just do it really. Springfest is so huge and there’s such a variety of teams that there’s a spot for everyone.

AD: Just dare to dream and dare to go for those dreams - apply and help make Springfest epic.

C: And a message for the younger years: if you tried to be manager but didn’t get the job, don’t give up; try again next year, you never know what will happen!

J: We have each other’s backs, for starters. Aris is great at talking to people. And then Adrian, he is so good with computers, it comes in handy all the time. Then Caroline, I think she’s just an angel. Really. But she also has the experience from last year, which of course helps us loads.

AR: Everyone has different talents and different skills. And when we put those talents and skills together, we can use that to create a Springfest that’s perfect for everyone.

We’ve asked you about which stereotype you are; but what do you see in others? What makes this year’s core team a dream team?

AD: The three of them are really motivated. They attend all the interviews and meetings. Unlike me (smile).

C: The main reason is my presence in it (laugh). And Fien too. In all seriousness, we all bring something to the team. My wife Fien is very creative, motivated and amazing, which is perfect for the Act. Adrian is really smart and has this kind of messy genius (smile). For Aris, he’s social and confident and he’s perfect for talking to the teachers.

J: We see each other’s backs, for starters. Aris is great at talking to people. And then Adrian, he is so good with computers, it comes in handy all the time. Then Caroline, I think she’s just an angel. Really. But she also has the experience from last year, which of course helps us loads.

AR: Everyone has different talents and different skills. And when we put those talents and skills together, we can use that to create a Springfest that’s perfect for everyone.

Top 10 Christmas Jokes by Charlotte Gross

1. What did the snowman say to the aggressive carrot?
   Get out of my Face

2. What is one of the best Christmas present that you can give and receive?
   A broken drum. Why ? Because you can’t beat it

3. Why did Santa have to go to the hospital?
   Because of his poor elf

4. Why did Mrs. Claus insist take an umbrella?
   « Because of the rain, dear. »

5. Where does Santa Claus go swimming?
   The north Pool

6. What do you call a old snowman?
   Water

7. How can you tell that Santa is real?
   You can always sense his present

8. What do snowman eat for breakfast?
   Ice Chrispies

9. What is every parent’s favorite Christmas song?
   Silent Night!

10. What do they sing at a snowman’s birthday party?
    Freeze a jolly good fellow!