



INKKOM

Pubs in Maastricht

What are the student favourites?

Page 3

Maastricht under construction

find out how much the city is going to change in the years to come

Page 4-5

Workgroup Inkom:

“Our message: you can shine at any time”

Page 7

Who is Observant?



Maybe you're standing in line to register for Inkom 2015, or maybe you're chilling out in your new room for a moment when you read this.

- We are the editors of *Observant*, the independent weekly paper and website – in English and Dutch – for Maastricht University. From next week onwards, you can read a new printed copy of the paper every **Thursday morning**. Get your copy from the special trays at the entrance to your faculty building. It is full of news about the university, student life,

- background stories and columns.
- On our Dutch/English website www.observantonline.nl you can find daily updates of the news, columns, stories about student life, event, debates, interviews, et cetera.
- For the latest news and interesting info, check out www.facebook.com/ObservantUM or follow us on Twitter [@observantUM](https://twitter.com/observantUM).

Our team

Our team consists of five professional repor-

ters, a secretary, a freelance team of columnists, students who are learning about the profession of journalism from us, draughtsmen and a graphic designer.

Journalistic ambitions?

If you want to try and see what it's like to be a journalist, we can give you the opportunity to gain experience. You can also meet us during the Inkom, Monday 17 August at We are International and the next day at Day@The Uni.

Come right in

Whether you want to gain some experience, have questions or news, just e-mail us or visit us in person! Our editorial office is located in the centre of town. At the top of the Minderbroedersberg (side street to Tongersestraat) is the university's administrative building. Do not enter, but turn right and pass through the glass door of the red-bricked building. You will find us on the second floor.

colophon

Observant

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I've taken up squash, and here's what I've learned. It's not just like tennis. Sure, there's a racket and a ball and an itchy-bitsy skirt to wear. But if you think you'll pick it up fast because you've got a mean tennis forehand, think again. You're going to look like a moron.

My team has eight women, and I'm by far the worst. I spend every session trying my hardest not to be not so shit as to be a nuisance. Squash is tiring, and squash in Dutch is even more tiring, so Monday nights see me in bed, paralytic, at nine pm. Wednesday night is netball night, and that's easier. First, because I can actually play netball. And second because it's blatantly an expat club. The Dutch don't do netball, so it's full of Brits, Australians, New Zealanders and South Africans. Netball is sort of like korfbal, except it's seen as a very girly game. In fact, when played well it's extremely fast

"I was the worst integrated person ever"

paced and exciting. Obviously, that's not how we play it. The korfbal guys who train in the same stadium enjoy having a good laugh at us as part of their weekly warmup. What's with all the clubs, you ask? In short, I recently moved to Amsterdam, and I'm determined not to make the same mistake I made in Maastricht. It's almost a decade since I arrived in Maastricht, a fresh-faced, ill-equipped 22-year-old. I was the worst integrated person ever. I had truly awful Dutch but also felt bad making Dutch people speak English with me. I solved this dilemma by not speaking

to anyone. By the time I left four years later I had exactly two friends, and that's because they were my closest colleagues, so I could hardly avoid them. After a stint in England, I'm now based in Amsterdam. Permanently. So this time around, I'm making a point of doing *everything*. I've joined every club there is. Besides tennis, squash and netball, I'm in four book clubs – three English and one Dutch – and a life drawing society. I may be exhausted, but I'm having fun!

*Alison Edwards,
researcher, translator, editor, writer*



Eat, drink and be merry



de twee heeren

Café de Twee Heeren/Hier komen wij meerdere keren/Het biedt een heerlijk diner/En in de avond pik je nog een dansje mee This is the start to a poem which was put on the Café de Twee Heeren Facebook page by candidate members of ladies debating society Sconfinato of student association Amphitryon. For many students, this is one of their favourite spots. Sidewalk cafe during the day, lunch or dinner, part of a pup crawl through the Platielstraat in the evening. And then of course you have the barmen ... "The main reason why we always pop in," say a group of female students.

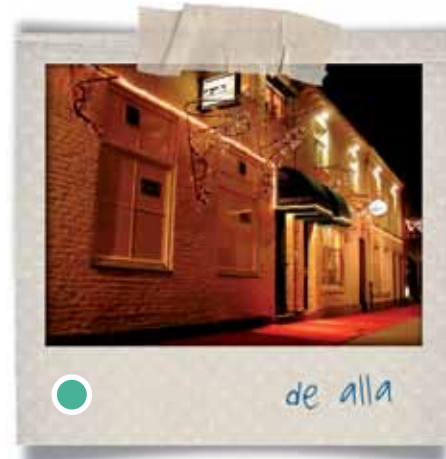
De Twee Heeren, Platielstraat 17-19



shamrock

With Beer Pong tournaments, pub quizzes and the celebration of foreign feast days like St. Patrick's Day and Thanksgiving, The Irish Pub Shamrock focuses in particular on foreign students. "It feels a little like home, even though I am not from Ireland at all," a German student laughs. Sport lovers are in the right place here too. Not only football matches (Champions League, ECs and WCs) can be watched from the bar, but also the Six Nations rugby matches. With a pint of Guinness in your hand, of course.

The Irish Pub Shamrock, Brusselsestraat 49



de alla

"De Alla is a pub that you don't go to on purpose, it is where you end up accidentally. And you will have a good time." De Alla is one of the few places

Maastricht has a great many pubs, but what is the difference between one bar and the other? Observant describes a few student favourites.

Text: Cleo Freriks

in Maastricht where you can party until the small hours of the morning. That is also the reason why many students end up there at the end of their evening out. Although not everyone is a fan ("actually it is a terrible club"), it also has another side: "De Alla is a tradition in Maastricht. Everyone knows those wild stories, everyone has been there at some time or another." The future of the nightclub is uncertain. The owner had to sell the premises and it is uncertain at the moment what the new owner is going to do.

De Alla, Leliestraat 6



de boschpoort

"De BoschPoort is very relaxed. Occasionally someone gets blind drunk, but that actually rarely happens. You meet nice people there and the alcohol is cheap. It is a good pub to start off your evening." Independent fraternities Que Pasa, Prometheus and Cerberus have been in charge of BoschPoort since 2010. They did up the building on the Boschstraat and turned it into a cosy old-fashioned pub. The interior refers to the long history of the building as a pub. For example, there is a photograph on the wall of a beer delivery to the pub dating back to before the Second World War.

De BoschPoort, Boschstraat 64



de uni

"We go to De Uni because everyone goes there. It is fun and you always meet people you know." Student pub De Uni is an old-fashioned local pub and not just for the four debating societies (the men from Epicurus and Chic Sat and the women from Femmes-Tastiques and Allicht) who drink there on a weekly basis. Everything from the decorations (beer barrels used as standing tables, street signs on the wall) to the cheap beer: cries out student bar. Which is to be expected, with an annually changing board of students running the bar.

De Uni, Brusselsestraat 31



de beurs

Student pub De Beurs is not a pub where you go to talk, this is where you come to dance. This is clear when the blasting beat hits you as you open the door. When the weather is good, everyone takes their glasses outside where it is a fun and colourful affair, with maybe ten debating societies drinking here together in their different club apparel. Those who don't have a room yet, can easily roll onto the last train, the pub being opposite the station. This pub is run by students too, in this case by debating societies Hyperion, Lucifer and Pandora.

De Beurs, Spoorweglaan 6



feestfabrik

"Always a good place for a party, but you leave your dignity at the door." So, let this be a warning before you enter the Feestfabrik. Sing-alongs, après-ski songs, dance, trance and golden oldies blast from the speakers here. Because of this, the club attracts mainly Dutch students. It really only starts to get busy after 2 o'clock in the morning, when the other pubs in Maastricht close; lights are only turned off in the Feestfabrik at six o'clock in the morning. For that reason, the pub is seen as the 'last chance' club; if you haven't picked up anyone yet, you may get lucky here.

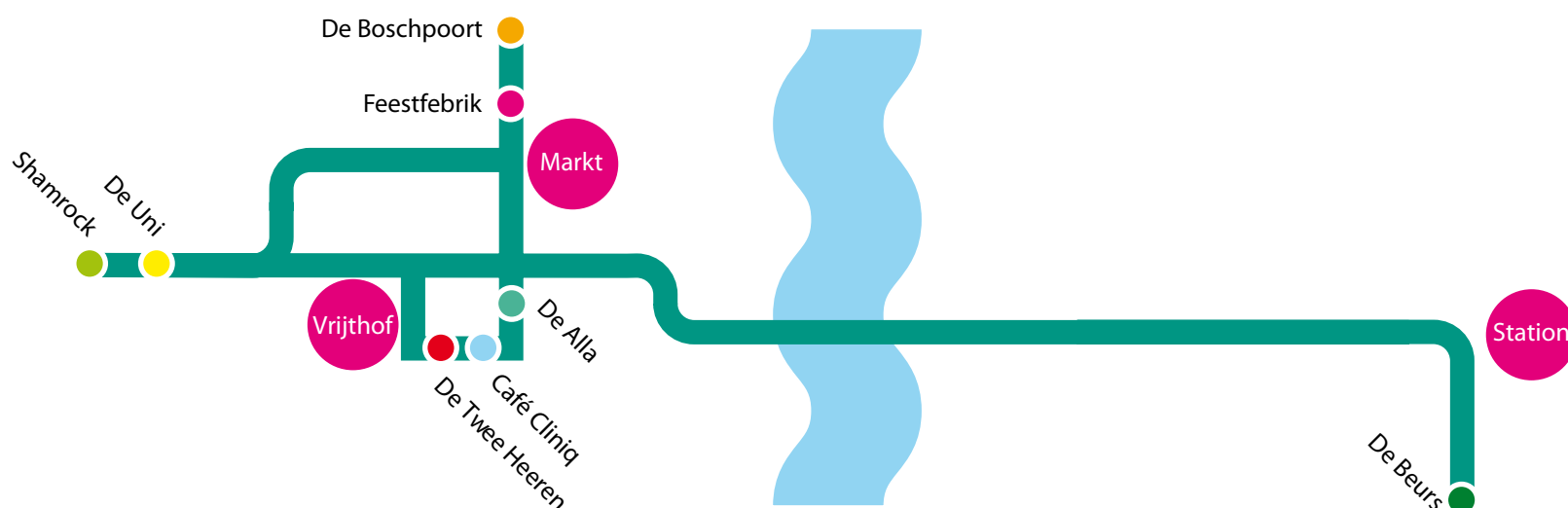
Feestfabrik, Markt 25

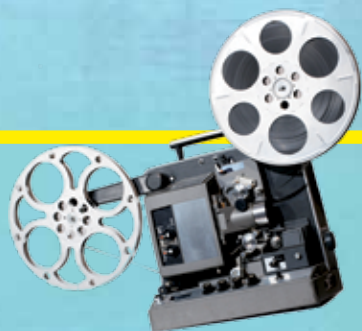


cliniq

"There is always something fun to do at Cliniq. And they have delicious shots, often new flavours, too." Students of modest means may do well at Café Cliniq on Thursdays. That is the weekly Student Night and between 22:00-22:30hrs a beer costs only €1.50. After 23:30hrs you get a free shot with every glass of beer. Visitors can dance to R&B, Latin, house, dance, top 40 songs and nineteen-nineties hits. You can have a meal too; the pub is a restaurant until ten o'clock. Speciality is spareribs.

Café Cliniq, Platielstraat 9A





End 2015

Going to the cinema

Maastricht is to have a third cinema: a Pathé cinema on the Boschstraat. It will have eight film theatres with approximately a thousand seats. The adjoining United Nations University MERIT will use one of the theatres for lectures now and then. Cinemagoers, listen carefully! There is no need to panic, thinking you have nowhere to go and watch a film at the moment. There is art cinema Lumière on the Bogaardenstraat and Euro-scoop (Wilhelminasingel 39).

End 2015

Student campus

Located on the Tongerseweg is the Carré building, a former tobacco factory, which was in a delapidated state for years. All this is about to change as a Belgian project developer has started renovations. There will be shops and a student campus with 143 rooms of about 25 square metres each, including individual kitchens and bathrooms (Ready? Hopefully at the end of 2015). A little further on, in the former Bonnefanten college, another student campus with some 250 studios is planned. The first residents should be able to move in around the middle of 2017.

Beginning 2016

Sports

For the past few years, Maastricht University has been expanding its sports facilities, but that is a thing of the past. Our own sports centre. Part of it is already open. The new building in Randwyck will be delivered at the beginning of 2016. It will boast a spinning room, a large sports hall where basketball games can be played simultaneously, squash courts, a climbing and boulder hall (and two halls for group lessons). There will also be catering facilities.



As a first-year bachelor's student, you will find yourself in Maastricht for quite some time. But as a master's student there is also plenty for you to discover. That is why we made a list of the most important developments in Maastricht for you. With special attention for the Sphinx district, which is on its way to becoming a cultural hotspot, with a pop podium, art house, cinema and an International Students Club.

Text: Wendy Degens

Developments Tapijn grounds

This Inkom-Monday you will most likely spend most of your time on the Tapijn grounds. This former military base that backs onto the Stadspark is slowly but surely being transformed. Maastricht University is very much present, for example with a lecture hall for Knowledge Engineering (DKE). A shed that houses 180 study places and also the Edlab, the university centre for education innovation, and Launchbase, an initiative of the Centre for Entrepreneurship for starting student entrepreneurs, are all housed in one of the renovated buildings.

Furthermore there is a catering establishment, a Tapijn garden, the so-called M building where events take place regularly (such as Supermarket, a monthly handmade/lifestyle market) and the Werkgebouw for craftsmen and artisans. There is also a cycle path and a walking trail. The monumental buildings at the front are still vacant. Some new buildings will be constructed. The hope is that work will start in 2017.



Bicycle shelter

There is to be a new, underground shelter for three thousand bicycles under the Station square. Bicycles left there will be registered and you can easily roll your metal steed inside using the moving pavement. The entrance will most likely be in the centre of the Stationsstraat.

Taking the tram to Hasselt

There might be an express tram running between the Belgian city of Hasselt and Maastricht. But it has to be admitted, this is by no means certain, because a few months ago, a huge technical bottleneck came to light: the Wilhelminabrug (a link that is required to be able to have the terminal at the train station) is unsuitable. The Maastricht city council suggests scratching the terminal at the train station and investigating two alternatives for the final stop: the Boschstraat and Mosae Forum. The Flemish are not happy, to put it mildly. They feel that a route from train station to train station is the most attractive option.



End 2017

2017

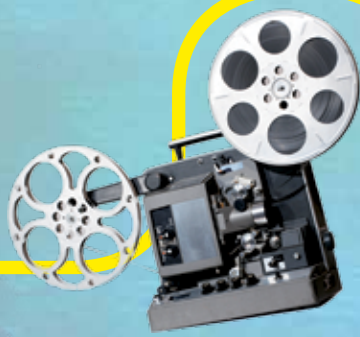
was rightfully ashamed
e past. We now have
en, but the rest of the
e beginning of January
ports hall where three
ly, a fitness room, three
eleven metres high), and
e 175 study places and



Middle
2016

Let's go Lumière

At the moment, the Lumière art house is still on the Bogaardenstraat 40B, but next year it will move to the former Sphinx ceramics factory power plant to be exact. A beautiful building, a beautiful location, at least that is if we can believe the architect's drawings. There will be six film theatres with five hundred seats, a bar, a terrace and a restaurant. www.letsgolumiere.nl



2016

Natural swimming pool

Of course Maastricht has the river Maas, but it is not advisable to just take a dip into the Maas water on a warm sunny day. It is not always clean; there are commercial vessels on the river and there is a strong current. Other options? The outdoor swimming pool at the De Geusselt, but try finding a spot there in August ... Or Fun Valley's urban beach, in the direction of Oost Maarland. You can find this (not freely accessible) beach in one of the gravel pits of the river Maas. In 2016 a natural swimming pool will be exploited at the Sint Pietersberg. Cement producer ENCI will discontinue limestone extraction from the Sint Pietersberg and together with Natuurmonumenten the company wants to turn the limestone quarry into an area of natural beauty and recreation. A nice beginning is a pool in the quarry, filled with spring water, between the two and four metres deep.



Student hotel

The Student Hotel, with branches in Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Liege, and The Hague, is to add Maastricht to its list. The organisation wants to offer 350 furnished rooms, including study areas and 24-hour security in the Sphinx building – at the end of the Boschstraat. They are meant for students and researchers who want to spend a year, a semester or a night in Maastricht. Rates are about 600 euro per month.

2016



A2 tunnel

Years ago, it was decided that all traffic on the A2 motorway should go straight through Maastricht. A residential area like Wittevrouwenveld suddenly found itself right next to a busy road, resulting in noise and odour pollution. And not to forget: the irritation suffered by drivers on the motorway by having to stop at traffic lights every so many metres. At the end of 2016, that will be a thing of the past when the gigantic Koning Willem-Alexander tunnel will be opened. Almost all traffic will then go underground. There will be a green park for cyclists and pedestrians on top.

End
2016



Large pop podium

Pop podium De Muziekgieterij is based in the Timmerfabriek on the Boschstraat. The arrival of the International Students Club in the same building, a little further along, will be accompanied by the arrival of a brand new pop podium (in a new building) for approximately a thousand visitors. A small club with accommodation for 350 visitors will remain in the Timmerfabriek. www.muziekgieterij.nl

International Students Club

A long-cherished wish has been fulfilled with the establishment of an International Students Club for Maastricht University. For foreign students and Dutch students who have an 'international' interest, there will be a location for parties, cultural events, workshops and lectures. Where? In the Timmerfabriek on the Boschstraat. It is located in the city's cultural hotspot, so who could wish for more? Moreover, with the moving of the Noorderbrug in 2018 there will be more space for greenery, cycling paths and footpaths.

2017

2017



Extraordinary Maastricht research

Italians love chips

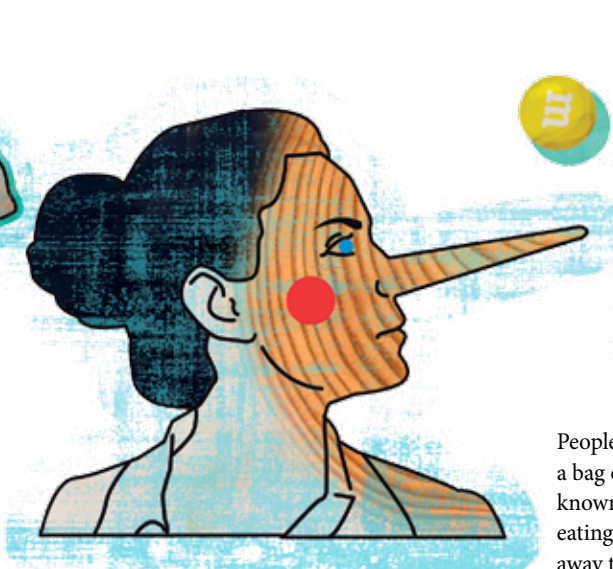
André Rieu is probably not someone you would link to scientific research; the same goes for pasta or testosterone among financial experts. And still it happens. In Maastricht, and it's not absurd. We have lined up a few remarkable topics.

Text: Riki Janssen and Maurice Timmermans



Testosterone

When you hear the word testosterone, you automatically think of hooligans, bodybuilders, skinheads and motorcycle clubs. Not financial experts from Robeco investment bank – not immediately at any rate. Economist Paul Smeets does; he did research into the male sex hormone among managers of investment funds. At the Robeco main office in Rotterdam, he first took saliva to determine the degree of testosterone, after which he did some tests to measure their appetite for risk. Smeets wondered if professionals with high testosterone levels behaved recklessly and took greater risks. And we wouldn't want that, because investment fund managers play with a lot of money, in this case with fifty billion euro. The results are not known yet, but if the hormone does indeed induce reckless behaviour, then you'd better send those managers an e-mail at critical moments: *Pay attention now, don't do anything crazy!*

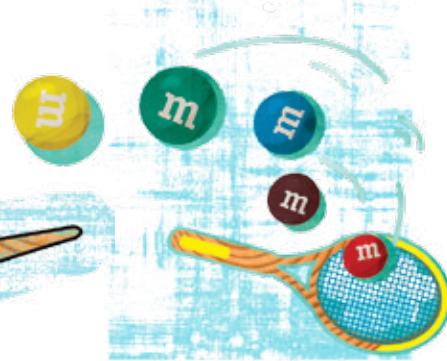


Lies

People in England who phone their insurance company to report a scratch on their car, are likely to have their voice analysed. More and more insurers, but also governments and police forces, are using voice analysis to trace liars. But is this actually possible, detecting lies using a computer programme? The Israeli company that sells the software, writes on its website that the technique is 90 per cent accurate. Nonsense, say Maastricht forensic psychologists. Time and again, research shows that it does not work. Lies can only be exposed by analysing the content of what someone says. If the story told actually happened, people report more sensory details. The forensic psychologists were so outraged that they brought the company before the Dutch Advertising Code Authority twice. And indeed, they won their case. The Israeli company is lying.

Interrogation terror

Why do people admit to murder while they know they are innocent? For three reasons. Because you want to protect someone else. Because you have started to believe that you are guilty. Or because you succumb to the pressure put on you by the police. Succumb? That would never happen to me, most people will think. But that remains to be seen, because Maastricht research has shown that people don't know enough about it and overestimate themselves. Things can get very aggressive in an interrogation room, more so than most people think. Detectives can go on and on and sometimes produce false evidence (even though that is not allowed). "We have it on camera," they say. "There is no use denying it." You think, in a complete state of despair: well, if they have something on camera, then I will confess and they will soon discover that it is not me. No sooner said than done. You sign a confession. Then later it appears ... they had nothing on camera.



Boredom

People who are bored, are quite likely to rip open a bag of crisps. Boredom and eating is a well-known combination. But is it specifically about eating or is it just generally an attempt to chase away the monotony? To test this, psychologists showed a group of sixty test subjects a very boring documentary. Or worse, the same fragment of two old men playing tennis, for a whole hour on end. Once, they watched with a jar of M&M's beside them (from which they ate twice as much as they would normally do), the other time they had a shocker beside them. This is an appliance that they could use to give themselves a shock, from light to heavy. And what appeared: on average people gave themselves 24 shocks, much more than was expected. And also heavier than the researchers had expected: on average level seven, which is around the pain barrier. The conclusion was that it is not the food that counts, but the escape from boredom. An interesting follow-up question: does boredom also play a role in self-mutilation, cutting one's body? In England it appears that youths spend six hours a week twiddling their thumbs. Even without looking at old-age pensioners playing tennis for an hour.



Pasta

It is hardly imaginable, but Dutch chip shops are shooting up all over Naples. In the land of pizzas, pesto and Parmesan, it seems they love chips, and that should be taken as a warning because the Italians are eating increasingly unhealthily. Italy these days even has the fattest children in Europe. And to think that the Italian diet in the nineteen-fifties was renowned for being one of the healthiest in the West; heart disease, at any rate, was less prevalent in Southern Europe than in other parts of the world. That was not just because of the olive oil. Italians traditionally also ate a lot of vegetables and fruit, not too much meat and only drank alcohol with meals. An Italian woman, who did her PhD in Maastricht, discovered that people who stuck to their traditional diet, suffered less inflammation in their blood vessels. This means that they are less likely to suffer from cardiovascular diseases. Let's hope that those chip shops don't spread further.

André Rieu as a subject of research

André Rieu, the famous conductor and violinist from Limburg, often incites intense emotions. You either love him or you despise him. Professor Maaïke Meijer, a researcher from Arts and Social Sciences, feels that one cannot afford to put such a world famous phenomenon to one side. Together with fellow-researchers, she wrote a book about him. Rieu, with his large-scale popular festivals, is an example of today's experience trend. He stripped classical music of its ceremony and formality, says Meijer: "These days, you can't even cough during a classical concert, even the rustling of a programme irritates fellow-listeners." The great master does not only concern himself with the music, he has a hand in everything, up to and including the clothes that the members of the orchestra wear. For example, each female member of the orchestra has four dresses – one dress will last one hundred-and-twenty working hours and costs approximately 3,500 euro. André Rieu is a *people manager* who knows the many people who work for him well, and is aware of what is going on. He shows interest and keeps the lines of communication short. At the same time, he is a perfectionist who is strict and demanding: "When the bus is supposed to leave at 15:00hrs, then it doesn't leave at 15:01hrs," says Maaïke Meijer.



“Our message: you can shine at any time”



Workgroup Inkom, from left to right: Charlotte, Ella, Werner, Daphne, Marenne

Why does he always drive? Werner: “I like doing it so much.”

The girls just let him do it.

But does the inevitable girl talk in the group not drive him stark raving mad?

Werner: “It is not that bad, and if it gets too much, I just put on my headphones.”

Ella de Vries, secretary: “Pink ones.”

Werner: “I got them from my predecessor. Indeed, pink ones.”

Daphne: “Werner, by the way, is not the most male person in the office.”

The others look at her with questioning eyes.

Daphne: “I just seem to take on the male role quite a bit, I think.”

Oh, well, the others feel it's not so bad. But just how female are things, at the ‘office’?

Daphne: “We have meetings about clothing. Our clothing and the volunteers’. Then it's good if a man says: ‘Ladies...’”

Werner: “When it's about clothing again, I grab my headphones.”

But they do feel that clothing is important. Just like every year, they adorn the brochures neatly dressed in suits. This year, the prevailing colour is mint green. Well, prevailing colour, the girls have a tiny green edge under their white blouses; Werner is wearing a green necktie. The rest is black and white.

Is all this not a bit too classical, a bit boring, all that black and white?

Charlotte Klüter, vice chairwoman: “We want to look neat. Show ourselves in a respectable way.”

Werner: “That brochure goes to sponsors, suppliers. You want to give them the idea that you are a professional partner, not just some student club.”

Marenne Hoogenboom, treasurer: “WGI used to have scarves, which would have the appropriate colour, and a white blouse. We didn't want that.”

Daphne: “We also didn't want a blouse with buttons, we thought that was a little too ...” She hesitates.

Marenne: “Dopey.”

Daphne laughs: “Yes, dopey.”

In a cramped Inkom office in the Student Services Centre (SSC), there are four women and a man. A familiar image, as it is the same composition that last year's Workgroup Inkom (WGI) had. It seems to be a pattern, but it is a coincidence. Who signs up, who fits in well with the group, that is always a matter of wait and see. The man, Werner Rijkers, is logistics manager this time. “He always drives the car, we call him daddy, even though he is the youngest. He looks after his girls well,” says chairwoman Daphne Peters.

Text: Wammes Bos

For months now they have been at close quarters with each other, but they have never really argued.

Marenne: “No real argument. At the most, female discussions. Like about the colour of the Inkom bag.”

Werner: “Well, also about cleaning up after yourself when you've had lunch. That happened once.”

Who hadn't cleaned up their mess? A contrite face: “Yes, me.” Men.

Charlotte: “We talk things through, have feedback sessions, and we do so before we start to bottle things up. Actually, I am proud of how we are doing.”

Marenne: “At the beginning, you are really sweet, but now we can say anything to each other. You know each other and what the other person feels is important, so you take that into account.”

Charlotte: “We have a coach from SSC, who does the feedback sessions with us, but sometimes we cancel because there is no need. And we do something fun every month, a car rally, an ‘escape room’ from which you can only escape when you complete certain assignments.”

The Inkom motto this year is *Time to Shine*. Yes, that is about the Inkom, but also about your whole time as a student, they say. And afterwards (the cynical reporter asks), do things only get worse? Or in the words of Schopenhauer, the famous German philosopher: ‘The worst is still to

come’?”

They had never heard of Schopenhauer. Ella: “I thought, you were going on about the Toppers [a popular Dutch male band of dubious quality; ed.], we have actually heard that before. A few years ago they had like a Shine song for the Song festival, but that has nothing to do with this. The message that we want to get across, is: you can *shine* at any time.”

Daphne: “Your time as a student, you can never get that back.”

Ella: “Well, anyway, you could say that about any time in your life ...”

Werner: “It is also the message that you must not feel pressured by all the measures taken by the government, the borrowing system, and things like that. You shouldn't stop developing, *shining*, when you are a student. Don't just think books. When you apply for a job, businesses will want to see that you also have practical experience.”

Charlotte: “If you come to the Inkom and *shine*, then that's good, if life is a drag after that, well, then it's up to you to do something about it.”

Their own Inkom was fine, but if they could do it over again ...

Ella: “I came here with a friend, and unlike today, when we set up the mentor groups beforehand, you could choose your own. So we clung on to each other and we ended up in the same group, but that means that you do less by yourself. After-

wards that was not a good thing, I think.”

Marenne: “Unfortunately I didn't see everything, I spent too much time sleeping. Now I would go to everything.”

Daphne: “I was in a nice group, we did a lot of things together, eating, for example, instead of eating with the Inkom crowd. In doing so, you miss out on all kinds of activities.”

Charlotte: “I came here from the Hotel School, where they say: we are going here and we are going there. As a new student, you accept it all, but now I think: I should have been more independent, discovered things for myself.”

Only Werner would do it all over again: “I had a terrific Inkom. And no, I didn't have too much booze.”

Indeed, the drink, that is always an issue, certainly now that the still-not-quite-eighteen-year-olds have to make do with water and soft drinks.

Charlotte: “Drinking is part of it, but we also do culture, sports, integration in the city; there are so many activities that do not involve beer.”

Daphne: “The mentors are given instructions, a training in ‘dealing with alcohol responsibly’, we work together with Mondriaan, an institute for mental health care.”

Charlotte: “It makes them more aware of their responsibility towards the kids.”

Speaking of drinking, chairwoman Daphne was given a sweet nickname by Werner, which derives from her apparently uncontrollable urge to say Cheers at every opportunity. With Prosecco. Werner wrote an e-mail to his colleagues with nicknames ending in *..uitje*.

Werner: “Daphne was *zuipschuitje*, Ella *schavuitje*, Charlotte *flapuitje*, Marenne *kleinduitje*.”

Marenne: “They say I am the shortest. But I'm really not that short.”

Daphne: “And Werner is *buitje*. No, that is not from the word rainshower (*regenbuitje*) but from ‘*buit*’, treasure. Because he is a handsome single man.”

Charlotte: “But actually, we now call ourselves the Toppers.”

3HOOG

By Ype Driessen



René



Jurre



Merel



Harrie



Box of chocolates

Forest Gump's mother used to say that life is like a box of chocolates and you never know what you're going to get. Well, that definitely goes for my first year in Maastricht. Three years ago, I was in the same situation you're in right now: wandering through an unknown city, not knowing exactly what will cross your path during your time in Maastricht. In my case, European Law School brought me to this medieval city. But it didn't take me long to realise the programme was in no way the right fit for me. Not long after, I quit the course, leaving nothing more behind than the legacy of the lowest exam mark of the year: a 2.8. At that point, I could have taken a plane to the other side of the world, moved back in with my parents or started a new study programme elsewhere – but I didn't go anywhere. Life in Maastricht kept me here. I remembered the wise words of mother Gump and realised that many roads lead to Rome: people like Steve Jobs, Mark Zuckerberg, Bill Gates, Tom Hanks and the foun-



ders of WhatsApp and Twitter all dropped out of university too. In that sense, there was

no use sounding the alarm: European Law School was nothing more than a piece of bad

chocolate to me. The reason I chose not to focus on inventing the new iPhone or some revolutionary kind of social media was that I'd gone all out after arriving in Maastricht. Since I wanted to make the most of my time here, I'd started the hazing period at one of Maastricht's fraternities. So, instead of quitting UM altogether, I switched to Arts and Culture. However awful the chocolate might have been at the time, the sweeter it is these days. Take a balanced dose of *whyphy* (*Work Hard Yes, Play Hard Yes* – 22 Jump Street) and you'll see that Maastricht has all the ingredients to make your student years unforgettable. Sometimes all it takes is a second chance to know which road to Rome is best for you. So whatever the study programme that brought you here, if things go differently to what you expected, don't panic!

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third-year student of Arts and Culture