

## PEDAS ANNUAL ART TOUR

As usual we were not disappointed with the places we visited in Belgium due to John Biggs and his hard work researching the museums and galleries.

Day 1 - This was spent on the coach travelling to Dover and across the ferry to Calais. Another couple of hours and we arrived at our hotel in Antwerp. The hotel was situated in a super location so we had numerous restaurants to choose from all within walking distance.

Day 2 - We walked to the KMSKA in Antwerp and studied the Modern Masters and the Old Masters as well as drawings and sculptures on 5 levels. It featured the work of James Ensor which was definitely down to personal choice! The building itself inside was magnificent with amazing floors which looked like marble, we had no problem filling our time.

Day 3 – The coach took us to Brussels, only just over an hour away where we visited the Royal Museum of Brussels and the Magritte Exhibition. Here again there was so much to see, we even went down 8 floors to different exhibitions. Again lots of Old Masters but also some works of Van Gogh, Charles Hermans, Paul Gauguin, Auguste Rodin, Xavier Mellery, Emile Galle and Victor Horta to name a few. Some people stayed in there all day but Roy and I went walk-about and explored all the back streets. Having got totally lost we found a cab to bring us back to the hotel.

Day 4 – We travelled by coach to Ghent, only about 45 minutes away. We walked in from the coach park along the canals which made me think I was in Holland rather than Belgium. The weather threatened to be awful but we were quite lucky and were able to dodge showers. What a lovely city, the Cathedral sits in the centre of the city and most of us were able to visit the Altar Piece – Jan Van Eyck's Mystic Lamb which is finally on display after years of restoration. We didn't venture any further but went to the Castle which was very interesting and walked round the ramparts and down in the dungeons. A really lovely day.

We decided to try and eat together in the evening and with the help of Margaret and John we did a 'reccy' and found The Big Chef who said YES to all our demands, however the paying of the bills was a bit stressful. We realized, although they spoke English, they did not have much understanding of the language, hence separate bills was not a possibility. Nevertheless we had a lovely last evening altogether.

Now where to next year for our 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary???

*Carole Gadesby*