



April 2011 Issue

- Does the future belong to sustainable energy?
- In focus: **Fuel Cell Europe** and **Solar Solidarity International**, conference organisers at the European Union Sustainable Energy Week 2011 (EUSEW 2011)
- Interview with **Alexandre Dang**, the creator of the 'Dancing Solar Flowers'
- Events in Brussels



Does the future belong to sustainable energy?

Japan's nuclear threat, along with the ratcheting up of oil prices because of the instability in Libya, have brought the make-up of the European energy model into question. We already knew that the world's supply of oil and natural gas would end someday - although there is still some left for now. And we were conscious of the fact that nuclear energy, despite being a CO₂-free energy source, had the potential to be extremely destructive. But public perceptions of green energies have shifted in recent months and clean power sources are increasingly seen as a more attractive power source than nuclear or petroleum.

The current energy crisis is also being perceived by some businesses as a chance to overcome present economic difficulties: this may become a niche market, offering significant numbers of new job opportunities.

Despite this, doubts remain about how best to produce energy responsibly, using existing technologies to secure supplies effectively, while protecting the environment and keeping prices competitive.

Is it possible to replace hydrocarbons with renewa-

ble energy? What role should public authorities play in this process? Can we meet our energy supply needs using renewable sources? Can "renewables" answer the cry for energy efficiency? What will be the EU's future energy mix?

With the hope of finding the answers to these and other questions, more than 20,000 participants from across Europe and beyond will meet at the European Union - Sustainable Energy Week (EUSEW, www.eusew.eu), the reference event for sustainable energy issues in Europe, which will take place next week, between 11 and 15 April. The programme will largely focus on the need for energy efficiency and renewable energy sources in Europe, with a significant portion dedicated to the European energy market and smart electricity grids. Over 120 related events are already planned in Brussels and another 270 are set to take place across Europe. In this context, Eurideas interviewed representatives of FuelCell Europe and Solar Solidarity International, two organisations participating at this event, to learn more about their vision and strategy, as they move towards green energy.

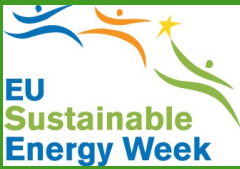


Fuel Cell Europe

How does the fuel cell industry address the current European energy challenges?

A fuel cell is an electrochemical device that combines fuel and oxygen to produce electricity. The process takes place without combustion, thus making fuel cells

a very clean means of producing energy. Fuel cells typically use hydrogen as fuel, only generating heat and water as by-products, but they can also work with a variety of other fuels, including methanol, butanol, natural gas and biogas, which makes them very flexible energy producers. They also address the need for cleaner, more efficient energy sources and processes. For example, fuel cell powered vehicles emit an average of 30% GHGs less than conventional technologies--this makes them an excellent option for both public and private transport. When fuelled with green hydrogen (which is produced from renewable sources), fuel cells yield no toxic emissions at all. They also represent a smart solution for the building sector, because the heat resulting from the conversion process can be used for cogeneration. Finally, because fuel cells are clean and quiet, they can be easily deployed in urban areas.



Fuel Cell Europe organises the conference '*Fuel cells and hydrogen within the European Initiative on Smart Cities*' within the framework of the **EUSEW 2011**, jointly with NEW-IG and EHA (The European Hydrogen Association)

Date and time: Wednesday April 13 2011, at 9.30 am

Venue: Palais des Académies, Rue Ducale 1, Brussels

More information: www.fuelcelleurope.org



As a result of the Japanese nuclear crisis and the Arab revolution, a new debate on renewable energies is now on the table. Do these events confirm the need for new perspectives on European energy supplies?

Despite the horror of these events, they highlight the need for a serious debate on how our energy supply systems are secured. It would also be pertinent to take advantage of this debate to change how we think about

energy, with our main objective being strategic resource management and the provision of clean, secure energy.



Solar Solidarity International organises the conference '*Art and Sustainable Development*' within the framework of the **EUSEW 2011**, jointly with Entretiens Monde

Date and time: Wednesday April 13 2011, at 18.00 pm

Venue: Rond Point Schuman 14, Délégation Bretagne Europe, Brussels

More information: <http://solarsolidarite.org/>

Interview with...

Alexandre Dang



One day, the creator of the well-known kinetic art installations, “Dancing Solar Flowers”, Alexandre Dang, decided to help raise awareness of the need to move towards a more sustainable way of life. In that context, he established the international non-profit association, Solar Solidarity International, which aims to raise awareness of the potential of renewable energies. It also supports solar electrification projects in developing countries, in partnership with other organisations, such as *Electriciens Sans Frontières* or *Solar Zonder Grenzen* (“Sun without Borders”). Dang explains his views on art and energy in an exclusive interview with Eurideas.



Your installations of kinetic art might be considered naïve and lively, but behind them there appear to be great doses of activism and commitment. What is the message behind your artwork?

My artistic work is intimately linked to my engagement in the sustainability agenda. Similarly, Solar Solidarity is leading an original educational initiative for the public at large. It highlights the need to raise awareness of green energy options and why they matter, stressing the importance of energy efficiency. This is expressed in a playful and artistic way, which appeals to people of all ages — the “Dancing Solar Flowers” are excellent “eye catchers” and they frame the debate on sustainable energies poetically.



As Antoine de Saint-Exupéry once said, “We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children”, which is why this project seeks to raise awareness of the importance of these issues among younger generations.



Does your art reflect your environmental commitment?

One important artistic aspect for me is that “Art can make things ‘move.’”

Art enables the artist to develop his or her own poetry and to remain committed to environmental issues. The brightly colored, “Dancing Solar Flowers” make us think of Pop Art: indeed we can add the idea of “seriality” to my work. Also, after my exhibitions, visitors can usually buy flowers, which help finance humanitarian projects.



What kind of reactions to your exhibitions do you expect from the public?

As was previously mentioned, I seek to trigger debates about renewable energies through my work. I strive to make people think differently about the impact of renewable energy sources on the global environment. Raising public awareness is not easy, but with art as vector, I think I succeed in reaching a bright audience with a simple message: the sun has the potential to supply people with energy, which in turn provides people with access to water, education, medical care and telecommunications. Innovative thinking on energy management issues is therefore essential, and should inspire everyone to promote clean, sustainable development. My exhibitions are colourful with an artistic, humanistic, scientific dimension to them, and they often provoke an emotional response in visitors. They are suitable for visitors of all ages.



For more information, please visit Alexandre Dang’s website www.alexandredang.be

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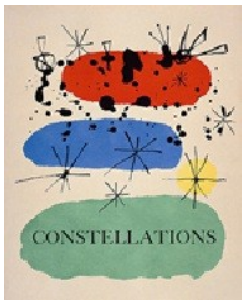
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Visit our website: www.eurideastranslation.com

Tel: +32 2 669 7701

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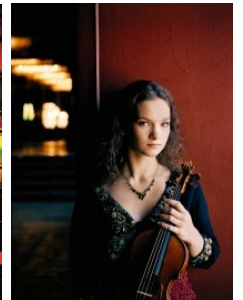
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**ART
BRUSSELS**
29 contemporary art fair

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► **March 24-June 19, Joan Miró @ Espace Culturel ING.** The ING Cultural Centre and the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium are organizing an exhibition of some 120 pieces of artwork that illustrate the poetical aspects of Joan Miró's work.

► **April 15-May 8, Greenhouses of Laeken.** As usual, the Greenhouses of Laeken are open to the public for almost three weeks. The current plant collection still respects the spirit that prevailed when the original collections were planted and contains an enormous number of rare and valuable plants.

► **April 28-May 1, Fair Art Brussels, Brussels Expo.** Art Brussels, which welcomes some 30,000 professionals, collectors and art lovers from all over the world, is the European platform for up-and-coming talents in the field of contemporary art. Established galleries will also be present, dis-

playing a selection of their highest-quality paintings, sculptures, photography, video and installations.

► **April 28-May 8, Brussels Short Film Festival, five different venues: Maison A. Latine, Vendôme, Bozar, Flagey, Mercelis.** The Brussels Short Film Festival counts 25,000 visitors, 2,558 film submissions for the national and international competitions and showcases 300 films from over 40 countries. The festival will include approximately 92 screenings, featuring five shorts each.

► **May 4, Hilary Hahn in concert, Centre for Fine Arts.** Hilary Hahn returns to Brussels for a recital, in the company of the Ukrainian pianist Valentina Lisitsa. Their programme is a particularly original and interesting one, offering a fine balance between well-known works and more rarely heard pieces.