

10 Books from Holland

London Book Fair Issue



Nederlands
letterenfonds
dutch foundation
for literature

Spring 2019

Frequently Asked Questions

10 Books from Holland? Who decides the contents?

Our editors. We want to showcase the best fiction from the Netherlands for our audience of literary publishers. Most titles have been published recently and have enjoyed good sales, excellent reviews and one or more literary awards or nominations. Though sometimes one of these factors is enough. Equally important is the question: 'Does it travel?' Our advisors talk to publishers from all over the world and while it is impossible to say with certainty which novels will travel where, we have the expertise to make an educated guess.

At book fairs, do you talk about these books exclusively?

While we like to discuss our catalogue, there are always other titles: books that have just appeared or are about to come out or books that just missed our selection. Our advisors read as much fiction as they can.

Do you work together with Dutch publishers and agents?

We keep each other informed about interest in titles and rights sales. When we commission a sample translation, we usually share the costs. However, we always make our own decisions, and remain completely independent.

How many books by one author will you support?

We can support one author with three books. If the author has changed publishing houses, previous titles are not counted.

Are all books in your brochure eligible for a grant?

Yes they are, with a maximum subsidy of 100% of the translation costs for classics and 70% for contemporary prose, based on the actual fee paid by the publisher.

Are books that aren't included in your brochure eligible?

As long as it's a good literary title, it probably is. We make our decisions based on three criteria: literary quality of the book, status of the publishing house and quality of the translator. You can always ask in advance if a book is eligible or not.

Can you help us find a translator?

Lists of experienced translators are provided by e-mail.

We want to work with somebody who is not on your list.

Then we require a sample translation of 20 pages and the translator's CV. If the translation is good, the translator will be added to our list. If the translation needs repair, we can make suggestions. If the translation is beyond repair, you are advised to hire somebody who is on our list.

How do we apply for a translation subsidy?

We need contracts with the rights holders and the translator, plus the application form. You can submit digitally from our website: <http://www.letterenfonds.nl/en/translation-subsidy>. Meetings are held six times a year, the dates are announced on our website.

Do you subsidise production costs?

This is possible in the case of editions of poetry, illustrated children's books or graphic novels. For regular fiction and non-fiction, we support translation costs only.

We would like to invite a Dutch author for a promotional visit.

If you organise a good programme and offer the author accommodation, we can cover the travel costs.

How to apply for the Amsterdam Fellowship.

Every September, we organise a fellowship (4 days) for publishers and editors. We do not have an application procedure, but you can always send us an e-mail stating your interest.

Individual Publisher's Visits

We host 8 to 10 publishers and editors per year on an individual basis. Usually, these are great if you already have one or more Dutch authors on your list and would like to see them, combined with a schedule of meetings.

What's Schwob?

Schwob.nl is a European network for forgotten or undiscovered books, established and maintained by translators, publishers and editors, researchers, readers and critics.

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Please leave your card at our stand, or send a message. All our past issues are available at www.letterenfonds.nl.

Advisors Fiction



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Ilja Leonard Pfeijffer

Grand Hotel Europa

Writer pays homage to lost love and a dying Europe

An author by the name of Ilja Leonard Pfeijffer leaves Venice and moves into the stately Grand Hotel Europa for an indefinite period. His relationship with Clio, a clever hot-blooded art historian, has just fallen apart. In the hotel, where a sense of long-lost glory hangs in the air, he reconstructs exactly what went wrong with Clio and befriends the eccentric hotel staff and guests along the way.

Among these are the major-domo, who always speaks in complete sentences, the feminist poet, Albane, the congenial bellboy, Abdul, and the intellectual, Patelski. Ever since the hotel was bought by the Chinese millionaire, Mr Wang, there have been plastic flowers in the antique vases and disco lights in the chandelier. The tension between the representatives of Old Europe and the new world reach a climax when the major-domo is fired.

The clash between tradition and modernization played a decisive role in the end of Ilja and Clio's relationship as well. A classicist like Ilja sees nothing but the beauty of Old Europe, whereas Clio laments that a country like Italy is strangled by the past. This sentiment compels her to take a job at the Louvre Museum in Abu Dhabi, but Ilja – a European in his heart and soul – refuses to go with her. Ilja is enraged by the fact that Europe is

becoming a giant theme park, Venice being one frightening example. He contends that beauty and an illustrious past alone are no longer relevant: 'I don't want to have to conclude that, like the hotel I'm staying in and the continent it's named after, my best years are behind me and that my only real prospect for the future is to live off my past.' Still, the book is anything but sombre – Pfeijffer is too witty for that. At the end, when the main character decides to follow Clio to Abu Dhabi, the reader is left with the hope that he can still reconcile his muse and his beloved continent.

Just like Pfeijffer's previous novel, *La Superba*, this book addresses central themes such as tourism, globalization and the refugee crisis. Its stylistic variety is striking: in the hotel, the characters speak in flowery, old-fashioned prose, whereas the language used to describe Ilja's relationship with Clio is poetic and sensual. What's more, an exciting, Dan Brown-style subplot emerges when the author and his girlfriend go off in search of a lost painting by Caravaggio. Along the way, the book offers essay-like elaborations on Venice, Skopje and the excesses of mass tourism. With this ingenious juxtaposition of styles and themes, Pfeijffer makes a stunning literary plea for Europe. *Grand Hotel Europa* is truly a Great European Novel.

Classicist **Ilja Leonard Pfeijffer** (b. 1968) has published poetry, stage plays, essays, columns, travel accounts, stories, political satires and four novels written in the spirit of Rabelais. In *Het grote baggerboek* (The Big Book of Dredgings, 2004) and in *Het ware leven, een roman* (Real Life. A Novel, 2006) he played a game with world literature and divided the critics. *La Superba* (2014) showed Pfeijffer's engaged side. It won him the Libris Literature Prize and is currently being adapted into a film. In 2017 his novel *Peachez, A Romance* was published. He is highly praised for both his poetry and his novels.

For a full biography and information on previous works, please check out the author's website: <https://iljapfeijffer.com/en/biography/>



Publishing details

Grand Hotel Europa (2018)
547 pp., 193,864 words
45,000 copies sold

Rights

De Arbeiderspers
Jolijn Spooren
j.spooren@singeluitgeverijen.nl

Rights sold

Italy (Nutrimenti), Macedonia (Antolog), Spain (Acantilado)

Translated titles

La Superba: Croatia (V.B.Z.), Egypt (Al Arabi), Germany (Aufbau), Italy (Nutrimenti), Macedonia (Antolog), Rumania (Casa Cărtii de Știință), South-Africa (Protea Boekhuis), US (Deep Vellum)

'Despite the loaded subject, his great European novel is a page-turner.'
– *De Tijd*

'You should put *Grand Hotel Europa* by Ilja Leonard Pfeijffer on the shelf next to Europe books by Thomas Mann and Harry Mulisch. Rarely have we read a novel that ingeniously links a tragic but beautiful love story with serious, but never dull, often witty reflections on the phenomenon that is Europe. [...] *Grand Hotel Europa* is a love letter to an old beloved, a dead-tired but stunning continent.'
– *De Limburger*

Photo: Stephan Vanfleteren



Vonne van der Meer

The Findling

A moving novel about lost objects and people

At the end of the 1950s, the young Jutka Horvath finds a woman's handbag and returns it to its rightful owner. As a reward, she receives a book about a boy who loses his plastic fish only to find it back years later. From then on, Jutka makes it her mission to find lost items and return them to their owners. She becomes the 'findling'.

Combing the streets in search of lost objects gives Jutka a sense of freedom – not unimportant for a girl whose parents were victims of the Communist regime in Hungary. She keeps an accurate account of all her findings and grows up to become an accountant by profession.

Jutka left Hungary as a child with her mother, who used the Russian invasion as an excuse to immigrate to the Netherlands. She had hoped the move would drag her husband away from his mistress, but it didn't, and Jutka grows up without a father.

Jutka grows up in Amsterdam with her mother, who barely scrapes by as a singer in a nightclub. Because of the hump on her back, developed over years of constantly looking at the ground, and her aversion to unfaithful men, instilled in her by her mother, Jutka struggles to develop a healthy love life as an adult.

When she discovers all the letters from her father that her mother had kept hidden from her, she leaves for Paris. There, father and daughter are reunited, but the many years and miles between them lead to misunderstandings and mutual feelings of rejection.

Through beautiful anecdotes about objects lost and found, Vonne van der Meer tells the story of a lonely soul.

Jutka's last discovery is a baby boy in a dumpster. To her great sorrow, she is not allowed to keep him, and he's placed in a foster family. Years later, when she develops a bond with another adopted young man, her life becomes less lonely. She also patches things up with her father.

As in her previous novels, such as the bestseller *Island Guests* or *The Woman with the Key*, Vonne van der Meer organically interweaves stories of very different people, all of which resonate with the same themes: homesickness, loss, attachment and destiny. In ways that are sometimes funny, sometimes melancholic, Van der Meer describes how her characters regain what they have lost or find something else to take its place. Like Jutka, who believes there's wonder lying around every corner, Van der Meer reminds us that happiness belongs to those who are willing to seize it.



Publishing details

Vindelning (2019)
240 pp., 55,093 words

Rights

Atlas Contact
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Translated titles (a selection)

De vrouw met de sleutel [The Woman With the Key]: France (Héloïse d'Ormesson, 2013)
Ik verbind u door [I'll Put You Through]: Germany (Kiepenheuer 2006), Turkey (Altin Bilek 2007)
De avondboot [The Evening Boat]: France (Héloïse d'Ormesson, 2006), Germany (Kiepenheuer 2002)
Eilandgasten [Island Guests]: France (Héloïse d'Ormesson, 2005), Germany (Kiepenheuer 2001), Spain (Maeva 2004)

Quotes about earlier work:

'With her superb pen, her compositional ingenuity and her prodigious powers of observation, Vonne van der Meer manages to endow even the most insignificant characters and events with brilliance and depth.'

– *NRC Handelsblad*

'What is so striking about Vonne van der Meer's stories are the fine character portraits and the vivid depictions of experiences that could easily be our own.'

– *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*

Photo: Annaleen Louwes



Vonne van der Meer (b. 1952) made her breakthrough with *Eilandgasten* (Island Guests, 1999), a novel about visitors to a guesthouse on the island of Vlieland. The sequels *De avondboot* (The Evening Boat, 2001) and *Laatste seizoen* (Final Season, 2003) were also highly praised. Since her debut in 1985, she has been associated with sensual portrayals of female fantasies and secrets, highlights being the novel *Een warme rug* (A Warm Back, 1987) and the story collection *Nachtgoed* (Nightwear, 1993), but as years went by her work has acquired a humanist accent, as in the novels *Ik verbind u door* (I'll Put You Through, 2004), *Take 7* (2007), *Het smalle pad van de liefde* (The Narrow Path of Love, 2013) and *Winter in Gloster Huis* (Winter in Gloster House, 2015). Van der Meer is president of PEN Netherlands.

Martin Michael Driessen

My First Murder

Dark, mythical stories about human weakness

'Death is stupid,' thinks one of the characters in Martin Michael Driessen's latest collection of short stories. He has survived a shipwreck, a Japanese POW camp and a shark attack, but now it seems that he will finally meet his end after taking a dive off his sailboat alone and realizing too late that he forgot to hang the swim ladder.

The central theme of *My First Murder* is death: although it may be stupid, it is above all impatient. At the beginning of the story, it's as if death doesn't have time to sit back and wait for the end to come. Death comes disguised as a stoic announcement: 'On the first day, he fell into a ravine.' That's it – no more words are wasted on the matter. There is no shortage of death in Driessen's work. It plays a role in almost every story, and in the novella *A True Hero*, it's particularly cruel.

The Italian brothers Beppo and Luigi are standing in line for decimation, a Roman punishment for troops who behaved cowardly in battle: every tenth man is executed. The soldiers have fled from

an avalanche, and their brutal general decides that this time every fourth man will be killed. The clever Beppo starts calculating their odds. If he and Luigi stand next to each other in line, one of them will survive no matter what. But then there's a fifty per cent chance that one of them dies. They could also spread out and stand with three men between them – then there's a seventy-five per cent chance that they both live and a twenty-five per cent chance that they both die. Luigi doesn't understand. 'You decide,' he sobs. 'You're the one who decides everything anyway.' Luigi's statement turns out to be crucial once death has made its final countdown, and the story takes an unexpected twist.

Driessen's robust narrative style brings an almost mythical atmosphere to his stories, giving them a whisk of modern irony. None of these stories end as their classical settings initially lead the reader believe. *My First Murder* is an exquisite short story collection that celebrates the power of the imagination.



Publishing details

Mijn eerste moord (2018)
165 pp., 36,000 words

Publisher

Van Oorschot
Menno Hartman
menno@vanoorschot.nl
www.vanoorschot.nl

Rights

2 Seas Agency
Marleen Seegers,
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Translated titles

Rivieren [Rivers]: US
(Amazon Crossing), *Vader van God*
[Padre di Dio]: Italy (Del Vecchio
Editore, 2016)

Rights sold

Rivieren [Rivers]: Germany
(Wagenbach), Hungary (Gondolat),
Italy (Del Vecchio Editore),
De pelikaan [The Pelican]: US
(Amazon Crossing), Hungary
(Gondolat), Slovenia (Modrijan)



Martin Michael Driessen (b. 1954) is a director of plays and operas, a translator and a writer. He made his debut in 1999 with the novel *Gars*, which was followed in 2012 by *Vader van God* (Father of God) and in 2013 by *Een ware held* (A True Hero), all of them acclaimed by the press and nominated for literary prizes. His work has been translated into Italian, German and Hungarian. His voluminous novel *Lizzie* (2015) was written with the poet Liesbeth Lagemaat. *Rivers* (2016) won the ECI Literature Prize. *The Pelican* (2017) has been shortlisted for the prestigious Libris Literature Prize.

'The fact that Driessen is an excellent classical storyteller is something we've known since his debut. [...] His latest collection of short stories, *My First Murder*, is the crème de la crème of Dutch narrative art.'

– Trouw

'With a steady, masterful hand, the writer places his characters in a battle for their lives and constantly confronts them with new twists of fate. Compelling and inescapable.'

– Trouw

Photo: Bob Bronshoff

Auke Hulst

Searchlight on the Lawn

A compassionate portrait of a controversial political figure

After ten books in twelve years, it's safe to say that Auke Hulst is a prolific writer. His work has always had a cinematic quality: both *Sleep Tight*, *Johnny Idaho* (2015) and *Brotherland* (2017) read like dystopian road novels. In his new novel, he steps into the mind of one of the most unpopular presidents in American history. The result is remarkable.

Perhaps the most fascinating thing about Richard Nixon was his personality, particularly the darker sides of it. In three acts, the writer enters into the psyche of the former world leader: first during a sleepless night in the White House, then at the moment he loses the 1960 election to Kennedy, and finally on the day he has to publicly resign after the Watergate scandal for what he refers to as a 'chicken shit burglary'.

Hulst offers us a glimpse into the aggrieved soul of a man from a poor background who managed to work his way up to the highest office in the country, but who was never really able to enjoy his own success. This was how he felt in 1960 at the beginning of his career: 'He was angry about something that might not even happen. But it did happen. It had already happened, and it would keep on

happening. He was regularly snubbed by the press, in debates, in the smallest matters of everyday life, and he was so often wronged, underestimated, misclassified and misunderstood. Hated.'

More than anything Hulst paints a convincing portrait of his character. Distrustful to the bone, Nixon was chronically suspicious of everyone around him – only his closest family would escape his hypersensitivity. Even his friend Kissinger, his 'holy' mother, Hannah, and his rival Kennedy, with whom he had a love-hate relationship, were all counted among his enemies at one point or another.

Auke Hulst shows a strong empathy for the former president and one of the most contentious figures in recent world history. Despite Nixon's personality flaws, Hulst allows the reader to develop a kind of understanding and compassion for him as a person, as if he is the embodiment of the human condition. This controversial character, who is above all at war with himself, evokes paradoxical feelings in the reader – a mixture of aversion and empathy for a man convinced that he has to push his way into a world where he isn't welcome. 'The world wasn't going to open the door for him, that he knew, so he would have to kick it down by force.'



Author and musician **Auke Hulst** (b. 1975) made his literary breakthrough in 2012 with his third, strongly autobiographical novel, *Kinderen van het ruige land* (Children of the Savage Land). He won the Harland Award two years in a row, for *Slaap zacht, Johnny Idaho* (Sleep Tight, Johnny Idaho, 2015) and *En ik herinner me Titus Broederland* (Brotherland, 2016), which was also on the longlist for the ECI Literature Prize and the Libris Literature Prize. *Motel Songs* (2017) was favourably received, winning the Bob den Uyl Prize.



Publishing details

Zoeklicht op het gazon (2018)
192 pp., 45,000 words

Complete English
translation available

Rights

Ambo Anthos
Orli Naamani
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World English Rights

Markus Hoffmann,
markus@rhaliterary.com
www.rhaliterary.com

'A strong psychological novel in which Hulst takes a fresh, nuanced look at well-known facts about the most controversial president the United States has ever had. In doing so, Hulst manages to reveal new layers of his complex character.'
– *De Standaard*

'Auke Hulst is a versatile author, adept in all genres. He goes out onto the streets, leaves the country, comes back, travels, isolates himself, gets angry, thinks. And meanwhile, he writes beautiful sentences.'
– *De Revisor*

Photo: Mark Uyl

Wanda Reisel

Adam

An exciting road novel about a man with no moral compass

Wanda Reisel tells the story of a young man who, after witnessing an attack on the war monument in Amsterdam's Dam Square, hears a voice telling him: 'You have to change your life. Don't look back.' But is that really possible when you're trying to flee? The faster you run from the past, the harder it is to escape your memories.

Adam has abandoned his wife and son, and on top of that, he blames himself for the car accident that killed his mother. He works as a bookkeeper for charitable organizations, and one day he decides to do something that will show everyone exactly what kind of person he is: he funnels millions of dollars' worth of donations into secret bank accounts in Switzerland and the Far East and takes off.

Wanda Reisel manages to maintain the story's breakneck speed all the way to the very end. The reader travels along with the protagonist and desperately wants to protect him from pitfalls, warn him, slow him down and hurry him along.

Adam is constantly looking over his shoulder – is Interpol onto him yet? But already on the first train, he meets a German photographer documenting

the refugee crisis and immediately falls for her. Her name, Lili, is reminiscent of Lilith, the sexual seductress and Adam's first wife before God created Eve.

Reisel masterfully plays with Adam's masculinity and Lili's femininity, creating a convincing psychological portrait of a man rushing from Zurich to Shanghai via the old Silk Road, along old Jewish trade routes and across lands settled by his ancestors. Meanwhile, Europe is being hit by a series of attacks, each one directed at a famous phallic symbol: the Fernsehturm in Berlin, the Eiffel Tower, the Leaning Tower of Pisa.

When Adam gets stranded in Norway, he finally finds the peace to look back on his life, his past marriage and his family's history in the Jewish diaspora. As the suspense surrounding the stolen money and Lili's machinations begins to unravel, a new woman enters into his life. This one may not be exciting or beautiful, but she helps Adam discover his destination and provides him with a kind of moral compass. Reisel's ambitious novel weaves together numerous themes: our thirst for self-knowledge, recognition and love. Powerful and inescapable, *Adam* is the life story of a modern-day European.

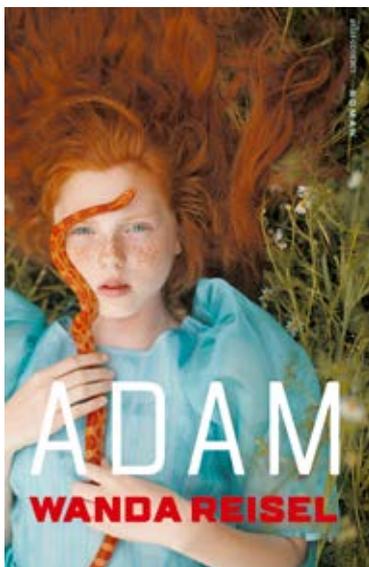


Publishing details

Adam (2019)
360 pp., 86,000 words

Rights

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Wanda Reisel (b. 1955) studied dramaturgy and made her literary debut in 1986 with *Jacobi's tocht* (Jacob's Journey) followed two years later by the novel *Het blauwe uur* (The Blue Hour). Deception and self-deception are recurring themes in her novels, stories and plays. *Baby Storm* (1996) and *Een man een man* (A Man a Man, 2000) were both shortlisted for the Libris Prize for Literature. *White Love* (2004) was shortlisted for the AKO Literature Prize and won the Anna Bijns Prize (2008).

'A beautiful, mythical image of a man's inner world [...] the writer engrosses us in her discerning, almost casual descriptive art.'
– *De Groene Amsterdammer*

'A rich, exemplary novel, thematically strong and colourfully elaborated. Wanda Reisel has a special gift for depicting the human condition and the human fate. Her work is full of nuance, feeling for paradoxes and contradictions, and, above all, sharp formulations.'
– *Trouw*

Photo: Annaleen Louwes

M.M. Schoenmakers

The Flight of Gilles Speksneijder

The tragicomic decline of a redundant man

Gilles Speksneijder, a loyal payroll slave in an anonymous administrative office, is the archetype of a man with no defining characteristics. Life just happens to him. He isn't really a part of anything, and in life's most crucial moments, his primary survival strategy is 'respectable docility'. His marriage to Madelief, his struggling, overweight wife, is the result of her search for a 'man was just as leftover as she was'.

One day while vacuuming, he finds a tiny screw. In Speksneijder's world, this can mean only one thing: calamity is around the corner. The screw must have been rattled out of a device, and sooner or later an electrical wire would be cut, which would produce a short circuit, which would cause a fire, which would end in a fatal injury. In short, it was 'something small that could lead to something big.' Speksneijder systematically dissects all the appliances in the kitchen in search of a screwless hole, but in the end, all he's left with is a collection of dismantled devices.

Under pressure from his superiors and seduced by promises of a bonus and a promotion, he accepts the position of assistant move coordinator. The company's move, however, quickly evolves into a

'transition' and soon into a reorganization, pulling him farther and farther away from his closest colleagues. 'Remember that the transition is motivated by the logic of development, not by the logic of normal propriety,' his manager says.

With a keen sense of humour, Schoenmakers masterfully describes how, in no time at all, Speksneijder gets left behind. He cannot cope with all the power struggles and misunderstandings that come with the transition process, and he is forced to hand over the tasks of scheduling and writing meeting reports to his wife. In order to avoid any unnecessary delay in the moving plans, he even lets Melanie, the drifter who's been squatting the building, come home with him. And to make matters even worse, a warm friendship flourishes between Madelief and Melanie, which only pushes him further into the periphery of his own domestic life. When all of his employer's promises prove to be empty, and it turns out there is no room for Speksneijder in the new building, he realizes that he has deteriorated into a 'residual problem, someone who, after all the sifting, sorting, weighing and judging, is leftover without a purpose.'



Publishing details

De vlucht van Gilles Speksneijder
(2019)
256 pp., 58,027 words

Rights

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After a twenty-year break from writing, **M.M. Schoenmakers** (b. 1949) returned to the literary scene in 2015 with the widely acclaimed novel *De Wolkenridder* (The Cloud Knight). His earlier novels were based on his experiences in development aid in Suriname.

'M.M. Schoenmakers succeeds with flying colours in writing about a dull, disillusioned life.'
– *Trouw*

About *De Wolkenridder*:
'A beautiful novel about someone learning to let go. If only there were more of these books, more of these writers.'
– *NRC Handelsblad*

Photo: Tessa Posthuma de Boer

Frank Martinus Arion

Double Play

A game of dominoes turns into a battle of life and death

Frank Martinus Arion's debut novel *Double Play* (1973) was the first Antillean novel written from a black perspective. In all of his work, Arion reflects on the topics of racism and discrimination, the relationship between the community and the individual and the effects of colonialism on the world. In the end, equality is the only way forward.

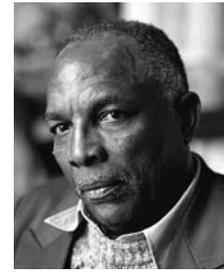
Double Play is a story about four domino-playing Antillean men and their wives. While playing, the men talk about the island of Curaçao, women, politics and money.

Their life on the island is characterized by corruption, inferiority complexes and a lack of future prospects – partly due to colonialism and partly due to the powerlessness of the people themselves. Each of the four men represents a certain class on the island. Janchi Pau is a smart, Jack of all trades. Manchi Sanantonio is a bailiff suffering from megalomania. Taxi driver Boeboe Fiel has been appointed union leader against his will, and Chamon Nicolas is a rack-renter who doesn't really

belong on the island. All four men have a double agenda, their own kind of double play.

The conversations between the four rum-drinking men, each with a weapon on his belt, add even more tension to the game. They talk about cheating and prostitution, white domination, nationalism and the islanders' inability to stimulate their own economy. They also discuss the need for education and the bloody uprising of 1968. As the story develops, Arion demonstrates how women's emancipation is essential for resolving many of the ongoing issues on the island. Nora, Boeboe's wife, sleeps with all kinds of men – Chamon being one of them – of them to be able to afford food and shoes for her children. She hates her waste-ful husband but leaving him is not an option.

Not only does *Double Play* provide a flawless portrait of the social position of these characters, it offers insight into their thoughts, dreams and political ideals. *Double Play* is a prime example of how a socio-political novel can be artistically convincing.



Publishing details

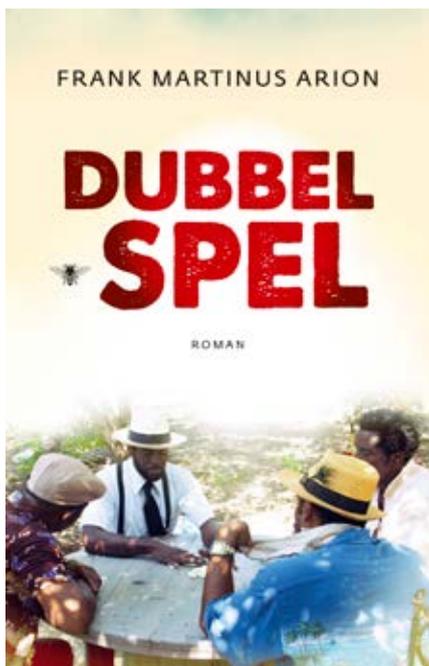
Dubbelspel (1973)
365 pp., 118,976 words

Rights

De Bezige Bij
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Uta Matten
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Rights sold

Denmark (Hekla, 1983), Germany (Peter Hammer, 1982), UK (Faber and Faber, 1998). All out of print.



Frank Martinus Arion (1936-2015) is the most important black Dutch-language author from the Netherlands Antilles. His debut novel, *Double Play*, was the perfect springboard for his literary career. It won the Van der Hoogt Prize and has been reprinted countless times; in 2017, it was made into a movie. Arion was someone who not only professed his ideas in numerous debates and articles, but also in his novels. After *Double Play* came *Afscheid van de koningen* (Farewell to the Queen, 1975), *Nobele wilden* (Noble Savages, 1979), *De laatste vrijheid* (The Last Freedom, 1995), *De deserteurs* (The Deserters, 2006), and a collection of short stories titled *De eeuwige hond* (The Eternal Dog, 2001).

‘Although *Double Play* is a first novel, it is the work of a mature writer – one who prepared himself for this sort of audience through life experience. [...] Beneath the ostensible goal of victory in dominoes, the four men are competing for individual power and for the loyalty of their lovers and wives.’
– *World Literature Today*

‘A cleverly constructed novel, full of sharp social observation and convincing characterisation, it tells us a good deal about Curaçao, about men, and about the darkness that lurks behind the seemingly innocent pastime of dominoes.’
– *Caribbean Beat*

Photo: Roeland Fossen

Tobias Schalken

Eldorado

The multifaceted fantasy world of a versatile artist

The beautiful, carefully compiled *Eldorado* showcases Tobias Schalken's diverse and original work in all its glory. Surprising surreal paintings provide moments of calm between short stories that are so different they could have been written by several authors. *Eldorado* is a clear testament to Schalken's unique imagination and craftsmanship.

Content-wise, this collection digs deeper than the experimental comics that first brought Schalken international recognition. These stories leave a lasting impression as the artist translates the theme of adolescent alienation into captivating literary comics. In *Thirteen*, for example, the images show only the settings of various teen hangouts, while the text describes their actions and feelings. *The Lights of Home* and the title story, *Eldorado*, are about girls who feel uncomfort-

able in their own families, both told in a style similar to that of Daniel Clowes or Adrian Tomine.

Schalken still poses compositional challenges for himself, but never without reason. In *That Bright Land*, a man is walking with his dog down deserted streets and across empty landscapes as if he is the last soul on earth. The wordless narrative reinforces the character's loneliness. Another textless story, *The Final Frontier*, playfully illustrates the fundamental inaccessibility of the other in the form of a loving embrace in the void.

In the collection's more mysterious comics, there is little to be drawn from the illustrations, and the imaginative text plays a more dominant role. From teenage angst to poetry, from artistic slapstick to bitter jokes about human naivety, *Eldorado* has it all.

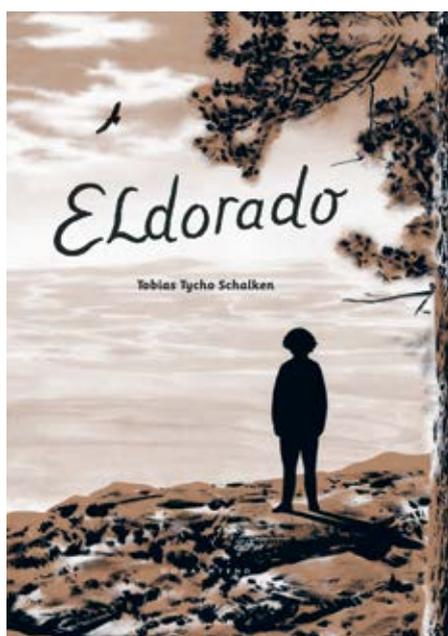


Publishing details

Eldorado (2018)
168 pp., 4,000 words

Rights

Oogachtend
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Tobias Tycho Schalken (b. 1972) is a versatile artist. In addition to sculptures, paintings, installations and illustrations, he has been drawing comics for more than twenty years. Together with Stefan van Dinther, he created the innovative comic anthology *Eiland* (Island), which caught the attention of *Wired Magazine* and brought the duo international acclaim. Solo, Schalken has published *Balthazar* (published in French by Les Éditions de la Cerise, 2012), but most of his comic strips to date have appeared in *Eiland* and in international anthologies such as *Lapin* or *Kramers Ergot*.

'Schalken's paintings are reminiscent of Caspar David Friedrich's desolate romanticism but also surrealistic. [...] *Eldorado* compels you to reflect on the world—and that's what counts.'

– *Cutting Edge*

'Schalken gets away with both literary voiceovers and wordless choreography on paper, stories without characters and classical narratives: each time the result is highly personal and perfectionistic.'

– *Knack*



We acted cheerfully; told jokes; but the moment was gone and after a while dad concentrated on the driving and I turned to watching the landscape flow by and occasionally twiddling with the radio buttons, hoping to find a good song.



It was already dark when we could finally see the city from the ring road. I could see my reflection in the car's window and beyond it, in the distance, the apartment buildings, their windows alight, like beacons from some different, more substantial world. And, for an instant, I could imagine what it could be like to be a ghost. To perpetually drift through stillness. To see the lights of home but to never actually reach them.

Felix Weber

The Fatal Blow

A troubled hero trapped in a triangle of competing interests

In his new thriller, Felix Weber introduces us to another troubled hero. The Second World War has left SS veteran Eden Lumas with blood on his hands, and now there's a battle raging inside of him. He tries to make things right, to do good, but he cannot escape the stains of his past.

After volunteering for the German army, Lumas was sent to the Russian front, where he was involved in a mass execution. While the massacre was underway, he discovered a woman and child hiding under the floor of a barn. He gives them food and water but gets caught. As a result, he is subjected to severe torture, which, in addition to the memories of the brutal executions, traumatizes him for the rest of his life.

After the German defeat, Lumas has one goal in mind: to take revenge on Julius and Erna Liedtke, the couple responsible for his torture and the sadistic slaughter of countless Jews.

Lumas's dark history forces him to leave Europe. He manages to escape via Switzerland to Argentina, where he

is by no means the only person running from the past. Have the Liedtkes fled to Argentina as well? In the German enclaves in and around Buenos Aires, the Third Reich's ideals live on. Lumas finds work at a company that delivers post and food to Nazis in hiding. He also picks up a job on the side taking care of the disabled Sophie Denrée. He ends up falling for the idealistic young woman but knows that he has to keep his sinister past a secret or risk losing her forever. In Argentina, however, the war isn't over. A Jewish group is hunting down war criminals and blackmails Lumas to learn more about the German network. Lumas finds himself trapped in a triangle of competing interests, and the story eventually culminates into a blood-curling denouement.

Supporting characters, such as the war criminals Bormann and Eichmann, and interwoven historical facts, like Juan Peron's ambivalent attitude towards the Jews and Nazis, bring depth to Weber's smoothly written thriller. *The Fatal Blow* can certainly stand up next to the work of Philip Kerr or John Le Carré.



Publishing details

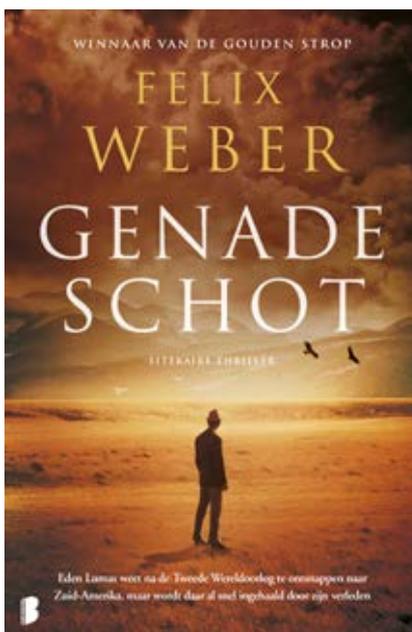
Genadeschot (2018)
368 pp., 113.000 words

Publisher

De Boekerij
Maaik le Noble
mlenoble@meulenhoffboekerij.nl

Rights

2 Seas Agency
Marleen Seegers
marleen.seegers@2seasagency.com



Felix Weber is the pseudonym of well-established thriller writer Gauke Andriessse (b. 1959). *Unto Dust* earned him his second Gouden Strop Award for crime fiction, having won under his own name in 2011 with *De handen van Kalman Teller* (The Hands of Kalman Teller). Adopting a new pen name is indicative of Andriessse's urge to take his writing in a new direction.

'Weber isn't skating on thin ice with this book. The authenticity leaps off the page, making it a realistic representation of the spirit of the times during and after the Second World War.'
– *Thrillzone*

'Weber has managed to place a very human main character in a world that is far from black and white.'
– *Thrillzone*

Photo: Bert Nienhuis

Also New & Noteworthy

Rob van Essen

The Good Son

De goede zoon (2018)

338 pp.

Two men on a quest for salvation and obscurity are assisted by ironic robots and chatty self-driving cars. This critically acclaimed novel is not only a compelling account of a journey through a labyrinth of strange events, it's also a surprising autobiographical tale of a son taking stock of his life after his mother's death.

Rights: Atlas Contact, Hayo Deinum
hdeinum@atlascontact.nl



'The protagonist's alienation has a profound effect on the reader of this rich, wonderful book.'

– *NRC Handelsblad*

'His work reminds us of that of Murakami and Paul Auster, and sometimes of James Bond with all its bizarre fantasies, conspiracies, self-running backpacks, sex-supplying cars and the all-levelling basic income. A novel of ideas, about life, about art. Very special.'

– *Trouw*

Bregje Hofstede

Drive

Drift (2018)

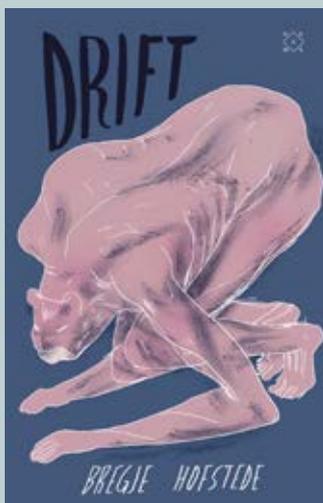
398 pp.

A young woman runs away from home in the dead of night, leaving behind her beloved. With nothing but her diary, she wanders the streets of Brussels. *Drive* is an outspoken story about how first love can be overwhelming to the point of oppression. And how every love story revolves around deception. 'I am that woman. That night is now. Everything before and after is a story.'

Publisher: Das Mag

Rights: Cossee, Stella Rieck
riek@cossee.com

Rights sold: Germany (Oktaven)



'A poignant, dramatic story, enriched with metaphors and symbolism, skillfully jumping in time between present and past, adding an enormous depth.'

– *Trouw*

'A beautiful though merciless retrospection of a marriage gone wrong.'

– *De Morgen*

Hendrik Groen

Live and Let Live

Leven en laten leven (2018)

228 pp.

After two successful novels about the life of an elderly man in a retirement home (*Attempts to Make Something of Life* and *As Long as There is Life* have been translated into more than 35 languages), Hendrik Groen has recently published a novel about a man in his fifties whose life leaves much to be desired: a failed marriage, no children, stuck in traffic every day to get to his boring job. His only pleasure is meeting up with friends in the evening for drinks. One day, he's fired from his job. However, this turns out to be a blessing because it opens the door for new opportunities.

Publisher: Meulenhoff

Rights: 2 Seas Agency,
Marleen Seegers
marleen.seegers@2seasagency.com

Rights sold: Estonia (Eesti Raamat),
Czech Republic (XYZ-Albatros), Germany (Piper),
Poland (Albatros), Slovakia (Albatros Media),
Italy (Longanesi).



'Once again, the observations of human behavior are as sharp as they are witty.'

– *Algemeen Dagblad*

'Good news for Hendrik Groen lovers: they will immediately recognize the tone of voice of the diaries.'

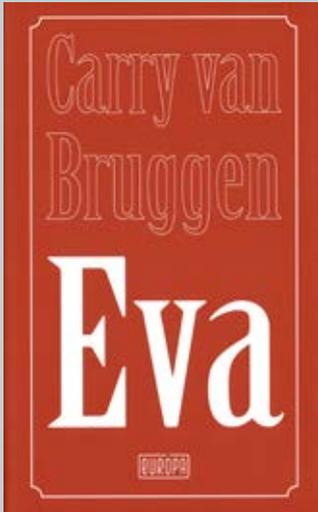
– *De Telegraaf*

'Ironic, full of inside jokes and recognizable small sufferings.'

– *De Limburger*

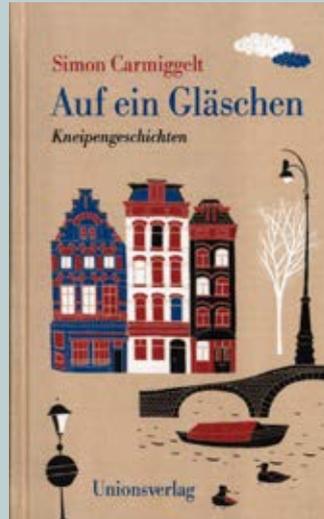
Recent Translations

This is a selection of recently published translations from the Dutch. For more information please go to our online database of translations en.vertalingendatabase.nl



Carry van Bruggen
Eva

Translated into Slovak by Adam Bžoch for Európa, 2018.



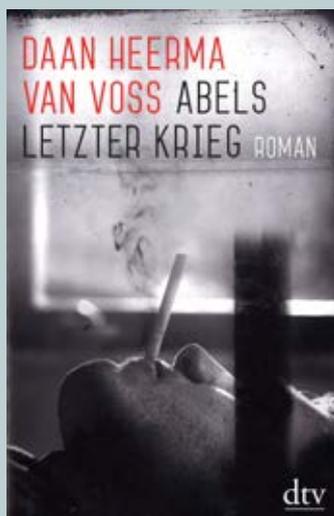
Simon Carmiggelt
Pub Stories

Translated into German by Gerd Busse and Ulrich Faure for Unionsverlag, 2019.



Marjolijn van Heemstra
And His Name Is

Translated into French by Emmanuèle Sandron for Les Escales, 2019.



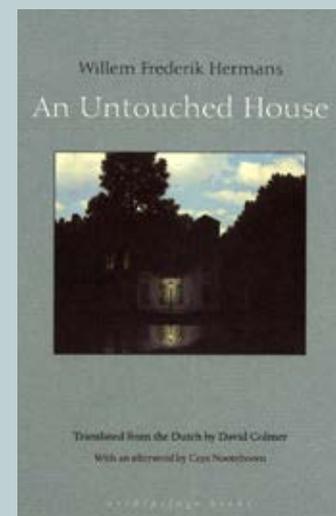
Daan Heerma van Voss
The Last War

Translated into German by Gregor Seferens for DTV, 2018.



Roman Helinski
The Waffle Factory

Translated into Czech by Blanka Juranová for Albatros, 2018.



Willem Frederik Hermans
An Untouched House

Translated into English by David Colmer for Archipelago Books, 2018.



Ernest van der Kwast
The Ice-Cream Makers

Translated into Chinese by Yuan Sun
for Shanghai Dook Publishing, 2018.



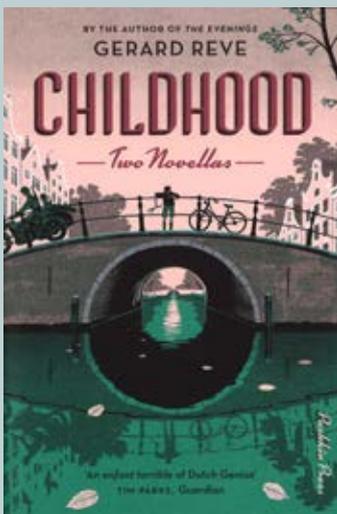
Multatuli
Max Havelaar

Translated into English by David McKay and
Ina Rilke for New York Review of Books, 2019.



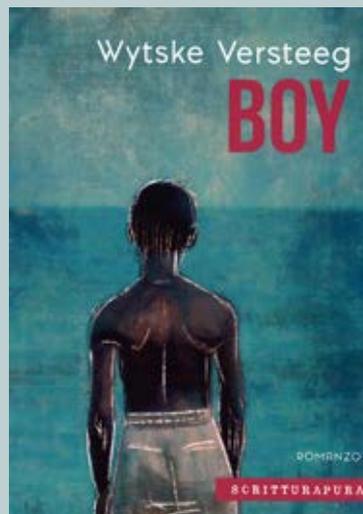
Hagar Peeters
Malva

Translated into Arabic by Lamia Makaddam
for Dar al Saqi, 2018.



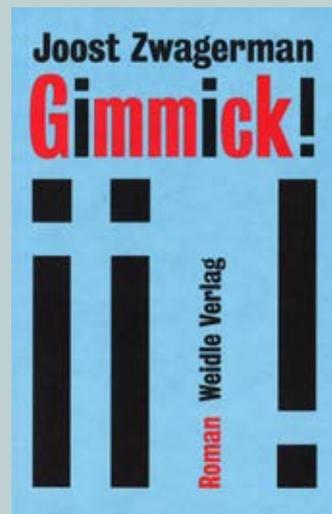
Gerard Reve
Childhood

Translated into English by Sam Garrett
for Pushkin Press, 2018.



Wytse Versteeg
Boy

Translated into Italian by Cecilia Casamonti
for Scritturapura, 2018.



Joost Zwagerman
Gimmick!

Translated into German by Gregor
Seferens for Weidle Verlag, 2018.

Ilja Leonard Pfeijffer
Grand Hotel Europa

Vonne van der Meer
The Findling

Martin Michael Driessen
My First Murder

Auke Hulst
Searchlight on the Lawn

Wanda Reisel
Adam

M.M. Schoenmakers
The Flight of Gilles Speksneijder

Frank Martinus Arion
Double Play

Tobias Schalken
Eldorado

Felix Weber
The Fatal Blow

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