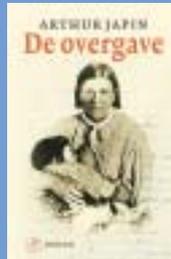
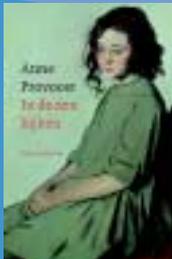


10 Books

from Holland and Flanders



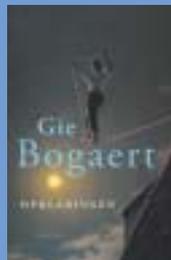
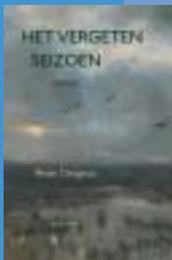
Anne Provoost

Arthur Japin



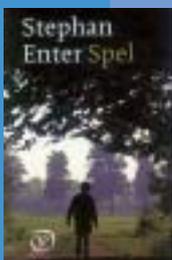
Philip Snijder

Tomas Lieske



Peter Delpout

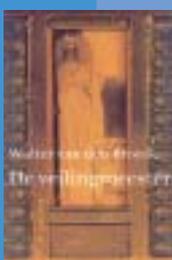
Gie Bogaert



Stephan Enter

Marjolijn Februari

Walter van den Broeck



P.F. Thomése

 Foundation for the
Production and
Translation of
Dutch Literature

Flemish
Literature
Fund



A little gem

Anne Provoost

Looking into the Sun



ANNE PROVOOST'S new novel, *In de zon kijken* (Looking into the Sun), is set on a ranch in Australia, home of eight-year-old Chloe Vanderweert, her father, mother and half-sister. Father Greg has set his heart on the production of lemon gin, which he wants his brother Brendan to produce. In Chapter One, however, Greg falls off his horse, is paralysed and, soon after, dies leaving Chloe behind with her mother Linda, who is slowly going blind. Before falling ill, her mother was a

photographer, and she now tries to battle her increasing blindness with photographs. Chloe's older half-sister can no longer stand the camera and the one seeing, critical eye her mother has left. 'Without your realising it, she fastens [the eye] on to you and it sticks to you like a burr wherever you go.' The girl flees to her father in the city. Provoost unfolds the sadness of those left behind on the ranch – linearly, but in fragments, as a child experiences and remembers.

The story is told from the point of view of young Chloe, who is alert and perceptive about their lives, often observing events with wonder, hinting at factual meaning and emotion. For instance, Chloe observes while understanding her mother's misery and fear. The structure of the story contributes to the evocative atmosphere. Greg's visit to his brother Brendan, which Chloe relates only late in the novel, puts a different perspective on events, starting with Greg's death. Overshadowed by a vague threat, the backdrop to the desperate mother's and naïve daughter's attempts to better understand each other is created by vivid descriptions of their surroundings, the climate, their way of life and other characters – often intriguingly unfathomable themselves. *In de zon kijken* leaves a profound impression.



photo Patrick de Spiegelaere

After her debut, *Mijn tante is een grindewal* (My Aunt is a Pilot Whale, 1990), Anne Provoost (b. 1964) made her name with *Vallen* (Falling), about a boy who falls under the spell of a neo-Nazi; *De roos en het zwijn* (The Rose and the Swine, 1997), a retelling of *The Beauty and the Beast* about the sexual coming of age of a young woman; and *De arkvaarders* (In the Shadow of the Ark, 2002), her own version of the Flood in which she questions issues like being chosen and justice. *Vallen* was translated into eleven languages. *De arkvaarders* was nominated for the IMPAC Dublin International Award 2006 and was successful in the United States.

Everything fits in this book that reverberates with sun, drought and danger. *HET PAROOL*

The most beautiful part of all is that implicit style, the careful suggestion. Provoost is again proving herself as a formidable director of the imagination. *DE VOLKSKRANT*

Looking into the Sun is a beautiful novel, in which the confusing thoughts and feelings of a sensitive girl are reliably drawn up. *ELSEVIER*

A lump in my throat. *DE GROENE AMSTERDAMMER*

PUBLISHING DETAILS

In de zon kijken (2007)
202 pp

RIGHTS

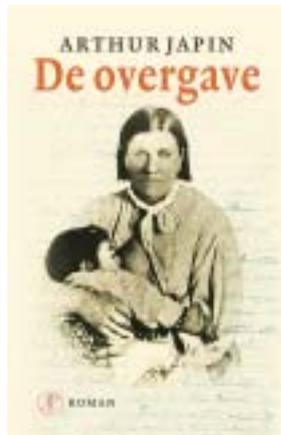
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SELECTED TITLES IN TRANSLATION

In the Shadow of the Ark (De arkvaarders). New York: Scholastic / Arthur A. Levine, 2004. Also in German (Altberliner, 2003), in Swedish (Opal, 2002).
Strandet (Mijn tante is een grindewal). Oslo: Aschehoug, 1992. Also in Danish (Høst & Søn, 1991), in German (Anrich, 1995), in English (Women's Press, 1994), in Portuguese (Afrontamento, 2002).
Le piège (Vallen). Paris: Seuil, 1997. Also in Swedish (Opal, 1995), in Norwegian (Aschehoug, 1996), in Danish (Høst & Søn, 1997), and many other languages.
Rosalenas Spiegel (De roos en het zwijn). Berlin; München: Altberliner, 2000. Also in Swedish (Opal, 1998), in Danish (Høst & Søn, 1998).



Heartbreaking, fascinating, convincing



Arthur Japin

Surrender

IN *DE OVERGAVE* (Surrender), Arthur Japin tells the heartbreaking, horrific and cruel story of Sallie ‘Granny’ Parker, a devout white colonist who moves further and further West with her husband, daughters and grandchildren in order to build a new life.

Arthur Japin has set his new novel in the ‘New World’ of early and mid-nineteenth century America, basing it on historical facts, moulded to his own ends.

The Parkers build their small settlement in Texas, in the middle of the rough, inhospitable terrain of the Comanche Indians.

One day they are brutally attacked by the Comanche – the men are hunted down, scalped and killed; a number of young mothers and their children are kidnapped, and Granny Parker is nailed to the ground with spears and raped several times. ‘That one day,’ is how *De overgave* starts. ‘People always ask about that one day. As if I didn’t live another one.’

Miraculously, Granny Parker survives ‘that one day’ and from then onwards, she devotes her life to finding her lost family, filled with hatred and bent on revenge. Amazingly, she manages to find all of them, although it doesn’t end well for the young women once reunited with Granny, having lived for years with the Indians. Divided by two cultures, despised by everyone, their heads full of terrible and confused memories, they either die or choose to die.

The girls’ sense of being torn links *De overgave* to *De zwarte met het witte hart* (The Two Hearts of Kwasi Boachi), Japin’s beautiful debut in which two young black Ashanti princes are given as a present to King William I, robbing them of their sense of belonging – neither in Holland nor in Africa, forever held captive by fate. Both novels are characterised by melancholy, written powerfully, poignantly. Japin is a master of creating an enchanting yet harrowing atmosphere.

In *De overgave* (Surrender) – the title says it all – Granny Parker is eventually forced to embrace that which she hates most, to show understanding, to offer forgiveness and accept her sad fate. ‘She’s tough as nails, that old one,’ people say. Granny Parker’s struggle with the demons of her past is long and hard, and ends in a true climax. But because she is not portrayed as soft and typically feminine, but as contrary, headstrong and tough, her story remains fascinating and Arthur Japin’s new novel convincing.

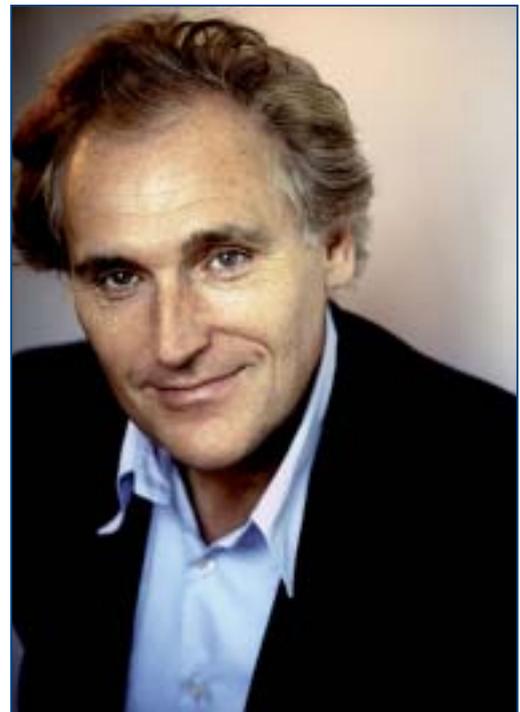


photo Corbino

Arthur Japin (b. 1956) has written for the stage as well as for radio and television. In 1997 he made his breakthrough with the novel *De zwarte met het witte hart* (The Two Hearts of Kwasi Boachi) which was awarded the Van der Hoogt Prize (1998) and the ECI Prize (1999). In 1998 Japin published the story collection, *De vierde wand* (The Fourth Wall), followed in 2002 by the novel *De droom van de leeuw* (Director’s Cut) and in 2003 by *Een schitterend gebrek* (In Lucia’s Eyes), which won him the Libris Literature Prize. Japin’s work has been translated into more than 15 languages.

A good read. VRIJ NEDERLAND

Arthur Japin’s latest novel is an old-fashioned western with scalp-hunting redskins and noble pioneers. What Japin adds to the history is psychology. [...] Surrender is packed with great one-liners. They are embedded in a story that is occasionally thrilling and far more often poignant. *NRC HANDELSBLAD*

PUBLISHING DETAILS

De overgave (2007)
302 pp

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SELECTED TITLES IN TRANSLATION

In Lucia’s Eyes. London: Chatto & Windus, 2005 / New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2005. Also in German (Schöffling & Co., 2006), in French (Héloïse d’Ormesson, 2006), in Spanish (Martínez Roca, 2006), and in many other languages.
The Two Hearts of Kwasi Boachi (De zwarte met het witte hart). London: Chatto & Windus, 2000. Also in German (Claassen, 2001), in French (Gallimard, 2000) and in many other languages.
Director’s Cut (De droom van de leeuw). London: Chatto & Windus, in prep. Also in Norwegian (Gyldendal, 2004).



A tender, sometimes hilarious story

Philip Snijder

Sunday Money



NOT FAR FROM Central Station in Amsterdam is Bickerseiland, a piece of reclaimed land, a lively harbour in the seventeenth century, but in the turbulent sixties a rundown working-class area, 'a forgotten, messy part of Amsterdam full of bad housing, rickety sheds and car wrecks.'

Every Sunday the eleven-year-old protagonist goes to collect his 'Sunday money' from an aunt and uncle who treat him as their favourite child. It's one of the deep rooted traditions of his large, typically Amsterdam working-

class family, with its countless uncles, aunts, cousins, grandfather and grandmother.

Snijder paints a beautiful, restrained picture of daily life on the island at the time through the eyes of an intelligent, sensitive boy who feels safe in the bosom of his family, while beginning to realise that he doesn't quite fit in.

Snijder vividly describes both everyday and special events, such as the parties brightened up by stubborn Uncle Freek, a musician and master of ceremonies. The boy wants to belong and plans to join in the dancing: 'It should have been a moment of penance, but at the same time a manifesto of great happiness, a joyful christening of my new self, an ecstatic immersion into my family.' There is only one person in his family who seems to really understand him - his father, who is from rural Groningen, 'the only wise man on the island.' He subtly resists his uneducated in-laws by 'defending everything which is jeered at on the island.'

Clearly and precisely, Snijder evokes a lost world with striking sights, sounds and smells. This slightly melancholy yet wholly unsentimental novel paints a touching picture of an Amsterdam family in the sixties, as well as an affectionate portrait of father and son.



photo Erik Pezarro

Philip Snijder (b. 1956) was born in Amsterdam, where he grew up in an old working-class area. He studied Italian and worked variously in a cleaning company, a bookshop, a youth hostel, a university, a café, and a cultural centre. He published a few partly fictionalised stories about his childhood in literary magazine *De Tweede Ronde*, which he has now turned into this debut novel, *Zondagsgeld* (Sunday Money).

A beautiful portrait of a poor working-class area.

NEDERLANDS DAGBLAD

Zondagsgeld contains many charming details about a sometimes wonderful yet always grubby working-class area in Amsterdam which has now, as such, ceased to exist.

LEEWARDER COURANT

PUBLISHING DETAILS

Zondagsgeld (2007)
158 pp

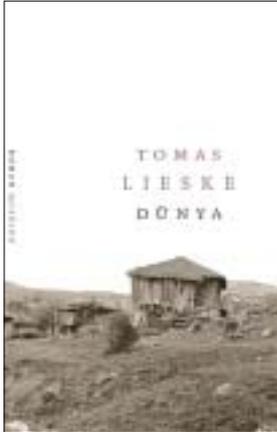
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RIGHTS SOLD

Germany (Claassen)

Vivid picture of a confused world



Tomas Lieske

Dünya

‘MY NOVELS always evolve in the same way: I wait until I have a subject, a theme that I’m passionate about, and then I find a suitable time and place for it,’ Tomas Lieske said in a recent interview. He is not a writer who likes to stay close

to home. *Dünya*, his latest novel, is set in Turkey shortly after the First World War. He has written about Turkey before, in his novel *Nachtkwartier* (Night Quarters), but not when it was poor and ruined, not at the time of the Armenian genocide – still a burning issue ninety years later.

The story consists of two parts: first we hear the monologue of Dünya Şuman, a widow from the rich, fashionable Beyoğlu quarter in Istanbul, who has been exiled to rural Turkey for stealing a bottle of perfume from a shop. She becomes housekeeper to two Dutchmen, Simon and Otto, who harbour a secret – they’re looking after a child, a young Armenian girl named Julia, whom they found in a war-torn area. After they fought with the Allies and became prisoners of war – the Netherlands was neutral during the First World War but volunteers fought in the British Army – they were ordered by the Turkish army to cross a devastated region to a deserted, apparently barren plain, to work on a large project commissioned by Atatürk; constructing an airship. At the same time, they have to bring up the girl, who is led to believe she is the daughter of Simon and a young Turkish woman who died. *Dünya* helps them and develops such a strong bond with the child that she sets aside her own desires – to return to the civilised world, Istanbul in particular – and does all she can to protect Julia and conceal the secret of her origin.

With a great sense of atmosphere, with detail and historical facts, Lieske paints a vivid picture of a desolate, confused world at a politically sensitive time in which there is room for love and ideals. In blurring the boundaries between fact and fiction – the accident with the Hindenburg plays a role – Lieske persuades the reader to believe in the authenticity of his characters and his novel, to be gripped, right to the thrilling dénouement.



photo Leo van der Noort

Tomas Lieske (b. 1943) writes poetry, prose and essays. His debut, *De ijsgeneraals* (The Ice Generals, 1987), a collection of poetry, was followed by *Een tijger onderweg* (A Tiger Underway, 1989). He received the Geertjan Lubberhuizen Prize for his prose debut, *Oorlogstuinen* (War Gardens, 1992). His novels *Nachtkwartier* (Night Quarters, 1995) and *Gran Café Boulevard* (2003) were nominated for the Libris Literature Prize, an award he received for his novel *Franklin* (2001). 2006 saw the publication of Lieske’s widely praised poetry collection *Hoe je geliefde te herkennen* (How to Recognise Your Beloved), for which he received the prestigious VSB Poetry Prize.

There is a very good chance that Lieske will again be nominated for the Libris Literature Prize.

NRC HANDELSBLAD

It is precisely here that Lieske’s greatest literary strength resides: the telling of stories through suggestive imagery.

VRIJ NEDERLAND

PUBLISHING DETAILS

Dünya (2007)
341 pp

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SELECTED TITLES IN TRANSLATION

Gran Café Boulevard (Gran Café Boulevard). Berlin: Kiepenheuer, 2005 / Aufbau Taschenbuch, 2007.
Franklin (Franklin). Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 2004
(Mijn soevereine liefde) (Mijn soevereine liefde). Berlin: Aufbau, in prep. Also in French (Seuil, in prep.), and Czech (Lidové Noviny, in prep.).
Le petit-fils de Dieu en personne (Gods eigen kleinzoon). Strasbourg: Impasses de l’encre, 2006



Torn between knowledge and superstition

Peter Delpout

The Forgotten Season



THIS FIRST NOVEL by much-praised director and filmmaker Peter Delpout is set in the mid-nineteenth century. Every week, Lidia, a sick child in a remote country village, receives the stigmata; wounds appearing on her hands and feet like those of Christ on the cross. A small but devout band of believers refuse to eat, among other things, since they hope that through the girl's ecstasy they can share the miraculous manifestations of the Messiah, who would seem to be revealing himself to the village through Lidia.

Father Peters, a priest at the height of his career, is sent by the archbishop to investigate. Are the stigmata a miracle, or a hoax? He finds himself up against the progressive Dr Wessels, an unbeliever who dismisses everything out of hand as hysteria.

Peters is an aesthete who feels at home in the city of Rome, a lover of art and literature, who does not shrink even from books on the Index: 'nothing is so agreeable as a crisply formulated fallacy'. He is a child of the nineteenth century, the century of Darwin, the century in which God is declared dead not only by Nietzsche but by many scientists, and the supposed historicity of the Bible is investigated for the first time. Peters realises that for the people flocking around Lidia, faith is no more than a straw to cling to, and yet he is deeply affected by Lidia's suffering.

As he attempts to solve the case his problems mount: Wessels wants Lidia to undergo an operation, his own housekeeper becomes increasingly meddlesome, and her son, the village idiot, seems Peters' only ally in the hostile village community. When the villagers come to believe the idiot has tried to molest Lidia, the villagers exact a terrible vengeance on him, but as if they are actually taking revenge on Peters himself.

Delpout evokes naturally and realistically the atmosphere of a period that, despite being so recent, can feel medieval. At the end of the book when he hears a cock crow for the third time, the priest knows that ultimately he must face defeat. *The Forgotten Season* is a gripping, atmospheric novel about a time closer to our own than we should like to think.



photo Roeland Fossen

Peter Delpout (b. 1956) made the 1998 film *Felice... Felice...*, which opened that year's International Film Festival Rotterdam and was chosen as best Dutch feature film. In the same year, his first book was published, a novella of the same name. In 1999, to accompany the first screening of *Diva Dolorosa*, a compilation film about Italian film divas of 1913–20, he published the travel book *Diva Dolorosa. Journey to the End of the Century*. He has made several internationally released documentaries, including *In Loving Memory* (2001) about the British tendency to commemorate people's lives with public benches. Delpout is also an avid cyclist; he believes there is no travel experience comparable to seeing the landscape from a bicycle. In 2003 he published a book on the subject: *The Great Bend. A Brief Philosophy of Cycling*.

Delightful and horrifying. [...] The characters are developed consistently and with great acuity, the dialogue is sharp and funny and the descriptions of nature evocative. [...] Delpout's first-born is enchanting. DE VOLKSKRANT

Delpout excels at detailed descriptions of the still inhospitable nineteenth-century Dutch landscape and the simple souls who inhabit it. TROUW

Peters is portrayed convincingly and movingly as a man torn between knowledge and superstition, between delusion and the real world. Exactly as befits a nineteenth-century character.

NRC HANDELSBLAD

PUBLISHING DETAILS

Het vergeten seizoen (2007)
254 pp

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Wonderfully subtle and evocative

Gie Bogaert

Sunny Spells



OPKLARINGEN (Sunny Spells) is Gie Bogaert's best novel yet. The protagonist, Rob, a compiler of hotel guide-books has invited his twenty-two-year-old daughter on a fact-finding mission on hotels in Germany, Italy and France. She had stopped living with him after the death of her mother fourteen years previously, as a result of an accident that he had caused in his bewilderment at hearing she no longer loved him. His attempts at restoring contact and familiarity with his daughter are constantly thwarted

by her aloofness, even rancour.

Gie Bogaert has excelled himself in creating the atmosphere of the story, allowing charged descriptions of the various places where father and daughter stay, to express the emotions that are involved. Rob's memories of his unhappy life after the death of his wife are interspersed – occasional encounters with his daughter at family gatherings, where it became clear that she was drifting further and further away from him, and his tentative new relationship, which had no chance of success. Tragically, the more we learn about Rob's past, the more hope there is for new closeness with his daughter, and yet the more impossible this seems.

Opklaringen evolves into silent musings about the meaning and workings of our memory, about loss and mortality, melancholy and consolation, disappointments in life, and the limited feasibility of love in every shape or form: whether between men and women, parents and children, or acquaintances and strangers. *Opklaringen* is a novel that exudes compact and solemn emotional strength.

Gie Bogaert's prose is wonderfully subtle and evocative. Time and again he creates a unique atmosphere, sometimes by means of his characters, but more often through the intense intimacy of his prose, as he maps the complexity of the emotions brought by attachment, love and longing.

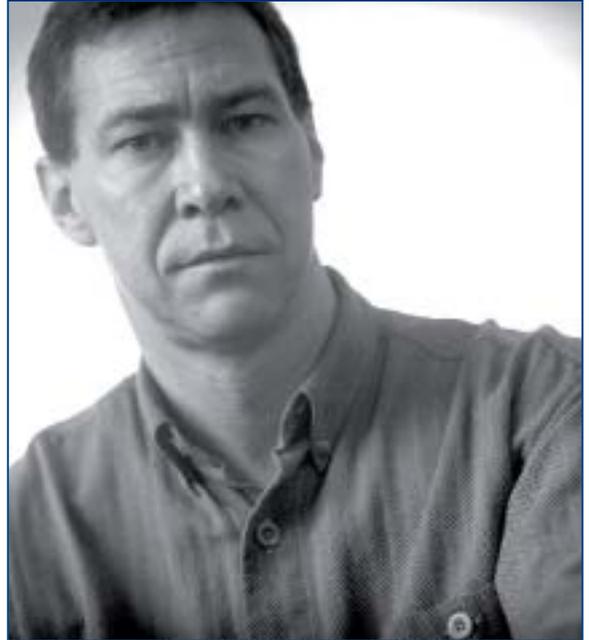


photo David Samyn

Gie Bogaert (b. 1958) is a Germanist and teaches prose at the SchrijversAcademie (Writers' Academy) in Antwerp. His debut, *Wat kwaad doen de tovenaars?* (What Harm do the Magicians? 1990), was followed by *Keizer Doede* (Emperor Doede, 1992) and *Wat we met de liefde doen* (What We Do with Love, 1995). After *De liefdeverzamelaar* (The Love Collector, 1998) and *Nathan Meyer, vrouwenwandelaar* (Nathan Meyer, Women Walker, 2000) came the melancholic *Hemelstof* (Heavenly Dust, 2004) about the little luck a series of characters manages to extract from life.

Gie Bogaert writes prose of staggering beauty.

RADIO NEDERLAND WERELDOMROEP

Gie Bogaert is the most lyrical of Flemish authors [...]

A dazzling experience.

KNACK

Gie Bogaert rates as a secret tip for literary connoisseurs.

VRIJ NEDERLAND

PUBLISHING DETAILS

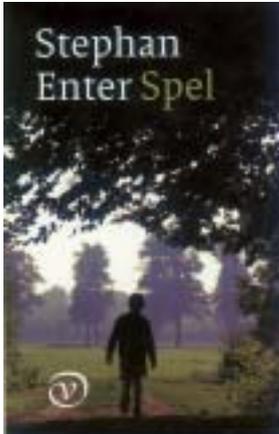
Opklaringen (2007)
188 pp

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Creating maximum effect with minimal means



Stephan Enter

Game

STEPHAN ENTER is a writer who takes time to describe the atmosphere, milieu and nature of his characters sensitively and in great detail. As with his previous two novels, this new one is characterised not by loud street noises or an exciting urban life of drink and drugs, but by a refined, touching,

sometimes happy, sometimes sad atmosphere in which he describes a number of scenes from the childhood of an intelligent village boy.

Norbert Vijgh is shy and self-conscious, wary and sensitive, perhaps oversensitive, to everything happening around him. Norbert is a familiar type in Dutch literature: Stephan Enter belongs to the same clear, realistic tradition of writers like Vestdijk, Reve and Rosenboom.

Norbert Vijgh's youth is unexceptional; he grows up from boy to teenager to young man in a life marked by nothing more than ripples. But still waters can run deep and dark. The real world intrudes constantly into Norbert's safe inner world dominated as it is by reveries and fantasy. In the first chapter, 'Bird Language', Norbert plays 'Indians' in the woods near his native village and for the first time in his life meets a black man. To his excitement and surprise, they become friends. Sadly 'Soufi-Ali' leaves the village and the friendship ends.

This ennobling pattern recurs in every chapter, each of which is a well-plotted short story in its own right, and in each of which a game is played. In effect, Norbert is forced to play a game with the world outside; he plays in earnest but doesn't always 'win'. Becoming aware of adult reality often means losing the naïve or audacious boy-thoughts that he loves.

On the threshold of adulthood, Norbert falls from his father's faith, falls in love and, for the first time, makes love to a girl. To his horror, he sees pimples appear on his schoolfriends' faces, he is humiliated by a group of gangling youths and travels abroad by train for the first time – all crucial initiation rites.

In the last chapter, 'Scrabble', in which Norbert goes on holiday in Switzerland with his grandmother, Enter once again makes it clear what this book is about, creating maximum effect with minimal means. By painting an affectionate portrait of the frail 'grandma' through the eyes of her nearly grown-up, loving grandson, he impresses and moves the reader. Stephan Enter knows how to play the game, poignantly and subtly.



photo Friso Keuris

Stephan Enter's debut, a collection of short stories entitled *Winterhanden* (Chilblained Hands), published in 1999, was well received and nominated for the Libris Literature Prize 2000. His first novel, *Lichtjaren* (Light Years), published in 2004, was also nominated for the Libris Prize. Both books were nominated for the Gerard Walschap Prize. Enter's second novel, *Spel* (Game), appeared in April 2007.

Spel [Game] is beautiful, tender, impressive. Stephan Enter evokes a childhood doomed to disappear, but continuing to exist in a natural, gradual, increasingly poignant way.

JAN SIEBELINK

Enter has composed the eleven chapters of his novel in such a way that each forms a masterfully complete story. [...] Enter manages to use language as a key to a different reality.

HET PAROOL

Evocative and extremely beautiful writing.

DE GROENE AMSTERDAMMER

An exceptional novel. DE VOLKSKRANT

Stephan Enter's new novel touches upon a fundamental theme in literature: where do we find something to hold on to in life and where do we dare to live without it? NRC HANDELSBLAD

PUBLISHING DETAILS

Spel (2007)
269 pp

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Brilliant indictment of the ‘backyard network’



Marjolijn Februari The Literary Circle

THIRTY-YEAR-OLD Theresa Pellikaan is typical of the wealthy middle classes – with her respectable background, successful husband and house in an apparently sleepy, yet powerful, rich village. ‘Money is what you have, it isn’t for talking about,’ she feels, and art is a spiritual occupation.

Her former schoolmate Ruth Ackermann, brought up in the same village, has made waves with an international bestseller, yet none of the villagers ever mention her achievement, not even the literary circle of Theresa’s father, famous civil rights scholar Randolph Pellikaan. The circle isn’t interested: they only read ‘literature’.

But there’s a dark secret in the village. Slowly it emerges that the bestselling author’s father, a former member of the literary circle, was the deputy director of a company which supplied contaminated glycerine to Haiti. Not knowing what to do with the contaminated consignment, he had turned to his high-placed friends for advice – thereby making them accomplices.

Februari brings to light a shameful episode in Dutch history. In the nineties the Alphen company, Vos BV, deliberately supplied heavily contaminated glycerine to Haiti, which was then used in cough syrup, resulting in the death of seventy children and leaving dozens handicapped. The case was settled, and even though the Public Prosecutor’s decision not to prosecute has been challenged several times, it has never been reopened.

In *De literaire kring* (The Literary Circle) Februari paints a dark picture of the right-minded class society in the Netherlands in which such things can happen. It is an indictment of the ‘backyard network’ where there’s always someone whose backyard borders on yours who can help. ‘You don’t have principles, you have a network,’ one of Februari’s characters says to Randolph.

This novel is about looking away, ‘Not doing your job, keeping your mouth shut, looking the other way, referring to regulations you know are wrong, hiding behind superiors whom you know don’t give a shit about the world.’

A modern social critique, *De literaire kring* is a fluent novel full of irony, playing masterfully with the conventions of chicklit and women’s thrillers. Februari draws on a variety of sources, from the Oprah Winfrey Show to works by Aristophanes. Ironically, the novel has appeared on countless reading lists of reading clubs in rich Dutch villages.

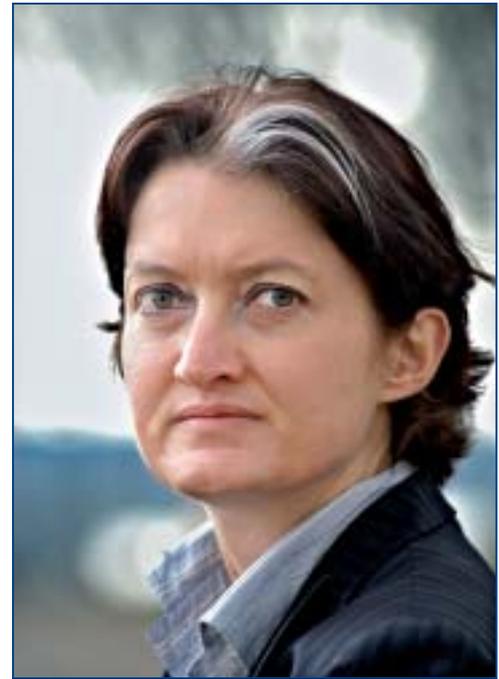


photo Klaas Koppe

Marjolijn Februari (b. 1963) studied Art History, Philosophy and Law. She was awarded her doctorate for a thesis on the clash of economics and ethics. Her debut novel, *De zonen van het uitzicht* (The Sons of the View), appeared in 1989. *De literaire kring* (The Literary Circle), which is more traditional in structure, is her second novel. She has also published several collections of essays and, since 1999, has been writing a Saturday column for *de Volkskrant*, often on the subject of justice and morality.

The combination of erudition and breeziness makes The Literary Circle an extremely enjoyable book. Despite the seriousness of the subject, it is light in tone, refined in its humour.

DE VOLKSKRANT

Februari conjures up an intriguing world, which she immediately confronts with a parody. That’s what’s called the absolute grip of a consummate novelist.

VRIJ NEDERLAND

PUBLISHING DETAILS

De literaire kring (2007)
254 pp

RIGHTS

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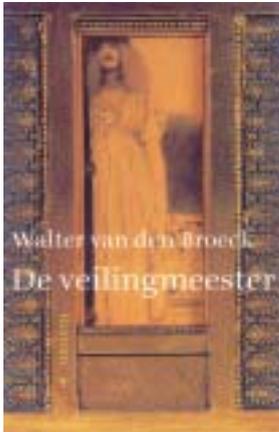
Horisontens zoner (De zonen van het uitzicht).
København: Politisk Revy, 1993.



Full of unexpected twists

Walter van den Broeck

The Auctioneer



ONE STRIKING FACTOR OF Walter van den Broeck is that he often appears as a character in his own novels. In his latest, *De veilingmeester* (The Auctioneer), he shows his lighter side, being visited by Bo van Dorselaer who asks him to write about his crazy and incredible story.

Bo van Dorselaer is an auctioneer asked to sell the contents of a house by a young woman to whom he is immediately attracted. Inside the house he finds three

hundred copies of *The Heiress*, written by the unknown Walda van den Broegel; they contain a code, the key to a great secret. In his dogged pursuit of the remaining copies that were printed Bo forces up the price, but he is prepared to risk his business, and even his marriage for the secret. The dénouement is stunning: the young woman, with whom Bo has fathered a child, is the natural daughter of the supposedly childless King Baudouin of Belgium. What does a writer do with a story like that?

As is often the case, Van den Broeck plays ironically with reality, using references to his earlier work, revelations about the Belgian royal family and pure fiction, to create a popular bibliographic thriller. In exposing both the technique and impact of novels, Van den Broeck subtly criticises the craft of writing. *De veilingmeester* is a clever, compelling novel, full of unexpected twists that show the fun that the author had in writing it.

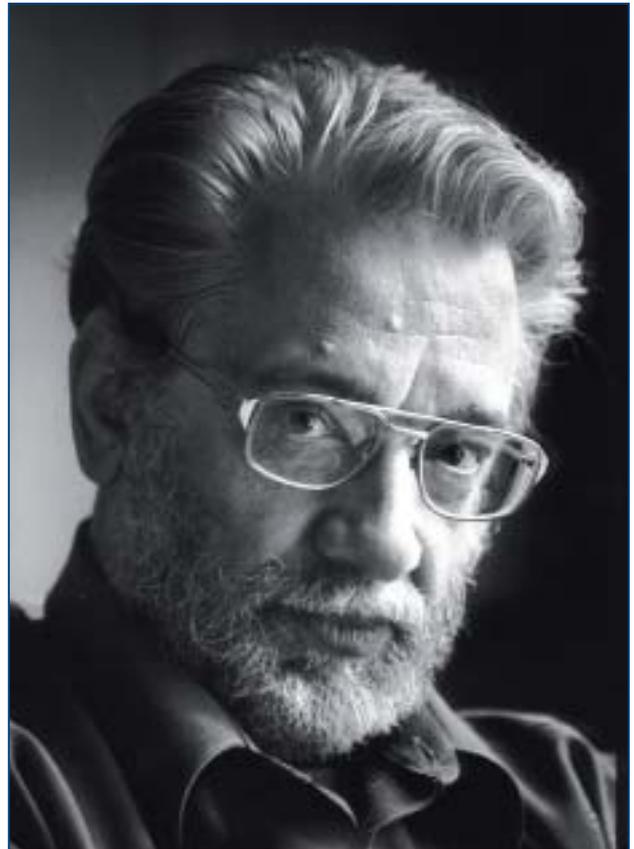


photo Patrick de Spiegelaere

The 1967 debut of Walter van den Broeck (b. 1941), *De troonopvolger* (The Heiress), was a Freudian novel about a young writer wanting to escape his father's authority. Van den Broeck's breakthrough came with *Brief aan Boudewijn* (Letter to Baudouin, 1980), in which he shows the Belgian king round the working class area and house in which he grew up. The author's fictional counter visit to the royal palace in Laken (Brussels) evolved into Van den Broeck's masterpiece *Het beleg van Laken* (The Siege of Laken, published in four parts from 1985, collected in 1999). The personal theme recurs in novels like *Verdwaalde post* (Lost Mail, 1998), *Een lichtgevoelige jongen* (A Sensitive Boy, 2001) and *De beiaard en de dove man* (The Carillonneur and the Deaf Man, 2004).

Van den Broeck continues to come up with original, glittering stories with the structure of reinforced concrete.

VTM

PUBLISHING DETAILS

De veilingmeester (2007)
367 pp

RIGHTS

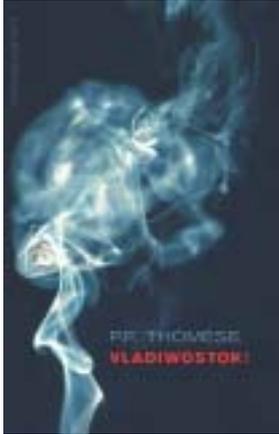
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OTHER TITLES IN TRANSLATION

Lettre à Baudouin (Brief aan Boudewijn). Bruxelles: Editions Labor, 1984
Sprdacni pozdravi iz Balena (Groenten uit Balen). Novi Sad: Prometej, 1996
[Amanda] (Amanda en de widowmaker). Beograd: NOVA, 1994



Razor-sharp political satire



P.F. Thomése Vladivostok!

P. F. THOMÉSE broke through internationally in 2003 with *Schaduwkind* (Shadow Child), the heartbreaking story of the death of his newborn daughter, Isa. The contrast with his most recent novel couldn't be greater: *Vladivostok!*

is political satire about power shifting to the media, which, through polls and spin-doctored news, manipulates public opinion. Thomése has used pornography as his vehicle, reinstating this genre as the critical instrument it was originally in the eighteenth century. This vision combines power and porn, both as sinister as they are banal.

The main character is Fons Nieuwenhuijs, a communications consultant who helps his childhood friend, Hans Portielje – part-time senior lecturer and Africa expert – prepare for a top position in politics. Nieuwenhuijs has to guide him into Parliament and prepare him to be a Minister. Having worked for a progressive weekly in the past, both arrivés now present themselves as thoroughly cynical alpha males who define their existence entirely in terms of their one-dimensional sexual urges.

Since Martin Amis' *Money* (1985) it has been rare for so much stylistic ingenuity to have been put into blatant sexism: 'She could silently undress and offer herself to him as an object. Take me. So easy, he could do anything with her without her obstructing him. The nice thing about her was that he had stopped seeing her as a person a long time ago. She was but wrapping for his dick, a piece of female wetness around it which always fitted.' Both protagonists also use racist language without shame. Still, it is not Portielje's pompous, conceited opinions which bring about his ruin after a failed television appearance. Thomése has a better fate in store for Nieuwenhuijs. He comes to realise that he can actually mean something to someone. *Vladivostok!* is a razor-sharp, funny and controversial novel about our media-dominated democracy in which everything is superficial and power-madness translates literally into pornography.

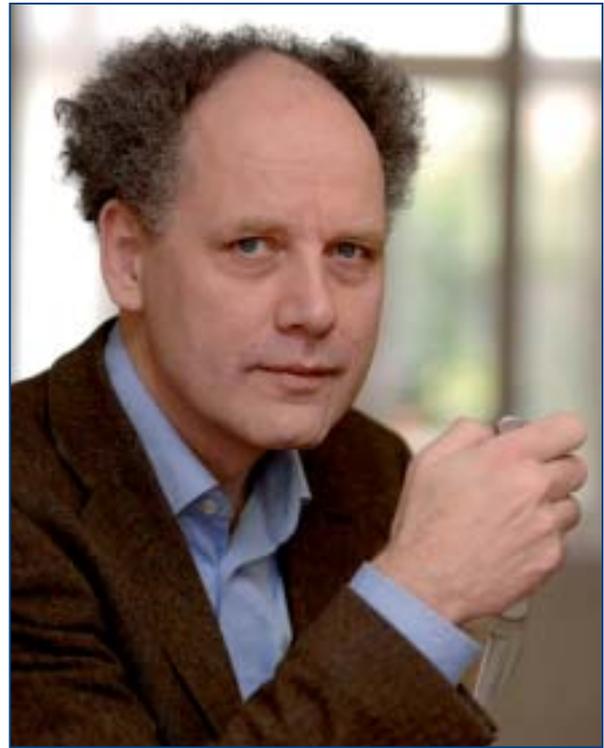


photo Ronald Hoeben

P.F. Thomése (b. 1958) won the AKO Literature Prize with his first book, *Zuidland* (South Land), a collection of short stories, in 1991. The novels *Heldenjaren* (Heroic Years, 1994) and *Het zesde bedrijf* (The Sixth Act, 1999) and his collection of short stories, *Haagse liefde & De vieze engel* (Love in The Hague & The Dirty Angel, 1994), were published subsequently. Thomése made his international breakthrough with the memoir *Schaduwkind* (Shadow Child, 2003). Seventy thousand copies of the book were sold in the Netherlands, and the book was also well-received abroad where it was published in 12 languages.

A pre-emptive strike by an author who decided he did not want to use subtle means and veiled allusions to broadcast his message about an increasing absence of integrity.

DE GROENE AMSTERDAMMER

Thomése is once more in truly great form. He writes magnificent, euphoria-inducing prose, witty, with tremendous pace to it. [...] At work here is a writer who has taken the form and content of his novel to their ultimate conclusions.

HET PAROOL

PUBLISHING DETAILS

Vladivostok (2007)
295 pp

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OTHER TITLES IN TRANSLATION

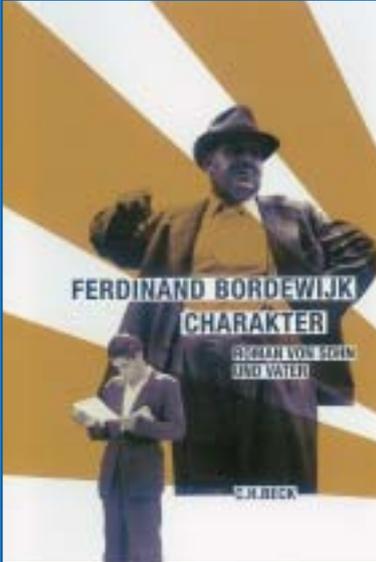
Shadow Child (Schaduwkind). London: Bloomsbury, 2005 / New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005. Also in French (Actes Sud, 2004), in German (Berlin Verlag, 2004), in Spanish (Lumen, 2005) and in many other languages.

Der sechste Akt (Het zesde bedrijf). Leipzig: Kiepenheuer, 1999
Heldenjahre (Heldenjaren). Köln; Basel: Bruckner & Thünker, 1995
Über der Erde (Zuidland). Köln: Bruckner & Thünker, 1993. Also in Serbian (Prometej, 1994)



Recent publications

Ferdinand Bordewijk
Charakter



In July, 68 years after it was first published, C.H. Beck published the new German translation of *Karakter* by Ferdinand Bordewijk. In the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* reviewer Dorothea Dieckmann praised the 'excellent' translation by Marlene Müller-Haas and commented that *Charakter. Roman von Sohn und Vater* still reads like a 'hochmodernen Roman'. The classic was previously translated into English (by E.M. Prince and others, as *Character*, in 1966 and reprinted in 1990 and 1999), Slovak (by Adam Bzoch, Europa, 2003, as *Román o synovi a otcovi*) and Norwegian (by Egil Rasmussen, Solum, 2006, as *Karakter*). A Swedish translation by Urban Lindström, published by Augusti, is due out soon, and, at a future date, one in Hungarian, published by Gondolat.

Kader Abdolah

Huset ved moskeen

(The House of the Mosque)

Translated into Norwegian by Guro Dimmen for Gyldendal

Abdelkader Benali

La vedova spagnola

(Let Tomorrow Be Fine)

Translated into Italian by Claudia Di Palermo for Fazi

Jan Brokken

Mein kleiner Wahnsinn

(Mijn kleine waanzin)

Translated into German by Helga van Beuningen for Luchterhand

Paul Claes

[Syn Pantery]

(The Son of the Panther)

Translated into Russian by Dimitri Silvestrov for Azbuka

Willem Elsschot

Poskramiacz Lwów

(Tsjip; The Lion-Tamer)

Translated into Polish by Zofia Klimaszewska for P.I.W.

Maarten 't Hart

Der Psalmenstreit

(Psalms and Riots)

Translated into German by Gregor Seferens for Piper

Willem Frederik Hermans

Soha többé alvás

(Beyond Sleep)

Translated into Hungarian by Krisztina Törö for Jelenkor

Marek van der Jagt

[Ha-sipur shel hakrachat sheli]

(The Story of my Baldness)

Translated into Hebrew by Irit Varsano for Babel

Geert Kimpen

Der Kabbalist

(The Kabbalist)

Translated into German by Hildegard Höhr for Goldmann

Ariëlla Kornmehl

The Butterfly Month

(De vlindermaand)

Translated into English by Faith Hunter for Scribe

Marga Minco

La hierba amarga

(Bitter Herbs)

Translated into Spanish by Julio Grande Morales for Libros del Asteroide

Multatuli

Max Havelaar

(Max Havelaar)

Translated into Italian by Piero Bernardini Marzolla for Iperborea

Joseph Pearce

Graines de pavot

(Maanzaad)

Translated into French by Annie Kroon for Actes Sud

Jan Siebelink

Im Garten des Vaters

(Kneeling on a Bed of Violets)

Translated into German by Bettina Bach for Arche

Pieter Waterdrinker

Die Hochzeit von Zandvoort

(A German Wedding)

Translated into German by Rainer Kersten for Aufbau

Most of these books were covered previously in our 10 Books brochures.

For a complete list of translations of Dutch fiction, please consult our website: www.nlpvf.nl/translations

10 BOOKS FROM HOLLAND AND FLANDERS

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