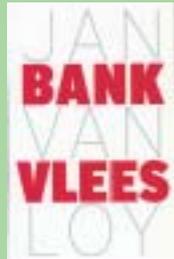


10 Books

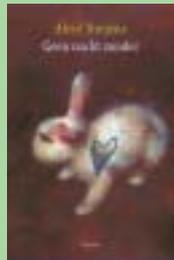
from Holland and Flanders



Jan Van Loy



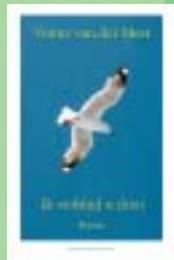
Cees Nooteboom



Aleid Truijens



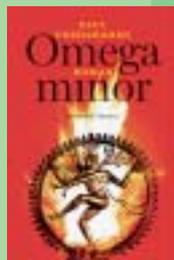
Maarten 't Hart



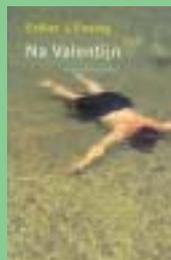
Vonne van der Meer



Kees van Beijnum



Paul Verhaeghen



Esther J. Ending



Gerrit Krol



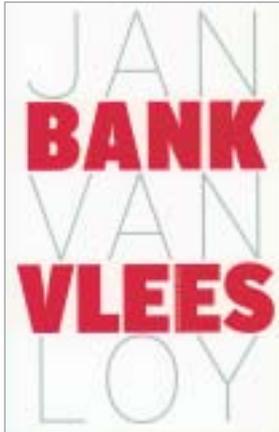
Guido van Heulendonk



FOUNDATION FOR
THE PRODUCTION AND
TRANSLATION OF
DUTCH LITERATURE



A hilarious picaresque debut



Jan Van Loy

Scraps

THE NARRATOR IN *SCRAPS* plays second fiddle to his 'principled' pal Celis who has made a conscious decision to become a social security scrounger. The two meet when they attempt to organise a 'better' food distribution for the homeless, but thanks to the liberal amounts of wine involved, this inevitable gets completely out of hand. Full of

conviction, they then throw themselves into a free and easy existence in which they try to take advantage of every opportunity that comes their way: they pimp for a while, they team up with a female pick-pocket, they scabble together enough money to live the highlife during a seaside holiday in Italy, and they stay in the luxurious villa of the parents of a student they picked up out of the gutter. Whichever avenue they explore, they never have any difficulty finding female company, although Celis does not always feel comfortable about this.

This freebooter existence continues until it is brought to an end by an unfortunate incident when they try to squat in a house that turns out to be still inhabited. The narrator's hospitalisation in a psychiatric centre will mark a turning point in his convictions. When he subsequently chooses a mainstream existence, with a wife and a job in which he has to kowtow to a boss, his already fading friendship with Celis takes a spiteful and menacing turn. During the ultimate confrontation, it turns out that both of them have doubts about their different choices.

'Bankvlees' is another word for butcher's scraps: the fatty, sinewy trimmings Celis incorporates into his meals. This is precisely how he sees himself and his friend, as the scraps of society. However, the narrator is not so categorical in his rejection of mainstream life, even if he finds it insipid and predictable. He concludes that as long as he has freedom of choice, his freedom is guaranteed. With its laconic tone and adventurous episodic plot, *Scraps* reads like a polished picaresque novel, nevertheless, at the same time it also poses pertinent questions regarding the seemingly obvious choices people make between sticking to their principles and selling out, between freedom and self-denial.

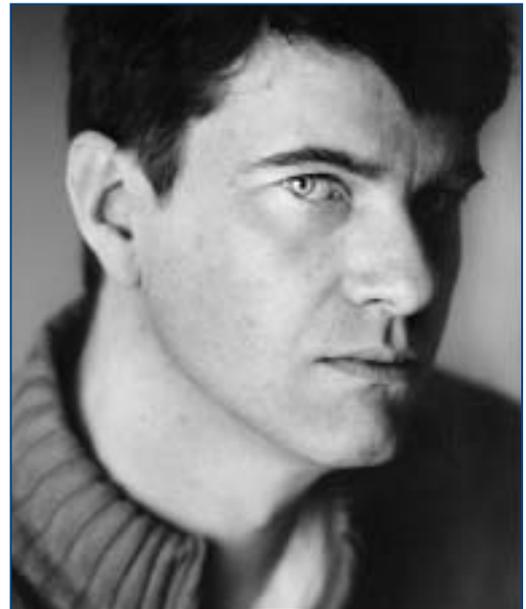


photo Stephan Vanfleteren

Jan Van Loy (1964) has published stories in literary magazines, among them the prestigious *Dietsche Warande & Belfort*. His story *De hel van Jan Foster* ('Jan Foster's hell') was awarded the Rabobank Spring Prize 2001. He was relatively little known until the publication of his debut novel *Bankvlees* ('Scraps', 2004). This was widely reviewed and immediately won him widespread recognition as an exceptionally fluent writer with a distinctive slant on life.

A debutant who is here to stay: Jan van Loy's Scraps is an exemplary picaresque novel.

KNACK

The language is straight from the shoulder, the dialogue is sharp and could almost have been plucked straight from the better film noir.

GAZET VAN ANTWERPEN

Detached and playful; mischievous, ironic, ambiguous and not seldom hilarious

DE MORGEN

Van Loy is awfully good at depicting misery in warm colours

HET PAROOL

PUBLISHING DETAILS

Bankvlees (2004)
238 pp
Sample translation available

RIGHTS

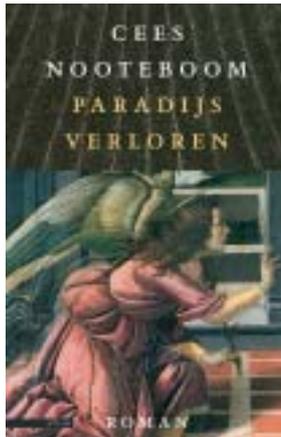
Nijgh & Van Ditmar
Singel 262
NL - 1016 AC Amsterdam
TEL. +31 (0) 20 551 12 62
FAX +31 (0) 20 627 36 26
E-MAIL publiciteit.nijgh@querido.nl



A love of angels

Cees Nooteboom

Paradise Lost



CEES NOOTEBOOM'S *Paradise Lost* tells of an accidental meeting between two former lovers and is written in a postmodern style full of references to creation in general and the creation of this story in particular. In the first part of the novel, the reader travels the world with two young Brazilian women, Almut and Alma. The latter is trying to come to terms with a traumatic rape. She believes she has found paradise, or at least a semblance of it, in Australia. She

becomes obsessed with an aboriginal artist whose paintings are as inaccessible to her as the painter himself; he is one representative of paradise lost. Then, to earn some money, the two friends take part in a literary festival in Perth where, in honour of John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, several angels are to be 'hidden'. Alma, dressed in an angel's costume including wings, has to hide in a cupboard in an office.

The second part of the novel tackles the mid-life crisis of a literary critic in his late forties, Erik Zondag. Sour and fat, he is married to a much younger woman who sends him on a spa holiday in Austria. There, he is massaged by a woman who appears to be the angel with whom he once shared an almost mythical experience in Perth. This comforting, yet fatal meeting makes a real reunion impossible.

The simple conclusion to a complicated love story is that angels don't belong with humans. No writer but Nooteboom can write so well about ecstasy, about the frustration of grasping onto something doomed to disappear or the unwillingness to resign oneself to an inescapable farewell. 'We wouldn't and couldn't understand', Alma says of her obsession with Aboriginal art, 'It was both an abstract and physical reality.' Something similar is true for this novel, which is as light and ungraspable as a poem, yet seems to be about everything in life, including the fall from grace.

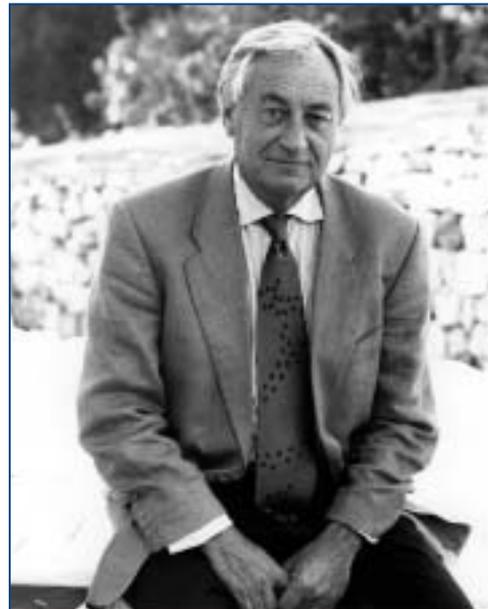


photo Simone Sassen

Paradijs verloren is Nooteboom's first novel since *Allerzielen* (*All Souls' Day*, 1998) and in comparison is a more compact, lighter novel in keeping with his earlier work, such as his debut *Philip en de anderen* (*Philip and the Others*, 1955), *Rituelen* (*Rituals*, 1980), *Mokuseil* (1982) and *Het volgende verhaal* (*The Following Story*, 1991). Last year, the 71 year-old writer, whose prose, poetry and travel stories have received many awards and were translated into many languages, received the highest literary award of The Netherlands, the P.C. Hooft Award. The jury's report stated that with regard to its power of expression, scope and originality, Cees Nooteboom's prose is of the best produced in The Netherlands in the last fifty years.

A daring, poetic, provocative, cleansing novel.

DE VOLKSKRANT

A stylish, successful novel. Mysterious, rich and very re-readable.

ELSEVIER

Cees Nooteboom's new novel is inhabited by angels.

Paradise seems to be in Australia, while hell is in São Paulo. Nooteboom has effortlessly reworked his travel stories into a surprising variation on an old theme.

TROUW

PUBLISHING DETAILS

Paradijs verloren (2004), 156 pp

RIGHTS

Atlas
Herengracht 481
NL - 1017 BT Amsterdam
TEL. +31 20 524 98 00
FAX +31 20 627 68 51
E-MAIL mnagtegaal@amsteluitgevers.nl
WEBSITE www.boekenwereld.nl

TRANSLATED TITLES

All souls' day (*Allerzielen*). London: Picador, 2002. Also in German (Suhrkamp, 2003), in French (*Actes Sud*, 2001) and in many other languages.
Rituals (*Rituelen*). London: The Harvill Press, 2000. Also in German (Suhrkamp, 1989), in French (Calmann-Lévy, 1994), and in many other languages.
Philip und die anderen (*Philip en de anderen*). Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2003. Also in English (Louisiana State University Press, 1988), in Spanish (Galaxia Gutenberg; Círculo de Lectores, 1999 and

in many other languages.

In the Dutch mountains: a novel (In Nederland.). San Diego; New York; London: Harcourt Brace & Company; A Helen and Kurt Wolff Book, 1997. Also in French (Calmann-Lévy, 1988 / *Actes Sud*, 1994), and in many other languages.

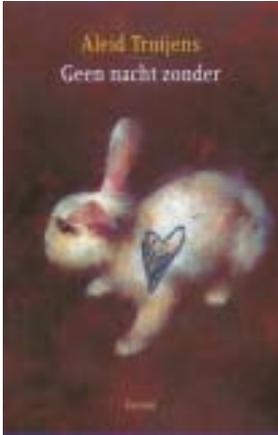
The following story (*Het volgende verhaal*). New York; San Diego; London: A Helen and Kurt Wolff Book; Harcourt Brace & Company, 1994. Also in German (Suhrkamp, 1994) and in many other languages.



Poignant observations

Aleid Truijens

No Night Without



LIKE P.F. THOMÉSE's acclaimed bestseller *Schaduwkind* (Shadow Child), Aleid Truijens' prose debut *Geen nacht zonder* (No Night Without) deals with a deeply emotional subject provided by real life. While Thomése's book minutes his grief over the death of a newborn baby, Truijens tells the story of the medical treatment of her second child, Tom, a four year-old with leukaemia. Like Thomése, Truijens

manages to avoid the pitfalls of melodrama and sentimentality. Her tone is lucid and down-to-earth, rendering the events accessible but no less poignant. Truijens writes short, yet meaningful sentences which give her story great emotional depth.

The title of the novel refers to a cuddly toy, Poefje, a threadbare yet well-loved rabbit, despite its odour of vomit, snot, tears and medicine. Poefje unflinchingly accompanied Tom to hospital, undergoing all the same treatments and examinations, including painful bone marrow punctures. He also provided comfort during Tom's long, lonely nights in cheerless wards. Even though the rabbit receives a little less attention nowadays, Poefje remains a treasured toy and accordingly, Truijens devotes the entire first chapter to him.

Despite the fact that leukaemia is incurable, Tom's treatment has apparently been successful, which is some relief to the reader. The story, however, remains heart-wrenching. Truijens gives a detailed account of the two difficult, frightful years she and her family struggled through – years in which life was completely disrupted and everything necessarily revolved around Tom. She tells of good friends who suddenly avoided all contact and ignored them in the street, and about the painful, aggressive reactions of strangers to a small child who had become overweight and bald after Prednison treatments. She writes about her obsession with statistics which ultimately provide a mere semblance of security. Following in the footsteps of Susan Sontag, she discusses the false metaphors used in cases of incurable illness like 'fight', 'struggle' and 'courage'. Whether a treatment is successful or not is pure chance, the same ungraspable chance which makes someone ill or not. It is not a matter of fighting – both illness and treatment have to be endured. Truijens' observations and contemplations are poignant, sometimes merciless, but always to the point. This narrator was clearly motivated by a story that had to be told, its urgency obvious in every sentence.



photo Jeroen Swolfs

Aleid Truijens (1955) is a literary critic on the broadsheet *De Volkskrant*. She has also reviewed literature for *NRC Handelsblad* and the weekly magazine *Elsevier*. Truijens has written several books about journalism, published monographs about the authors Hella S. Haasse and F.B. Hotz, and collaborated on a book of letters from the latter's correspondence. She is currently writing a biography of F.B. Hotz.

Aleid Truijens has written a brilliant, poignant and disconcerting book.

DE VOLKSKRANT

Painfully precise, she records how anxiety and desperation forge their cruel plot under a flimsy membrane of no-panic and nothing-wrong. With self-mockery and a substantial dose of irony she describes the vertiginous trip to 'Child Cancer Land' in a rollercoaster of emotions.

DE VOLKSKRANT

Truijens has written a cheerful book about an uncheerful subject.

NRC HANDELSBLAD

PUBLISHING DETAILS

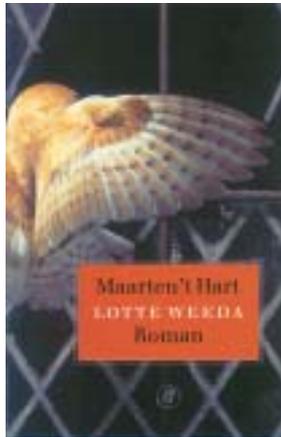
Geen nacht zonder (2004)
144 pp

RIGHTS

Cossee
Kerkstraat 361
NL-1017 HW Amsterdam
TEL. +31 20 528 99 11
FAX +31 20 528 99 12
E-MAIL info@cossee.com



Boisterous vaudeville



Maarten 't Hart

Lotte Weeda

DELUSION is all that is given to us' is the maxim Maarten 't Hart gives Xenophanes in his new novel, and the villagers that 't Hart creates in his sardonic *Lotte Weeda* do indeed become delusional. A woman photographer is chosen to make portraits of the two hundred most important inhabitants of the

town of Monward (anagram of Warmond, where the writer lives) for a book of photographs. The narrator, a biologist and best-selling author of a book on sex called *De roekeloze buiteling* ('De Reckless Tumble'), is under her spell from the moment they meet: 'the Creator uncharacteristically outdid himself. But he admires her work too: 'She seemed to be trying to get to the true character of each person portrayed'. He agrees to write the introduction to the book.

It is only when the first victim in the book becomes a real-life victim that it becomes clear just how extraordinary the work of the photographer of Monward is. Initially, the first man photographed is 'merely' consumed, obsessed by the sudden notion that his children are not his own, and he eventually dies a tragic death. When one person after another portrayed in the album dies as soon as it is published, the community is in uproar. Even the narrator suffers one strange accident after another, and is unsure if he too is about to die.

Maarten 't Hart was named 'Gogol of Maassluis' when he published his burlesque novel *De vlieger* ('The Kite', 1998), and this style is continued in *Lotte Weeda*. The absurd idea that a photographer possesses the evil eye lifts the drama of small-town folk to boisterous vaudeville. The author/biologist is shameless at pushing his pedantic vision of nature and human motivation. 'I thought: it is good to realize that when dealing with love and eroticism it is merely your selfish genes wanting to reproduce themselves. No less and certainly no more.' In passing, the writer also vents his spleen on the disastrous results of governmental delusions: when cattle become diseased, millions of animals are exterminated.



photo Bert Nienhuis

Maarten 't Hart (b. 1944, Maassluis) made his debut under the name Martin Hart with his novel *Stenen voor een ransuil* ('Stones for a long-eared owl', 1971). He studied biology in Leiden and worked as an ethologist at Leiden University. One of the most important themes in his ever-growing oeuvre is his childhood in a Calvinist community, and his distancing himself from it. 't Hart broke through to a wide audience with his melancholy novel about meeting his teenage love in *Een vlucht regenwulpen* ('A Flight of Curlews', 1978). Many novels, short story collections and collections of essays later, 't Hart, with his authentic tone and work which often touches upon the tension between biography and fiction, has grown to be one of the most popular and most translated of Dutch authors. As he said in an interview: 'What I like about literature is, that one can show a compressed piece of one's most intimate self.'

Unlike the big naturalistic novels the title of the book refers to where heroines are defeated by the delusion of love, Maarten 't Hart's characters conquer their fear of death by facing up to the delusion of life. (...) This novel is the best Maarten 't Hart has written to date.

NRC HANDELSBLAD

With Lotte Weeda, Maarten 't Hart has written a rich novel that hounds you.

VRIJ NEDERLAND

PUBLISHING DETAILS

Lotte Weeda (2004)
270 pp

PUBLISHER

De Arbeiderspers
Herengracht 370-372
NL-1016 CH Amsterdam
TEL. +31 20 524 75 00
FAX +31 20 622 49 37
WEBSITE www.boekboek.nl

RIGHTS

The Susijn Agency
820 Harrow Road
London NW105JU
TEL. +44 181 96 87 435
FAX +44 181 35 40 415

RIGHTS SOLD

Germany (Piper)

SELECTED TRANSLATED TITLES

Die schwarzen Vögel (De kroongetuige). München: Piper, 2003.
Draken (De vlieger). Stockholm: Atlantis, 1999.
The sundial (De zonnepijler). London: Arcadia Books, 2004/Connecticut: The Toby Press, in prep. Also in German (Zürich; Hamburg: Arche, 2003), in Portuguese (Livros do Brasil, in prep.), in Swedish (Atlantis, 2003), in German (München; Zürich: Piper, in prep.).
A flight of curlews (Een vlucht regenwulpen). London; New York: Allison & Busby, 1986. Also in German (Suhrkamp, 1988), and in many other languages.
Das Wüten der ganzen Welt (Het woeden der gehele wereld). München; Zürich: Piper, 2001. Also in English (Arcadia, in prep.), and in many other languages.



Small acts, huge consequences

Vonne van der Meer

I'll put you through



IN *I'LL PUT YOU THROUGH* Vonne van der Meer shows what huge consequences small acts can lead to. The story takes place on 10 September 2002, one day before the first commemoration of the 9/11 terrorist attacks in New York.

It begins in the morning with Edith. She's in bed with her husband Berend. At first she wants to make love to him, but then she rejects him in a fit of frustration. Berend goes to work in a bad mood. At work he is rude to his colleague, Jaap, who takes out his frustra-

tion on his secretary Carla, who in turn is unkind towards a job applicant. So it goes on, each character linked to the next through peevish misery. The narrator turns out to be an angel of death who has to pick up a 'package', somewhere and, seems unable to prevent the murder at the end of the chain reaction of interconnected serendipitous events.

Van der Meer is a master at observing boorish behaviour and in depicting the evil that it can lead to, at times undetected. In this book, cause and effect are inextricably interrelated, positively though, as well as negatively, the positive energy coming from the juxtaposition of another storyline in which a child's life in Afghanistan is saved.

The implication is that good can only come about through a timely recognition of the evil within oneself and its subsequent neutralisation. Yet Van der Meer does not moralise. Through the freshness of her language and the frequent use of dialogue, the book avoids pomposity.



photo Bert Nienhuis

Vonne van der Meer (b. 1952) debuted in 1985 with her short-story collection *Het limonadegevoel en andere verhalen* ('The Lemonade Feeling and Other Stories'). It received the Geertjan Lubberhuizen Prize for best debut of the year. In 1999, three novels, several collections of short stories and plays later, *Eilandgasten* ('Island Guests') was published and became a bestseller. It was the first of a trilogy; the other titles are *De avondboot* ('The Night Boat', 2001) and *Laatste seizoen* ('Last Season', 2002). *Eilandgasten* is being filmed this year, directed by Karim Traïda (director of *The Polish Bride*).

This cohesive story has a convincing and subtle structure (...) varied, beautiful scenes, good dialogue, surprising details, witty asides.

NRC HANDELSBLAD

Vonne van der Meer's gift for capturing someone in just a few strokes is admirable.

TROUW

PUBLISHING DETAILS

Ik verbind u door (2004)
176 pp

RIGHTS SOLD

Germany (Kiepenheuer)

RIGHTS

Contact
Herengracht 481
NL - 1017 BT Amsterdam
TEL. +31 20 524 98 00
FAX +31 20 627 68 51
E-MAIL mnagtegaal@contact-bv.nl
WEBSITE www.boekenwereld.nl

SELECTED TRANSLATED TITLES

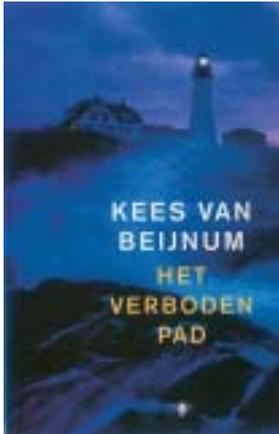
Die letzte Fähre (De avondboot). Leipzig: Kiepenheuer, 2002/Berlin: Aufbau Taschenbuch Verlag, 2004. Also in Serbo-Croatian (Prometej, in prep.).
Die Reise zum Kind (De reis naar het kind). Berlin: Twenne Verlag, 199/Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1998.
Inselgäste (Eilandgasten). Leipzig: Kiepenheuer, 2001/Berlin: Aufbau Taschenbuch Verlag, 2002. Also in Serbo-Croatian (Prometej, 2003), in Spanish (Maeva, 2004), in French (Éditions Héloïse d'Ormesson, in prep.) and Turkish (3C, in prep.).
Abschied von der Insel (Het laatste seizoen). Berlin: Gustav Kiepenheuer, 2004/Aufbau Taschenbuch Verlag, in prep.



In hooligan hands

Kees van Beijnum

The Forbidden Path



THIS IS THE STORY OF Philip Soek, social worker, whose first job is in a home for problem children where discipline is maintained through a complicated system of rewards. Because Soek comes from a wealthy family both inmates and his colleagues wary of him and he works flat hour to win their approval.

Soek is the narrator, and he talks drily and laconically about his experiences with the kids. When they go on holiday to a campsite in Brittany,

one of the young people dies. Who is responsible? This book delves deeply into the rationalizations made as hands are washed in innocence.

Kees van Beijnum's ambitious novel gives a razor-sharp and convincing picture of the social care provided to young people who have gone astray. Through his narrator Soek, the author has succeeded in presenting several unsentimental and compelling portraits of the young people and the members of staff without distancing himself from them.

As the novel progresses it becomes clear that Van Beijnum's choice of the social services as his theme is an accurate and interesting metaphor for social relations at large which are so often – and vainly – held in place through rewards, punishments, and rituals. The protagonist is not emotionally capable of participating in this world, and the novel presents a harrowing and intriguing depiction of this failure.



photo Wim van de Hulst

Kees van Beijnum (b. 1954) worked originally as a journalist, but after reporting on a case of murder in Amsterdam-Noord, *Over het IJ* ('Over the IJ Water', 1991), opted to become a full-time writer. In the novel *Dichter op de Zeedijk* ('A Poet at the Zeedijk', 1995), his literary ambitions became more serious and later novels such as *De Ordening* ('The Archives', 1998, and the successful *De Oesters van Nam Kee* ('Oysters at Nam Kee's', 2000, which received the Bordewijk Award and was translated into a successful film, demonstrated his increasing mastery of the profession. Whereas his earlier work was strongly biographically tinted, the later novels have broadened out. Van Beijnum's work follows the tradition of such great American writers as Capote, Hemingway, and Faulkner. His characters attempt to get a grip on the world, and deliberate on their own participation in it, subtly covering major ethical and social problems in the process.

Van Beijnum sketches a beautiful yet sombre picture of modern youth, without completely giving up hope – that is the virtue of this book.

HP DE TIJD

An exciting, raw and, above all, deeply involved novel about realistic problems. A moving, if not very reassuring portrait of an era.

NRC HANDELSBLAD

PUBLISHING DETAILS

Het verboden pad (2004)
451 pp

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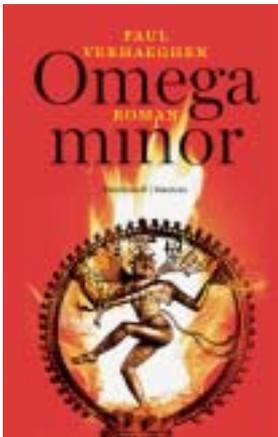
De Bezige Bij
Van Miereveldstraat 1
NL – 1071 DW Amsterdam
TEL. +31 20 305 98 10
FAX +31 20 305 98 24
E-MAIL info@debezigebij.nl
WEBSITE www.debezigebij.nl

TITLES IN TRANSLATION

Die Archivarin (De ordening.). Stuttgart; München: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 2000.



A powerful and ambitious epic



Paul Verhaeghen

Omega Minor

OMEGA MINOR IS A *BILDUNGSROMAN* of international scope in which the author lays bare the essence of human nature – and by extension *la condition humaine* – against the backdrop of twentieth-century social history. Even though the Second World War, the persecution of the Jews and the atom bomb determined the face of the twentieth century, it

is not these events but people, individuals, who are central to this novel. Viewing life from a planetary perspective, Verhaeghen introduces a number of remarkable personal narratives that become increasingly interwoven with each other and with history as the book progresses.

In particular, the novel brings together the fates of three characters. In hospital in 1995, a young Flemish university employee Paul Andermans who has been beaten up by neo-Nazis in Berlin, meets an elderly Jew Jozef De Heer who has tried to take his own life. Jozef De Heer had come to Berlin from Amsterdam, escaping the first wave of persecution. He had survived Auschwitz thanks to his talent as a conjuror and later became involved in the building of the Berlin Wall. Andermans is impressed by De Heer's story and decides to write it down. However, while he is recording these events, Paul Andermans begins to realise that Jozef De Heer has been lying to him about his life: he has been borrowing elements from a Primo Levi book and from other authors.

Back at his lodgings at the University of Potsdam, Andermans meets the Italian researcher Donatella, a woman intimately involved with professor Goldfarb. Goldfarb had managed to escape from Berlin to the United States in the nick of time, studied nuclear physics there and was enticed to Los Alamos to work in the greatest secrecy on the atom bomb.

Ultimately these characters become caught up together in the book's exciting and harrowing finale, in Berlin, fifty years to the day after the death of Hitler.

The author investigates the capacity of literature in the light of the multi-faceted nature of reality. His viewpoint is that 'the present is a flat *trompe-l'oeil* that only becomes three dimensional thanks to the disquieting glimmer of the past.' In its baroque, epic narrative style and structure, in its ambition to lay bare human motivation and the course of history, in its attempt to perceive 'science, art and memory' as one great interwoven whole, *Omega minor* is a thoroughly impressive and fascinating book.



Cognitive psychologist Paul Verhaeghen works at the University of Syracuse, New York. His first novel *Lichtenberg* (1996), set on the campus of a Dutch university, was awarded the Flemish Debut Prize. In 1999, together with Isabelle Rossaert, he published the epistolary novel *De Venusbergvariaties* (*Mons Veneris Variations*).

Omega Minor is Paul Verhaeghen's mighty and impressive new novel. This epic fresco of the twentieth century is a vital and vibrant book and one of those rare literary works that fills the reader with gratitude to the author.

DE STANDAARD

Paul Verhaeghen has written the first successful encyclopaedic novel in Flemish literature. Though more than six hundred page long *Omega Minor* is exactly what an encyclopaedic novel has to be: overwhelming.

DE MORGEN

PUBLISHING DETAILS

Omega Minor (2004)
614 pp
Sample translation
available

RIGHTS

J.M. Meulenhoff
Herengracht 505
NL – 1017 BV Amsterdam
TEL. +31 20 553 35 00
FAX +31 20 625 85 11
E-MAIL info@meulenhoff.nl
WEBSITE www.meulenhoff.nl

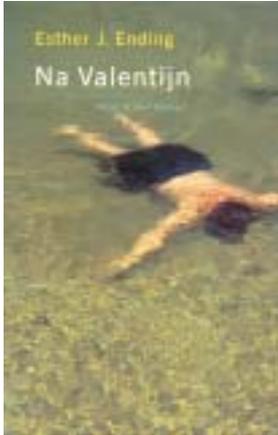
Meulenhoff/Manteau
Belgielei 147A
B – 2018 Antwerpen
TEL. + 32 (0)3 285 73 55
FAX +32 (0)3 285 72 99
E-MAIL harold.polis@standaarduitgeverij.be
WEBSITE www.standaard.com



Moving portrait of a neglected generation

Esther J. Ending

After Valentine



ESTHER J. ENDING'S DEBUT is characterised by her convincing rendering of troubled characters. The narrator is Rain, daughter of an insecure and irresponsible hippie mother, who is a typical example of what Ending describes as the lax and self-centered 'love generation'. Rain is in her late twenties, a translator and lives with her sex-addict brother, Storm, whose bed

she shares occasionally. Her sister Pillow is an alcoholic, her brother Forest smokes too many joints and her twin brother, Ocean, committed suicide eight years earlier.

All children have the same mother, but three different fathers. They have been raised on Ibiza, where they were abused by their mother's boyfriend, who was addicted to alcohol and coke. After a deliberate, disastrous accident the children return to The Netherlands. There they were housed with host families and in children's homes but eventually managed, with difficulty, to build a new life in Amsterdam. The actual drama takes place around Valentine's Day, the day on which Ocean ended his life. Eight years later, Pillow sees him sitting on her sofa. Following this unnerving appearance, Storm and Forest are particularly worried about Rain, who has no more than a vague suspicion of the meaning of this event, and doesn't see the link between Ocean's suicide and the day of his reappearance. During the days following this event, Rain goes off the rails: she drinks too much, knocks over glasses in a cafe, and rows with her new boyfriend, whom she wants to hit her.

Ending gradually tightens the noose of oppression. Through subtle hints she makes it clear that there is, indeed, a link between Rain's behaviour and Ocean's suicide. After a violent confrontation, Storm and Forest let her in on the terrible secret.

In *After Valentijn* Ending paints a convincing, moving portrait of a neglected generation which grew up loveless but is capable of more solidarity and feeling than its parents' generation – which preached love but put very little of it into practice.



photo Bob Bronshoff

Esther J. Ending (b. 1975) spent her childhood on Ibiza, where her Dutch mother had settled. She came to Amsterdam ten years ago, where she has worked as a computer specialist. She has been writing stories since she was eight. *After Valentijn* is her first novel and was awarded the Debutanten Award 2004. Ending is currently working on her second book.

In her intense debut novel, Ending manages to capture the right tone that immediately wins the reader over. (...) Esther J. Ending has talent, that's obvious.

TELEGRAAF

PUBLISHING DETAILS

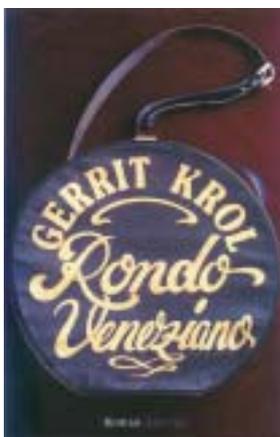
Na Valentijn (2004).
224 pp.

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Nijgh & Van Ditmar
Singel 262
NL – 1016 AC Amsterdam
TEL. + 31 20 551 12 62
FAX + 31 20 627 36 26
E-MAIL publiciteit.nijgh@querido.nl



Connecting contradictions



Gerrit Krol

Rondo Veneziano

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY are the main ingredients of *Rondo Veneziano*, as in pretty much all Krol's novels and stories – and so is love. Reason and emotion, man and woman, poetry and technology, order and chaos, form and content – these are complex contradictions that Krol connects, as his writing passes seamlessly back and forth from the cryptic

to the poetic, from the contemplative to the funny. With the uniqueness of his themes and approach, Krol is one of the most remarkable Dutch writers of the past forty years. With *Rondo Veneziano* this reputation is once again confirmed.

The story takes place during a scientific congress in Padua and Venice, the embodiment, as not other, of death and decay. Krol presents the city as a kingdom of ghosts where past and present meet. Joseph Brodsky and E.J. Dijksterhuis, among other dead souls, are present at the congress, and the narrator, Jan Pipper, also seems to be a ghost. He is the only one present with neither a doctorate nor a professorship. He has been living as a recluse on the island of Curaçao, because he stole his degree certificate, and is scared of being found out, even though he has the reputation of having solved the Riemann Hypothesis, which has kept mathematicians busy for some hundred years – and is still not proved in reality.

Venice may be the embodiment of mortality, but it is also a romantic city and Pipper is accompanied by the much younger Vicky, daughter of a couple he had befriended in Curaçao. The past returns as tangible reality even in her presence. In addition, Venice is a pivotal in the emergence of western science and technology, as is clear from the lectures, reflections, dialogues and historical asides. Consequently, Pipper concerns himself with the question as to which revolution can end the supremacy of science and technology – just as the church's claim to absolute truth was once broken. Krol switches nimbly from scientific theories to amorous intrigue, descriptions of Venice and Padua, his main character's recollections. *Rondo Veneziano* is a novel like the singing of a choir, and it refers to the very foundation of our existence. It is superbly written.



photo Hans Vermeulen

Despite Gerrit Krol's (b. 1934) work as computer programmer and systems analyst at Shell and the Nederlandse Aardolie Maatschappij (NAM), he has written an imposing and varied oeuvre of nineteen novels, several collection short stories and poetry as well as collections of essays and columns on science, philosophy and literature. He received the Multatuli prize for his novel *De weg naar Sacramento* ('The Road To Sacramento', 1977), and for his collection of essays *De mechanica van het liegen* ('The Mechanics of Lying', 1985) he received the Busken Huet Prize. He received the Constantijn Huygens Award in 1986 for his entire opus and in 2001 again with the P.C. Hooft Award.

A unique blend of love scenes and references to the mechanization of our worldview. (...) The crown on the oeuvre of Gerrit Krol

TROUW

Gerrit Krol is one of the best Dutch authors of the last forty years and this is one of his very best books.

DE TIJD

PUBLISHING DETAILS

Rondo Veneziano (2004)
257 pp

RIGHTS

Querido
Singel 262
NL – 1016 AC Amsterdam
TEL. +31 20 551 12 62
FAX +31 20 639 19 68
E-MAIL info@querido.nl
WEBSITE www.querido.nl

OTHER TITLES IN TRANSLATION

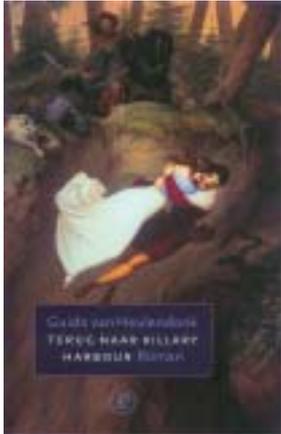
La testa millimetrata (Het gemillimeterde hoofd). Milano: Arnoldo Mondadori Editore, 1969.



Love, struggle and politics

Guido van Heulendonk

Return to Killary Harbour



A JOURNALIST retires to the village of his childhood to get away from the excesses and stress of city life. Thirty years previously he had been left by two girlfriends in quick succession. Now one of these ex-girlfriends is mayor of the village; she does not recognize him. He moves in with the other, whose long marriage has just broken up. Gradually, subtly, disillusionment and dissatisfaction gnaw at his apparently simple life. The merest sus-

picion of infidelity triggers his suppressed need for revenge and he plans gruesome action.

With *Return to Killary Harbour* Guido van Heulendonk nimbly and ingeniously weaves several threads together, while keeping crises off the page, deliberately leaving the reader to work out what happens from the hints and clues scattered through the text, that the main character is planning a double suicide near Killary Harbour. The author actively nudges the reader towards the denouement.

As in all Guido van Heulendonk's novels the narrator is an underdog who shelters behind detachment and cynicism. He seems undisturbed by Flemish mannerisms and peculiarities while underneath he is seething with frustration and schemes resistance, setting out to topple accepted norms and values. Van Heulendonk portrays his main character in finely honed, detached prose that is suggestive and yet deliberately devoid of emotion. He unmasks romantic ideals, respected artistic achievement and heightened discourse about hollow values as forms of self-deception. Behind Van Heulendonk's muted ridicule and cynicism, lies an intriguing and menacing vision of life.



photo Filip Claus

Guido van Heulendonk (b. 1951) is the pseudonym of English teacher Guido Beelaert. His first novel *Hoogtevrees* ('Fear of Heights', 1985) was filmed by Belgian National Television (BRT) and his novel *Paarden zijn ook varkens* ('Horses are also Pigs', 1996) was awarded the Gouden Uil for fiction.

A striking, recalcitrant novel

DE STANDAARD

As a novel, due to the rather recalcitrant, laconic and occasionally hilarious style, and the ingeniously sophisticated and challengingly fragmented composition, it is an extremely exceptional achievement.

DE MORGEN

PUBLISHING DETAILS

Terug naar Killary Harbour (2004)
238 pp

RIGHTS

De Arbeiderspers
Herengracht 370-372
NL - 1016 CH Amsterdam
TEL. +31 20 524 75 00
FAX +31 20 622 49 37
WEBSITE www.boekboek.nl

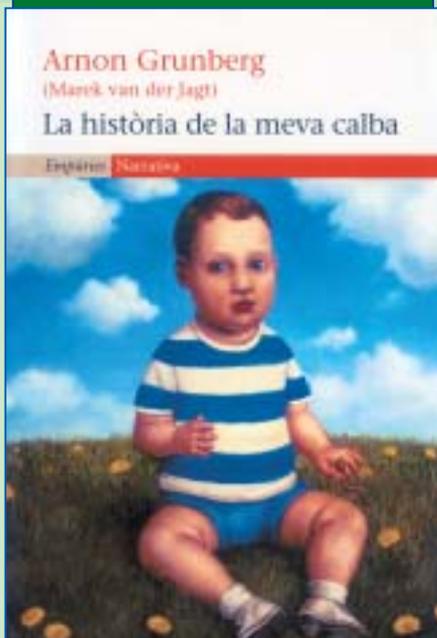
TITLES IN TRANSLATION

Pferde sind auch Schweine: Roman (Paarden zijn ook varkens).
sSalzburg: Residenz Verlag, 1998.



Recent publications

Marek van der Jagt
(a.k.a. Arnon Grunberg).
The story of my baldness



The story of my baldness (De geschiedenis van mijn kaalheid) was published in English by Other Press in the United States, and in Catalan by Empúries. ‘Vienna’s van der Jagt (a.k.a. Arnon Grunberg, Blue Mondays, 1996, etc.) spins the classic coming-of-age and sets the table on a roar. (...) Van der Jagt looses the spirit of J.P. Donleavy – and more – once again upon the world. Wonderful.’ wrote Kirkus Review. In 2004 Other Press also published Grunberg’s *Phantom Pain* (Fantoompijn). ‘Funny in a retch-in-the-gutter sort of way: It sours, like real literature. Many have recorded art’ futile urgency, but rarely so blithely.’ wrote Village Voice.

Jan van Aken
Das Geständnis des Mönchs
(The False Dawn)
Published in German by Droemer

Abdelkader Benali
Menyegző a tengernél
(Wedding by the Sea)
Published in Hungarian by Gondolat

Hugo Claus
Glazine; Nesvrse na proslost
(The Rumours; Unfinished History)
Published in Servisch by Prometej

Louis Couperus
[(De stille kracht)]
(The Hidden Force)
Published in Arabic by DarEmar

Anna Enquist
La blessure: dix nouvelles
(The Injury)
Published in French by Actes Sud

Hella S. Haasse
L’anneau de la clé
(Eye of the Key)
Published in French by Actes Sud

Maarten ’t Hart
The Sundial
(De zonnewijzer)
Published in English by Arcadia Books

Paul Koeck
Po siestos
(After the Siesta)
Published in Lithuanian by Tyto Alba

Margriet de Moor
The Kreuzer sonata
(Kreutzeronate)
Published in English by Arcade

Multatuli
[Max Havelaar hay công việc buôn bán cà phê của công ty thương mại hà lan]

(Max Havelaar, of de koffij-veilingen der Nederlandsche Handel-Maatschappij)
Published in Vietnamese by Van Hoc/RICC

Cees Nooteboom
La història següent
(The Following Story)
Published in Catalan by Bromera

Brigitte Raskin
Hjerterkongen
(King of Hearts: A King’s Tale)
Published in Danish by Aschehoug

P.F. Thomése
La voz de la sombra
(Shadow Child)
Published in Spanish by Lumen

Dimitri Verhulst
Hotel Problemski
(Problemski Hotel)
Published in Danish by Ries Forlag

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

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EDITORIAL BOARD

Carlo van Baelen, Maria Vlaar, Henk Pröpper, Greet Ramael

CONTRIBUTORS

Jos Borré, Joris van Groningen, Kees ’t Hart, Oene Kummer, Marja Pruis

TRANSLATION

George Hall, Maureen Healy, Susan Ridder

EDITOR IN CHIEF

Dick Broer

DESIGN AND PRODUCTION

Wim ten Brinke, BNO



NLPVF

Singel 464
NL – 1017 AW Amsterdam
TEL. +31 20 620 62 61
FAX +31 20 620 71 79
E-MAIL office@nlpvf.nl
WEBSITE www.nlpvf.nl



VFL

Generaal Capiaumontstraat 11/5
B – 2600 Berchem
TEL. +32 3 270 31 61
FAX +32 3 270 31 60
E-MAIL info@fondsvoordeletteren.be
WEBSITE www.fondsvoordeletteren.be