

Dutch

Spring 2023
Dutch Foundation
for Literature

Books



Children's

Dear children's book friend,

The curious heron cycling towards you on his typical Dutch bike along a narrow street that could well be in Bologna is the creation of Martijn van der Linden, the current Dutch children's laureate. Like the previous Children's Book Ambassadors, Martijn has a special focus. His emphasis is on the role of illustration in children's books because, as he says, 'Illustrations are to books what music is to films.' In his own work, he always aims for diversity – in his subjects, techniques, materials, colours and style – and he has done so in books for all ages, from picture books to YA.

'Diversity' is also a good word to describe the books that feature in this brochure. We have selected warm and classic picture books, a fun – and big – book for beginning readers and a story that may offer comfort for children who feel isolated.

A recurring theme in our selection is migration and the search for your roots, and intergenerational patterns, found in *Tortoise and I* and *Trigger*.

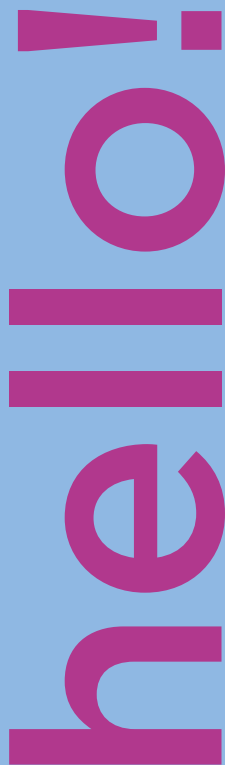
Lobi is a magical-realistic adventure, *Lightning Child*, about an Asian girl who is believed to have healing powers, and *In the Cursed Heart* is 'horror fantasy' of a kind rarely found in Dutch YA.

The fact-based titles *Anaconda* and *A Small History of Humankind* give animals voices of their own, as they talk about other creatures including humans. This change of perspective provides important and interesting information in an entertaining and thought-provoking way. While we're on the subject of facts and science, once you've read *Artificial Intelligence Isn't Scary*, I'm sure you'll agree with the book's title.

In short, lots of wonderful books to 'broaden your horizon', as Martijn van der Linden invites us to do.

I look forward to talking to you soon about these and other Dutch children's books.

Agnes Vogt
Children's book specialist
Dutch Foundation for Literature



Somewhere in the Snow

Linde Faas



Ergens in de sneeuw
32 pages, 550 words

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(Romania), Von Hacht Verlag
(Germany), Edizioni Clichy
(Italy), Moon1000 Company
(South-Korea), Editions
Kaleidoscope (France)

Linde Faas

(b. 1985) graduated cum
laude from the art academy
and works as a cartoon
animator, artist and
illustrator.



‘A magical Christmas book full of sumptuous winter scenes.’

Trouw

Linde Faas was clearly inspired to make this book by the country where she lives: Norway. Vast spaces and huge forests – an elk comes along, and she masterfully paints the Northern Lights. And there’s snow – lots and lots of snow. Faas has as many ways to depict snow as some languages have words for it. You can almost feel the cold rising from the pages.

The story is about Sofie, who wants to celebrate Christmas, but her dad is too busy. She goes out during a wild winter storm to search for a Christmas tree and meets an elk who takes her to the forest. That’s where she finds the Christmas feeling, together with the animals that she decorates a Christmas tree with. The wintry story culminates in warm scenes, in which Sofie’s dad plays an important role. A glorious ending to a book that has all it takes to become a new winter classic.

4+

Spring 2023

1

We're Moving House Tomorrow

Maayken Koolen



Morgen gaan we verhuizen
32 pages, 330 words

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Luciënne van der Leije

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singeluitgeverijen.nl

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Maayken Koolen

(b. 1970) went to two art schools and later studied poetry. She illustrated a number of children's books and created look-and-find books with various artists before making her debut with her own picture book in 2022.



'An original look-and-find book with poetic sentences, it leaves you longing for more.'

NRC

When everything is being packed for the big move, Otis loses Sam, his chameleon, who refuses to be put inside a box. As the house fills up with boxes, finding his pet becomes more and more difficult. Maayken Koolen cleverly uses the chaos of moving house to create a playful picture book about friendship. Otis becomes increasingly desperate and readers can help to look for his best friend. Otis obviously won't move house without Sam and luckily he doesn't have to – when the house is almost empty, the chameleon suddenly reappears, and Otis and his mum can breathe a sigh of relief.

Koolen uses bright colours with lots of contrasts and contours in a style that feels messy but is in fact very precise. This is a remarkable and unconventional picture book that beautifully demonstrates what Koolen is capable of.



Tortoise and I

Marit Törnqvist



Schildpad en ik
64 pages, 1,210 words

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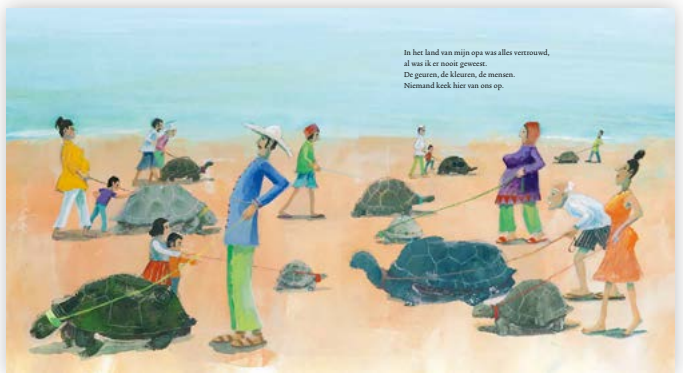
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Rabén & Sjögren (Sweden)
and Read with me (Iran)

Marit Törnqvist

(b. 1964) has Dutch and Swedish nationality. She has created and illustrated many books, some by her compatriot Astrid Lindgren. Marit has won numerous prizes for her illustrations as well as the IBBY I-Read Outstanding Reading Promotor Award.



‘A touching tale about migration and how the past travels through the generations.’

Trouw

Very occasionally a book comes along that you hope will become a classic, not only in the Netherlands, but also in the rest of the world. This is one of those books. It tells the story of a boy who moves to another country with his parents and takes a young tortoise with him to help cure his homesickness. That tortoise grows bigger and bigger. At first, everyone thinks it's funny. They just need to knock a hole in the wall next to the door so that he can come in. But when his owner grows up and can't find a girlfriend because of his clumsy housemate, he decides to return the animal to the country where he was born. He comes back home with much more than he left with.

Törnqvist has found a beautiful, light and accessible metaphor for a topical and painful issue, in which a tortoise reminds us what it means to be human.

5+

Spring 2023

3

They Had Counted Their Sheep

Benny Lindelauf
& Marieke Nelissen



Ze hadden hun schaapjes geteld

56 pages

3,081 words

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Some years ago, a sentence from a Christmas song inspired Benny Lindelauf to create a musical performance for children. Last year, the book of the same name was published. *They Had Counted Their Sheep* is a warm Christmas tale for children of around seven and up.

While Lindelauf's youth novels excel with their stylistic fireworks, this new story has a more classic atmosphere. Gili, a shepherd girl, accidentally lets a sheep escape one night, and she ventures out into the inhospitable desert landscape around Bethlehem to look for the runaway. She wants to prove to her father and brothers that girls can look after sheep, too. Since her mother died, she has been the only female in the family, and her relatives openly express their doubts about her ability to herd sheep.

Gili is very aware that she's in danger of getting lost, falling into a ravine or being attacked by a wolf. The problem with getting lost is that you don't realise until it's already happened, Lindelauf writes with wry humour. Which he follows up ominously with: 'There are plenty of stories about girls and wolves – and they usually don't end well.'

But this is a Christmas story, so Gili passes a stable with a drowsy ox and meets a man and a woman on a donkey – and the only one who ends up in trouble during this night of adventure is the wolf.

6+

A warm Christmas tale with an original twist

The attentive reader will already have spotted the references to the Bible story. However, that does not make this a religious book. Joseph and Mary remain nameless figures, and Jesus is a bald baby bundled up in blankets. That means that this Christmas story can just as easily be read as a universal winter's tale.

Marieke Nelissen's illustrations are in line with the story: classic. Her colours are earthy, with a pink glowing desert and a dark-blue starry night. She subtly announces the arrival of the predator with wolf-shaped rock formations and a menacing shadow.

'Benny Lindelauf's magnificent Christmas book is so ingeniously constructed that it can be read on multiple levels. The atmospheric night-time scenes lend his words an enchanting Christmas glow.'

NRC

'A classic Christmas story with illustrations that steal the show.'

Trouw



Benny Lindelauf (b. 1964) writes theatre texts and children's books that stand out for their narrative power and stylistic mastery. His family epic about the Boon sisters (*Het tegendeel van zorgen*) and his two magical-realistic tales about six brothers who are sent to war (*Hoe Tortot zijn visserhart verloor* and *Hele verhalen voor een halve soldaat*) belong to the canon of Dutch youth literature.

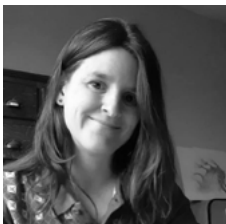
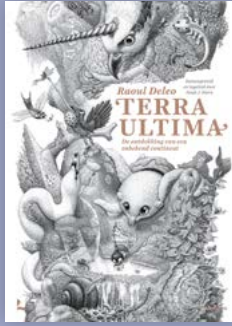


Photo: Marieke Nelissen

Marieke Nelissen (b. 1975) is an illustrator with a rapidly expanding oeuvre. She works with a variety of materials, including watercolours, gouache and pen and ink. Her illustrations often have a fairy-tale look and are reminiscent of Arthur Rackham's work.

awards

Woutertje Pieterse Prize



Terra Ultima
Raoul Deleo and
Noah J. Stern
(Lannoo)

Gouden Penseel



Terra Ultima
Raoul Deleo and
Noah J. Stern
(Lannoo)

The Netherlands' major awards for children's books in 2022

Gouden Griffel



Films die nergens draaien
Yorick Goldewijk
(Ploegsma)

Boon shortlist 2023

Misjka
Edward van de Vendel,
Anoush Elman and
Annet Schaap (Querido)

Mot en de metaalvisser
Sanne Rooseboom and
Sophie Pluim
(Unieboek | Het Spectrum)

Patroon
Marco Kunst (Gottmer)

Schildpad en ik
Marit Törnqvist (Querido)

Zilveren Penselen



Op de rug van Bigi Kayman
Henna Goudzand Nahar
(Querido)

Zilveren Griffels

> 6



Het geluk van Schildpad

Tiny Fisscher and Barbara de Wolf
(Samsara Uitgeverij)

6 > 9



Toen rups een vlinder werd

Bette Westera and Naomi Tieman
(Volt)

9 > 12



Lennox en de gouden sikkels

Zindzi Zevenbergen,
Hedi Tjin and
Brian Elstak
(De Harmonie)

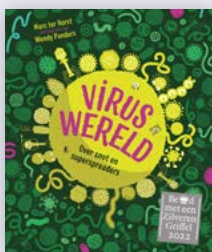
12 > 15



De tunnel

Anna Woltz
(Querido)

Non-fiction



Viruswereld

Marc ter Horst and
Wendy Panders
(Gottmer)

Non-fiction



Rekenen voor je leven

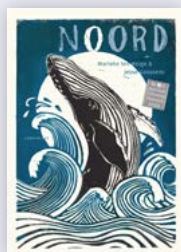
Edward van de
Vendel and Ionica
Smeets (Uitgeverij
Nieuwezijds)

Poetry



Alle wensen van de wereld

Rian Visser and
Janneke Ipenburg
(Leopold)



Noord

Marieke ten
Berge and
Jesse Goossens
(Lemniscat)



Lennox en de gouden sikkels

Zindzi Zevenbergen,
Hedi Tjin and
Brian Elstak
(De Harmonie)



De haas zonder neus

Annabel Lammers
and Hanneke
Siemensma
(Hoogland & Van
Klaveren)



Het lied van de spreekw

Octavie Wolters
(Ploegsma)

Tuft and Fluff —The Way Home

Mathilde Stein



Pluk en Pluis. De weg naar terug
318 pages
20,497 words

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This is a story in verse about two guinea pigs, made up of short sentences grouped into paragraphs, with illustrations on almost every page. It's a book for children who are already quite good at reading and would like to try reading a real book for themselves, one that's thicker than the usual classroom books. It's an exciting story, more than 300 pages long, told in words that aren't too tricky. Stein not only wrote the book, but also created the many illustrations, which bring these guinea pigs to life, lending a great sense of dynamism and pace to the text.

Pluk and Pluis are guinea pigs who are forced to live together. Pluis's peaceful life is disturbed one day, when Pluk is dropped into his cage. At first, Pluis wants nothing to do with this intruder, who keeps running around the cage and also has quite a big mouth, bragging about a secret that has something to do with his previous owner. After a while, Pluis comes to realise that Pluk has brought some excitement back into his life, which he was maybe missing a bit. He starts to like the other guinea pig more and more. The stolen ring of a Peruvian princess, which Pluk happens to have in his possession, triggers a thrilling adventure in which Pluis has to overcome a lot of his fears. Of course there's a cat, and there are people, some nice and others not so nice, and there's the princess whose ring Pluk and Pluis want to return. That's no easy task.

6+

A fun story about two guinea pigs for beginning readers

This is a fun story that tends at times towards slapstick. The style is bright and cheerful, and Stein uses plenty of creative language, including exclamations and made-up words. The rhythm and cadence are perfect for reading aloud if children aren't yet ready to read the book independently, while children with a little more reading experience will finally be able to say that they've read a nice, big book, all by themselves.

'Funny, exciting, colloquial and, in spite of the short sentences, smoothly written.'

Trouw



Mathilde Stein (b. 1969) made her debut as a children's writer in 2006 with the picture book *Bang Mannetje*, illustrated by Mies van Hout, which was a big success, winning the Kinderboekwinkel Prize. After that, she produced four more picture books, including *Van mij* and *De kindereter*. This is the first book for which she has created both the text and illustrations herself.

Mishka

Edward van de Vendel,
Anoush Elman & Annet Schaap



Misjka
156 pages
15,634 words

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Thienemann-Esslinger (Germany)
and L'école des loisirs (France)

The story of how this book came to be is a tale in itself. Over fifteen years ago, Van de Vendel met a family of Afghan refugees. One of the children, Anoush, who was 17 at the time, told him about his dangerous journey to the Netherlands, and the two of them wrote a book about it together.

In the book, he was called Hamayun, but he also had to use a pseudonym as an author, because when their book was published, there was still no guarantee that the family would be able to remain in the Netherlands permanently.

Van de Vendel helping him to get his story onto paper was the perfect solution, and he has done so twice: first in the YA novel *De gelukvinder* (2008), which was well received, and now, almost fifteen years later, in *Mishka*.

Mishka tells more or less the same story, but for much younger readers. The little sister, Roya, is the protagonist this time. When the family finally move into their first Dutch home, Roya wants a rabbit. Her three big brothers like the idea, too.

Mishka the rabbit joins them and is soon a valued member of the family, someone to confide in. Gradually, the rabbit – and also Roya – gets to hear the story of the family's escape from Afghanistan, from slightly different perspectives every time: big Bashir, gentle Hamayun, tough Navid and sometimes Mum and Dad make their own contributions to the story. *Mishka* listens.



The rabbit soon becomes a valued member of the family, someone to confide in

There's a painful part of the story when Mishka escapes and the brothers and sister go looking for him, and the reactions of their neighbours aren't always positive. This makes *Mishka* a very relevant book in the current climate.

It's asking a lot of an author to capture the funny, the everyday, the adventurous and the terrible on paper in such a balanced way. This impactful story has been stripped down to its essence in this new version, and it is told in a controlled way that succeeds in keeping the story small and manageable, yet touchingly beautiful at the same time.

'When Mishka escapes from the cage and Roya really cries for the first time in her life, you can't help crying with her.'

Kidsweek

Photo: Jota Chabel



Edward van de Vendel (b. 1964) trained to be a teacher before becoming a writer. He has won several Zilveren Griffel awards, the Woutertje Pieterse Prize and the Deutscher Jugendliteraturpreis.

Photo: Bonnita Postma



Annet Schaap (b. 1965) worked for years as a popular illustrator for various authors, until she made her debut as both the writer and illustrator of *Lampje* (2017), which has received widespread critical acclaim at home and abroad.

Lightning Child

Hans Hagen
& Martijn van der Linden



Bliksemkind
192 pages
22,092 words

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An article in *The Jakarta Post* about the exploitation of an Indonesian boy as a miracle healer inspired Hans Hagen to write this book. His starting point: 'A lot is possible in real life, but far more is possible in stories.' The result is a playful tale about a girl hit by lightning who comes round with a stone in her hand, which has healing powers. She is then used by her family and other villagers for their own gain.

Writing about child exploitation resulting from poverty is nothing new for Hagen: he has done so before in *Verkocht* (2007), which won the Woutertje Pieterse Prize, and in *Het hanengevecht* (2012). What is new, though, is his magical-realistic approach to the subject. The story is told not only from the perspective of the girl, Yoko, but also from other points of view, including that of the lightning, the healing stone, the rice paddy where Yoko is found, Yoko's grandmother's rickety bed, and the long line of poor souls who hope to be healed.

Hagen poetically uses the subtleties and ambiguity of language to lend a soul to all these people and things. The way he breathes life into the lightning, for example, is enchanting: 'I was fully rested. / I had lingered long and lazily, / slept until that sweltering day. / The moisture in the air had kissed me awake. / The heavy wetness and the scalding heat. / I sucked my lungs full to bursting. / Everything started to bubble away inside me.' This poetic style also keeps the story nice and light, in spite of the serious, contemporary theme.



This multi-voiced story is a beautiful example of magical-realistic storytelling

The dazzling Asian-style illustrations that Martijn van der Linden has provided for every chapter make this book a beautifully harmonious whole. The calligraphic symbols that he created to playfully reflect the characters in the chapters are ingenious. Just like Hagen, Van der Linden proves that there's magic in real life.

‘Experimental and daring, a beautiful symbiosis of text and image.’

Jaapleest.nl

‘The power of this children’s novel is in its poetic wordplay and appropriate illustrations.’

NRC



Hans Hagen (b. 1955) is a versatile and award-winning author and poet who writes for all age groups, often about other cultures. In the early 1990s, he became well known for his anecdotal stories for younger readers, about the lively, imaginative Jubelientje and her grandma, with illustrations by Philip Hopman, who also illustrated Hagen’s Gouden Griffel-winning *De dans van de drummers* (2003), a frame story set in Ghana.

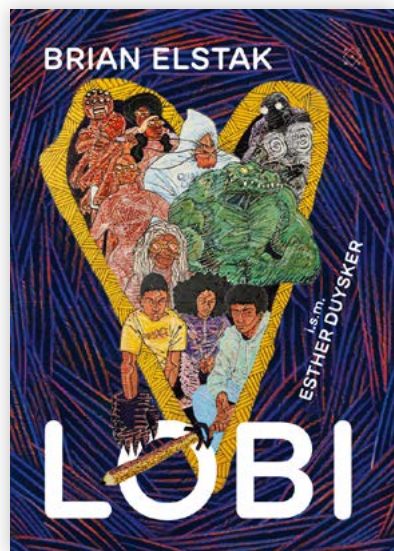


Photo: Maranke Rinck

Martijn van der Linden (b. 1979) is the current Dutch Children’s Book Ambassador and always aims for diversity in his subjects, techniques, materials, colours and style. He has provided imaginative illustrations not only for this book but also for Hagen’s poetic tale *Yuna’s Maan* (2018).

Lobi

Brian Elstak



Lobi

Pages 183

36,690 words

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Das Mag Publishers

Mike van Holsteijn

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‘End?’ This is how artist Brian Elstak concluded his first two children’s books, *Tori* and *Trobi*. With a question mark. Because the adventure of the three children Cel, Bones and Zi – armed with a magic tiger’s paw, a pencil sword and a colossus shield – wasn’t over yet. But in *Lobi*, there’s a full stop after the word – the trilogy is complete.

Elstak began the series for his own children, because there are still so few children’s books with protagonists of colour. What makes this trilogy remarkable is that the content and the look are rooted in hiphop, street art, Marvel comics, films and TV series. Add a dash of Surinamese culture and language – ‘tori’ means ‘story’, ‘trobi’ is ‘problem’ and ‘lobi’ is ‘love’ – and you have a unique and quirky mix that hasn’t been seen in children’s bookshops before.

Like the first books, *Lobi* is full of strong portraits and dazzling, rough and at times dark images, often clearly based on comics. This book is a true finale, tying up loose ends from the previous stories. For example, we now find out how, in book 1, it was possible for the human children Cel, Bones and Zi to be born from eggs on a tropical island, where they were brought up by Jean-Michel, a giant tortoise. In that one character alone, Elstak alludes both to the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles and to the artist Jean-Michel Basquiat.

The island is solely inhabited by talking animals, such as a dragon in shower slippers and a motorcycle-riding crocodile. It turns out that



A dazzling hero story inspired by Marvel comics, TV series and street art

this weird and wonderful setting is a different dimension, which exists alongside the world of humankind.

This new adventure begins when Anansi the spider causes Zi to accidentally end up in yet another dimension. Meanwhile Bones and Cel take on Booboolaas, a bogeyman who drives them into the arms of the diabolical Beast.

This exciting story is written in swinging, contemporary language. It reads like an action movie with uncomplicated heroes and villains, while also touching upon themes such as exploitation, following your dreams, courage, prejudices, family ties and feminism, while its most important message is: *lobi* (love) conquers *ogri* (evil).

‘We have not come across a book like this before. An ode to art and to the imagination. A powerful and special book.’

*Penseel jury (about *Tori*)*

‘Insanely beautiful drawings. Very important, because children can recognise themselves in these pictures and be proud.’

Adriaan van Dis, author

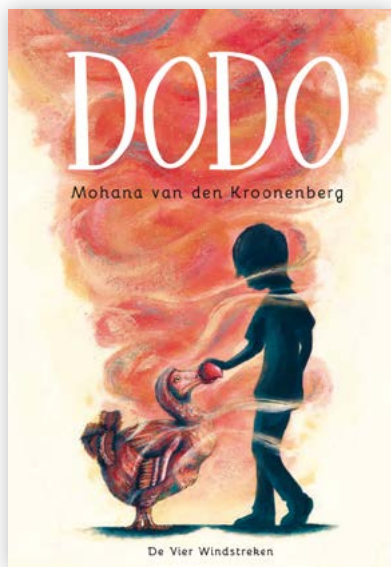
Photo: Sharon Jane



Brian Elstak (b. 1980) is an artist and illustrator. He makes graphic novels and children's books, as well as video clips and paintings. For his children's book *Tori*, he won a Zilveren Penseel, one of the most important Dutch prizes for illustration. The book was also adapted into a play, which was broadcast on national television. He wrote the story for his trilogy in collaboration with the authors Karin Amatmoekrim and Esther Duysker.

Dodo

Mohana van den Kroonenberg



Dodo
180 pages
40,848 words

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De Vier Windstreken
Nathalie Bierhuizen
nathalie@vierwindstreken.com

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After a failed round of introductions at school, when Dorian can't say anything more than a faltering 'Do-do', he decides to keep quiet. Not long after that, he sees a stuffed dodo in a museum, and it triggers something inside him. Dorian steals a rare dodo's egg, incubates it and develops a close bond with the chick. At least, that's how he describes it in the notebook that he starts writing in after that disastrous first day at school. It's up to the reader, who's locked up inside Dorian's head – an insecure, fiery boy's mind – to decide where reality stops and imagination begins. Dorian thinks back to the summer with his best friend, Ramses, and the two girls in the treehouse, and about how perfect it was, until everything went wrong and he lost even Ramses.

Mohana van den Kroonenberg has written a touching story about a stuttering boy who becomes isolated. An interesting element is that the stuttering is never mentioned. Even more interesting: except for two 'Dodo's, Dorian doesn't say a word for the entire length of the book. His silence is absolute, but his imagination knows no bounds. Just for Dodo, he builds an imitation island of Mauritius in his bedroom, making a hilarious mess of water and sand. At a certain point, the flightless bird even takes off. Dodo is a blazing ode to the imagination. In her tribute, Van den Kroonenberg also conceals a series of children's books in her chapter titles and dialogues. 'Imagination is the only weapon in the war against reality,' reads the quote



A touching and empathetic debut about an isolated boy with a stutter

from Lewis Carroll at the start of the book. The author of *Alice in Wonderland* stuttered so badly as a child when saying his surname (Carroll was a pseudonym – in reality he was called Dodgson) that he did not get any further than Do-do.

Van den Kroonenberg may place literature on a pedestal and refer to a literary hero with her protagonist, but she does not deny reality. In the end, Dorian has to return to real life. In a satisfying conclusion, he finds a way to deal with his speech impediment. This makes *Dodo* not only a strongly written debut, but also a story that offers comfort.

‘A strong and touching novel about an insecure adolescent who seeks comfort with an imaginary dodo.’

Trouw

‘The story is full of beautiful sentences and well-chosen imagery.’

NRC

Photo: Marco Zoon



Mohana van den Kroonenberg (b. 1967) is a sculptor and has previously written a collection of stories for adults. As a child, she stuttered, and she stopped talking for a while. She has used this experience in *Dodo*, her debut for young readers, with which she raced into the world of children's books at full speed. The book has been showered with praise by both readers and reviewers.

Today I'm Going to Talk About the Anaconda

Bibi Dumon Tak
& Annemarie van Haeringen



Vandaag houd ik mijn spreekbeurt over de anaconda
120 pages
19,845 words

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Bibi Dumon Tak can do magic with words. Whether it's facts, portraits or poetry, her language sparkles and shines. She uses that language mainly to write about the animal kingdom, tirelessly tweaking different genres to highlight animals' unique characters.

In this book, she has once again come up with an extremely original form: animals who are giving a talk at school about other animals. Having previously given cows a voice of their own in *Het koeienparadijs*, this school-presentation format takes her to the next level. In a classroom where snow leopard, barn owl, fox, goose, Gila monster, cassowary and earthworm sit cosily together, this gang of creatures behaves like a bouncy bunch of modern kids: they talk over each other, interrupt the animal who is presenting and are very focused on themselves. This leads to humorous presentations, with some animals clearly copying directly from Wikipedia, while the fox talks mainly about the goose's meat, and the nervous hermit crab can barely manage to say a word. Meanwhile, the reader learns a lot, as Dumon Tak has ingeniously packed plenty of information into the animals' squabbling and chatter.

Humans are mentioned only indirectly and they usually come off badly. For example, the wild donkey scoffs at a human's disrespectful presentation about zebras.



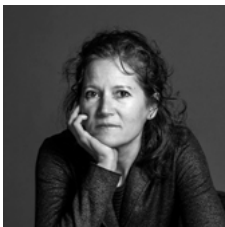
Hilarious school presentations – by animals and about animals

The illustrations are by the three-time Gouden Penzeel winner Annemarie van Haeringen and are classic Van Haeringen. Clear lines, clean backgrounds, expressive animal faces. The shoebill stork's bright eyes look invitingly at the reader along its huge beak. The glorious koala, on the other hand, is a distinguished little bear with a serious expression.

'Bibi Dumon Tak gets the zebra to talk about black-and-white animals and the howler monkey to talk about the unicorn in this successful series of talks by animals about animals.'

Trouw

Photo: Koos Breukel



Bibi Dumon Tak (b. 1964) is the first non-fiction writer for children to have won the Theo Thijssen Prize for her oeuvre. With her literary imagination, she has expanded the genre in all directions, coming up with ideas such as 'non-fiction poetry' (*Laat een boodschap achter in het zand*). In nearly all of her books, the focus is on animals.

Photo: Evellene Deraedt



Annemarie van Haeringen (b. 1959) has won three Gouden Penzeel awards and illustrated several of Dumon Tak's award-winning books, including her non-fiction poems and the touching picture book *Siens hemel*, about Dumon Tak's dog who died.

Artificial Intelligence Isn't Scary

Bas Haring
& Maus Bullhorst



*Kunstmatige intelligentie is
niet eng*

176 pages
31,983 words

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You might have a PhD in something like artificial intelligence, but that doesn't mean you can write about it for children in an accessible way. Professor and philosopher Bas Haring certainly can do that, though – and he proves it in this book.

He first explains in an elegant and simple way how a computer works, by talking about lights that go on and off and how you can use that to do sums and even create a memory.

But that isn't enough. How does a computer solve questions that are relatively simple for human beings? Like, what's the shortest route from A to B? Or much more complex ones: what's the best move to make next in a game of chess? People have been pondering these questions since the 1950s, but computers have only recently become fast enough to be able to figure it all out.

And then it gets really exciting: can a computer learn, too? And if a computer can learn, can it also think for itself? Can it do so even better than a human being? And if a self-driving car hits someone, is it guilty? Haring uses example after example to show that these are not foolish questions and that, although computers can do a lot of things, that doesn't mean they're going to take over the world any time soon.

The answer to the question about whether computers can think turns out to be a philosophical one. As the famous Dutch computer scientist Edsger Dijkstra, one of the first people

10+

The question of whether a computer can think is as interesting as the question of whether a submarine can swim

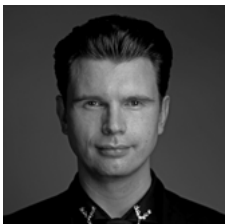
to write modern algorithms in the 1950s, once put it so well: 'The question of whether a computer can think is as interesting as the question of whether a submarine can swim.' This book is not only informative and enlightening, but also mind-expanding.

'[Bas Haring] knows better than anyone else how to make complicated subjects accessible for large groups of readers.'

Hebban.nl



Bas Haring (b. 1968) studied physics and cognitive intelligence in Utrecht, where he later obtained a PhD in computer science. He now works at the University of Leiden. Haring made his children's book debut in 2001 with the amusing *Kaas en de evolutietheorie* (Cheese and the Theory of Evolution, Gouden Uil).



Artist and illustrator Maus Bullhorst (b. 1988) has a distinctive colourful and geometric style and, in addition to his independent work as an artist, also creates illustrations for major Dutch newspapers and journalistic websites.

A Small History of Humankind through the Eyes of Animals

Joukje Akveld
& Djenné Fila



Een kleine geschiedenis van de mens door dieren-ogen

96 pages

33,500 words

Rights

Lannoo

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‘A history of humankind without animals would be an incomplete history,’ writes Joukje Akveld. ‘That’s why this book is about them. And because we humans have already told our story often enough, it is the animals themselves who are doing the talking here.’ This original premise results in twenty-nine fascinating and colourful animal testimonies in words and pictures, which take the reader from the Botswana of 200,000 years ago to present-day South Africa.

Akveld has not invented anything here and supports every chapter with scientific information about the relationship between humans and animals. For example, you’ll read about ‘the animal as an object of study’ in ancient Greece (the peacock), ‘as a goldmine’ when whaling came along, and as ‘a rarity’, now that a sixth mass extinction is looming (the northern white rhinoceros).

The animal perspective also results in imaginative and sometimes amusing monologues and dialogues in which Akveld has cleverly given each animal its own appropriate narrative voice. For example, Fortune, the pug who belonged to Napoleon’s first wife, sounds rather prim when he talks about how ‘furieux’ he was when ‘madame’ allowed another man besides him into their bed. While the lion waiting beneath Rome’s Colosseum until he can hunt his prey feels thoroughly tormented and expresses himself in snappy sentences: ‘The crowd roars wildly. I roar too. For my lionesses.

A richly illustrated and mind-expanding history of humankind as seen from the perspective of animals

For my cubs. For the yellow grass that has gone for good. With one leap, I am with him. [...] I hit, I pull, I tear. And I kill.'

All these voices resound powerfully in Fila's beautifully evocative illustrations. Using a variety of colours and materials, she gives each account a distinctive atmosphere. The mountain gorilla, for example: his dejected appearance and the black scribbled pages look ominous, reinforcing the deep tragedy of the Rwandan genocide that killed a million Tutsis in 1994. 'The people had gone insane,' says the gorilla.

Yes, humans do not come out of this well. However, that does not diminish the huge pleasure of reading the text and looking at the pictures in this truly impressive book.

'When such an inspired author collaborates with a top illustrator, the result is a very special book, written with love for nature and yet critically objective, with a wealth of interesting facts.'

Tzum

'A unique history.'

Het Friesch Dagblad

Photo: Justin Fox



Joukje Akveld (b. 1974) is a writer and journalist and lives in South Africa. She writes picture books and non-fiction about animals and the human-wildlife conflict, such as *Een aap op de wc* (2015) and *Wij waren hier eerst* (2017), both of which won Zilveren Griffel awards. Akveld's style is marked by her quirky and critical perspective and her sparkling use of language.

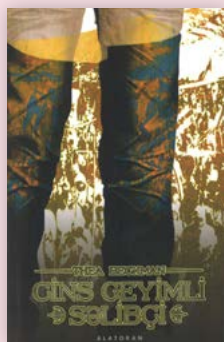
Photo: Michèle Bergsma



Djenné Fila (b. 1995) graduated cum laude from art school. She caused a sensation with her colour mixed-technique illustrations in *Het beest met de kracht van tien paarden* (2019) and *Schaduw van Toet* (2021) by Lida Dijkstra. Fila won the prestigious silver European Design Award for *De Vuurvogel* (2020) by Bette Westera.

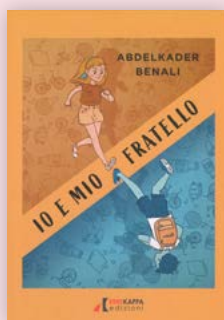
recent

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



Thea Beckman
Cins geyimli səlîbçi

Azeri translation by Anar Rahimov for Alatoran, 2022.
Original title: *Kruistocht in spijkerbroek*, published by Lemniscaat, 1973.



Abdelkader Benali
Io e mio fratello

Italian translation by Olga Amagliani and Claudia Di Palermo for Errekappa, 2022.
Original title: *Mijn broer en ik*, published by Querido, 2019.



Paul Biegel
The King of the Copper Mountains

English translation by Gillian Hume and Paul Biegel for Pushkin Press, 2022.
Original title: *Het sleutelkruid*, published by Holland, 1964; Gottmer, 2020.



Tonke Dragt
Tayemnytsi dykoho lisu

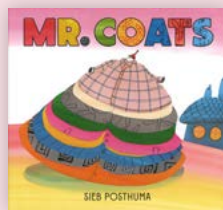
Ukrainian translation by Svitlana te Pas-Denysenko for "NAIRI", 2022.
Original title: *Geheimen van het Wilde Woud*, published by Leopold, 1965.



**Simon van der Geest
& Karst-Jankeke
Rogaar (ill.)**

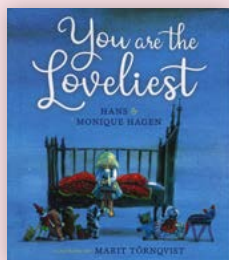
**Comment j'ai disparu
dans la jungle**

French translation
by Maurice Lomré for
La Joie de Lire, 2022.
Original title: *Het
werkstuk*, published
by Querido, 2019.



Sieb Posthuma
Mr. Coats

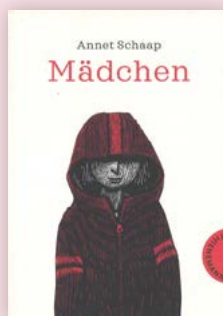
English translation
by David Colmer for
Levine Querido, 2022.
Original title:
Mannetje Jas,
published by Querido,
2006.



**Hans & Monique
Hagen & Marit
Törnqvist (ill.)**

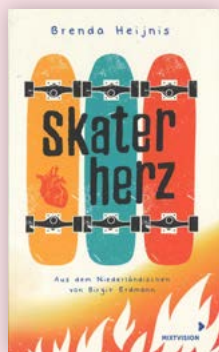
You are the Loveliest

English translation
by David Colmer for
Levine Querido, 2021.
Original title: *Jij bent
de liefste*, published
by Querido, 2000.



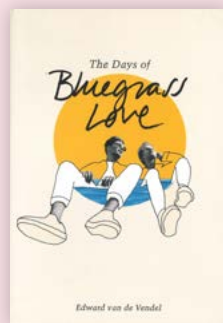
Annet Schaap
Mädchen

German translation
by Eva Schweikart for
Thienemann-Esslinger,
2022.
Original title:
De meisjes, published
by Querido, 2021.



Brenda Heijnis
Skaterherz

German translation
by Birgit Erdmann for
Mixtvision, 2022.
Original title:
Tikker, published
by Hoogland & Van
Klaveren, 2019.



**Edward van de
Vendel**

**The Days of Bluegrass
Love**

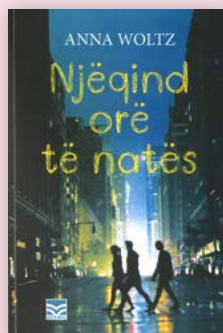
English translation
by Emma Rault for
Levine Querido, 2022.
Original title:
*De dagen van de
bluegrassliefde*,
published by Querido,
1999.



Annet Huizing

**[Hoe ik per ongeluk
een boek schreef]**

Complex Chinese
translation by Minya
Lin for Taiwan
Interminds Publishing
Inc., 2022.
Original title: *Hoe ik
per ongeluk een boek
schreef*, published by
Lemniscat, 2014.



Anna Woltz

Njëqind orë të natës

Albanian translation
by Mimoza Backa for
Dituria, 2022.
Original title: *Honderd
uur nacht*, published
by Querido, 2014.

I Think I Was Kidnapped

Pim Lammers
& Sarah van Dongen



Ik denk dat ik ontvoerd ben
120 pages, 5,985 words

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Pim Lammers

(b. 1993) is one of the most important and innovative voices in the Dutch-language children's books landscape. Lammers won a White Raven award for *De boer en de dierenarts*, about the love between two men.

'In Pim Lammers's writing, loving goes hand in hand with tough, and childlike wonder with raging hormones.'

Trouw

About struggling with homework, about not being a man but not a woman either, about families with two dads and divorce problems, about jealousy, death and bullying – Pim Lammers writes with the greatest ease about all kinds of issues that might have an impact on children's lives today. What is interesting is that he doesn't write *about* the child but from the child's point of view. This empathetic perspective, coupled with Lammers's choice of subjects, makes this collection most definitely a mirror of our modern age.

In spite of the sometimes tricky themes and the complicated emotions they can bring up for children, these narrative poems never become too weighty. This is because of the masterful way in which Lammers, assisted by Sarah van Dongen's witty and lively colour illustrations, subtly plays with the reader's expectations. Lots of the poems end with an unexpected twist that suddenly makes the extraordinary surprisingly ordinary.

Lammers cheerfully shows how our diverse society is something obvious and natural. It is also admirable how he dares to let his young readers read between the lines. Lammers effortlessly finds his way into children's minds and speaks their thoughts with a powerful voice all of his own.



Applause for My Finger

Erik van Os
& Jan Jutte



Applaus voor mijn vinger
128 pages, 3,713 words

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Erik van Os

(b. 1963) writes children's books, poetry and song lyrics, both with his wife Elle van Lieshout, and on his own. He has written over 100 books and his work has been widely translated.

'There is exciting wordplay to be found in the beautiful mix of light verse and more meaningful poetry for young people.'

NRC

'Books are like trousers / coats and shoes, finding the right / ones takes time, but oh, when they fit, / you know which ones to choose!' For young teenagers, the book that fits and means something to them might well be this swinging poetry collection by Erik van Os, because it's full of varied, humorous and stimulating poems that reflect their perceptions and experiences.

What should work well with teenagers is the mixture of simple chuckles and slightly more serious, yet still accessible poetry, with lines that you want to remember. Funny: 'Mobile in her pocket. / My sister shops until she drops. / And when her boyfriend calls, / her backside hops and bops.' In Jan Jutte's illustration, we see the boyfriend on his phone, rising out of the sister's back pocket.

Van Os writes about parents who take 'the time not to look at each other' and sometimes get divorced, about internal dilemmas, about being like your mother, about school and about love.

Jan Jutte shines in this collection with his quirky pictures in a wide range of styles, which reinforce the poems and provide allusions to art, from Picasso, Miró and Matisse to the Pop Art of Roy Lichtenstein, which comes up in a hilarious poem about a beautiful girl who picks her nose – and eats it.

12+

Spring 2023

27

Trigger

Marco Kunst



Patroon
190 pages
34,000 words

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Two adolescents who experiment with an unused cartridge from an old service rifle that belonged to one of their grandfathers (a Vietnam veteran) is a conceivable story. But it is the fatal consequences and the philosophical implications of this grim event that make *Trigger* such an unusually refreshing and daring YA novel.

‘Was it an accident, was it manslaughter, or was it murder?’ Mylo worries. ‘That Truth should be anchored in the nerve cells of my brain.’ However, since the cremation of his best friend, Mees, and the lawsuit, and ‘all the nagging and whining’ of the official organisations that are presenting Mylo with their own versions of the story, it seems as if the truth has ‘made a run for it’.

The stream-of-consciousness story that Mylo tells at the urging of his therapist, Bastiaan, sounds completely authentic. The sixteen-year-old effortlessly draws the reader into his worrying mind, aptly switching between philosophical questions about guilt and penance and all kinds of emotions. There’s despair in his outburst when he admits that he’d rather not write anything down because it’s not going to bring Mees back anyway. Frustration and irony resonate in his words when he addresses the organisations that are supposed to help him but just ‘suck him dry like a spider in a web’. And sadness echoes in his childhood memories of Mees, and his mum’s silent grief when his dad left.

13+

A philosophical page-turner that reads like a therapeutic account of a guilt-filled adolescent with a sense of irony

The story becomes more of an adventure when Mylo travels to California with his American grandpa, in search of his dad and himself. The road trip results in touching scenes and revisited memories, as the two of them carefully break down the walls around each other's hearts – until his grandpa reveals his secret about his traumatic wartime past in Vietnam, and Mylo finds himself looking into a horrifying mirror. Is there such a thing as free will? Or is he trapped in an intergenerational pattern? Mylo eventually enters into the ultimate confrontation with himself. Kunst explores the limits of what an adolescent brain can handle, and he does so convincingly: his scintillating language fits Mylo perfectly and the boy captures the reader's heart.

'The way in which Marco Kunst, with great ease, combines psychological insight and philosophical questions with a very convincing and contemporary adolescent voice brings to mind great YA authors like John Green.'

Trouw

'Dark, but also humorous and mind-expanding.'

Volkskrant

Photo: Chris van Houts



Marco Kunst (b. 1966) – a philosopher by background – proved with his futuristic *Gewist* (2004) and fantastic *Kroonsz* (2014) that he does not shy away from telling big stories that reach through time and space. He refuses to be pinned down to any single genre or style. In 2013, he surprised his readers with *Vlieg!*, an everyday story about a dreamy little boy, while 2020 saw the publication of *Het verlangen van de prins*, a tale of adventure at sea and the search for happiness.

In the Cursed Heart

Rima Orie



In het vervloekte hart

448 pages

128,000 words

Rights

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Black & White Publishing
(Scotland)

Author Rima Orie based the tropical country of Awaran, which she describes so evocatively, on her parents' South American homeland: Suriname, until 1954 a colony of the Netherlands. She found the building blocks of her fantasy world in the period around 1880, after the abolition of slavery, when Indian contract labourers were brought to the country.

The largest population groups in Suriname can be recognised in the people of Awaran: original inhabitants, Africans, Indo-Surinamese and Javanese. Although they largely live separately, in Orie's book – unlike in reality – these groups are fighting together in a guerrilla war against the colonists, who are inspired by the Dutch.

The protagonist, Priya, ends up at the military jungle fortress of Kuwatta as a trainee soldier. She has been carrying a big secret with her: she was born during the blood moon, which means she possesses a special gift, one that most people consider a curse. For this reason, blood children are usually killed after birth, but Priya's mother saved her life.

In Kuwatta, her curse suddenly counts as a blessing: she can manipulate the souls of humans, animals and monsters and order them to carry out physical actions. That's right – monsters. Kuwatta is not only fighting against colonists, but also against a terrifying creature and against zombies with bleeding mouths, who attack every night.

There's lots of hacking and slashing in the bloody, feverishly written fight scenes, but Orie

15+

A thrilling horror fantasy with intriguing roots in colonial history

gives that horror aspect an organic place in the cleverly constructed tale, which also has successful psychological storylines. The strong Priya develops from a pariah into a hero, while processing her difficult relationship with her family.

Orie writes in a cinematic, compelling style and has created a spine-tingling book that refers back to colonial history in an intriguing way. Her fantasy debut with an eastern touch (*De zwendelprins*) caught the attention of readers and reviewers, and with this 'horror fantasy' she has confirmed her talent. The book was first published in the Netherlands in a beautiful limited edition, with tropical leaves printed on the edges, endpapers with full-colour illustrations, a dust jacket and a cloth cover with gold print.

'In the Cursed Heart calls for a strong stomach at times, but those who can handle it are in for a chilling and bloodcurdling tale.'

AD

'Unique atmosphere (...) I was pleasantly surprised by In the Cursed Heart and would happily read it all over again.'

Boekenkrant



Rima Orie (b. 1994) took part in a national YA writing competition, which she won with her manuscript of *De zwendelprins*. This fairy-tale story became her first book and was nominated for the Best Book for Young People award. *In the Cursed Heart* is her second book, and she is currently working on the sequel to this horror fantasy.

Dutch Children's Books is published by the Dutch Foundation for Literature.

The Dutch Foundation for Literature has the task of supporting writers and translators, and of promoting Dutch literature abroad. It invests in the quality and diversity of literature through grants for writers, translators, publishers and festivals, and contributes to the production and distribution of Dutch and Frisian literature at home and abroad. With the support of the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, it aims to promote a thriving literary climate, embedded in literary history and attuned to the latest developments in the publishing industry.

Foreign publishers wishing to publish translations of Dutch literature may apply for a subsidy towards the translation costs. In the case of high-quality illustrated children's books, additional support for production costs is possible.

For more information please visit www.letterenfonds.nl or contact children's books specialist Agnes Vogt, a.vogt@letterenfonds.nl.

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Broaden
your
horizon

Martin
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