

**N**ederlands  
letterenfonds  
dutch foundation  
for literature

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# 10 Books from Holland and Flanders



# The Foundations

**The Dutch Foundation for Literature stimulates interest in Dutch literary fiction, non-fiction, poetry and children's books by providing information and granting translation subsidies. The foundation maintains contacts with a large number of international publishers, and has a stand at major international book fairs, including the Frankfurt Book Fair, the London Book Fair and the Beijing Book Fair.**

## Translation Grants

Foreign publishers wishing to publish translations of Dutch or Frisian literature, including children's literature, quality non-fiction and poetry, may apply for a subsidy towards the translation costs.

Having acquired the publishing rights to a Dutch or Frisian literary work, the publisher's application for a subsidy must be accompanied by a copy of the contract between the foreign publisher and the owner of the Dutch rights, and a copy of the contract with the translator. Publishers must make use of specific application forms which are available from the foundation.

## Considerations

In deciding whether or not to grant a subsidy, the foundation takes account of the following considerations:

- the literary quality of the book
- the status of the publisher
- the quality of the translator

If the translator is unknown to the foundation, a sample translation is required. This will be evaluated by external advisors. The maximum possible subsidy is 70% of the total cost of translation. Applications for subsidies for translations which have already been published will not be considered.

**The Flemish Literature Fund awards subsidies to foreign publishers for the translation of literary works by Flemish authors. The following genres qualify for support: prose, poetry, literary non-fiction, drama, children's literature and comics.**

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# Arnon Grunberg

## The Man without Illness

An outstanding Kafkaesque novel by the greatest Dutch writer of his generation

**An architect, as idealistic as he is naive, is the central character of the eleventh novel by Arnon Grunberg, the most talented young writer of the Netherlands. In *The Man without Illness* an arrogant Westerner is destroyed amid the harshness and random cruelties of a chaotic Middle East.**

'What was he expecting? That the world would be one big Switzerland?' Samarendra Ambani is Swiss, the son of immigrants, and a prominent architect who sees himself as 'the great anonymous manipulator of other people's happiness'. His perfect little life – good job, nice girlfriend, hygienic sex – is thrown into irreparable turmoil when he is commissioned by a shadowy financier to design an opera house for Baghdad. A journey to the Iraqi capital leads from deception to torture and mortal danger. Sam returns to his girlfriend in Zurich physically and mentally shattered.



'I was asking for it,' Sam tells her. 'I went there, I was careless, I made mistakes [...]. I ought to have thought a couple of steps ahead.' But he has not learned from the experience. A few months later he accepts a commission to build the National Library of Dubai. On a business trip to the Gulf state, Sam discovers that history can repeat itself remorselessly and that a European passport is no guarantee of a safe return. 'He was naive, and naivety is worse than stupidity, worse even than wickedness.'

*The Man Without Illness* is an analysis, both tragic and funny, of the times we live in, plot-driven but with philosophical asides – about justice, about humiliation, about a false sense of security and the excesses of modern architecture. Like a contemporary Kafka, Grunberg takes his hero through a world he cannot comprehend, a world in which he is no better off than the cockroaches in his hotel room.

**Arnon Grunberg** (b. 1971) wanted to be a Charlie Chaplin or a Jacques Tati, but after failing to get into drama school he became a writer. Since his debut with *Blauwe maandagen* (Blue Mondays, 1994) he has published ten tragicomic novels under his own name and two under the pseudonym Marek van der Jagt. He won the most important of Dutch literary prizes for his novels *Fantoompijn* (Phantom Pain, 2000), *De asielzoeker* (The Asylum Seeker, 2003) and *Tirza* (2006), and in 2008 was awarded the Constantijn Huygens Prize for his oeuvre as a whole. His work, which is typified by short sentences, literary slapstick and hilarious pseudo-philosophy, is available in many languages.



### Publishing details

*De man zonder ziekte* (2012)  
222 pp, ca. 74,000 words

### Publisher

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For translated titles by this author  
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An exemplary novel of almost aphoristic clarity, which pitilessly exposes humanistic clichés.

– Trouw

Fast, compact, witty and terrifically exciting. [...] Here is a writer at work who is firmly in control throughout.

– NRC Handelsblad

This game with appearance and reality leads us to a shocking denouement.

– Het Parool

Photo: Bob Bronshoff

## Jan-Willem Anker

# A Civilised Man

The amazing life story of the man who stole the treasures of the Acropolis and met with disaster

**A Civilised Man is based on actual events: the looting of the marble treasures of the Acropolis, which were taken to London by Lord Elgin. The story behind this sensational affair has been transformed into an exciting, beautifully written debut novel.**

Working in the service of the British Empire, Elgin was sent to Constantinople as an ambassador at the end of the eighteenth century. However, he soon ceased to focus on his diplomatic role as he became increasingly fascinated with the art in the temples of the Acropolis: statues, columns and frescos that lay gathering dust in the blazing Greek sun. Neither the Greeks nor their Turkish occupiers seemed to be too concerned.

Anker uses an old-fashioned omniscient narrator, but the perspective appears to move ever closer to Elgin, who is motivated by good intentions – he is worried that these artistic treasures will be lost if left in Greek hands – but more so by vanity and greed. Elgin is very calculating and cleverly abuses his position. He seizes the works of art and has them shipped away – in a seemingly endless process of negotiation and bargaining.

Back in London, following a period of

captivity in France during which he discovers that his wife has been unfaithful, he has to sell his treasure for far less than it is worth, as its authenticity is doubted. He also loses a bitter court case for his father-in-law's fortune. What started as an art-historical mission ends as a brutal battle that is anything but civilised.

What makes this novel stand out are the details with which Anker illustrates his story, right from the prologue, a heartrending scene in which the young Elgin visits his father on his deathbed and gives him a picture he has drawn for him. After a brief conversation, his father sends him to draw a picture for his sick brother. Two weeks later, both his father and his brother are buried. This is the seed of the drama that will later unfold.

Lord Elgin, a distant relative of the picaresque heroes of Sterne (Tristram Shandy) and Mann (Felix Krull), tried to save the remains of an ancient civilisation, but ultimately destroyed himself. Jan-Willem Anker has transformed the bizarre events behind this notorious marble theft into a subtle and compelling story and, as a reader, you become wrapped up in moral, cultural and political dilemmas. Anker's dazzling and witty style also offers pleasure on every page.



### Publishing details

*Een beschaafde man*  
366 pp, 124.700 words

### Publisher

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**Jan-Willem Anker** (b. 1978) has written three collections of poetry. His debut *Inzinkingen* (Breakdown, 2005) won the Jo Peters poetry prize.

An elegant, well-crafted period piece about an enlightened idealist who believes he can pack eternal beauty into crates.  
– *Vrij Nederland*

Convincing and humorous.  
– *Het Parool*

There is a new novelist on the scene.  
– *NRC Handelsblad*

Photo: Victor Schiferli

# Nelleke Noordervliet

## Free Man

A bold historical novel about the quest for freedom and knowledge, set in the Golden Age and the present day

**In *Free Man*, Nelleke Noordervliet makes full use of the freedom that a storyteller has. In the novel's opening scene she describes her own encounter with her protagonist at the Dutch Reformed Church in Woodstock, New York. Together with this man, Menno Molenaar, who is lost in the 21st century, she travels back to the 17th-century Republic of the Seven United Netherlands.**

Menno Molenaar is the son of a Rotterdam doctor and, like his father, he is fascinated by new scientific insights. He wants to study medicine but, following his father's death, the family's assets prove insufficient. With financial support from the city of Rotterdam, he embarks upon a theology course at the University of Leiden, where he finds himself moving in the same circles as Spinoza and Adriaan Koerbagh. These philosophers and scientists accept him as their equal and stand by him when he is banished from the university for smuggling in a prostitute. Menno is guided not only by high ideals, but also by a weakness for drink and women.

Noordervliet's treatment of historical figures is not without risks for the credibility of the novel, but she brings all of her characters convincingly to life, partly

because of the distinctive voices that she gives them. One such example is Henry Dixon, a hard-of-hearing English merchant who lives in Leiden and who takes Menno into his service and continues to support him – even though Menno eagerly surrenders to his wife's sexual advances. Dixon sends Menno to The Hague to work as a clerk in the service of Grand Pensionary De Witt, where he gathers information about the Republic.

Menno feels constrained by the power that Dixon has over him, but is not overly concerned and still acts as a free agent, passing on information not only to Dixon, but also to Van Aitzema, a diplomat and spy. Menno becomes increasingly entangled in a web of circumstances, which leads to Dixon's murder and Menno's escape to the New World, where he intends to start over.

The ins and outs of life in 17th-century Holland, the politics of the Republic, life as a pioneer in America, historical figures such as Koerbagh, Spinoza and De Witt – all of this is brought beautifully to life in *Free Man*. When the writer puts down her pen and leaves her protagonist behind, what remains for the reader is a sense of longing for the world conjured up by Noordervliet's words.

**Nelleke Noordervliet** (b. 1945) writes both historical novels in the tradition of Hella S. Haasse and novels set in the present day. She has won awards and nominations for her books, which include *Het oog van de engel* (The Eye of the Angel, 1991), *De naam van de vader* (The Name of the Father, 1993), *Uit het paradijs* (Paradise Lost, 1997), *Pelican Bay* (2002) and *Snijpunt* (Intersection, 2008), and also writes stories, essays and autobiographical non-fiction. Her work has been translated into several languages. *Free Man* is her ninth novel.



### Publishing details

*Vrij man* (2012)  
464 pp, ca. 139,000 words

### Publisher

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For translated titles by this author  
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**You should not use essays to defend yourself against those who claim that the novel is dead. What you need to do is press a book like *Free Man* into their hands.**

– *Het Parool*

**Noordervliet sets herself the goal of breaking through the entrenched image of the idyll of the Golden Age and the associated historical clichés [...] She succeeds admirably.**

– *NRC Handelsblad*



Photo: Ernie Enkelaar



# Esther Gerritsen

## Thirst

A pitch-black filmic comedy about a destructive mother-daughter relationship

Esther Gerritsen excels at writing fast, humorous dialogue, which she uses to capture the lack of understanding between people, the ways they deliberately talk at cross purposes so as to edge around each other's problems. *Thirst* is a harrowing story about the impossibility of loving and truly making contact with others, written so drily and pointedly that you regularly laugh out loud as you read.

At the start of the novel, Elisabeth and her adult daughter Coco happen upon each other in the city, on opposite sides of the street. The accidental nature of their meeting is indicative of their estrangement. Elisabeth divorced Coco's father long ago, and contact with her daughter has been scant ever since. She takes the opportunity to share some bad news; she has terminal cancer and not long to live.

It is a message her daughter receives with a mixture of disbelief and indifference. They part rather uneasily ('We must ring each other. We'll ring. Right? Shall we ring?'). The next moment, the mother's bicycle wheel gets caught in the tram rails before she wobbles off to the hairdresser's,

with whom she has the same short conversations every time, again about her illness.

We follow the lives of mother and daughter by turns. Both are conscious of futility and mortality, and they do not become close even after Coco decides to move in with her mother. Nowhere do we read in so many words that they are unhappy, but it is clear from everything they experience. Coco's relationship with her egotistical lover, the chatter at the hairdresser's, a man who sings John Denver lyrics phonetically and an awkward meal at a Chinese restaurant with Coco's stepmother – all are shrouded in a permanent haze of melancholy and alienation.

*Thirst* is an animatedly written, tragicomic novel in which the author is not afraid of putting her finger on the most painful places, whether they have to do with alcoholism, obesity or loveless sex. Elisabeth finds it increasingly hard to lie to her daughter to keep up appearances, and her daughter reconciles herself to her fate: 'Sometimes you start doing something even when you know it will never be enough.'



### Publishing details

*Dorst* (2012)  
224 pp, ca. 41,000 words

### Publisher

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A writing style that grabs you by the throat: clear, rhythmical, humorous and sometimes deeply affecting in its rendition of the characters' trains of thought.

– *de Volkskrant*

Interpersonal communication is an inexhaustible theme, which she has so far managed to develop with great dramatic and indeed great comic ingenuity.  
– *NRC Handelsblad*



Since her debut in 2000, **Esther Gerritsen** (b. 1972) has been considered one of the most promising authors in the Netherlands. In 2005 she was awarded the Dif/BGN prize for her second novel *Normale dagen* (Ordinary Days, 2005). Both *De kleine miezerige god* (The Small, Puny God, 2008) and *Superduif* (Superpigeon, 2010) were nominated for literary prizes and Gerritsen was declared one of the ten best new Dutch writers by the cultural magazine *Hollands Diep*.

Photo: Liesbeth Kuipers

# Arjan Visser

## Hotel Linda

A gripping book about the reliability of memories and a love that lasts a lifetime

**In his new novel *Hotel Linda*, Arjan Visser evokes the world of an old man who is reflecting upon the course that his life took long ago, when he was rescued from the Nazis but left a lover behind. The Second World War, the diamond trade and a hotel owner play key roles in this subtle story about memory and the passing of time.**

Jonah Jacobson is an old man when he flies from Brazil via Munich to the Netherlands, sixty years after sailing in the opposite direction on a ship, on his way to freedom. He has never revisited his homeland, not wanting to look back. Of course he knows that most of his family disappeared in the Holocaust, but the news that the last member of his family, a cousin, has died prompts him to take this journey back to the past.

Slowly, the true circumstances behind Jacobson's reason for embarking upon his journey after so many years becomes clear. Jacobson has unfinished business. He takes up residence in Hotel Linda, hoping to meet a certain woman. They were once

supposed to escape together, but shots were fired and she was wounded – a jealous rival? – and he just kept on going. What happened next is not clear at first and the reader has to put together the pieces of the puzzle.

Jacobson, frail and forgetful, becomes increasingly lost in a forest of confusing memories. What still remains of the city where he once lived, a city where he knows the streets, but not the people? What happened to the woman who shares the name of the hotel where he is staying and to whom he never spoke again? He sent her diamonds from Brazil, but anonymously, so that she never knew who they were from.

Will he ever be able to tell her that he was the one who sent her the precious stones to help her? Or should he, as Marcus Aurelius has taught him, not expect gratitude for his good deeds? Jacobson poses philosophical questions about love and happiness, friendship and betrayal, life and death. *Hotel Linda* is a gripping, mysterious novel about two people who were driven apart forever.



### Publishing details

*Hotel Linda* (2012)  
232 pp, 62,000 words

### Publisher

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**Arjan Visser** won the Anton Wachterprijs, the Geert Jan Lubberhuizenprijs and a nomination for the AKO Literatuurprijs shortlist for his debut *De laatste dagen* (The Last Days, 2003). His second novel *Hemelval* (Fall From Heaven) came out in 2006, followed in 2009 by *Paganinipark*. *Hotel Linda* is his fourth novel.

Visser beautifully depicts an old man slipping slowly out of life, with the line between imagination and memory, past and present, life and death becoming increasingly blurred.  
– *NRC Handelsblad*

A beautiful and gentle novel about reflection and memory.  
– *Trouw*

The story completely gripped me. A novel that is as ingenious as it is rich.  
– *Kees van Beijnum*

Photo: Mark Kohn

# Peter Terrin

## Post Mortem

The all-consuming love of a father for his daughter and for literature

***Post Mortem*, a new highlight in his work, is the first of Terrin's novels to be centred on a dramatic event in his own life. The book is a crafty interplay of imagination and reality, taking the reader on a trip through a literary hall of mirrors. A surprising narrative situation is at the root of this literary tour de force.**

Emiel Steegman, an unknown writer with touches of Peter Terrin, is seeking a way to escape a compulsory dinner with Estonian colleagues. Although things are plodding along quite happily, he cancels at the last moment 'due to a rather difficult time for the family'.

A nasty feeling immediately comes over him: is he inviting trouble for his family in doing so? And what if a biographer stumbled on this? Would he not then suspect that something significant had happened in his life? The thought gives him a great idea for a new novel about a successful author, T, who becomes famous with an existential crime novel and increasingly worries about what his future biographer will write about him, so he withdraws entirely from public life.

And so Terrin sets the stage for his double play with fiction and reality. Because fate does strike. One afternoon, his daughter Renée falls asleep and it is impossible to wake her. In the hospital she is diagnosed with a brain stroke. Fiction overtakes reality. In this second part of this novel, Steegman describes the weeks following the stroke. It is a blow for blow account of the hospital life Steegman's family is leading at that moment.

In the third part, the narrative situation shifts surprisingly to the biography of Steegman, who has by then gained international fame with the novel 'T'. The biographer watches home videos of and with Steegman and Renée, who is working hard on her convalescence, in the hope of discovering more about Steegman's secret, which concerns the murder or suicide of a woman Steegman knew in his youth and whom he describes in 'T'. But is that death fact or fiction? And how is Steegman trying to influence his biographer by sending him videos?

*Post Mortem* is an equally intense and ingenious novel about a writer's inspiration, a father's love for his daughter and a man's fear of losing his life after his death.



### Publishing details

Post Mortem (2012)  
283 pp, 62.000 words

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**An ingenious, rich book, beautifully put together.**  
– *Dagblad van het Noorden*

**It's like looking through a kaleidoscope [...]**  
**Dazzlingly poetic perspectives [...]** A shrewd story about the illusion of fiction [...] It is surely no coincidence that it is this fact that is so beautifully embodied in the character of Renée. She is Terrin's stroke of genius.  
– *de Volkskrant*

***Post Mortem* is not only the blood-curdling account of a father in agony but also a novel about a writer. A peerlessly impressive novel. A True hall of mirrors.**  
– *VPRO Gids*



**Peter Terrin** (b. 1968) is building a remarkably consistent oeuvre, which has already earned him comparisons with such writers as Franz Kafka and Albert Camus. *De Bewaker* (The Guard, 2009) won him the European Union Literature Prize, establishing his great talent. *Post Mortem* is, for the first time, centred on a dramatic event in his own life. At the same time, he plays a crafty game with imagination and reality.

Photo: Stefan Vanfleteren



Peter Verhelst

# The Very Last Caracara in the World

A magical novel about vulnerable man in the wide, wide world

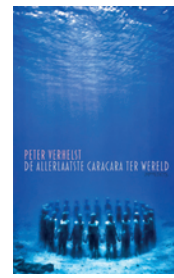
For years, the lonely, tormented doctor, Victor Duval, has been living on a magnificent tropical island. And not by chance, as one will find out. He is the main character in this enchanting tale of love, repression and migration. Unexpected events slowly but surely bring secrets from the past and present to the surface with a fatal outcome for Duval and everyone around him.

The caracara is not only a rapacious falcon; on this island it is also a devastating wind. It heralds approaching doom.

The Belgian Doctor Duval moved to the island paradise years ago. Together with the priest, Coriolan, and the Madame from the coffee house, he involves himself in the destiny of Cassandra, the girl who stands constantly at the water-line since her beloved was lost at sea. She looks out silently over the waves, or evokes all the winds of the island in an intoxicating litany.

Life on the island is abruptly disturbed when not only several whales are washed, but also a number of women and girls who are unable to speak. Are they boat refugees? In the commotion, a hidden past of occupation and repression comes to light: Cassandra is the daughter of Madame and a wanted rebel. When she was born, Duval's father, a hard-hearted officer in the occupying army, pressurised Madame into giving up her baby. History repeats itself, old scores are settled. The current rulers avenge themselves and Madame, Cassandra and all the women mysteriously lose their lives.

An inconsolable Duval, who turns out to have had a special relationship with Cassandra, wants to leave the island, but is killed in a flying boat accident. All this takes place amidst the glorious light and intense scents and colours bursting from each page.



## Publishing details

*De allerlaatste caracara ter wereld* (2012)  
155 pp, 28.000 words

## Publisher

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**Peter Verhelst** (b. 1962) is one of the most original top authors in the Dutch language. He gained fame as a poet, theatre writer and novelist. He is known for his sensual prose, rich with imagery, and his fairytale imagination. He writes like 'music that takes us back to the time when we were unable to speak, but sang'.

It would be difficult to surpass the vividness of Verhelst's prose.  
– *De Standaard*

The humanity and compassion of Verhelst's description of man's philosophical quest [for a place in the world] is reminiscent of Albert Camus' *The Plague* and José Saramago's *The City of the Blind*.  
– *De Morgen*

Photo: Patrick de Spiegelaere

# Kisling & Verhuyck

## Black Lace

Eighteenth-century eroticism and bloody history in a literary biblio-thriller

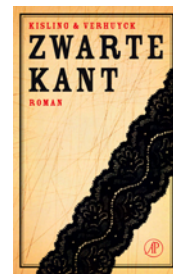
A garter belonging to Marie Antoinette and a collection of pornographic sonnets by Pietro Aretino have roles to play in the latest thriller from Dutch-Flemish writing team Kisling & Verhuyck. *Black Lace* grippingly combines the history of the French Revolution with a blood feud in a village in the Dordogne.

Anyone who is tired of the standard plots of literary thrillers – woman takes revenge on bad guys, likeable inspector solves murder mystery, journalist unravels political conspiracy – is sure to enjoy *Black Lace*, a well-written whodunnit that begins with a mysterious death in a French castle.

Nora Blanker works at a prominent antiquarian bookshop in Amsterdam. During her holiday, she takes part in a philologists' conference about eighteenth-century pamphlets at a castle in the Périgord. Then the body of a professor who was supposed to give a talk on erotic cartoons is found lying on a four-poster bed that once belonged to the last French

king... As the police investigate whether the professor was murdered, the organisers of the conference quickly try to find a replacement for him. The talk subsequently given by this substitute sets in motion a stream of events that ends in violence and bloodshed. In the meantime, the reader has learned all kinds of interesting details about the French Revolution, the tragic fate of Marie Antoinette, the medieval troubadours and the art of printing.

Kisling & Verhuyck's *Black Lace*, whose title refers to the garter that Marie Antoinette was wearing when she died on the guillotine, is a literary variation on the work of Agatha Christie, Dan Brown and Ross King. Although royal relics play a role in their novel, much of the intrigue involves a rare copy of Aretino's sonnets. Knowledge of the Middle Ages and early-modern period permeates the entire book, without ever breaking the tension or spoiling the pleasure – because the authors have succeeded in presenting their plot in a most elegant fashion.



### Publishing details

*Zwarte kant* (2011)  
272 pages, 84.848 words

### Publisher

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A story that, like their previous books, is rich in its language, content, imagination, plot and originality.

– *de Volkskrant*

Few authors have succeeded in connecting bloodcurdling historic events to the present day as cleverly as Kisling & Verhuyck [...] The atmosphere they evoke is vivid, the language is beautifully crafted, the plot is original and intelligent, while the storyline is unconventional.

– *Crimezone.nl*



All of the novels written by the husband-and-wife team **Kisling & Verhuyck** – crime novelist Corine Kisling (b. 1954) and literary scholar Paul Verhuyck (b. 1940) – enter into a dialogue with the past. In *Kwelgeest* (Geest, 2007), the intrigue involved a missing section of the 15th-century manuscript of *Tijl Uilenspiegel*, while *De duim van Alva* (Alva's Thumb, 2010) revolved around the bloody and haunting legacy of the Spanish Iron Duke in the city of Antwerp. Their plots are intelligent, the prose is well paced and the authors take obvious pleasure in creating lines of connection throughout the history of Western Europe.

Photo: Richard Praast

# Leon de Winter

## VSV, or Acts of Kindness

A surprising and cinematic page-turner in which De Winter plays with the boundary between fiction and reality

In this thrilling novel, bestselling author Leon de Winter describes how radical Muslims in Amsterdam blow up the town hall and opera house and hijack a plane before taking the children and teachers at a school (VSV) hostage. Theo van Gogh, the filmmaker and polemicist who was murdered by a Muslim in 2004, plays a special role as the guardian angel of the man who has to bring the hostage situation to a successful conclusion.

In VSV, De Winter describes a fictitious but not implausible series of attacks by Muslim extremists. The protagonist is Max Kohn, a former criminal who has spent the past ten years in Las Vegas, losing himself in drink, drugs and prostitutes. But after a heart operation he decides that he wants to turn his life around. He returns to Amsterdam to reconcile with the love of his life, Sonja Verstraete, a doctor. Kohn had Sonja's father, a property magnate, killed in retaliation for an attempt on his own life.

What Kohn does not know is that Sonja

is the mother of his son, who is one of the hostages that he has to free. His partner in this mission is Kichie Ouaziz, who was once Kohn's right-hand man and did his dirty work for him. Kichie also has an interest in ensuring a positive outcome; his son is the leader of the terrorists. At a crucial moment in their joint operation to rescue the children and teachers, they are aided by Van Gogh, in the form of a guardian angel who subtly influences the situation, so that the special forces unit can successfully intervene.

While building up to this climax of the novel, De Winter introduces a host of fictitious and real characters, including himself – all with their own motives and background story. As in much of De Winter's work, some of them are struggling with their Jewish identity.

VSV is far more than just a contemporary thriller about events that may seem far-fetched. De Winter presents a carefully crafted tale that feels both plausible and realistic.



### Publishing details

*VSV of Daden van onbaatzuchtigheid* (2012)  
428 pp, 113.700 words

### Publisher

De Bezige Bij  
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### Rights

Diogenes

For translated titles by this author  
see [www.letterenfonds.nl/translations](http://www.letterenfonds.nl/translations)

This will be De Winter's summer.  
– *de Volkskrant*

De Winter is a master at uniting opposites. His cinematic, tightly rhythmic style is a perfect fit for this unique divine comedy in which the writer, at lightning speed, goes in search of light and enlightenment for everyone.  
– *De Morgen*

De Winter immediately grabs hold of the reader and does not let him go.  
– *Nederlands Dagblad*



**Leon de Winter** (b. 1954) is the author of a large number of successful novels, which have been translated into other languages, including German, French, Italian, Russian and Spanish. Many of his novels, such as *The Hollywood Sign* and *Hoffman's Hunger*, have been made into movies. De Winter himself has often been directly involved in these film adaptations, as the director, screenwriter or producer. He is also a high-profile political commentator, whose columns and essays have been published in Dutch periodicals and newspapers, as well as in German titles such as *Die Welt* and *Der Spiegel*.

Photo: Patrick de Spiegelaere



# Kristien Dieltiens

## Cellar Child

The mystery of Kaspar Hauser unravelled

**Kaspar Hauser has intrigued historians, writers and artists for centuries. The teenage Kaspar appeared out of the blue in Nuremberg in 1828, hardly able to speak or walk, and was murdered a few years later. Kristien Dieltiens has constructed a masterful novel around Kaspar's life.**

*Cellar Child* begins with an impressive scene that grips the reader and refuses to let go until the breathtaking finale 480 pages later. This extraordinarily rich book is not only captivating and exciting; it also paints a vivid psychological portrait of two outcasts, both rejected by society.

In addition to Kaspar, we follow the trail of Manfred, a boy of lowly origins, born with a hare lip. He is bullied and excluded and his mother's intense love is not enough to stop him developing into a recluse. The

adult Manfred still longs for the slightest gesture of friendship and love. Years of bullying and abuse by his stepfather have left their mark. His vulnerability makes him a perfect pawn for evil. He has been hardened by life, but is totally naïve nonetheless; filled with hate yet frightened as a rabbit.

Dieltiens' fiftieth novel is a true literary page turner, which boasts perfect timing with alternating moments of suspense and reflection. The author avoids the cheap sentiment and heavy emotions such a plot might incline. She often turns aside from the story at the most intense moments, briefly allowing the reader to imagine the impact of the events on the characters. This is part of what makes *Cellar Child* an enthralling novel that lingers long after the last page.



### Publishing details

*Kelderkind* (2012)  
496 pages, 98,359 words  
15+

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www.eenhoorn.be

For translated titles by this author  
see [www.letterenfonds.nl/](http://www.letterenfonds.nl/translations)  
translations



**Kristien Dieltiens** (b. 1954) is at her best when writing historical novels. Just like *Cellar Child*, *Papinette*, *Olrac* and *Candide* are interwoven with historical facts and customs. Her debut *De Gouden Bal* (The Golden Ball, 1997) centres on the death of a child. Since then, she has published forty-nine books, seven of which have been translated into a total of nine languages. Typical of her writing are lively portrayals of the past and psychologically complex characters, of which Manfred Ostheim from *Cellar Child* is a most intriguing example.

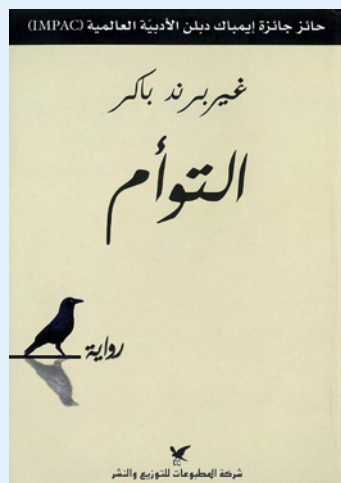
A state of pure literary  
pleasure  
– *Iedereenleest.be*

*Cellar Child* is an epic story  
about life and identity that  
is hard to put down  
– *De Morgen*

Kristien Dieltiens masters  
the complex story in what  
can easily be called her  
magnum opus  
– *De Standaard*

Photo: Bas Bogaerts

## Recent Translations



Gerbrand Bakker  
**The Twin**

*Boven is het stil*

Published in Arabic by All Prints. Translated by Antoine Bassil. Also in: Catalan, Chinese, Danish, English, Finnish, French, German, Hebrew, Italian, Korean, Norwegian, Spanish and Turkish. In preparation: Afrikaans, Croatian, Czech, Hungarian, and Serbian.



Stefan Brijis  
**The Angel Maker**

*De engelenmaker*

Published in Danish by Turbine. Translated by Lise Bøgh-Sørensen and Gudrun Gilhuis-Glenthøj. Also in: English, French, German, Greek, Hebrew, Hungarian, Italian, Russian, Spanish and Turkish. In preparation: Chinese.



Peter Buwalda  
**Bonita Avenue**

*Bonita Avenue*

Published in Italian by Mondadori. Translated by Laura Pignatti. In preparation: Czech, English, French, German, Hungarian and Spanish.



Remco Campert  
**Life is Grrreat**

*Het leven is vurrukkulluk*

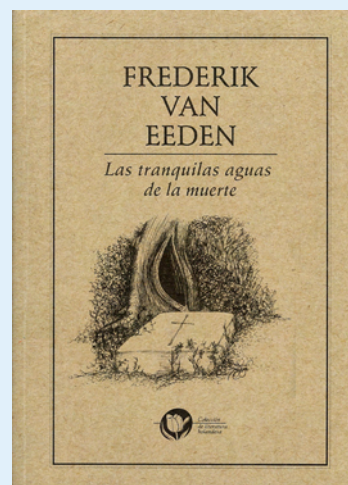
Published in Italian by Elliot. Translated by David Santoro.



Louis Couperus  
**Psyche**

*Psyche*

Published in Macedonian by Ikona. Translated by Eli Doeze. Also in: English, French, Hungarian and Slovak.



Frederik van Eeden  
**The Deepes of Deliverance**

*Van de koele meren des doods*

Published in Spanish by Ediciones del Ermitaño. Translated by Goedeke de Sterck. Also in: English, German and Urdu.



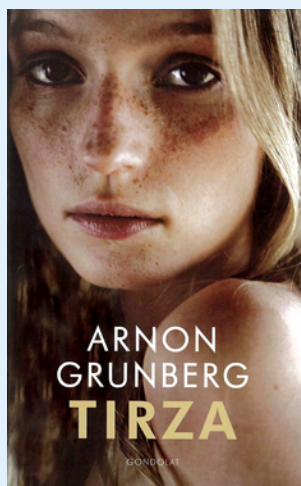
## Recent Translations



Laia Fàbregas  
**Landing**

*Landen*

Published in French by Actes Sud. Translated by Arlette Ounanian. Also in: Catalan. In preparation: Spanish and Turkish.



Arnon Grunberg  
**Tirza**

*Tirza*

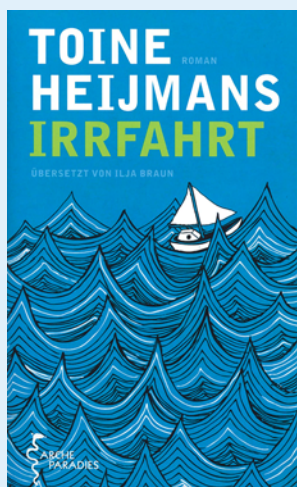
Published in Hungarian by Gondolat. Translated by Szabolcs Wekerle. Also in: Arabic, Bosnian, Czech, French, German, Greek, Hebrew, Italian and Turkish. In preparation: Afrikaans, Croatian, Danish, English, Russian and Serbian.



Hella S. Haasse  
**The black lake**

*Oeroeg*

Published in English by Portobello Books. Translated by Ina Rilke. Also in: French, German, Hungarian, Indonesian, Italian, Polish, Romanian, Serbo-Croatian and Welsh.



Toine Heijmans  
**At Sea**

*Op zee*

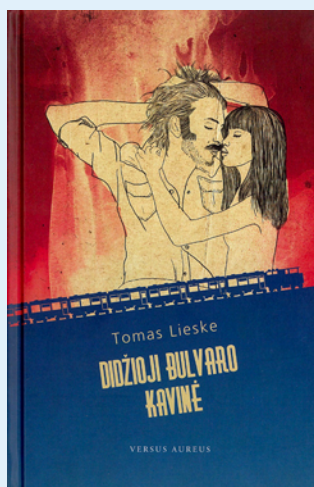
Published in German by Arche. Translated by Ilja Braun. Also in: Hungarian. In preparation: French.



Herman Koch  
**Summerhouse with Swimming Pool**

*Zomerhuis met zwembad*

Published in Catalan by Ara Llibres. Translated by Maria Rosich Andreu. Also in: German, Hebrew, Icelandic, Italian, Norwegian and Spanish. In preparation: Chinese, French and Russian.



Tomas Lieske  
**Gran Café Boulevard**

*Gran Café Boulevard*

Published in Lithuanian by Versus Aureus. Translated by Antanas Gailius. Also in: German.



## Recent Translations



Margriet de Moor  
**The Painter and the Girl**

*De schilder en het meisje*

Published in French by Libella/Maren Sell.  
Translated by Annie Kroon. Also in: Czech,  
German, Slovenian and Ukrainian. In  
preparation: Danish and Italian.



K. Schippers  
**Where Were You?**

*Waar was je nou?*

Published in Romanian by Univers.  
Translated by Alexa Stoicescu.



Peter Terrin  
**The Guard**

*De bewaker*

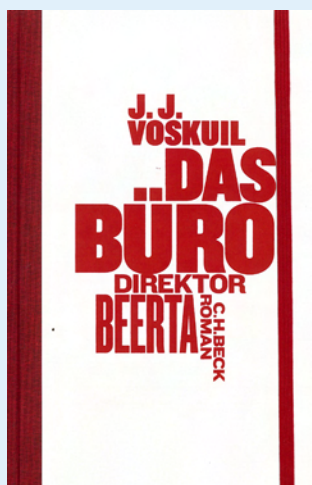
Published in Hebrew by Carmel. Translated  
by Ran HaCohen. Also in: Czech and  
Serbian. In preparation: Bulgarian, English,  
French, Hungarian, Italian, Romanian and  
Slovenian.



Franca Treur  
**Confetti on the Threshing Floor**

*Dorsvloer vol confetti*

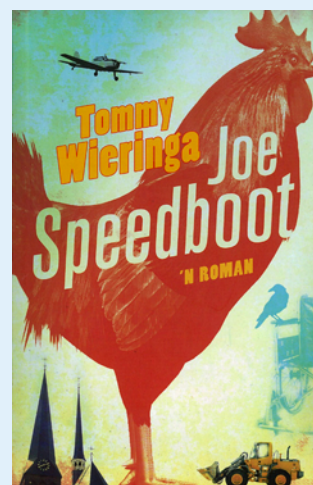
Published in Portuguese by Livros de Safra.  
Translated by Cristiano Zwieseles do Amaral.



J.J. Voskuil  
**The Bureau**

*Het bureau*

Published in German by C.H. Beck.  
Translated by Gerd Busse.



Tommy Wieringa  
**Joe Speedboat**

*Joe Speedboot*

Published in Afrikaans by Queillerie.  
Translated by Zandra Bezuidenhout.  
Also in: Croatian, Czech, Danish, English,  
Finnish, French, German, Hebrew, Italian,  
Korean, Polish, Portuguese and Spanish. In  
preparation: Hindi.

Arnon Grunberg  
*The Man without Illness*

Nelleke Noordervliet  
*Free Man*

Arjan Visser  
*Hotel Linda*

Peter Verhelst  
*The Very Last Caracara in  
the World*

Leon de Winter  
*VSV, or Acts of Kindness*

Jan-Willem Anker  
*A Civilised Man*

Esther Gerritsen  
*Thirst*

Peter Terrin  
*Post Mortem*

Kisling & Verhuyck  
*Black Lace*

Kristien Dieltiens  
*Cellar Child*



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