

Children's Books from Holland a selection from 2005



Foundation for
the Production and
Translation of
Dutch Literature

A remarkable year

2005 was a remarkable year in many respects. Guus Kuijer won the Gouden Griffel, the prize for the best children's book of the year, for the fourth time – never before has a writer been honoured in this way. Max Velthuijs was the first Dutch illustrator to be awarded the Hans Christian Andersen Prize; not long afterwards, he died at the age of eighty-one. There were anniversaries, birthdays, special debuts, original educational books and some really eye-catching titles for young people. All in all, 2005 was certainly not a bad year for children's literature in the Netherlands. An impression:

Celebrations

Ingrid and Dieter Schubert, a husband-and-wife team of illustrators, set the ball rolling in January with *Krokodil is jarig* (*Crocodile's Birthday*), a picture book celebrating twenty-five years of their collaboration, and a large retrospective exhibition at Kasteel Groeneveld. The Schuberts have been creating picture books together since 1980, inspiring, complementing and correcting each other's work, without giving the outside world precise information about who does what in a book. Animals play an important role in their picture books, which have been translated into over twenty languages. Their choice of original perspectives, the many details and the visual jokes ensure that there is always a lot to see in their drawings. In December 2005 they were amongst the thirteen illustrators presented at the exhibition *Dutch Treats* at the UBS Gallery in New York. From April 2006 this exhibition will be on display at the Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art in Amherst.

In March, **Paul Biegel**, also known as the master storyteller with the heart of a highwayman, celebrated his eightieth birthday. Biegel has written more than fifty children's books, mostly set in a fairytale fantasy world full of princesses, highwaymen and gnomes. He is a linguistic virtuoso who does magic with sounds and rhythm, regularly adding new words to the Dutch language. Biegel's work has won many awards and back in 1973 he won the 'Staatsprijs voor kinder- en jeugdliteratuur' (the highest literary distinction, which is awarded once every three years for the oeuvre of an author of children's books). A special edition of his debut *De gouden gitaar* (*The Golden Guitar*) was published to celebrate his eightieth birthday. Last year also saw the publication of *Wegloop* (*Runaway*, see p. 9), a cleverly told story about a boy with an irresistible urge to run away.

In the summer, **Rita Verschuur** celebrated her seventieth birthday. Verschuur, who translated nearly all of Astrid Lindgren's books for children, has written more than twenty children's books herself. Many of these stories are about her own childhood, such as *Moeder en God en ik* (*Mother and God and I*), published in 2005, in which little Rita puts up a fight against the beliefs of her strictly Protestant stepmother. In short, vivid chapters, she looks back on her experiences just after the war. Verschuur chooses her words carefully; her style is gently poetic, her humour subtle.

2005 concluded with the celebration of **Tonke Dragt's** seventy-fifth birthday. The combination of adventure, fantasy and philosophical questions in her books means that her magical tales, often set in an indeterminate past or in the distant future, are rightly seen in the tradition of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis and Michael Ende. Dragt's work has been translated from Spain to Japan and has also been awarded the state prize for children's literature. Last year saw the publication of the collection *Het dansende licht* (*The Dancing Light*), which contains a number of previously unpublished stories.

Finally, there was the announcement of **Wim Hofman's** sixty-fifth birthday in February 2006. Hofman's talent is versatile: he is not only an author and illustrator of children's books, but also a poet and an artist. He takes his inspiration from the whimsical imaginations of Edward Lear and Lewis Carroll and the spontaneous, naïve art of Paul Klee, the Cobra group and African artists. Hofman has translated Jacques Prévert's (children's) poems and written a number of spectacular adaptations of well-known fairytales, with endings that are considerably less rosy than in the expurgated versions of Charles Perrault and the Brothers Grimm. Wim Hofman's books have won award after award, both for the stories and for the illustrations. His birthday is being marked by an exhibition at the Literature Museum and by the beautifully illustrated anthology *Van Aap tot Zip* (*From Ape to Zip*).

Aren't young Dutch readers lucky!

The anniversaries and birthdays of these writers and artists underline the rich tradition of children's books and picture books in the Netherlands. However, it wasn't only those well-known authors who made their presence felt in 2005. The first half of the year saw the publication of a trio of remarkable debut works. *Rits* by **Mariken Jongman**, *Kies mij!* (*Choose Me!*) by **Dirk Weber** and *Joshua Joshua Tango* by **Robert Wolfe** are all original, well-written stories that have had praise heaped upon

them by the Dutch press. Sample translations of all three are available.

And then there were the authors whose first books were published a while ago, but who have not yet been working for so long that their birthday is the cause for a big party. **Floortje Zwigtman**, for example, author of the lengthy novel *Schijnbewegingen* (*Tricks of the Trade*), set in Victorian London. Zwigtman has previously written impressive historical books with daring themes for young people, but never has she written as convincingly as in this most recent book. Dutch reviewers agree that this is *the* Dutch children's book of 2005 (see p. 12). Karlijn Stoffels has cornered the market on sulky adolescents. In 2005, however, she surprised her readers with a fairytale story about love. This time she's not writing about young people who view the world around them with distance and sarcasm, but about Bennik, a singer of sorrows who offers comfort wherever there is grief. In *Koningsdochter, zeemanslief* (*King's Daughter, Sailor's Sweetheart*), Stoffels has followed a new avenue, further demonstrating what a great writer she is (see p. 13).

The biggest surprise of 2005 came from the prolific **Lydia Rood**, who not only published *Sprong in de leegte* (*A Leap into the Void*), a moving story about a highly gifted girl who is struggling to deal with an event from the past, but also wrote the novella *Kus* (*Kiss*), a balanced father-daughter portrait and, according to the daily newspaper *Trouw* 'a little masterpiece'. Young Dutch readers are very lucky to have such a rich and varied selection of high-quality children's literature (see p. 8).

The advance of non-fiction

An interesting development can currently be seen in literature for adults – the sharp dividing line between fiction and non-fiction appears to be blurring. Writers such as Geert Mak and Annejet van der Zijl are using literary techniques to describe reality, aiming first and foremost at an emotional response. The new genre is proving popular, achieving sales of over 100,000 copies.

There is also talk of change in children's literature. Whilst until recently non-fiction for children consisted mainly of collections of facts, increasingly it is the story behind things that is being told nowadays, and more attention is being paid to style. The difference from adult literature is primarily in the choice of subjects; whilst adult literature always focuses on

the story of people, the focus in children's books is often on animals.

A highpoint in 2005 was *Rundreis om de wereld* (*Cows around the World*) by **Bibi Dumon Tak**, in which the cow is the starting point for describing differences between countries and cultures. Even people who aren't the biggest fans of cows couldn't help but enjoy this beautiful, well-written book.

The horse is a considerably more popular animal than the cow and therefore less daring as a subject for a children's book. But *Het paardenboek* (*The Horse Book*) by **Hans and Monique Hagen** also deserves a recommendation because of its original approach and the unconventional aspects that it features: the horse whisperer, the Trojan horse, the company that destroys dead horses.

Finally, there is the picture book *Kriebelpoten* (*Creepy Crawlies*) by **Hans Post** and **Irene Goede**. Like the cat goes on a voyage of discovery in the garden and meets all sorts of creepy crawlies on her travels. Factual information about the insects is provided alongside the story. Irene Goede's illustrations are reminiscent of old school posters. Fact and fiction go hand in hand in this book, which combines education and emotion.

One of a kind

Not all books can be categorised within a theme or genre. Two projects deserve extra attention because of their unique character. Firstly, there are **Gottmer's cd books**. For a number of years, this publishing house has been bringing out packages of picture books in combination with cds. The book tells the story of a piece of classical music and is read out by a famous Dutch person on the cd and accompanied by the piece of music. Well-known illustrators ensure that there is also a lot for the eye to enjoy. The series makes such pieces as *Peter and the Wolf*, *Swan Lake* and *The Nutcracker* accessible for a young audience.

And to return to the illustrators once more: 2005 saw a new edition of *Grimm's Fairytales*. Uitgeverij Lemniscaat had the two hundred fairytales retranslated and asked **Charlotte Dematons** to provide illustrations. The result is an enchanting book with over four hundred full-colour drawings. 'A book that lasts a lifetime and deserves a place next to the Bible in every home,' said the *Volkskrant* newspaper.

So, there was a great deal to enjoy in 2005 – for both younger and older readers it was a year of beautiful books, of special books and sometimes even of especially beautiful books.

Joukje Akveld

Prizes 2005

Gouden Griffel

Het boek van alle dingen – Guus Kuijer Querido

Gouden Penseel

Beer is op vlinder – Annemarie van Haeringen Leopold

Woutertje Pieterse Prijs

2005 Waar is de taart – Thé Tjong-Khin Lannoo

De Gouden Uil Jeugdliteratuurprijs

Het boek van alle dingen – Guus Kuijer Querido



Title **Bang Mannetje**

Scaredy Cat

Text **Mathilde Stein**

Illustrations **Mies van Hout**

Age **6+**

Pages **28**

After years of domination by coloured pen-and-ink drawings, painting has definitely made a comeback amongst the younger generation of Dutch illustrators. *Bang Mannetje* (Scaredy Cat) by first-time children's author Mathilde Stein and illustrator Mies van Hout was tipped for the top as last year's most beautiful picture book. Van Hout uses dazzling pastels to depict the story of a boy who doesn't dare to wear his favourite flowery trousers because he's scared that people might laugh at him. She subtly gives depth to her gouaches by sometimes turning them into collages using her own material. Her work combines the good points of drawing with the good points of painting and the good points of collage: solid lines, warm colours, sharpness and depth. The result is a unique style with a clear identity.

Pjotr van Lenteren

Mathilde Stein studied at the Arts Academy in France. She lives in the Netherlands, where she works as a communication and organisation adviser.

Mies van Hout (b. 1962) is a graphic designer. She trained as a drawing teacher and did an evening course in graphic design. Since 1989 she has worked as a freelance illustrator. She has created a variety of books for pre-schoolers and has illustrated a number of reading books. *Bang Mannetje* is her first real picture book.

'Definitely the most beautiful picture book of the year.'
de Volkskrant

'This picture storybook is good for a whole lot of smiles.'
Leeuwarder Courant

Publisher
Lemniscaat
Vijverlaan 48
3062 HL Rotterdam
Tel: +31 (0)10 206 29 29
www.lemniscat.nl

Contact for rights:
Sarah Breimer
sarah@lemniscat.nl

Title **Bijna jarig**

It's Almost my Birthday

Text **Imme Dros**

Illustrations **Harrie Geelen**

Age **4+**

Pages **30**

Plucky pre-schooler Ella can't wait for her birthday and is terribly curious about the mysterious present up in the attic. When she finds a ladder leaning against the side of the house, Ella climbs up on to the roof with her friend Lucy and looks through the attic window. And then she sees her secret present, which hasn't been wrapped yet... Imme Dros convincingly captures the birthday excitement and anticipation, followed shortly afterwards by the pangs of Ella's guilty conscience. The illustrations by Harrie Geelen (Imme Dros's husband) make this book really appealing as a picture book. Geelen depicts Ella both touchingly and believably in an attractive, nostalgic children's world full of sunshine. And he really went to town when he painted Ella's doll's house.

Truusje Vrooland-Löb

Imme Dros (b. 1936) A prolific literary author, Imme Dros has published books for children of all ages since 1971. She has also translated and adapted titles including Homer's *Odyssey* and *Iliad* and has written a number of plays for children. She has won many Dutch prizes for children's literature.

Harrie Geelen (b. 1939) A successful multidisciplinary artist, Harrie Geelen writes, paints, directs films, makes animated films, adverts, children's television series, children's operas, translates, produces plays, makes his own picture books and illustrates many of the books written by his wife Imme Dros.

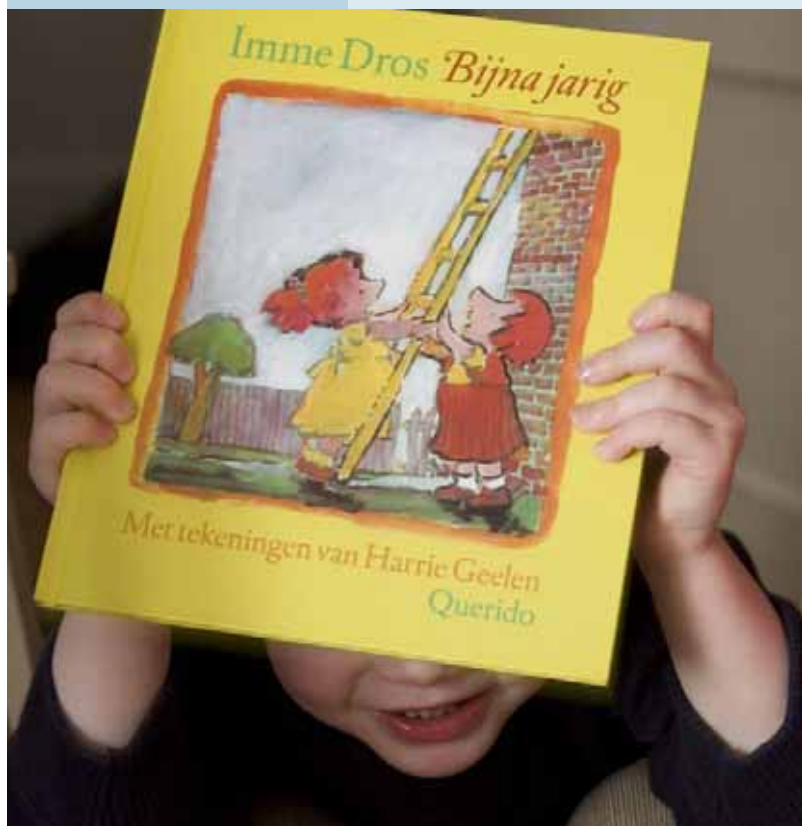
'Bijna jarig is an exceptionally beautiful book.'
AD Magazine

'Dros also unobtrusively incorporates a wonderfully wise lesson: honesty is always the best policy.'
AD Magazine

Woutertje Pieterse Prijs

Publisher
Querido
Singel 262
1016 AC Amsterdam
Tel: +31 (0)20 551 12 62
www.queridokind.nl

Contact for rights:
Lucienne van der Leije
l.van.der.leije@querido.nl



Title **Pikkuhenki**

A Little Spirit

Text **Toon Tellegen**

Illustrator **Marit Törnqvist**

Age **6+**

Pages **30**

Pikkuhenki, is a classic and unusual fairytale about two young heroes, Pikkuhenki and Iwan, who 'long ago, in a land far from here' set off into the world, where they are confronted with fear, sadness, doubt, light and darkness and, strengthened by their travels, turn safely homewards.

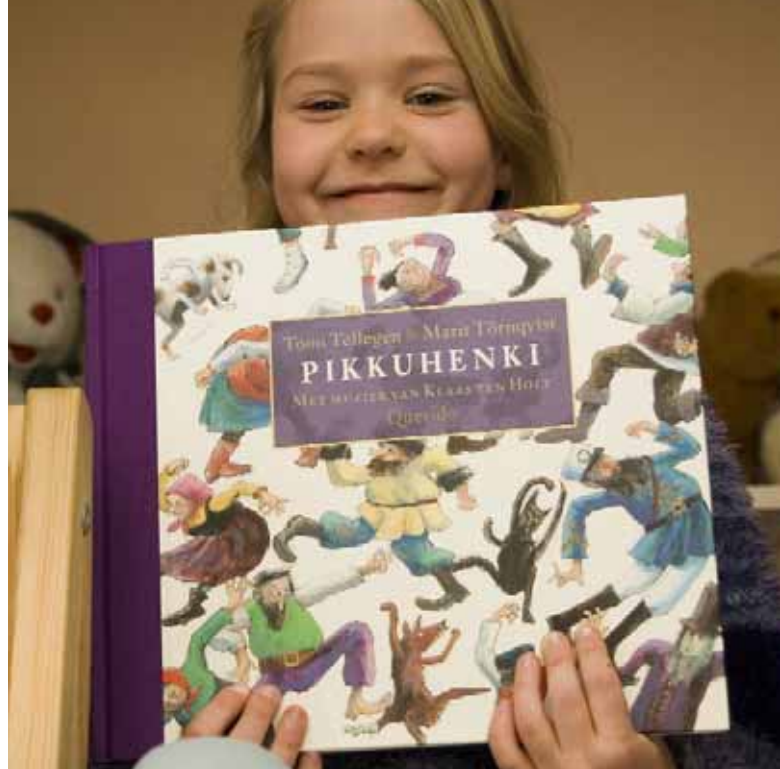
Iwan has lost his mother in an unknown country that is ruled by a tyrannical emperor. Pikkuhenki (Finnish for 'a little spirit') is a tiny invisible witch whose minuscule size makes her doubt her status as a witch. Her invisibility means that Pikkuhenki can fly into people's thoughts via their nose or ear and can influence them. Floating around in the heads and thoughts of people and animals, she haphazardly tries out her powers. When Pikkuhenki meets Iwan one day and flies around amongst his sad thoughts 'about being smacked and going to bed without dinner, and about dying and never going back home and about freezing', she changes Iwan into a hero, who frees the land from the cold-blooded emperor and finds his mother again.

One of Tellegen's original ideas is Pikkuhenki's invisibility. This means that readers have the freedom to complete the story by using their own imagination – and so do listeners, because *Pikkuhenki* is not only a fairytale told in words and pictures in a book, but also has a marvellous musical accompaniment on cd (composed by Klaas ten Holt).

Törnqvist and Ten Holt complete Tellegen's story. Törnqvist's strong illustrations, with their sense of colour, reflect Tellegen's text, sometimes in a very detailed way. The people who Pikkuhenki saw 'dancing and kissing and shutting each other away for a hundred years in castles covered with roses' are all there, for example, depicted subtly and with a nod towards Grimm's fairytales, just as Tellegen does with his words.

Tellegen's story and voice, Törnqvist's atmospheric illustrations and Ten Holt's spectacular composition for wind instruments, percussion, violin and double bass reinforce each other wonderfully and demonstrate how successfully text, picture and music can be integrated.

Mirjam Noorduijn



When he was fifteen, **Toon Tellegen** (b. 1941) wrote a poem about a square ball. Tellegen says: 'I already knew that in a poem you had to say everything differently from the way it really was.' This attitude is typical of Tellegen, who works not only as a poet and author, but also as a doctor. His collections of poetry, award-winning animal stories and tales such as *Juffrouw Kachel* are very original. Tellegen has won all of the important awards for children's books. *Pikkuhenki* once again demonstrates his mastery of the craft.

Marit Törnqvist, born in Sweden in 1964, studied illustration at the Gerrit Rietveld Academie in Amsterdam. Törnqvist, who designed the three-dimensional journey through Astrid Lindgren's work at the Junibacken children's cultural centre in Stockholm, illustrates other people's work and also creates her own books. Her *Klein verhaal over liefde* won a Zilveren Griffel, one of the major Dutch awards. Törnqvist's work is always most impressive, but in *Pikkuhenki* she surpasses herself.

'Astounding illustrations, each of which makes you think that Marit Törnqvist must possess supernatural powers.'
Provinciale Zeeuwse Courant

'Toon Tellegen, the writer-philosopher, at his best.'
Vrij Nederland

'A modern fairytale that embraces traditional fairytales with one sweeping gesture.'
Vrij Nederland

Publisher
Querido
Singel 262
1016 AC Amsterdam
Tel: +31 (0)20 551 12 62
www.queridokind.nl

Contact for rights:
Lucienne van der Leije
l.van.der.leije@querido.nl

Translations
- German
- French
- Swedish
- Japanese



Title **Oma's rommelkamer** **Grandma's Junk Room**

Text **Bette Westera**

Illustrations **Barbara de Wolf**

Age **5+**

Pages **128**

Oma's rommelkamer (*Grandma's Junk Room*) by Bette Westera is an intimate book about the strong bond between a grandmother and her granddaughter. Sofia and Grandma are the best of friends and they both have a great time on the regular occasions when Sofia comes to stay for the night. Grandma is becoming forgetful and this is really upsetting her, partly because her daughter keeps confronting her about it. After a broken leg and a period of considerable resistance from both grandmother and granddaughter, Grandma ends up in the Rozengarde old folks' home. Sofia finds this hard to come to terms with, but realises that it doesn't mean the end of her warm relationship with her grandmother. The box full of memories that Sofia has 'rescued' from her grandmother's house forms a bridge between the past and Grandma's new life. Westera has Sofia get to know other residents of Rozengarde so that we as readers, and Sofia herself, are prepared for the fact that a relationship is still possible even if the situation worsens. One of Sofia's observations is indicative of the tone of the book: 'The more things you forget, the more surprises you have.' Sofia's mother doesn't come out of the book very well. She doesn't understand much about either her own mother or her daughter. Most of all she wants to 'sort everything out properly', which actually means walking all over other people's feelings. Fortunately, Sofia's father has more understanding of the fact that 'forgetting' is a relative concept and that it can actually have its good points when things don't go entirely according to plan. Westera writes sincerely, with original observations and humour. Her vivid writing style ensures that every reader is perfectly able to imagine his or her own Sofia and Grandma. *Oma's rommelkamer* is Bette Westera's best book yet.

Wendy de Graaf

Bette Westera (b. 1958) is a versatile writer who creates modern fairytales, poems, picture books and realistic stories for children up to the age of around ten. After a short period as a primary-school teacher, she studied psychology. Bette now teaches people how to write stories for picture books. Her other great passion is music. She sings and writes lyrics for the music that her partner composes.

'With *Oma's rommelkamer* she has created an intimate and sensitive book about getting older and about the strong bond between a grandmother and her granddaughter. (...) Westera writes from the heart, with lots of original observations and humour. (...)'
Leesgoed, Max Verbeek

'An enjoyable reading book about a lively little girl and a kind grandmother.'
Kidsweek Junior

Publisher
Hillen
WG Plein 512
1054 SJ Amsterdam
Tel: +31 (0)20 612 40 88
www.hillenboeken.nl

Contact for rights:
C. Hillen
info@hillenboeken.nl





Title **Keizer en de schelpenzanger** **Keizer and the Shell-Singer**

Text **Koos Meinderts**

Illustrations **Annette Fienieg**

Age **8+**

Pages **120**

There are very few writers who can create stories for young readers that add up to more than an accumulation of everyday events. Koos Meinderts is one of those writers. In his Keizer trilogy he tells the tale of the eight-year-old Keizer, who lives with his dad in a house by the sea. There's no mum around – at least, not really. Shortly after Keizer's birth she disappeared, but she lives on as a mermaid in the stories that Keizer's dad tells. Keizer's dad makes hats, but first and foremost he's a story-telling dad.

Sometimes stories and songs just pop into Keizer's head as well and he tells them into the wind or sings them out loud on the beach. It is through these songs that he gets to know the shell-singer in the third book *Keizer en de schelpenzanger* (*Keizer and the Shell-Singer*), an eccentric character who lives in a little hut on the beach and calls himself the 'no-worries man'. He sings cheerful songs, but Keizer discovers that there's great sorrow hiding behind that cheerfulness: 'His cheerfulness was just a lid on his sadness.' The books about Keizer can be read as a tribute to the imagination. Every person is a story, says Keizer's dad, and the dreamy Keizer is only too happy to believe this. After all, stories sometimes make reality less harsh and having a mermaid-mum is better than knowing that your mother has drowned or maybe just walked out of your life.

Meinderts describes the trials and tribulations of the eight-year-old wonderfully, in a simple, poetic style. Keizer's ponderings are sometimes philosophical, sometimes funny, but they always remain close to the world of the child.

Illustrator Annette Fienieg, Meindert's wife, gave a face to Keizer and his father – they're nice faces, but never too sweet, just like the stories themselves.

Joukje Akveld

Keizer en de verhalenvader (2002)

Keizer en de knikkervis (2004)

Keizer en de schelpenzanger (2005)



Koos Meinderts (b. 1953) grew up by the sea. He wrote his first book for children in 1983. His work has won various awards, both from juries of children and professionals. He also writes books for adults and he has written a number of prize-winning songs together with singer/cabaret artist Harrie Jekkers. Their cabaret show *Het verhaal achter de liedjes* (*The Story behind the Songs*) has played to full houses. Meinderts has also won his spurs in youth theatre by adapting a number of his own books into successful plays.

Annette Fienieg (b. 1959) made her debut as an illustrator in 1986. She has since illustrated over eighty children's books, including a large number by her husband Koos Meinderts.

'Meinderts is a skilled writer: his stories are simple and gently philosophical, sometimes a little wistful.'

NRC Handelsblad

'Fienieg and Meinderts: a golden duo.'

Algemeen Dagblad

'The Keizer trilogy has developed into a breathtakingly beautiful series. Koos Meinderts uses velvet-soft language to describe a boy who is holding his father's hand as he makes his way into the wide world. These books deserve a permanent, prominent position in children's literature.'

Trouw

Publisher

Leopold
Singel 262
1016 AC Amsterdam
Tel: +31 (0)20 551 12 50
www.leopold.nl

Contact for rights:
Diana Garibbo
d.garibbo@leopold.nl

Translation

German



Title **Het Hercynische woud** **The Hercynic Forest**

Text **Simone van der Vlugt**

Illustrations **Martijn van der Linden**

Age **10+**

Pages **96**

Rufus, a writer, is recruited against his will as a scout in the army of Julius Caesar in the first century BC. The Roman army has been ordered to conquer the Germanic tribes. On a scouting expedition Rufus is taken prisoner by the Germans, but because Rufus once had a German slave who taught him the language and customs of his people, he eventually comes to occupy a very different position in the tribe. His doubts about Caesar's lust for conquest increase as he gets to know the Germans better and as the Romans come closer to the tribe's camp. Then Rufus has to make a decision that will affect the rest of his life: the Romans or the Germans?

In this book, Van der Vlugt has woven historical events to create a fascinating story about loyalty and decency. The powerful language has great pace and variety, leading you by the hand into another age and keeping you gripped right until the last page.

Title **Kus** **Kiss**

Text **Lydia Rood**

Age **10+**

Pages **96**

Marjon is the daughter of the famous actor Toon Mandersloot. When she bumps into him one afternoon after school, she's not in the mood for chatting. But Toon manages to talk her into going for a walk in the woods with him. When they arrive at the open-air theatre, Toon suggests that they do a bit of acting and put on a play. But the scenes that Marjon and her father act out sometimes suddenly diverge from the original story. Then it's all about Marjon and Toon and Marjon gets to know a completely different father. This is a wonderful story in which the development of both the characters and the storyline is fascinating and compelling. Toon and Marjon come to life in such a way that the unexpected end of the story is very poignant indeed.

Simone van der Vlugt (born in Hoorn in 1966) made her debut in 1995 with *De amulet*. The book was immediately recommended by the Nederlandse Kinderjury (Dutch Children's Jury) and since then Van der Vlugt has rapidly become a very popular author of children's books. Her books have won various honourable mentions. She has also written two books for adults.

Alongside her career in journalism, **Lydia Rood** (born in Velp in 1957) has been a full-time writer for fifteen years. She has more than sixty titles to her name: books for young people, novels, plays, thrillers and erotic stories. She was awarded a Vlag en Wimpel for her book *Maanzaad*; she won a Zilveren Griffel for *Een mond vol dons*; *Anansi's web* won the Jenny Smelik-IBBY Prize and an honourable mention from the Zoenjury.

'A story with a great deal of suspense.'
Leeswelp

'In Kus, Lydia Rood demonstrates that her oeuvre is one of timeless class.'
de Volkskrant

'Lydia Rood shows wonderful ingenuity in keeping even the attentive reader uncertain about how the story is going to end.' (...)
PZC

'A little masterpiece (...) An unexpected ending that gives the reader goose bumps. Kus once again demonstrates that Lydia Rood is one of the top Dutch children's authors.'
Trouw

The Kidsbibliotheek

A unique way for young readers to get to know the best Dutch authors for children and young people

Kidsweek is a weekly magazine for young people that tells its readers about news from home and abroad, politics and the environment, music, games, films and books. The *Lemniscaatkrant* comes out four times a year and is a magazine about books, reading and writing, written by young people for young people.

These two magazines have got together to publish a series of children's literature for their subscribers. The 'kidsbibliotheek' (kids' library) is sent free of charge to readers' homes so that they can get to know the pick of Dutch writers for children. At the back of the book there is an interview with the author and a list with descriptions of the author's works, so that readers have all the information about further reading at their fingertips. This really is a very special project to encourage kids to read!

Dorine Louwerens

Publisher of the series

Lemniscaat
Vijverlaan 48
3062 HL Rotterdam
Tel: +31 (0)10 206 29 29
www.lemniscaat.nl

Contact for rights:

Sarah Breimer
sarah@lemniscaat.nl

Title **De geur van roestig ijzer** The Scent of Rusty Iron

Text **Harm de Jonge**

Age **12+**

Pages **96**

Joeri has still got a bottle of aftershave that belonged to his dad, who doesn't live at home any more. When he smells it, it's just as though his dad's there. And then Joeri can even talk to his dad, about the Turkish girl Nesrin, for example, who smells like rusty iron, the best smell that Joeri knows. Nesrin races around in scrap cars and dreams of the poppy fields in the Zvicyn Valley, where she was born and where her mother is buried. Her father always promises that they'll go there on holiday but, much to the anger of Nesrin, it doesn't come to anything.

And then there's the ancient Bruno Levie, who wants to go to the Valley of Butterflies in Israel. Three people, each with their own dreams: they find each other on a strange journey in an old car. The use of language in this work by De Jonge is so evocative that you can feel and smell the colourful contrasts of the characters. This is a brilliant book about friendship and loneliness, about loss and about going in search of what has been lost.

Harm de Jonge (born in Groningen in 1940) made his debut in 1989 with *Steenkuib is een rat*. Since then he has written over twenty books, including *Het peergeheim*, *Jesse Ballewal-tsjj* (which won the Vlag en Wimpel), *De gouden golf* and *De circusfietser*. *De peperdans van Panzibas* was on the shortlist for the Gouden Uil in 2005. His books are usually about a great friendship between children or about the sadness of a broken friendship.

Title **Wegloop** Runaway

Text **Paul Biegel**

Age **10+**

Pages **96**

'Runaway' is the nickname of a boy who suffers from a strong desire to run away. He's not bothered where he runs to, just so long as he can get away. Away from home, away from school, away from the village. But when he disappears to Paris and lands behind bars, it comes to an end: he has to go to sea, because you can't run away from a boat, says his father.

Biegel interweaves throughout this story the tale of an Inca boy who, in the high mountains of Peru five centuries ago, has to take a case containing a vitally important state secret to Machu Picchu, the holy city in the clouds, and deliver it into the hands of the local ruler. The two boys live in very different centuries, but have a great deal in common. They are very single-minded and both have a goal: for one boy the goal has been defined, for the other it becomes clear in an extraordinary ending. Biegel tells this original story in the exceptional and appealing way that is unique to him. A typical Biegel hit.

Paul Biegel (born in Bussum in 1925) made his debut as an author of children's books in 1962 and has since written more than fifty books. Biegel's work enjoys great popularity with children and adults and has won Zilveren Griffels, the Staatsprijs voor kinder- en jeugdliteratuur, the Woutertje Pieterse Prize and the Nienke van Hichtum Prize. Many of Paul Biegel's books contain fairytale elements and are often about the fight between good and evil.



Margriet Heymans (b. 1932) was born into a large family in Den Bosch and lived through the Second World War as a child. She studied at art academy, also teaching there for many years. She has written and illustrated such books as *Lieveling, boterbloem* (1989) and, together with her sister Annemie, she created *De prinses van de moestuin* (1991) and *De wezen van Woesteland* (1997). For her use of language and her illustrations she has won almost all of the prizes possible to win in the Netherlands.

'This is precisely the way text and pictures should work together.'
De Volkskrant

Publisher
Querido
Singel 262
1016 AC Amsterdam
Tel: +31 (0)20 551 12 62
www.queridokind.nl

Contact for rights:
Lucienne van der Leije
L.van.der.leije@querido.nl

Title **Diep in het bos van Nergena**

Deep in the Forest of Nergena

Text and illustrations **Margriet Heymans**

Age **10+**

Pages **60**

It really doesn't get much more cold-hearted than this: one Sunday evening in September, Uncle Pep comes to town on his motorbike to borrow one of his nieces. And who better than Frieda the pest? She has to go with him to the family's remote house to entertain her lonely and maladjusted cousin Jet.

This is the beginning of *Diep in het bos van Nergena* (*Deep in the Forest of Nergena*), Margriet Heymans' latest book. Fortunately, Frieda isn't easily thrown. She sends letters full of macabre humour to her sister Adalie, who writes back and tells her that life is going on as usual in town: Father's lost his job and Adalie's lost her glasses, there's hardly anything to eat, Mother's hurt her foot and their newborn brother has died. Could it be that there's a war going on? That's a big word, dangerously big, and it's never actually used in the book.

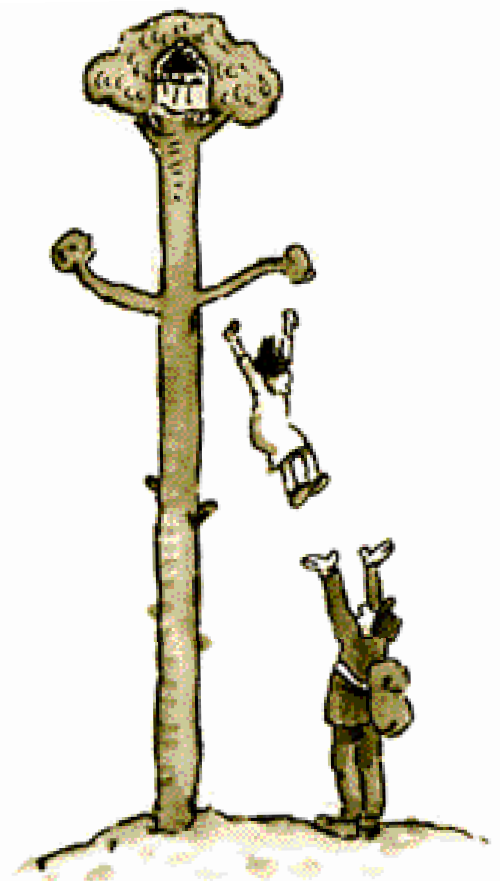
Heymans' inimitable style, packed full of undertones and black humour, keeps this book light and airy and means that there are more reasons for laughing than crying. Until, that is, it begins to dawn on the reader what's really going on and it becomes painfully clear that the girls are just trying to keep their spirits up with their dark sense of humour.

As in all of Heymans' books, the illustrations are essential. They complement the text in such a way that the story can't do without the pictures and the pictures can't do without the story. This is precisely the way text and pictures should work together.

There is only one point of criticism regarding this book: is it actually more of an experimental novella for adults who want to relive their own WWII childhoods, rather than a real children's book?

This, however, does not alter the fact that Heymans, who for years now has been producing a unique kind of illustrated literature that appears to be all about childhood itself, has written and illustrated a new highpoint in her oeuvre.

Pjotr van Lenteren



Title **Vrije val**

Free Fall

Text **Agave Kruijssen**

Age **11+**

Pages **80**

Stories about knights always go down well with children. But it's trickier to tell a medieval religious story about a saint's life in such a way that it becomes exciting and understandable for a young audience of today. Agave Kruijssen succeeds marvellously in doing just this in *Vrije val* (*Free Fall*).

The medieval poem *Beatrijs* is seen as the first literary text in Dutch. Although the story has been preserved in many European languages, no version is as elaborate and beautiful as the Dutch version. At least, that's what Dutch literary scholars believe.

The book is based on a story about a young nun who is so smitten with her noble lover that she leaves the convent for him. This is a great sin and it brings untold shame upon her family. There is no way back for her! Unfortunately, her lover turns out not to be as noble as he had made out: when the money runs out after seven years, he leaves Beatrices and their two children in the lurch.

Beatrices now has to turn to the streets, where she sells her body. When, seven years later, she reluctantly drags herself back to the convent in the hope of washing away her sins, no one has even noticed her disappearance. The blessed virgin Mary has taken her place all these years.

Kruijssen's candid manner of storytelling makes a profound impression. In an emotional and passionate monologue that maintains the tension throughout, she regales her readers with authentic sentences that tell it like it is and a number of metaphors that are magnificent in their simplicity.

It was also a clever decision to make this into a framework story and have Beatrices herself confess the events to a travelling abbot. This means that readers are hooked right from the start. What could be the great sin that she has committed?

Vrije val is indisputably one of the best volumes in Kruijssen's series of medieval stories for children. She ensures that Beatrices's miraculous return to the convent is still remarkably touching even seven hundred years after the event.

Pjotr van Lenteren



Linguist **Agave Kruijssen** (b. 1959) is a modern troubadour, retelling literary works from the Middle Ages in a way that appeals to children: high on excitement and low on waffle. She makes Dutch and European history accessible for children who are in the top years of primary school. Her series now includes ten titles, including *De Vliegende Hollander*, *Lancelot* and *Walewein*. In 2001, she won a Vlag en Wimpel award from the Griffeljury gave an honourable mention to *Het vrouwtje van Stavoren*.

'(...) a pleasure to read. (...) an exciting adventure packed with curious twists and turns.'
Trouw

'A faithful adaptation that will make this old legend more immediate for children.'
De Standaard

Publisher
De Fontein
Prinses Marielaan 8
3743 JA Baarn
Tel: +31 (0)35 548 63 11
www.uitgeverijdefontein.nl

Contact for rights:
Femke Geurts
fgeurts@defonteinbaarn.nl



Title **Schijnbewegingen**

Tricks of the Trade

Text **Floortje Zwigtmán**

Age **15+**

Pages **504**

Rarely has a book for young adults been so eagerly anticipated as *Schijnbewegingen* (*Tricks of the Trade*), the third book by the popular young author Floortje Zwigtmán. She understands better than anyone else that adolescents aren't looking for a neat book of instructions for the future. These are stories that tell it like it is, historical novels about surviving in conditions where the laws and morals of polite society no longer seem to apply.

Tricks of the Trade is Zwigtmán's best novel to date. Adrian Mayfield is born in the poor East End of Victorian London, the son of a pub landlord and a seamstress. However, a different career lies in store for him.

It's not a scenario that the street-hardened lad could have envisaged: a wealthy older gentleman falls in love with him and takes him home. The man is Augustus Trop, a second-rate artist from Flanders. He introduces Adrian to the flamboyant circle of Oscar Wilde, where he meets other men like Augustus and finds work as an artist's model. The work pays well and he meets the most interesting and powerful people of his time.

Adrian is very pleased with his new life at first. Everything appears to be going swimmingly. Until, that is, London's beau monde decamps to Europe for the summer holidays, as happens every year. Adrian, by now accustomed to luxury, ends up without any income.

In a male brothel he discovers the flip side of his new life in the twofaced London of the nineteenth century, where gossip, blackmail and brutal police violence make homosexuality a highly dangerous way of life. Then he faces the choice of whether to put his integrity and his friendships on the line so that he doesn't have to live in a mouldy, cockroach-infested garret.

Tricks of the Trade is an intense book that is difficult to put down. It draws the reader in without resorting to cheap sensationalism. This is a result of Zwigtmán's unique ability to combine critical distance with open intimacy. The raw, breathtaking writing of this sharp, historical portrait really makes the reader think about life.

Zwigtmán is one of the great modern writers of books for young adults.

Pjotr van Lenteren

Floortje Zwigtmán (b. 1974) made her debut in 2001 with *Spelregels: het verhaal van een Middeleeuws huwelijk* (*The Rules of the Game*), followed by *Wolfsroedel* (*Wolf Pack*), her breakthrough novel, in 2002. *Wolfsroedel* won both the Dutch 'Zilveren Zoen' award and the 'Gouden Uil', the most prestigious Flemish award for children's literature. The book, set against the background of the never-ending religious conflict in the Balkans, describes how circumstances can drive anyone to commit acts of infinite cruelty. She does extensive research for her novels but manages to seamlessly incorporate those historical details into the story.

Zwigtmán regards Emily Brontë (*Wuthering Heights*) and Melvin Burgess as literary models, admiring them for their honesty about human relationships. Another favorite is Astrid Lindgren, whom she respects for her imagination and versatility. Zwigtmán is not a writer of few words. Her third book, *Tricks of the Trade*, the first in a two-part series, has five hundred pages.

'A 'Great Dutch Novel' for not-yet-adults, which will also entertain older readers with its glimpses into the world of Oscar Wilde.'

NRC Handelsblad

'Tricks of the Trade is a masterpiece with international appeal.'

De Volkskrant

'Tricks of the Trade is a real doorstopper of a book, packed with pure reading pleasure (...).'

De Standaard

Publisher

De Fontein
Prinses Marielaan 8
3743 JA Baarn
Tel: +31 (0)35 548 63 11
www.uitgeverijdefontein.nl

Contact for rights:
Femke Geurts
fgeurts@defonteinbaarn.nl

Title **Koningsdochter, zeemanslief**
King's Daughter, Sailor's Sweetheart
Text **Karlijn Stoffels**
Age **15+**
Pages **122**

Koningsdochter, zeemanslief (King's Daughter, Sailor's Sweetheart) by Karlijn Stoffels is a fairytale story for young and old about the beauty and the sadness of love. In this chain of eleven melancholy life stories that give the impression of being based on old folktales, Stoffels sings of the romantic love between man and wife, the never-ceasing love of a son for his mother, the suffocating love of a mother for her son, the lack of love of parents for their royal daughter, the deep love of a carpenter's daughter for a sailor, the sailor's everlasting love for the sea and the sweethearts he has in every port. Stoffels shows how the whims of love determine the course of our life.

These love stories are told by Bennik, the singer of sorrows, who is the son of deaf-mute parents. He sings at funerals, after floods and forest fires: 'everywhere that people need the consolation that is known as mourning'. Bennik's enchanting voice, which touches people deeply, evokes the moving life stories of those who have died. Stoffels phrases these in an original way, using short, expressive sentences with poetic repetition that stimulate the imagination and are wonderfully in keeping with the timeless fairytale character of *Koningsdochter, zeemanslief*.

The reason Bennik is able to 'see into all of the people's pain and sing it out' is his own raw grief about his beautiful, dead, deaf-mute mother, the only person he has ever been unable to console, following the death of his father. Bennik's grief drives him eastwards, away from the coast where he was born.

Whilst Bennik is trying his luck in the east, the happy, accordion-playing Mitoe is travelling westwards. She is the daughter of unfeeling, argumentative parents who are infected by the 'woordpest', the 'word plague', one of Stoffels' striking neologisms. Mitoe hears stories about the singer of sorrows and 'his mournful dark eyes', who, by chance or otherwise, shares her date of birth. It inspires her to dream of 'the day when she and Bennik will travel the world together, Bennik consoling people with his songs of sorrow and she making them dance and sing'. As befits a great storyteller, only Stoffels knows whether Mitoe's dreams will come true.

Mirjam Noorduijn



The fairytale *Koningsdochter, zeemanslief* is a jewel in the oeuvre of **Karlijn Stoffels** (b. 1947), who, since her debut *Mosje en Reizele* (1996) (which won many awards and has been translated as far afield as Japan) has become one of the most dedicated authors in the Netherlands. Stoffels, who studied French and Dutch, is not afraid to write about serious social problems, as is demonstrated by her well-received *Stiefland* (1997), *Marokko aan de plas* (2002) and *Een-nul voor de autisten* (2003). Stoffels' protagonists often balance on the threshold of childhood and adulthood. But in 2004 she surprised her readers with a happy fairytale for eight-year-olds, *Foead en de vliegende badmat*. In the romantic and timeless *Koningsdochter, zeemanslief*, Stoffels definitively demonstrates her great and versatile talent for storytelling. The secret of her writing: 'The language is the boss'.

'A wonderful subject and it's also beautifully written.'
Het Parool

'Love is: *Koningsdochter, zeemanslief* by Karlijn Stoffels.'
NRC Handelsblad

'Stoffels balances poetry and pathos so well that, as a reader, you can shamelessly revel in romance.'
NRC Handelsblad

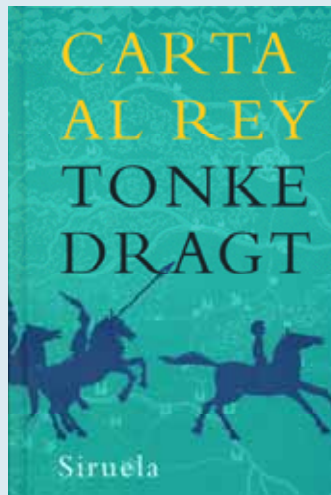
Publisher
Querido
Singel 262
1016 AC Amsterdam
Tel: +31 (0)20 551 12 62
www.queridokind.nl

Contact for rights:
Lucienne van der Leije
l.van.der.leije@querido.nl

Recent translations

In 2005 around 50 translations of Dutch children's books were published in various languages all over the world. The Foundation for the Production and Translation was happy to give 36 of these financial support – either for the translation costs (fiction) or for the production costs (picture books). These are a few of these recent translations.

If you are interested in publishing Dutch literature and would like to know more about our subventions, please contact Agnes Vogt at: a.vogt@nlpvf.nl



De brief voor de koning

Tonke Dragt in Spanish by Siruela, translated by María Lerma



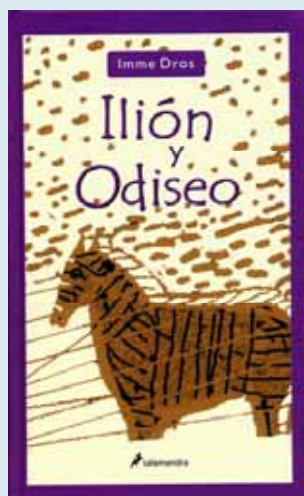
De tuinen van Dorr

Paul Biegel in Japanese by Hayakawa Publishing, translated by Etsuko Nozaka



De gevleugelde kat

Isabel Hoving in English (UK & US) by Walker Books/Candlewick Press, translated by Hester Velmans



Ilios & Odysseus

Imme Dros in Spanish by Salamandra, translated by Marta Arguilé Bernal



Schaap met laarsjes

Maritgen Matter in Spanish (Mexico) by Fondo de Cultura Económica, translated by Goedele de Sterck



Kweenie

Joke van Leeuwen in German, published by Gerstenberg, translated by Hanni Ehlers



Is er dan niemand boos?

Toon Tellegen in Serbian by Dejadora,
translated by Olivera Petrovic van der Leeuw



Jannis, Teunis

Toon Tellegen in Russian by Zakharov,
translated by Irina Trofimova



De genezing van de krekel

Toon Tellegen in Russian by Zakharov,
translated by Irina Trofimova



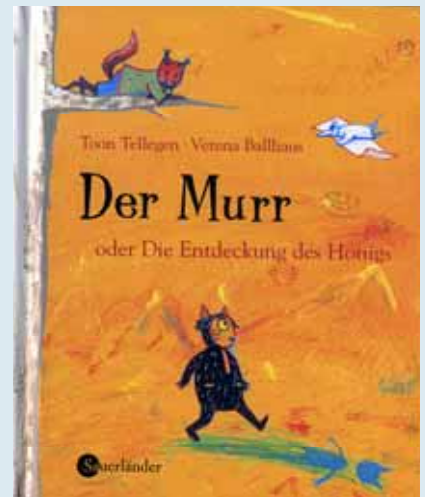
Toen niemand iets te doen had

Toon Tellegen in Russian by Zakharov,
translated by Irina Trofimova



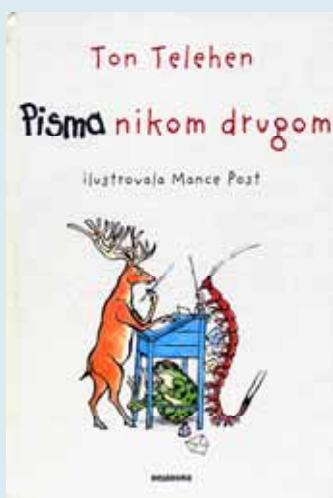
Is er dan niemand boos?

Toon Tellegen in Russian by Zakharov,
translated by Irina Trofimova



De ontdekking van de honing

Toon Tellegen in German by Patmos,
translated by Jens Eschmann - Hendrik
Neukäter - Georg Verweyen - Peter Wessels



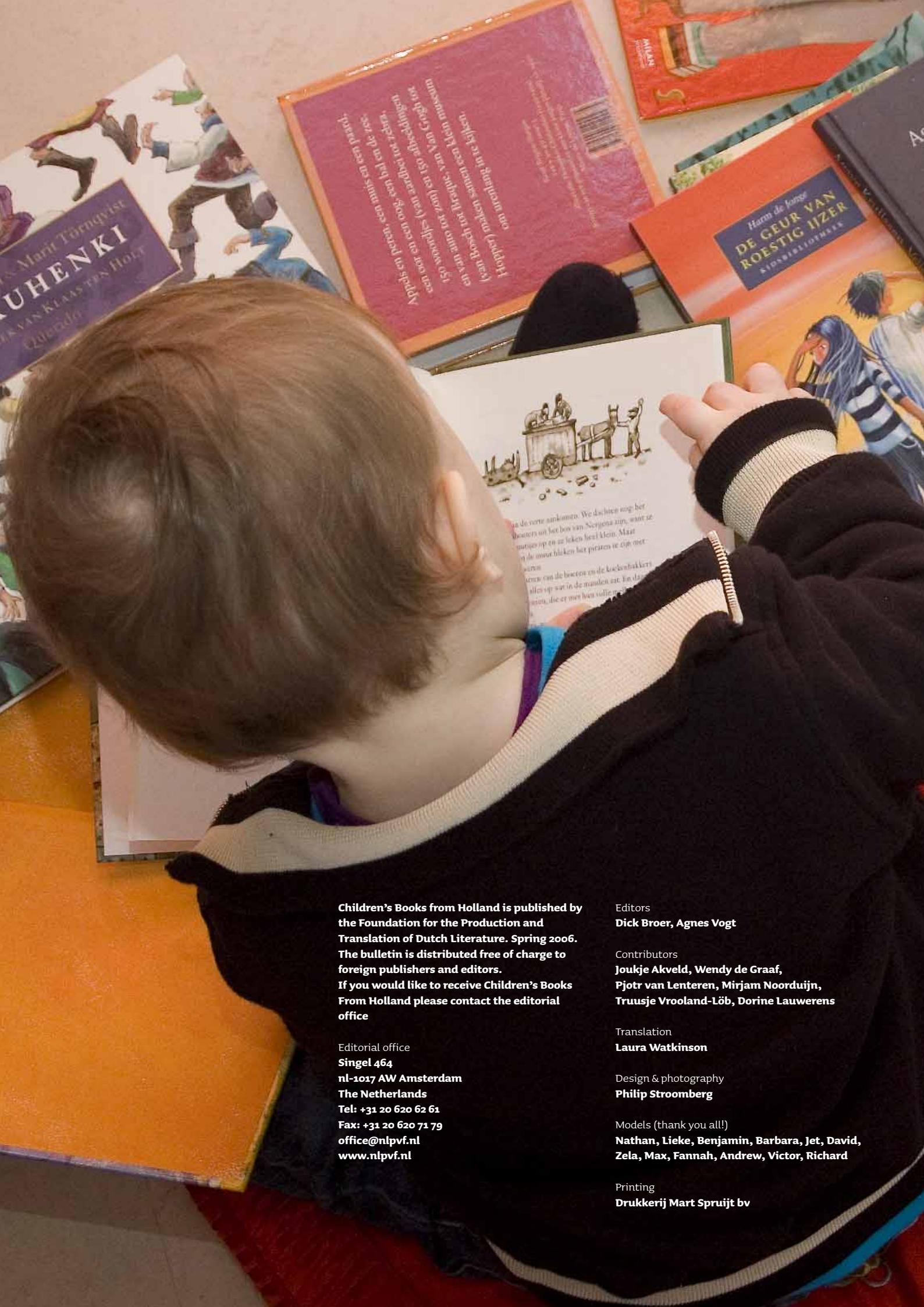
Brieven aan niemand anders

Toon Tellegen in Serbian by Dejadora,
translated by Olivera Petrovic van der Leeuw



Bijna iedereen kon omvallen

Toon Tellegen in Polish by Kowalska/Stiasny,
translated by Jadwiga Jedryas



Children's Books from Holland is published by the Foundation for the Production and Translation of Dutch Literature. Spring 2006. The bulletin is distributed free of charge to foreign publishers and editors. If you would like to receive Children's Books From Holland please contact the editorial office

Editorial office
Singel 464
nl-1017 AW Amsterdam
The Netherlands
Tel: +31 20 620 62 61
Fax: +31 20 620 71 79
office@nlpvf.nl
www.nlpvf.nl

Editors
Dick Broer, Agnes Vogt

Contributors
Joukje Akveld, Wendy de Graaf,
Pjotr van Lenteren, Mirjam Noorduijn,
Truusje Vrooland-Löb, Dorine Lauwerens

Translation
Laura Watkinson

Design & photography
Philip Stroomberg

Models (thank you all!)
Nathan, Lieke, Benjamin, Barbara, Jet, David,
Zela, Max, Fannah, Andrew, Victor, Richard

Printing
Drukkerij Mart Spruijt bv