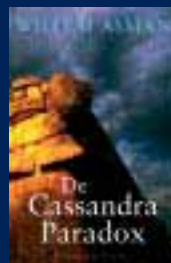
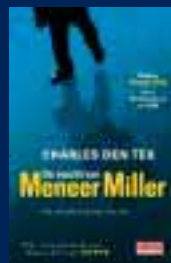
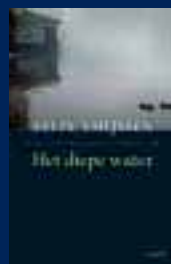
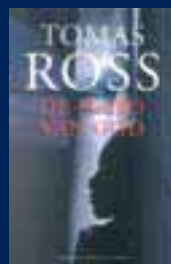


Crime Writers

from Holland

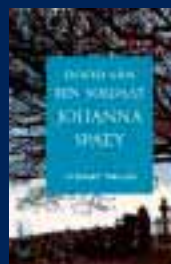


Charles den Tex



Willem Asman

Tomas Ross



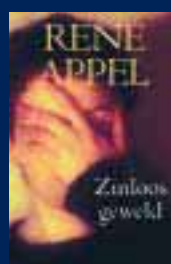
Felix Thijssen

Elvin Post



Johanna Spaey

René Appel



The Development of the Dutch Thriller

Gijs Korevaar

A WRITER'S SUCCESS can, to a certain degree, be determined by his sales figures. By this token, Saskia Noort stands head and shoulders above the rest. Of her three books that have been published so far, more than 750,000 have been sold, which means that there is a Saskia Noort book in almost one in every ten houses in The Netherlands. It is the tip of the iceberg. Behind her, authors are lined up: old hands, beginners, young women, middle-aged men. Together they produce about fifty thrillers a year, all with one thing in common: they are sparsely translated and therefore unknown abroad, unknown and therefore unpopular.

When it comes to The Netherlands foreigners know all about coffee shops, windmills, and dikes, but that's it. 'The Dutch have heard of New York and Washington. They see them on television, they read about them in the newspaper. But Americans know nothing about Holland. And even if they have heard about Amsterdam, then they still never see anything of it on television. That is why the Dutch are behind in America and why we are ahead in Europe,' concluded the American best-selling author James Patterson when he visited The Netherlands.

But the Dutch thriller is versatile and has everything it takes to make an international breakthrough. The genre has grown tremendously over the past decades, and goes beyond mere sales figures. Since 1986 there has been an award for the best Dutch thriller of the year: the 'Gouden Strop', or Golden Noose.

DEPTH

The Dutch thriller is booming. An increasing number of talented authors are choosing to write thrillers, in part lured by the success of foreign authors, but definitely also encouraged by the blossoming of the genre in The Netherlands, where it is taking on a shape of its own.

The Dutch thriller has matured and deepened at several levels: linear plots have made way for well thought-out, sophisticated storylines, there is more attention to style, and several sub-genres have emerged.

Of these, the most important is the rapid rise of the 'female thriller' in recent years. Simone van der Vlugt, Saskia Noort and Esther Verhoef have shown with their tremendous sales that a new market has been tapped. They have succeeded by combining descriptions of everyday reality with a fluent, readable style. It is a success that appeals to the imagination and encourages imitation, an increasing number of young women are getting down to write thrillers and the publishers await the finished manuscripts with open arms.

Thriller writers no longer feel limited to the traditional boundaries of the genre. The term 'literary thriller' has become popular. The simple plot has made way for deeper character development, strong dialogue and conscious attention to style. Authors are constantly testing the limits of the thriller. Just as Nicci French and Karin Slaughter stand out above the regular thriller authors, Dutch authors such as Charles den Tex, Chris Rippen, and Felix Thijssen distinguish themselves by

“The Dutch thriller is versatile and has everything it takes to make an international breakthrough.”

their attention to their protagonists' psychology, personal relationships and interactions. You don't put books by these authors down until you've turned the last page. They make you think, as a good literary novel should.

The existence of sub-genres is characteristic of the maturity of the Dutch thriller, with authors specialising within the general boundaries of crime and suspense. Some, such as Roel Janssen and Charles den Tex, focus on the business world, others on the latest news, such as Tomas Ross, who mixes fact and fiction in such a way that the reader no longer knows where reality ends and the author's imagination begins. Is the foiled attempt on the former female politician Ayaan Hirsi Ali's life reality or fantasy? Did the perpetrators really get as close as Tomas Ross describes? Such questions are what makes Ross's *faction* so attractive and successful. And then there is the loner Elvin Post, who stands out because of the humour in his books, not the hilarity of Carl Hiaasen, more the subtle humour of Elmore Leonard and Harlan Coben.

But of course there are also writers who have stayed true to the original form of the detective novel. Simon de Waal and Peter de Zwaan are good examples, as well as former cabinet minister Jan Terlouw, who, with his daughter Sanne, has written a good, old-fashioned whodunnit.

MIRROR

In general the Dutch thriller stays away from extreme violence or sex. If literature is a mirror for the society in which it develops, then thrillers reflect the fringes of that society – the dark side with its drugs, murder, theft, deceit, blackmail and kidnapping. In this mirror The Netherlands still looks like a tolerant country where much is possible and permitted. The political wind may have chilled in recent years, but the basis is and will always be a country of tolerance, a country where the police don't immediately start bludgeoning, let alone shooting, when there's a problem, a country where excesses in prisons don't exist to the extent that we know from other countries, and where serial killers are an unknown phenomenon. Nor are authors particularly interested in ghettos; such neighbourhoods are not nearly as scary as in France or Britain, let alone America. So there is a certain reservation on the part of Dutch authors about hardcore violence and sex. Young female authors such as Saskia Noort and Esther Verhoef are, it is true, breaking through those barriers, but so far they are the exceptions.

In general, the important ingredient in the Dutch thriller is still the human dimension, the relationships between people and the effects of unusual circumstances on those relationships. In Dutch books style and content are what matters, and the blood splatters seldom reach the ceiling.

PIONEER

A large international breakthrough is imminent. Foreign publishers and readers may not know The Netherlands very well, but then again, what do they know of Sweden? Still, Sweden has Henning Mankell, who has put the Scandinavian thriller on the map. The Dutch are still waiting for such a pioneer. Nicci Gerrard of the English author couple Nicci French recently said, 'Only one author needs to break through for the Dutch thriller world to become interesting for English publishers. Hopefully for Dutch authors this moment is not too far off.'

Here are seven candidates: Charles den Tex, Willem Asman, Tomas Ross, Felix Thijssen, Elvin Post, Johanna Spaey and René Appel.

***“Only one author
needs to break
through for the
Dutch thriller world
to become
interesting for
English publishers.”***

Golden Noose 2006



Charles den Tex

The Power of Mr Miller

AN OFFICE without a computer has become an anomaly. Nowadays no office can do without, and in almost every home there's one softly humming somewhere. But what if all those computers have a secret little back door? What if there is an organization that has access to all those PCs and uses the information for its own dark purposes?

Charles den Tex has taken this nightmare scenario as the basis for *The Power of Mr Miller* and it won him the award for the best Dutch-language thriller in 2006. The plot revolves around a secret organization that pries into computers of the government, multinationals, European organizations, even the personal computers of government officials. All this information is worth a fortune to a worldwide consulting firm. The possibilities are endless: foreknowledge of the stock market, manipulating decisions at both a bureaucratic and political level by adjusting information, putting competition out of business by changing police records. It is so lucrative for the firm that when an employee stumbles on the system, he becomes a risk and his life is in danger.

Den Tex places this modern version of the struggle between good and evil in the world of consulting, where, as a former company consultant, he is quite comfortable. His descriptions of this complacent, arrogant world demonstrate his knowledge and insight.

In *The Power of Mr Miller*, Charles den Tex again proves that he can write beautifully. The rising suspense, the murders, the inevitability of computer technology, and the idea that governments and multinationals are unknowingly working with hacked computers make this book so appealing that it is hard to put down.

Jury Report

In *The Power of Mr Miller* Charles den Tex introduces a communications consultant who had witnessed a murder. And that's not all. Michael Bellicher comes across a worldwide conspiracy to replace the information stored in our computers with a virtual reality that the individuals and companies involved can use to their advantage in the political arena. Den Tex writes with a clarity and precision that are exceptional in the Dutch language. Although *The Power of Mr Miller* is action-packed, the author also takes the time to parse the complicated relationship between Bellicher and his brother. This makes the book a truly all-encompassing thriller.



photo Liesbeth Kuipers

Charles den Tex (b. 1952, Australia) came to The Netherlands with his parents when he was five. He studied photography and film in London and then worked in Paris as an English teacher. Den Tex is the first author in the history of The Golden Noose to have had all his books nominated. With *Chance in Hell* and *The Power of Mr Miller* he finally won the prestigious prize. His work is often compared to that of John Grisham, Michael Crichton and Michael Ridpath.

Clear, compelling prose. A must.
VN DETECTIVE & THRILLERGIDS
(5 STARS)

Incredibly exciting, tightly written story.
DE VOLKSKRANT

His language constantly sparkles and surprises.
NRC HANDELSBLAD

A singular mix of action, interaction, contemplation, and fantasy.
CRIMEZONE

A convincing horror scenario. Another wonderful thriller by Den Tex.
NBD

PUBLISHING DETAILS

De macht van meneer Miller (2005)
392 pp

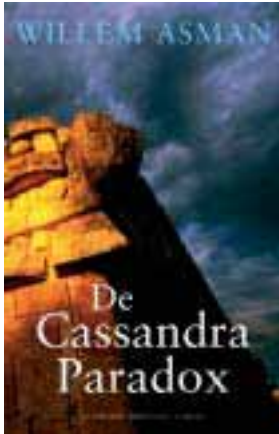
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The Netherlands' Stephen King

Willem Asman

The Cassandra Paradox



WILLEM ASMAN has emerged as The Netherlands' Stephen King, an author whom Asman greatly admires and whom he has adopted as his role model, even to the point of absorbing his handbook *On Writing* and following King's directions to his advantage.

The result is a grand story that takes us in several directions, from an Indian temple in the Andes to the international power struggle following the 9/11 attacks.

The central theme of *The Cassandra Paradox* is the human dilemma of acting with good intentions, the results of which are totally unpredictable.

The book's main characters achieve the opposite of the good they intended. Asman writes about a real CIA study into clairvoyance and ESP as potential tools in the struggle against communism. The research ended when the iron curtain fell. 'The abilities of the human mind are as incredible as they are horrifying. Imagine a medium for browsing another's thoughts. The idea that somebody can not only "read" somebody else's deepest feelings, but can also manipulate them is both magical and very scary,' Asman explains.

The fast action and flowing dialogue make this book quite a page-turner. *The Cassandra Paradox* is a promising debut by a new Dutch talent.

Jury Report

In his debut *The Cassandra Paradox*, Willem Asman introduces parapsychologist Jonathan Harl, who is in the public eye due to his research on apparently irrational but very successful decisions. The project's present sponsor is about to stop financing while at the same time a scientist makes discoveries in an underground pyramid in Ecuador that may lead to a scientific breakthrough. Asman drags us into present-day world politics as well as into the interior of Ecuador, where the Indians have not forgotten how the Spaniards imposed their foreign culture in 1526. This is an ambitious, intelligent, and exciting thriller.



photo Mark Kohn

After secondary school Willem Asman (b. 1959) started to study Dutch, then switched to acting, but ended up getting a degree in law. He worked for a software company for fifteen years, first as a company lawyer, then in marketing, and finally in human resources. He left this career to start his own consulting company and to begin writing.

Exciting, smart, and subversive.

HET PAROOL

A rich book.

NRC HANDELSBLAD

An asset for the thriller market.

TROUW

A powerful, original, and exciting debut in which science and power are weighed against friendship and loyalty.

BN DE STEM

PUBLISHING DETAILS

De Cassandra Paradox (2006)
480 pp

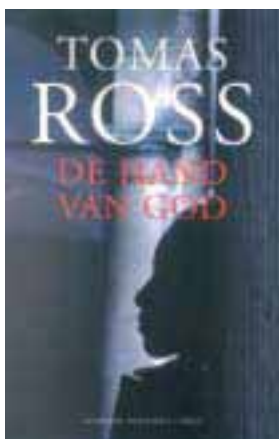
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The Story of a Failed Assault

Tomas Ross

The Hand of God



TOMAS ROSS must be the fastest writer in The Netherlands. While working on a trilogy about the Second World War, the resistance, and Prince Bernhard, he wrote – as an aside – *The Hand of God*, about the preparations for an attack on Ayaan Hirsi Ali, the female politician who, until the summer of 2006, was a member of parliament and constantly under police protection due to threats to her life.

The borderline between fact and fiction gives a certain force to this thriller as to all Tomas Ross' books, like in his previous novel *De zesde mei* ('The Sixth of May', 2003), about the murder of politician Pim Fortuyn in 2002.

The hand of God is partly a homage to his favourite book, the classic *The Day of the Jackal* by Frederick Forsyth. In Ross's novel the hit man is Danish and is paid by an obscure group (which incidentally, has nothing to do with Jihad or anything like that). Like the Jackal, the Hand of God fails to fulfill his assignment. In a sizzling finale that takes place beside the Israeli embassy in The Hague, the assault is foiled at the last minute. That was to be expected. De Gaulle was not assassinated and Hirsi Ali is still very much alive. It is exactly because the ending fits reality that the story is so credible, which is what it is all about for this author of the *faction* genre.

Jury Report

Despite the thematic similarity to Forsyth's *The Day of the Jackal*, *The Hand of God* is a completely authentic book. The planned assault on Ayaan Hirsi Ali is the author's idea, but the story feels as real as the volumes that have been published so far of the trilogy *Voor koningin en vaderland* (*For Queen and Country*). Both the preparations for the assault and the gradual unveiling of the perpetrator prove Ross's great craftsmanship.



photo Iona Hogendoorn

Tomas Ross (b. 1944) studied history and trained as a journalist, going on to work as a reporter for various newspapers and television stations. His first novel *Dogs of Treason* ('De honden van het verraad') was published in 1980 – a political thriller about the Moluccan struggle for independence, a legacy from the Netherlands' colonial past. It was thoroughly researched, which is typical of Ross's work. Since that highly praised debut, Ross has published a novel every year, sometimes two, some thirty to date. Three novels have been awarded the Golden Noose.

Craftsmanship... exciting to the very end.

HET PAROOL

A reality thriller as a disconnecting experience.

TROUW

A carefully developed denouement.

GPD

Unsettling mix of hard facts and even harder fictional possibilities.

DE VOLKSKRANT

Well-written, beautifully constructed crime thriller with an original plot.

NBD

PUBLISHING DETAILS

De hand van God (2006)
397 pp

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OTHER TITLES IN TRANSLATION

Jaromir und das verborgene Tor (De verborgen poort). Wien: Ueberreuter, 2002; Rowohlt Taschenbuch, 2005
Jaromir und die geheimnisvolle Höhle (De stem in de grot). Wien: Ueberreuter, 2002; Hamburg: Rowohlt Taschenbuch, 2005
Jaromir und der Talisman (Talisman). Wien: Ueberreuter, 2002; Hamburg: Rowohlt Taschenbuch, 2004

The Sympathetic Side of Crime



Felix Thijssen

Deep Water

FELIX THIJSSSEN's books are irresistible. He writes beautifully, his plots are easy to follow although they have enough unexpected twists to keep up the tension, and his protagonists show depth and character development.

He has written quite a row of books – a series about a friendly criminal, and one about a private detective – but his latest work, *Deep Water* takes a different turn. Young Francine dreams of sailing around the world with her father. They are completely prepared, except that they lack the necessary funds. Meanwhile, the clock's ticking because father Gerard is ageing. His beloved daughter does odd jobs for a friend, a dodgy character, to raise the money, and things get out of hand when she thinks she can make it big.

Yet again Felix Thijssen has chosen to depict the sympathetic aspect of crime. Francine, a woman only twenty years old, manages to climb out of the deep hole she's fallen into, without any help. The father-daughter relationship runs like a thread through the book. Francine undertakes the shady jobs to make money for the sailing trip, and she does it for her father; it is for Francine that her father ends up in jail. Then when they find out that he has terminal cancer, Francine plans to rescue him. Her goal is simple: he wanted to live on a boat, and therefore will make sure that he dies on a boat.

The plot is well-developed and plausible, and logically structured. The dialogue is sharp, the characters strong, the descriptions evocative, and the suspense is built up. *Deep Water* is a book that can compete with those of Nicci French: just as interesting, just as addictive...

Jury Report

In *Deep Water*, Felix Thijssen has set aside his protagonist Max Winter. This works out well. The psychological bond between twenty-year-old Francine and her father Gerard is complicated enough without any private detective interfering. The sailing trip that father and daughter want to make is foiled by circumstances, not least by Gerard's unjustly landing up in prison. So there is work for the enterprising Francine to do. Thijssen has developed into an excellent stylist. Added to the complex intrigue and the memorable character of the protagonist, this leads to a top quality thriller.



photo Fe Mylene Sagra

Felix Thijssen (b. 1933) studied journalism in France and worked as a journalist in The Netherlands for fifteen years. In 1970 he moved to the country and decided to spend all his time writing. He has written children's books, science fiction, and scenarios for movies and television series. In 1980 he published his first thriller, *Wildschut*. Thijssen has lived and worked in France since the 1980's.

Felix Thijssen writes with the authority of somebody who knows exactly what he wants to tell, and how.

HET PAROOL

Beautifully and smoothly written, with interesting characters, exciting developments and a fantastic finale. What more does a thriller buff need?

LEEUWARDER COURANT

PUBLISHING DETAILS

Het diepe water (2006)
271 pp

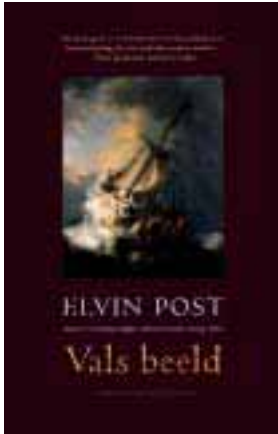
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WEBSITE www.boekenwereld.com

OTHER TITLES IN TRANSLATION

Rebecca. Ein Fall für Max Winter (Rebecca).
Dortmund: Grafit, 2006. In the same series:
Rosa (2005), *Caroline* (2004), *Charlotte* (2004),
Ingrid (2003), *Tiffany* (2002), *Isabelle* (2002),
Cleopatra (2000).

A Hilarious Art Robbery



Elvin Post

Fake

TWO SECURITY GUARDS at an American museum are sitting in their office at night, oblivious to what's going on outside. The bell rings. One of the guards looks up and, seeing a uniformed police officer, opens the door. He is staring

straight into the barrel of a pistol. The intruders take pictures from the wall, wrap them up, and disappear.

Fantasy? No, this really happened, in an American museum. Dutch author Elvin Post decided to base his second book on the incident. The thieves in *Fake* are two former partners – separated by a prison term – who rob the museum for ageing gangster, a mob boss, who wants to hang an authentic Dutch master over his mantelpiece.

The burglary itself goes smoothly; the problems for the thieves begin afterward. What do you do with stolen paintings if your client kicks the bucket? This dilemma is fluently and plausibly described by Elvin Post. The book has pace, and it has humour which never goes over the top.

Fake is a real page-turner, similar in its relaxed comic style to Post's debut *Groene vrijdag* ('Green Friday'). In combining humour and suspense, he adds an American tradition to Dutch thriller writing. Elvin Post has the potential to become the Elmore Leonard of The Netherlands.

Jury Report

With *Fake* Post continues on the same path as his Noose-winning debut *Green Friday*. Post's readers don't have to fear the postmodern symbiosis of murder and humour that made Quentin Tarantino famous. His protagonist is again a rather sympathetic fringe character, not a hardened criminal. Luckily the story has enough sharp edges to guarantee suspense.



photo Jo van den Assen

Elvin Post (b. 1973) is the son of Rotterdam's thriller author Jacques Post. After an internship with a literary agency in Amsterdam, he left for New York where he worked for a year for Ralph Vicinanza, agent for Stephen King, among others, and began freelance writing about crime fiction for a national Dutch newspaper. Once back in The Netherlands, he wrote his first thriller, *Groene vrijdag* ('Green Friday', 2004), and this makes him the first beginner to win the Golden Noose. *Vals Beeld* ('Fake') was also nominated. He lives in Rotterdam with his American wife and daughter.

It's a joy to see these sympathetic, somewhat cartoony characters develop, and to feel the suspense rise while the characters take shape, because together they form the contours of Murphy's Law.

NRC HANDELSBLAD

The mix of fact and fiction, the wonderfully convincing characters, the fluent, relaxed style, and the subdued humour make Fake a thriller of international quality.

DE VOLKSKRANT

Post distinguishes himself from the majority of literary thriller authors with his fresh style, his sense of humour, and his narrative spunk which let him deviate slightly from the beaten track every now and then.

DE GROENE AMSTERDAMMER

PUBLISHING DETAILS

Vals beeld (2006)
292 pp

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OTHER TITLES IN TRANSLATION

Groene vrijdag. Paris: Seuil, in preparation.

Golden Noose

THIS ANNUAL AWARD, created by the Society of Crime Authors in the Dutch Language, is named after the novel *De gouden strop* ('The Golden Noose') by Dutch thriller writer Joop van den Broek (1926-1997). The prize is awarded to the best crime novel in the Dutch language. Since 2001 the NLPVF supports the award.

2006

Charles den Tex

De macht van meneer Miller

2004

Elvin Post

Groene vrijdag

2002

Charles den Tex

Schijn van kans

2005

Johanna Spaey

Dood van een soldaat

2003

Tomas Ross

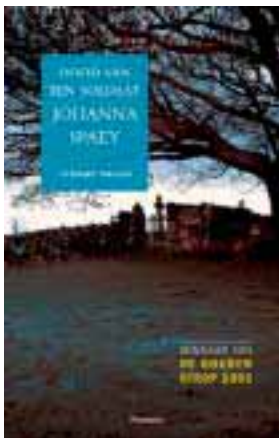
De zesde mei

2001

René Appel

Zinloos geweld

Brilliant debut about the First World War



Johanna Spaey **Death of a Soldier**

THE GREAT WAR OF 1914-18 made deeper wounds in Belgium than the Second World War. Memorials, exhibitions, and books keep the memory of this traumatic period alive. It is no surprise then that Johanna Spaey writes about that war and its aftermath. Her own grandfather fought in the mud of the trenches. *Death of a Soldier* takes place in 1919. Together with the local detective, country doctor Sara Sondervorst inspects the death of a war veteran who was found in a field with his skull bashed in. The story is about postwar Belgium, about the return of the messed-up men who survived the hell of the trenches, about collaboration with the German occupying forces. And it is about the relationship between Sara and her beloved officer who returns to the village severely maimed.



photo Stephan Vanfleteren

Johanna Spaey (b. 1966) studied Assyriology in Louvain and Leiden, and then worked as editor and journalist for the Flemish magazine *Flair*. This, her first thriller won both the Golden Noose and the Belgian Hercule Poirot Prize.

PUBLISHING DETAILS

Dood van een soldaat (2005)
300 pp

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Sophisticated blend of excitement and humour



Elvin Post Green Friday

FOR ALL ITS VIOLENT CLIMAXES, it is primarily the atmosphere, the venomous, sometimes funny dialogue and the convincing characters that make *Green Friday* an exceptional thriller. Winston Malone, film fanatic, wants to provide a better life for himself and his wife, Cordelia. As a result, he's become badly in debt to a loan shark. He has problems making the payments and receives a couple of very clear warnings. Crime seems the only solution for Malone, who is hoping for a happy ending à la *Jackie Brown*.

The originality of the scenes – like the hilarious description of a Jerry Springer show – and the many references to crime films, which serve as a *modus operandi* for Malone, give the story a comic undertone. At the same time, they make the hero rather endearing despite his being an insecure, criminal type.



photo Judith Dekker

Like Simenon's 'Watchmaker of Everton' Elvin Post's 'Green Friday' is a rare example of an American crime novel written from an American point of view by a foreign writer. Post's view of New York City is as fresh and as jaundiced and as funny as any I've read in a long time.

SCOTT PHILLIPS

PUBLISHING DETAILS

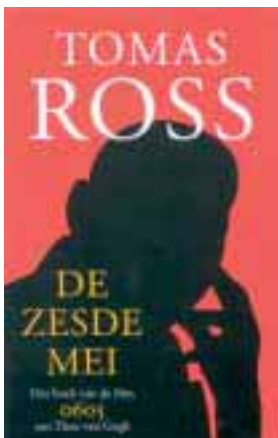
Groene vrijdag (2004)
285 pp

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A tense and exciting political thriller



Tomas Ross The Sixth of May

ON 6 MAY 2002, two weeks before a General Election, Volkert van der Graaf assassinated the populist politician Pim Fortuyn. This act of political violence shook the pacifist, tolerant Netherlands to its core. The assassin was immediately arrested and was convicted, yet the investigation into the killing left several fundamental questions unresolved. Was he acting alone as the court decided? If so, how come the police were on the scene so quickly? Recordings of telephone conversations show that the security service was aware of the attack beforehand; so why didn't they intervene? From these facts Tomas Ross, three-time winner

of the Golden Noose, has woven a tense and exciting political thriller, backed by the thorough research for which he has rightly become famous.

As maverick politician, Pim Fortuyn shook consensual Netherlands from its torpor, and his assassination sent shock waves through Dutch society. This tersely written thriller is both exciting and alarming. It has international appeal.

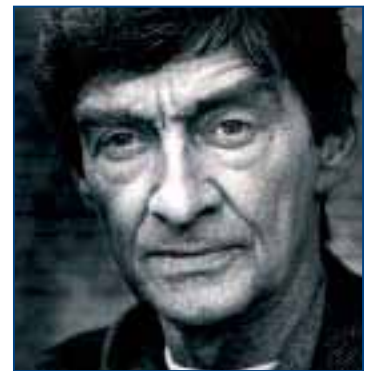


photo Roeland Fossen

Those various angles of approach present a good picture of the enormous antitheses that surfaced during the 2002 electoral campaign in the Netherlands.

Tomas Ross is the author of the thriller par excellence about Pim Fortuyn.

DE VOLKSKRANT

PUBLISHING DETAILS

De zesde mei (2003)
296 pp

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A strong woman fights back

Charles den Tex Chance in Hell

A FEW YEARS AGO, when Aad Jacobs, former CEO of the ING Group, appeared on a Dutch television show, he was offered a challenge: if the businessman could come up with the plot of a thriller, the show would find a writer for the book. Jacobs accepted the challenge and devised a plot in which a small Dutch investment bank manages to land a major deal. Writer Charles den Tex developed this plot into the thriller *Chance in Hell*. The head of the small investment bank is an ambitious man, anxious to break into the big league. Motivated not by money, but by glory and the thrill of the game, he lands a job that's actually too big for him. It takes every contact and trick he knows, but then he's unexpectedly routed. An accidental fall in the bathroom proves fatal, but the reader knows better. This was no accident.

The book is impressive, not just for its fast pace, but also for the cool vitality of the language in which the story unfolds. The understated humour makes this financial thriller an entertaining read from beginning to end.



photo Klaas Koppe

Like Michael Crichton, Den Tex knows how to cleverly wrap up a current social problem in an exciting story, while the technical information never becomes annoying.

NRC HANDELSBLAD

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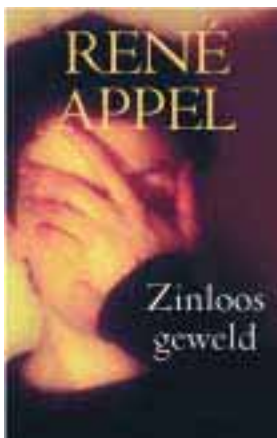
Schijn van kans (2002)
288 pp

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Even the kindest person can become a killer



René Appel Random Attack

RENÉ APPEL ranks among the best mystery writers in the Netherlands, and his work has won him many plaudits. But his success does not lie in his use of the ingredients of the typical blood-and-guts thriller. Appel writes psychological novels, in which ordinary people suddenly find themselves wrested out of their ordinary lives. 'People do stupid things when they lose control,' the author explained in an interview. 'If you harass them long enough, if you hound them until they're witless, they turn vicious. Even the kindest person can be driven over the edge and become a killer.'

Random Attack tells a modern story. Appel latches onto the contemporary theme of senseless aggression, with random members of the public being attacked by strangers, but he gives it a critical twist: while the violent actions of the main character Martin turn out to serve no purpose at all, his victims are hardly random. However monstrous the excuses Martin invents for himself to ward off the consequences of his actions, the reader cannot help watching in suspense as this basically sympathetic character sinks deeper and deeper into the morass of his fervid imagination.

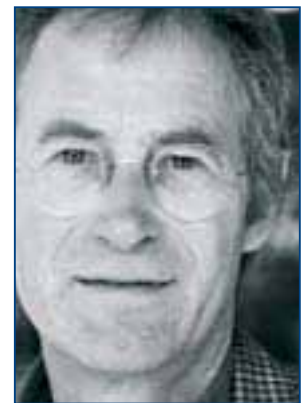


photo Klaas Koppe

René Appel is unsurpassed in the skill of meting out expertly timed, low-key hints to keep the reader in mounting suspense until the final, shattering conclusion.

DE VOLKSKRANT

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301 pp

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Crime Writers from Holland

PRESENTS WINNERS AND NOMINEES OF THE GOLDEN NOOSE,
the annual award for the best crime novel in the Dutch language.

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