



Dutch

Children's

Spring 2025

Dutch Foundation
for Literature

Books

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

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

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

We highly recommend the titles in this brochure, and would be happy to give further advice on noteworthy and interesting books for your publishing list. For more information please visit www.letterenfonds.nl/en or contact children's book specialist Agnes Vogt, a.vogt@letterenfonds.nl

Editors
Agnes Vogt
Marlies Hoff
Emma Stomp
Geertje op de Hoek

Contributors
Pjotr van Lenteren
Mirjam Noorduijn
Laura Watkinson
Marjoleine Wolf
Eline Rottier

Translation
Laura Watkinson
Cover illustration
Jan Jutte

Printing
Jos Morree Fine Books
Impressed Print & Sign

Design
Stroomberg

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Spring 2025

Lucas & Bunny

Jan Paul Schutten & Sanne te Loo



4+

Ludas en Bontje
36 pages

Rights

Gottmer
Uta Matten
u.matten@gottmer.nl

- A book design and illustrations with powerful impact
- An appealing story about an unlikely friendship
- Equal measures of humour and suspense
- A satisfying conclusion
- An excellent marriage of words and pictures

Lucas the fox is the fastest animal in the forest. But one day, when he's racing around, he crashes into Bunny the rabbit and bumps his head. The injured Bunny is petrified, but something strange has happened to Lucas. 'Where am I?' the fox wails. 'Who am I? And, um... *what* am I?'

Bunny seizes this opportunity – and tells Lucas that he is, in fact, a deer. 'Did you know that rabbits and deer are often the best of friends?'

Lucas and Bunny snuggle together, but Bunny is terrified that the fox will regain his memory. As the days go by, Bunny slowly recovers, and Lucas realises how sad he'll be when they go their separate ways.

The story and the illustrations are a perfect match, with Sanne te Loo's stunning pictures lending extra verve and humour to this tale of an unlikely friendship. This universal and touching story will appeal to readers young and old.

It's Red and Round

Jan Jutte



4+

Het is rood en rond
48 pages

Rights

Lemniscaat
Robin van der Gaag
foreignrights@lemniscaat.nl

- One red circle, endless possibilities
- Makes surprising, playful links between objects
- For fans of Hervé Tullet



With apparent simplicity, Jan Jutte inserts a red ball into new and layered background images. In powerful and playful letters, we read what the ball has become: ball of wool, balloon, wheel, belly, mouth, berry, drum. The associations and transformations prove to be endless.

The layered lines, collage style and subtle retro look of the letters and images combine with the muted colours to lend the book a unique atmosphere.

This picture book is more than a game with shapes. It sparks the imagination, encouraging children to create for themselves and to see beyond the pictures. Even the cover offers a subtle invitation. There's a red ball, but if you spot the tip of the brush and open up the book, you'll discover the painter who's painting the ball.

It's *Red and Round* is an inspiring ode to the honest and open gaze of children and the power of imagination.

The Waiter and the Penguin

Joukje Akveld & Jan Jutte



5+

De ober en de pinguïn
76 pages

Rights

Lannoo
Liesbeth de Bruyne
liesbeth.debruyne@lannoo.be

- Two very strong protagonists
- Sublime, wryly comical dialogue



From the moment the two of them meet, it's clear that this is anything but love at first sight. When the penguin greets the waiter, the waiter does not reply. He merely points at the signs around the entrance indicating that pets are not allowed. The penguin is not impressed. 'Do I look like a pet?' he asks, pushing the waiter aside and waddling through the doorway.

Joukje Akveld skilfully crafts the comical dialogues and the charming conclusion, as the penguin plays a joke on the waiter and their roles are reversed. And make no mistake. With great subtlety, their playful and amusing clashes touch upon important subjects such as friendship, decency and prejudice.

Jan Jutte's cartoonish black-and-white drawings with pinkish accents are bursting with subtle emotion and humour. With a single glance, a tremble of the hand or a meaningful gesture, Jutte perfectly captures the characters' thoughts. It's as if he took a snapshot at exactly the right moment in each scene.

A Very Ordinary Dog

Bette Westera
& Barbara de Wolf



4+

Een heel gewoon hondje
40 pages

Rights

Gottmer
Uta Matten
u.matten@gottmer.nl

- A very ordinary dog with a most extraordinary story
- Bette Westera and Barbara de Wolf show that you're exactly right just the way you are
- Heartwarming, amusing and touching



Binkie is a very ordinary dog. Not big, not small, not white, not black, but somewhere in between. Sometimes he's naughty, but mostly he's good.

He lives at the Dog Hotel. That's where people go when they want to choose a dog. The big one, the little one, the fluffy one, the loudest barker, the sad one... they all find an owner. But a very sweet, but also very ordinary dog like Binkie? He never gets picked.

Whatever will happen to Binkie when the nice boss of the Dog Hotel announces that she's going to the Home for Retired Managers of Dog Kennels?

As always in her work, language wizard Bette Westera adds extra layers to the story with her unique style and powers of wit and invention. There's a great deal of warmth in her flowing sentences, and the same goes for Barbara de Wolf's expressive and exuberant collages. With her amazing eye for detail, she creates atmospheric illustrations that perfectly capture the world in which the story takes place.

A touching and funny adventure that offers a perfect starting point for talking to children about self-esteem.

When Big Dog Cries

Tamara Bos
& Barbara de Wolf



4+

Als grote hond huult
32 pages

Rights

Gottmer
Uta Matten
u.matten@gottmer.nl

- Sadness, emotions, comfort and love
- For everyone who has ever had to dry someone else's tears



Big Dog is crying. And Little Dog doesn't like that at all.

The endearing Little Dog enters the page with a bunch of flowers, jumps on a trampoline to stick plasters on Big Dog's fur, digs up bones and takes Big Dog to a field of pooing and peeing dogs in case she needs to go, too.

Nothing helps. The tears keep on coming.

Tamara Bos and Barbara de Wolf cinematically build up the tension and despair as Little Dog frantically searches for a solution. But it's no good.

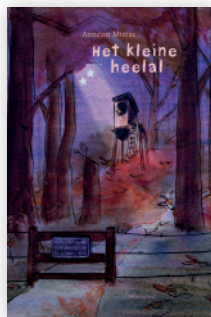
In the lively illustrations, you see the tears rising higher and higher, until it looks like they're about to wash the dogs away in an enormous wave. Little Dog doesn't know what to do - except for join in with the crying. Then Big Dog tells Little Dog that she's sad. And that crying isn't a bad thing and it's sometimes necessary. It's a thought that's both funny and touching, and it even makes Big Dog smile. Even when she's full of tears, she's still Big Dog.

And that's the beautiful conclusion of this comforting picture book. It shows that sadness is a part of life - even for grown-ups.

awards

The Netherlands' major awards for children's books

Gouden Griffel



Het kleine heelal
Annejan Mieras
& Evelien Jagtman (ill.)
(Lemniscaat)

Gouden Penneel



Het touw en de waarheid
Jeska Verstegen (ill.)
& Marco Kunst
(Lemniscaat)

Boon Shortlist 2025

Het grote kippenboek
Evelien De Vlieger
& Jan Hamstra
(Lannoo)

Oever
Ludwig Volbeda
(Querido)

Ommouw me
Ted van Lieshout
(Leopold)

Waar is Winter?
Gerda Dendooven
(Querido)

Wat ons nog rest
Aline Sax
(Salto - Standaard
Uitgeverij)

Zilveren Griffel

< 6



De restjes van de zon
Edward van de
Vendel
& Jet Parent (ill.)
(Querido)

Non-fiction



De reis van Manie Schaafijs
Zindzi Zevenbergen
& Hedy Tjin (ill.)
(De Harmonie)

Zilveren Penneel



Water is voor vissen
Puck Koper
(Querido)

6 > 9



Vuurtorenbeer
Mathilde Stein
& Piet Grobler (ill.)
(Lemniscaat)

Non-fiction



Een slijmzoen voor je oma
Matthijs Meeuwssen
& Paco Vink (ill.)
(Querido)

9 > 12



De jongen die van de wereld hield
Tjibbe Veldkamp
& Mark Janssen (ill.)
(Querido)

Non-fiction



Paddenstoel & co
Geert-Jan Roebers
& Wendy Panders (ill.)
(Gottmer)

9 > 12



Zebedeus en het ganzenbord van Wisse
Koos Meinderts
& Annette Fienieg (ill.)
(Hoogland
& Van Klaveren)

Poetry



Gelukkig en blij
Edward van de Vendel
& Martijn van der
Linden (ill.)
(Querido)

12 > 15



De spin en de sleutel
Anna Woltz
(Querido)

Poetry



Nog lang geen later
Kees Spiering
& Jeska Verstegen
(ill.)
(Luitingh-Sijthoff)

The Tree That Was a World

Yorick Goldewijk
& Jeska Verstegen



6+

De boom die een wereld was
80 pages

Rights

Ploegsma
Sophie Mulder
sophie.mulder@wpgmedia.nl

Rights sold

Eerdmans Publishing (World
English), Harper Collins
Deutschland (Germany)

- Original tales told with wit and imagination
- Perfectly matched illustrations that are full of life

Night is when the sloth likes to party. During the daytime, he hangs on his branch and acts like he's doing nothing. But as soon as darkness falls, he starts doing somersaults and causing a commotion at the nearby lake, where the pikes are trying to sleep. The other inhabitants of the tree pretend they don't know what's going on. Meanwhile, they're all getting on with their own lives and their own little dramas.

The sloth's story is the first short tale in this book about the very different creatures living in one and the same tree. There's a caterpillar who refuses to grow up and become a moth. A swallow who's lost something but doesn't know what. Among the roots of the tree, a bear wakes up – and he's not in the mood for spring. A grumpy woodlouse demands that there should be a story about him, too. The highlight is perhaps the cannibalistic aphid who eats her brothers and sisters in her sleep. Or was it just a dream?

The poetic read-aloud stories have a friendly, humorous undertone and are subtly interconnected. The two pikes, for example, who are bothered by the sloth at night, haven't spoken to each other in a long time. When you compare one pike's story to the other's, this turns out to be a tragic misunderstanding.

Such connections and the double meanings in some of the stories make them perfectly suited for reading aloud and then talking about. The atmospheric illustrations by Jeska

Philosophical stories about animals, packed with lessons that can be related to real life

Verstegen, who puts her own subtle spin on the stories, also draw the reader in.

This collection is a new and original contribution to the genre of the animal tale, so popular with children and with the people who read stories to them.

'Another new step for Goldewijk.'

Tzum

'A wonderful book that you should read at least twice.'

Kidsweek

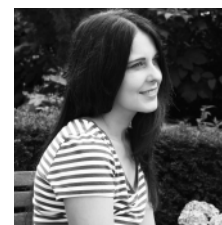
'A collection of philosophical animal stories packed with humour and casual wisdom.'

Trouw

Photo: Yvonne Lacet

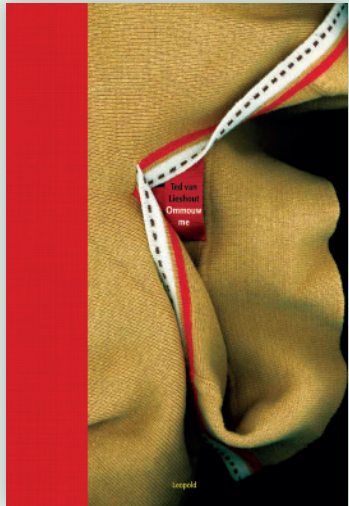


Author Yorick Goldewijk also composes music for films, television and computer games. His book *Films die nergens draaien* won the Gouden Griffel for the best Dutch children's book of the year and its English translation, *Movies Showing Nowhere*, was the Times Best Children's Book of the Year in 2024.



Illustrator Jeska Verstegen's imaginative and dreamy style has made her very popular with young readers and with publishers of children's books. She won the Gouden Penseel for the best illustrated book of the year in 2023, and her book *Bear Is Never Alone* was chosen as one of the New York Times/New York Public Library's ten Best Illustrated Children's Books in 2023.

Ted van Lieshout



9+

Ommouw me
96 pages

Rights

Leopold
Sophie Mulder
sophie.mulder@wpgmedia.nl

- Great emotional impact
- A clever interplay between words and pictures

Hug Me Tight

'Candid and poignant.'

Trouw

'Anyone who throws clothes away also throws away memories.' In this collection of poetry, Ted van Lieshout brings to life old items of clothing and the people who wore them, in words and pictures, based on the idea that 'you are the soul of your clothes'.

He does this in a completely original way, cleverly playing with the ambiguity and the richness of sounds and language, supported by serene portrait photographs of seemingly casually abandoned clothes against a black background. The opening poem, in which the words on a shirt label beg for a sleeved embrace, speaks volumes: this cry for love is from a lonely person to a shirt and vice versa, in a relationship that is undeniably mutual. It is this dual perspective that gives the poems, by turns funny, touching and sensually stimulating, their emotional eloquence. This is further enhanced by the composition of the beautifully designed collection: Van Lieshout has arranged the chapters in such a way that a striking portrait of a growing child emerges.

Van Lieshout's loving memories of his brother who died at a young age are particularly touching. In the final chapters, a pink pair of children's mittens are a reminder of wintertime brotherly adventures, and a pair of purple trousers speaks of a life that is over.

Van Lieshout touches you right in the heart: no one but him could have created this collection.

Photo: Ben Kleyn



Poet, illustrator, novelist, teacher of history and art, Ted van Lieshout doesn't fit into a single box and doesn't write for one particular target group, as demonstrated by his award-winning oeuvre. Both of these books once again testify to his urge for innovation and follow his artistic principle that every book must be a work of art in its own right, made out of language and pictures with respect for the form and material. In February 2025, Ted van Lieshout was made a Knight of the Order of the Netherlands Lion for his services to children's literature.

For the Most Beautiful

'With Voor de mooiste, Ted van Lieshout has written one of his best books to date.'

de Volkskrant

'Come home./Take off your coat./Hang it up.//Look around and see: this is where your history begins.'

It's no coincidence that the final poem from his collection *Hug Me Tight* also opens this book. In this masterful non-fiction title, Van Lieshout leads you in a playful, educational walk and talk with a curious child, looking at pieces of forgotten past and people, including ordinary individuals like his brother who died young, with the message that 'history belongs to us'.

In an original 'relay story' form, supported by beautiful images, he writes fluidly about women in trousers, black men in white wigs and civil activists such as Rosa Parks and Ida Wells. He demonstrates convincingly: there is not *one* history – we are all part of it. And whether someone is a hero or a villain depends on the perspective.

Lieshout charts his own path through history on the basis of his artistic and personal background. But, he says, we need to keep talking to one another. It's only by sharing our stories that we can come to understand the world of today: 'After all, everything that happens today already started yesterday.'



8+

Voor de mooiste
122 pages

Rights

Leopold
Sophie Mulder
sophie.mulder@wpgmedia.nl

- Playful form
- Factual and nuanced
- Groundbreaking

Smarter Than You Think

Lotte Stegeman
& Mark Janssen



9+

Slimmer dan je denkt
144 pages

Rights

Luitingh-Sijthoff
Amanda Castro Thijssen
amanda@sharedstories.nl

Rights sold

Fischer Sauerländer (Germany)

- Recommended by Jane Goodall
- Brilliant non-fiction
- A treasure trove of animal intelligence

Following a previous collaboration in which they told moving and surprising stories that shed light on the emotional life of animals, they show in this new book how smart animals can be.

It turns out that you don't necessarily need a big brain to do clever things. Animals use intelligence in very different ways. This book makes it clear that – if you can look beyond the end of your human nose – there's a whole world of animal intelligence out there.

The book opens with the spectacular story of Hans, a horse who turned out to be a linguistic and mathematical prodigy. That wasn't because he could actually do maths, but because of his other extraordinary feats of intelligence, in areas such as reading body language, paying attention, memory and cooperation.

In the chapters that follow, a large number of amazing creatures show off their clever skills. They're divided into categories that appeal to the imagination, such as survival, cooperation, defence, hunting, seduction and deceit.

Using stories, observations, experiments and research carried out by behavioural scientists and others, Stegeman writes vividly and passionately about smart tricks, amazing events and fascinating phenomena. Her voice is intimate, engaging, knowledgeable and full of life, and she writes in a style that arouses the reader's curiosity and whets the appetite for more information. It's like a perfectly

As this book demonstrates, there are few subjects more fascinating than the inner lives of animals

constructed documentary that holds your attention from start to finish.

Illustrator Mark Janssen plays with light, shadow and colour. His breathtaking compositions lift the animals off the paper, capturing their energy and emotions in a unique way. The life-like images – sometimes small, sometimes filling a whole page – are real works of art.

This is an exceptional non-fiction book, whose most important message is an invitation to take a more open-minded approach to intelligence. These animals show that there are thousands of brilliant ways to be supersmart that go far beyond the narrow parameters within which we usually measure genius.

Photo: Anna Reposa



In addition to writing for children, Lotte Stegeman is a journalist. She writes narrative non-fiction, usually focusing on animal behaviour and biodiversity, and always carries out extensive research. Her books have been translated into Korean, Chinese, Turkish, Russian and German.



Mark Janssen has illustrated hundreds of books for children and has also won awards for picture books that he has written himself. His prizes include the Kinderboekwinkelprijs, the Premio Andersen Award and the White Raven.

'Intelligent scientific journalism for children.'

Het Parool

'I'd be happy for this book to win a Zilveren or even the Gouden Griffel award in the non-fiction category next year.'

Friesch Dagblad

Chicken on Your Head

Jowi Schmitz
& Jeska Verstegen



10+

Kip op je kop
199 pages

Rights

Querido
Luciënne van der Leije
l.van.der.leije@singeluitgeverijen.nl

Rights sold

Carlsen Verlag (Germany)

- Sentences that you want to write down and keep
- The humorous, down-to-earth style ensures the theme doesn't become too heavy

Two months ago, Romeo heard that the hospital was stopping his dad's treatment because he's going to die. 'That kind of thing doesn't happen to us' is his initial reaction, so he doesn't mention it to anyone. If it's not going to happen, why talk about it? But now Romeo's struggling to cope with the thought of losing his dad.

Romeo's dad spends all day on the sofa, watching DVDs and coughing. He seems to have accepted his fate, but the same can't be said for Romeo's mum. She spends her time arguing with everyone and making disgusting vegetable concoctions for his dad, in the hope of making him better.

Romeo feels alone until he finds a friend in the form of a chicken who lands on his balcony one night. He calls her Cluck, and he tells her everything that's going on inside his head. Cluck belongs to the girl who's just moved in next door. Tobi is Romeo's complete opposite: she's a chatterbox and a livewire. But she has a dead mum, too. In an urn. On her first day at Romeo's school, Tobi talks about her mum's death, even passing the urn containing her mum's ashes around the class. Romeo realises that she understands what it's like to have a dead parent, and they become friends.

Romeo and his dad often watch a TV show about making terminally ill people's last wishes come true. His dad doesn't have any big wishes, but he does have fond memories of a long-ago trip to the Mojave Desert, where the vast space

An honest and poignant story about the loss of a parent, told with humour and empathy

gave him a sense of freedom. Freedom, for him, is being able to 'see a long way'. Romeo and Tobi decide to do whatever they can to give him that feeling one last time.

Jowi Schmitz's sentences and dialogues often have a deeper layer. With cinematic subtlety and also humour, she presents the inevitable course of events, as a hospital bed suddenly appears in the living room and the untouched glasses of water pile up by the bedside. She skilfully depicts the impact on Romeo, making it easy for the reader to identify with him and his emotions.

'Not just an emotionally moving book about a parent's death but above all a tribute to the ingenuity and determination of children, which remains intact even in the most difficult of times.'

Het Parool

'Jowi Schmitz has written a buoyant story about living and death that leaves you hopeful.'

Trouw

Photo: Kika Booy



Jowi Schmitz is a journalist and writes books for both adults and children. Her first children's book was published in 2012, winning a Vlag en Wimpel and the German Luchs Prize, and she has gone on to write other award-winning and well-received books, becoming a treasured fixture in the Dutch literary landscape.

Violet Soapy's List

David Vlietstra
& Yoko Heiligers



10+

De lijst van Violet Sopjes
224 pages

Rights

Gottmer
Uta Matten
u.matten@gottmer.nl

- An unusual and imaginative protagonist
- About the challenges of introversion and life at school
- With an optimistic conclusion
- An affectionate and absorbing account of a girl overcoming her challenges

Eleven-year-old Violet's psychologist, Ingeborg, says she needs to meet more people. So, Violet decides to go and play with each of her classmates, in alphabetical order, whether she likes them or not. She has an ice cream with Jamie Bender, for example, and goes trampolining at Jamie Fles's house. Then she writes detailed and funny descriptions of her playdates in a notebook.

Sometimes she gives herself challenges – like trying to make the mum of one of her classmates say a certain word, which turns out to be more difficult than she thought. At other times, she has in-depth conversations with people she doesn't know, like Disco's grandpa, who's practising to be in the Olympic Games. He wants to become the oldest gold-medal winner in the triple jump.

It starts off innocently enough, but things become stranger and stranger. Bart-Peter is struck by lightning while taking part in the traditional Dutch sport of canal-vaulting, and Violet and Nonet discover a secret breeding farm for dodos when they visit a farm to get bedding for her guinea pig's cage.

Something gradually starts gnawing away at the reader. What's going on? There must be some reason why Violet's working with a psychologist. Are these strange things really happening? And when will Ingeborg get to read Violet's notebook? The explanation is delayed for a long time and comes as a surprise, with

A captivating and quirky story about a young girl who has psychological challenges and lots of amazing adventures

the story taking a hopeful and emotionally satisfying turn.

Curiosity about what exactly is going on maintains the tension from start to finish. As you turn every page, it feels like you might find something completely different from what you've imagined. Books like this are published only very occasionally: magical adventures that start out in such an ordinary and everyday way that they could happen to almost anyone – and you really want to believe they're true.

'Vlietstra makes it remarkably clear how great the healing power of the imagination can be.'

NRC

'Original, imaginative, funny, poignant and tender at the same time.'

De Standaard

'Light and nimble style.'

Trouw

Photo: Maarten Westmaas



David Vlietstra studied social psychology and spends three days a week teaching at a primary school. He was first inspired to write a book about a tough male schoolteacher when his pupils kept accidentally calling him 'Miss', and he has gone on to write other humorous titles. He has since written more than fifteen books.

Photo: Chris van Houts



Yoko Heiligers studied to become a professional illustrator and works for various commercial clients, including newspapers. She also writes and illustrates her own picture books, many of which have been translated. Her technique is a combination of drawing and collage.

Runaway Days

Pim Lammers
& Sophie Pluim



10+
Wegloopdagen
224 pages

Rights
Querido
Luciënne van der Leije
l.van.der.leije@singeluitgeverijen.nl

- A warm friendship between two strong characters
- A great role for a grandpa with a fun and appealing character
- Deals with sad realities but always with hope and humour

Ten-year-old Luca is having a hard time. His best friend has moved away, and everyone at home keeps arguing. He's convinced that his dads want to get divorced. His big brother, Lorenzo, has accepted that they're not in love anymore, but Luca has a bright idea to bring them back together. He plans to run away.

However, he's going to need a new best friend to run away with. So, he puts an advert on the board at the local supermarket, asking for someone who wants an adventure. Imane responds. She has plans of her own – to help her grandpa escape from 'prison'.

In fact, her grandpa has broken his leg and is recuperating in a care home, but all he wants is to return to his house in the forest. Imane wants to help him, and she needs a partner in crime. Luca and Imane form the perfect team. Their exciting adventures involve burnt pizza, a scary walk in the forest at night, a disastrous games night at the home, a robot cat, an all-terrain wheelchair and a care assistant who's more like a prison guard. Luca even ends up on TV and gets to ride in a police car.

Luca's dads are still going to get divorced at the end of the book, and Imane's grandpa is resigned to leaving his beloved house. Life is changing, but that doesn't have to be a bad thing, and Luca learns from Imane that even if you can't change something, you don't have to take it lying down.

The relationship between Imane and her grandfather is touching, and Lammers depicts

A touching and funny story about running away and coming back home to the people you love

the people in the care home sensitively, painting individual portraits that are believable and funny. He also captures the personalities of Luca and Imane's troubled parents, allowing their love for their children to shine through their worries.

The story ends on an optimistic note, with a tasty recipe and with hope for Luca and Imane and for their families and friendship.

'This sparkling story does not end with a magical miracle, but it does end with hope.'

Kidsweek

'A loving adventure full of friendship, emotions and a touch of humour.'

Kinderboekenjournaal

'A cheerful adventure about friendship and acceptance.'

Trouw



Pim Lammers is a writer and poet. His debut *Het lammetje dat een varken is* was published in 2017, winning a Zilveren Griffel and making him the youngest winner in the prize's history. He has since written several well-received books, often with gender and sexual identity as a theme.

Photo: Maan Limburg



Sophie Pluim is in great demand, mainly working on covers and illustrations for books for children and young adults. Her work has been shortlisted for the prestigious Boon literary award and she was nominated for the Woutertje Pieterse Prize in 2023.

We're Not Going Home Today

Enne Koens
& Maartje Kuiper



10+

Vandaag komen we niet meer thuis
239 pages

Rights

Luitingh-Sijthoff
Amanda Castro Thijssen
amanda@sharedstories.nl

Rights sold

Gerstenberg (Germany),
Camelozampa (Italy)

- A refugee's journey in reverse
- Written with great empathy, making it easy to identify with the characters
- Beautiful illustrations and stunning design

Imagine coming home from school one day to find your dad standing there with a car packed with belongings and the engine running. You climb in and, after days of driving, it turns out to be the start of a completely new life. Your life. A life you don't want, but as a child in a foreign country, you don't have much say.

That's what happens to ten-year-old Mirza. He loses his familiar surroundings and has to survive in a strange country where he doesn't speak the language. He used to live in a modern terraced house, but his new home has no hot water and some of the windows are broken. There's no fridge, no washing machine and no nearby supermarket, but all these 'inconveniences' are nothing compared to Mirza's biggest challenges: accepting the situation, having to learn a new language and, most importantly, making new friends.

At first, Mirza is angry with his dad and resists his new reality, seeing it as temporary and counting down the days until he can return home. He has 'conversations' inside his head with Lucas, his former best friend, trying to give himself hope, and he also tries to run away. Gradually, though, he moves on from his past and starts to build a future in his new homeland. He forms a special friendship with a girl, passes an important test and is even allowed to join the football team.

A gripping story about resilience and the strength to start over again

'A beautifully designed, daring and important book: one of the best in Enne Koens's oeuvre.'

JaapLeest

'Enne Koens admirably makes it possible for everyone to experience the feeling of displacement.'

NRC

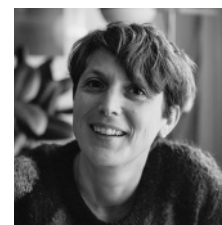
'Enne Koens once again demonstrates what a good writer she is. She succeeds in describing the inner world of a confused child in a light tone convincingly, subtly and with humour. It makes you want more.'

Waan en Wijs

Photo: Neeltje Anita de Rover



Enne Koens took inspiration for this book from the stories of young refugees. In fluid language, she makes it painfully clear how it must feel to suddenly have to leave your familiar home and start a new life in a different place. She demonstrates that feeling at home somewhere doesn't happen automatically, that it takes courage and perseverance – and that there's sometimes resistance against 'newcomers'. The path that ten-year-old Mirza travels in this book is sure to touch every reader. Maartje Kuiper's stunning illustrations and the book's beautiful design complete the package in this outstanding children's novel.



Maartje Kuiper (1979) is an illustrator and designer. Her illustrations are characterised by their graphic, stylised design. In 2020, she received a Vlag en Wimpel (honourable mention) from the jury of the Gouden Penseel.

The Teller of Wonders

Lida Dijkstra
& Djenné Fila



11+

De wonderverteller
208 pages

Rights

Luijtingh-Sijthoff
Amanda Castro Thijssen
amanda@sharedstories.nl

- The perfect combination of fact and fiction
- History meets fantasy
- Focus on a fascinating historical character
- Packed with fun stories

Marco Polo, famous even in his own lifetime, has returned home after years of travel and immediately finds himself in a tricky political situation. His hometown of Venice is at war with Genoa, and the adventurous merchant is imprisoned by the Genoese.

In his luxurious cell, he receives important guests who want to hear about his experiences. Even the prison director comes by for a visit and the maid Topina secretly eavesdrops from the corridor. When she discovers that a well-known writer is locked up on another floor, she steals the keys from the guard and brings the two men together, so that they can create a book. As a reward, she is allowed to listen in on their discussions.

The stories are beautiful in themselves, but the conversations that the narrator and the writer have about them are even more interesting. Marco Polo doesn't want a sensational tale, but a guide for merchants, who need to know about the quality and the prices of grass, grains and other goods from the East.

Rustichello da Pisa, on the other hand, who has already written a successful novel, advises him to add gory and romantic details. When Marco Polo finally gives in, Rustichello notes with satisfaction: 'We are creating a book that hordes of people will want to copy.' As everyone knows, the book about Marco Polo's travels was indeed published. To this day, scholars speculate about it: what is true and what is made up? With palpable pleasure,

An intriguing look at a historical figure and the relationship between fact and fiction, with plenty of fun along the way

Dijkstra leaves that question open, adding her own stories into the mix.

So, the reader experiences not only the colourful story of Marco Polo visiting Kublai Khan and the exciting experiences of the orphan girl Topina but also a discussion about fact and fiction, which is perfectly easy for curious young readers to follow and – whether true or not – is, above all, exciting and captivating.

'History flows from Dijkstra's pen.'

Trouw

'Beautiful atmospheric illustrations by Djenné Fila.'

Het Parool

'A wonder of a book.'

de Volkskrant

Photo: Bonnita Postma



Lida Dijkstra grew up in Friesland in the north of the Netherlands. She did Museum Studies at Leiden University, later studying art history and archaeology. After her daughter was born, she increasingly turned her focus to writing, both in Dutch and in Frisian. History often plays a role in her stories.

Photo: Danu Caris



Djenné Fila made her debut as an illustrator just over five years ago and has quickly become one of the most respected young illustrators in the Netherlands. Last year she won a Gouden Penseel, the award for the best illustrated children's book of the year, for *Een kleine geschiedenis van de mens door dierenogen*, written by Joukje Akveld.

The Great Flood

Sjoerd Kuyper



12+

De Grote Vloed
187 pages

Rights

élami agency
Elaine Michon
elaine@elami-agency.com

- A thrilling adventure set in the future
- Both hilarious and horrifying
- Lively and poetic use of language
- With an important message
- Memorable protagonists

Fourteen-year-old Moos wakes up to find Leon, his foster grandfather, sailing into his room, complete with his bed. The world has been engulfed by a devastating flood. Fortunately, Moos is prepared: a raft carrying his grandpa's old Buick and sufficient food and tobacco for Grandpa proves to be a lifesaver, and a frantic adventure ensues, full of social criticism.

Sjoerd Kuyper makes no bones about it. Humans have brought this flood upon themselves by their greed and destructiveness. 'They saw nothing, heard nothing, or pretended not to,' he writes, 'because they didn't want to hear or see anything. The sun burned more harshly than ever, but they called it nice weather for a barbecue and everyone became richer and everyone thought they were entitled to everything and everyone flew all over the world.'

Kuyper's vision of the future may be bleak, but his tone is anything but. He refers to the book as 'a mischievously playful dystopia'. It's a fair description: right from the opening scene, the jokes race by at the same pace as the bizarre adventures. Meanwhile, Kuyper speaks through the mouth of Grandpa Leon to vent his dissatisfaction with our current era, covering everything from the decline of democracy to the reading crisis to fake news. When Kuyper's heroes wash ashore on Atlantis (a hypermodern mountain-based dictatorship, as the story about it being a sunken island turns out to be fake news), the refugee crisis comes up too.

A madcap parody of climate fiction, in the form of a sparkling adventure packed with sharp humour and poetic ingenuity

The heartless admission policy speaks volumes, as do the starving asylum seekers at the gates of Atlantis. But Moos, Grandpa Leon and their friends are irredeemable optimists, trying with all their might to save the world.

Meanwhile, Kuyper's love of life and all the beauty that is at risk of being lost fills the pages of this book, with beautiful, poetic Kuyper sentences and hope that everything will turn out well, as long as we keep on caring about one another and, above all, believing in the power of stories. In short, this is a book that you need to read.

'Kuyper is angry but, above all, he is a writer. One with an imagination that shoots off in all directions and a stylistically flawless pen.'

Het Parool

'An ode to the imagination. Unbelievably fantastic and horribly realistic at the same time.'

Jong Literair Nederland



As his writing career has progressed, Sjoerd Kuyper, initially known for his 'Robin' series for young readers, has increasingly embraced his own unique angle on the world. He knows his strengths and has been writing non-stop since receiving the prestigious Theo Thijssen Prize for his oeuvre in 2012 (he now has more than sixty titles to his name). Since *De Duik* (2014), he has also added social criticism to his stories: 'This way I can help a little, perhaps, to make the world a better place.'

Oever

Ludwig Volbeda



14+
Oever
232 pages

Rights
Querido
Luciënne van der Leije
l.van.der.leije@singeluitgeverijen.nl

Rights sold
Gerstenberg (Germany),
Levine Querido (World English)

- A coming-of-gender story
- Stylistically sophisticated
- An unforgettable protagonist

Jip has to make a self-portrait for school. But even though the teenager has a talent for drawing and 'a head that's bigger on the inside than on the outside', every attempt fails. 'The problem isn't with the letters in the assignment,' Jip realises. The 'portrait' part is fine. No, it's the word 'self' – what is Jip supposed to do with that?

Ludwig Volbeda writes as he draws: sensitively, intimately and with striking observations and metaphors that gradually give the reader insight into Jip's innermost thoughts. He doesn't immediately reveal whether Jip is a boy or a girl: the reader has to search for Jip's identity, just as Jip does. What is clear, though, is that Jip is good at 'twilight dreaming' and isn't just mad about insects (Jip wants to study biology) but also about the new boy at school.

In a series of emotional letters (which aren't sent), Jip confides in the new classmate about missing their best friend Oever, who deliberately disappeared from Jip's life because he had difficulty with how others defined Jip – and therefore him. By writing the letters, Jip goes on a journey of self-discovery and realises what a defining role that childhood friendship played: 'When I was seven, I saw a boy for the first time. That was how it felt, like seeing a real boy for the very first time,' says the struggling adolescent. 'I wasn't sure if I wanted to get to know him or if I wanted to be him. All I knew for certain was that I wanted to stay close to him for the rest of my life, so that I could find out.'

A stunning writing debut by a celebrated illustrator about a teenager struggling to create a self-portrait

Do you get it?' What emerges is a magnificent, authentic and striking self-portrait in words, which reveals that Jip's outward and inner self are not in harmony.

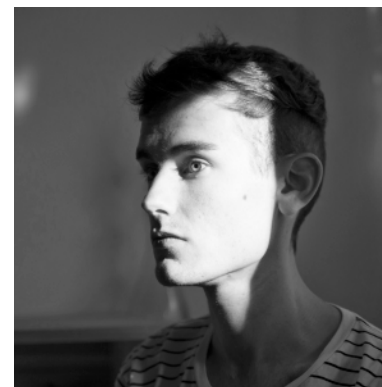
When, after kissing the new classmate in an amusing scene, Jip finally finds the courage to see the real Jip, the school assignment works out, in a hopeful conclusion to a unique, exquisitely written book that is not to be missed.

'It is rare to encounter a book about gender identity written with the attention and finesse of Oever.'

NRC

'It doesn't often happen that you read a debut and immediately feel that you're dealing with an author in a league of their own.'

Trouw



Illustrator and visual artist Ludwig Volbeda made his picture-book debut with *De Vogels* (2016), a book he created with Ted van Lieshout. Soon after that, he made his big breakthrough with illustrations for books by Benny Lindelauf and Floortje Zwigtmann, winning the Woutertje Pieterse Prize and two Gouden Penseel awards. *Oever* is his debut as a YA novelist and proof that he can write as sensitively as he illustrates; his writing is distinctive, imaginative and pitch perfect.

This is a selection of recently published translations from Dutch. For more information please go to our online database of translations en.vertalingendatabase.nl



Rana. Ou la légende des aurores boréales

Marieke ten Berge

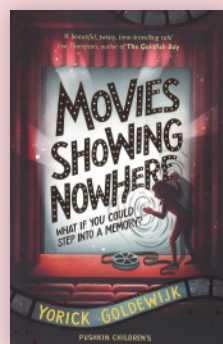
French translation by Alain Serres for Rue du Monde, 2024. Original title: *Rana*, published by Lemniscaat, 2023.



Dziś opowiem wam o anakondzie

Bibi Dumon Tak & Annemarie van Haeringen (ill.)

Polish translation by Jadwiga Jędryas for Dwie Siostry, 2024. Original title: *Vandaag houd ik mijn spreekbeurt over de anaconda*, published by Querido, 2022.



Movies Showing Nowhere

Yorick Goldewijk & Yvonne Lacet (ill.)

English translation by Laura Watkinson for Pushkin Press, 2024. Original title: *Films die nergens draaien*, published by Ploegsma, 2021.



Controcorrente

Marc ter Horst

Italian translation by Olga Amagliani for La Nuova Frontiera, 2024. Original title: *Rugzwemmen*, published by Gottmer, 2023.



Tihotapci

Annet Huizing

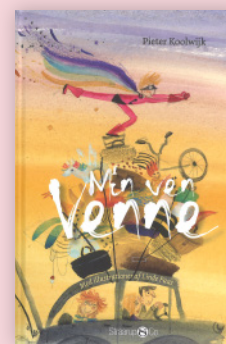
Slovenian translation by Mateja Seliškar Kenda for Založba Zala, 2024. Original title: *Het pungelhuis*, published by Lemniscaat, 2020.



Von hier aus kann man die ganze Welt sehen

Enne Koens & Maartje Kuiper (ill.)

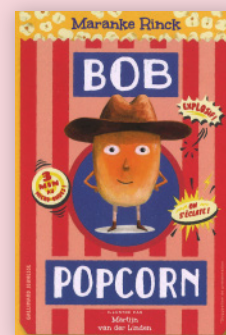
German translation by Andrea Kluitmann for Gerstenberg, 2024. Original title: *Vanaf hier kun je de hele wereld zien*, published by Luitingh-Sijthoff, 2021.



Min venne

Pieter Koolwijk & Linde Faas (ill.)

Danish translation by Aino Roscher for Straarup & Co., 2024. Original title: *Gozert*, published by Lemniscaat, 2020.



Bob Popcorn

Maranke Rinck & Martijn van der Linden (ill.)

French translation by Françoise Antoine for Gallimard Jeunesse, 2024. Original title: *Bob Popcorn*, published by Querido, 2019.



Motte und die Metalfischer

Sanne Rooseboom & Sophie Pluim (ill.)

German translation by Lotte Hammond for Magellan, 2025. Original title: *Mot en de metaalvisser*, published by Van Goor, 2022.



Senza titolo

Erna Sassen & Martijn van der Linden (ill.)

Italian translation by Olga Amagliani for Camelozampa, 2024. Original title: *Zonder titel*, published by Leopold, 2021.



Die Gefühle der Tiere

Lotte Stegeman & Mark Janssen (ill.)

German translation by Verena Kiefer for Rowohlt, 2024. Original title: *Ik voel ik voel wat jij niet ziet*, published by Luitingh-Sijthoff, 2022.



[Hoshimukudori ga utau uta]

Octavie Wolters

Japanese translation by Kaori Shiozaki for Acero, 2024. Original title: *Het lied van de spreuww*, published by Ploegsma, 2021.

