

NEW

London Book Fair
Issue **Spring 2024**
Dutch Foundation
for Literature



DUTCH

FICTION

QUESTIONS

This new edition of New Dutch Fiction once again presents a selection of books recently published in the Netherlands, books that have been included for their artistic and commercial success.

Who makes the selection?

Our aim is to showcase the best fiction from the Netherlands. Most titles will have been published recently and will have done very well in terms of reviews, sales and awards or nominations. Equally important is the question: 'Does it travel?' We work with an advisory panel, which gives us recommendations and input on new fiction.

Do you work with Dutch publishers and agents?

We keep each other informed about interest in titles and rights sales. When we commission a sample translation, we usually share the costs. However, we always make our own decisions, and remain completely independent.

Are all the books in your brochure eligible for a grant?

Yes, they are, with a maximum subsidy of 100% of the translation costs for classics and 70% for fiction, based on the actual fee paid by the publisher, and with a maximum of 10,000 euros per translation grant.

Are books that aren't included in your brochure eligible, too?

Yes. Our decision will be based on three criteria: the literary quality of the book, the status of the publishing house and the quality of the translator.

Can you help us find a translator?

Lists of experienced translators are provided by e-mail. If you wish to work with somebody who is not on our list, we require a sample translation of 20 pages and the translator's CV. If the translation is good, the translator will be added to our list. If the translation needs work, we can make suggestions. If the translation is beyond repair, you will be advised to hire somebody who is on our list.

How do we apply for a translation subsidy?

We need copies of the contracts with the rights holders and the translator, plus the application form. You can submit these digitally through our website: www.letterenfonds.nl/en/translation-subsidy.

Meetings are held six times a year.

Can we invite a Dutch author for a promotional visit?

If you organise a good programme and offer the author accommodation, we can cover the travel costs: www.letterenfonds.nl/en/travel-costs.

Marja Pruis

Homework

A novel about white privilege and the complex relationship between a woman and her Black domestic worker

Clara Feij is a writer working for an intellectual magazine. She jokingly calls herself Mrs Dalloway, lives with her husband in a nice house in a gentrified neighbourhood and leaves the housework to a parade of domestic staff, all refugees from their own countries. When Rose comes to her home to work, everything changes.

Clara tries to build a relationship with Rose and help her. Full of good intentions, she desperately tries to be on an equal footing with Rose. Every word she says or texts to her is supposed to reinforce this equality. When Rose asks Clara to hide her wages in a safe place in the home rather than paying them out every week, Clara is all too happy to oblige.

Right before Christmas, the money disappears, and Clara catches herself suspecting Rose. She discusses this suspicion, which is at odds with her desire to be nonjudgmental, at length with her husband, children, friends and acquaintances. We become privy to her thoughts, which are a testament to her privileged position. Whereas Clara has the time and leisure to reflect on notions of guilt, at first the reader has no sense of Rose's private life and circumstances. It's not until the final chapter that Rose gets to speak. In an affecting monologue,

she confronts Clara and the reader with a genuine call for help.

Pruis' books are thoughtful and nuanced – a refreshing approach in these times, when people are quick to take a stance and tend to stay inside their own social bubbles. She leaves room for the readers to make up their own minds about Clara – is she naïve or admirably open-minded?

Homework is a confrontational novel about intimate happiness and domestic betrayal. About being the boss and not wanting to be. With great precision, Marja Pruis exposes the confusion that wealthy westerners get caught up in with their good intentions.



'She exposes the complexity of the zeitgeist and the hypocrisy of a cultural elite which pretends there is no distinction between the underclass and the upper class and painstakingly tries to keep up the appearance of equality.'

Het Parool

'It's pleasant to be inside Clara's head (...) A novel full of linguistic ingenuity (...) The storyline is the glue that holds together the swirling thoughts on the zeitgeist, on ageing, femininity, literature and shame, all the tangents that betray the puckish essayist in Pruis.'

Trouw

Publishing details

Huiswerk (2023)

216 pages

46,000 words

10,000 copies sold

Sample translation available

Publisher

Nijgh & Van Ditmar

Martijn Prins

m.prins@singeluitgeverijen.nl

Marja Pruis

(b. 1959) has been writing about the expectations men and women have of each other and of life since her debut novel *Bloem* (Flower). She has been called the chronicler of contemporary womanhood; she explores these themes further in her novels and essays. Pruis works at the *De Groene Amsterdammer* weekly magazine as a literary editor and columnist, writing essays on topics as wide-ranging as humour, shyness and greed. Her non-fiction books have earned numerous awards. *Homework* was named one of the best books of the year by *de Volkskrant*, *Trouw* and *NRC*.

Photo: Iris van der Valk



Anjet Daanje

Sugar Animal

A glimpse inside the mind of a serial killer

In *Sugar Animal*, Anjet Daanje draws a shockingly human portrait of a serial killer. Rutger Jaspers lives in a rowhouse. He is the sales manager at a sugar factory, he loves his wife, the music of the popular Dutch singer Marco Borsato and having a tidy home. He seems perfectly ordinary.

With no premeditated plan, he murders a random woman in a random house – a heinous act which gives him a taste for more. Before long he turns into an animal, egged on by the media’s fevered speculation about the identity of this cold-blooded killer. He murders one woman after another – women that look just like his wife, Mireille. People start referring to him as ‘the spotless butcher’.

Sliced-off nipples, a casserole topped with fingertips – the ‘spotless butcher’ takes pleasure in the torture he inflicts. He wallows in self-pity and blames everyone else. Once he gets the hang of killing, we start learning more about what drives him. Flashbacks to his troubled childhood and scenes from his home life with Mireille reveal his bad temper as well as his vulnerability.

As the story unfolds, the reader begins to understand how things spiralled out of control the way they did – disturbingly, you even find yourself empathising with him in moments, as Daanje really puts

you inside his head. It’s this psychological complexity that makes *Sugar Animal* such an accomplished novel.

Jasper is fully in control of himself, his actions and their consequences – at least, that’s what he thinks. When, after his eleventh victim, he kills his own wife, to the outside world he looks like a poor lonely widower. No one wants to believe he is the one who committed all the gruesome murders.

Anjet Daanje published this book in 2001, long before she broke through on the international stage with *Het lied van ooievaar en dromedaris* (The Song of Stork and Dromedary) and *De herinnerde soldaat* (The Remembered Soldier). For fans of these historical novels, *Sugar Animal* might come as a surprise, since it shows a different side of her as a writer. But attentive readers will pick up on a recurring theme in Daanje’s work: characters that choose to or are forced to put on a mask and act their way through life.



‘For thriller aficionados with a strong stomach, Anjet Daanje’s *Sugar Animal* is a must-read. (...) With this remarkably accomplished book, she is once again a serious contender for the Gouden Strop (‘Golden Noose’) crime fiction award.’

Opzij

‘The discontent and existential anxiety of the protagonist is the *cri de cœur* of a desperately lonely, selfish man who feels victimised by the world. *Sugar Animal* is an intelligent and haunting book.’

Leesidee

Publishing details

Suikerbeest (2001, 2023)
168 pages
41,700 words
Sample translation available

Publishers

Pluim
Evi Hoste, Mizzi van der Pluijm
Passage
Anton Scheepstra
passuit@xs4all.nl

Rights

Pluim
Evi Hoste
ehoste@uitgeverijpluim.nl

Rights sold

De herinnerde soldaat (The Remembered Soldier): Bulgaria (Aquarius), Germany (Matthes & Seitz), France (Gallimard), USA (New Vessel Press).
Het lied van ooievaar en dromedaris [The Song of Stork and Dromedary]: Czech Republic (Bourdon), Denmark (Gyldendal), France (Gallimard), Germany (Matthes & Seitz), Italy (Neri Pozza), Norway (Bonnier), Spain (Lumen), Sweden (Bonniers).

Anjet Daanje

(1965) is the author of several books, but it was *De herinnerde soldaat* (The Remembered Soldier) that won her widespread acclaim. Her follow-up to this breakthrough novel, *Het lied van ooievaar en dromedaris* (The Song of Stork and Dromedary), earned the two most important literary awards in the Netherlands, including the Libris Literature Prize. She has also received the Constantijn Huygens Prize for her entire body of work. *Sugar Animal*, her third book, came out in 2001 and was republished in late 2023.

Photo: Henk Veenstra



Frank Nellen

The Invisibles

A gripping novel about idealism and disillusionment during the Soviet era and the Chernobyl disaster

For young Dani, life in a remote Ukrainian village during the Soviet era is boring and spartan. But then a new boy joins his class at school: Pavel. He is charismatic and incredibly well-read, a staunch believer in communism with a keen sense of justice.

From the moment he arrives, Dani and his classmates are utterly captivated by Pavel. He wears an eyepatch – sparking the wildest rumours – and is full of incredible stories from all the books he has read. Later, Pavel moves to Kiev to go to university and launch his career. Dani stays in his hometown and gets a mind-numbing job at the local lamp factory, which is run with the tragicomic inefficiency typical of the Soviet economy.

The village's sedate routine abruptly changes when they learn that 'a serious natural disaster' has occurred – a euphemism for the nuclear catastrophe in Chernobyl – and that a 'temporary evacuation' is necessary. The villagers scatter all over Ukraine – most of them will never see their homes or one another again. Dani leaves for Kiev, where he takes a job as a dish-washer in a hotel.

Meanwhile, Pavel joins the so-called 'liquidators', the crews cleaning up the contaminated zone. The horrors he sees make him lose his faith in communism. In 1989, Dani watches Pavel give an

impassioned anti-communist speech at the University of Kiev that ends up sparking a riot. Later, when he hears Pavel tell stories on the radio about ordinary Ukrainians who became victims of the system, Dani recalls the way Pavel used to wax lyrical about communism. What has happened to Pavel – what's left of his dreams?

A hallucinatory search takes Dani to 'the zone', the hermetically sealed area surrounding the Chernobyl nuclear plant where Pavel now lives a hermetic existence. Here, he broadcasts his stories on the radio in an effort to awaken his compatriots – stories of the countless victims of communism, the 'invisibles'.

In *The Invisibles*, Nellen shows a world in which the individual is subordinate to a dictatorial system, but where stories become a powerful weapon and a source of comfort. Like his character Pavel, Frank Nellen is a great storyteller who vividly evokes an entire universe.



'In the lively, tragicomic *The Invisibles*, Frank Nellen writes compellingly and authoritatively about the Soviet era in a village near Chernobyl (...) In Pavel, Nellen has created a genuinely tragic hero.'

Trouw

'A convincing, empathetic coming-of-age story set in Ukraine. The story is firmly anchored in the here-and-now.'

de Volkskrant

'With his Ukrainian Soviet novel *The Invisibles*, Frank Nellen shows he is right up there with the great storytellers from that part of the world.'

Het Parool

Publishing details

De onzichtbaren (2023)

256 pages

68,000 words

10,000 copies sold

Sample translation available

Publisher

Hollands Diep

Elco Lenstra

elco.lenstra@hollandsdiep.nl

Rights

Daan van Straten

daan.vanstraten@overamstel.com

Frank Nellen

(b. 1982) is a lawyer and economist who works as a university lecturer and tax adviser. His debut, *Land van dadels en prinsen* (Land of Dates and Princes), was shortlisted for Best YA Book of 2020. *De Volkskrant* called him one of the most promising artists for 2024. *NRC* ranked *The Invisibles* one of the ten best Dutch books to come out in 2023; it won the Dutch Booksellers Award 2024 and it was also longlisted for the Libris Literature Prize.

Photo: Melanie Marsman



Bregje Hofstede

Primordial Soup

A breathtaking autobiographical novel about a young mother's (sexual) freedom

Primordial Soup describes the life of a young Dutch woman who lives in a tiny hamlet in the French countryside with her boyfriend and who has just become a mother. Without any clear story arc, we see her taking her first steps as a mother – starting with labour. It's immediately apparent that *Primordial Soup* is a raw and wholly unique story.

The letters literally fall off the page. But it's not just the book's form that is unique. Hofstede impressively articulates how emotions like pain, wonderment and arousal coalesce as the protagonist gives birth: *'Can you take it, he asked. Fuck, you can take a lot. Fucked me until I bled. And this? Can you take this too, my uterus asks, this payback for all the years of pounding?'*

This opening scene sets the tone for the rest of the book, in which the protagonist is constantly looking for the balance between freedom and being at home. As part of this search, she writes a letter to her first love, Hade, who didn't return her feelings and died young. She goes on group ayahuasca retreats led by a shaman. And she struggles with her life as a writer in rural France, where nothing ever happens. She yearns for the very same 'big city' they moved there to escape. *Primordial Soup* brims with a sense of urgency. For the reader, it's even uncomfortable at times being so close

to the protagonist. An intense, visceral, taboo-shattering book about our primal urges.

'There are no holds barred in this inspired, transgressive, trippy novel by Bregje Hofstede.'

NRC

'Bregje Hofstede spits, screams and pushes onto the pages of Primordial Soup.'

Het Parool

'In this breathtaking novel full of psychedelic trips, Bregje Hofstede slews between control and surrender.'

Trouw



Publishing details

Oersoep (2023)

248 pages

42,000 words

Sample translation available

Publisher

Das Mag

Daniël van der Meer

Daniel@dasmag.nl

Rights

Marianne Schönbach Literary Agency

Marisca van der Mark

m.vandermark@schonbach.nl

Translated titles

De hemel boven Parijs [The Sky Above Paris]: Denmark (Tiderne Skifter, 2016),

Egypt (Dar Oktob, 2019), Germany

(C.H. Beck, 2015). *Drift* [Drive]:

Germany (Oktaven, 2020).

De herontdekking van het lichaam

[The Rediscovery of the Body – On

Burnout]: Germany (Oktaven, 2016).

Slaap vatten (In Search of Sleep):

Bulgaria (Colibri, 2023), Germany

(Oktaven, 2022), Poland (Linia, 2023),

US (Greystone Books, 2023)

Bregje Hofstede

Bregje Hofstede (b. 1988) writes both fiction and literary non-fiction. In 2019, her second novel *Drift* (Drive) was shortlisted for the Libris Literature Prize. With *De herontdekking van het lichaam – over de burnout* (The Rediscovery of the Body – On Burnout) and *Slaap vatten* (In Search of Sleep), she found a wholly individual way to talk about the topics relevant for her generation. In her latest novel, *Primordial Soup*, which was shortlisted for the Confituur Bookseller's Prize, she takes this to a whole new level.

Photo: Alexander D'Hiet



Joost de Vries

Higher Powers

A novel about a love affair as passionate as it is complicated, and an erudite whistle-stop tour of the 20th century

It's the early decades of the 20th century. James Welmoed is too British for his Dutch school – just like he'll be too Dutch for London later in life. In 1930s Indonesia, he is an inscrutable member of the colonial establishment. No one knows what to make of him – including Elisabeth van Elsenburg, an eighteen-year-old so witty she could only be the brainchild of an author with a keen intellect and boundless dexterity. She'll grow up to be a writer, but first she embarks on a love affair with Welmoed which, even though it will be cut short, will shape both their lives.

This deliciously clandestine and intellectual love affair is set in places where the events of the 20th century had a profound effect. From the Dutch East Indies and the Dutch community in London during the Blitz to a cell in Egypt under the nationalist president Nasser. Like in all of his work, De Vries explores the relationship between modern people and their surroundings, brilliantly moving between different forms of storytelling. With equal devotion, De Vries describes the games the colonial elite use to relieve their boredom and the cruelty of the battlefield in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War. In the midst of it all, we witness a betrayal of Biblical proportions, De Vries pays

homage to Simone de Beauvoir, and a secondary character seems straight out of Hanya Yanigihara's *A Little Life*. In the end, De Vries has his characters find what they were looking for: a sense of wholeness – if not together, then each on their own.

'With his ingenious storylines De Vries, deftly interweaving plots, is reminiscent in moments of Ian McEwan's razor-sharp scrutiny of the zeitgeist and John le Carré's brilliantly plotted espionage novels (...) His keen intellect is everywhere apparent.'

NRC

'His best yet (...) An effortless flair characterises De Vries' prose. He is an assured storyteller, so consummately in control that he can permit himself all kinds of liberties. Quickfire, tennis-match dialogue, abrupt segues and associative leaps, lists, jokes, letters, transcriptions of radio interviews, and – of course – a handful of aphorisms.'

de Volkskrant



Photo: Annaleen Louwes



Publishing details

Hogere machten (2024)
Higher Powers
320 pages
84,850 words
7,500 copies sold

Publisher

Prometheus
Nikki Verkerk
foreignrights@pbo.nl

Rights

A.M. Heath
Sam Edenborough
rights.consultant@amheath.com

Translated titles

De republiek (The Republic): Catalonia and Spain (Anagrama, 2017), Estonia (Varrak, 2020), France (Plon, 2020), Germany (Heyne, 2016), Greece (Metaixmio, 2016), Italy (Bompiani, 2017), South Korea (Hyundae Munhak, 2020), UK (Arcadia, 2019), US (Other Press).
Oude meesters [Old Masters]: France (Les Escales, 2020)

Joost de Vries

(b. 1983) put himself on the map with his 2010 debut *Clausewitz*, which drew comparisons to the work of Harry Mulisch. *De republiek* (The Republic, 2013) received the prestigious Golden Book Owl. He is the deputy editor-in-chief of the weekly news magazine *De Groene Amsterdammer*. When he earned the Frans Kellendonk Prize in 2023 for his body of work, the jury praised his daring, his originality and the tragic sense of life embodied by his characters.

Daan Heerma van Voss

No Goodbye Today

A poignant, sweeping novel about grief and family secrets

‘Someone is already going to die in this chapter,’ the nameless narrator cautions on the very first page of *No Goodbye Today*. En route to his holiday destination, Oskar van Bohemen collapses at Schiphol Airport, which turns out to be a place of departure in more ways than one. From there, we follow his three grown children, who each had their own difficult relationship with him and experience his death in very different ways.

Oskar – a father most notable for his absence – worked in the Dutch film world and in Hollywood, where he spent months at a time and led a second life. He barely talked about his work. How do you mourn someone who was hardly ever there when he was alive? Now that the opportunity for a reconciliation or a confrontation has definitively passed, his children, Tessel, Moor and Cat, are left only with their memories, their father’s possessions and his secrets, which begin to rise to the surface as they clear out his house. As the perspective flips between the three, we get to know each character by how the other two see them. Tessel, the eldest, has been struggling with writer’s block for years after her acclaimed debut novel and is trapped in an unhappy marriage. Her brother Moor, a self-proclaimed bohemian, is

still bitterly resentful about the fact that he was the only one in the family who got hit by his father on occasion. And Cat, who is studying Freud at a prestigious university in New York City, wonders who she might have become if she’d been free from her father’s critical scrutiny – or did she misread his gaze? In resonant prose, Heerma van Voss shows the chasm between worrying about everyday banalities and mourning a parent. We see a generation who didn’t get much help from their parents when it came to reaching emotional maturity and had to figure out for themselves how to be resilient in the face of life’s challenges.

As in Jonathan Franzen’s family epics, Heerma van Voss combines sharp analysis with empathetic descriptions of Tessel, Moor and Cat’s struggles. Can you get past something as major as the loss of a parent? And can you ever be at peace knowing certain questions will never be answered?

No Goodbye Today is a keenly perceptive exploration of the lasting impact of childhood traumas and the universal yearning for love and safety.



‘All families are normal when you’re growing up in them; no family is normal when you look back on it’ – that apt quote sums up *No Goodbye Today*, a family epic as true-to-life as it is devoid of ego, as ordinary as it is extraordinary (...) One of the warmest books I read this year.’

NRC

‘Daan Heerma van Voss writes with precision and compassion about what shapes us – and how we don’t get to have much of a say in that.’

Trouw

Publishing details

Geen vaarwel vandaag (2023)
375 pages
107,000 words
6,000 copies sold
Sample translation available

Publisher

Atlas Contact
Hayo Deinum
hdeinum@atlascontact.nl

Rights

Peters Fraser + Dunlop
Lisette Verhagen
lverhagen@pfd.co.uk

Rights sold

Diogenes (Germany)

Translated titles

De laatste oorlog [The Last War]: China (Flower City, 2019), Germany (DTV, 2018), Spain (Malpaso, 2018), Sweden (Weyler, 2017). *De bange mens* (The Anxiety Project): Germany (Diogenes, 2023), Lithuania (Tyto Alba, 2024), Poland (Slowne, 2022), Russia (Ast, 2023), UK (MacLehose, 2023). *Een verlate reis* [A Belated Journey]: Germany (Büchergilde Gutenberg, 2020), Sweden (Faethon, 2018)

Daan Heerma van Voss

(b. 1986) made his debut in 2010 with the novel *Een zondagsman* (A Sunday Man). In addition to publishing articles in national and international publications, he has written a total of seven novels, including *De laatste oorlog* (The Last War, 2016) and *Noem het liefde* (Call It Love, 2018). With his brother Thomas Heerma van Voss, he wrote the thriller *Ultimatum* (2015). His work has been translated into English, German, Swedish, Spanish and Russian. His latest novel, *No Goodbye Today*, earned the 2023 BNG Bank Literature Prize.

Photo: Desiré van den Berg



Rob van Essen I'll Come Back to This Later

A dazzling and poignant novel about time travel, memory and regret

Few things are as tempting as musing on what might have happened if you'd taken a different turn at some point in your life. Rob van Essen's new book, *I'll Come Back to This Later*, is a gripping, hilarious exploration of what might happen if we were able to fix our past mistakes. It's a light-footed philosophical novel – a Dutch counterpart to Paul Auster's *4 3 2 1*.

Ron Hollander is an unassuming man in his sixties. He is contacted by an old university pal, a man living in Los Angeles by the name of Icks, who gives him the opportunity to travel back into the past using a time machine. What does he want to go back in time to fix? Hollander recalls a long-suppressed night in his very religious hometown when he almost fell prey to a dangerous man in the woods. While there is clearly unfinished business to be explored there, ultimately Hollander opts to temporarily return to his student years. Once he has been whisked back to this past, he runs into a group of old friends from back then who have also been lured back to the Amsterdam of the late '80s by the mysterious Icks. Worse than that, it turns out they are unable to get back and are all stuck in their own past.

Reading Rob van Essen is like taking a walk on a brilliantly sunny day. He is

one of the most original writers in the country. He uses the story of his 'temporal refugees', with all its absurd twists and turns, as a jumping-off point to explore all kinds of existential questions. To what degree do our memories correspond to what really happened? If we got a second chance, would we do the right thing? These questions become increasingly pertinent as it becomes apparent that Icks had a very clear notion of what the time travelers were supposed to set right. Levity notwithstanding, *I'll Come Back to This Later* is also a story about irremediable loneliness – and about revenge.



'A great book is a book that's begging to be read – the kind of book that makes you happy – and one that was begging to be written, in which both the writing and the writer's hand are visible. Rob van Essen makes everything visible.'

De Groene Amsterdammer

'Sci-fi-esque plot twists, 1980s Amsterdam, student pranks and adult ennui shaken up by strange characters from the past – I'll Come Back to This Later contains almost all of the ingredients that made Rob van Essen's previous books so successful (...) It's a deceptive book that only reveals the most deeply buried pain in the final chapter.'

Het Parool

Publishing details

Ik kom hier nog op terug (2023)

400 pages

106,500 words

13,000 copies sold

Sample translation available

Rights

Atlas Contact

Hayo Deinum

hdeinum@atlascontact.nl

Translated titles

Verhalen [Stories]: Germany (Elif Verlag). *De goede zoon* [The Good Son]: Germany (Homunculus, 2020), Russia (Mann, Ivanov and Ferber, 2023)

Rob van Essen

(b. 1963) is the author of fifteen books. Ever since he made his debut, he has been praised for his imagination and individuality. His breakthrough was the autobiographical sci-fi novel *De goede zoon* (The Good Son, 2018), which earned the prestigious Libris Literature Award and became a bestseller. In 2015, his short-story collection *Hier wonen ook mensen* (People Live Here Too), received the J.M.A. Biesheuvel Prize.

Photo: Stefaan Temmerman



Lisa Weeda

Dance Dance Revolution

A searing indictment of the privileged Western attitude of westsplaining and looking the other way

In four magical realist storylines about the war between the fictional countries of Besulia and Tenebria, Lisa Weeda draws parallels with the Russo-Ukrainian war, which has been dragging on for almost a decade. Cynicism and indifference to what’s happening in war zones – that sums up the attitude of many people in the West. The characters in *Dance Dance Revolution* don’t have this luxury.

The title refers to the svabova samover-zhenza, the dance that was once meant to keep the enemy at bay and can now bring the dead back to life. This dance is the only hope for the victims and survivors of the war in Besulia.

The various storylines are set two and a half years, two years and one year after, and four days before the start of the war in Besulia. People try to keep going about their lives as the enemy approaches their village. Some are tasked with the surreal responsibility of picking up dead bodies from homes and transporting them to special centers where they are stored until they can be danced back to life. Amid the madness of war, the dead soldiers Danylo and Maks are danced to life but have a hard time settling back into the land of the living. Toni has to pick up the dead bodies of children and Baba Yara, the village elder, teaches the svabova

samoverzhenza to the other residents, wearing her ceremonial furry white suit, mask and headdress. Her young granddaughter Anna tries to use social media to encourage the rest of the world to get involved and dance with them – the only way the people of Besulia can be saved.

‘This part is the hardest. Stomp your feet on the ground, hard, like you’re trying to break the earth into pieces. Then lift up your hands and feel there is an orange lying in them. Feel it, really feel it. In a moment, you will twist the orange in half and squeeze all the juice onto the land.’



Praise for *Aleksandra*:

‘A breathtaking debut about a young woman in search of the history of her Ukrainian family during Stalin’s Great Purge in the 1930s and in present-day, war-torn Ukraine.’

NRC

‘With her stunning debut *Aleksandra*, Lisa Weeda chronicled the charged history of a Ukrainian family – a story that has taken on additional urgency with the war.’

Trouw

Publishing details

Dans dans revolutie (2024)
240 pages
43,300 words
5,000 copies sold
Sample translation available

Publisher

De Bezige Bij
Marijke Nagtegaal
m.nagtegaal@debezigebij.nl

Rights sold

Germany (Kanon Verlag)

Translated titles

Aleksandra: Czech Republic (Garamond), Denmark (Turbine), France (Le bruit du monde), Germany (Kanon Verlag), Norway (Cappelen Damm), Poland (W.A.B.), Rumania (Casa Cărții de Știință)

Lisa Weeda

(b. 1989) is a Dutch-Ukrainian writer, literary programmer, screenwriter and virtual-reality director. Text is always central in her work, but she moves between a range of different forms. In the autumn of 2021, Lisa Weeda made her literary debut with *Aleksandra*, about her Ukrainian grandmother and her fraught family history. Three months later, Russian tanks crossed the Ukrainian border and the conflict escalated. To better understand this torn country, stuck between East and West, many people reached for Weeda’s work. *Aleksandra* was nominated for two literary prizes and came out in seven languages.

Photo: Gaby Jongeneelen



Anton Koolhaas

Due to a Tender Skin

A literary classic about love and the way we rebel against our own vulnerability

Few things are more affecting than a lonely twelve-year-old catching a girl's eye and falling in love at first sight. Anton Koolhaas situates this story full of clumsiness and yearning for the future in a setting shaped by the past. The result is a confrontation the reader will never forget.

Twelve-year-old Jokke sees Takkie, a girl his age, sitting in her window every day. He dreams of her – when she's standing in front of him one day, he is dumbfounded. What follows is an outing in a canoe that fills to the brim with shyness and misunderstandings and yet doesn't tip over. Koolhaas' prose is always lyrical, but never pretentious. He puts the two young people under an early spring sun – without heat, but full of promise.

With the same loving detail, Koolhaas portrays the life of two hudnas – fictitious, beaver-like animals that live off the fish they ingeniously catch in a river delta further downstream. The two animals, Lussel and Twenna are their names, are very instinctive in everything they do, and all too human in their longing for warm Africa, where they were born. Koolhaas' universe is characterised by gentle irony, great feeling and a sense of powerlessness. There is no malice here, just regret and ineptitude.

In the end, the storylines of the children and the animals converge, when Jokke ends up in the animals' territory – with fatal consequences. Here, Koolhaas writes one of the most poignant lines in Dutch literature: 'Very dead, if only just so.' In *Due to a Tender Skin*, Koolhaas shows how a writer can use a seemingly small story to explore the major themes of human existence with remarkable subtlety.

All the windows of the house of one's first love share the quality that she herself might suddenly appear in one of them. This makes these windows restless, like a tender skin, which blushes or pales with every emotion, or blotches when there is tension. They are unassuming and yet ominous when she is not standing in the window of her own room.



'A writer with a bizarre imagination, highly versatile, with an irreverent irony and impressive restraint. *Due to a Tender Skin* is undoubtedly Koolhaas' most accomplished book.'

Het Parool

'I discovered Koolhaas last year. I read *Due to a Tender Skin*, which turned out to be a forgotten masterpiece, a ten-out-of-ten.'

Peter Buwalda

'Perhaps I'm basing this too much on the immediacy of the emotions in this book, but I believe this is Koolhaas' best work yet. His most affecting work, too. And most terrible – because, as he writes in this book, one's first love is a gift from the devil.'

de Volkskrant

Publishing details
Vanwege een tere huid (1973)
176 pages
33,000 words
200,000 copies sold

Publisher
Van Oorschot
Mark Pieters
Mark@vanoorschot.nl

Rights
Stella Rieck
Rieck@cossee.com

Translated titles (selection)
Dierenverhalen (Der dünne Pelz des Bären Burlót. Tiergeschichten): Germany (Luchterhand, 1996).
De geluiden van de eerste dag (Die Stimmen des ersten Tages): Germany (Luchterhand, 1999).

Anton Koolhaas
(1912-1992) was one of the most beloved storytellers in the post-war Dutch literary landscape. He wrote ten collections of animal stories for adults which stood out thanks to their profound empathy and the author's refusal to put his characters in the service of a tidy moral. *Due to a Tender Skin* (1973), an animal story and a human story both, is generally considered his masterpiece: it has been reprinted every year and has sold more than 200,000 copies. Koolhaas' body of work received the prestigious P.C. Hooft Prize in 1992. He worked as a screenwriter and a lecturer at the Netherlands Film Academy in Amsterdam. His son is the internationally renowned architect Rem Koolhaas.



B. Carrot

A Way Out

Graphic novel about a Polish woman's struggle to get an abortion

Magda is a young teacher at a primary school in Warsaw. She is caring, kind, responsible and has her life in order. But then she gets pregnant. The pregnancy is unwanted, but abortion is illegal in Poland. The subject is so controversial in Poland's conservative political climate that it's hard to talk about, even with her friends and family. The only person she is able to confide in is her sister.

Magda struggles with her feelings of guilt and the unreassuring options that the internet offers. And looking for solutions online is risky, because her colleagues at school use the same network and suddenly a colleague begins to get pop-up ads for baby products. As a teacher, Magda talks to little kids every day who rave about their adorable baby brothers and sisters, all while an unwanted baby is growing inside her. Meanwhile, the clock keeps ticking mercilessly... Magda is growing desperate, but then she comes across the Amsterdam-based organisation ANA (Abortion Network Amsterdam). She and her sister get in the car and head for the Netherlands, where she can have a termination.

With great empathy, B. Carrot portrays Magda's loneliness and the trials and tribulations she goes through. This abortion is *her* choice – it's *her* body. But

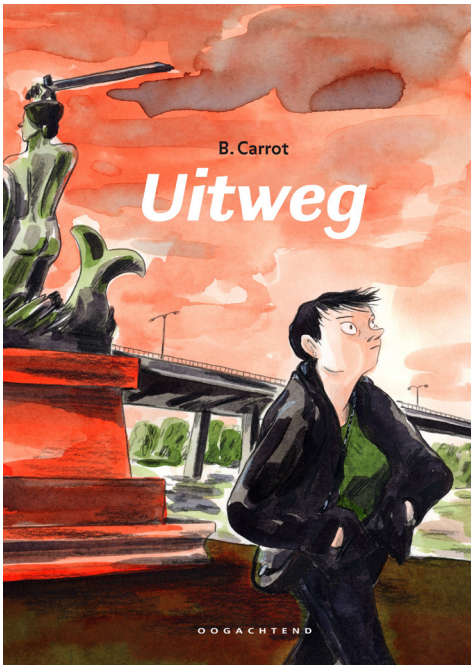
that doesn't mean the choice is easy. The reader also feels a wave of relief when Magda finally finds her way out. This outstanding graphic novel is a finely wrought portrait of a woman in a difficult situation and a story about the power of sisterhood. It also makes a powerful case for the right to abortion, which continues to be at risk all over the world.

'A Way Out is a tragic, funny and important story. B. Carrot shows what it feels like when your own body suddenly becomes a political statement. She isn't preachy about it, though – she tells this story with great nuance and sensitivity, and with a lot of love for human fallibility.'

Judith Vanistendael

'This is why healthcare should be accessible for everyone! Along with Magda and her sister Oli, the people from Abortion Network Amsterdam (ANA) are the other heroes in this graphic novel.'

Sophie Straat



Publishing details

Uitweg (2024)
232 pages
Approximately 7,066 words
Full colour
Complete English translation available

Publisher

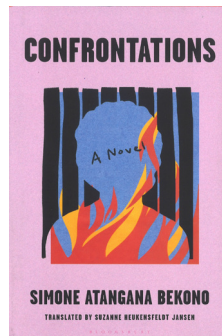
Oogachtend
Sammy Koot
sammy@oogachtend.be



B. Carrot (b. 1985, Jerusalem) came to Amsterdam in 2006 to study at the Rietveld Academy, and ended up staying in the Netherlands. After several years of writing and illustrating short stories and strips she moved to Brussels to complete a Master's program in graphic storytelling. In 2019 Carrot graduated Cum Laude from the Sint Lukas School of Art in Brussels. Her final project turned into her debut graphic novel *Alle dagen ui* (Days of Onion), published by Soul Food Comics in 2020. B. Carrot's work is politically and socially driven, as she writes about issues such as migration and border policies and feminism. B. Carrot lives and works in Nijmegen.



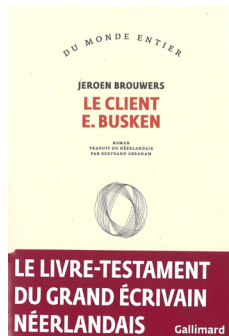
RECENT



Simone Atangana Bekono
Confrontations

Debut novel about familial influences and everyday racism

Translated into English by Suzanne Heukensfeldt Jansen for Bloomsbury, 2024



Jeroen Brouwers
Le client E. Busken

A spectacular novel on the decline of a brilliant mind

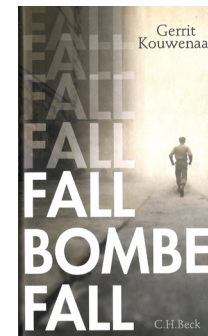
Translated into French by Bertrand Abraham for Gallimard, 2023



Sander Kollaard
[Aru inu no kainushi no tsuitachi]

Psychological novel about love and ageing

Translated into Japanese by Saki Nagayama for Shinchosha, 2023



Gerrit Kouwenaar
Fall, Bombe, Fall

A razor-sharp novella about the hubris of youth and the frightening reality of war

Translated into German by Gregor Seferens for C.H. Beck, 2024



Ilja Leonard Pfeijffer
[Grand Hotel Europa]

An homage to lost love and a dying Europe

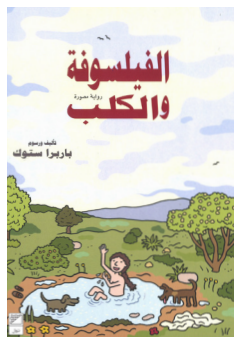
Translated into Hebrew by Inbal Silberstein for Modan, 2024



Lucas Rijneveld
Ty moje skvostné zviřátko

A horrific and captivating novel about a forbidden love

Translated into Czech by Veronika Havlíková for Argo, 2024



Barbara Stok
[The Philosopher, the Dog and the Wedding]

A graphic novel about a strong female philosopher in classical antiquity

Translated into Arabic by Barbara Bracke and Tia Hassan for Nool Books, 2023



Fien Veldman
Xerox

Absurdist debut novel about a young woman's relationship with her printing machine

Translated into German by Christina Brunnenkamp for Carl Hanser, 2024



J.J. Voskuil
Die Nachbarn

Autobiographical novel on the relationship between a couple and their homosexual neighbours

Translated into German by Gerd Busse for Klaus Wagenbach, 2023



Gijs Wilbrink
Las Bestias

A riveting debut about motocross, mink farms and a legacy of dark family secrets

Translated into Spanish by Catalina Ginard Féron for Bunker Books, 2024

TRANSLATIONS

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

Barbara den Ouden and Denise Larsen are present at the London Book Fair (IRC C13 and C14), and will be more than happy to make an appointment or arrange a videocall with you.



Barbara den Ouden
b.den.ouden@letterenfonds.nl
Fiction, graphic novels



Denise Larsen
d.larsen@letterenfonds.nl
Fiction



Romkje de Bildt
Managing director

New Dutch Fiction is distributed to international editors and publishers. Please contact us if you would like to be included on our mailing list.

Nederlands Letterenfonds
www.letterenfonds.nl
post@letterenfonds.nl
t +31 (0)20 520 73 00
Postbus / PO Box 16588
NL–1001 RB Amsterdam
Visiting address:
Nieuwe Prinsengracht 89
1018 VR Amsterdam

Editors
Denise Larsen
Barbara den Ouden
Romkje de Bildt
Contributions
Esther Op de Beek
Arjen Fortuin
Tim van den Hoed
Denise Larsen
Michiel Nijenhuis
Barbara den Ouden

The text about *No Way Out* was based on the pitch by Oogachtend.

Advisory panel
Esther Op de Beek
Margot Dijkgraaf
Arjen Fortuin
Tim van den Hoed
Andrea Kluitmann

Translation
Emma Rault

Cover image
Nathalie Dekker

Printing
Jos Morree Fine Books /
Impressed Print & Sign

Design
Stroomberg

This brochure is printed on FSC-certified paper.

Marja Pruis

Homework 2

Anjet Daanje

Sugar Animal 4

Frank Nellen

The Invisibles 6

Bregje Hofstede

Primordial Soup 8

Joost de Vries

Higher Powers 10

Daan Heerma van Voss

No Goodbye Today 12

Rob van Essen

I'll Come Back to This Later 14

Lisa Weeda

Dance Dance Revolution 16

Anton Koolhaas

Due to a Tender Skin 18

B. Carrot

A Way Out 20