

SELECTION OF FLEMISH AUTHORS

The authors in our series *Writing in Flanders and the Netherlands* have all touched our hearts and minds with their pens in different ways: the one because their writing is so moving and pure, the other with their surrealism, their playful style or humour, yet another has blown us away with their cutting analyses, opulent use of words or unmatched imagination.

But all of them have two things in common: bags of talent and an incorrigible desire to create things and make their voices heard.

The authors we talk to in our documentaries are people who have received well-deserved recognition in a lot of different genres: fiction, non-fiction, poetry, children's and young adult literature and the graphic novel. They are all people who tirelessly made their own way to fame, but whom we can still expect plenty from in the future.

They also cover a myriad of different personalities: from flamboyant characters who court the media to those who would rather avoid the limelight, all of them writing their oeuvre in their own special way.





Saskia De Coster – a film by Griet Teck

Saskia De Coster is an author, filmmaker, columnist and visual artist who regularly works together with artists from other disciplines.

De Coster caught the writing bug early on, but only made her *real* debut in 2002 with *Vrije Val* (Free Falling). In that same year, Belgian literary magazine *De Brakke Hond* selected her for *Mooie Jonge Honden*, a collection with work by young literary talent from Flanders. But De Coster's talent would really prove itself in the years after that: nominations, prizes and praise followed each of her new publications, critics applauding her no-nonsense style and originality. Her one before last novel *We and Me*, published in Dutch in 2012, broke all sales records, became a bestseller, won the Opzij Literary Prize, made the AKO Literatuurprijs and Golden Book-Owl longlists and is soon to be adapted for the big screen. Her work has been translated in ten languages.

Fellow writers, too, consider Saskia De Coster among the best writers in Flanders and the Netherlands, "The Great Flemish Novel is not dead. It has just been written by Saskia De Coster. *We and Me* is a novel that will haunt me for a long time. Excellent and unforgettable." (Dutch writer and actor Herman Koch)

Some of her famous work:

Vrije Val (Free Falling)

Jeuk (Itch)

Eeuwige roem (Undying Fame)

Held (Hero)

Dit is van mij (This is Mine)

We and Me

About the film

I Knew You would Come is the title of Saskia's entry for the 2016 Art Festival Watou. It is an unassuming whitewashed labourers' cottage that sets the scene for a story as an experience. The process of setting up the project is the starting point for the documentary that wants to offer a sensory and visually layered portrait of a process, a work under construction. The rooms and façades of the house form the canvas for the sentences and objects gradually introduced by De Coster.

All of it is moulded into an experience with a 3D sound performance by musician Inne Eysermans whom De Coster regularly collaborates with.

I Knew You Would Come is an intimate examination of all who came into this house before the visitor, in precisely this spot where all who enter seek direction. The trajectory tells the story of an impossibility, an inimitability, how man seeks himself in others and endlessly runs after his fellow creatures in a chain that started long ago:

*They swim under water and come on land
They look around them, open the door
They breathe deeply in and out
Here they will live
(Saskia De Coster)*

De Coster has a constant urge to explore the limits of literature itself. And in *I Knew You Would Come* she makes her first spatial installation in co-operation with musician Inne Eysermans.

And as the story slowly unfolds through the space, Griet Teck takes its elements and moulds them into a film that touches upon the dynamics of a process that inextricably confines the character of De Coster's oeuvre.

About Griet Teck

Born in the East Flemish city of Ghent, Griet Teck (b. 1982) is a young, oncoming Flemish maker of documentaries. She likes to explore the way and circumstances man lives in and the underlying, unknown dynamics that define how people act in the different societies that populate our world. Her work examines the relationship we have with love and time in a compelling, lasting and tangible way.

Teck studied at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Ghent and was the maker behind the award-winning film *Johan* which followed the daily rituals of her autistic brother.



Through this very personal account, she was able to really experience what reality feels like in a world with limitations, while as a maker the film gave her the unique opportunity to probe into the universal essence of being human. Her experience led to her first feature-length documentary *Feel My Love*, which premiered in 2014 at the International Film Festival Rotterdam.



Elvis Peeters – a film by Eva Küpper

Jos Verlooy is an author, singer/performer, playwright and screenwriter who works under the pen name Elvis Peeters, which is also the pseudonym for the books he writes together with his wife Nicole van Bael. The pair write poetry, children's books, audio and stage plays as well as down-to-earth, unsparing novels.

Their work is admired and feared alike for its 'pitiless', 'amoral' characters and storylines.

But the pair are also masters of suspense and cutting observations, grabbing the reader by the throat time and time again.

"Just as with their other work, the couple have wreaked havoc again. It is, and will always remain, their own peculiar gift to confront the reader sensationally with a very particular morality. The questions just force themselves upon the reader." (Dutch newspaper *De Volkskrant* about *Jacht* [Hunt])

Some of their famous work:

Het uur van de aap (The Hour of the Ape)

Brancusi

Meneer Papier Gaat uit wandelen (Mister Paper Goes for a Stroll)

De ontelbaren (The Uncountables)

Wij (We)

Dinsdag (Tuesday)

Jacht (Hunt)

About the film

Elvis Peeters' portrait casts an intimate light on the psyches of the writing pair that is Jos Verlooy and Nicole Van Bael. It is not easy, writing as a pair, so they developed their own unique rituals and working methods, keeping the balance between tension and agreement, their private and professional lives: they never discuss their work at home, for instance, but go to their favourite coffee bar, 'because then the conversation has to remain civilised.' After all, this charmingly disarming duo writes cuttngly contemporary and dark texts that often leave the reader deeply moved, while attempting to uproot the banality of evil. Through intimate conversations and spontaneous performances, combined with more abstract and poetic imagery, the portrait gives us a glimpse of the unique creative process that lies behind new work by Elvis Peeters.

About Eva Küpper

Eva Küpper (b. 1984) is an audio-visual author and director of documentaries. She graduated as Master in Audio-visual Arts (Film) at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Ghent in 2009. One year later she won the IDFA Award and a Wildcard from the Flanders Audiovisual Fund for her documentary *What's in a Name*, making *King and Queen of Hearts* for Flemish TV channel Canvas soon after. She also claimed two Canadian awards as co-director of the film *Gardenia, Before the Last Curtain Falls* (an Arte and Canvas co-production) as well as the Ensor for Best Documentary at the 2015 Ostend Film Festival. Her new documentary *Between the Devil and My Deep Blue Skin* is expected to come out next year in 2017. She has also been working as an Audio-visual Production Techniques lecturer at Ghent University, is a board member at copyright association deAuteurs and gives guest lectures and masterclasses about documentary making in Belgium and abroad.





Dimitri Verhulst – a film by Emilie Verhamme

Dimitri Verhulst writes novels, poems, plays and columns.

He made his official debut in 1999 with his collection of short stories entitled *De kamer hiernaast* (The Room Next Door) which was nominated for the literary prize of Dutch newspaper *NRC Handelsblad*. It would mark the start of his glittering career: his novel *The Misfortunates* won multiple prizes and was made into a film which premiered in January 2016.

The jury of the 2009 Dutch Libris Literature Award praised his novel *Godverdomse dagen op een godverdomse bol* (Goddamn Days on a Goddamn Globe) as 'linguistic fireworks and a true literary feat by an author who has mastered his *metier* like the best of them. This novel pushes the reader into a corner and puts him before the block.' Not surprising, then, that Verhulst claimed the coveted award.

Verhulst writes in a very colloquially Flemish, sarcastic and direct style, with lots of self-created words, which earned him the prize for the most beautiful literary sentence of 2014. He was also the author behind the *Boekenweekgeschenk* for 2015 Dutch Book Week, called *De zomer hou je ook niet tegen* (You Can't Postpone the Summer).

Some of his famous work:

Problemski Hotel

The Misfortunates

Madame Verona Comes Down the Hill

Godverdomse dagen op een godverdomse bol (Goddamn Days on a Goddamn Globe)

About the film

From Chipka to Chipka is an account of Dimitri Verhulst's journey as an author between his birth town Aalst to the east of Brussels and Sofia, the Bulgarian capital, which is the backdrop for his latest book *Het leven, gezien van beneden* (Life, Seen from Below). Both places are connected in name and spirit. The viewer discovers what place both Chipkas take up in Verhulst's personal life and his literary career; how their private and general history, in an attempt to understand the world, life indeed, are woven together into new ideas and poetry...

About Emilie Verhamme

Emilie Verhamme might be young, but she is not a nobody in the Flemish world of cinema. Already in her second year at LUCA School of Arts in Ghent, her short film *Cockaigne* was nominated for the Cannes Film Festival's official competition and her graduation film entitled *Tsjernobyl Hearts*, which tells the story of two teenagers stuck on an island who are trying to escape from a closed society in which they find it hard to grow up, was awarded a wildcard by the Flanders Audiovisual Fund.

And there was more to come, because in 2014 she surprised the world with her international award-winning feature film *Eau Zoo* which received another wildcard from the Flanders Audiovisual Fund. The film tells the viewer about a closed community of people who are convinced the end of the world is nigh. Despite limited funds, but thanks to a dedicated cast, Verhamme created the bewildering, at times nervous, atmosphere that formed the backdrop of her film.



And she did not stop there, because she made another two short films recently:

Antichambre (2015) - Video channel Nowness / São Paulo International Short Film Festival
Farao's zonder goud (Pharaohs without Gold) (2016) - Slovak International Film Festival



Bart Van Loo – a film by Ibbe Daniëls

Bart Van Loo is an author and well-loved raconteur both in his birth country Belgium as well as in the Netherlands.

With his in the meantime legendary enthusiasm and wisdom, he writes, tells stories and acts about the country and culture he loves dearly: France. And his words are as sumptuous as the topic he writes about.

It was in 2006 that Van Loo made his literary voice heard for the first time with *Parijs Retour. Literaire reisgids voor Frankrijk* (Return to Paris. A Literary Guide through France).

Even after several well-documented and very original show-stopping books about French culture, Van Loo who 'would like to be an advocate for a (French) culture that is gradually disappearing' still has plenty to say.

Some of his famous work:

Parijs retour. Literaire reisgids voor Frankrijk (Return to Paris. A Literary Guide through France)

O vermiljoenen spleet! Seks, erotiek en literatuur (Oh, Vermillion Crack! Sex, Erotica and Literature)

Elsschot, Antwerpen en Coraline (Elsschot, Antwerp and Coraline)

Chanson. Een gezongen geschiedenis van Frankrijk (Chanson. A History of France in Song)

Bleu Blanc Rouge. Reis door Frankrijk in 80 vragen (Blue White Red. Around France in 80 Questions)

Napoleon. De schaduw van de revolutie (Napoleon. The Shadow of the Revolution)

About the film

Ibbe Daniëls saw a stark contrast between Van Loo's quiet life as an author and the kind of exuberance that tends to push itself onto the foreground when he leaves his cosy nest to turn himself into the well-loved raconteur he is.

This prompted her to build the film around the intriguing juxtaposition of the author writing peacefully in his study and the explosive presence of the comedian in the public eye; the peace and quiet of the meadows and the excited murmur in the venues where Van Loo performs.

Daniëls set out to make her film as honestly as possible. After all, writer and director best meet each other halfway.

But the film ended up as a fascinating enactment of the interactions between the author and his director; as the story of a director who gradually loses control of her documentary, because the writer and his exuberant enthusiasm increasingly hijack the show.

If we take it all literally, we end up at the edge of fiction, because even if we were watching a spoof documentary, Bart Van Loo's authenticity is never in doubt: his answers are real, just like his stand-up routine (which he will go on tour with next year). Indeed, the only one to lose control is the film and its maker, while the wool is pulled over the viewer's eyes...

...Through the sheer power of the story.

About Ibbe Daniëls

Ibbe Daniëls' graphic artist stock comes very much to the fore in her work. Documentaries are her big passion, though she makes them with a twist: She chooses to pull the nose of reality and loves interpreting it, of course always with profound respect for the original. Even her first short documentary entitled *Badhuis* (Bathhouse) had the manipulative streak which would also feature in her later work. She tends to focus on subjects that are marginal or misunderstood.

As a director, Daniëls does work for television (*Belpop*, *Mijn Moeder*, *People of Tomorrow...*), but she also directs video clips (for *dEUS*, *Evil Superstars...*) and campaigns (SOS Children's Villages).



For Offworld she directed her first documentary *Rêve Kakudji*, a powerful and intimate portrait of a young, Congolese countertenor wanting to make it in the world of Western opera.

The film premiered in 2013 at the IDFA Documentary Festival in the Dutch capital Amsterdam and toured several international film festivals and Belgian cinemas.



Lize Spit – a film by Ellen Vermeulen

Lize Spit grew up in Viersel in the north of Belgium, but made Brussels her home in 2005. She graduated with a Master's degree in Screenwriting from the RITCS School of Arts in Brussels and writes prose and poetry. She has published work in literary magazines *Het Liegend Konijn*, *De Gids* and *Das Magazin*, and in 2013 won both WriteNow!'s prize of the jury and the audience. She also teaches courses in screenwriting at art school Wisper in Leuven and is a Creative Writing guest lecturer at LUCA School of Arts in Brussels. She specialises in writing stories for young readers and has contributed to texts for *De Taalbende*, the new reading method of Belgian educational publisher Plantyn. She is one of the founding members of not-for-profit organisation RAW VZW which offers work spaces to talented young authors and filmmakers.

Her debut *Het Smelt*, which is being translated into English under the title *The Melting*, appeared in January 2016 with publisher Das Mag.

About the film

As Helga van Beuningen is working on the German translation of *The Melting*, Spit returns to the place where her story plays, and where she spent her childhood.

There she thinks about her heroine Eva as a reflection of herself and her youth...

The film becomes one about the power of a literary score that needs to be settled.

About Ellen Vermeulen

Ellen Vermeulen (b. 1982) lives and works in Ghent.

After finishing her studies at the Brussels RITCS School of Arts in 2005, she made her big break with *9999*, an account of the plight of mentally ill inmates in Merksplas prison in the north of Belgium.

She won a Fried Van Hoof Award for human rights with the film and received an honourable mention at the Swiss Visions du Réel documentary film festival. It was subsequently screened at several festivals in Belgium and abroad, and even shown at the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg.

For her PhD at RITCS School of Arts, she is doing research for her martyr trilogy and teaches at the school.





Sylvia Vanden Heede – a film by Leni Huyghe

Sylvia Vanden Heede is a children's author who writes for young readers and teenagers alike. Her name might not instantly ring a bell with the general public, but her work definitely does. The *Vos en Haas* books (Fox and Hare)? An international success! And other work of hers has received much-deserved recognition as well. Even in primary school, Vanden Heede spent her time writing long stories in her notebooks, loving nothing better than sitting alone in her room at her little desk to think up heroes and heroines to write pages and pages about. The adventure stories of the Red Knight, first created by Flemish comic artist Willy Vandersteen inspired her, as well as the fairy tales of the brothers Grimm and animal encyclopaedias. As a little girl, she wanted really to become a vet when she grew up... Even back then, her stories, which she illustrated with drawing of her own, were about animals like stray dogs and foxes. Everything changed in 1988 when Vanden Heede sent in a manuscript for a children's writing competition. She only got second place, but her story *De spiegelplas* (The Mirror Puddle) was published nonetheless. She carried on writing, often collaborating with Flemish publisher Lannoo, and regularly translated for children's magazines, like the French texts for *Het Zonnekind* by Davidsfonds. She proved really good at it: as Dutch is far more compact, French can't always be translated literally; she often pondered on the words and grammar in Dutch, thinking about the very foundations of her language and seeking the exact right word, precisely the right sentence.

Some of her famous work:

De spiegelplas (The Mirror Puddle)

Wok van de wilden (Wok of the Savages)

De huid van de beer (The Skin of the Bear)

Vos en Haas (Fox and Hare)

Opgestaan is plaats vergaan (Shouldn't Have Got Up Then, Should You?)

Ik kan huilen! (I Could Cry!)

De kers op de taart (The Cherry on the Cake)

Donderkop (Thunderhead)

Wolf and Dog

About the film

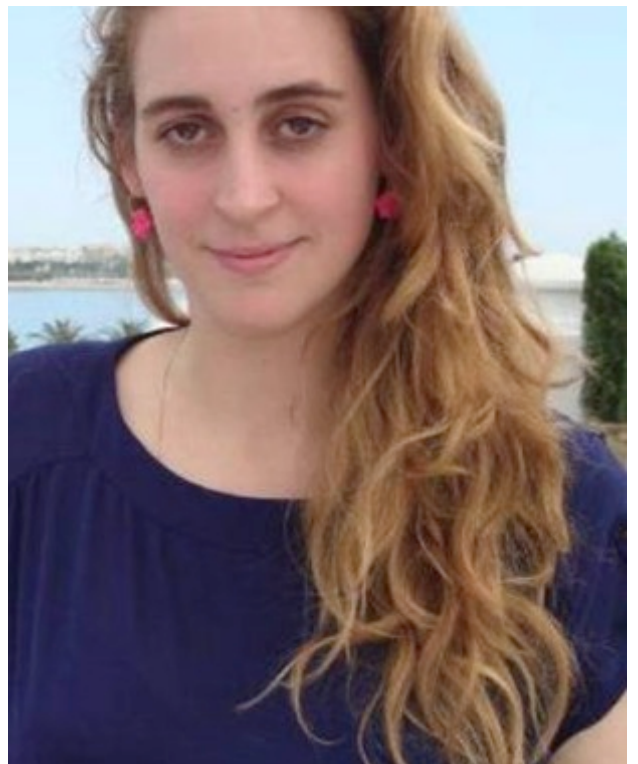
Living in Bruges, Sylvia Vanden Heede is a children's author with an impressive list of children's books and young adult fiction to her name. She has written many stories in the past twenty years, including some about her most famous characters Fox and Hare. Writing in words that are easy enough for her young fans to read and understand, she creates playful and funny stories that unfold in a world entirely of her own, revolving very much around her fascination with animals and nature.

Everything starts with imagination, she feels. That's why she writes: children can still escape into their own phantasies without needing to be ashamed, often exchanging their innocence for reality as they grow up. Sadly enough. But Vanden Heede never let go of the imagination she had as a little girl. Every single day she delves into her own world to create new stories, 'because you need them to understand the real world.'

About Leni Huyghe

Leni Huyghe (b. 1986) studied Political Sciences at Ghent University and Audio-visual Arts at LUCA School of Arts in Brussels. Fiction is her greatest passion, but her work also flirts with experimental cinema and the documentary genre. All of her four short films made the selections of several film festivals in Belgium and abroad, and the 2012 Cannes Cinéfondation as well as the 2013 São Paulo International Short Film Festival nominated her film *Matteus* which was crowned with the Young Audience Award at the Swiss Visions du Réel documentary film festival. At the moment she is in the final production stages of a short film that received support from the Flanders Audiovisual Fund and is working on a number of other new projects.

Huyghe is a member of not-for-profit organisation Mont Saint Eugène, a platform for and by likeminded young artists of various disciplines. She lives and works in Brussels.





Kristien Dieltiens – a film by Gust Van den Berghe

Kristien Dieltiens is an illustrator and author of novels for young readers of different ages. She made her debut in 1997 with a picture book for young children and adults alike, and has published more than 50 books since, many of which have been award-winning or were at least nominated for one literary prize or other.

Writing in a style often described as 'cinematic', 'tactile' and 'sensitive', her psychologically realistic, well-drawn and historically well-researched characters as well as her skill in describing sensitive topics and children's issues make her unique as an author. Intrigue, humour and adventure are the red threads that run through her books, some of which have been translated into several languages.

Some of her famous work:

Olrac

Aude

Candide

De stille pijn van Luca (Luca's Silent Pain)

De zomer van gisteren & Pudding (Yesterday's Summer & Pudding)

Papinette

Kelderkind (Cellar Child)

About the film

Mother and son: she writes books, he directs films...They both know what the creative process is like. Hesitating, searching, thinking, waiting and then... jump! When and how does a good story unfold? What if it doesn't work this time? Together, they go on a quest for a novel yet unwritten, always excited about who and what they will meet along the way.

About Gust Van den Berghe

Gust Van den Berghe (b. 1985) started his career as a dancer and member of the Royal Ballet of Flanders, where he also produced music. Between 2005 and 2009, he also wrote and produced music for several bands, ballets and plays, becoming Assistant Director at the Royal Flemish Opera (*Koninklijke Vlaamse Opera*) in 2009. Since then Van den Berghe has made some experimental short films and documentaries, releasing his fiction debut in 2010 with *Little Baby Jesus of Flandr*, inspired by a 1924 novel and play by Flemish writer Felix Timmermans, followed by his second feature film *Blue Bird* one year later. Both films premiered on the Directors' Fortnight in Cannes. Then in 2012, Van den Berghe was commissioned to write and direct a youth opera, which would become *Queen of the Night*, a free adaptation of Mozart's *Magic Flute*. Lastly in 2014, he made the closing piece to his film trilogy entitled *Lucifer*, the first film entirely in round format, using a custom Tondoscope developed together with his cameraman Gust to achieve the round and enclosed space they were looking for.

He currently teaches at several film schools and is working on his new feature film planned for recording in 2017.





Randall Casaer – a film by Christina Vandekerckhove

Randall Casaer is an author-comic strip artist, poet, cabaret director and retired performer 'who would love his life to be like his comics: flamboyant, consummate, cheerful, poetic, funny, deceptive, simple, all the while in search of magic and full of empathy' (Oogachtend publishing company).

In 2007, Casaer made his comic debut with *Sleepyheads*. It would prove to be a hit, 'you could even call it a dream debut, pun intended. With this album, which explores the boundaries between imagination, dream and reality, Randall C (Randall Casaer in full) has given us a decided masterpiece. His drawings are fantastic, his demure, and one-of-a-kind colouring is sublime and the story he tells is replete with wonderful finds.' (Dutch comic magazine *Stripgids*)

No surprise then that many of his graphic gems and wonderful texts - be they illustrations, graphic novels or poems - have found their way into the hearts of the general public.

Some of his famous work:

Sleepyheads

To Do

Ik zie u gaarne met een boek (I Like You With a Book)

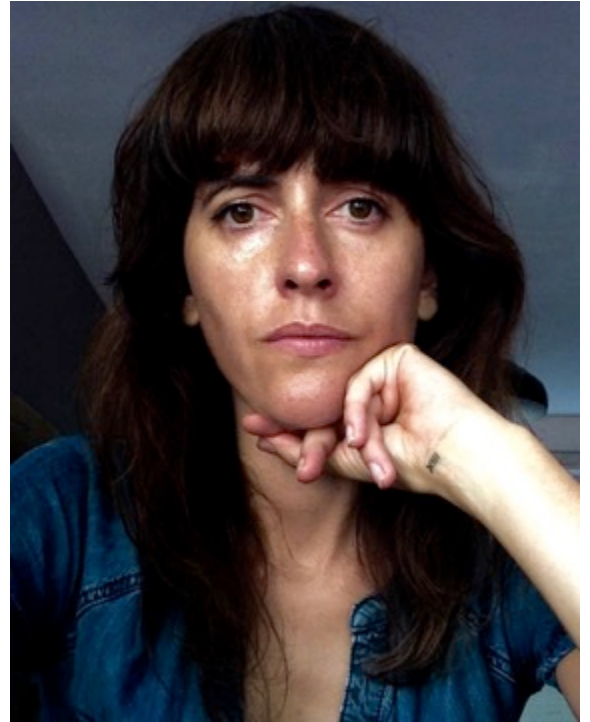
De ridder die niet slapen wilde (The Knight who Didn't Want to Sleep)

About the film

Choosing to combine reality and the surreal, the portrait Vandekerckhove made of Casaer is like a journey through the author-illustrator's imagination and creative process that allowed him to visually express his love for the imaginary and poetic.

About Christina Vandekerckhove

Vandekerckhove finished her Audio-visual Arts studies with greatest distinction at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Ghent and has been working as a freelance director ever since, mainly for television. Last year she made *De Nada* with singer Daan Stuyven and photographer Peter De Bruyne, a visual and musical road movie for Flanders' public broadcaster VRT. At the moment she is recording her documentary *Rabot*, a portrait of the residents of three soon to be demolished Ghent tower blocks which is planned for release in October 2017.





Joost de Vries – a film by Rob Rombout

Joost de Vries (b. 1983) studied journalism and history in Utrecht, becoming editor and literary critic at Dutch weekly *De Groene Amsterdammer* in 2007. In 2010 he published his first novel entitled *Clausewitz*, which tells the story of a young academic in search of a cult author who is believed to have disappeared long ago. In part due to the strong and at times diametrically opposing views, his book became a success, selling more than 10,000 copies and being nominated for the Selexyz Debuutprijs as well as Anton Wachterprijs awards. De Vries also received a C.C.S. Crone grant on 6 December 2011. In April 2013 he published his second novel entitled *De republiek* (The Republic) with his former publisher Prometheus. The book plays out in the academic world once again, though this time telling the story of the death of a Hitler Studies lecturer and the battle between two of his former students to be considered his successor. *The Republic* was nominated for the BNG Bank Literatuurprijs for new literature and the Libris Literature Award, claiming the 2013 Charlotte Köhler Stipendium and 2014 Golden Book Owl award.

His collection of essays *Vechtmemoires* (Fighting Memoires) appeared in October 2014, the success of which de Vries met with the cold humour of his novel's hero, declaring in an interview that 'it [was] great to pay off [his] student debt.'

Some of his work:

Clausewitz (2010)

De republiek (The Republic) (2013)

Vechtmemoires (Fighting Memoires) (2014)

About the film

Rob Rombout's portrait of de Vries tries to catch a glimpse of how he thinks, what fascinates him and his penchant to know absolutely everything about a topic.

He clearly distances himself from the relativism and cynicism of the generation of writers that came before him.

The film sets out from an interview that (quite literally) shows him from all sides, underlining (and contrasting) the words with the images of the train journey.

The film is really an encounter between literature and film, author and filmmaker, in which they find themselves and each other in the anonymous and timeless setting of a train carriage.

So the universe is not Amsterdam, where de Vries spends his life, but the tableaux of landscapes and people gliding past; the quick, casual stopovers populated with (un-Dutch) architecture; the masters wanting to surpass themselves; all of it interspersed with fleeting, anonymous passers-by.

About Rob Rombout

Rob Rombout is a freelance filmmaker, lecturer and teacher, and is the co-founding head of international master's programme DocNomads at LUCA School of Arts in Brussels. Many of his international award-winning films were co-produced and broadcast by international TV channels. For 10 years, Rombout was also vice president of the Belgian branch of French copyright agency Scam, he is a member of the jury on film commissions in Belgian and France, and is now a member of the advisory committee of the American University of Technologies in the Lebanese capital Beirut.





Ernest van der Kwast – a film by Flo Flamme

Ernest van der Kwast made his debut with *Soms zijn dingen mooier als er mensen klappen* (Sometimes Things Are Better When People Applaud). He also published *Stand-in* under the pseudonym Sieger Slood, but his big break was his novel *Mama Tandoori* which became a bestseller in the Netherlands and Italy, selling 100,000 copies. His novella *Giovanna's Navel* appeared in 2012 and is being translated into German. Van der Kwast's novel *De ijsmakers* (The Ice Cream Makers) which appeared in 2015, won the 2016 Diorapthe Literature Award and has been sold to six countries so far. His latest novel entitled *Het wonder dat niet omvalt* (The Wonder that Doesn't Fall) appeared only recently in September 2016.

Some of his work:

Man zoekt vrouw om hem gelukkig te maken (Man Seeks Woman to Make him Happy) (2004)

Soms zijn dingen mooier als er mensen klappen (Sometimes Things are Better When People Applaud) (2005)

Stand-in (2007, under the pseudonym Sieger Slood)

Mama Tandoori (2010)

Giovanna's Navel (2012)

De familie Lazuriet (The Lazuriet Family) (2014)

The Ice-Cream Makers (2015)

Het wonder dat niet omvalt (The Wonder that Doesn't Fall) (2016)

About the film

"Narrow / The heart that loves, the brain that contemplates, / The life that wears, the spirit that creates / One object, and one form, and builds thereby / A sepulchre for its eternity." - From Percy Bysshe Shelley's *Epipsychidion*.

Precisely these verses by the English Romantic poet Shelley are the main character's first encounter with the art of poetry in *The Ice-Cream Makers*. But they also seem to point towards the story's author van der Kwast himself, whose mind is constantly spinning with ideas, chat shows, presentations and columns. He flits between one office where he writes his prose, a second one which he uses to work on other projects and his attic room at home where he dots the Is and crosses the Ts, all the while passionately supporting his two young children from the side lines when they take part in athletics competitions and going back and forth between Rotterdam and South Tirol with his Italian partner. Indeed, van der Kwast's soul is restless, which undoubtedly shows in his characters too.

About Flo Flamme

Flo Flamme (b. 1986) is a film director of Belgian stock. Born the daughter of a visual artist, she developed a love for images and especially theatre early on, leaving the stage lights when she was 18 to start her studies at LUCA School of Arts in Brussels. There she became fascinated by the at times exceedingly narrow line between reality and fiction, specialising in the documentary genre. After her studies, Flamme gathered experience in filmmaking, collaborating with several directors and making a number of video clips of her own. Her first feature film *Añoranza*, which came out in November 2016, was inspired by the disoriented older generation in modern Cuba. Filmed in the capital Havana, the film gives three senior residents of the city a poetic voice, highlighting the precarious balance between their revolutionary past and their uncertain future among the touristic madness of the new Cuba.





Stefan Hertmans – a film by Kadir Balci

Born in Ghent, Stefan Hertmans (b. 1951) has written an impressive list of literary works and essays, receiving recognition in Belgium and abroad. He has published poetry, novels, essays, plays, short stories and even a book about art agogy.

He taught part of the Master's programme at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Ghent where he led the Studium Generale until October 2010.

He also lectured and did readings at the Sorbonne University in Paris, as well as the universities of Vienna, Berlin and Mexico City, the Library of Congress in Washington and University College London.

During the 2012-2013 academic year, he was guest professor at the faculty of Art Studies of Ghent University.

Hertmans' oeuvre consists of novels, short story collections, essay collections, plays and some twelve volumes of poetry.

Some of his work: *Ruimte* (Space), published by Van Hyfte in 1981; *Ademzuil* (Breath Column), 1984; *Melksteen* (Milk Stone), poetry, 1986; *Gestolde wolken* (Frozen Clouds), prose, 1987; *Zoutsneeuw* (Salt Snow), elegies, poetry, 1987; *Bezoeken* (Visitations), poetry, 1988; *Oorverdovende steen* (Deafening Stone), essays, 1988; *De Grenzen van Woestijnen* (Borders of Deserts), prose, 1989; *Sneeuwdoosjes* (Snow Boxes), essays, 1989; *Het Narrenschip* (The Ship of Fools), poetry, 1990; *Verwensingen* (Curses), poetry, 1991; *Kopnaad* (Suture), play, 1992; *Muziek Voor de Overtocht* (Music for the Crossing), poetry, 1994; *Naar Merelbeke* (To Merelbeke), novel, 1994; *Fuga's en pimpelmezen. Over actualiteit, kunst en kritiek.* (Fugues and blue tits. About current affairs, art and criticism.), essays, 1995; *Francesco's Paradox*, poetry, 1995; *Annunciaties* (Annunciations), poetry, 1997; *Steden. verhalen onderweg* (published in English as *Intercities*), prose, 1998; *Het bedenkelijke. Over het obscene in de cultuur*, (The Questionnable. About obscenity in culture.) essays, 1999; *Waarover men niet spreken kan: elementen voor een agogiek van de kunst* (What cannot be spoken of: elements for agogy in art), 1999; *Goya als hond* (Goya as a dog), poetry, 1999; *Mind the gap.* play, 2000; *Café Aurora*, essays on the work of Dutch artist Jan Vanriet, 2000; *Als op de eerste dag* (As on the first day), novel in stories, 2001; *Het putje van Milete* (Milete's Well), essays, 2002; *Engel van de metamorfose. Over het werk van Jan Fabre* (Angel of metamorphosis. On the work of Jan Fabre), 2002;

Vuurwerk zei ze. Gedichten. (Fireworks she said. Poems.), poetry, 2003; *Harder dan Sneeuw* (Harder than snow), novel, 2004; *Kaneelvingers* (Cinnamon Fingers), poetry, 2005; *Jullie die Weten* (You Who Know), libretto, 2005; *Muziek voor de overtocht. Gedichten 1975-2005.* (Music for the crossing. Poems 1975-2005), poetry, 2006; *Het zwijgen van de tragedie* (The silence of the Tragedy), essays, 2007; *Het verborgen weefsel* (The Hidden Fabric), novel, 2008; *Waarover men niet spreken kan. Grondslagen voor een agogiek van de kunst* (What cannot be spoken of: principles for agogy in art), 2010; *De val van vrije dagen* (The Fall of Free Days), poems, 2010; *De Mobilisatie van Arcadia* (The Mobilisation of Arcadia), essays, 2011; *War and Turpentine*, novel, 2013.

About the film

The film accompanies Hertmans on an atmospheric journey through a major part of his life: from his parents' home in Sint-Amandsberg to the picturesque but at the same time rugged village of Monieux in the south of France where he started his second life many years ago.

One feeling that always presses itself onto the foreground when reading Hertmans' work and which is visually expressed in this documentary is a sense of sweet, unsparing, at times suffocating melancholy.

About Kadir Balci

After graduating as a Master in Audio-visual Arts at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Ghent, Kadir Balci (b. 1970) spent two years at the Bournemouth and Poole College of Art and Design as a guest student. He worked primarily on corporate films and commercials, making also one short film and an animated film.

He made his debut with his first feature film *Turquoise* in 2010.

For his second feature film *Marry Me*, which came to Flanders' cinemas in early 2015, Balci collaborated with screenwriter Jean-Claude van Rijckeghem and producer Dries Phlypo of Belgian production company A Private View.

In 2015 he also directed five episodes of new Flemish drama series *Amigos* and is currently working on his third feature film.





Christophe Van Gerrewey – a film by Sofie Benoot

Christophe Van Gerrewey (b. 1982) studied Architecture at Ghent University and Literature at the University of Leuven. He finished his PhD entitled *Architecture, a User's Manual. Theory, Criticism and History since 1950 according to Geert Bekaert* in the spring of 2014 as a FWO fellow, promoted by Mil De Kooning and Theory of Architecture and Architectural Criticism professor at Ghent University Bart Verschaffel. He wrote a monograph about Belgian firm Xavier De Geyter Architects in 2013 and worked on a book about Belgian architecture since 1989 for Belgian publisher Lannoo in 2014.

He is part of the editing departments of *OASE Journal for Architecture* and Belgian literary magazine *DW B* and edited Geert Bekaert's essays together with Mil De Kooning, winning the Young Art Critics Award (*Prijs voor de Jonge Kunstkritiek*) of the Mondriaan Fund in the category Review and Essay in 2008. In 2012, he published his first novel entitled *Op de hoogte* (In the Know) with Dutch publisher De Bezige Bij and claimed the Debut Prize and Prose Prize of the Belgian Province of East Flanders. He followed this success with his next novel in 2013 called *Trein met vertraging* (Train Delayed).

About the film

Trein met vertraging (Train Delayed) is a minutely detailed account of a seemingly innocent train journey from Ostend to Antwerp Central Station. Everything goes well until the dramatic climax of the novel when the train comes to a standstill. Van Gerrewey takes the reader by the hand, leading him masterfully and minute by minute along the bumpy road while giving us a glimpse of the traveller's deepest inner thoughts.

As an account, *Train Delayed* is as sad as it is comical, made up of the experiences of individual travellers who face each their own peculiar problems; whether it be physical issues, an essay that urgently needs smoothing

over, or a family's supply of ice cream that's now surely going to melt... Van Gerrewey's skilled pen turns a simple train journey into a symbol of our hysteric times: an era wherein nothing seems to really work, wherein people all too often end up unsatisfied.

Train Delayed is an exceedingly minute description of what should be banal happenings at first sight. Indeed the unity of the setting and the concentration on the characters' inner thoughts seem to be the perfect context for an author's creative portrait.

Van Gerrewey does not have a driving licence, so he uses public transport quite often. Exactly because he takes the train so often, this true public transport expert in the end decided to write a book about the odd situation of strangers cooped up together in a small space, alone with their thoughts and interactions. He set out observing fellow passengers, incorporating everything he saw into his characters and beginning to wonder what they were thinking and what stories they could tell him.

In this sense, the author's portrait becomes a kind of re-enactment of the book's creative process. Indeed, Van Gerrewey finds himself on the train and is looking at the faces and doings of his fellow passengers; he moves through the carriages, sitting down across or next to people; he observes and looks around him, seeing a whole register of potential fellow passengers with the narrator's voice telling their story as recorded in his book.

We set out looking for Van Gerrewey's archetypes: noisy teenagers, a class of schoolchildren that get on and take up the whole carriage, a man trying to work in vain, a woman speaking loudly into her mobile phone,...

We quite literally use Van Gerrewey's point of view as a silent observer. The setting inside the train has attracted Benoot for a long time, because of its constant interplay of glances. A train journey is one great opportunity to watch people, after all. Certainly at dusk, when it is not quite dark enough outside to no longer see the landscape, yet the light has faded just enough to be able to see the reflection of fellow passengers in the window. People can watch each other undisturbed, without others noticing they are doing it. Indeed, we all watch each other, try to think who the stranger across us really is, making up stories about each other in our minds... This is the topic of Van Gerrewey's brief portrait: the constant interplay of glances between travellers, with the author's gaze as the most prominent one that projects its imagination on his characters.

About Sofie Benoot

Sofie Benoot is a talented young filmmaker working from Brussels. She graduated with an MA in Audio-visual Arts (Documentary) from the Brussels LUCA School of Arts in 2007. Ever since she started studying in 2003, she has put all her passion and talent into very idiosyncratic and captivating documentary projects. *Blue Meridian* was her first film after graduation and was one out of 13 selected projects for the first edition of FIDlab at the 2009 Marseille Film Festival, where it claimed first prize. Since then, she has expanded her experience as creative co-ordinator at renowned theatre and film collective Berlin and as assistant producer and -director for various theatre and film projects. The little time she has left, she spends giving guest lectures and readings about aspects and topics to do with the documentary genre. In 2014 she let her third film *Desert Haze* loose on the world. It premiered at the Swiss Visions du Réel documentary film festival and subsequently toured several other international festivals and cinemas. She also co-wrote and directed two episodes of the much-praised documentary series *Archibélge* in 2015.





Wide Vercnocke – a film by Jan Bultheel

Wide Vercnocke (b. 1985) graduated in 2010 with an MA in Illustration/Comic from LUCA School of Arts in Brussels. Since then he has been working as a freelance illustrator for magazines like *Knack Focus* and *Agenda*, and is resident comic artist at monthly talent event *De Sprekende Ezels* in Leuven. In 2013 he released his lauded debut comic strip *Mijn muze ligt in de zetel* (My Muse is Lying on the Couch), followed by his second album *Wildvlees* (Scar Tissue) in May 2014, both at publisher Bries. In September 2016, his graphic novel *Narwal* appeared, again with Bries.

Some of his work:

Narwal (2016)

Wildvlees (Scar Tissue) (2014)

Mijn muze ligt in de zetel (My Muse is Lying on the Couch) (2013)

About the film

The film departs from the maker's fascination with Vercnocke's work and how easy he steps in and out of reality. His drawings are realistic, yet surreal, and the setting of his stories constantly shifts between a vivid and intensified dream world and the banal, same-old-same-old reality. He calls this an exchange of hidden urges: the unseen, innermost erotic yearnings that are not or ought not to be spoken, but are there nonetheless in the twilight zone between wanting and knowing.

Bultheel's portrait works in the same way, using his experience and skill as a maker of animated films to visualise this ambiguous, split world. Animations namely also makes it easy to create a parallel universe where everything's possible.

Made in Vercnocke's unmistakeable graphic style, the film indeed gives the viewer a vague impression of a parallel universe among, next to and through the interview where whatever is being said is commented on, contradicted or refuted by visual interruptions. The interviewer's banal reality, then, is intensified by the graphic and coloured surrealism that, through its very form, adds as yet unseen value.

Vercnocke's reality is his own habitat: his studio in the business park in Zaventem near Brussels and his sofa, the centre of all his activities. There he lives, writes and works. Which is why Bultheel wanted to interview Vercnocke on and around his couch, turning the piece of furniture into a free interpretation of his universe that must illustrate the unspoken, unseen urges of the author in a playful and light-hearted way.

How does he work? What everyday rituals does he have? What inspires him? Who are his idols? Why does he make his drawings? Why do these stories interest him? How does he write? Where does his fascination with deer in estrus come from? And what about nude women? Where is he coming from? Where does he want to go? What is his next work and what will it be about?

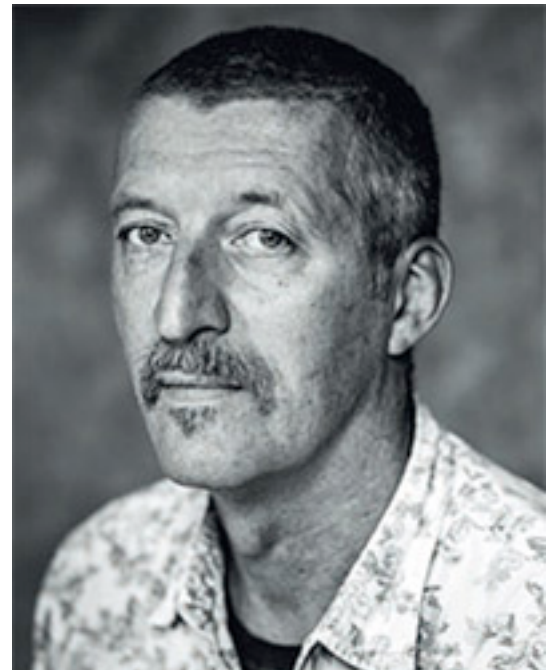
About Jan Bultheel

For 16 years, Jan Bultheel directed and produced mainly commercials through his own production house Pix & Motion, gaining international acclaim and awards. But for the new millennium he exchanged the advertising industry for creative work with theatre and dance companies.

He wrote, designed and directed *International Hareport*, an animated children's series in a co-production with Flemish children's channel Ketnet and French broadcaster TF1, which was sold to several European broadcasters.

Cafard from 2015 is Bultheel's first feature film. Written, directed and edited by him, in its own graphic style, managing the animation team by himself and making absolutely all of the figures and sets' textures himself, the film is entirely author-driven.

Canaan, which is still in the making (in 2016), will be his second feature film for an adult audience.





David Van Reybrouck – a film by Dick Tuinder

Having studied archaeology and philosophy, David Van Reybrouck worked as a cultural historian for a few years, but said goodbye to the world of academics in 2005 to concentrate on writing his essays, prose, poetry and plays.

Van Reybrouck is noted for his versatility, diligent research and moving writing style.

He made his debut in 2001 with his literary non-fiction book *De Plag, het stille knagen van schrijvers, termieten en Zuid-Afrika* (The Plague) which claimed several prizes, including the 2002 Flemish Debut Prize, and received several nominations. His first novel entitled *Slagschaduw* (Drop Shadow) was published in 2007.

But he would make himself a real household name in Belgium *and* abroad with *Congo: The Epic History of a People*, published in Dutch in 2010. For this 'epic', 'brilliant' and 'breath-taking' masterpiece he received three awards in that year, including the prestigious AKO Litatuurprijs. The book was also translated in multiple languages and accordingly kept piling up the national and international awards in the years that followed.

In 2014 he was given the Gouden Ganzeveer award in recognition of his great contribution to writing in Dutch, putting him on a par with Flemish author *Tom Lanoye* and Dutch writer *Ramsey Nasr*.

Even as a poet and thinker, he has claimed himself a leading place in the public debate with great aplomb.

Some of his famous work:

De Plag, het stille knagen van schrijvers, termieten en Zuid-Afrika (The Plague)

Die Siel van die Mier (The Soul of the Ant)

Slagschaduw (Drop Shadow)

Congo: The Epic History of a People

Tegen verkiezingen (Against Elections)

About Dick Tuinder

Born in Hawaii, Dick Tuinder (b. 1963) is a visual artist, author and director who grew up in Deventer in the north of the Netherlands. his studies at the Rietveld Academy in Amsterdam in the late 80s, he and made films, radio and TV programmes. Many exhibitions and publications followed the set-up of artist initiative Park4DTV with a few friends. After some 20 short films, he made his first feature film called *Winterland* in 2009, followed by *Farewell to the Moon* in 2014. He regularly makes illustrations for Dutch weekly *De Groene Amsterdammer*, writes screenplays and stories, and from time to makes murals too.





Annelies Verbeke – a film by Simone de Vries

Annelies Verbeke is an author and performer. Having studied Germanic Linguistics and Literature as well as screenwriting, she stormed onto the literary scene in 2003 with her debut *Slaap!* (Sleep!).

The novel instantly won her the Flemish Debut Prize, the Gouden Ezelsoor and the Vrouw & Kultuur association's debut award. The novel also made the longlists for the AKO Literatuurprijs and Libris Literature Award and was nominated for the Gerard Walschap Prize.

Her surreal and humorous style soon made her popular with press and public alike.

"Everyday weirdos, potty singletons *and* beautiful freaks, they populate the stories of Annelies Verbeke in their droves. She puts them in absurd situations to pour a sauce of dry humour over them with a soupçon of hopelessness. Characters with a screw loose are her *metier*(...)." (cobra.be)

Verbeke has received acclaim in many genres, including theatre and screenwriting, but her great talent for short stories has earned her the title of 'true short story diva' on literary website cobra.be. She has grown into a passionate advocate for the short story as a fully-fledged genre.

Her work has been translated in many languages and has claimed several prizes.

Some of her famous work:

Slaap! (Sleep!)

Giant

Groener gras (Greener Grass)

Vissen redden (Saving Fish)

Thirty Days

About Simone de Vries

Born in the Dutch capital Amsterdam, Simone de Vries (b. 1963) has been making documentaries since 2001, often about artists. Like *De Kijk van Kessels* about Dutch artist and designer Erik Kessels and *Blond, Blue Eyes* about Dutch actor Rutger Hauer. In 2007, she won the Golden Calf and in 2008 the Sound & Vision Award for *Touch Me Somewhere I Can Feel*, about controversial cartoonist John Callahan. Her documentary *Beer is Cheaper than Therapy*, a moving account of war veterans' mental distress that has no place in the macho culture of the military, premiered at the IDFA Documentary Festival in 2011.





Tommy Wieringa – a film by Frans Weisz

Tommy Wieringa is an author and essay writer who studied history and journalism. He published two novels at the end of the 1990s and his third book *Alles over Tristan* (All about Tristan) came out in 2002, receiving the city of Roermond's Halewijn Prize and claiming a place on the longlist for the AKO Literatuurprijs.

His fourth novel *Joe Speedboat* from 2005 was his big break with the general public and accordingly claimed many nominations for literary awards, including the 2006 Ferdinand Bordewijk Prize. His essays and reminiscences have appeared in newspapers like *De Volkskrant* and *NRC Handelsblad*.

In 2009, Wieringa published his novel *Little Caesar*, which received lauding reviews in the Netherlands and abroad. Dutch newspaper *NRC Handelsblad*, for instance, wrote that "with *Little Caesar*, Tommy Wieringa ha[d] claimed a spot among the ten great writers in Dutch literature."

The book ended up on the shortlist for the prestigious International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award in 2013 and even French newspaper *Le Figaro* showed its appreciation: "The only ones who have managed to reach this Grail in recent years are writers such as Sebald in *Austerlitz*, Coetzee in *Disgrace* and Philip Roth in *My Life as a Man*. From now on, however, to that list must be added the name of Tommy Wieringa."

In 2012 his novel *These Are the Names* was crowned with the Libris Literature Award and the Golden Book-Owl's 2013 Audience Award. Wieringa also wrote the *Boekenweekgeschenk* for 2014 Dutch Book Week, entitled *A Beautiful Young Wife* and in 2015 his new collection of travel stories appeared under the title *Honorair Kozak* (Honorary Cossack).

Wieringa's work is translated all over the world.

Some of his famous work:

Alles over Tristan (All about Tristan)

Joe Speedboat

Ik was nooit in Isfahan (I was Never in Isfahan)

De dynamica van begeerte (The Dynamics of Desire)

Little Caesar

These Are the Names

A Beautiful Young Wife

About Frans Weisz

Frans Weisz (b. 1938) is a Dutch film and television director. Known works of him are the films *The Burglar* (1972), *Red Sien* (1975), *Charlotte* (1981), the trilogy *Leedvermaak* (Polonaise) (1989), *Qui vive* (2002), *Happy End* (2009), *Last Call* (1995) and the television series *Bij Nader Inzien* (Old Friends) (1991).

He made his first feature film in 1966, *A Gangstergirl*, after Remco Campert's novel with the same name that was published a year earlier. There would be many more novels made into books: *The Burglar* by August Defresne, *Naked Over The Fence* by Rinus Ferdinandusse, *Happy Days Are Here Again* after the novel *Pass Me The Mug, Jet!* by Heere Heeresma, *Havinck* by Marja Brouwers, *The Betrayed* by Simon Vestdijk, *Last Call* by Harry Mulisch and *Boy Ecury* after the novel *An Antillian Boy In The Resistance* by Ted Schouten. He also made films after the theatre plays *Leedvermaak* and *Qui vive* by Judith Herzberg.

Frans Weisz has worked with Louis d'Or-winners like Ko van Dijk, Gijs Scholten van Aschat, Pierre Bokma, Edwin de Vries and Jeroen Willems, Theo d'Or-winners Sigrid Koetse and Annet Nieuwenhuijzen and Dutch Golden Calf award-winners like Rijk de Gooyer, Willeke van Ammelrooy, Gerard Thoolen and Willem Nijholt. He also worked with respected actors like Kitty Courbois, Will van Kralingen and Coen Flink.

He received a Golden Calf award for *Leedvermaak* and *Bij Nader Inzien*.





Marente de Moor – a film by Robert Oey

Marente de Moor studied Slavic Languages and is an author and columnist.

Her much lauded debut novel *De overtreder* (The Transgressor) was released in 2007 and published in German under the title *Amsterdam und Zurück* (Amsterdam and Back) in 2010 by Suhrkamp Verlag. She has been Dutch weekly *Vrij Nederland*'s resident columnist since 2009 and published her second novel *The Dutch Maiden* in 2010 to much acclaim in the Netherlands and Germany. The book also claimed the 2011 AKO Literatuurprijs, the jury primarily praising de Moor's subtle and sensual style.

In 2013, she published *Roundhay, tuinscène* (Roundhay, Garden Scene) which made the shortlist for the 2014 Libris Literature Award and was described by Dutch newspaper *NRC Handelsblad* as "a novel with waves of brilliance wherein thoughts about transience and futility leave the reader bewildered."

Some of her famous work:

De overtreder (The Transgressor)

The Dutch Maiden

Roundhay, tuinscène (Roundhay, Garden Scene)

Gezellige verhalen (Cosy Stories)

About Robert Oey

Robert Oey (b. 1966) studied Modern History, English and American Studies at the University of Amsterdam, starting his career in film as an assistant producer and location manager for several international co-productions. In 1995 he wrote the scripts for a series of documentaries about the 1960s by Dutch production company TV Dits: *De Eindeloze Jaren Zestig* (The Endless Sixties). From 1997 to 1999 he collaborated with Swiss documentary maker Hans Polak on a wide variety of films, such as *Een Tragisch Ingrijpen* (A Tragic Intervention) about the murder of Jewish people in hiding and *Ted De Turk* (Ted the Turk) about mass murderer Cevdet Yilmaz who was sentenced to life in prison in 1983. In 2000, he directed his first documentary entitled *Toxic*, followed by *What's Eating Serbia?* in 2003, about the country's sense of collective guilt after Milosevic. *De Zwemmers* (The Swimmers) from 2006 told the story of a swimming pool in the Indian quarter of Amsterdam. Dutch TV channel VPRO also broadcast a few episodes of *Noorderlicht* news (2001) and *De Toekomst* (2005) by him, as well as his famous trilogy *Wonderland* from 2004 about the influence of political correctness on him and the Netherlands in general. His feature film *De Leugen* (The Lie), a musical documentary about the naturalisation scandal surrounding Somali-born Dutch-American politician Ayaan Hirsi Ali, came out in 2010. His documentary *Gesneuveld* (Fallen) premiered at the 2012 Netherlands Film Festival and his film about the bizarre circumstances surrounding the purchase of a Joint Strike Fighter entitled *Vandaag kopen we een Vliegtuig* (And Today We'll Buy a Plane) appeared in 2015.





Gustaaf Peek – a film by Ramón Gieling

Gustaaf Peek studied English Linguistics and Literature at Leiden University, focusing mainly on poetry after his graduation.

He made his debut with his novel *Armin* in 2006 and followed this with *Dover* two years later, but made his real big break with his third book *Ik was Amerika* (I Was America) in 2010 which claimed that year's BNG Bank Literatuurprijs for new literature as well as the 2011 Ferdinand Bordewijk Prize.

Thinking there were 'already enough stories about illusionless sex', Peek wrote his fourth much talked-about 2014 novel entitled *Godin, held* (Goddess, Hero), an explicit account of an erotic relationship, which was nominated for the 2015 Libris Literature Award.

Literary website cobra.be wrote that "Peek describe[d] the sex with intense vigour, something only very few authors are able to do. The last scene ha[d] not left the reader's mind yet, or the next one [was] already firmly on its way. Sweat and sperm almost leak[ed] from the page." *NRC Boeken's* literary critic, columnist and editor Arjen Fortuin even said that Jan Wolkers' *Turkish Delight* from 1969 which has become legendary for its explicit erotic content, was 'only an innocent boys' book' in comparison with Peek's *Goddess, Hero*.

Some of his famous work:

Armin

Dover

Ik was Amerika (I Was America)

Godin, held (Goddess, Hero)

About Ramón Gieling

Ramón Gieling attended the Arnhem Academy of Arts and Design between 1971 and 1976, focusing on painting and film. His career took off in 1979 with the feature film *Vijand gevraagd* (Enemy Wanted). Apart from directing films and documentaries, he is also active in the world of theatre and edits for magazine *Wolfsmond* which he founded in 1967. He also exhibited drawings, photos and paintings until 1987. Much of his work is related to Spain, like *Johan Cruijf - En Un Momento Dado* about the footballer's impact on Catalonia and the *Garden of Remembrance* about the 11 March 2004 terrorist attacks in Madrid. His film *Tramontana* opened the 2009 Netherlands Film Festival.

Off mineur which came out in 1995, starring Gijs Scholten van Aschat claimed a Golden Gate Award.





Ilja Leonard Pfeijffer – a film by Boudewijn Koole

Ilja Leonard Pfeijffer studied Classics and now writes novels, short stories, poems, columns, essays, reviews, plays and song texts. He does not shy away from controversy.

His 1998 collection of poems *Van de vierkante man* (Of the Square Man) won the C. Buddingh' award. His novel *La Superba*, published in 2013, won the following year's Libris Literature Prize for "[its] thematically rich, yearning, consummate prose with which [he] skilfully connects the numerous storylines." "Apart from an ode to Genoa and its residents, *La Superba* is in the first place an ode to the imagination," we read on the Libris Literature Award website.

In 2015, Pfeijffer was the author behind the *Poëziegeschenk* for Dutch Poetry Week.

Some of his famous work:

Van de vierkante man (Of the Square Man)

Rupert

La Superba

Idyllen (Idylls)

About Boudewijn Koole

Boudewijn Koole (b. 1965) is creative producer and co-owner at production company Witfilm and helps filmmakers develop and set up their plans during filming and editing. After his studies at Delft University, Koole started making documentaries and has released many (youth) films, including *Tommie*, *Pierlala* and *In Belfast staat een muur* (In Belfast Stands a Wall). Though in recent years he has started focusing more on television dramas and feature films, releasing his debut *Kauwboy* which was well received and sold in 14 countries. It also won more than 30 prizes worldwide, including the European Film Academy's Discovery Award and the First Feature Award at the 2012 Berlin International Film Festival. His latest 2016 film *Beyond Sleep* opened the International Film Festival Rotterdam.





Ester Naomi Perquin – a film by Catherine van Campen & Tjitske Mussche

Ester Naomi Perquin grew up in the southern Dutch province of Zeeland, but moved north to Rotterdam 13 years ago. To pay for her studies at the Amsterdam Creative Writing School, she worked for four years as a custodian at a prison. Then in 2007, she made her debut at Dutch publisher van Oorschot with her collection of poems entitled *Servetten Halfstok* (Napkins at Half Mast), followed by *Namens de ander* (On Behalf of the Other) in 2009.

She has received the debut award of literary magazine *Het Liegend Konijn*, the Anna Blaman Prize, Lucy B. & C.W. van der Hoogt Prize and the J.C. Bloem Prize. She also regularly attends festivals in the Netherlands and abroad and in 2012 published her new collection of poems entitled *Celinspecties* (Cell Inspections), which was awarded the 2013 VSB Poëzieprijs poetry award.

Apart from her poems, Perquin writes essays and short stories, and teaches workshops and masterclasses, for years, also writing columns for Dutch weekly *De Groene Amsterdammer*. Perquin also co-presented and programmed the last few editions of the annual Nacht van de Poëzie poetry event in Utrecht, wrote some radio stories for Dutch broadcaster VPRO and has contributed to magazines and newspapers including *De Gids*, *Trouw* and *NRC Handelsblad*.

Since March 2015, Perquin has been the VPRO's Friday night host for its late night culture programme *Nooit Meer Slapen* on Dutch Radio 1.

About Catherine van Campen

Catherine van Campen (b. 1970) lives and works as a freelance radio presenter and maker of documentaries in Amsterdam. Her 2007 debut entitled *Eternal Mash* won the 2006 IDFA Completion Prize for most promising film project and premiered at the festival. In 2009, van Campen made her second film based on her award-winning script *Drona & Ik* (Drona & I), a short documentary about two brothers, which would end up touring the globe. Her third film *Flying Anne* told the story of 11-year-old Anne who suffers from Tourette's syndrome. The documentary won several international prizes, including the 2011 Toronto Hot Docs award for Best Short Documentary and the international Swiss film festival Visions du Réel's award for Best Short Film in 2011. Her next production *Painful Painting* premiered at the 2011 IDFA Documentary Festival.



Van Campen's *Joan's Boys* made its first appearance at the 2013 Netherlands Film Festival in Utrecht. And she recorded her latest documentary entitled *Garage 2.0* in 2016.

About Tjitske Mussche

Tjitske Mussche (b. 1982) makes short radio documentaries for NTR/VPRO Radio 1 story programme *Toendra* and interviews authors and artists for late night cultural programme *Nooit meer Slapen* on Dutch Radio 1.

With freelance journalists' collective *Bureau Boven* she works on audio tours for special places like the Tolhuistuin cultural centre in Amsterdam and the Strijp-S quarter in Eindhoven.

She also collaborates with radio maker and journalist Laura Stek for Woord.nl and broadcaster VPRO on the series *Ongesigineerd*, finding out the stories behind the designs of bigger and smaller things like streetlights, street signs and the Dutch A2 motorway.

Together with journalist and radio maker Maartje Duin, she organises theatre listening evenings under the name *Grenzeloos Geluid* (Boundless Sound) and she collaborates with radio producer Katharina Smets through *In the Dark* to organise radio competition *Korte Golf* (Short Wave) each year.



Apart from all this, Mussche also makes short radio stories, called *1Minutjes* (1-Minutes), performed at the Cinekid Filmfestival and available on the website of *Klokhuis*, Dutch broadcaster NTR's children's programme. Animated versions of these will soon feature on the Dutch Children's News and channel Zapp.



Maartje Wortel – a film by Astrid Bussink

Maartje Wortel already published short stories in literary magazines early on, but she would make her formal debut in 2009 with her story collection *Dit is jouw huis* (This is Your House). "Critics praised [her] cutting observations, sense of humour and her skill in saying plenty with few words. [Resident literary critic of Dutch newspaper] *De Volkskrant* Daniëlle Serdijn even called her 'gigantically promising'." (cobra.be)

Her first novel entitled *Half Mens* (Half-Human) came out in 2011 and instantly claimed nominations for several literary prizes. The bizarre world Wortel's characters live in, the dry tone in which she narrates what happens to them in her bold, yet poetic style, received much praise.

Wortel's third novel *Ijstijd* (Ice Age) won the 2014 BNG Bank Literatuurprijs for new literature thanks to '[her] skill in drawing her characters flawlessly, with little tell, in innocent strokes of artistry,' according to the jury. And there was more: "Wortel is one of the greatest literary talents of her generation in our [Dutch] language. [...] [Her] powerful, independent voice resounds unequivocally in her one-of-a-kind quality oeuvre."

The press in the Netherlands and abroad chimed in, lauding her talents in superlatives.

Some of her famous work:

Dit is jouw huis (This is Your House)

Half Mens (Half-Human)

Ijstijd (Ice Age)

Er moet iets gebeuren (Something Must Be Done)

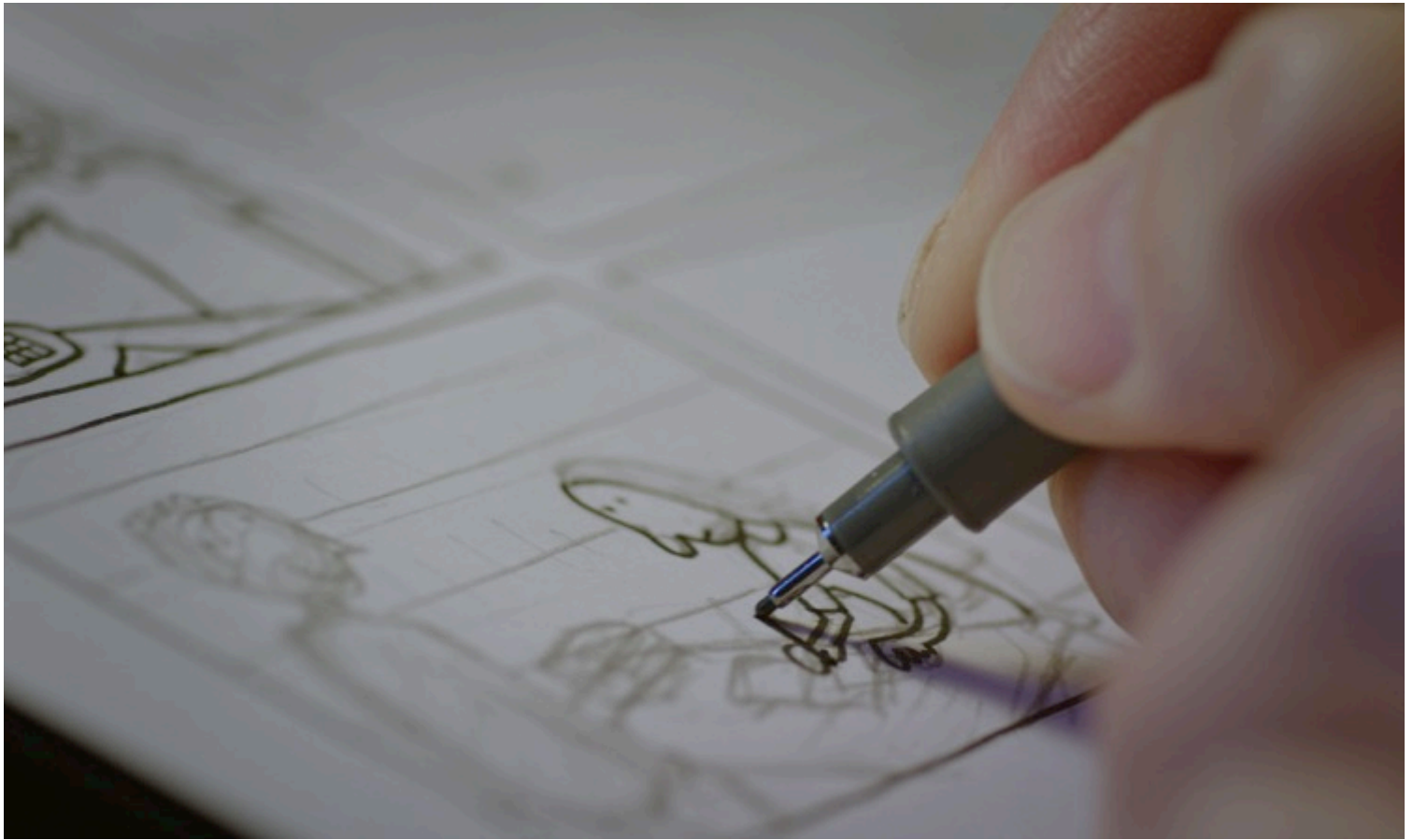
About Astrid Bussink

Astrid Bussink studied Visual Arts at the Enschede AKI Academy for Art and Industry and later went to Edinburgh College of Art for an MA in Film. Her documentary *The Angelmakers*, which she made in 2005 as part of her studies in Scotland, claimed several prizes including the First Appearance Award at the IDFA Documentary Festival, the Little Stamp award at ZagrebDOX International Documentary Film Festival, Best Short Documentary at international documentary and short film festival Dokufest as well as a nomination for the Grierson Award. She made another few short films: *The 9 Lives of My Car* and *I Shot the Mayor*. Her film *Upside Down* received the Award for Best Experimental Short Film at the 2006 Vermont International Film Festival.



Bussink currently lives and works in Amsterdam. In 2008, she produced and wrote the script for *The Lost Colony*, an account of the world's oldest monkey laboratory, which premiered in January 2008 at the International Film Festival Rotterdam.

Her 2009 documentary *Mijn Enschede* (My Enschede) about the fireworks storage explosion in her hometown in the eastern part of the country, which happened across her own home in 2000, was screened for the first time at the 2010 International Film Festival Rotterdam. *Poem of Death*, about people who die alone and the poets who write for them at their funerals, including author Frank Starik, was screened as part of the Golden Calf selection at the 2011 Cin and received a Special Jury Mention at the Swiss Visions du Réel documentary film festival. Bussink also won a Golden Calf award for Best Short Documentary at the 2013 Netherlands Film Festival for *Achter de Toren* (Behind the Tower).



Barbara Stok – a film by Lisa Boerstra

When she was 24, journalist and photographer Barbara Stok started making comic strips, initially as a hobby in her free time. She eventually published her first album, entitled *Barbaraal tot op het bot* (Barbaraal to the Bone) in 1998.

She would become famous for her autobiographical comics in which she examines with an open mind and sense of humour life's bigger and smaller questions. In her work, she zooms in on the trivialities everyday life, all the while looking at them from a relativistic distance. The red thread through her work is always: *how to live?* American comic artist Robert Crumb has called her work 'quite funny, well-told, courageously truthfull'.

Her graphic novel *Vincent* about painter Vincent van Gogh is the most translated graphic novel in Dutch history, about which international newspapers like *The Times*, *The Guardian* and *La Repubblica* wrote raving reviews!

It was hardly a surprise therefore, that in 2009 she received the Stripschapprijs comic strip award for her oeuvre and that Dutch newspaper *De Volkskrant* proclaimed her one of the Netherlands' five best comic strip artists in the same year.



Her latest book *Toch een geluk* (Happy Anyway) came out in 2016 and again, could count on lauding reviews. Dutch newspaper *NRC Handelsblad* wrote about it: "With her tongue-in-cheek tone, confident gaze and great sense of humour, this author from Groningen time and time again succeeds in expressing a fundamental thought in one or at most a few panels. [...]"

It is clever and impressive at the same time, how Stok has been making comic strips at the highest level for 20 years now. This album only confirms her status as one of the Netherlands' most important comic strip artists and, we may say it, the queen of Dutch comics."

Some of her famous work:

Vincent

Lang zal ze leven (Long May She Live)

Nog een geluk (Happy Anyway)

About Lisa Boerstra

Lisa Boerstra is a director. She studied Art History at the University of Amsterdam, followed by Directing at the Netherlands Film Academy. She is the maker behind *Dushi*, a documentary about Curaçao and the residents of the island who are living in poverty. Recently, she also made *L.A. Raeven: Beyond the Image*, which tells the story of artistic twins Angelique and Liesbeth Raeven.





Rodaan Al Galidi – a film by John Albert Jansen

Born in Al-Najaf in Iraq, Rodaan Al Galidi (b. 1971) is an author and poet.

After finishing his Civil Engineering studies, he fled his birth country in order to avoid serving in the military. Six years down the line in 1998, he ended up in the Netherlands where he applied for asylum. His application was sadly rejected, but in 2007 the Dutch government announced a general pardon. In 2000, Al Galidi had already won a prize in the El Hizrja Centre for Arabic Art and Culture's literature competition. He also published five novels and seven poetry collections. His 2007 collection of poems entitled *De herfst van Zorro* (The Autumn of Zorro) was shortlisted for the VSB Poëzieprijs poetry award and his novel *Thirsty River* of 2009 made the shortlist for the BNG Bank Literatuurprijs for new literature. His 2011 book *De autist en de postduif* (The Autist and the Carrier-Pigeon) was awarded that year's European Union Prize for Literature. His sixth novel *Hoe ik talent voor het leven kreeg* (How I Found a Talent for Living) from 2016 is based on his time in the refugee centre.

Some of his famous work:

De fiets, de vrouw en de liefde (The Bike, the Woman and Love)

De herfst van Zorro (The Autumn of Zorro)

Thirsty River

De autist en de postduif (The Autist and the Carrier-Pigeon)

Hoe ik talent voor het leven kreeg (How I Found a Talent for Living)

About John Albert Jansen

Deventer-born Dutch journalist and documentary maker John Albert Jansen (b. 1954) is a director and producer for production company Oogland Filmproducties. His first film called *Lood verscheurt het Hart* (Lead Tears the Heart Apart) from 1993 told the story of British poet and war correspondent James Fenton. Other work of his includes *Brokopondo, Verhalen van een Verdronken Land* (Brokopondo, Stories from a Drowned Land) from 1994, about the Saramaka people's transmigration in Surinam, which he made in collaboration with writer Dorus Vrede; *Iets van genade* (Some Mercy); *Een ontmoeting met John Berger* (Meeting John Berger) from 1996, which portrays the British author who lives in the French Alps; *En nu de droom over is* (And Now The Dream is Over) from 1996, which he made in collaboration with Dutch writer, art historian and literary critic Michiel van Kempen about Surinam poet Michaël Slory; *Het leven is overal* (Life is Everywhere) of 2000, about the death of Czech author Bohumil Hrabal; *De goddelijke gekte* (The Divine Madness) from 2001, about Dutch poet Hans Vlek; and *Wie Eegie Sanie / Onze eigen dingen* (Our Own Things) from 2003, about Surinam's cultural and political awakening, based on a script by Dutch journalist and writer John Jansen van Galen. In 2004, he followed this with a portrait for television of Surinam doctor and poet Jit Narain entitled *De As van de herinnering* (The Ashes of Memory). After that he made *Wreed geluk* (Cruel Happiness) in 2009, a portrait of Flemish writer Hugo Claus; and *Wacht op mij, galg* (Wait For Me, Gallows) in 2010, a film about music and resistance, fundamentalism and atheism. He made the film, which plays in Turkey, in collaboration with Turkish author Özkan Gölpinar. *End and Beginning - Meeting Wisława Szymborska* came out in 2011.





Gideon Samson – a film by Barbara Makkinga

Born in The Hague, Gideon Samson (b. 1985) writes children's books. As his real surname was reportedly difficult to pronounce for Dutch speakers, he decided to adopt a pseudonym that would suit his career, which eventually became 'Samson'. He initially studied Film and Television, but made his debut as an author in 2007 with *Niks Zeggen!* (Say Nothing!), which received the Vlag en Wimpel children's literature award in 2008. He followed this by winning the Zilveren Griffel award with his book *Ziek* (Ill) in 2010, making him the youngest winner ever at 25. Several of his books have been translated into German, Danish, Spanish and Catalan, and from September 2013, he wrote columns on the back page of Dutch newspaper *NRC Handelsblad* under his pseudonym Menno Fernandes for a whole year, eventually collecting them in a book entitled *The Ref*.

Some of his famous work:

Niets zeggen! (Say Nothing!)

Ziek (Ill)

Met je hoofd boven water (With Your Head Above the Water)

Zwarte zwaan (Black Swan)

Overspoeld (Washed Away)

About Barbara Makkinga

Barbara Makkinga already had her medical degree when she went to started study Documentary Directing at the Netherlands Film Academy in 2000, graduating in 2004. She was selected by the Academy to compete for the project grant awarded jointly to oncoming talent in film by the Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds and Dutch broadcaster NPS, ending up winning the competition with her film entitled *De droom van Jan Wolf* (The Dream of Jan Wolf). Makkinga gets her inspiration from people and their stories, which she then tries to translate into images in her own way, often combining documentary and fiction.



Esther Gerritsen – a film by Suzanne Raes

Born in the eastern Dutch city of Nijmegen, Esther Gerritsen (b. 1972) writes novels, short stories, plays, columns and articles.

She made her prose debut in 2000 with her short story collection *Bevoorrecht bewustzijn* (Privileged Consciousness) and won the 2014 Frans Kellendonk Prize for her oeuvre. Gerritsen writes clearly and precise: she draws situations very aptly so the reader can imagine them, moving him by what she writes, even though it might be absurd at times. She often writes about people with a 'problem'; characters who are hypersensitive, have a fear of germs, find making contact with others difficult, are (supposedly) autistic, prone to depression or obsessive in one way or the other. All this has earned her the well-deserved title of 'chronicler of madness'. Her dialogues are hilarious, but also moving at times, as if they are taken straight from life.

Some of her famous work:

Tussen een persoon (Between One Person)

Normale dagen (Ordinary Days)

De kleine miezerige god (The Small Measly God)

Craving

Broer (Brother) (written as the *Boekenweekgeschenk* for 2016 Dutch Book Week)

About Suzanne Raes

Suzanne Raes (b. 1969) studied Cultural Studies in Amsterdam and started work as an editor and framer for various television programmes. She has been working as a freelance director since 2001, making documentaries and educational films about topics including cleaners working illegally, old activists and the heirs of Flemish writer Willem Elsschot. Her work consists of accessible films that are emotionally very much involved with their subjects. They are screened all over the world and have a long life, even after their premiere, like her documentary *De Tegenprestatie* (In Return), which made its mark on the general benefits debate.

