Dear colleagues and friends,

Thank you for taking a look at our new Spring 2014 Foreign Rights Brochure. We are delighted to present the wide variety of intriguing Dutch titles that epitomise the publishing houses proudly represented by shared stories: Ambo|Anthos, Atlas Contact, Luitingh-Sijthoff and VBK|Media.

We handle the translation rights, as well as the TV, film and stage rights, of Dutch and Flemish authors such as Herman Koch, Geert Mak, Dimitri Verhulst, Esther Verhoef, Eline Snel, Bert Wagendorp and Dick Swaab, to name but a few. This brochure is brimming with brand-new, recently published or forthcoming bestselling narrative non-fiction, popular science, upmarket literary novels, and thrillers. Please take a look yourself and get in touch if you would like us to send you some of our translated material or the Dutch texts.

We have also handpicked some interesting backlist titles for you, in the ‘Ones to watch’ section. Some of these titles were chosen because full English translations are now available; others are award winning and/or huge bestsellers.

We wish you an inspiring book fair in London and hope to assist you in finding lots of new and enriching stories. At the fair you’ll find us at table number 10s – please stop by and say hello.

Yours,
Uta Matten
Elaine Michon

About shared stories
Since 12 September 2013, shared stories has been up and running in its premises at Herengracht 418 in Amsterdam. Shared stories is the in-house rights agency of the Dutch VBK Publishing Group, representing the publishing houses Ambo|Anthos, Atlas Contact, Luitingh-Sijthoff and VBK|Media. The rights department is staffed by Uta Matten, who started out in 2005 in the rights departments of Ambo|Anthos and Atlas Contact publishers. Since the expansion to the shared stories agency in 2013, she has been assisted by Elaine Michon. Shared stories also organises events in The Netherlands for authors and readers. Event manager Cindy Eijspaart has worked for several publishing houses as publicity manager. With the unique combination of rights sales and event planning, shared stories, headed by Dorien van Londen, has embarked on an adventure that is entirely consistent with the entrepreneurial spirit of the publishers it represents.
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An uncompromising love story against all odds

CHRISTINE OTTEN

Raphael
A love story

In the summer of 2011, at the height of the Arab Spring, Dutch hairdresser Winny and Tunisian Nizar briefly become world news. Heavily pregnant, Winny is in Lampedusa to collect her husband, who is being held there in a refugee camp.

Winny and Nizar met in Greece, where they both worked as tourist entertainers. They fell in love and got married. Since Nizar has been working illegally for years and has no papers, they settle in Tunisia. Winny soon falls pregnant. She travels to the Netherlands for the birth and the couple applies for a visa for Nizar. But then the Jasmine Revolution begins in Tunisia. Fighting breaks out, shops are looted and a curfew is imposed. Europe closes its borders to North African immigrants. Nizar leaves for Lampedusa on a rickety boat in the hope that he can witness the birth of his child. This is the beginning of a Kafkaesque, almost mythical story.

Raphael is the true story of a love threatened by history.
At the same time, Raphael is about dreams and the desire to escape circumstances, about unforeseen forces and cultural differences: an engrossing and extremely pressing story about our complex time.

PRESS ON PREVIOUS WORK

‘Christine Otten has a talent for exploring unsettling worlds.’
– ADRIAAN VAN DIS

‘Carefully composed around the themes of family, origins, ambition and fate. A comforting book.’ – OPZIJ

‘Otten has developed a unique form of telling a breath-taking saga. Play it again Christine!’ – NRC HANDELSBLAD

‘Chillingly accurate. Penetrating are the deeply tragic, recurring scenes in which she banishes him from her life. So I Can Breathe is Otten’s belated tribute to her father after making peace with him. The unspeakable, spoken with warmth.’ – VRIJ NEDERLAND

‘Besides a memorial, So I Can Breathe is a book that redresses the balance and not a moment too soon.’ – DE VOLSKRANT

Christine Otten (born 1961) debuted in 1995 with Blue Metal, which was nominated for the Dutch Debutant Prize. In 2004 she broke through to a wider audience with her novel The Last Poets, which was nominated for the Libris Literature Prize and adapted for the stage. The English translation rights of The Last Poets have been sold to World Editions. Like Casablanca was published in 2008, followed in January 2010 by the controversial novel In Wonderland. In 2011 Otten wrote the Dutch Book Week Essay together with photo artist Erik Kessels. Her last novel, So I Can Breathe, received great acclaim.
Albert Drilling is a successful immigration officer, loyal to his minister and the law. He works alone. His missions are secret and sensitive. The 10,000 euros he carries in his jacket are to help him resolve matters as quickly and smoothly as possible. On the way to an island in the North Sea he reads the file on the young woman he is looking for. An easy assignment. But on the island, different laws apply, and slowly he becomes entangled in a story that shakes him to the core.

Who is the woman he is looking for? Where does she come from? And why should he control her fate?

Pristina is a brooding shadow play between two people condemned to each other: an officer and an illegal immigrant. One lives in hotels, the other in immigration camps. Both are trying to make the best of their lives and they both know that one of them will lose.

**PRESS ON PRISTINA**

‘Pristina is polished to perfection. A rich book.’ – NRC HANDELSBLAD

‘The great merit of Pristina is that Heijmans has cast a major socio-political issue in the form of a well-written novel.’ – DE VOLSKRANT

‘The second beautifully-written novel by Toine Heijmans.’ – ZIN

‘Remarkable novel.’ – **** CUTTINGEDGE.NL

**PRESS ON PREVIOUS WORK**

‘Sophisticated literary masterpiece between insanity and choppy waves.’

– DER TAGESSPIEGEL

‘An astute and poignant novel about drifting.’ – FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG

‘A remarkable, tightly-written novel with thriller-like momentum that will appeal to the same kind of reader as Herman Koch’s The Dinner.’

– NRC HANDELSBLAD
The First World War, David, a young schoolteacher stands before the firing squad, sentenced to death as a deserter. Why did he desert? What did the boy Marcus Verschoppen have to do with it? And his mother? Jan Vantoortelboom shows in an unparalleled manner how guilt can ruin a life.

One evening in a forest lane near of Elverdinge, David witnesses a secret meeting that has far-reaching consequences. Moreover, when it turns out that Marcus’s mother has feelings for him, the situation becomes untenable. Then the Great War breaks out, and David ends up in the trenches. He fights for his life. And for his love.

**PRESS ON MASTER MITRAILLETTÉ**
‘A book to be unashamedly excited about.’ **** – NRC HANDELSBLAD

‘A book that deeply impressed all four of us. It holds you in its grip from the very first page. It is beautiful, poignant, moving, and covers all the major themes. And it is so very well written.’ – BOOK OF THE MONTH, CHOSEN BY THE DE WERELD DRAAIT DOOR BOOKSELLERS PANEL

‘In his second novel, Jan Vantoortelboom once again gives evidence of his talent: his evocative prose transports the reader straight to Flanders during the First World War.’ – TROUW LETTER & GEEST

‘Every paragraph evokes images that resonate, every sentence deserves to be re-read.’ – COBRA.BE

**PRESS ON PREVIOUS WORK**
‘The beautiful, suggestive sentences raise The Sunken Boy above the level of the average first novel. In a skilful way, Vantoortelboom switches between common coarseness and an almost loving intimacy that he appears to whisper to the reader, reminiscent of his Flemish predecessor Louis Paul Boon.’ – NRC HANDELSBLAD

‘Tightly composed, loosely told. Vantoortelboom is a born storyteller. He interchanges beautiful, poetic descriptions with raw dialogue, interspersed with Flemish words and curses. Furthermore, in the narrative he intertwines history, especially about the Great War, with striking imagery.’ – DE VOLKSKRANT
How far can you manipulate reality without losing yourself?

NIÑA WEIJERS

The Consequences

1984. When Minnie Panis enters the world nearly four months early, tiny and translucent, she is only just declared viable. Her mother anxiously keeps watch beside the incubator, fearing her child will slip away. The baby survives, but there is no guarantee she won’t be brain damaged. In 2012, Minnie is an established name in the international art world, admired for conceptual work in which she fearlessly puts her own life under the microscope. She is on the threshold of an experiment that goes beyond anything she has done before, an experiment in which she seeks out the ultimate boundary between life and art, which could well become the high point of her work. But how far can you manipulate reality without losing yourself?

‘Although she knew it would be small, Minnie’s mother was shocked by the actual dimensions of the child, who lay bloody and deathly still in the palms of the doctor’s hands, as if he had pulled out a heart from somewhere and was now presenting it to her.

The little eyes squeezed together, the little mouth began to tremble, and immediately after that the hands clenched into fists and the little legs began kicking wildly. Then, six months after her birth, she opened her mouth and began to cry, quietly but unmistakably, for the first time in her life. Good God, thought Minnie’s mother, it was about time.’

Niña Weijers (born 1987) studied Literary Theory. In 2010 she won the writing contest Write Now!, and her short stories have appeared in publications including De Gids and Passionate Magazine. In 2013 Opzij named her one of its ’35 writers under 35’. She has a regular column on the website of De Groene Amsterdammer.
Joshua Lohman sets off for a remote island in the Atlantic Ocean. Plagued by guilt over a serious car accident for which he was responsible, and which caused the death of a child, he is looking for total solitude. The ferry service has been cancelled, the last inhabitants are being evacuated, and he will be the only one left. At least, that's what Joshua thinks... A handful of islanders are in hiding, each for their own reasons, unbeknownst to one other. One of them, the young girl Jo-Anne, keeps seeking Joshua’s company, quite against his will. But when the summer is over, the storms come, and the situation on the island gradually deteriorates, he is faced with a dilemma: must he save this child?

‘I’m going to make it, damn it, I’m going to make it, I dare not only think it but whisper it. One more hour, at most, and then I’ll be alone. How long I have been standing here, hidden behind the mouldy curtain, I have no idea, but I don’t care, because the wait will not be in vain. Sometimes I close my eyes, press my cheek against the doorframe, then I feel the headache pounding against my left eye. For a while I’ve been trying to muster up nonchalance, like a child playing hide and seek - ‘What does it matter? If they find you, the game’s up, so what?’ - but I can’t any more. I’ve fallen prey to this sacred desire. It has to work. It has to.’

PRESS ON AIR FISHING
‘A balanced, tense, well-written novel, focusing on the existential question of the meaning of life. A question, as the author makes clear, that you cannot possibly escape. Air Fishing is Van der Werf’s best work to date.’ – BOEK

‘Powerful in its atmospheric description and dialogue.’ – TROUW

Gerwin van der Werf (born 1969) is a musicologist, music teacher and regular columnist for Trouw. He is the winner of the Turing National Poetry Contest 2010. His stories and poems have appeared in publications including Lava and Tirade. His first novel Armed Man (2010) won acclaim and was named by NRC Handelsblad as one of the best books of 2010. The novel Wild was published in 2011 and was longlisted for the Libris Literature Prize.
Boredom, addiction and aggression translated in a fast-paced, hallucinatory trip

BARRY SMIT

Now

The characters in Now set up cannabis farms, plunder those of others, and look for kicks in pills, powders and football hooliganism. They try to rob a bank, steal seized scooters from a police station, mess around with a corpse, and drug and abuse young girls. One of them blows up his apartment after being told in a mushroom trip that the end of the world is nigh. The thieves, dealers and hooligans sometimes pay a high price for their choices, but anything is better than 40 years in an office.

Barry Smit’s first novel is tough, humorous and poignant. His language is razor-sharp and clear, but sometimes also unexpectedly hallucinatory. Smit describes Now as ‘an autobiography of the choices I didn’t make’.

PRESS ON NOW

‘Word for word, sentence for sentence, a great writer.’ – TOMMY WIERINGA
‘Now: never a dull moment.’ – NRC HANDELSBLAD
‘Hard-hitting and poetic.’ – CUTTING EDGE

Barry Smit was born in Alkmaar in 1974 and worked for years at the Dutch Parliament in the campaign team of the Socialist Party. Nowadays he publishes in de Volkskrant and gives campaign training, including to political activists in Egypt. The experiences he gained there form the basis of his next novel.
Dear Mr. M.

The once celebrated writer M. had his greatest success with a novel about the notorious disappearance of Jan Landzaat. This history teacher disappeared after a brief affair with a stunning pupil, and was last seen at the holiday cottage where she was staying with her new boyfriend. The novel was a bestseller and marked M.'s international breakthrough, but now, at the end of his career, he is fading increasingly into obscurity. But not when it comes to his mysterious downstairs neighbour, who keeps a close eye on M.. What does he have to do with the disappearance case?

From various perspectives, Herman Koch tells the intriguing story of a writer in decline, a teenage couple in love and a missing teacher. Thanks to the bestseller, their fate seems to be linked forever. Dear Mr. M. is a magnificent novel about jealousy and envy, friendship and love. With his world-renowned sharp eye, Herman Koch once again spares nothing and no one.

Herman Koch (born 1953) is a renowned television producer and an internationally bestselling author. The translation rights of The Dinner (2009) have been sold to 37 countries, which is unprecedented for a modern Dutch novel. The Dinner has been adapted into several international stage plays and into a Dutch movie. The Australian Academy Award winner Cate Blanchett will make her directorial debut with the English-language movie of The Dinner. Summer House with Swimming Pool (2011) is another international bestseller. The English translation of the book will be published this summer in the US (Hogarth), the UK (Atlantic), and Australia (Text Publishing). In Dear Mr M, Koch again succeeds in creating unforgettable characters, who do not necessarily arouse your sympathy, but still win you over.
When Didi is confined to her bed after the difficult birth of her first child, she is delighted with the help of the maternity nurse. The baby is cute and healthy, but Didi’s recovery is slow.

Miriam, who works for the Rotterdam police force, cannot get over the sudden death of her brother. She suspects foul play on the part of his beautiful widow Hennequin. When she delves into Hennequin’s past, Miriam becomes convinced that she is dealing with a dangerous psychopath. And it is precisely this woman who is making herself indispensable to the young, vulnerable family...

Close to the Cradle describes 10 critical days in the life of three young women. Vulnerability, will power and bloodlust find each other in a dark, poignant page-turner: Esther Verhoef’s scariest thriller to date.

**PRESS ON CLOSE TO THE CRADLE**

‘The storylines are ingeniously combined. Verhoef tells the story effectively, with tantalising cliffhangers.’ – NRC HANDELSBLAD

‘Does it matter what her new book is about? Not really. You buy and devour every Esther Verhoef thriller without even reading the back flap.’ – MARIE CLAIRE

‘Superlatively dark.’ – DAGBLAD DE LIMBURGER

‘Shockingly suspenseful.’ – BOEK

‘OMG, she is the maternity nurse from hell! The spine-chilling new Esther Verhoef.’ – GLAMOUR

‘The Maternity Nurse is a genuine page-turner with a masterful final plot twist.’ – DE VOLKSKRANT

‘Dark drama full of nail-biting suspense.’ ***** – ALGEMEEN DAGBLAD

**ESTHER VERHOEF**

Close to the Cradle

_**HIGHLIGHTED BY THE DUTCH FOUNDATION FOR LITERATURE**_

**NEW**

Ambo | Anthos, thriller, 320 pages, February 2014

* Dutch pdf available
* sample translation available *

**ESTHER VERHOEF** is one of the most successful writers in the Netherlands. Her books have sold more than 1.5 million copies. She conquered the bestseller lists on her first attempt in 2006 with her thriller Rendezvous, followed by Close-Up (2007) and Everything to Lose (2008). Her thrillers have been nominated multiple times for the NS Book of the Year Award (NS Publieksprijs), which she won in 2011 with Déjà Vu. Additionally, both Rendezvous as Close-Up were awarded the Silver Fingerprint. The translation rights have been sold to the UK, Russia, Denmark, the USA, France, Germany and Spain, and the film rights to Rendezvous have been sold to Millstreet Films.
In this alternately poignant, perplexing and humorous autobiographical novel, Dutch writer Auke Hulst depicts the decline of a family that is out of touch with reality – for better and for worse.

Somewhere up north, in an area that’s referred to as the Savage Land, stands a dilapidated house in a forest. Here four children grow up, estranged from family and the nearby village. Their father has died young, their mother is a high-spirited yet deceitful woman who is haunted by creditors. Can the children escape the ever mounting problems, or has their fate already been decided?

*Children of the Savage Land* is a family chronicle that mercilessly exposes the causes and consequences of a derailed upbringing. It’s a universal story, creating a vivid picture of growing up in the eighties.

‘A fantastic, unstoppable, unusual novel.’
– De Groene Amsterdammer

**AUKE HULST**

*Children of the Savage Land*

‘The dark side of Villa Villekulla.’ – NRC Handelsblad

‘A fantastic, unstoppable, unusual novel. I read it with growing amazement and, admittedly, emotion, and at the end I sat for a while staring into space. This is a real book, I thought, and that is of course what literature should be: a real, great book.’ – De Groene Amsterdammer

‘This book is not black and white and it is precisely this approach that lifts it to a higher level. Hulst implicitly poses numerous existential questions. For what misdeeds can you judge someone, and where does human fallibility begin?’

**** – Dagblad Van Het Noorden

‘Seamlessly flowing from scene to scene through his childhood, in a clear, rhythmic style, each time he manages to lull the reader to sleep – “oh, it wasn’t that unusual” – only to punch him in the stomach once more. Splendid.’ – Boek

‘A wonderful novel, the jury cannot be clearer. A very compelling – partly thanks to the evocative language – story about “growing up in the shadow of absence”. The contemplative layer of Kai’s budding authorship helps *Children of the Savage Land* rise above the family saga, and makes it the pinnacle of Hulst’s oeuvre to date.’ – BNG Jury

‘A book that deserves to be read again and again. It grabs a hold of you from the first sentence, and stays with you after the final page has been read.’

***** – CuttingEdge.NL

Auke Hulst (born 1975) debuted with *You and I and Everything In Between*, but made his definitive breakthrough with his fourth, heavily autobiographical book *Children of the Savage Land*. He is frontman of band De Meisjes and writes for NRC Handelsblad and Vrij Nederland. Hulst is working on a novel that will be published by Anthos in 2015.
**The Survivors** is about two lives that come together unexpectedly: a teenage girl trying to find her way in life and, by contrast, an elderly dentist looking back, trying to justify to himself his sometimes rather awkward choices. After a Christmas holiday in Thailand, things will never be the same again for Fae and her parents. Sprengler is suddenly forced to give up his job as a forensic odontologist in Thailand after a major event at home. Years later, young Fae enters Sprengler’s dental practice. The contrast between these two people could not be greater and the meeting marks the beginning of a special friendship.

Maaike Gerritsen writes accessibly and with a sharp pen about loneliness, about the (in)ability of family members to cope with a common grief and the unpredictability of life and death.

Her acclaimed debut *The Birth of an Orphan* was nominated for The Bronze Owl.

**PRESS ON PREVIOUS WORK**

‘A brilliant, strong debut with moving and highly identifiable elements.’
– MARGRIET

‘A confident debut.’ – RED

‘A sober book full of apt discoveries.’ – NOUVEAU

‘Pleasant and smoothly written.’ **** – DE TELEGRAAF
A haunted house and the discovery of a shocking secret keep you at the edge of your seat...

JUDITH VISSER
Strangers in the Night

A young couple is brutally murdered in a secluded house. 40 years later, Cassandra Wolf, a nutritionist whose relationship has just ended, moves into the house. She wants to make a new start and set up a practice at home, but her plans are soon derailed by terrifying events. Every night she is woken with a start by a dreadful scream. Where is it coming from? She delves into the history of the house and soon upon the mystery of the tragic event that lies behind the double murder. Soon after, she makes a shocking discovery that puts not only herself, but also her loved ones, in danger...

1978
A wide, red sticker had been stuck diagonally across the blue for sale sign in the front garden. Sold, it now said. Passing residents stopped, nudged each other, and looked at the abandoned house. ‘See that?’ Even the postman, who cycled past on his daily round, shuddered when he saw the sticker. The house had to be torn down, the villagers had clamoured at the time. Razed to the ground. How could this house be left standing, as if nothing had happened?

PRESS ON PREVIOUS WORK
‘An edge-of-your-seat-book in which Visser very cleverly wrong-foots the reader several times on the way to the conclusion.’ – HAARLEMS DAGBLAD

‘Not only thrilling, but also light-hearted. Anyone still looking for a fun, exciting beach novel need look no further!’ – CRIMEZONE

Judith Visser (born 1978) is known for her edgy thrillers that are invariably acclaimed. She debuted with Antidote, and Sailor’s Bride was published in 2012. In 2008 she was nominated for the Golden Noose.
What if your loved keeps a big secret from you? A moving novel about the value of family ties

MACHTELD BOUMA

Regarding the Children

As the world enters the 21st century, Wendolyn – late thirties, successful career coach, devoted to her job instead of motherhood – has a family land in her lap. Neurologist Eric, her new love, steps into her life with a son and two daughters in tow. While Wendolyn tries to combine her work with Eric and this new family life, questions arise about her bond with her own mother and Eric’s loaded past.

She soon discovers why stepmothers are sometimes wicked: they give a great deal but seem to get little in return. What kind of bond does she have with the children? And is it easier when you have children of your own flesh and blood? It’s too late for that now, and ultimately the questions will only get more pressing.

Regarding the Children is a moving novel about the value of family ties and the impact of the past on the present. With a sharp pen, Machteld Bouma asks probing questions about life and shows that no blood ties are necessary to lay down roots.

PRESS ON REGARDING THE CHILDREN
‘Regarding the Children is pacey, intelligent, sharp and humorous.’
– MARGRIET

Machteld Bouma (born 1961) attended the School of Journalism, studied Dutch and worked as a reporter and editor at NPS television. She made her debut in 2007 with PUR foam, followed by Losers (2008), The Buffet (2011) and The Dog That Fell Out of Fashion (2012), all published to great acclaim. Machteld Bouma lives in Arnhem.
Lineke Tesinga gives a lecture on Germanic human sacrifices described in a medieval travelogue. In the following weeks a series of crimes are committed that turn out to be connected with gruesome rituals that occurred in the previous century in The Round House – a mysterious hunting lodge in the Veluwe woods where Prince Hendrik and his guests used to go hunting. Lineke is in serious danger: the greatest criminal of that time is still on the loose...

**PRESS ON THE ROUND HOUSE**

‘A compelling story.’ – ALGEMEEN DAGBLAD

**PRESS ON PREVIOUS WORK**

‘Tense, mysterious and unpredictable, with a particularly successful multi-layered structure.’ **** – CRIMEZONE.NL

‘A well-written, readable thriller with believable characters and a pretty complicated plot.’ **** – DE TELEGRAAF, 4 STARS

‘With Blue Gold, Almar Otten more than proves his reputation as a storyteller.’ **** – VN DETECTIVE & THRILLERGIDS

‘A rich and full book that captivates until the final page. A showpiece!’
– BOEK

‘One hell of a story.’ – NEDERLANDS DAGBLAD

‘The Descendant is an accessible book written with verve. It has a distinct edge over the majority of this genre and compels you to read on.’ **** – VN DETECTIVE EN THRILLERGIDS

Almar Otten (1964) graduated as a hydrology engineer from Wageningen University and has always been passionate about history and writing. He has written four detective novels that met with great acclaim. In 2011 he published the historical thriller *The Descendant*, which was very well received, and *Blue Gold* (2012) was awarded with the prestigious Diamond Bullet. *Sins of Youth* followed in 2013. *The Round House* is the fourth Lineke Tesinga thriller. The story is based on some true facts; one can still find remainders of *The Round House* in the village of Nunspeet, the Netherlands.
ADRIAAN VAN DIS
Betrayal
FULL ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE
HIGHLIGHTED BY THE DUTCH FOUNDATION FOR LITERATURE
- Rights sold: MacLehose Press (world English), Protea (Afrikaans), Iperborea (Italian), Tiderne Skifter (Denmark), Actes Sud (France), Keter (Israël)
- sample translation available - Dutch pdf available

'Tikkop is more vivid, more profound and more humorous than could ever be captured in a thousand-word review. Adriaan van Dis's prose is scintillating.' - NRC HANDELSBLAD

'Tikkop is hugely compelling thanks to the action-packed anecdotes, subtle symbolism, authentic characters and above all Van Dis' stylistic prowess – the man can write.' - VRIJ NEDERLAND

'Adriaan van Dis gets under the skin of his protagonist, so much so that the reader perceives Mulder as a first-person narrator. The writer lets him think and speak in beautifully crafted sentences that are a delight to read. This may well be his best novel to date.' - HP/DE TIJD

'A delight to read out loud.' - BOEK

TOINE HEIJMANS
At Sea
WINNER PRIX MÉDICIS ÉTRANGER 2013 (France)
- Rights sold: Arche Verlag (Germany), Christian Bourgeois Editeur (France), Turbine (Denmark), Gondolat (Hungary), Hitkitap (Turkey), film rights sold (Viking Film, the Netherlands)
- French & German pdf available - Dutch translation available - Dutch pdf available

'Toine Heijmans is a master at building tension with seemingly insignificant details and disturbing information (real or imagined), revealed with cool detachment. Especially striking is the writing style, which is particularly masterful for a debut novel: hypnotic, sometimes staccato, with sentences that follow one another with the rhythm of an angry sea.' - LE MAGAZINE LITTÉRAIRE

'A cracking novel.' **** - METRO

'Tikkop is more vivid, more profound and more humorous than could ever be captured in a thousand-word review. Adriaan van Dis's prose is scintillating.' - NRC HANDELSBLAD

'A wonderful novel (…) The Latecomer is one of those books you always hoped Verhulst would write: a perfect brew of social criticism with a strong anecdotal touch.' **** - NRC HANDELSBLAD

JANNIE REGNERUS
The Lamb
SHORTLISTED FOR THE OPZIJ LITERATURE PRIZE 2014
LONGLISTED FOR THE LIBRIS LITERATURE PRIZE 2014
- German sample translation available - Dutch pdf available

'With The Lamb, Regnerus has written a beautiful novel; I will never again be able to look at Van Eyck's painting without thinking of this book.' - CEES NOOTEBOOM

'The Latecomer is smoothly written, extremely witty and often painful.' - BOEK

DIMITRI VERHULST
The Latercomer
HIGHLIGHTED BY THE FLEMISH FUND FOR LITERATURE
LONGLISTED FOR THE GOLDEN BOOK OWL 2014
OVER 80.000 COPIES SOLD
STRONG INTERNATIONAL INTEREST IN FILMRIGHTS
- Rights sold: Luchterhand (Germany), Portobello (UK), Denoël (France)
- German translation available - English sample translation available - Dutch pdf available

'With The Lamb, Regnerus has written a beautiful novel; I will never again be able to look at Van Eyck's painting without thinking of this book.' - CEES NOOTEBOOM

'Best novel of the year!' – WIM BRANDS IN BOEKEN

'A wonderful novel (…) The Latecomer is one of those books you always hoped Verhulst would write: a perfect brew of social criticism with a strong anecdotal touch.' **** - NRC HANDELSBLAD

'A cracking novel.' **** - METRO
BERT WAGENDORP
Ventoux
OVER 100.000 COPIES SOLD

- Rights sold: btb (Germany), Turbine (Denmark), Galaade Editions (France), Kagge (Norway)
- Dutch pdf available • English sample translation available

‘This book has it all. An unconventional story about friendship.’ – BOOKSELLERS’ PANEL, ‘DE WERELD DRAAIT DOOR’

‘Hilarious, stirring, feel-good.’

**** – PETER VANDERMEERSCH, NRC HANDELSBLAD

‘A boys’ book (for men and women), a real page-turner.’

**** – DE VOLKSKRANT

‘Bert Wagendorp keeps his readers firmly in tow in this glorious tragicomedy about friendship.’

– DE MORGEN

HERMAN KOCH
Summerhouse with Swimming Pool

FULL ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE

- Rights sold: Kiepenheuer & Witsch (Germany), Salamandra (Spain), Neri Pozza (Italy), Keter (Israel), Amsterdam/Ara Llibres (Catalan), Belfond (France), Forlagid (Iceland), Pax (Norway), Shanghai 99 (China), Azboka – Atticus (Russia), Atlantic (US & UK), Text Publishing (Australia & New Zealand), Sittal (Finland), Dogan (Turkey), Protea (South Africa)
- German & French pdf available

‘A skilful, timely novel, one you simply can’t put down.’

– DE VOLKSPRACHT

‘Summer House with Swimming Pool is perfectly constructed and written with obvious pleasure.’ – BOEK

‘Once again Koch shows us, in that keen, almost icy style, how easy it is for successful people to go haywire.’

– GLAMOUR

‘After the resounding success of The Dinner, Herman Koch comes with a new novel, Summer House with Swimming Pool, in which moral issues are tackled in a delightful fashion.’ – RED

MARION PAUW
Daylight

WINNER GOLDEN NOOSE 2009
OVER 170.000 COPIES SOLD

FULL ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE

- Rights sold: Heyne Verlag (Germany), Szo Kiado (Hungary); Film rights sold to Eyeworks (NL)
- German translation available • sample translation available

‘A fascinating tale.’ – DE TELEGRAAF

‘Irresistible. Compelling, intriguing and well written.’

**** – VIVA

‘Daylight is an unusual and good thriller. Splashes from the pages.’

– ALGEMEEN DAGBLAD

‘Daylight is a moving and thrilling book. Intelligent, cleverly structured, atmospheric and chilling to the bone. Original, without clichés, full of linguistic pearls.’

– **** CRIMEZONE

ESTHER VERHOEF
Backlight

OVER 180.000 COPIES SOLD

- Rights sold: BTB Verlag (Germany)
- sample translation available • synopsis available • Dutch pdf available

‘Backlight is the gripping story of a woman trying to escape her troubled childhood. Utterly compelling and with a narrative arc that’s reminiscent of a thriller.’ – JAN

‘Esther Verhoef is clearly part of our country’s literary elite.’ – ALGEMEEN DAGBLAD

‘A new Verhoef is always good news and it looks like she is getting better and better. Here is another excellent piece of cleverly structured suspense, astute psychology and crystal-clear narrative style.’

– LINDA

‘Verhoef always hits the right note as she conveys evil, temptation and confrontation, as well as vulnerability, introversion and love in its many guises.’

– DE VOLKSPRACHT

‘With Backlight Esther Verhoef proves that she does not just write good thrillers. Her descriptions of helplessness, temptation and resilience are painfully accurate. A touching novel.’

– VIVA

‘After her successful thrillers Esther Verhoef has now written a very incisive psychological novel.’ – RED
LIEVE JORIS
On the Wings of the Dragon. Travels between Africa and China

SHORTLISTED FOR THE BOB DEN UYL PRIZE 2014 (Best Travel Book)

- Sample translation available
- Dutch pdf available
- Rights sold: Actes Sud (France), Tekin (Turkey)

‘In the Western world, so much is written about the Chinese exploitation of Africa, but who writes about the price China is paying? The answer is: Lieve Joris, and she does so splendidly.’ – **** NRC HANDELSBLAD

‘In this book, Joris again tries to capture the slowly rippling undercurrent. This approach is typical of her entire oeuvre. And for this very reason, her previous non-fiction work on the Arab world, Eastern Europe and Africa still stands up decades later.’ – DE TIJD

Joris is a conscientious and worldly reporter, refusing to be side-tracked either by sentimentality or bravado.’ – CAROLINE MOOREHEAD, TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

‘Lieve Joris has that rare ability to follow both paths, the general and the particular, the panorama and the close-up, the analysis and the narrative, without ever losing track of either.’ – LIBERATION (FRANCE)

JAAP SCHOLTEN
Comrade Baron. The lost world of the Transylvanian aristocracy 1949-2009

FULL ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE
WINNER LIBRIS HISTORY PRIZE 2011
SHORTLISTED FOR THE BOB DEN UYL PRIZE 2011 (Best Travel Book)

- Dutch pdf available
- Rights sold: Corvina (Hungary), Arcadia Books (UK / ANZ)

‘There are many wonderful things about Scholten’s book. In his introduction he writes that he wants to record the stories of a disappearing world, particularly those concerning the Transylvanian aristocracy, but he also captures the spirit of Old Europe, the pride in the past, the assumptions, the ideals, the worldview, the superiority. Scholten’s book is full, colourful, occasionally gruesome, often astonishing, and beautifully written. By beautiful I mean: fast-paced, with passion and a good feeling for details.’ – HET PAROOL

‘Comrade Baron can be characterised as a mixture of travel writing, oral history, and personal perception. Many of the stories have been confided to the writer only after months or even years of insistence, simply and solely on condition of anonymity.’ – FINANCIEEL DAGBLAD

‘Stories about injustice, humiliation, exclusion and worse, but the effect is that the reader shudders at every testimony.’ – VRIJ NEDERLAND

DICK SWAAB
We Are Our Brains.
From Womb to Alzheimer’s

FULL ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE
WINNER ECNP MEDIA AWARD 2014
OVER 400.000 COPIES SOLD

- German pdf available
- Rights sold: Droemer Knaur (Germany), Spiegel & Grau (World English), Zmora/ Kinneret (Israel), Elliot Edizioni (Italy), Cheers (China), Open Books (Korea), Azoth (Taiwan), Plato (Serbia), Protea (South-Africa), Libri (Hungary), Arkadas (Turkey), Limbahk (Russia), Plataforma Editorial (Spain)

‘This is a book to keep beside the First Aid Manual. It may not save your life, but Swaab’s liberal theses and lively case studies will vividly improve and illuminate it.’ – THE TIMES ON SATURDAY

‘A fun, wild ride through contemporary brain science. It has been a big bestseller in Holland and may well be one here. As a read and a guide to the big science of the moment, this book is fun and informative. As an ice-breaker at parties, it is unmatched.’ – BRYAN APPELEYARD, SUNDAY TIMES

‘A popular science book that you simply cannot put down. The combination of personal observations and anecdotes, scientific information and brief patient case notes holds the reader’s attention in each of the entertaining chapters. And that is no mean feat.’ – DE VOLSKRANT
ANDRÉ ALEMAN
Our Ageing Brain

FULL ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE
OVER 35,000 COPIES SOLD

• German pdf available
• Dutch pdf available

• Rights sold: C.H. Beck Verlag (Germany), Corvina (Hungary), Scribe Publications (World English), Alfa Group (Turkey)

‘Aleman clearly knows what he is talking about. He is a specialist on the ageing brain and he distinguishes facts from fables.’
— HET FINANCIEEL DAGBLAD

‘A book you can’t put down, no matter how old you are.’ — PSYCHOLOGIE MAGAZINE

‘Aleman’s book is a plea in favor of a more positive view on growing old’
— NRC HANDELSBLAD

JAN BROKKEN
The Reprisal

SHORTLISTED FOR THE GOLDEN BOOK OWL 2014
SHORTLISTED FOR THE NS PUBLIEKSPRIJS 2013 (READERSHIP PRIZE)
SHORTLISTED FOR THE LIBRIS HISTORY PRIZE 2013
OVER 60,000 COPIES SOLD
HIGHLIGHTED BY THE DUTCH FOUNDATION FOR LITERATURE

• English sample translation available
• Dutch pdf available

• Rights sold: Kiepenheuer & Witsch (Germany); Film rights sold: Column Film NL

‘Brokken has developed his village drama with consummate skill. Tense, intriguing, sometimes moving. The Reprisal is the kind of book that you finish and immediately want to reread. The subtle portrayals of women contribute to this effect – of Sandrien, of ‘Kraut-whore’ Dirkje. Brokken raises the question of whether she, as a single mother, really had a great deal of choice.’
***** — ALGEMEEN DAGBLAD

‘The way he describes a trauma that continues to divide a small community to this day is spellbinding.’
**** — NRC HANDELSBLAD

‘The Reprisal presents a penetrating and detailed portrait of Rhoon in those final war years.’
**** — DE VOLKSKRANT

ARNOLD VAN HUIS,
MARCEL DICKE & HENK VAN GURP
The Insect Cookbook

FULL ENGLISH TRANSLATION AVAILABLE

• Dutch pdf available
• Rights sold: Columbia University Press (USA)

‘An attractive mixture of background information on insects, their anatomy and history of use in food and other products, food culture, recipes, and interviews. It is very carefully prepared and a pleasure to read.’
— JOB UBBINK, FOOD CONCEPT AND PHYSICAL DESIGN OF THE MILL SWITZERLAND

‘Beautifully presented and well written, The Insect Cookbook has a variety of authorities to support its case that we need to consider incorporating insects into our diets for ecological reasons.’
— THERESIA DE VROOM, MARYMOUNT INSTITUTE FOR FAITH
If there is anyone who knows what vulnerable living is, it is Ada de Jong. In the summer of 2008, her husband and three children were killed in a tragic accident while descending the Italian Mont Dolent. There is one question that has been weighing on her mind ever since: how to move on, now that everything has changed so radically?

Ada knew no one that had experienced such a terrible loss until she met Christa Anbeek, who lost her parents and brother at a young age and then lost her life partner only a couple of years ago.

The experiences of Christa and Ada make up the foundations of *Mountain of the Soul*, in which they explore important questions in life, such as: Who are you when there is no one else? How to rise above your grief? And what is responsibility when you are so utterly saturated with how vulnerable life is?

The authors have drawn these core questions from theology, but answer them in a personal and secular manner. The book is a great success in the Netherlands: over 10,000 copies were sold in a few months.
Mindful Moments with Teenagers
Time Out, Tune In

Teenagers are funny, vulnerable, unpredictable and sometimes downright difficult. They crave independence, but they are often not yet ready for it. This demands a great deal of energy, not only from teenagers themselves, but also from their parents and teachers. The book, with the accompanying CD, offers practical mindfulness exercises that teach teenagers how to reflect on their own behaviour and teach parents not to immediately react to the behaviour of their children.

*Mindful Moments with Teenagers* helps to set boundaries and communicate better. Courage, confidence and compassion are essential. The exercises in the book will help adults, but also teenagers, to strengthen these qualities.

An app is being developed exclusively for teenagers.

**PRESS ON PREVIOUS WORK**

‘Because of its lighthearted but deeply honest perspective, *Sitting Still Like a Frog* turns the cultivation of mindfulness into something more akin to a game, an experiment, and an adventure, rather than a burden. May this book find its way into the hands of all the parents and children who might benefit from it.’ – JON KABAT-ZINN

‘The book is very informative and realistic. The explanation of the method is very clear and the illustrations are beautiful. It is, overall, a very pleasant read. Some tips can actually come in handy for adults as well!’ – LE FIGARO

‘This book helps you find the ‘pause button’ on your child. With entertaining and easy exercises.’ – J/M MAGAZINE

‘Very effective, simple, clear and thorough. Eline Snel’s methods are being translated and employed around the world for good reason.’ – VIVES ONDERWIJSMAGAZINE

**ELINE SNEL**

Eline Snel is a mindfulness trainer. Her method ‘Mindfulness Matters’ has had success in the Netherlands, France, Germany and Hong Kong. *Sitting Still Like a Frog* has sold more than 16,000 copies in the Netherlands and has been translated into French, German, English, Spanish, Norwegian, Danish, Korean, Russian and Catalan. The book has sold 50,000 copies in France alone.
The Great War

The Kingdom of Belgium during the First World War

On 4 August 1914, the biggest invasion force ever mobilised up until then attacked a small, ill-prepared neighbouring country. And so began Belgium's Great War, a war that was both like and unlike that of other countries. Belgium's First World War proceeded on two fronts: in the mud of the Yser and in the occupied territories. Trenches and occupation, poison gas and forced labour, or two wars in one: ‘14-`18 was for Belgium, perhaps more so than other countries in Europe, the original sin of the 20th century.

Since the publication of The Great War in 1997, research into Belgium’s First World War has gained momentum. This reissue features a new introduction.

*SOPHIE DE SCHAEPDRIJVER*

**The Great War**

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**PRESS ON THE GREAT WAR**

‘A masterpiece of brilliantly written history.’ – DE MORGEN

‘A rare historical masterpiece.’ – HUMO

‘A written monument to the heroes and victims of the First World War.’ – DE VOLSKRANT

*SOPHIE DE SCHAEPDRIJVER*

Sophie de Schaepdrijver studied History in Brussels and Florence and graduated from the University of Amsterdam in 1990. She lectured at the VU University Amsterdam and Leiden University and has lived and worked in the United States since 1995; she has taught Modern European History at Penn State University since 2000. In 1997 she published The Great War, hailed by critics as a fresh look at a major war experience.
The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand is regarded as the trigger for the First World War. On 28 June, 1914, the Archduke and his wife Sophie were shot dead, and the European powers ended up in a catastrophic war. It is known that the killer, student Gavrilo Princip, was aided by shadowy army officers who were united in the Black Hand, but that is where the story usually ends. The shooter of Sarajevo thus appears to be a footnote in world history, but what social, cultural and intellectual background led him to this terrorist act? What moved him? And what were his aims?

Guido van Hengel follows Princip’s personal development: poor farmer’s son from the Bosnian mountains who moved with great expectations to the city, where he was radicalised and eventually became trapped in a new world. Princip’s frustration is now, a century on, still frighteningly relevant.

*The Days of Gavrilo Princip* is not only the story of an individual, but also the history of a whole generation of young people who unleashed an explosive cultural revolution at the beginning of the 20th century.
Hard to Believe I Really Exist
The Desire for Self-knowledge

When suddenly confronted with our reflection, we’re sometimes surprised at the strange creature staring back at us. It’s as if our outside doesn’t match our inside.

In Hard to Believe I Really Exist, Martijn Meijer explores this tension between inner and outer world. His ‘philosophical narcissism’, as he calls it in his self-examination, sheds a surprising light on the ‘me’ that we all are a unique way.

With his playful essays, Meijer moves into the area between philosophy and literature. His recurring concern is the question of how the individual holds firm in a complex world. The loner versus humanity, the soul versus matter, the man versus his lover, the writer versus his work: all try to overcome alienation and become one with the other, if only for a moment.

Press on Previous Work

‘An intelligent biographer.’ – NRC HANDELSBLAD

‘An amusing and intriguing game on the relationship between a writer and his characters.’ – NOORDHOLLANDS DAGBLAD

Martijn Meijer (born 1974) is a philosopher and works as a freelance journalist for publications including NRC Handelsblad and Filosofie Magazine. Previous publications include Arthur’s Apocalypse and Wrong Man. The latter novel was longlisted for the Libris Literature Prize in 2009.
Science, especially the natural sciences, is invariably met with awe, even a degree of fear. Right-minded people, who love to read books and discuss politics and society, shrink back the moment they are confronted with a formula.

It doesn’t have to be that way. Diederik Jekel, who has quickly emerged as one of the Netherlands’ best teachers and popular TV personalities, explains the most important natural and astronomical theories using examples that anyone can understand and recognise: a headphone cable, a passing car, snowflakes, a comb, the weather forecast and the enormous power of love. In this way science becomes a story that anyone can read, understand and retell.

‘Why do your headphones get tangled up in your pocket? Why does coffee taste bad onboard an aeroplane? I tell stories rather than formulas.’
— Diederik Jekel

How to influence the position of the moon?
Where do stars come from?

Diederik Jekel
Long Answers to Short Questions
An Easy Read that Explains the Universe

‘Every single chapter radiates his broad knowledge of the natural sciences, as well as his infectious enthusiasm.’— NEW SCIENTIST

‘He might be a science geek, but he is of the hipster variety, telling exciting stories.’— HET PAROOL

Diederik Jekel (born 1984) is a science journalist with a mission to make science accessible, and a popular guest on Dutch talk show De Wereld Draait Door. In 2012 he was nominated for ‘nerd of the year’. He made his debut in 2011 with Seven Disasters That Aren’t Going to Happen.
Nowadays we are getting old, very old. And by the time we become infirm, there’s no luxury retirement village where we are welcome and pampered to a peaceful death. It is family who must take care of us.

This is what most children and grandchildren do: they give love and care as best they can. Are parents grateful? Not always.

In her new book, Yvonne Kroonenberg gives a voice to people faced with these circumstances: desperate, self-sacrificing, angry and happy family carers. Grateful and ungrateful old people, nursing home residents and staff, children and grandchildren of all ages.

A comforting book about a complicated stage of life for the elderly and their loved ones.

**PRESS ON PREVIOUS WORK**

‘Familiar and oh so poignant.’ – ESTA

‘Delightful, that caustic, stinging Kroonenberg humour that drips from every page.’ – COSMOPOLITAN

‘Witty, sharp observations about men and women and the way they interact.’ – PROPRIA CURES
An exciting double perspective on history, art and literature

MAARTEN ASSCHER

Apples and Oranges
In Praise of Comparing

LONGLISTED FOR THE GOLDEN BOOK OWL 2014

What do people mean when they say a certain comparison is 'lame', or that some comparisons 'simply cannot be made'? In his new book, Maarten Asscher argues that comparing is the ideal way to look at history, art and literature. In 22 essays, stretching from classical antiquity to the present day, he shows just how enriching the comparative approach can be: Telemachus and Hamlet, the ‘suicide’ of Primo Levi and of Japanese Kamikaze-pilots, the Mediterranean and the North Sea, generalist versus specialist art historians, writers writing in prison and writers writing at home, Heinrich Schliemann and Sigmund Freud, factual versus imaginative literature of the Shoah, etc.

In Maarten Asscher’s hands the comparative approach turns out to be a most insightful way of looking not just at two subjects simultaneously, but at the one underlying fundamental issue. By the very differences they present, the two subjects create new depth in the eye of the beholder, just like a 19th-century stereoscope, with its double photographic view.

Apples and Oranges is an eloquent defence of the supposedly ‘lame’ comparison and at the same time a rich and varied collection of thoughts and digressions in the field of history, art and literature.

PRESS ON APPLES AND ORANGES
‘Thanks to the multitude of ideas, beautiful details and anecdotes, this collection is perfectly suited to quiet reflection.’ **** – NRC HANDELSBLAD

PRESS ON PREVIOUS WORK
‘Surprising angles of approach… a graceful, elegant style.’
– DE VOLSKRANT

‘At times nimble, occasionally melancholic, but always apposite.’
– DE MORGEN

Maarten Asscher (born 1957) trained as a lawyer, but became a writer and a publisher before entering the bookselling trade as the director of the Athenaeum Bookshop in Amsterdam. He has published a collection of poetry (Nocturnal Gluttony, 2002), a novel (The Hour and the Day, 2005) and a book about the Netherlands and its water (H₂Olland: In Search of the Source of the Netherlands, 2009). Five of his books have been published in German translation. Maarten Asscher contributed columns to various newspapers, weekly magazines and a television programme.
For his travels through Russia, Michel Krielaars could wish for no better guide than Anton Chekhov. The great Russian writer was far ahead of his time, and this enabled him to grasp the nature of his country and countrymen. With Chekhov’s gaze, Krielaars follows in the footsteps of his hero, from Moscow to St. Petersburg and Yalta, from Perm to Yekaterinburg, from the Siberian Tomsk to Vladivostok, and finally to the writer’s deathbed in Badenweiler, Southern Germany.

Krielaars speaks to labourers, shopkeepers and farmers, who are struggling to survive in an archaic society, and also meets mayors, opposition politicians, doctors and teachers, who are doing their best to change their country. The result is a moving and melancholy account of a country trying to move on, but still that is stuck in a mindset that in many ways dates back to the Middle Ages.

**PRESS ON CHEKHOV’S GLASSES**
‘Krielaars examines Russian society from the bottom up, yielding valuable passages on ancient Russian ailments such as alcoholism and corruption. [...] The parallels between the Russia of the Tsar and that of Putin are sometimes really scary.’ **** – DE VOLSKRANT

‘The best travel book of Book Week.’ – WIM BRANDS IN VPRO BOEKEN

‘Krielaars is a born storyteller. With his sharp eye he tracks down stories that don’t usually make the papers, but which offer much greater insight into the Russia of today and yesterday.’ – TROUW
The past century has witnessed a revolution: an explosion of life. Never before have so many people reached such an advanced age. It is the most radical change in our society since industrialisation. While less than a century ago the average life expectancy was 40, it is now 80. And there is no end in sight: the first person to reach 135 has already been born. Is this an awesome milestone or an extremely fearful prospect? Many wonder in dismay why no one has pulled the emergency brake. The answer is that it is we who wanted this, and we who made it happen. This is something we can be proud of, and something we need to turn to our advantage.

In his fascinating book, internationally respected gerontologist Rudi Westendorp explains what this involves, and how it came to be that every week we add a weekend to our lives.

Growing Older Without Growing Old is the definitive book on the hottest topic of the 21st century. It sheds light on our lives from all angles – from biology and medicine to care and society.

‘70-year-olds are still wet behind the ears. They need to make at least three five-year plans. So I say, “Surprise yourself. Surprise us. Then we’ll have something to talk about when you’re 85.”’ – Rudi Westendorp

P R E S S  O N

‘An entertaining and revealing book about our delayed ageing and death, about astonishing future prospects and the lack of simple measures to prevent diseases such as dementia.’ – DE VOLSKRANT

‘A navigation system for the second life that lies ahead.’ – DE MORGEN

‘One by one, Westendorp demolishes ingrained ideas about old age and ageing. He offers a brand new perspective on old age.’ – HET BELANG VAN LIMBURG
Plenty of attention is paid to cooking and eating, but very little to digestion and pooping. It’s as if what goes in, never comes out. Poo is in the bad books, where sex used to be. As was once true of sex, the biggest obstacle to talking about poo is language: there’s little jargon beyond the vulgar and the medical. But just as sex, besides reproduction, is mainly for pleasure, defecation is also a source of satisfaction.

Poo is a wonderful, multifaceted subject that can be approached from the perspective of biology, history, art and the environment. All it requires is the gaze of Midas Dekkers, who is able like no other to turn the most unlikely subject matter (death and mortality, red hair, bestiality) into books that make you think, and make you laugh. What a Relief. Or the Delights of Defecation is a unique book about a very mundane topic: ‘Defecation equals job done.’

‘Dekkers devotes many pages to the cultural and historical side of the subject. He also pays a great deal of attention to the sociological aspect of our bowel movements. At the same time, he gives a charming rundown of pooping and farting in world literature. And when it all threatens to become too serious, which is actually never the case, Dekkers inserts a joke to lighten the mood and thus hold his readers’ attention.’ – **** NRC HANDELSBLAD

‘What a Relief. Or the Delights of Defecation is written in that characteristic contrarian and no-nonsense tone with which the biologist likes to make us think.’ – BOEK

‘For those who aren’t aware: we are not our brain, we are our gut. There is always that unmistakable Midas touch: his brilliant, sharp style makes it hard to suppress a laugh or a smile.’ – MEDISCH CONTACT

‘Besides his highly commendable columns, Dekkers has several major works to his credit, including Impermanence (1997), The Larva (2002) and Red (2011). In all these books, he has shown that he has a masterful writing style that is not only unique in biology but without equal in the whole of Dutch literature. What a Relief shows Dekkers once again to be in possession of a golden pen.’ – NEW SCIENTIST

‘An ode to poo – Midas Dekkers hits the right note.’ – ***** de Volkskrant

MIDAS DEKKERS

What a Relief
Or the Delights of Defecation
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Dear colleagues and friends,

Thank you for taking a look at our new Spring 2014 Foreign Rights Brochure. We are delighted to present the wide variety of intriguing Dutch titles that epitomise the publishing houses proudly represented by shared stories: Ambo|Anthos, Atlas Contact, Luitingh-Sijthoff and VBK|Media.

We handle the translation rights, as well as the TV, film and stage rights, of Dutch and Flemish authors such as Herman Koch, Geert Mak, Dimitri Verhulst, Esther Verhoef, Eline Snel, Bert Wagendorp and Dick Swaab, to name but a few. This brochure is brimming with brand-new, recently published or forthcoming bestselling narrative non-fiction, popular science, upmarket literary novels, and thrillers. Please take a look yourself and get in touch if you would like us to send you some of our translated material or the Dutch texts.

We have also handpicked some interesting backlist titles for you, in the ‘Ones to watch’ section. Some of these titles were chosen because full English translations are now available; others are award winning and/or huge bestsellers.

We wish you an inspiring book fair in London and hope to assist you in finding lots of new and enriching stories. At the fair you’ll find us at table number 10s – please stop by and say hello.

Yours,

Uta Matten
Elaine Michon

About shared stories
Since 12 September 2013, shared stories has been up and running in its premises at Herengracht 418 in Amsterdam. Shared stories is the in-house rights agency of the Dutch VBK Publishing Group, representing the publishing houses Ambo|Anthos, Atlas Contact, Luitingh-Sijthoff and VBK|Media. The rights department is staffed by Uta Matten, who started out in 2005 in the rights departments of Ambo|Anthos and Atlas Contact publishers. Since the expansion to the shared stories agency in 2013, she has been assisted by Elaine Michon. Shared stories also organises events in The Netherlands for authors and readers. Event manager Cindy Eijspaart has worked for several publishing houses as publicity manager. With the unique combination of rights sales and event planning, shared stories, headed by Dorien van Londen, has embarked on an adventure that is entirely consistent with the entrepreneurial spirit of the publishers it represents.