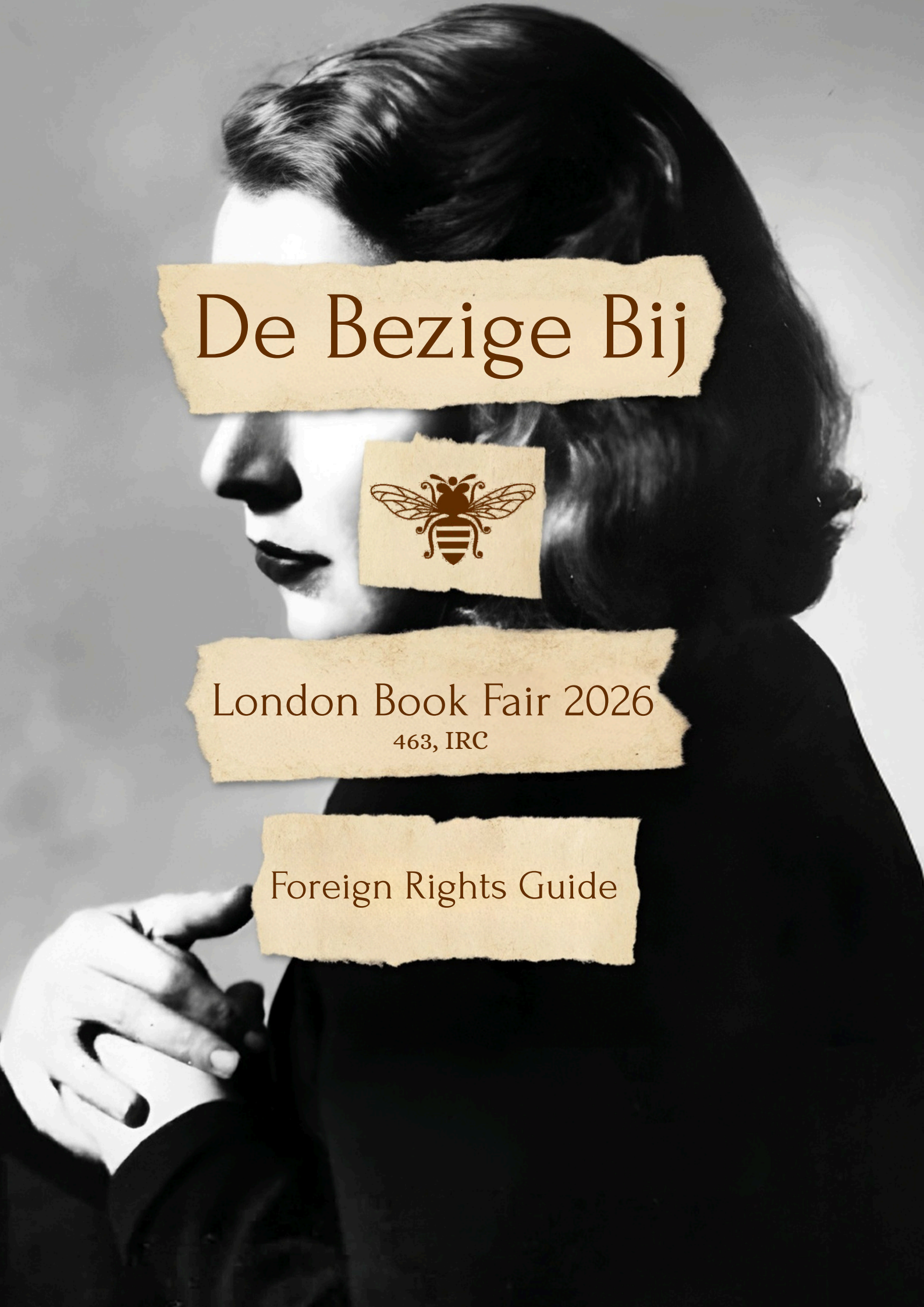


De Bezige Bij

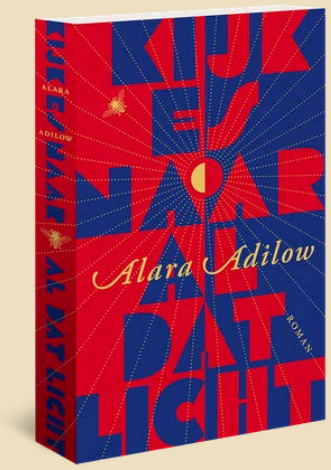
London Book Fair 2026

463, IRC

Foreign Rights Guide

FICTION

Look at All the Light - *Alara Adilow*



Is staying together really possible when the person you love is also the one who hurts you the most?

Sagal is twenty-eight and, as a marketing professional, lives a life of luxury. Her girlfriend Diana struggles with gender dysphoria and wants to know why she always seems to make the same bad choices. When Sagal has an abortion without her knowledge, Diana is left feeling betrayed. The night Diana leaves her, Sagal seeks out her Somali, drug-addicted mother for the first time in ten years. *Look at All the Light* is about maintaining a relationship with people who seem to be constantly falling apart.

> 'The impressive debut novel by literary talent Alara Adilow is not neat or flawless: expect drugs, semen, and grotesque scenes. *Look at All the Light* is so romantic, raw, and realistically written that you can fully empathize with the identity struggles.' - *de Volkskrant*

NOVEL
269 pages
September 2025
English sample

Here Comes the Sun - Kees van Beijnum

'Van Beijnum shows Amsterdam as it is, with all its rough edges and sewers, human wreckage and failures' - Trouw



In his most autobiographical work to date, the author reveals his childhood in Amsterdam's Red Light District and goes in search of his equally wonderful and complicated mother. She longs for a different, more sophisticated life than that of her own mother, who ran a pub in the centre of Amsterdam. She projects her thwarted ambitions onto her son, leaving chaos, a succession of romantic mishaps and fights with lovers in her wake.

His mother's restless nature results in them moving house several times, eventually ending up in a bungalow in the countryside, almost a two-hour journey from his high school. He goes in search of an escape, a way to shape his own life.

AUTOFICTION
496 pages
January 2026
English sample

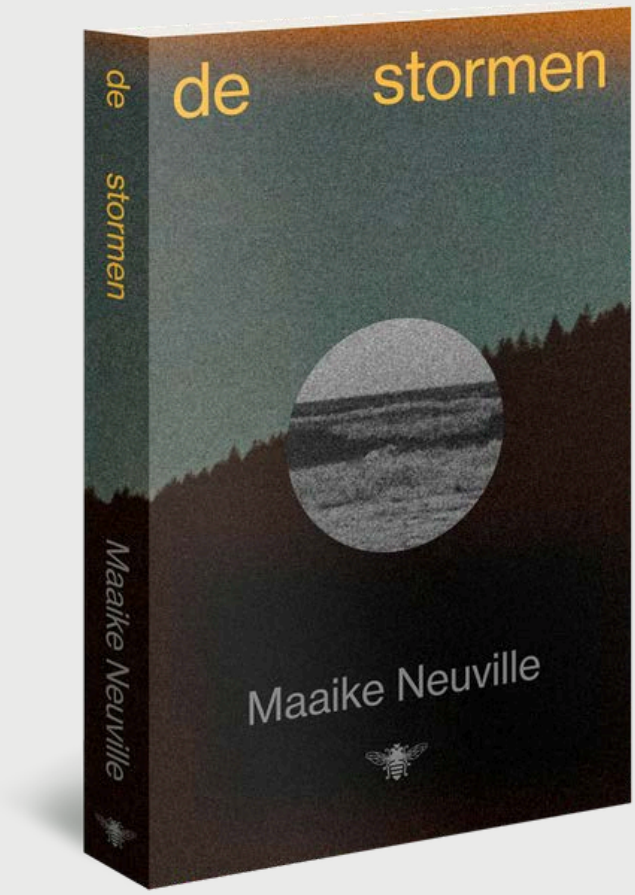
FICTION

“I no longer know who I am, all I know is that it's rippling and that the storm is unavoidable.”

the storms

Maaike Neuville

A caleidoscopic novel about grief, sexuality and motherhood throughout the ages



Actress Abbie de Lange is preparing to play a part in a historical film based on the life of Therese Mae Smith, an Irish writer from the early twentieth century. This is a role that forces Abbie to confront demons from her own past. During the filming, the lives of Abbie and Therese become mysteriously intertwined.

In *the storms*, motherhood, mourning and sexuality become intertwined. This novel, a dazzling reflection on mental health, the place of female artists in society and wild, untameable nature, gets under your skin like a breathless physical experience. Everyday observations are alternated with deep dives into the inner worlds of two women who seem destined to be united across the centuries.

NOVEL
256 pages
March 2026
English sample

> *‘I want to tell you about the day I lost my mother.*
> *Because through the waters that surround us, that dwell within us,*
> *we are connected, Grace. You, me, her, and all who breathe our past and*
> *our future. There is no end to a mother. Her boundaries fade and become ours.*
> *How absurd it suddenly seems to me to follow a single wave with your gaze*
> *until it breaks on the rocks and then to cry because it is no longer there.’*

FICTION



Hermit Days - Yanaika Zomer

About uncontrollabe desire, mistakes and hidden grief.

Monk and Meira don't really know each other, but they have been online acquaintances for months. When she buys one of his paintings, their online contact turns into a secret, captivating affair. But Meira is married to Sam, and is the mother of Finn and Ro. She is also the daughter of Suze, who is suffering from early-onset dementia, and she's afraid of what may be lurking in her own DNA. Through her phone, she encounters Monk, who makes everything lighter - until he suddenly passes away, leaving her with a broken heart and a head full of memories.

> *"Monk is dead. Since two o'clock this afternoon, I've thrown up once and cried almost nonstop. Screamed. I've felt the bitter air in my chest as I gasp for breath between sobs. There's a stinging layer of salt on my cheeks. My arms hurt. I've screamed and drooled into my pillow. I've muttered his name and now I'm doing math. To keep from going crazy or arousing suspicion among my family, I do sums in my head."*

DEBUT NOVEL
224 pages
March 2026

Without Mercy - Nicolaas Matsier

> ***"He hasn't slept. That's impossible, with so much at stake. He knows it. Although, hasn't slept? In any case, not worth mentioning. That is to say: catnaps and waking up with a start, the familiar duo. Like a sentry managing to stay upright in his guardhouse."***



The year is 1618. Stadtholder Maurice has made all the preparations for the arrest of Oldenbarnevelt – including the Resolution of the States-General, which is still a carefully kept secret. So, what could go wrong? Now and then he glances outside at the gate between the Buitenhof and the Binnenhof. He is standing ready, but he does not intend to show himself during the arrest and the aftermath. He is determined to remain the invisible tool of the States-General. He is covered; they are in control. That does not mean, of course, that he hasn't done everything in his power to bring this about, so that all he has to do now is wait here in his own tower for the Advocate of Holland to be arrested.

NOVEL
208 pages
April 2026

NON-FICTION

Women in Dark Times

Alicja Gescinska

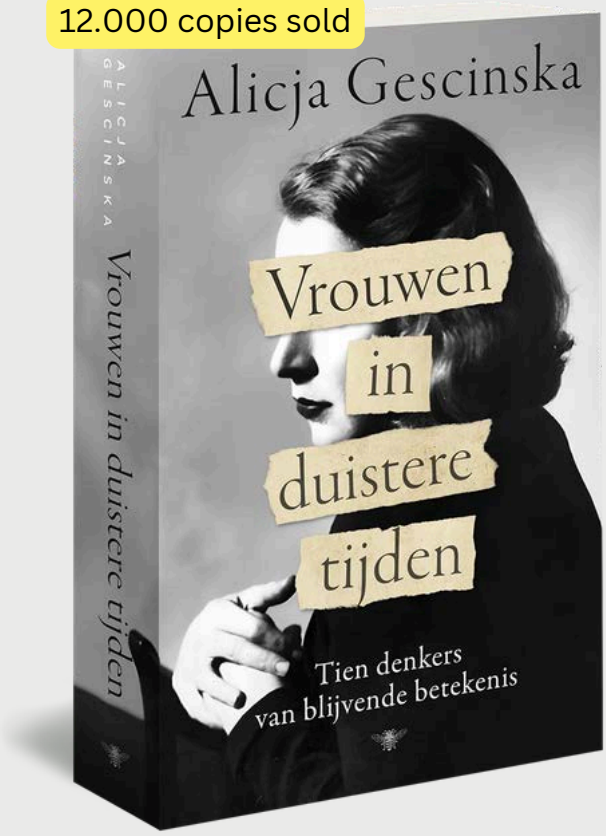
Ten Thinkers of Lasting Significance

Shortlisted for the Socrates Cup 2026
Nominated for the Libris Prize 2026

Rights sold: Propylaen/Ulstein Verlag (Germany)

“‘If evil is intrinsic to humankind, then so is goodness. And that is exactly what this book is about. It is an indictment of evil and an ode to the goodness of which humans are capable.’ - ***** *NRC* ”

12.000 copies sold



In ten biographical portraits, Alicja Gescinska shows what humankind can learn from these courageous and intelligent women: Rosa Luxemburg, Anna Achmatova, Edith Stein, Hannah Arendt, Martha Gellhorn, Simone Weil, Jeanne Hersch, Etty Hillesum, Barbara Skarga and Judith Shklar.

With words and deeds, they fought against the oppression, the dehumanisation, the urge for destruction that dominated their own era. They were beacons of light in humanity’s darkest hours, often paying a high price: from death in a camp to a life in exile.

‘Gescinka's book is not only a tribute to the women she focuses on, it is a plea for commitment and an indictment of indifference. Her women in dark times left no stone unturned in making their voices heard and helping their friends. They countered evil with that which kept “the light of humanity” burning.’ - *de Volkskrant*

HISTORY/PHILOSOPHY
432 pages
November 2025
English sample

“‘How can we maintain hope in dark times? How can we remain human in inhumane circumstances? And what should we do when fundamental values such as freedom, tolerance and pluralism are under pressure? These are the major themes addressed by Alicja Gescinska. With this book, the fruit of twenty years of thinking, the Polish-Belgian philosopher seeks to provide a contemporary response to Hannah Arendt, who published Men in Dark Times in 1968. At the time, Arendt portrayed ten thinkers (eight men and two women) who, in her view, were sources of hope and light in times of darkness. In a similar vein, Gescinska now sketches the lives and work of ten women who “all looked evil in the eye and stood tall”.’ - ***** *NRC* ”

NON-FICTION

12.000 copies sold

What You Need to Know to Understand the Middle-East - Koert Debeuf

You will put this book down with a heavy heart. But chances are you will pick it up again.



Rights sold: Project N (Slovakia)

Whether it's the conflict between Israel and Palestine, the tensions between Iran and Saudi Arabia, the problems surrounding Turkish membership of the European Union, or wars in Syria and Yemen, the Middle East is in the news almost daily. The situation in the region seems to become more complicated by the day. Why can't someone explain what's going on? That is exactly what Koert Debeuf does in this book. In a concise and accessible style, he explains what you need to know to understand the Middle East.

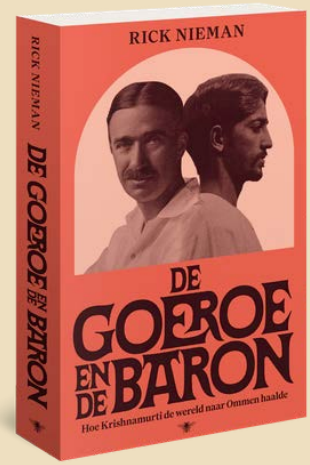
"'In 200 pages, Koert Debeuf races through the history of the Middle East. A confrontational overview that prompts reflection on, among other things, Europe's role and the scars it continues to leave in the region.' - *Financieel Dagblad*"

CURRENT AFFAIRS
224 pages
February 2026
Full English translation available

The Guru and the Baron - Rick Nieman

About the phenomenon Krishnamurti and a friendship.

In India, the young Krishnamurti is heralded as the new Messiah. Meanwhile, 23-year-old Philip van Pallandt unexpectedly inherits a centuries-old estate near Ommen, a small town in the Netherlands. When he meets Krishnamurti, the two men become friends.
The idealistic Philip donates his estate and castle to Krishnamurti, as a location for his annual 'Star Camp' gatherings. Thousands of visitors, including artists, musicians, architects and journalists, come from all over the world.
Krishnamurti speaks to them by the campfire, and they dare to dream of a future in which everyone is equal – until the summer of 1929, when Krishnamurti suddenly tells them not to follow him any longer.
Rick Nieman follows the trail of the guru and the baron and shows how they influenced each other – and their age. And how their story is still just as relevant as it was a hundred years ago.



BIOGRAPHY
320 pages
April 2026
English sample

NON-FICTION

Every Day - Maarten Asscher

About Three Stages of Mortality

How a near-death experience can prove to be enriching and inspiring



In this book, the writer and poetry translator Maarten Asscher reflects on his mortality. As part of his cancer treatment programme, he underwent a course of immunotherapy. A rare side-effect resulted in his muscular system being attacked by his own body. Asscher's lower body temporarily became paralysed, and his heart muscle was also damaged. Back at home and slowly recovering, equipped with a pacemaker and a mass of pills, he wrote this small but meaningful handbook based on incidents, poems and favourite authors.

> *"The three stages of mortality. The first stage is when you are not yet aware of death and the subject does not really sink in. The second stage begins from the moment you are first fully confronted with the death of other people. And the third stage begins when it looks like death now has its sights set on you."*

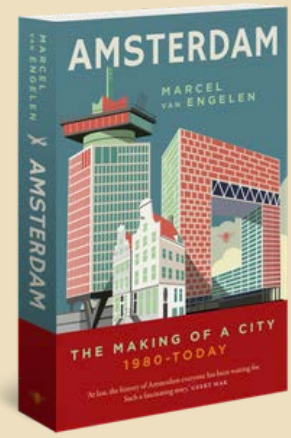
MEMOIR/PHILOSOPHY
172 pages
February 2026
English sample

Dutch edition: 23.000 copies sold

Amsterdam, The Making of a City - Marcel van Engelen

1980 - today

In the early 1980s, Amsterdam was in bad shape. The street scene was marked by dilapidated buildings and addicts. Unemployment was on the rise. Residents left en masse, offices disappeared from the city centre. Ten years later, the exodus was over. Neighborhoods improved, factories became creative breeding grounds, yuppies arrived, families wanted to live there again. But in recent years, Amsterdam has attracted so many people, businesses and money that a new crisis has emerged. A 'crisis of success' - in which housing shortages, tourism and economic inequality make the city unaffordable and inaccessible to many. In a book full of colorful characters - aldermen, architects, activists, scientists, residents and café owners - he tells how Amsterdam changed from neighborhood to neighborhood, flourished again and faced new challenges.



NON-FICTION
448 pages
Paperback
March 2026
Full English translation

NON-FICTION

'Literary talent 2026' - de Volkskrant

'Better than Edouard Louis.' – de Volkskrant

Punches - Rasit Elibol

About climbing up and fighting your way in



NON-FICTION
192 pages
September 2025
English sample

For the first time in 25 years, Rasit Elibol returns for a few days to the village that was his home for the first sixteen years of his life, where he always felt like an outsider. He is there to write a story for the intellectual magazine he works for and is trying to figure out why he still feels such resistance to this place after all these years. Elibol grew up in poverty as one of the few immigrant children in the village, struggling with addictions and violence. Now that he has climbed the social ladder and has a successful career as a writer and journalist, he feels like an outsider once again.

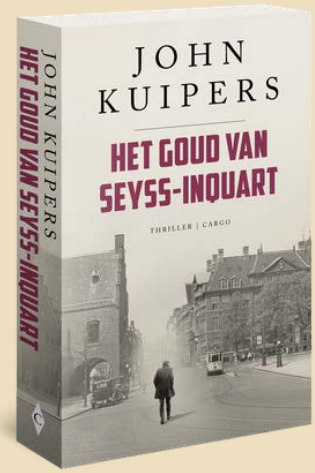
> *"I was in the village also known as Alabama, staying with someone whose father made it clear that he didn't like me. Let's just say that there were very few people in that village who liked me at all. That father kept calling me Said, and when he was corrected (not by me), he said, "Oh, yes, sorry. I'm confused with the handyman from the office." At that point, we had known each other for two years. Just to be sure, my name is not Said at all.'*

COMMERCIAL-FICTION

The Seyss-Inquart Gold - John Kuipers

CARGO

'Kuipers writes vividly and with great humour, and his main character Charlie Swieninck is truly reminiscent of Philip Kerr's Bernie Gunther.' **- NRC**



Wartime. Winter 1943. Chief Inspector Charlie Swieninck is tasked with tracking down the perpetrators of a violent robbery at a jewellery shop. During the robbery, two people are killed and a large amount of valuable jewellery is stolen. The Germans suspect that the Resistance is involved, but they are unable to solve the case. Six months later, when the body of a well-known fence is discovered at a deserted railway station, the two cases turn out to be connected.

Swieninck tries to carry out his investigation without buckling under the pressures of German occupation. If the Resistance is behind the murders, does he really want the perpetrators to be caught?

SUSPENSE
416 pages
January 2026
Full English translation of first part in the series

SUCCESSFUL TITLES: FICTION

34.000 copies sold

Yes Man - Peter Buwalda

***The long-awaited finale of the literary success* Otmar's Sons**



Rights sold: Rowohlt (Germany), Actes Sud (France)

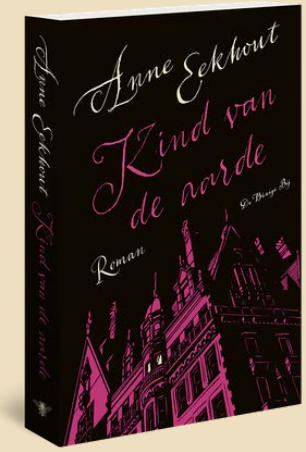
In *Yes Man* by Peter Buwalda (1971), we return to bastard son Ludwig Smit and Shell CEO Johan Tromp. The action plays out on Sakhalin Island, where the relationship between the two men becomes strained when Ludwig carves out a career as Tromp's bag-carrier. Together, they turn against the journalist Isabelle Orthel, who unwittingly puts their relationship to the test. Characters and pasts subsequently collide, forming a dangerous web of suspicions and disappointment. In the biting cold of Siberia, on the coast of Los Angeles and eventually in deceptively domestic Leiden, The Netherlands, *Yes Man* reaps what was sown in *Otmar's Sons*.

NOVEL
496 pages
January 2026
Full German and French translation available of *Otmar's Sons*

"'He has moved with the times, transcending the mainstream form of Otmar's Sons by allowing the grand, smooth narrative to erode. The result is a frayed book that leaves you bewildered, but one that is nonetheless complete and resolved.' – **** *NRC*"

The Enchantment of Lucy Applewhite - Anne Eekhout

'Lucy Applewhite is a witch'. This is scratched on the door of the toilet cubicle at St. Elizabeth's, a Catholic school for girls in New York City, 1966. And perhaps it is true.



Rights sold: btb-Verlag (Germany)

There is something strange about thirteen-year-old Lucy Applewhite. A few years before, she found out she was conceived when her mother was raped by a stranger. And ever since, Lucy has been afraid of growing up. What if she becomes a bad person, just like her father? She clings desperately to her childhood, but life insists on pulling her in the opposite direction. Not long after her thirteenth birthday, she experiences the destructive power of men for herself. This event awakens unsuspected powers deep inside her, and she discovers she can change the lives of the people around her. But doesn't that make her a bad person? Perhaps even a witch?

NOVEL
319 pages
October 2025
English sample by Laura Watkinson

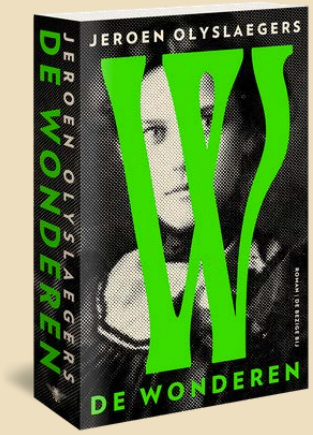
SUCCESSFUL TITLES: FICTION

From the author of *Will* (Netflix hit)

15.000 copies sold!

The Wonders - Jeroen Olyslaegers

Rights sold: Editions Stock (France)



At the end of the nineteenth century, Amandine and her twin brother Ambrose grow up in a prominent Antwerp banking family, shackled by the obedience and convention forced on them by their parents. Amandine is married off to a banker who hopes to make his fortune in the rubber industry, while Ambrose, with all the theatricality of a bohemian, is completely preoccupied with his own self-destruction. Together, they seek escape and freedom in mysterious séances. While the madness of the First World War plays out around them, Amandine tells the story of her resistance to a chaotic world that does not understand her.

> “Jeroen Olyslaegers writes lustfully and passionately about a woman's desire for freedom in times of colonialism and smothering, patriarchal family ties. Olyslaegers is one of those writers who grabs you by the scruff of the neck and drags you through the story with a steady hand, a beautiful novel.’ - *Trouw*”

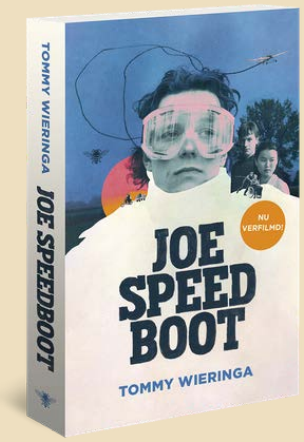
NOVEL
408 pages
November 2025
English sample by David Colmer

66th printing!

Joe Speedboat - Tommy Wieringa

Just launched: Joe Speedboot, the film (producer: BALDR Film, director: Sam de Jong)

Rights sold: in over twenty territories; new licenses available

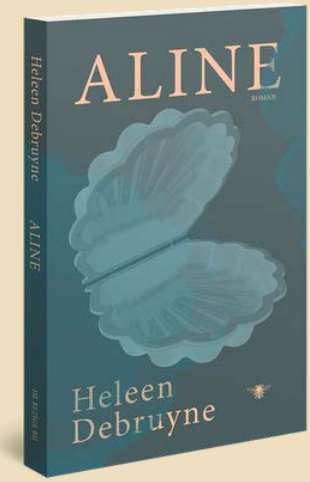


The inhabitants of a sleepy rural town are shaken awake by the arrival of a kinetic young visionary, the eponymous Joe. After a violent farming accident plunges him into a coma for six months, young Frankie Hermans wakes up to discover that he’s paralyzed and mute. Bound to a wheelchair, Frankie struggles to adjust to a life where he must rely on family and friends to complete even the simplest tasks. The only body part he can control is his right arm, which he uses obsessively to record all the details of daily life in his town.
But when he meets Joe Speedboat everything changes. Joe sees the potential strength in Frankie’s handicaps. With Joe’s help, Frankie’s good arm will be used for more that just writing: as a champion arm-wrestler.

FILM EDITION
313 pages
First publication 2005
Film ed. March 2026
Full English available

SUCCESSFUL TITLES: FICTION

Aline - Heleen Debruyne



Nominated for the Libris Literature Prize 2026

A family that has just moved from a bigger city. A house under renovation. A young child who demands constant attention. A mortgage that has to be paid off. A relationship in which the burden of care is never quite fairly distributed. Frustrations that are more often screamed than talked out.

Then there are the neighbours, whose abusive relationship plays out on the street. And on top of that, a polyamorous love triangle. There's a lot going on in Aline's life – too much, in fact. And Aline is getting angry. Angrier and angrier. In her attempts to cope, she leans on feminism and her psychologist for support.

But will she ever learn to reflect on her own shortcomings?

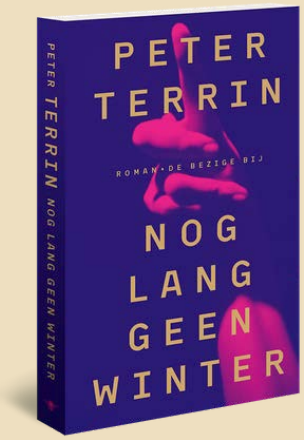
NOVEL
232 pages
October 2025
English sample by
Anna Asbury
English sample by Quaid Cey

"Debruyne subtly works out the tension between what Aline should feel as a woman, mother, and partner and how she really feels: angry, distraught, and prey to moments of "existential despair."' - *Het Nieuwsblad*"

Far from Winter - Peter Terrin

What if you could travel to the life you never lived?

Nominated for the Libris Literature Prize 2026



The day before Simon flies to Italy to scatter Carla's ashes, he receives a huge sum of money out of the blue. Someone interrupts Simon's nightly chat session on the bank's website, claiming to be trapped, just like him, in an alternate timeline. Stranded in a parallel life. It is the beginning of a gripping search. Simon is assisted by his daughter Romy, the fruit of his tempestuous love for the much older Carla in the late 1980s. Romy was born with a disability, and her relationship with her father became severely disturbed early in her childhood. After ten years of silence, Romy tries to reconnect, because her father seems to have become a different man lately.

"*A profound reflection on love and human existence.*' - Het Parool
'Super stylist Terrin is not only capable of constructing a perfect sentence or paragraph, measured and controlled, like no other he also shows that a good story relies on suggestion.' - **** Focus Knack"

NOVEL
256 pages
January 2025
English sample by
David Doherty

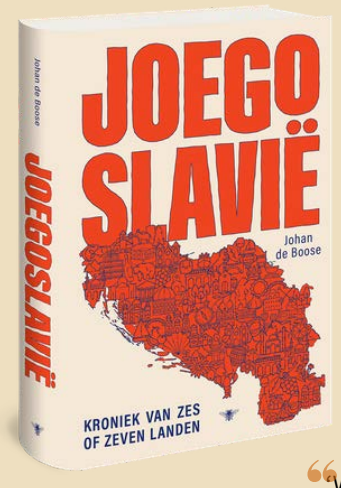
SUCCESSFUL TITLES: NON-FICTION

‘A compelling work, part travelogue and part history, like a Geert Mak in the Balkans.’
– *VRT Radio*

Yugoslavia - Johan de Boose

Chronicle of Six or Seven Countries

Rights sold: MOST ART (Serbia; Bosnian)



Yugoslavia began as a dream. A noble ideal to unite the Slavic peoples of the south. What followed was a convoluted tale: from kingdom to socialist republic, from tourist paradise to war zone. In this captivating book, **Johan de Boose** (1962) travels through the former Yugoslavia, in search of what the country once was – and why it fell apart. By learning the languages and speaking with people from all corners of the region, he unravels a country that was at once unique and universal. Yugoslavia became the broken mirror of Europe. And now, in a Europe that is increasingly beginning to resemble a continent divided into endless jagged pieces, the Yugoslav story is becoming relevant once more.

HISTORY
672 pages
October 2025
English sample

“What matters most to De Boose is humanity and decency. To emphasise this, he ends his book with a Romeo and Juliet story from Sarajevo. There, Bosnian Muslim Admira and Serbian Bosko fell in love and decided to flee together, which cost them their lives. Their tragic fate represents that of all ordinary people in the former Yugoslavia, who were crushed by the nationalistic lust for power of their leaders. For them, De Boose's book is a worthy monument.’ **** *NRC* ”

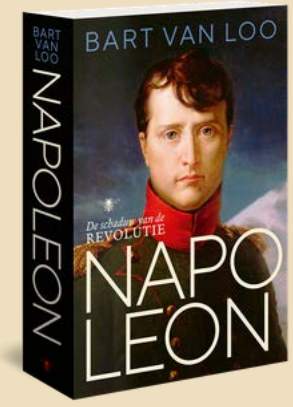
28.000 copies sold

Napoleon. In the Shadow of the Revolution - Bart Van Loo

An essential work on Napoleon and the French Revolution in less than 500 pages

Rights sold: Flammarion (France), Mondadori (Italy), C.H. Beck (Germany), Head of Zeus (World English)

From the international bestselling author of The Burgundians



Napoleon is one of the most influential figures in all of history, yet he raises an enormous number of questions. **Bart Van Loo** (1973) goes searching for the man behind the myth and finds answers in the engrossing and extremely turbulent years of the French Revolution, when the old world gave way and everything changed. The French Revolution and Napoleon: the two most captivating Homeric stories in one sagacious and compelling tale.

“‘A master test of erudition that combines factual veracity with an elegant style, and reads like a novel.’ – *Le Soir* ”

BIOGRAPHY
494 pages
2019/2023
Full French, Italian translation; English sample

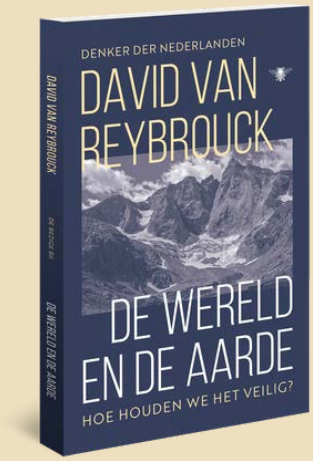
SUCCESSFUL TITLES: NON-FICTION

20.000 copies sold

The World and the Earth - David Van Reybrouck

How do we keep it safe?

Rights sold: Actes Sud (France), Suhrkamp (Germany), Fraktura (Croatia), Idee/Feltrinelli (Italy), Endebate (Spain).



The biggest security issue of our time is not the world with its mutual conflicts, but the earth that is becoming more and more disordered. For **David Van Reybrouck** (1971), this spherical model is a metaphor for the global challenges of our time: we must save the Earth – but we are attempting to do so with a form of diplomacy developed by thinkers and politicians such as Richelieu and Metternich in past centuries: world politics, in which ultimately raison d'état is the deciding factor. In view of the impending climate catastrophe, we must invent new, planetary forms of Earth politics that focus on the Earth's raison d'être. Models such as a global climate council, for example, in which Earth citizens selected by lot deliberate on the fate of the planet.

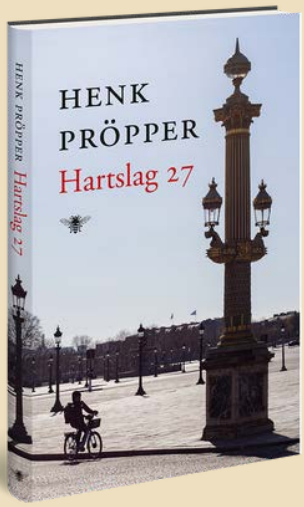
ESSAY
80 pages
April 2025
Full French and German translation

"The threat to the globe is forcing diplomacy to take a further step in its development: 'planetary diplomacy' is needed; *raison d'état* must become 'reason of the Earth'. The masterful narrator Reybrouck demonstrates this vividly.' - *Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung*"

27 Beats per Minute - Henk Pröpper

Meditations to life, literature and Paris

Rights sold: MacLehose Press (Hachette, UK)



Soon after the author moves from Amsterdam to Paris, both the world and his heart almost come to a full stop. He undergoes major surgery and awakes in an empty city in lockdown. Paris is transformed into an abandoned stage. To quicken his recovery, Pröpper begins walking. He combs his immediate surroundings, he hunts for the past, discovering countless commemorative plaques and monuments that honour well- and lesser-known Parisians and keep their histories alive. Pröpper also reflects on his own life and the literature that has shaped him. In this way, he walks in the footsteps of literary heroes such as Victor Hugo, of Balzac and of Camus.

"One of the most moving and most invigorating autobiographies ever written.' - *Knack*"

"A very special book that I enjoyed enormously.' - Cees Nooteboom (Author)"

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