

Do you read

le belge ?

This selection was made possible thanks to experts for each genre. We warmly thank them for their contribution.

Prose

Ariane Herman, Bookseller and Founder of the bookshop Tulitu, Brussels

Jean-Claude Vantroyen, Head of the book supplement of the daily newspaper Le Soir

Comics

Erwin Dejasse, art Historian, Professor and Curator specialising in comics

Clément Fourrey, Comics Artistic Director for the Brussels Book Fair

Poetry

Charlyne Audin, Teacher and President of the bookshop le Comptoir du livre, Liège

Christophe Meurée, First Assistant at the Archives and Museum of Literature in Brussels

Youth Literature

Thalie Natkiel, Children's bookseller at Tropismes, Brussels

Carole Saturno, Artistic Director of Picture! Festival

Non-Fiction

Catherine Mangez, Bookseller and Co-manager at the bookshop Papyrus, Namur

Olivier Verschueren, Bookseller and Manager at the bookshop Livre aux Trésors, Liège

Responsible editor
Wallonie-Bruxelles International

Editorial coordination
Primaëlle Vertenoel (Altura Consultance)

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Graphic design
Mona Habibizadeh

Translation
Rhona Kappler for BETRANSLATED INTERNATIONAL except page 8-9: Alexandra Niem and page 46-47: Katherine Gregor.

Editorial

Wallonie-Bruxelles International (WBI) is the organisation in charge of international relations for Wallonia and Brussels. Its mission is to increase the impact, influence and notoriety abroad of its actors, including, among others, professionals of the book field. The object you have in your hand or in front of you reflects one of our promotion workstream: to make books written by authors from French-speaking Belgium more visible.

We are therefore very pleased to present the second edition of our annual selection “Do you read le belge?”. The 45 titles – 10 novels, 10 comics, 10 albums & novels for youth, 10 essays and 5 poetry books – published between December 2021 & November 2022 and chosen by experts, remain unchanged in their DNA: to offer you a representative sample of the diversity of contemporary creation in French-speaking Belgium at a given moment. Nevertheless, it has been enhanced with new features to enable you to go easily from one book to another, from one genre to another. In addition to the table of contents, you will find now key words in the form of hashtags to quickly identify the themes that each book deals with.

This selection is nothing more and nothing less than an invitation to enter French-speaking Belgian books.

Don't be surprised to see French publishing houses: this is also a reflection of the dynamics that make up our landscape. Our proximity to France creates a porosity in terms of both creation and publishing. Similarly, we consider a Belgian author to be anyone who has been writing in French on French-speaking Belgian territory for at least five years. Like Brussels, a highly cosmopolitan city that brings together more than 180 nationalities, French-speaking Belgium is a fertile ground for exchanges, literary creation, fields of thought, a fertile ground for welcoming hybrid personal and artistic journeys, of which we are trying to offer you an image here.

Let yourself be guided through these pages, let immerse yourself in these books: you will be able to get a better taste of this living creation, inextinguishable and ready to go beyond its borders to better reach you.

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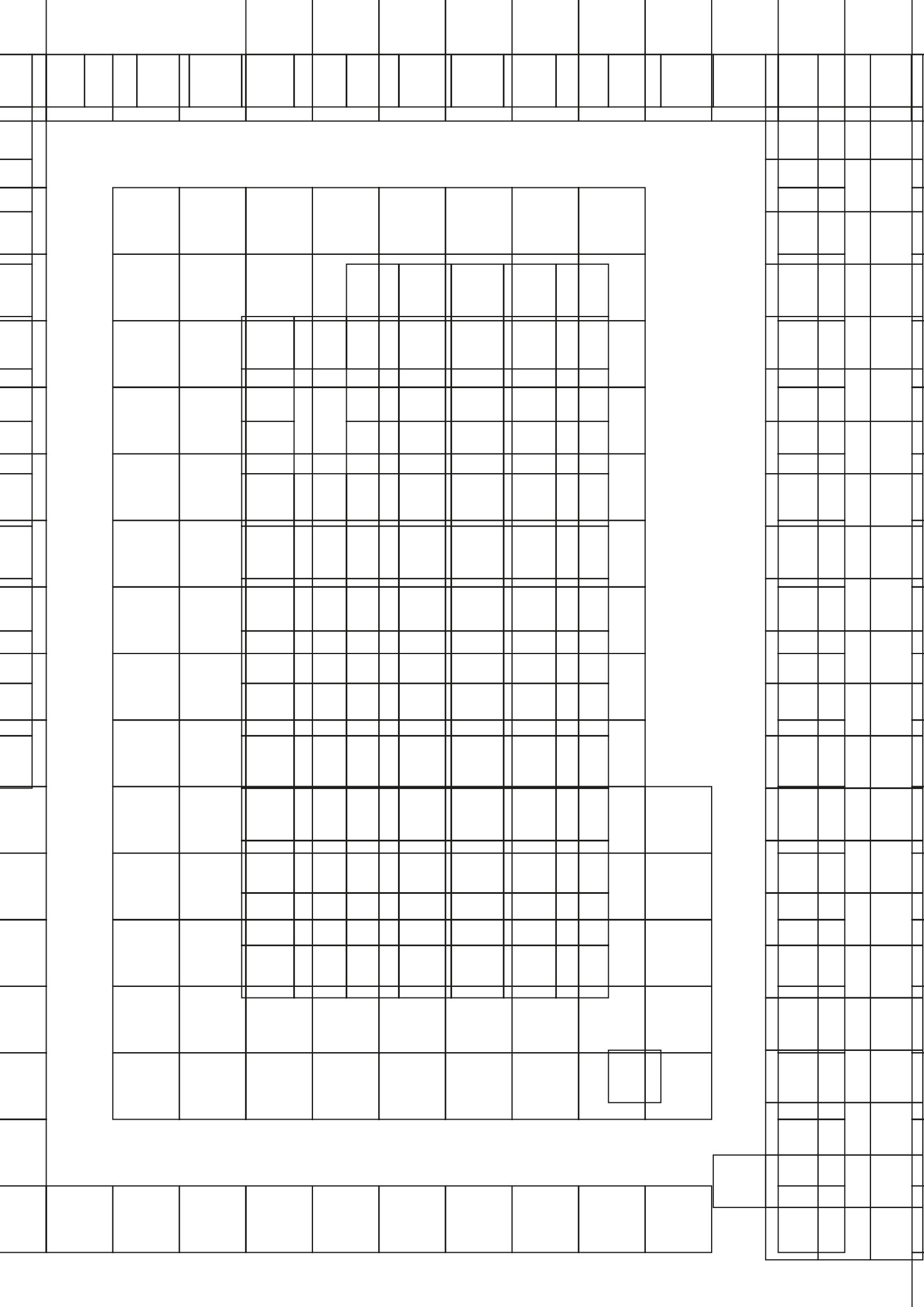
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A grid of squares, resembling graph paper, with a central rectangle containing the word "Novel".

Novel



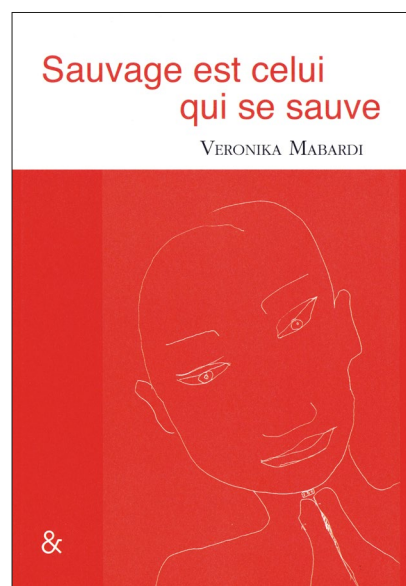
Veronika Mabardi was born in Leuven to a half-Egyptian father and a Flemish mother. She now lives in Brussels. An playwright, she is moving increasingly towards writing, directing and radio content creation. She collaborates with a variety of artists and collectives on projects in the realm of the visual arts, photography, dance, performance art and music. She regularly runs and co-runs writing workshops. Veronika has written a series of texts, including *Pour ne plus jamais perdre*, *Les choses m'arrivent hors du temps* and *Les Cerfs*.

VERONIKA MABARDI

FR
Sauvage est celui qui se sauve

EN
Savage is he who saves himself

Title	<i>Sauvage est celui qui se sauve</i>
Author	Veronika Mabardi
Genre	Novel
Publisher	© Éditions Esperluète
Format	14 x 20 cm
Pages	200
ISBN	978-2-35984-149-7
Keywords	Adoption, family, childhood, South Korea, Belgium, identity, place in the world



This book starts at a breaking point, in the year 1997, when Shin Do Mabardi perishes in a brutal car accident. He leaves behind him his work as a potter, his drawings, a pile of sketchbooks and, in the memory of all who knew him, an incredible sweetness and a great deal of silence. Veronika Mabardi places herself at the heart of this silence to follow the traces he left behind, as if following tracks. They unlock childhood memories of the

whirlwind years of the 1970s, the dizziness of adolescence at the height of Thatcherism, the complicity and the bond shared between a disoriented brother and sister. She draws the map of this unlikely meeting that takes place in a family of mixed origins. She follows the path back to her sibling relationship, and the games and solidarities of childhood. Those unbreakable bonds with friends. The first decisions and the first doubts. Their parents, their values, their struggles. Their imposed identities, their denials, their orders to take chances, to behave normally. And the chaos that found its way into her and her brother's life, shaking up everything they thought to be true. What is there that hasn't been said, or even thought? At the time of the death, this brother and sister had been planning on writing a book together: a story about a child hidden in the shadows of a secret world. The premise of a story that could form the basis for this one, the story of a child growing up in a world that eludes him.

Her play *Loin de Linden* (Lansman, 2014), was awarded the Fédération Wallonie Bruxelles Prix Triennal for Dramatic Literature and the Belgian Royal Academy's Prix Georges Vaxelaire. *Les Cerfs*, was awarded the City of Tournai Prix Triennal de Littérature. *Savage is he who saves himself* nominated for the Prix Rossel, was awarded the Royal Academy of Belgium's Grand Prix du Roman.

Suppose I sit at the iron table right there between the trees, opposite the garden.
A green table tarnished with rust.
That I sit and let words take over.
Suppose I let words take physical form,
That, in their rock-like slowness, they build a path, stone by stone, starting from you,
From your brief presence around my body,
A presence that, although now invisible, was tangible for so many years, in all the houses in which
I've lived, since the end of that morning when you landed on Belgian soil - when you entered this
country and my life - exhausted, on the edge of tears, with no more strength or even a shout left
in you. Ripped from a world I knew nothing about. Entering a world so utterly unfamiliar to you.
Burning and trembling from having cried all night in the plane that ripped you from one
continent just to drop you in another, leaving a piece of you behind.
You, placed here in front of other staring children. Lost. Legendary.
Impossible to find for all those looking for you back home.
You would speak in a singing tongue, a language of vivid colours, exclamations, and no one knew
how to answer you.
And we would say "sorry, sorry, I don't understand."

Did people say to you, back home, in a language that envelops you: "You're leaving everyone and
your story behind, pick yourself up and don't look back?
Pick yourself up, we're taking you somewhere else, placing you in the story of the family waiting
for you over there,
Who will know nothing of what happened here, what happened to you in this place you don't recall,
erase this place from your story and leave not a trace nor a witness."

What were you told, as you boarded the plane?



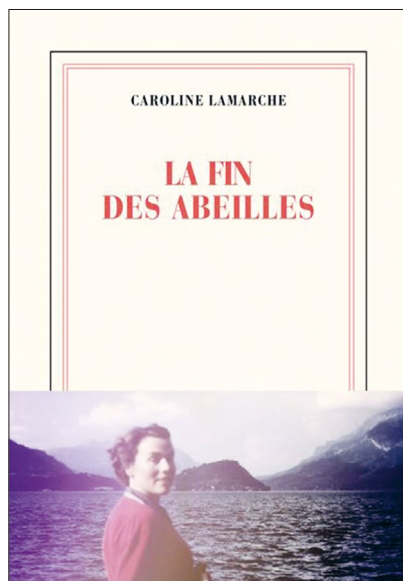
Born in Liège, Caroline Lamarche spent her childhood in Spain, then in the Paris region before finally moving to Belgium. Since her first years as a poet, she has never stopped channelling the energy of her prose over the course of a varied and intense body of work. The author has enjoyed a sterling reputation since her first short stories (Prix Radio France Internationale and Prix de la Fureur de Lire). She went on to win the Prix Rossel for her book *Le jour du chien* (Minuit, 1996), publish *La nuit l'après-midi* (Minuit 1998), as well as several novels with Gallimard, including *The memory of the air* (2014, translated into Spanish, Dutch and English) and *Dans la maison un grand cerf* (winner of the ADELFF Prix Europe 2017). In 2019, she released a collection of short stories entitled *Nous sommes à la lisière* which was awarded the Prix Goncourt de la Nouvelle. She then published her industrial and family saga *L'Asturienne* was released (Les Impressions Nouvelles), followed by her book *La fin des abeilles* in 2022 (Gallimard).

CAROLINE LAMARCHE

FR
*La fin
des abeilles*

EN
*The end
of bees*

Title	<i>La fin des abeilles</i>
Author	Caroline Lamarche
Genre	Novel
Publisher	© Gallimard, Paris 2022
Format	11 x 18 cm
Pages	208
ISBN	978-2-07296-102-1
Keywords	Dream, mother, memory



"It's about time for me to die, otherwise I'm just going to be a burden."

"You're only a burden to yourself: you don't get bored, doing nothing all day?"

"I never get bored. When I have nothing left to do, I'll finally be good."

One night, the narrator dreams that her disabled and partially-sighted mother escapes the hospital and runs the distance of a hundred kilometres, in the dark, to reach her. This dream marks the renewal of an ambivalent but deep-rooted bond between them, in this "big, decent house" where the mother would like to die surrounded by her family. Five years later, at almost 100 years old, she bravely accepts to be moved into a care home. This exile comes hand in hand with the lockdown brought about by the pandemic, her mother's voice on the telephone being the only channel for her revolt. Death will come for her without a chance to see her children again. But how she decides to spend her final days will offer some bright consolation to this family in disarray.

In 2020, Caroline Lamarche won the Fédération Wallonie Bruxelles' Prix Quinquennal for her entire body of work.

The beehives were a kilometre away from the house and the path there uneven, especially when pushing a wheelbarrow full of honeycomb frames gorged with honey. Our father had built the apiary, with its pitch-coated canvas roof and spruce partition walls that wept a different honey: their golden sap. But our mother took care of the rest, all wrapped up in her protective suit, with a veil over her eyes, a shapeless hat on her head, rubber bands on her wrists to stop any crazed worker bee from muscling in between the cloth of her suit and the rubber gloves. Like a Martian with a buzzing squadron for a halo, her gentle gestures were unfamiliar to us, accustomed as we were to her brusqueness with brooms, pans, cutlery and buckets. If housework was a war, then caring for bees gave her the sensitivity of a bomb disposal expert. She was, indeed, a different mother, who would remove the boxes with calculated slowness, pull out the frames one by one, brush them meticulously so the worker bees would drop out, and place them into the wheelbarrow as though they were paintings by great masters, making sure she did not knock them, arranging them so they would not overlap too much.

I would watch this metamorphosis from afar, standing motionless on the pebbles of the path. Once she'd grasped the wheelbarrow to return home, I would still always keep this distance, because there were always a few bees, jealous of their honey, chasing after her, shedding their stings in the folds of her protective suit. Further along the way, they would give up and my mother would finally remove her hat and mesh mask. I would once again see the brisk woman I knew, her quick strides, looking like she was already thinking about what came next, about the soup left on the corner of the stove, the table that needed setting, the beds being aired since dawn thanks to the wide-open windows. Closing, folding, setting and waiting on people had to be done after waiting on bees. As I went back, I could see in her face the return of repetition and duty, it was neither less active nor less cheerful, only more worrying for my own future, for the female model I was trying to emulate in her.



Charlotte Boulard was born in Liège in 1984. It is in this city that her first novel, *L'apparence du vivant*, is set.

CHARLOTTE BOURLARD

FR
L'apparence du vivant

EN
The appearance of living things

Title	<i>L'apparence du vivant</i>
Author	Charlotte Boulard
Genre	Novel
Publisher	© Inculte
Format	20 x 26 cm
Pages	132
ISBN	978-2-36084-143-1
Keywords	Darkness, cruelty, sweetness, filial love



A young photographer with a fascination for death decides to take an elderly couple under her wing. They are the Martin's, the owners of an old funeral parlour. Their house is frozen in time, in a ghostly neighbourhood of Liège, hidden away from the gazes

of passers-by behind towering linden trees. Enchanted by this setting, the young woman moves in permanently. A tender friendship grows between her and Mrs. Martin, all under the calm watch of Mr. Martin. During their promenades by the canal, they look as if butter wouldn't melt in their mouth. But don't let looks deceive you... Madame Martin owns a collection of stuffed animals, the result of her life's work. She hopes to pass on her skills to her protégée. And so, the young woman patiently and meticulously learns the art of taxidermy, testing her skills on a variety of specimens. For one day, she must be ready to accomplish her Great Masterpiece.

A radical first novel where the sweetness of filial affection is born from darkness and cruelty.

It has been snowing since this morning, tiny snowflakes slowly forming a blanket over my old life. I had made a room for myself under the sloped ceilings of the eaves. Then, I turned the attic into a darkroom. On the first floor, the kitchen opens out into the dining room, with its faded pink wallpaper, wooden furniture and creaky floorboards. Bronze chandeliers and paintings in coloured frames, one crying Virgin facing an immobile rocking chair, a few porcelain dolls, and a library of worn, old books. The windows are divided into little squares of stained glass, letting a dim light filter in. Each object has remained in its place. Monsieur's last coffee cup on the side of the sink. His coat on the coat rack, his slippers at the foot of the bed, the clock's pendulum that counts the seconds until his death. In front of the fireplace, *The Accursed Kings*, open at page 172, sits next to his glasses on a cherry wood pedestal table. On the dining table, his napkin embroidered with his first name, waiting at the place where he would have his breakfast. On the wall, their wedding portrait. It's an old photograph in black and white. They are unrecognisable, even if I try and imagine. She wears her hair in a braid and a long ornate dress that she has sewn herself. He wears a suit, and you can tell he was an elegant man. They stand up straight, smiling. They are twenty years old and want to go on loving each other forever. I look at them every evening before going upstairs. Mr. Martin fell in front of the fireplace. It's been five years. He grabbed onto the divan, then fell to the ground. Madame was busy making bread and butter pudding. She called for an ambulance. The puddings burned, and Monsieur ended up a vegetable. She never gave up on him. She wants to keep on loving him. I check the time. She's waiting for me downstairs. We had spent the day making verrines of every single colour. She's teaching me how to cook. I meet them in their room. She welcomes me with a bottle of champagne, sitting next to Monsieur who is still in his pyjamas. Madame is dressed in a dark red ballgown, covered in thousands of tiny metal disks that glint as she moves. An ice bucket and three crystal coupes have been laid out on the bedside table. It is our first New Year's Eve together. We leave the champagne to chill. I hang up some fairy lights on the ceiling, then we take care of Monsieur. We dress him in his formal attire, a white dress shirt and a striped woollen dinner suit with horn buttons. A black satin bow tie, a dab of cologne, and he's as handsome as can be. She places a coupe in his hand. I pop the cork. We drink a toast to the year that's almost over.



Eva Kavian learned to write at six years old, and still does to this day (28 books: YA fiction, adult fiction, poems, manuals). She started encouraging others to write at 10 years old, and still does to this day (Aganippé creative writing workshops). After a happy childhood during which she did more than her fair share of lying and stealing, and an adolescence spent boning up on dead languages, she worked for a few years in psychiatry, trained as a psychoanalyst, sold goat's cheese and renovated houses, raised a few children, loved and cried, with a bit of knitting and courgette growing in between. She considers herself one of the lucky ones to have found their calling in this life, but hopes that if she ever is reincarnated, it would be as someone who doesn't have to cook dinner every day and bear such a heavy burden of family necessities. And who could write, keep writing, then write some more.

EVA KAVIAN

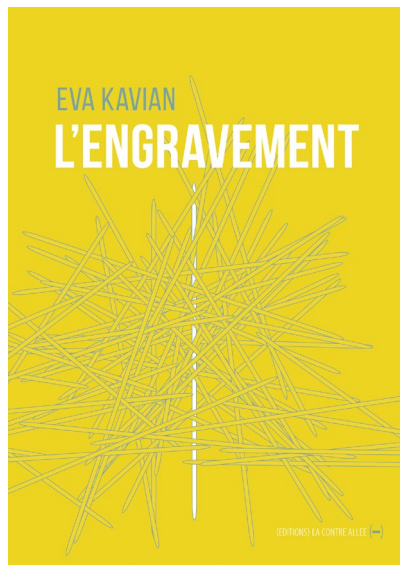
FR

L'engravement

EN

The Stranding

Title	<i>L'engravement</i>
Author	Eva Kavian
Genre	Novel
Publisher	© La Contre Allée
Format	13,5 x 19 cm
Pages	192
ISBN	978-2-37665-034-8
Keywords	A psychiatric hospital, path lies, the stranding



One path lies at the centre of this text: a path that sees the comings and goings of families and loved ones visiting the patients of a psychiatric hospital. At the end of this path are the young patients who find themselves in a state of collapse, like beached whales, overwhelmed by the din of the world. Although these families are forced to confront their own pain and hardships, they come together nonetheless to form a sort of

united group, or, in the author's words, a "pack". A story of the borderland between hope and resignations plays out on this path lined with doubts and incomprehension, as the arrivals and departures of each individual, in a constant ebb and flow, give the text its own unique rhythm.

As we read this novel, written in the second person, we make our own way up and down this path, accompanying the movements of the visitors, as they give us key information about the story behind each patient. We are confronted with different points of view and a succession of moving scenes that give us an idea of the daily solitude experienced by each individual.

The language oscillates between a poetry dedicated to the expression of inner feelings and pain, and an orality that generates a feeling of closeness and intimacy with the different characters. A kind of familiarity is established and, as the text progresses, we become increasingly aware of the changes taking hold.

Eva Kavian is the two-time winner of the Fureur de Lire short story competition and has been awarded the Prix Horlait-Dapsens in 2004, the Prix Marcel Thiry in 2006 and several prizes in children's literature (Prix Libbylit for the best Belgian children's novel, Prix Sézame, Chronos, Spécial Chronos, Escapages, Tatoulou, and more). Her latest novel, *L'engrèvement*, was shortlisted for the Rossel Prize and the Wepler-La Poste Prize in 2022, and is in the running for the SGDL Prix Printemps 2023.

You leave the parking lot, the bus stop, the road where no one wants to live, you involuntarily group together on the asphalt path lined with neatly trimmed hedges, you proceed through the park without a guide - one silent unit - towards the terrace where you'll find your poor beached whales, so overwhelmed by the din of the world. It's the first time you've joined the pack, you don't look at the others around you, you are alone in your suffering, the anxious knot in your stomach makes it an immense effort just to move your leg, place one foot forward, move the other leg forward, keep going, something that seemed so straightforward just a few days ago. You arrive at the terrace, Mira isn't there, it's too early still, you don't look at the whales either, your only concern is your child, your little girl who tried to die. You enter the hallway, the border, it feels like. Your pain makes you a unique, isolated entity, it binds you up in a straitjacket, you look for a nurse, a doctor, your child, the only people you have been able to communicate with since that day the ambulance came. You have the right to visit, of course, in the visiting room, second door on the right, under close supervision, that's how it works in the closed ward, one half hour, that's how it works for the first week. You take Mira in your arms, she cries, she who never cries, she feels awful, I'm sorry Mum, I'm sorry Mum, I'm sorry Mum, she remembers everything, how she took the pills, how she wanted to throw up with each pill swallowed, but she kept going, she emptied the box, it was hard to walk afterwards so she lay down on her bed while she waited for you, she knew you would come. She can't remember what happened next. She wanted to die or sleep and never wake up again. She had still prepared an overnight bag for the hospital, just in case. And now? Now, still. She doesn't want to suffer any more. She doesn't want to suffer like this any more. I'm here, I love you, I care about you, fight back those tears, your child needs you to be strong, you cannot let her see your pain. Your child no longer wants to live and underneath you the ground splits, the earth's crust cracks into a gaping fault, the knot that was tied in your stomach, as you followed the ambulance, tightens even more, your lungs shrivel up from the pressure, I'm sorry Mum, I'm sorry Mum.



Historian and scriptwriter Emmanuelle Pirotte achieved international success with her first novel *Today We Live*, translated into 17 languages. She then published *De Profundis, Loup et les hommes*, and *D'innombrables soleils* with Cherche Midi and *Rompre les digues* with Philippe Rey.

EMMANUELLE PIROTTE

FR *Les reines* EN *The Queens*

Title	Les reines
Author	Emmanuelle Pirotte
Genre	Novel
Publisher	© Le Cherche midi
Format	14 x 20 cm
Pages	528
ISBN	978-2-74917-415-0
Keywords	civilisations, forbidden desire, ancient tragedy



A new world has been built upon the ruins of our civilisations. Humanity has renounced material progress and stripped the male sex of their former privileges. The kingdoms are now ruled by women, Queens, who, their power put to the test, often become rivals, sometimes authoritarian ones at that. In this world of vast, wild spaces, groups of nomads,

artisans, hunters, and actors cross paths on the remains of bygone roads. In one of these communities, the Britannia, young Milo and Faith are burning with a mutual yet forbidden desire. Their attraction leads to Milo being banished from the community. The young man then sets off on a long journey through the Northern lands; but despite Milo's dream of finding Faith again, he has no idea how much his journey is bound by the laws of destiny - that great compass that always takes us back to our roots. Beneath the turbulent surface of this epic, Emmanuelle Pirotte explores the setting and themes of an ancient tragedy. Jealousy, romantic tensions, hidden alliances, prophecies and oaths of vengeance electrify the hot-blooded characters of this novel. What we're left with is an aberrant and fearsome tale, far from a paint-by-numbers or moralistic approach.

Her first novel *Today We Live*, was awarded the Prix Historia, the Prix Edmée de La Rochefoucauld and the prix des Lycéens.

The horses purchased from the Kazakhs followed the convoy without too much fuss. It would take a few more hours to properly break them in before they could be sold. The party had been travelling almost all summer long through the Steppes, and were gradually approaching the Western territories. The first cities in Poland would soon appear on the horizon; those little towns were the doors of civilisation, after weeks of wandering in the great vastness where the closest thing to men were the tall steles found on royal funeral mounds.

The fields glimmer under the last few rays of sun, slowly disappearing behind the horizon. The convoy had come to a halt at an inlet bordered by birch woods. Nearby, a pine tree struck by lightning traces its eerie silhouette in the dusky sky. A gaggle of children and a few women quickly emerge from underneath their canvas tents and immediately set about collecting wood for the fire. Some of the mothers break into song, the children help the adults or play tag, while the men unhitch the horses and lead them to the watering hole. A few have taken out seldom-seen firearms and bows and stand watch around the circle of caravans. Each of them wears a long knife, clearly visible at the waist.

Milo is already attending to the grey mare. He speaks softly in her ear, but she continues to roll her eyes and stomp her hooves madly, making him laugh. She has already bitten a few of the other horses and needs to be tied up far away from the rest to avoid her making too much trouble. "She's a real devil," Aïbek had told him. "You can have her for free. She'll never give in." Milo had become fond of her nonetheless, this wild, unruly devil. As he tries to soothe the mare, he can already see himself riding away one morning on her sturdy back, going wherever the wind takes him, towards the unknown beings and places that keep calling him. Milo freezes: there she is, walking towards him. Faith. She walks with her shoulders back, head held high; her blue-black hair swinging at her hips to the rhythm of her undulating yet determined gait. What does she want now? Faith places her tattooed and ringed hand on the mare's silky coat, staring down Milo with an almost ferocious intensity. He shoots her a quick glance and continues to talk calmly to the animal, stroking her flank. Faith's hand moves from the horse to the boy's chest, on which she makes a sign. He looks right at her, preferring not to know what she just traced out on his chest. He takes her hand, holds it for a moment, then pushes her away gently. Then he turns his back on her and busies himself with another horse. He feels her terrible gaze boring into him for a long while.



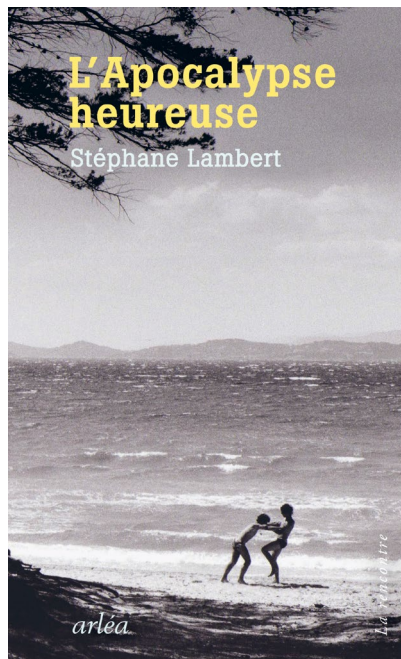
Born in Brussels in 1974, Stéphane Lambert is a novelist, poet and essayist. He has published the following works with Arléa: *Nicolas de Staël, le vertige et la foi* (2014; Arléa-Poche, 2015), *Mark Rothko, rêver de ne pas être* (Arléa-Poche, 2015), *Monet, impressions de l'étang* (Arléa-Poche, inédit, 2016), *Avant Godot* (2016), *Fraternelle mélancolie* (2018), *Visions de Goya, l'éclat dans le désastre* (2019), *Être moi toujours plus fort on Léon Spilliaert* (2020), *Paul Klee, jusqu'au fond de l'avenir* (2021) and *Vincent Van Gogh: l'éternel sous l'éphémère* (2023).

STÉPHANE LAMBERT

FR
L'apocalypse heureuse

EN
The Happy Apocalypse

Title	<i>L'apocalypse heureuse</i>
Author	Stéphane Lambert
Genre	Novel
Publisher	© Arléa
Format	12,5 x 20,5 cm
Pages	184
ISBN	978-2-36308-285-5
Keywords	Abusive childhood, difficulties learning to love, path of life



Here, the apocalypse has already happened. The devastation gave way to beauty before beauty, in turn, could give way to devastation. The scene is perfectly set for the invention of Gods, as we bathe peacefully at the gates of death, savouring the proximity of heaven and the abyss.

In this major work of fiction, Stéphane Lambert describes the chaos of an abusive childhood. By a simple twist of fate, while visiting a therapist, he finds himself, thirty years later, in the same building as his former abuser. This moment pushes him to look back over his silenced childhood, realising to what extent the past still permeates his present life. Within this traumatic memory of a family broken into pieces, he discovers a parallel with his current difficulties learning to love. And when his fathers passes away, old fault lines are reawakened on the Greek island where he has sought refuge to write. It is in the deepest cracks that books try to reconcile the best and worst life has to offer.

Stéphane Lambert was awarded the Prix Rossel in 2022 for *L'Apocalypse heureuse*. The book will be adapted into a play in 2024 by director Jean-Baptiste Delcourt at the Théâtre des Martyrs in Brussels. Stéphane Lambert has also been awarded the Prix Roland de Jouvenel by the Académie Française for *Avant Godot*, and the Prix André Malraux for *Visions de Goya*.

The house that didn't exist

I'm driving slowly down the wide boulevard of my childhood. As usual, I slow down as I pass the red building that was my primary school. I can make out the playground through the hedges. Our games, our own little world, all enclosed within this little space that seemed so big at the time. Nothing existed beyond this world. And certainly not this picture I've become, standing here one day, impossibly far away, on the other side. I have an appointment with a doctor who offers EMDR therapy (Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing), a type of therapy that has proved to be effective among deeply traumatised war veterans. After finding various other psychotherapy and psychoanalysis methods to be unsuccessful, I reckoned I had nothing to lose. Chance had dictated that the doctor I had been recommended would be based in my childhood neighbourhood. I drive in the direction of his clinic, down the wide boulevard named after the king whose funeral procession we once attended on a class trip, decades after his abdication. Back then, we lived fully and honestly; this national funeral was the pinnacle of what we could witness, and we still possessed the ingenuousness required for us to stand there in awe. This was before I took a step aside, divested myself of my life - or was this process already taking place without my knowing it, sewn into the lapel of my days by the night's patient, implacable hand? Perhaps this geographical coincidence will only work to the therapy's benefit, I think to myself as I stare at the red building whose familiar character now seems strangely hostile. Perhaps this path I am forced to tread again by visiting the doctor will set the stage for my first session of semi-hypnosis.

On the other side of the boulevard, opposite the primary school, there is a series of small flower beds bordered by houses. I once visited one of these houses with my parents, a few months before everything fell to pieces. This brings me back to the present. The idea of what living in this house would have meant for me comes back to me clear as day, bringing with it an unpleasant sensation. This house, which I probably wanted more than my parents, who must have known at the time what to expect in terms of the viability of such a project, this house represented for me the possibility of a happy adolescence. By this I mean that after the torments of late childhood, I believed this house would be able, if it had existed, to save us from everything that had culminated in beating our family life into a pulp. But the house never was, it was but an impossible dream, and everything continued to fall apart. Now that this had come back to me, I understood just how inhabitable this city had become, and just how much I needed to leave it, because what should have happened never did, I had to leave, find somewhere else.



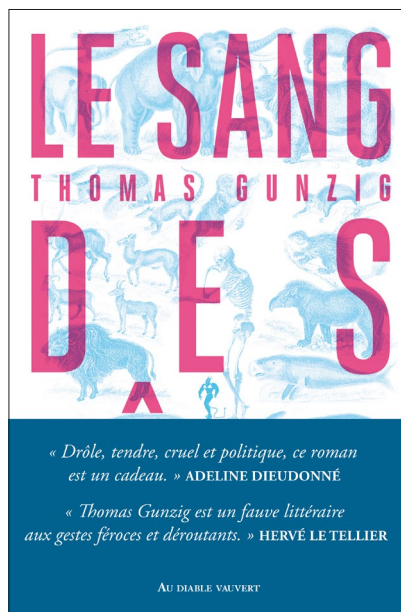
Thomas Gunzig, born in Brussels in 1970, is the most award-winning Belgian author of his generation and his work has been translated as far afield as China. He teaches at the University of Brussels. A star in Belgium, his theatrical works are constantly performed on stage. As a screenwriter, he wrote the film *Tout Nouveau Testament* (“The Brand-New Testament”), which was awarded the Magritte award for best screenplay and was nominated at the Césars and the Golden Globes. He is also the writer of *Blake and Mortimer*, *The Last Pharaoh*.

THOMAS GUNZIG

FR
*Le sang
des bêtes*

EN
*The blood
of beasts*

Title	<i>Le sang des bêtes</i>
Author	Thomas Gunzig
Genre	Novel
Publisher	© Au diable Vauvert
Format	13 x 20 cm
Pages	222
ISBN	979-1-03070-452-5
Keywords	Identity, veganism, ecology, patriarchy



Tom, a sales assistant in a shop selling dietary supplements and protein for bodybuilders, is in the midst of a depression. As his fiftieth birthday approaches, he has become increasingly aware of the state of his well-to-do life with Mathilde, who no longer makes him happy. His life, however, is turned upside down when his weedy son

Jeremy, recently separated from his girlfriend, returns to the family home, along with his Jewish father, marked by the Shoah and sick with cancer. This seems like a complicated arrangement for Tom, whose only wish is peace and quiet.

After bearing witness to an assault, Tom saves a stranger of mysterious origins from an abusive brute, and welcomes this woman without papers into his own home, upsetting the daily life of everyone around him.

Thomas Gunzig uses the members of Tom’s family to write a vivid account of the times he lives in and its tropes. His short and impeccably written novel delves into the body, the couple, life, getting old, love, perseverance, staying alive, while delivering plenty of laughs, sharp observations and joy with talent and perfect rhythm... Funny and profound, this is the author’s most sensitive and personal book yet.

This exceptional novelist has been awarded the Prix des Éditeurs for *Le Plus Petit Zoo du monde*, the Prix Victor Rossel for his first novel *Mort d'un parfait bilingue*, prizes from the RTBF and the SCAM, the special prize of the Jury, the prize of the Royal Academy of French Language and Literature of Belgium, and finally the highly coveted and prestigious Triennial Prize for Fiction for his book *Manuel de survie à l'usage des incapables*. In 2017, his novel *La vie sauvage* was awarded the Prix Filigranes.

Pecs

It was mid-Autumn, mid-afternoon, and now on the day of his fiftieth birthday, he reckoned it was pretty much his mid-life as well.

Tom gazed up at the grey sky through the shop window and noted that it was going to rain. Then, a moment later, it did rain. A modest sheet of thin drizzle that clouded the atmosphere, nothing more.

Out in the street, a little boy ran by at top speed, as little boys do. Where was he going? Where did he come from? Nothing really mattered. This snapshot made him feel nostalgic about that lost age, back when he had the inexhaustible energy of childhood and everything seemed possible. He wondered:

What am I doing with my life?

It was a question he had been asking himself increasingly of late. It was maybe a sign he was getting older. Whenever an event, no matter how insignificant, reminded him that his childhood had gone by without him noticing, just like this autumn shower, just like this child running by, or just whenever he was bored, he would ask himself this question. In reality, it wasn't quite a question of asking himself. It was more of a question that emerged in his mind, as if inviting itself in from outside, and would linger a long time before leaving. For this to happen, a customer had to enter the shop or the telephone would have to ring and interrupt his thought process. But because there weren't many customers or telephone calls, the question would remain there most of the time, slowly, sluggishly stagnating, like a piece of wood in a pond, before disappearing into the silt of his subconscious.

What am I doing with my life?

Tom sat behind the counter, eyes fixed on his computer screen. Sometimes, as he had just done, he would lift his head and watch the passers-by come and go past the shop window, then he would turn back to his screen.



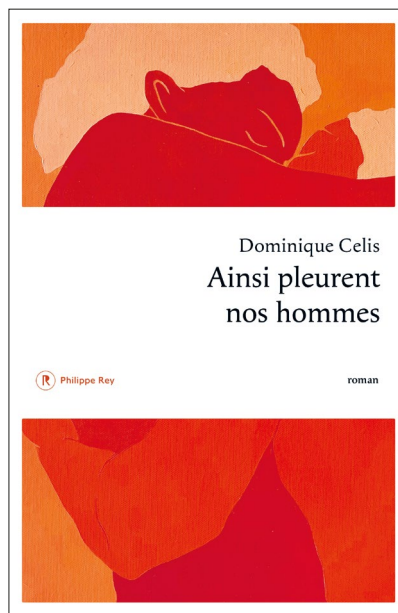
Born in Burundi to a Rwandan mother and a Belgian father, Dominique Celis spent her childhood in Rwanda, her teenage years in Kinshasa, DRC, then twenty years in Belgium where she studied philosophy. She has lived in Rwanda for the last ten years. *Ainsi pleurent nos hommes* is her first novel.

DOMINIQUE CELIS

FR
*Ainsi pleurent
nos hommes*

EN
*This is how
our men cry*

Title	<i>Ainsi pleurent nos hommes</i>
Author	Dominique Celis
Genre	Novel
Publisher	© Philippe Rey
Format	14,5 x 22 cm
Pages	288
ISBN	978-2-84876-959-2
Keywords	Kigali, the love/ devastation, first novel



Kigali, 2018. Ever since her breakup with Vincent, Erika has been living life on the edge. She writes to her sister in an attempt “exorcise from her body” the love/devastation that continues to inhabit it. She tells not only her own story but also those of the sensitive souls she holds dear, those who, like her, are simply trying to live. Along with James, her second-hand

brother, Manzi, the smooth-talking karateka, Maman Colonel, and Tonton Damas, hearts overflowing like foam on freshly opened beers in the L’Église bar, they form a new family that makes this novel shine bright.

In Rwanda, the country of a thousand flowering hills, the country that was forced to turn over a new leaf after the Tutsi genocide, Dominique Celis shows that, behind the official rhetoric of national unity, everyone has “locked away their pain for life”. Old wounds are constantly reopened as yesterday’s torturers can be encountered anywhere, from a petrol station to the calm banks of Lake Kivu...

In this captivating first novel, Erika tells us the tale of a love striving to escape the inevitable burden of an inherited past. Even when Vincent breaks up with her, their carnal passion refuses to fade, and it is a regretful woman, still ravaged by desire, who writes these magnificent letters, as “nothing can be erased” from her skin.

Kigali, Tuesday 2 January 2018

Lawurensiya,

“Let go and stop trying to possess him!” you said to me.

We were talking on the phone.

“Write to him,” you added, “or write about him. Exorcise it from your body. And fast!”

I took your advice.

Over nearly one hundred and twenty pages, in 12-point Times New Roman, I wrote to him.

To get this *thing* out of me.

For now, let’s just call it a *devastation*.

Writing cut me up into pieces. I was performing hara-kiri in the truest sense of the word.

I stopped.

A year went by.

It just wouldn’t go away, Lawurensiya. Nothing was erased from my skin.

I need to leave this transitory plane, somewhere between the void and nothingness.

I’m going to scribble down a few words for you, sister.

Do things your way:

“Provide some context, Erika. Give me something to help me understand, please.”

Then I’ll go find a place. Somewhere just respectable enough.

I will leave Rwanda.

This putrefaction of hearts is giving me gangrene.

Me, I want to live!

My body is infested with corpses.

Our own corpses, of course. Not only those of the genocide.

The corpses of others, too.

Of my mother. Especially my mother.

Of families we know. Of loved ones. Of friends. Of lovers.

Of kin.

Of strangers met in the bus, in nightclubs, in shops.

At parties. At home.

The vibrations of all these people... Those they have lost end up living inside me.

I have to leave, Lawurensiya.

I have to get out of this booming capitalist cemetery.

They always rave on about the “Rwandan economic miracle”.

It was no wonderful stroke of luck, nor some sort of prodigy.

Utterly deliberate.

Thirty-five years of violence at the hands of Cain pummels you into action.

Their alchemy of hatred has transformed us from insects into strategic builders.

Our real holocaust is our hope of humanising Cain. It is our continued desire to love them.

You don’t like these words, do you, Lawurensiya?

They should have been executed!

“No vengeance!” our old guerrillas, the Inkotanyi,¹ would insist upon us. “*Let’s build our country!*”

They were right. The Thousand Hills are blooming.

“That country’s a real laboratory!” foreign researchers would gleefully declare, researching our remarkable methods and successes.

But I won’t talk to you about *all that*. There’s enough information out there already.

By *all that*, I mean the real, the palpable, and these impalpable masquerades of ours, these acts of unity and reconciliation.

Now, we’re all Rwandan, dèh!

¹ *Inkotanyi*: Soldiers fighting in the Rwandan Patriotic Front during the Tutsi genocide (1990-1994).



Although born in Brussels, Jacques Richard spent his childhood in Algeria, during the War of Independence. He has been teaching painting and illustration for thirty years. He has published ten books in France and Belgium, including several poetry collections, a non-fiction book on painting, two short story collections and five novels. He now focuses his efforts exclusively on writing and painting.

JACQUES RICHARD

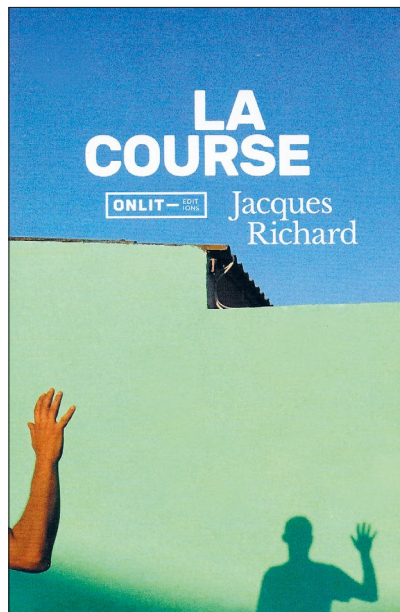
FR

La Course

EN

The Race

Title	<i>La Course</i>
Author	Jacques Richard
Genre	Novel
Publisher	© Onlit
Format	19 x 12 cm
Pages	200
ISBN	978-2-87560-169-8
Keywords	Relationships, aspirations, simple yet powerful language



Somewhere between joy, jealousy, and the bitter stings of love, the relationships shared by the characters of *La Course* shed light on each of their inner worlds. Each of them proves to be too little for their aspirations, too closely involved for passion and engulfed in a daily life that refuses to allow for it in the first place. What light

can be found elsewhere than in the empty promises of universal happiness? And if it is money that brings them together, what price can be put on love? And “how can one person’s arms being anything else than another person’s prison?” In the end, all that remains of these portraits, shifting between the real and the fake, are shadows cast on a reality that is no more than a stage set. Written in simple yet powerful language, *La Course* takes place across several narrative registers that bring the characters together in a sort of tragicomic patchwork, revealing their different “presents” to be out-of-sync realities.

Three years after *La femme qui chante*, several painting exhibitions, a short book about drawing (*Nues*) and a poetry collection with Cormier, Jacques Richard is turning his attention back to fiction. His writing is precise, pertinent, and more powerful than ever.

Petit Traître, shortlisted for the Prix Rossel 2012, was awarded the Prix Franz de Wever by the Royal Academy of French Language and Literature of Belgium.

Encore

Léna turns to face her nephew, but she's not quite there. Her nephew is me. And me, I cannot take my eyes off her jumper. That's not good nephew behaviour. She's going to tell him to look away, and quickly! A raised eyebrow. They should be saying goodbye. Instead of that, she takes her cardigan by the edge, rolls it up, pulls it over her bun, raises her arms high, then joins her hands behind her back to unclasp herself. She is in the middle of the hall, a piece of clothing in each hand, her arms swinging as if she was waiting for the tram. Her chest takes up the entire room. The image is frozen. He doesn't need to breathe any more, he just watches her. Her eyes have become solemn.

“Just like that, you see.”

It's the plural “you” we give to animals and small children in French. In the countryside, not here anymore. He doesn't know what to do. How to act. Something is bothering him in a way he hasn't felt before. His immediate surroundings because grey, a little blurry. The woman, her eyes, and her breasts are all still staring at him. He wants to leave. Her faced became flushed while talking. She picks up an envelope from a miserable, ornate credence table and, going back to the informal “you”, says: “Here. This is for your mother. Don't lose it, OK?” The smell of her skin when she comes closer and offers, as usual, her right cheek for a kiss goodbye.

Behind the closed door she will put her clothes back on, readjust her black locks of hair. Or she will stay like that, until the next time, half naked in front of the scalloped mirror where she checks over her outfit before going out.



Member of the Royal Academy of French Language and Literature of Belgium, Armel Job is one of Belgium's greatest contemporary authors. His entire literary career, totalling twenty publications – including *Tu ne jugeras point*, *Loin des mosquées*, *En son absence*, *La Disparue de l'île Monsin*, *Sa dernière chance* – has been published with Robert Laffont.

ARMEL JOB

FR

Un père à soi

EN

*A father
of one's own*

Title	<i>Un père à soi</i>
Author	Armel Job
Genre	Novel
Publisher	© Laffont
Format	13,5 x 20 cm
Pages	304
ISBN	978-2-22125-958-0
Keywords	Life's circumstances, relationship with reality, father



A great complicity, a landscaping company, two grown-up kids at university: the world smiles upon Alban and Lydie Jessel. Then, one day, Alban receives a phone call from a young stranger while closing the office. Without mentioning anything to his wife, who he usually tells everything, Alban agrees

to meet the young woman. She tells him about how she was present during the last few days of a certain Michelle. She wants to carry out her last wish: Michelle wanted Alban to know, after she passed, that during her entire life she had never loved another man... What on earth is she talking about? Alban has no recollection of any Michelle. Although... Little by little, almost in spite of himself, he remembers a brief love affair from his youth that he thought he had forgotten, and whose consequences on his life, his family's life, and that of his strange messenger will force him to question everything he had taken for granted. What becomes of us when life's circumstances push us to change even our firmest beliefs? With breath-taking virtuosity, *Un père à soi* explores the sometimes devastating effects of our relationship with reality.

Alban

When we return from a walk in the woods, we have unknowingly disturbed and crushed hundreds of tiny lives under the leaves strewn across the path. It's the same in life. We don't know what truly lies under our tracks. The day when, by chance, it all blows up in our face, we are tempted to retrace our steps to repair the damage done. The problem is that sometimes turning back can do even more damage than moving forward.

My eyes were suddenly opened to an unexpected chapter of my youth, although I'd just turned forty-five. The day was Saturday 14 April, 2018. I was in my office. The telephone rang. I answered, even though we technically close at six o'clock and only open again on Monday morning at nine. The answering machine had already started relaying its message: "La Meuse Gardens thanks you for your call. Our offices are..."

— "Hello?"

— "I... Hello... Could I speak with... Is that Mr. Jessel speaking?"

— "Speaking, Ma'am."

It was a young, slightly hesitant voice. I immediately pictured a young girl, a teenager. In the past, I wouldn't have said "ma'am", I would have said "miss". I had done away with this custom ever since my daughter, Sarah, had affectionately scolded me:

"Don't say that, Dad, no one says that to a woman any more, it's macho."

My first assumption was that the young person on the other end of the line wasn't expecting me. She seemed caught off guard. Perhaps she wants to speak with my son, Alexandre. But she went on to ask: "Mr. Alban Jessel?"

— "That's me, ma'am."

There was another silence, and I felt I could hear her breathing. Then she introduced herself:

"I'm Virginie Lambert. Would it be possible for us to meet, Mr. Jessel?"

— "Is it about a new garden, some landscaping? We can send one of our architects out to you."

— "No, no... I don't have a garden. I'm not calling for your services. I'm just calling to reach you."

— "Me?"

— "That's right."

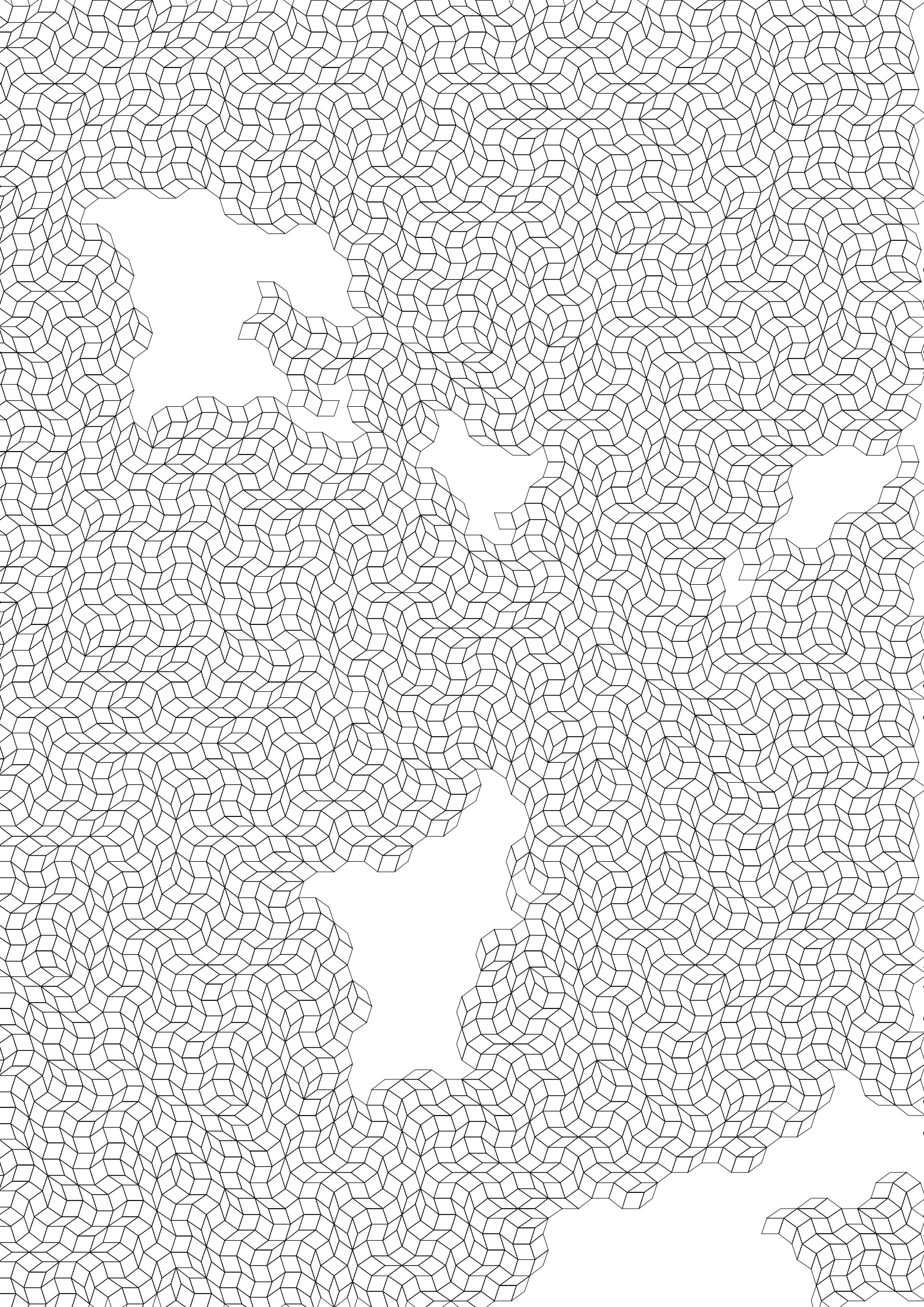
— "Are you selling something?"

— "No, no, it's a private matter."

— "Oh? Private? Please tell me more. Do we know each other?"

— "No, sir."

I could have told her to get lost, I have no trouble doing that whenever I get hassled by psychics, numerologists or other phone scammers, but she had piqued my curiosity. And I couldn't deny that something about the slight emotional wobble in her hesitant, very un-sales-like voice troubled me.





Poetry



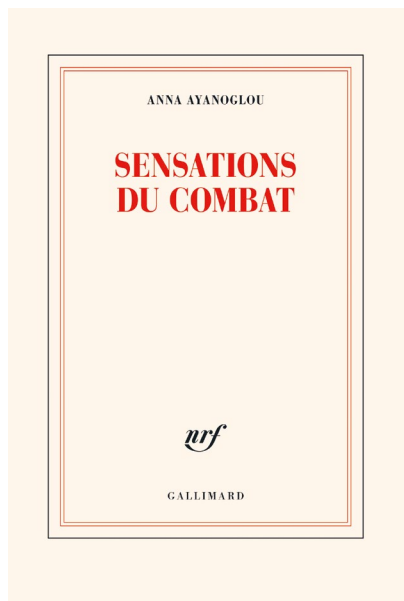
Anna Ayanoglou was born in France in 1985 to a Greek father and a French mother. She is a graduate of Sorbonne University where she studied Russian. Later, she spent three years in Lithuania and Estonia. This experience led her to write her first collection of poetry, *Le fil des traversées*, published by Gallimard in 2019. Her second collection, *Sensations du combat*, was published in 2022. A resident of Brussels since 2014, Anna writes and hosts the radio show “Et la poésie, alors?” (a non-literal but accurate translation would be: ‘Cut to the Poetry!’) on Radio Panik, a programme dedicated to poetry from around the world, with poems read in the original language with their French translation.

ANNA AYANOGLOU

FR
*Sensations
du combat*

EN
*Sensations
of the Fight*

Title	<i>Sensation du combat</i>
Author	Anna Ayanoglou
Genre	Poetry
Publisher	© Gallimard, Paris 2022
Format	14 x 20 cm
Pages	88
ISBN	978-2-0729-7245-4
Keywords	Love, entanglement, journey, fight, struggle



In *Sensations du combat* (“Sensations of the Fight”), Anna Ayanoglou continues to blend her own personal melody with powerful verse, carefully dosed in a series of fragments as seen in her first publication, *Le fil des traversées* (“A string of crossings”). The author takes inspiration from a reality she seizes with both hands with no intention of letting go; life itself, life in its true form, that is her subject matter. Words serve to make sense of this chaos. Make no mistake, Anna Ayanoglou is in a constant battle with the hurdles of life: the shackles of binary discourse, the banality of daily life and the difficulty of loving yourself. The only way out is to “feed the fire inside/ never lose your strength/foster your cunning.” The poet, who has found a home in writing, owes it to herself to go on, with determination, and “with an overflowing heart, not let anything show.”

Anna Ayanoglou was awarded the Prix Apollinaire Découverte and the Société des gens de lettres Prix Révélation Poésie in 2020, as well as the French language prize by the Fédération Wallonie Bruxelles in 2021.

The Tipping Point

I
 Not a heart exactly
 but if a heart a body for the taking—
 the coming love is brewing
 brewing like a quake
 and like an earthquake
 it will come and it will be too late.

II
 Thank God for this chance to love again
 to live against time at any cost

to feel both fire and dreaming spar, who will
 kick the hardest, drag the other further on—
 hope

is no longer a hollow refuge, and its object
 is approaching—I hear his steps, my heartbeats

I wait for this assailing love
 to herald its arrival.

Twenty-Four Frames per Second

No longer a young man really
 but still a younger man—
 I'm sure even at eighteen
 you could feel the patriarch in his blood

And now his denim jacket
 graces his severity with innocence
 his assurance that one Law governs us—a fate
 that would be foolish to refute

If he keeps his eyebrow arched
 when speaking French he often
 blushes—the willful feline
 in his language slips away

—I hope he allows himself to float
 in this new sea I know so well
 I want to teach him how to swim
 and to never stop discovering

all of the men he is.



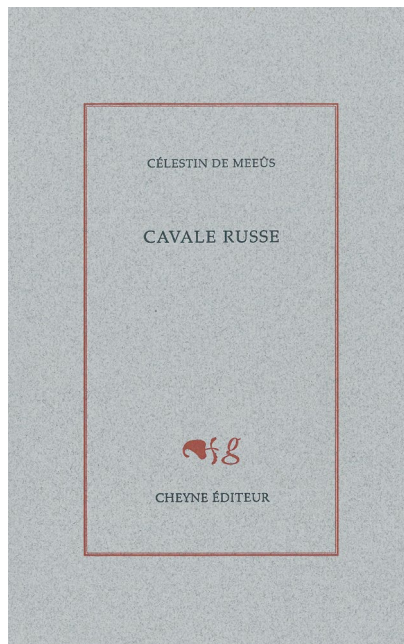
Célestin de Meeûs was born in Brussels in 1991. From 2015 to 2020, he co-ran the poetry and graphic arts magazine *On peut se permettre*. In 2018, he published *Écart-type* (Émile Polak) with publisher Tétrás Lyre. That same year, he published *Cadastres* (Prix de la Vocation) with Cheyne. In November 2021, he published *Cavale russe*, also with Cheyne. His latest book, *Atlantique*, was published by Tétrás Lyre in September 2022. Célestin de Meeûs is also the co-founder of Angle Mort publishing house and has been at the helm since 2018.

CÉLESTIN DE MEEÛS

FR
*Cavale
russe*

EN
*Russian
Escape*

Title	<i>Cavale russe</i>
Author	Célestin De Meeûs
Genre	Poetry
Publisher	© Cheyne Éditeur
Format	14,5 x 22 cm
Pages	80
ISBN	978-2-84116-309-0
Keywords	Russia, travel, humanity, encounters



Célestin de Meeûs' second book published with Cheyne, *Cavale russe* ("Russian Escape"), is a long poem composed in a single breath, a long journey across Russia from east to west, from the bay of Zolotoy Rog to Saint Petersburg. On foot, hitchhiking or by train, Célestin de Meeûs' journey is a human, deeply touching epic and a tale of personal, unabashed discovery: "I am drenched / in bitter fear but perhaps it's for the best / without it I would not have moved an inch." *Cavale russe* paints the poet's portrait from a bird's eye view. The poem is a patchwork of encounters, journeys through unnamed hidden villages, landscapes and discoveries that stir up old memories. Célestin de Meeûs presents us with a lyrical and colloquial, shameless and magnificent Russia - a truer Russia than ever seen before.

In 2018, he was awarded the Prix Émile Polak for *Ecart type* (Tétras Lyre) and the Prix de la Vocation, for *Cadastres* (Cheyne Éditeur). For *Cavale russe*, he received the special mention of the Jury of the Prix Apollinaire 2022 and the “Discovery” special mention of the Prix Max Jacob 2022.

It was a good old April afternoon the 24th —
 I had three maps pinned for months on the
 narrowest wall of my apartment the first one is
 granda continent in itself and the second marks
 out Cyrillic borders to the detriment
 of the last IGN map of my recollection And my
 little homeland
 That while never the object of my affection
 I find impossible to abandon

(...) but at dawn's first light
 the three-hundred-and-thirty-six tributaries
 of the lake
 have cleaned the sky - the ridges outline
 a perfect symmetry and the sun
 drowns out any thought that may arise
 steps double back on themselves
 towards Severobaikalsk where sniffing
 by their vessels fishermen amass
 inhaling the odour of sweet resin
 and tar interlaced with wild
 snowdrops and ancient sea glass
 and for the first time in weeks
 I rent a hotel room and give in to slumber (...)

(...)
 the flies and the days
 are never-ending —
 I wind through countryside pathways
 land wrinkled by early fields of wheat
 and black wood isbas the road merely skirts
 before leading you to a some-place
 or other repeating that same old refrain
 the old men at the doorstep the little tasks
 the bottomless samovar the long furrowed lines
 the farming machines the backs of the men
 the silence of a tub of cold water
 the wild forsythia the women how the light
 inclines an engine backfiring
 two times the laughter the stares
 of teens on their too-small bikes
 and even the word of welcome



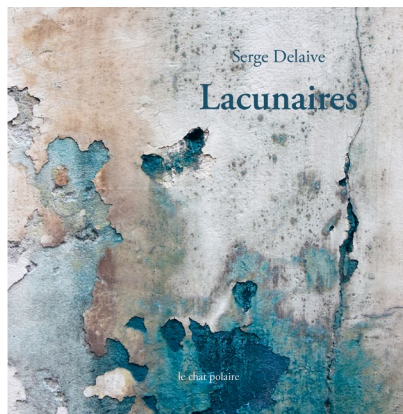
Serge Delaive was born in Liège in 1965 and studied Communication (Anthropology) at the University of Liège. Poet, novelist and photographer, he has published twenty works in Belgium and France, including *Légendaire* (1995), *Petite suite irlandaise* (2019), and others such as *Le livre Canoë*, *Les jours*, *Meuse fleuve nord* or *Art farouche*. Novels by the same author: *Café Europa* (2004), *L'homme sans mémoire* (2008), *Argentine* (2009) and *Nocéan* (2016). Essays, travel writing and short stories: *Paul Gauguin, étrange attraction* (2011), *Carnet de Corée* (2012), *Saumon noir* (2017). Between 1997 and 2007 he created and ran the magazine and publishing house Le Fram with his friends Karel Logist and Gérard Purnelle.

SERGE DELAIVE

FR
Lacunaires

EN
Incomplete

Title	Lacunaires
Author	Serge Delaive
Genre	Poetry
Publisher	© Éditions Le Chat polaire
Format	15 x 15 cm
Pages	97
ISBN	978-2-931028-21-6
Keywords	Daily life, incomplete, shadow, life, death, escape



How do we access what cannot be seen?

Through the mind that moves around, fades away, hallucinates.

How do we access what cannot be said?

Through the poem that captures, ossifies, reveals. How do we achieve this? Through trial and error.

With his unique poetic language, simultaneously harsh and dense, Serge Delaive walks down the staircase of an often bleak everyday world, occasionally scattered with a few bursts of light or embellished by the arrival of a new love. He kneads the poem, delving into language even in its most ontological sense, taking us on a four-stage journey, placing his lucid, questioning gaze on everything around him. The outcome is violent: "I won't write anymore/which is why I am still writing this torrent/of lines from a field of ruins/as vast and as deep as fear itself.."

He has received the Indications prize for *Café Europa*, the Marcel Thiry prize for *Les jours*, the triennial poetry prize of the Fédération Wallonie- Bruxelles for *Art farouche* and the Rossel prize for *Argentine*.

To lose the rain (extract)

I

Barcis Friuli nine bars
 three hundred inhabitants
 heading from bar to bar no further
 doubles in summer transhumance
 tourists in their loose shorts
 bikers in their identical jackets
 amassed on the lake's shore
 punctuating this frenetic chemistry
 as if one could be reborn in the landscape
 a whole existence to say I'll bid goodbye
 a whole existence to silence the "I will die"
 the Barcis holidaymakers in the land of Federico
 Tavan
 three hundred inhabitants from bar to bar
 no further than the thresholds
 the cold water to slip into from the pontoon
 the rocky Cellina valley
 and precisely the time space of this year's
 summer
 the last stop on the roads of disobedience
 before descending step by step into frozen hells
 count by the river the days that pass
 each step further along the icy mass
 in Barcis the lost corner of a province
 where the asphalt of a few streets
 soaks up the hemmed heat
 in the easy and temporary forgetting
 of the snows and the debacles that follow

II

The father and children live
 in the sturdy house in the village
 lent to them by Giorgio his heritage
 among the venerable dead shadows
 the first name of his mother Celia pronounced
 the Italian way
 Now that of the father's daughter
 Gallicised whistling acute accent
 that is to say the name of my daughter
 shadows sitting in the living room
 perhaps in the kitchen
 near the old wood stove
 where Giorgio the friend of the father
 intermittently finds his life's resolution
 as wherever else the exiles have led him he is
 a hunchbacked tree growing from a crack in the
 bricks



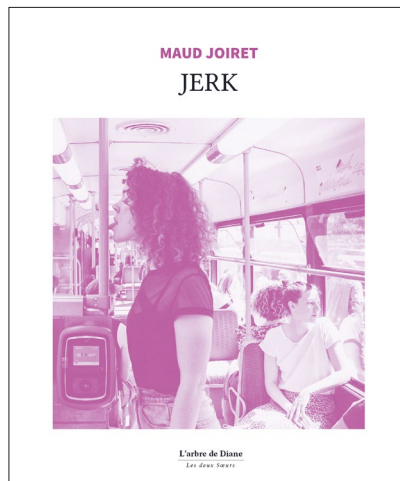
Maud Joiret was born in Brussels in 1986. Several of her texts have appeared online, in magazines and in anthologies, both in Belgium and France. Her writing grabs hold of desires and reality, hunting down taboos with words that shoot down the impossibility of their utterance. Placing the spotlight on registers and genres, her poetry searches for the breaking points of sensations and stories, obstinately trying to figure out what the hell we're doing here and determinedly feeling out exactly what is going on. With her finger on the pulse of our inner and outer chaos, she explores malice and melancholy with a prose full of bite, punctuating this quest for meaning. Her language aims at exactly the right place to hit the nail on the head. To translate the invulnerability of the sensitive. To lay bare an encounter between oneself and the world.

MAUD JOIRET

FR
JERK

EN
JERK

Title	JERK
Author	Maud Joiret
Genre	Poetry
Publisher	© Éditions L'Arbre De Diane
Format	15 x 18 cm
Pages	92
ISBN	978-2-930822-21-1
Keywords	Hybrid style, bodies, women, influence, childhood, abuse, maturity



We find the unstoppable Sixtine running free, sixteen years old, in the year 2003. Caught between her happy-go-lucky attitude and the urgency of living in the moment, she is spending part of her holidays with a recently widowed friend of her mother's. We also find Thirty, who quit their job in 2019 and is compiling, in the confines of their home, an inventory of possibilities - anxious to finally find a way out. And we find the Choir, who narrates, sings, dances and gets their groove on. Their mission? To make the invisible visible. The story finds itself at the clashing point between two eras. A tragicomic lens pointed at doubt. It is a story of young and old souls who cross paths, collide, and wither under the harsh sun of another's gaze. Blending genres and narrative and linguistic tones, JERK is a tale that breaks convention. Its shared poetic voice breaks apart the modern world.

Cobalt, her first poetry collection (Éditions Tétras-lyre), was awarded First Prize by the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles in 2020.

Two zero zero three
 anno domini
 July cedes the crown
 to the first of August
 in a TGV
 Hollywood is better than Stimorol
 Breaking an arm better than emptying the
 dishwasher
 86, window seat
 with an inclination of the left cheek
 Sixtine looks at herself in the window when no-
 one is watching
 coffee
 pain au chocolat
 €3.90 deal
 artificially docile, two
 hairless legs
 circumflex feet
 one hundred and thirty two songs
 on an MP3 player

Eminem as well as Dr Dre
 being sixteen is better than having a family
 a kitten
 an apartment in Los Angeles with a big balcony
 a DVD player
 valiantly
 a trip to the toilets
 a ticket inspection a uniform
 matching the interior's carpet
 solo trip
 Sixtine sinks into her seat
 she moves from book to landscape
 from instant to anticipation
 steamed cauliflower brain
 Vladimir's nymphet
 is nothing like the one in Alizée's song
 on the paperback cover
 of Nabokov
 the profile
 of a woman with parted
 lips
 the vascular red
 shines splaying two plump
 commas imposing
 a duckface symmetry



Julie Trémouilhe was born in 1990 in region of Le Borinage, near Mons. She has had several of her articles and photographs published in literary and art magazines, including the Quebec magazine *Mœbius*. Through writing, she explores liminal situations, twists of fate, the points where genres intersect, rhythm, silence, the non-human and the material. She likes to peel back the layers of language, discovering what lies beneath.

JULIE TRÉMOUILHE

FR
*Les loups
seraient restés
des loups*

EN
*The wolves
will still be
wolves*

Title	<i>Les loups seraient restés des loups</i>
Author	Julie Trémouilhe
Genre	Poetry
Publisher	© Éditions La Place
Format	10 x 14 cm
Pages	32
ISBN	978-2-960291-83-4
Keywords	Pursuit, borders, dichotomy, human, animal



One pursuit, one person - or is it an animal? Something in between, perhaps. Where is he or she running to? But have you seen them? Have you seen their legs, their hands, all sharp and canine-like? The story of these lives powers on at a furious pace, these lives that are gasping for breath, both familiar and unfamiliar, pushing themselves beyond extremes, through underground ardours that reflect our own - both real and imaginary. The liberating pen of the author interlaces desire, violence, and chaos, buzzing with life and ready to whisk you away. This narrative poem and getaway tale is executed with a decadent tongue, and the book both questions borders and establishes in the places we least expect them, brings bubbling fears to the surface and hints at unexpected joys to come.

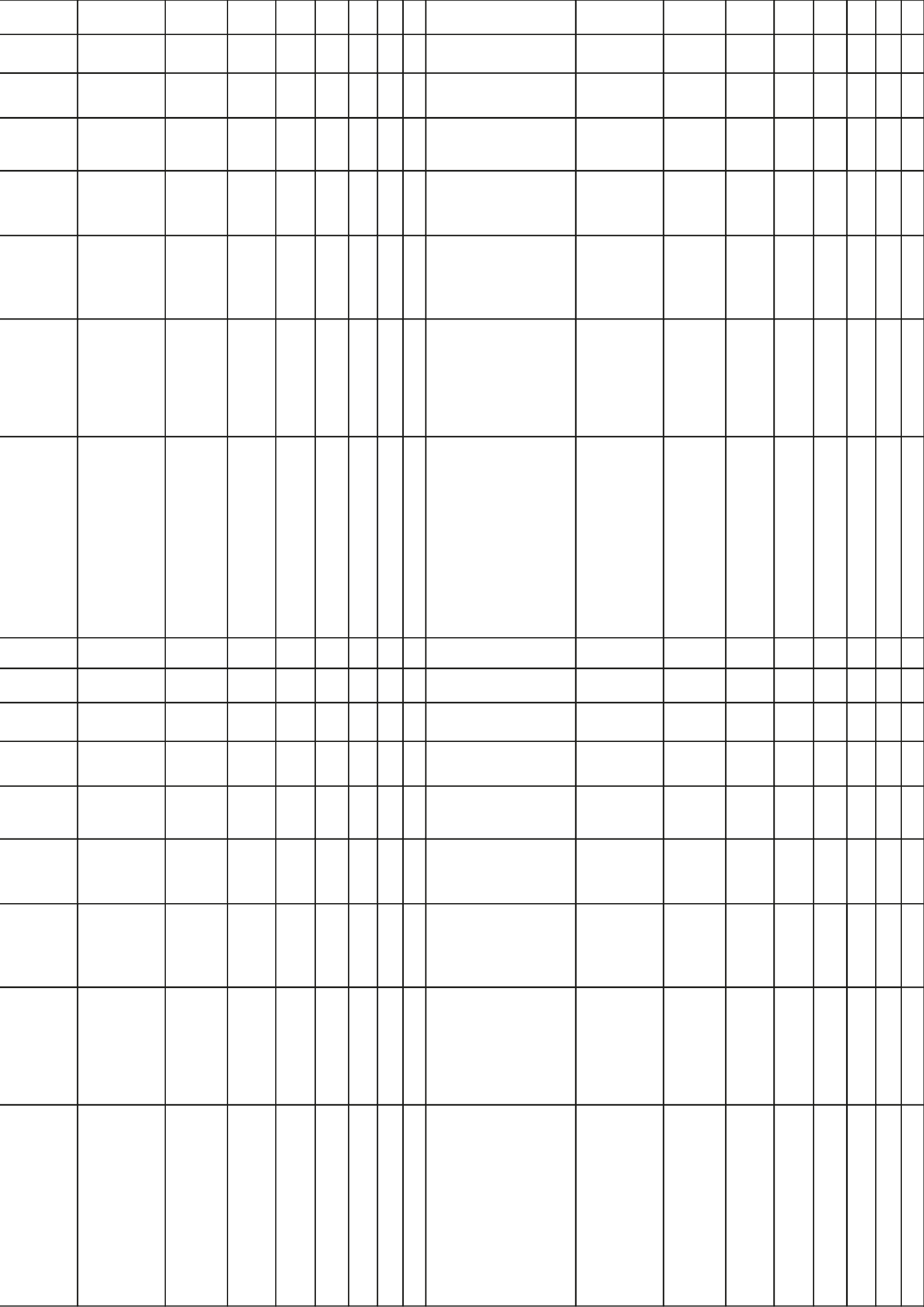
Her short story *Au nord du Nord* ("North of the North") was awarded the Grand Prix of the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles Short Story Contest in 2021.

1.

The rodent's bones snap
under the cat's fangs.
The grey dawn lingers, as do I,
at day's threshold, both inside
and out. Sharp, taught skin,
beads of sweat gather on the epidermis.
Pining and swarming
down in the buzzing earth, creatures pacing
within,
rising to the surface. Push ahead
through thick marble, reach the cavernous stead
latch onto their bones. Hold what remains
close. Flesh hanging by a thread.
Wandering stems wrap themselves around
what remains in me of the human.
A field of charred daisies.
The body still alive.
(...)

2.

Antennae sweep the smallest
corner of the aquarium where the animal
dies still. He is watching, from
the other side of the misty glass,
the ballet of red stems that capture
the water's movements.
an unbridled lightness floats
over the piled bodies
of crustaceans. He loses himself in their
tiny marble-like eyes.
So black. He thinks that with
animals, everything is on the outside,
written on the shell, in plain sight.
For him all is held inside.
He thinks that if we cut him in two,
from head to tail, we would also
find antennae that quiver
without purpose. His fists tied
with big white rubber bands.
He contemplates the hundreds of red
spikes adorning the shell's hard
surface, surrounded by spots of marine
blue on the rostrum protruding
between the eyes.



Non-Fiction



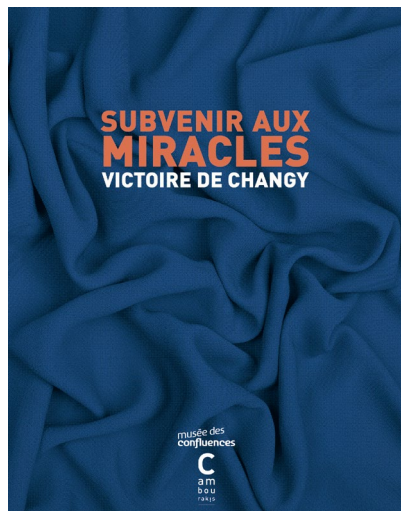
Victoire de Changy was born in Brussels in 1988, where she still lives today. She has published two novels: *Une dose de douleur nécessaire* (Autrement, 2017), shortlisted for the Prix Rossel, *L'Île longue* (Autrement, 2018), shortlisted for the EU Prize for Literature, and the poetry collection *La Paume plus grande que toi* (L'Arbre de Diane, 2020). She has published two children's picture books with Cambourakis, illustrated by Marine Schneider: *L'Ours Kintsugi*, shortlisted for the Prix Sorcières, and *Le Bison Non-Non*.

VICTOIRE DE CHANGY

FR
*Subvenir
aux miracles*

EN
*Keeping
miracles alive*

Title	<i>Subvenir aux miracles</i>
Author	Victoire de Changy
Genre	Non-Fiction
Publisher	© Cambourakis
Format	14 x 18 cm
Pages	80
ISBN	978-2-36624-672-8
Keywords	Wedding dress, fashion, clothing, social discourse



May a miracle happen through it, and may it keep our miracles alive. That's what we expect, or at least what I expect, from a piece of clothing.

A costume, attire, rags, laundry, adornment, things, effects... What bond do we share with our clothing, this shroud that indissociably

swaddles our daily existence, that accompanies us from birth to death and partially determines our interactions with the world around us? Whether we're dressing up to protect ourselves from the elements, playing a social role, or simply trying to look our best, the clothes we wear act as a reflector of our existence. Examining real-life practice and different points of view, Victoire de Changy uses a unique wedding dress as a springboard for a sensitive and delicate reflection on the relationship we share with our wardrobe and how this fluctuates over the course of our lives. She also weaves a parallel between the creation of a text and the creation of a textile, both of which require care, attention and a unique connection with our surroundings.

Une dose de douleur nécessaire was shortlisted for the Prix Rossel and her book: *L'Ours Kintsugi* was shortlisted for the Prix Sorcières.

I left it hanging in my wardrobe for three years, along with my other clothes, as if one day I might get the whim to put it on. Its long train, rolled into a ball at the back of the wardrobe, has been constantly trod on by the soles of my shoes stored away in the back, thrown into the wardrobe carelessly, and the train has turned from white to grey, with a few long smudges of black, depending on the season and the whims of the asphalt. I had left it in my wardrobe in the hope of taking it to the dry cleaner or to the seamstress one day, I wanted to change it in the hope of possibly wearing it again. Cutting it would be easy: I could remove the train and trim the hem to below the knee. I wouldn't need to change the form in any way. It is perfect, simple and natural, free of frills or lace, but with some bold tailoring. Its sleeves - as it does have sleeves - are very wide, like those of a kimono, and stop at the elbow. Its neckline plunges to just above the bellybutton; with my almost completely flat chest, I could afford to be so daring. Its broad belt, cinching in the waist, had to be altered due to my childlike measurements. The skirt is long and light, it floats, following each movement and occasionally billowing up in the wind. The entire dress is made of silk georgette, and is fastened by a few silk-covered buttons - nothing else.

The model is called "movement", something I only learned after looking it up today.



Gauthier Chapelle is an agricultural engineer and a Doctor of Biology. A spokesperson and pioneer of the concept of biomimicry in Europe, he is the co-author of the book *Le vivant comme modèle* (Albin Michel, 2015).

Pablo Servigne is also an agricultural engineer and a Doctor of Biology. A specialist in questions of collapse, transition and agro-ecology, he has recently published the book *L'Entraide* (LLL, 2017).

SERVIGNE CHAPELLE DE

FR
*L'Effondrement
(et après) expliqué
à nos enfants...
et à nos parents*

EN
*Explaining the collapse
(and what happens
next) to our children....
and parents.*

Title	<i>L'Effondrement (et après) expliqué à nos enfants... et à nos parents</i>
Author	Pablo Servigne Gauthier Chapelle
Genre	Non-Fiction
Publisher	© Éditions du Seuil
Format	11 x 19 cm
Pages	192
ISBN	978-2-0214-6648-5
Keywords	End of the world, intergenerational dialogue, collapse



From the collapse of the living world to the possible collapse of our society, the word casts a foreboding shadow over our era. But what sort of collapse are we talking about? Can we talk to children about it without provoking anxiety? What sort of language do we use? And why do some boomers have such a hard time wrapping their heads around it? Blending debate, experiences and emotional states, Pablo Servigne and Gauthier Chapelle set the scene for an informal intergenerational conversation in the aim of preserving a certain mutual understanding.

Lucie, 13 years old

— Dad, what's all this about the world ending? Everyone's talking about it... It's getting scary. Is it really the end of the world?

— Um... Yes and no.

— What do you mean, “yes and no”? Is it yes or no? If it's yes, then that means it's serious!

— Hmm... It depends...

— But do you really believe all this? Are you being serious? Why didn't you tell me before?

— I'm always talking about it...

— Maybe with Mum, with Camille or with your friends, but never with me!

— OK, OK. Let's sit down. It's true that I've been discussing this sort of thing with your mother and your brother during these last few years. Perhaps a little too much. We didn't take the time to talk to you because we were waiting for you to come to us, basically. We didn't want to force it upon you. I've told you before, we're always here if you want to talk, or if you have questions. It seems that time is now.

— That wasn't the right tactic, Dad! I looked like an idiot when the teacher brought it up in class. I felt like everyone knew all about it apart from me. When I got home, I looked it up online and... Oh my God! It's a mess! I'll be real with you: I wasn't brave enough to watch all the videos or read those books. And to be honest, I don't know if I believe it... I just need to talk to someone who knows what's really going on.

— I'm sure that deep down, using your intuition, you already know a lot. But I'll tell you everything I know. What do you want to know, exactly? What's worrying you?

— Everything! Like, if it's the end of the world, then how, and why? Are we all going to die, and if so, when? Why is no one talking about this on the news? And what are the politicians doing about it? Why is no one doing anything?

— Alright. Let's deal with this one question at a time. First of all, you mentioned “the end of the world” ... I think we can find a better way to approach this topic.



After having written a series of works on the environment and children's books on sustainable development, Dominique Costermans has developed a unique collaborative method, blending personal stories and literary writing. Her first books in this style looked at the subject of first names (*Comment je m'appelle: porter un prénom, du déterminisme à la liberté*) then the theme of work (*Le Bureau des Secrets professionnels, en collaboration with Régine Vandamme*). Much like *L'Impensé de l'IVG*, the latter offers a rewriting of personal stories that invites us to engage in a political debate.

Costermans has also written several works of fiction and is considered to be one of Belgium's greatest short story writers.

DOMINIQUE COSTERMANS

FR
*L'impensé
de l'IVG*

EN
*A new perspective
on abortion*

Title	<i>L'impensé de l'IVG</i>
Author	Dominique Costermans
Genre	Non-Fiction
Publisher	© Courteslignes éditions
Format	13,5 x 21 cm
Pages	118
ISBN	978-2-9603-0970-6
Keywords	Abortion, personal story, experience, taboo



Women's voices are taking centre stage on an increasing number of topics, bringing all that was once secret or sensitive out into the open: menstruation, harassment, rape, society's obsession with youth and slimness, post-partum depression, and, more recently, questions of endometriosis and regrets surrounding motherhood. Nevertheless, abortion remains a taboo. What is this silence telling us? In the midst of such divisive discourse, there is no space left for the sensitive and unique nature of personal experiences. Armed with her experience in the creative non-fiction genre, Dominique Costermans meets with twelve women who have had an abortion. With these twelve often deeply moving stories so bravely shared by these women, the author hopes to pave the way towards another kind of discussion on abortion, one that is more kind, respectful and liberating.

With her short hair, tortoiseshell glasses and a broad smile that shines through her eyes despite the mask, Garance opens the front door and invites me to follow her upstairs. The TV is switched on in the living room; while she fetches me a glass of water, I notice that she was watching a TV series while waiting for me. She had told me by e-mail that it was good timing: it was her week off. Everything about the space was welcoming: the comfy sofas, the green plants, the books. Garance, dressed in a vest top, sits with her legs folded under her. The heavy heat of the summer creeps in through the open window, through which she will later smoke a cigarette. But first, she wants to know a little more about my reasons for doing the project. This is the point where I can measure the trust that my confidants have in me, even when I still don't know exactly where I am going with it all. An article, short stories, a book? I talk about my recent books, on the world of work, on first names; I mention Florence Aubenas and creative non-fiction. Really, I'm not trying to do anything in particular. We're simply going to set the world to rights together. Once I've set the pretext, we delve directly into the heart of the matter. Garance is forty-five years old. My first question concerns the story leading up to the abortion. "I was a teenager", she begins, "I think I was sixteen years old. I don't remember the date. I remember the operation, I have flashbacks to my mother's reaction, but the date... I talked to my therapist about it and she told me: 'That's normal; that's how we process trauma.'" I try to quickly make some calculations to find out if abortion had been legalised in Belgium yet. "I don't know" Garance replies, "but because I was at sixteen weeks, I had to go to Holland. When I heard the news [about the legalisation] on the radio, I thought it would be best to go to Holland anyway. I think I was sixteen but maybe I was only fourteen."



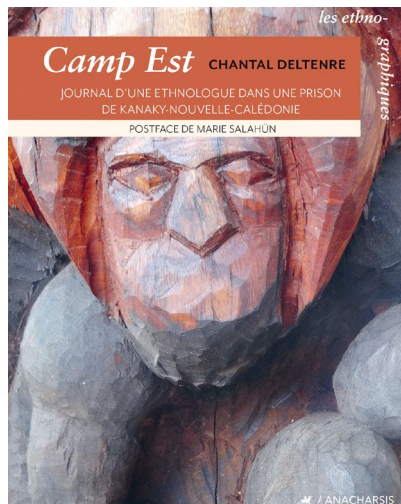
Chantal Deltenre is a writer and social anthropologist. Born in Belgium, she lives in France. She has been writing several novels and travel books, most of all published in Belgium.

CHANTAL DELLENRE

FR
Camp Est

EN
Camp Est

Title	<i>Camp Est: Journal d'une ethnologue dans une prison de Kanaky Nouvelle-Calédonie</i>
Author	Chantal Deltenre
Genre	Non-Fiction
Publisher	© Anacharsis
Format	12 x 16 cm
Pages	224
ISBN	979-1-0279-0444-0
Keywords	Neo-colonialism, ethnology, prison



This book is essential reading for anyone looking to understand the contemporary workings of colonialism. *Camp Est* is the logbook of an ethnologist visiting the Nouméa Prison (New Caledonia), built in the same location as the former penal colony of the same name built during the 19th century for France's "exiles", criminals sentenced to forced labour on the French mainland. The International Prison Observatory ranks it as the worst French prison along with the Faa'a-Nuutania

correctional facility in Tahiti. The French prison service has been aware of the situation at Nouméa Prison in New Caledonia for many years, and personally invited Chantal Deltenre to visit the prison known as "Camp Est" in 2016 to carry out an ethnographic study after three suicides were committed on the site. Unfamiliar with the world of incarceration and the land of New Caledonia, she tells a story that swiftly immerses the reader in this institution left behind as a remnant of colonisation, incapable of coping with the emotional, social and psychological distress experienced by its inmates, 90% of which are Kanak and under the age of 30. The ethnologist's daily logbook tackles these issues head on, showing how this administrative structure is failing not only because it is a prisoner of its own history, but also because imprisonment alone is not a viable solution to most of the inmates' situations.

4 June 2016

Saturday, flight from Paris to Narita

The French Prison Service for the Overseas Territories has sent me to carry out an ethnographic investigation at Nouméa Prison. For one month, I will observe the day-to-day running of this correctional facility. After my return, I will have to submit a report, with recommendations on how to improve collective living conditions in the prison, reduce tensions, help released prisoners reintegrate into society and prevent repeating offences. I feel troubled by this obligation to produce results. First of all, the time frame is very short; secondly, I have no knowledge of the prison world; and finally, I have never set foot in New Caledonia.

(...)

What conclusions will I be able to draw from a one-month study? One month seems like a long time to the Prison Service. And yet, it boils down to no time at all on the ground. I even detected a certain reluctance from the prison staff during the video conference organised before my departure. Not one of the participants – the prison director, the assistant director, the head of integration and probation, nor the two prison officers – outwardly opposed my visit, but they all expressed reservations nonetheless. These were initially of a practical nature: an officer would have to be assigned to accompany me at all times in the prison block, which would be difficult. I worry that the prison's management staff are relying on the infeasibility of this to further reduce the duration of the investigation. Their other reservation, unanimously shared by all staff present at the meeting, was that my mission may be doomed before it even begins: the inmates would not talk to a white woman. "We need someone local to approach the inmates, otherwise they won't give much away." Those were the words of the prison director, jotted down in my notes. He added that during recent meetings with imprisoned minors, not a single one talked.



A philosopher of science, psychologist, author, and professor at the University of Liège and University of Brussels. Passionate about ethological research and the author of a number of works, she was awarded the Prix Moron by the Académie Française in 2021.

VINCIANE DESPRET

FR

*Et si les animaux
écrivaient ?*

EN

*What if animals
could write?*

Title	<i>Et si les animaux écrivaient ?</i>
Author	Vinciane Despret
Genre	Non-Fiction
Publisher	© Editions Bayard
Format	12,5 x 17,5 cm
Pages	80
ISBN	978-2-227-50083-9
Keywords	Animals, writing, ethology



Many of those familiar with animals believe that they are able to write, in their own way... They talk amongst themselves and with other species, too. Dogs leave messages for other dogs on trees and lampposts, cats too, so much is said in the smells they leave here and there. This behaviour is also found in wolves, wild boar, octopuses with their ink, mountain goats, ants... All of them leave traces, marks, signatures, and every animal learns how to read them. Of course, rats can write as well. And what if, one day, we were able to read their writing too? A marvellous, fascinating, surprising text by the great philosopher Vinciane Despret.

What if animals could write? I believe this is an important question. Because if this were the case, it would not only mean that we are finally admitting that they have something to say, but it should also persuade us, as humans, to become a bit less boastful — if we are unsure if animals can write or not, is this not simply because we are unable to read foreign languages? I have been working on our understanding of animals for years. And for years I have been irked by all the nonsense written on the subject. I must add, however, that over these years I have taken great joy in seeing all the fascinating pieces of writing that teach us just how interesting and complex animals truly are.

In these moments of irritation, I often ask myself this exact question: at what age do some human persons start to become convinced that animals are stupid, that they don't think, that they feel very few emotions, that they don't have a clue about anything? The reason I ask myself this question is because through meeting children, I have learned they don't possess these simplified ideas about animals. It is later in life that they are at risk of adopting such attitudes. I call this the catastrophe of exceptionalism. This catastrophe happens when we start believing that human beings are exceptional, that they have skills they alone are capable of, and that animals cannot have these skills they are only animals.



Bruno Frère is a senior research fellow at the Belgian National Fund for Scientific Research, a lecturer at the University of Liège and an associate member of the University of Cambridge.

Jean-Louis Laville is a professor at the CNAM (holder of the “Solidarity Economy” Chair) and head of the Pluralist Democracy and Economy research programme at the College of World Studies-MSH.

FRÈRE LAVILLE

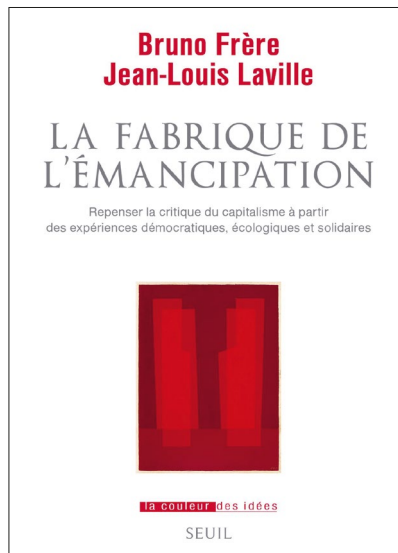
FR

La fabrique de l'émancipation

EN

The emancipation factory

Title	<i>La fabrique de l'émancipation. Repenser la critique du capitalisme à partir des expériences démocratiques, écologiques et solidaires</i>
Author	Bruno Frère Jean-Louis Laville
Genre	Non-Fiction
Publisher	© Éditions du Seuil
Format	14 x 20 cm
Pages	448
ISBN	978-2-0214-8487-8
Keywords	Emancipation, democratic experiment, critical theory



In a climate of hatred, violence, social inequality and ecological disruption, democracy appears to be under threat.

Faced with this risk, critical theory (from the Frankfurt School to Bourdieu) remains an essential tool for identifying the scope of these systems of alienation and domination. But it is not enough. We must also adopt some new approaches. Bruno Frère and Jean-Louis Laville identify some of these approaches, suggesting, for example, the adoption of

pragmatism and epistemologies from the global south. Comparing and contrasting these analyses, they focus on some increasingly prominent causes (Zapatismo, Zone to Defend, climate activism, freedom fighting organisations, ecofeminism, etc.) and resistance movements that still often lack visibility (local supply chains, commons, solidarity economy, etc.).

The authors use these examples to demonstrate that despite the current dangers, democracy is still in a process of reinvention, even weaving new threads between humans and non-humans, between individuals and researchers.

By providing an original overview of some of the most influential works of the twentieth century and an analysis of a wide variety of experimental movements, this book lays the foundations for a new kind of critical theory and proposes a different conceptualisation of emancipation. As such, it offers a wealth of ideas for all those who refuse to be trapped by inaction or wallow in catastrophic thinking.

Chapter 1

The scope of domination and the evanescence of emancipation

The verb “emancipate” comes from the latin *emancipare*, formed by the words *ex* (outside, no longer) and *mancipium* (slave, dependent). In Roman law, it was used to describe acts of liberation and freedom, and remained in use throughout many popular uprisings that reaffirmed our desire for self-determination. But it was Marx who universalised this process. In his theoretical writings inspired by contemporary 19th century conflicts, he argues that universal emancipation is possible. The only condition for achieving this is to attack the mechanisms with which a minority of owners who monopolise the means of production and condemn the majority of people to sell their capacity for labour.

More than a century and a half later, the precariat¹ has only grown in size and the same unbearable conditions of exploitation have remained in place. The dominating economical model continues to be propped up by a series of legal provisions promoting the ownership of private property and “zero-hours” work contracts. In many ways, the contemporary economy, through its promotion of internet platforms and freelancing is reviving the quest unbridled capitalism in many parts of the world.² Marx’s argument remains in keeping with the times. Its relevance should not, however, mask the problems caused by the direction of the workers’ movement since the Second International. By examining history as a series of stages, the Marxist analysis that came to the fore during the second half of the 19th century adopted a teleology that failed to truly break away from the epistemological bases of liberalism.

¹ Standing, Guy, 2011.

² While the European Union is beginning to draft legislation on the issue, elsewhere in the platform economy, as astutely argued by Luc Boltanski and Arnaud Esquerre, everyone remains free to offer a service.



Grégoire Polet is a Belgian writer and translator born in Uccle on April 15, 1978. He has a PhD in Literature from the Catholic University of Louvain, specialising in Spanish literature. He has published several books with Gallimard. He has also written and directed TV documentaries.

GRÉGOIRE POLET

FR
*Petit éloge
de la Belgique*

EN
*A simple ode
to Belgium*

Title	<i>Petit éloge de la Belgique</i>
Author	Grégoire Polet
Genre	Non-Fiction
Publisher	© Gallimard
Format	10,8 x 17,8 cm
Pages	128
ISBN	978-2-0728-8599-0
Keywords	Praise, elegy, Belgium, fog



Praise, elegy? As soon as I set my eyes on my Belgium, the sea, childhood, an intemperate melancholy is lifted from me, like a veil of mist or a cloud of fog. This may feel like a rather uncomfortable start to a book. And yet... And yet, every Belgian knows that everything begins with fog; every morning, eyes and car headlights are forced to battle this thick humidity. Marie Gevers writes about “the source of the grey”, which is ultimately “an immense joy”. In fact, fog can sometimes show us the way. It can form its own path. We will see where the melancholy takes us, to which day, towards which light. This short yet rich and poetic elegy transports the reader to the very heart of Belgium.

Madrid ne dort pas (2005) was awarded the Prix Jean Muno, while *Excusez les fautes du copiste* received the Prix Victor Rossel des Jeunes in 2006 and was awarded the Special Writer's Prize by the Fondation Jean-Luc Lagardère. *Leurs vies éclatantes* (2007) was awarded the 2008 Prix Indications du Jeune Critique, the 2007 Prix Fénéon and the 2007 Prix Grand-Chosier. The novel was also long-listed for the 2007 Prix Goncourt. His 2009 work, *Chucho*, was awarded the Prix Sander Pierron by the Belgian Royal Academy for French Language and Literature. Grégoire Polet received the Amerigo Vespucci Award for Barcelona! (2015) and the Félix Denayer Award from the Belgian Academy for all his work (2016).

Clouds

Clouds. A recent love of mine. Their music is so unique. It is the truest music of all - silence. Full of twists and nuance.

I am lying like a loaf on my balcony, listening to the clouds.

Django Reinhardt was born not far away from here. He was mobile and nomadic, just like them.

I listen to Django Reinhardt's dreamlike ode to clouds. It's as if Monet's *Waterlilies* was performed on guitar. *Drifting lilies*. The skies of Belgium are a lot like those of the Netherlands. I reckon they have even more in common, bizarrely, with those of Denmark, around Jutland. Every painter has captured their caresses. A fluttering of eyelashes: a shower comes from nowhere and leaves again just as quickly.

I recently acquired the typescript of an unpublished work by Marie Gevers, in which she writes in praise of the climate that hangs over her hometown of Antwerp and its surrounding countryside. She names the piece *Tourism for dreamers*, and, in beautifully succinct fashion, declares that all it takes is a "blink of a soul" to understand how the beauty of the Belgian climate lies in its unpredictable nature. A perpetual poem. The real "joy of meteors", she writes elsewhere. Because meteors can refer to all phenomena of the sky. Changing clouds; their amorous metamorphoses. Nomadic clouds.

Django knew that clouds are music.

Django Reinhardt was born in Belgium because the caravan of his traveller parents just happened to be passing through. Clouds, traveller folks... They all pass through, paying no heed to borders. They are true citizens of the world. Clouds.

Drizzle. You can drink the air, its intoxicating. The atmosphere is a fizzy drink, the Belgian climate is one big mash tun, bubbling liquid under a blanket of white or grey foam, gulped down by the Gods whose drunkenness explodes into a clear blue sky.

Reaching as far as the Meuse and the Ardennes, the sea climate can be felt, and those little raindrops you feel are not really drizzle: they are sea spray. The North Sea passes overhead, and we are in the curl of the wave. Eleven million surfers.



Pierre Schoentjes is a professor at the University of Ghent, where he teaches French literature. Specialising in irony (*Poétique de l'ironie*, Seuil, 2001) and the literary representation of the Great War (*Fictions de la Grande Guerre*, Classiques Garnier, 2009), he examines 20th and 21st century literature from a European perspective. With a particular interest in the *extrême contemporain*, he has worked with an international team to launch an online publication: the *Revue critique de fixxion française contemporaine* ("Critical Review of French Contemporary Fixxion"). His current work is focused on the *extrême contemporain* and eco-poetry: *Ce qui a lieu. Essai d'écopoétique* (Wildproject, 2015). In the continuation of his research into the relationship between literature and the environment, he published the books *Littérature et écologie: le mur des abeilles* and *Écrire la nature: imaginer l'écologie* with José Corti in 2020 and *Pour Pierre Gascar* (Droz, 2021). His most recent published work is *Leurs regards se sont croisés: La rencontre avec un animal* (Le Mot et le reste, 2022).

PIERRE SCHOENTJES

FR

*Nos regards se
sont croisés*

EN

Our Eyes Met

Title	<i>Nos regards se sont croisés: La scène de la rencontre avec un animal</i>
Author	Pierre Schoentjes
Genre	Non-Fiction
Publisher	© Le mot et le reste
Format	14,8 x 21 cm
Pages	166
ISBN	978-2-3843-1002-9
Keywords	Non-fiction, animal rights, ecology, non-humans



A literary essay that shines a light on concerns surrounding relationships between human and non-human animals. If we rule out pets, animals are absent from daily life in prosperous Western societies. However, direct contact with animals is what makes us human, through our understanding of what we share with them and where we differ. This essay examines this intimate link through a scene commonly found in books: the encounter between human and non-human animals. Based on an extensive study into the literature of the past century, this book aims to pinpoint the way in which writing captures our empathy towards animals and particularly the event of the encounter as a trigger to a strong commitment to animal rights and ecology in general.

It seems that the smaller the place animals have in our lives, the more they occupy our imagination. If we rule out pets, which are only becoming more popular, animals are absent from daily life in prosperous Western societies. Cows, pigs and chickens are relegated to industrial farms before being carted off to immense abattoirs where their miserable life is brought to an often-undignified end. Meanwhile, animal documentaries and YouTube videos documenting the lives of bears, wolves, whales, migrating birds and microscopic insects out in the wild are unendingly popular. And yet, city dwellers rarely have the chance to spot a fox, badger, deer or a wild boar, although these species used to be widespread in populated areas. For the youngest generations, even these animals - albeit not quite as exotic as those on our screens - only exist as characters in picture books or animated films. We are distanced from both the gritty reality and the ideal picture, in a sanitised and totally abstract manner.

This wasn't always the case. In France, much like any other large agricultural country made up of smallholdings, animals were universally present, certainly in the countryside. It was not until the 1960s and the introduction of the tractor and land consolidation that draught animals disappeared and backyard farms became increasingly few and far between, as supermarket chains started offering consumers affordable meat. Beyond the rural environment, horses - the last representatives of the era of animal power - remained visible for a long time, uncommon in big cities but still widely present in villages.



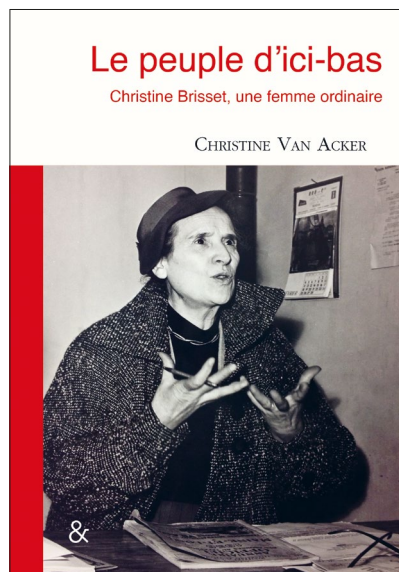
Christine Van Acker comes from a family of French, Walloon and Flemish boatmen. This may be the reason why she so deftly navigates between the genres, sometimes creating ones of her own (dramatic poetry, amateur books on animals and plants, etc.), in a bittersweet to-and-fro marked by boldness, daydreaming, mischievousness and sophistication. Although she enjoys playing around with the meaning of words, she is suspicious of and criticises those who misuse their meaning (and manipulate our senses) at our expense. This “giant ear”, as she likes to call herself, directs documentaries and writes works of fiction, broadcasted on French-language radio. She runs and organises writing workshops (including the “Infuse your writing with science” workshop series, where science and literature come together in a mutually beneficial harmony) as well as radio show creation courses (AKDT Summer School).

CHRISTINE VAN ACKER

FR
Le peuple d'ici-bas

EN
Us folks from around here

Title	<i>Le peuple d'ici-bas: Christine Brisset, une femme ordinaire</i>
Author	Christine Van Acker
Genre	Non-Fiction
Publisher	© Esperluète Éditions
Format	14 x 20 cm
Pages	208
ISBN	978-2-3598-4160-2
Keywords	Peuple, pauvreté, action sociale, biographie



One day, while out for a walk, Christine Van Acker stumble across Christine Brisset Square in Angers. While initially just a name to her, it soon reveals the story of a woman that begins to captivate and pursue Christine. She starts researching the figure, combing the city archives,

and talking to her loved ones. The more she learns about the life of Christine Brisset and her social activism to help those in need, the more she is fascinated, as she starts to understand how the story of the post-war slums mirrors the experience of homeless people in the 21st century.

A pioneer of social activism, Christine Brisset worked to reaccommodate over 12,000 people, set up around 800 squats, wrote countless letters to the authorities, initiated the Castor housing movement, and much more. Although the squatting of unoccupied upper-class houses was her most spectacular act, the core of her activism was centred on extreme poverty: this was the focus of her fights against illiteracy and for access to healthcare. This was a woman who battled all forms of injustice related to power and money.

Christine has published, among other works, *La bête a bon dos*, shortlisted for the Tri-annual Prize for French-Language Prose in 2022, *Le tulipier de Géraldine* which received an honorable mention at the FReDD documentary awards, and *Moi, je parle*, winner of the 2014 SCAM prize for best writing for radio.

A woman with a long face, dressed in a very classic style.
She wears a little buttoned cardigan, a blouse and a pleated skirt falling just below
the knee, a double-breasted brown jacket, a fox fur draped around
her neck, and a hat perched jauntily on her wild chestnut
hair. She disappears around a corner. Her gait is swift,
and I struggle to catch up with her. At this rate, a single strike of her heel
could split the pavement in two. I recognised her.
She wasn't just any old passer-by. Luckily,
she comes to a stop. This gives me the time to
reach her. There is a certain determination in her expression and her chin
is held high. Her natural elegance, marking her as a
woman of high society, is in stark contrast with her attire.
We find ourselves standing before a house that appears to be abandoned,
with closed shutters, an unkempt garden, and a rusted
padlocked gate. Ghosts have the advantage of invisibility. Those who appear
before the living are a rare breed. But I'm a different
type of ghost. I did not wait for death
to become one. I did not even wait until birth.
I am the ghost of a 21st-century woman who
walks alongside another woman, born sixty-three
years before me. For this reason, I can look over her
shoulder and watch her without any risk of frightening her.
And, if the unthinkable were ever to occur, if my ghostly
breath were to tickle her nape, she would think nothing of it, it was just
a light breeze, a simple gust of air felt by everyone
She pulls a pair of wire cutters out of her bag. I myself am a woman
who always carries a screwdriver in her bag, which is more useful
than lipstick; wire cutters, however,
are not so common.



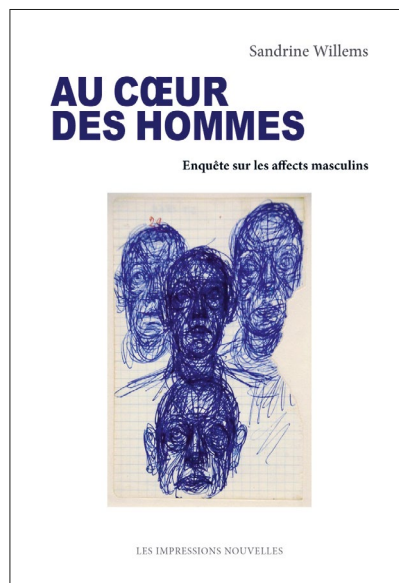
Sandrine Willems, born in Brussels in 1968, is a writer, psychologist and philosopher, and currently lives in Montpellier. Starting her career as an actor and then director, the spoken word inspired her to move into literature. She has published a large number of works with Impression Nouvelles, including *Devenir oiseau* and *Consoler Schubert*. She has also published *L'Animal à l'âme: de l'animal-sujet aux psychothérapies accompagnées par des animaux* ("The Animal Within: From the Animal Subject to Animal-Assisted Psychotherapy") with Éditions du Seuil.

SANDRINE WILLEMS

FR
Au cœur des hommes

EN
In the Heart of Men

Title	<i>Au cœur des hommes: Enquête sur les affects masculins</i>
Author	Sandrine Willems
Genre	Non-Fiction
Publisher	© Les Impressions Nouvelles
Format	14,5 x 21 cm
Pages	112
ISBN	978-2-87449-950-0
Keywords	Study, affects, men, femininity



The accounts presented in this book were taken from a series of interviews with twelve men aged between 25 and 65 years old. They ask themselves what it is to be “a man” nowadays and ponder the multiple meanings of the term, from those that are no longer relevant to those yet to be invented. Straight, bi, and gay men question their so-called femininity and the delicate concept of gender differences, which are nowadays particularly hard to pin down.

Each of them tries to describe their inner world, their emotional states, the inner workings of their “heart” or “soul”, and what these age-old terms mean to them. This leads to a re-examination of love, friendship, and how these concepts can be extended or grouped together through what is described as an “oceanic” effect, where we feel a connection to the non-human world or to the great unknown.

Polyphony

Genders

- Man or woman...?
- I have no answer to that question.
- It leads to generalisations, which is less than ideal...

- I'm not sure that the word "man" means anything other than the rules imposed upon us. But I'm not sure if that's my final answer, either.

- Generally speaking, men abide by the rule: "You'll be a man, my son," which is very brutal. Women have more freedom. Men are bound by uniformity, and for the most part, find themselves in a state of catastrophic paralysis. Men often feel the need to follow through on their commitments, they are particularly drawn to dying for a cause, or for a flag.

- Virility should no longer be solely associated with men, it is only a masculine energy. Anger is yang, sadness is yin. Disassociating the feminine from the woman and the masculine from the man, that is the key to change.

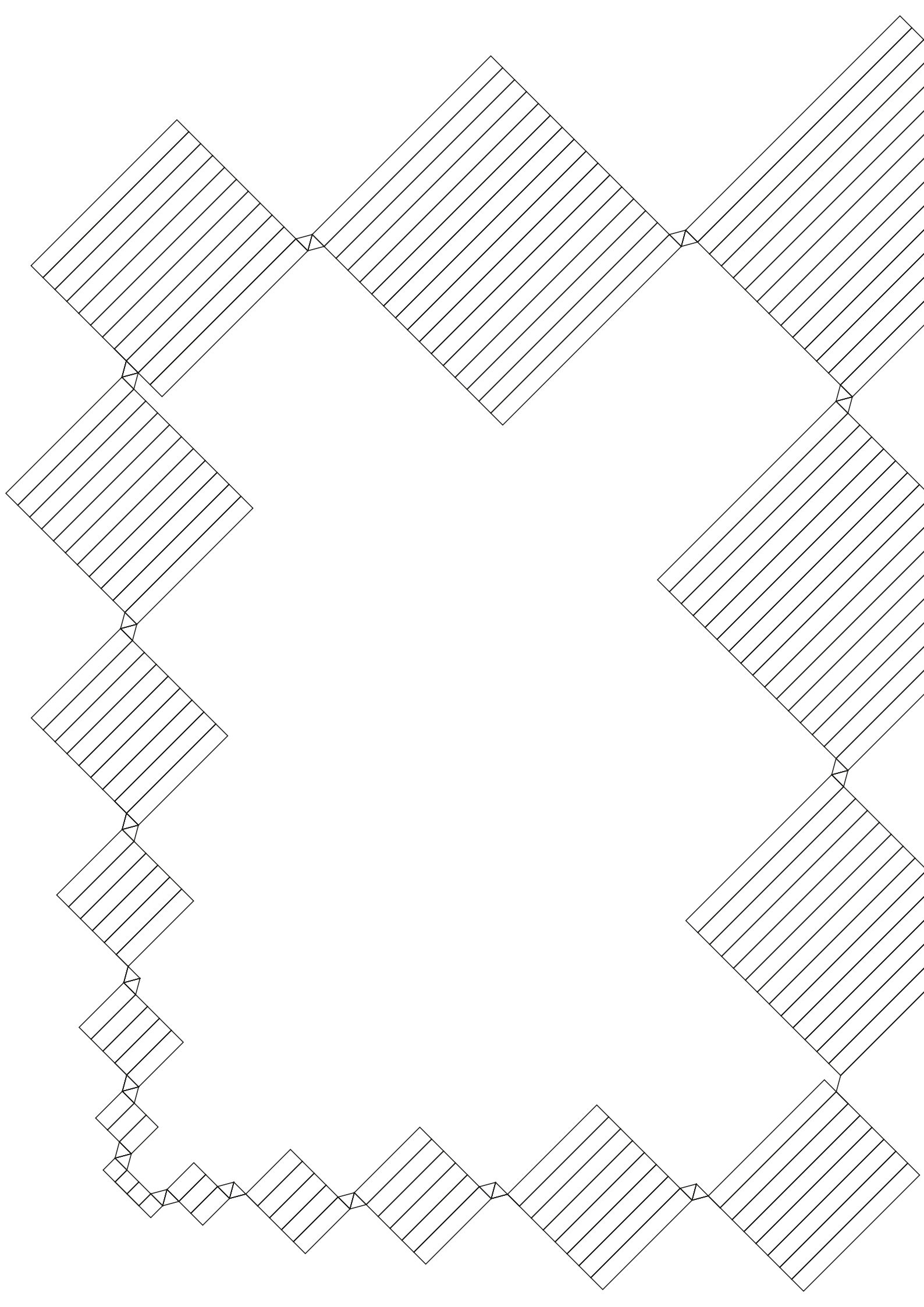
- I think that men are more emotionally tortured than women. With men, there was so little space given to emotion, for so long, and then came such a great liberation that they now feel completely lost.

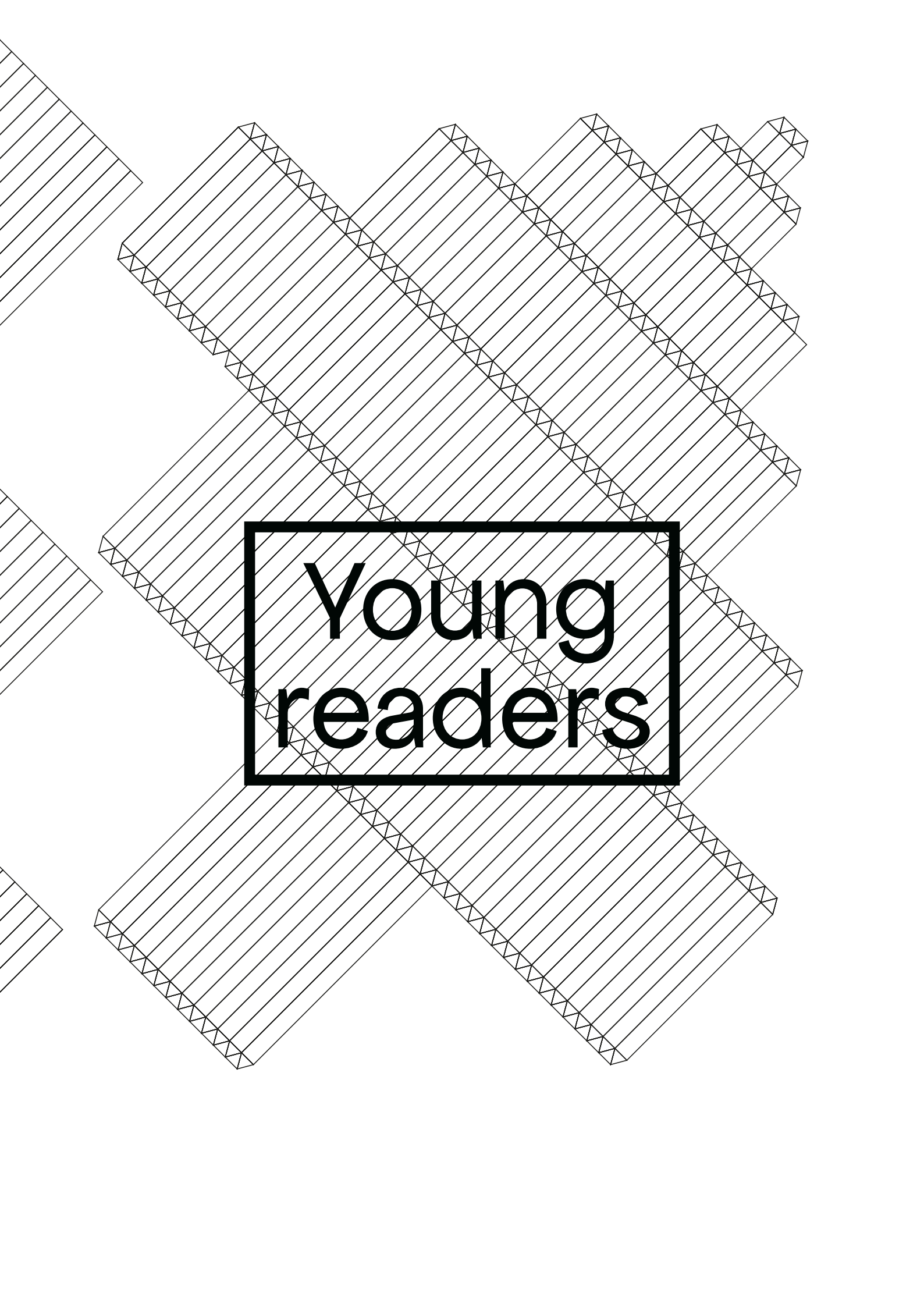
- The woman must be calm or she is seen as hysterical, while if a man gets angry it is more or less accepted, as he is expected to assert himself, to take action.

- These values become automatic, we are forged by them.

- We teach men to feel in another way, that's all.

- Women have more of a tendency to keep their feelers out, while men often cover them up.





**Young
readers**



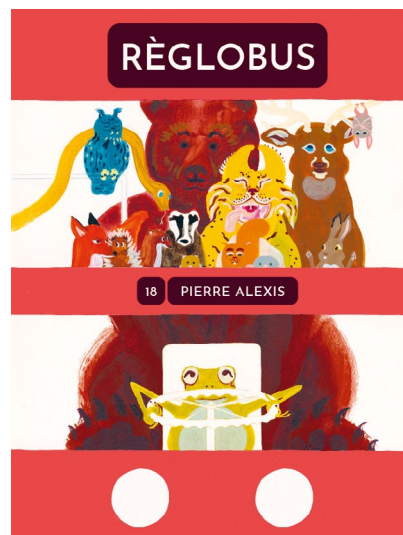
Born in 1980, Pierre Alexis grew up in Normandy. As a child, he was obsessed with two types of literature: wildlife magazines and folk tales. He worked as a vet for ten years before studying illustration at the Belgian Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Brussels. Natural sciences and representations of animals in literature remain a major source of inspiration and awe for the author currently lives and works in Brussels.

PIERRE ALEXIS

FR
Réglabus

EN
Rulobus

Title	<i>Réglabus</i>
Author	Pierre Alexis
Genre	Young readers
Publisher	© La Partie
Format	20 x 26 cm
Pages	40
ISBN	978-2-49276-824-8
Keywords	Bus, rules, travel, animals



All aboard the Rulobus! Treefrog, the driver, is the queen of the wheel! But if we want to ride in her bus, we'll have to follow some very strict rules.

As for the passengers, let's just say they're a restless bunch! Voles, hedgehogs, snakes, lynx, deer, bears and many others each have their own way of hanging, lying down, reclining or even spreading out flat on the ground...

Not to mention the rodents that nibble on the benches, the weasels and squirrels that use the handles as their own gymnasium or the lynx that thinks it's the perfect time for a hunt. This fun and cheeky bestiary is delivered with a strong and unique graphic style.

In 2020, the album *Rulobus* was shortlisted by the jury of the Unpublished Picturebook Showcase 2. He was awarded the Pépîte prize for illustrated fiction at the Montreuil Children's Book Fair.



Wipe your paws before you get on.

Don't stand there gawking around.
Get on the bus nice and quickly.





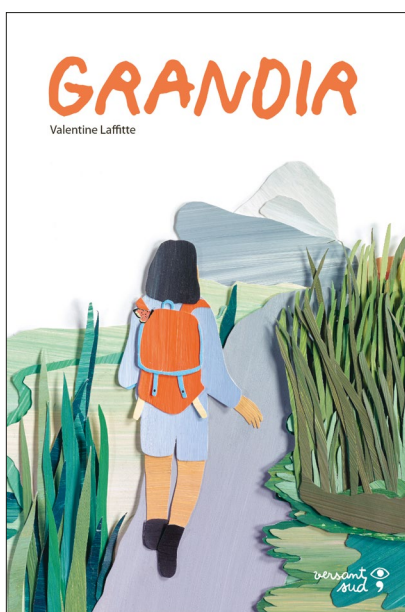
Valentine Laffitte is a French illustrator who lives in Brussels. She studied at the Brussels Royal Academy of Fine Arts. She runs children's workshops and teaches art in specialised secondary schools. Her signature style consists of paper cut-outs that play with volume and colour.

VALENTINE LAFFITTE

FR
Grandir

EN
Growing up

Title	Grandir
Author	Valentine Laffitte
Genre	Young readers
Publisher	© Versant Sud Jeunesse
Format	16 x 24 cm
Pages	32
ISBN	978-2-93093-857-8
Keywords	Life, growing up, memories, learning



From the grey days of autumn to the bright days of spring, Freja experiences small adventures, tiny events, all those things that make you grow up. Staying at home on rainy days, remembering the summer, walking in the cold, waiting for the sun, listening to the frogs talk, climbing in the trees, a little higher every year. Of all this, memories remain, and the traces they leave in oneself.

C'est l'automne, l'heure des départs.
Les oiseaux reviendront au printemps.
Freja prend encore un peu de lumière
avant les journées grises.



It's autumn, the time of
departures.
The birds will come back in
spring.
Freja continues to enjoy the
sunlight
before the grey days come
around.



Les jours de pluie, les jours d'ennui,
tout le monde est à l'intérieur.
Quatre murs et un immense imaginaire.
Elle devient la cheffe de sa tribu.

On rainy days comes the
boring haze,
when everyone stays
indoors.
Four walls and one great
big imagination.
She becomes the chief of
her tribe.



Dans l'obscurité
de ses mains...
1, 2, 3, 4,
l'été lui revient.

Par la fenêtre,
les paysages qui s'étirent.
Des petites aventures
aux grands souvenirs.

In the darkness
of her hands...
1, 2, 3, 4,
she remembers the
summer.

Landscapes stretch far and
wide
outside the window.
Little adventures
leaving big memories.



Born in Belgium in 1974, Mélanie Rutten spent her childhood surrounded by nature, in Central America and Africa. With a degree in photography from the École Supérieure des Arts “Le 75”, her fascination with image and narration led her down a self-taught path to producing her own children’s literature. In 2008, her first picture book *Mitsu, un jour parfait* was published by Éditions MeMo, marking the start of a long partnership. Both author and illustrator. Her works have been translated into ten different languages and some have been adapted into children’s plays. Alongside her literary work, she runs narrative illustration workshops for different audiences and works with the press, children’s theatre organisations and various associations promoting children’s literature and nature. Mélanie Rutten lives and works just outside of Brussels.

MÉLANIE RUTTEN

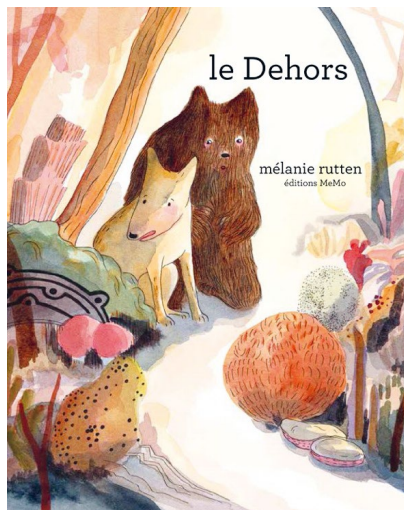
FR

Le Dehors

EN

The Outside

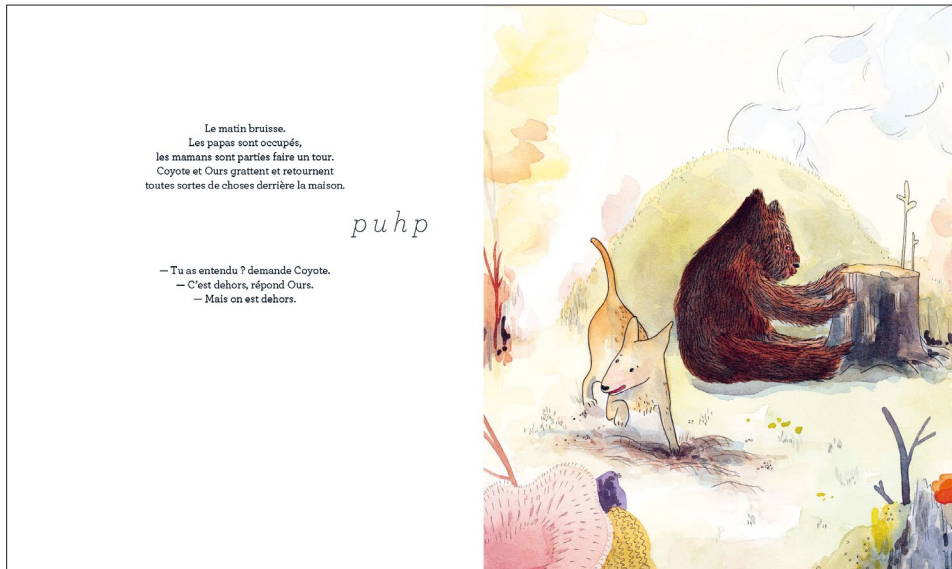
Title	<i>Le Dehors</i>
Author	Mélanie Rutten
Genre	Young readers
Publisher	© MeMo
Format	21,4 x 25,7 cm
Pages	40
ISBN	978-2-3528-9531-2
Keywords	Nature, animals, discovery



The dads were making crepes while the mums were out for a walk. Coyote and Bear are playing outside when suddenly, they hear a noise. PUHP-PO-WEE. Coyote wants to find the source of the noise and takes Bear, despite his fears, into the forest. That’s where they discover the Outside.

Mélanie Rutten introduces an assortment of characters: a growing mushroom, a slug, a magpie, a leaf, a rock, and a silent little seed... Until suddenly, a noisy and joyful storm breaks out. Maybe this will be the chance for Bear and Coyote to find their voice...

Mélanie Rutten received a mention of honor at the Bologna Ragazzi Awards, the Sorcières prize and the Brindacier prize.



The morning was all abuzz. The dads were busy at home and the mums were out for a walk. Coyote and Bear were scratching around and digging up all sorts of things behind the house.

puhp

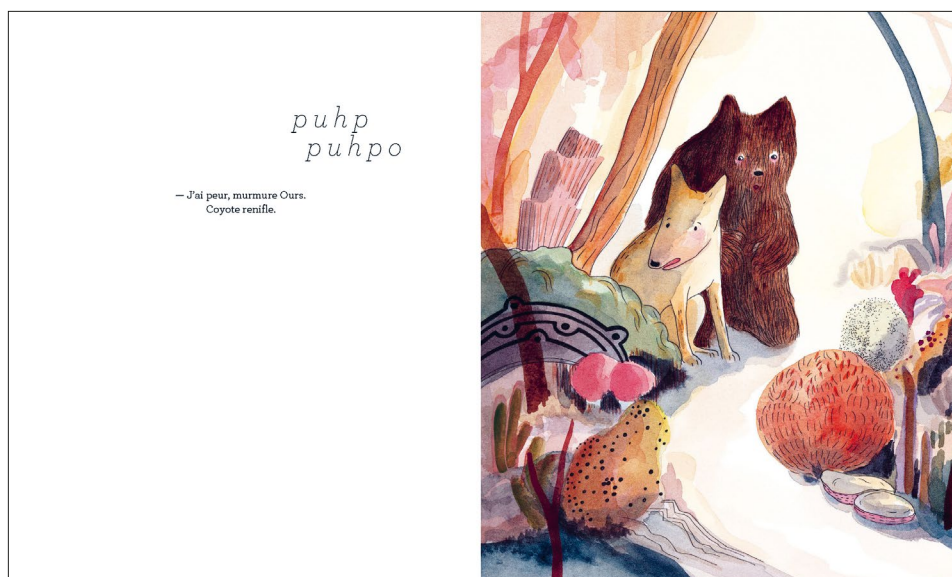
“Did you hear that?” asked Coyote.
“It’s coming from outside,” answered Bear.
“But we are outside.”



puhp

“What is it?”
“It’s the Outside, over there.”
Bear looked towards the deep, dark forest.

“Come on, Bear, let’s go see the Outside.”
“Alright, but what about the ka-boom?”
“There’s no ka-boom, let’s go!”



puhp

“I’m scared,” murmured Bear.
Coyote sniffed around.



Marine Schneider is Belgian. After graduating from the LUCA School of Arts in Ghent, she went on to illustrate three books by the Norwegian writer Elisabeth Helland Larsen, published by Magikon. She then published *Hiro, hiver et marshmallows* with Versant Sud Jeunesse, which she both wrote and illustrated. After this, she went on to publish and illustrate a number of works, including *Grand ours Petit ours* with Cambourakis, *Blaireau* with L'école des loisirs, *Tu t'appelleras Lapin* with Versant Sud Jeunesse and *Le gang des chevreuils rusés* with Seuil Jeunesse. With publisher Albin Michel Jeunesse, she has illustrated *Le Chant des loups* by Alice Liénard, published in 2021.

MARINE SCHNEIDER

FR

Hekla et Laki

EN

Hekla and Laki

Title	<i>Hekla et Laki</i>
Author	Marine Schneider
Genre	Young readers
Publisher	© Albin Michel Jeunesse
Format	26 x 32 cm
Pages	64
ISBN	978-2-226-47522-0
Keywords	Iceland, Volcanoes, Childhood, Parenthood



Hekla turns up unannounced in Laki's life. He quickly makes himself at home and settles into the cosy little house deep down in the crater. Little by little, the big, wise old Laki and the young, fiery Hekla get to know each other and come out of their shells. They learn to live together and, in the end, to grow together. This poetic and stunning picture book takes us to the volcanic landscape of Iceland and tells us a universal tale of love, bonding and separation.

She was awarded the Pépète d'or at the Montreuil Children's Book Fair in 2022



Hekla wasn't called Hekla before he came tumbling into the old man's life, or maybe he was. "I'm Laki," said the old man, holding out his far-too-big hand, and Hekla didn't answer, because Hekla never speaks, ever.



From then on, Laki kept expecting the next gust of wind to whisk Hekla away. He thought the little one could blow away at any moment, be swept away to who-knows-where. But the days went by and despite the wind, no matter the weather, Hekla stayed put.



Laki had spent so many years alone in his crater that Hekla's arrival felt like a meteorite. Laki liked order and peace and quiet. Hekla didn't like order or peace and quiet. Hekla was constantly causing some catastrophe or other and paid no attention to routine.

Hekla would go out barefoot at any time of day, come wind or snow. He imagined he was a bandit, a pirate, or an adventurer, and would set off to explore the banks of the lake, where he would collect stones and bring them back to the house in their hundreds.



Léa Viana Ferreira studied illustration at the Auguste Renoir art school in Paris then at the Brussels Royal Academy of Fine Arts. Her work is primarily based on painting, with scenes rich in detail, inspired by a desire to share and tell stories. “*On joue à cache-cache?*” (“*Want to play hide and seek?*”) is her first children’s picture book and has been shortlisted for numerous prizes, including the Montreuil Children’s Book Fair 2022 SLPJ Pépites award, and is one of the Kibookin recommended reads, selected by the SLPJ reading committees at Montreuil in March 2022 for the “Graphic style favourites” and “Subtle” categories. Léa Viana Ferreira lives and works in Brussels.

LÉA VIANA FERREIRA

FR

*On joue à
cache-cache?*

EN

*Let’s play hide
and seek!*

Title	<i>On joue à cache-cache</i>
Author	Léa Viana Ferreira
Genre	Young readers
Publisher	© CotCotCot Éditions
Format	20 x 30 cm
Pages	52
ISBN	978-2-930941-27-1
Keywords	Life lessons, friendship, nature, animals, humour, following and disobeying the rules



Before playing hide and seek in the garden, we set the rules together... Only to break them later on. The game acts as a pretext to explore our lush natural surroundings, bathed in light at certain times of the day. Friends come together to watch the sunset and then go back to their game.

Prize

Her first children's book, *On joue à cache-cache?* (Let's play hide-and-see!), was selected for the 2022 French Pépites – illustrated books category (SLPJ – Montreuil) and the 2020 DPictus Unpublished Book Showcase. A few illustrations were part of the 2020–2021 exhibition of the Chen Bochui exhibition in Shanghai.



The woods and the house are out of bounds!

Ok, we'll stay in the garden

Set the boundaries



Who's going to play the wolf?

assign roles



1, 2, 3...

count



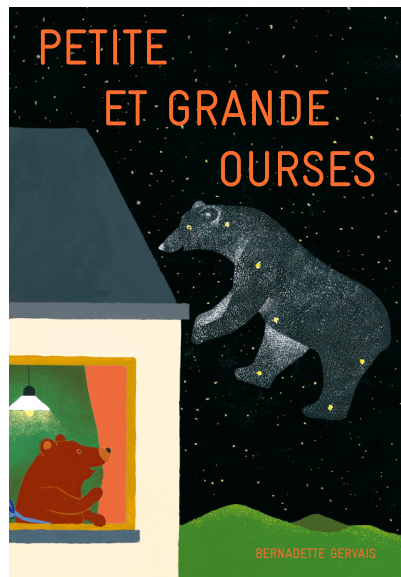
Bernadette Gervais uses a wide variety of techniques such as stencil and engraving, adapted to the concept of each book. She has published more than a hundred children's books. She has published *Petite et Grande Ourses* with publisher La Partie. She currently lives in Brussels.

BERNADETTE GERVAIS

FR
*Petite et
Grande
Ourses*

EN
*Big Bear
and
Little Bear*

Title	<i>Petite et Grande Ourses</i>
Author	Bernadette Gervais
Genre	Young readers
Publisher	© La Partie
Format	24 x 33,5 cm
Pages	40
ISBN	978-2-49276-835-4
Keywords	Family, friends, couple, help



This illustrated children's book by Bernadette Gervais explores, in an accurate and simple portrayal, systems of persecution, emotional abuse and denial.

Little Bear is proud to be the daughter of Pandora. In fact, Pandora is not exactly her real mum, but she has looked after Little Bear for so long that she no longer remembers what life was like before. Little Bear, who finds herself to be so stupid, is very lucky to live with someone who knows so many things! While Pandora reads and learns, Little Bear does all the work: the gardening, the shopping, the cooking. But Pandora is never happy, and is constantly telling her how stupid, naughty, and unfair she is. The situation explored in the picture book can be applied to a variety of contexts (family, friends, couples), but Bernadette Gervais sends one universal message: there is always someone there to help you.

Prize

Her book *ABC de la nature* published with Éditions des Grandes Personnes is winner of the Montreuil Children's Book Fair Pépîte d'Or prize and *Petite et Grande Ourses* is the winner of the Prix IBBY for Belgian French-language children's picture books.



Pandora lit toute la journée.
C'est pour cela qu'elle connaît tant de choses!

Elle impressionne tout le monde dans le village.
Quand on la croise, on lui dit: «Bonjour, Madame!»
Ça la fait sourire.

Pandora reads all day long.
That's why she knows so many things!

Everyone in the village is impressed by her.
When they see her in the street, they say "Good morning, teacher!"
It makes her smile.



Quand Pandora s'assoit au parc,
les gens l'entourent pour discuter avec elle.

Pandora veut toujours avoir le dernier mot.
Un jour, Hamster Martin n'était pas d'accord avec Pandora.
Alors Pandora a dit: «Tu es plus intelligent, Non? Martin?»
Et tout le monde a ri car Hamster Martin n'est pas très grand!

When Pandora sits down at a park bench, everyone crowds around to talk to her.

Pandora always wants to have the last word.
One day, Hamster Martin didn't agree with Pandora.
So Pandora said to him, "You think you're so smart, Midget Martin?"
And everyone laughed because Hamster Martin isn't very tall!



À la maison, Petite Ourse s'active toute la journée.
Elle fait la lessive, elle fait à manger, elle nettoie.
Pendant ce temps, Pandora lit.

De temps en temps, Petite Ourse lui apporte
du café et un morceau de gâteau.
Souvent, Pandora s'imagine: «Il est froid
ce café! Il est trop cuit ce gâteau!»
Alors, Petite Ourse est déçagée et s'excuse.
Elle se trouve vraiment bête.

At home, Little Bear is busy all day.
She does she dishes, she makes the meals, she cleans.
Meanwhile, Pandora reads.

From time to time, Little Bear brings her a cup of coffee and a piece of cake.
Often, Pandora gets angry: "This coffee is cold! This cake is overcooked!"
Little Bear feels bad and apologises.
She feels really stupid.



Born in 1960 to a poet father and actress mother, Carl Norac was bathed in language from a very young age. His way of looking at the world is like that of an enchanted child, which explains why he is most famous for his children’s books, challenges the distinction between what some would define as “poetry for children” and “poetry for adults”.

Prize

Carl Norac was chosen to be Belgium’s National Poet for 2020.

NORAC HERBAUTS

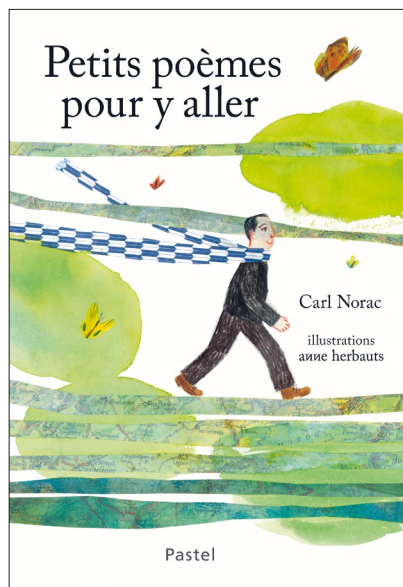
FR

*Petits poèmes
pour y aller*

EN

*Little poems to
take you there*

Title	<i>Petits poèmes pour y aller</i>
Author	Carl Norac Anne Herbauts
Genre	Young readers
Publisher	© L'École des Loisirs
Format	13,5 x 19,5 cm
Pages	132
ISBN	978-2-211-31684-2
Keywords	Poetry, dreamer, return to nature, reflection on life



Little poems taking us to so many places where we can discover ourselves and the world around us. Poems to help us dive down into the depths of everything, to take a big bite out of this cake called life, to stop complaining, to travel the distance of a millimetre or slow things down, because “a poem is nothing much and everything at once.”

© D.R.



Multi-award winning and internationally renowned illustrator Anne Herbauts studied at the Brussels Royal Academy of Fine Arts and has published more than fifty books with Casterman, Esperluète, Pastel, Ecole des loisirs, and others. Her work mainly consists of children's books and graphic novels, but she also dabbles in other narrative media such as short film (animated films and videos).

Prize

In 2021, she was awarded the Prix Triennal by the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles and was awarded the Libbylit prize in 2022.



**A little poem
to take you there**

Sometimes, a poem, that's
all there is to it,
some simple glances, a
movement of the lips,
the way you caress a wing,
skin, a shell,
the way you wave to the boat
that barely opens its eyes,
to which you could reach
out a hand or wave a flag,
and also the way in which
you say:
"Good luck! On this path
that I have chosen,
I've found my way, I'm on
my way!"
A poem is both nothing
much and everything at
once.

Petit poème pour y aller

Un poème parfois, c'est souvent ça,
de simples regards, des mouvements de lèvres,
la façon dont tu peux caresser une aile, une peau,
une carapace,
dont tu salues encore ce bateau qui ouvre à peine
les yeux,
dont tu peux tendre une main
ou une banderole,
et aussi la manière dont tu te diras :
« Courage ! Sur le chemin que j'ai choisi,
j'y vais, j'y suis ! »
Un poème, à la fois, ce n'est pas grand-chose
et tout l'univers.



Ce que tu dois savoir sur les arbres

Quand les arbres dansent, on dit que c'est le vent.
Mais, parfois, les arbres demandent au vent
de faire semblant de souffler,
sans rien remuer.
La bouche du vent imite si bien les bruits.
Alors, les arbres dansent seuls,
se penchent sur les sentiers,
se touchent branche à branche.
Et s'ils se mettent aussi à chanter,
on dira encore que c'est le vent.
Sa bouche à lui imite si bien les bruits.
D'ailleurs, pour te dire un secret,
ce que le vent préfère, dans la forêt,
c'est chanter comme un arbre.

6



What you need to know about trees

When trees dance, we say
it's the wind
But sometimes trees ask
the wind
to pretend to blow, without
moving a thing.
The wind's mouth mimics
sounds so well.
So, the trees dance alone,
stretching over the path,
branches touching
branches.
And if they start to sing,
we'll say it's the wind.
Its mouth mimics sounds
so well.
In fact, I'll tell you a secret:
in the woods, what the
wind likes best
is to sing like a tree.

Le fond des choses

Nous allons chercher le fond des choses
dans l'effet miroitant
de la bruine sur l'étang.
Nous avons peur de noyer nos mots:
c'est écrit.
Nous avons peur que le silence nous dévore:
c'est écrit.
Nous avons peur du temps quand il passe
trop vite ou se fait pour nous attendre:
cela demeure à écrire,
à l'envers de la nuit ou à contre-jour.
C'est pourquoi nous traçons encore
nos poèmes, sans détour,
pour nager, moins vaguement,
vers le fond des choses.

8



The bottom of things

We're going to look for the
bottom of things
in the shimmering surface
of the drizzle-speckled
lake.
We're scared of drowning
our words:
it is written.
We're scared of being
gobbled up by the silence:
It is written.
We are scared of time when
it passes too quickly or
becomes quiet, waiting for
us:
this remains to be written,
on the other side of the
night or against the light.
This is why we still scribble
our poems, no turning
back, to swim, more
determinedly,
to the bottom of things.



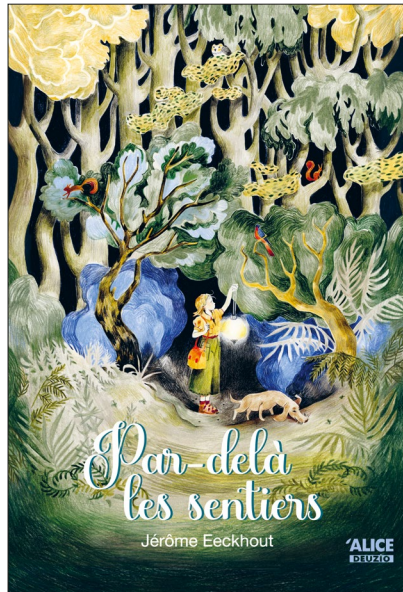
Jérôme Eeckhout lives just outside of Liège, where he was born in 1974. Over the years he has been involved in a range of curious pursuits including archaeology, dendrochronology, even embarking on a thrilling career as a civil servant. To keep a healthy mind, he has practised writing and illustration for many years. He has turned his pen (and his pencils) towards children's literature so his kids will think he's a cool dad.

JÉRÔME EECKHOUT

FR
*Par-delà
les sentiers*

EN
*Off the beaten
track*

Title	<i>Par-delà les sentiers</i>
Author	Jérôme Eeckhout
Genre	Young readers
Publisher	© Alice Jeunesse
Format	14 x 21 cm
Pages	296
ISBN	978-2-87426-511-2
Keywords	Adventure, nature, legendary creatures, human relationship, mysterious investigations



Once again, Jérôme Eeckhout whisks us away on a fantastical adventure full of suspense and twists and turns, in search of a forgotten creature...

This summer, Ana is going on holiday far away, in the mountains. Her mum is taking her with on a research mission to investigate the mysterious accident of her mentor, Professor Ovide Lachance, as well as the strange creature he was studying: the zylvat. Andreï, Ana's dog, also tags along. They share a unique relationship as ever since she was young, Ana could talk to animals. Her gift might even be enough to help her uncover just what happened in the village of Petru. An adventure in the great outdoors, exploring strong human relationships and intriguing mysteries.

Chapter 1, where we pass by someone passing out

The old professor comes back to his senses. He half opens his eyes, but his clouded vision only makes out some colourful shadows moving around against a blue background. He quickly realises that his other senses have become just as fuzzy. His ears roughly capture the outside noise and only a low buzzing echoes in his skull. The pain that had just a few hours ago been piercing his side had given way to a worrying numbness. Although trying not to move too much, he is overwhelmed by a feeling of losing his balance. He tries to focus, and after a few seconds, he realises that this is more than just a dizzy spell: his body is slowly swaying to and fro because he is still being carried, laid out on a makeshift stretcher. He's not in the cave anymore. The pale light he sees is the early morning sun, and the moving shadows are the branches and leaves moving overhead. The old professor does not know how much time has gone by. When the jolting stops, he feels he is being softly slid onto the ground, onto his uninjured side. Despite their care, the pain comes back, spreading with an unbearable intensity. He tries to focus his attention on something else. He thinks about the previous night, to those last few hours and his discovery. Very slowly, after several long minutes, the numbness returns, to his great relief. Later, there is an indistinct sound that could be a shout. Someone calling a name, perhaps. He reopens his eyes and, this time, a huge silhouette looms overhead, leaning over his body. Everything is blurry still, but he sees this shadow approaching and hears it emitting a sort of repetitive grunt. The professor doesn't want to try and move, he doesn't think he'll be capable. What appears to be a huge hand lands on his forehead. He faints again.



Geneviève Casterman is an author and illustrator and teaches illustration at the Brussels School of Graphic Research (ERG Brussels) and, up until recently, the Art School of Ixelles, where she ran a children's workshop. Her works have been published by Esperluète Éditions and l'École des Loisirs (Pastel), including such tender stories of daily life as *Costa Belgica*, *Rue de Praetere*, *E411*, *Se jeter à l'eau* and *Cours Lola, cours!* Her research with children has resulted in the creation of several works on workshop teaching methods (*Copains gribouill'arts* and *Copains des Peintres*, now out of print).

GENEVIÈVE CASTERMAN

FR

Un nouvel ami

EN

New friend

Title	<i>Un nouvel ami</i>
Author	Geneviève Casterman
Genre	Young readers
Publisher	© Esperluète
Format	15,5 x 21 cm
Pages	24
ISBN	978-2-35984-154-1
Keywords	Childhood, daily life, friendship, discovering nature, animals



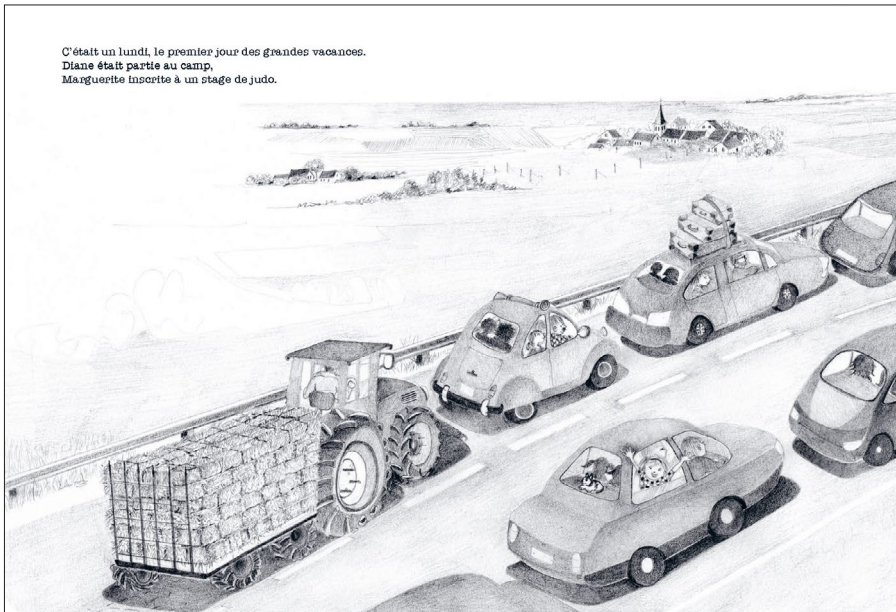
It's the first day of the summer holidays. Lily, Basile and Claire are spending them at their village. A new friend soon appears, much to their delight...

This story is the first volume in a series of picture books entitled *La bande à Lily* ("Lily's gang"), which invites

us into the everyday world of a group of children. They all live in the same village, the stage for their adventures. Each character has their own personality, revealed through a series of stories.

These little picture books, presented in the format of school workbooks, tell us about rural living, childhood, friendship, closeness, and all the little things that come together to make childhood what it is. In these simple tales, adventure is waiting at the turn of a path or at the bottom of the garden.

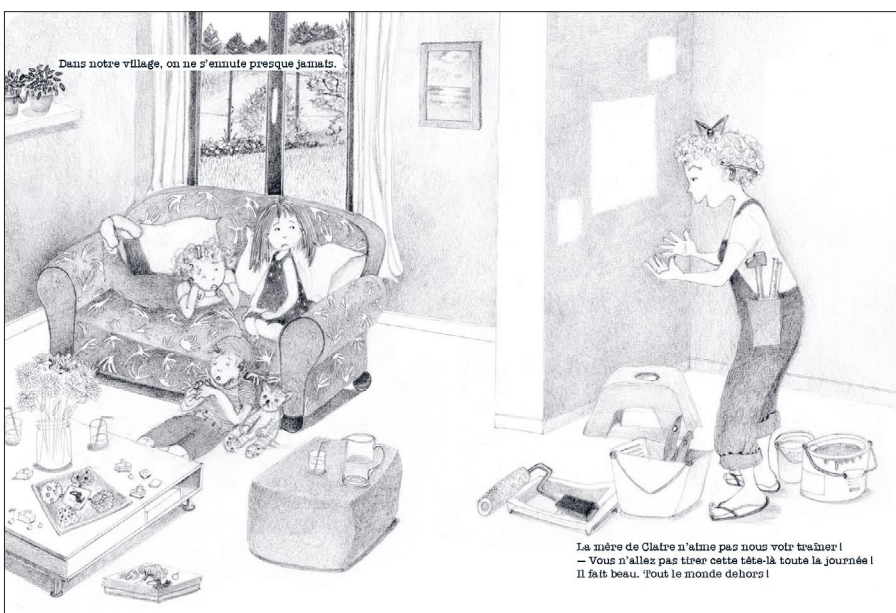
Friendship is the force that guides each of these episodes. Geneviève Casterman, with a keen eye for the realities of everyday living, captures these childhood moments. Her illustrations, drawn in pencil in black and white, are consistently joyful, expressive and meticulously detailed.



It was a Monday, the first day of the summer holidays. Diane had left for summer camp, Marguerite was going to do a judo course.



Diane, Marguerite, Claire, Basile and I live just a stone's throw from the motorway in a village surrounded by fields, with a railway, a river and lots of little dirt paths going through it.



We hardly ever get bored.

Claire's mum doesn't like us lazing around!
"You're not going to mope around like that all day!
It's lovely weather, everybody outside!"



Amélie Javaux works as a psychologist in Liège (Belgium, La Citadelle Regional Hospital and CHC MontLégia). She works with children and adolescents diagnosed with serious illnesses. Her first children's book tackled the subject of a life ending with great sensitivity, and since then she has soundly and constructively explored the great issues of our society, such as school bullying and the role of screens in family life.

JAVAUX MASSON

FR
*Ma famille
déconnectée*

EN
*My disconnected
family*

Title	<i>Ma famille déconnectée</i>
Author	Amélie Javaux Annick Masson
Genre	Young readers
Publisher	© Mijade
Format	24,3 x 27,5 cm
Pages	32
ISBN	978-2-8077-0149-6
Keywords	Animals, screens, family, daily life



Cookie was the happiest dog in the world... Until screens took over his home. Now, César, Barnabé and Anémone only have eyes for their tablets, smartphones and consoles. And their parents aren't any better, spending every evening glued to the TV screen and their smartphones. Cookie has decided enough is enough: he sets about getting his family to reconnect with real activities, with each other and above all, with him.

© D.R.



Annick Masson was born in 1969 near Liège. After studying illustration at Institut Saint-Luc in Liège, she started working in an animation studio, then as a layout artist in a publishing house for 15 years before working on her own books full time. She illustrated her first children’s book in 2006. Since then, her albums have warmed the hearts of readers and publishers thanks to their sensitivity, authenticity, and humour.



I joined my family one lovely Autumn morning. You should have seen their smiling faces and the twinkle in their eyes.

“A cocker spaniel!” shouted César.
“My very own doggie,” added Barnabé.
“Can I play with him?” asked Anémone.

I was so sweet, they named me Cookie!

In this family, everything comes in threes:

walks...

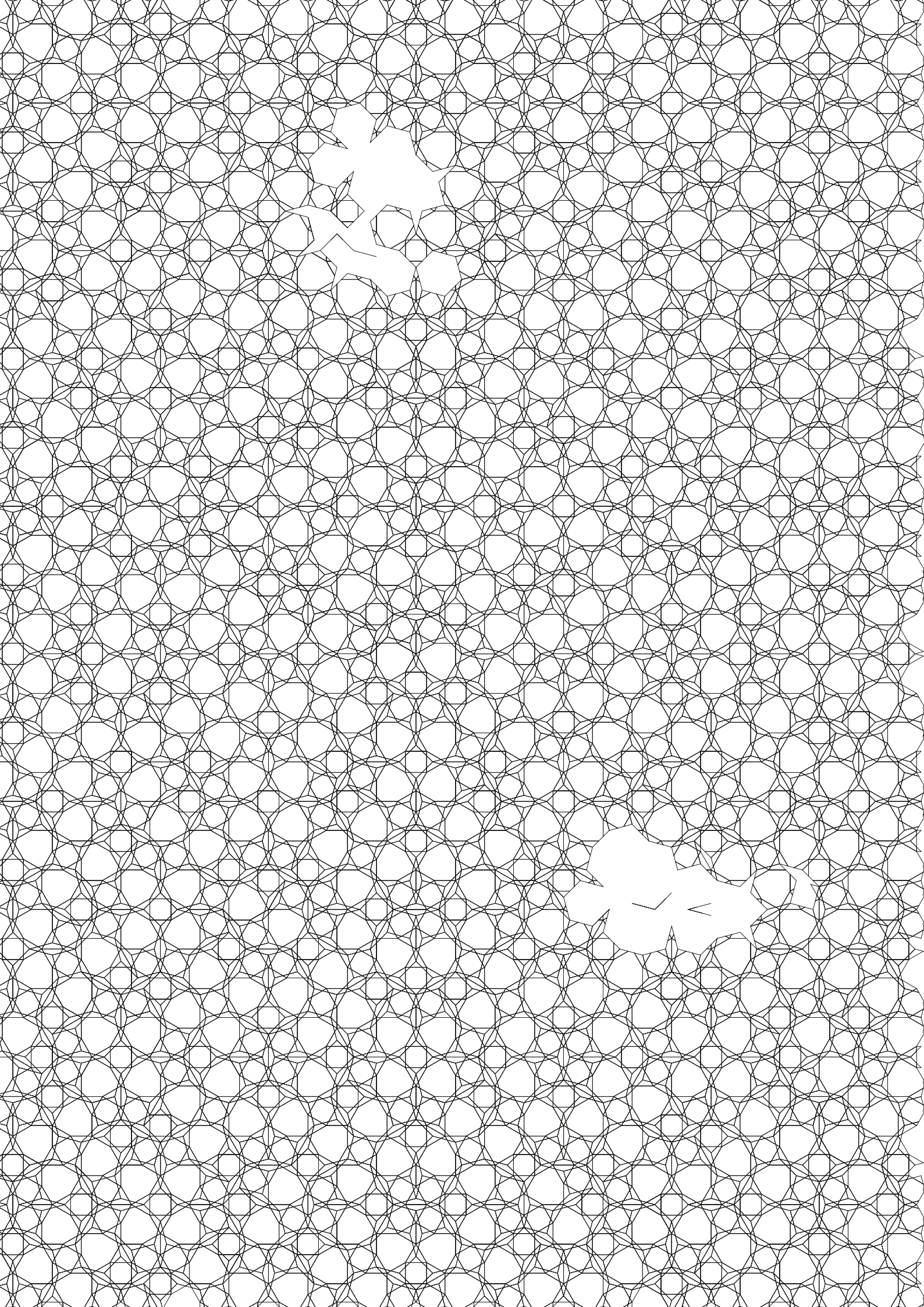


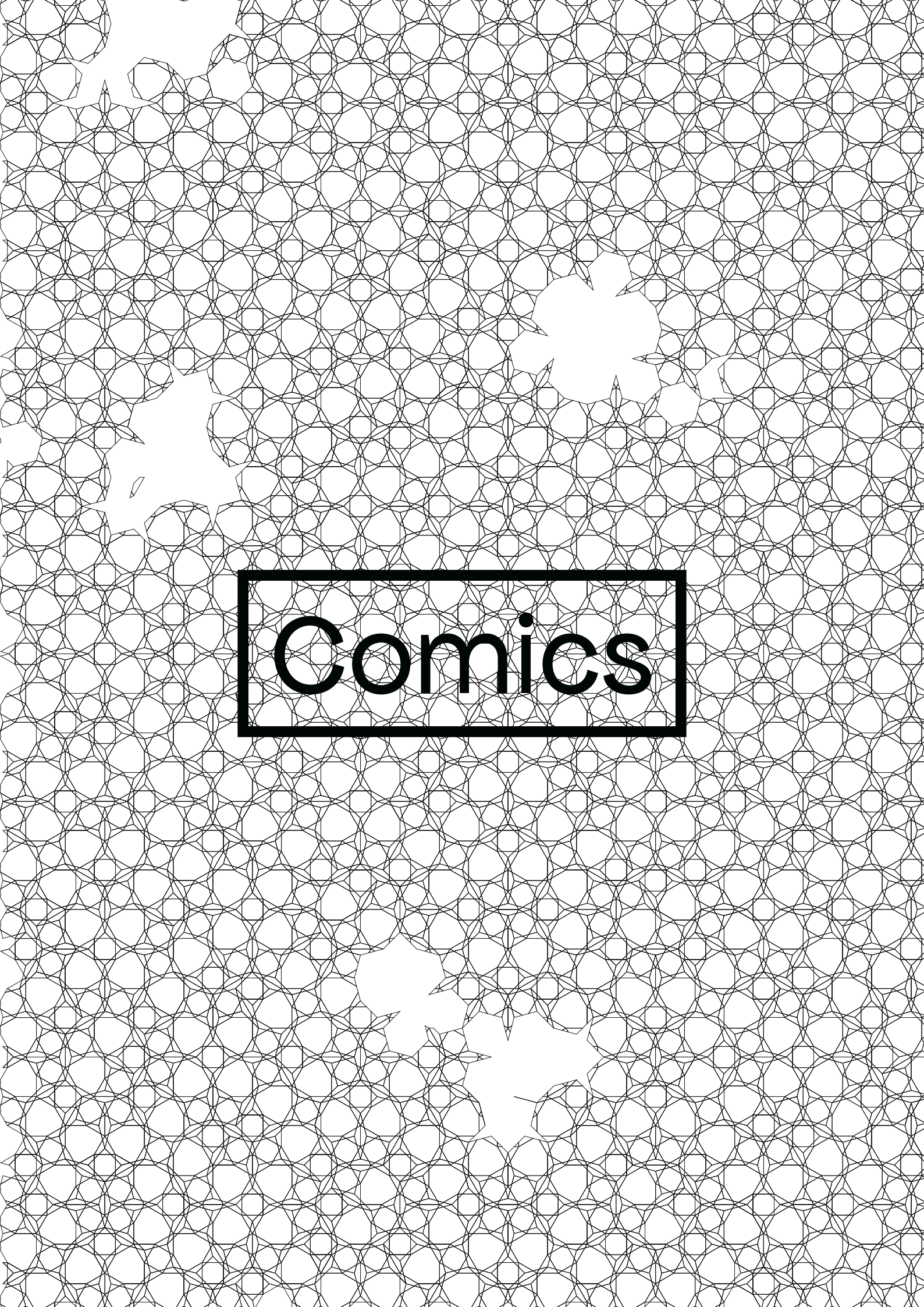
...scratches,

and kibble!

I was the happiest dog in the world... Up until Granny’s last visit, that is. I immediately recognised that look of wonder in their eyes.

“A smartphone!” shouted César.
“My very own console!” added Barnabé.
“A tablette! Can I play with it?” asked Anémone





Comics

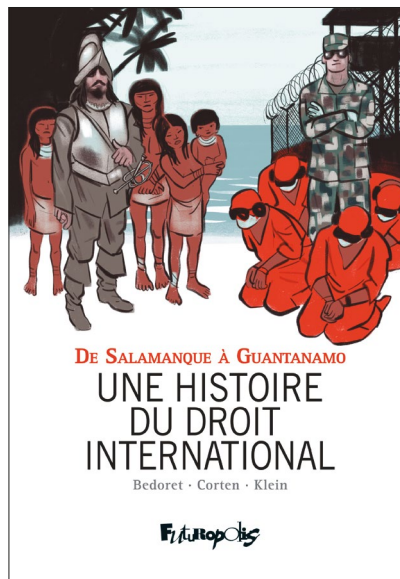


CORTEN, KLEIN BEDORET

FR
*Une histoire
du droit
international*

EN
*A History of
International
Law*

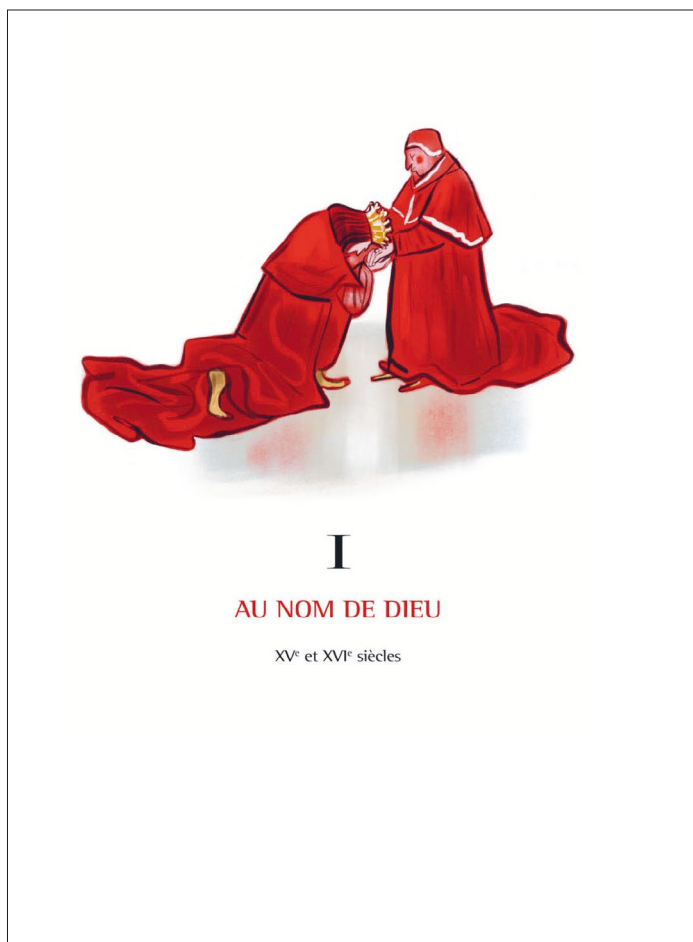
Title	<i>Une histoire du droit international De Salamanque à Guantanamo</i>
Author	Olivier Corten Pierre Klein Gérard Bedoret
Genre	Comics
Publisher	© Futuropolis
Format	20 x 27,2 cm
Pages	256
ISBN	978-2-7548-3353-0
Keywords	Colonization, international law, history, current debates, sovereignty



Why is Portuguese spoken in Brazil and Spanish in the rest of Latin America?" Why are the borders between African countries so often made up of straight lines separating peoples who used to live as one? Why exactly is Bashar

al-Assad still in power in Syria while Muammar Gaddafi was assassinated in Libya? And what does all this have to do with international law? This one-of-a-kind book presents international law from a historical perspective, making it easier to understand the principles and processes of today's international legal system. It is hard, for example, to understand the current debates concerning the situation in Syria without having a clear idea of the concept of sovereignty – a concept that was formalised from the 17th Century onwards and that has been refined over time and through practice. This historical tableau takes a series of specific examples from various moments in history, and is written by two professors of international law from the University of Brussels.

Olivier Corten and Pierre Klein have taught international law at University of Brussels (ULB) for almost 25 years. They have published a total of twenty books and almost 250 articles. In 2013, the ULB's Centre for International Law launched a large-scale project led by Olivier, aimed at decompartmentalising the academic and popular/cultural readings of international law. Their graphic novel forms part of this initiative. Alongside his work as an architect, Gérard Bedoret has manically filled up countless sketchbooks with his drawings. He now focuses solely on illustration. *Une histoire du droit international* is his first full-length graphic novel.



In the name of God
15th and 16th centuries

The 4th of May 1493,
Vatican City,
Rome.

it's my turn

Rodrigo Borgia, also known as His Holiness
Pope Alexander VI 1431-1503

Alexander, bishop, servant of the servants of
God, to his dearest son in Christ, Ferdinand,
and his dearest daughter in Christ, Isabella,
illustrious King and Queen of Castile, Leon,
Aragon, Sicily and Granada, greetings and
apostolic blessings...



Among the efforts that are pleasing to the
divine majesty and dear to our hearts, there is
none better, surely, than the propagation and
development, in all places, of the Catholic faith
and the Christian religion, the salvation of
souls...

He's talking to us!

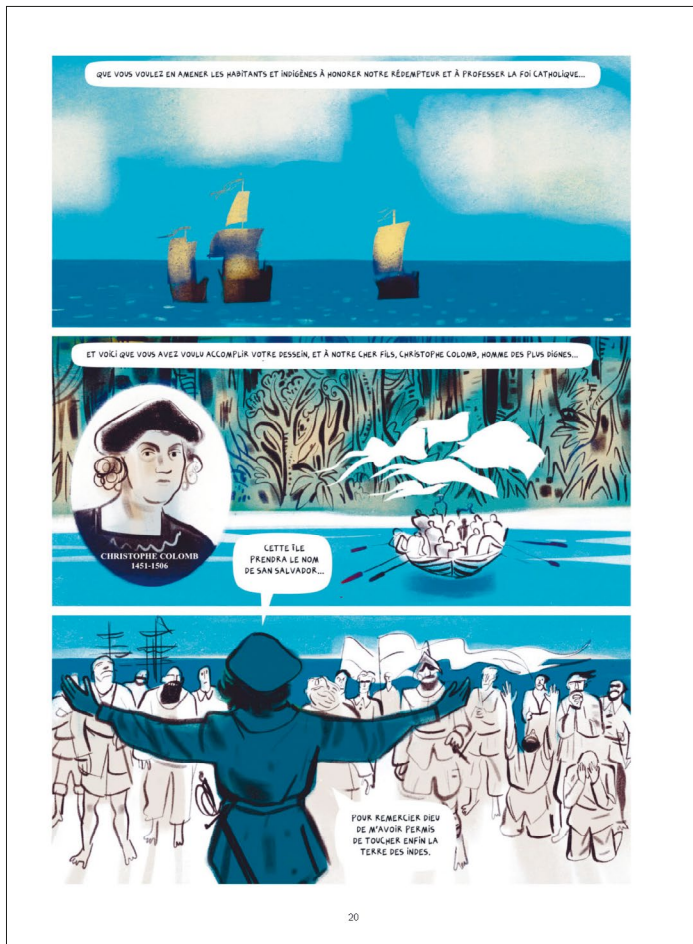
On 2 January 1492, the Reconquista and the
Islamic kingdom of Granada came to an end
under our reign, bringing seven centuries of
Muslim presence in Europe to a close.

Isabella I
1451-1504
The Queen of Castille

Ferdinand II
1452-1516
The King of Aragon

...the submission of barbaric nations and their
conversion to the faith... We know that you
have long proposed to seek and find remote
and unknown islands and continents, yet to be
discovered...





20

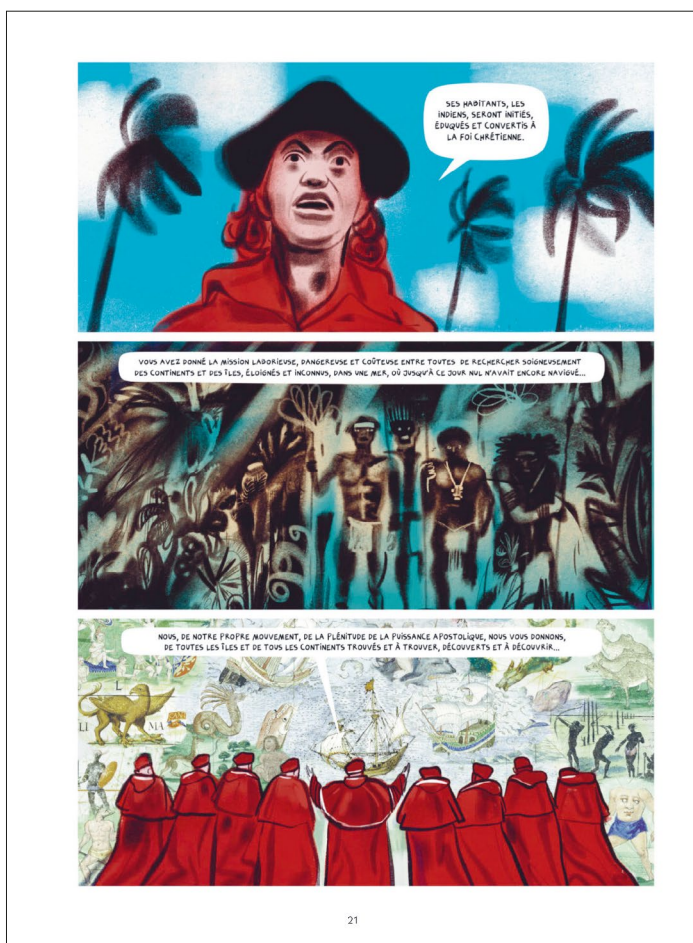
That you wish to lead their inhabitants and native peoples to honour our Redeemer and to profess the Catholic faith...

And now you have strived to accomplish your purpose and to our dear son, Christopher Columbus, a most worthy man...

Christopher Columbus
1451-1506

This island will be named San Salvador...

To thank God for having allowed me to finally set foot on the Indies.



21

Its inhabitants, the Indians, will be initiated, educated and converted to the Christian faith.

you have assigned the most laborious dangerous and costly of all missions: to search rigorously for remote and unknown continents and islands, in a sea never sailed before...

We, of our own volition, with the fullness of our apostolic power, grant to you, of all the islands and continents found and yet to be found, discovered and yet to be discovered...



Jean-Luc Cornette was born in Belgium in 1966. After completing his studies at the Institut Saint Luc in Brussels, he started working in children's illustration before gaining recognition in 1989 for his work in the *Tintin Reporter*. He then went on to produce his own children's series *Les enfants terribles* for Casterman in 1995, then turned his attention to scriptwriting for Michel Constant (*Red River Hotel*, *Au Centre du Nowhere*), Christian Durieux (*Columbia*, *Central Park*), Stéphane Oiry (*Les Passes murailles*, 2009) and Jürg (*Ziyi*). In 2013, he published *Le Sourire de Mao* with Futuropolis, then *Un million d'éléphants* with Vanyda in 2017, before returning to his coloured pencils once again to do his own adaptation of *The Pearl* by John Steinbeck.

CORNETTE BALTHAZAR

FR

*Kristina,
la reine-garçon*

EN

*Kristina,
the boy-queen*

Title	<i>Kristina, la reine-garçon</i>
Author	Jean-Luc Cornette Flore Balthazar
Genre	Comics
Publisher	© Futuropolis
Format	20 x 27,2 cm
Pages	96
ISBN	978-2-75482-820-8
Keywords	Feminism, history of Sweden, 17th century, Descartes



Adapted from the play *Christine, la reine-garçon* by Michel Marc Bouchard. Kristina, the Queen of Sweden, astounded everyone with her modern ways. An enigmatic ruler, a woman thirsty for knowledge, an astute politician, flamboyant and unpredictable, a tomboy and a feminist ahead of her time, she revolutionised Northern Europe in the mid-17th century!

Stockholm, 20 December 1650: Kristina has ruled Sweden since her father passed away when she was just 7 years old, and she was crowned at the age of 24. Kristina, as ugly as she was seductive, more of a man than her fiercest soldiers, more political than her diplomats, and more erudite than her scholars, invites the French philosopher René Descartes to the kingdom so that he can teach his theory of the passions of the body and soul.

© D.R.



Flore Balthazar is a scriptwriter and illustrator born on 23 February 1981 in La Louvière (Belgium). She now lives in Orléans (France). Since 2004, she works – among other roles – as an illustrator at Planète Enfants and Planète Jeunes, with African newspapers in the Bayard group, and at Spirou magazine since 2006 (*Jack le Sanguinaire*, a medieval series about a young girl who wants to become a knight) and several full works, on her own or in collaboration with Frank Le Gall, Thiriet, Zidrou, Laurent Letzer, and others.

In 2015, Flore and Jean-Luc previously worked together on a biography of Frida Kahlo for Éditions Delcourt.

Caught between the masculine and the feminine, the austerity of Luther and the splendour of Catholicism, between her love for a woman, the Countess Ebba Sparre, also her second lady in waiting, and the State that demands an heir, Kristina is seeking the truth, her truth. To accomplish her own personal aspirations, she eventually frees herself from the shackles imposed by her faith and her title. She abdicates and flees to Rome to devote herself to the arts.

Jean-Luc Cornette and Flore Balthazar have created a superb adaptation of the play *Christine, la reine-garçon* by playwright Michel Marc Bouchard and show us, through this often violent but always passionate tale, all the complexity of the Swedish court, ruled by this unique woman.





Kristina, king of Sweden, it is a great honour for me to place upon your head the crown of our beloved late king Gustav II Adolf, your father.

Long live Kristina!

Long live the king!

Long live Kristina!

Long live the king!



Long live Kristina!

Long live the king!

Long live the king!

You called for us, your majesty?

Help me out of this dress. It is inhumane to be dressed in such a ridiculous costume!



Kristina!

Karl Gustav?

What are you doing?

You're hurting me!

Unhand me, you animal!



By God's arse, unhand me at once!

Father, shouldn't we separate them?

Leave them, Johan... Leave them.

Ah, there you are! I've been shouting myself hoarse for so long that if this brute had been a bear, you'd have found nothing but a pile of bones!

By the bleeding wounds of Christ, I go hunting and I end up being the prey!



Born in Morocco in 1989, Aniss El Hamouri has a Belgian–Moroccan double nationality. He moved to Belgium in 2007 where he graduated with a Bachelor’s in illustration from the ESA Saint-Luc in Liège, followed by a master’s in illustration from the Liège Royal Academy of Fine Arts. He currently lives in Brussels and spends his time working on graphic novels, illustration and self-publishing. In 2017, he co-founded the micro-publishing house Brumeville with his sidekicks Thomas Vermeire and Docteur Lunet. He pursued his own creative path, working in the dark fantasy genre, on series such as *Buffy, the vampire slayer* (Joss Whedon) and *Neon Genesis Evangelion* (Hideaki Anno). The brutal decadence of his graphic style is paired with a wonderful narrative density that makes him one of the young authors to watch this decade.

ANISS EL HAMOURI

FR
Ils brûlent
Volume 1:
Cendre et Rivière

EN
They are burning
Volume 1:
Cendre et Rivière
("Cinders and River")

Title	<i>Ils brûlent</i>
Author	Aniss El Hamouri
Genre	Comics
Publisher	© 6 Pieds sous terre Editions
Format	18,5 x 26 cm
Pages	216
ISBN	978-2-35212-178-7
Keywords	Medieval world, witches, magical powers, identity, friendship

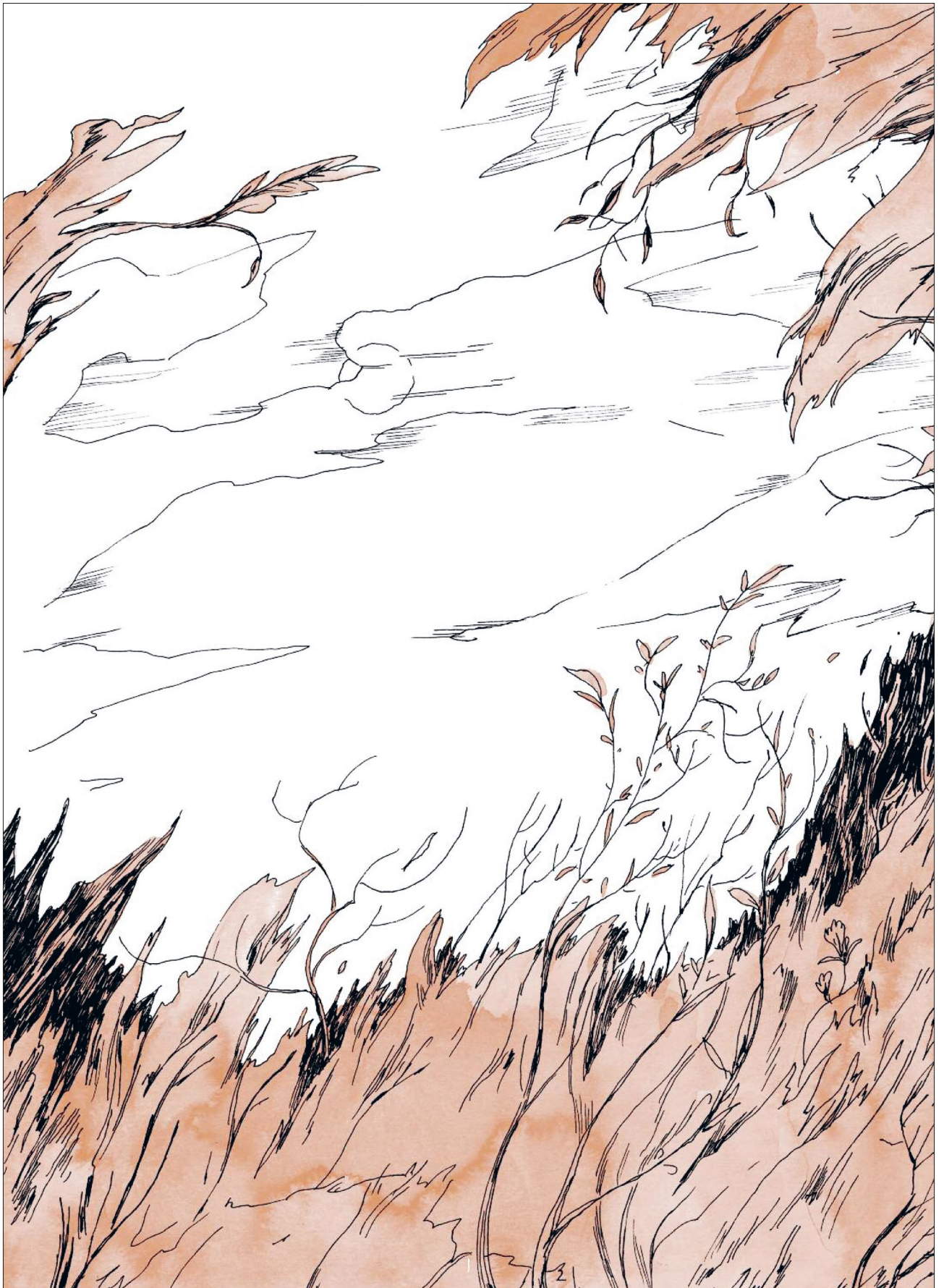


In a hostile, medieval world absorbed in a never-ending witch hunt, the young Georg is helping Nail and Rain, two strange girls with a traumatic past, to flee the Sanctuary, a prison ran by the Inquisition. Blessed with powers too terrifying for mere mortals, unable to explain their origins or even their identity, nail and

Rain, accompanied by Georg, set off on a hopeless wander across the country. Over time, Georg discovers the full extent of the consequences of the physical and mental abuse suffered by Nail and Rain and realises he has committed to a seemingly impossible quest. Armed with his kindness and his candour, he tries to help them to heal, one step at a time. Where can they find a safe place in a world that wants them dead? What’s more, an unrelenting inquisitor, nicknamed the Sorcerer, is hot on their tails, and seems to be able to find them even in their dreams. Will they receive any help from the strange voice coming from the heart of the forest, as they venture deeper and deeper into the undergrowth?

Ils brûlent is a mystical and poetic tale of identity, trauma, the difficult path to healing and friendship. The story will be told over three volumes.

In 2018 Aniss El Hamouri was awarded the Prix Révélation by ADAGP/Quai des bulles for his first book *Comme un frisson* (initially published by Vide Cocagne).





Does she have to grab onto us like that?

It's attracting too much attention.

Have you seen her?

She looks crazy.



She's frightened...

...aren't you?





Mortis Ghost is a comic book writer, illustrator, video game designer and philanthropist. He is most well known for designing and producing OFF, an online RPG adored by fans around the world. He also participates in the young Brussels comic book scene along with his friends: Marie Spénale, Xavier Bouyssou, Yohan Sacré, Aniss El Hamouri, and Juliette Boutant (to name just a few). In 2018, he came back to his first love and set about producing an epic science fiction series: *Dr Cataclysm*. This unique, laid-back and comical space opera was published in four volumes by L'employé du moi. Otherwise, his passions also include food, robots and communication between living souls.

MORTIS GHOST

FR

Le soleil des mages

EN

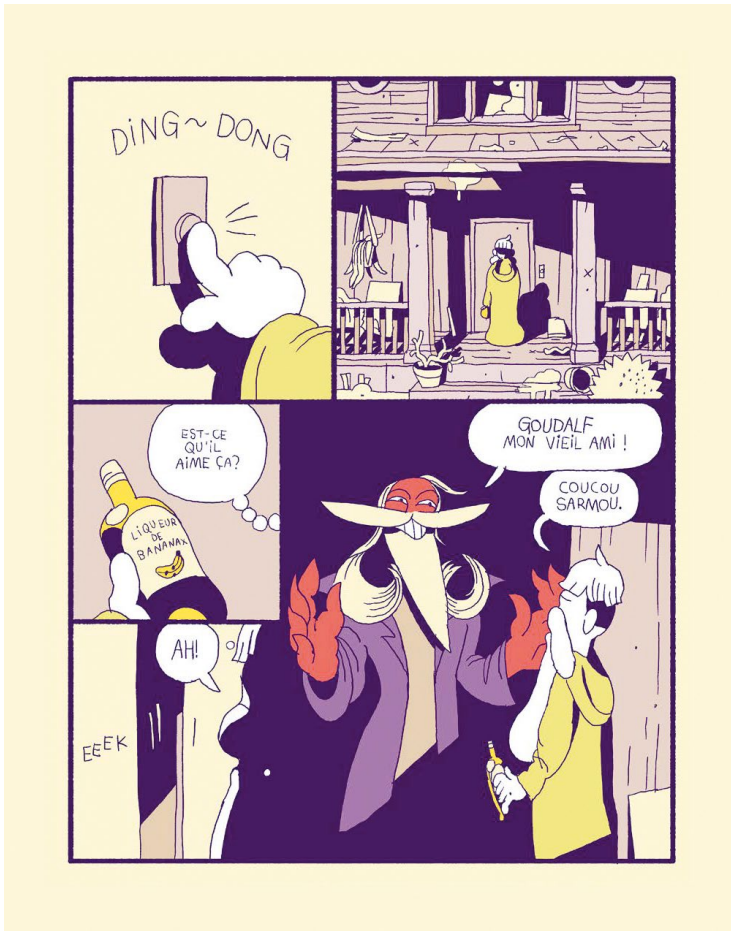
The wizard sun

Title	Le soleil des mages
Author	Mortis Ghost
Genre	Comics
Publisher	© L'employé du moi
Format	17 x 21,5 cm
Pages	96
ISBN	978-2-39004-094-1
Keywords	Aventure, Quête, Relecture, Humour, Fantasy, Magie, Seigneur des Anneaux, Pain elfique, Goudalf, Sarmoumane, Road-trip, Camaraderie



Sarmoumane the wizard has completely lost his marbles. Goudalf, his friend, is sure that the magic ring possessed by the innocent Prodon is the cause of his slow descent into madness. He assembles a group of old friends to destroy the cursed ring by melting it in the lava of Mourdor. Prodon is entrusted to wear the ring, as his honesty and kindness protect him from the power

it wields over humans. It has, however, already corrupted one of his fellow creatures, Goloum. Goudalf sets off with Prodon, Samouel, Aragornna and Yegolas on an adventure by car, train and on foot to the volcano of Mourdor. The little gang hopes that if they leave on Friday evening, they'll be back in time to enjoy their Sunday off before heading back to work on Monday morning. Repackaged as a laidback and carefree road trip, the latest book by Mortis Ghost, following on from his *Dr Cataclysm* series, is a retelling of a legendary fantasy tale. Although the author takes inspiration from this world-famous saga, he strips it of its epic weight, bringing the heroic fantasy back down to Earth.



Ding-Dong

Will he like this?

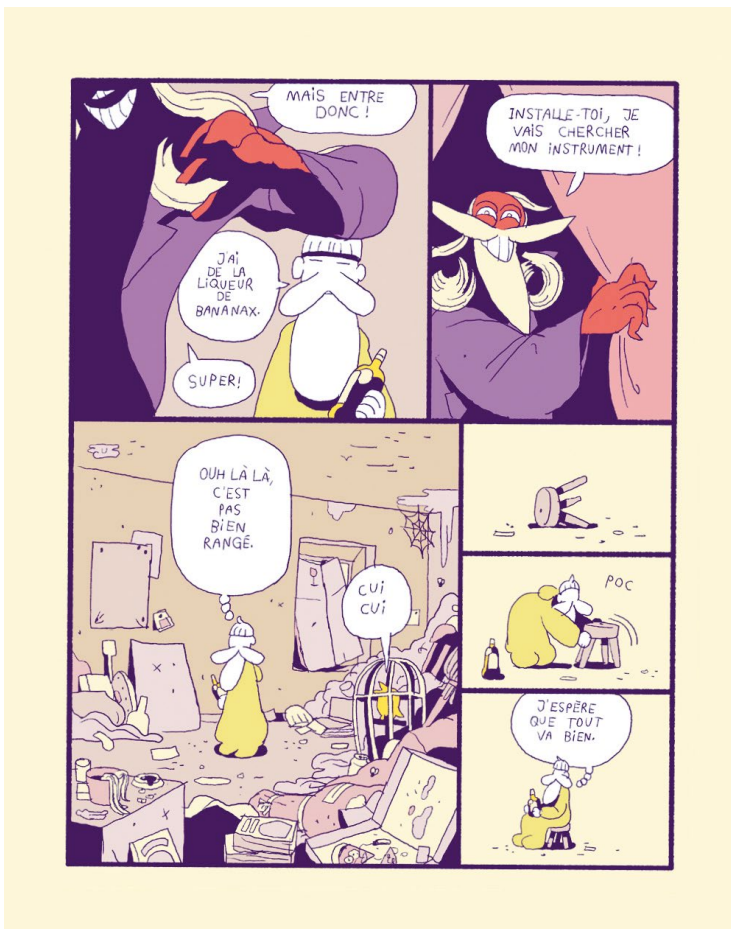
Bananax liqueur

Goudalf, old friend!

Hey, Sarmou.

Ah!

CREEEAK



Come on in!

I brought some bananax liqueur.

Great!

Make yourself at home,
I'll go get my instrument.

Oh dear, it's a bit of a mess in here.

Cheep cheep

TAP

I hope he's doing alright.



Dominique Goblet was born in Brussels in 1967 and studied illustration at the Institut Saint-Luc. She regularly exhibits her paintings and sculptures in Belgium and abroad. Her mixed-media techniques and multiple influences form her own unique graphic language. Her first book, *Portraits crachés*, published by Fréon, brought together stories and images inspired by the iconic second-generation comic magazines of the 1990s. Her first full-length book, *Souvenir d'une journée parfaite*, was published in 2001 as part of the *Récits de villes* ("Tales of our towns") project. In 2007, the publication by L'Association of her autobiographical work *Faire semblant, c'est mentir*, which she had started working on 12 years prior, shows the coherence of a body of work that questions representations and intimacy as well as fiction and time. In 2010, she finished her book *Chronographie*, made up of portraits of her daughter by the artist and portraits of the artist by her daughter, collected since 2002 she publishes *L'amour dominical* with Dominique Théâte. *Plus si entente*, co-written with Kai Pfeiffer, was published by FRMK and Actes Sud BD in 2015. Her latest book comes in two volumes *Ostende* and *Ostende carnets*.

DOMINIQUE GOBLET

FR
Ostende

EN
Ostend

Title	<i>Ostende</i>
Author	Dominique Goblet
Genre	Comics
Publisher	© Frmk
Format	32 x 23,8 cm
Pages	88
ISBN	978-2-39022-028-2
Keywords	Flanders, melancholy, landscape, appearances

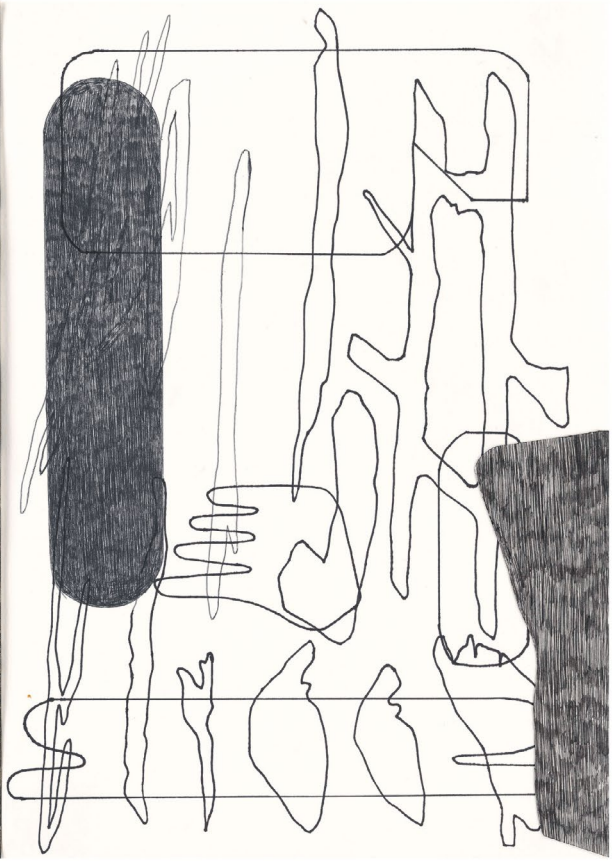


In Flanders, Ostend and the surrounding area, where the sea sleeps or crashes against the jetty, where peaceful cows graze all day long, where one sole woman takes off her clothes in public, where geometric forms gather in the sky...

Ostend, the first volume in the *Derrière* series is at first glance a series of seaside images, a melancholy wander through the peaceful landscapes of Flanders. But

under their timeless aesthetic beauty, these landscapes are ready to burst, inhabited by hypotheses of what is hidden beneath appearances and habit, by desires, fantasies, physical and abstract forms, which linger between the real and the imaginary. A geometric language disrupts the space, noises break the comfortable silence and force it to talk, like accidents on the set of a carefully directed show, rips in a familiar curtain, where we find sensations, tensions, desires...









Kid Toussaint was born not very long ago and not very far away. He is a Sagittarius, Virgo rising, which always goes down well at high-brow parties. Alternating between defining himself as a “writer”, “translator”, “astrophysicist”, “wrestler”, and even “scriptwriter” (which is often the case), he has made a vow to write a serious autobiography after his death. In the meantime, he writes graphic novels.

TOUSSAINT STOKART

FR

Elles

UNIVERSELLE(S)

EN

Elle:

UNIVERS-ELLE

Title	<i>Elles</i> UNIVERSELLE(S)
Author	Kid Toussaint Aveline Stokart
Genre	Comics
Publisher	© Le Lombard
Format	19 x 24 cm
Pages	96
ISBN	978-2-80820-000-4
Keywords	Subconscious personalities psychological trauma

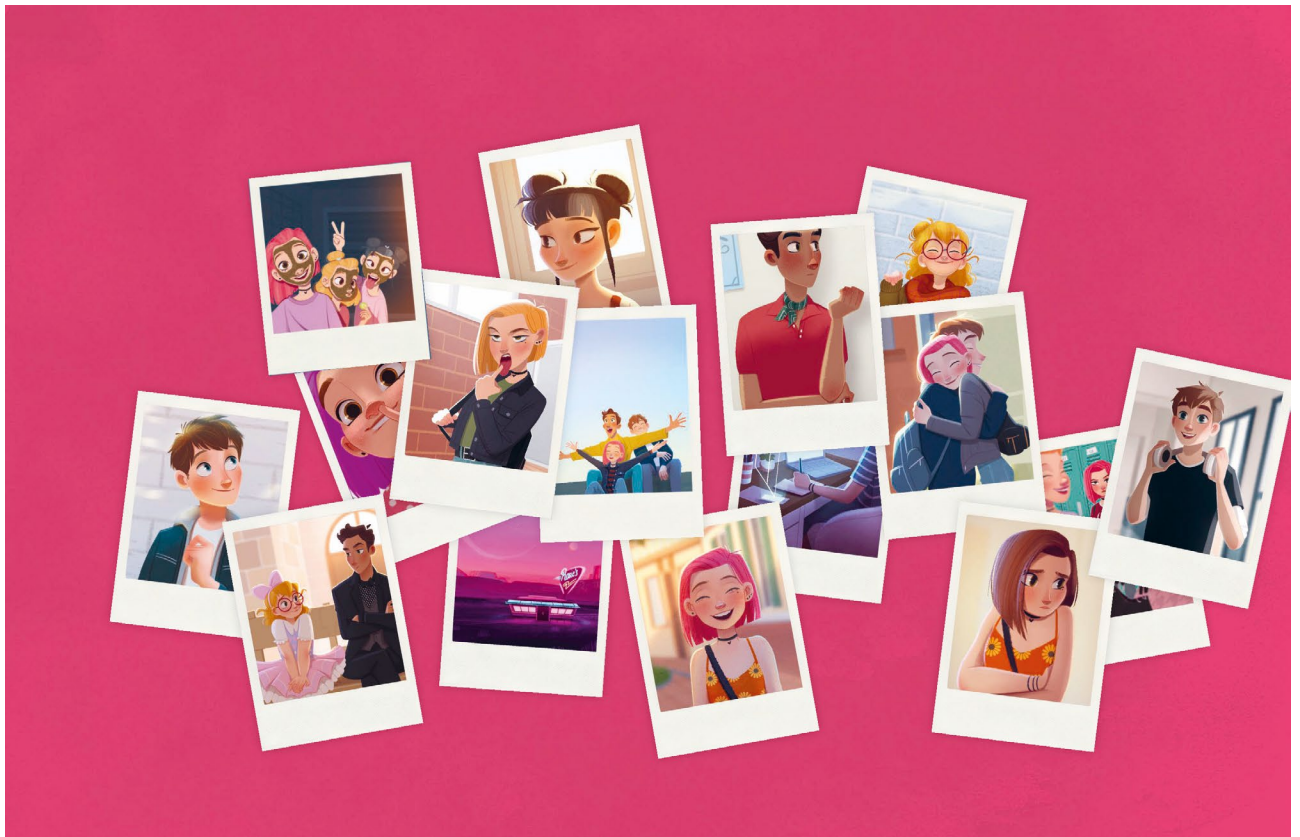


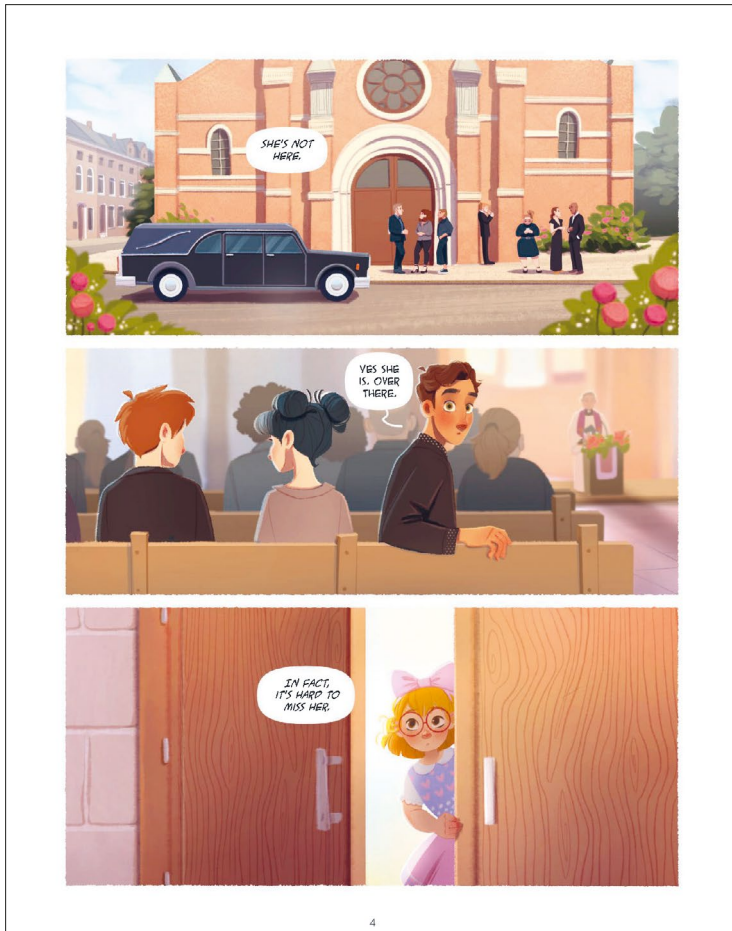
The recent psychological trauma faced by Elle have allowed Blue, her deeply buried inner personality, to take complete control, banishing Elle to the limbo of her own subconscious. Blue is sociable, cheerful, artistically gifted... In fact, Blue is pretty much an amalgam of all of Elle’s personalities. But if Blue is so great, why is Elle spending her life trying to keep her imprisoned, deep within herself?

© D.R.



Aveline Stokart is a nineties kid who grew up in a family very much oriented towards culture, illustration, and artistic expression in general. After studying a degree in computer graphics design and 3D animation in Namur, Belgium, Aveline took a step back from illustration for several years before understanding just how important it was to her. Self-taught, she practised tirelessly, putting together and taking apart her characters, given them their now-unmistakeable finesse. The illustrator is now taking on a new challenge: the world of graphic novels. Her first book, *ELLES* (the first volume of an open-ended series), was published by Lombard in 2021. With a comic book hero name like Aveline Stokart, maybe it was destiny all along!



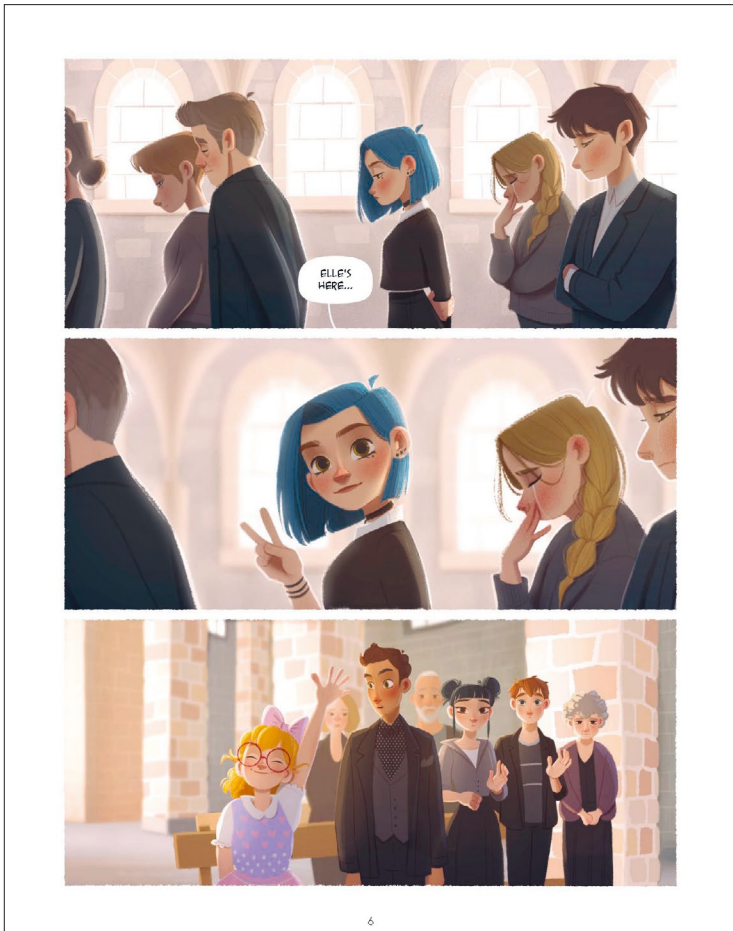


She's not here
 Ah, there she is.
 And how could you miss her?



But... Line! You don't wear pink to a funeral!
 Aaaah... That's what you meant by "ceremony"
 I was just saying Elle's not here.
 She'll surely show up.
 It's her aunt's funeral!

I don't know... Maybe her parents wanted to protect her
 Stand up.
 What? It's already over?



She's here...



Elle? Are you OK?

I mean...

Given the circumstances, I guess not, but...

Maëlys...

I know...

It was a stupid question.

I'm so glad you came!

Oh... Um... OK...



Clara Lodewick, born in Brussels in 1996, grew up between two linguistic communities: Flemish and French-speaking. She studied at the Saint-Gilles illustration school, then at Halle after moving to Flanders as a teenager. Clara then spent three years discovering the possibilities of the world of comics, guided by her professors at the Haute École Saint-Luc in Brussels. She is particularly interested in people's lives, relationships, and problems, the social inequalities they face, and their connection with nature. In 2022, she published *Merel*, her first graphic novel, with Éditions Dupuis, as part of the collection *Les Ondes Marcinelle*.

CLARA LODEWICK

FR
Merel

EN
Merel

Title	<i>Merel</i>
Author	Clara Lodewick
Genre	Comics
Publisher	© Dupuis
Format	26 x 19,5 cm
Pages	160
ISBN	979-1-0347-6268-2
Keywords	Single woman, rural life in Flanders, village



Merel is a forty-something single woman with no husband or children. She splits her time between duck breeding, her local football club, and writing, and lives a life of harmony and friendships. But one evening, chaos ensues when Mari makes a joke about her neighbour's husband's sexuality. This joke sparks the spread of rumours that *Merel* is sleeping with all the men in her little village in Flanders. The entire community starts to gang up on her, making her life a living hell...

This is the first graphic novel by Clara Lodewick, a young artist from Brussels, with illustrations and scriptwriting full of maturity. In this book, she provides a rare and astute social commentary on rural life in Flanders. Her tone and illustrations in direct colours immediately warm you to her cast of characters!



A round of applause, please!

Clap! Clap Clap Clap Clap!

Thank you! We're going to start with the special prize, an award that's very dear to our hearts. It is intended...

...to encourage young poultry farmers in their work. For his tenacity and dedication, this prize goes to... Lars!

Bravo!
Clap clap clap

45th of poultry farmers

My sincere congratulations, young man!

The jury hopes that this will inspire your growing ambition.

Now...

...First prize in all categories...

...goes to Alexis and his Balinese Crested Duck!
One of Hainaut's finest poultry farmers!

Yeess clap clap

Don't worry, you're the prettiest of the lot.

Don't fret, now.

Ne t'en fais pas, va!

There, there...

The jury have no taste...

Anyway, we don't care, do we?





Born in 1975, Romain Renard studied at the Institut Saint-Luc in Brussels, and is a comic book author, scriptwriter, illustrator and musician. He has worked on video games, produced live shows with Franco Dragone and Pascal Jacob and is a writer-composer for artists including the rock band ROM. With Casterman, he has published *American Seasons* (with scriptwriting by Yves Vasseur), voted best graphic novel at the Polar festival in Cognac in 2005, *The End*, *Jim Morrison* in 2007, an adaptation of the Daniel Woodrell novel *Un hiver de glace* in 2011 and illustrations for the City Guide to Montreal/Québec with Lonely Planet/Casterman. With the “Melville” series, published with Lombard, he has produced a strong, personal work that asserts a real artistic maturity.

ROMAIN RENARD

FR

Melville

(tome 3):

L'histoire de Ruth Jacob

EN

Melville

(volume 3):

the story of Ruth Jacob

Title	<i>Melville (tome 3): L'histoire de Ruth Jacob</i>
Author	Romain Renard
Genre	Comics
Publisher	© Le Lombard
Format	22,5 x 31,8 cm
Pages	400
ISBN	978-2-8036-7204-2
Keywords	True love, summer, tragedy



Have you ever known true love? The one that stays with you forever, the one you would do anything for, even the very worst?

Paul Rivert has known such a love. It was summer in Melville, he was fourteen years old, and he had fallen in love with Ruth, the pastor's daughter. Their passion ended in a fiery tragedy and Paul has never been the same since. Now, he is forced to return after more than twenty-five years. But Melville remembers, and its inhabitants too.



Hello Paul.....

Paul...

What happened to us?
I wish we could turn back time...

Go back to that day in Major,
when we kissed, do you remember?
You were shaking.

You told me one day
that I'd brought you to life...

We're still alive, Paul. We'll still alive.
But we're living in this mad world.

Do you remember that song? It was the
first song we listened to together...
Mad world, Paul, mad world...

"All around me are familiar faces... worn out
places, worn out faces..."*

*"Mad World" by Tears for Fears - Roland Orzabal 1982



Born in 1998 in Orléans, Nina Six has lived in Belgium for eight years. Her narrative style is intimate, personal and inspired by childhood memories. Her work as an author pushes her to closely examine everything that is sensitive, living; this constantly changing world that inspires her compositions. Her stories come alive through the various tensions used to explore the themes of her stories.

NINA SIX

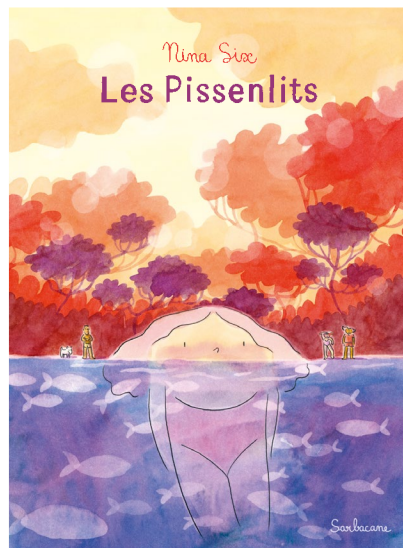
FR

Les pissenlits

EN

The dandelions

Title	<i>Les pissenlits</i>
Author	Nina Six
Genre	Comics
Publisher	© Sarbacane
Format	19 x 26 cm
Pages	112
ISBN	978-2-3773-1889-6
Keywords	Holidays, friendship childhood, memories



A heart-warming graphic novel with the salty taste of summer holidays by the sea! Deliciously nostalgic!

Summer 2006, France has just lost the World Cup Final against Italy, and everyone is talking about Zidane's legendary headbutt. Flip-phones are in everyone's

pockets, the Nintendo DS Lite just came out and Rihanna's album sales are off the charts. It's hot and dry in the south of France, while the little Nina gazes out of the window of the car taking her to the family campsite known as "The Dandelions". The magic of this seaside camping trip transforms simple encounters into friendships, daily life into an adventure and, above all, changes the lives of its holidaymakers forever. With her friends, Camille, Luc and Arthur, Nina discovers the secrets hidden with this wooden landscape, from the giant slide to the boy who dresses up as Pierrot the Clown... But she'll also learn a great deal about herself. Because, at 9 years old, one summer can change everything and help us to grow!



Zidane hit him good, hard as he could
 Headbutt to the chest



He's too sore to score, Zidane hit him good...
 He got the Italian, the old rascalion...

Zidane hit him good, hard as he could
 You're so annoying, Camille!

I was sleeping!



Sarah Masson and Michel Squarci are both alumni of the Institut Supérieur d'Arts Plastiques de Saint-Luc in Brussels. In 1993, along with some of their fellow students, they founded the graphic novel and illustration publishing house, La 5e Couche. They worked there as editors, authors and page layout artists. This collaboration came to an end in 2005, after the publisher helped architect Jean Nouvel publish his *Louisiana Manifesto* in Denmark.

MASSON SQUARCI

FR

Reste avec moi

EN

Stay with me

Title	<i>Reste avec moi</i>
Author	Sarah Masson Michel Squarci
Genre	Comics
Publisher	© CFC Éditions
Format	17,5 x 24,5 cm
Pages	136
ISBN	978-2-87572-077-1
Keywords	Mother/daughter relationship, abandonment, sadness, life course



Will the present help Florence to nurse the wounds of her past? After *Au cœur de la montagne* (CFC, 2018), the Masson-Squarci duo bring us this personal tale for teenage and mature readers. Thirty-year-old Florence lives in the city and restores paintings for a living. She lives with her partner and their daughter, the apple of her eye. Ever since she became a mother, Florence recalls the difficult relationship she had with her own mother at the same age. She realises that a strong feeling of abandonment pervaded her childhood years and that even today, nothing has been resolved. This feeling comes bubbling up to the surface, impacting her daily life. Her attempts to reconcile with her mother continuously result in disaster. From fall outs to misunderstanding, the two women struggle to maintain a peaceful relationship. Is Florence's mother aware of her daughter's sadness? How will the present nurse the wounds of childhood?



In 1997, when Sarah Masson created Tea Time Productions, a brand under which she produced cooking books, screen-printed stationery, Michel Squarci was working as a computer graphics artist for Belgian national television channel RTBF. In 2000, he started working as a freelance graphic designer. Since then, alongside their careers, they have worked as a four-handed writing team, publishing children's picture books and graphic novels.



Shut up!
Stop lecturing me!
BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP
BEEP BEEP
Hi, Mum
You haven't forgotten about our appointment, have you?
I haven't forgotten anything. We've got time, it's not for another two hours.



OK, I'll take care of it...
See you later.



Pssst! Take your time, me and Amélie are preparing a surprise.

Should I set the table for four?

For four?

Us three and your mum, right?

Ah yeah... Sure.

How did it go at the doctor's?

I don't know.

Didn't you go with her?

She gets on just fine without me.

Like she always has done.

You called the doctor though, right? You know the results?



Help!

Mum!

Mum!

Translation grants

The Ministry of Wallonia-Brussels Federation supports the translation of literary works written in French by authors from Wallonia and Brussels. Foreign publishers can apply for financial assistance to cover 75% of the translation costs. This refers to novels, short stories, poetry, plays, children literature, comic books and literary essays. Concerning classical authors, the financial assistance will be up to 50% of the translation costs. The grant application must be submitted for review at least 6 months before the planned publication date of the translated work.

Informations
<https://urlz.fr/hxa2>

Contact
Silvie Philippart de Foy
traduction.lettres@cfwb.be

Literary residency of Seneffe

In August, the translation and writing residence in Seneffe - 30 minutes from Brussels - welcomes literary translators from all over the world in an ideal environment for a period of two weeks to one month. Its primary aim is to promote the circulation of French-speaking Belgian literature abroad. These thirty days allow for exchanges between practitioners of these same languages and source territories. The residents are provided with accommodation and food and receive a per diem. Candidates are selected on the basis of an application form and a curriculum vitae. They are required to have their translation published. During their stay, they will also have the opportunity to work with French-speaking Belgian authors, either in residence or invited for meetings.

Contact
Anne-Lise Remacle
seneffe@passaporta.be

Travels grants & support for the transfer of rights

Wallonie-Bruxelles International (WBI) offers various grants to French-speaking Belgian operators with a view to their internationalization:

Transfer of rights for the following genres: youth (albums and novels), comics, human and social sciences, fine arts, heritage, tourism, popular science. The aid is delivered to the French-speaking Belgian publishing house that applies for it, so as to offer financial aid on the advance due by the acquiring publishing house.

Support for the international mobility of authors: on the basis of an invitation to an international event or residency and subjected to validation by the dedicated committee, WBI can support the travel of authors around the world.

Other grants are available and can be consulted on our website.

Informations
<https://urlz.fr/hxaR>

Contact
Marie-Eve Tossani
me.tossani@wbi.be
0032 2 421 83 64

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