

GRAPHIC NOVELS

A tragicomic family drama by a master of comic book art

What We Need To Know

WILLY LINTHOUT

Karel, Valère and Roger are three brothers who each need to come to terms with their own demons. Reading about their troubled lives, we get a sense of just how cruel and thankless as well as enchanting and hilarious the world can be: extremes we have no choice but to accept.

‘What We Need to Know’ is done in pencils without inks, which gives it a rough and unfinished look that perfectly matches the psychological state of the characters who are trying to make the best of life. Fortunately, in emergencies they can consult ‘The Book’. In that magic reference work, their mother has collected innumerable facts, recipes, and advice: everything we need to know about life.

A coherent and bittersweet meditation on family foibles

COMICSALTERNATIVE.COM

‘What We Need To Know’ is Willy Linthout’s sequel to ‘Years of the Elephant’, the graphic novel he wrote and drew after the suicide of his son in 2007. This moving and vulnerable book was nominated for a number of international awards. It also won the Bronzen Adhemar, the most important Flemish comics award. The main character from ‘Years of the Elephant’ is given a supporting role in ‘What We Need To Know’. Both books combine melancholy with lightheartedness, sadness with humour, moulding it into a unique and distinctive whole.

A highly eccentric graphic novel

DE REACTOR



AUTHOR



Willy Linthout (b. 1953) is well known in Flanders and the Netherlands as the illustrator of ‘Urbanus’, about the crazy, fictional adventures of a famous comedian. The series includes nearly 200 stories and millions of books have been sold. He surprised the comic strip world with his solo work Years of the Elephant, in which he tried to make sense of his son’s suicide. Rough-and-ready pencil sketches and the subtle balance between tragedy and more humorous passages have become his stylistic trademarks.

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