

Black humour and hints of Roald Dahl

# The Sourballs

BENJAMIN LEROY & JAAP ROBBERN

Brothers Harry and Huibert, 'so sour even the flowers on their wallpaper are wilting', appear to be pretty content with their stagnant lives: day after day they soak their dentures in vinegar and breakfast on pickled herring and nettle tea. 'The Sourballs' is a caricature of two bitter loners, stuck in a rut and clinging to obsolete habits. That routine is disrupted when they receive a letter that turns their lives upside-down and uncovers a dark secret from their not-so-colourless past.

## What a wonderful, cheeky children's book!

FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG

Jaap Robben paints a hilarious picture of the sourball brothers, yet makes them human at the same time. Short, animated sentences lend the story a certain urgency and give readers enough space for their own interpretation. Leroy's illustrations, a mix of acrylics, coloured pencil and collage, enrich the text and visualise what is merely hinted at between the lines. At times the illustrations even take over the narrative.

Robben and Leroy have successfully provided an often neglected group of readers with a richly layered book, which boasts stimulating writing and masterful visuals.

## Black humour, wonderfully oblique details, tickling full-page drawings and colored collages

BADISCHE ZEITUNG



## AUTHORS



Benjamin Leroy's (b. 1980) work is characterised by a mix of emotion, humour and absurdity. He enjoys applying layers to his drawings so that readers can discover new elements in even the smallest details of his work. He works with whatever materials he finds on his drawing table: coloured card, ballpoint pens, coloured pencils, acrylic paint, masking tape, brushes... Chance plays a big role in all of this. His work is often simultaneously exuberant and fragile, marked by great diversity yet also a highly personal signature. *Photo © Johannes Van De Voorde* Jaap Robben (b. 1984) is a Dutch writer, poet and playwright. He writes poems and stories for both children and adults. Having more than proven his credentials as a superb children's writer, he published his first book for adults in 2014. It was very well received both at home and abroad. His second novel, 'Summer Brother', was longlisted for the International Booker Prize 2021. *Photo © Johannes Van de Voorde*

**ORIGINAL TITLE** De zuurtjes (2010, De Geus, 160 pp.)

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**RIGHTS SOLD** German (Mixtvision), Afrikaans (Protea)

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