

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 several layers in creating his drawings so that readers can continue to discover new elements even in the tiniest corners of his work. He often works together with Jaap Robben, resulting in collections of poems, illustrated novels and picture books. *Photo © Johannes Van De Voorde* **Jaap Robben** (b. 1984) is a Dutch writer, poet and stage director. Since 2000 he has written poems and stories for both children and adults, often in collaboration with illustrator Benjamin Leroy. Their first book, 'Shall We Make a Forest?', was shortlisted for the Gouden Uil for Children's Literature, and it marked the start of a productive partnership, with author and illustrator planning out their work together from start to finish. *Photo © Johannes Van de Voorde*

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