

Anthology of a former idealist

Pitfalls

RICHARD MINNE

'Pitfalls' is a varied collection of letters, verse and short stories. The excerpts from the letters – which were never intended to be made public – caused a furore at the time. This was a new thing in the Flemish literary landscape. Here was a 'guy' talking, a tormented writer who lived in isolation in the countryside and struggled with his vocation to write. The title refers to the obstacles between Minne and the process of writing, between the author and publication – in other words, to the aforementioned struggle. As Minne put it: 'Caution, enter at your peril!'

Minne is a poet, even in his stories: his writing is concise, adhering to the 'show don't tell' adage, and the style, the way in which he tells something, is always paramount

TROUW

The inimitable mix of irony, melancholy and wit in his work have a lasting appeal. Minne always remained a man of the people, contrary and cranky, often disparaging. During his lifetime, he was admired by a small group of readers in both the Netherlands and Flanders and by peers such as Elsschot and Boon. The final story in this collection, 'The Eulogy', reflects his sombre view of the state of Flemish poetry and culture. Minne wrote outside any literary trends and did not belong to any club or coterie. Ultimately, he was a disappointed idealist. A unique voice.

A literary all-rounder who explores all facets of life

DE VOLKSKRANT

Richard Minne
Wolfijzers
en schietgeweren
Manteau

AUTHOR



Richard Minne (1891-1965) was a writer of poetry and prose as well as a journalist. His oeuvre is modest and was partially planned by friends – if it had been up to the author himself, he would have published hardly anything during his lifetime. A Keatsian life marked by ill health, insecurity and a lack of recognition resulted in a literary career that lasted barely ten years. Minne's work is characterised by irony and a degree of social engagement, both of which are unmistakable in the wide-ranging collection 'Pitfalls'.

ORIGINAL TITLE Wolfijzers en schietgeweren (1942, Manteau/Nijgh & Van Ditmar, 277 pp. Collected Works published by Van Oorschot in 2006.)

PRIZES Flemish State Prize for Narrative Prose

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