

On the knife edge between ideas and real life

The Ghosts

YVES PETRY

Following the painful break-up with his girlfriend Kristien, humanitarian doctor Mark Oostermans travels to camp Bilonga, a refugee camp in the interior of West Africa, on behalf of Doctors Without Colour. The civil war seems a long way from the camp, until one day a group of soldiers rock up with less than friendly intentions. But that does not seem to fill Jeroen Ullings, an ex-Jesuit and the eccentric head of the medical team, with a lot of fear – on the contrary, not nearly enough fear.

A highly original and beautifully composed story peppered with gallows humour

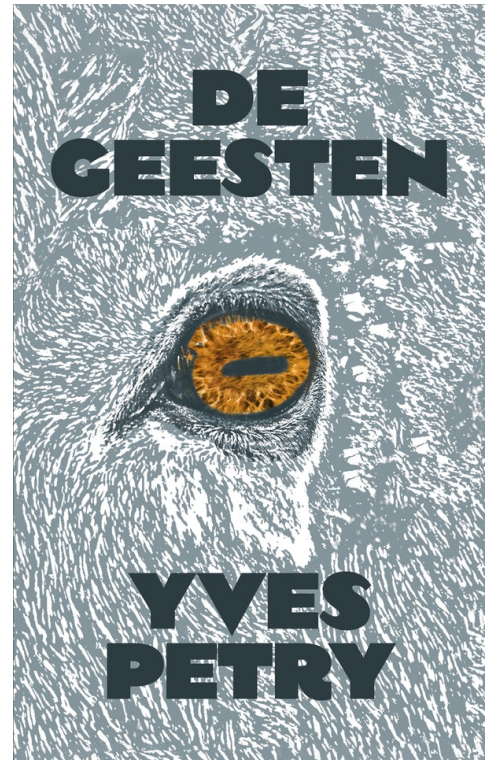
TROUW

Yves Petry's 'The Ghosts' is a philosophical book that challenges the motivations of western aid workers in Africa. At the same time it is an account of an idealistic, lonely western man who is incapable of exorcising the ghosts from his past. His obsessive love for his therapist is unrequited, yet his longing for her is greater than ever after a traumatic experience in Bilonga.

This novel once again underlines Petry's stylistic skills. 'The Ghosts' is a compelling novel of ideas, written in virtuoso prose. Besides, Petry does not shy away from provocation as he puts ideas about love, science, morality and the enlightened man into his characters' mouths.

An elegant stylist, Petry is a unique phenomenon in Flemish literature ****

DE MORGEN



AUTHOR



Yves Petry (b. 1967) studied mathematics and philosophy. He was awarded the BNG Literature Prize for 'The Straggler' (De achterblijver, 2006), a novel about artificial intelligence and human emotions. His disconcerting novel 'The Virgin Marino' attracted a large readership and won the prestigious Libris Literature Prize. 'Love So to Speak' is a lucid book about a writer in a love triangle, about love and resentment. 'The Ghosts', his seventh novel, is a philosophical book that challenges the motivations of western aid workers in Africa.
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ORIGINAL TITLE De geesten (2019, Das Mag, 356 pp.)

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