

A dark fairy tale about the fringes of Europe

The Arrival of the Titanic

FREEK VIELEN

The imminent arrival of a gigantic cruise ship throws a small, poor village into turmoil, prompting dreams of money. Small bottles of olive oil or limoncello, oranges or crocheted oven gloves: everybody in the Italian village of Sperino has something to sell to the expected tourists.

Vielen skillfully intertwines various failed attempts at making something of life, with the ship popping up everywhere as a metaphor of hope and salvation.

HET PAROOL

On board the ship we find Friedrich Alve, a grey EU official and retired 'Head of Prospects'. Alve has checked in for a cruise of indefinite duration on the Mediterranean in order to disappear, to pause. On board the luxury vessel he is writing his final report on the future of the EU. On land, in Sperino, the flags and decorations are out to welcome the visitors. Until suddenly a deafening scraping noise can be heard and the Costa Europa runs aground...

'The Arrival of the Titanic' is an intelligent and astute theatre monologue. On the one hand there is a ship that sinks – an event with clear echoes of the Costa Concordia disaster in 2012. On the other hand, the brief snippets that fit together like a mosaic are about a more metaphorical catastrophe. About little people with big dreams and about Europe which, like a setting sun on the horizon, slowly but surely sinks into the water.

Vielen is both a masterful writer and a born story-teller.

CUTTING EDGE



AUTHOR



Freek Vielen (b. 1985) is a theatre maker and playwright. Along with Rebekka de Wit and Suzanne Grotenhuis he is joint artistic director of theatre company De Nwe Tijd. The pieces they have made together include the trilogy 'Heimat' and in 2012 he and co-authors Rebekka de Wit and Maarten Ketels won the Sabam Jong Theaterschrijfprijs for the text 'Stel je voor; ik zoek een staat' (Imagine, I'm seeking a state). Vielen's text 'Dracula' was awarded the Taalunie Toneelschrijfprijs in 2014. Photo © Alexander Daems

ORIGINAL TITLE De Aankomst van de Titanic en andere heldendichten (2017, De Nwe Tijd & De Nieuwe Oost, 77 pp.)

DETAILS 1 character (M), premiere 16 September 2017

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