

Two simultaneous leaps of faith

The Channel

GAEA SCHOETERS

The lives of the two main characters in 'The Channel' unexpectedly become intertwined. On one side of the Channel, on Calais beach, a refugee is getting ready to make the crossing in search of a new beginning. Across the water, on the chalk cliffs of Beachy Head, trans woman Margaret is about to hurl herself into the sea to end it all. Eventually, their paths cross and life takes an unpredictable turn.

By taking their crucial leaps of faith, these two characters connect two major current issues that dominate their lives. Standing on the edge, they take turns speaking and reflecting on the search for who they are and the choices they face. As a trans woman, Margaret is struggling with her sexual identity and even more so with other people's reaction to it. The refugee is not even given a name in this piece, let alone an identity, because he is merely one of many in search of a better life. Linking the two monologues are Shakespearean texts set to music by composer Annelies Van Parys.

Unconventional music theatre that boldly opts for simplicity and humour to make a powerful and incisive statement about living with hope in a time of escalating despair.

KNACK

This compelling music theatre libretto puts a face to the marginalisation of 'the other'. Their personal narratives become a reflection on society and its growing awareness of transsexuality and today's refugee crisis.



AUTHOR



Gaea Schoeters (b. 1976) is a very versatile author. She has written all sorts of texts, from travelogues and novels to operas and theatre plays as well as children's books. Additionally, she works as a journalist and writes columns and essays about current topics for various newspapers and literary magazines. Her work, praised for its descriptive and detailed writing style, is situated between formal experiment and social engagement. *Photo © Annelies Van Parys*

ORIGINAL TITLE *Het kanaal* (2017, Uitgeverij Kartonnen Dozen, 56 pp.)

DETAILS 2 characters, 2 actors, 1 soprano, 1 lute player/guitarist, 70 minutes, premiere 17 February 2017

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