

Patriarchy under fire

Uproar

FREEK MARIËN

In an ivory tower at an indeterminate place, men in a meeting room are engaged in intense consultation. They are the board members of this fictional location, where suddenly more and more female residents are reporting intimidation by their male fellow citizens. The dominant males try to deal with the crisis but fail to get the situation under control. On the contrary, their decrees and decisions soon expose the difficulties and double standards under which their subjects live. Meanwhile the air conditioning in the administrative department breaks down and tension rises there too. On the pretext of protecting their female subjects against abusive behaviour, the managers can think of nothing better than to isolate all women on a separate island.

‘Uproar’ is a play about an island full of women, and a room full of men. In his script, Freek Mariën addresses the focal point of our time; the abuse of power, bureaucracy and gender inequality come together in his dystopic and gripping story, which is based on real events. Between 1923 and 1961, ‘loose women’ were interned on the Danish island of Sprogø.

However robust the content sounds on paper, Mariën and von Winckelmann present a tight and funny play that unerringly rips apart the patriarchal rhetorical conjuring tricks of our politicians and other media personalities.

DE STANDAARD

‘Uproar’ manages to capture the debate over feminism in lightning fast and quick-witted dialogues. It is an incisive story with contemporary relevance that feels both absurd and almost alienating at the same time. With a generous dash of humour and girl power, Freek Mariën has painted an impressive picture of contemporary society that makes us think.



AUTHOR



Freek Mariën (Ghent, 1988) is an author and a theater maker. He studied drama at KASK in Ghent. He and Carl von Winckelmann are the artistic leaders of the theater ensemble Het Kwartier, mounting productions for young people and adults that emphasize powerful writing, socially relevant topics, and unexpected forms and themes. He has written for ensembles including ARSENAAL/LAZARUS, Circus Ronaldo, Tuning People, and Laika. He also teaches writing as a guest instructor at LUCA Drama. Freek has won awards such as the Dutch-German Kinder- und Jugenddramatiker*innenpreises 2012 and 2020 for plays for young people, the East Flanders Literary Prize 2014, and the Toneelschrijfprijs for the best Dutch-language play (winner in 2015, nominated in 2017 and 2019). His writings have been translated into German, French, Finnish, and English, with public readings and performances in various European countries and the United States.

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