

Cruising in the wake of 'Carol'

# Magnificent Monster

FLEUR PIERETS

'Magnificent Monster' is an extraordinary mixture of fictionalized road novel, memoir, essay collection and 'biomythography', meaning a mythologization of one's own life. The nameless narrator, an artist and LGBTQ+ activist, is mourning the loss of her wife who died unexpectedly of cancer a few years earlier. To break out of her loneliness and her impasse, she leaves for the United States. There she repeats the road trip undertaken by Carol and Therese, the central characters in the book 'Carol' by Patricia Highsmith, the first lesbian love story with a relatively happy ending.

The journey is a search for herself, for her family history and her own love story. The protagonist examines her place and freedom as a writer, but also shines light on the minority groups that have often been overlooked in art history. In that sense, 'Magnificent monster', is also a homage to the work of lesbian authors and a rehabilitation of lesbian 'romance novels'.

## A beautiful collage about life, love and death

DE STANDAARD

As she travels across the US, the narrator investigates what 'cruising', or picking up temporary partners, can mean for lesbian women. During a conference on pulp fiction with queer writers she meets Niko, who is twenty years her junior, and eventually they travel onwards together. 'Carol' comes fully to life, mirrored in this parallel love story. The relationship confronts the narrator with her own internalized ageism.

These sophisticated reflections on relationships, art and loss make 'Magnificent Monster' a compelling trip in which Pierets offers insights that rise far above the literature of grief.

## Without doubt one of the books of the year.

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HET NIEUWSBLAD



Julian is wonderful. Swift, lean and moving.

## HEERLIJK MONSTER



Fleur Pierets

## AUTHOR



**Fleur Pierets** (b. 1973) is an award-winning performance artist, writer, speaker and LGBTQ+ activist whose work balances between photography and theory, performance, fiction and nonfiction. In 2017, Fleur and her wife Julian P. Boom started 'Project 22', a performance art piece in which the couple planned to marry in every country that had legalized same-sex marriage at the time. Following the untimely death of her wife in 2018, after only four weddings, Fleur turned to writing her debut memoir 'Julian'. As well as hybrid works for adults, Pierets writes children's books on LGBTQ+ subjects.

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