

DRAMA

To have no plan, that's the plan Wilderness

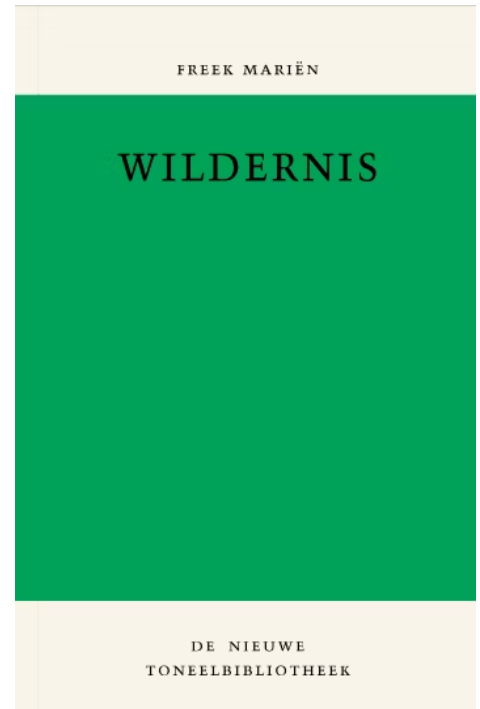
FREEK MARIËN

A family arrives on a hill and squats an empty house. Pa is a restless soul who is addicted to adventure, Ma is an equally capricious eccentric with vague artistic ambitions. Their 'spawn', Brother and Sister, are dragged along by their parents through a chaotic and nomadic family life. But to make up for the leaking roof and their growling stomachs, there's a tight bond and a life close to nature. All the same, something is brewing beneath the family's charming simplicity and wilfulness. Their parents' loathing of conformity inflicts deep wounds (sometimes literally) on Brother and Sister. When does a free and unbounded upbringing tip over into neglect? Perhaps, when they finally go their own way, Sister and Brother will be taken in a very different direction from that of their parents.

'Wilderness' is a family portrait about extreme poverty and the decision to shape your own life, even if that sets you in opposition to those who are closest to you. Mariën makes us reflect on ethical dilemmas, rich versus poor, city versus nature, and the way that our choices influence others.

In all its most intense moments there is room for nuance, warmth and solidarity, and an invitation to think for ourselves.

THEATERKRANT



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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ORIGINAL PUBLICATION: Wilderness (2022, De Nieuwe Toneelbibliotheek, 57 pp.)

PRIZES: nominated for the 2022 Kaas & Kappes Prize

PREMIÈRE: 12 February 2022

CHARACTERS: 2M, 2F

AGE: 14+

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