

Powerful monologue about resistance and self-determination

Ifigeneia

MAAIKE NEUVILLE

In her monologue 'Ifigeneia', Maaïke Neuville gives a new voice to the mythical daughter of Agamemnon. In the classical tragedy, Ifigeneia has only a minor part to play, but Neuville places her at the centre: she is not a passive sacrifice but a young woman who demands to tell her own story. The play opens with Ifigeneia's birth, which is directly connected to guilt and sacrifice through the promise made by her father to the goddess Artemis. Neuville has Ifigeneia reflect on her family history, marked as it is by violence, revenge and trauma. Her mother Clytemnestra, grandmother Leda and aunt Helen are all, as women, imprisoned in patriarchal stories.

Neuville's apt observations fan a feminist fire.

ETCETERA

In the Greek original, Ifigeneia's role is remarkably small. "Do you know how many scenes I appear in, in my own tragedy? Just three." In this play she demands her rightful place. She asks questions about her fate, her father's silence and the role of women as bargaining chips in a man's world. The language is poetic and sharp, full of images and musicality. The central conflict – Ifigeneia's sacrifice to make possible the war against Troy – becomes universal, a story about obedience, sacrifice, and the quest for a voice of one's own. Iphigenia refuses to remain the victim and says no to her fate. Her resistance to the logic of violence and revenge means prioritizing her own existence, her own body, her own story. Neuville's text is an indictment of patriarchal structures and an ode to female strength and imagination. 'Ifigeneia' is a plea for the right to refuse, to question and to rewrite your own story – a message that resonates powerfully today.

A convincing and uncompromising danced monologue that does far more than fill in the lost scenes of the ancient tragedy of the same name.****

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AUTHOR



Maaïke Neuville (b. 1983) is an actress, filmmaker, theatre producer and author. She graduated from the Studio Herman Teirlinck theatre school in Antwerp and went on to act for various theatrical companies and film producers. She also creates cinematic poems and short fiction films. Photo © Kaat Pype

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TRANSLATION GRANTS Yannick Geens - yannick@flandersliterature.be, Esther de Gries - esther@flandersliterature.be