

Moving and disturbing life of a servant girl

Papinette

KRISTIEN DIELTIENS

Papinette, a curious servant girl in sixteenth-century Antwerp, has no father but many mothers, because all the other servants boss her around. Kristien Dieltiens interweaves the moving, yet disturbing story of Papinette with the history of Antwerp and the rich artistic tradition that has developed in this Flemish city.

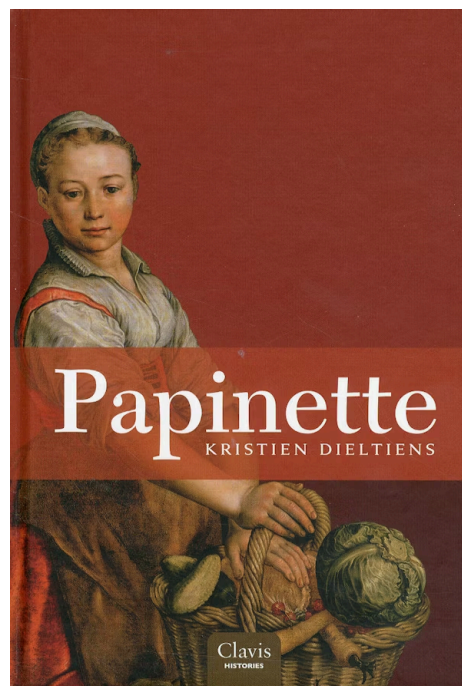
A richly documented novel written in a sensual style

DE STANDAARD

Both Papinette and her mother pose for sixteenth-century paintings that exist in the real world. The art of cooking, as well as female sensuality, are handed down from mother to daughter and the novel is most informative about the ingredients, dishes and culinary secrets of the past. At the same time, the powerlessness of poor, single women also remains a constant fact that is passed on from one generation to the next – the female servants are desired, but just as easily forgotten when younger, wealthier or more respectable women become available. This is a richly documented novel, but because of its candid and sensual style you never get the impression of being taught a history lesson.

Strong women finding themselves in a period when this was anything but self-evident, makes for an interesting area of tension.

DE LEESWELP



AUTHOR



Kristien Dieltiens (b. 1954) started writing and playing music at a young age. Since her debut in 1997, she has published over a hundred books, of which several have been translated. Dieltiens is at her best when writing historical stories. Her main characters are often outcasts who have to find a place for themselves. She writes evocatively, with humour and she loves a good intrigue. Photo © Bas Bogaerts

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AGE 16+

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