

A tapestry of heartache

Fifteen Wild Summers

JAN DE LEEUW

Thomas is dead, but three people can still see him: his inconsolable mother, his beloved Orphee and his dying grandfather. The fifteen-year-old boy is forever present when they think of him and through his eyes the reader sees how they are losing themselves.

Thomas' tone is dreamily distant and mild, and free from emotion. This approach allows this heartrending story of three generations to penetrate to deeper, more interesting layers. In this cleverly composed novel, the break in the timeline is so skilfully disguised that a lot is left to the reader's guesswork and interpretation.

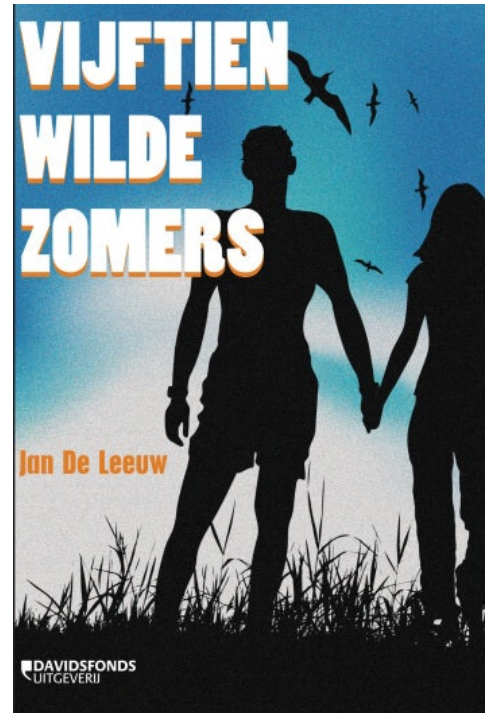
De Leeuw writes artistic prose: poetic, vivid and full of harmonious images. There is not a word or sentence too many.

DIE ZEIT

This complex tangle of various lives and perspectives works perfectly. The grandfather's wonderfully enthralling and enchanting stories, such as the one about the ice bird summoned by a disappointed villager, which freezes the entire village, lift the book to a higher level. De Leeuw writes highly sensitive, keen prose with poignant images, and is painfully honest in showing that damaged, lonely people can be unreasonable and unkind, and that love can be an immense burden.

Fantastic, an author who dares to say: 'Stories are something to stay away from, they are dangerously addictive.'

VOLKSKRANT



AUTHOR



Jan De Leeuw's (b. 1968) first young adult book appeared in 2004 and was an immediate success. *Nightland* won him the Gouden Uil Young Reader's Prize, and *Frozen Rooms* and *Fifteen Wild Summers* were nominated for the Deutscher Jugendliteraturpreis. De Leeuw has developed a voice like no other in Dutch-language YA literature. Always different, and always an intense reading experience, his books get under the reader's skin and make a lasting impression.

ORIGINAL TITLE *Vijftien wilde zomers* (2012, Davidsfonds, 170 pp.)

AGE 15+

PRIZES nominated for the Deutscher Jugendliteraturpreis

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