

Tragicomic chronicle of our times

The Detours

JEROEN THEUNISSEN

The three Joes, triplets, celebrate their eighteenth birthday in the month in which Kurt Cobain takes his own life. With lofty but vague ideals, they leave their parental home and go out into the big wide world. The first becomes a do-gooder, the second a multi-millionaire, the third a brawny adventurer and womanizer.

Languishing at home, however, is their mother, a woman born at the exact moment when Robert Schuman spoke of a Europe that should unite in small but concrete steps.

The various themes complement and throw new light on one another. The reader is continually presented with new and unexpected connections, urging him in a particular direction, but allowing him to make his own choices.

Theunissen has discovered his inner Homer for this modern Odyssey.

DE STANDAARD

‘The Detours’ is a lavishly painted saga of a post-war family in which too much has remained unsaid. Theunissen presents unforgettable characters in search of a good life, of themselves and of a way to feel connected. With a great feel for humanity, he describes their often tragicomic fates, so that ‘The Detours’ grows into a chronicle of our time.

The changes the world has seen in the past fifty years in a light-hearted, no-nonsense and sometimes satirical style.

KNACK



AUTHOR



Jeroen Theunissen (b. 1977) is the author of novels, poetry, essays and theatre and known for his dazzling and dynamic style. Both his prose and his poetry possess an underlying social critique and engagement, which is challenged at the same time. This is why he is sometimes described as the sociologist of Flemish literature. His characters are ‘ordinary’ people who have washed up in recognisable lives, but whose immense inner unrest causes them to falter and ultimately derail. *Photo © Koen Broos*

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