

The art of self-deceit

Saving Fish

ANNELIES VERBEKE

The story of 'Saving Fish' is pervaded with the pain of a lost love. After her boyfriend Thomas leaves her, author Monique Champagne turns her back to literature. She gains a new lust for life in her devotion to protesting against the worldwide depletion of the fish population, with dramatic implications for all mankind.

An organisation asks her to provide a literary interlude at international symposia on fishing. This good cause justifies the flight from her own problems. Until she can no longer hide behind cod and tuna. After all, by saving fish she is attempting to save not only mankind but also, ultimately, herself.

Verbeke enchants us with her beautiful descriptions.

FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG

Downhearted, helplessly emotional and losing her way, seeking her identity and some sense in her life in risky and foolish ways, Monique endeavours, in a similar manner, to evade her buried pain and grief.

The impressive intertwining of this personal account of evolutionary theory, the measured wording and the well-considered composition of the story, not forgetting Verbeke's typical intractable, ambiguous, laconic humour, make 'Saving Fish' an intelligent, intense and admirable novel.

A truly exciting novel with unexpected twists, rapid changes in tone and acerbic turns of phrase

DE STANDAARD



AUTHOR



Annelies Verbeke (b. 1976) is a leading figure in Flemish literature. Her love of the short story form has made her an advocate of the genre. In addition, she has written columns, scripts, theatre texts, a graphic novel and a children's book. What makes her characters so powerful is their angular personality: they are familiar in their ordinariness, but also have a dark and unexpected side. Keywords: snappy, slightly absurdist, wistful nostalgia with keen observations. *Photo © Alex Salinas*

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