

Idiosyncratic version of a classic fairy tale

The Magic Garden

GERDA DENDOOVEN

The king has twelve daughters, whom he keeps close to him. The girls feel trapped in a golden cage. Until one day they discover a secret staircase that takes them to a magic garden, where every night they wear out their shoes dancing with willing princes. The wearing out of so many shoes is suspicious and the king calls in Crafty Tobias, who is too clever for the girls...

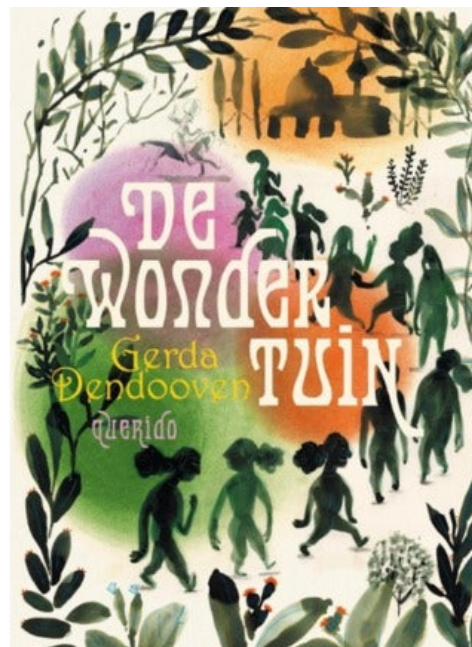
Virtually inimitable

DE LEESWELP

In 'The Magic Garden' Gerda Dendooven blows a breath of fresh air through 'The Worn-Out Dancing Shoes' by the Brothers Grimm, and adds a feminist-tinted ending. The story is told and partly drawn by one of the sisters, whom we regularly see with an exercise book. In the field of drawing Dendooven rediscovers herself: she uses light line drawings in coloured pencil, alongside watercolours and painted silhouettes. The white of the line drawings contrasts with large areas of colour. Dendooven's language plays with the conventions of the fairy tale, and provides humour by contrast with contemporary spoken language. 'The Magic Garden' is pure Dendooven.

The leading lady of the Flemish picture book

DE MORGEN



AUTHOR



Gerda Dendooven (b. 1962) is highly regarded both as an author and as an illustrator. She often employs archetypes and absurd humour. Dendooven's pictures are direct and emotional, sometimes almost confrontational. Her characters are distinctive and often almost like caricatures. She creates a bizarre, imaginative world that is funny and playful, but which can also be disturbing and frightening. Unique and intriguing: that is Gerda Dendooven's signature style. *Photo © Rika Vanhove*

ORIGINAL TITLE De wondertuin (2014, Querido, 36 pp.)

FORMAT 292 x 215

AGE 6+

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