

## FICTION

An Antwerp policeman trying to survive the Second World War

# WILL

JEROEN OLYSLAEGERS

Wilfried Wils is an auxiliary policeman in Antwerp at the start of the Second World War. The city is in the grip of violence and distrust. Wilfried does what he can for himself, avoiding paths that are too slippery. He receives attention and material support from a man who has sided with the German occupier, Nijdig Baardje ('Angry Beard'), but he also enjoys the confidence of his anti-Nazi colleague Lode, brother to Wilfried's love Yvette. Wilfried struggles to survive as the persecution of the Jews proceeds unabated. Years later he tells his story to one of his descendants.

**A razor-sharp book about the cowardice we call neutrality \*\*\*\*\***

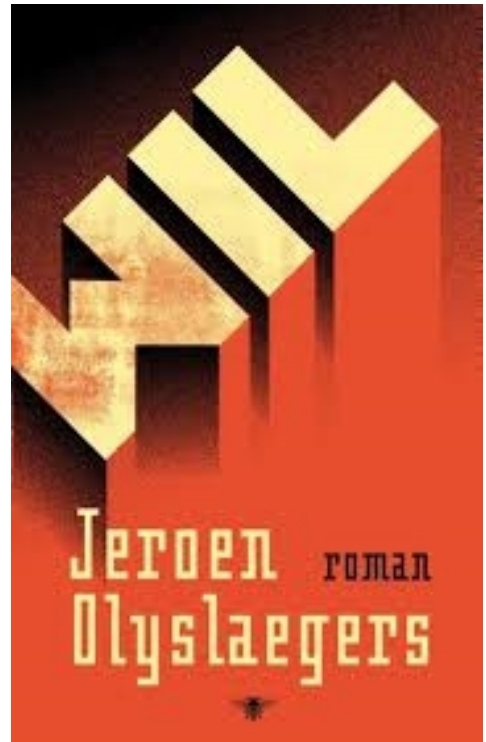
DE STANDAARD

'WILL' is a bold, ambitious and multifaceted novel in which no one is spared. Olyslaegers challenges the widely accepted boundaries between good and evil and ingeniously makes the book resonate with our own time, with its heated political climate and its polarisation manifesting in religion, nationalism and populism.

Wilfried is the archetypal antihero. He is Everyman, hearing, seeing, saying nothing and hoping the storm will blow over. He is neither the best nor the worst of us. His minor wartime misdeeds go unpunished, but he cannot claim afterwards that he knew nothing.

**The everyday but lyrical language of 'WILL' – inspired by Louis Paul Boon – is masterful**

DE TIJD



## AUTHOR



**Jeroen Olyslaegers** (b. 1967) writes columns, plays and prose. In 2014 he was awarded the Arkprijzen van het Vrije Woord for his work and his social engagement, and the Edmond Hustinx Prize for his theatrical oeuvre.

**ORIGINAL TITLE** WIL (2016, De Bezige Bij, 334 pp.)

**COPIES SOLD** 50,000

**PRIZES** Ultima 2016, Fintro Literature Prize 2017 (jury + readers' prize), Confituur Bookstores' Prize, Tzum Prize, F. Bordewijk Prize

**RIGHTS SOLD** English (Pushkin), French (Stock), German (DuMont), Czech (Odeon), Italian (E/O Edizioni), Spanish (Seix Barral), Catalan (Ara Llibres), Hungarian (Helikon)

**TRANSLATION RIGHTS** Uta Matten - u.matten@debezigebij.nl, Marijke Nagtegaal - m.nagtegaal@debezigebij.nl

**TRANSLATION GRANTS** Elise Vanoosthuyse - elise@flandersliterature.be, Marieke Roels - marieke@flandersliterature.be