

The limited feasibility of desire

Cloud Faces

GIE BOGAERT

Lambert, a trader in old mirrors, finds his counterpart, Lana, when she, on becoming blind, wants to dispose of her mirror. At her request, he reads to her on a weekly basis from books from her own library. She is someone he knew when she was still a child and, again, as a student. On both earlier occasions their careful approaches were cut short, and although his virgin desire now resurfaces, Lambert chooses not to make himself known to her, as he has cancer. And although Lana knows exactly who he is, she too restrains herself from taking things further. During their last session, he reads to her what he has written over the years they lived apart.

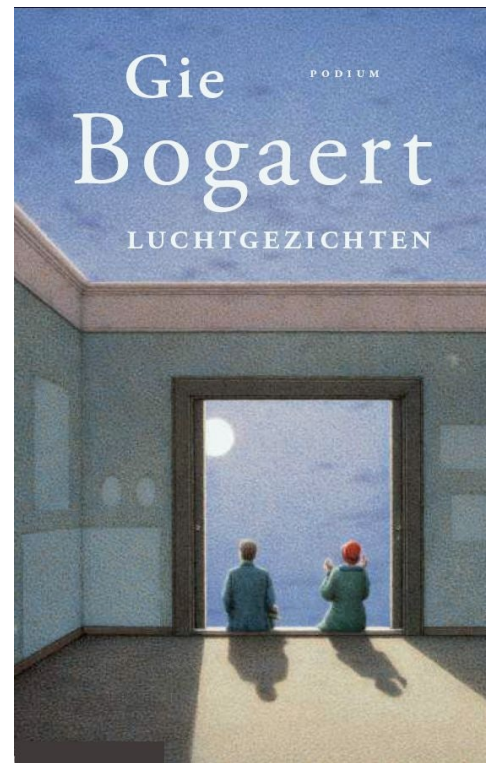
His prose is peppered with extraordinarily beautifully formed sentences full of magnificent words.

8WEEKLY

Narrated alternately by Lambert and Lana, this is a novel of searing beauty, uplifting in spite of the lost opportunities for love and the pain it causes. A novel that confirms that loving, even at a distance, gives life great quality. Bogaert often works with stilled, intimate scenes, very precisely drawn miniatures full of fine details that attest to an extraordinary gift of observation. His seemingly modest prose shimmers with sensibility and emotion, with melancholy and muted tragedy.

Heart-breaking – right down to the square centimetre. Left me breathless and moved to tears.

CUTTING EDGE



AUTHOR



Gie Bogaert (b. 1958) has gained a reputation as an author of atmospheric prose that vividly expresses the unspoken, conjuring up human desire and impossible longings in his pared-down, minimalist, poetic language. Love, loss and loneliness are the central themes of his work. Bogaert's stories and novels are mostly populated with characters who are occupied with their own rather banal cares and activities. Gradually however a hidden world of very human emotions and desires emerges – a world that reflects the author's vision on la condition humaine. In his novels he follows in the American storytelling tradition set by Raymond Carver. *Photo (c) Koen Broos*

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TRANSLATION RIGHTS Marijke Nagtegaal - m.nagtegaal@debezigebij.nl

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

Vanoosthuyse - elise@flandersliterature.be ,
Yannick Geens -
yannick@flandersliterature.be