

THE HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN AWARDS 2022

Dossier on illustrator **Sylvia Weve**

Candidate for the **2022 Illustrator's Award**

Nominated by The National IBBY Section of The Netherlands



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NOTE:

This dossier has been compiled for the jury of the Hans Christian Andersen Awards 2022. It is a completely updated version of the dossier that was sent in for the H.C.A. Awards 2020.

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Life and Work of Sylvia Weve: A Short Biography

Sylvia Weve was born on May 28, 1954, in Utrecht (the Netherlands) and grew up in Roosendaal. She already loved to draw when she was a little girl. After her secondary education in Roosendaal and Apeldoorn, she studied graphic design at the Art Academy in Arnhem. In 1976, she successfully completed her studies, and since 1978 she lives and works as an independent illustrator in Amsterdam.

After working for several newspapers and magazines, Sylvia Weve illustrated her first children's book in 1980: *Een gnoom op school* [A Gnome at School]. By now, she has illustrated over two hundred books, mostly for children. Additionally, she has made countless drawings for newspapers and magazines, among others, *de Volkskrant*, *Playboy*, *Opzij*, *Vrij Nederland*, *Holland Festival*, *Milieudefensie*. From 1986 until 1993, she also taught illustrative design at the Art Academy in Arnhem.

Early on in her career, Sylvia Weve mostly drew with a blunted pen and ink, showing her great capability to express emotions, movement, mood and personality with just a few lines. For colour, initially mainly used in cover illustrations, the felt tip pen was her main material, but she was mostly known for her expressive black-and-white line drawings with which she enriched the works of countless children's book authors. Among them were Veronica Hazelhoff, Anke de Vries, Dolf Verroen, and Hans Dorrestijn. She illustrated several books of songs and poems by Karel Eykman, and developed a strong working relationship with Rindert Kromhout, illustrating many of his children's books from the 1980s onward.

Her approach changed when digital possibilities opened up. Since then, she constructs her illustrations by combining digital and traditional techniques. Slowly but surely her illustrations were also given more space, which allowed her to combine her illustrative talents with her graphic design qualities. In working together with author Bette Westera, starting in 1999, she found a partnership that led to masterful and daring award-winning books in which author and illustrator are on entirely equal footing in the creative process. Sylvia Weve also published two books that she not only illustrated, but also wrote: *Kip en ei* [Chicken and Egg] (2006) and *Logboek van tot nu toe onbekende dieren* [Log of Thusfar Unknown Animals] (2018). Their book *Dit is geen CoBrA* (also published in English as *This is not a CoBrA*) (2019) was written by both Bette Westera and Sylvia Weve, and they were both awarded a Zilveren Griffel (Silver Slate Pencil) for the text.

Sylvia Weve has been awarded the Vlag en Wimpel [Flag and Streamer] three times, the Zilveren Penseel [Silver Paintbrush] four times and a Gouden Penseel [Golden Paintbrush]¹. The Amsterdam Foundation for the Arts awarded her the Prof. Pi Award for her entire oeuvre in illustration. In 2015, together with author Bette Westera, she received the Woutertje Pieterse Award for *Doodgewoon* [Dead Normal] and in 2020 they received this award again for *Uit elkaar* [Breaking Up]. In 2019, Weve was awarded the prestigious triannual Max Velthuijs Award for her entire oeuvre. Internationally, Sylvia Weve was greatly appreciated for her illustrations in *Ik leer je liedjes van verlangen, en aan je apenstaartje hangen* [I'll Teach You Songs of Longing, and Swinging by Your Monkeytail], written by Bette Westera. She received the IBBY Honour List Certificate for Illustration in 2012. For her contribution to children's literature Weve has been nominated for the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award of 2018 and 2019. This is the second time she is nominated for the H.C. Andersen Award.

¹ See p. 16-17 for a brief explanation of the awards.

Sylvia Weve's Contribution to Literature for Young People²

What makes Sylvia Weve's illustrations so interesting? Possibly it is because she did not start out as a children's book illustrator. In fact, she did not start out as an illustrator at all. Although Sylvia Weve has been drawing ever since she was a little girl, she studied graphic design – not illustration – at the art academy in Arnhem. After finishing her studies, mid-1970s, she tried to find work as a graphic designer. When that did not happen, she looked for assignments in illustration. Not for children's books, but for magazines, newspapers, and advertising agencies.

It was not until she was asked to illustrate for the children's section of *Vrij Nederland*, 'De Blauw Geruite Kiel', that her career really took flight. 'From that moment on, I've never had to beg for work ever again. It was the early 1980s, everybody read *Vrij Nederland*, clients came to me,' Weve said in an interview with Joukje Akveld (2010). Commercial and journalistic assignments flooded in. Newspapers loved Weve's dynamic line-work. Her expressive, journalistic style of drawing was awarded in 1996 with the Prof. Pi-Award for Illustration. This award from the Amsterdam Foundation for the Arts placed Weve on equal levels with famous cartoonists/ political illustrators like Peter van Straaten and Frits Müller. At the same time, her work for the children's section of *Vrij Nederland* also opened the door to Weve's career as a children's book illustrator. With her unique style of illustration, she set a true trend in the 1980s and changed the face of Dutch children's literature. Her discovery of digital illustration software in later years, however, truly allowed her to combine her illustrative and graphic qualities and opened up endless possibilities for experimentation, which has produced several award-winning books.

Changing the Face of Dutch Children's Literature

In the 1980s, children's book writers such as Rindert Kromhout, Karel Eykman and Veronica Hazelhoff were on the rise. Sylvia Weve was asked to illustrate their stories and poems with her dynamic black-and-white pen drawings.



² This section draws heavily on the following source: Akveld, Joukje. 'Sylvia Weve', in: Akveld, Joukje. *Tekenaars - Kinderboekenillustratoren geportretteerd*. Hoorn, Hoogland & Van Klaveren, 2010, pp. 104-115.

Weve won two Silver Paintbrushes in those years: the first with *Oma, waar blijft de taart?* [Grandma, Where's the Cake?] (1983) by Veronica Hazelhoff and the second with *Het bad van de zandloper* [The Bath of the Sand Walker] (1990) by Rindert Kromhout.

Weve especially enjoys drawing emotions and movements. To capture a human or animal in its essence with as few resources as possible, that is the art, Weve thinks (2010). She does not like endless fussing over a drawing. According to her, fiddling is a sign of weakness, erasing senseless. When she herself taught at the Art Academy in Arnhem for a few years, her students got an erasing prohibition. Once they would start erasing, they would forever lose their guts, she believed.

Angry old birds with faces full of wrinkles are dearest to her. With a few powerful lines she puts them on paper: their speed and expression jump right at you. With a few dynamic swipes of a blunted dipping pen a malicious spider appears, a young girl's emerging femininity, a dog helplessly dangling over a tree branch. One of her favorite books to illustrate in those early years was *De bloeddorstige badmeester en andere griezels voor kinderen* [The Blood Thirsty Swimming Instructor and Other Creeps for Children] (1983) by Hans Dorrestijn. This book, with the most gruesome songs since *Struwwelpeter*, suited her perfectly. She is not one for capturing reality as it is; Weve is drawn to the macabre, and loves humorous exaggeration.



© 1983 Sylvia Weve; Illustration from *De bloeddorstige badmeester*.

Nonchalant looking drawings with a lot of humor they are, but also: energetic, wayward, of a conscious sloppiness and made with a genius sort of carelessness. 'It is just like with Duke Ellington, Matisse or Remco Campert,' Karel Eykman once wrote about Sylvia Weve's work: 'it is not as simple as it looks.'

The sketch as ready-made illustration, is how Ted van Lieshout once characterized her work, but this is not quite correct, writes Joukje Akveld (2010): 'Weve does not sketch, rather her drawings are unfinished in a daring way. She plays with the mysterious effect of the incomplete, the looseness and vitality of her work are expressly informal. With her drawings Weve invokes the suggestion that they have been put on paper in one flowing line.' Weve herself was greatly inspired by the work of Tomi Ungerer, especially his drawings for adults: 'Those have that viciousness, I love that, I'm not one for sweetness myself. Ungerer's work has a roughness, a casualness that you cannot possibly accomplish with sketching. I've

never seen him at work, but I just know, you can see it in his drawings. I've learned a lot from it [...].' (in Akveld, 2010)



© 1991 Sylvia Weve; Illustration from *Het grote boek van Merel* (Amsterdam, Querido).

The way in which Weve illustrated children's books, with her characteristic dynamic black-and-white line-drawings that were closer to journalistic illustration than children's book illustration at the time, was a sensation in the 1980s. And with that a trend was set. Other illustrators were sometimes even asked specifically to make Sylvia Weve-style illustrations. Weve is seen as one of the illustrators who changed the face of Dutch children's literature and greatly contributed to the development of children's literature as an artform.

The Digital Revolution in Weve's Work

Although she was hesitant at first, Sylvia Weve discovered the many feats of digital illustration software after a friend had shown her the possibilities. She has completely embraced this 'other paintbox' by now:

'It is a fantastic medium, you can do completely different things with it than with a paintbrush. And it enlarges your freedom, you can try all sorts of things without having to start all over. My compositions tend to be fuller now, which is easier on the computer.' (in Akveld, 2010)



According to Joukje Akveld (2010), the medium has changed Weve's signature.



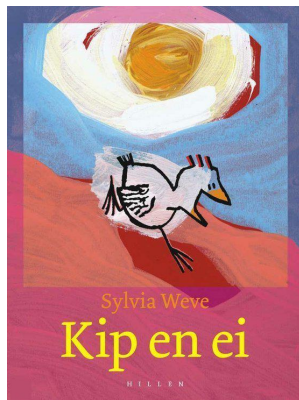
The minimalistic illustrations from the 1980s, built up out of a few lines, spots and blotches, gave way to more graphic work (*Hans en Grietje in Jimmy Jammie Bobbyland*, 2002), stylized illustrations with more color (*Peer Gynt*, 2007).

In twenty years, Weve's style seems to have undergone a metamorphosis; when you compare the pastel colored *Saartje en Sikje* [Sara and Goatee] (2007) to the expressive faces in *Liefdesverdriet* [Love Sickness] (1983), you can hardly believe that these books are by the same illustrator.



And yet, on closer inspection *Saartje en Sikje* is a real Weve; you only need to look at the expressive line-work to recognize Weve's characteristic style.

This 'digital revolution' in Weve's work did not go unnoticed. The 1980s may have been a high point in terms of income and publicity, when it comes to creativity and experimentation her heydays came in the 21st century. By 2006, she had finally found the time and the space to make her first own picture book, *Kip en ei* [Chicken and Egg] (2006), which was awarded with a Vlag en Wimpel [Flag and Streamer] from the Paintbrush jury in 2007.



Weve's need to experiment increased and so did her possibilities to try different styles and combine different materials. In *Kip en ei*, the colorful acrylic-painted prints with fierce spots and nonchalant black pen strokes are brimming with liveliness and expression. The drawings in Karel Eykman's adaptation of *Reinaert de Vos* [Reynard the Fox] (2008), in turn, are reminiscent of old woodcuttings, while in reality they come from the computer.

Weve likes to combine different materials and different styles in her illustrations, when it suits the text. In *Ober! Er zwemt een kwal door mijn soep* [Waiter! There is a Jellyfish in My Soup] (2009) by Bette Westera, she tried to integrate different styles, just like Saul Steinberg used to do in his cover illustrations for *The New Yorker*. 'As a student I got to know his work, he strongly influenced my way of drawing. Steinberg shows how you can work in different manners, even within one drawing. Bette Westera's texts lend themselves for such an approach very well. She has a great sense of humor; I can



really go all the way with that,' Weve says (Akveld, 2010). In one illustration of the book, she may use drawing in different styles, images that are 'pasted' in across the illustration, as well as signs and symbols.

Weve's collaborations with Bette Westera have been very successful. In 2012, Weve received the IBBY Honour List certificate for Illustration for *Ik leer je liedjes van verlangen* [I'll Teach You Songs of Longing, and Swinging by Your Monkeytail] (2010, Bette Westera). In this book with rhymes about animals, Weve showcases different styles in different illustrations, some in flowing watercolor, some more cartoonish

handdrawn figures with digital colouring. In 2013, she was awarded a Golden Paintbrush for her illustrations in *Aan de kant, ik ben je oma niet!* [Step Aside, I'm Not Your Grandmother] (2012, written by Bette Westera). In this book, which portrays several elderly people in rhyming stories and illustrations, Weve has really outdone herself and was clearly motivated by a desire to experiment. The resulting illustrations reveal her background in graphic design. Using bold shapes and thirty different colours of ink, Weve has created artistic fold-out pictures that feature complete life stories in beautifully designed compositions and colour combinations. Humour is always present throughout this book too, as Weve employs her trademark over-the-top style³. In 2015, Weve received a Flag and Streamer (Vlag en Wimpel) from the Paintbrush Jury for the book *Doodgewoon* [Dead Normal] (2014), and she and Bette Westera got the Woutertje Pieterse Award for the same book that year. With the poetry collection *Uit elkaar* [Breaking Up] (2019), Westera and Weve continue their successful cooperation, which has resulted in an even more daring, expressive and highly original book, that was awarded a Silver Paintbrush and a Golden Slate Pencil and the Wouterje Pieterse Award 20. Westera and Weve are one of the few that have received this important award for outstanding children's literature two times.⁴



In 2014, the collected poems and songs by Karel Eykman were published in *Was ik zee* [Was I Sea]. Through the years, Weve has illustrated many of his books of poetry and songs for young readers, starting with *Wie verliefd is gaat voor* [Who Is in Love Comes First] (1982). Comparing the cover of this first book with the cover of *Was ik zee* shows how Weve has gained an ocean of new possibilities and uses this freedom to employ different styles. The emphasis no longer needs to be on her expressive line-drawn figures, although she can still draw them like no

other.

While she continues to illustrate the work of (other) writers, Weve found the time to make her second individual book, *Logboek van tot nu toe onbekende dieren* [Log of Thusfar Unknown Animals] (2018), which shows her love of fantasy and humor, her want for exaggeration and her need for experimenting and using a variety of techniques and materials.



Together with Bette Westera, Weve made two books in which visual arts play an important role. *Jawlensky – haar ogen* [Jawlensky – her eyes] (2018) about expressionist art inspired by the German expressionist painter Alexej von Jawlensky and *Dit is geen CoBrA / This is not a CoBrA* (2019), inspired by the playful and experimental European Avant-Garde movement CoBrA. Weve's illustrations have been exhibited in several museums

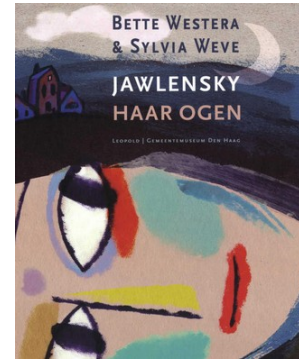
³ Description of Weve's illustrations in *Step Aside, I'm Not Your Grandmother!* as presented on the website of the Dutch Foundation for Literature: <http://www.letterenfonds.nl/nl/boek/897/aan-de-kant-ik-ben-je-oma-niet>.

⁴ The award-winning titles are all presented in more detail in the section 'Ten of the Most Important Titles' elsewhere in this dossier.

in the Netherlands and abroad, including the national museum Rijksmuseum, the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam for modern and contemporary art, the Biennial of Illustration in Bratislava, UBS Art Gallery in New York and the Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art Museum (USA).



Renowned author and illustrator Ted van Lieshout, who delivered the festive speech at the award ceremony of the Max Velthuijs Award, believes that Weve has brought about a revolution in children's book illustration art: "Sweet little pictures of cute children were no longer necessary. Sylvia buzzed through children's illustration like a bull in a china shop and brought panache and daring into the genre with bravado, balls and boots." According to Van Lieshout, her work is full of literary layers and her drawings have developed into well-considered compositions in which impression and expression go hand in hand.⁵



The jury of the Max Velthuijs Award praises Weve for the idiosyncratic richness of her images and states that her oeuvre is full of eloquence. "Weve's approach is daring, original and personal. Her illustrations are full of speed and expression and have a human, intuitive side that comes straight from the heart and appeals to both children and adults," according to the jury.

With her striking black-and-white pen drawings, Sylvia Weve caused a stir in Dutch children's literature and changed the face of children's book illustration in the 1980s. This does not mean, however, that she leaned back and stuck to what she already knew. Digital technology opened up endless possibilities and allowed her to combine her illustrative and graphic qualities. As the jury that awarded her with a Golden Paintbrush in 2013 said: 'Sylvia Weve has renewed herself as a visual artist: she exchanged the fierce, cartoonish brushstrokes for spectacular graphic constellations that do not know their equal in the nevertheless versatile landscape of Dutch illustrative art.'

Sylvia Weve uses her freedom to experiment and aims to make illustrations that add something to the text. Resulting in a series of awards for illustration, Sylvia Weve's illustrations never cease to impress and amaze, and show how children's book illustration is an artform that deserves as much attention and appreciation as writing is and does.

⁵ From <https://www.maxvelthuijs.org/max-velthuijs-prijs/>.

Appreciative Essays About Sylvia Weve

Column

Illustrator of the month March: Sylvia Weve

By: Janneke Siebelink

14-3-2018

(In: *Lees Magazine*, online (book)shop Bol.com; link:

<https://lees.bol.com/nl/article/illustrator-van-de-maand-maart-sylvia-weve>)

Because they color the world a bit sweeter. Because they give stories a golden lining. Because the drawings are fairy tales in themselves. That's why every month we offer a podium to illustrators.

What motivates them, what are they proud of, what inspires them? Today Sylvia Weve. "Drawing is in my genes, it runs in my family. I got a lot of stimulation and lots of materials from a young age to express myself on paper. As a child I already knew: I will become an illustrator when I'm older."

Weve was born in Utrecht but grew up in Roosendaal. After the art academy in Arnhem (graphic design department) she moved to Amsterdam. After working for several newspapers, her first book, *Een noom op school* [A Gnome at School] was published in 1980. By now, she has illustrated more than a hundred books. Weve draws expressively, with a lot of speed and movement, and with few lines. She works in colors a lot and draws with a blunted pen and ink, pencil, chalk, or with the computer (paintbox). In 2006, she wrote her own text with her illustrations for the first time, in *Kip en ei* [Chicken and Egg], a picture book with colorful illustrations.

The work of Sylvia Weve has been awarded often. Twice she won a Silver Paintbrush and in 1996 her expressive drawing style was awarded with the Prof. Pi prize for illustration. In 2013 she received the Golden Paintbrush for her illustrations in *Aan de kant, ik ben je oma niet!* [Step aside, I am not your grandmother!] (Gottmer), which she made together with Bette Westera.

For publisher Gottmer, Sylvia Weve also provides illustrations for the publications in the Ted van Lieshout-library.

Who are you?

I was born in Utrecht and then lived in Roosendaal, Apeldoorn and Arnhem, where I went to study at the art academy. Then I moved to Amsterdam, where I started drawing for newspapers, magazines, publishers, television and theater and also started to illustrate children's books.

Which illustrations (books) are you most proud of and why?

I am very proud of the book *Doodgewoon* [Dead Normal]. It is a difficult subject: death, both to write about and to create images of it. Yet that has succeeded. I am also proud of *Kip and Ei* because I wrote it too.

By what or whom are you inspired?

That is often a fragment, a glimpse of something and I regularly do not even know exactly what it is. This is converted in my head into a usable form or an idea for a drawing. Text is of course also an inspiration.

Which illustrator may answer these questions next time and why?

Ingrid Godon, because her drawings go straight to my heart.

Excerpts from the jury report of the Max Velthuijs Award 2019

“Unconventional richness of images - an oeuvre full of expressiveness”

“Sylvia Weve's (Utrecht, 1954) illustrations for children's books are accurate, show flair and excel in expression. The fact that these cannot be easily categorized is something the jury admires. Her visual reach is vast and everything that comes out of her hands looks seemingly effortlessly made. For every book, every story Weve draws on a palette of techniques, visual means and styles. From pen drawing and painted work to digital collage. Form, line or colour may alternatively take the leading role. From simple and stylized to baroque. Humorous, poetic, or a little surreal. Weve can do it all. She not only chooses what the story asks for, but also what she feels like. Whatever style, with whatever material or for whatever purpose or commission Sylvia Weve works, her illustrations always come across as vital and free, and play with the attractive effect of the unfinished. According to the jury, this is the common thread in her versatile oeuvre. Weve's approach is daring, original and personal. Her illustrations are full of speed and expression and have a human, intuitive side that comes straight from the heart and appeals to children and adults alike. Time and time again, her illustrative work has been convincing, and that from the very outset, since her debut in 1980. (...) You draw by looking, Weve says. Not literally by drawing obediently what you see, but by looking and taking in the essence. And to fall back on this later, when you're drawing. (...) With her idiosyncratic approach, her surefire use of ever-changing techniques and styles, and her ability to move us, Sylvia Weve is unmistakably a visual artist to the jury - whether she agrees or not. For these reasons and the aforementioned reasons, the jury proposes Sylvia Weve as laureate for the Max Velthuijs prize 2019.”

Jury: Brian Elstak, Olivia Ettema, Jet van Overeem, Floor Rieder (chairman), Emilie Sitzia, Aad Meinderts (official secretary).

Excerpts from the jury report of the Max Velthuijs Award 2019:

Juryrapport Max Velthuijs-prijs 2019: Sylvia Weve. Eigenzinnige beeldenrijkdom – een oeuvre vol zeggingskracht. (2019). Den Haag: Stichting P.C. Hooft-prijs voor Letterkunde / Haarlem: Gottmer Uitgevers Groep.

Source: <http://www.dutchheights.nl/winnaars/gouden-penseel-2013-sylvia-weve>



Jury Report of the Woutertje Pieterse Award 2015 (excerpts)

Awarded to: *Doodgewoon* [Dead Normal], by Bette Westera & Sylvia Weve

“Grasping a big theme in poetry and image is the assignment Bette Westera and Sylvia Weve gave themselves and the result is *Doodgewoon* [Dead Normal]. Death is central to the book. And that life-size theme is not just treated, Westera and Weve attack death, embrace it, keep it at a safe distance, give it value, and make it their own, also for the readers. All that at once in one great book. The language is steady in its poetic form, the illustrations diverse and very fitting, colorful and rich in visual power, the combination of text and image is masterful. *Doodgewoon* is a themed book that has touched us deeply.

[...]

In the end the jury chose a book that is clearly the work of not one, but two designers. In that book one big literary and human theme is discussed. It firmly stands within a centuries-long literary tradition. It is known to us and yet it is not, because this book shows that within the boundaries of a familiar house there are nevertheless many unknown and surprising places. The echoes of the past and the tradition bring new sounds, familiar contours lead to surprising and distant insights, feelings and thoughts. The writer of this literary work does so accurately and challengingly, softly musing or edgy, but always in a light tone and with depth.

But the writer alone could never have made this book. An illustrator was also needed who, in the same natural way, combines humor with seriousness, and whose palette is sufficiently rich to forcefully capture and visualize the diverse aspects of this theme. Anecdotal, edgy, reflective and aesthetic are the key words for text and image in this book.

Finally, this book would not be complete without the refined input of the designers. In the extraordinary cohesion of text, illustration and design this book shows its quality to the full.

The winners of the Woutertje Pieterse Award of 2015 are Bette Westera and Sylvia Weve with *Doodgewoon*.’ (Amsterdam, 11 April 2015)

NOTE: The full jury report extensively discusses all books that were considered for the Award. In this excerpt, only fragments about the winning book, *Doodgewoon*, are presented (in translation). The full report can be found here: http://www.woutertjepieterseprijs.nl/WPP/2015/Juryrapport_15.asp.html

Jury Report of the Woutertje Pieterse Award 2020 (excerpts)

Awarded to: *Uit elkaar* [Breaking up], by Bette Westera & Sylvia Weve

“*Uit elkaar* [Breaking up], by Bette Westera and Sylvia Weve (published by Gottmer Publishers), is about divorce, which has become an everyday practice, nevertheless with profound consequences for both parents and children. What inventiveness Westera and Weve (who have been successful as a duo for some time) demonstrate, and the designer Bockting design, responsible for the Japanese folding method and choice of paper. Everything is original and sparkling about this book, with pleasantly unadapted drawings and boisterous poems, in which children shake their heads at the love carousel of the adults, who sometimes seem to forget their children - but which sometimes also offer their children a new perspective. And even the pets are mentioned: “They stayed together for the children. / Now that they have moved out, I am screwed. / Chihuahuas often live up to twenty years. / Seven years to go. Who sets me free?””

“The 33rd Woutertje Pieterse Prijs is for a book that does not deny tragedy, but allows celebration to prevail. It can support children, and make them laugh, on every page of the exuberant *Uit elkaar*, by Bette Westera and Sylvia Weve.”

NOTE: The full jury report also discusses all books that were considered for the Award. In this excerpt, only the fragment about the winning book, *Uit elkaar*, is presented (in translation). The full report can be found here: <https://woutertjepieterseprijs.nl/juryrapport/juryrapport-woutertje-pieterse-prijs-2020/>



List of Awards and Other Distinctions

Sylvia Weve has received a number of nominations and awards for her outstanding work⁶:

- 1984: Silver Paintbrush (Zilveren Penseel) for *Oma, waar blijft de taart?* (Veronica Hazelhoff).
- 1991: Silver Paintbrush (Zilveren Penseel) for *Het bad van de zandloper* (Rindert Kromhout).
- 1996: Prof. Pi Award, oeuvre award for illustration from the Amsterdam Foundation for the Arts.
- 2007: Flag and Streamer (Vlag en Wimpel) from the Paintbrush Jury for *Kip en ei* (Sylvia Weve).
- 2012: IBBY Honour List certificate for Illustration for *Ik leer je liedjes van verlangen* (Bette Westera).
- 2013: Golden Paintbrush (Gouden Penseel) for *Aan de kant, ik ben je oma niet!* (Bette Westera).
- 2015: Flag and Streamer (Vlag en Wimpel) from the Paintbrush Jury for *Doodgewoon* (Bette Westera).
- 2015: Woutertje Pieterse Award, together with Bette Westera, for *Doodgewoon*.
- 2018: Nominated for the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award.
- 2019: Nominated for the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award.
- 2019: Max Velthuijs Award.
- 2019: White Raven for *Zo kreeg Midas ezelsoren*.
- 2020: Shortlist H.C. Andersen Award.
- 2020: Woutertje Pieterse Prijs, together with Bette Westera, for *Uit elkaar*.
- 2020: Silver Paintbrush (Zilveren Penseel) for *Uit elkaar* (Bette Westera).
- 2020: Silver Slate Pencil (Zilveren Griffel) for *Dit is geen CoBrA* (written together with Bette Westera).
- 2020: White Raven for *Dit is geen CoBrA*.

Brief explanation of some of the awards

Golden and Silver Paintbrush, Silver Slate Pencil & Flag and Streamer Awards

Annual awards for illustration (Paintbrush) and text (Slate Pencil) in children's literature, established by the CPNB (Collective Propaganda for the Dutch Book). An independent jury can award two books in four different categories (three age-categories and one for non-fiction) with a Silver Paintbrush. The same applies to the Silver Slate Pencils. From the awarded books, one is then selected as winner of the Golden Paintbrush and one as the Golden Slate Pencil. These awards were introduced in 1981 and 1973 respectively. The 'Vlag en Wimpel' (Flag and Streamer) is an honourable mention for this award.

Woutertje Pieterse Prijs

The Woutertje Pieterse Prize was established in 1987, and awarded for the first time in 1988. Libris, a bookseller's chain, sponsors the prize, which is intended for children's books of Dutch origin with literary merit. This annual award is for a maximum of 15.000 euro. The goal of the Woutertje Pieterse Prize is to improve the quality of children's writing by means of this award. The jury is free not to grant an award when there is no book of sufficient

⁶ Awards for the text of books have not been listed here since they are, strictly speaking, not for the illustrator, except for the Silver Slate Pencil that Weve received for her text in *Dit is geen CoBrA*. Bette Westera received a Golden Slate Pencil for *Doodgewoon* (2015) and *Uit elkaar* (2020).

quality. The prize owes its name to the character Woutertje Pieterse, since the story of this boy by Multatuli is said to be one of the finest ever written. This Award is seen as the most important award for authors of children's literature.

Max Velthuis-prijs

The prestigious Max Velthuisprijs (an award and 60,000 euro) is awarded once every three years, honouring an illustrator's complete oeuvre. The award is named after the famous illustrator Max Velthuis, mainly known for his books about *Frog* (1923-2005). In 2019, Sylvia Weve is the fifth illustrator who received the award, after Dick Bruna, Mance Post, Wim Hofman and Thé Tjong-Khing.

Bibliography of Books for Young Readers Illustrated by Sylvia Weve⁷

- **Een noom op school** / [*A Gnome at School*] Corrie Hafkamp; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1980, Tilburg, Zwijsen.
- **En Peter was de vlieg** / [*And Peter Was the Fly*] Rindert Kromhout; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1981, Utrecht, Bruna.
- **De jacht op het suikeren bruidspaar** / [*The Hunt for the Sugar Wedding Couple*] Henk van Kerkwijk; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1982, Tilburg, Zwijsen.
- **Heer Gosbert en de draak** / [*Sir Gosbert and the Dragon*] Frank Herzen; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1982, Tilburg, Zwijsen.
- **Samen in een nest** / [*Together in a Nest*] Anke de Vries; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1982, Tilburg, Zwijsen.
- **Moet je horen met je oren** / [*You Should Hear With Your Ear*] Rindert Kromhout; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1982, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Zullen we deze dan maar houden** / [*Shall We Keep This One*] Rindert Kromhout; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1982, Utrecht, Sjaloom.
- **Wie verliefd is gaat voor** / [*Who Is in Love Should Go First*] Karel Eykman; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1982, Amsterdam, Harmonie.
- **De strijd om de gouden schaats** / [*The Battle for the Golden Ice Skate*] Frank Herzen; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1983, Tilburg, Zwijsen.
- **Het beeld van de tovenaer** / [*The Statue of the Magician*] Jacques Weijters; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1983, Tilburg, Zwijsen / Meerhout, Infoboek.
- **Oma, waar blijft de taart** / [*Grandma, Where's the Cake*] Veronica Hazelhoff; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1983, Utrecht, Sjaloom.
- **Een spartelende speelgoedhond** / [*A Jiggling Toy Dog*] Rindert Kromhout; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1983, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Ouders ontsnapt!** / [*Parents Escaped!*] Rindert Kromhout; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1983, Utrecht, Sjaloom.
- **Liefdesverdriet** / [*Love Sickness*] Karel Eykman; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1983, Amsterdam, De Harmonie.
- **Boven op tante Agaath** / [*On Top of Aunt Agatha*] Paul van Loon; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1983, Tilburg, Zwijsen.
- **De bloeddorstige badmeester en andere griezels voor kinderen** / [*The Blood Thirsty Swimming Instructor and Other Creeps for Children*] Hans Dorrestijn; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1983, Amsterdam, Bakker.
- **Een olifant op schoot** / [*An Elephant in Your Lap*] Rindert Kromhout; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1984, Amsterdam, Querido.

⁷ Books for which Sylvia Weve only did the cover illustration are not mentioned here. Weve also illustrates books for adults, those are not mentioned here either.

- **Roos** / [*Rose*] Erik Lotichius; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1984, Amsterdam, Meulenhoff Informatief.
- **Roos ontdekt de wereld: de belevenissen van een bobtail** / [*Rose Discovers the World: The Adventures of a Bobtail*] Erik Lotichius; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1985, Amsterdam, Meulenhoff Informatief.
- **Bozo's droom** / [*Bozo's Dream*] Trude de Jong; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1986, Utrecht, Sjaloom.
- **Taptoeter: een bonte verhalenparade** / [*Taptooter: A Motley Parade of Stories*] various authors, edited by Robert-Henk Zuidinga; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1986, Amsterdam, Sijthoff.
- **Tijgers in de tuin** / [*Tigers in the Garden*] Rindert Kromhout; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1986, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **De prinses en de stroper: twee fabels** / [*The Princess and the Poacher: Two Fables*] Roald Dahl; Translated by Sjaak Commandeur; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1987, Amsterdam, Meulenhoff.
- **Wat moet dat daar!** / [*What's Going on There!*] Rindert Kromhout; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1987, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Sneeuwitje en de zeven krakers** / [*Snow White and the Seven Squatters*] Karel Eykman; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1988, Amsterdam, De Harmonie.
- **Beestachtig** / [*Beastly*] Rindert Kromhout; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1988, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Lastige portretten** / [*Difficult Portraits*] Karel Eykman; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1989, Amsterdam, De Harmonie.
- **Het bad van de zandloper** / [*The Sand Walker's Bath*] Rindert Kromhout; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1990, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Het grote boek van Merel** / [*The Big Book About Merel*] Rindert Kromhout; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1991, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Dingen van Daan: uit het leven van een scholier** / [*Dan's Things: From the Life of a School Boy*] Wim Daniëls; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1991, Haarlem, Holland.
- **Vechten met Veronica** / [*Veronica Ganz*] Marilyn Sachs; Translated by [?]; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. Second edition: 1991, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Aardappels met stokjes: vluchtelingkinderen vertellen** / [*Potatoes with Chopsticks: refugee children tell their stories*] Christel Jansen; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1992, Bloemendaal, Gottmer / Amsterdam, Vluchtelingenwerk.
- **Beertje Bonzibor heeft een zacht vel** / [*Little Bear Bonzibor Has a Soft Skin*] Rogier Proper; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1993, Amsterdam, Leopold.
- **Kinderen pesten kinderen: wat alle kinderen van 8 tot 12 jaar tegen pesten kunnen doen** / [*Children Bully Children: What All Children Between 8 and 12 Can Do Against Bullying*] Jos van Hest; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1993, Amersfoort, Opvoedingsinformatie.
- **Toen oma weg was** / [*When Grandma Was Away*] Ted van Lieshout; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1993, Tilburg, Zwijsen.

- **Duivelse verhalen: een boek over witte en zwarte magie** / [*Devilish Stories: A Book About White and Black Magic*] edited by Henk Figeer; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1994, Amsterdam, Leopold.
- **Beertje Bonzibor leert rugzwemmen** / [*Little Bear Bonzibor learns to Swim on His Back*] Rogier Proper; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1994, Amsterdam, Leopold.
- **Het beest van Bas** / [*Bas's Beast*] Dolf Verroen; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1994, Tilburg, Zwijsen.
- **Durf-je-wel, durf-je-niet** / [*Do-you-dare, Dare-you-not*] Anke de Vries; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1994, Tilburg, Zwijsen.
- **Juf doe niet zo suf!** / [*Miss Don't Be So Dull*] Dolf Verroen; Illustrations by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1994, Tilburg, Zwijsen.
- **Mijn hoofd in de wolken** / [*My Head in the Clouds*] Karel Eykman; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1994, Amsterdam, De Harmonie.
- **Lieve Liza** / [*Dear Liza*] Veronica Hazelhoff; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1995, Amsterdam, Averroès.
- **De allerergste hik** / [*The World's Worst Hiccups*] Mariska Hammerstein; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1995, Tilburg, Zwijsen.
- **Hoe Walvis een walvis werd: meer verhalen uit de vroege wereld** / [*How the Whale Became a Whale and Other Stories*] Ted Hughes; translated by Rob Scholten; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1995, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Een juf om op te eten** / [*A Teacher to Eat*] Dolf Verroen; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1995, Tilburg, Zwijsen.
- **Jakkes! Sprookjes van Gert Verderrie** / [*Yuck! Fairytales by Uncle An*] Rogier Proper and Brian Meijers; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1995, Amsterdam, Leopold.
- **Brieven van mijn broertje** / [*Letters From My Little Brother*] Chris Donner; Translated from French by Bart Moeyaert; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1995, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Het piepkleine boek van Merel** / [*The Tiny Book About Merel*] Rindert Kromhout; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1995, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Een leuke klas & Het schoolfeest** / [*A Nice School Class & The School Party*] Lieneke Dijkzeul; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1996, Tilburg, Zwijsen.
- **Geen grappen dit keer** / [*No Jokes This Time*] Selma Noort; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1996, Tilburg, Zwijsen.
- **Feestverhalen** / [*Festive Stories*] Jos van Hest and Saskia van der Valk; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1996, Haarlem, Gottmer.
- **Kijk, zo word je rijk** / [*This Is How You Make a Fortune*] Chris Donner; Translated from French by Bart Moeyaert; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1996, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Waar verteld!? Vreemde verhalen van vroeger en nu** / [*True Story!? Strange Stories of Now and Then*] Abbing & Van Cleeff; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1996, Amsterdam, Leopold.
- **En de winnaar is ...** / [*And the Winner Is ...*] Bies van Ede; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1997, Tilburg, Zwijsen.
- **Magische tekens: als je ze ontcijfert krijg je een verhaal** / [*Magic Signs: If You Decipher Them You Get a Story*] various writers; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1997, Amsterdam, Leopold.

- **Puit plep twiet** / [*Puit Plep Tweet*] Bies van Ede; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1997, Tilburg, Zwijsen.
- **Bijna alle sleutels** / [*Almost All Keys*] Edward van de Vendel; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1998, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Verjaardagsverhalen** / [*Birthday Stories*] edited by Jos van Hest and Saskia van der Valk; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1998, Haarlem, Gottmer.
- **Meester Max en de minimonsters** / [*Mister Max and the Mini Monsters*] Rindert Kromhout; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1998, Amsterdam, Leopold.
- **Super Duck valt aan!** / [*Super Duck Attacks!*] Rindert Kromhout; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1998, Tilburg, Zwijsen.
- **De koning en de koffieboon [en] andere nieuwe kerstverhalen** / [*The King and the Coffee Bean [and] Other New Christmas Stories*] edited by Lieke van Duin; Illustrated by Wim Hofman, Sandra Klaassen, Roel Ottow and Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1998, Baarn, De Fontein / Hilversum, Kwintessens.
- **Stijntje Stoer** / [*Tammy Tough*] Lian de Kat; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1999, Tilburg, Zwijsen.
- **Wat je moet doen als je een monster ziet dat erg op een berg lijkt** / [*What To Do When You See a Monster That Looks a Lot Like a Mountain*] Sjoerd Kuyper; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. Second edition: 1999, Tilburg, Zwijsen.
- **Meester max en het wiebelkind** / [*Mister max and the Wobbly Child*] Rindert Kromhout; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1999, Amsterdam, Leopold.
- **Bij mij onder de dekens** / [*Under My Covers*] Bette Westera; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1999, Haarlem, Gottmer.
- **De schommel** / [*The Swing*] Gerda De Preter; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1999, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Slapen en schooieren** / [*Sleeping and Scallywagging*] Peter van Gestel; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1999, Baarn, De Fontein.
- **Bertje Babbelkont** / [*Loudmouth Louis*] Anne Fine; Translated from English by Henk Hokke; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1999, Baarn, De Fontein.
- **Een dikke pil** / [*A Big Pill*] edited by Jos van Hest and Saskia van der Valk; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 1999, Haarlem, Gottmer.
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- **Goed fout!** / [*Rightly Wrong!*] edited by Jos van Hest and Saskia van der Valk; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2000, Haarlem, Gottmer / Hilversum, Kwintessens.
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- **Beertje Bonzibor en de luie mieren** / [*Little Bear Bonzibor and the Lazy Ants*] Rogier Proper; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2001, Baarn, Fontein.
- **Een koffertje voor opa** / [*A Suitcase for Grandpa*] Gerda De Preter; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2001, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Hans en Grietje in Jimmie Jammie Bobbyland** / [*Hansel and Gretel in Jimmie Jammie Bobbyland*] Karel Eykman; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2001, Amsterdam, De Harmonie.
- **De BVO's** / [*The EAPs (Extremely Annoying Parents)*] Rindert Kromhout; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2001, Tilburg, Zwijsen.
- **De feesten van het jaar: een verhalenboek over feesten en seizoenen** / [*The Celebrations of the Year: A book of stories about celebrations and seasons*] edited by An Kessler-van der Klauw; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. Sixth edition: 2001, Haarlem, Gottmer.
- **Hij is weg!** / [*He is Gone!*] Henk van Kerkwijk; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2002, Tilburg, Zwijsen.
- **Meester Max in de dierentuin** / [*Mister Max At the Zoo*] Rindert Kromhout; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2002, Amsterdam, Leopold.
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- **Slaapfeestjes** / [*Sleepovers*] Jacqueline Wilson; Translated from English by Suzanne Braam; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2002, Amsterdam, Hillen / Averbode.
- **Kunnen heksen heksen?** / [*Can Witches Witch?*] Kathleen Vereecken; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2002, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Alles over Spanje** / [*Everything About Spain*] Rik Zaal; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2003, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Zonder liefde ben je nergens** / [*Without Love You Are Nowhere*] Karel Eykman; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2003, Amsterdam, De Harmonie.
- **De raadselridder** / [*The Riddling Knight*] Bette Westera; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2003, Amsterdam, Hillen.
- **Meester Max en de minimonsters in het donkere bos** / [*Mister Max and the Mini Monsters in the Dark Forest*] Rindert Kromhout; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2003, Amsterdam, Leopold.
- **Resus** / [*Resus*] Edward van de Vendel; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2003, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Heleen Hik en de echoput** / [*Helena Hiccup and the Wishing Well*] Mariska Hammerstein; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2003, Amsterdam, Pennenstreek.
- **WereldKIDS: voor en door Nederlandstalige kinderen wereldwijd** / [*WorldKIDS: for and by Dutch Speaking Children Across the World*] edited by Martine Zoer; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2003, Amsterdam, KIT Publishers.
- **Katrien en de Waanse wereld** / [*Catherine and the Wanish World*] José van de Burgt; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2004, Amsterdam, Clavis.
- **Ra, ra, wie ben ik?** / [*Guess Who I Am*] Bette Westera; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2004, Amsterdam, Hillen.

- **Veilig leren lezen: leesboekjes** / [*Safely Learning to Read: Reading Books (teaching method)*] Annemarie Bon et al.; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2004, Tilburg, Zwijsen.
- **Wie vangt Joukje?** / [*Who Will Catch Joukje?*] Nanda Roep; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2004, Tilburg, Zwijsen.
- **Het grote voorleesboek van Meester Max: verhalen over een kleuterklas vol minimonsters** / [*The Big Book of Mister Max: Stories About a Kindergarten Full of Mini Monsters*] Rindert Kromhout; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2004, Amsterdam, Leopold.
- **De jongen die het leven tegemoet ging en andere verhalen** / [*The Boy Who Met Life and Other Stories*] edited by Rindert Kromhout; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2004, Amsterdam, CPNB / ABN AMRO (Special publication for Children's Book Week with stories by children).
- **Spinsels van een kater** / [*The Purrings of a Cat*] Jacques Brooijmans; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2004, Amsterdam, Clavis.
- **Spookpijn** / [*Phantom Pain*] Gerda De Preter; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2005, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Kip en ei** / [*Chicken and Egg*] Written and Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2006, Amsterdam, Hillen (Re-published by De Fontein (Baarn) in 2007).
- **Over de liefde** / [*About Love*] Bette Westera; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2007, Amsterdam, Hillen.
- **Peer Gynt** / [*Peer Gynt (adaptation to Edvard Grieg)*] Bette Westera; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2007, Haarlem, Gottmer / Universal Music (book and cd).
- **Hier zijn ze weer, Aap en Beer** / [*Here They Are Again, Monkey and Bear*] Frans Lasès; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2007, Tielt/ Arnhem, Lannoo.
- **Waar is het geld?** / [*Where Is the Money?*] Anke Kranendonk; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2007, Tilburg, LeesLeeuw.
- **Saartje en Sikje** / [*Sara and Goatee*] Frans Lasès; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2007, Wielsbeke, De Eenhoorn.
- **Het grote luisterboek van Rindert Kromhout: prentenboeken, versjes, voorleesverhalen & verhalen om zelf te lezen** / [*The Big Listening Book by Rindert Kromhout: Picture Books, Rhymes, Reading-Aloud-Stories & Stories to Read by Yourself*] Rindert Kromhout; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve, Jan Jutte and Annemarie van Haeringen. First edition: 2007, Groningen, Wolters-Noordhoff.
- **Mijn eerste zoen** / [*My First Kiss*] Anke Kranendonk; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2008, Tilburg, Zwijsen.
- **Mijn geheime papa** / [*My Secret Dad*] Hilde Vandermeeren; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2008, Leuven, Davidsfonds/ Infodok.
- **Wie knipt de tenen van de reus? Versjesgroeiboek voor kleuters** / [*Who Cuts the Giant's Toes? Rhymes-Growing-Book for Toddlers*] edited by Jan Smeekens; Illustrated by Ingrid Godon, Kristien Aertssen and Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2008, Leuven, Davidsfonds/ Infodok.
- **Reinaert de Vos** / [*Reynard the Fox*] retold by Karel Eykman; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2008, Amsterdam, Prometheus.
- **Alles klaar? Vertrekken maar!** / [*All Ready? Let's Go!*] Frans Lasès; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2008, Tielt, Lannoo.

- **Oma's knie** / [*Grandma's Knee*] Frans Lasès; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2009, Wielsbeke, De Eenhoorn.
- **Grote helden** / [*Big Heroes*] Rindert Kromhout; Illustrated by Annemarie van Haeringen, Jan Jutte and Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2009, Amsterdam, Leopold.
- **Ober! Er zwemt een kwal door mijn soep: alles wat je liever niet wilt weten over eten** / [*Waiter! There is a Jellyfish in My Soup: Everything You Would Rather Not Know About Food*] Bette Westera; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2009, Baarn, De Fontein.
- **Meester ontvoerd!** / [*Teacher Kidnapped!*] Marion van de Coolwijk; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2009, Baarn, De Fontein.
- **Help! De meester is een vreetzak** / [*Help! The Teacher is a Guzzler*] Selma Noort; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2009, Dordrecht, De Inktvis.
- **Ik leer je liedjes van verlangen, en aan je apenstaartje hangen: 47 verdichte dierenverhalen** / [*I'll Teach You Songs of Longing, and Swinging By Your Monkee-Tail: 47 Rhymed Animal Stories*] Bette Westera; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2010, Haarlem, Gottmer.
- **Help! Ze jatten de dikke dame** / [*Help! They're Stealing the Fat Lady*] Selma Noort; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2010, Dordrecht, De Inktvis.
- **Fransje** / [*Franky*] Frans Lasès; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2011, Hoorn, Hoogland & Van Klaveren.
- **Ika en Ibsen: het boze oog** / [*Ika and Ibsen: The Evil Eye*] Mikael Engström; Translated from Swedish by Bernadette Custers; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2011, Houten, Van Goor.
- **Ik moet mee** / [*I Have To Come Along*] Jorien de Bruijn; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2011, Haarlem, Gottmer.
- **Ik ben een held** / [*I Am a Hero*] Ted van Lieshout; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. Sixth edition: 2011, Haarlem, Gottmer (published as part of Ted van Lieshout Library).
- **Super Duck en de superheld** / [*Super Duck and the Super Hero*] Rindert Kromhout; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2011, Utrecht, Link / Business Creatives.
- **Ik ben een goochelaar** / [*I Am a Magician*] Ted van Lieshout; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. Second edition: 2011, Haarlem, Gottmer (published as part of the Ted van Lieshout Library).
- **Aan de kant, ik ben je oma niet!** / [*Step Aside, I'm Not Your Grandmother!*] Bette Westera; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2012, Haarlem, Gottmer.
- **Luitje en de limonademoeder** / [*Lazy and the Lemonade Mom*] Ted van Lieshout; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. Fourth edition: 2012, Haarlem, Gottmer (published as part of the Ted van Lieshout Library).
- **Giel heeft een geheim** / [*Gill Has a Secret*] Ted van Lieshout; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. Second edition: 2012, Haarlem, Gottmer (published as part of the Ted van Lieshout Library).
- **Kunst en vliegwerk** / [*With Flying Colours*] Dolf Verroen; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2012, Dordrecht, De Inktvis.
- **Dat zou ik nooit doen!** / [*I Would never Do That!*] Bette Westera and Naomi Tieman; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2012, Utrecht, De Fontein.
- **Komt een dier bij dokter** / [*There's An Animal At the Doctor's*] Bouwien Jansen; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2013, Amsterdam, Moon.

- **De allerliefste jongen van de hele wereld** / [*The Sweetest Boy in the World*] Ted van Lieshout; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. Third edition: 2013, Haarlem, Gottmer (published as part of the Ted van Lieshout Library).
- **Sint gaat op gym** / [*Santa Goes to the Gym*] Bette Westera; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2013, Haarlem, Gottmer.
- **Waar is Sim?** / [*Where Is Sim?*] Isabel Versteeg; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2013, Tilburg, Zwijsen.
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- **Herrie** / [*Noise*] Ted van Lieshout; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. Second edition: 2014, Haarlem, Gottmer (published as part of the Ted van Lieshout Library).
- **Doodgewoon** / [*Dead Normal*] Bette Westera; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2014, Haarlem, Gottmer.
- **Het wonderbaarlijke Snergenland** / [*The Marvellous Land of Snergs*] E.A. Wyke-Smith; Translated from English by Erik Bindervoet & Robbert-Jan Henkes; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2014, Amsterdam, Moon.
- **Haasje Repje** / [*Hurry Hare*] Bette Westera; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2015, Haarlem, Gottmer.
- **Op een ochtend vroeg in de zomer** / [*One Morning in Early Summer*] Toon Tellegen; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2016, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Van wie is dat boek?** / [*Who's Book is That?*] Bette Westera; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2016, 's Hertogenbosch, Malmberg.
- **Arme Rijk: een lees- en luistersprookje** / [*Poor Rich: A Fairytale for Reading and Listening*] Bette Westera; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2016, Haarlem, Gottmer.
- **Hazelnotentartaart met room** / [*Hazelnut Pie with Cream*] Bette Westera; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2016, 's Hertogenbosch, Malmberg.
- **Klaartje Klieder** / [*Missy Messy*] Bette Westera; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2016, 's Hertogenbosch, Malmberg.
- **Was de aarde vroeger plat?** / [*Was the Earth Flat?*] Bette Westera; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2017, Haarlem, Gottmer.
- **Ben ik dan een vogel?** / [*Am I a Bird?*] Vera Marynissen; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2018, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Logboek van tot nu toe onbekende dieren** / [*Log of Thusfar Unknown Animals*] Sylvia Weve (text and illustrations). First edition: 2018, Hoorn, Hoogland & Van Klaveren.
- **Jawlensky – Haar ogen** / [*Jawlensky – Her Eyes*] Bette Westera; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2018, Amsterdam/ Den Haag, Leopold/ Gemeentemuseum Den Haag.
- **Zo kreeg Midas ezelsoren: de mooiste Metamorfosen van Ovidius** / [*That's How Midas Got Donkey Ears: The Best Metamorphoses by Ovid*] told in rhyme by Maria van Donkelaar; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2019, Haarlem, Gottmer.
- **Het beste van het beste** / [*The best there is*] Mark Haayema; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2019, Amsterdam, Rubinstein.

- **Uit elkaar** / [Breaking up] Bette Westera; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2019, Haarlem, Gottmer.
- **Dit is geen CoBrA** / [This is not a CoBrA] Bette Westera and Sylvia Weve; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2019, Amsterdam, Samsara Books.
- **Meneer Droste van het Kinderboekenmuseum** / [Sir Droste from the Children's Book Museum] Sjoerd Kuiper; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2020, Hoorn, Hoogland & Van Klaveren.
- **Miauw, miauw, miauw! De mooiste gedichten over poezen en andere dieren** / [Mew, mew, mew! The most beautiful poems about cats and other animals] Annie M.G. Schmidt; Illustrated by Sylvia Weve. First edition: 2020, Amsterdam, Querido.

Books with the works of various illustrators, including Sylvia Weve:

- **Holle Bolle Gijs: nieuwe verhalen, strips en versjes** / [*Robin the Bobbin: New Stories, Comics and Rhymes*]. First edition: 1995, Amsterdam, Querido (cover illustration by Sylvia Weve).
- **Kinderkrakers: toffe kinderverhalen** / [*Kids' Crackers: Cool Stories for Children*]. First edition: 2000, Naarden, Strenght.
- **Aan tafel met Leopold** / [*At the Table with Leopold*]. First edition: 2002, Amsterdam, Leopold.
- **Een boek vol beesten** / [*A Book of Beasts*]. First edition: 2005, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Onder de kerstboom: voorleesverhalen** / [*Under the Christmas Tree: Stories to Read Aloud*]. First edition: 2005, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Winterpret: voorleesverhalen** / [*Winter Fun: Stories to Read Aloud*]. First edition: 2005, Amsterdam, Leopold.
- **Avonturen van Baron von Münchhausen** / [*Adventures of Baron von Munchhausen*]. First edition: 2010, Hoorn, Hoogland & Van Klaveren.
- **100x Annie: gedichten en verhalen voor kinderen van Annie M.G. Schmidt** / [*100x Annie: Poems and Stories for Children by Annie M.G. Schmidt*]. First edition: 2011, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Het grote De geit van dokter Sanders dierenvoorleesboek** / [*The Great Doctor Sanders' Goat Animal-Reading-Aloud-Book*] Annie M.G. Schmidt. First edition: 2015, Amsterdam, Querido.
- **Avonturen van Odysseus** / [*Adventures of Odysseus*] Daan Remmerts de Vries. First edition: 2015, Hoorn, Hoogland & Van Klaveren.
- **December: winterse versjes en verhalen** / [*December: Wintery Rhymes and Stories*] Annie M.G. Schmidt. First edition: 2015, Amsterdam, Querido.

Translations of Books for Young Readers Illustrated by Sylvia Weve ⁸

authors, diverse. *[(Een boek voor jou)]*. Arabic / translated from Dutch by Amina Abed. Amsterdam: Querido, 2017.

Donkelaar, Maria van. *[(Zo kreeg Midas ezelsoren)]*. Arabic / translated from Dutch by n.n.. Ill. Sylvia Weve. Abu Dhabi: Kalima, since July 2019. Original title: *Zo kreeg Midas ezelsoren*. Haarlem: Gottmer, 2018.

Eykman, Karel. *Liebeskummer*. German / translated from Dutch by Mirjam Pressler. Ill. Sylvia Weve. Weinheim etc.: Beltz & Gelberg, 1985. Original title: *Liefdesverdriet*. Amsterdam: De Harmonie, 1983.

Kromhout, Rindert. *Herr Max und die Minimonster*. German / translated from Dutch by Andrea Kluitmann. Ill. Sylvia Weve. Düsseldorf: Patmos, 2001. Original title: *Meester Max en de minimonsters*. Amsterdam: Leopold, 1998.

Kromhout, Rindert. *Animalvagi*. Italian / translated from Dutch by Laura Draghi. Ill. Sylvia Weve. Firenze: Salani, 1995 (I criceti; 34). Original title: *Beestachtig*. Amsterdam: Querido, 1988.

Kromhout, Rindert. *Il bagno nel deserto*. Italian / translated from Dutch by Laura Draghi. Ill. Sylvia Weve. Firenze: Salani, 1993 (Gli'istrici; 70). Original title: *Het bad van de zandloper*. Amsterdam: Querido, 1990.

Lieshout, Ted van. *Ben bir kahramanim*. Turkish / translated from Dutch by Ufuk Güngör. Ill. Sylvia Weve. Istanbul: Büyülü Fener / Alfa Basım, 2016. Original title: *Ik ben een held*. Amsterdam: Van Goor, 1990.

Lieshout, Ted van. *Giel'in bir sirri var*. Turkish / translated from Dutch by Ufuk Güngör. Ill. Sylvia Weve. Istanbul: Büyülü Fener / Alfa Basım, 2016. Original title: *Giel heeft een geheim*. Haarlem: Gottmer, 2012.

Lieshout, Ted van. *Ben bir sihirbazım*. Turkish / translated from Dutch by Ufuk Güngör. Ill. Sylvia Weve. Istanbul: Büyülü Fener / Alfa Basım, 2016. Original title: *Ik ben een goochelaar*. Haarlem: Gottmer, 2011.

Lieshout, Ted van. *Gürgür*. Turkish / translated from Dutch by Ufuk Güngör. Ill. Sylvia Weve. Istanbul: Büyülü Fener / Alfa Basım, 2016. Original title: *Herrie*. Amsterdam: Van Goor, 1995.

Lieshout, Ted van. *Lutje ve limonata anne*. Turkish / translated from Dutch by Ufuk Güngör. Ill. Sylvia Weve. Istanbul: Büyülü Fener / Alfa Basım, 2016. Original title: *Luitje en de limonademoeder*. Amsterdam: De Boekerij, 1987.

Tellegen, Toon. *Storie di animali per quattro stagioni*. Italian / translated from Dutch by Laura Pignatti. Ill. Sylvia Weve. Rome: Sinnos, 2018 (I Tradotti). Original title: *Op een ochtend vroeg in de zomer*. Amsterdam: Querido, 2016.

⁸ Source: the translation database of the Dutch Foundation for Literature, available through the following link: [Vertalingendatabase Nederlands Letterenfonds](https://www.vertalingendatabase.nl/)

Vandermeeren, Hilde. *Min hemmelige far*. Danish / translated from Dutch by Gudrun Gilhuis-Glenthøj, Lise Bøgh-Sørensen. Ill. Sylvia Weve. Århus: Turbine, 2011. Original title: *Mijn geheime papa*. Leuven: Davidsfonds / Infodok, 2008.

Vries, Anke de. *Trau dich doch!*. German / translated from Dutch by Daniel Löcker, Alexander Potyka. Ill. Sylvia Weve. Wien: Picus, 1995. Original title: *Durf-je-wel, durf-je-niet*. Tilburg: Zwijzen, 1994.

Westera, Bette. *[[Doodgewoon]]*. Chinese / translated from Dutch by Shinan Liu. Ill. Sylvia Weve. Beijing: TB Publishing Limited, 2020. Original title: *Doodgewoon*. Haarlem: Gottmer, 2014.

Westera, Bette. *[Yanshu yudao ai]*. Chinese / translated from Dutch by Yongan Dai. Ill. Sylvia Weve. Changsha: Hunan Juvenile & Children's Publishing House, 2009 (Love philosophy). Original title: *Over de liefde*. Amsterdam: Hillen, 2007.

Westera, Bette. *Was macht das Licht, wenn es dunkel wird?. Fragen, die nach einem Vers verlangen* German / translated from Dutch by Rolf Erdorf. Ill. Sylvia Weve. München: Susanna Rieder Verlag, 2019. Original title: *Was de aarde vroeger plat?*. Haarlem: Gottmer, 2017.

Westera, Bette. *Jawlensky - Mit ihren Augen*. German / translated from Dutch by Rolf Erdorf. Ill. Sylvia Weve. Stuttgart: Freies Geistesleben, 2019. Original title: *Jawlensky - Haar ogen*. Amsterdam: Leopold, 2018.

Westera, Bette. *(Uit elkaar)*. German / translated from Dutch by n.n.. Ill. Sylvia Weve. München: Susanna Rieder Verlag, since february 2020, will be published in March 2022. Original title: *Uit elkaar*. Haarlem: Gottmer, 2019.

Westera, Bette. *Überall & Nirgends*. German / translated from Dutch by Rolf Erdorf. Ill. Sylvia Weve. München: Susanna Rieder Verlag, 2016. Original title: *Doodgewoon*. Haarlem: Gottmer, 2014.

Weve, Sylvia. *Wie das Huhn beinahe vergaß, dass es ein Ei gelegt hatte*. German / translated from Dutch by Mirjam Pressler. Ill. Sylvia Weve. Köln: Boje, 2012. Original title: *Kip en ei*. Amsterdam: Hillen, 2006.

Translated editions published within The Netherlands:

Hazelhoff, Veronica. *Sevgili Liza*. Turkish / translated from Dutch by Alli Sönmez. Ill. Sylvia Weve. Amsterdam: Averroès, 1995. Original title: *Lieve Liza* (same publisher).

Hazelhoff, Veronica. *Lizā al-'azīza*. Arabic (Moroccan) / translated from Dutch by Omar Bouadi. Ill. Sylvia Weve. Amsterdam: Averroès, 1995. Original title: *Lieve Liza* (same publisher).

Hazelhoff, Veronica. *Dushi Liza*. Papiamentu / translated from Dutch by Hetty Kook. Ill. Sylvia Weve. Amsterdam: Averroès, 1995. Original title: *Lieve Liza* (same publisher).

Ten of the Most Important Titles Illustrated by Sylvia Weve

In order of appearance

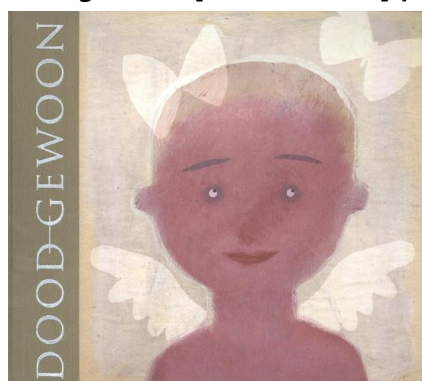
***Aan de kant, ik ben je oma niet!* [Step Aside, I Am Not Your Grandmother!] (2012)⁹**

“A visual spectacle of colour and ingenuity.” (*Trouw*)

Awarded with a Golden Paintbrush for illustrations. Children’s author Bette Westera and illustrator Sylvia Weve have taken a unique and gently anarchic approach in these vibrant and powerful portraits of twelve old people, with their snappy rhymes and eloquent images. *Step Aside, I’m Not Your Grandmother!* demonstrates how craftsmanship and artistry can come together to produce an imaginative children’s book that playfully combines ethics and aesthetics, emotion and humour. Sylvia Weve first received a Silver Paintbrush (2013) for her illustrations. According to the jury: ‘Sylvia Weve has renewed herself as a visual artist: she exchanged the fierce, cartoonish brushstrokes for spectacular graphic constellations that do not know their equal in the nevertheless versatile landscape of Dutch illustrative art. [...] Her color combinations are spherical and daring - and, thanks to the printer, they come out beautifully on the thick paper: light blue, neon green, red, yellow and brown fit together unexpectedly well. This in combination with the format and the double folding pages makes the book exceptional. And exceptionally successful.’ From the Silver Paintbrush winners, Sylvia Weve was selected as winner of the Golden Paintbrush later that year.



***Doodgewoon* [Dead Normal] (2014)¹⁰**



Winner of both the Gouden Griffel (Golden Slate Pencil) and the Woutertje Pieterse Award 2015, this book is highly appreciated for its approach to its central theme: death. The jury of the Woutertje Pieterse Prize writes in their jury report: “The monumental subject of the book isn’t just dealt with, Westera and Weve tackle death, embrace it, keep it at a safe distance, give it value, take it to heart, to their readers’ hearts. The illustrations are so diverse and suitable, colourful and rich in visual impact, the fusion of text and image is brilliant. *Dead Normal* has touched us very deeply.” Unique, unorthodox and unflinching: this describes children’s writer Bette

Westera and illustrator Sylvia Weve’s approach to death in all its aspects. These poems range from poignant to light-hearted in tone and invite the reader to recite them out loud. Weve’s outstanding,

⁹ Published by Gottmer, latest (3rd) edition in 2013.

¹⁰ Published by Gottmer, latest (4th) edition in 2015.

evocative illustrations are marked by their diversity of style, composition and atmosphere, beautifully complementing the poems and completing the collection. The notion behind *Dead Normal* is that the only certainty in our lives is death – and that we’d better get used to that idea. Writing about such a theme without resorting to clichés or pretension is no easy task, but Westera does a magnificent job. Illustrator Sylvia Weve, too, calls on all kinds of registers, making inventive use of the varying page widths within the book. Cartoonish pictures – such as the family portrait with the skulls of distant ancestors in the foreground – alternate with more abstract images. Where the subject is too vast to be neatly depicted, such as the elusive nature of time, she paints rounded shapes and rough brushstrokes in earthy colours to suggest the circle of life. *Dead Normal* – this wonderful collection of poetry and illustrations is anything but¹¹.



***Op een ochtend vroeg in de morgen* [One Morning in Early Summer] (2016)¹²**

While 2010s are a very productive period in the collaboration between Sylvia Weve and author Bette Westera, Weve’s illustrations also keep attracting the attention of other publishers and other authors. In 2016, she was asked to illustrate the new collection of animal stories by Toon Tellegen, one of the Netherlands’ most acclaimed writers. The style Weve uses in *One Morning in Early Summer* is comparable to that in *Haasje Repje* [Hurry Hare] (2015), a book of animal stories by Bette Westera, although Tellegen’s absurdist tendencies have clearly inspired Weve in their own way. Reviewer Jürgen Peeters wrote: ‘The surreal prints by Sylvia Weve have a strong symbiosis with Tellegen’s narrative style, which unmistakably contributes to the expressiveness of this collection of stories. Although the swirling prints clearly reflect Weve’s signature, the illustrator uses a less exuberant color palette. The strange atmosphere of the narratives remains just as good in pastel shades, which also draw attention to the events. The interferences between the animal figures and prominent objects are indicated by arrows. A nice extra, although this was not necessary, because the coherence is also evident from the expressive prints.’ According to him, Weve would have deserved an award for her illustrations of this collection of stories.

¹¹ From website of the Dutch Foundation for Literature: <http://www.letterenfonds.nl/en/book/1010/dead-simple>

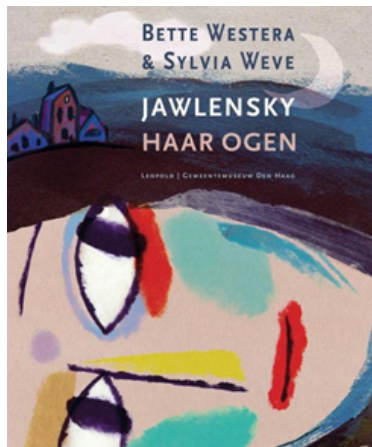
¹² Published by Querido, latest (2nd) edition 2016.

Was de aarde vroeger plat? [Did the earth used to be flat?] (2017)



In 36 poems, Bette Westera gives more substance to big questions children have. How do we know that time exists? Where do people come from? Where is the light when it is dark? There is not always an answer, but both the text and the illustrations are the starting point for thought experiments and fantasy. Sometimes the illustrations are linked to the whole poem. Sometimes Sylvia Weve explores one specific detail, with watercolour or ink. Her illustrations are dynamic and diverse, sometimes relatively subdued and very precise, sometimes exuberantly with vivid colours, showing different perspectives, making use of the space of the fold between two pages.

Jawlensky – Haar ogen [Jawlensky – Her Eyes] (2018)¹³



Every year, an ‘art picture book’ about the life and work of a famous artist appears alongside an art exhibition: a unique collaboration between the Gemeentemuseum Den Haag and publisher Leopold. For each art picture book, a renowned children’s book writer and illustrator are selected. In 2018, Bette Westera and Sylvia Weve were invited to create a book about expressionist painter Alexej von Jawlensky. It is at once a confirmation of the quality and acclaim of their work and yet another opportunity for this award-winning duo to show their creativity.

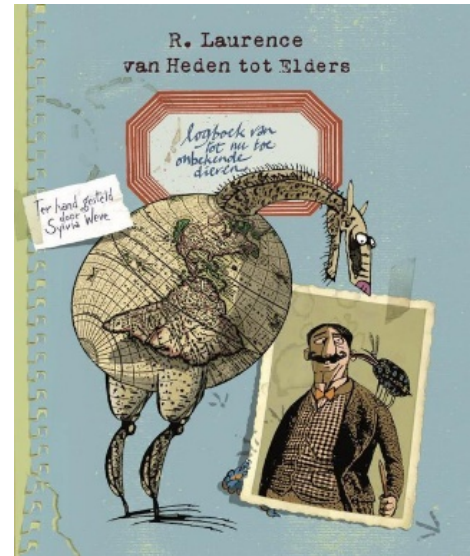
In his review of the exposition of Alexej von Jawlensky’s work in Gemeentemuseum Den Haag, art critic Frans van Hilten¹⁴ makes special mention of the art picture book created by Bette Westera and Sylvia Weve. Pointing to the difficult challenge it is to create a good children’s book about an artist without ending up with a simplified biography or an all too literal imitation of the artworks, he remarks about Weve’s illustrations: “Without actually copying Jawlensky, Weve has managed to capture the atmosphere of his work: the colors, the eyes, the shapes, and most of all the world that can be discovered behind those.” Although Weve is reluctant to call herself an artist, this book (once again) gives plenty of reason to say that she is.

¹³ Published by Leopold and Gemeentemuseum Den Haag, latest (1st) edition 2018.

¹⁴ Source: <https://kunst-hart.nl/2018/10/13/hoe-jawlensky-ziel-schilderde-grote-overzichtstentoonstelling-gemeentemuseum-den-haag/>

Dagboek van tot nu toe onbekende dieren [Log of Thusfar Unknown Animals] (2018)

Sylvia Weve shows in this book she is not only a very talented illustrator. She knows how to write an appealing and humoristic text as well. In this journal she describes several extraordinary unknown animals like for instance the ‘Gekooide Tureluur’ (In Latin: *Avis Insanum Captus*) or “the Wamstekker” (In Latin: *Feles Vadere Alibi*). Imaginative images of these unknown animals are accompanied by facts about its origin, its diet, mating and breeding and whether it is dangerous or not.



Sylvia Weve’s has an unrestrained fantasy, which results in gentle exaggeration and a light-hearted enlargement. Her associative skills are visible through witty links between the colourful illustrations- made with pen paintbrush and ink- and frisky humoristic explanations.

“The Cervus Brassicus Albus is an athletic build animal descended from the cabbage, the Small White Butterfly and the hummingbird. It is a herbivore with a strong preference for ... you guessed it...cabbage. Scientists suspect there are green and red varieties, but no proof has been found yet. Its offspring are called sprouts and similar to young children, they can smell horrible.”

Uit elkaar [Breaking up] (2019)



A boy who sees his dad kissing his teacher. A girl who finally gets the big (half-)brother she’s wanted for so long. Stepmothers who actually turn out to be okay. This poetry collection by Bette Westera and Sylvia Weve is about love, but about love that has failed, run aground or ended in separation. In these rhythmic verses, no subject remains undiscussed.

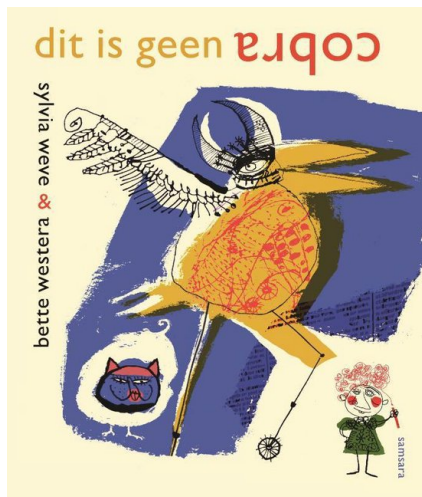
Sadness, infatuation, cheating, new family structures — Westera writes with a light touch and often with humour, as in the poem about the goldfish dividing their time between him and her after a break-up. But we also find ourselves confronted with painful situations, for example, when a child speaks up who suddenly has to deal with two homes and extra parents. Would it have turned out differently if he had been nicer? If he had never stood on the chairs with his dirty shoes? That particular poem is called ‘Nonsense’, and Weve has blasted a huge pink cross through it — one of the two fluorescent colours that have been added to the printed palette. The graphic work by Bocking Design also stands out in other respects. The paper is folded to make each page a kind of loop, so the words and pictures can flow from spread to spread. This gives Weve ample opportunity to let loose with her expressive, flamboyant illustrations. Like the mother’s hand reaching out for her daughter on the next spread in a poem about a girl who can’t believe her parents were ever a

couple. 'They have nothing, absolutely nothing, / in common / except for / me.'

The publishing house Gottmer has taken a daring approach by publishing poetry with such a strong focus on the design element. And it works — the poetry collections of Westera and Weve have the 'wow factor' and have found their way to a wide audience. Sometimes the whole really is greater than the sum of its parts.¹⁵

In *Uit Elkaar*, Sylvia Weve's illustrations are at least as powerful as the poems written by Bette Westera. Westera describes feelings and observations from children, who are witnessing the bygone relationships of adults. And they wonder...what is love? How many different forms of love are there, and why do relationships end? Are there new beginnings? How can we cherish memories of what has disappeared? Why do swans mate for life and why do female spiders eat their spouse? Sylvia Weve made dynamic (digital) drawings, with fluorescent colours, linking one page with another. We see the body of a swan, its neck visible on the back of the Japanese fold in its head on the next page. With these inventive ideas, Sylvia Weve makes a strong connection between the different poems.

Dit is geen CoBrA (This is not a CoBrA) (2019)



Marie makes strange drawings of purple birds with wheels instead of feet. This is not appreciated and she is sent to the Embassy for Children with cognitive and adjustment problems. The exercises she has to do are boring and not very creative. She meets Kris, who shows her a world filled with colours and magical fantasy. A world in which nothing is what it seems, is one of the CoBrA Movement's main principles.

The story takes an unexpected turn when Marie finds herself in secret painting lessons – she never has to colour inside the lines, her animals take on any colour she likes, and her playful drawings are free to sparkle and shine. This book is a beautiful introduction to the work and thoughts of the CoBrA avant-garde art movement (1948-1951). Sylvia Weve's mixed-media illustrations display the same brightness and spontaneity as those of the CoBrA painters. The humorous story is told with text and illustrations at the top of the pages, while the bottom of the pages feature text boxes with factual information.¹⁶

The story is combined with interesting facts about art history. The reader is encouraged to read the book following different directions. Sometimes the book needs to be turned upside down. The illustrations are daring, colourful and expressive.

¹⁵ Source: Dutch Foundation for Literature, <http://www.letterenfonds.nl/nl/boek/1343/uit-elkaar>.

¹⁶ Source: White Ravens Catalogue 2020, <https://whiteravens.ijb.de/book/1571>.

“Marie, this is a mess!”

Marie looked down at the spot of jam on her dress.

“I’m not talking about that stain,” sighed Miss Fowl. “I’m talking about your drawing. Canaries are yellow with little pink beaks. They have legs, not wheels. And you’re colouring outside the lines again.”

Marie put down her purple pencil and looked over at Peter’s drawing. His bird was neatly coloured in with canary yellow and a bit of pink.

Zo kreeg Midas ezelsoren [That’s How Midas Got Donkey Ears: The Best Metamorphoses by Ovid] (2019)

Maria van Donkelaar retells the famous myths from the Roman poet Ovidius in *Zo kreeg Midas ezelsoren*. The labyrinth of the Minotaur, the wings of Icarus and the donkey ears of King Midas, stories from over two thousand years ago, find their way to a modern audience accompanied by colourful and exaggerated illustrations by Sylvia Weve. Women are portrayed as angry trees with their feet deeply rooted in the soil. In the famous story of Persephone, we see her in Hades’ underworld, while the world is cold, and we see her sitting in the sun with her mother in the summer. The illustrations are both humorous and dramatic, showing disaster before it strikes in the character’s facial expressions and the forceful colours. Modern elements are included as well, in a contemporary handbag, or the security guards in black outfits with earphones, or the state-of-the-art wings of Icarus.



Sylvia Weve’s unique technique of drawing outside the lines yields expressive illustrations featuring strong black lines and eye-catching colours, which don’t shy away from depicting the stories’ cruel elements. In the illustrations, some characters and symbols reappear in different places.¹⁷

Miauw, miauw, miauw! De mooiste gedichten over poezen en andere dieren [Mew, mew, mew! The most beautiful poems about cats and other animals] (2020)

Fiep Westendorp illustrated most books by Annie M.G. Schmidt (1911-1995), but for this collection of poems, published on the occasion of the ‘Annie M.G. Smidt-week 2020’ Sylvia Weve was chosen. The poems are well-known by the readers, since they were published before, but Sylvia Weve sheds new light on them, with her humoristic, dashing and robust style. Annie M.G. Schmidt was known for her somewhat mischievous and funny texts, her creativity and expressiveness. Sylvia Weve and Annie M.G. Schmidt seem very evenly matched.

¹⁷ Source of last paragraph: White Ravens 2019, <https://whiteravens.ijb.de/book/1176>.



“Illustrator Sylvia Weve drew wonderfully recalcitrant cats with old cat poems by Annie M.G. Schmidt. What an excellent idea to have Sylvia Weve make new illustrations for this poetry collection. (...) Weve's playful contrariness and penchant for the caricatural suits Schmidt's slightly anarchic fantasy world wonderfully well. (...) In addition, Weve, who is just a bit freer, wilder and crazier than Westendorp, gives the collection a contemporary look. Her grim cat tronies, voluptuous cat tails and cheeky mice that run over and off the pages at random, liven up the texts optimally. And when the verse asks for it, she lets her imagination run wild. The ingenious "cat dyeing machine" at "The kitten Pieterneel" rightly catches the eye. Weve also makes the few somewhat brave, rippling Schmidt poems resistant to objections.”¹⁸

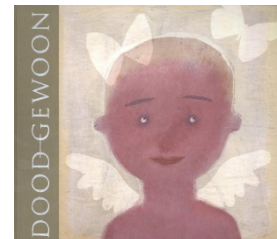
¹⁸ Source: Mirjam Noorduijn (8 May 2020). “Schmidt’s cats now have grim thrones and voluptuous tails” in NRC Handelsblad (<https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2020/05/08/schmidt-poezen-hebben-nu-grimmige-tronies-en-wulpse-staarten-a3999131>).

Books Sent to the Jury

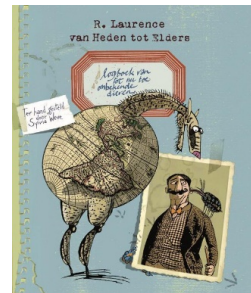
1. **Aan de kant, ik ben je oma niet!** (written by Bette Westera). Haarlem: Gottmer, 2013.



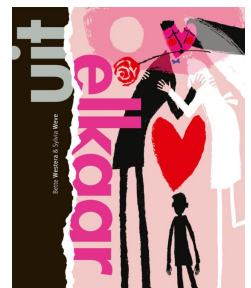
2. **Doodgewoon** (written by Bette Westera). Haarlem: Gottmer, 2015.



3. **Dagboek van tot nu toe onbekende dieren** (written and illustrated by Sylvia Weve). Hoorn: Hoogland & van Klaveren, 2018.



4. **Uit elkaar** (written by Bette Westera). Haarlem: Gottmer, 2019.



5. **Dit is geen CoBrA** (written by Bette Westera and Sylvia Weve). Amsterdam: Samsara, 2019.



Selection of Reviews of the Books Sent to the Jury

Trouw Boeken, 29 November 2014 [Dutch review – *Dead Normal*]

Bette Westera Writes Magnificent Poetry About Sensitive Theme

Bas Maliepaard

In the magnificent book 'Dead Normal' Bette Westera writes about death. For children, because death is unfortunately also part of their lives, when pets, friends or (grand)parents die. But her lyrics are just as poignant for adults. They are about the 'use' of death, the existence of a heaven, about funeral rites, grief and loss. Like this poem, in which the well-known store names make the sadness about a deceased mother painfully tangible and 'of every day': "I miss you on the bike,/ I miss you on the train./ I miss you at the H&M/ and at the Albert Heijn."

Westera also dares to deal with complicated issues. About suicide she writes: "The days hurt./ Life was too heavy./ She just could not go on." About a miscarriage: "You just should have waited a bit./ Then one day you could have come into my lap./ Then I could see how much you laughed at me/ and looked at me. Then you would not be dead." They hit home, those sensitive poems, by their direct tone.

That it has not become a heavy book, is due to lighthearted rhymes, including witty epitaphs: "Here I lie,/ buried in a grassy patch of green,/ and think what I thought before:/ death is easy enough." Or the brilliant 'Hein', in which life is a game: "Not far from our block lives Grim Reaper,/ who loves to play tag./ Heintje wants to be 'it' always and forever, as if it never gets boring."

Once again, Westera proves that of all poets who followed in the footsteps of Annie M.G. Schmidt, she is the most convincing successor. Her steady verses read unbelievably fluently, she is not or barely caught on forced 'Sinterklaas-rhymes', the lyrics are socially aware, quirky, moving and witty and regularly even more linguistically sensitive than Schmidt's.

But also because of the beautiful design this book is a highlight: linen back, three (!) reading ribbons, pages varying in width, tasteful layout. And, most importantly: gorgeous illustrations by Sylvia Weve, who won a Golden Paintbrush for 'Scram, I'm Not Your Gran!', her previous book with Westera, but surpasses herself yet again. She varies in style, works inventively with the different page widths and gives the book a warm cohesive atmosphere, which never gets tacky.

Source: <https://www.trouw.nl/nieuws/doodgewoon-bette-westera-dicht-magnifiek-over-eeengevoelig-thema~b5856241/>.

de Standaard, 26 December 2014 [Flemish review – *Doodgewoon*]

Book of the Week – Youth: An Unusual Book About Death
Dying Is a Part of It

Vanessa Joosen

Dead Normal is an illustrated collection of poems about death, in which humor and sadness go hand in hand. Bette Westera and Sylvia Weve made an extraordinary children's book.

In short

- 'Dead Normal': one of the most extraordinary children's books about death ever made
- Bette Westera and Sylvia Weve make an unusual children's book about death
- Humor and sadness in the special book 'Dead Normal' of Bette Westera and Sylvia Weve

There was a time when death was not taboo in children's literature. Dying is a part of life, and so in older children's books you regularly find poems and stories about deceased acquaintances and family members, up to and including little brothers and sisters. In the greater part of the last century, these stories were rarer, because writers and parents wanted to protect children from the painful aspects of life. In recent years, however, death has completely returned to children's literature, with the beautiful collection of poetry *Dead Normal* as a high point so far.

In Bette Westera's texts, many facets of death are discussed: classical themes like a dead grandparent or pet, but also surprising subjects, such as a sailor who gets a seaman's grave, the division of an inheritance, or a servant who must follow his pharaoh to the grave.

Equally varied are the feelings the book evokes. Missing and sadness are obvious, but there is also a great deal of wonder and humor in it. The reader for example gets advice about things that you should not say to someone who has just lost his father, resulting in a tragicomic poem with the title 'Better Not'. The accompanying illustration by Sylvia Weve shows a boy with a green face, a zipper for a mouth and frightened eyes. Weve so aptly grasps the fear that people have to say something wrong to someone in mourning.

'Puss Minoes' starts with the cliché that a dead pet is irreplaceable: 'If you are dead, Puss Minoes, / then we will not get a kitten, / no cat eating from your bowl / and sitting in your chair'. In the end, however, that idea is reversed and the narrator can barely suppress his anticipation: 'We do not get canary, / no goldfish and no guppy./ If you are dead, puss Minoes, then we can have a puppy!'

Tangible Sadness

While its dark sense of humor makes the book bearable, other poems cut straight into your soul, with striking details that make the sadness palpable. 'Nothing / is sadder / then your table / next to mine', a poem about a deceased classmate starts. Like the irreplaceable pet, the empty spot is a cliché in children's literature, but with the last sentence, Westera also gives this poem an original and very painful turn: 'With your photo / next to your notebooks, / with a candle / next to your markers, // and the teacher, / who one day / forgets / to put the candle on'. Westera does not compromise and evokes the irrevocability of death and the sadness of those who remain behind repeatedly and mercilessly.

But the first poem of the collection makes clear that death enriches life: "If you could not die, / was vacation still nice? / Would you still be looking forward to that trip by train?" Through the eyes of a critical child Westera moreover destabilizes the image of heaven as comfort. The child who just lost his grandmother asks, "What is she supposed to do? What is she doing? What does she have to look for?" The poem closes with an image of the grandfather, who will not die for a long time: "He is standing firmly on the ground with both his feet." The same applies to the child who does not simply embrace the projection of the idea of life after death.

Not all young voices who speak in this book are so skeptical. A little boy who has lost his father is sure his photo is talking to him: "He also misses me, I can hear that from his voice. / He is really there, I feel him up close. / I'm not talking to his photo but with him". The accompanying touching illustration shows the boy who is being addressed by the shadow of his father. You can only hope he is right.

Bette Westera and Sylvia Weve formed a successful duo before with *Step Aside, I am not your grandmother!* For that book, Weve rightfully received a Golden Paintbrush. In *Dead Normal* again they both push their boundaries.

Weve illustrates less exuberantly than we are used to, but with soft colors and subtle effects she perfectly captures the atmosphere of the poems. Moreover, this book has been published with great care, with tricolor ribbons, and beautiful flaps, which sometimes completely transform the images and show a different side of the same situation.

The theme of death may be presented in this book as 'normal', but the book itself is by no means so. On the contrary, *Dead Normal* is one of the most extraordinary books ever made about death.

OUR JUDGMENT: redefines the boundaries. *** (5 out of 5 stars)**

Trouw Boeken, 23 June 2012 [Dutch review – *Step Aside, I’m Not Your Grandmother!*]

In a Chair on Her Balcony

Bas Maliepaard

A nursing home is a warehouse full of fascinating life stories. They are brought to life in the original narrative poems by Bette Westera. The familiar themes are present, sometimes serious, sometimes witty: loneliness, old-age woes, war, dementia, death. But because they are connected to a personal life course, their meaning really gets through to you.

Take for instance the touching diptych about Mrs. Verweerd. In the cheerful first poem you can read how two children adopt her as a surrogate gran after the death of their own grandmother. But if you read in the second poem that Ms. Verweerd is undesirably childless, it gets a completely different charge. Before she became an adoptive grandmother, she dreaded “having to talk about Freek again and again, who had not yet walked./ Or about Liselotje, who could say grandma already./ She was not a part of it, she certainly was aware./ She preferred to read in the chair on her balcony.”

The poems about the marriage between the ladies Jansen and Verbruggen are also about the late fulfillment of a 'young girls' dream'. We read how they fell in love during French class: “It is not possible and it is not right./ But every time I see you/ I feel butterflies in my stomach again:/ Je t'aime toi aussi!”

Westera writes admirably smooth poetry: about the elderly Turkish guest worker, the former circus artist with 'clambering urges' and the veteran who receives royal mail. Because the poems are more complex and more contemporary than those of Annie M.G. Schmidt it is a shame that Westera sometimes leans on her legacy: “Have you heard? Mrs. Van Veen of number nine/ gave birth to septuplets last night at a quarter to four!” That sounds a lot like [a well-known poem by Annie M.G. Schmidt].

Sylvia Weve, with whom Westera collaborated on *I’ll Teach You Songs of Longing* before, provides the diptych-poems with eccentric, foldable computer illustrations. They look like printed collages, almost like scrapbooks full of memories. And although the cover looks dark, the inside is a visual spectacle of color and beautiful finds. The bride and groom get a walker with cans behind it, the septuplet is one man with fourteen eyes and the ugliest resident of the house has a leaky faucet as a nose.

Awarded with a Golden Paintbrush [Gouden Penseel] 2013.

Source: <https://www.trouw.nl/nieuws/in-een-stoel-op-haar-balkon~b19a04e9/>.

High chuckle content in Weve's fake animals

Mirjam Noorduijn

Children's Book | Illustrator Sylvia Weve made a book about animals that do not exist. Slight exaggeration and light enlargement that are the result of an unbridled crazy fantasy, that is her gift.

Sylvia Weve (1954) draws her inspiration mainly from other people's stories. She has already illustrated about two hundred (children's) books, of which the titles she made with Bette Westera (such as *Step aside, I'm not your grandmother!*, *Dead normal*) are among the most successful. The many assignments and high production mean that making your own picture books usually falls short. That is a pity: her own, with a Flag and Streamer awarded Kip en ei (2006) is a successful and visually attractive book. And the newly released *Log of Thusfar Unknown Animals* exudes so much fun - fun Weve must have had while creating the twenty-four humorous nonsense creatures - that you wish she would give in to her experimental drive more often, unhindered by audiences.

Fictional non-fiction

Not that the book has no small imperfections. For example, why was Weve's introductory text sent by the publisher for bookstore and press about her discovery of the logbook next to a garbage bag in Ootmarsum not used as an introduction? Although the text is brief, it reinforces the suggestion that it is an original manuscript. Now the reader is left with a piece of paper seemingly stuck to the cover, which reads "Handed by Sylvia Weve". This idea of fictional non-fiction, or non-fictional fiction, is of course not new either. Harm de Jonge and Fiel van der Veen, among others, preceded her with *Tjibbe Tjabbes world voyage* (2008): a fictitious ship's diary and unfinished handbook of exceptional animals, and more of a story than Weve's logbook.

But for a story you shouldn't go to Weve either. "My talent certainly does not lie in coming up with this," she once confessed in a *Volkskrant* interview. Slight exaggeration and light enlargement that are the result of an unbridled crazy fantasy, that is her gift. Moreover, she masters the art of association. In her log, this produces witty connections between the expressive, colorful animal illustrations inspired by everyday things - made with pen, brush and ink - and the playful explanation, as well as smart language jokes and ambiguities.

It turns out that the "Bestia Munda Magnus" (dog Latin for the World Animal - an ostrich with a dragon head and belly as a globe) has evolved from a flat to a round version, and is so loved today that a special day is named after her. Also clever are the *Aranea Mater* (Mother Spider), which does not spin but knit, and the young of the *Cenrus Brassicus Albus* (White Coal Deer), who are called "sprouts" and "like small children can smell quite badly". And beautiful is the find (whispered in the ear by Weve) of the name of the logbook writer: Richard Laurence was Weve's husband, who, when he died in France, was taken by carrier Van Heden to funeral home Elders.

Cheerful parody

Fortunately, Weve can't resist provoking lightly at times. As a result, the book has a high chuckle content and reads like a cheerful parody of cryptozoology. For example, with the Volarus Assicarus (the Lappish Kite, who has a tea towel-like plumage) she tells about his country of origin Lapland that it is claimed that Santa Claus lives there. But that that is of course nonsense, because it does not even exist, with a crossed out, angry looking Santa Claus face next to it. Also funny is the difference in appearance between the male and female of the Red Stiltwalker. One fast (an upturned mountain boot with a broken nose on long legs), the other slow, because she has to walk upside down, a high-heeled boot.

In short, Weve made a delightful, imaginative coffee table book. Not to put your cup of coffee on - although you can safely do that because Weve has already smeared it professionally because of the logbook suggestion - but to browse through.

Source: <https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2018/07/13/hoog-gniffelgehalte-bij-de-nepdieren-van-weve-a1609901>.

The divorce was a celebration, thanks to Bette Westera's astonishing finds.

Bette Westera makes you cry and laugh with her poems.

Bas Maliepaard

How funny to choose Japanese folded pages in a book called *Breaking up*, where one page consists of a double-folded sheet that has not been cut open at the front, as if two pages are together. Designer Bockting Design often provides such surprises in the poetry books of Bette Westera and Sylvia Weve, the spectacular highlight of which is the award-winning *Dead normal*, with poems about the end of life.

The shape allows illustrator Weve, who recently received the Max Velthuijs Award (60,000 euros) for her oeuvre, to take a special approach: her dynamic (computer) drawings, which look fresh thanks to fluorescent color accents, often run over onto several pages in *Breaking up*. Example: we see the body of a swan, its neck continues over the Japanese fold and its head is on the next page. In this way, Weve inventively unites the collection of poems.

Moreover, it is held together by a theme. In short: the past love between adults and its recognizable consequences for many children. That sounds heavy, but just like in *Dead Normal*, Westera makes you laugh and cry in her astonishingly skilled, form-retaining verses.

No photo album

There are a lot of humorous verses in it, like this one: "We've been married like this for quite some time," Grandma said. "No, your grandfather was not an easy man / and I was not an easy woman. The divorce was a party, / for both. There is just no photo album of it."

But also poems about guilt and grief, such as "My father", in which contemporary details bring the feelings of loss close: "No more Axe deodorant on the edge of the bath. / No more papa macaroni on Fridays. / His rain boots off the kitchen mat (...) His phone no longer on the charger. / His name crossed out on the calendar, / That is still left of my father at home." Weve draws - poignantly - the scratched-through shadow of a father, suitcases in his hands.

It's about faithfulness, adultery, complicated family arrangements and the benefits of a divorce: twice on vacation and suddenly having that big brother or dog.

Like Westera's work, Weve's is full of great discoveries, like this one: she builds an aunt who loves knitting and her fresh ex from one long "thread" that the aunt cuts through.

Verdict: Amazingly skilled verses, beautiful finds.

Source: <https://www.trouw.nl/nieuws/de-scheiding-was-een-feest-dankzij-de-verbluffende-vondsten-van-bette-westera~b59acf63/>.

Dad's name crossed out on the calendar

Mirjam Noorduijn

Children's poetry | Bette Westera's form-retaining verses run smoothly as ever, Weve's handwriting is elegant as usual, but what they tell is groundbreaking. The playful poems are about the divorce suffering of children.

You used to come across them sometimes: books whose pages had not been cut loose. This was due to the way of bookbinding in folded sheets (quires). With a sharp kitchen knife you then had to cut the pages open yourself. Anyone who sees the new book of poems by the illustrious duo Bette Westera and Sylvia Weve might be inclined to walk straight to the kitchen drawer, especially given the evocative title *Breaking up*. Don't do this. The so-called Japanese folded pages, with the fold of the sheet intact at the front, are part of the smart, neat design of Bocking Design. In this way, Weve's characteristic, expressive illustrations and Westera's lines of poetry can continue on the consecutive pages. Apart from the fact that, together with the sophisticated typography, this gives the collection an exciting dynamic, it effectively emphasizes that the forty-four poems about broken loves and its consequences for children are linked.

Four grannies

An illustrative example is the poem "Nothing in common". In the poem, a child does not understand how it is possible that her father and mother – meaningfully depicted by Weve with their backs to each other – ever had a relationship. "They have nothing, really / nothing in common," she says, "except", followed by "me" on the next page. In addition, Weve, who plays a wonderfully inventive game with shapes and residual spaces in *Breaking up*, let the mother's arm run over the Japanese fold, with the girl in question on her hand. Also nice is "Four Grannies" which is linked to "Five Grandpas" on the other page side. This shows that "grandma three" has a friend: "Grandpa four wants to know everything / about the friend of grandma three, / who will now be called grandpa five". *Breaking up* is teeming with such ingenious textual and visual discoveries.

The tone already gives away that it is by no means all doom and gloom in this book. Just like in *Dead normal* (2014), the acclaimed collection of poems by Westera and Weve about death in our lives (also designed by Bocking Design), lightheartedness and seriousness alternate in balance and there is room for laughter and tears, without the ladies thereby lapsing into cheap sentimentality. And very well: Westera has no taboos. Everything is reviewed: falling in love, adultery, unimaginably complicated family arrangements, happy divorce rituals, dogs that come when father leaves, and fathers who, as the closing lines from 'My father' say, are literally banned: 'His name scratched through on the calendar./ That is still left at home from my father. "Painfully striking are the scratched-through father figure and pan with 'papa-macaroni' with which Weve gives an extra boost to the loss and frustration of the child.

Groundbreaking

Westera's form-retaining verses, which run smoothly as usual, and Weve's elegant, loose handwriting complement each other beautifully. If this pair proves anything, then it is the same as the never-change-a-winning-team principle. Still, it is fair to say that their fifth, joint collection of poetry does take some getting used to, so that the surprise effect sometimes fails to materialize. That doesn't mean that *Breaking up* isn't groundbreaking. There is no children's book in which the divorce suffering of children is discussed in such a literary and playful way in its full width. The comforting effect is great. Just read the 'Nonsense' printed on two black pages, in which a guilty child wonders: 'Would it have been different / if he had been nicer / [...] / Were they still together?' Weve's daring, abstract answer, a bright pink fluorescent cross right through Westera's text, says more than a thousand self-help books.

Source: <https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2019/12/06/papas-naam-op-de-kalender-doorgekrast-a3982934>.

Sylvia Weve revives the craziness and energy of Cobra art

Mirjam Noorduijn

Children's book | The duo Bette Westera and Sylvia Weve seemingly effortlessly follow in the footsteps of the Cobra movement. The story is teeming with idiosyncratic and ingenious references to art.

"Marie, this is messy". This is the opening line in *This is not a cobra*, an unexpected, cheerful picture book by the successful duo Bette Westera and Sylvia Weve that was published this spring and ended up unjustifiably at the bottom of the review pile. It is not entirely coincidental that the story of Marie, who does not want to color within the lines and then is banned to "the Embassy for Children with Perception and Adjustment Difficulties," resembles Weve's own childhood history. Although Weve was not expelled from school, she, like Marie, was troubled by a teacher who systematically tried to suppress her creativity. If she made something intuitively or associated with a subject instead of copying the blackboard drawing, it was wrong and she got bad grades. While she loved nothing more than drawing in freedom.

Messing around

This favorite anecdote by Weve is of course a fantastic starting point for a picture book story about Cobra art: it is precisely in this post-war avant-garde art movement that free 'mess' was of paramount importance, under the motto: "nothing is what it seems". The Cobra artists were rebellious; they strived for a direct and spontaneous expression in which they were inspired by children's drawings and naive (folk) art, and they experimented to their heart's content with methods and forms of expression.

This free approach is perfect for Weve and Westera. With visible pleasure, they have apparently effortlessly followed in the footsteps of the Cobra movement. For example, they have practiced each other's artistic disciplines: "Sylvia Weve, image and word"; "Bette Westera, word and image", it says at the front of the book. And then you have to begin: the actual story is teeming with quirky and ingenious references to Cobra art. Very pleasant: there is no educational undertone.

The story gains momentum when Marie ends up in a secret studio through the wardrobe door of the Embassy attic through fellow student Kris (who is actually a boy). Anyone who knows his classics knows that a fantasy playground awaits her there. First, she is enchanted by "moonlit paintings". Then she meets painter Bram and his girlfriend Corry, who let the children paint whatever they want. "Make something beautiful out of it," is their credo. So Marie, "sometimes with a brush and sometimes just with her fingers", paints purple canaries on wheels and skating swans that unmistakably recall Corneille, and Kris paints a green boy, because she "was very good at self-portraits".

Fact or fiction

This nothing-is-what-it-seems ambiguity is the exciting thread. Yes, Weve is Weve: her illustrations are as elegant and humorous as ever, with expressive heads with big noses and graying mouths. At the same time, it is not difficult to recognize Cobra art in the bright colors, lively shapes and sometimes somewhat primitive images. Moreover, it is full of surprising puns and absurdities that lie under Marie's story (but sometimes also left or right, which means that you have to turn the effectively designed book regularly) and are the result of playful association. For example, if Corry calls the work of Marie and Kris 'magnificent', in addition to the meaning of that word, you will find an explanation of the origin of the name Corry, after which you via Cornelius and Corneille and the Cobra artists - also called 'Barbarians' at the time – end up with the Vikings.

This wonderfully disruptive language and image game is played cleverly and consistently. Until the end, when inspector Cornelis Schimmelpenning of "the Ministry of Education and Training" comes to put things in order in the Embassy, you will be misled. Although the good reader / viewer can already know that this Cornelis is not who he seems. Even in the colophon, the world is turned upside down. Rightly so: whether something is fact or fiction is artistically uninteresting. "Those colors, that freedom, that playful", that is what this delightful book is all about, which "is not Cobra", but as a passionate plea for limitless thinking and acting it breathes Cobra.

Source: <https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2019/08/23/sylvia-weve-doet-de-gekte-en-energie-van-cobra-kunst-herleven-a3970956>.

Children's Book Review website Kinderboekenpraatjes 15 April 2019

[Dutch review – This is not a CoBrA]

Susan Venings

The duo Bette Westera and Sylvia Weve are known for creating daring and original work. For example, they made children's books about being old and about death. It is appreciated, Westera and Weve have won many awards, including a Golden Slate Pencil and a Golden Paintbrush. This month, Weve also received the prestigious Max Velthuijs Prize for her entire oeuvre. *This is not a cobra* is a cheerful and unruly book and that ties in nicely with the subject: the work of the Cobra artists. This group believed that art was by and for everyone and they therefore looked beyond the traditional art forms taught in art academies. They were inspired by children's drawings, non-Western art and folk art, among other things. Their work is generally colorful and expressive.

Bette Westera tells the story of Marie who is unable to color within the lines. She is sent to a boarding school to learn this: the Embassy for Children with Perception Problems and Adjustment Difficulties. The students are taught to colour in neatly and when they have mastered that they can continue drawing pears, apples and dead pheasants. What the school management does not know is that the children sneak into Mr Bram's studio at night and there they can paint whatever they want. One day the school inspector is expected. The most beautiful drawings of apples, pears and pheasants are hung on the walls. But Mr. Bram has a plan. The school inspection will proceed very differently than expected.

Marie's story is the backbone of this adventurous and unsettling book. Sylvia Weve adds beautiful illustrations to the story, showing many familiar aspects of her work. Weve creates figures with strong lines and combines them with cheeky colors that do not always remain within the lines. She enlarges and reduces elements. For example, we see small mouths that are no more than a stripe next to large mouths with sturdy teeth. Weve also winks at the Cobra artists by depicting her own interpretation of their work. Characteristic of the book is the space for associations. In addition to the text of the story, a colored band that runs over all pages contains information related to the main story. They are facts in words and images and they are often very funny. For example, the director's blah blah blah is explained and we read that it is actually "rubbish, nonsense, banter, chitchat, gibberish, bullshit, nonsense and nonsense". In short: the director is a chatterbox and a chatterer, which in turn leads to the recording of a chatter recipe. Often the explanation is supported with an illustration, for example we see a "drawing from observation" of a chameleon next to a so-called "free impression" of the same animal. It is clear that Westera and Weve have more sympathy for the courage to step outside the lines than to simply do what is expected of you.

The book has been marketed as a picture book for preschoolers, but I think it will do more justice to a somewhat older readership. Preschoolers are still too young to question rules and enjoy making unconventional choices. *This is no Cobra* is a cheerfully disruptive and surprising picture book with playful language and images. A delightful book.

Source: <http://www.kinderboekenpraatjes.nl/home-blog/ditisgeencobra-bettewestera>.

