

# Cossee Publishers

Non-Fiction Highlights 2017



15 years of independent publishing

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## Eva Meijer *Animal Languages*

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- Rights sold: **German (Matthes & Seitz), World English (pre-empt John Murray), French (Presses de la Cité), Arabic (Dar Oktob), Polish (Marginesy), Turkish (Kaplumbaa Books)**
- Nominated: Socrates Beker, award for best Dutch philosophy book
- Third print-run

Dolphins and parrots call each other by their names. In the songs of many species of birds, and in skin patterns of squids, we find grammatical structures. Bats like to gossip. Most social animals have complex and nuanced ways of communicating with one another and with humans. In *Animal Languages*, Eva Meijer discusses many examples of recent empirical research. Biologists and ethologists are only beginning to understand the meaning of these signs. Her research presents us with a new perspective on other animals, while also raising philosophical questions. Can we call nonhuman animal communication language? What exactly is language? Can we speak with other animals and if so how? After reading *Animal Languages*, you might not be able to speak with all animals, but you will see them in a different light.

Currently in the media: in her newest essay *Political Animals* Eva Meijer investigates how we could live with non-human animals in a different way, organizing an alternative democracy, which includes a wide variety of species “A daring, original, innovative, very well-written and accessible essay.” – *Trouw*\*\*\*\*\* Rights sold: **German (btb)**

**Eva Meijer** (1980) is a philosopher, author, and singer-songwriter. After *The Shiest Animal* (2011), *Adventures in Animal Activism* (2013), her successful novel *The Bird Cottage* was published in 2016. Furthermore, Eva Meijer recently concluded her PhD on ‘Political Animal Voices’ at the University of Amsterdam.

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## **Marjolijn van Heemstra** *It Grows! It Is Alive!*

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- Thoughtful and at the same time hilarious anecdotes about the **first two years with child**
- “Beautiful observations and poetic musings, written in **subtle and sensitive prose.**” – *Literair Nederland*

Being a parent is a tremendous experience: it is commonplace, new, mysterious and takes you by surprise. Shortly after the birth of her son, people were asking Marjolijn van Heemstra whether parenthood was more difficult than she had expected. Her answer was no, but infinitely weirder. In *It Grows! It Is Alive!* she describes this new world of napkins, toys, sleeplessness, overwhelming love and fears – without the usual clichés.

Every week we enter a new phase with Marjolijn van Heemstra. From a softly sleeping and babbling baby, her son developed into a decisive toddler. “If I have to describe my son, it really depends which month we are talking about. In november he was sweeter than a marsbar, in december a downright terrorist. Sometimes he sleeps through the whole night, sometimes he is awake until the morning. Sometimes he caresses his duplo, sometimes he is smashing it against the wall. There is only one thing I can be sure about: everytime he recovers from having thoroughly fallen ill, he will be able to do something new.”

**Marjolijn van Heemstra** (1981) studied religious studies with a specialization in Islamic studies in Amsterdam. She is a successful theatre director of engaged, experimental performances, staged in the Netherlands as well as abroad. As a writer she is a multi-talent, writing poetry as well as columns for the Dutch newspapers *NRC* and *Trouw*. Her novel *And His Name Is* (2017) will be translated into five languages.

30,000 words, published in 2017 by Cossee Publishers

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## Lia Tilon

### *The Archivist of the World*

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- *Humans of New York* avant la lettre
- Based on **fascinating archive material** from the Albert Kahn Museum in Paris

In 1907, the French banker Albert Kahn hands his driver Dutertre a brand-new camera and tells him to take pictures. Kahn wants him to realise his dream: capturing all the different inhabitants of the world on photograph in order to create an “archive of the planet”. He is convinced that his pictures will eliminate fear of and prejudice against strangers, bringing about a more peaceful world.

Soon, Kahn begins sending out a number of photographers all over the globe – to the Native Americans, to African tribes and to the plains of Mongolia. Dutertre is not convinced of the project and has problems grappling with the new equipment, but as he gets closer to Kahn, he begins to understand his by now senior employer.

In 1939, Kahn refuses to accept that the results of the collapse of the stock exchange and the impending war are rendering the realisation of his idealistic project impossible. His villa is in demise; Paris is full of anti-Semitic posters. In the last days of his empire he has nothing but his pictures to look back upon. We, the readers and Dutertre, his last and only friend, are breathlessly looking back with him.

**Lia Tilon** (1965) is working as a communication and writing coach. She did a residency in the Institut Néerlandais in Paris in order to research the life of Albert Kahn. After coming across the diary of his driver Dutertre, she decided it was to form the basis of *The Archivist of the World*.

57,000 words, to be published in November 2017 by Cossee Publishers

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## Eefje Rammeloo

### *The Happiness of the Chinese*

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- “Eefje Rammeloo writes in such evocative language, that the book seems a documentary.” – *Humo* \*\*\*\*
- “Instead of assessing the current domestic situation in China through geopolitics, Rammeloo takes into account the **individual Chinese point of view.**” – *NRC Handelsblad*

China is a political and economic superpower. But what do we really know of the country that is playing such an important role in world politics? Taking into account the consequences of air pollution, the rise in ageing population and the growing discrepancy between city and countryside: What worries the Chinese? What are their ideas about progress?

In 2016, the population has continuously more money to spend. The wealthy have a house, a car and more than plenty to eat. They discover the world during trips to Rome, Paris and Giethoorn, wishing for clean air and a good education for their children. The Communist Party keeps the population happy by making prosperity grow steadily. In Shanghai but also far from it, this optimism is making itself felt. But at the same time inequality is rising. The Dutch China correspondent Eefje Rammeloo visits the people in their homes and talks with them about their worries and about their dreams for the future.

**Eefje Rammeloo** (1979) studied at the School for Journalism, the University of Utrecht and Rhodes University in Grahamstown, South-Africa. She worked in the foreign affairs team of the NOS and since 2011 she is working as a freelance journalist. Early 2014, she moved to Shanghai. As a correspondent she is writing amongst others for *De Groene Amsterdammer* and the VPRO.

70,000 words, published in 2017 by Cossee Publishers

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## Gerbrand Bakker

### *Jasper and his Serf*

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- A personal diary from the author of *The Twin* (IMPAC Dublin Literary Award) and *The Detour* (Independent Foreign Fiction Prize) in the style of Karl Ove Knausgård
- Rights sold: **German (Suhrkamp)**

Gerbrand Bakker bought a house in the remote German village Schwarzbach to compensate for his busy life in Amsterdam. He also got himself a dog, named Jasper, with whom he develops a special bond. In *Jasper and his Serf*, Bakker is frank about his relationships with his parents and his grandparents, the literary world, his work as a gardener, his job as an ice skating teacher, his former life as a student and his current life as a writer, and a thousand more matters, from the minor to the most important.

With impressive honesty we learn about Bakker's most intimate fears and desires, successes and achievements. While his novels leave much room for interpretation, this diary is a confidential document in which we learn a lot about the author of the books that are cherished around the world.

**Gerbrand Bakker** (1962) is a gardener and the author of *The Twin* (IMPAC Dublin Literary Award), *Pear Trees Blossom White*, *June* and *The Detour* (Independent Foreign Fiction Prize). His novels are published in 30 languages, are bestselling titles in the Netherlands, UK, Germany, and France, and have been adapted for movies and plays.

100,000 words, published in 2016 by De Arbeiderspers

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**Britta Böhler**  
*The Good Lawyer*

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- Author of the success novel *The Decision*, **sold to nine countries**
- Fascinating philosophical insight into the ethics of the legal profession

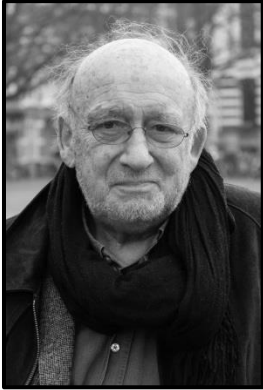
What makes a good lawyer? While the ethical behavior of the lawyer was previously taken for granted, it has in recent years become the subject of growing concerns and debate.

In *The Good Lawyer* Britta Böhler links examples from her own experience to the representation of the legal profession in film and literature. She elaborates upon concrete ethical dilemmas and the way in which they are portrayed, at the same time proposing ways to solve them. Böhler questions how the profession of the lawyer in a modern constitutional state can best be fulfilled. Should lawyers simply follow their clients' commands? What qualities should a good lawyer possess? And what about the public responsibility of the legal profession? Britta Böhler sketches an ethical framework for the 'good lawyer' befitting the challenges of the twenty-first century.

**Britta Böhler** (1960) is a Dutch lawyer of German origin. She studied law, philosophy and political science, and took part in some of the most well-known lawsuits of the past decennia. Along with Rodney Bolt she wrote a thriller-trilogy under the pseudonym Britta Bolt, in which the authors subtly expose the current problems of modern society. In 2013, she published her first novel, *The Decision*, which has been translated into nine languages.

24,000 words, published in 2017 by Cossee Publishers

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## Hans Croiset

### *I, Vondel*

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- Unique insight into the **Dutch Golden Age**
- “Well-versed and inventive, heartwarming and true to life. I finished it with bated breath.” – Nelleke Noordervliet

*I, Vondel* is the autobiography of the old Joost van den Vondel himself. And what a life he has lived, he, the embodiment of the Golden Age! Admiration, yet also deep and utter humiliation befell him. Throughout his life, Vondel attracted mockery and made enemies, for example, when he dared to express his doubts concerning the punishing God of Calvinism. He couldn't gather the courage to propose to the love of his life, he survived all of his children and found himself all alone at the age of ninety-two. Hans Croiset delved deep into the life and soul of the beloved and reviled writer, and has this old and timeworn man, who stood at the foundation of the Dutch language and literature, search for the right words to express his doubts, his motivations and his world. *I, Vondel* is a unique portrait of the Golden Age, portraying a passionate man who struggled with many of the issues we face nowadays.

**Hans Croiset** (1935), actor and director, commenced a second career as a writer at the age of seventy-five. After the autobiography *Bath House Road* (Cossee 2010) he wrote the novels *Lucifer beneath the Lime Trees* (Cossee 2011) and *Springtime in Prague* (Cossee 2013). Croiset acted in theater productions from the age of seventeen onwards, and received several awards for his works, among which are the *Oeuvre-Award*, two times the *Louis D'Or* and the *Drielanden Vondel Award*. As a director, Croiset put twelve of Vondel's plays on stage.

77,000 words, published in 2017 by Cossee Publishers

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## **Anna van Suchtelen** *Versailles at the Scheldt*

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- **The astonishing tale of an oriental palace** in the Dutch countryside
- Anna van Suchtelen tells the story of her family through the eyes of three generations of exceptional women

“A miniature Versailles in a remote corner by the Scheldt”, writes a reporter in 1894 about the house Zorgvliet in the little village of Ellewoutsdijk, Zeeland. During his visit to this country house of the Van Hattum dredgers family, he cannot believe his eyes. He comes across a winter garden, a theatre room with a revolving stage, extensive greenhouses and an island with an aviary. The enterprising J.C. van Hattum stands at the foundation of this success: within the time span of one generation he leads the small dredgers company of his father to prosperity. The company is involved with the construction of the Panama Canal, the IJsselmeer Dam and the Zeeland Bridge. Meanwhile their country house is growing out to become a palace in Moorish style.

Anne van Suchtelen sketches the lives of three women, and with them three generations of dredgers. What does it mean to be a part of this family? How do the women define themselves and what do they want to pass on to their children? And what does it mean to be rooted in a certain place?

**Anna van Suchtelen** (1961) studied Dutch language at the University of Groningen and visual arts in San Diego. Sources of inspiration for *Versailles at the Scheldt* were her own family’s history and the concept of ‘genius loci’, the spirit of a place. She focused on the country house *Zorgvliet*, and investigated what happens to individuals once their surroundings suddenly drastically change.

87,000 words, published in 2017 by Cossee Publishers

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## **Katja Reichenfeld**

### ***Charlotte Salomon: Inspired by Berlin***

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- A **new perspective** on the work of Charlotte Salomon
- With **beautiful illustrations**

The tragic ending of Charlotte Salomon's life in Auschwitz in 1943 is often compared to that of Anne Frank. Just like Anne Frank, Charlotte had strong artistic ambitions and was driven by the desire to create something extraordinary. Her painting style and the often humoristic and ironic undertone of her texts, combined with the many references to music and literature, did certainly not simply fall from the clear azure skies of southern France. And then there's the ultra-romantic commitment to her friend from Berlin, Alfred Wolfsohn. It is through his words that she found the courage and inspiration for her work *Life? or Theatre?*, an extensive illustrated narrative about her family, her childhood and student years at the Berlin School of Art, and her adventures in the south of France.

Katja Reichenfeld compellingly shows us how Berlin's sparkling atmosphere and the cultural climate of the interbellum influenced Charlotte Salomon's work. Her essay investigates the way in which this extraordinary artist processed the rise of the new medium of cinema, classical and popular music, expressionism and satirical literature in her own distinctive way.

**Katja Reichenfeld** (1942) studied art history and worked in the Jewish Historic Museum of Amsterdam from 1977 to 1988, where she also managed the collection on Charlotte Salomon. Later, she was employed as a music journalist for the *NRC Handelsblad*, and she currently works as a freelance music producer. Earlier, she published *XYZ of Classical Music* and *Classical Music in a Nutshell*.

18,000 words, published in 2017 by Cossee Publishers

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## Recent Sales

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**Gerbrand Bakker**, *The Twin*: sold to 27 countries/languages, US (Archipelago), UK (Harvill/Random House), ANZ (Scribe), German (Suhrkamp), French (Gallimard), Spanish (Rayo Verde), Italian (Iperborea), Brazilian (Radio Londres), Chinese (Shanghai 99), (All Prints, Lebanon), film rights (Circe, NL)

**Gerbrand Bakker**, *The Detour*: sold to 17 countries/languages, US (Penguin), UK (Harvill/Random House), ANZ (Scribe), German (Suhrkamp), French (Gallimard), Spanish (Rayo Verde), Italian (Einaudi), Brazilian (Radio Londres), Chinese (Shanghai 99), Arabic (All Prints, Lebanon), film rights (N279 Ent., NL)

**Britta Böhrer**, *The Decision*: World English (Haus, UK), German (Aufbau), French (Stock), Italian (Guanda), Hebrew (Sifriat-Poalim), Danish (Turbine), Greek (Kapon)

**Bregje Hofstede**, *The Sky Over Paris*: German (C.H. Beck), Danish (Tiderne Skifter/Gyldendal), film rights (Sara Verweij, NL)

**Marjolijn van Heemstra**, *And His Name Is*: World English (Atria Books), German (HoCa), French (Les Escales), Italian (Rizzoli), Spanish (Seix Barral) and film rights (Bind Film, NL)

**Dola de Jong**, *The Field*: German (Kunstmann), Arabic (Al Kotob Khan), Norwegian (Aschehoug), Swedish (Nilsson), Danish (Turbine), Czech (Pistorius & Olsanská)

**Dola de Jong**, *The Tree and the Vine*: Swedish (Nilsson), Czech (Pistorius & Olsanská), Spanish (Siruela)

**Eva Meijer**, *Animal Languages*: German (Matthes & Seitz), World English (John Murray), French (Presses de la Cité), Polish (Marginesy), Arabic (Dar Oktob), Turkish (Kaplumbaa)

**Eva Meijer**, *The Bird Cottage*: German (btb), French (Presses de la Cité), World English (Pushkin Press), Arabic (Kotob Khan), Polish (Marginesy), Turkish (Nebila)

**Ida Simons**, *A Foolish Virgin*: sold to 18 countries/languages, World English (MacLehose/Hachette), German (Luchterhand), French (Belfond), Spanish (Alfaguara/Random House), Brazilian (Alfaguara)

**Lize Spit**, *The Melting*: World English (MacMillan), German (S. Fischer), Spanish (Seix Barral), French (Actes Sud), Italian (E/O), Norwegian (Cappelen Damm), Danish (Rosinante), Czech (Host), Polish (Marginesy), Arab world rights (Madarek), Catalan (Ara Llibres), Bulgarian (Janet 45) and film rights (Menuet Film, BE)

## Recent Acquisitions & Publications

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- Bette Adriaanse – *Rus Like Everyone Else* (Greene & Heaton, London)
- Kristine Bilkau – *Die Glücklichen & Eine Liebe, in Gedanken* (Lit. Ag. Michael Gaeb, Berlin)
- Bov Bjerg – *Auerhaus* (Aufbau, Berlin)
- Christophe Boltanski – *La cache* (Éditions Stock, Paris)
- J.M. Coetzee – *The Schooldays of Jesus* (Peter Lampack, New York City)
- Sherko Fatah – *Der letzte Ort* (Random House, Munich)
- Milena Michiko Flašar – *Herr Katō spielt Familie* (Wagenbach, Berlin)
- David Foenkinos – *Le Mystère Henri Pick* (Gallimard, Paris)
- András Forgách – *No Life Files Remain* (Bence Sárközy & Co., Budapest)
- Jane Gardam – *Old Filth/The Man in the Wooden Hat/Last Friends* (Chatto & Windus, London)
- David Grossman – *Collected Essays* (Deborah Harris Agency, Jerusalem)
- Michael Ignatieff – *Ordinary Virtues. Moral Order in a Divided World* (United Agents, London)
- Husch Josten – *Hier sind Drachen* (Piper Verlag, Munich)
- Navid Kermani – *Ungläubiges Staunen/Einbruch der Wirklichkeit* (C.H. Beck, Munich)
- Stefano Mancuso – *Brilliant Green & Plant Revolution* (Giunti, Florence)
- Francesca Melandri – *Sangue giusto* (Italian Literary Agency, Milan)
- Catherine Poulain – *Le grand marin* (Wandel Cruse, Paris)
- Erich Maria Remarque – *Die Nacht von Lissabon/Arc de Triomphe* (Mohrbooks, Zürich)
- Aleksandr Skorobogatov – *Cocaine* (Cossee Publishers, Amsterdam and Regal Hoffmann & Associates LLC, New York)
- Elio Vittorini – *Il garofano rosso* (Mondadori, Milan)

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