

## From painting to writing

(translation by Alan Reynolds of article 'Van doek naar boek' dated 16 September 2009 in newspaper *Witte Weekblad*)

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*MONNICKENDAM - 'My fantasy often runs off every which way. I experience the inspirations that I get from that as gifts. With a few key words on a piece of scrap paper I can carry on for hours. Glorious. That creative process is what I find most enjoyable about writing.' Catharina Reynolds has been painting professionally for 12 years. After 50 exhibits here and in foreign countries this Monnickendam resident debuts with her first novel, named 'Flor'.*



Writing is not completely strange for her. She wrote as freelance journalist for newspapers and magazines until after completing a university studying philosophy she began writing plays. In Monnickendam and far outside the city Catharina has become known for her lyric abstract paintings. The artist is not painting 'at the moment' because two things at once don't work.

'I was busy for three or four months with my first book. Writing every day. Sometimes only a few lines, sometimes whole pages. During that process I was so caught up with my characters, with the developments in the story, but I could not even make one painting. That will come again. Actually my second book is already ready, in any case in its first version. When it's completely ready there will probably come another time when I dive into my studio and paint. Although the idea of a third book is already my head. But now first week of it to see how my novel is received. It's very exciting.'

### *Spain*

The development of '*Flor – woman seeks man*' did not happen without going through swings and roundabouts. 'The idea for this story arose when my husband and I came back from a vacation in Spain. We thought it would be fun to write an exciting story about some pensioned Dutch people who live permanently in Spain. Since my husband is American he would write his part in English and my chapters would be in Dutch. After months of the writing the manuscript a publisher let us know that a two-language novel was not saleable. My husband and I decided that it would become my book and I headed off to rewrite it. I only kept the main line of the original. When I had it printed in America I was happy with the content but it did not feel right. And that had everything to do with the design, the paper and the cover. I looked for a publisher in Holland and I am now very happy with the result.'

**FLOR** is the story of a missing person, of a search where as so often is the case the point is more the looking than the finding. Catharina Reynolds described her book simply as a novel although her

publisher preferred 'psychological thriller'. 'Reviewers often call my paintings "lyric abstract" and perhaps that is also the right term for my books. From my work I have perhaps developed a journalistic style which is very direct and concise. I don't very much like all those long descriptions. Because I've also written many plays I am used to writing a lot of dialogue and I still do that. So all in all a bit of a personal style. And I want to keep that style and naturally develop it.'