

TRANSLATION FREE TO BE FREE UTRECHT

CHURCH - PART 1

JEANNIE

Utrecht, the center of the Netherlands. A religious center for both Catholics and Protestants. This church started as a Catholic church in the shadow of Cathedral De Dom. The Buurkerk, the place of the people, where sermons was not in Latin but in Dutch. Where news from the city was proclaimed. Just like today, this church was surrounded by shops, trade and activity.

JOMEZIA

This church has adapted over time.
Church transformed into a play and music paradise.
Museum Speelklok
The happiest museum in the Netherlands

JÖRGEN

Who can still hear the sound of the wooden cart wheels driving through the gates of this church?
On the way to the market
With stolen raw materials
And faces full of sadness
Whose right to vote is spoken about without respect

CHURCH - PART 2

JEANNIE

Utrecht. A multicultural city far before its time
The tranquility and green landscape made it attractive for traders and the upper class to live here in stately mansions. They made their fortune from the colonial trade and brought merchandise to this city; Ivory, sugar, indigo, tobacco. Which the people could then buy in De Winkel van Sinkel warehouse.

JOMEZIA

They also took people with them.
Forced, trafficked, stolen from Batavia, Angola, Ghana, Sri Lanka.
To serve as nannies like Sibilla van Batavia, named after the person she had to work for, Sarah Sibilla van Verdion, widow of a VOC Merchant. She lies buried in this church.
Buried in this church are the enslaved servants Cervina van Moors and Maria Moor of Angola. Little is known about them, except what information we can gather from their names.

JÖRGEN

Moor refers to a person of color.

JEANNIE

Angola is the country they were stolen from.

JOMEZIA

Cervina van Moors and Maria Moor of Angola are buried in this church. Not free to be remembered by their own family, not free to carry their own name. Then how free are you?

CHURCH - PART 3

JEANNIE

Pieter Quint Ondaatje

Born in Colombo in 1758

His father was a pastor. A native Tamil from Sri Lanka, his mother was from Amsterdam.

Double blood. He is Double Blood.

Utrecht is his city.

He came to the Netherlands at the age of 14

came to study here in Utrecht.

as a law and theology student he rented a room at Lange Nieuwstraat 18

JOMECIA

Quint Ondaatje fought for democracy! He was leader of the patriot movement, which revolted against corruption and abuse of power in the Utrecht city council, the vroedschap.

JEANNIE

In 1785, furious patriots gathered in front of the town hall, supported by the residents of Utrecht, they demanded more democracy. The city council, which was meeting inside, felt the pressure, fear and agreed. Outside, Ondaatje addressed the crowd and announced that their demands had been met! Peace returned. He fought for power and freedom for the people.

JOMECIA

What does freedom mean when you fight for a city that oppresses your family elsewhere?

Are you really free if you fight for people who do not see you as an equal?

Freedom in the form of servitude

Freedom in the form of adapting to survive

Only since 2021, Ondaatje is commemorated with a memorial stone at the Town Hall as leader of the revolution in Utrecht

His portrait is depicted, but his Asian-European heritage is masked. He is depicted as a white person.

Remembered for the freedom he brought, but not for who he truly was.

SQUARE - PART 1

JOMECIA

Utrecht, the city of trade, freedom and peace. In 1713, De Vrede van Utrecht (The peace of Utrecht), brought colonial powers together to make new trade agreements. Including the Asiento de Negros, the monopoly to supply enslaved people to the Spanish crown. This lucrative trade deal was long in the hands of the Dutch, who used Curaçao as a central slave market to trade more than 100,000 women, men and children to Spanish colonies in South America between 1648 and 1713. Utrecht was the place where the traffic in people was divided and traded. Utrecht, the center of human trafficking.

SQUARE - PART 2

JÖRGEN

On the First Ship
I observe
Red White Blue
Horizontal
They speak with spit
Under their tongue
Low in their lower jaw
And chop the language without
Emotion to each other

JEANNIE

discover more and more
I'm discovering more and more things that I don't know
I thought I knew about this city
and learn how plantations were built in colonies around the world, in the name of this city

I thought I knew about these colonies
and learn how they are connected to other colonies
from France
Spain
England
Portugal

JÖRGEN

On the second Ship
I observe
Red white blue vertical
On the highest mast
From the stern
When they speak
A lot of mucus sticks to their lips
Their spit dies in the corners
From their mouths
Emotion a rocket of syllables

JEANNIE

There is continuous fighting over land, trade, power, people
how the indigenous people first had to fight the Spanish, negotiate with the Dutch, and establish borders with the French, the Portuguese

discover more and more
How language was used as a weapon
How language was taken away
Had to adapt
How a new language was always imposed
How creole languages emerged from these intertwined raids

JÖRGEN

Red yellow red horizontal
On my hostages' third ship
When they speak, spit builds
itself on their tongue
It flies out when the face turns red
Followed by threatening hand gestures
Fingers become knives
Arms become swords

JEANNIE

discover more and more
How the slave trade went far beyond the Dutch colonial borders
How people were kidnapped, sold and shipped under the Dutch flag
To Colombia, Venezuela, Brazil
I'm discovering more and more
How the bell of the neighboring church rings incessantly when the plague destroyed the people of
Utrecht in the 17th century
five minutes for every death
How long should the bell ring if we commemorate every human life destroyed for Dutch glory?
if the bell were to ring for the more than two million enslaved women, men and children
the bell would ring day and night for almost 20 years

JÖRGEN

Red left green right vertical
The fourth ship is a harbor
Run by those spit talkers who want to sell us
Hellish journeys across seas filled with their sins
Hostage in the devil's wooden belly
Seduced by the devil's sweet tone

Baptized by believing barbarians
who think they can make people out of people
All the Colors
on all those masts

Ola kora ku sin bida
Nan Wesu sin tera
Nan wowo sin mama
E luna ta lusa e morto na awa

My journey comes to an end
In a multilingual plan
To set us free

GARDEN - PART 1

JEANNIE

I have to learn
to listen
to my grandmother's knowledge
how everything moves
I have to learn
to listen
to the legacy around me
that resonates in my heart, in my dancing feet, in my restless hands
in my genes
because the one
who could tell
doesn't tell anymore

I hear you, grandma
in the stones
I hear crying
in buildings
I hear mourning
whispering in the darkness
stories that said
stories told
stories heard
undisturbed
sssst....!
Be quiet!

Don't say so much
listen more
listen in
listen to me

Ground
ground me
nothing is mine
ground me
I am grounded here, grounded
but a bastard
I put my ear to listen
to the ground
ground me
I belong here

GARDEN - PART 2

JOMECIA

In the name of the wind
the head can think again
In the name of the sun
find warmth within ourselves

ALL

In the name of borders
keep finding them
In the name of resistance
we stand

JOME CIA

or she stays seated on the bus
To stand for herself and others
for those who were not heard, not seen, but carried

ALL

In the name of transformation

JOME CIA

I continue to immerse myself
in the icy water
until my body can no longer feel
until I can no longer hear my own thoughts
In the name of listening
In the name of healing
In the name of transformation

and always another person is the main character in the story of creation. Today it's you, tomorrow its somebody else.

In the name of listening
In the name of healing
In the name of transformation

THE END