

Het Debuut

("The Debut")

Netherlands : 1977 : dir. Nouchka van Brakel : : 94 min

prod: : scr: : dir.ph.: Theo van de Sande

[Marina de Graaf](#) [d]

Gerard Cox; Kitty Courbois; Pleuri Touw; Sandrien van Brakel; Dolf de Vries; Mathilde Willink

Ref:	Pages	Sources	Stills	Words	Ω	□	€	Z	⚡	Copy on VHS	Last Viewed
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A refreshingly human portrait – of a paedophile couple

Source: International Film Guide 1978

Speelfilm Encyclopedie review:

"A tender schoolgirl [? = "een prille school-meisje"] is having a secret affair with a married friend of the family. A not unlikeable, albeit rather stiffly executed, adaptation of Hester Albach's confessional novel. The women steal the show: Marina de Graaf makes a very promising debut. Kitty Courbois as the mother has an astonishingly strong scene at Schiphol, as her friend Cox is waved off and she perceives at once what her daughter has gone through. ** "

International Film Guide 1978 comment:

"While there is a lack of first-class scriptwriters and producers (and to some degree, really experienced directors) in Holland, there is no shortage of excellent cinematographers. Eduard van der Enden and Jan de Bont are already known internationally, and Theo van de Sande has now reached a comparable level. His work for "SOLEIL DES HYÈNES" is remarkable, but so too is his cinematography on Nouchka van Brakel's first full-length movie "HET DEBUUT" ("The Début").

The story tells of a man in his forties who is diverted by the sexual charms of a fourteen-year old girl, Caroline. Behind the fragile, idyllic consistency of this relationship, the female characters in the film are sharply and intelligently depicted. Nouchka van Brakel knows how to give her story impact through an accumulation of significant details."

[no listing in "Halliwell's Film Guide", "Leonard Maltin's Movie and Video Guide 2001", "The Critics' Film Guide", "The Good Film and Video Guide", "Movies on TV and Videocassette 1988-89", "Rating the Movies (1990)", "The Sunday Times Guide to Movies on Television", "The Time Out Film Guide", "TV Times Film & Video Guide 1995", "Variety Movie Guide 1993", "Video Movie Guide 1993" or "The Virgin Film Guide"]

No further information currently available. 1977, back when Holland was still able – and a woman director still able – to make a commercial film treating relatively sympathetically with a pædophile relationship, and a British reviewer was able to apply the word “idyllic” to it without fear of a summary lynching in the press. A somewhat less “idyllic” relationship, this time with a boy of 12, was played out in the later Dutch film “**VOOR EEN VERLOREN SOLDAAT**” (“For a Lost Soldier”). Neither could properly be judged as an “apologia” for such friendships, but perhaps they were willing to take a calmer view than has since become obligatory under our culture of The Victim.

One senses, furthermore, that this is a very different kettle of fish from Adrian Lyne’s recent remake of “**LOLITA**” (also accused of “validating” “under-age sex”), which is essentially a portrait of hopeless middle-aged infatuation, rather than a relationship in any genuine sense. Here we seem to be looking at a clandestine affair, where the age difference between the partners is wider than usual, but not at some form of malevolent sickness. Which you feel to be a truer definition of pædophilia is a matter for your own prejudice.

Nothing else is known of Marina de Graaf.

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