

Gert van Santen:

Short Tale of a Big Man



A curriculum is often a boring recital of dates, places and activities. This one tries to be less tedious while also giving the reader a glimpse of the person behind the information.

Young Gert

Born in 1958, in the Dutch town of Capelle aan den IJssel, Gert van Santen sensed from the very start that he might not want to take the path other members of society were following.

It all started at the age of five, when the little boy got a Spanish guitar. After touching it briefly and hitting a string or two, Gert informed his parents enthusiastically about his plans for the future: he was going to be a musician. Mum and dad lovingly explained that this was an utterly foolish idea; everyone knew that musicians ended up as lazy bozos with long hair and a severe drinking problem. Something with agriculture and the EEC would have a bet-

ter future. It was a good thing that Gert would soon go to school, where the teachers could correct the boy's ideas.

School was interesting. His class was divided in three groups, and he was the only one in the third. They had created a one-member geeksquad - just for him. Some kids thought that was funny, some were jealous. Gert didn't care - as long as he didn't get bored.

In spite of - or perhaps *because of* - his alleged intelligence, Gert couldn't always follow the world around him. Possibly as a result of the fact that he was reading lots of science fiction, an idea began to form in his mind: could he be a castaway from another planet, somehow stranded on this cruel, although beautiful world called Earth? Sometimes he wondered when his real folks would show up to take him home.



Gert's earth family was huge. His parents had many brothers and sisters, and together with their children and grandchildren they could fill a church. To Gert's joy - and later to his horror - this was exactly what happened every Sunday - twice.

Frustrated, Gert started performing foul reeking experiments with his steadily growing chemistry set. This always took place on Sundays in the living room, and especially when guests were coming over. With this behaviour he hoped to convince his folks he needed to install a full-blown lab in the attic - which, of course, never happened. Gert's love for science and technology only increased, though, and because his parents wouldn't let him have an electric guitar, he built his own: a revolutionary instrument with nylon strings and a little loudspeaker, powered by batteries.

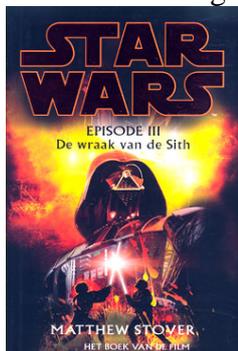
T H E S T O R Y O F M Y L I F E . . .

Gert's imagination sadly outweighed his technical knowledge: the little loudspeaker kept refusing to produce any sound at all, and Gert got disillusioned, so he decided to pick up photography – something he had been excited about since a friend of the family had visited them to take pictures.



There was, after all, little chance he would make it as a television personality. Or so his dentist had suggested; according to the man it would never work because his teeth were not straight - unless he would get braces. *Braces? No way, dude!* Also, an office as a man of the cloth, which had always seemed like a wonderful plan, had become pointless since he had stopped believing in God at the age of nine.

Things developed fast. During his teens, being a dreamer with a rather impressive imagination, Gert found he often didn't care for the things his friends or family thought important. On the other hand, he was known to rave about stuff that others were waving away as being way too weird. He read a lot of science fiction and books by Velikovsky and von Däniken at the minister's house during babysitting.



Gert rarely spent an evening out in the city, and as a result he didn't date. Not that he was gay; his favourite body parts were all distinctly female. Nevertheless, some people might have found him a bit of an Einzelgänger.

College

During college things seemed to change. Although the feeling of being disconnected never completely left him, it was as if the world was starting to look more real, more 'in your face'; as if a mysterious force had slowly lifted a grey blanket from the world. He signed up for Environmental Studies; he wanted to save the world from getting destroyed by pollution, and he loved chemistry. But, to his amazement, after six months he found it all stupendously boring; he couldn't understand what had been so very interesting all those years. He changed to Sociology, and he loved it. A new world seemed to open up for him. He started travelling, took up photography again, played in rock bands, wrote songs and poetry, and the regular intake of fermented beverages brought him to the conclusion that, after all, the world might be a bit more than just a figment of his solipsist mind.



Professional life

Then, after what seemed only a couple of years - although it was, in fact, much longer - Gert miraculously finished his studies and got a job.

He suddenly found himself living in his own apartment and spending his own money – brilliant! Or was it? Dark times lay ahead. It didn't take long before he found himself being completely overwhelmed by the necktie-armies in their concrete barracks that the masses lovingly call 'The Office'. Changing jobs did not bring any relief, and finally our hero fell back to Disconnection Mode. Not good. Time-out.

And so it happened that somewhere in

THE STORY OF MY LIFE...

1991, in the middle of another restless night, Gert found himself sitting straight up in his bed. It suddenly appeared to him that the solution to his problem was very simple. And he said to himself, 'From now on I will only be what I wanted to be all along; a man of music, language and photography!'

And from that moment on, Gert lived happily ever after... Sort of...

Musical career

Since 1992 Gert has been providing professional recording, production, mastering and restoration services.



The first steps in his musical career were set in his childhood, when he learned to play recorder, piano and classical guitar. In the 80's he was a member of numerous bands and projects as a guitarist, bass player and keyboardist.

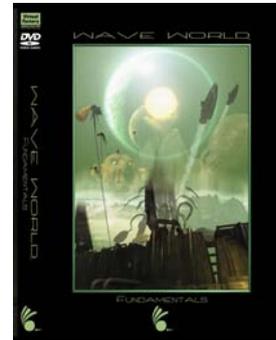


Today Gert specialises in music for documentaries, leaders, commercials and numerous special projects. Voice-over recording, mastering and audio restoration also form a part of Gert's work.

One of Gert's most famous projects is called Wave World (www.waveworld.tv).



The multi-media act, that has toured several countries in Europe as well as the United States of America with its spectacular 3D Computer Graphics show, has released 8 CD's, a VHS video and recently a DVD called Fundamentals.



Wave World combines ambient and danceable electronic music with stunning 3D computer Graphics of an alien world.

Translations

Gert has been working as a professional translator since 1992. His first jobs within this discipline, though, date back to the late 80's. Colleagues, friends and employers, who knew Gert's love for language, started approaching him on a regular basis for articles, manuals and other texts that had to be written in, or translated into Dutch, English as well as German. Over the years he has worked for, a.o., Meulenhoff, de Boekerij, Deagostini and fnl.



Examples of Gert's work: almost the complete Dutch Star Wars series, including novels from the movies *The Phantom Menace*, *Attack of the Clones* and *Revenge of the Sith*; lots of other SF novels, thrillers, short stories, plus a biography of Apple hero Steve Jobs, as well as a book

THE STORY OF MY LIFE...

about the making of the movie *The Lord of the Rings*.



Gert has also translated hundreds of issues of magazines like *Star Wars Fact File*, *Real Robots* and *Mind Body Spirit*.



Special projects are, for example, instrument manuals for synthesizer manufacturers Roland and Access, various articles for Wageningen University, a manual for security cameras plus many articles for photography and computer magazines.

Photography

Since the dawning of digital cameras Gert has worked with this spectacular new technology. He now owns professional DSLRs and has enough lenses and experience to cover anything from weddings and parties to nature, company shoots, people and interesting Photoshop edits.



Contact

Gert van Santen
Tarthorst 935
6708 JE WAGENINGEN
The Netherlands
Tel. +31-317-418280
e-mail: info@gertvansanten.nl
web: www.gertvansanten.nl