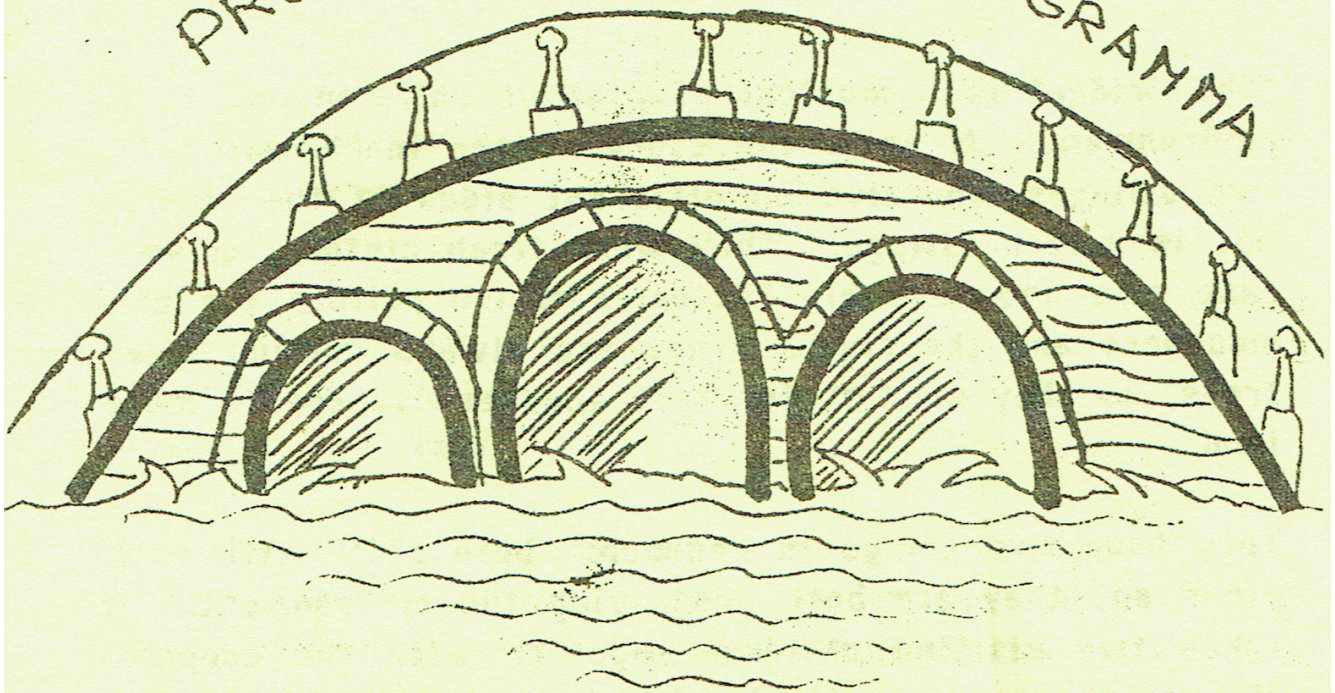

PROGRAM

PROGRAMMA



The Bridge

Friday

Vrydag

3-7-1992

The Bridge

A play for 10 -12 year olds about taking responsibility for our environment and dealing with prejudices about different communities.

The English Stream of the Violen School are keen to take responsibility for the Boven Bouw play which involves as many children as possible. This would be done in both English and Dutch. The director to be Rosey Woollcombe , a professional actress who has written and directed 3 short plays for the English Stream as well as other childrens productions.

She would be assisted by a Dutch teacher who would help her with the Dutch children and translations. She would also be helped by her husband, David Woollcombe who is a professional writer/director, English Stream Staff and mutual volunteers to make it a joint production.

Objective: As well as produce an entertaining musical play which will be enjoyed by performers and audience alike, this will be an excellent way to get both English and Dutch students to really work together, sharing their ideas and breaking down barriers.

It would also be a nice occasion to invite the officials working with English school streams throughout Holland - an occasion to invite the mayor and community leaders. Youth news of TV companies may also be interested in this. It would thus be quite high visibility for the Violen School Intergrated program.

Proposed Schedule: To audition children on Monday 13th April.

10 - 12 (two groups, approx 15 in each)

1-3 (" ")

It is hoped that children from each class would have speaking roles. We will try and incorporate as many children as we can. All those who want to be in it, should be incorporated. They would be in a chorus.

Rehearsal Schedule : Friday 8th May and then on Tuesdays and Fridays for 1 1/2 hours in afternoons.

Dress rehearsal on Thursday 2nd. Performances on 3rd July - in morning for children and evening for parents.

All rehearsals would take place in the Violenschool - speelhal
(apart from the final 2)

THE BRIDGE

by
David Woollcombe

Second Draft Treatment for a One Hour play for the Violenschool, Hilversum.

Cast: Boy
Girl
President I
President II
Narrator One
Narrator Two

Villagers
Council-Members

The Voice of the River
The Voice of the Forest

Setting:

The play is set with two acting areas representing two sides of a river. The two stages represent two villages, the dress, habits, mannerisms and everything about which is different. The river is represented by a long billowing sheet of blue polythene or fabric. At the beginning, it is polluted, thus is covered by a second layer of brown fabric, with old cans, bicycle tyres, cigarette packets etc. stuck on it.

On either side of the river stands a tree: a substantial structure, hinged so that it can sway and fall in a storm. The two sides are symmetrical, thus:

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PROLOGUE: Bare Stage apart from the trees: we are at a school camp in a clearing beneath the trees. The cast come on stage, fresh as though from a football match; they are a boisterous, rowdy international group of kids, speaking a bunch of different languages. The adult amongst them organizes them into groups, calling for the camp song. The piano player calls them to order. The song starts - in spite of themselves, the kids get into it. They enjoy themselves:

SONG ONE: PEACE IN THE HEART

The adult (Keith Keyes/Nadine Kaplanian?) congratulates them on their performance. The kids breathe a sigh of relief and start to go get ready for bed. But the adult tells them to wait a minute. A great privilege is to be bestowed upon them: they are being given the responsibility for coming up with an appropriate event for Earth Day this year. There is some dialogue about "What is Earth Day?"

"Oh - you know! The day we are supposed to check up on the state of the planet, do good works, clean up our rooms etc...."

"So what do you want us to do?"

"An Exhibition, a concert, an art show - a debate maybe. You decide."

"Do we have to?"

"No one will graduate my class this year unless you do! You'd better get started: camp's the place to put it all together. When I come back at the end of the week, I expect to see something spectacular!"

He/she walks out leaving a bunch of disgruntled kids.

EXIT

IMPROVISATION ONE

Through Improvisation and discussion, the children explore all the alternatives - tin-can collections, recycling exhibition, a fashion show using recycled clothes, a Nintendo game with eco-friendly characters defeating polluting giants. And so on - each kid comes up with crazier and crazier ideas. None of them sound very practical; none of them sound much fun. Until one kid comes up with an idea for a musical play.

"What's about??" they all ask excitedly; they all gather round as the child whispers the story; they turn round with whoops of glee, then turn back excitedly for more. The audience is kept guessing through the kids reactions. After a few moments like this, the kids are decided. They are going to do a play. They agree to start rehearsals immediately.

"But which language will it be in?"

"That's the great thing: it can be in both languages!"

"Great!"

The kids all exit.

TRANSITION: A Backdrop comes into place, indicating the two villages; the kids position it carefully. The staging is erected; the fabric river is drawn out. The Adult comes in: the kids greet him/her telling that the play is ready and that Earth Day is going to be great. The Adult sits down to watch.

SCENE ONE: The characteristics and cultures of the two villages are established by the casts through improvisation and discussion. One side (the Dutch speakers) are rich: they have Nike shoes, fast cars, big factories - and pollute the environment through their hi-tech life-styles; the other side (the English speakers) - are very poor, have too many babies, over-farm their land, chop down all their trees, badly manage everything so that everywhere is dirty. Both sides throw junk in the river.

It is very important that bi-lingual Dutch kids are in the English side, and bi-lingual English kids are in the Dutch side.

IMPROVISATION TWO "A" AND "B"

The improvisations should take place completely separately. The whole culture of each village is built up at these improvisations - clothes, food, manner of greeting, gestures, things that they like - marmalade, cricket, cheese - whatever! The improvisations should be fun, and should take most of one rehearsal to complete.

The Scene begins with the children welcoming their societies to a Festival - maybe the Harvest Festival, when the communities celebrate the fruits of the earth, and their own skill at harvesting them.

Out of the improvisations, each side should create a rap song - one in Dutch, one in English. Through the raps, which move back and forth between the stages, the children establish their societies - who they are and what they represent. The rap is also a celebration of their ability to defeat all enemies - like a football song, or a war dance!

SONG TWO: THE CHILDREN'S RAPS

Into this celebration, two new children arrive, one in each village. The village people welcome them warmly. They're invited to join in the last verse of the rap song.

When the song is over, the new arrivals - a Boy on the Dutch side, and a Girl on the English, - notice the other stage, where a similar Festival is going on. They ask their new friends about the village on the

other side. The children tell the all the terrible things about it. Because of the junk/poison they throw in the river, there are no more fish! They are planning to attack us - take all our food, our wealth. They are not to be trusted - dreadful people. "There's a law now that stops them coming near us - thank goodness, say the children! That lot are dangerous."

Each side says exactly the same thing about the other. The children never even look at each other: they have their backs to the River at all times. The Boy and the Girl both are shocked by what they hear: they cannot believe that there is such hatred. But they accept it, saying something like:

"Kind of a shame you guys couldn't get along."

"Why don't you build a bridge - get to know each other?"

The Mayor comes in - each one a self-important pouter pidgeon type: he/she interrupts and tells the children that there used to be a bridge: We tore it down a long time ago. We don't want their diseases and filth on our side of the river. We want to keep ourselves pure, unpolluted by the decadent culture of the people the other side - "

The Mayor reminds the children that it is getting late and that they should be getting home. The Boy and the Girl are sad: after the celebration of the Festival, the bitterness and hatred displayed by the villages towards each other distresses them. They sit down under the tree, thinking.

Two children come forward and sing: "Say you love this world" - as though revealing their thoughts to the audience.

SONG THREE: SAY YOU LOVE THIS WORLD

SCENE TWO: The River begins to twitch and roll; sound effects of a storm building are created by children with found props - tin cans, sheets of metal etc. Hands and feet on wooden floors create the sound of rain. The boy and girl run home, frightened. The mayor meets a councillor who says he's heard the storm coming could be the worst one ever - a hurricane!

The sound builds, lights swirl - and dancers in leotards with shimmering streamers come on in a hectic, storm dance. Crashing sound effects form the music, children hurtle hither and yon amongst the dancers, battling against the elements. The backdrop flaps ominously as though in a gale.

A group gathers round the trees on either side. They sway ominously. The children struggle to hold them up, but fail. The trees crash down, meeting mid-stage. [The top sections of the tree are made to bolt together to form a slimbing bridge across the center of the stage. The bolt is inserted and tightened by one of the dancers during the hectic climax of the storm dance.] The children run in terror; the storm swirls a few more beats, then abates. The stage clears.

SCENE FOUR: The lights come up. The Boy and the girl come on, breathing in the sweet, fresh morning air after the storm. The boy notices the trees which now form a Bridge across the river. The girl sees him coming and runs and hides. The boy crawls across the two trees and jumps down softly on the other side. He has noticed the girl; he sees her hiding and pretends to ignore her. She tries to creep away - but he turns on her. They blather at each other in their different languages then stop. They don't understand anything. They look awkwardly at each other. They go through the breathing deeply routine, but recognise that the sweet smell of morning has now been replaced by the more familiar smell of the river. They move further away. He offers her something to eat - a tangerine perhaps; carefully he peels it and throws the peel in the river.

"Don't do that!" says a voice.

Both children hear it. They look around and seeing no one there, laugh at each other.

They start playing the word game - he naming the tangerine for her; she names his shoe - the grass - the tree - a flower, each time learning the name in the other language. She offers him a candy bar; they share it, and this time she trhows the wrapper in the River.

"Will you please not do that?!" says the voice of the River.

This time, there is no mistake: there is definitely a voice. The Boy and the Girl jump up and start looking for it. They run into some other children and ask them about the voice from the river. The children spot the Boy as some one from the other side and attack the girl:

"You know where not supposed to talk to such people - what are you? A Spy? A traitor??" The children start to chase the boy and the girl round the stage until the voice from beneath stops them saying:

"Each one of you is a traitor!"

The children stop. They've all heard it. The river continues:

"Yes - each one of you! You all started life as a perfect product of Mother Nature, and now, as you grow up, you attack your Mother, first with your candy-wrappers, then with your poisons of your farms and factories. You have transformed your communities into perfect polluting prisons! And worst of all - you children don't care! Look at you - !

The River explodes into a mass of dancers in blue leotards, and singers who emerge to sing:

SONG FOUR: POLLUTING INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX

The song builds into a good old rock number; the children join in, singing and dancing energetically on both sides of the river. But suddenly, some parents come on: the river immediately gets back beneath its blue fabric and continues to flow normally. The parents see the Boy with the new Girl and believe it to be all their fault. One orders the Boy to go home, and never to return. One of the children protests that he got the river to speak to them about the dangers of pollution. [Go into "The Bridge" scene about the Dangerous madmen "My poor darling, etc."] The Boy is told never to venture to this side again, or the consequences will be serious.

SCENE FOUR: The children look at each other across the river, fear in their eyes. They speak try to speak to the river but the River is silent. Other children listen with them: on the Boy's side, they laugh at him - "The River spoke to you? - Ha!!" On the Girl's side, several kids listen intently. The parents urge the children to come in, now it's bed-time. "Don't even think of going across to the other side: that tree will be cut down tomorrow."

As the rest of the children leave, the Boy and the Girl, sneak across the Tree Bridge and meet in the center. A few of the other children join them. They agree they must work together to change things.

SONG FOUR: U EN IK

There, clinging to the trees, they agree that the first thing they must do is to clean up the banks of the river - pull out all the old bicycles and trash, stop the pollution entering it, make it pure again.

"Thank you - " says a voice. They all hear it.

SCENE FIVE: Song begins, and the children work hard to clean up the river, dragging out old bicycles, pulling the cans and the trash off the brown layer above the river. They plant rushes, clean channels, haul away the rubbish. They sing as they work - children from each side, in spite of their fears, learning each other's words, singing back and forth to each other side:

SONG FIVE: "SING!"

[In discussing all this environmental stuff, the children might take time out to visit one of the Hilversum ponds and clean it out. This would give the children a practical understanding of what they are describing here.]

As the song ends, the Mayors come in with some parents. All are fuming with anger: they reel off a list of crimes that the children have committed and demand that the Boy and the Girl, who incited the other

kids, to be arrested immediately. The Boy and Girl are hauled off by Police. The trees are cut down and taken away. Several children complain bitterly but others, who have never liked the Boy and Girl, cheer happily.

SCENE SIX: As they go, a bunch of international tourists arrive in the Boy's village. They announce that this village has been designated a major tourist attraction with some of the most modern amenities and best food in the world. They congratulate the mayor and comment on the beautiful clear waters of the river, and the pretty view of the village on the other side. They sing a song they have composed specially for the occasion and present the Mayor with a medal. He is uncomfortable, but welcomes the attention:

SONG SIX: HAMBURGERS EN FRITES

As the song ends, the Mayor and parents walk off with the International Tourists. The children remain.

SCENE SEVEN: A child runs on each side and announces that the Boy and the Girl have been Banished! Several of the children friendly with the pair and keen to end the rivalry between their two villages, break down in tears at the news.

A small Boat is carried through the auditorium to carry the children away to their banishment. It is placed on the floor in front of the audience. The Boy and the Girl are led out. Some children scream that it is dangerous - they could drown in the fast flowing river. By now, the Boy and Girl each speak the other's language so answer the children of the other side. They speak to each other's village about their mutual desire to live, to save the environment and to allow all living creatures, all plants, all flowers to live, grow up and enjoy their lives. They are sure the river will take care of them for it wants to live too. They beg the children to remember this basic instinct, common to all living things:

SONG SIX: I WANT TO LIVE

The children weep, but the Mayors are firm. The Boy and the Girl are dragged into the boat and pushed out to the middle of the river. The screams get louder and louder, then suddenly the River dries up: the blue fabric is hurriedly pulled up to one side and disappears.

The Mayors and the councillors are distraught: "What happened?" The Boy and the Girl, laugh and run across the dried up river bed to greet their friends.

"Didn't we tell you that the river would look after us!"

The children leap in happily to clean up the rest of the rubbish. The Mayors and the parents look at the river bed in horror. Suddenly, some of the children bend down and listen. The husky voice of the River is just audible:

"There's a mud slide up the river! - the people there have been cutting down too many trees; now you have to suffer..."

"What can we do?"

"If you want to save your lives, get up there and dig out the mudslide.

Otherwise my water will rise and flood the valley killing all of you. Quick Hurry! - ALL OF YOU !"

The river's voice dies! The children hurry to explain to the Mayors about the mud slide and beg them to rush up the river bed to dig it out. The Mayors see that this will mean looking at the people from the other side: they refuse. The International Tourists come out in their pajamas to find out what the commotion is: the children tell them, and explain the problem.

"Why won't they work with each other?"

"Because they're foreigners!"

"But we're foriegners! You'll work with us!"

The river says that in a few minutes, it won't matter who's foreign and who's not 'cos they'll all be killed in the flood. The children repeat this to the Mayors - who are suddenly spurred into action. They all run

off upstage. The Boy and the Girl remain a moment: they thank the river for saving their lives. Suddenly, another voice speaks: the voice of the Forest thanks them for making people listen to them for the first time in centuries. The voice of the Air and the voice of the Earth also thank them.

"What would you like us to do?"

"Build a bridge again," says the river.

SCENE EIGHT: The children and villagers come back covered with mud. Slowly the river re-fills its banks, (the fabric is stretched out again. The Mayors are so pleased to have saved the villages, they agree to let the Boy and the Girl stay. The children agree to stay on one condition: they build a Bridge to connect their two villages, to be friends with each other, to work together always.

Great expostulation and displeasure! But the children are adamant: they would rather be banished than live the rest of their lives with their villages as enemies. The children all support them. So the Mayors finally agree. The International Tourists look around at what has gone on and explain to the children that they think that this is a unique pair of villages - a unique planet in the universe. "For you, unlike any of the others, have Life!"

SONG SEVEN: LOOK AT LIFE

Everyone joins in with this, the dance spreading across both stages, through the river - every where. The painted backdrop of a beautiful bridge links the two sides of the stage, and the children spread across it.

EPILOGUE: The tableau at the end of the song breaks and the children come forward to ask the adult what he/she thinks. They sit around drinking juice from plastic cups and talking about the play. Some of the kids still think it "sissy" to do a play but most like it. The adult does too. They seek the Dutch equivalent of "sissy". They talk about other words - "Un-cool" - "Fun" - "Hip!" etc. Finally, they agree that maybe they should do a play again the following year on Earth Day.

They walk out, dropping their cups on the floor. The voices of the river, the forest and the river say in unison: "Aa-aah! - recycle!"

The children look in horror - pick up their cups and run away.

THE END

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Summary of "The Bridge"

"The Bridge" is a musical play about children and the environment. It tells the story of the inhabitants of two villages who live on different sides of the river. One is a rich village. They wear flash clothes, drive fast cars and have big factories which pollute the atmosphere and the river. They are always cutting down trees, as they need it for fuel and need to create more land.

They have two things in common: both sides hate each other and they are both destroying the environment. It takes two visiting children together with the cooperation of the river to finally bring them to their senses.

This version of "The Bridge" has been specially written for the Violenschool to incorporate the two languages. The "rich" are Dutch speaking, while the "poor" are English speaking.

THE BRIDGE (written by David Woolcombe)

director : Rosey Woolcombe
music director : Wim van Geffen
choreographer : Pat Graham
costumes : Pat Graham
set design : Kathleen Tripp and Group V (E.S.)
sound & lighting : Jonathan Tripp
band : drums: Jim Groudstra
 : guitar: Pieter Wilhelmus
 : bass guitar: Chris Vroonland
 : Keyboard: Frank v Geffen
 : Piano: Willem v Geffen
music and lyrics: David Gordon
 : Stas Namin
 : Ella Vitiuk
 : Gregor Bak
 : Coby Nijpels
 : Chic Street Man

We are extremely grateful to the Gemeentelijk Gymnasium for their kindness in allowing us to use their auditorium.

Cast

Rich side

Girl Elise Eerenberg
Mayor Donni v Bruseok
Rich Boy Michiel Heusden
Mother Chantal Bart
Father Pieter v Geffen
Doctor Gerrit v d Schaaf

Kids Paul Wilhelmus
Ferry v d Veer
Talitha de Boer
Thomas Fedorus
Shevonna Timmins
Sven v d Schans

International Tourists Alexander Woolfcombe
Sudhir Sand
Sergei Zaitsev
Kirsten v Rijn
Rishma Gopalrai

Cast

Poor side

Boy Christopher Wood
Mayoress Romy Stevens
Boss's daughter Charlotte Kootstra
Mother Karen Murphy
Father Stanley Occitti
Doctor Neil Collins

Kids Victor Bonvanie
Minke Thieme

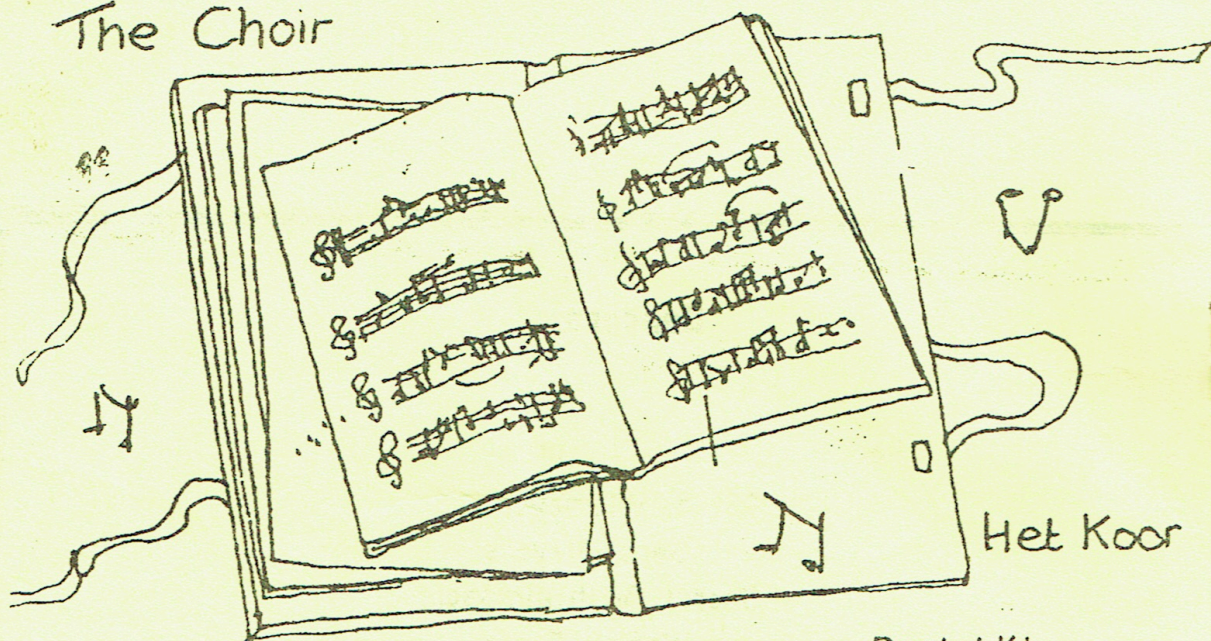
River Liesbeth Hooijberg
Earth Siggi Ottevanger
Wind Simone de Boorder
Tree Daan Wetzler

Teacher Robert Wittebrood

Dancers

Robin Witmeyer
Sara Meyers
Snorri Vilhjalmsson
Wendy Frank
Wanda v d Biezen
Frank Stevens
Noenie Hendriksen
Hawa Divarci
Sabrina v Meenen
Sherida v d Velden
Aruna Madho
Candy v d Veer
Danny Sutjaho

The Choir



Michiel Scheffer
 Sebastiaan van Doorn
 Niels Warmerdam
 Sandra Phillips
 Marco Uithol

Hawa Divarci
 Pieter v Geffen
 Aruna Madho
 Sabrina v Meenen
 Sherida v/d Velden
 Paul Wilhelmus
 Johannes v. Schijndel

Daniel Kiss
 Jamie Martin-Henry
 Gulraj Behl

Lesley Heesen
 Sander Zeedijk
 Niels Elfrink
 Semih Tukenmez
 Miloda Druoch
 Fleur de Graaf
 Johan Bakker

Youri Meyer
 Jerry de Vaal
 Kay Hagens
 Elwin Rook
 Ibrahim Hamdany

Martijn de Birk
 Koen Hoenderkamp
 Khalid el Mourabit
 Yildirim Sezer
 Rutger Jan Thole
 Elmar Zwart

