

Europe Solidaire Sans Frontières > English > Europe, Great Britain > On the Left (Europe) > History of the Left (Europe, out of France and Britain) > Maarten van Dullemen > **Christiaan Maarten van Dullemen September 15, 1936 - December 4, 2021**

Obituary

# Christiaan Maarten van Dullemen September 15, 1936 - December 4, 2021

Wednesday 19 January 2022, by [ARIAN Max](#) (Date first published: 9 December 2021).

**Maarten van Dullemen was editor abroad of *De Groene Amsterdammer* for over ten years, from 1969 to 1980. He opened the magazine to news from other parts of the world. Later he imported very beautiful Vietnamese pottery.**

Our world did not revolve around the Sarphatistraat in Amsterdam [This refers to the famous first sentence from Nescios' book "de Uitvreter". This book is about three young naive idealists. "Behalve den man die de Sarphatistraat de mooiste plek van Europa vond, heb ik nooit een wonderlijker kerel gekend dan den uitvreter." ("I never met a stranger man than this parasite who thought Sarphatistraat was the most beautiful spot in Europe.")]]. We really didn't think the building of De Nederlandsche Bank was the most beautiful building in Europe. Our lives were almost entirely played out at Westeinde, near there, where the weekly *De Groene Amsterdammer* was then located. It was a tiny editorial staff at the time and we worked extremely hard, not to make a nice or interesting magazine, but with the mission to change the world for the better.

Maarten van Dullemen was a somewhat older boy, who would always remain a student activist. Full of idealism, ideas, contrary, a grumbler at times, and a silent silencer very often. Someone to sometimes be a little afraid of, very tall, meters high, with flaming red hair and striking features.

He came out of the student trade union movement of the sixties. He himself did not need an emancipation movement. He came from an upper-class background. His father Nout van Dullemen was a prosecutor at the Amsterdam Court of Justice and had almost been executed as a hostage by the German occupiers. His mother had been painted by Isaac Israëls as a beautiful young writer, Jo de Wit. His sister Inez, ten years older, also became a writer. She died ten days before her little brother. His older brother had been wrong in the war, as a protesting adolescent, but nobody knew the ins and outs of that at the time.

Maarten did things differently. As a medical student, he stood up for his fellow students who had a harder time, campaigned for more meaningful study content, wrote thoroughly about the struggle of the Vietnamese against America and about the conflict in the Middle East between Israel and the Palestinians. He married Sima Colcher, an internationally recognized specialist in folk dancing. She already had a baby daughter, the editor Ariëla Legman, and they had a son, Mischa van Dullemen, who became a dancer and yoga teacher.

At that time *De Groene* was a bit stuffy, all kinds of older staff members had died or disappeared. In 1969 they were happy to bring him in as a representative of a new generation, and he in turn brought in many new people (I was one of them). *De Groene*, too, now had to change its ways. Maarten started new sections such as the pages 'The Other News', from home and especially far and

very far abroad. Encouraging news, drawn from the magazines of dozens of action groups that existed at the time. An uprising here, a revolution there, demonstrations, reforms, new ideas. The circulation of the magazine flourished in its day, but some readers complained that the stacks of unread Greenes were beginning to fall over. There was no such thing as nice writing, there was hardly any room for a joke, and it was usually not very personal.

Maarten left De Groene after more than ten years of diligent work and fighting for his ideals and went to De Kleine Aarde in Boxtel and later the Medical Committee Netherlands-Vietnam. From 1995 onwards he set up his company Hemel & Aardewerk (finally a cautious joke could be told). He had Vietnamese pottery made, which he also imported himself: beautiful, hand-painted blue and soft green plates, bowls and vases. It was more about giving the people in Vietnam a good bowl of rice than about earning money himself.

Because, no matter what bad tongues might say, we were not unfriendly boys. We believed in a better world, but were - fortunately - never in a position to realize it. As a result, we didn't even get the opportunity to make all the mistakes that came with it. We did not kill or torture anyone. At the most, and this is bad enough, sometimes a little humiliated or confused by a long-continued, ominous silence.

But people like Martin were strict with themselves rather than with others. He could enjoy nature, a plate of good food, a happy child, or a friendly fellow human being. But he did not write about that. All the more so about a revolution that never came and never should have come, as he himself later admitted. But those beautiful, blue-painted Vietnamese breakfast plates are still in use with us, cracked and all, every day.

### **Max Arian**

*The Groene Amsterdammer*

December 9, 2021

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### **Short Bio**

- Youngest son of Nout van Dullemen, procurator general at the Amsterdam Court of Appeal, and writer Jo van Dullemen-de Wit
- Brother of Inez (1925) and Ronald (1923)
- Elementary school: Geert Groote-school (Rudolf Steiner School co-founded by Maartens mother Jo van Dullemen de Wit)
- Secondary school: Montessori Lyceum
- Study: Medicine at the UvA (kandidaats) active in/chairman: Student Trade Union SVB, Demokrater, ASVA
- Founder with Ton Regtien of the *Vietnam Bulletin* 1966. Maarten was on the editorial board until 1975
- Book (with Ton Regtien): *The Vietnam Tribunal, Stockholm-Roskilde* 1967, with a foreword by Jean-Paul Sartre, published by Kritiese Bibliotheek Library/Polak & Van Gennep, 1968

- *De Groene Amsterdammer*, editor 1970-1980 (until '82 co-worker)
  - *De Kleine Aarde*, Boxtel (organization dealing with ecology and sustainability), publisher 1982-1988
  - Medical Committee Netherlands-Vietnam late 1980s - 1994(?) (approximately)
  - Hemel & Aardewerk (Heaven & Earthenware), Import of Vietnamese pottery, wholesale and Amsterdam store, 1995-2009.
  - Married to Sima in 1964, one son Mischa van Dullemen (1964)
  - Stepdaughter Ariela Legman (27 September 1957) from Sima's previous marriage.
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**P.S.**

- Translated from *The Groene Amsterdammer*. December 9, 2021.