

Marga Vogel

A Jewish pearl

by David Simon

She sang with cabaret Quatsch (*bullshit*), she held a top office in advertising, as a sculptor she made monuments for memorial days and she was always stimulating joyful and optimistic: last week the everywhere loved and inspiring Marga Vogel passed away.

I live for the Arts was one of the Quatsch-songs Marga Vogel-Granade sang in the first programme of the Jewish Student Cabaret in 1968. One year earlier she was one of the founders of that cabaret. Thereafter Marga Vogel would give voice to many songs in Jewish Netherlands and was a welcome guest at many Jewish and non-Jewish cabaret performances. Now, 52 years later, many still remember her mind blowing performances in great detail. And one could call the title of the first song prophetic, for Marga Vogel built a lifelong career in advertising – and in the arts.

In advertising Marga Vogel was huge, a ‘guru’, one of the top people in the Netherlands and far beyond. With her special insight and enormous know how she gained a leading position in her trade as a woman – prominently a man’s world in those days. Say the name Marga Vogel in the advertising community and everybody will have a special story to tell about her. Marga’s optimistic, joyful and inspiring attitude was her own brand of ‘advertising’.

Not only in the advertising community Marga was a top woman, she also established herself as a painter and sculptor. Two monuments in remembrance of the Shoah are made by her: one in Oud-Beijerland, the other in Nijkerk. Lots of sculptures were made in commission: one can be admired in the Singer Museum. Marga Vogel also designed winning awards, among others for clothing company C&A.

She also liked to write and draw. Her book for children *The Marbles and the Crown, Jewish wisdom in a fairy tale*, with illustrations by herself, became a success; it was not only published in Dutch but also in English. The leading theme of the book was Mussar, a Jewish movement she was very much dedicated to and that she studied for many many hours. Marga was also one of the initiators and founders of the Mussar Institute Europe, that organized an international symposium bringing many in contact with Mussar. She gave many courses throughout the country herself.

Marga was in the midst of preparing a Mussar Study Day in the Uilenburger Synagogue (may 2020), when - totally unexpected - she was snatched away from life. Filled with grief, confusion and disbelief her family and many friends took her to her last resting place on the Jewish cemetery in Muiderberg on Thursday last week.

Her Jewish name was Margalith, meaning ‘pearl’. A Jewish pearl left the earth to shine in higher spheres. The songs *Little Fairy King*, *Close your Eyes* and her favorite song *I live for the Arts* will always be connected and stay associated with her. May her Soul be Bound Up in the bond of Eternal Life and may her family and countless friends draw strength and power from her unconditional love for all those who were dear to her. She always called them ‘my gevurah’.