

A psychedelic road trip

A Book To Make Friends With

LUKAS VERSTRAETE

Two men wearing rat masks mug a casual passer-by and steal his briefcase. Thereupon the man's identity separates from his body and turns into a spirit with the ability to take over the bodies of other people, as well as a dog and a car. We tag along with the body that wanders around without an identity, the soul that goes in search of the briefcase and the road travelled by the briefcase itself.

A wonderful, over-sized graphic novel full of wild pencil drawings ****

HUMO

What follows is a psychedelic road trip full of chases, fights, religious hallucinations and freaked-out characters and dialogues. Nightmarish scenes harbour creatures reminiscent of those inhabiting the work of Hieronymus Bosch, David Lynch, Goya and James Ensor. But Verstraete's graphic novel also references 'Pulp Fiction' and popular Flemish cartoon heroes such as Suske en Wiske and Nero.

The story is entertaining and action-packed, but author Lukas Verstraete really pulls out all the stops with graphic fireworks. The drawings, in pencil and with a basic colour palette, are brimming with movement and energy. Publisher Bries managed to produce a beautiful edition following a successful crowdfunding campaign: oversized, on luxury, uncoated paper and with a vintage-looking hardcover.

An overwhelming debut and a mind-expanding book *****

DE STANDAARD



AUTHOR



Lukas Verstraete (b. 1992) fills his graphic world with losers, antiheroes, cowboys, knights, grotesque women and wretched maniacs. Drawing on a generous dose of naivety, smuttiness, stereotypes and humour, he tries to establish the meaning of life. In 2013 he was awarded the prize for best script at Swiss comics festival Fumetto. In 2015 he completed his post-graduate degree under the supervision of German artist ATAK.

ORIGINAL TITLE Een boek waarmee men vrienden maakt (2017, Bries, 208 pp.)

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RIGHTS SOLD French (Même Pas Mal), English (Fantagraphics)

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