

On Putin's Russia, the spirit of Pushkin and the spectres of Siberia

Russia's Fortune. A Journey to the Loneliest People on Earth

JOHAN DE BOOSE

When Johan De Boose packs his bags, readers know they are in for a treat. *Russia's Fortune* takes him to the heart of his first love, a country that has enthralled him ever since his days as a young student of Slavonic languages. Travelling from Moscow to Vladivostok and from St Petersburg to the Caucasian mountains, he takes the reader on an exhilarating journey through time and space.

From the outset De Boose admits to a love for all things Russian. At the same time he readily acknowledges that he is entering a madhouse. Russia is a cradle rocking above an abyss, De Boose quotes Vladimir Nabokov.

An impressive collection of travelogues

GEERT MAK

What was Russia's past? What is its future? Given that De Boose is both a romantic and a sceptic, he manages to find a perfect balance between unconditional enthusiasm and sober observation. He knows all too well that Russian history is a succession of state terror and cringing servility. And what about the Russian soul? Although De Boose would love to find it, he admits it is a futile hunt.

De Boose never flinches from asking questions about himself either. Could his passion for Russia have anything to do with a need for tragedy and suffering?



AUTHOR



Johan de Boose (b. 1962) has a doctorate in Slavonic Studies and has worked as an author and actor with various theatre groups and as a producer and presenter for television and radio. Since 2003, he has devoted himself full-time to writing poetry, literary nonfiction and fiction about his travels in eastern Europe. He has won several awards, including the Halewijnprijs and the Cutting Edge Award. *Photo © Michiel Hendryckx*

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TRANSLATION RIGHTS Marijke Nagtegaal - m.nagtegaal@debezigebij.nl, Uta Matten - u.matten@debezigebij.nl

TRANSLATION GRANTS Patrick Peeters - patrick@flandersliterature.be