

NONFICTION

Brussels' Dreams

Brutopia

PASCAL VERBEKEN

Since Donald Trump dismissed Brussels as a 'hellhole', the city has become world famous. Brussels has its fans, but it is also the most hated city in Belgium and the European Union. In this fascinating and very readable urban biography Pascal Verbeken debunks the widespread clichés and prejudices about contemporary Brussels by looking at its history with all its dreams and failures. In 'Brutopia' he portrays Brussels in ten idealistic projects, which have made the city into the chaotic mosaic it is today.

We read about Karl Marx, who wrote 'The Communist Manifesto' in Brussels and redefined the world by doing so. About Charles Baudelaire, who found refuge here as a dissident, but came to truly hate Brussels. And about the Atomium, one of the few relics of Expo 58, the World's Fair, a paean to the optimism of progress. Via a stroll through the European Quarter the author discusses the analogies between architecture and the European project. And he writes at length about Paul Otlet, pioneer of the world wide web and sometimes referred to as 'the Jules Verne of information scientists'.

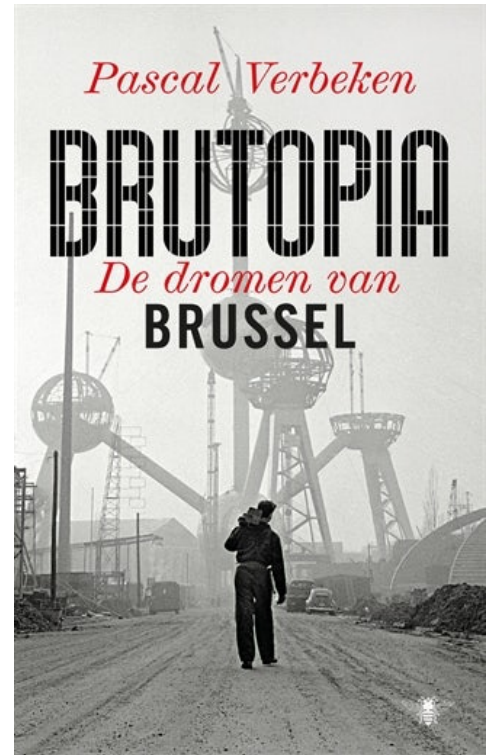
A superb book about Brussels.

ARCHITECTURA.BE

With the help of these and other topics Pascal Verbeken offers the reader a masterful guide through the history of Brussels' dreams, which completes his Belgium trilogy.

Those who have read 'Brutopia' will be seeing this metropolis through different eyes

CUTTING EDGE



AUTHOR



Pascal Verbeken (b. 1965) is a journalist, writer and maker of documentary films. With his book 'Promised Land' ('Arm Wallonië') he won the M.J. Brusse Prize for the Best Journalistic Book. Grand Central was nominated for the VPRO Bob den Uyl Prize for the Best Travel Book and for the AKO Literature Prize. *Photo © Tim Dirven*

ORIGINAL TITLE: Brutopia. De dromen van Brussel (2019, De Bezige Bij, 336 pp.)

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

TRANSLATION GRANTS Patrick Peeters - patrick@flandersliterature.be