

13 ways of looking at failure

Bold Ventures

CHARLOTTE VAN DEN BROECK

Charlotte Van den Broeck is primarily known as a poet – in that capacity she opened the guest of honour presentation by Flanders and the Netherlands at the Frankfurt Book Fair in 2016 – but ‘Bold Ventures’ is her extraordinary and highly distinctive debut as a non-fiction writer.

In this book she has gathered together thirteen tales about tragic architects – tragic because these well-known or forgotten master-builders committed suicide in or on account of a building designed by them. Their intervention in the public arena culminated in a fiasco or else they viewed it as such. Over the past few years, Charlotte Van den Broeck travelled extensively to find out more about these architects and their fate.

Van den Broeck has a very keen eye. But she also has a great mind. ****

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Her texts combine description with analysis and take the reader on a journey into the final buildings by these tragic heroes. Van den Broeck examines whether there is a link between personal and public failure, between the importance of the public arena and the damaged reputation of the (usually male) architects. And of course the author also makes the connection between constructing buildings and writing texts, because all creation is a bold venture.

A book like no other. Van den Broeck has hit upon the original approach of drawing on the lives of others to help us understand her own. It bodes well for the rest of her oeuvre.

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AUTHOR



Charlotte Van den Broeck (b. 1991) studied English and German Literature and holds a Master in Drama (Verbal Arts) at the Royal Conservatoire in Antwerp. She has published two prize winning collections of poetry *Chameleon* (2015) and *Nachtroer* (2017). In 2019 she published her prose debut *Waagstukken*. Photo © Stephan Vanfleteren

ORIGINAL TITLE *Waagstukken* (2019, De Arbeiderspers, 272 pp.)

PRIZES Confituur Bookstores' Prize 2020, shortlisted for Boekenbon Literature Prize

RIGHTS SOLD German (Rowohlt), English (Chatto & Windus), Danish (Jensen & Dalgaard), English (Other Press), Arabic (Al-Arabi), Spanish (Acantilado), French (Héloïse d'Ormesson), Italian (Il Saggiatore)

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