

#FreeBritney

Corpus Britney

DOMINIQUE DE GROEN

Few debut novels become such an instant cult sensation upon publication as 'Corpus Britney'. The book appears to begin as a crime story: Bella Goth, a B-movie horror film actress and Britney Spears lookalike, has vanished without trace. Paranormal detective Malayney Melkzuur is called in to find her. The search takes her through the 19th century, the virtual world of The Sims, witch hunts and much, much more.

As a reader, you willingly let yourself be swept away by a narrative that keeps on expanding as it interweaves different stories. De Groen explores the dark side of capitalism, from social exploitation and environmental damage to mental wellbeing in a world where the online and offline converge. Within this context, Britney Spears emerges as the 'Corpus Christi': a pop icon completely derailed by the music industry.

But 'Corpus Britney' is more than a one-dimensional Marxist indictment. Its nostalgic fascination with kitsch, glamour and pop makes the book as spellbinding as it is incisive. Science fiction, historical fiction and crime fiction merge in a rich, maximalist novel that constantly surprises the reader and immerses them in new worlds. It's unlikely you've ever empathised with a talking sheep or a thistle before. This is a unique book that rightly achieved instant cult status.

De Groen lives up to all expectations with her lyrical sentences, her deadpan humour and her nods to David Lynch. *****

KNACK

A dizzying and endlessly fascinating debut novel *****

NRC



AUTHOR



Dominique De Groen (b. 1991) is a Belgian poet, author and artist. At *balanseer* she has published the collections 'Shop Girl' (2017), 'Sticky Drama' (2019), 'Sacrificial Lamb' (2020) and 'SNAKES' (2022). Her debut novel, 'Corpus Britney', was published in March 2026. Her work has also appeared in translation and has received awards including the Frans Vogel Poetry Prize, the Fintro Public Prize and the Jan Campert Prize. De Groen is co-founder of the zine label *Marktkorruptie*. In her work, she explores the intersections of ecology, (anti-)capitalism, pop culture and internet culture. Photograph © Jonathan William Beaton

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