

Semi-autobiographical novel about the son of a prostitute who opens a brothel and becomes his mother's pimp

Cinderella

MICHAEL BIJNENS

The novel plunges the reader into a dismal world on the lowest rung of the social ladder. It is the story of a son trying to save his mother from the irreparable trauma of her existence, an attempt which threatens to end in the loss of both of them. You get a panoramic tableau of the underworld in the flesh, with a passing carnival float of characters every one of whom excels in hopeless tragedy.

'Cinderella' is a grand novel, written in raw prose, tackling the tribulations of running a brothel and the inescapable relationship between mother and child. It is a refreshing combination of filth and the sublime, of tragedy and comedy.

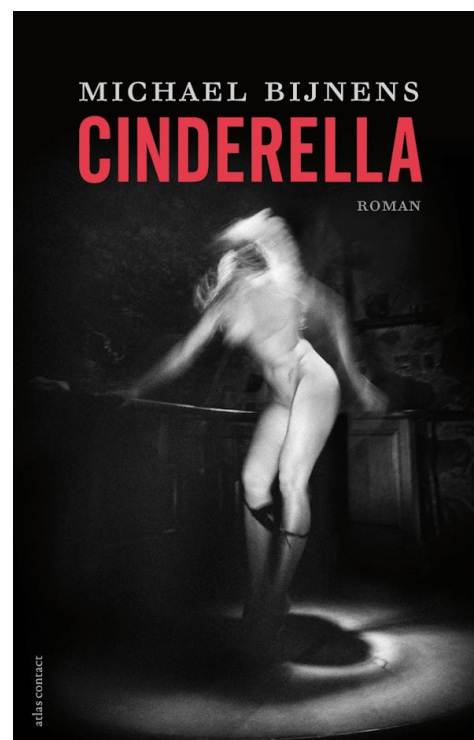
So confusing, intriguing, dark and horrifying that you want to devour every single page *****

CUTTING EDGE

Michael has a love-hate relationship with his mother, an ageing prostitute, who in her attempts to keep her head above water only digs herself ever deeper. Michael decides to take over a brothel with her, but this does not bring an end to their troubles. The Albanian mafia, a criminal escaped from prison, the police, the tax authorities, the murder of a prostitute and debts take their situation from bad to worse. They lead an improvised life, clumsy in their organisation and defenceless against the lawlessness and power of the strongest figures in their industry.

His feeling for the grotesque is grand, the dialogues between mother and son are sublime ****

DE MORGEN



AUTHOR



Michael Bijnens (b. 1990) grew up as the son of an Antwerp prostitute. In 2013 he graduated from the theatre school in Brussels and went on directly to make his name as a playwright. In his own words, 'an extensive case knowledge and an individual writing style' are central to his work. In researching his play 'La Linea' he immersed himself for months in the Mexico-US border region racked with drug-related violence. Cinderella is Bijnens' debut as a novelist.

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TRANSLATION RIGHTS Hayo Deinum - hdeinum@atlascontact.nl

TRANSLATION GRANTS Marieke Roels - marieke@flandersliterature.be , Elise Vanoosthuyse - elise@flandersliterature.be , Yannick Geens - yannick@flandersliterature.be