

Requiem for a divided country

Grand Central Belge

PASCAL VERBEKEN

Once, Belgium was a very promising country. It was an industrial world power. The central motor of this small miracle was the railway. On the European continent, Belgium had the most developed railway network. While Belgium is dying, Pascal Verbeken walks back to the era of the *great expectations*. He goes on a walking-trip along the Grand Central Belge, the nineteenth century private railway that connected Flanders and Wallonia.

Verbeken brings back to life the era of the great expectations

DE VOLKSKRANT

Pascal Verbeken registers the small and the large signs of the times. He listens to a multicoloured collection of Belgians and their unique, sometimes tragic stories. *Grand Central Belge* is a requiem for a divided country that does not succeed in chasing its old demons away.



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

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