

A Prussian Blues

Junker

SIMON SPRUYT

Prussia, early 20th century. Ludwig von Schlitt and his older brother Oswald are privileged to attend the Köslin cadet school, where King Wilhelm II is revered as an omnipresent deity. As both young men are growing older, they are each in their own way confronted with their parents' loveless marriage, father Ernst's war trauma, mother Claudia's disillusioned escapism and the ideological brainwashing at school.

Brilliant use of the narrative and graphic possibilities of comics

STRAPAZIN

Dutybound Oswald changes into a rebel, while for Ludwig, Wilhelm II becomes the symbol of everything that has failed in his life. Being the best shot of the school, Ludwig has been entrusted with an instruction model of the German army's latest machinegun, the Maxim m1908. At the spring parade of 1914, Ludwig uses the Maxim to mercilessly cut down Wilhelm II. Now the German throne is vacant, a dynastic row arises.

Stylistically blowing the reader away

JURY WILLY VANDERSTEEN PRIZE

In the trenches, the nameless corpse of a German machine gunner attempts to construct his own history. He tries to get to grips with the insanity of war by tempering the brutal reality with stories. Ludwig's imagined memoirs are moulded according to the narrator's interpretation.



AUTHOR



Simon Spruyt (b. 1978) calls himself a 'Belgian Comics Engineer'. This comic book artist is a masterful storyteller. The tone, style and atmosphere of his graphic novels vary greatly from book to book, but are always just right. Time and again, Spruyt demonstrates that he masters and manipulates the graphic novel medium like no other. *Photo © Marc Tessier*

ORIGINAL TITLE Junker (2014, Blloan, 192 pp.)

FORMAT 170 x 240

PRIZES Willy Vandersteen Prize, Sheriff d'Or, nomination Max und Moritz Prize

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TRANSLATION RIGHTS Kim Sanders - kim.sanders@standaarduitgeverij.be

TRANSLATION GRANTS Lien Devos - lien.d@flandersliterature.be