

FICTION

An intelligent comedy on the threshold between reality and fantasy

Hotel Rozenstok

CHRISTOPHE VEKEMAN

Christophe Vekeman decides, after a series of well received but not particularly successful novels, to give up writing. To give himself space to consider his future he plans a seventeen-day stay in a little Dutch town in a rather miserable wooden hotel, Hotel Rozenstok.

A colourful and intense comedy *****

DE STANDAARD

Both the town and the hotel, however, turn out to be populated with rather strange figures. Vekeman also learns that a tragedy has taken place in the hotel: the owners' six-year-old daughter, whom the writer strangely enough thinks he has met in the hotel a couple of times, died and disappeared two years previously in tragic circumstances. The writer's imagination gets to work in spite of him and the threshold between reality and fantasy appears far from clear.

On the face of it this novel is a wonderfully ironic reflection on the author's own writing. The quirky, detailed style combined with ambiguous self-mockery often has hilarious effects. Beneath it all Vekeman presents an original and persistent challenge to all aspects of writing. The blood-curdling end of the novel forces us to face the task of the actual writer, balancing on the tightrope between fiction and reality, between fantasy and realism.

What courage. What mischief. What virtuosity!

JEROEN BROUWERS



AUTHOR



Christophe Vekeman (b. 1972) is a writer, poet and performer. He also has a weekly literary slot on Belgian national radio. Vekeman's universe is populated by rather unenviable characters who succeed in eliciting sympathy from the reader because of the author's humorous undertone. The elegance of his style and his keen eye for hilarious details keep his prose light, despite the difficult and sobering questions that he poses. *Photo © Mieke De Ley*

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TRANSLATION RIGHTS Jolijn Spooren - j.spooren@singeluitgeverijen.nl

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