

FICTION

Magisterial novel of the Flemish master

Wonder

HUGO CLAUS

Victor-Denijs de Rijckel, a bewildered schoolteacher, is led to a distant village in pursuit of a mysterious woman. Tracking her to an underground political conference in a remote castle, he poses as an expert on Crabbe, a messianic Belgian fascist who disappeared in World War II. Drifting into a dense fog as his sanity begins to crumble, de Rijckel soon finds himself trapped among a handful of desperate individuals still living out the consequences of their collaboration with the Nazis decades earlier and all of whom are united by their belief that Crabbe's return is imminent.

While fully aware that such an honorable title can only be used in great exceptions in Flemish literature, I would call Wonder a masterpiece

VLAAMSE GIDS

The subtle cadences of the prose and the dense emotional texture of characters lost in complex moral labyrinths make 'Wonder' a symphony only Claus could have composed. The baroque plot is intertwined with strong psychological portraits, scenes from Flemish military history and lurid images of desire. Eminently readable as an adventure story, this scintillating tour de force also harbours an array of emotions and densely textured meanings. 'Wonder' is without any doubt one of the landmarks of twentieth-century Dutch literature.

A work of savage satire

THE NEW YORK REVIEW OF BOOKS

A bizarre, kaleidoscopic hide-and-seek narrative

PUBLISHERS WEEKLY

FLANDERS LITERATURE

HUGO CLAUS

DE VERWONDERING



AUTHOR



Hugo Claus (1929-2008) is Flanders' most famous and most important writer of modern literature. He is internationally acclaimed for his plays, novels and poetry. In his Faulknerian novels, he mixes expertly crafted stories of post-war Flanders with poignant character portraits and telltale allusions to mythology. *Photo © Stephan Vanfleteren*

ORIGINAL TITLE De verwondering (1962, De Bezige Bij, 276 pp. Latest edition: 2018)

PRIZES PEN Translation Prize

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