

Poems that suggest that it would have been quite impossible to leave them unwritten

Poet, Boxer, King's Daughter

DELPHINE LECOMPTE

Delphine Lecompte's third collection of poems, 'Blind Verses' (Blinde gedichten), was acclaimed as her first ambitious, mature publication. Readers of her poetry will be pleasantly surprised by the crazy twisted paths over which the poems lead them.

Delphine Lecompte's poetry creates an extraordinary universe, peopled with characters of highly diverse plumage. The mother, the father, the grandfather, the grandmother, the cousin, the old crossbow archer who serves as lover and muse, the 'I' figure... They are all depicted in their fundamental shortcomings in relation to the narrative self, yet the poet portrays them with a great deal of compassion and mercy. The 'I' figure is possibly the hardest on itself: scornful and uncompromising, almost to the point of self-destruction.

Her universe is peopled by characters and situations which brutally burst into your imagination and remain there to haunt your dreams when you are wide awake.

JURY REPORT VSB POETRY PRIZE

The poems are self and family portraits, which, like mirrors at a funfair, magnify the poet's world into mythological dimensions and associations and reduce it to personal dramas. Full of unusual trains of thought, they seem most like lucid ravings. They are at once light and dark. They corroborate life, while bearing witness to a disquieting morbidity. Lecompte's verses demonstrate little poetic contrivance. The absence of contrived enjambment and other familiar poetic rhetorical procedures enhances the parlando tone of this poetry. Nevertheless, the reader always feels that something is happening with language in these poems: in describing experiences, the words create a distance from the events. And there are constant traces of traumatic experiences in



AUTHOR



Delphine Lecompte (b. 1978): When asked about the autobiographical slant to her poems, Lecompte herself once stated in an interview that "Jean Cocteau said, 'Je suis un mensonge qui dit toujours la vérité' – 'I am a lie that always tells the truth' – but I would prefer to say, 'I am a truth that always lies'. I am constantly confessing, but I slip lies into those confessions, and that gives me pleasure". © *Koen Broos*

ORIGINAL TITLE Dichter, bokser, koningsdochter (2015, De Bezige Bij, 111 pp.)

PRIZES C. Buddingh' Prize, Prize for Literature of West-Flanders

TRANSLATION RIGHTS Uta Matten - u.matten@debezigebij.nl, Marijke Nagtegaal - m.nagtegaal@debezigebij.nl

TRANSLATION GRANTS Patrick Peeters - patrick@flandersliterature.be