

A textual adventure

Writing Prague

DANIËL ROBBERECHTS

In 'Writing Prague' Daniël Robberechts tries to create a written portrait of this turbulent city during the end of the 1960s and the decade that followed it. This doesn't prove easy, though. The object of Robberechts's writing becomes a project in itself, or, even more so, a conundrum, forcing the reader to ponder metafictional problems. It's against this backdrop that the Prague Spring breaks out, and the book expands to encompass the genres of chronicle and reportage, an increasingly ingenious web in which all the events described are interconnected in weird and wonderful ways. As it goes on, the web becomes increasingly tangled, and 'Writing Prague' turns into a book about writing a book, begging the question: is 'writing' Prague even possible anymore?

Without Robberechts, contemporary Flemish prose would look completely different

KNACK

In the book, Daniël Robberechts explores different methods, genres and tricks in his attempt to describe the city. Which convention will prove a recipe for success, if any? The result is an example of mixed media before its time, and a conglomerate of different types of texts. 'Writing Prague' is a courageous challenge to the question of probability in fiction, a project of trial and error, beginnings and abandoned attempts, failure and persistence.

A web in which everything is magically interwoven

KANTL

AUTHOR



Daniël Robberechts (1937-1992) wrote primarily novels, diaries and essays and is known for his experimental urge for form innovation. He developed his own, individual style, sometimes adopting provocative standpoints that ran counter to dominant (literary) conventions. He refused to classify his books as novels, stories, or essays, according them all equal status as, simply, writing. This liberation from genre gives his work, for all its apparent simplicity, an elusive, hypnotic quality.

ORIGINAL TITLE Praag schrijven (1975, De Bezige Bij, 275 pp.)

PRIZES F. Bordewijk Prize

TRANSLATION RIGHTS Cateau Robberechts - c.robberchts@skynet.be

TRANSLATION GRANTS Marieke Roels - marieke@flandersliterature.be , Yannick Geens - yannick@flandersliterature.be