

A daring mix of Eastern wisdom
and Western science

Air

BART KOUBAA

Kudo Yamamoto is weighed down by events in his past. When he was fifteen, he followed his father to the USA. He worked his way up to become a translator for the FBI, but in 1945 he made a vital mistake: in hesitating over the imperial idiom, he missed the unconditional capitulation of the Japanese emperor, which resulted in the USA dropping a bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In the resulting destruction, his daughter – of whose existence he knew nothing – also died. Could he have prevented this? Why did he remain silent?

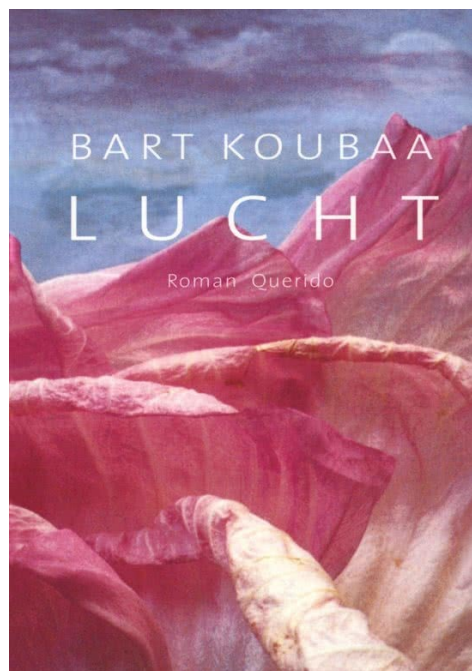
An original novel by an ambitious author

VRIJ NEDERLAND

Bart Koubaa brings the life story of an ordinary man into direct connection with historical events and developments. His main character is a man trying to come to terms with his past but also fascinated by the mysteries of the universe. He contrasts Eastern and Western philosophies of life and resolves to try and represent the entire cosmos in a haiku – reducing it to only seventeen syllables. 'Air' is a melancholy story with a vague undertone of a tragic, long history. Rich in light-footed images and symbols, the novel is saturated with ideas on the great coherence and meaning of life.

In this tour de force, Koubaa brings the Western tradition of rationality and Eastern nature poetry into harmony.

KNACK



AUTHOR



Bart Koubaa (b. 1968) is a writer and photographer. In the late 1980s and the early 1990s, he caused a stir in Flanders with his rock band Ze Noiz. Koubaa is a true storyteller: major and minor histories blend effortlessly in his novels. Each of them is based on thorough research, something that is reflected in his meticulous observations. His work also stands out for its quasi-impassive narrators, who register everything from a distance and create an alienating, almost surreal atmosphere. Away from contemporary trends and fads, Koubaa has been steadily building a diverse body of work.
Photo © Laila Koubaa

ORIGINAL TITLE Lucht (2005, Querido, 124 pp.)

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

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