

BOOK RELEASE

What's it like sleeping with Michel Houellebecq? A book suggests it

In "A Few Months in My Life" the author explains himself about the porn scandal from the beginning of the year. It's also about his preference for sex in threes

Michael Wormitzer

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In his new book, Michel Houellebecq states that he was "never able to complain about his genitals".

AFP/JOEL SAGET

Michel Houellebecq's books are usually followed by scandals - this one is preceded by one. Namely the porn shoot with which the French author has been making headlines since the beginning of the year. Some thought he was crazy now, others thought it was a PR campaign when the associated trailer appeared on the Internet in January. It was just too fitting for the author, who had never hidden his love of sex and prostitutes in either his books or interviews.

The Dutch art collective Kirac (Keeping It Real Art Critics) posted the trailer online with the announcement of a feature film. Houellebecq sued against the publication, the strip announced for mid-March is still under lock and key. A verdict was reached in mid-May, according to which Kirac must present the film to the author before it is released, and Houellebecq may request changes. So far the interim.

In this respect, it is understandable that Houellebecq (67) is upset, even if the title of the "report" that was quickly stamped out of the computer keyboard between the end of March and mid-April and is now appearing in German is a few months in my life *sober* .

Criticism of sex capitalism

Houellebecq's anger is shown, for example, in the fact that he gives the filmmaker and his female co-lead actress animal names: he calls Stefan Ruitenbeek "cockroach", Jini van Rooijen "the sow". The latter becomes more and more difficult for you the longer you read it. That would be the case in a novel, but straight from the author's mouth it's all the more violent.

You shouldn't make it too easy for yourself with your own opinion about Houellebecq. But sometimes the descriptions here take your shoes off: van Rooijen met his wife before the shoot - and "quickly came to the conclusion that it was still quite a young sow who, properly dressed up (...), could arouse enough desire in me". The author will not only emerge unsatisfied from the meeting in November 2022, but also disgusted that the act actually filmed for the Onlyfans account van Rooijens should only be available on the platform for a fee - this capitalist model benefits "from the loneliness" of the users.

Houellebecq is the defender of sex. It's not about art for him here, but about saving his honor. He feels like a victim and contradicts the stories shaped by Ruitenbeek. One reads of sedative pills that, together with wine, led Houellebecq to a state in which he did not understand the shooting contract. The story is a lie that his wife hired prostitutes for a month for their honeymoon. One must acknowledge this, albeit with caution; the author claims to have approached the shooting in a naive manner.

"stupidity" and "attraction"

Houellebecq's statements about sex in general are probably the most reliable in the book, but they are often not for the faint-hearted. "A slight aura of stupidity contributes to a woman's beauty; but it just as surely diminishes her erotic appeal," it reads. Young lover? Showed him Youporn! Commercial films once repelled him, but since then he has been fascinated by amateur porn, how its actors want to gift the world with their love. So far, Houellebecq's private porn has probably only failed because he couldn't have held a camera and an erection at the same time.

According to the hobby sexologist, this is not the only reason why it is advisable to involve other people. For Houellebecq, sex in a threesome is proven not only by the "triple stream of simultaneous sympathy" but also by "fundamental anatomical considerations" regarding the impossible simultaneous stimulation of several male body parts with just one mouth. If you want to get to know "an excellent way to spend a summer afternoon" "when it's too hot to go to the beach", you can read for yourself on page 68. This does not have to go down in literary history. (Michael Wurmitzer, July 18, 2023)

Michel Houellebecq, "A few months in my life. October 2022 – March 2023". from d. French v. Stephen Kleiner. € 20.95 / 105 p. Dumont 2023

For reading

Dispute over stripes: Houellebecq distances himself from porn

[<https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000143377929/houellebecq-distanziert-sich-von-porno-streit-um-einen-streifen>]

Michel Houellebecq's novel "Annihilate": self-abolition from within

[<https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000132420728/michel-houellebecqs-vernichtenselbstabschaffung-von-innen>]

Michel Houellebecq: Emergency medicine for the present [https://www.derstandard.at/story/2000122182715/michel-houellebecq-notfallmedizin-fuer-die-gegenwart]

THEMA DES TAGES



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