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MICHAEL WOLF | PARIS

Michael Wolf achieved fame when he won the 2005 World Press Photo with his *China, Factory of the World* project, and the 2010 World Press Photo with his *Tokyo Compression*. The present book offers his personal take on the French capital. Singling out typical architectural features of the Parisian landscape he renders the seemingly banal immortal, as only he knows how.

Roofs, chimneys, and lights provide the pictures with rhythm, with their colours, shapes, and above all their volumes. Wolf invites the reader to enter his highly distinctive visual world and let his gaze follow the snaking lines of walls and gutters, dwelling on unexpected details lovingly picked out. The photographer's underlying desire is to encourage us to consider the environmental and architectural context that provides a framework for all these rigorously rectangular features.

This dreamlike journey into a Paris viewed from the rooftops is underlined in the second part of the book. The shadows of trees decorate the façades of various buildings, creating a visual poetry and prompting an intimate dialogue where, in the absence of all human presence, nature and architecture blend into one another.

Michael Wolf (1954-2019) lived in Europe, America, and Asia, spending his last years in Hong Kong. A German photographer specialized in urban shots, he graduated in photography from the Folkwang University of the Arts in Essen, where he studied under Otto Steinert. Among his most noteworthy projects are the "beehive" skyscrapers in Hong Kong. The focus of his research is city life, especially in overpopulated contemporary metropolises, and their inhabitants' loss of individuality. Wolf's work has been displayed in a variety of locations, including the Venice Biennale of Architecture, the Aperture Foundation Gallery in New York, the Hong Kong Shenzhen Biennale, and the Museum of Contemporary Photography in Chicago. His works are also present in many permanent collections, including those of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Museum of Contemporary Photography in Chicago, and the German Architecture Museum in Frankfurt.

Johan-Frederik Hel Guedj, a French writer, has published two novels (*Le traitement des cendres*, *L'amour grave*), a collection of short stories (*De mon vivant*), an account of polar exploration (*Chercheurs d'éternité*), and an essay on Orson Welles (*La règle du faux*). He lives in Brussels and writes on contemporary art in the daily newspaper *L'Echo/De Tijd*.