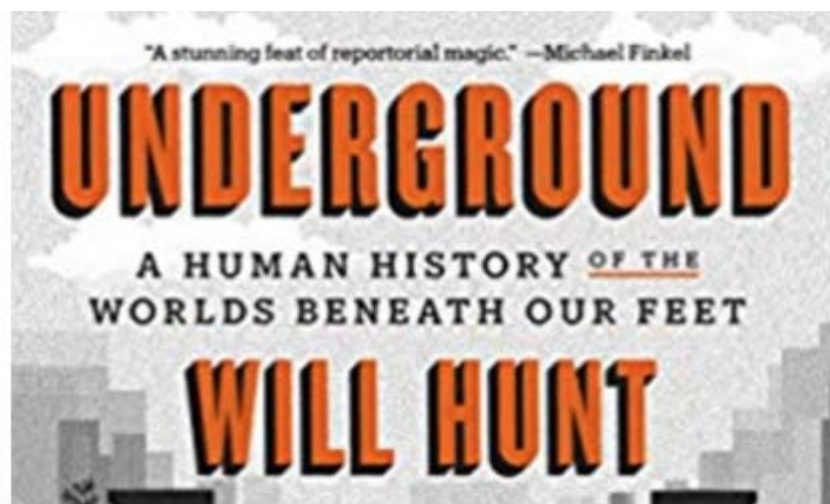


Saturday, February 16, 2019

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Can You Dig It?

'Underground: A Human History Of The Worlds Beneath Our Feet'

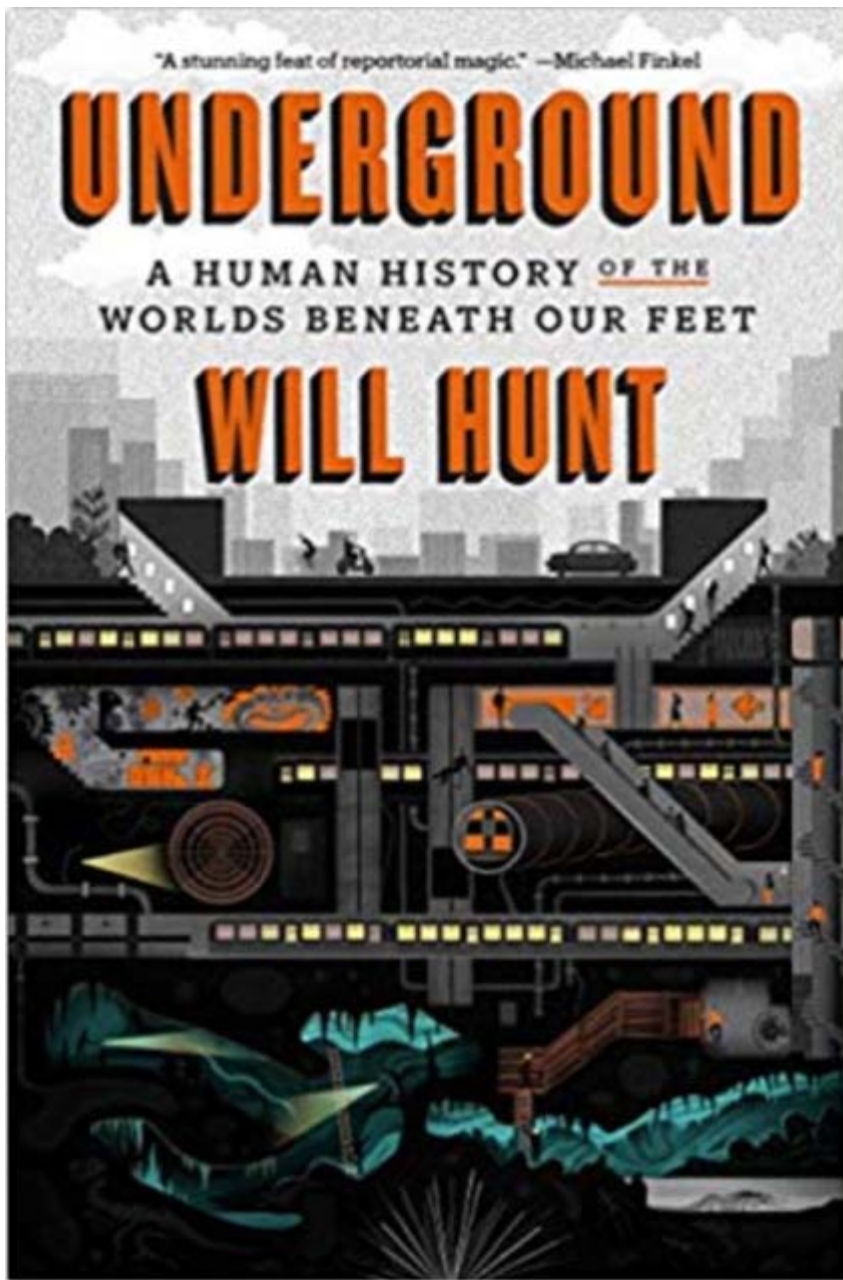
February 5, 2019 Michael Giltz

When author Will Hunt was a kid, a teacher told his class about an abandoned tunnel beneath the surface of their small town. Naturally, Hunt and some friends tracked down the entrance and whooped their way through an awesome sight: a huge tunnel, practically an invisible empire lying underfoot. Perhaps unnaturally, Hunt became obsessed with that tunnel, exploring it again and again and then realizing with a jolt it ran right below the very house he lived in.

That was that, until Hunt moved to New York City. On the streets of Manhattan, Hunt was lost. He found the subway confusing but was bewildered and overwhelmed, too embarrassed to ever ask for directions. Yet he realized that an underground city, a maze of tunnels and pathways that were semi-abandoned and sort of illegal,

lay just beneath, there for the exploring. He ventured timidly into one such tunnel. He just slipped through a fence near the West Side Highway, and suddenly he was below the surface of the city! And then he ventured, not so timidly, into subway tunnels.

Before he knew it, Hunt's childhood passion became a lifelong obsession. Part travelogue and part meditation on the nature of our connection to caves, *Underground* provides a fascinating, intriguing look at the bizarre, dangerous and thrilling subterranean adventures Hunt has taken part in all over the world. He's been lost in the catacombs underneath Paris and gone on a songline in Australia to win favor with aboriginal tribes guarding a fabled buried location. He's partnered with scientists and local experts to plumb Mayan ruins. Hunt wooed an



aristocratic French family whose estate sits on an undisturbed underground system. Deep inside, in the most inaccessible spot, he finds a

sculpture of bison that leaves him and other visitors weeping.

On and on it goes, with Hunt traipsing all over the globe and showing how virtually every culture has a deep and powerful connection to the earth. From obsessive diggers in England to a subway graffiti artist who places his visual diaries in locations where literally no one can safely glimpse them, Hunt makes fascinating connections again and again. Ultimately, it seems perfectly natural for him to squeeze between girders as subway trains rumble past or spend a day huddled in absolute darkness in a cave where jaguars may or may not show up at any minute. It's fun, a little frightening and awfully intriguing. Hunt might just make you peer down the nearest manhole and wonder what would happen if you pulled it open and slipped down inside...just for a glimpse.

(Spiegel & Grau, January 29, 2019)

Tags: Underground, Will Hunt

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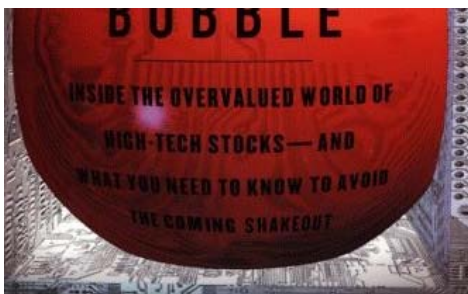
Die Another Day Again →



Michael Giltz

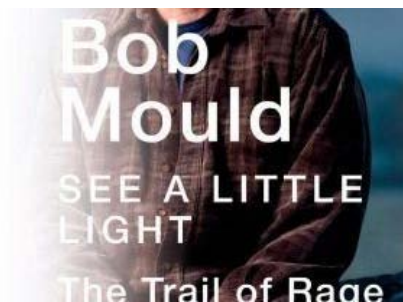
Michael Giltz is a freelance writer based in New York City covering all areas of entertainment, politics, sports and more. He has written extensively for many outlets, such as New York Post, New York Daily News, New York Magazine, The Advocate, Out, Huffington Post, Premiere Magazine, Entertainment Weekly, BookFilter, USA Today and the Los Angeles Times. He's co-host of the long-running podcast Showbiz Sandbox.

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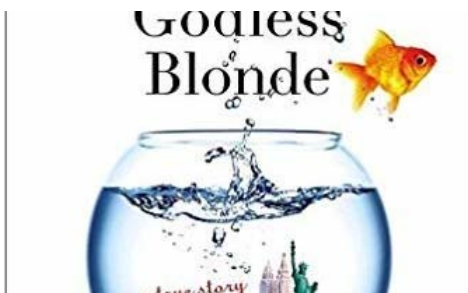
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