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Super-Cannes: A Novel



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Description : Description du produitLong-regarded as one of the true visionary writers of the twentieth century, J.G. Ballard was one of the first British writers of the post-War period to begin to see, and to map out in his fiction, the future course of our civilization. For forty years his unflinching eye has turned to the point where the advancing edge of our technological progress has worn away our inner humanity. Eden-Olympia is more than just a multinational business park, it is a virtual city-state in itself, with the latest in services and facilities for the most elite high-tech industries. Isolated and secure, overlooking the luxurious French Riviera, the residents lack nothing. Yet one day Doctor Greenwood from Eden-Olympia's clinic goes on a suicidal shooting spree. Dr. Jane Sinclair is hired as his replacement, and she and her husband Paul are given Dr. Greenwood's house as a residence.Unable to work while recovering from an accident, Paul spends his days taking a close look at the house where Dr. Greenwood shot himself and three hostages. He discovers clues in the house lead him to question Eden-Olympia's official account of the killings. Drawn into investigating the activities of the park's leading citizens, while Jane is lured deeper into Eden-Olympia's

inner workings, Paul uncovers the dangerous psychological vents that maintain Eden-Olympia's smoothly-running surface. An experiment is underway at Eden-Olympia, an experiment in power and brutality. Soon Paul finds himself in race to save himself and his wife before they're crushed by forces that may be beyond anyone's control.

Prsentation de l'diteurLong-regarded as one of the true visionary writers of the twentieth century, J.G. Ballard was one of the first British writers of the post-war period to begin to see, and to map out in his fiction, the future course of our civilization. For forty years his unflinching eye has turned to the point where the advancing edge of our technological progress has worn away our inner humanity. Eden-Olympia is more than just a multinational business park, it is a virtual city-state in itself, with the latest in services and facilities for the most elite high-tech industries. Isolated and secure, overlooking the luxurious French Riviera, the residents lack nothing. Yet one day Dr. Greenwood from Eden-Olympia's clinic goes on a suicidal shooting spree. Dr. Jane Sinclair is hired as his replacement, and she and her husband, Paul, are given Dr. Greenwood's house as a residence. Unable to work while recovering from an accident, Paul spends his days taking a close look at the house where Dr. Greenwood shot himself and three hostages. He discovers clues in the house lead him to question Eden-Olympia's official account of the killings. Drawn into investigating the activities of the park's leading citizens, while Jane is lured deeper into Eden-Olympia's inner workings, Paul uncovers the dangerous psychological vents that maintain Eden-Olympia's smoothly running surface. An experiment is underway at Eden-Olympia, an experiment in power and brutality. Soon Paul finds himself in race to save himself and his wife before they are crushed by forces that may be beyond anyone's control..co.ukJG Ballard covers familiar territory in *Super-Cannes*: new social structures under pressure, new psychopathologies to be explored. As he did in his previous novel *Cocaine Nights*, he has avoided the more abstract imagery and plot of *Rushing to Paradise* or *The Day of Creation* to create, on the surface, a more mainstream novel, clearly concerned with modern issues of racism, random violence and sexuality. But familiar territory is always the most deeply subversive place in a Ballard novel. Eden-Olympia is more than a mere business park. It is an expensive and intense hive, the modern "Dream Palace" of "a new elite of administrators, enarques and scientific entrepreneurs"; its aim, "to turn Provence into Europe's silicon valley". Paul Sinclair finds himself with time on his hands in this radical environment when his young wife takes a job at Eden-Olympia. She replaces a doctor who killed 10 executives with a rifle before shooting himself. He left no note and no explanation. Sinclair finds himself living in the same house and learning some of the same lessons as the killer. There are the (un)usual Ballardian motifs; the injured airman, the swimming pools, the cars, the voyeuristic sex and violence, the perverse personal iconography of the central characters (the hothouse social environment even harks back to *High-Rise* from 1975), but in this new context they are even more profoundly unsettling than before. The apparently slick, professional characters are flawed and ambiguous, while strange events, as in the outstanding novella *Running Wild* from 1988, lead to extreme conclusions. Ballard is an expert in explaining how what at first appears perverse, amoral or simply wrong, is actually obvious, sensible and sane, and then going even further. From the beginning, the clues are all there. Eventually, both Sinclair and the reader are clear on what must be done. -- John Shire From *Publishers Weekly*The connoisseur of the bizarre (*Cocaine Nights*, *The Atrocity Exhibition*, etc.) turns his attentions to the globalized corporate elite in his 26th book. Crippled aviator Paul Sinclair ("I counted the titanium claws that held the kneecap together") accompanies his young wife, Jane, to her new posting at a luxurious corporate park on the French Riviera. A manicured paradise of multinational conglomerate HQs and their executives' villas, Eden-Olympia (which the author has modeled on the current business parks of Antibes-les-Pins and Sophia-Antipolis) is managed by a seductive yet sinister psychiatrist named Wilder Penrose, who ensconces the Sinclairs in the house of a former local doctor named Greenwood, who one day went on a suicidal murder spree, leaving 10 dead. In short Ballardesque order, the Sinclairs become estranged from one another: Jane falls into heroin-fueled mnages with the Belgian couple next door; Paul takes up tranquilizers and trysts with an Eden-Olympia vamp. Paul becomes obsessed with unraveling the mystery of the massacre, coming almost to identify with Greenwood. His efforts eventually reveal the horrifying true nature of Eden-Olympia, where the most bestial drives of corporate executives are harnessed in Brownshirt-style "therapy sessions" to create optimum working efficiency. Paul's collision course with the psychopathic Penrose is a new twist on Ballard's weird neo-romanticism, whereby our self-defining "latent psychopathy" is put to use to save society rather than to revel in hedonistic defiance of it (*la Crash*). Ballard actually seems to have penned a story with a clear-cut hero (if the reader overlooks Paul's

drug use and pedophilic urges) and villain ("I don't want to start a race war or not yet"), with the fate of civilization in the balance. This novel, for all the author's trademark grotesqueries, may be Ballard's most commercially viable yet. Author tour. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc.