

Alja Adam

Andrej Blatnik

Nina Dragičević

Erica Johnson Debeljak

Barbara Korun



LITERARY CRITICS' CHOICE

2022

**10
Books
from
Slovenia**

Nataša Velikonja

Kaja Teržan

Natalija Milovanović

Ana Marwan

Jedrt L. Maležič

ALJA ADAM

Attractions

Privlačnosti, Center za slovensko književnost, 2020



Photo by: Tadej Bernik

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Alja Adam, poet, essayist, specialty trainee in gestalt therapy and lecturer, obtained her degree in Comparative Literature and Sociology of Culture from the Ljubljana Faculty of Arts, where she also obtained a PhD in Gender Studies and Feminist Literary Theory in 2007. She has published four poetry collections: *Zaobljenost* (Roundedness, 2003), *Zakaj bi omenjala Ahila* (Why Mention Achilles, 2008), *Dolgo smo čakali na dež* (We've Long Waited on the Rain, 2015) and *Privlačnosti* (Attractions, 2020).

As a young poet, she received a few foreign awards, and her book *We've Long Waited on the Rain* was nominated for the 2016 Veronika Award. In 2021, the author was nominated for the same award for her book *Attractions* as well as for the Jenko Award.

Her poems have been translated into fifteen languages and published in Slovenian and foreign publications and anthologies.

In 2014, she and poet Maja Vidmar developed the programme *Experiential Creative Writing*, which combines writing and gestalt therapy.

She lives and works in Ljubljana and the ecological community Sončni grič, Hrvoji.

ABOUT THE BOOK

Alja Adam explores various relationships, dividing the subject matter into five cycles, the verses of which are constantly intertwining. From a love/erotic relationship between a man and a woman, she moves onto a passionate relationship between two women, then eases back into friendly, family relationships, going back into childhood and facing her personal relationship to writing and her own position in the world. The poet is intrigued by “spaces of intimacy”, where identity is being built (dissolved) over and over again, in new forms and dimensions. Through this, she also discovers “what we are forbidden to see”.

The poet enters these relationships through sensuality, the presence of the body. She knows that the body carries a social and historical background and is as such subject to control, exploitation and manipulation. Keeping this in mind, her poetry is established as socially aware and critical. The poet talks about frictions between the past and the present, the historical trauma inherent to experiencing the here and now by connecting her own experience with the experience of the other. Her poems mention and combine various places and times, creating an organic whole that reflects a metaphysical awareness. The poet's use of metaphors plays an important role in this respect – intertwining everyday language with innovative, visual metaphors, creating an exciting, fluid, suggestive poetry, which opens the space of broader dimensions.

EXCERPT

Frog

In my childhood, I often kept silent
to stop an appalling frog, a keeper of dark secrets,
from springing out of my mouth
in a moment of carelessness.

I had to sit up straight,
with my face completely motionless,
so that people would not notice the bulging eyes,
and the distended eyeballs.

I kept silent for many years
because I wanted to belong to humankind,
like the landscape on a map belongs
to a broader geographical space.

In the meantime they have built concrete homes
and surrounded themselves with possessions
and barbed wire, in an attempt
to chase away the otherness
I could not take it any longer:
when the animals crossed the border,
unaware of the existence of it all,
my skin began to bleed.

Animals

Sometimes, among the voices in the crowd,
I feel twitching in my neck, my veins tighten
and a snake tongue flicks out of my mouth uncontrollably.

The webbing between my toes keeps growing since birth.
Why did you not inherit my ear for music instead;
grandma keeps pounding on the piano keys,
and I try to sing the right note, with bitterness,
for the sake of the genetic code.
It teaches us how to step into a line of ducks,
flap our wings, grunt, stretch and hold out our paw,
snarl, plunge into the waves.

A few years after her death, I can still hear
her drifting body, the flailing of her arms:
they cut through the summer haze, the coolness of the autumn air,
the frozen crust of the lake.

The movements are mechanical, resembling an engine,
the moving wheels of a shopping cart,
their rhythm relentlessly penetrates the ears
and the lullaby that I reluctantly sing to my child.

I practice my strokes,
I slide through the echo of the recurring question *why*,
the horror of grandma's nightmares;
in the hospital they tied her to the bed, stuffed her mouth with pills,
suffocated her howls;
the flashing images of gray faces from the camp, shame,
they surrounded us with rifles,
I had to relieve myself before their very eyes.

Until I stop, I glide
with the gentleness I use to feed the baby,
the sound of the last piano key resonates and quiets down.

I drag myself into silence,
an animal, one of many.

Translated by
Marta Košir

ANDREJ BLATNIK

Liberation Square

Trg osvoboditve, Goga, 2021



Photo by: Matic Bajelj

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Andrej Blatnik (1963) is an Associate Professor of Publishing Studies at the University of Ljubljana. He has published five novels, six collections of short stories, five books of cultural studies and a how-to book on writing short stories.

Andrej Blatnik won some major literary awards (the award of the city of Ljubljana, Zlata ptica, the highest award for young artists, the Slovenian national state award, Prešeren Fund, and the Russian best Slavic book of short fiction 'Jugra' award in 2016 among them). His stories were translated into more than 40 languages and published in literary magazines and various anthologies including *Best European Fiction* 2010 (Dalkey Archive Press 2010) and *Short: An International Anthology of Five Centuries of Short Short Stories* (Persea Books 2014). He has over 35 books in translation in fourteen languages, including four in English (Northwestern University Press, Dalkey Archive Press), three in German, Turkish, others in Spanish, French, Hungarian, Czech, Slovakian, Russian, Croatian, Serbian, Macedonian, Odia ...

Andrej Blatnik has read fiction around the globe, on literary festivals such as PEN World Voices in New York City, Toronto International Festival of Authors, Jaipur Literary Festival and Cosmopolis in Barcelona, and was a participant of the International Writing Program at the University of Iowa, Iowa City, USA, in 1993. He received various fellowships, including Fulbright.

ABOUT THE BOOK

On June 21, 1988, a crowd gathers in Liberation Square in protest against political arrests. In the crowd is a young man who treads on the toes of a woman his own age, thus starting a complicated relationship. The novel follows the pair through decades that see a ten-day war, change of the political system, upheaval of ethical norms, as well as transformations of ideals, unfolding before us the complexity of the transition of dreams forced to meet the reality of the free market of both goods and values, with the tissue of family and society tearing under the pressure.

Alongside the country transforming into an independent state, the young man becomes an adult. After a short and unusual affair he doesn't see his partner from the years of social and personal liberation very often, though they do run into each other again and again, different each time. He no longer writes literary reviews, having gone to work for a marketing firm, while she – with the support of her privatization tycoon father, who supports her work-free and worry-free existence although she refuses to have anything to do with him – seeks independence in faraway places with the aid of meditation and diving, both into the depths of the ocean and her self. The same people keep meeting in different constellations, with every encounter raising the same unspoken question: after so many – also social – transformations, do they still have enough in common to preserve hope for a happy ending?

EXCERPT

Revolution Square

The rally was scheduled for two p.m. He came some fifteen minutes early and found the square virtually empty. The organizers rushed about in confusion. Stage hands exchanged quizzical looks: Such a stage, such a sound system, and for what – a few dozen people?

Darko jogged past him, glancing around, as if it might do some good to keep checking if somebody else was coming so that pulling all the cables wouldn't have been for nothing. For a few dozen people, that's too few. For nothing. He caught his questioning look and spread his arms. *I did my best, there's nothing more I can do.* They both seemed equally baffled. All that excitement

over the past days, all those people saying something should be done, and now they've all gone and stayed at home! That's no way to change the world. Not even your own street.

And then it began. All the side streets started spouting rivers of people. From the left, from the right, from everywhere. Unstoppable. Hippies, punks, students, bums, businessmen, workers, university professors, farmers. Everyone. In a matter of minutes the square filled to capacity. Total strangers nodded hello to one another. Saying wordlessly, we're in this together. We're not alone. There're many of us, and more are coming. There'll be even more of us.

The action onstage also began. The guitars twanged. Pankrti, a band from the working-class district of Moste that had broken up six months before, came together specially for this occasion. Pero the front man yelled from the stage that this was not about politics, that they wanted their friends from their football team back, friends that were now in military lockup. The intimate is political. The political is intimate. Neither the state nor the system nor any political party can give one happiness – but they sure can take it away.

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Starting *Nova revija* was by no means easy, but the way it was done would come to seem almost idyllic a few decades later: in 1980, a group of intellectuals brought forward a proposal stating that, in the name of democracy, a new journal for thought and poetry was needed; the highest political bodies debated the issue for a while; opinions were ventured and clashed; and finally, after two years, the money was granted. The golden age of debates about thought and poetry including the highest political circles, cynics might say.

The turning point came with issue no. 57, titled eponymously with its editorial *Contributions to the Slovene National Program*. It began by saying that the Slovenians were facing a crisis in Yugoslavia, a crisis “apparent in a special kind of dejection, in mass emigration and a high suicide rate.” There was no mention of the differences in the GNPs of the federal units; that would enter the secessionist vocabulary later. In those early days, thinkers and poets were not yet obliged to justify themselves through the economy of added value; other kinds of speech were deemed equally worthy of consideration. Independence started out through the emancipation of the spirit, not money.

Nova revija wrote about things that had been in the air for a long time, but on its pages these hardly conceivable ideas descended from the clouds and settled on paper. And caused a panic. Those politically organized convened all over the republic, interpreting for each other the photocopied texts that went from hand to hand, and their *true* meaning. Even those who never read, read them.

“Do you have that journal?” his father asked.

“What journal?”

“Go on, you know what I mean.”

He brought it back a few days later. “Interesting,” he said.

“What did you think?”

“Like I said.”

“Oh, come on. Elaborate.”

His father smiled.

“I'm not used to elaborating. That's for you, young people.”

“So you're saying you agree that more should be said.”

“I'm also saying beware of a time when you can say anything. It just might so happen no one will listen. It's different now.”

He pointed at the ceiling and nodded. The conversation was over.

Translated by

Tamara M. Soban

NINA DRAGIČEVIĆ

This Body, Standing

To telo, pokončno, Škuc, 2021



Photo by: Nataša Velikonja

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Nina Dragičević is a poet, essayist and composer. She holds a PhD in Sociology. She is the author of *Kdo ima druge skrbi* (Who’s Got Other Concerns; Škuc, 2014), *Slavne neznane* (The Famous Unknown; Škuc, 2016), *Med njima je glasba* (There Is Music between Them; Parada ponosa, 2017), *Ljubav reče greva* (Luv Says Let’s Go; Škuc, 2019) and *To telo, pokončno* (This Body, Standing; Škuc, 2021). Her texts have been translated into English, Serbian, Croatian, German, Czech, Spanish and Portuguese. Dragičević is a member of the Slovene Writer’s Association and the Slovene PEN Centre.

She is the recipient of the 2021 Jenko Award and the 2020 Župančič Award. In 2018, she won The Knight of Poetry competition, and was the first in its history to receive both the Jury Award and the People’s Choice Award. She was nominated for kritiško sito and the Veronika Award. She was also presented the Outstanding Achievement Award of the University of Ljubljana. In 2018, she was shortlisted for the European award Palma Ars Acustica.

ABOUT THE BOOK

The body is constantly under attack. Everything hits it, everything sticks to it. The body is not the final harbour of freedom, but a point that the world uninhibitedly cuts into, throws endless amounts of words and violence at it and sometimes simply bypasses it, thus negating it.

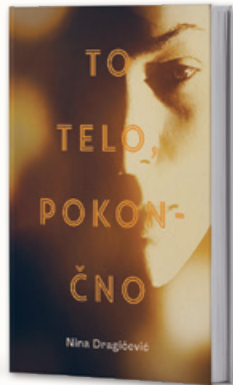
If Dragičević’ book *Luv Says Let’s Go* focused on the position of a female individual in the age of omnipresent precariousness and, in the end, *luv* said *let’s go*, the question that follows in the second part of the author’s trilogy in the making, *This Body, Standing*, is: *and what then?* Can there be a future?

Yes. But the body needs peace. In an age that promotes constant communication, the representation of endurance and a type of “cool”, the body needs something completely different: it needs peace. Dragičević starts the book with the verse *no words*, thus opening the space to the voices of many bodies, many women and many lesbians, perhaps all bodies. There will be a future when their sufferings, negations and criticism can be expressed without punishment. And it is true that the *body falls sometimes*, she writes, *but because everything is wrong / it actually rises*.

With *This Body, Standing*, Dragičević thickens its special mixture of criticism and lyrical sentiment, with language and syntactic ingenuity in the form of a poem. Aljoša Harlamov, the author of the foreword, writes: “And it’s not that I don’t get the self-irony in the verses *nina strong critical nina a pillar of her generation and that we need people like that*, but. That’s the people we have. Finally.”

EXCERPT

and if they are onto me
and if they are coming from all
sides woodlands swamps thrusts and impulses
I am onto them
I am stalking them eyeing this campaign of those heavy bodies crafts
bearing everything and bearing themselves
stumbling and suffering severely
and in those nights with me hardly going anywhere
and arriving no further
I go behind them who go behind me
this body the return to the scene of the crime



to the continuum of outrage and acceptability
and above all complacency
where envisaging someone else
or at least something else
is only the lifeline for failed subjectification
the replenishment of bodies through secretion
ensuring authenticity unity through negation
a void is hard to identify in a void
and when this body says no words it contemplates other meanings
uncoordinated meanings
a somber glow is being drawn for it
something better
meanings at last.
and therefore here where realities are constituted by ceaseless wondering
where the wondering is sieved through by the delay of discovery and vice versa
where as a result the expression of suffering is not possible certainly not allowed
in this large torture sinkhole of endurance training
and orgasming at the distant misery
where pleasure becomes synonymous with horror
where it is a pleasure to destroy the body and a pleasure and asap and forever
here this body vortex mundi
the decay of fulcra the collection point of rust and discarded thoughts
should it fade away this will do so because you will
there is nothing you can do without this body
it grabs the screeching soundless voices knits interference patterns
it will not go away it will not escape
what does not possess a place of expression it will find one here
here the body slim gorgeous yet outrageously gasping
the extender of stages and counter-temporal depths
the entire future is the history of this choice.
and thus here
where representation has abandoned the spent host her the image
striking out at full tilt after the word
where speech is coercion of presence
constantly and in the bounce and in the name of the absentees
something about solidarity and empathy and emotional intelligence
with nothingness really really really multiplying
where suffering is falsified
and is therefore somewhere else and alone yet without a place of its own
where it is not pronounced but falsified
in this fatally standing impetuous world
the body seeks the cavities of peace
it throws oneself into them sometimes it falls
but because everything is wrong
it actually rises
no words in those pockets the suffering is finally being pronounced
therefore in those silences no words at last this body standing.

Translated by
Andrej Pleterski

ERICA JOHNSON DEBELJAK

Virgin Wife Widow Whore

Devica, kraljica, vdova, prasica, Mladinska knjiga, 2021



Photo by: Borut Kranjc

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Erica Johnson Debeljak has an unusual profile for a Slovenian writer. Born in San Francisco, California, she moved to New York in 1981, where she obtained degrees from Columbia and New York University, and, in 1993, moved to Slovenia to marry the poet Aleš Debeljak. In her new home, she launched a career as a translator, writer, and columnist. In 1999, her first book was published: a collection of essays entitled *Foreigner in the House of Natives*, followed by *Srečko Kosovel: The Poet and I* (2004), the collection of short stories *You Are So Mine* (2007), and the memoir *Forbidden Bread* (published in English in 2009 and Slovenian in 2010). She later published two novels *Antifa Zone* (2012) and *The Bicycle Factory* (2015). She writes in English and her work is translated into Slovenian. She is a member of the Slovenian Writers' Union.

In 2016, her life once again underwent a dramatic change when her husband died in a traffic accident. In 2018, she co-edited and contributed the introductory essay to a unique tribute, *Just Passing Through: The Postcards of Aleš Debeljak*. In 2021, she oversaw the transformation of this book into a museum exhibition at the Slovenian Ethnographic Museum. In 2021, she published *Virgin Wife Widow Whore*, which became an immediate bestseller and won the book-of-the-year award at the 37th Slovenian Bookfair. She lives and works in Ljubljana.

ABOUT THE BOOK

Virgin Wife Widow Whore belongs to the bereavement genre but also transcends it. More than merely an account of loss, grief and survival, it is a book about the power and endurance of women throughout history. Johnson Debeljak widens the canvas by interweaving her own experience with the enthralling stories of widows past: Tamar and Judith from the Bible, Hecuba and Penelope from mythology, the last sati widow, Roop Kanwar, from India, and from literature, Hamlet's mother, the wretched queen Gertrude. She also confronts taboos of death and widowhood in our society: the stigmatization, medicalization, and bureaucratization of bereavement, the struggle for material survival, typically viewed as a crass consideration in comparison to the emotional loss but central to the experience and definition of widowhood today and through history, and finally the dangerous sexuality of widows and older women.

EXCERPT

Chapter One: Tamar

Tamar's survival is ensured by a levirate union—marriage to her dead husband's younger brother. Levirate marriages were common practice in many patriarchal societies and those with clan structures, such as the Ancient Near East, but also in Islamic and nomadic cultures, in parts of Africa and Asia, generally in times and places where women had little or no independent economic power.

Levirate unions were also practiced for dynastic purposes in seemingly more sophisticated societies, during the Middle Ages in Europe for example. Recall that the first of Henry VIII's unfortunate wives was Catherine of Aragon, the widow of his elder brother. Recall that Hamlet's mother Gertrude—oh, wretched queen!—married her brother-in-law Claudius within months of her husband's demise. Looked at in the most positive light, these unions kept assets and heirs within the family, and provided stability and a sort of life insurance for widows.

And so, Tamar, childless widow of the eldest son of Judah, entered into the matrimonial state with Onan, Judah's second son. Just as we do not know if she loved and mourned her first husband, we also do not know if she ever came to love her second one, but the marriage assured her position in the household and society at large.

We do know that the arrangement did not please Onan. The first male child Tamar would bear with Onan would be considered her dead husband's son and not his, and this son would inherit two-thirds of Judah's estate and would be head of the family when Judah himself died. These privileges would not flow to Onan or to any subsequent sons he might have. In this union that had been thrust upon him, he was merely the carrier of family seed.

I do not live in a clannish society, not even I think in a particularly patriarchal one. I am not childless, and, even if I were, Aleš has no brother. He was an only son, a golden son. My survival will have to be ensured by other sources, other accommodations. In the beginning, in these first hours, it is not members of my clan, but strangers who shoulder the burden.

At the airport I am taken to the gate by a Lufthansa employee. He speaks little to me during our brief time together. He does not know what to say to the woman he is pushing in the wheelchair, her facial features distorted, her eyes wild and uncomprehending, her shoulders hunched protectively around her heart. I explained my condition to the man the moment I was conveyed into his care.

My husband is dead. My husband is dead.

And at the departure gate I tell the personnel behind the counter:

My husband is dead. I am flying home to him.

They are solicitous. They bring me water because they know that shock dehydrates the body. They let me sit close to them, not in the anonymous crowd, for I am no longer of the crowd. They tell me that I can board with the priority passengers. I sit beside their counter and cry. Not far from me, a man leans over his shoes and carefully ties the laces. When he is finished, he looks up at me, an expression of concern on his face.

He approaches me and asks if I am afraid of flying.

I am not afraid of flying.

My husband died today.

I am going home.

He sits down in front of me. He holds my two hands in his two hands. He looks into my eyes. His eyes are close set, the pupils light brown, almost beige. We converse with each other, though it is not really conversation, not ordinary speech. The purpose is not the exchange of information.

Why are you going to Munich? I ask him.

"I am going to guide a cross-country ski trip."

Where is your group?

I break away from his gaze and pass a panicked eye over the departure lounge. I don't want him to leave me yet.

"We're meeting there," he says.

This is not conversation. We are deep-sea divers and I have run out of oxygen in my tank, and he still has oxygen in his, and I will suffocate if he does not share his oxygen with me. We communicate with the minimum expenditure of energy, with gestures, touch, by holding each other's gaze through our masks.

"In Munich. At the hotel."

He takes a deep breath, removes the regulator from his mouth, and passes it to me. I hold the regulator to my mouth and take a deep breath:

Will there be enough snow?

I pass the regulator back to him.

"I hope so."

He holds my gaze tight. He takes a deep breath. And so we continue, slowly, back and forth, minimal movement, conserving air, conserving energy, him keeping me alive, waiting for the moment when we will ascend.

Some time passes in this way before the departure staff announces the beginning of priority boarding. I must break away from him, from that steadying gaze behind the mask, from his life-saving oxygen. I show my passport at the gate. The barcode on the boarding pass slides over the sensor. I enter the jet bridge but there is a hold-up. The door to the plane has not been opened yet and I am trapped in the portal with the other priority boarders. It is mostly young parents with little coveys of children. I start sobbing again. The parents look at me angrily. The children look at me with frightened eyes.

I am a mad woman. I am a banshee.

I used to be one of them.

Now I am this.

English original

BARBARA KORUN

Idiorhythms

Idioritmija, KUD AAC Zrakogled in Hyperion, 2021



Photo by: Š. Zupancič

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Barbara Korun has published seven poetry collections and received several Slovenian and international awards and nominations – the Best First Book Award, (1999), the zlata ptica Award (2011), the Veronika Award (2012), Premio Leandro Polverini (2014, translated by Jolka Milič), the award for best translated poetry collection in Slovakia (2018, translated by Stanislava Repar). Her work has been published in 15 independent book translations and over 60 anthologies in more than 20 languages.

Since 2011, she organises regular monthly meetings of Slovenian female poets Pesnice za pesnice, which provide an important support environment for women authors and contribute to greater visibility and recognition. The all-around creativity of Barbara Korun has been recognised both at home (Mira Award, 2000) and abroad (Regina Coppola Award, 2016). “With her actions and accompanying texts, she has been sensibilizing Slovenian readers for years to establish a gender-sensitive attitude to the present, while fostering the re-reading of the past and thereby encouraging the building of a genealogy of female poetry writing in Slovenia and around the world.” (Mira Award panel)

ABOUT THE BOOK

The titles of all three sections of the collection (Idiorhythms, Foundlings and Echolocation) are expressive of the thematic foundation of the book that is explored from a variety of poetry positions. Croquis from dreams are in contrast to the phantasmagorical subject matter, written in a precise prose language with a clearly defined speaker – dreamer, followed by a series of haiku-like three-liners, in which the personal subjectivity is erased, and finally the third part, which comprise poems with more pronounced social and historical dimensions. The book’s heterogeneity thus convincingly reflects the endless variety of intersubjectival experiences through which the subject is constantly being established, i.e. always in relation to the other and with the other, in an “instantaneous point of balance”. In the new book, these others are, as usual, often very marginal creatures, broken by all kinds of violence, not only human, e.g. the victims of totalitarian camps, but also animal and plant life. In the experience of this vigilant coexisting – locating, finding, merging – the subject is constantly a watchful observer, but also an unrelenting questioner of her own abysses; forms of fear, forms and feelings of nothingness, her own transience, as well as brutality and violence. Exchanges with others happen through a kind of expanded concept of physicality, and the poetic gesture emerges as a simultaneous witness to these events, continuously in search of its proper place between the exhalation and the inhalation, “in between”, in mid-voice, its potential.

EXCERPT

(from Idiorhythms)

on the night of 7/8 February 2010, Wuppertal

We are pushing our way from a sandy beach onto a steamer—sometime in the 20s of the 20th century – the men wearing colonial hats and jackets, the women dressed in long silk dresses etc., including a man in a round hat, a melon, with two dogs. Accidentally, I step on the paw of one of them, who speaks up in tone of reproof, saying that he may well be a dog, but I need not treat him like this. I jump off in surprise and see it is really a dog speaking, though dressed in a fine human suit, beige, in the latest fashion of the time. Wonderingly, I look at his master, who says his dog is

rather sensitive and likes to complain. The dog has a human face with big brown eyes, very much resembling Cankar, the most famous Slovenian writer, only without the moustache. It took me by surprise that, above his eyes, he had a pair of arches drawn with a liner instead of the eyebrows. Then, he also complained there were too many ill-bred folks in the world: “Just look at this unruly rabble jostling, treading on one another’s feet, the kids crying and nagging, even a dog hasn’t got a moment’s peace!” I feel a bit embarrassed, but not too much.

(from Echolocations)

Yesterday

I looked into the pot with the soup
with the lid in my right hand and a pinch of parsley in the left one
waiting for it to boil
for me to throw in the parsley
cover it up and turn it off

yesterday I looked into the pot
and the surface of the soup was retreating downward
faster than my gaze could chase it
lower and lower still nothing
until I had leant deeply over the pot
and saw—the *abyss*

I felt dizzy
but as soon as I began falling (endlessly)
hot steam burst into my face
I could smell the fresh parsley
I could hear my neighbor from below
and a child’s cry in the distance
still further fire sirens
the calming murmur of the traffic

the rectangle of light coming from the window
became dark
—the clouds had blocked the sun—

and the sun is only a little star on the margins of a
small galaxy within a cluster of a billion of galaxies
says the newspaper spread on the table
an article on gravitational waves coming from
the thirteen-billion-year distant past of an endless universe
that keeps expanding

and myself with a pot in the fugitive universe
the lid and the parsley in my hands
in the loosening gravitation of the world
with this child-like trust

now I am (here)
a fleeting point
of equilibrium

I toss the parsley into the pot
I cover it up and
turn it off

Translated by
Andrej Pleterski



JEDRT L. MALEŽIČ

Almost Murderers

Napol morilke, Goga, 2021



Photo by: Boštjan Pucelj

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jedrt L. Maležič (1979) is a writer and a literary translator from English and French. Her first collection of short stories *Težkomentanci* (Heavymentals), published in 2016 and shortlisted for the best debut award, has opened and demystified the topic of staying in a psychiatric hospital as a totalitarian institution in the 21st century. The following book, *Bojne barve* (War Paint), short-listed for the Novo Mesto Award, discusses the topic of several different LGBT entities and their troubles in coming out in a closed or hostile society. In 2018, she published her first novel *Vija vaja ven* (Eeny, meenie, mynie, moe), which tackles the subject of dangerous new age mentality and spiritual cults. *Napol morilke* (Almost Murderers) is her second novel.

ABOUT THE BOOK

The young Marina and her stubborn mother, Marija, are Slovenes living in Trieste in the 1920s. Marina, working in a hospital, falls in love and gets pregnant. However, her activist partner flees the country, leaving behind a daughter he's never even seen. With the rise of fascism, the three women seek safety with relatives in Istria, where they stay at a farm until their hosts' orchard is burned down. Not being safe anymore, and their relationships already torn, they flee yet again. They finally arrive in Maribor, where a family of benefactors offers them hospitality. By now, at the end of 1930s, Zorka, the youngest of the three women, has grown up and become a political activist herself, while her grandmother has become even more possessed by religion. When Marina is visited by her long-gone husband, he tries to make amends by giving her the keys to a new home, then disappears forever. Marina, who has always been rather passive and therefore never able to stand up to her own mother, finds some comfort in finally being able to support her own daughter when, in 1941, she decides to join the Liberation Front. At about the same time, Marina meets Gvido, an older man from Trieste, whose family was killed by fascists. Not knowing that the war was just about to begin and change their lives once more, Marina feels she's finally broken the circle and set herself free.

Almost Murderers is a moving account of a woman's winding path towards freedom. Her journey is a poignant reminder of the obstacles women – and minorities in general – had to overcome in the 20th century up to WWII. The theme of three women moving from place to place, desperately trying to find a home, shines a new light on current crises and migrations.

EXCERPT

Marina didn't know the first thing about Yugoslavia, a kingdom whose king she couldn't even name. No one around here had ever lived there. However, she was now able to learn everything, and she felt like she was on a cart, with the reins in her hands. Were they really? Nona was driving, she had to admit that. But even if the cart was being steered by the old woman all the time, Marina was now feeling good and happy to follow her willingly. Given that Nona was Slovene and that they'd be running away from the fascists and to the Slavs that everyone had been considering them to be anyway, Marina's future seemed light, pleasant, and comfortable. They would start living!

When she went to bed before Nona, she felt relieved, relaxed. Nona had given her something she hadn't had in ages. A clear sense of control. Assured that the horse harnessed to the cart hadn't bolted and she still held the reins.

Zorka said, "Give me a word to make a rhyme, Mommy."

"Homeland," Marina said, absently.

She didn't think that Zorka would know the term. "No, Mommy, I said a word. Like 'flower'."

"Find me a rhyme for 'flower'."

"That's easy! The *flower* is a *clover*."

Marina burst out laughing, "You're a little clover! That's not a rhyme. Do you even know what a rhyme is?"

"I do. It's the first thing that comes to your mind." Zorka had a strange power to make her forget before going to bed, when she covered her, smothered her, caressed her baby skin, her baby, clover-soft skin.

At night, Marina dreamt that someone was banging a drum hard and loud. At first she couldn't see where she was in the dream. She closed her eyes tightly in fear, but the drumming didn't fade yet ... You could hear the wooden footbridge breaking up and threatening to send everyone on it crashing down into the stream. What was this, on the footbridge? It reminded her of a military parade... the banging could be a regimental drum... What bangs so hard that Marina had to open her eyes in her sleep? When she opened them, she saw the crowd around chanting and trampling everything below her: the footbridge disappeared, everyone was in the middle of Trieste's Piazza Grande, and some raised their hands in close-fisted salute, others clenched their fists so that it is not clear which of the raised arms belonged to the fascists and which to their opponents. But all the time there was banging, as if the footbridge was still breaking up, only the footbridge was nowhere to be seen...

In her half-sleep, a howl crept up on her. Someone roared through the crowd, almost an animal sound. In the last remnants of her dreamlike images, Marina looked around the square to see what this strange noise was, who was suffering so much, who was being burned or trampled alive, what was happening...

Then the dream faded into a gloomy morning. The door slammed below, but the roaring still didn't stop. When Marina looked around Nona's bed, it was empty. She was already up.

Who was roaring? Marina's head was pounding. With a delay of a few seconds, she recognized Uncle Renato's hoarse voice, still roaring away in indistinct syllables, occasionally coalescing into a grotesque: "NOOO!"

As soon as she realized who was screaming, Marina sprang up. Nona was already outside in her nightgown, and Zorka was sitting on the bed, frightened and rubbing her eyes. Marina gave her a quick peck on the forehead, and then she was already in front of the house, next to her grandmother, calming Uncle Renato, who was crying and angry, howling, howling, howling, porko dio, madona, putana, roaring, why, why me, and how is this possible ...

Neither Nona nor Marina managed to extract from him the cause of his wretchedness.

"What, what is it? Tell me, tell me, if I ask you!" Nona tried tries to calm him down, to catch him by those hands used to shovelling, but she was too weak, too small, she couldn't match his stocky body.

Then Renato swung his hand towards the upper terrace of the grove, and all that comes out of his mouth is, "Dio mio, my olive trees!"

When they crested the hill, they immediately saw that the century-old olive grove was gone. All over the wide terrace, which the day before had been covered with lush and ancient wizened trees, there were forked branches and idle stumps. Renato's howling was so grotesque it spread into the recesses of Marina's head, like a background to the killing fields before her. Almost every tree had been cut down, mowed down. Murdered.

There wasn't even time for Nona or Marina to say anything, no time to say: Who would do that? All they could do was stare blankly at the utter desolation.

Regardless of why someone had cut Uncle Renato off at the knees, regardless of who could be so malicious, regardless of whether the evildoers were upset with the family's political activities or the presence of three Trieste women at the homestead, Nona and Marina were of one mind. It was so obviously time to leave that they felt like the right time had already passed.

Killing fields. That's the only word that came to mind as they surveyed the greyish wooden hands reaching into the dawning day. Marina chased away the thought of last night's dream and of the fact that it might really have been axes she was hearing when she could have done something. If she'd gone to check what was going on outside, if she'd woken Nona and Renato, maybe they could have seen who on this dry earth could have taken it upon themselves to take the life away from breathing trees. On the other hand, if she'd done that, she might not be here anymore.

Translated by

Jason Blake

ANA MARWAN

Cocooned

Zabubljena, Beletrina, 2021



Photo by: Franco Volpi

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

After studying Comparative Literature at the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana, Ana Marwan (1980) moved to Vienna in 2005, where she won the Schreiben zwischen den Kulturen (Writing between cultures) literary prize in 2008. In recent years, she has devoted herself entirely to writing short stories, novels and poetry in German and Slovenian. Her debut novel *Der Kreis des Weberknechts* was published by Otto Müller Verlag in 2019. *Cocooned* (Zabubljena) is her second novel but her first written in Slovenian.

ABOUT THE BOOK

Rita is developing slowly and is not sure into what. Carefully, she observes her social environment, where she is trying to find her place. Her gaze comes to rest on Mr Jež, who she thinks might be of help to her. She observes and dissects him. What she doesn't see in real life, she fills in with her imagination, but it soon becomes hard to separate the two. At first, Jež resists her vivisection, but slowly it comes to suit him more and more, thinks Rita. Writing about Jež is a task that she completes conscientiously. Who has given her this task remains unclear for quite some time, as does the question of whether she is employed at the institution where she observes Jež, or a patient there. Ministry departments change into hospital wards and back again. Like Rita herself they lack a clear outline, a visible meaning. But Rita's eye is sharp and clear when she casts it on the world, on the people around her and the connections between them, which become increasingly interwoven and eventually unravel.

EXCERPT

They are pleased with me. They are talking about unusual progress. They were amazed at coherence. "We're on the right track," they opine, and when they are satisfied with me they are satisfied with themselves, as we have a common source. They insist upon just one thing: Jež is the key. As much as possible about him, as little as possible about yourself. They do not acknowledge that Jež and I have a common source.

*

That encouraging patting of his thigh which Jež would later refer to as "the pity-pat", when in his solitude he began to name events and play with words, lay letters in patterns as he had once laid wooden bricks when he was waiting for his mother, was one of the gestures that he was unable to forgive.

Preserve ... Reserve ... Serve ... Verse ... Reverse ... Perverse

His eyes were closed.

"Are your eyes burning?" she knew how to ask in concern. He had great trouble with his eyes. They were always red and burning. The doctor gave him artificial tears and got rid of him. Which was completely useless, since his eyes produced tears on their own anyway. If he closed them when they were burning the most, two real tears trickled down the edge of his face, pouring from the outer corner of his eyes. People were unable to ignore this inflammation. They looked on him as an insomniac or a drinker, or as one of those dogs with a sad expression that you have to keep patting, even though it was that type.

"Yes, they're burning. I should be going home, in a minute."

In a minute.

His wife was wearing high heels, oh so high. She had shoes that hurt her more than the bare ground would if she was barefoot; because women's shoes are made for women who do not always

understand why things are, that is, what their purpose is, a woman often has her own purpose which she then forces upon things, was Jež's opinion at that moment. A person discovers, perfects, develops weapons of relief, but the woman always then goes a step further, beyond the limit, and relies on the male following her, at her speed, that is slowly. The man is deceived, this willing decision to suffer seems promising to him, he thinks that the woman would also easily tolerate the marital yoke, with a certain degree of elegance even, wearing it like jewellery, perhaps; he realises too late that she will eventually turn everything upside down and put an end to his comfort. In that moment Jež also forgot how much he liked his wife's heels, if he observed them separate from the consequences, and that actually everything that we want comes in a package with something we don't, in other words a consequence, and that this needs to be accepted, but he said nothing as he was already to a large extent reconciled.

When she could manage or wanted no more, a taxi was called. Her wish was granted immediately, without being patted encouragingly first.

On the back seat of the taxi she then stretched out comfortably, the evening once again rose to her mouth and she began to chew it over. At some point she expressed the view that Jež's stance against snobbery was exactly the same kind of zealous striving for a flattering self-categorisation of which he accused snobs. She really did say "zealous striving" and "flattering self-categorisation". The sentence had evidently been prepared in advance, well prepared, and Jež was silent in order to understand it and give it some thought, and his wife, who believed simply that if someone says nothing they are in agreement, from sheer delight that she had managed to hit the nail on the head, added playfully:

"By looking down on them, you've become like them."

She had got him. She was pleased with herself. After a while, Jež replied:

"I'm not reproaching them for 'striving for flattering self-categorisation' in itself, I am questioning the value of what seems flattering to them."

"You mean that their friends are successful and that they read intellectual debates," his wife steered into more concrete areas.

That was her regular manoeuvre – to move into the concrete.

"Exactly!" out of revenge Jež played dumb and looked aside, through the window into the good world of things whose concreteness was not their own questionable choice.

His wife was successful. He couldn't deny it. She also knew how to express herself better than he. And although, for example, he had been learning Italian for years and years with ever new surges of eagerness that it finally came to the point that he read the whole of the *Divine Comedy* (*Inferno*, of course), he let her ask for the bill when they were in Rome. She, who had never learned Italian, but only allowed it to flow into her ears, spoke increasingly more smoothly than him and he was forced to console himself with the thought that it was easier for her to choose words because her vocabulary was smaller. She was selecting from among hundreds, but he among thousands. Given time, he would also be able to ask for the bill, he had to reassure himself.

He heard her rummaging through her bag. Before she pulled her phone out, he glanced inside, which he couldn't resist, he looked into every handbag and down every cleavage, and even, although he would never admit this, up the skirts of women on bikes. The flash of cotton or silk between their thighs brought him nothing, although it was what he was looking for. It was, it seemed, a simple instinctive response to the gaping cleft.

This time, things didn't unfold as they usually did. That evening in the taxi, when he looked in his wife's handbag, he spotted, completely clearly and sharply – a condom.

Sometimes night falls on earth suddenly, as if you have closed your eyes.

*

My room isn't without windows. But the window is so high that I cannot see out. When I say "out" I am pretty much aware that involves an unfounded assumption that my room borders the outside world and is not inside another, bigger room, or even next to a smaller one. I don't know, I cannot know, whether someone is looking through this window from the other side and longing for the breadth of my room. I cannot and do not want to exclude that.

Translated by

**Maja Visenjak
Limon**

NATALIJA MILOVANOVIĆ

Taken for Granted

Samoumevno, Center za slovensko književnost, 2021



Photo by: Jana Radčević

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Natalija Milovanović (1995, Niš) is a poet and translator. Her first poetry collection *Samoumevno* [Taken for Granted] was awarded the Best Debut at the 37th Slovenian Book Fair and was selected for Pranger Festival 2022, a gathering of poets, critics and translators of poetry. She also published texts in Slovenian and Serbian literary journals and in the anthology *Biće bolje/Bo že* [It'll be fine, bilingual] (SKC Danilo Kiš, 2019). In co-authorship with Tanja Božić, she wrote the performative poetry dialogue *Udomaćevanje domaćih živali/Pripitomljavanje domaćih životinja* [Domestication of Domestic Animals, bilingual] (self-published, 2019). Her poems have so far been translated into English, German, Spanish, Serbian and Macedonian. She translates Serbian literature into Slovene for the project *Connecting Emerging Literary Artists*, and Slovene literature into Serbian for the anthology *Rukopisi*, yearly collection of U30 prose and poetry from exYugoslavia. She lives in Graz.

ABOUT THE BOOK

In the poetry debut *Taken for Granted* by Natalija Milovanović, there is practically nothing that can be taken completely for granted, nothing that the poet could not question one way or another [...]. The poet unflinchingly moves and pushes boundaries, realising that the only boundary we can take for granted is the skin of our body. Scarred, but nevertheless. In short, the collection is an inconspicuous introduction of a distinct narrative and metaphorical intertwinement into Slovenian poetry. To a superficial reader, some verses may seem nothing more than a clever wordplay, most often based on a funny juxtaposition of two similar, but characteristically quite different languages and language backgrounds. In fact, such juxtapositions are always well-thought-out and symptomatic. Though the issues of displacement, difference, the tragic of war and horde-like behaviour are often treated with a distinct edge, even irony, cynicism and black humour, the author's writing always carries an indelible personal note. And it is because of this personal note that her engagement is never reduced to the level of slogans or cold agitation. That is what makes the poetry of Natalija Milovanović very much tangible and present in the here and now. (*The jury upon conferring on the author the Slovenian Book Fair Award for best literary debut 2021*)



EXCERPT

Aftershocks

my father used to be a billionaire
then he bought a box of matches and a box of cigarettes
for the nine zeros of his wage
although the economic system had collapsed
he went to work only the currency of the pay
became edible for a while

my father used to exceed every speed limit
but never got fined because he knew every
police officer within a radius of forty kilometers
even though the legal system had collapsed
the laws patched up instinctively were observed

he explains to me that we have to observe
what has been arranged and live persistently

even though everything is meaningless
there will be plenty of time for the consequences

he teaches me to keep my anger in check and realize
that no zero helps with the ulcers of the system
but rather those replacing you holding the hinges
of the present full of aftershocks

*

came to slovenia
through bregana
a border crossing
always busy

people from the south
pushing against the
banks of bureaucracy
stepping out at behest
crossing them on foot

left slovenia
through šentij
where one could propel a wind turbine
with the many crossings

all the gazes directed northward
only those rich enough drive south
or excessively sentimental who
cannot take it anymore

I turn around look back
the first junction
on the slovenian highway
is called pesnica poetess

what a silly
sentimentality
I go backward some
where

Height regulation

I am crouching in the middle of life
in the hot-air balloon
the silence is only broken
by the occasional noise of the burner

I am feeling in the middle of life
in the wicker basket
there is no wind on the tip
of the licked finger

if I drop the ballast
I begin to ascend
if I accept the surrounding air
the lowering begins

Translated by
Andrej Pleterski

KAJA TERŽAN

I'll Have Time Someday

Nekoč bom imela čas, Center za slovensko književnost, 2021



Photo by: Jure Teržan

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kaja Teržan (1986) made her poetry debut in 2015 with her first book of poems *Delta*, which was nominated for the Veronika Award. It was followed by her 2018 collection *Krog* (The Circle), which was nominated for the kritiško sito Award and won her the Jenko Award. Recently, the same publishing house, Center for Slovenian Literature, published her third collection *Nekoč bom imela čas* (I'll Have Time Someday).

ABOUT THE BOOK

The relationship between time and space in the collection is crucial – rather complicated and, above all, too narrow, which is why she attempts to separate the two to make at least one dimension manageable, perhaps even reassuring. What seems particularly devastating is the effect of (past) time on space (the body) which, in this case, is deeply internalised. While before, particularly in *The Circle*, the narrator's draughty body turned outward, reaching out to nature and its elements, it is now turning inward, (paradoxically) searching for contact with the world inside itself. Gone are the refined images, softness, clean lines and polishing, what is at work now is an expressive, erotic, existential, physical directness, rawness, uncompromisingness.

EXCERPT

I Must Have Died

What a nice cellar you've prepared for me.
Light, covered in velvet.

In the middle, there is a four-legged bathtub,
like Earth among the directions of the sky.

Wallpapers are freely hanging,
without the support of walls. Behind them, there are abysses;

I am in no hurry, I reach to the surface...

Silhouettes of black crows at the top of a long birch tree.
Behind them, a dirty pink evening sky.
One by one they fly off and pull me with them.

To Armenia – the duduk is playing.
Sadness and joy like a double helix.

The funeral has been a relief for many.

The end of worries. It's getting dark. The birch tree has become blurred.
A spruce is pointing its fingers to the sky and to the north.
I hear a violin. I see women.

Behind them, grey, black threads. Behind them, a big
dark castle; it's midway up the hill, that's why it's sliding
down. There is nothing at the top of the hill,

just the free-hanging wallpaper edges. I return
into the bathtub. I'm floating among the juices of trees,
with the mouth closed so I don't swallow the blood.

Voices are heard from the surface. I feel them
like spruce resin. They sting a bit towards the end
of the nasal cavity, towards the forehead, where there is a swarm.

Faithfulness

There must be someone who's lost and wandering.
I'm waiting for him with a stick full of love that I've kept for myself.

In an age when people are honest only in therapy sessions, it's important to remember
your childhood. Your invisible friends, demons and elephants.

There are days when you don't get anywhere with anyone – except with the elephant.

I base my practice on the elephant, as instructed by pedagogical manuals,
and conduct activities that fit him like his skin – rough, tough and wrinkled in the right places.

Soon, he'll take the lead and turn me into him.
We'll be like an old married couple – easygoing and dressed the same.

We'll plan vacations together under a white and purple magnolia.
And we'll never go skiing, and we'll never take out a loan.

Nobody will be in our care, except the two of us.
And when one of us dies, the other won't get himself another elephant.

That's how wolves do it

My last one
was a proud man.
Proud of his wolf mythology.

As though he'd always been part
of the pack, hunting and fighting
a struggle for survival with the rest.

He considered urinating freely on
the body of his woman the highest
expression of love. That's how wolves do it, he said.

He liked blood. Also the menstrual one.
He kept on licking until he realized there was too much.

Abundant bleeding in his presence
was supposed to confirm my belonging to him.
A physical one, of course. Is there any other kind?

Translated by
Barbara Jurša

NATAŠA VELIKONJA

A Place at the Crossroads

Prostor sred križišč, Škuc, 2021



Photo by: Tihomir Pinter

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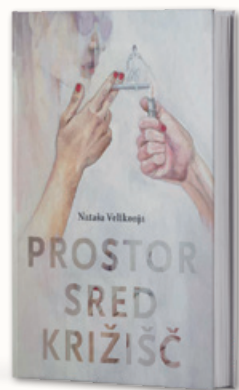
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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Nataša Velikonja (1967) is a sociologist, poet, essayist, translator and lesbian activist. In 1992 she obtained her BA in Theoretical Sociology from the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana, and received the Faculty Prešeren Award for her undergraduate thesis. She has published seven poetry collections: in 1994, the ŠKUC Publishing House published her first poetry collection *Abonma* (Subscription; 1994), considered to be the first openly lesbian poetry collection in Slovenia. This was followed by *Žeja* (Thirst; 1999), *Plevel* (Weeds; 2004), *Poljub ogledala* (Kiss of the Mirror; 2007), *Ostani* (Stay; 2014), *Preveč vljudna* (Too Polite, 2017) and *Prostor sred križišč* (A Place at the Crossroads, 2021). She is the author of six books of essays and scientific paper, analysing the intertwining of artistic, cultural, political and socio-sexual realities; she writes from a counterculture, lesbian feminist perspective. She has translated dozens of literary works of culture theory, lesbian and gay theory and radical social criticism, as well as theories of architecture, design and art history. She is also active on other fronts of culture and arts in Slovenia: she is a former editorial board member of the magazine *Časopis za kritiko znanosti*, former editor of the *Lesbo* magazine, a long-time columnist for Radio Študent, and is currently the coordinator of the Lesbian Library and Archive at the Autonomous Cultural Zone of Metelkova. She has been registered with the Slovenian Ministry of Culture as a freelance poet, art critic and translator since 1995. She is the recipient of the 2016 Župančič Award and the 2018 Kons International Literary Award, conferred on authors who are considered to have written socially transformative literature and dedicated their lives to improving social justice.

ABOUT THE BOOK

A Place at the Crossroads is a collection of conceptually related intimate poems, gradually opening an insight into contemporariness in which elementary human ties, from love to social ties, seem to disintegrate or have already disintegrated. This judgement is also based on the feelings of the lyrical subject, the history of love relationships, including breakups – the question of how to look at love (which implicitly involves all forms of social bonds) after experiencing disappointment, after learning not only about its transience but, above all, the illusion of the bond it contains. But the author chooses vitalism; she will not give up love, she will only give up the naïve, fetishized view on love. After several collections of socially-engaged poetry, Nataša Velikonja is going back to love, but not the concept of love as the ultimate ability to connect and synchronise; she proposes a different approach to the concept: love that does not seek to establish ties, which sooner or later turn out to be illusory, but seeks analogy in the concept of heterotopy, which can potentially be represented by the city, urbanity: to be at the centre of density, but randomly and without ties. Disconnectedness, but with presence, can become the other, potential, materially intangible, utopic, but real, in short, a game within a game, always socially undesirable and therefore dangerous, being beyond the required social norms that always demand absolute inclusion.



EXCERPT

*

Once you know something, there's no way back,
what you know, pushes you to move on,
it changes you, it's time for new things,
for courage, not fear,
fear is a lazy body, detached senses,
the fear of aloneness are small adventures
with great wishes, but you don't follow them,
because wishing equals breaking with the old,
the fear of aloneness is a bandage on your eyes,
and you don't have the courage,
you don't speak, you don't say it,
days are passing by and everybody's still there,
wherever I look, the fear,
the fear experienced by the lazy people
of great wishes and small adventures.

*

She says, more and more,
you tend to look somewhere totally away
when being told something,
as if you weren't there at all,
torn, diminished, negated,
I listen over there, they speak,
they hold their positions and know it all,
entitled to human hierarchy,
which is all they know,
without a point of contact,
I don't want to enter,
as though I've never existed,
and as though they haven't either,
I look past, somewhere totally away.

*

I keep waiting all the time,
I come to a literary evening and wait,
and, by the end of the evening, I'm murdered,
you murdered Zofka Kveder,
you murdered Vida Jeraj,
you've erased Pavlina Pajk
and Ljudmila Poljanec,
in that "Burschenschaft" room of the Slovene Writers' Association,
the reindeer antlers,
Trubar, Cankar, Voranc, Prešeren,
everybody is speaking about the Slovene culture,
and anywhere I look, nothing but "Burschenschaft" rooms,
the dark wood on the ceiling,
the dark wood on the floor,
the dark wood panelling,
the dark wood wallpapers.

Translated by
Andrej Pleterski

Slovenian Book Agency: funding opportunities for foreign publishers

Grants for the translation and publication of works by Slovenian authors

Yearly open call for **translations from Slovenian into foreign languages** includes first translations of adult fiction, children's and young adult fiction, essayistic and critical works on culture and the humanities, plays, graphic novels and comics. Applicants must be legal persons (publishing houses, theatres) registered abroad. The subsidy covers up to 100% and maximum of 10.000 € of the translation costs.

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Grants for printing costs

Yearly open call for **printing costs of Slovenian Books published in foreign** includes first prints of adult fiction, children's and young adult fiction, essayistic and critical works on culture and the humanities, plays, graphic novels and comics. Applicants must be publishing houses registered abroad. The subsidy covers up to 70% and maximum of 3.000 € of the printing costs.

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Slovenia – Guest of Honour at the Frankfurt Book Fair 2023

Yearly open call for **translations from Slovenian into German language** includes first translations and reprints of adult fiction, children's and young adult fiction, essayistic and critical works on culture and the humanities, plays, graphic novels and comics. Applicants must be publishing houses registered in Austria, Germany or Switzerland. This subsidy covers up to 50% and up to 11.000 € of all types of costs connected with book publication (excluding license fees) and promotion for first translations or 50% and up to 3.000 € for reprints, eligible costs are printing, typesetting, cover design and corrections.

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In 2022 and 2023 publishers from EU countries, publishing first prints of adult fiction, children's and young adult fiction, essayistic and critical works on culture and the humanities, plays, graphic novels and comics can apply for a fixed sum of 5.398,48€ towards the costs of translating, editing, printing and publishing Slovenian works in **German, French and English**.

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Travel grants are also available for Slovene authors, translators, editors or rights agents, who have been invited to literary or industry events abroad. An invitation and the program for the event must be enclosed with the application. There is one call per year, which covers trips throughout the year.

**10
Books
from
Slovenia**

Published by the Center for Slovenian Literature,
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