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Five poems of Pavol Janik in English and Slovak

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Wisdom

Do you want to make a hole in the world?

To bad.

The world is full of holes.

And yet nothing goes through it.

Only you became smaller.

Decreased.

Do you hear that noise?

It lasts and sometimes

pretends it is a speech.

You answer

the questions

that you asked.

As many questions

that many answers.

That is that wisdom.

With it you like to make a hole in the world.

Too bad.

You suffer only because of

what you know.

Translated into English by SMILJANA PIKSIADES

Múdrosť

Chceš urobiť dieru do sveta?

Škoda.

Je tak deravo na svete.

A predsa z neho nič neunikne.

To len teba je čoraz menej.

Ubúda ťa.

Počuješ ten ruch?

Trvá

a niekedy predstiera hovor.

Odpovedáš mu

na otázky,

ktoré mu sám prisudzuješ.

Toľko otázok

a raz toľko odpovedí.

To je tá múdrosť?

Ňou chceš urobiť diery do sveta.

Škoda.

Len to, čo vieš,

ťa mrzí.

Pax Militaris

Peace is not female emotionalism.

Peace is a battle.

Peace doesn't dwell in words.

Peace is waiting for its opportunity

hidden in rockets heads.

Fastest peace.

Spreading at supersonic speed.

Do you want peace?

Have it.

It will come to you
in a few seconds.

Permanent and strongest peace-
-weighs 350 000 trinitrotoluens.

Translated into English by SMILJANA PIKSIADES

PAX MILITARIS

Mier nie je ženské rojčenie.

Mier je boj.

Mier neprebýva v slovách.

Mier čaká na svoju príležitosť
utajený v raketových hlaviciach.

Najrýchlejší mier.

Šíriaci sa nadzvukovou rýchlosťou.

Chcete mier?

Majte si ho.

O niekoľko sekúnd
vás zasiahne.

Trvalý a najsilnejší mier –
- mier o sile 350 000 ton trinitrotoluénu.

Tribute

With a move of arm
you break the sky.

Your admirers, to death to you devoted,
are in extasy.

There is so many of them,
only archive can know them
by the name.

And how many more will you charm?!

You want some more glory
to add to your tribute,
at least a poem,
the deflection of loud defile.

I am honored, my
noble army.

Translated into English by SMILJANA PIKSIADES

Poceta

Mávnutím ruky
rozbíjaš oblohu.

Ctitelia tebe oddaní až na smrť
sú vo vytržení.
Toľko ctiteľov,
že ich po mene pozná
iba archív.

A koľkých ešte len očaríš?!

Želáš si ďalšiu slávnosť na svoju počesť,
aspoň báseň,

odblesk rinčiaceho defilé.

Je mi ct'ou,

šľachetná armáda.

We Are Professionals

For us is enough to insert moon into twilight,
not routinely, like a coin into the slot machine,
and conosours of beauty are trembling in admiration
while choirs recite praises.

We are closer to Zenith
of course light as balloons.

We sing about its monumental emptiness.

We already envy our own past.

Translated into English by SMILJANA PIKSIADES

Sme profesionáli

Stačí nám vsunúť lunu do súmraku,
nevdojak, ako sa do automatu vkladá minca,
a vyznávači krásy trpnu v úžase,
obradne odriekajú zborový chválospev.

Stúpame k zenitu
samozrejme a ľahkovážne ako balón.
Spejúci k jeho monumentálnej prázdnote.

Už závidíme aj vlastnej povesti.

Chatter above the Grave

Clumsy are hitting lamps
like night moths.

Matured drunks are falling down.
In the amusement park, weird generals
in a little green skirts are making grimaces.
In the middle of a metropolis, the forest burns.

In the shell of whispering lips
you swim in a part of the story.

My heart is beating the rest.

Translated into English by SMILJANA PIKSIADES

Táranie nad hrobom

Nemehlá vrážajú do lám
ako nočné motýle.
Zrelí opilci opadáajú.
A v lunaparku pojašení generáli
v zelených sukienkach strúhajú grimasy.
Uprostred veľkomesta horí les.

V škrupinke šepkajúcich úst
plávaš do rozprávky.

Srdce mi odbíja celú.

PAVOL JANIK

Mgr. art. PAVOL JANIK, PhD., (magister artis et philosophiae doctor) was born in 1956 in Bratislava, where he also studied film and television dramaturgy and scriptwriting at the Drama Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts (VSMU). He has worked at the Ministry of Culture (1983–1987), in the media and in advertising. President of the Slovak Writers' Society (2003–2007), Secretary-General of the Slovak Writers' Society (1998–2003, 2007–2013), Editor-in-Chief of the Slovak literary weekly Literarny tyzdennik (2010–2013). Honorary Member of the Union of Czech Writers (from 2000), Member of the Editorial Board of the weekly of the UCW Obrys-Kmen (2004–2014), Member of the Editorial Board of the weekly of the UCW Literatura – Umeni – Kultura (from 2014). Member of the Writers Club International (from 2004). Member of the Poetas del Mundo (from 2015). Member of the World Poets Society (from 2016). Director of the Writers Capital International Foundation for Slovakia and the Czech Republic (2016–2017). Chief Representative of the World Nation Writers' Union in Slovakia (from 2016). Ambassador of the Worldwide Peace Organization (Organizacion Para la Paz Mundial) in Slovakia (from 2018). Member of the Board of the International Writers Association (IWA BOGDANI) (from 2019). He has received a number of awards for his literary and advertising work both in his own country and abroad.

This virtuoso of Slovak literature, Pavol Janik, is a poet, dramatist, prose writer, translator, publicist and copywriter. His literary activities focus mainly on poetry. Even his first book of poems *Unconfirmed Reports* (1981) attracted the attention of the leading authorities in Slovak literary circles. He presented himself as a plain-spoken poet with a spontaneous manner of poetic expression and an inclination for irony directed not only at others, but also at himself. This style has become typical of all his work, which in spite of its critical character has also acquired a humorous, even bizarre dimension. His manner of expression is becoming terse to the point of being aphoristic. It is thus perfectly natural that Pavol Janik's literary interests should come to embrace aphorisms founded on a shift of meaning in the form of puns. In his work he is gradually raising some very disturbing questions and pointing to serious problems concerning the further development of humankind, while all the time widening his range of themes and styles. Literary experts liken Janik's poetic virtuosity to that in the work of Miroslav Valek, while in the opinion of the Russian poet, translator and literary critic, Natalia Shvedova, Valek is more profound and Janik more inventive. He has translated in poetic form several collections of poetry and written works of drama with elements of the style of the Theatre of the Absurd.

Pavol Janik's literary works have been published not only in Slovakia, but also in Albania, Argentina, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Croatia, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, India, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Kosovo, Macedonia, Mexico, Moldova, Nepal, Pakistan, Poland, the People's Republic of China, the Republic of China (Taiwan), Romania, the Russian Federation, Serbia, South Korea, Spain, Syria, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, the United States of America and Venezuela.

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