



International Edition

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# Sahitya Cafe

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\*\* English translation is available for every poem



# Pavol Janik

## Slovakia

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 SWS (1998–2003, 2007–2013), Editor-in-Chief of the literary weekly of the SWS 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 – Kultúra (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, Austria, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Croatia, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, India, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Macedonia, Mexico, Moldova, Nepal, Pakistan, Poland, the People's Republic of China, the Republic of China (Taiwan), Romania, the Russian Federation, Serbia, Singapore, South Korea, Spain, Syria, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, the United States of America, Uzbekistan, Venezuela and Vietnam.

## **DIVADLO ŽIVOT**

Život, ktorý znamená len divadlo -  
taký život chceme stále hrať.  
Ak vám dačo vtipné práve napadlo,  
prezlečte sa do klaunovských šiat.

Život nami máva ako kyvadlo -

do kaluže z blata uteká.  
Nikdy nie je, ako predtým bývalo -  
to je pravda v skutku odveká.

Čas je ako pohár po vrch naliaty,  
odznova a stále preteká.  
Stúpame si sami sebe na päty  
a chceme nájsť v sebe človeka.

Na duši a na opone záplaty...  
Na konci nám smrť dá riadny mat.  
Hrať tú hru sa napriek tomu oplatí,  
že si bol, raz budeš iste rád.

Na javisku život našiel zrkadlo -  
každý večer ožíva v ňom zas.  
Ak vás čosi do divadla zlákalo,  
prenesme sa do pradávnych čias.

Zaujmite svoje prázdne sedadlo,  
naučte sa život naspamäť.  
Keby sa vám pri živote zívalo,  
nechajte si vstupné vrátiť späť.

## **THE THEATER OF LIFE**

Life which means only the theater –  
such life we always wish to play.  
If just now you've got a funny thought  
change into your clown's suit.

Life sways with us like a pendulum –  
it runs from mud into a puddle.  
It never is as it used to be  
is a truth well-tried from age to age.

Time is like a glass filled to the brim  
again and again it runs over.  
It ourselves that step on our heels  
and we wish to find the person inside us.

There are patches on curtain and the soul...  
At the end death gives checkmate.  
Yet it's still worth playing the game,  
you should be glad that at least you've existed.

Life has found a mirror on the stage –  
it comes alive in it every night.  
If something has lured into the theater  
let's move into ancient times.

Settle into your empty seat,  
learn life by heart.  
If you yawn during life  
then ask for your entrance fee back.

[https://sahityacafe.deshbidesh.in/Pavol\\_Janik.html](https://sahityacafe.deshbidesh.in/Pavol_Janik.html)