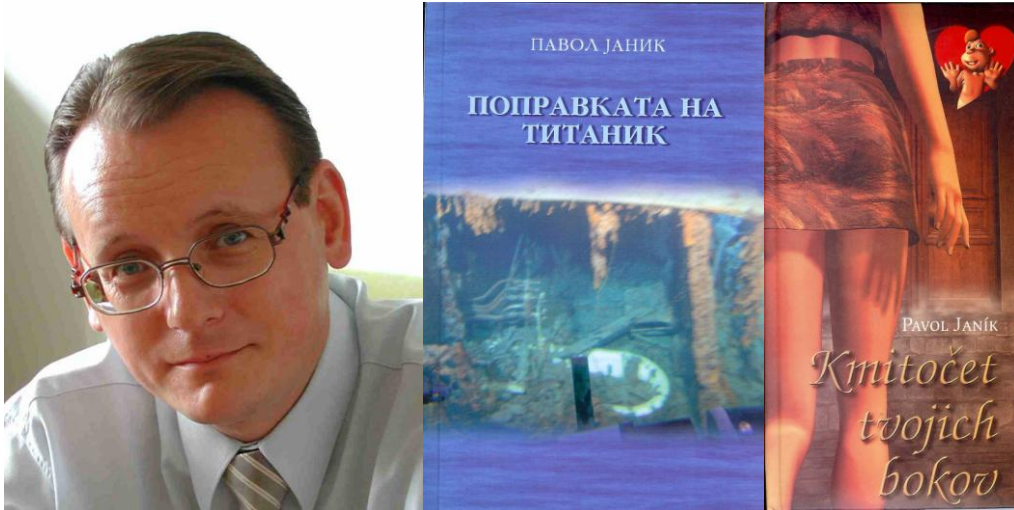


## POET PAVOL JANIK IN SOUTH AFRICA

Written, selected and edited by Mabule Mogale Zachariah Rapola (SOUTH AFRICA)

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Abridged by Pavol Janik



Pavol Janik, a multi-discipline and multi-award winning poet, television writer, stage writer and fiction writer is a Slovak national.

Opting for the two-part profiling is to give a fair sampling of the diverse works on offer from A DICTIONARY OF FOREIGN DREAMS, a volume comprised of 57 finely selected poems spanning the more than 45 years of his writing vocation. And, my sincerest gratitude and thanks to him for generously availing a publication that offers revealing, exploratory, engaging and pleasurable reading. Multilayered, visceral and bold with an acerbic tone, the poetry displays the craftiness of a consummate poet skilled at layering, decking and packaging images, metaphors and irony – a mosaic that spans the range of emotions, from somber, observational to overt and subtle whimsical verse and quips that leave the reader at times marveling with its critical sharpness and at times bemused. It is poetry that is destined to earn the poet international acclaim.

Presented in translation, A DICTIONARY OF FOREIGN DREAMS owes a great deal to the couple translators that laboured to bring this poetic trove to English readers. An engrossing and fluid read, an anthology is a reminder once again of the debt we owe literary translators the world over. Themes thrown in the mix include love, politics, social commentary etc... The 83-page anthology exhibits poetic flair, elegance and brilliance of a poet who revels in his craft. And, I would urge poetry lovers to go get copies for themselves, this as my sampling of only 5 poems in each instalment is a negligible representation of this selected and compiled tome of poetic excellence.

Poetry expresses itself in many languages, it is fitting therefore that we acquit ourselves with one of those languages by introducing the poet in his native tongue – Slovak.

**DO MODRA (1985):**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qb57UbKv1aM>

English translation –

**INTO THE BLUE (1985):**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uyyQvYG0M4M>

(Translated into English by James Sutherland Smith)

Janik on occasions dips his pen on matters that shaped the destiny of his country, and that of the world over the last past half century. He takes us back to that era with the poem:

**THE REPORT FROM THE END OF THE COLD WAR (1991):**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ENGxRCXiwcY>

(Translated into English by Pavol Janik Junior)

In this poem the poet pays tribute to his compatriot, Miroslav Valek, a celebrated Slovak and world renowned poet.

**WISER FOR YOUR DEATH (for Miroslav Valek) (1998)**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0IGR3Q\\_vlyc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0IGR3Q_vlyc)

(Translated into English by James Sutherland Smith)

From a dedication to a beloved poet, Dr. Janik's pen tackles that ambivalent emotion called love, that can be both traumatic or euphoric. And here he's opted for the euphoric high scales.

**MIRRORS AFTER NIGHTFALL (1991)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t7M1zTKtFjw>

(Translated into English by James Sutherland Smith)

**THE MOMENT BEFORE TOUCH (1981)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UoJ9WBLV4Do>

(Translated into English by James Sutherland Smith)

NOTE OF THANKS: All the poems provided by the poet, Pavol Janik – compressed bio:

Pavol Janik is a poet, dramatist, prose writer, translator, publicist and copywriter. A film and television dramaturgy and scriptwriting graduate from the Drama Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts (VSMU). He earned a PHD in arts and philosophy. He has worked in both the public and private sectors that includes stints at the Ministry of Culture (1983–1987), media and advertising.

Creative and professional positions and affiliations includes: 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 – 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).

A recipient of numerous national and international awards for his literary and advertising work, Janik has his literary works published in dozens of countries from around the world.