

**Gedigte / Poems**

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## Rubriek vir skeppende werk

Litera is 'n rubriek vir die publikasie van skeppende werk in al die tale wat gewoonlik in *Literator* gebruik word. Die Redaksie wil daarmee 'n geïntegreerde beeld skep van die verskeidenheid nuwe skryfwerk wat Suid-Afrikaanse skrywers kan bied.

'n Elektroniese kopie van elke bydrae moet voorgelê word. Die naam en adres van die insender moet regs bo-aan die eerste blad vermeld word. **Verstrek ook 'n telefoonnommer, faksnommer en e-posadres waar u bereik kan word.** Elektroniese bydraes kan gestuur word aan Susan.Lourens@nwu.ac.za

Bydraes kan ook gepos word aan die Burohoof, *Literator*, Personeelbussie 251, Buro vir Wetenskaplike Tydskrifte, Privaatsak X6001, POTCHEFSTROOM 2520.

## Section for creative writing

Litera is a section for the publication of creative writing in all the languages that *Literator* usually caters for. Through this section the Editorial Board wants to present an integrated image of the diversity of new writing by South Africans.

An electronic version of each contribution should be submitted. The name and address of the author should appear at the top right of the first page. **Please include a telephone number, a fax number and an e-mail address where you can be contacted.** Electronic submissions can be send to Susan.Lourens@nwu.ac.za

Contributions can also be mailed to the Head of the Bureau, *Literator*, Staff Box 251, Bureau for Scholarly Journals, Private Bag X6001, POTCHEFSTROOM 2520.



**Hennie Prins**

## **Eensame, vreedsame wêreld**

later begin ek hoor  
my wiele sing nou name uit die sand  
van Lekkerdrink en Lekkersing  
hoe Houmoed Witdraai Hotazel  
wapper in die hitte van die horizon  
Pofadder Sonstraal Blinkklip  
naaldsteek in jou oog  
Die wydtes aanhou oopvou vorentoe  
Vuilnek Grondneus Kraandraai toe  
Vaalkolk Lubbeskolk Uitspankolk  
lekker lê op die oor  
as jou mond verdroog jou tong verdor  
Soebatsfontein Mesklip Riemvasmaak  
dobber op hittespieëlings in jou herinnering  
dié name kry jy nimmermeer uit jou onthou  
Putsonderwater Platbakkies Garingkop  
Grootdrink Verneukpan Onseepkans  
bly eggo in jou ore  
onthou jy dié wat terg:  
Komersbrand Eierdopput Hakskeenpan  
die beloftes van Botterkloof Niekerkshoop Kleinbegin  
ontnugtering in Bitterwater Hoedjies Rugseer  
Spytfontein Steekdorings en Salpeterpan  
– het die taai voorgeslagte hier  
hulle verrukking en seer  
met name probeer besweer?

**Johann Lodewyk Marais**

## **Richard E. Leaky**

*Here is the Africa of unlimited space,  
of tranquility and of great beauty.*

Die huis met sy wye uitkyk  
suidwes oor die Groot Skeurvallei  
bied aan die gesin na maande  
se ondersoek 'n verposing.

Hier kan hy Ol Donyo Lengai  
ver in die vallei sien sluimer  
en vroegaand die Massaikinders  
met hulle beeste hoor aankom.

Wanneer die maan oplaas ligtend  
bo die vlaktes en berge hang,  
sal hy 'n oomblik lank terugsit  
en oor name van spesies peins.

## **Jane Goodall**

In die begin het God  
met sy wysvinger  
Adam s'n  
liggies aangeraak.

Lank daarna het 'n vrou  
ook só deur tralies  
Fifi s'n  
liggies aangeraak.

## **François le Vaillant**

'n Voëlkabinet het dit begin.  
Die slange in flesse versterkwater  
ingeprop, skoelappers aan spelde vas  
en die trofeë van antilope  
buite die vae besonderhede

van landkaarte waarmee gereis is  
na waar troppe wyd en vry gewei het.  
Boonop in 'n krat die eerste giraf  
wat ná maande se geskud op die see  
sy kop in 'n museum opgelig het.  
'n Kind het die voëls gesien, gedroom.

In sy droom skryf hy 'n monografie.  
Hierdie boek lê voor een wat daarin blaai  
en die kleurplate versigtig oopvou.

**Elizabeth Joss**

## Untitled

a dampness has come over me  
the gentle press of pencil on page:  
You seem speechless as I talk absurdities.  
as soon as the final ray of orange sunset  
flickers across my mind,  
fleeting advertisements  
on a silenced TV.  
I am my plastic shell again.

the miniscule hairs inside the canal  
of my ear wither to the beds of their pores.  
I am not awake, nor can I ever be:  
morning is night and night  
morning.

I pry my words into pieces  
and hang them with wooden pegs on the washing line.  
your face, stiff with wrinkles  
around your mouth as you struggle to  
pronounce a greeting.

head shimmies down to the gray floor –  
my eyes, auburn and white  
turn away in retaliation.

you drop my pegs with your purposeful fingers  
letting go of all that was said  
in between.

**Tony Ullyatt**

# **Wilhelm Knobel: four translation for the 35th anniversary of his death**

**[26-10-1935 – 06-01-1974]**

## **Interior**

a small swallow flies around the room  
the woman in the black frock sits at the machine and works  
now that he is dead the house is still  
the flowers on the grave have long since wilted  
day by day visitors become fewer  
the small swallow flies round the room desperately  
the woman in the black frock feeds material feverishly to the needle  
just now she can drink a pill with her tea  
but the day is so long  
in the quiet house  
the cherry tree in front of the window is almost stripped bare  
    by weaver birds:  
one day soon it will be autumn  
the telephone rings and rings  
the woman in the black frock weeps

## **you didn't have a great deal when you began**

you did not have a great deal when you began  
a dog a lovely girl and a horse  
and then you got everything  
through years of hard work too, yes,  
but above all inspiration and promise  
the lovely girl became a woman  
and children filled your house  
neither of you always understood each other  
but insight really comes with the years  
and then, on the day of your death, you were alone  
more than in the beginning  
or did there perhaps for one merciful moment  
flash through your brain the comforting image of  
your horse and your girl and your dog

## **I wear a suit a waistcoat and a tie of yours**

I wear a suit a waistcoat and a tie of yours  
If anyone complements me on the choice of the  
    dark green and ochre tie  
then I think contentedly  
we had good taste  
my father and I  
because didn't I give it to him on his last birthday  
and didn't he wear it  
And when I see the slightly darker spots on the pockets  
    of the suit  
then it does me good to know:  
sometimes you also put a sweet in your pocket ...  
for later  
and then forgot it  
until it threaded stickily through the cloth  
But mornings  
as I put on the beige waistcoat  
and feel its warmth through the day  
I wonder  
how cold you are now  
or does warmth still stream out  
from the idea of the fabric tight against my body

## **Archilochos of Paros is sick**

Archilochus of Paros is sick  
of living on figs and fish  
and there's his engagement with Neoboule:  
her father has long known he's a bastard  
but still without warning he  
sent him on his way one day,  
(there was much talk of a richer lover  
but no one bothers much about rumours)  
would he storm into the house with his sword  
and cleave the old man's flabby belly open  
or exit suddenly for some Far Eastern lands  
to forget his heart's passion with exotic women?  
you don't have that much energy  
if you have to live on figs and fish  
so only satire remains:  
the beautiful Neoboule with her slender body  
became, in his poems, a faded courtesan

whose charms bewitched no man any longer  
and then as if this didn't satisfy his piqued reputation  
he turned her into a fat prostitute  
who used cheap perfume too lavishly  
Now her honour is avenged  
– Neoboule and her father killed themselves  
to escape his scathing pen –  
life on Paros is now even duller  
mornings he wakes with Neoboule's name on his lips  
and evenings the seagulls on the beach call, tormenting him  
Neoboule! Neoboule!

*h. le r. slabbert*

## **besoekie aan die hemel** (a near death experience)

god nooi my mos toe, innig,  
vir 'n besoekie ani hemel, vinnig  
– mar ek's weg, ken nié die gepeupel  
van die reënboeg-nasie wa' da wemel

*h. le r. slabbert*

## **Arrestasie van Oscar Wilde<sup>1</sup>** in die Cadogan hotel, 1895

It's the spectator not life that  
art mirrors (Wilde, 1891)

In sy hand had hy flou dop-en-dam,  
terwyl hy tuur na Londen se lug  
deur die gaas van Nottingham-kantgordyn,  
of was dit waas in sý oë, dié dof uitsig?

---

1 Ierse akteur en dramaturg (1854-1900). Verloor lastersaak teen Markies van Queensburgh, wat gekant was teen intieme verbinding tussen Wilde en sy seun, Lord Douglas.



Regs, en effens voor hom: Pont straat  
die geboue indrukwekkend in nuwe rooi,  
dog hard, soos die gaslig reeds vroegoggend  
wat skyn op steeds onopgemaakte kooi.

“Ek soek méér dop in dié dam, man,  
en Robbie,<sup>2</sup> jou arm as ek wil neerslaan.  
Is dit die einde of net die begin?  
Hoe kan ek dit verstaan?”

“Jy’t dus vir my die jongste ‘Geel Boek’<sup>3</sup> gebring  
en Buchan ís toe daarin, nou:  
Aanvaarding van wat aanvaarbaar is,  
is so vals soos ’n eed getrou.”

(Twee polisiemanne in siviele drag binne)

“Miester Woild, onse opdrag is u te vang  
en medie ‘criminals’ te gooi in ’n sel.”<sup>4</sup>  
Makie moeilikgeit, en houd-u-bek  
– dis ímmers die Cadogen Hotel.”

Hy’t opgestaan, die Geel Boek toegeslaan,  
en effe onvas, met oë verskrik, bloedbeloop,  
is hy gehelp tot in die vangwa buite,  
het nog teen die palms geskuur toe hy trap-af loop.

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2 Robert Ross, ’n intieme vriend van Douglas-kring. Die kamers in Cadogan Hotel is deur Douglas gehuur.

3 ’n Kwartaalblad wat vanaf 1894 verskyn het met reputasie dat dit die kunste en letterkunde bevorder. Wilde het dit nie hoog aangeslaan nie.

4 Wilde skryf *Ballad of reading goal* tydens sy gevangeneskap, en dit word in 1898 gepubliseer (6 000 kopieë binne drie maande). Ná sy vrylating het hy hewige kritiek teen die Engelse gevangenisstelsel gehad. Hy sterf in ballingskap in Frankryk op die ouderdom van 46. Ross was by.

