

In the city of W. Early morning

She gets up, deftly slips her panties on –
hear how the band snaps on her naked hip?
Once more the city is urged by the light
groggy, as if struggling to crawl out
of a bed warm from two young bodies
or a dog's coat, stroked at dawn
by the tender fingers of the waitress at the Orpheus.
How many doors at this hour close forever,
how many people turn their backs in contempt
upon the dawn, how many gates are opened
wide to a strong draught?
At noon the gong of sunlight pushes in here
blinding the room becomes, like a pond
and what it dreamt up, awakens
to stagger drunkenly in search
of its own contours, a visible hinge.
Shade overtakes the sparrow on the balcony
of the neighbour woman wasted thin by dreaming
to sink farther away. In what body this brightness,
in what shrinkage?
You hear the snap of elastic band the rush
of blood, you, staring at the flashing bridge
over the river?

That from the dead

She dreamt she went downstairs, opened the doors,
that she stepped out into the morning, the bright
garden,
that on a table near the bower sat a bee-eater,
a parrot on the backrest of the wicker chair
a corax on a larch branch, that there flew by
an oriole dead for ages, that a goldfinch
picked at its feathers on an ancient root
that other birds, colourful and exotic,
hemmed in the garden and sang one after another
except for the finch, for it ruffled its wings
that it sang what was needful, needful
immediately needful in a perfect way
that from the dead, that living she finds
that the shimmering service, that the pulsing arras,
that the flashing satin, that the splash of wonder
that the drizzling abundance, that there escaped
absolutely
nothing.

There were many such

O water of Lake Nidzkie, my exorcist
You doubt, O you of little faith? There were many
such
and when they were not returning they tossed towels,
suits
and said: It's fine, it's otherwise
but no one ever found that one word
no one knew what happened.
For all that they brightened in a heretofore unknown
order.

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Selected works

Objawy, 2019

Ufność: trzy poematy, 2018

Tak: trzy eseje o poezji, 2018

Pocałuj światło. 89 wierszy, 2016

Przekłady na języki obce

Selected poems by Wojciech Kass have been translated into English, Bulgarian, Croatian, Czech, French, German, Italian, Lithuanian, Russian, Serbian, Slovenian, and Spanish.

Selected awards

Gloria Artis Silver Medal for Merit to Culture (2015)

Kazimiera Iłakowiczówna Award for the best poetry debut (2000)

Capital City of Warsaw Award – nomination (2016)