

Sava Rakočević

AFTER ALL

Selected Poems

The Lord Byron Foundation

Chicago 2010

Translated from Serbian and edited by Srdja Trifkovic

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ISBN 978-1-892478-09-2

FROM THE FOREWORD TO
THE SERBIAN EDITION (2002)

“A DORMANT BLUE APPLE...”

This book presents us with an interesting phenomenon: an accomplished painter, who has established his international reputation a long time ago, comes up with a collection of poems in his mature years.

This begs several questions: What has prompted him to exchange, even for a moment, the brush with the pen? Is there an unstated need to complement his painter's vision, to explain it further with his own word? What is the relationship of these verses, as poetic pictures, to his paintings? Are they linked by the same visual poetics? Is the image on Sava's canvas in the same circle of ideas and metaphysical problems as the picture in his verses – or are they to be treated separately? Do they merely complement each other, compete for the more accurate expression of Sava's spiritual world? Or do they part ways from the outset and each follows its own path in expressing the particular messages that cannot be reduced to a common denominator?

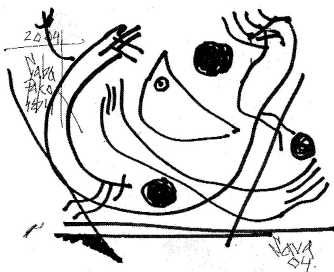
In his paintings we have followed the author's path of development that has brought him to the esoteric sphere focused on human pre-existence.

The author's poetic imagination follows a different path. Its focus is on the effort to address some of the key existential issues: who are we, what whirlpools of biological and cosmic inheritances do we carry? What is the relationship between our inherited fate and the destiny we weave ourselves? What is the world and the universe we inhabit? Does our existence make sense? Are we bound by the shackles of the absurd and nihilism as the lasting, unchanging cosmic curse, or is the gloomy destiny we experience merely an expression of our inability to discover the harmonies with ourselves and the world? Have we definitely lost the capacity to harmonize our desires and passions with the allmighty rhythms of nature and universe? Is there a cure to our suffering, caused by our inability to change anything in this world that meaningfully affects our existence?

The author's paintings and poems differ in terms of their 'visual' impact. The verses are 'classically' modern, more surrealist than his paintings. They have a specific rhythm. Their almost sculptural melodicity blends the epic narrative mode and an elegant, rhetorically dignified lyricism which never descends into trite emotionalism.

Belgrade, September 2002

Zoran Glušćević



AT THE END
BEFORE THE BEGINNING



No Response

He who summons his springs
Dreams not of alien silver
The chill of snowy silence.

Warriors' tombs elongate the shadows
With the arrows of spilt blood
The last hope

The sunflowers are burnt
In the name of the future
Glossy plate with no response

Oh broken headlands
Had you had fewer fathers
Would you have been a bigger field

In The Beginning

By darkness in the beginning
And at the end before the beginning
The crows extinguish the ignited corn

Red eyed wind
Peels the skin
Off the broken stone

From the cracked mouth
The teeth of drought implant the hair
Of crucified waters

The bone of dust blazes across the sky
At the end before the beginning
The suns brimming above the whole

A Day With No Old Age

The nape of the world above the void
Everything returns to the selfish earth
Only the light with its long fingers
Chisels the day with no old age

On the back of darkness
It carves the letters in flames
From the inferno's top

The suns are falling
Onto the eternal today

At the Tail of Darkness

The perspective is the same
In front and behind
It consumes its remains
At the tail of darkness

The horizon is upright
Bound to the sky
Where trunks are flowering
Their heads upside down

The secrets of the sky
Come and go
The world is a filled void
A wounded word and a circle closed

Oaring Through Fogs

Stones rusted by leaves
Extinguished fires of time
The day is digging into itself

Where are we hurrying
Oaring through fogs

Is there a road to remember time
Longer strides
Do not shorten the journey

Oh green fire
Heavens are guarding us from fall

The Wind

Cursed wind
Ever evading time
Are you seeking rest or stupor
The calming of your empty heart
Or you long to die on high
Condemned eternally
To shape your solitude.

The wind with no heirs
What wouldn't you give
If only you could die

The Raven

Your voice heightens fear
You devour the relics of sleep in blood
You black bird
Never sated by punishment

You fly over from another time
Fed by the dead
Your shadow a scar in mud
Above all legions

When will be the time
When you will be man

The Spider

What is this needle
That weaves the web with secrets
And sets the traps
For flies on the wire
That in death they fly

Behind the corner
Where shadows carry the light
In the end he hangs too
Off the same wall
By the thin line of dew

The Picture

The night above a watery grave
Mourns the face with no shadow
The dead toll from the tall towers

Are they punishing the light
For casting a shadow on all
Except itself

The picture on the canvas of earth
From its cloud
The lunar sickle is invisibly hued

The light seeks no face
That which is everywhere
Does not seek itself

On the Road

To Adina

When you see my paintings
They are the colors of your face
My body is in your shape
My steps on your path
In your eyes my shadow
In your leaves my name
The palette is my bird
In your tomb
Listen and look
Do not ask

On Myself

What I think
I see
What I see I paint
Silence I hear by my thought
Invisible thought can see

Am I its own I
Or both in something
My thoughts are not mine
The visible crack of mind
Mirages mine or of others

If the thought was not the light
The rot would devour it
I think
I see
I paint

In the Studio

Among the canvases
Dormant
A blue apple

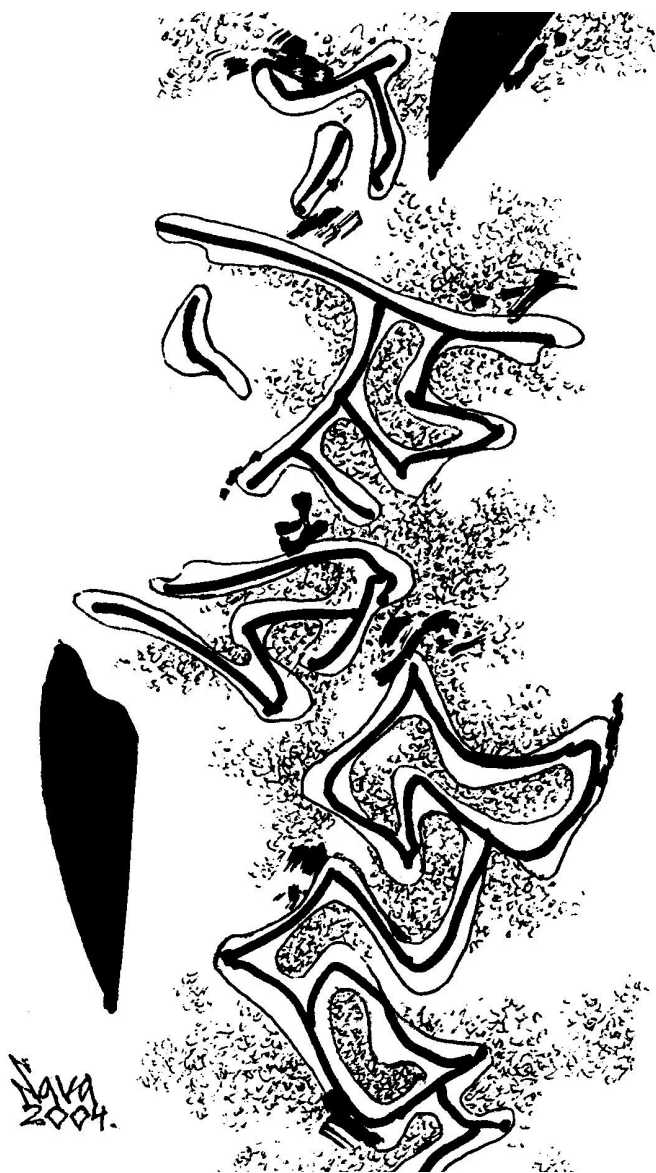
In the empty frame
The painter
Imagining himself

In the bird's eye
Visible
Darkness condensed

Paints with light strokes
The intransient night
The last one

When I Paint

When I paint I am not alone
The word of the past by my hand
Decants the time
The dead have their age
You will know them in me
In the picture I am visible
Give me a name



EARLIER AND BEFORE



From the Dark

From the dark of ancestry
We seek ourselves
Before birth

Visible dew
In the eye of the woods

Before death
We know the black cypress
The spider above the head

With no memory
Time exhausted

What we see
Are poppies shut

Awoken by Silence

Oh blackberry awoken by silence
Woven by lunar needle
Your lips white in the dark

From darkness in motion
You listen to the sky and passers by

The silver of your ink
In the end is thinning
Into a night with no peer

The Light

The light with no age
With petals of silver
Embosses the days
Where the stars flutter
Above the black holes

The white line that fades not
Falls onto the images of ancestry
In the tongue of distant lanterns

Whence your birds fly in
Light present and unreal
Your day knows no time

The voids are filled by you
Where the stars flutter
Above the black holes

Before and Earlier Than That

I have been before
And earlier than that
Buried silence and earth
The fruit of time
The bread of straw
The color and its face
A wild strawberry in bloom
The mark on the stag's horn
The father of wind and the wolves' kin
When I became what I am
The past was gone

Never

Life does not live in the blade of death
All within her exists not
She seeks herself
Collects the remnant of her sign
Does not take away what she is not

Oh unhappy death
You will never be life

Being and Not Being

To the matter on the palm
Awakened by fire
Crystal kernels imbue the space
With an uncaring fog

What is offered to us
By the endlessly baffling eternity
Between those two words
Being and not being

All is contained in nothing
In oblivion to fade
And nothing is something
To the matter on the palm

Over One's Own Self

Who will bury
The last man
With nobody behind

Nature neither loses nor remembers
White rivers will go on flowing
The springs will not be short
Of flowers and rains

With nobody behind
The grave with no wind
Weeps over itself

On the Way Back

The light by the color
Of ignited core
Arrives in our time

What shines does not know the dark
On the window of the world
A plucked rose spreads its scent

The Sun in the smile of a circle
With its rays etches the sketch
Along the earth that hangs by a thread

A DARKENED WORLD



The Concert

Dead singers in the dark
Are giving a concert

The teeth of ignited sound
Fly out at half moon

The white dust of rustling
The bell for the dead

Only on the stars no night descends
The world is a dubious mirror

Above the map of the dark
Dead singers are giving a concert

The World Divided

The first form
Is the first star

The stone of fire sears the threads
Of the divisible world

In the whirlwind
Echoes the word of heaven
God too is divisible

In the Dark

What hope in the dark
Who sings to the bird's call

Maybe the old ghost
That paces the house

With a black arrow
And the eye of jade

In his solitude
Of mute weeping

(He cannot touch me)

Underground the dust matures
Speared by the dark

Circular Games

Dizzying schasms are sparkling
Into new forms

In the void the whirls glitter
By the blazing birds

The games of solemn space
Greeting the flame

Fiery solar spear
In the darkness of the soil
The day

A Darkened World

Existence with no sign
 A wandering shadow
A face with no memory
 A bone in limestone
The onset with no exit
 Ravine and fire
A shadow with no form
 A crack in the night
A darkened world
 In search of its eyes

Premonition

You shoot a stag
I bleed

Do not break the branch
The arm hurts

Do not extinguish the light
I drown in darkness

All that I have
Is not mine

Through nothingness
I intuit God

YOU
WHO HAVE CREATED
AND CREATE



AVA
2004.

The Thought

By the voice of fire
The future reads the past

At the gate of universe
The thought sees
The hollowed bell
Of eternity

With No Loss

'There where the night breaks
And the light raises fires
What we do not see
Does not exist
What is not seen
'There is most of it

'There where the night breaks
And the day is hinted at
If death is
Before and after life
We are life
Between two deaths

In a game with no loss

Unknown Creator

By Your arrow
Darkness is in the eye
Of the future moment

Imbided fog
Sound and colors in the bones of the walls

By Your arrow
Time is an ignited stone
Above our heads

Never drying spring
Salt and wound

In Your perfect work
Your imperfection are we

If It Were So

Head downwards
Roots heavenwards
The Sun around the Earth
The Earth behind the Moon
The sky under waters
The living in the grave

If it were so
That we slice the air with knives
By water that we breathe
The snow would sprout
The stones would walk
And everything would be the same

Heavenward Gaze

The days slumped upside down
Extinguished summers above us

The wind no sigh
After the lost sound
Intuits execution

To meet the ancestry
We walk to the spot
Where stars are burnt

With heavenward gaze
It is easier to die

Full Void

Unwilted crust of sparkling
Heavenly orbs are but hollows
In the round void

From a forgotten window
The world is visible

Voices fly
By ignited words
What is empty
All is filled
By itself
And by God

Glorifying You

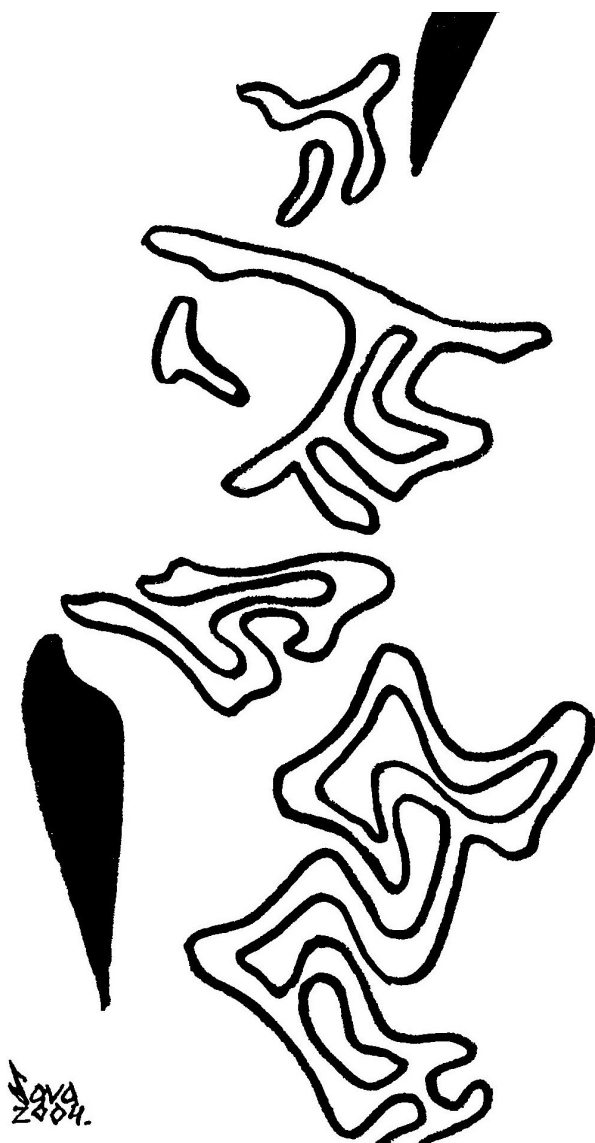
You in everything
That you have created and create
Glorifying you
We raise the crown of flames
By the wing of our bitter plant

The light of an unending circle
The march of the worlds
Returns to its birth

If it is your deed
What you have created and what you create
All and nothing
Naughting nothing
Awaits your death



THE THINKING COLORS



Sava
2004.

The Age

The sound of the past
Above the river
Conceals time

The shadow of the centuries
Measured by the day
A crack at the onset

The struggle of the forgotten ones
A visible mark
On our face

In the eyes of the unborn
The image of the world
A recurring wound

What is it that we seek
In this age

The Word

The word with the wind
The strings of playful leaves
A harmony of strewn forests

The word in the sea
Thoughtful rays
In the field of blue

The word of the earth
Ignited time
The fog with no date

The word
Neither uttered nor written
The dead carry it with them

White wings
Hovering above the sea

What Comes Third

The guardian of secrets
Multiplies the word of light
With flying needles

Playful angels
Sweep celestial corridors
Raising glowing snails
To their pouting lips

And timelessly they bear
The thought ignited
Before this world

In paradise
Angels gather apples
That putrify slowly

In hell
The scream of burnt witches
Changes the guards

What comes third

The Chill

If we had two suns
In the sky
How would we cope with two shadows
On Earth

Everything submits to the arc
Our own footsteps are not followed
What spouts in the dark
Seeks the light

Why grind the earth
So that it covers us
By his shadow
Man was felled

The Shadow

Mute like the maker
You tie the worlds

You breathe in the vanished
You darken the living

The fall is the measure
Of your greatness

You are the sign of every end
Fate's spy

Afraid of nothing
Except immortality

Sapient Cells

Smiling volcanoes
Reveal the secret
The light becomes the thought
The Sun is not devoid of mind

Within a stone
Enough celestial cells
For a galaxy

Everything raised falls
Towards the earth
Only the flame
Faces the sky

The canvas of the world
With its base
Is on fire

A Question

Who is older
We
Or the shadow

Ancient apple
Crowns
New words

By floral powder
The stone
Evades time

Who will leaf the pages of time
We
Or the shadow

To You With No Past

Boiling thought freezes at the thought
What will be
That has already been

Formless
What are the rounded letters
Of the same book for

Your fires are
All sunflowers
Eternity is your destiny

The Fullstop

By fire from the outset
The fullstop is there where it is now
By heights snooping on itself

Those raised above the desert
An awakening awaits
And lasts

On the wings of fire
There is nothing

Yet all
That exists
Within it is conceived
The fullstop is the parent of the world

The Bouquets Above the Void

The land of delayed springs
The third from the Sun
With comets extinguishes the bone

An offspring of its glow
Multiplies yellow tears
With the worn sickle

Excavated is the crown
Of the bouquet above the void
The timeless fire

What has come to pass and now
Is but one moment
The fog of the same native land

The Earth is slowly dying

Black Fruit

The evil from its slumber arises
Never in its bed
Hollow bone
Dissolves insatiable time

From its seed
Ice would be poisoned

Hatred is evil's banner
Blind grass from the wild eye
Now and here
And of that yet to come

Water Deluged By Sky

The shells feed on oysters
With the tongues of echoes
The knives of seabed sand

Leaves carry words
From which all loathing vanishes
By the sprouting day

When the knife enters life
The living is with fear
The longer we last the further is death

Water deluged by sky
Knows no leaves
Shells and pearls
Above the grave

In the Wind

By their growth
Fall silvery drops

The dissolved bone of lasting
Sculpts the game

Death loses no life
By stone whispers the water

Facing colors and peaceful clay
Nobody is late

White dragons
Disperse the clouds

Thinking Colors

The red and the green are thinking
Of sleep

Colors filled with thought
What do they foresee

The rainbow ties golden sheafs
With a transient sash

And a part of God departs with us
While the stars ooze

The Time of Twilight

We are all of one daybreak
In the flock
Of the celestial ring

We are returning to the hue of sand
To another time
Under the sheath of light darkness

Levelled by name
We celebrate the peace
Of a petrified world

With No Calendar

That which thinks
That is you
In me

Visible ancient bone
In my paintings
Is your handwriting

Contained in past colors
By the shield of a future flam

You in me
And here
From the dark you chisel the time

The earth has no calendar
What it has fed it remembers not

One eye is for all
Only God
Can say I

TO ASHES
WITHOUT ASHES



Dry Paintings

The stone
The sound ever less frequent
Chisels dry paintings
With the hand of thirst

The mind
On the light roof
A white-hot bird
Flies after the cloud

The sun
Knows where it sails
While the line of the world
Awaits its birth

The Pomegranate

The light raises your sails
The words at the world's bosom
By your red spears
Heralds arrive
Of the stellar dream
Of the flying fruit
The sizzling seed
The embers of sunset on the other side
Illuminated by you

The Hearth of the Night

In the swing of day
Ashes on the hearth of the night
Neither saved nor lost

The chapel is open
It remembers not
The tart apple of the living

It dissolves the remnant of the fruit
Salt and ashes
For the souls above the void

The wind spoke
The rain dried in the cloud

Being

The crickets' song ignites the corn
The moon in its coldness
Whitens the night

From the other side of the ring
Playful spiral of death
Emerges

While time begets silence
The dormant ashes of the world
Baffle the being

Silence inside the sound

By the mirrors' play
Each moment
Instantly is lost

The night in the day
The silence inside the sound
Within the stone lightning's streak

Ashes are fire's sanctuary
The sky a banner of stars
Which way are we sailing

Everything is enclosed by the circle
A clear mind
Clearly stays silent

Above the Void

The light of wise mirrors
With glowing circles
Knits the roses

The fire in the wreath of centuries
To the densely knitted stone
Reveals the past

All is in the touch
Above the void
Of the white smile

The lights of glowing gulls
Can the setting Sun
Utter a word

Where is the soul
Of ashes with no ashes

The Path of the Fruit

Is there a path away from the circle
Oh land of wingless flight

With an invisible chisel
You form yourself in stone

Long is the path of the fruit
On the stony bedstead

Your shadows are in no hurry
To catch up with time

Tightened geometry
Reddens in the wind

God in the Garden

With God I observe
The yellowed drawing

We imbibe time
With no words

While waiting for the train
To the astral graveyard

Lightning

By the wings of ignited arrows
Broken light is dying down
The seed of the sky absorbed by earth

Is it that life seeks a speedy death
Or in the span of dying
It extends itself

Or the rainbow in the blaze of the moment
Spreads the colors
Over the shadows of extinguished sands

Above the Forest Treetops

Above the forest treetops
Silence evaporates

Life was born

All my years
I am living the day
Visible in the dark
I am vanishing under the Sun

Premonition

The tombs are covered
With canvasses of white silence
With wheat and wine

Women of chiseled dark
Name names
So as to feed the dead with tears

And the word echoes
Where there is no pain
Happiness is dead

Up To the Cloud

Dissipated sound
By sleepless fear
Grinds the dark

Along the bank of the dark
The drowner's hand
Up to the cloud

Fear cringes
When it sees itself
Adorned by footprints

Without Abode

On green frogs' skins
Rainy heart trembles

Listening up for the unspoken
I sink into the fated slumber

Through the night the grasses grew
Above the chalky heads

They have never found me
I had turned into green

Out To Meet

In the moist coal
Of the dark bird's eye
We seek ourselves

In the stone
Of quick snowstorms
Of spent days

In the wood
Of dead waters
Of light clay

In the time
With no memory
Of form and being

We seek ourselves on the first night
Below the ground
Out to meet ourselves

Words

A thought among the colors
Shapes the words
Maturing by being

Like birds flying out
From sheaths
Lured by sound

When they leave the candle remains
Tearing in solitude
From a single flame

Ample
To dry the eye
With the color of delicate leaves

As We Listen

We remain
Walled into the depths of secrets

That which vanishes
Does not take everything away
Nor the black roses to heaven's stage

The thought does not die
While it illuminates

Life decanted
Darkly petrifies the water
On the other side

We remain
Our own funeral march
As we listen

Poplars Passing

Birds tangled the air
Scatter into shadows
Of the red fields

Evening plants darkness
Poplars passing
Counting leaves

Unexpected sound
Draws signs in color
Besides God there is more

God

The Longest Nought

Birds of the dead
Drill the fur
 Of the marble dawn

The longest naught's shadow
Records the age
 Frozen in its stride

Old apple's nuptials
Comforted with a croon
 By prying sin

Where souls
Serve the heavens
 Wedded to silence

ON THE ARCING PATH



N
2004

The Void

Residue of silence heralds the dark
Life awakened
The rhythm of death hastening the weave

What ripens is prone to fall
Time has its void
And it is not over with us

Born
By death extended
What can it reach

The rhythm of death hastens the weave

Where They Are Tolling

On what flame
The breath of creation
Absorbs the spark's shine

Light in the restless dark
Would not change itself
Free
Slave to itself

Light
What the invisible offers
In the bottomless dark
Where they are tolling for the dead guards

Incorporeal light
Your body is your soul

If We Knew You

We are of the same age
With God and with olives
All is one in one

The line of the sky
On the unknown side of the Sun
Has the same life

The void built a tear within us
But that tear
Is it not a ruse

You that you are
To you everything turns
And we on your palm

If we knew you
Would you be God

From the Dark

From the dark this world
Faces a trembling tide
Until the dogs' bark
Erodes the Moon

To a hungry eye
The sky too is a slice
A golden apple by the night
That has a different smile

Inaudible in the smash
The sound reverberates
What is not felled by shadow
Waits to be burnt

On The Arcing Path

Shaped by the wind
And the Sun
We return to the beginning

Long is the road
Of the void with no fall
Of the movement with no shift

On the arcing path
All that is
Already has been

The living seek answers from the dead
Who has more from life
Or from death

Slim silvery Moon
The Earth's palm
Into the nameless night

Of Dreams An Apple

Unreachable
Of dreams an apple

Wingless
Where do you fly

Alive
Long departed

Dead
Where do you live

By oblivion
We shall meet the future

A Vision

All the nights
In a never ending night

What is torn from the day
Is added to the night

While the sparkling
Of remembrance tolls

An ancient vision
Sings of dawn

The Time

Of amorous birches
Woven time is ripening

Spruces in ecstasy
With their scent seduce the wind

A flicker of the flame
Opens itself to the sound

Only the flowers
Die of beauty

De Milo

When the stone forgets
Its days
By the sigh of the blue
How is your heart in the stone

Are you growing from pain
With your arms lost
Your love by remembrance
Illuminates beauty

You have absorbed the stares and time
De Milo
Oh music of all memories
How is your heart in the stone

A Quiet Change

O Lord
Who is our God

We vanish
In your being

Into the secret cause
And a quiet change

By Your will
The Earth is fed by itself

O Lord
Who is our God

In Your Lasting

My painting
Awoken by spirit
Woven by the straw of wind
On the rocky hide

I cherish your image
In my mind's frame
The creature of my conscience
Is in your lasting

You my painting
Wrought by sorrow
I pray to God
To wash your face

Shadows of the Dream

When stars are sinking
Into the dark corner
What happens to the shine

Are there days
Without dark lanterns

Is there a seed
Twice to rot

Is there what has been
That is not within us

Shadows of an ancient dream
Beckon again
So that we see the past

The Return

In the abyss of the void
The being has its gait
On return
A bird's voice
Is a vein on the leaf
The drops of the grass
For thirsty butterflies
Departing to God and plants
We know not
Whence our pain

A scattered Earth

Marble Drapery

Of those long departed
Ashy hands
Cover the memories

Off to meet themselves
The dead too travel the road
Around the Sun

Mortared into their own bones
Every house
Rests on a grave

Marble drapery
Wraps the fruits

Waters Whitening the Dark

That which is Tomorrow
Has it passed
Or is it still aflame in glow

That which was Once
Will it be red
Or has it been

That which is day
Does it wed the dusks
Or else dawns while setting

At the threshold of what is done
The ray gives
To that which is constant

Waters whitening the dark
To awaken the light

From the Book of Clouds

The world is in the Sun
Named by abyss
Forgotten rain
Letter by letter
From the book of clouds

Red words in the trees
By the magic of the inception
In the lasting of the day
Touch the life of the dream
By the transient glow

In the mist of cosmic landscape
A celestial harp
Colors tremble
In the substance of fire
They listen out for being

The universe to itself
The father and the mother

Inside the Circle

Our need is mercy
Dying is the dream vanished

When the wind's arrow
Brings the snowstorm's breath to tears

Ice breaks
From its own chill

Everything goes on playing
For ever inside the circle

From the lava birds fly out
The blood of springs and life

Our need is mercy
Dying is our dream

In the Nest

Oh death
Do you have a death

Does love die
In your nest

Oh lonely bird
You my soul

Do you have a death of your own

The Earth Is On Fire

Interment of silence absorbs the clouds
The bird that carries a hook in its beak
Is not free of pain
The dew has changed the face
All birds are singing
The cuckoo is cuckooing
Cuckooing calamity crooning
To whom are we singing

No pain will be soothed by pain
Only the shaken bells are ringing
The land of Kosovo is on fire
In the dense fog of rings

No pain will be soothed by pain
Only the shaken bells are ringing

The Dove of Darkness

You may get to know
The dove of darkness
By observing
The comet aflame

Speech of waters
Eavesdropping on
The fire of remembrance

The trail of light
Touching
The name of the eclipse

How to unveil
The breath of life
The endless road
That built you

The Apple

A blue apple
Blooms in time
Obedient to spring
So as to grow from darkness

What Cézanne thought
Among apples
Of the space of another sky
And shadows

What Rembrandt in the dark
In the twilight of silence
What van Gogh
While cornfields burn

A blue apple
Growing from the dark
Without time
Is there life

The Response of the Dead

We shall not meet
In the path of black footsteps

The dead carve the letters
An outing in stone

Waiting for ourselves
We have found us in them

What knows no time
Lasts

Yesterday's sun ripens
In the path of black footsteps

A Dry Tear

The dagger of imprinted chill
On your palm
Red

The stone against the dark
Fear at the tips of horns
Yellow

By red yellow
You trapped the bison
To last

From the hunt of hunger
You adorned the tomb
The extinguished smile of wind
And dry tears

You with no name
In Altamira interred
The present within me
Is the shadow of your twilights

The Remnants

Bodies vanish with no memory
By the play of fire
From one Sun

Is it the being of shadows
There where you are now
Or the marbles on your nonbeing

Are the souls restoring
The endless gem
To the dead

Or the colorless voice
Spreads the remnants
The forgotten clay within us

Yellow Apples

The dust that recalls
The twilight
In the forest of white wolves
Is dying

The dawn dreams of birds
Tomorrow exists already
And all sinks into slumber
Into the night of yellow apples

From the towers of clouds
A bell tolls
It is the toughest on God
He cannot die

The Painting

Within you the painting
The sound of fire and color
Are a reflection from the dark
Of lucent springs
The blood of archetypes
And a trace
Of initial light

The shepherd of dusts
Of stellar highways
By your eye
Will observe the world

Within you
I hear myself

In Ecstasy

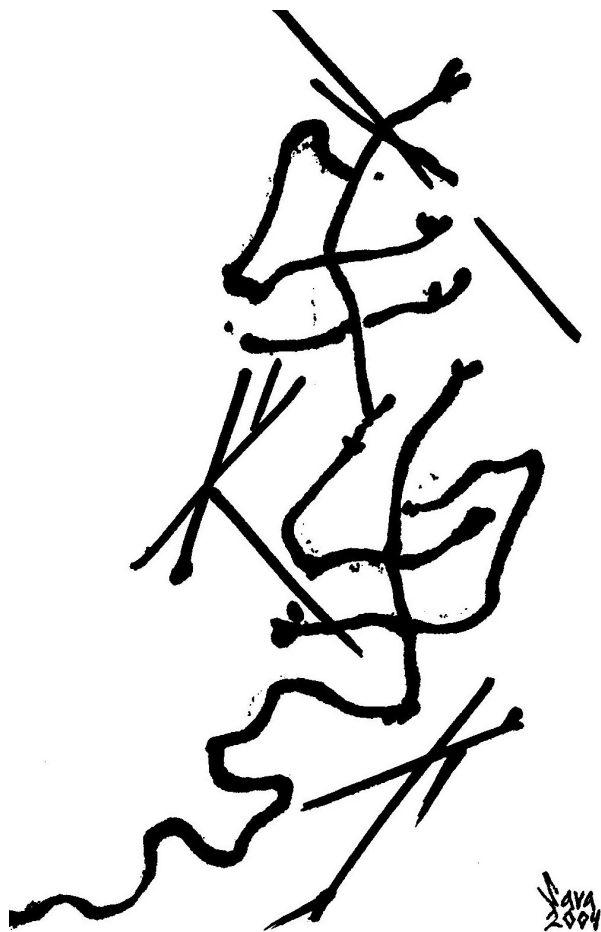
The shadow of a vanished world
Soaks the souls

The heaven in the ecstasy of the living
Is not without parents

Through all of them flows
A cosmic blood

Only Adam has
No father and no mother

The angels wounded butterflies
Fall onto the clouds



LIFE HEARING ITSELF



YAVA
2004.

The Return

Heavenly tiller saws
Unanswered letters

From the soil no fear sprouts
On the path of blazing pictures

The smile of dead stars
Twists the light

They feed ignited years
On return

Not knowing
They sink into depths

Their journey longer
Than life itself

Visible Pictures

Snakes hang from paradise
Their heads earthbound
Under the lash of whirling wind

Angels
In heavenly storm
Imbibe the clouds

Birds woven from dry grasses
Fly out of watery kernels
Of the bewitched Moon

Blazing vitrage's fireflies
Travel on the golden ring
To the other bank of darkness

Equally

We walk towards the other side
Where we had been
And where we shall be

Neither the Sun nor its father
Are on the same axis of the moment

Everything remains behind and ahead
Equally

Thirst of ideas drowned by words
The book of heaven
Multiplies its pages

The Gait

The lit path
Of soundless gait
We have picked as many days
As years
Following the sun
We are setting

Each peak is
Under a sky
All that we see
We see by halves
To you of soundless gait
All is visible

Where is the egress

The Angle

That which is to come
Bewitches the black angle

The sky is falling
The Earth ignited by liquid ashes

By the sign of the onset
All settles into its shadow

Between that which has been
And what is yet to be

Ashes ignite the mists
For the one yet to come

By the Color of the Morning

Light springs from memory
Of form
Becomes a being
By the color of embering crystals
It fills the space

The time is running out
Enlightened we depart
With no body and no fruit

Thus we renew the light
The memory
Of form

The Open Eye

When we were dead
Years were not added up
There was no night
To know the Sun

From our darkness
Ivies were climbing
Into the open eye of heaven
Its selfless kingdom

Since we were already dead
What prodded us into life

The Sound

Birds tied to a cloud
Carry the wounds of childhood
Along the sky of winged rains

Angels verdant
Above the bones grown heavy
Layer the clouds

And they lose not what is not
That which has passed
Has it ever been

Luminous Dusts

The ignited ring
Petrifies the isles
With no time or sides
With no funerals or tombs

The world dreams on its wheel
Sliced by rays
Turned to the red mists
Amidst the flying forests ablaze

By its ashes
Darkness also glows

The Vigil

Fog knitted by wind
Recalls not the slash of time

Oblivion inters itself

Who knows the pain of light
While stars were dying

Souls fly over black straws

The angels in whisper
Serve vigil to the truth

An Ode to Matter

How much of the invisible world
Of assembled darkness
You hide within yourself

Every yesterday you tie to today

What prompts the soul
With you to spend the night
In your fur
Where night and day are the same

Oh world

White Lines

In the blue tower
On the white sheet
Black lines

In the cage of the Sun
Of the old seed
Springs are coming back

In the blue tower
Is it the world
On the other side
Of the white line

Expectation

The painter contemplates the canvas
In the tone of dubious mist
Looking for his face

To dead grasses he declaims
The words of rebirth
The music written by dew

It is futile to bridge the water
Decay
Needs no surrogate

Oh world invented
I await you

Red Rains

At the end of the world
Fiery forehead

Red rains
Rush to the onset

Under the fan of darkness
Floating fogs

The amber aglow
Extinguishes itself

The night ignites the bones
At the end of the world

The Red Emerges

Our home is half illumined
Never complete darkness
Nor light

With its back to the source
The nape to the sky
It is the same
To all that circles

All that is on the Earth
Is also inside the earth
The night with no name
Taking the clouds down

On its way back
The red mirror emerges
Our home is half illumined

The Picture

The picture of heaven
Embedded in time

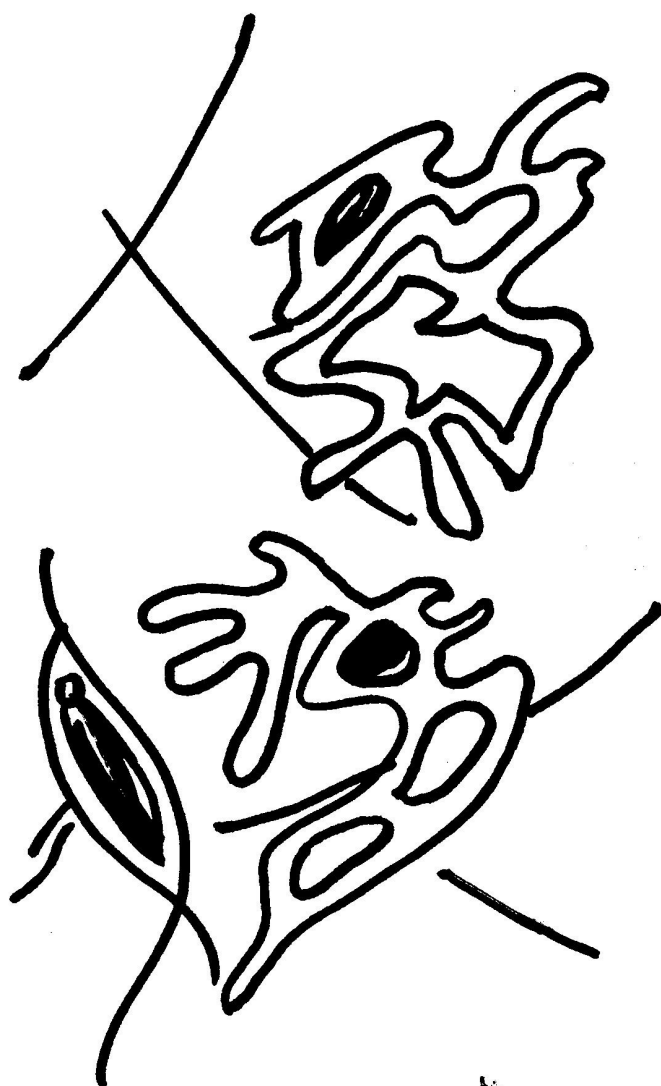
Lunar wedding ring
Visible in water

The first line
The last can never catch

The time is ripe

Life Hearing Itself

All has lived
In everything
Soul with soul
Is the multitude
The light darkens
It amends no arcs
Of translucent souls
The measure is but one
The time is the same
It has run out everywhere
It is life
Hearing itself



AVA
2004

AFTERWORD TO THE SERBIAN EDITION
(2004)

Tiodor Rosić
RAKOČEVIĆ'S SYMBOLIC NARRATIVE

Sava Rakočević is a poet of the symbolic picturesque form. Like an ancient sage, he talks of the world of existentialist equalization with nothingness. This poet succeeds to talk simply, calmly, in a measured tone and with no superfluous words, of the world, man, time, of natural and supranatural phenomena; to narrate that which is within hand's reach, the essence hidden in the multitude.

A gentlemanly calm emerges from his verses. He looks at things, life and phenomena from two angles: from the particular to the general and from the supraphenomenal to the phenomenal, the life down on the Earth, in its particularities. In the former, his visions establish a poetic cosmogony; in the latter, a poetry of existential puzzlement. It is between those two layers, vantage points and poetic directions that Rakočević's poetic symbols are to be found, his experiences, with which he develops the sequences of poetic images and contemplative observations.

Rakočević, a leading contemporary Serbian painter, is the poet of the picture; but that picture – having left its visual functionality – becomes subordinated to the poetic form and its esthetic canon. He succeeds in expressing this in the language of poetry, through a rigid selection of linguistic

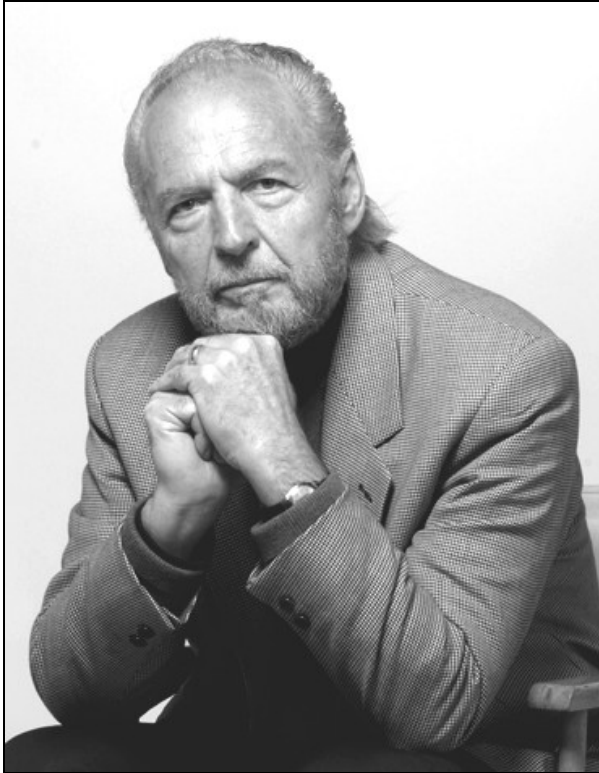
elements. His verse is devoid of superfluous narrative layers and communication noises.

All would be futile, however, were it not for the fact that in his unraveling of existential finality Rakočević manages to speak warmly and with a measure of human sympathy of our most intimate feelings and the awareness of all-permeating transience. Both before and after everything there stands God, and Rakočević's religiosity. His poetic world is not devoid of God, but that world is not firmly defined either: it remains open to God the Creator, the Ruler of All, but also to God of Nature, all-present in the particular.

Like a traveler who in his baggage carries the answers to the mysteries of the world and life, this poet manages to create a wealth of symbols, to seal and certify them. Whoever steps onto his symbollic paths has to be circumspect, as if unraveling the secret prayerful messages of some ancient brotherhood.



BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE



Sava Rakočević was born in Peć (Serbia) in 1933. He graduated at the Academy of Applied Arts in Belgrade in 1960. He is regarded as one of the most prominent contemporary Serbian painters. His works have been exhibited in galleries all over the world. He has lived in the United States since 1966.

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