

ON DEBELJAK'S WORK

"[A poet] sensitive to the enormity and complexity of our historical and intellectual predicament."

CHARLES SIMIC

"Melancholy, reminiscence and nostalgia are regarded as inactive, passive mind formations but Debeljak makes them active and operational, they are a source of living, unpredictably moving thoughts."

MOJCA PIŠEK, Dnevnik

"In Smugglers, Aleš Debeljak feeds himself and his readers with a delicious mixture of past, present and future, with tastes of reminiscence and expectations of world's new savours."

Jenko Poetry Prize Laudatio

"In Smugglers, Aleš Debeljak doesn't leave the river bed of his widely known poetics; even more, his poetic stream has no torrents and rapids, but flows quietly through havens and meanders, in which memories are reflected in inviting and in no way treacherous pools that literally absorb us."

MILAN VINCETIČ, Sodobnost

"Read Aleš Debeljak. In the age of the world's disappearance, of its destructive virtualization and de-substantialization, smuggle to yourself the messages of his poetry. Try to hitchhike. You will slowly reach your inner selves."

DELIMIR REŠICKI

"In his essay In Praise of the Republic of Letters, Aleš Debeljak maintains that the republic of letters, although perhaps a 'lost cause,' yet remains our 'true home,' where borders are permeable, citizenship is perpetually renewable, and our literary cosmopolis is mapped onto the Gutenberg galaxy."

DANIEL SIMON, World Literature Today

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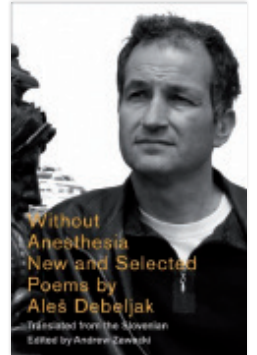


Aleš Debeljak

Aleš Debeljak (1961), Slovenian poet, belongs to the group of prominent intellectuals and writers whose poetry—as well as critical, theoretical, and philosophical practice—marked the former Yugoslav cultural and literary space. He published 14 books of cultural criticism and 8 books of poems in his native Slovenian. His books of poems in English include *Without Anesthesia: New and Selected Poems* (2010), *Dictionary of Silence* (1999), *The City and the Child* (1999), and *Anxious Moments* (1994); in English, he published 3 books of cultural criticism and edited the comprehensive anthology *Afterwards: Slovenian Writing 1945-1995* (published 1997). He won several awards, including the Readers' Choice Award for the best essay of the decade in the

magazine *World Literature Today*, Slovenian National Book Award, Miriam Lindberg Poetry for Peace Prize (Tel Aviv) and Chiqyu Poetry Prize (Tokio), and was named Ambassador of Science of the Republic of Slovenia. His books have been translated to 19 languages. He received his Ph.D. in Social Thought from Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University, New York and is a recurring visiting professor at the graduate school, College d'Europe, Natolin-Warsaw, teaches cultural studies at the University of Ljubljana, and is a member of European Council on Foreign Relations (London-Berlin-Paris-Madrid-Sofia). He and his American wife, a writer Erica Johnson Debeljak, have three children and make their home in Ljubljana.

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Persea Books, 2011

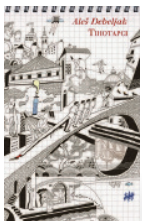
Without Anesthesia

Debeljak's recognizable discourse of melancholy that is founded in the poetic and philosophic articulation of the unspoken gradually expands the focus of the lyrical subject, without which genuine poetry could hardly survive in the framework of postmodern literature. The poetical device of phenomenology of memory is extremely significant for Debeljak's aesthetics and doesn't merely imply a thematic aspect. *Without Anesthesia* maintains an ongoing dialogue with various temporal dimensions. This poetic position and attitude are designated as "travelling

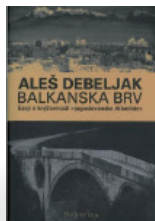
poetics" that provide fullness and simultaneous impressions, perceptions, and memories from different times and in historical, geographical, and spatial relations. The memory thus evokes shadows of lost things, people and places, disappeared and yet preserved in a hidden time (Hoffmansthal, George, Rilke, Proust). It integrates some lucid, epiphanic moments in the nostalgic narrative voice, which is always devoted to the Other, eternally present male-female character of Debeljak's poetry, and maybe to the most important reader, his beloved wife.

BOJANA STOJANOVIĆ PANTOVIĆ, University of Novi Sad

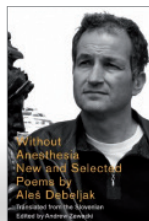
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Tihotapci (Smugglers), Mladinska knjiga, 2009



Balkanska brv (The Balkans Footbridge), Studentska založba, 2011



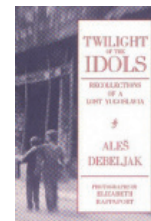
Without Anesthesia, English, 2011



Dictionary of Silence, 1999



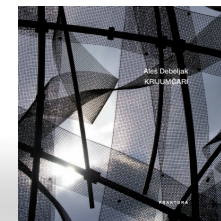
The City and the Child, 1999



Twilight of Idols, 1994



Baltische Adria, (Baltic Adria), German, 2010



Krijumčari (Smugglers, Croatian edition), 2010