

## ON ŽABOT'S WORK

"Die Stimmung in der Schneenacht, die Verkommenheit des Dorfes, die Einsamkeit verlorener Seelen, all das beschreibt Žabot auf bedrückend schöne Weise."

*Uwe Stolzmann, Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 2001*

"We are aware that objectivism is penetrating reality and it allows Žabot to touch upon unfathomable secrets that are an integral part of reality. The mysterious and supernatural does not disrupt reality here, but rather augments it."

*Vesna Mojsova Čepičevska, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Macedonian-Slovenian Scientific Conference, 2009*

"Žabot's novel *The Succubus* is marked by the magic and inescapability of the situations at hand, condemning the protagonists to flee each other and themselves."

*Silvija Borovnik, Slovenska književnost III, 2001*

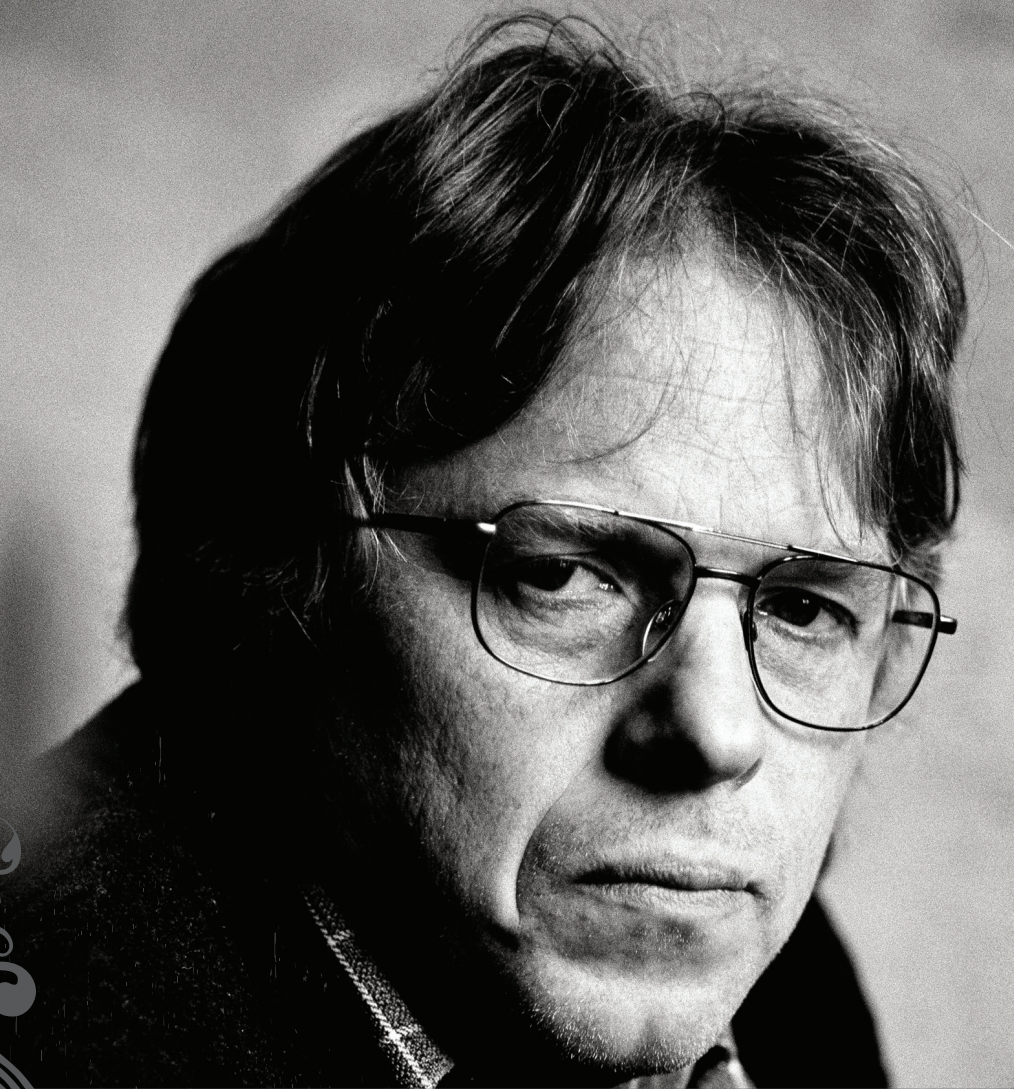
"Žabot is intrigued by the internal, subconscious identity of an individual who is experiencing and discovering themselves and the world from a magical perspective."

*Božena Tokarz, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Slaskiego, 2009*

"Vlado Žabot's *The Succubus* has been compared to the novels of the great American writer Hubert Selby, Jr."

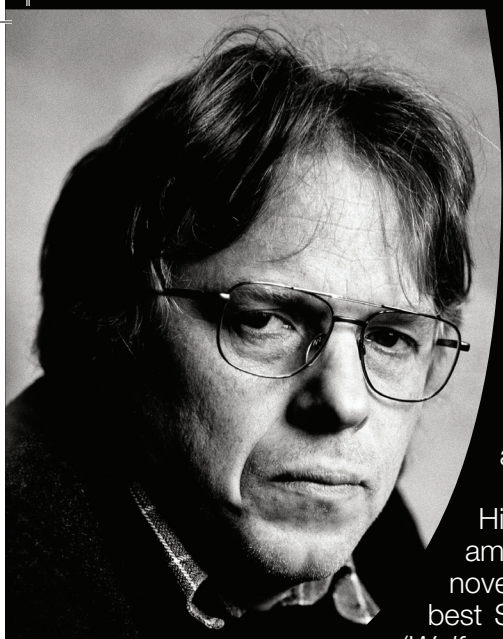
*John O'Brien, Dalkey Archive Press, 2010*

photo by Jozé Suhradobnik



VLADO ŽABOT

design | Studio Usnek d.o.o.



## VLADO ŽABOT

is the author of a collection of short stories, tales for children and seven novels. He was awarded a number of Slovenian literary prizes and is considered by critics to be one of the most important Slovenian contemporary authors.

His novel *Volčje noči* (Nights of the Wolf) is among one hundred best contemporary Slavic novels, and it received the 1997 Kresnik award for best Slovenian novel. It was translated into German (*Wolfsnaechte*, Drava Verlag, 2000) and Polish (*Wilcze noce*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Slaskiego, 2010).

His novel *Pastorala* (The Pastoral) was the winner of the Prešeren Fund award. It was also translated into Macedonian (*Pastorala*, Zojder, 2006).

*The Succubus* was nominated for the 2009 IMPAC Dublin Literary Award. The Polish translation was also published that same year (*Sukub*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Slaskiego, 2009). In 2010 it was published in the United States (*The Succubus*, Dalkey Archive Press, 2010).

The literature of Vlado Žabot is featured in a number of international anthologies and is rapidly gaining critical attention at home and abroad.

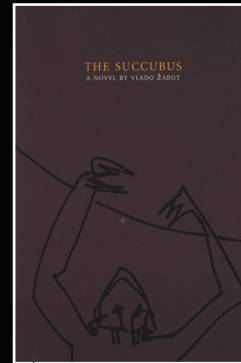
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Sukub



## THE SUCCUBUS

The book was translated by Rawley Grau and Nikolai Jeffs



The recently retired Valent Kosmina, the main character in the novel *The Succubus*, is doing everything he can to acquire a little human dignity in the contemporary urban world, where nihilism and consumerism have desecrated all social relations. He fails at this, however, both among his neighbors in the high-rise apartment building where he lives and with his tranquilizer-and-soap-opera-addicted wife.

When he was working and still had a socially acceptable role, he did not realize that this world ascribes real value only to the roles one plays in the ostensibly redeeming dominant social fiction, and has no interest in people's personal reality and finality once they step outside this fiction into their own intimate lives. Now that he has a different perspective on things, this is of course clear to him. What surprises him, however, is the fact that, in fear of his own mortality, he cannot, even for himself, live peacefully and confidently without resorting to some sort of fiction. The creator – perhaps a demon – of all this social and personal need for fiction is, however, the erotic allure of youth, which, it seems, is the very opposite of transience and which reigns, immortal and depersonalized, on advertising billboards, in the electronic media, in newspapers and tabloids, and, to no less a degree, in the human consciousness. As such it also creeps into Valent Kosmina's intimate personal fiction – revealing itself more and more as a dangerously seductive and destructive succubus.

Valent tries to free himself from this terrible curse of fiction, but having nothing firm in this endeavor to hold on to and with no point of orientation to save him, he only sinks deeper and deeper into it. Fictive people, fictive relations, and the fictive private world thus turn into an uncontrollable, tormenting obsession for him and a form of paranoia. His only salvation from this hell lies in an unconditional confrontation with his own finality.