In her book *Tales of Love* (1987), Julia Kristeva analyses the concept of love. She labels her text as «a philosophy of love» and defines love as infinite quests for rebirth through the experience of love. According to Kristeva, love is explicitly a hymn to the narcissistic power to which «I» may sacrifice itself. Her rhetorical question is whether we all speak of the same thing when we speak about love. Kristeva states that in the rapture of loving the limits of one’s own identity vanish; at the same time, the lines between reference and meaning begin to blur in love’s discourse. Love is the intense sign of truth and eternity. The subject discovers the confines of its condition and the powerlessness of language. Kristeva concludes that love is the time and space in which «I» assumes the right to be extraordinary. The characteristics of love are:

1) *Expectancy*: the subject becomes painfully sensitive to its incompleteness that it was not aware of before. 2) The *call*: the body responds to the symptoms or emotions. 3) The *meeting*: the mixture of pleasure, hope and promise represents a perfect future.

The experience of love is: 1) *Symbolic* (forbidden, distinguishable, thinkable); 2) *Imaginary* (what the Self imagines in order to sustain and expand itself); 3) *Real* (an impossible domain, where affects desire everything and no one accounts for the fact that the self is only a part of the whole). In this article, Julia Kristeva’s theoretical framework of love will be applied to the following three Slovenian authors of children’s books that are in the curriculum at Slovenian primary schools and the fact they wrote about love and they use language (metaphors) of love according to Kristeva: F. Prešeren:
This study aims to explore comprehensively and in depth the notion of love in *A Wreath of Sonnets* and in concrete textual contexts. The study is based on elements expressed rationally as well as on elements based on an analysis of the context (expectation, call, encounter).

**Key words:** Julia Kristeva, *Tales of Love*, France Prešeren, Niko Grafenauer, Boris A. Novak, symbolic love, idealistic love, real love.

**Introduction**

Julia Kristeva explores the theme of love in her book *Tales of Love* (1987). The recurring thought in the book is love as a type of love philosophy. Love is defined as an endless search for new births through the experience of love. The language of love, says Kristeva, is impossible; it is a language of metaphors and literature. She says it is only possible to speak about love in first-person singular. According to Kristeva, love is the most intensive sign and most explicit hymn of narcissistic power in which a person sacrifices love but in reality sacrifices themselves. She poses a rhetorical question whether we are speaking about the same thing when speaking about love. She says that, in the ecstasy of love, the boundaries of one’s own identity disappear, whereas in a conversation about love the accuracy and meaning are blurred. For her, love is the most powerful expression of truth and eternity. Moreover, when someone is in love, they become real, strong, subjective and ethical because they are willing to do anything for another person. At the same time, this person discovers the boundaries and the powerlessness of language. Please provide page references for Kristeva’s ideas (according to our stylesheet).

Kristeva defines love as the time and space in which «I» assumes the right to be extraordinary. Kristeva says: «As a bonus of desire, on the far and near sides of pleasure, love skirts or displaces both in order to expand me to the dimensions of the universe. I am, in love, at the zenith of subjectivity. Love is the time and space in which “I” assumes the right to be extraordinary» [3, p. 5].

According to Kristeva, there are different images of love, e.g. expectation, call and encounter. Expectation makes someone painfully vulnerable to their own imperfection, of which they were not aware before love. In love expectation, «before» and «after» can merge in a
terrible «never». The body responds to the call with symptoms or emotions that resemble fear since it wants to reach beyond the limits and is at the same time scared to do so. An meeting is a mixture of pleasure, promise and hope, which is a kind of perfect future. Love is a disease of civilization.

According to Kristeva, love is revealed at three levels, the symbolic (prohibited, different, reflexive), the imaginary (what the person imagines in the sense of maintaining and expanding oneself) and the real (an impossible domain where emotions want everything and nobody considers the fact that «I» is only a part of it).

The philosophical theory of Julia Kristeva will be applied to the concept of love of three Slovenian (children’s) authors which are included in the Slovenian literature curriculum in primary schools. For the purpose of the article, the theory will be applied to selected texts, namely Prešeren’s Sonetni venec (A Wreath of Sonnets, 1834, illustrated by Dunja Kofler, 1987), Grafenauer’s Mahajana (Mahajana, 1990) and the work of Boris A. Novak Narcis in Eho (Narcissus and the Echo, 1991). All the selected texts posit can be read both by child and adult readers.

**Results and discussion**

France Prešeren, *Sonetni venec (A Wreath of Sonnets)* [5].

Prešeren is a typical Slovenian author who did not write for children but, as a poet, he is considered a national author and, in the process of literary reception (1844–1945), his poems have become part of the children’s literary canon. Many of his poems were published in illustrated picture books which was another motivation to include them in the primary school curriculum. For example, his ballad *Povodni mož (The Water Man)*, published as a picture book with illustrations by Jelka Reichman, which has become a popular reading among preschool children in kindergartens, aged from 3 to 6, especially on the event of the Slovenian cultural holiday on 8 February as well as on 3 December. In the school curriculum, pupils read or listen to Prešeren’s texts only in the third triad (7th–9th grade) (*Apel in čevljar (Apelles and the Shoemaker), Gazela 6 (Ghazal 6), Glossa (Gloss), Povodni mož (The Water Man), Turjaška Rozamunda (Rosamund of Turjak), Uvod h Krstu pri Savici (Introduction to The Baptism on the Savica), Zdravljica (A Toast)).
According to Kristeva theory, the characteristics of love can be found in many of Prešeren’s poems although, in terms of motive and theme, the most frequent was his love for Julija Primić. She is also metaphor for the nation (the Carnioleans, the Slovenians, the Slovenian language and the Slovenian woman) and for poetry (elegies, *Magistrale* (*The Master Theme*), Orpheus, poem, poetry, sonnet). Prešeren’s poetry encompasses the characteristic language of love, as discussed by Kristeva. First, the *expectation* that makes someone painfully vulnerable to their own imperfection, of which they were not aware before love, can be identified in the following translated lines:

(How often through the town with watchful eyes I wander,
praying for a fate more kind;
I shed my tears to loneliness confined;
Like many a Slovenian girl, they were afraid
That from such flowers on our Parnassus laid
With cold disdain you would avert your gaze etc.)

Second, a *call* to which the body responds with symptoms or emotions similar to fear

(They were all fed on many a plaint and tear;
My tears of love flowed not for you alone;
Had eased his weary soul from all its care;
Away a heart and mind appeased by you etc.).

Third, a *meeting* as mixture of pleasure, promise and hope which is in a way a perfect future

(With me a poet’s timeless fame might share;
A radiance I would search for and pursue;
A record of my pain and of your praise;
Purblind, I seek in vain at home and everywhere,
In theatre, on promenade and square
Midst revels where the chains of dancers wind, etc.).

In Prešeren’s *A Wreath of Sonnets*, the notion of love recurs in different collocations (*pure/one/your/fervent/faithful love; flowers/elegies/plead his love; love etc.*). In *A Wreath of Sonnets*, all notions are in a situational context of permanent interaction. The emphasis is on the generalisation from the individual to the general and on abstraction from the general to the individual, i.e. deduction (the concept of love in Romanticism is simmilar to the troubadour
concept of love which is based on – longing and not possessing – as well as the concept that the only true love is unrequitted love). Prešeren’s image of love is at the same time an image of love in Romantic poetry and a romanticised conception of love based on the troubadour concept of longing for an unattainable object and not for possessing it.

Prešeren’s female literary characters are seeker heroes, in contrast to their male counterparts who are victim heroes (of love). The heroines belong to different religions and they also change their habits, customs or faith due to love and/or a man. They originate from Judaism (Judovsko dekle (The Jewish Maid)), Christianity (Lenora, Lepa Vida (The Song of the Fair Vida)), Majerca, Rozamunda Turjaška (Rosamund of Turjak), Urška), Islam (Lejla) or paganism (Bogomila).

While Prešeren’s male literary characters usually lose faith – both literally and metaphorically – his female characters are more motivated and are social rebels: e.g. Lenora even opposes God because of Vilhelm (the dust must not argue with God); the Jewish maid changes neither her religion nor her love; Lejla converts from Islam to Christianity (the vicar teaches her all truths of the true religion and then baptises and marries her); the pagan Bogomila converts into a Christian so as to save Črtomir and then motivates him to convert. A typical feature of Slovenian Romanticism in Prešeren’s poetry is the tempestuous sentimentality with which the author shows dynamic emotions in heroes and dynamic actions in heroines. Prešeren considers love to be a cure, as is already evident from the title of his poem Zdravilo za ljubezen (Cure for Love), which is a typically Romantic conception. The most lyrical love can be found in A Wreath of Sonnets, which Prešeren dedicated to Julija Primic. In the chapter Narcissism and Idealization, Kristeva argues that narcissism and idealisation are close because «his majesty ego» praises itself through idealisation in the mirror. In her opinion, all forms of love include narcissism because they set forth ideal values page reference. Also in A Wreath of Sonnets, Prešeren considers love to be a cure: Had eased his weary soul from all its care.

Kristeva also mentions Freud’s concept of transference love consisting of three elements: the subject (Prešeren), the object (Julija Primic) and the third element called a potential ideal or possible power. The love object (Julija Primic) triggers imaginary or real love
in the subject and the subject becomes a first-class victim. The application of Julia Kristeva’s theory to the concept of love in Prešeren’s *A Wreath of Sonnets* reveals that his concept of love also included narcissist love. A striking example of transference love is found in Prešeren’s poem *Nezakonska mati (The Unmarried Mother)* where Prešeren, through the female character of an unmarried mother, discusses the unmarried father (himself). In accordance with the romantic concept and the convention of romance, he ascribes his fatherly love to the (unmarried) mother.

*Love as a cure.* Once a person identifies their desires, they can construct their reality more or less as a fragile boundary of their love life. In the 11th sonnet, Prešeren writes: *eased his weary soul, cure for love.* Prešeren’s conception of love is symbolic and imaginary, whereas the object (Julija Primic) is desexualised, idealised and sublimated.

Prešeren’s symbolic conception of love is structured into three types of love: the object of desire, Julija Primic (*haughty maids with beauty*), poetry (*tear-stained flowers of a poet’s mind; Orpheus, poem, poet, poetry, sonnet*) and the nation or himself (*me, we, my; poet; your poet; my memory; Slovenian; praise, our songs* (the majestic plural)).

Please summarise this section, making reference to the focus of your article.

Niko Grafenauer: *Mahajana (Mahaiana)*, 1990 [1].

Grafenauer is also an author who writes for a dual audience, namely for adults and juveniles. In the curriculum for the Slovenian language (2011), his works are included in all three triads; namely, in the from 1st–3rd grade his collection of poems *Pedenjped (Littleman)*, in the 4th–6th his collection of poems *Stara Ljubljana (Old Ljubljana)* and in the 7th–9th grade of primary school the collection *Skrivnosti (Secrets; 1983)*. In the first triad (1st–3rd grade), the proposed poem is *Pravljica (Fairy Tale)*. His fairy tales *Majhnica (Littlish, 1987), Majhnica in Katrca Škrateljca (Littlish and Katrca Škrateljca, 1987)* and *Mahajana in druge pravljice o Majhnici (Mahaiana and Other Fairy Tales About Littlish, 1990)* are more suitable because of metaphorical language for the third triad (7th–9th grade). All three books were illustrated by Marija Lucija Stupica (1950–2002).
When reading the modern fairy tales written by Niko Grafenauer a question arises concerning the juvenile audience, namely: are these texts intended for a young or adult reader, or do they have an open audience? These are complex texts intended for multiple audiences not only because of their external structure of a triptych, but also because of the internal structure, high style and inter-textual connections. This trilogy, *Mahaiana and Other Fairy Tales About Littlish* (1990) is possibly the most complex literary text aimed for a dual audience (crossover). The external structure of *Mahaiana* consists of five short modern fairy tales forming a whole. The title itself, *Mahaiana*, is intertextually connected to the Indian epics *Ramayana* and *Mahayana* and alludes to both of these texts in the motive-theme and form-structure terms. With regard to its structure, Grafenauer’s *Mahaiana* is an epic. Many readers believe that *Mahaiana* is a name, which of course it is, but it is the name of a spaceship. Grafenauer is inventive when it comes to means of transport, introducing e.g. a tram, spaceship and velocipede. *Mahaiana* is structured as an allegory of four seasons of the year (spring (*Primavera*), summer (*V pozablenem poletju (In a Forgotten Summer)*), autumn (*Jesen (Autumn)*)) and winter (*Pozimna pravljica (Winter Tale)*) as well as the fifth chapter entitled *Slehebnik sem (I Am Everyman)*.

The text is generically syncretic: it is a fantastic (parallel fantastic worlds), love, developmental and allegoric account whose intertextually corresponds to the *Song of Solomon*. In the triptych, especially in *Mahaiana*, the symbols reach the highest level, e.g. the symbol of an apple (*the gift of the Watch Winder*). Already the title of the triptych *Majhnica (Littlish)* indicates dichotomies that are essential in all fantastic tales (Atlant, Einstein’s stars, elephantine, Galileo’s stars, *Mahaiana*, fifty light years, Ptolemy’s stars, titans, giants, gigantic, large etc.) and small (Littlish, dust, tiny glass teardrops, homunculus, *piccolo*, diminished town, dwarf professor, eclipse of seconds, small café, small table, little sister etc.). Grafenauer’s use of antique symbols is above-average and it is not surprising that his style is intertextually connected with Virgil’s circle and elevated style, including such reference as a white Lipizzaner with a silk rein, soul, mister knight of Žalomir, stone titans, chalice, crystal bowl, shadow, tears, chess, fairy unicorn, gold and similar.
• The characteristics of Grafenauer’s love include expectation that makes someone painfully vulnerable to their own imperfection of which they were unaware before love occurred. First: *Mia bella, cara Primavera! a young, jolly voice spoke to Littlish. I have been waiting for you. For days. What took you so long?* [1, s. 5].

Second, a call to which the body responds with symptoms and emotions:

*She touched her breasts to convince herself if it was true. She wasn’t lying. Her breasts were pulsing with excitement and behind them was a throbbing heart; Littlish thought as if she had no body and only her soul floated into the distance, so happy was she* [1, s. 5].

Third: an encounter, a mixture of pleasure, promise and hope, which is a kind of perfect future: Littlish stared at him as if he were a wonder, and could not move. She felt how she became a little more adult as, never before, had she felt such a tingling excitement in her heart as at this encounter. She went numb and quiet as if her mouth was sealed with wax [1, s. 6].

Love means that, for example, you and Littlish depend on each other. And how do you make yourself dependent? Pueret asked excitedly. I’d really love to be dependent. You must feel a very strong desire that Littlish would remind you of yourself. Then it’s easy [1, s. 105]. Love has to be felt and it is difficult to express with words and sentences. Only when love puts them in your mouth are they true and real. It is difficult to explain love only with intellect [1, s. 104].

He wrote a whole notebook of love poems, but this did not comfort you. Paris is a city of love [1, s. 59].

Real love never grows up. Whoever lives without longing does not feel the secret. And when the goal is attained, it is all over. Everything is as clear as day there [1, s. 117].

I admitted that I was a messenger of love and spring awakening in people’s souls [1, s. 87].

I would call this love. A heart that is open to secrecy is a heart in love, Pers gently commented [1, s. 104].

These are anemones, Sem explained. They are very sensitive and ephemeral flowers of love. The souls chose them as their own [1, s. 83].
Pan uses it to celebrate spring awakening in nature and entice love into souls [1, s. 88].

Therefore, it is at home in all centuries and millennia since the beginning of time, as it embodies the human longing for love and joy for life [1, s. 88].

I would like to know love so much. It is very difficult to explain love only with intellect [1, s. 104].

_Mahaiana and Other Fairy Tales About Littlish_ (1990) is a typical post-modern text for a dual audience. The autobiographic resonance is an element of the hermetic fantastic narration with a unique aesthetics of autonomy. The metaphorisation is above-average and the symbolism draws from antique and modern times, thus encompassing a literary tradition of at least 2,000 years. The author discusses the existential themes in his texts and, in his literature which is presumably intended for juvenile readers, looks for answers in a literary and cognitively demanding time – the period of postmodernism from 1980 to 2010.

The triptych is also characterised by melancholy permeating all three books. The author autonomously presents his personal mythology, renews the classical mythology (the god Pan, Heraclitus, Ptolemy etc.), fairy tales (Pueret, soul…) and autobiographic interferences (Jurij Pan and Primavera). He applies the palimpsest technique and uses references to known and less-known literary texts. The underlying love story between Littlish and Jurij Pan is idealised and the literature artistically monumentalised. These elements and the conception of love that resembles that in the _Song of Solomon_ could classify it within romantic-melancholic postmodernism which is demanding or even too demanding for a juvenile readership and a great challenge for adults.

No logical transition between these paragraphs. Grafenauer follows the same pattern as Sandro Botticelli in his painting _Primavera_ from 1482, which is an allegory of spring, i.e. love. Besides mythological beings, Botticelli’s work also depicts earthly beings but in a mythological manner. Grafenauer’s work involves syncretism of general and personal mythology. The idealised pastoral atmosphere is characteristic of both works of art – the painting and the book. Botticelli’s _Primavera_ is dressed up in flowers and that is also the case with Grafenauer’s character: In the tiny house on the left a secret spring moved right at the time Littlish arrived and a little girl
with long blond hair stepped out, wearing white flowery attire. Her clothes were knitted from freshly opened blossoms that closed up in the evening and, in the morning sun, a drop of dew glittered so that the dress was twinkling as if sprinkled with pearls. The girl was barefoot, holding a turtledove in her palms that was just about to fly off. She was the spitting image of Littlish, except that Littlish was not barefoot, did not hold a turtledove and her white dress was made of fabric, without any pearls. The little girl stopped before Littlish like a statue and looked at her silently. The turtledove was startled, took off and vanished in the distance, cooing [1, s. 104].

Grafenauer frequently uses symbols for a child and childhood, e.g. around: around her, around the fountain, around the waist, around the trunk...; blossom/flower: shiny buttercup blossoms, flowery plume, edelweisses, asphodels, anemones, tulips...; child (orphan): a child without a childhood, poor child, eternal child...; cup/chalice/goblet: a chalice-like funnel, gem(s): gems glittered; gold: golden armour, wheat gold, gold coins, from a golden brocade, golden signet ring...; pearl: mother-of-pearl (Lipizzaner); stars: a dictionary of stars, clear starry night, learn to read the stars... sun: sunlit, low sun, the sun shines, sun for a hat...; and surrounded by stars: starlit sky, star system, starry night... as a metaphor for monumentality or a natural triumphal arch for glorification on a symbolic level [2, p. 109].

C.G. Jung explained that the frequent use of symbols for a child is a consequence of the suffering of the soul of an outcast, tormented and rejected people. According to Jung, symbols can also express powerlessness and these prevailing symbols and metaphors stem from subtle mythical contents.

Besides the abundance of intertextual connections and images, the book is very visual and imaginative, what is the connection between these ideas revolving around the concept of love. Perhaps, in its hermetic and encoded form, this segment of a children’s fantastic story is intended for a multiple audience. Grafenauer depicts love or desire as a time and space of love [3, p. 5] because expectation, call and encounter are at the forefront. The experience of love in the book is simultaneously symbolic, imaginary and realistic. In Mahaiana, the concept of transfer love prevails (subject and idealised object), which is close to the troubadour concept of love that is based on longing and not on possessing [3, p. 5]. Grafenauer’s subject does not want to have but
wants to be, at least in the poetic reality, which is the purest expression of reality but not a reality itself [1, s. 64]. In Mahaiana, the author mentions Ptolemy’s, Galileo’s and Einstein’s time, which indicates a concurrence of parallel worlds, love, concepts, cycles and the dichotomy between big (Atlant, Einstein’s stars, elephantine, Galileo’s stars, fifty light years, Ptolemy’s stars, titans, giants, gigantic sea wave, the Great (and the Small) Bear etc.) and small (tiny glass teardrops, homunculus, little girl, Mahaiana, piccolo, diminished town, dwarf professor, dust, second eclipse, little sister, tears etc.).

All three modern fairy tales are interconnected and form a triptych (child, little girl, girl) based on a cyclic or mythical conception of time and space. The end of one story is the beginning of the second story and the end of the second is the beginning of the third – Mahaiana.

Grafenauer’s autobiographical resonances are only material in hermetic texts where the autonomy of the aesthetics applies that is intended more for an adult than for a child, also because of the rich metaphoric language and indirect communication using symbols. Grafenauer looks for answers in a literary and intellectually complex time, which is why the pastoral atmosphere has nuances of melancholy and the metaphoric experience of existentialism that is presented through metaphors and cycles of seasons. The palimpsest technique is an essential characteristic of Grafenauer’s Mahaiana as it was written in a high poetic tradition using an elevated style, detached from reality (Lipizzaners, silk, soul, mister knight of Žalomir, stone titans, chalice, crystal bowl, shadow, tears, chess, fairy unicorn, gold etc.) and idealising a love story. All of the mentioned post-modernist characteristics, essential for Grafenauer’s style and Mahaiana, open the text up to multiple audiences, thus moving the text beyond the realm of juvenile readership.


Boris A. Novak is a Slovenian writer, poet and dramatist who writes for adults and children. He belongs to the period of Slovenian children’s literature from 1980 to 2010. He started publishing for children already in the 1970s (V ozvezdu Postelje: radijska igra za otroke (In the Constellation of a Bed: A Radio Play for Children), 1976) but he published the main works of his opus in the 1980–2010 period. Worth noting in his output is the literary theory for children Oblike
sveta: pesmarica pesniških oblik (Forms of the World: A Song-book of Poetic Forms, 1991). and Mini poetika – literarna teorija (Mini Poetics – Literary Theory, 2001). Oblike srca: pesmarica pesniških oblik (Forms of the Heart: A Song-Book of Poetic Forms, 1997) is a literary theory for young adult readers and an upgrade of the Forms of the World. The margin between his poems for juvenile and adult readers is open and fuzzy, which is why his children’s books are also read by adults and vice versa (e.g. Zarje časa: Mit v sliki in besedi (Dawns of Time: A Myth in Pictures and Words), 1997); M O M: mala osebna mitologija (S P M: Small Personal Mythology), 2007).

Novak also wrote a rare poetic form, an echo sonnet, where he inventively combined the antique myth about the creation of the echo, which is known as a story about a young man Narcissus and a nymph called Echo. The sonnet has four stanzas, three of which have four verses and one two verses, with rhymes (abba, cddc, effe, gg). Besides the rhymes in the stanzas, the author inventively created rhymes that resulted in a play of words imitating an echo.

The method of creating rhymes or rhymes with an echo is based on voice-auditory and writing-visible changes in sounds (z, s, u, n, s, s, lj, b) or sound units (le-, bre-, za-, pro-, res-, ne-), which a rhymed word has but its rhyme or echo does not, thus creating new meanings (zvenenje-venenje, svila-vila, ljubiti-ubiti idr.). The strongest sound (voice-auditory and writing-visible) and meaning are revealed in the word ljubiti (to love) with the rhyme ubiti (to kill) and the rhyme biti with its echo iti, which changes, through a reduction of the phoneme i and the verb iti (to go), into the pronoun ti (you). The entire string is: ljubiti-ubiti; biti-iti; ti-ti.

Narcissus and the Echo
an echo sonnet

In the air I hear magic ringing Withering
Who is that laments with a soft voice so silky Fairy
She savoured her own blood and wings Vein

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1 The English version of the sonnet is merely a rough translation of its substance because it is impossible to translate an echo sonnet word by word without losing its essence. In another language, it can only be recreated in line with the impulses of the original and without its characteristic rhyming scheme.
Cursed in echoes and floating

All the same! Water is so boundless
To capture the glitter of all the stars in the night
What twinkles there on the surface
The ample mirrored image reaching beyond the sky

It is truer than any other
This white snowy flowery skin of mine
And the mouth cannot escape from itself
And my eternal bed will be a riverbed

How to love only oneself
How to live without the beloved self

[4, s. 121]

_Narcis in Eho_

_sonet z odmevom_

V zraku slišim čudežno zvenenje  
Kdo toži z glasom tihim kakor svila  
Si lastno kri in krila je užila  
Zakleta v odmeve in lebdenje

Vseeno! Voda je tako brezdanja  
Da ulovi lesket vseh zvezd noči  
Le kaj se na gladini zaiskri  
Zrcalna slika do neba prostrana

Bolj kakor vsaka druga je resnična

Gentle
Blood
Void
Coffin
Go
You
You

Narcis in Eho

sonet z odmevom

V zraku slišim čudežno zvenenje  
Kdo toži z glasom tihim kakor svila  
Si lastno kri in krila je užila  
Zakleta v odmeve in lebdenje

Vseeno! Voda je tako brezdanja  
Da ulovi lesket vseh zvezd noči  
Le kaj se na gladini zaiskri  
Zrcalna slika do neba prostrana

Bolj kakor vsaka druga je resnična
Ta moja koža bela roža snežna  Nežna  f
In usta sama sebi neizbežna  Bežna  f
In moja večna postelja bo struga  Truga  e

Kako le sebe samega ljubiti  Ubiti  g
Kako brez ljubljenega jaza biti  Iti  g
Ti  g/ h

The author published his echo sonnet for the first time in the Nova Revija magazine in 1990 and one year later in the song-book Forms of the World. The poem was also a canonical text for the ninth grade of primary school (1998, 2005) and was included in school reading books (Svet iz besed 9, Novi svet iz besed 9).

The characteristics of love according to Kristeva: Expectation that makes someone painfully vulnerable towards their own imperfection of which they were unaware before love: In the air I hear magic ringing – Withering. A call to which the body responds with symptoms or emotions: Who is that laments with a soft voice so silky – Fairy. The last one is the encounter, a mixture of pleasure, promise and hope, which is a kind of perfect future: And the mouth cannot escape from itself – Fleeting.

The notion of love is frequent in the poetry of B.A. Novak, e.g.
– Jaz in ti (Me and You),
– Ljubezenska (Love Poem),
– Ljubezenska – za deklice in dečke (Love Poem for Girls and Boys), Ljubica (Lover),
– Ljubezen do besed (Love for Words),
– Marjetičine meditacije (Marjetica’s Meditations),
– Na zdravje (Cheers),
– Najlepša pošta (The Most Beautiful Mail), Nebesna predstava (Heavenly Show),

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– **Nekoč in danes** (Someday and Today),
– **Pantum tisoč tristo osemindesetih poljubov** (Pantum One-Thousand Three Hundred Ninety-Eight Kisses),
– **Sveta svetloba** (Sacred Light),
– **Tovornjak metaphor** (A Truck of Metaphors) –

**Conclusion**

**Love as a cure** – Prešeren’s concept of love is inseparably connected with love for Julija, his nation and poetry. The emphasis is on generalisation from individual to general love (Julija, nation, poetry). His concept of love is romantic and underpinned by the troubadour concept of love which is based on longing, not possessing and the concept that the only true love is unrequitable, yet it approaches Freud’s concept of seeing love as a cure.

**Love as an allegory** – Grafenauer’s concept of love is complemented by visual (illustrations by Marija Lucija Stupica) and verbal elements in the very visual and imaginative book, with the notion of love placed at the centre. This characteristic of a children’s fantastic story, in its hermetic and encoded form, is open to a multiple audience. Grafenauer depicts love or desire as a time and space for love because expectation, call and encounter are at the forefront [3, p. 5]. The experience of love in the book is symbolic, imaginary and realistic. The palimpsest technique is typical of Grafenauer’s *Mahaiana* which was written in a high poetic tradition, using an elevated style.

**Love as narcissism** – Novak’s central theme in his children’s opus is love. He depicts two dominant types of love: love for a woman and love for language, which in fact is Orpheus’ theme that is also characteristic of Prešeren. In his echo sonnet, the conception of love as narcissism and/or eros and tanatos are at the fore. An elevated conception of love characterises all three selected Slovenian (children’s) authors as love also personifies

– one’s love for poetry or Orpheus’ theme (F. Prešeren, N. Grafenauer, B.A. Novak: *Oblika, ljubezen jezika* (Form, Love of Language), 1995),
– love for the nation (F. Prešeren),

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All three Slovenian (children’s) authors also discuss the troubadour concept of love which is based on longing and not possessing [3, p. 5].

References