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Balog's Treasure: Zvonimir Balog's Poetry

Stručni članak / report paper

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This paper aims to mark the occasion of the 80th birthday of Zvonimir Balog, one of the greatest Croatian children's poets, and to describe his immense contribution to Croatian children's literature. His Selected Works, published in 2007, make his work more widely available not only to the general reader, but also to scholars, thus preparing the way for a comprehensive critical evaluation. As the award-winning author of more than seventy books for children and adults, an essayist, novelist, playwright, illustrator, and editor of children's magazines, he takes a special place in Croatian culture. This paper also shows how Zvonimir Balog creates a nonsense grammar of his own, adopts an original approach to picture poetry, and engages in passionate wordplay, becoming equally appealing to adults and children. Literary critics are particularly interested in his language and style. His unique expression is one of the reasons why Zvonimir Balog is considered to belong to the founders of contemporary Croatian children's poetry.

Keywords: *Zvonimir Balog, contemporary Croatian children's poetry, poetic style, picture poetry, nonsense grammar, children's literature*