

Classic Poetry Series

**Diederik Johannes
Opperman
- poems -**

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Diederik Johannes Opperman(29 September 1914)

Biography

He was born on 29 September 1914 in Dundee in Natal, where he grew up. He went to school in the towns of Estcourt and Vryheid, and afterwards received an M.A. degree from the University of Natal. He taught at schools in Pietermaritzburg and Johannesburg, and later on became editor of "Die Huisgenoot". In 1949 he became a lecturer at the University of Cape Town. During this period he completed one of his most important publications – "Digters van Dertig" (Poets of the thirties) – in 1953. From 1960 to 1975 he was a professor of Afrikaans at Stellenbosch University, where he also served on the editorial board of the publication "Standpunte" ("points of view"). He died in 1985 in Stellenbosch. He won the coveted Hertzog prize for poetry in 1947 for his collection "Heilige beeste (His first book published in 1945)" ("Holy cattle"). He also wrote "Negester oor Ninevé" ("Nine star over Niniveh"), "Joernaal van Jorik" ("The Journal of Jorik"), "Engel uit die klip" ("Angel from the stone"), "Blom en baaierd" ("Flower and Chaos" or perhaps "Flower and rubble"), "Dolosse" ("Knucklebones"), "Kuns-mis" ("Fertilizer"), "Edms. Bpk" ("Pty. Ltd") en "Komas uit 'n bamboesstok" ("Comas from a bamboo pole"). His three verse plays, "Periandros van Korinthe" ("Periandros of Corinth"), "Vergelegen" (a place name, lit. "faraway") and "Voëlvry" ("Outlaw"; lit. "bird-free") appeared in 1954, 1956 and 1968. His collected essays on literature were published as "Wiggelstok" ("Divining rod"), "Naaldekoker" ("Dragonfly") and "Verspreide opstelle" ("Spread-out essays" – the direct opposite of "Collected essays" in Afrikaans). He won four Hertzog prizes (in 1947, 1956, 1969 and 1980), four Hofmeyer prizes (in 1954, 1956, 1966 and 1980), two CNA Prizes (in 1964 and 1980), a prize from the "Drie-Eeue Stigting" ("Three Centuries Foundation") in 1956, the Louis Luyt-prize in 1980 and the Gustav Preller prize for literary criticism in 1985. The South African composer Cromwell Everson wrote music for some of Opperman's poems e.g. "Kontraste" and "Nagstorm oor die see".

Awards

Hertzog Prize for Poetry

1947 for Heilige Beeste, 1969 for Voëlvry and 1980 Komas uit 'n bamboesstok
Hertzog Prize for drama 1956 for Periandros van Korinthe, and 1969 for Voëlvry
Gustav Preller prize for Literature and Literary Criticism, 1985
SA Academy of Arts and Science: Honorary Member 1983

CNA Award for

1964 Dolosse and 1980 Kommas uit 'n bamboesstok

WA Hofmeyr Prize for:

1954 Periandros van Korinthe, 1956 Blom en Baaierd, 1966 Dolosse and 1980 Kommas uit 'n bamboesstok

Louis Luyt prize 1980 for : Kommas uit 'n bamboesstok

Gustav Preller Prize 1985 for literary criticism

Doctor honoris causa

1968 University of Natal, 1976 University of Stellenbosch, 1980 University of Cape Town and 1982 University of Pretoria

1956: Prize of the Drie-Eeue Stigting

In the sixties he became a Honorary Member of the Koninklijke Vlaamse Academie voor Nederlandse

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1970: Diplôme d'Honneur du Prix de la Propagande

1979: KVV Award

1977: Diploma, União Brasileira de Escritores, Manaus

Die Onse Vader

Diederik Johannes Opperman

Stad In Die Mis

Diederik Johannes Opperman