

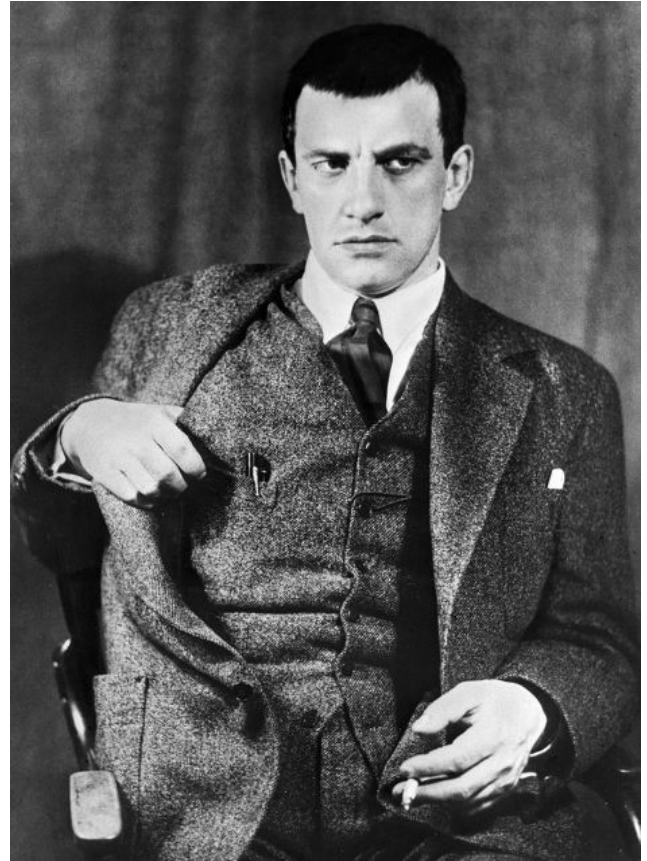
## VLADIMIR MAYAKOVSKY

GEORGIA (1913-1930)

LANGUAGE: RUSSIAN

### А вы могли бы?

Я сразу смазал карту будня,  
плеснувши краску из стакана;  
я показал на блюде студня  
косые скулы океана.  
На чешуе жестяной рыбы  
прочел я зовы новых губ.  
А вы  
ноктюрн сыграть  
могли бы  
на флейте водосточных труб?



Vladimir Mayakovsky was a poet, actor, playwright, and prominent member of the Russian Futurist movement, which rejected the past and celebrated speed, machinery, violence, youth, and industry. This poem was written when Mayakovsky was just 20 years old in the years leading up to the October 1917 revolution. The Futurists dressed outlandishly, and Mayakovsky, "a regular scandal-maker" in his own words, appeared at readings in a homemade yellow shirt that became a signature of his early stage persona.

In April of 1930, he shot himself through the heart after an argument with his partner, Veronika Polonskaya.

TRANSLATOR'S GLOSSARY			
WORD	ROMANIZED	DEFINITION	POSSIBLE SYNONYMS
а	a (conj.)	used to introduce something additional or contrasting to what has already been mentioned	but, and
блюде	bliude (n.)	a shallow container for cooking or serving food	dish, plate, saucer
будня	budnia (n.)	the work week	the workaday, the everyday, the usual, the familiar, colorless existence, humdrum life
бы	by (part.)	used to indicate possibility—often omitted in English	
чешуе	cheshue (pl. n.)	the small, thin bony plates protecting the skin of a fish	scales
сыграть	cygrat' (infinitive v.)	to perform (on a musical instrument)	play
флейте	fleite (n.)	a wind instrument made from a tube with holes along it	flute
губ	gub (pl. n.)	the upper and lower edges of the mouth	lips, mouth
я	ia (n.)	refers to speaker	I
из	iz (prep.)	indicating the point in space at which an action starts	from, out of
карту	kartu (n.)	a diagrammatic representation on paper	map, chart, pattern, record book, menu, plan
могли	mogli (past tense v.)	used to make a request or indicate possibility	could, be able,
на	na (prep.)	physically in contact with and supported by a surface	on, upon

WORD	ROMANIZED	DEFINITION	POSSIBLE SYNONYMS
ноктюрн	noktium (n.)	a short musical composition of a romantic or dreamy character suggestive of night, typically for piano.	nocturne
новых	novykh (adj.)	not existing before	new, fresh, novel, recent, modern, different
океана	okeana (n.)	a very large expanse of sea	ocean
плеснувши	plesnuvshi (past part. v.)	to cause liquid to fall or scatter	splash, dash, pour, spill
показал	pokazal (past v.)	to allow or cause to be visible; to call attention to	show, exhibit, present, display, indicate, point out
прочёл	prochiol (past tense v.)	to look at and comprehend the meaning of written or printed matter	read, decipher, make out, puzzle out, uncover, see, discern
рыбы	ryby (n.)	a cold-blooded animal with gills and fins living in water	fish
скулы	skuly (pl. n.)	the bones below the eye	cheekbones
смазал	smazal (past tense v.)	to messily coat something with an oily or sticky substance or blur its edges	smear, grease, wipe away, blur
сразу	srazu (adv.)	at once	in an instant, right away, straight off, immediately, out of hand
стакана	stakana (n.)	a container for water or other liquids	glass, cup, tumbler, vessel
студня	studnia (n.)	a dish of meat that is boned, cooked, pressed, and served cold in aspic	meat jelly, jelly, galantine, gelatin, aspic
труб	trub (pl. n.)	tubes used to convey liquid	pipes, tubes
водосточных	vodostochnykh (pl. adjective)	related to the removal of surplus liquid	rainwater, gutter, drain

WORD	ROMANIZED	DEFINITION	POSSIBLE SYNONYMS
вы	vy (pron.)	used to refer to refer to a person or group other than the speaker	you
жестяной	zhestianoi (adj.)	a silvery-white metal	tin
зовы	zovy (pl. n.)	a cry made as a summons or to attract someone's attention	calls, summons, instructions, invitations, biddings, commands



## REFLECTING AND FINDING MEANING

Group Member Names:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Pick a scribe for the group, and work together to answer the questions.

What are the best parts of this translation, and why do you think they are good?

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What elements of the original poem did you lose in the translation? What did you manage to keep?

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Did you achieve something new with your translation, and if so, does it make sense in the poem or not?

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