Contents

Acknowledgements	page vi
Songs of a furtive self: Whitman	I
State of the nation: American poetry	8
'A poet insufficiently himself'?: Bloom on Stevens	21
The poetry of John Ashbery	33
Moment after moment: Day by Day by Robert Lowell	45
Confidences: Delusions, etc. by John Berryman	51
E. E. Cummings: Complete Poems, 1910–1962; and Dreams in the Mirror. A biography of E. E. Cummings by Richard S. Kennedy	56
Halycon structures: City without Walls by W. H. Auden	67
The flight of the disenchanter: Early Auden by Edward Mendelson	72
The best of Betjeman: John Betjeman's Collected Poems compiled by the Earl of Birkenhead; and Church Poems by John Betjeman	83
The last Romantic: Philip Larkin	93
Looking in on Pushkin	103
A Petrograd apocalypse: The Poet and the Revolution. Aleksandr Blok's 'The Twelve' by Sergei Hackel	116
The secrets of Gogol: The Creation of Nikolai Gogol by Donald Fanger	124
The greatness of Akhmatova: Requiem and Poem Without a Hero translated by D. M. Thomas	138

Two pieces on translating Mandelstam	149
A poet's tragedy: Marina Tsvetaeva	156
The novelist as pedagogue: Lectures on Russian Literature by Vladimir Nabokov	166
Canetti and power	176
Czeslaw Milosz	192
I Emperor of the Earth: Modes of Eccentric Vision	192
2 Return of the Native	198
Life studies: Vasko Popa, Collected Poems, 1943-1976	211

Acknowledgements

These essays originally appeared, in whole or in part, in the following periodicals: The Times Literary Supplement, The London Review of Books, The New York Review of Books, The Listener, The Guardian and the New Statesman. The essay on Pushkin has not previously been published.