

Contents

| | |
|---|----------|
| Preface | ix |
| PART I The Imperative to Imagine the Unimaginable | I |
| Writing a web of nations | 3 |
| Orature, literature and the media | 21 |
| The imperative to imagine the unimaginable: J.M. Coetzee's <i>Doubling the Point</i> | 33 |
| "Nothing less than the writing of our own texts": Njabulo Ndebele's <i>Rediscovery of the Ordinary</i> | 41 |
| Challenging the metropolis as the marketplace for Third World literature | 53 |
| The voice of the poet: "The blues is you in me". The class and culture specificity of emotion | 57 |
| "Where we stride above the fading, insistent mutter of the dead": Kelwyn Sole's <i>Projections in the Past Tense</i> | 79 |
| "That invention of the working class": Sandile Dikeni's <i>Guava Juice</i> | 91 |
| "Standing armed on our own ground": Barry Feinberg's <i>Gardens of Struggle</i> | 99 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Vincent Swart or the malaise of South African poetry | 107 |
| Poetry to sing at Rosies and All that Jazz: Heather Robertson, <i>Under the Sun</i> | 119 |
| The poet has nothing but his voice: On the poetry of Tatamkhulu Afrika | 123 |
| The spaces <i>between</i> : Tatamkhulu Afrika, <i>Maqabane</i> (Mayibuye 1994) | 129 |
| At a certain distance from hell: Patrick Cullinan, <i>Selected Poems 1961–1994</i> | 137 |
| “The purple pink salt of songs without heads”: Seitlhamo Motsapi’s <i>earthstepper/the ocean is very shallow</i> | 141 |
| PART II The Difficulties of Memory | 145 |
| Dostoevsky in Cape Town: J.M. Coetzee’s <i>The Master of Petersburg</i> | 147 |
| I am dead: you cannot read. André Brink’s <i>On the Contrary</i> | 163 |
| The difficulties of memory: Christopher Hope’s <i>Serenity House</i> | 177 |
| The mysterious patterns of everyday life in a colony: Christopher Hope’s <i>The Love Songs of Nathan J. Swirsky</i> | 183 |
| A house/a story hanging by a thread: Ivan Vladislavic’s <i>The Folly</i> | 189 |
| The genealogy of shame: Etienne van Heerden’s <i>Ancestral Voices</i> | 195 |
| The myth of the wave: Mike Nicol’s <i>This Day and Age</i> | 203 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| Trying to make sense of the past: W.P.B. Botha's <i>The Reluctant Playwright</i> | 209 |
| Bibliography | 215 |
| Acknowledgements | 225 |
| Index | 227 |