

# CONTENTS

<i>Acknowledgements</i> . . . . .	xi
<i>Introduction</i> . . . . .	xiii
 <b>Dennis Brutus</b> <i>South Africa, 1924</i>	
<i>Their Behaviour</i> . . . . .	1
<i>Postscripts 2</i> . . . . .	2
<i>'A simple lust is all my woe'</i> . . . . .	3
<i>'Sometimes a mesh of ideas'</i> . . . . .	4
<i>Night-song: City</i> . . . . .	4
<i>'The sounds begin again'</i> . . . . .	5
<i>Robben Island Sequence</i> . . . . .	5
<i>For My Sons &amp; Daughters</i> . . . . .	8
 <b>Marjorie Oludhe Macgoye</b> <i>Kenya, 1928</i>	
<i>Omera</i> . . . . .	9
<i>August the First: The Watchman Speaks</i> . . . . .	10
<i>August the First: The Shadow. Patel Speaks</i> . . . . .	14
<i>August the First: Court Martial. The Mother Speaks</i> . . . . .	16
<i>Mathenge</i> . . . . .	17
 <b>Christopher Okigbo</b> <i>Nigeria, 1932-1967</i>	
<i>Thunder can Break</i> . . . . .	24
<i>Come Thunder</i> . . . . .	25
<i>Hurrah for Thunder</i> . . . . .	26
<i>Elegy for Slit-Drum</i> . . . . .	27
<i>Elegy for Alto</i> . . . . .	30
 <b>Lenrie Peters</b> <i>The Gambia, 1932</i>	
<i>Home Coming: The present-reigned supreme</i> . . . . .	32
<i>Isatou died</i> . . . . .	33
<i>I am asking about the way ahead</i> . . . . .	34
 <b>Wole Soyinka</b> <i>Nigeria, 1934</i>	
<i>Fado Singer</i> . . . . .	35
<i>Ogun Abibiman</i>	
<i>I Induction: Steel Usurps the Forests; Silence Dethrones</i>	
<i>Dialogue</i> . . . . .	37
<i>After the Deluge.</i> . . . .	43
<i>Apologia (Nkomati)</i> . . . . .	45
<i>'No!' He Said</i> . . . . .	46

<b>Kofi Awoonor</b> Ghana, 1935	
<i>Songs of Sorrow</i> . . . . .	49
<i>The Weaver Bird</i> . . . . .	51
<i>America</i> . . . . .	52
<i>Long Island Sketches x: On having been an experimental sacred cow for four years and a token African on Faculty</i> . . . . .	53
<i>Songs of abuse ii: To the Eminent Scholar and Meddler</i> . . . . .	54
<i>Hymns of Praise, Celebration and Prayer ii: To Dennis Brutus</i> . . . . .	55
<i>Afro-American Beats iii: An American Memory of Africa</i> . . . . .	56
<i>The First Circle</i> . . . . .	57
 <b>J. P. Clark Bekederemo</b> Nigeria, 1935	
<i>Abiku</i> . . . . .	59
<i>The Casualties</i> . . . . .	60
<i>Epilogue to Casualties</i> . . . . .	61
<i>The News from Ethiopia and the Sudan</i> . . . . .	63
<i>A Family Procession</i> . . . . .	64
<i>Death of a Lady</i> . . . . .	65
<i>The Order of the Dead</i> . . . . .	66
 <b>Syl Cheney-Coker</b> Sierra Leone, 1942	
<i>Letter to a Tormented Playwright</i> . . . . .	67
<i>On Being a Poet in Sierra Leone</i> . . . . .	69
<i>The Outsider</i> . . . . .	70
 <b>Arthur Nortje</b> South Africa, 1942–1970	
<i>Letter from Pretoria Central Prison</i> . . . . .	71
<i>Newcombe at the Croydon Gallery</i> . . . . .	72
<i>Waiting</i> . . . . .	75
<i>Autopsy</i> . . . . .	76
<i>Asservations</i> . . . . .	79
<i>Native's Letter</i> . . . . .	80
<i>At Lansdowne Bridge</i> . . . . .	81
<i>Cosmos in London</i> . . . . .	82
 <b>Steve Chimombo</b> Malawi, 1945	
<i>from Napolo: The Messengers</i> . . . . .	84
<i>Obituary</i> . . . . .	85
<i>Of Poems and Prophecy</i> . . . . .	86
<i>Four Ways of Dying</i> . . . . .	89
<i>Derailment: A Delirium</i> . . . . .	91
<i>A Death Song</i> . . . . .	99

**Jack Mapanje** *Malawi, 1945*

<i>Messages</i> . . . . .	103
<i>The Cheerful Girls at Smiller's Bar, 1971</i> . . . . .	105
<i>These Too Are Our Elders</i> . . . . .	106
<i>On African Writing (1971)</i> . . . . .	107
<i>From Florrie Abraham Witness, December 1972</i> . . . . .	108
<i>Glory Be to Chingwe's Hole</i> . . . . .	109
<i>Making Our Clowns Martyrs (or Returning Home Without     Chauffeurs)</i> . . . . .	110
<i>We Wondered About the Mellow Peaches</i> . . . . .	111
<i>Another Fools' Day touches down: shush</i> . . . . .	112

**Kojo Laing** *Ghana, 1946*

<i>Senior lady sells garden eggs</i> . . . . .	113
<i>Godhorse</i> . . . . .	114
<i>Africa sky</i> . . . . .	116
<i>Tatale Swine</i> . . . . .	117
<i>I am the freshly dead husband</i> . . . . .	119
<i>The same corpse</i> . . . . .	121
<i>Many worlds are walked at once</i> . . . . .	124
<i>One hundred lines for the coast</i> . . . . .	126
<i>Race on gathering bites</i> . . . . .	127
<i>The huge car with the sad voice</i> . . . . .	132

**Niyi Osundare** *Nigeria, 1947*

<i>Excursion</i> . . . . .	134
<i>Who says that drought was here?</i> . . . . .	135
<i>eyeful glances</i> . . . . .	137
<i>Our Earth Will Not Die</i> . . . . .	140
<i>Moonsongs III: 'We called the statue'</i> . . . . .	142
<i>V: 'Frantic as a prentice poet'</i> . . . . .	143
<i>XVIII: 'The moon is an exile'</i> . . . . .	144
<i>XIX: 'A madding moon'</i> . . . . .	145
<i>Goree</i> . . . . .	146

**Lupenga Mphande** *Malawi, 1947*

<i>Why the old woman limps</i> . . . . .	153
<i>the wood-cutter</i> . . . . .	154

<b>Tanure Ojaide</b> <i>Nigeria, 1948</i>	
<i>When tomorrow is too long</i> . . . . .	155
<i>Ward 6</i> . . . . .	156
<i>What they said</i> . . . . .	158
<i>Launching Our Community Development Fund</i> . . . . .	159
 <b>Musaemura Zimunya</b> <i>Zimbabwe, 1949</i>	
<i>Arrivants</i> . . . . .	160
<i>Kisimiso</i> . . . . .	161
 <b>Frank Chipasula</b> <i>Malawi, 1949</i>	
<i>A Love Poem for my Country</i> . . . . .	163
<i>Ritual Girl</i> . . . . .	164
<i>Talking of Sharp Things</i> . . . . .	166
<i>Going Back Patiently</i> . . . . .	169
<i>My Blood Brother</i> . . . . .	170
<i>Those Rainy Mornings</i> . . . . .	172
<i>Because the Wind Remembers</i> . . . . .	173
<i>My Friendly People</i> . . . . .	174
<i>Tramp</i> . . . . .	175
<i>Friend, Ah You Have Changed!</i> . . . . .	177
<i>NIGHTWATCHER, Nightsong: I. Dusk</i> . . . . .	178
<i>Manifesto On Ars Poetica</i> . . . . .	182
 <b>Molara Ogundipe-Leslie</b> <i>Nigeria, 1949</i>	
<i>song at the african middle-class</i> . . . . .	183
<i>On Reading an Archaeological Article</i> . . . . .	184
 <b>Odia Ofeimun</b> <i>Nigeria, 1950</i>	
<i>Prologue</i> . . . . .	185
<i>How Can I Sing</i> . . . . .	186
<i>Let Them Choose Paths</i> . . . . .	187
<i>The Poet Lied</i> . . . . .	188
<i>A Naming Day</i> . . . . .	192
<i>A Handle for the Flutist</i> . . . . .	193
<i>Beyond fear I and II</i> . . . . .	194
<i>Judgement Day</i> . . . . .	197
 <b>Catherine Obianuju Acholonu</b> <i>Nigeria, 1951</i>	
<i>Other forms of slaughter</i> . . . . .	199
<i>Nigeria in the year 1999</i> . . . . .	201

<b>Chenjerai Hove</b>	<i>Zimbabwe, 1956</i>	
<i>Red Hills of Home</i>	. . . . .	203
<i>You Will Forget</i>	. . . . .	205
<i>Lost Bird</i>	. . . . .	206
<i>Migratory Bird I</i>	. . . . .	208
<i>Child's Parliament</i>	. . . . .	209
<i>The Other Syllabus</i>	. . . . .	211
<i>Country Life</i>	. . . . .	212
 <b>Gabriel Gbadomosi</b>	 <i>Ireland/Nigeria, 1961</i>	
<i>The Reading</i>	. . . . .	215
<i>Death of the Polar Explorers</i>	. . . . .	216
<i>from: Sango</i>	. . . . .	216
 <b>Biographical Notes</b>	. . . . .	218
 <b>Some anthologies of African Poetry</b>	. . . . .	224