



HOME
from
HOME

new and selected poems

Chris Mann

Chris Zithulele Mann is one of South Africa's best known poets. His work has received numerous significant prizes and awards.

For more information about him and his books, plays-in-verse and multi-media shows see www.chrismann.co.za

Technically sophisticated, here is a poetic voice that opens our perceptions to a fresh and vivid world beyond the deadening reflexes of habit and custom.

Laurence Wright,
School of English Studies,
Rhodes University.

Mann uses a uniquely South African voice to explore what it means to be human. In so doing he provides a 'home from home' for all who love words, wherever they may be.

Molly Brown,
English Department, Pretoria University.

All of us from time to time probably experience moments in our lives in which the ordinary is charged with significance.

Such epiphanies, lingering in the memory, tell us much about our inner being as well as the times in which we live.

They are our homes from home.

This book of poems expresses a broad, holistic approach to such significant experiences.

The poems refer to animals and art, to love, science, the natural and socio-economic environment as well as to spirituality.

In such an array readers are likely to discover a number of their own homes from home.



**Echoing Green
Press**

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Animals

Rhinoceros

A gully of thorn-bush, smitten by the heat.
Ant-heap pinnacles, like Gaudi's cathedral.
And sightings, in cycads, of pale grey hide.
Ear-scallops. The dusty boulder of a rump.

You were a saga upwind of me. Had been,
for millions of years. A Pliocene mammal
getting on with it. That maw of a mouth
lipping, ripping, grinding scrub to a mash.

I sat in a jeep, my camera aimed like a rifle,
and zoomed in. On a snuffling, slobbering,
pig-eyed cranium. A calloused flange of lip.
Click. I bagged in pixels a kill of your being.

What art, I thought, could begin to semaphore
the instincts delicately latticed in your genes,
the shoals of blood-sacs bred in your marrow
and your whole horned hunger to live, live, live?

A month or so later, back home at my desk,
tracking your spoor through the internet bush,
I marvelled at what the artists had made of you
centuries back in Mapungubwe's hill-top smithy.

You were a small, austere replica of your self,
a talisman crafted by the sculptors of the village,
a totem whittled from wood and skinned in gold
to strengthen and beautify the life of the clan.

I gazed and gazed, at the stump-strong legs,
the hippo-squat bulk, a head dropped to charge,
loving your lustre, your bony snort of a tail.
And then you charged, right out of the screen

into the word-carved talisman of a poem.