



Writing Home: Lewis Nkosi on South African Writing

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Lewis Nkosi's insights into South African literature, culture and society first appeared in the 1950s, when the 'new' urban African in Sophiatown and on 'Drum' magazine mockingly opposed then Prime Minister H.F. Verwoerd's Bantu retribalisation policies. Before his death in 2010, Nkosi focused on the literary-cultural challenges of post-Mandela times. Having lived for 40 years in exile, he returned to South Africa, intermittently, after the unbannings of 1990. His critical eye, however, never for long left the home scene. Hence, the title of this selection of his articles, essays and reviews, 'Writing Home'. Writing home with wit, irony and moral toughness Nkosi assesses a range of leading writers, including Herman Charles Bosman, Breyten Breytenbach, J.M. Coetzee, Athol Fugard, Nadine Gordimer, Bessie Head, Alex La Guma, Bloke Modisane, Es'kia Mphahlele, Nat Nakasa, Njabulo S. Ndebele, Alan Paton and Can Themba. Combining the journalist's penchant for the human-interest story with astute analysis, Nkosi's ideas, observations and insights are as fresh today as when he began his 60-year career as a writer and critic. Selected from his out-of-print collections, 'Home and Exile, The Transplanted Heart' and 'Tasks and Masks', as well as from journals and magazines, Lewis Nkosi's punchy commentaries will appeal to a wide readership. Lindy Stiebel is a professor of English Studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal and visiting professor at the University of the Witwatersrand. Michael Chapman is affiliated as a senior researcher to the Durban University of Technology. He is also an emeritus professor and fellow of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. [Subject: African Studies, Literature, Literary Criticism]

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