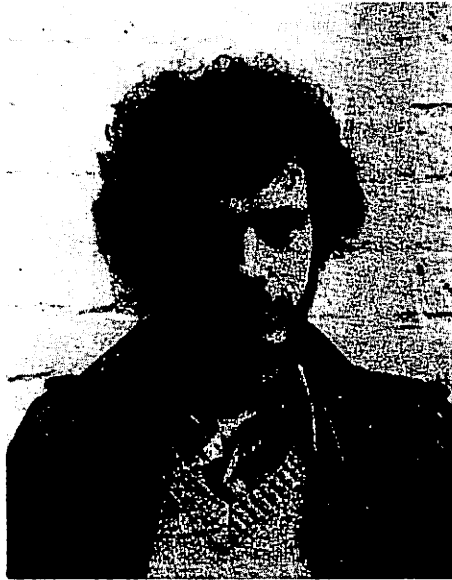


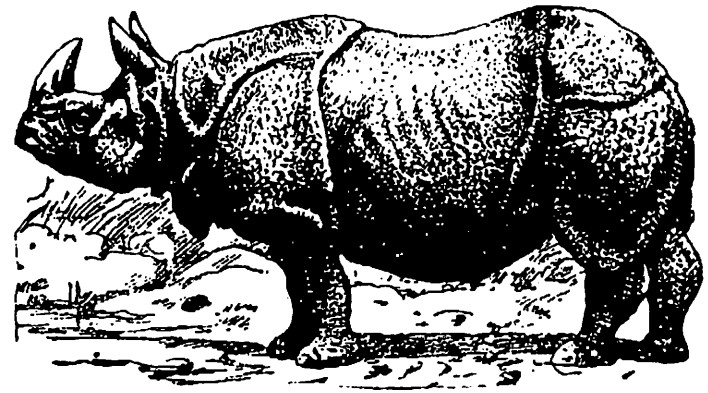
*Rhinoceros* is for those people who wouldn't be found awake near a poetry reading. Some of the poems are instant hits and leave you reflecting on some irony of life - others are like the tips of Russian KGB agents' umbrellas. The sharp sensation on first reading eventually gives way to the poison which floods the unsuspecting mind with new ideas.

At the heart of it all is the sharpened, incisive and restless Christian mind, grappling with an uncomfortable faith. This tension produces poetry which is not otherworldly, but which involves itself in our sceptical age. It is poetry with dirty hands.



£1.00

# RHINOCEROS



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**POEMS BY  
SIMON JENKINS**

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1981. B. 1580

# RHINOCEROS

For Roey :  
I only play the music  
because you tune the piano



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Simon Jenkins is a graduate in theology who edits a small alternative magazine known as *Ship Of Fools*, and enjoys bringing ideas to life, especially by using words. Over the past couple of years, his poetry has been featured in magazines like *Over 21* and *Ms London*. During 1978, Simon left his promising career as a bus conductor with London Transport, to join musician Steve Goddard as part of the travelling duo *Goddard and Jenkins*. As a result, his poetry received a wide audience, from bleary-eyed third-form assemblies to arts festivals. Recently, Scripture Union's Sound and Vision Unit have used six of his poems in a soundstrip titled *X-Ray Eyes*. Simon was born in Cardiff, is married, and now works as a book editor in London. *Rhinoceros* is his first book of poems.

## rhinoceros

is God an evangelical?  
consider the rhinoceros  
in the morning  
he stumps off into the jungle for shade  
in the afternoon  
he meanders to his local for a drink  
in the evening  
he looks obligingly ugly for a camera  
he does nothing beyond  
thinking about the last meal  
and working on the next  
he shows precious little interest  
in things religious  
he does not ask the question  
'how can a rhinoceros enter again  
into its mother's womb and be born?'  
God may be evangelical in his doctrine  
but some of his behaviour  
seems pretty unorthodox

## babies

babies are safe  
they're not really the sort to  
cut people's hands off  
(although the ayatullah once wore nappies)  
they just aren't given to  
causing world wars  
(although someone once said  
I christen this child adolf)  
they show no particular desire to  
murder their political opponents  
(but even idi once played with his toes)

the trouble with babies  
is that they have this  
annoying tendency  
to grow up  
they refuse to stay cuddly  
they start to ignore teddy  
they insist on learning things  
that it would be nicer  
for them not to learn

perhaps that's why we like  
to make a big fuss over christmas  
and the baby jesus  
who we can safely tuck up  
away in a manger for another year  
unable to do us any real harm  
that way he's just a baby  
whose grown-up words  
will not make us feel guilty  
or uncomfortable  
that we can safely forget  
what we did to him  
when he grew up