



UNIVERSITY *of* CAMBRIDGE
International Examinations

**Songs of Ourselves:
CIE Poetry Anthology**

Anthology of Poetry in English

Songs of Ourselves' is University of Cambridge International Examination's (CIE) first anthology of poetry in English. Parts of the book are set for study in CIE's IGCSE, O Level, and AS/(A2) Level Literature in English syllabuses (2007 to 2012 inclusive), but it is designed to have a broader appeal and function, providing verse to enjoy for readers of all ages and backgrounds.

Songs of Ourselves contains work by more than a hundred poets from all parts of the English-speaking world. The collection has been selected and compiled by Mary Wilmer and Tim Underhill, CIE's Product Managers for English Literature syllabuses. It goes beyond being a book for students following a course for an examination: it is simultaneously a wide-ranging collection of verse for the school library, a resource for teachers and students of literature and language, and a handy single volume compendium for the general reader. Drawn from four centuries, it covers a great variety of poetic forms, styles and subjects, as well as reflecting a great variety of cultures. All the choices provide something to enjoy for readers of all ages, including those for whom English is not their first language.

The anthology is arranged in five broad sections, each illustrating the varied and exciting ways that poets choose forms, structures and words to shape meaning. Within each section the poems have been loosely grouped by theme so that many different connections may be made between them, increasing and enhancing the reader's enjoyment. The reader will find all human experience here: love in its many forms, relationships and human personalities; sickness, death and war; nature, animals and the environment; youth and age, the rich and the poor. Poems can offer innermost thoughts, feelings and insights into existence: memory and hope, joy, wonder, grief and reflection are all to be found within these pages.

Poetry anthologies tend to belong to one of two main types: anthologies that are standard and traditional, or anthologies that restrict themselves to the new and contemporary. *Songs of Ourselves* combines these two approaches but greatly extends the range of the pre-twentieth century poems usually included in such collections. This reflects something of the important work that has been done by scholars in recent years in retrieving many forgotten poets, challenging the traditional 'canon' of poetry. Many significant new voices have been emerging - for example, many women poets who had previously been written out of poetic history. The twentieth and early twenty-first century writing here spans the globe, drawing in poets who write in English from places as geographically far apart as New Zealand, the Caribbean, Canada, India, Singapore and South Africa, for example, but all part of a wider community of poets who write in English.

Songs of Ourselves is published by Foundation Books (publication date 24 June 2005) and can be ordered from their website: www.foundationbooksindia.com as well as from Amazon: www.amazon.co.uk

To complement *Songs of Ourselves*, a short poetry anthology is published on CIE's website and is accessible via all English Literature subject pages. This anthology includes a selection of poems that are set for examination 2007-2009. Further selections from the book will be set in future years.