

# Women writers: U.A. Fanthorpe and C.A. Duffy

## Ursula A. Fanthorpe (1929-2009)

Ursula A. Fanthorpe was born in Kent in 1929 and died in 2009.

First a teacher, she lived part of her life doing temporary jobs. Fanthorpe published nine volumes of poetry during her lifetime, including *Side Effects*, *Safe as Houses* (1995), *Homing In* (2006) and the posthumously published *New and Collected Poems* (2010), which includes a preface by poet Carol Ann Duffy. She deals with her life experiences and often gives voice to the dark side of the mind. Fanthorpe, along with many postmodern poets, creates works whose focus is on playfulness, on the parodistic cross-fertilisation of styles and speaking voices, on scepticism and fatalism. Art for these poets no longer has the power to improve the human condition, it rather laughs at it, undermining all objective knowledge.

## Carol Ann Duffy (b. 1955)

Poet Laureate Duffy (1955) is a Glasgow-born poet and playwright. She is the first woman and also the first Scot to hold the post. She is Professor of Contemporary Poetry at Manchester University. She covers themes such as oppression, gender and violence and is often thought of as a feminist poet. Her poetry collections include *Mean Time* (1993), *The World's Wife* (1999), *Feminine Gospels* (2002) and *Rapture* (2005), in which she explores the complexities and contradictions of love. Duffy's poetry shows:

- a minimalist approach to reality, focusing on the trifles of everyday life;
- a rereading of reality from a different perspective which sheds new light on usual events and offers a plural vision;
- an attraction to new forms of language which are often a revisitation or a parody of the more traditional ones;
- topics like love, death, motherhood, memory, sex, relationships, anguish, dreams, failure, inadequacy, women's loss of a social, traditional identity and the loss of a precise private identity, as in the poem.