

News release

London, UK

Thursday 1 March 2012

For immediate release

Thursday 1 March marks the birthday of acclaimed American poet Richard Wilbur, so what better way to mark the occasion than to watch him recount the absorbing story of his life and prize-winning work?

Born in New York City on 1 March 1921, Richard Wilbur published his first book of poems, *The Beautiful Changes and Other Poems*, in 1947. Since then he has published many poetry collections, including *New and Collected Poems* (1988) and *Things of This World* (1956), both of which were awarded the Pulitzer Prize.

Wilbur also published several translations of French plays, specifically those of Molière and Jean Racine as well as poetry by Valéry, Villon, Baudelaire and others. He also created a musical version of Voltaire's *Candide* with Bernstein and Hellman which is still produced today.

To share his thoughts, Wilbur recorded reflections on a vast array of subjects, such as how he compiles his collections: *'It's important to start with a good one, I know that.'* He also provides fascinating insight into becoming America's poet laureate and what that meant for him: *'The title of poet laureate maddened the journalists of Washington. They wanted to know what it meant, and the first question in any of the many, many interviews I gave was always "What does the poet laureate do?"'* When asked about his thoughts on the state of poetry in America today, he shares his views: *'It is encouraging that there are many more poetry readings than there ever were and there are larger crowds assembled to hear poets... there are 15 poets, maybe 20 poets in America who are writing poems that I would like to read.'*

These recordings also offer a rare opportunity to hear Wilbur read several of his poems while sharing the inspiration behind many of those most well-known, such as *Love Calls Us To Things of This World* and *The Writer*.

The resulting recording can be watched as a number of compelling short clips ranging in length between just seconds and several minutes with a fully searchable transcript. All Web of Stories videos are easy to share with friends and colleagues, and may be embedded into personal blogs and websites.

Find out more: <http://www.webofstories.com/people/richard.wilbur/39>

Notes for Editors

About Web of Stories

Everyone has a story to tell. Over time many stories become forgotten, but now Web of Stories offers members of the public the chance to tell their stories for future generations to enjoy.

Web of Stories began as an archive of life stories told by some of the great scientists of our time. As the number of stories grew, it became obvious that some were on related topics and a web was slowly being created of connected stories. After a while we also invited famous people outside the field of science to tell their life stories. Web of Stories is also open to the public to record their stories for the world to view and share. The project is built on the belief that we all have wonderful stories to share, and have family and friends whose tales we would like to hear. The great thing about Web of Stories is that anyone can come and talk about virtually anything they like. Just like our famous speakers, it is an account of their experiences as they remember them.

We hope to provide lasting, first-hand accounts of people's experiences. Imagine that in a hundred years' time your grandchildren or great grandchildren will be able to watch you telling stories about your life today!

Contact:

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