Finding aid for the Richard Wilbur poems and photograph 6027

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USC Libraries Special Collections
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Language of Material: English
Contributing Institution: USC Libraries Special Collections
Title: Richard Wilbur poems and photograph
creator: Wilbur, Richard
Identifier/Call Number: 6027
Physical Description: 2 Linear Feet1 oversized folder
Date (inclusive): 1970-1987
Abstract: This small collection contains "Two Riddles from Aldhelm," 1975, broadside edition, numbered 41 of 100, signed; "Teresa", 1976, press proof, signed; a photograph of Wilbur at the Grolier Club, 1970, photograph by Elsa Dorfman for her book, "Elsa’s Housebook". The collection also includes a photocopy of a postcards sent by Wilbur to Jack W.C. Hagstrom regarding his poem, "Teresa".
Storage Unit: 6
Storage Unit: 2
Biographical note
Richard Wilbur was born in New York City and grew up in North Caldwell, New Jersey. After graduating from Amherst College in 1942, he served in the United States Army from 1943 to 1945 during World War II. After the Army and graduate school at Harvard University, Wilbur taught at Wesleyan University for two decades and at Smith College for another decade. At Wesleyan, he was instrumental in founding the award-winning poetry series of the University Press. He received two Pulitzer Prizes for Poetry and, as of 2011, teaches at Amherst College. Wilbur published his first poem at the age of 8, and produced his first book of poetry in 1947 ("The Beautiful Changes and Other Poems"). Since then he has published several volumes of poetry. Wilbur is also a translator, specializing in the 17th century French comedies of Molière and the dramas of Jean Racine. His translation of Tartuffe has become the standard English version of the play. In addition to publishing poetry and translations, he has also published several children's books including "Opposites", "More Opposites", and "The Disappearing Alphabet". Less well-known is Wilbur’s work as a writer of musical lyrics. He provided lyrics to several songs in Leonard Bernstein's 1956 musical, "Candide", including the famous "Glitter and Be Gay" and "Make Our Garden Grow." He has also produced several unpublished works including as "The Wing" and "To Beatrice". In addition to the two Pulitzers, Wilbur has won a Drama Desk Special Award (1983); the PEN Translation Prize for his translation of The Misanthrope; the National Book Award for "Things of This World" (1956); and numerous others. He was elected a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1959. In 1987 Wilbur became the second poet, after Robert Penn Warren, to be named U.S. Poet Laureate after the position's title was changed from Poetry Consultant.
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