

"A Late Aubade"

- "A Late Aubade"
- Richard Wilbur
- What is an "aubade"?
- Robert Herrick's "To the Virgins, To Make Much of Time"
- 17th Century Poetry

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DR. Lahoti R.K.

“A Late Aubade”

You could be sitting now in a carrel
Turning some liver-spotted page,
Or rising in an elevator-cage
Toward Ladies' Apparel.

You could be planting a raucous bed
Of salvia, in rubber gloves,
Or lunching through a screed of someone's loves
With pitying head,

Or making some unhappy setter
Heel, or listening to a bleak
lecture on Schoenberg's serial technique.
Isn't this better?

Think of all the time you are not
Wasting, and would not care to waste,
Such things, thank God, not being to your taste.
Think what a lot

Of time, by woman's reckoning,
You've saved, and so may spend on this,
You who had rather lie in bed and kiss
Than anything.

It's almost noon, you say? If so,
Time flies, and I need not rehearse
The rosebuds-theme of centuries of verse.
If you *must* go,

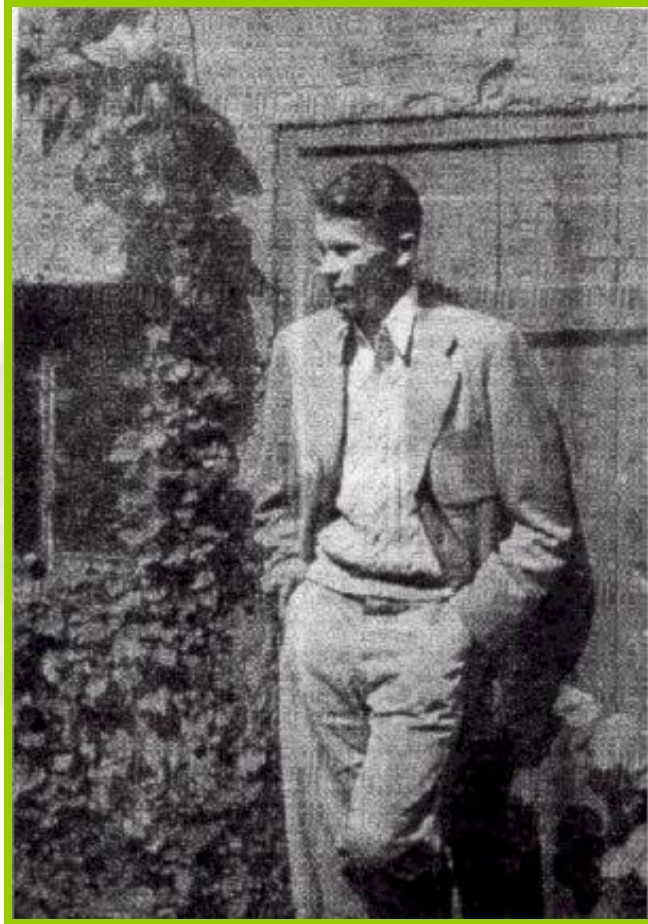
Wait for a while, then slip downstairs
And bring us up some chilled white wine,
And some blue cheese, and crackers, and some fine
Ruddy-skinned pears.

~Richard Wilbur

Menu



Richard Wilbur



- Born 1921 in New York City
- Pulitzer Prize for poems in 1956 and 1988
- National Book Award 1956
- formalism in poetry
- political vs. apolitical literary stance

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Additional Links

- Biography in greater detail

<http://www.poets.org/poets/poets.cfm?45442B7C000C04050F>

- Biography, pictures, other poems
Modern American Poetry site

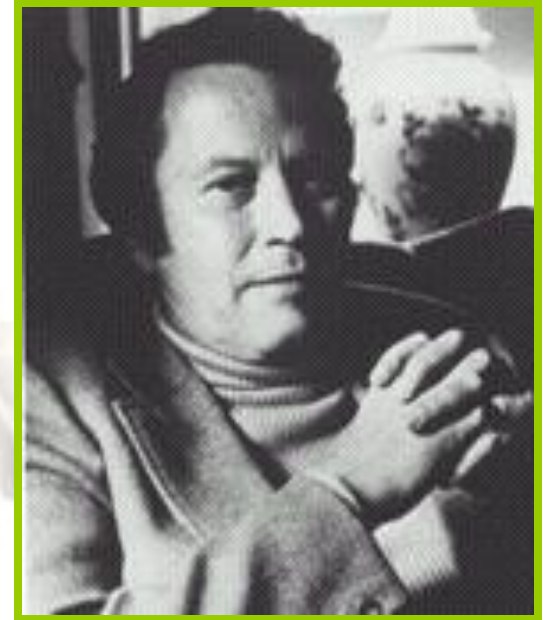
http://www.english.uiuc.edu/maps/poets/s_z/wilbur/wilbur.htm

- Interview with Wilbur

<http://interviews-with-poets.com/richard-wilbur/wilbur-note.html>

- Atlantic Literary Magazine
Interview with Wilbur

<http://www.theatlantic.com/unbound/poetry/wilbur.htm>



Menu



What is an “aubade”?

According to Dictionary.com, an “aubade” is:

1. A song or instrumental composition concerning, accompanying, or evoking daybreak.
2. A poem or song of or about lovers separating at dawn.



Menu



Image borrowed from: <http://www.agora.crosemont.qc.ca/dphilo/intradoc/phi102/images102/aubade.jpg>

Robert Herrick's "To the Virgins, To Make Much of Time"

Gather ye rosebuds while ye may,
Old time is still a-flying :
And this same flower that smiles to-day
To-morrow will be dying.

The glorious lamp of heaven, the sun,
The higher he's a-getting,
The sooner will his race be run,
And nearer he's to setting.

That age is best which is the first,
When youth and blood are warmer ;
But being spent, the worse, and worst
Times still succeed the former.

Then be not coy, but use your time,
And while ye may go marry :
For having lost but once your prime
You may for ever tarry.

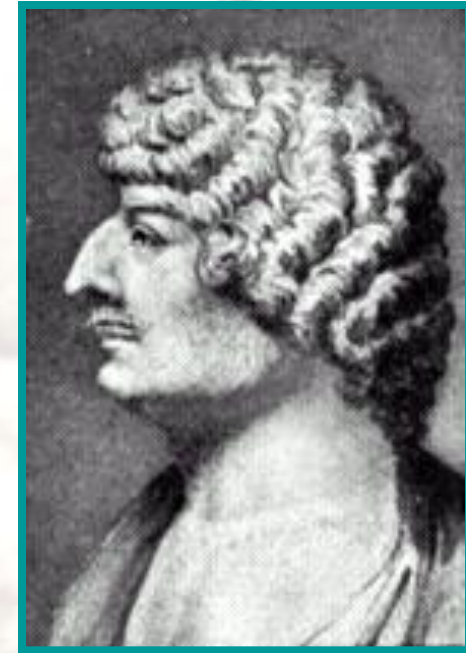


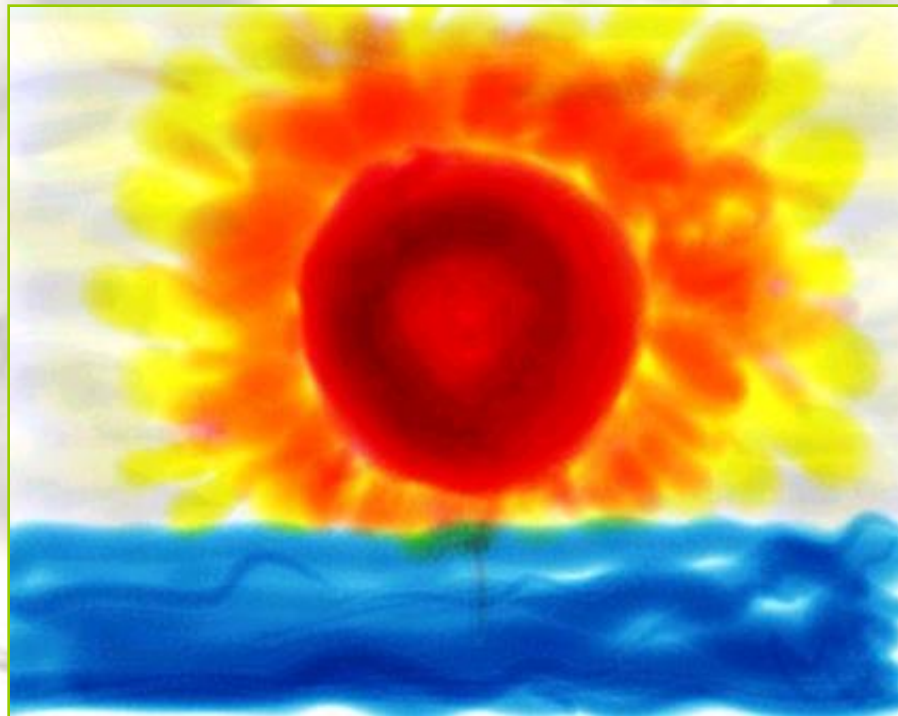
Image borrowed from:
http://www.eaglesweb.com/Sub_Pages/herrick_poems.htm

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Carpe Diem

- Mention of the “rose-buds theme” refers to Herrick’s poem
- “carpe diem” ... Seize the day!
- Have fun while you are young, sensuality
- Sexual emphasis ... virginity
- Misogynistic? Gender roles?
- How does this relate to “A Late Aubade”?

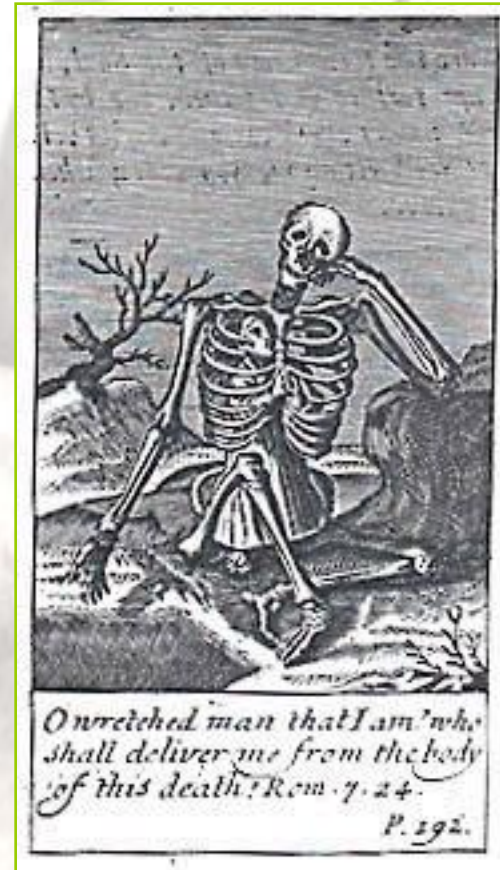


Menu



17th Century Poetry

- focuses on themes such as “carpe diem,” “memento mori,” etc.
- “memento mori” - remembrance of death
- emphasis on the current moment ... don't waste time on trivial things



Menu



More on 17th Century poetry/literature:

http://www.wwnorton.com/nael/17century/topic_3/rellife.htm