Introduction

From the Vision and Voices website:

Robert Pinsky is a world-renowned poet, literary critic and translator. His translation of Dante’s *Inferno* is among the most praised poetical reimaginings of our time, and his own poetry, including such prize-winning volumes as *An Explanation of America*, *The Figured Wheel* and *Sadness and Happiness*, continues to inspire a wide range of readers. In the book-length essay *Thousands of Broadways: Dreams and Nightmares of the American Small Town*, he travels seamlessly from personal history to literary analysis to film. The works of Preston Sturges and Alfred Hitchcock meet up with dazzling insouciance with such writers as William Faulkner, Willa Cather and Thornton Wilder. In his work as the poet laureate of the United States and as the creator of the “Favorite Poem” project, Pinsky makes us take literature more seriously and see the way the artistic imagination creates, recreates and transforms the world around us.

Note: This guide was originally developed for a Vision and Voices event in April, 2010. The guide has been re-purposed as a general guide for learning more about Robert Pinsky.

Comments (0)
Honors and Awards

- Fulbright Fellowship, 1965
- Stegner Fellowship in Creative Writing, 1965
- NEH Fellowship, 1974
- Massachusetts Council for the Arts Award, 1976
- Oscar Blumenthal Prize, 1979
- American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters Award, 1980
- Saxifrage Prize, 1980
- Guggenheim Fellowship, 1980
- Eunice B. Tietjens Prize, 1983
- NEA Fellowship, 1984
- William Carlos Williams Prize, 1985
- Landon Prize in Translation, 1995
- Shelley Memorial award, 1996
- LA Times Book Award, 1997
- Ambassador Book Award in Poetry, 1997
- Lenore Marshall Prize, 1997
- Harold Washington Literary Award, 1999
- Phi Beta Kappa Award, 2003
- PEN-Voelcker Award, 2004
- Manhae Foundation Prize, 2006
- Jewish Cultural Foundation Achievement Award, 2006

About Robert Pinsky

Robert Neal Pinsky, born October 20, 1940 in Long Branch, NJ, graduated from Rutgers University (B.A.) in 1962 and obtained his M.A. and Ph.D. from Stanford in 1966. He was an assistant professor of English at the University of Chicago from 1967-68, professor of English at Wellesley College from 1968-80, professor of English at the University of California Berkeley from 1980-88, and is currently a professor of English and Creative Writing at Boston University.

In 1997, Pinsky was named Poet Laureate of the United States and Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress, a post he held until 2000. He has been nominated for a Pulitzer Prize (1996) and was a 2005 National Book Critics Circle Award Finalist. (See sidebar for additional honors and awards)

In 1997, Pinsky founded the Favorite Poem Project, an invitation for ordinary Americans to read their favorite poems and have those readings recorded and archived in the Library of Congress. Over 18,000 Americans volunteered to read their favorite poems. The original letters, emails, and both raw and edited versions of audio and video recordings are housed by Boston University's Mugar Library, at the Howard Gotlieb Archival Research Center.

From 1978-86, Pinsky was poetry editor for New Republic and he is currently the poetry editor for Slate.com. Pinsky has also contributed to American Review, American Poetry Review, American Scholar, Antaeus, Atlantic Monthly, Literary Review, Poetry, Shenandoah, Three Penny Review, New Yorker, Washington Post Magazine, and Yale Review. Additionally, he has been a guest on the Colbert Report, the Simpsons, and NewsHour with Jim Lehrer.

Additional Biographical Sources


Harvard Review, 8, 60-71.


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History of my heart - Pinsky, Robert
Call Number: PS3566.I54H5 1984
ISBN: 0880010371

Jersey rain - Pinsky, Robert
Call Number: PS3566.I54J47 2000
ISBN: 0374178879

Landor's poetry - Pinsky, Robert
Call Number: PR4874.P5

Poems to read: a new favorite poem project anthology - Pinsky, Robert and Maggie Dietz
Call Number: PN6101.P497 2002
ISBN: 0393010740

Poetry and the world - Pinsky, Robert
Call Number: PS3566.I54P6 1988
ISBN: 0880012161

Sadness and happiness: poems - Pinsky, Robert
Call Number: PS3566.I54S2
ISBN: 0691062951

The figured wheel: new and collected poems, 1966-1996 - Pinsky, Robert
Call Number: PS3566.I54F54 1996
ISBN: 0374154937

The handbook of heartbreak: 101 poems of lost love and sorrow - Pinsky, Robert
Call Number: PS595.L57H36 1998
ISBN: 068816286X
The Inferno of Dante - Alighieri, Dante (transl. by Robert Pinsky)
Call Number: PQ4315.2.P47 1994
ISBN: 0374176744

The life of David - Pinsky, Robert
Call Number: BS580.D3P56 2005
ISBN: 0805242031

The separate notebooks - Milosz, Czeslaw (transl. by Robert Pinsky)
Call Number: PG7158.M553A24 1984
ISBN: 0880010312

The situation of poetry: contemporary poetry and its traditions - Pinsky, Robert
Call Number: PN1271.P5
ISBN: 0691063141

The sounds of poetry: a brief guide - Pinsky, Robert
Call Number: PN4151.P55 1998
ISBN: 0374266956

The want bone - Pinsky, Robert
Call Number: PS3566.I54W36 1990
ISBN: 0880012501

Thousands of Broadways: dreams and nightmares of the American small town - Pinsky, Robert
Call Number: PS169.C57P5 2009
ISBN: 0226669440

Writing a modern Jewish history: essays in honor of Salo W. Baron - Baron, Salo Wittmayer
Call Number: E184.35.W75 2006
ISBN: 0300106777
Selected Articles by Pinsky


Audio & Video - Robert Pinsky - LibGuides at University of Southern California

Robert Pinsky

A guide to the work of Robert Pinsky

Last Updated: Dec 6, 2013 | URL: http://libguides.usc.edu/robertpinsky | Print Guide | Email Alerts

Audio & Video

MIT World

From February 3, 2006 at MIT. Pinsky discusses an opera work, the Favorite Poem project, his book The Life of David, and contemporary poetry.

Also check out...

The Library of Congress has a web guide for online resources on Robert Pinsky. Some of the links are no longer active but the resource is still useful.

Comments (0)

SAMURAI SONG

Pinsky walks into an elevator and reads his poem, "Samurai Song."

Comments (0)
Pinsky judges between the metaphors of Stephen Colbert and Sean Penn.

The Colbert Report
Mon - Thurs 11:30pm / 10:30c
Meta-Free-Phor-All: Shall I Nail Thee to a Summer's Day?
www.colbertnation.com
About These Resources

On April 19, 2010, Robert Pinsky spoke to USC students, faculty and staff at Doheny Library. These are a list of works he mentioned during the talk.

Comments (0)

Additional Resources

Here is a list of books, films, poems, etc. mentioned during Robert Pinsky’s discussion (in order of appearance). A link to any holdings at USC Libraries is provided where available.

The Invention of Love - Stoppard, Tom
Call Number: Doheny PR6069.T6I66 1998
Hilary Schor mentioned this work in her opening remarks.

Ode to a Nightingale - John Keats
Pinsky spoke about the line "Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!"

Landor's Poetry - Pinsky, Robert
Call Number: Doheny PR4874.P5
Pinsky spoke about Landor’s poem "Lethe".

Duck Soup [videorecording] - McCarey, Leo
Call Number: Leavey DVD 279
Pinsky spoke about the mirror scene in this film and its relation to art and life.

The Collected Poems of Sterling A. Brown - Brown, Sterling Allen
Call Number: Doheny PS3503.R833A17 1996
Pinsky spoke about Brown’s poem "Harlem Happiness."

The Essential Haiku - Haas, Robert
No copies available at USC, but you can request a copy through ILL.

Comments (0)