

# The Light Within the Light



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Since the death of Robert Frost, American poetry has seen few major poets create important work in their seventh decade - and beyond. Yet today Donald Hall (77), Richard Wilbur (85), Maxine Kumin (81), and, until last year, Stanley Kunitz (100) continue to move from strength to strength. Each has published a new book in the past year and collected further accolades, including the Harvard Arts Medal (awarded to Kumin) and the Ruth Lilly Prize (awarded to Wilbur).

These are poets who bear, in individual and collective ways, the imprint of Frost's legacy: a clear commitment to form; a belief that, "like a piece of ice on a hot stove, a poem must ride on its own melting"; a willingness, even an eagerness, to assume the role of poet-as-witness. Perhaps most appealingly, their poems capture a corner of New England imbued with a spirit that is both of the place and of the poet. Against the backdrop of a dark world, all four create poems that are illumined from within, holding a vision of human possibility steady in the light.

Each poet-profile in The Light Within the Light is based on intimate personal interviews and explores the landscapes, lives, and artistic achievements of the poet. Several poems are woven into each essay, allowing the reader to experience the poet's world in his or her own words. Since the paths of the four poets cross frequently, the essays "converse" with one another, layering the narrative. Detailed informational endnotes and a list of selected readings cite primary and secondary sources of interest for each poet, making the book useful to the lay reader and literary specialist alike.

The book design is by Barry Moser, one of New England's favorite artists and a wood engraver sensitive to poets and their works. He provides a full-page portrait of each of the four poets as well as spot illustrations of great beauty and charm

作者介绍:

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