

Richard & Judy's Book Club 2006 - Two Penguin titles make the shortlist.

Wednesday 18th January 2006 sees the return of **Richard & Judy's** hugely popular **Book Club**. Once again, viewers will be invited to read along with the TV Duo as part of a ten week strand. Viewers will then have the chance to vote for their favourite title, with the winner receiving the coveted **Richard & Judy's 'Best Read Award'** at **The British Book Awards** on **Wednesday 29th March 2006**.

This year, we are delighted to report that not one, but two Penguin titles will be under discussion on the show. **The History of Love by Nicole Krauss** will kick off this year's book club strand as it is featured in the first show on Wednesday 18th January. **Richard Benson's acclaimed memoir, The Farm**, will be discussed on the show on Wednesday 1st February. Both titles will be available from January in Penguin paperback.

Amanda Ross, executive producer of Richard and Judy said "each year we worry that the list won't be as exciting or successful as the last, as we have a lot to live up to. I am delighted with the final ten books which we selected from over 500 submissions. I am confident that once again there really is something for everyone."

The ten selected titles, announced live on the show last night, are as follows: ***The History of Love* by Nicole Krauss, *Labyrinth* by Kate Mosse, *The Farm* by Richard Benson, *The Conjuror's Bird* by Martin Davies, *Arthur and George* by Julian Barnes, *The Lost Art of Keeping Secrets* by Eva Rice, *Moondust* by Andrew Smith, *March* by Geraldine Brooks, *Empress Orchid* by Anchee Min and *The Lincoln Lawyer* by Michael Connelly.**

The 'Richard & Judy Book Club' has ignited the public's interest in all things literary and recent figures suggest we've become a nation of bookworms thanks to 'Richard & Judy'. 1.8 million people, in a survey conducted by BML (a book specialist research agency) stated, because of the Book Club they bought or read a book they wouldn't have done otherwise.

Guest reviewers on the series have included Richard E Grant, Sir Trevor McDonald, Nigella Lawson and Bob Geldof.

Sales on last year's titles, which included **The Jane Austen Book Club** by **Karen Joy Fowler** (Penguin) have now reached well over two million. The programme's influence on book sales has become so potent that it's now dubbed 'the Richard & Judy effect.' The programme produced the top two best selling paperbacks of 2004 when it launched *The Lovely Bones* and the novel the couple rate as their favourite, *Star of the Sea* by Joseph O'Connor. Last year's club saw four of the selected titles reach the top ten highest book sales of the year.

Richard Madeley and Judy Finnigan said "We love the book club and can't wait to get reading as this year's list looks better than ever."

Viewers can get full details of how to join the book club and getting special extra back up material by calling **0870 1919955** or logging on to their website www.channel4.com/richardandjudy.