

2011 Poetry Festival Presenters



Laurel Bastian runs the [Writers in Prisons Project](#), taught writing at the college level, and curated the Crosshatxh Poetry Series. Her poetry can be found in Margie, Drunken Boat, Cream City Review, Fugue, Bellevue Literary Review and other journals. She is the Fair Housing Center's educator on fair housing law for Dane County.



B.J. Best is the author of two books of poetry: *Birds of Wisconsin* (New Rivers Press, 2010) and *State Sonnets* (sunnyoutside, 2009). His third book, *But Our Princess Is in Another Castle*, is forthcoming from Rose Metal Press in 2013. He is also the author of three chapbooks through Milwaukee-based Centennial Press, most recently *Drag: Twenty Short Poems about Smoking*. He teaches at Carroll University in Waukesha and lives in West Bend.



Kimberly Blaeser, a Professor in the English Department at UW-Milwaukee, teaches Creative Writing, Native American Literature, and American Nature Writing. Among her publications are three books of poetry: *Trailing You*, *Absentee Indians and Other Poems*, and *Apprenticed to Justice*, as well as the edited volume *Traces in Blood, Bone, and Stone: Contemporary Ojibwe Poetry*.



Sarah Busse lives in Madison, Wisconsin with her husband and two children. She is the co-editor of the poetry magazine *Verse Wisconsin*. Her poetry has appeared in journals both online and print, including most recently *Mezzo Cammin*, *Poet Lore*, *Dogwood* and *The Dark Horse*. Her chapbook, *Quiver*, was published in 2009 by Red Dragonfly Press.



Brenda Cárdenas has published two collections of poetry *Boomerang* (Bilingual Press, 2009) and *From the Tongues of Brick and Stone* (Momotombo Press, Institute for Latino/a Studies, 2005). She also co-edited *Between the Heart and the Land: Latina Poets in the Midwest* (MARCH/Abrazo Press, 2001). Cárdenas' work has appeared in a range of publications, including *Achiote Seeds*, *The City Visible: Chicago Poetry for the New Century*, *The Wind Shifts: The New Latino Poetry*, *RATTLE*, *Prairie Schooner*, and most recently in the literary journal *Pilgrimage* and the anthology *Brute Neighbors: Urban Nature Poetry, Prose and Photography*. She is currently serving as Milwaukee's Poet Laureate and is an Assistant Professor in the Creative Writing doctoral program at the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee.

Cathryn Cofell has published five chapbooks, most recently *Kamikaze Commotion* (Parallel Press). She's currently running about, performing with Obvious



Dog from the newly released CD called Lip, a blend of poems and music. Her work stands a bit more still in places like North American Review, New York Quarterly, Oranges & Sardines and Dirty Napkin. More at www.cathryncofell.com.



Cathy Cook is a filmmaker and multi-media artist who has been creating Films, Videos, Poetry Films, Collages and Installations since 1982.

IMMORTAL CUPBOARD: In Search of Lorine Niedecker won a Jury Award at the 2009 Wisconsin Film Festival and was nominated for the Best of Documentary at the 2010 Beloit International Film Festival. The film has screened at the Anthology Film Archives and the Bowery Poetry Club in NYC and was part of the 2009 'Fall for the Book Festival' at George Mason University and screened in San Francisco in Spring of 2010. **IMMORTAL CUPBOARD** was aired on Wisconsin Public TV along with an interview during the show, "Director's Cut." Starting in Summer of 2011, Cook's new project will take her to the wetlands of Maryland and Wisconsin to start work on the "Wetlands Series". This project will include collages, moving images and installations.

Cook has exhibited her award-winning work extensively in both solo and group shows including screenings at MOMA and the Whitney Museum. Recently her poetry film #536 was included in the Rattapallax #17 and her film 'tar guys' was in the 2008 Zebra Poetry Film Festival. In 2001, Cook was awarded a Guggenheim Memorial Fellowship. Currently she is an Associate Professor of Film/Video in Visual Arts at The University of Maryland "Baltimore County (UMBC.) Prior to moving to Baltimore, Cook worked in New York City for eleven years as an Art Director in the Film/TV industry. While in NYC, she also taught Film/Video production and Animation at various New York area colleges.



CX Dillhunt is the author of *Things I've Never Told Anyone* (2007, Parallel Press), *Girl Saints* (2004, Fireweed Press), and co-author of *Double Six* (Endeavor, 1994) with his son Drew Dillhunt. CX was born in Green Bay and grew up in De Pere in a big house on the Fox River with his eleven brothers and sisters. Currently, he's assistant editor for *Hummingbird: Magazine of the Short Poem*, and served as co-editor of the Wisconsin Poets' Calendar: 2006. His work has appeared in *Cream City Review*, *Exquisite Corpse*, and the on-line international literary journal *Studio* (York University, Toronto). He teaches elementary school Writers Workshops and is lead teacher for the annual "Exploring the Writer in You" seminar at Green Lake Conference Center. CX was named a Commended Poet by the Wisconsin Poet Laureate Commission in 2010.



R. Virgil Ellis is an emeritus professor at University of Wisconsin Whitewater and has several published books of poetry including *The Blue Train* with a forward by William Stafford, *The Tenting Cantos*, and *Recess* with forward by Marilyn Taylor and X.J. Kennedy. He has a book in progress, *Hail Mary Supper Bowl*.

Lisa Fishman is the author of five collections of poetry, most recently *Flower Cart* (Ahsahta Press, 2011) and *Current* (Parlor Press, 2011). She has lived on a farm in Orfordville, Wisconsin, for 13 years and is also Associate Professor of English and Director of Poetry at Columbia College Chicago.



Derrick Harriell holds an MFA in Creative Writing from Chicago State University and is currently a dissertator in UW-Milwaukee's English PhD program where he also teaches Creative Writing. *Cotton* (Aquarius Press-Willow Books 2010) is his first collection of poems.



John Lehman is the founder and original publisher of *Rosebud*, a national magazine of short stories, poetry and illustration for people who enjoy good writing. He is the poetry editor of the *Wisconsin People & Ideas* as well as managing partner of *Zelda Wilde Publishing*. John was a finalist for the Wisconsin Poet Laureate position in 2004 and again in 2008. Dramatic readings of his plays, *A Brief History of My Tattoo*, *The Jane Test* and *The Writer's Cave* have been presented in Milwaukee and Madison. His collections of poetry include *Acting Lessons*, *Shrine of the Tooth Fairy*, *Dogs Dream of Running* and *Shorts: 101 Brief Poems of Wonder and Surprise*. His latest nonfiction books are *America's Greatest Unknown Poet: Lorine Niedecker Reminiscences*, *Photographs, Letters and Her Most Memorable Poems* and *Everything is Changing: How to Gain Loyal Customers and Clients Quickly*.

John grew up in Chicago but for the last twenty years he has lived with his wife, Talia Schorr, their four dogs and six cats in Rockdale, the smallest incorporated village in Wisconsin.



Wisconsin poet and essayist **Tom Montag** is most recently the author of *The Big Book Of Ben Zen* and *The Idea Of The Local*. He recently wrote the lyrics for 14 original train songs on Doc Abbigk in Trinity's *The Last Caboose* cd. He blogs as *The Middlewesterner*.



Brian Mornar is currently a PhD candidate at SUNY-Buffalo. He teaches at Columbia College in Chicago and continues to work on his dissertation on Lorine Niedecker. In 2007, Punch Press published the chapbook *Repatterning*, in 2010, Little Red Leaves published *Three American Letters*. Recent poems can be found in *O Sweet Flowery Roses* and *American Letters & Commentary*.

Michael Nickels-Wisdom has been writing haiku since 1990, when he discovered Harold G. Henderson's *An Introduction to Haiku* on the shelf in the public library in



which he works. His poems have appeared in *The Willow Review*, *Modern Haiku*, *Acorn: A Journal of Contemporary Haiku*, *The World Haiku Review*, among others. He won several awards including, a Haiku International Association contest award, a Tokutomi Memorial Haiku Contest award, a Northwest Cultural Council award, and an International Kusamakura Haiku Competition award. He lives in Spring Grove, Illinois with his wife and little dog and tries to pay attention to our human presence in the glacial landscape of northeastern Illinois.



Bill Orth has played guitar, bass and sung for over 50 years. he has recorded 2 cds of original music with 'annaRANaway' and, with 'Obvious Dog', Cathryn Cofell's original poetry and music cd, LIP. By day he is the Sauk County Human Services Director.



Margot Peters is the award winning author of several biographies including *Design for Living: Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne*, *May Sarton: A Biography*, *The House of Barrymore*, *Mrs. Pat: The Biography of Mrs. Patrick Campbell*, *Bernard Shaw and the Actresses* and *Unquiet Soul: A Biography of Charlotte Brontë*. Her forthcoming biography of Fort Atkinson poet, Lorine Niedecker, will be published in September of this year.

In addition to writing biographies and essays, Ms. Peters is an accomplished poet. She has published poems in a variety of publications including: *Wisconsin Academy Review*, *Free Verse* and *The Deronda Review II*.



Robert (Rusty) Russell is an economist and host/producer of the program *Radio Literature* on WORT-FM, Madison. He has taught performance poetry workshops throughout the Midwest and at the Universidad Autonoma de Chihuahua, MX for several years. He coordinated the Cheap At Any Price/Poets Without Borders readings in Madison for fifteen years.



Thomas R. Smith's most recent poetry collection is *The Foot of the Rainbow* (Red Dragonfly Press). He is chief editor of *Robert Bly In This World* (University of Minnesota Libraries). He teaches at the Loft Literary Center in Minneapolis.



Wendy Vardaman, Madison, WI, has a Ph.D. in English from University of Pennsylvania. Co-editor of *Verse Wisconsin* (formerly *Free Verse*), her poems, reviews, and interviews have appeared in a variety of anthologies and journals, including *Poetry Daily*, *Breathe: 101 Contemporary Odes*, *Riffing on Strings: Creative Writing Inspired by String Theory*, *Letters to the World*, *Poet Lore*, *qarrtsiluni*, *Mezzo Cammin*, *Nerve Cowboy*, *Free Verse*, *Wisconsin People & Ideas*, *Women's Review of Books*, *Rain Taxi Review*, *Rattle and Portland Review*. She is the author of *Obstructed View* (Fireweed Press, 2009).