

2015 Poetry Festival Presenters



Poet, photographer and UW Milwaukee professor, **Kimberly Blaeser** is the current Wisconsin Poet Laureate. Her award winning writing has been widely anthologized and has been translated into several languages. Blaeser's current work *Picto-Poems* brings her nature photography together with poetry to explore intersecting ideas about Native place, nature, preservation, and spiritual sustenance.



Cathryn Cofell of Appleton is the author of *Sister Satellite* (Cowfeather Press) and six chapbooks. Her work has garnered the Lorine Niedecker Poetry Award and the WI People & Ideas Prize for Poetry, among others. Cofell is a fierce advocate for the arts, helping to launch the WI Poet Laureate Commission, Verse Wisconsin, the WFOP Chapbook Prize, and the Poetry Rocks Series. www.cathryncofell.com



Ron Czerwien is the owner of Avol's Books LLC, which sells used & out-of-print books on the internet. His poems have appeared online and in print journals. He was a finalist in the Concrete Wolf Poetry Chapbook Contest and hosts the monthly "Madtown Poetry Open Mic Series" at Mother Fool's Coffeehouse, in Madison, Wisconsin.



Nick Demske lives in Racine and works at the Racine Public Library. He is the author a self-titled collection of poetry, which was picked for the 2010 Fence Modern Poets Series prize, and a chapbook, *Skeetly Deetly Deet*, which was published by Strange Cage Press. His work has been taught at dozens of universities and colleges throughout the country, including Notre Dame, Columbia, Cleveland State, Marquette and many more. In 2011, Nick went on a 40+ city book tour that covered both coasts of America and back. Nick is a vegan, an urban gardener and a crappy student of sitting meditation.



Madison poet laureate (2008-2012), advocate, columnist and educator, **Fabu** celebrates the artistic expressions of women, children, African American, and multicultural communities. Her in depth research into the life and work of jazz pianist Mary Lou Williams culminated in a book of poetry and a theatrical/musical production. She authored poetry books: *In Our Own Tongues* (University of Nairobi Press), *Journey to Wisconsin: African American life in Haiku* (Parallel Press) and *Poems, Dreams and Roses: poetry for youth and children*. She has a traveling exhibit "Poet Fabu in Wisconsin."

John Lehman is the founder of *Rosebud Magazine*. For years he was literary editor



of Wisconsin People & Ideas and is now editor of Lit Noir (a digital magazine) and president/CEO of Zelda Wilde Publishing. He is a nationally published writer and poet with twenty-five years experience teaching creative writing and twenty years as a creative director/senior copywriter for advertising agencies.



Tom Montag, Fairwater, Wisconsin, is most recently the author of *In This Place: Selected Poems 1982-2013* (a finalist for the Midwest Independent Publishers Association' award for books of poetry published in 2014), and other books of poetry and prose. In 2015 he was the featured poet at *Atticus Review* (April) and *Contemporary American Voices* (August). He blogs as [The Middlewesterner](#) and serves as Managing Editor of the Lorine Niedecker Monograph Series, *What Region?*



Margot Peters is the award winning author of several biographies including *Lorine Niedecker: A Poet's Life*, *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*.

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*.



Nancy Rafal is an advocate of poetry, especially that of Lorine Niedecker. Nancy served as treasurer of the Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets for too many years and is a board member of Friends of Lorine Niedecker. The muse takes her to poetry readings throughout the state and Nancy's work appears in many editions of the *Wisconsin Poets' Calendar*. Her "if you build it, they will come" project is a 96 foot long mural celebrating Baileys Harbor and Lorine Niedecker. All she has to do is raise the funds.



Margaret Schroeder is the founder of The Solitary Plovers, a group dedicated to the living legacy and study of the works of Lorine Niedecker. She continues to coordinate the Plovers and is the warmth behind the Poetry Cafe during the Wisconsin Poetry Festival. She writes occasional poetry and also has a psychotherapy practice in Fort Atkinson.



Marilyn L. Taylor, former Poet Laureate of Wisconsin (2009 and 2010) and of Milwaukee (2004 and 2005), is the author of six collections of poetry. Her award-winning poems and essays have appeared in many anthologies and journals, including *Poetry*, *The American Scholar*, and Ted Kooser's "American Life in Poetry" online column. Marilyn taught poetry and poetics for fifteen years at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and currently serves as a board member for several writers' organizations.

Lisa Vihos is the Poetry and Arts Editor at *Stoneboat Literary Journal* and an occasional



guest blogger for The Best American Poetry. Along with two chapbooks, *A Brief History of Mail* (Pebblebrook Press, 2011) and *The Accidental Present* (Finishing Line Press, 2012), her poems have appeared in numerous journals and magazines. She has two Pushcart Prize nominations and received first place recognition in the 2015 Wisconsin People and Ideas poetry contest. She is very active in the 100 Thousand Poets for Change global movement and just returned home from the first world conference in Salerno, Italy. Visit her blog at [Frying the Onion](#).



Paul Wiegel lives and writes in Berlin, WI and is the founder of Fox River Poetry Company. He has been writing poems for passersby on his 1963 Smith Corona typewriter at Flea Markets, art galleries, and storefronts for the past four years. In doing so, he hopes to bring an appreciation of poetry to a wider audience. One of his own poems was awarded the 2014 Joseph Gahagan Poetry Prize.



David Wilk has published and distributed poetry in print and digital formats since the 1970's. He was editor of the influential literary journal TRUCK and affiliated Truck Press, devoting an entire issue to Lorine Niedecker's work. He currently publishes pop culture startup Frederator Books and the independent Prospecta Press. His podcast at [writerscast.com](#) features hundreds of interviews with writers and publishers. For more on his current projects, see [booktrix.com](#) and [livewriters.com](#)