



Friends of  
Lorine Niedecker

Issue #16  
Summer 2012

# *I was the solitary plover*



## **League of Women Voters Honors Lorine Niedecker**

The League of Women Voters of Ozaukee County, Wisconsin celebrated Lorine Niedecker at their Women's History Month luncheon in March. Margot Peters was the guest speaker. The LWV holds a silent auction fundraiser as part of this event. One of the auction items this year was a trip to Fort Atkinson to tour the Niedecker sites.

Pictured to the left are the lucky winners of this auction item. They visited on Wednesday, June 13 and enjoyed tours of the Dwight Foster Library, the Hoard Museum and Blackhawk Island.

*I was the solitary plover*

*a pencil*

*for a wing-bone*

*From the secret notes*

*I must tilt*

*upon the pressure*

*execute and adjust*

*In us sea-air rhythm*

*"We live by the urgent*

*wave of the verse"*



## **Visitors, Visitors, Visitors!**



In July, Beloit College English Professor, Chris Fink, (standing, far left) brought his summer term class to visit Blackhawk Island and learn more about Lorine Niedecker.



In April we were visited by Nicolas Pesques. (right) He is working on translating some of Niedecker's poems into French and was hosted by the University of WI in Madison. He is pictured here with graduate student Franz (center) and Peter Schofer, professor emeritus at UW.

## NEWS

### Homemade Book

The Center for the Humanities at CUNY has a project titled "Lost and Found." The project reclaims older works and publishes them in elegant, stapled editions. The third series, released this summer, includes a facsimile edition of the handmade book Lorine Niedecker sent to Cid Corman in 1964. This chapbook includes the copied wrapping paper covers Lorine created and thirty-one pages of handwritten poems. You can inquire about purchasing a copy by sending an email to Bob Arnold at [poetry@sover.net](mailto:poetry@sover.net). The price is \$15 plus \$3.95 shipping/handling.

This issue was edited by John Harkey who teaches composition, rhetoric and literature at The Georgia Institute of Technology as a Marion L. Brittain Postdoctoral Fellow. He operates Creature Press, a vehicle for handmade chapbooks. His writing can be found in *Cold Front Magazine*, *The Marsh Hawk Review*, *EOAGH* and *2nd Ave Poetry*.

### 2012 Lorine Niedecker Wisconsin Poetry Festival

The 2012 Festival is scheduled for November 2 through 4. The complete schedule is included on pages 6 and 7 in this newsletter. Make sure to take a look at the variety of programs and poetry readings that we are offering this year.

There is no pre-registration for the festival. We do request pre-registration for box lunches on Saturday and Sunday and for the Blackhawk Island Writers Workshop on Sunday. Most of the festival will again take place at the Dwight Foster Public Library at 209 Merchants Avenue in Fort Atkinson. The library is located in the historic downtown of Fort Atkinson and there is ample free parking in a municipal lot across the street.

## POETRY

### Greyhound

I didn't drink  
my juice at  
breakfast. Four  
hours from Oshkosh  
to Green Bay.  
What if I have  
to pee? I do. Or  
my little brother  
who always has  
to go but doesn't  
like to ask. We  
bounce along  
forever on the  
wide back seat  
of the hot and stuffy  
bus. Farms pass. We  
stop at towns. Next  
to us a moon-faced  
man smiles, asks  
questions, lights a fat  
cigar, the kind Dad  
sometimes smokes.  
I give the paper  
ring to Dickie  
who wears it  
on his thumb. My  
stomach turns, then  
lurches. I try to hold  
my breath until the  
bus groans to its  
final stop and Dad  
waves hello.

# *for a wing-bone*

## **Seers**

Do you remember  
that I'm out here  
in the dust  
waiting for you

One by one  
six hawks  
appear  
    wheeling  
    spiraling  
        choreographing  
    marvels  
        inscribing  
    calligraphy  
I can't read

There's nothing  
I can tell them  
that they don't  
already know

## **Donna Barkman**



in the bare spindly tree    one bird's song



traffic cone  
    in a bed of tulips  
where am I going?

## **Donna Fleischer**

## **Lorine**

words  
    drudged  
from green mud  
    lept  
like Koshkonong's  
    carp  
  
sound  
    of their serious  
mating  
    in the shallows  
  
some  
    deaf  
to crush  
    of bodies  
packed  
    for the tables  
of New York

## **Robin Chapman**



## **Everything Separate**

The tepid water in a pan on the stove  
The dry tea leaves measured out into the clay pot  
Logs split and jumbled in the woodbox next to the cold hearth  
A blanket carefully folded upon our bed

## **Michael F. Latza**

# *From the secret notes*

## ESSAY

### **Objects, objects.**

The way it happens with water is like this: The beginning is unclear, maybe it happened first with rain, maybe the clouds made water from vapor or notes on dreams. Also, there is the way the water moves; it is sure of itself, searching the lowest point - steady in the breaking down of it retaining its structure to the smallest division. It asserts itself in seeking to fill its surroundings, tracing a path from one substance to the next leaving great distinction between where it is and where it is not. Lorine Niedecker's poetry contains the essence of the water she lived by, moving across one phenomenon, seeking another in connection like a river, leaving a trail on the small portion of those places her poetry touches.

Niedecker's work places the objects before the reader; it is in the selection of them by this poet that the scene is imbued with meaning. All else is relative. Throughout the objectivist movement, most avoided metaphor in their poetry. They took to the style of portraying the happening as it was with a feeling that in its conveyance to the audience the intended emotion would be transmitted. Niedecker's work is a hybrid of objectivism blended with her interest in surrealism, which was contained and bubbling just below the surface. In a letter to Monroe in 1934, Lorine wrote "...the whole written with the idea of readers finding sequence for themselves, finding their own meaning whatever that may be, as spectators before abstract painting."

Niedecker seamlessly interweaves personal subject matter with the outward quality of the Objectivist movement. She called this approach, "monologue tongue", lending weight to the idea that series of sounds, their patterns and rhythms in correlation to human consciousness had enough of an effect to serve as a conduit for conveyance.

The vicissitude of Niedecker's line breaks link one image with another seemingly disparate image. The spiraling shape of "Paeon to Place" creates by the overlay of thought that spans stanzas and connects disparate ideas and images to each other while encompassing its meaning and highlighting individual pairings. Working in tandem with the precise line breaks, Niedecker also used the layout of the poem to make use of the heaviness of silence between them to guide the reader to a specific place, as water guides itself to the lowest point.

By washing away debris, leaving what is sturdy, she condenses images and events to their fundamental structure, and in doing so they are transformed into that which is both relatable and profound in the personal realm of the poet's life. Through this purification the objects take on a surreal quality since this naked and crisp form, frequently present in dream-states, is so obscure, yet familiar that the essence draws upon the psyche to externalize it in the way it would with surrealist imagery. Through the use of conventional imagery she bypasses the conscious mind, creating an aura of emotion that textures the image with the reader's subjective experience of archetypal phenomenon.

"Paeon to Place" was written in 1970, and within it the culmination of her life and growth as a poet are evident. Through the title she makes it known she is writing in homage to praise a place; "and the place was water". Not only is she paying homage to the external water she lived by, but also to its general quality and influence upon her life. The altered renku form the "niedecku" is the form that moves this poem forward. In traditional renku, the first three lines and last two had different authors, being passed back and forth between the two writers. In the niedecku, it is her own life experience that bring each stanza to a close. The first three lines of each stanza bears a tonal quality that evokes a particular mood based on the textural synthesis of the objects Lorine chose. The following two lines provide a sense of understanding of that quality. With the lay-

out as serpentine, and spatially varied as the objects in her life, it seems as if she were looking around the room and creating maps of objects with words on pages.

Water shapes, erodes and changes that which it surrounds. Lorine Niedeker's life by water molded her poetry. Through her liquid and flowing form, her poems define borders between subconscious and conscious states of mind the way a river divides land and sky. The rhythm of her words, and her silences, perpetuate motion.

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## Lauren Marie Cappello



## CONTRIBUTORS

Born into a family of Oshkosh Wisconsin actors, **Donna Barkman** started performing in kindergarten. Her solo play, "Hand-Me-Downs" was recently produced in NYC and Westchester. Her poetry has been published in *Chautauqua*, *String Poet*, *Per Contra*, *Boston Literary Review*, *Common Ground*, and others. She has enjoyed two arts residencies in Wyoming. Following a career as a librarian, with a

degree from UW-Madison, she currently teaches children's literature at Bank Street College, NYC.

**Lauren Marie Cappello** ventures to achieve a state of non-duality within each poem. She is a contributing editor for *Eratio Poetry Journal*, and her work has appeared in Uphook Press's *Gape-Seed*, & the forthcoming *Great Weather for Media* anthology. Aside from her work in poetics, she teaches and studies yoga. A former New Yorker, she now resides in New Orleans, LA.

**Robin Chapman** is author of seven books of poetry, most recently *Abundance*, winner of the Cider Press Review Editors' Book Award, and *the eelgrass meadow* (Tebot Bach), honorably mentioned for the Posner Poetry Award. Her poems have appeared recently in *The Alaska Quarterly Review*, *Prairie Schooner*, and *Nimrod*.

Hartford, CT native **Donna Fleischer** is author of three poetry chapbooks: *Twinkle, Twinkle* (Longhouse Publishers), *indra's net (bottle rockets press)*, and *Intimate Boundaries* (self-produced and published). Her poems of open form and Japanese-derived forms appear in print and online journals and anthologies, most recently *Esque Magazine*, *On Barcelona*, *We Are All Japan*, *Visions*, *Voices*, and *Verses*, *Fiera Lingue*, *South by Southeast*, *Poets for Living Waters*, *Wang Ping's Kinship of Rivers*, and *Kō*. She is an award-winning poet of the University of Hartford Writing Award for Poetry.

**Michael F. Latza** is a professor of English at the College of Lake County, Grayslake, IL.



*Lorine Niedecker Wisconsin Poetry Festival  
Friday, November 2 - thru Sunday November 4, 2012  
Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin*



**FRIDAY, November 2, 2012**

5:00 Café Carpe opens for dinner  
6:30 Open Mic Poetry Reading

Café Carpe

**SATURDAY, November 3, 2012**

8:30 Poetry Café and Poetry Store Open  
*Registration, freebies, exchanges, free WiFi*

Library

9:30 Hoard Historical Museum is open till 4:30.  
*Exhibits: Lorine Niedecker, Native American, Dairy and Civil War History*

1 block walk

9:00 - 10:00 How To Read/Present At An Open Mic  
*Presenter: John Walser*

Community Room

10:00 – 10:15 Poetry Café Break

Library

10:15 – 11:00 How To Create A Chapbook  
*Presenter: Ralph Murre*

11:00 – 12:30 Nature of Wisconsin Poetry  
*This traditionally lively panel gets everyone thinking about poetry, their own and an overview of the state of Wisconsin poetry. Discussion, questions and maybe answers.*  
*Moderators: Kim Blaeser,*  
*Panel includes: Ching-In Chen, Kate Sonntag, Jim Stevens*

Community Room

12:30 – 1:30 Welcome and Box Lunch  
Room  
*(\$10, registration required for box lunch.)*

Poetry Café and Community

2:00 – 3:00 Wisconsin Poetry Showcase Open Mic  
*Moderator: TBD*

Community Room

3:15 – 5:00 Poetry Round Tables - A new small group format this year.  
*Invited poets will read and discuss their work in small groups. There will be two 40 minute sessions with a 10 minute break.*

Group A Kim Blaeser,  
Group B Ching-In Chen  
Group C Kate Sonntage  
Group D Jim Stevens

Poetry Cafe  
Community Room  
Friends Room  
Library Gallery

5:30 Poetry Café Closes

Poetry Café

5:30 Poetry Happy Hour and  
Lorine Niedecker Grasshopper Invitational

Café Carpe

# *execute and adjust*

## **SUNDAY, November 4, 2012**

- |               |  |                   |
|---------------|--|-------------------|
| 9:00 – 11:45  | Lorine Niedecker Paper Presentations<br><i>Steele Wagstaff</i> - "Lorine Niedecker and Dwelling <i>With</i> Wisconsin"<br><i>Emilie Lindemann</i> – “More Than Recipes: a Complicated Portrayal of Marriage in Lorine Niedecker's Cooking Book”<br><i>Sarah Dimick</i> - “Lorine Niedecker’s “Lake Superior” Articulating Landscape Through Textural Collage”<br><i>Mary Linton, Karl Gartung and Tom Montag</i> – Title TBA | Community Room    |
|               | Special Poetry Café Guest, Julie Millen Schoessow  | Poetry Café       |
| 11:45 – 12:45 | Lunch<br><i>Box Lunch, \$10 Registration required.</i>   | Poetry Café       |
| 1:00 – 3:00   | Blackhawk Island Writer’s Workshop<br><i>For those who are interested in writing "in the spirit of Lorine" this workshop is being held on the property that was Lorine's home along the Rock River. This location is full of inspiration. Participants will create new work. Free, registration required. Limit 20</i><br><i>Moderators: Lisa Fishman</i>  | Blackhawk Island  |
| 1:00 – 2:30   | Wisconsin Poetry Showcase Open Mic<br><i>Sign up in Poetry Café.</i><br><i>Moderator: TBA</i>  | Community Room    |
| 3:00          | Niedecker<br>A play by Kristine Thatcher<br>Directed by Marti Gobel  | Museum or Gallery |

**PLEASE NOTE:** This schedule is subject to change. The complete and final schedule will be available after September 1 at [www.lorineniedecker.org](http://www.lorineniedecker.org).

## ABOUT US

The Friends of Lorine Niedecker is a non-profit corporation. There are no staff, just devoted volunteers. Our goals include preserving and expanding the legacy of Lorine Niedecker, as well as, offering educational materials, access to archives, a semiannual newsletter and events as time and resources are available. We are supported through donations and grants.

Donations are always welcome and are fully tax-deductible.

The Solitary Plover is issued twice yearly, in winter and in summer. Sign up for the email version on our website.

Friends of Lorine Niedecker  
209 Merchants Avenue  
Fort Atkinson, WI 53538  
(920) 563-7790  
[www.lorineniedecker.org](http://www.lorineniedecker.org)  
Find Lorine on Facebook

## NIEDECKER INSPIRED ART FOR SALE

There are two sets for sale. One was sold to the public (white box) and has never been opened - \$250. The other is the Artist's Edition - 13 were made. That one is \$300. There will be a \$5.00 shipping fee per box. Each box contains 12 original pieces of art created by the women of the Blackhawk Artists as a tribute to Lorine Niedecker. All art is in excellent condition and has never been displayed outside of the hand made box.

To obtain more information or inquire about purchasing send an email to: [mfirsty@gmail.com](mailto:mfirsty@gmail.com).

