



Friends of
Lorine Niedecker

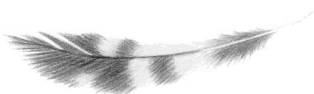
Issue #30
Summer 2019

*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"*



I was the solitary plover



Celebrating Lorine's Birthday

On Saturday, May 11 the Friends of Lorine Niedecker hosted a party in honor of Niedecker's birth. The event was held at the Hoard Museum in Fort Atkinson. Those in attendance were encouraged to learn more about Lorine and the Museum by participating in an I Spy scavenger hunt throughout the building. This program was appropriate for adults and children and engaged several families.

Visitors also enjoyed slices of the delicious birthday cake pictured above. Many thanks to event organizers Margaret Schroeder, Jane Nicholson, Nancy Shea and Merrilee Lee.



a pencil for a wing-bone

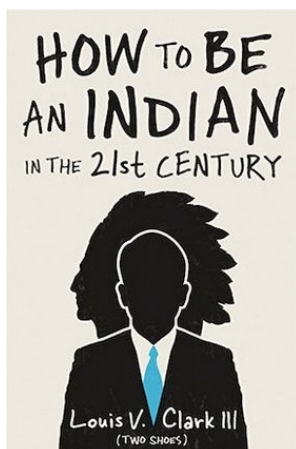
News

On Thursday, April 4 Oneida author and poet Louis V. Clark III read from his book *How to Be an Indian in the 21st Century*. This book received an Outstanding Achievement Award from the Wisconsin Library Association in 2018.

Written with the rhythms of Oneida oral storytelling traditions, this Wisconsin Historical Society Press memoir weaves poems and prose to capture the alienation, audacity, and triumph that have defined Clark's life experiences, from childhood on the Rez, through racially-charged bullying, and to his role as modern-day elder. Clark celebrates "The heartbeat of my nation" and encourages the rest of us to "speak the truth, confound the idiots, [and] listen to the silence."

Clark's unique voice takes readers on a deeply personal and profound quest through a wide range of subjects — from workplace racism to falling in love and the Green Bay Packers — to discover what it means to him to be an American Indian. In sharing the sometimes uncomfortable truths he unravels, Clark adds an important voice to the ongoing conversation about race and belonging in America.

Born and raised on the Oneida Reservation in northeastern Wisconsin, Louis V. Clark III (Two Shoes) turned to poetry to continue the oral tradition of his people, the People of the Standing Stone. A member of the Iroquois Confederacy, he and his family are of the Bear clan.



Lorine Niedecker in Spain Natalia Carbajosa What Region? #4

Natalia Carbajosa is the author of the next *What Region?* monograph (*Lorine Niedecker in Spain*) just out from the Friends of Lorine Niedecker. Carbajosa published an anthology of her translations of Niedecker's poetry, *Y el lugar era agua: Antología poetica*. (Leon: Ediciones Eolas, 2018)

Perhaps no one gets closer to a poem than the translator. Lorine Niedecker is famously subtle and concise in her poems. Here Carbajosa tells us why she decided to translate Niedecker. She gives us a record of her analyses of several of the poems in her book of translations; and charts the way she worked as translator with the qualities and meanings particular to each language to depict the poems elegantly in Spanish. Doing so, she gives us new insight into Niedecker's work.

The translator's job is a rare and privileged one. Working word by word with poems in their original language, thinking about their intentions, about the way the formal elements of a language are manipulated, out the nuances that must be preserved and ways to remain faithful to them in the context of another language brings one into rare and intimate contact with the poet and the poems. This particular translation project has led me to a deep respect for the skill and sensibility of Lorine Niedecker.

—Natalia Carbajosa

Copies are available for sale from Woodland Pattern Bookcenter here:

<https://woodlandpattern.org/bookstore/?item=85>

Thank You

The Friends would like to thank all of the donors from our recent fundraising campaign. We received \$3535 in contributions. Thank you!

From the secret notes

2019 Poetry Festival

On May 11, the FOLN hosted *Writing the Walk*, a writing excursion on Blackhawk Island. This event was facilitated by Richard Meier and Chuck Stebelton. Following a discussion of walking and a poetics of presence in the place Lorine Niedecker inhabited, the group walked the Niedecker property and Blackhawk Island Road. They practiced allowing language to emerge with the rhythm of walking. The workshop concluded with an opportunity to share the participants' work in an intimate, conversational setting at the former Niedecker property.

There are two more Poetry Festival events planned. On **Saturday, September 28** from 1 to 4 pm will be the annual *Blackhawk Island Writer's Workshop*. This workshop is held annually on Blackhawk Island at the former Niedecker property. It will be facilitated by Lisa Fishman. She is the author of six books of poetry, including *FLOWERCART*, *Current*, and *The Happiness Experiment*. Her collection, *24 Pages and other poems*, was published by Wave Books in 2015. She is the first Lorine Niedecker Poet-in-Residence in Fort Atkinson and Blackhawk Island. A dual citizen of the US and Canada, Fishman lives in Orfordville and Madison, Wisconsin and teaches at Columbia College Chicago.

Registration is requested for this workshop. Registration will open on August 1.

Email: contact@lorineniedecker.org to register.

The final festival event is an open mic poetry reading on **Friday, October 11 at 6:30 pm** at the Café Carpe in Fort Atkinson. Amy Lutzke will moderate the reading. Pre-registration is NOT required for this event. The Café Carpe serves food and drink. Readers can sign up at the Carpe. Individuals are welcome to bring their own work to read or simply poetry that they enjoy.

POETRY

If Looks Can Kill

From a naked branch
in a nearby tree
a harried great horned owl
glares cat-eyed
at me

"*Et tu?*" she seems to ask
flying off
with two harassing
hawks in tow

She has to zigzag
through spruces
to lose them but I—
my eyes unable
to veer

as quickly, reluctant
to risk the bristliness
of all those branches—
turn and walk
the other way

"I'm not your enemy"
I'd like to say—
if she were curious
or less irate

It's hardly fair
to judge her by
the fierceness
of her gaze

I have that too—
my features
sharpening with age

If looks can kill
mine and
that owl's
almost certainly will

Georgia Ressmeyer

I must tilt

Walking Blackhawk Island in May with Lorine Niedecker

Current swifter
Breeze stronger
The sound of planes
Louder than birds:
Red-wings, woodpecker,
Chirps to the whining.

Siding:
Wood, plastic or aluminum.
A trio of pitched roofs.
Why does this remind me
Of home?

Barely enough time
To count them:
Seven Canada geese chicks,
Perhaps two parents
In front and picking up
The rear.
The air fills with trumpeting.
Strange dogs,
Rough sounding,
Coughing.
The boats drift in the river.
A man in red jacket smoking,
Casting out, reeling in.
Small fry, if that.

First drops of rain.
They will ruin
My best
My verse.

What is the fuss about?
Canada geese unstoppable
Heaving their necks
Throwing their bodies
Out across the water
Mud and brown reeds,
Until they cease
Walk back onto land
Crooked like radiators
Or old men in need
Of a cane.

The cars are curious.
The drivers stop,
Ask – What are you doing here?
The line of poets with notepads.
The birders with field glasses.
Whatever it is
We are doing,
It is not what
They expected.

Imagine for a moment
What a slow life
Can do for you.
I hurry away to
The next thought.

Curious house
Across the road from hers:
A gnarled willow
By the front door.
The only real thing
A fishing net
Next to plastic owl,
Fawn, woodchuck,
Woodpecker.
Target practice.

Honestly,
Did she ever pine
For a house in town,
Running water,
Reliable heat.
Good thing for us
She didn't go
There.

Ronnie Hess



upon The pressure

subdural hematoma

blind white light
poetry explodes
out of the brain
on its way
to a silver coffin
lost
within billions of stars
each
a new-born word

James Roberts



Fringe Benefits

Sunlight through the forced spray
of water while cleaning the skimmer
for the pond. Look: momentarily
there with koi crap, a little rainbow.

When you finish soaking bean thread
in water brought to a boil
and then shock it with cold water,
you see in the strainer what
jewelers aim for when they granulate.

Lighting the candle, its flame
like a steeple, reaching.

David Curry

After Lorine

She said on the phone
The day
Our marriage
It was white all white of snow
So white you know
Forty years of white and dust
Brush off her husband's shoulders
Marriage is a clean contract
What was I going to say?

Sonia Menoud



Haiku

still talking about
the sermon
jack-in-the-pulpits

fresh scent
for an old pine
autumn rain

Julie Warther



execute and adjust

The Gray Catbird

With its meows, mimicked
melodies and secrets,
hops from shrub to thicket
at the hardwood edge.

Sighted—slate gray
black cap and smudge
of ochre under
tail.

Gray bird who
intimately knows
grasses, the succession
of seed to water, silt, and mud—

generational lessons
running along hollow bones—

suddenly presents
on a maple branch
to teach of mammoth
teeth preserved

in the swamp.

Nancy Shea



September Morning

I switched a shift to take my girlfriend
to the train station to visit her sister
who is pregnant and stressed
but whose husband has landed a job
they think he can keep.

Amanda Laughtland

Openings

your place
with the hedge around it
higher now

openings
the rabbits find

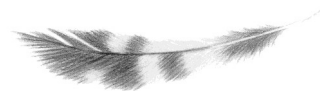
a casual offer
nectar
for the hummingbird

keeping
longer hours...
the morning glories

a bee shyly
circles the daisy

pulling
us in . . .
strawberry moon

Dan Schwerin
Julie Warther



In us sea-air rhythm

moon

snow light lifts dark
the bite of the moon
half full clearly seen
engraved on the back
of your hands

night light

jar of
fireflies
beside
my bed
who
filled
them
with
light
night
after
blessed
night?

song

wild plums
the rain
walking
i recognize
your voice
filtered
through
the music
of falling
leaves

pail

the clink
of ice
broken
the pail
frost
frozen
to ground
that no
longer
remembers
spring

blue

outside men
call freely
across newly
cut fields
you sit
inside
stuff need
into a blue
mason
jar

why

brightwinged
you singer
of joy
why is it
that you
make me
weep

Khadija Lacina



Haiku

water repeating itself
over rocks
over rocks

*

for the water
flowing by
the river's short name

*

deeper into daylight
sounds the ocean makes
out of land

Gary Hotham

"We live by the urgent"

City Talk

I
The flower beds
 on the superhighways—
Well they have all
 the facilities
the information
 from the colleges
they force it
 and all that garbage

II
I'm good for people?—
penetrating?—if you mean

I'm rotting here—
I'm an alewife

the fish the seagull
has no taste for

I die along the shore
and send a bad smell in

*

As praiseworthy

The power of breathing (Epictetus)
while we sleep. Add:
to move the parts of the body
without sound

and to float
on a smooth green stream
in a silent boat

*

Italian Translation of *City Talk* by
Lorine Niedecker

Conversazione di città

I
Le aiuole
 nelle autostrade:
Beh hanno tutto
 strumenti
informazioni
 dalle università
strappano loro
 e tutta questa sporcizia

II
Sono buono per le persone?,
penetrante?, se è questo che intendi

Marcisco qui,
sono una falsa aringa

il pesce il gabbiano
non lo favorisce

Muoio lungo la riva
ed emano cattivo odore

*

Com'è lodevole

La forza di respirare (Epitteto)
mentre dormiamo. In più:
muovere le parti del corpo
senza suono

e galleggiare
su un pacato verde ruscello
in una barca silenziosa

*

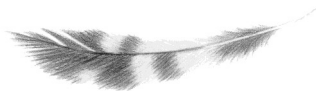
wave of the verse "

They've lost their leaves
the maples along the river
but the weeping willow still
 hangs green
and the old cracked boat-hulk
 mud-sunk
grows weeds
year after year

*

My mother saw the green tree toad
on the window sill
her first one
since she was young.
We saw it breathe
and swell up round.
My youth is no sure sign
I'll find this kind of thing
tho it does sing.
Let's take it in

I said so grandmother can see
but she could not
it changed to brown
and town
changed us, too.



Hanno perso le foglie
gli aceri lungo il fiume
ma il salice piangente
 sempreverde pende
e la vecchia carcassa incrinata di una barca
 affondata nel fango
cresce l'erbaccia
anno dopo anno

*

Mia madre ha visto la verde rana arborea
sul davanzale della finestra
la sua prima
dato che era giovane.
L'abbiamo vista respirare
e gonfiarsi tutta.
La mia giovinezza non mi dà certezza
che troverò tutto ciò
canta però.
Portiamola dentro

Dissi per far vedere alla nonna
ma non ha potuto
divenne marrone
e la città
ha poi cambiato noi.

Ilaria Milanesi



Solitary Plover

Roots are no guarantee of permanence. The ground shifts, flood water lifts, and trees come down.

The peculiar green of spring. Known as Heineken. Bottles on the ground. Young buds waiting to darken and mature.

Broke my vow of silence to answer a question from a passing car. Back in the world of humans.

A tree at the end of life. Odd angle to the earth. One branch with leaves, not aware of the future.

No fear from this water. No alligators with prehistoric eyes.

No order to this nature. No glorious cosmos. Just a jumble of tangled branches and muddy water.

The other bank is a mystery. Made inaccessible by the water. So instead I'm crossing the road. It's easier to see what's on the other side.

Six goslings in the mud. Crazy tilted chair in the water. Actually, there are eight goslings, eating.

Weeping willow speckled with green, dipping into the water. Spring green.

Not inspired by Blackhawk Island. Birds seem to like it.

Stabs of green in between the gravel and the beer cans. Nature shows its spirit to live.

River rolling by for days and years. A pelican is flying by, far from the ocean.

Gray light, cold rocks.

Mary Schumacher



Solitary Plover

Contributors

David Curry has published poems and short stories widely. His poem "Scene/Recipe," which first appeared in the winter 2019 issue of *The Southern Review*, has been selected by the Academy of American Poets for posting on its webpage, Poets.org. His second collection of poetry, *Contending to Be the Dream* (New Rivers Press) was a finalist in the Elliston Book Awards. He is a past writing fellow of the National Endowment for the Arts, and he edited and published the poetry magazine *Apple* for 10 years.

Ronnie Hess is an essayist and poet, author of five poetry chapbooks and two culinary travel guides. She lives in Madison. Find her at ronniehess.com

Gary Hotham grew up in northern Maine and currently lives in Maryland. He took up the art of English language haiku as a teenager and has had many published in literary magazines and journals since then. He has also had a number of chapbooks published since his first: *Without the Mountains* in 1976 with his most recent, *23*, in 2019. Also larger collections of his haiku: *Breath Marks: Haiku to Read in the Dark* (1999); *Spilled Milk: Haiku Destinies* (2010); *Nothing More Happens in the 20th Century* (2011); and *Stone's Throw: Promises of Mere Words* (2016).

Khadijah Lacina grew up in Wisconsin's Kickapoo Valley. She graduated from the UW - Eau Claire with a degree in English and Theater Arts. She and her family lived in Yemen for ten years, until stirrings of war brought them home. She now lives on a homestead in the Missouri Ozarks with her children and various animals. Her writings have appeared in various anthologies and many internet venues. *A Slice of Sunshine: The Poetry of Colors* was published in 2012, and her chapbooks *Night-running* and *Under the Sky* have been published by Facqueuesol Books.

Amanda Laughtland lives in the suburbs of Seattle and teaches English at Edmonds Community College. She enjoys making zines and shares info about them at teenytiny.org.

Sonia Menoud is a poet and playwright born in a rural area of the French-speaking part of Switzerland. She holds a Master's degree in English and in Spanish Literature. Her thesis on Lorine Niedecker was awarded the prize of the Faculty of Humanities in 2007 *Truth Gives Heat': The Poetry of Lorine Niedecker*. She writes poetry in French and in English.

Hailing from a small town in the centre of Italy, **Ilaria Milanese** has had fascination for foreign languages since she was a child. Loving English and German culture she graduated from the University of Macerata in "Lingue e culture occidentali e orientali." She continued her Master studies at the University of Udine. It is here that she got in touch with Anglo-American literature. Lorine Niedecker has moved her particularly: her accurate and detailed description of nature, which accompanied her through her entire childhood, is so real that Milanese decided to translate into Italian one of her most evocative poems, *City Talk*, *Conversazione di città*.

Georgia Ressimeyer, twice nominated for a Pushcart Prize in poetry, has published three books, the most recent of which is *Home/Body*. Her poetry has received awards from the Council for Wisconsin Writers, *Wisconsin People & Ideas*, the Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets, The Washington Island Literary Festival, *Peninsula Pulse* and others. Please see georgiaressmeyer.com for more information.

James Roberts has had nine books published to date in the fields of dark fantasy: *Bourland*, poetry: *Derne Runes* and *Spirit Fire*, literary non-fiction: *Famous Wisconsin Authors*, *Return to Derleth: Selected Essays*, *Haunted Voices: Selected Poetry and Art from Lithuania* and baseball history: *Howlin' Wolf: A Fan's History of the Highs & Lows During Five Stormy Years With the Madison Black Wolf*. Previous appearances in *The Baltimore Review*, *Urbanus*, *Red Owl Magazine*, *Requiem*, and a few dozen other zines. He is Past President and current Board Member of the August Derleth Society and very active in the Wisconsin literary scene.

Mary Schumacher is a freelance copywriter and content writer by day. When she manages to make it out of the office, she likes to read Niedecker poetry, hike, and discover new places in Wisconsin and around the world. She lives in Hales Corners, WI.

Dan Schwerin, Waukesha, WI and **Julie Warther**, Dover, OH met at a haiku conference in Evanston, Illinois in 2013 and have been spanning time zones by writing collaborative poetry ever since. Both Dan and Julie lead haiku study groups in their respective regions.

Nancy Shea lives near the confluence of the Crawfish and Rock Rivers. She is a member of the Friends of Lorine Niedecker. The poem, *The Gray Catbird*, started with an encounter of a gray catbird during a Blackhawk Island writing workshop.

Julie Warther serves as Midwest Regional Coordinator for the Haiku Society of America and is an associate editor for the online haiku journal, *The Heron's Nest*.

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.

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