

## Brief Resume

### Books:

*The Transit of Venus*, The Backwaters Press, 2016.  
*Milwaukee Does Strange Things to People: New and Selected Poems 1979-2007*, Backwaters Press, 2007.  
*The Laugh We Make When We Fall*, Backwaters Press, 2002.  
*The Lives of the Saints and Everything*, Cleveland State University Press, 1993.  
*The Underground Communion Rail*, West End Press, 1992.  
*My Life with the Tsar and Other Poems*, New Rivers Press, 1979.

### Principal Awards:

NEA Creative Writing Fellowship in Poetry, 2015.  
Named University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Distinguished Alumnus, 2009.  
Awarded Lorine Niedecker Prize by Council for Wisconsin Writers, 2009.  
Named Poet Laureate of Milwaukee, 2008-2010.  
Backwaters Poetry Prize, 2001.  
Milwaukee County Artist Fellowship, 1996.  
Wisconsin Council of Writers Posner Poetry Award, 1993.  
Cleveland State Poetry Center Prize, 1992.  
The Best American Poetry Selection, 1992.  
Wisconsin Arts Board Fellowship, 1979.  
Academy of American Poets Prize, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

### Selected List of Major Periodicals Where Poems Have Appeared:

*Georgia Review*, *New York Times Sunday Magazine*, *North American Review*, *New American Writing*, *jubilat*, *Columbia Poetry Review*, *Court Green*, *Margie*, *Hanging Loose*, *Prairie Schooner*, *The Iowa Review*, *Crab Orchard Review*, *Lungfull!*, *Southern Poetry Review*, *The Cream City Review*, *Chicago Review*, *Another Chicago Magazine*, *Exquisite Corpse*, *Christian Science Monitor*, *Ms.*, *Chicago Tribune Magazine*, *Oxford Magazine*, *Conduit*. Two poems read by Garrison Keillor on National Public Radio Writers' Almanac spring of 1994.

### Selected List of Principal Anthologies Where Poems Have Appeared:

*Far Out: Poems of the 60s*, Wings Press, 2016.  
*Burden of Light: Poems on Illness and Loss*, Fast Forward, 2014.  
*Visiting Dr. Williams: Poems Inspired by the Life and Work of William Carlos Williams*, University of Iowa Press, 2011.  
*The Cento: A Collection of Collage Poems*, Red Hen Press, 2011.  
*Irish American Poetry: From the Eighteenth Century to the Present*, University of Notre Dame Press, 2007.  
*Fresh Water: Women Writing on the Great Lakes*, Michigan State University Press, 2006.  
*Visiting Frost: Poems Inspired by the Life and Work of Robert Frost*, University of Iowa Press, 2005.  
*Sweeping Beauty: Contemporary Women Poets on Housework*, University of Iowa Press, 2005.  
*Boomer Girls: American Women Poets Come of Age*, University of Iowa Press, 1999.  
*Thus Spake the Corpse: An Exquisite Corpse Reader*, Black Sparrow Press, 1999.  
*The Talking of Hands: Unpublished Writing by New Rivers Authors*, New Rivers Press, 1998.  
*A Whole Other Ballgame: Women's Literature on Women's Sport*, Farrar Straus and Giroux, 1997.  
*Ladies, Start Your Engines: Women Writers on Cars and the Road*, Faber and Faber, 1996.

*Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend*, Faber and Faber, 1994.  
*The Next Parish Over: A Collection of Irish-American Writing*, New Rivers Press, 1993.  
*The Best American Poetry*, Scribners/Cloth and Macmillan/Collier Pbk., 1992  
*Mixed Voices*, Milkweeds Editions, 1991.  
*Hummers, Knucklers, and Slow Curves: Contemporary Baseball Poems*, University of Illinois Press, 1991.  
*The Journey Home: The Literature of Wisconsin Through Four Centuries*, North Country Press, 1989.  
*This Sporting Life*, Milkweed Editions, 1987.

## **Selected Readings, Workshops, and Other Professional Activities:**

### **National Presentations:**

Reading at AWP Conference with Backwaters Press, Washington, D.C., 2017.  
Reading at launch for Issue No. 8 of Court Green at Columbia College, Chicago, 2011.  
Reading at Upper Jay, NY, Art Center, 2010.  
Reading at the launch for Issue #22 of The Columbia Poetry Review, Columbia College (Chicago), 2009. Workshops and reading at Sundance Resort, Utah, for the University of Nebraska College of Medicine's Timpanogos Surgery Club, 2008.  
Reading at Notebaert Nature Museum for Chicago Public Library's Read Green Live Green: Summer Reads for Adults Program, 2008.  
Benefit reading for Backwaters Press, Crete, Nebraska, 2008.  
Featured poet of the Mackinac Island Poetry Festival, giving the keynote address ("Lilacs in American Poetry; American Poetry in Lilacs") at Mackinac Island Public Library, a workshop at the Mission Resort, and a reading at the Stone Church, 2006.  
Read with David Lehman at the KGB Bar, New York City, 2006. Plymouth Church Literary Witnesses Series (Minneapolis, MN), guest reader, 2004.  
LUNGFULL! magazine issue 13 launch reading, Zinc Bar (New York City), 2004.  
University of Missouri-St. Louis Center for International Studies, guest reader, 2003.  
River Styx Series at Duff's Restaurant (St. Louis, MO), guest reader, 2003.  
Southwest State University (Marshall, MN), guest teacher and reader, 2002.  
Associated Writing Programs Annual Conference (New Orleans, LA), panelist "Hunger and Excess: Women, Food, and Poetry," 2002.  
Illinois Wesleyan (Bloomington, IL), guest teacher and reader, 2001.  
Merriam Park Library (St. Paul, MN), guest reader, 1999.  
Hungry Mind Bookstore (St. Paul, MN), guest reader, 1998.  
The Distinguished Off-Campus Scholar at a five day graduate/undergraduate poetry workshop at Miami University (Oxford, Ohio), 1994.  
Columbia College (Chicago, Illinois), guest reader, 1993.  
Café di Falco (Chicago, IL), guest reader, 1989.  
Links Hall Literary Series (Chicago, IL), guest reader, 1988.

### **Local and Regional Presentations:**

Reading and book launch for *The Transit of Venus*, Boswell's Books (Milwaukee, WI), 2016.  
Reading at the Cream City Live! 40th Anniversary Celebration with work by Kimberley Blesser and Ihab Hassen, UWM Green Hall, 2016.

Found Poetry reading, organized by Matt Cook, Milwaukee's current poet laureate, other poets reading included

Matt Cook, Timothy Kloss, Kiki Anderson, Philo T. Ogden, Zack Pieper, Mike Hauser, Grace Mitchell and Soham Patel, Milwaukee Public Library's Centennial Hall, 2016.

Reading with Tobias Wray, Lindsay Daigle, and other special guests, Juneau Park (Milwaukee, WI), 2015.

Reading for Schlitz Audubon's World of Nature Series, Schlitz Audubon Nature Center (Milwaukee, WI), 2015.

Reading for The Ineluctable series, with Keith Gaustad, Microlights, 2015.

BURDOCK XIV supplementary launch, along with Paul Hansen Clark, Amanda Huckin & others, People's Books (Milwaukee, WI), 2015

Reading with Dorothea Lasky, Woodland Pattern (Milwaukee, WI), 2014.

Reading for Hidden Culture Tap series, along with Maurice Kilwein-Guevara and Ching-In Chen, Downtown Books (Milwaukee, WI), 2013.

Wisconsin Poets' Calendar reading, Books & Co. (Oconomowoc, WI), 2013.

Tribute to James Hazard, reading for the Midwest Small Press Book Festival, along with Jim Chapson, James Blessington, Antler, Jeff Poniewaz, Bix Firer and more hosted by Keith Gaustad, People's Books (Milwaukee, WI), 2013.

Reading for National Poetry Month, Woodland Pattern (Milwaukee, WI), along with Ching-In Chan, Elisa Karbin, and Skyler Osborne, 2012.

"Poetry of Place: Featuring Susan Firer and UWM Students", Woodland Pattern (Milwaukee, WI), 2012.

"The Art of Losing: Four Poet Laureates on Love, Bereavement, and Healing," Reading for Wisconsin Book Festival, A Room of One's Own Bookstore (Madison, WI), 2012.

100,000 Poets for Change reading at Woodland Pattern (Milwaukee, WI), 2011.

"Irish Women in Poetry," reading for the Annual Irish Fest Poetry Event, 2011.

Reading for BABY BONK! poetry series at GALLERY B4S (Racine, WI), with Ching-In Chen and Kari Freitag, 2011.

Reading at Butler, WI, Pubic Library, 2011.

Reading at Fond du Lac, Windhover Arts Center, 2011.

Reading for Wisconsin Book Festival, Avol's Bookstore (Madison, WI), along with John Koethe, Max Garland, Karl Elder, and Derrick Harriell, 2010.

Reading for Southeast Wisconsin Festival of the Book, University of Wisconsin Waukesha, 2010.

Verse Wisconsin launch reading, Avol's Bookstore (Madison, WI), 2010.

Verse Wisconsin launch reading, Woodland Pattern (Milwaukee, WI), 2010.

UWM Spring Writers Festival, individual conferences and class, 2010.

Woodland Pattern Marathon Reading, 2010.

Reading and workshop for the Milwaukee Area Academic Alliance in English, "Creating Creativity in the Classroom," 2009.

Reading at Third Saturday Coffee House, Unity Temple (Oak Park, Illinois), 2009.

Reading at the Lorine Niedecker Festival in Fort Atkinson, 2009.

Reading with other Council for Wisconsin Writers prize winners at Overture Center, Madison, 2009.

Reading for Milwaukee Book Festival, 2009.

Reading and teaching class at Beloit College, 2009.

Talk and reading for the Alliance of University Women, New Berlin Public Library, 2009.

Woodland Pattern Benefit Marathon Reading, 2009.

Panel participant for Wisconsin Book Festival, (Madison, WI), 2008.

Reading for Milwaukee Book Festival by Milwaukee's poets laureate, 2008.

Milwaukee Public Library Poet Laureate Inaugural Reading, Centennial Hall, 2008.

Allen Ginsberg Tribute, UWM Ballroom, 2008.

Participant in three events of the 2006 Wisconsin Book Festival: Wisconsin Authors' Night. (Marquette University), Wisconsin Historical Society reading, and Wisconsin Women's Poetry Reading (Orpheum Theatre, Madison, WI).

Reading with Mary Jo Salter at Woodland Pattern (Milwaukee, WI), 2006.

Cardinal Stritch (Glendale, WI), guest reader, 2004.  
 University of Wisconsin-Sheboygan (Sheboygan, WI), guest workshop leader and reader, 2004.  
 Canterbury Books (Madison, WI), guest reader, 2004.  
 A Room of One's Own Bookstore (Madison, WI), guest reader, 2003.  
 Alverno College (Milwaukee, WI), guest reader, 2003.  
 University of Wisconsin-Stout (Menomonie, WI), guest teacher and reader, 2003.  
 Judge for the Milwaukee Irish Fest Donn Godwin Poetry Prize and Joseph Gahagan Memorial Prize, 2002.  
 Marian College (Fond du Lac, WI), guest teacher and reader, 2001.  
 University of Wisconsin Center Sheboygan County (Sheboygan, WI), guest teacher and reader, 2001. Poetry Month reading at Milwaukee Public Library's Centennial Hall, 2001.  
 James Liddy Symposium (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee), guest reader, 2001.  
 Guest speaker at annual University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Women's Studies Student Award ceremony, 2000.  
 Woodland Pattern Book Center (Milwaukee, WI), guest reader, 1999.  
 Judge for the New Rivers Press Headwaters Poetry Book Contest, 1999.  
 Wauwatosa Public Library (Wauwatosa, WI), guest reader, 1999.  
 Wisconsin Fellowship of Poetry Conference (Olympia Village, Oconomowoc, WI), guest reader, 1998.  
 Ripon College (Ripon, WI), visiting writer and reader, 1996.  
 Woodland Pattern Book Center (Milwaukee, WI), guest reader, 1996.  
 Central Wisconsin Poetry Day, University of Wisconsin-Marathon County, keynote speaker, 1996.  
 Voices of Irish America, Vogel Hall Art Museum (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee), guest reader in conjunction with the exhibition Homeland: Historic Photographs of the North of Ireland, 1900-1935, 1996.  
 The Writer's Place (Madison, WI), guest reader, 1995.  
 University of Wisconsin Center Sheboygan County (Sheboygan, WI), visiting writer and reader, 1995.  
 The University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, visiting writer, 1995.  
 Highland Community College (Freeport, IL), visiting writer, 1994.  
 NOTA Visiting Writer at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, 1993.  
 Alverno College (Milwaukee, WI) seminar day, Wisconsin Women: Making a Difference, 1993.  
 Keynote Address at University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, Creative Writing Festival, 1992.  
 Woodland Pattern Book Center (Milwaukee, WI), guest reader, 1989.  
 University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, guest reader, 1989.  
 Performing Arts Center Vogel Hall (Milwaukee, WI), guest reader, 1987.  
 University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, guest reader, 1987.  
 Kettle Moraine Correctional Facility, guest reader, 1987.  
 Taycheeda Women's Prison (Fond du Lac, WI), guest reader, 1987.  
 Cardinal Bar (Madison WI), guest reader at Abraxas sponsored reading, 1982.  
 University of Wisconsin-Waukesha, guest reader, 1982.  
 Taycheeda Women's Prison (Fond du Lac, WI), guest reader, 1982.  
 Kettle Moraine (WI) Correctional Facility, guest reader, 1982.  
 Jazz Gallery (Milwaukee, WI), guest reader, 1980.  
 Alverno College (Milwaukee, WI), 1979.  
 Wisconsin Arts Board Residencies, Poets in the Schools Program: Monroe High School, Platteville High School, and Central Wisconsin Christian High School, 1976-1977.

Have given readings and workshops in universities, schools, book stores, coffee houses, book clubs, cultural centers, and prisons in Wisconsin and neighboring states. In all, I have given more than 125 local and regional presentations. Have actively promoted and organized poetry readings on the U. of Wisconsin- Milwaukee campus and the metro community for over twenty years.

As chair of the creative writing program's visiting writers committee and, more recently, the Boudreaux Reading, I have been responsible for bringing in Galway Kinnell, Cornelius Eady, Russell Edson, Carolyn Ferrell, Wang Ping, Maxine Chernoff, David Lehman, C.D. Wright, and Matthew Zapruder.

### **Media Presentations:**

Interviewed and read as part of Michael Feldman's live Whad'Ya Know Radio Hour broadcast at the historic Pabst Theater in downtown Milwaukee, 2015.

Three poems for Wisconsin Public Radio's series "Wisconsin Life." The poems will be aired a number of times through the year, 2011.

Interview on Third Coast Digest podcast with Mark Metcalf, 2010.

"Lilacs," broadcast on WUWM's "Lake Effect" program to celebrate the first day of summer, 2010.

"Call Me Pier" was included in the Poetry Everywhere showing of animated poems at the Downer Theatre, 2009.

Taped reading and interview for WUWM's "UWM Today" program, with host Tom Luljack, for broadcast on August 27 and rebroadcast on August 30, 2009.

Interview and reading aired on WUWM's "Lake Effect" program, 2008.

Interviewed and reading on "Milwaukee Presents," Joanne Weintraub's program on WHAD, Wisconsin Public Radio, on 2006.

*Higher Ground* (Wisconsin Public Radio), guest poet, 2005.

*At Ten* (Wisconsin Public Radio), guest poet, 2005.

*Hotel Milwaukee Radio Show* (Milwaukee, WI WHAD-FM 90.7), frequent appearances as guest poet, 1996 to 2003.

Videotaped poems ("It Was The Summer 12 Year Old Dark Haired Alyssa Danced in the Rain in a Blue Net Formal," "A Night Game in Menomonee Park," "My Mother Dried Her Girdle Indoors," "Estabrook Park, 1986," "The Minister's Post Card," and "Michigan.") for the WMVS public television program Art's Place, 1991-1992.

Taped poems for Pacifica Radio (Berkeley, CA) broadcast at the Jazz Gallery (Milwaukee, WI), 1984

### **Interarts Presentations:**

"The Weight of Skin" was choreographed by Janet Lilly and danced by Kelly Anderson on the main stage of the Lakefront Festival of the Arts, Milwaukee, 2010.

Sigmund Snopek presented musical settings of several of Firer's poems at a fund raising event for the music department of St. Matthias Church, Waukesha, 2010.

Friends of Milwaukee Repertory fundraiser, "Repertee," at Stackner Cabaret, with Rep actors reading my poems, 2009.

Organized an inter-arts program, "Contraptions," including video, poetry, dance, and music, at Centennial Hall, Milwaukee Public Library, 2008.

Documentary film appearance with James Liddy and John Koethe, Milwaukee, USA: Poetry by the Lake, 2008. A piece choreographed by Janet Lilly, based on Firer's poem "Call Me Pier," performed at St. Mark's in the Bowery, New York City, 2006.

Janet Lilly's choreographed piece "The Weight of Skin," inspired by and including Firer's "The Beautiful Pain of Too Much" along with John Tavener's music and performed by Kelly Anderson presented at St. Marks in the Bowery, New York City, 2005.

Jerome Kitzke Performed the Poetry of James Hazard and Susan Firer with special guest Michael Lowenstein, clarinets, Barbès (Brooklyn, NY), 2003.

### **Education:**

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, BA, 1973. General Liberal Arts.

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, MA, 1982. English/Creative Writing.