Linda Nemec Foster
Bio Note

Linda Nemec Foster has published nine collections of poetry including *Amber Necklace from Gdansk* (finalist for the Ohio Book Award in Poetry) and *Listen to the Landscape* (short-listed for the Michigan Notable Book Award). *Talking Diamonds*, her latest book, was selected as a finalist for *ForeWord Magazine’s* Book of the Year Award in Poetry. Her chapbook, *Contemplating the Heavens*, was the inspiration for jazz pianist Steve Talaga’s original composition which was nominated for the 2007 Pulitzer Prize in Music. Her latest project, *Cry of Freedom*, is a collaboration with Hungarian musician Laszlo Slomovits and was released as a CD in 2013. Foster’s work has appeared in over 300 literary journals including *The Georgia Review, Connecticut Review, New American Writing, The North American Review, Nimrod,* and *Verse Daily*. Her poetry has also been published in anthologies in the United States and Great Britain, translated in Europe, and produced for the stage. She has received nominations for the Pushcart Prize and awards from the Arts Foundation of Michigan, ArtServe Michigan, the National Writer’s Voice, and the Academy of American Poets. In 2008, Foster received the International Creative Arts Award in a ceremony at the Polish Embassy in Washington, D.C. She was selected to serve as Grand Rapids’ first Poet Laureate from 2003-05. Foster founded the Contemporary Writers Series at Aquinas College in 1997 and currently is a member of the Series’ programming committee.
Books:

Living in the Fire Nest, Ridgeway Press, Detroit, 1996.

Chapbooks:


CD's:

Contemplating the Heavens, with original music by Steve Talaga, Talaga Music, 2006.

Essays:


Poems published in anthologies:


Partial listing of poems published in magazines and journals:


“To the Younger Sister in Love,” in *The University of Windsor Review*, Volume XVI, No. 1, Fall-Winter, 1981.


“Nature of the Beast,” in *The Bridge*, Volume 1, No. 1, Fall, 1990.


“Young Shepherd in Front of Old Church,” “Brothers, Stoian and Christo,” “The Dance of Zlatko Zlatev, Ex-Pilot,” “A Man is a Man When a Man is on the Road,” in *Salamander*, Volume 13, No. 1, Winter, 2007/2008.

“Contrapuntal: Negative Space,” in *New Millennium Writings*, Issue # 17, 2007-08.


“Fire and Ice,” in *Driftwood*, Fall, 2010.


“This Boy, This Light, This Water,” “Luck Leaps Out of the Water,” “The Crazy Old Woman Next Door,” “Disappearing Act,” “A Daughter Dreams of Her Mother’s Death,” in *Big Scream*, Issue # 50, Winter, 2011.


“The Unanswered Question,” “Love in the Midst of War,” in Presa, Number 17, Fall, 2012.

“Scar,” in basalt, Volume 7, Number 1, 2012.


“Conspiracies of Three,” in Presa, Number 18, Spring, 2013.


For more information about my poetry, writings, and projects please visit these sites:

www.lindanemecfoster.com

http://archive.org/details/PoetLaureateDebutAt2003GrLibraryRenovation


http://www.pw.org/content/linda_nemec_foster_1


http://www.throughthe3rdeye.com/node/265


http://westmichiganwoman.com/profile/item/219-poet-laureate-contributes-to-westmichigans-literary-scene


http://www.amazon.com/Linda-Nemec-Foster/e/B001JSAFE8/ref=ntt_atr_dp_pel_1

http://www.aquinas.edu/cw/index.html
Awards, Prizes, and Honors
Finalist, *ForeWord Magazine’s* Book of the Year Award (2010)
Winner, Springfed Arts Poetry Contest (2008, 2010)
Creative Arts Award, Polish American Historical Association (2008)
Finalist, Michigan Governor's Arts Award (2007)
Selected to be first Poet Laureate of Grand Rapids, Michigan (2003-2005)
Finalist, Ohio Book Award for Poetry (2003)
Nominee, Laughlin Award from the Academy of American Poets (2002)
Creative Artist Grant, ArtServe Michigan (2001)
Fellowship, National Writers' Voice (1999)
Finalist, Poet's Prize from the Nicholas Roerich Museum (1997)
Creative Artist Grant, Arts Foundation of Michigan (1996)
Over 20 poems nominated for the Pushcart Prize by editors and poets (1982-2013)
Poet Laureate Projects  
Linda Nemec Foster, 2003-05

My duties as Poet Laureate consisted of several important facets which included the writing of three poems commissioned by various organizations to highlight major events in Grand Rapids’ civic life. These poems were:

1. “Beginnings” written for the Grand Rapids Public Library’s celebration of its grand reopening after major renovations, April 21, 2003. A video of this reading is included in my weblinks page.

I was also involved in over 25 events--readings, workshops, presentations, panel discussions, and seminars--in the Grand Rapids area and beyond (e.g. Detroit, Ann Arbor, East Lansing, and Bielsko-Biala, Poland--Grand Rapids’ Sister City). A general listing of these events are included but these are some examples:

1. Creative Arts Project for the Grandville Avenue Academy for the Arts.
2. Poetry competition (judging and presentation) for the Grand Rapids Public Library’s Writing Competition.
3. Reading at the Grand Rapids Women’s City Club.
4. Presentation at the Kent District Library--Cascade Branch.
5. Program for Peninsula Writers 20th Anniversary Celebration.
6. “In a Word” reading at the Grand Rapids Public Library with other area poets.
7. Presentation and reading at the Grand Rapids Rotary Club.
8. Honorary Committee Member for The Power of Poetry program with Nikki Giovanni in Detroit.
9. “We Sing the City Electric: Poetry from the Neighborhoods” at the GRPL.
10. Poet Laureate workshop and reading, UICA.
11. Poetry reading and presentation at the GR Writers’ Conference, UICA.
2005
June 2005
Linda Nemec Foster in Poland
In June, 2005 Linda Nemec Foster was the cultural representative for the city of Grand Rapids, Michigan in an official Sister City delegation that visited Bielsko-Biala, Poland.

The city in southern Poland is one of four places that has developed close ties with Grand Rapids in the Sister Cities International Organization. (The other three are in Japan, Italy, and the Ga District in Africa).

More than twenty people comprised the delegation that included Grand Rapids mayor George Heartwell and his wife Susan, City Commissioner Robert Dean, Aquinas College President Harry Knopke and his wife Sheila, and various professors, scholars, and translators. As the first poet laureate of Grand Rapids, Foster had specific duties during the trip that included meeting with university professors to develop a college exchange program and talks with secondary school educators to discuss the possibilities of a high school exchange program.
Her main goal was to develop relationships with prominent Polish poets and writers to explore the creation of a program in which those authors would be writers-in-residence at Aquinas College’s Contemporary Writers Series. With that goal in mind, she had a personal meeting with Adam Zagajewski, one of Poland’s most significant poets and writers. He was very interested in the Contemporary Writers Series and the residency program that would be connected with it. Foster is hoping that this cultural connection with Poland and Grand Rapids will be a reality in five years. In the meantime, she feels this trip was instrumental in starting the process.

**Friday, May 7-14, 2005**
Grand Rapids, Michigan, poet Linda Nemec Foster will appear on the nationwide broadcast of the public radio literary program *New Letters on the Air*. Foster, the first Poet Laureate of Grand Rapids, Michigan, talks about her books of poetry, including her most recent, *Amber Necklace from Gdansk*. The program will be available on the public radio satellite on April 27, 2005, and can also be heard on the program’s website [www.newletters.org](http://www.newletters.org). May 4-17.

[Click here to read full press release](http://www.newletters.org/press-releases/)

**Friday, February 4, 2005 from 6:00 PM**
Grand Rapids Poet Laureate Linda Nemec Foster is doing a poetry reading and presentation at the Grand Rapids Art Museum on Friday, February 4 from 6:00 PM to 6:30 PM in the Museum’s Cook Auditorium (second floor). The reading is from work that was specifically inspired by the visual arts and will include a slide presentation of those pieces. A question and answer period and book signing will follow. This event is free and open to the public.
2004

Thursday, November 4 at 1:00 PM,
Linda Nemec Foster gives a reading from her new work at University of Michigan-Dearborn.

Thursday, October 28 at 1:00 PM
Linda Nemec Foster presents her poetry at Thornapple Evangelical Covenant Church, 6595 Cascade Road, Ada, Michigan. Her work will be presented in the context of Woman as Immigrant.

Friday, October 22 at 7:00 PM
Linda Nemec Foster is the featured poet at the Writers Place in Kansas City, Missouri.

Friday and Saturday, October 15 and 16
Linda Nemec Foster critiques poetry manuscripts and conducts a poetry session at the Detroit Working Writers Conference at Schoolcraft College, 18600 Haggerty Road, Livonia, Michigan 48152.

Saturday, October 9 at 4:00 PM
Linda Nemec Foster reads from her critically acclaimed book, *Amber Necklace From Gdansk*, at the Hamtramck Public Library in celebration of Polish Heritage Month.

Wednesday, September 29 at 7:00 PM
Linda Nemec Foster will be reading poems inspired by visual art for a special exhibit at the Birmingham Bloomfield Art Center, 1516 South Cranbrook Road, Birmingham, Michigan 48009.

Monday, June 14, 2004 at 6-8 PM.
at the Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts
Linda Nemec Foster will read a new poem especially written to celebrate the 35th anniversary of La Grande Vitesse, Alexander Calder's magnificent public sculpture that has graced the Grand Rapids' City Hall Plaza since 1969. The sculpture was the first public arts project to be funded by the National Endowment for the Arts.

Thursday, June 10 at 7:00 PM
Linda Nemec Foster reads her poetry in celebration of Grand Rapids' neighborhoods. The program, "We Sing the City Electric: Poetry from the Neighborhoods," is sponsored by the Grand Rapids Humanities Council. The reading takes place at the Grand Rapids Public Library, 111 Library Street, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Saturday, May 22 at 7:00 PM
Linda Nemec Foster is the featured poet at the 7th Annual Theodore Roethke Poetry Festival. Reading takes place at the Anderson Enrichment Center, 120 Ezra Rust Drive, Saginaw, Michigan.

Wednesday, April 14 at 4:00 PM
Linda Nemec Foster will present a talk entitled "Publish or Perish: How Poems are Created, Written, and Published." Vandenberg Center for the Book Arts, Grand Rapids Public Library, Main Branch, 111 Library St NE, Grand Rapids, MI.
**Friday, March 26 at 4:30 PM**
Linda Nemec Foster will moderate and participate in a panel discussion celebrating the poetry of Lisel Mueller, Pulitzer Prize Winner. Associated Writing Programs Annual Conference, Palmer House Hilton Hotel, Chicago, IL.

**Thursday, March 18 at 7:00 PM**
Linda Nemec Foster presents a poetry reading and discussion of all six of her published books. Peninsula Writers March event. Schuler Books and Music, 2660 28th Street, Grand Rapids, MI.

**Friday, January 23, 2004 at 7:30 PM.**
Poetry reading and book signing for *Amber Necklace from Gdansk*. Michigan State University, Main Library, North Conference Room

**Tuesday, December 30, 2003 at 2:00 PM**
Poet Laureate Linda Nemec Foster reads a poem specifically written for the inauguration of the new mayor, George Heartwell. Grand Rapids City Hall, 9th floor, City Commissioners Conference Room.

**2003**

**October 23, 2003**
Poetry reading and book signing for *Amber Necklace from Gdansk* Shaman Drum Bookstore, Ann Arbor, MI, 8:00 PM.

**Sunday, March 30 at 2:00 PM**
Poetry reading in celebration of Women's History Month - Fenton Public Library. Fenton, Michigan.

**July 28, 2003**
Poetry workshop based on visual art, Franciscan Center, Lowell, MI, 7:00 PM.

**May 18, 2003**
Poetry reading at Grand Rapids Public Library, 2:30 PM

**May 8, 2003**
Celebration of poetry and contest winners in Grand Rapids Writing Competition, Grand Rapids Public Library, 7:00 PM.

**April 25, 2003**
Poetry Workshops for area high school students, Calvin College, 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM.

**April 24, 2003**
Poetry reading at the Women's City Club, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 11:00 AM.
April 21, 2003
Poetry reading in celebration of the opening of the new Grand Rapids Public Library, 10:00 AM.

April 16, 2003
Creative Writing Seminars at East Grand Rapids Middle School, all day sessions.

March 27, 2003
Creative Writing Workshops at East Grand Rapids High School, 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM.

Tuesday, March 18, 2003 at 7:00 PM
Poetry reading on the subject of Woman as Immigrant, Aquinas College, Wege Student Center, Loutit Room. Grand Rapids, Michigan