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For more information:

Mike DeVine, publicist, mike.devine@pbswisconsin.org

[Media kit](#)

New PBS Wisconsin digital series *Welcome Poets* premieres Sept. 12

Episodes premiere weekly at pbswisconsin.org/welcomepoets

PBS Wisconsin's limited digital series ***Welcome Poets*** explores the lives, work and legacies of two Wisconsin poets with strong ties to Fort Atkinson.

In the series' six episodes, the life and work of the late poet Lorine Niedecker is celebrated through the personal reflections of 2023-24 Wisconsin State Poet Laureate Nicholas Gulig as he examines the people, places and influences that have shaped his own life as a poet.

The series premieres with two episodes at 8 a.m. Friday, Sept. 12, followed by one episode every week at 8:30 a.m. each Friday through Oct. 10.

Episodes will be streamed at pbswisconsin.org/welcomepoets and on the free PBS app on all streaming devices and smart TVs.

Poetry can be a life-changing art form that gives us a deeper understanding of our world, but while Wisconsin's contributions to American poetry are often overlooked, the works of Niedecker stand as some of the most significant among them.

This series examines the impact that each poet has left and is leaving on the history of Wisconsin literature. Through a combination of contemporary documentary footage, historical reenactments, video collage and archival materials, *Welcome Poets* illustrates how Niedecker and her poems made Fort Atkinson a beacon for poets like Gulig, who went on to win the *Wisconsin People & Ideas* poetry contest twice (in 2017 and 2023), publish three poetry collections (including the award-winning books *Orient* and *The Other Altar*), and become Wisconsin's first Asian American Poet Laureate.

"We each stand on ground that's given and prepared for us by others," Gulig said. "This is especially true for writers. Moving to Lorine Niedecker's hometown taught me how to write again and gave me back my state."

As he tours Wisconsin, Gulig learns more about the connections he shares with Niedecker and the way her life and work inform his own. It is evident that Gulig's life and work have intertwined with the legacy Niedecker left on the small city in southeastern Wisconsin that

he has chosen to call home. Gulig is currently an associate professor of languages and literatures at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater.

“Welcome Poets is a unique multimedia project that uses a novel approach to bring the thoughts and words of two important Wisconsin poets to life,” PBS Wisconsin multimedia producer Colin Crowley said. “Our hope for this web series is that it will inspire our audience to gain a greater appreciation of the role that poetry can play in defining the meaning we give to our lives and to the places we call home.”

A preview of each episode can be found below:

- **Fort Atkinson — Premieres 8 a.m. Friday, Sept. 12**

Upon returning to his home state of Wisconsin after living overseas, a chance encounter with a surprising sign leads Gulig to reflect on how Niedecker’s legacy makes Fort Atkinson a special place in the history of American poetry.

- **Lorine Niedecker — Premieres 8 a.m. Friday, Sept. 12**

While Niedecker lived a quiet, anonymous life in the early 20th century, the groundbreaking poetry she wrote in her small cabin on the Rock River has made an impact in faraway places more than 50 years later.

- **Eau Claire — Premieres 8:30 a.m. Friday, Sept. 19**

Gulig grew up in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, with a collection of friends who were part of a unique art, music and literary scene during the 1990s and early 2000s that combined the aesthetics of rural Wisconsin with the “do-it-yourself” ethics of punk rock.

- **Lorine the Artist — Premieres 8:30 a.m. Friday, Sept. 26**

Niedecker’s intense work continues from the middle of the 20th century through the 1960s, crafting “gems of poetry from Wisconsin” through a life of quiet inspiration in a cabin on the Rock River, until a life change enables her to take trips to places that inspire a new direction in her poetry.

- **Poet Laureate — Premieres 8:30 a.m. Friday, Oct. 3**

Having dedicated his life to poetry as a professor and published poet, Gulig reflects on how Niedecker’s legacy has impacted his life and achievements while he brings poetry to the public as the 2023-24 Wisconsin State Poet Laureate.

- **Lake Superior — Premieres 8:30 a.m. Friday, Oct. 10**

Gulig dives deeper into Niedecker’s legacy by setting off on the road to retrace her 1966 trip that inspired the first poem of hers that he ever read, “Lake Superior.”

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821 University Ave.
Madison, WI 53706
Phone 608.263.2121

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