

# BIOGRAPHY

## THE MCKNIGHT FOUNDATION

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### WILLIAM J. HOLM

*2008 McKnight Distinguished Artist Award Recipient*

- Born 1943, in Minneota, Minnesota.
- Resides in Minneota with wife, Marcy Brekken.
- Retired professor of English Literature, Southwest State University, Marshall, 1980-2007.

#### EDUCATION

District 90, Swede Prairie Township, Yellow Medicine County, 1949-1954  
Minneota Public School, Minneota, MN 1955-61  
Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, MN BA, 1965  
University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS MA, 1967, Ph.D. (abd) 1969

#### TEACHING

Hampton Institute, Hampton, VA 1970-1975  
Lakewood Community College, White Bear Lake, MN 1976-1978  
University of Iceland, Reykjavík 1979-1980  
Southwest Minnesota State University, Marshall, MN 1980-2007  
Xi'an Jiaotong University, Xi'an, Shaanxi PRC 1986-1987  
Lecturer on American Culture, US Embassy Madagascar 1997

#### BOOKS

*The Music of Failure*, Plains Press, 1985  
*The Weavers*, Oxhead Press, 1985  
*Boxelder Bug Variations*, Milkweed Editions, 1985  
*Coming Home Crazy*, Milkweed Editions, 1990  
*Brahms' Capriccio in C Major Opus 76, No. 8*, Oxhead Press, 1990  
*The Dead Get by with Everything*, Milkweed Editions, 1991  
*Landscape of Ghosts* (with Bob Firth), Voyageur Press, 1993  
*Chocolate Chip Cookies for Your Enemies*, Josephson Press, 1993  
*The Heart Can be Filled Anywhere on Earth*, Milkweed Editions, 1996  
*Faces of Christmas Past*, Afton Press, 1997  
*Playing Haydn for the Angel of Death*, Minnesota Center for Book Arts, 1997  
*Eccentric Islands*, Milkweed Editions, 2000  
*Playing the Black Piano*, Milkweed Editions, 2004  
*Cabins of Minnesota*, Borealis Books, 2007  
*The Windows of Brimnes*, Milkweed Editions, 2007

**EDITOR**

*Happy Birthday Minneota!*, with Tom Guttormsson & John Rezmerski, Westerheim Press, 1981  
*There is No Other Way to Speak*, Minnesota Center for Book Arts, 2005  
*Farming Words*, with David Pichaske, Southwest Minnesota Foundation, 2007

**THEATRICAL ADAPTATIONS**

*Boxelder Bug Variations*, Lyric Theatre, Sally Childs, director, 1987  
*Boxelder Bug Variations II*, Jon Hassler Theatre, Plainview, MN, 2007

**TRANSLATIONS**

*Isole*, (Eccentric Islands), Stefano Viviani, trans., Ugo Guanda Editore S.p.A., Parma, Italy, 2002

**SPOKEN WORD**

*Holmward Bound*, EssayAudio, 2001  
*Faces of Christmas Past*, EssayAudio, 2002  
*Playing the Black Piano*, EssayAudio, 2004

**MUSIC**

Many piano duet recitals with Dr. Daniel Rieppel, SMSU, 2000-2007, many Minnesota towns  
Recital of left hand transcriptions of Bach Violin *Partitas* at *GlufraSteinn*, Halldor Laxness' house, Iceland, July 2007  
Much American music from ragtime to Charles Ives at lectures and readings, a few hundred times and places 1976-2007

**GRANTS, FELLOWSHIPS, AND AWARDS**

Fulbright Lecturer, University of Iceland, 1979-80  
Bush Arts Fellow, 1982, 1995  
National Endowment for the Arts Fellow, 1987  
Minnesota Book Award, 1991, 1997  
Prairie Star Award, Southwest Minnesota Arts and Humanities Council, 2000  
Honorary Doctorate, Gustavus Adolphus, College, 2002  
Cobb Award for Service to Iceland – American Connection, US Embassy, Reykjavik, 2003

**ADDITIONAL**

Many chapbooks, essays and introductions, many poems and essays in anthologies and magazines.  
Reader (and only American) at Nordic International Literary Festival Reykjavík, 2004  
Much radio work for Minnesota Public Radio for many years, Christmas shows, readings, hosted programs, etc.  
Director of an Iceland Writers' Week for two weeks in May and June from 1999-2008. Other writers who have taught with me: Carol Bly, Robert Bly, Judith Niemi, David Arnason, Einar Már Gudmundsson