



Lois Virginia Walker is a poet and visual artist. A graduate of Topeka High School, she obtained a BA in University of Kansas in 1951, followed by a BS in Education in 1954. She then moved to New York where she continues to teach and write.

Walker is always exploring ways to express what she wants to communicate. If a wild assortment of found objects and twine can have a meaningful impact on the viewer, she believes that she has succeeded just as much as when she writes a good poem or paints a picture.

Though she started as a poet, her new work with paint, crayons, paper, canvas, wood, hardware, wire, etc. also probe or stretch the means of sharing her world with the reader/observer. For Lois Walker, it is an adventure that never ends.

While, Walker's art work has been exhibited across the country, she has also appeared at many readings and workshops as well as being featured on TV and radio programs. She has been involved as an editor at Process 5, Process 8, Xanadu 7-10 and several other locations.

Walker's poetry has appeared in Pandora's Box: Collected Poems 2006, You and You and Me, The Studio Press; Anthology, Saturday's Women; Magazines College English, New Letters, Sojourner, West Branch, The Mickle Street Review, The Pikestaff Forum, Helicon Nine, Xanadu, The Hiram Poetry Review, Alderbaran, Measure 6n, The Miscellany, Eleven, The Long Island Poetry Review, The Street, Handbook/Silence, Dark Tower, Process, Phoebus and others.

Prairie Graveyard For Two

Flint Hills 1947

Two graves!
Man and wife.
Now part of the soil
That once they tilled.
Part of the prairie
That fought their existence.

Pioneers!
German immigrants.
Their destination unknown
Yet inevitable.
The plains of Kansas
Caught them unawares.

Two markers!
Two mounds covered over with prairie grass.
A dull gray fence shutting
Them off from the vastness of space.
Even in death set apart
From the land they labored over.

Death!
End of all cares.
No howling winds and
Screaming loneliness.
Now darkness, endless earth
Ever absorbing them.

I Have Just Come Back

The burrs cling to my socks.
I have just come back
from riding that new pinto
through Grandpa's patch of the wild.

I had lost both stirrups early
was forced to hug the fat belly
with my legs, while making a fist
of hands around the reins and mane.

Now pinto safe and quiet in the barn
I enter the small kitchen.
My stomach turns as I inhale
the sour smell of curdled milk.

She smiles hello. . .
over forty years ago
but burrs still scratch and cling
and I say
"What a ride, Grandma, what a ride!"



Lois Virginia Walker

Distinguished Kansas Poet

• [E-mail](#)

To A Sheltering Town

Topeka, Kansas--tornado

To a sheltering town
Not now but yesterday
Was my sweltering town
(circle of summer dust
and sudden rain) around
me falling down to look
at leaves and measure grass,
Angry cutting up roads
With a turn again turn
Of the wheels. Whisper all
The houses "people here."
My bicycle passing by
Could hear the middle class
Washing up or turning off
The radio to take
A nap. A peaceful town
For curiosity
To travel, circle bound.

Secrets are kept by me.
Only the wind could find
That special place and make
Splinters out of old
Security. I am
Ashamed of what the wind
Can do to you and me
In half an hour. The myth
Of sheltering becomes
Extended energy
Standing still for wild spin
To suck the form away.
Swinging up the funnel
Rising ascension day
For dancing hardware free
To circle unhinged and fall
Debris. I stare and build
Another shelter there.

Topeka To Los Angeles

I read Schopenhauer's World
as Will and Idea, riding Santa Fe's
El Capitan alone to L. A.
sat among servicemen and strangers
head in my book or pressed
against the window with fans of light
and space folding back to close as
words, glass, red mesas, sky
converged in me. Anonymous, I
was positive no one could see me--
the book, maybe, but not the reader.
I was seventeen and made of air.

Inventory For An Assemblage

"Portrait of the Artist as a Middle-aged Woman"

From Sands Salvage
one damaged wastepaper basket
and desk set in warm strips of brown
Phillipine teak wood with hard edges.
Exterior, elegant.
Interior space, a collage experiment.
Conceptual catalyze.

From Jon and Marie
a large commercial spool
of off-white linen thread.
Unwinding it, I saw

the neck stripped naked,
ready to be marked
after an ancient rite
that decorates female flesh
with formal scars.

Assemblage to be torso and head.
The self, the artist selected form,
gather artifacts
for an interior: pages from books
(poems by Dickinson, Hopkins. Dust covers
of *Jude the Obscure* and *The James Family*)
pictures, pages from the notebooks,
strings, letters, words written before
"The Naming of Names."
An artist, here, possessed by work.

From Rickel's
4 ft. of 1/4 " copper tubing
to bend and work in place.
Fallopian/umbilical
female concoction.
a shaped but single,
firm, metal connection.

Continued at right

Searched the garage
for copper wire, couplings
assorted wood screws, nuts,
and threaded rods. Applied
without mercy to chest, head, and neck.
Permanent and part of the female object.

Another gift.
One used motor of fine design

with hidden sources
and locked-in secrets.
From another piece
remnants
three hard-wood blocks
once part of the floor
in an old post office
pulled apart in the 70's
blocks stacked in ascending steps
to be a ceremonial headdress
for the climb up years.

Earrings out of small
electronic plugs
from an old T.V.
The short form,
Venus de Milo arms
out of appliance levelers
where I attached pieces
of an old suede jacket
to the metal stumps.

My portrait finished for display