

Ken Waldman Bio

Ken Waldman has drawn on his 25 years in Alaska to produce poems, stories, and fiddle tunes that combine into a performance uniquely his own.

A former college professor, Waldman has had published six full-length poetry collections, a memoir, a children's book, and has released nine CDs that combine old-time Appalachian-style string-band music with original poetry. Since 1995 he's toured full-time, performing at some of the nation's leading universities, festivals, arts centers, and clubs. Over 400 of his poems and stories have appeared in such magazines as *Beloit Poetry Journal*, *Quarterly West*, and *Yankee*.

His most recent books are the memoir, *Are You Famous?* (Catalyst Book Press, 2008), which chronicles Waldman's adventures on tour throughout the United States, and *D is for Dog Team* (Nomadic Press, 2009), a sequence of Alaska-set acrostic poems for young readers. *Nashville Scene* has called the memoir, "a travel guide for aspiring free spirits." The University of Alaska Press, which distributes the children's book, says *D is for Dog Team* is destined to "be a fireside treasure for the whole family."

Among Waldman's CDs are two for children, *Fiddling Poets on Parade* (2005) and *D is for Dog Team* (2009), which goes with the children's book of the same title. On all CDs, Waldman is joined by a number of fine accompanists. Of particular note are a pair of double CDs. *Some Originals, Some Traditionals* (2006) is an epic: one CD contains Waldman originals with a five-piece string band; the other CD contains Waldman and friends playing traditional tunes to Alaska-set poems, and includes a ten-minute treatment of Waldman's 1996 plane crash near Nome. *55 Tunes, 5 Poems* (2008) further shows off Waldman's skills as a composer.

Though he still performs solo on occasion, Waldman teams with other musicians for a bigger sound when he headlines such venues as Freight and Salvage Coffeehouse in Berkeley, The Ark in Ann Arbor, The Millennium Stage at The Kennedy Center in Washington D.C., or else for concert series and festivals. Recently, he's begun bringing a whole troupe of musicians for performing arts series shows.

He is also a popular visiting artist in classrooms. Employing both his fiddle and a repertoire of proven writing exercises, he has led workshops in over 180 schools in 31 states nationwide, and has been a guest writer at over 80 colleges and universities, including University of Tennessee, University of Alabama Birmingham, Knox College, Iowa State University, and San Diego State University.