

Home	<h1>When Lilacs Bloomed: An Elegy</h1> <h2>1892</h2> <p>by <i>Laura Madeline Wiseman</i></p>
Winter/Spring 2011	<p>After a lecture, a man in a straw hat stopped. <i>Will you walk with me in the city?</i> Walt Whitman offered his arm and nodded</p>
Autumn/Winter 2011	<p>toward the boardwalk and promenade. The fireflies sparked. I took his arm and tucked my free hand into my lace shawl.</p>
Summer 2010	<p>My black skirt collected the dust of the day, sent it in whirl in the honey light. Aware of Walt Whitman's saunter,</p>
Spring 2010	<p>I stretched my ankles, stiff with the art required to keep up with the audience of a thousand to hear <i>Men and Their Whims</i>.</p>
Winter 2010	<p>I said, <i>I've read your Leaves of Grass and the reviews</i>. Newspaper critics wrote he was a man always touching himself</p>
Autumn 2009	<p>in his poems. None denied the weight of the man's body in "Song of Myself." I wondered if women were merely a prop.</p>
Summer 2009	<p>Walt Whitman's elbows jutted rakishly at pairs of boys just old enough to be men. They watched our blue eyes.</p>
Spring 2009	<p>Walt Whitman stroked the heft of his beard. Like an invitation, his trouser buttons winked. We turned a corner and paused</p>
Autumn 2008	<p>before a blacksmith's shop. Inside a red hot point plunged into the barrel in a hiss. The man at the bellows flexed.</p>
Summer 2008	<p>Whitman's gaze lingered. I asked, <i>How do you do it? Find a paper to print your reviews of your own poetry collection?</i></p>
Spring/Summer 2008	<p>Never averting his eyes from the man, Walt Whitman smirked. Walt Whitman tipped his hat. <i>Never tell anyone who you really are.</i></p>
Winter/Spring 2008	
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Laura Madeline Wiseman has a MA from the University of Arizona and a PhD from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln where she teaches English. Her work has appeared in *Margie*, *Poet Lore*, *Blackbird*, *Arts & Letters*, *Prairie Schooner*, *American Short Fiction*, *The Fence*, *The Los Angeles Review* and *13th Moon*. She is the author of several collections of poetry, including *Branding Girls* (Finishing Line Press, 2011), *Ghost Girl* (Pudding House, 2010), and *My Imaginary* (Dancing Girl Press, 2010). Recently, she has collaborated with the artist Kate Johnson on a limited edition series of broadsides that combine poetry and graphic art printed at the Prairie Center of the Arts.

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