

Readings both energetic, slow-paced

By Chuck Lieurance

Tuesday night's poetry reading at the Zoo Bar was a success mainly because Lincoln gets few chances to hear the poetry that is written by its major poets. Whereas other large cities have poetry readings as part of their artistic culture, they have long been alien to this city, finding only a few havens such as the Glass Onion and the Zoo Bar.

But the Zoo's support of poetry is quite encouraging and Tuesday's show, which included Warren Fine, Sally Herrin and Lincoln's master, Bill Kloefkorn, proved that the reading of poetry is not boring at all.

In this age when art forms are so saturated into mainstream culture that it is hard to keep them from melting into one another, (music into theater, literature into poetry, poetry into music, etc.), a reading of poetry is as exciting as the opening night of any play.

Sally Herrin, a professor of English at UNL who was recently published as Sally Cottonwood in Greg Kuzma's, *Forty Nebraska Poets*, introduced a style of poetry she calls "Chicken Shack."

These poems are basically blues lyrics with a feminist perspective, replacing the music with a very rhythmic reading. Her poems reflected this stylization very well, but the words themselves were practically emptied of life and imagery by the restrictions inherent in the form. Obviously the style is not perfected, but it was interesting to be given a chance to hear the experiment in progress.

Fine seems stereotyped

Warren Fine, also a professor at UNL and a recent con-

New wave...

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999 has a penchant for off-the-wall covers, including such fabulous choices as "Little Red Riding Hood" by Sam the Sham and the Pharoahs. Their latest release is "Indian Reservation" from Paul Revere and the Raiders, which debuted at number 74 this week in England.

"We're probably going to fly back and do a video promo for some of the programs," Cash said.

999 called their live album *The Biggest Tour in Sport* which Cash said is an English euphemism for sex which may top baseball as a national pastime.

tributor to *Forty Nebraska Poets*, seemed the most stereotyped of poets in the perfect Bukowski school of cult/life-weary poets. The major problem here was that Fine's poems tended to be shorter than the tedious introductions which preceded them. It was easy to see that the poems did not stand well on their own because the explanations of the poems were almost crucial.

Fine read a series of poems based on the love poems of Catullus written in ancient Rome to a woman named Lesbia. Fine's rather clumsy rewritings to a woman named Barbara were void of fresh imagery, but portentous with sadness.

Fine, the haggard, quietly sardonic, experimental prose writer read and explained with a restrained monotonous voice that did nothing to add life to poems that died as he read them. His poems gravitated, or levitated, somewhere between the excruciating and the shallowly glum.

Kloefkorn energetic

By far the best of the reader of the evening was Bill Kloefkorn, who basically performed instead of read. Kloefkorn's poems are light and energetic, with child-like energy, exuding an energy level unparalleled in the evening's readings. Kloefkorn sang some poems a capella and used totally captivating vocal inflection and gestures to put across his fresh metaphor and unique eccentricity.

The best poems of his reading were from his collection about a young boy, *Ludi Jr*, *Ludi* infiltrates the Boy Scouts, seeks revenge against a hostile dog, and offends the crowd at a Pentecostal Church Rally. Kloefkorn comes off as an ordinary man with endearing quirks, without having the omnipresent shadow of intellectuality hanging over him as with Herrin and Fine, who seem to be afraid of being too simple or ordinary.

Hopefully, more establishments will follow the initiative of the Zoo Bar and Glass Onion and provide nights for poets to read, perhaps in an open-stage setting. As businessmen, proprietors should note that the Zoo Bar was full on Tuesday night thanks to this reading. This should be enough to generate some commercial interest.

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