

Poet seeks healing in language



By Jill O'Brien
Staff Reporter

American Indian poet John Trudell scrawls messages on the walls of hearts — healing messages that deal with racial oppression, wars, love, Elvis, reservation rock and reservation death.

"The reality of any healing is, there are words that must be said before there can be healing," Trudell said.

The poet has undergone his own intense emotional healing. In 1979 a fire killed his wife, three children and mother-in-law.

"Before any kind of healing, I have to lay out this barrage of words," he said. "I have to say a lot of words. I don't get to stop."

Trudell also is an accomplished recording artist and actor. He played the fugitive, Jimmy Looks Twice, in the movie "Thunderheart." As a former activist, Trudell said, he could relate to the role.

When asked about his current calling as a poet and recording artist, he paused.

"I do what I'm compelled to do, and sometimes I don't understand it," he said.

"In some ways, consciously and unconsciously, I headed in a direction, and right now, I write and I make records. These are things that happened to me as I was headed in this direction."

Born in Omaha in 1946, Trudell, along with nine brothers and sisters, grew up on Nebraska's Santee Reservation. When he was 17, he enlisted in the Navy.

"I went off to see the world," he said. "I didn't think in terms of going off into another state looking for something — I went off into another reality."

In 1969, Trudell went off into yet another reality. He became an active spokesperson for Indian rights and served as national chairman for the American Indian Movement.

He encountered more than his share of trouble during those years.

His poem, "Living in Reality," documents a time when soldiers handcuffed him and forced him to kneel in the dirt beside the trash.

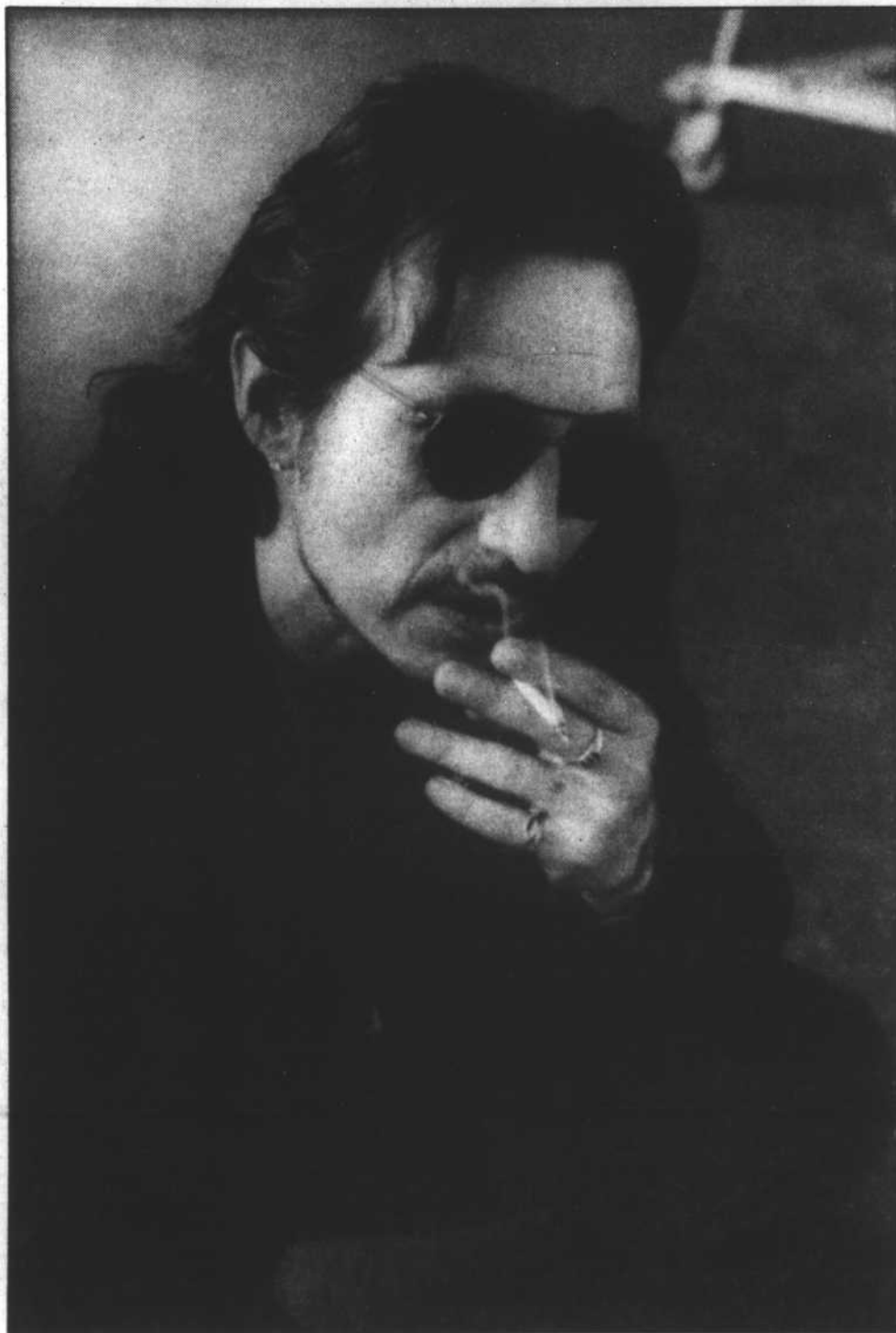
He told them, "What you don't understand is, I am the resistance. I will return."

Trudell said the lines meant his consciousness would continue, no matter what the form. Whether activist, artist or performer.

"We all have our soldiers making us kneel down in the trash, right? In our daily lives? We may resist it, sometimes we tolerate it, but we don't necessarily accept it," he said.

Trudell's standoff trysts with the government ended on Feb. 11, 1979. He burned an American flag in front of the J. Edgar Hoover building in protest of the desecration of justice, he said.

Twelve hours later, his family perished in an arsonist's blaze on the Shoshone Paiute



Courtesy of Beth Herzhaft

John Trudell is an American Indian poet, musician and actor.

Reservation in Nevada. The FBI refused to investigate the fire, Trudell said.

"They were murdered as an act of war," he said.

Six months after the fire, still immersed in his grief, Trudell started writing poetry.

"The lines came," he said. "They were my bombs, my explosions, my tears."

His emotions spilled onto paper as he transcribed grief and anger into lines that contained healing power, he said.

That same year Trudell met Jackson Browne, a rock musician who gave the poet free reign to wander through his music studio.

Browne helped Trudell to produce "Tribal Voice," an emotional tape backed by the traditional powwow singing of Quiltman, a Northwest Indian from Warm Springs, Ore.

But Trudell envisioned taking his poetry a step farther — by incorporating synthesizers and electric guitars.

In 1985, he met Jesse Ed Davis, a Kiowan from the group, Taj Mahal. Davis was known for his impressive guitar leads.

"He told me his name, and the next thing he said was, 'I can make music for your words,'" Trudell said, and then laughed.

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New releases include a real heart-warmer



Bolt right past the trash for a little romantic comedy, because the best date-movie of the summer arrives in local video stores this week — as do a few real snoozers, of course.

"**Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story**" Jason Scott Lee (no relation to Bruce) stars as the martial-arts legend in this biographical docu-drama. The movie follows Lee's life from his immigration to the United States through the heights of his career. Lauren Holly co-stars. The facts may not be all straight, but the choreography has to be stunning.

"**Guilty as Sin**" Rebecca De Mornay stars as a first-rate attorney in a high-power firm who accepts the case of a man accused of murdering his wealthy wife. The defendant (Don Johnson) is a sleazy cad who has more concern for his appearance than for his murdered wife. When he becomes obsessed with her, the case and her career rapidly fall into a downward spiral. Jack Warden co-stars as De Mornay's cranky old detective pal — the kiss of death in any movie.

This is a definite stinker. De Mornay virtually walks through the entire movie, and the story is a tired old replay of every bad '80s thriller. The bright spot here is really Johnson, who hams it up in every way and delivers a truly frightening performance.

"**Return to Lonesome Dove**" Yep, this was just on the tube last month. Those crazy folks at Cabin Fever couldn't wait to rush it home to video. This sequel to the enormously popular and award-winning "Lonesome Dove" replaces the great Tommy Lee Jones and equally terrific Anjelica Huston with Jon Voight and Barbara Hershey. Brooding Rick Schroder — remember when he was just plain Ricky? — returns with more stubble and a tobacco-spitting attitude.

"**Sleepless in Seattle**" Ah, here it is, the best date-movie of the summer: a movie about destiny and true love.

Tom Hanks is a widower who lives in Seattle. On Christmas Eve his young son calls a radio psychiatrist and tells her — on the air — how much dad needs some love and attention. Hanks, disgruntled and unhappy with his son at this point, gets on the telephone and talks. Across the country in Baltimore, journalist Meg Ryan catches the conversation on her car radio. Ryan becomes obsessed with the idea of Hanks, certain he is The One.

Hanks is terrific — he's his best cuddly self in thick fishermen's sweaters. Ryan is Ryan, a neurotic romantic. Together they're magic. Supporting cast members Rosie O'Donnell and Bill Pullman are terrific, too.

Written by Nora Ephron, the woman who penned "Heartburn" and "When Harry Met Sally ...," this movie is a sure hit for those with a sentimental streak.

— Anne Steyer

Nationally-known bands take shows to Nebraska stages

Ak-Sar-Ben readies for Nirvana, moshing



By Paula Lavigne
Staff Reporter

In less than a month, alternative grunge band Nirvana's second album "Nevermind" went gold. Ever since, Nirvana has been on the path to musical stardom.

On tour in support of their newest album, "In Utero," the band will follow that path to the Ak-Sar-Ben coliseum in Omaha this Thursday.

Ak-Sar-Ben, a popular venue for country

acts such as Garth Brooks and Clint Black, is making special preparations for the Nirvana concert, Candi Stark, director of admissions at Ak-Sar-Ben, said.

"We did have Jane's Addiction a while back," Stark said, "but we usually have more family shows."

Stark said she really did not know what to expect because she had never sold a concert like this before. She said she anticipated a younger crowd at the Nirvana concert, though.

Jim Smutny, director of security at Ak-Sar-Ben, said the venue's usual country performers attracted a more mature crowd.

"From what I've been told, rock concerts have a younger crowd," he said. "It's been the experience across the country these young kids are down on the floor and the entertainers are more lively."

"They're just more active," he said. "We plan on taking greater precautions so everyone can come in to have a good time and not get

See NIRVANA on 10

Famed funk acts like Lincoln's family feel



Glenn Antonucci
Staff Reporter

De La Soul and A Tribe Called Quest will take the stage Wednesday night at Rockin' Robin for a show sponsored by the Afrikan Peoples Union.

Wondering why these big rap acts are playing the small stage? Brian Adams, assistant publicist at Tommyboy records, said a small, college-town venue like Rockin' Robin suits the bandmembers, who like the cozy, "family

feel."
"It makes for a lot of love, a lot of energy," he said.

Okwumuo said he expected a scene similar to the one when Nebraska natives 311 last appeared at the club. The show sold out and more than 200 fans had to be turned away.

De La Soul will draw much of its playlist from "Buhloone Mindstate," the group's third album for Tommyboy, which was released in September.

Adams said the band changed musical directions, as it has after each of its projects. The result was the loss of some old fans and the addition of new ones.

But Adams said De La Soul had kept its word in producing "thought-provoking rap."

Tickets for the 18-and-over show are \$14 in advance and \$17 at the door. Tickets are also available at the Student Union from the African Peoples Union, cost is \$12.50. Doors open at 7 p.m. and the show starts at 9 p.m.