

Performers use the power of the spoken word to spread person, political vibes

By Krissy Gochnour
The Western Front

People packed into the Fairhaven Auditorium on Monday night as poets and storytellers performed their "Spoken Word."

The Women's Center, the Sexual Awareness Center and the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Alliance co-sponsored the performances, making it free to the public.

The night began with Aysha Cromeenes, whose poetry about broken love, hopes and personal obstacles kept audience members eagerly listening.

"I've got butterflies," said Western freshman Jessica Boam. "I can't just sit; I've just got all of this energy. The vibe was just the greatest thing ... I want to go home and write everything that's in my head."

Following Cromeenes was Ivant-E. Coyote. Her hardships of intolerance regarding her sexuality have inspired her to become a writer and to perform her stories for others.

"It's a sign for me that

I've told a good story when somebody can't wait to come tell me some story that reminded them of mine," Coyote said. "Stories beget stories."

Or-A-Trix, a Seattle-based, all-female collective of edgy, political performers, delivered poetic themes ranging from love and acceptance to freedom and the fight for peace through a combination of individual and group pieces.

"Or-A-Trix was very diverse," Boam said. "There were definitely a lot of viewpoints. It was a mix of the women's personal stories as well as expressing themselves."

Or-A-Trix co-founder and performer Tara Hardy gave tribute to all of those who had faced issues of acceptance and age and glorified the power of writing and poetry.

"We wanted to get ourselves onstage and get the courage to tell our stories so that we can encourage others to tell theirs,"

Co-founder of Or-A-Trix

Katinka Kraft said. "Ultimately we hope that everyone will go home and write. I think that if everyone can tell their stories, the things that have been forgotten, we could have ourselves a huge revolution."

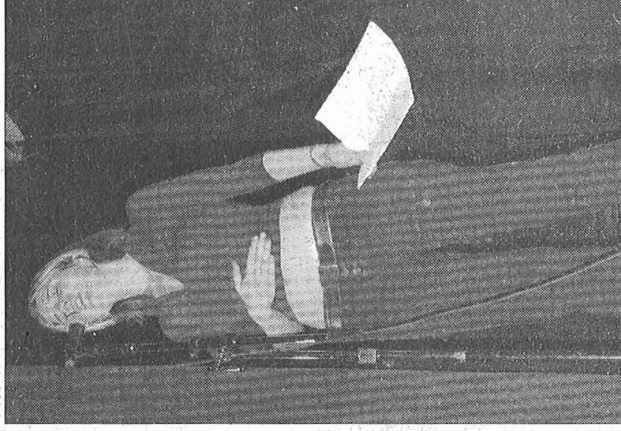
Sini Anderson, a traveling performance poet from San Francisco whose work is based in multimedia form, also spoke of inspiration and shared guidelines for a healthy lifestyle.

"If you are fortunate enough to have two working legs and a mind, run more," Anderson said. "And if you're not, demand that your people push you."

The forceful words accompanied by rhythmic sound clips allowed those who attended to feel Anderson's emotions as the performer demanded that they have a stronger voice in governmental issues, ignorance and feelings of being "lost in our community."

"I was excited to come with my more personally inspired work," Anderson said. "I think that what a lot of people do when things get really down is they find each other. I hope that they can become politically motivated. The people in this room are making art, and that's what we need to be doing."

The Women's Center, the Sexual Awareness Center and the LGBTIA are part of a research and outreach program



Krissy Gochnour/The Western Front
Katinka Kraft, co-founder of Or-A-Trix, an all-female collective of performers, reads a poem.

that grants them money to sponsor events on and off campus.

"I just want to thank everyone for coming out to the show tonight," Coyote said. "I really believe that without an audience a storyteller is just someone who is talking to themselves."



Krissy Gochnour/The Western Front
Aysha Cromeenes performs her spoken word pieces at the Fairhaven Auditorium.