

Poetry a great place to get lost, forget yourself

Diane Egge 11:53 a.m. MDT August 30, 2014



Photo: Courtesy photo)

“The Disappearing Cowboy Trick” is the intriguing title of Fort Collins author Kristin Abraham’s latest book of poetry. Do cowboys really disappear? No, this is merely her clever title melding cowboy folklore with the carnival.

Abraham said most of her poems are difficult to understand. They are meant to have an emotional resonance rather than be taken literally. They are full of imagery, slices of life meandering across her mind. From “Bigger than a Bread Box,” which reverberates the cowboy’s innate feeling of “Don’t Fence Me In” to love, death, hardship and pain — the saga of the West is there. Her poems will touch your senses and stir your imagination.

Always obsessed with the West, Abraham, along with her husband, one cat and three dogs, is living out her dream in Fort Collins. She graduated from Central Michigan University and received an MFA in poetry from West Virginia University.

Her fascination with the cowboy culture increased when she did a creative residency with the Ucross Foundation. The competitively selected individuals are free from the pressures and distractions of life in order to concentrate on their artistic endeavor. The foundation is located in the unincorporated community of Ucross, Wyoming, about 26 miles south east of Sheridan. Never heard of Ucross? No surprise. It boasts a population of only 25. It’s a writer’s haven, though, especially for those interested in the West.

When a teaching position opened at Laramie County Community College, Abraham left her job in Iowa, and she and her husband, Matt, moved West. Her husband has a MFA in fiction and teaches at CSU.

Abraham started writing as a child. The greatest influence in her pursuit of poetry was her undergrad teacher, Joseph Lease. She thought she would write fiction until Lease opened her eyes to the imagery of poetry.

What is the most important concept she wants to get across to her students? “There is no right or wrong when writing poetry. Don’t censor yourself and allow yourself to go to weird places. Let the strange happen — that’s where the best poems come from. Go beyond the cliché and make it new and exciting.”

Besides teaching, Abraham is the adviser for the literary journal, the High Plains Register, which LCCC publishes. She is also the editor-in-chief and poetry editor of the literary magazine Spittoon.

When she has a spare moment, she grabs a book and disappears into the world of imagination. She’s also enjoys sampling the culinary talents of the local restaurants.

She is the author of two other chapbooks, “Orange reminds you of Listening” and “Little Red Riding Hood Missed the Bus.” “The Disappearing Cowboy Trick,” along with her previous books, are available on Amazon.

Diane Egge (dianeegge.com) is the author of two children’s books, “My Cuddly Cat” and “How Many Cats are on my Bed?” To learn more about Northern Colorado Writers, visit www.NorthernColoradoWriters.com.