Pulitzer-Winning Poet Will Read At Kearney State Conferences

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Kearney, Neb. — A Pulitzer Prize-winning poet will be featured during two concurrent conferences at Kearney State College Thursday and Friday.

Mary Oliver, who won the prize in 1984 for "American Primitive," will read selections from her poetry at 8 p.m. Thursday in the Fine Arts Recital Hall.

The two conferences, "Women's Artistry: Process-Product-Progress" and "Nebraska Poetry and Fiction Writing Festival," will bring scholars from such states as New York, Kansas, Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Kathryn N. Benzel, program director, said the women's conference will explore women's creative contributions across the spectrum of arts and humanities.

She said the conference will revolve around the central question: "Is the creative process similar or different in the different disciplines?" The conference's purpose is not necessarily to discover all the answers, she said, but to investigate the issues.
Experiences source of poetry

By NANCY TAYLOR
Hub Staff Writer

KEARNEY — Mary Oliver writes poetry from experience.
The 1984 Pulitzer Prize-winning poet said what she experiences firsthand is the primary source for her rich imagery and ability to write "presents of sights and sounds" of nature. Thursday, she shared a number of poems with an audience of 150 at Kearney State College.
The Women's Artistry symposium of KSC sponsored the poet's reading, which coincided with the Nebraska Poetry and Fiction Writers Festival. Both events at KSC began Thursday and continued Friday.

WHILE IN NEBRASKA Thursday afternoon and Friday morning, Oliver said she was eager to see the one thing that intrigued her — the Platte River.
Oliver, 32, a native of Ohio and resident of the Cape Cod town of Provincetown, Mass., said she had briefly visited the Midwest in the 70s. "I've read much of the history of the area and am well aware of the descriptions of Nebraska written by Mari Sandoz and Willa Cather," she said at a reception following her program in the Fine Arts Recital Hall. "I'm very eager to see the Platte River."

A reference to the Platte River she made during her program drew a few chuckles from the audience.
She said, "I used to have a thing about drinking out of rivers. Maybe tomorrow I will go out to the Platte. Is that not a good idea?"

OLIVER'S POEM, "Ghosts," about the fate of the American bison, indicated she had a grasp of the West and the white man.
The poet said she may write a great deal about the East Coast and Ohio, but "it's by natural inclination I find the natural landscape very rich and conducive to writing." The spaciousness of the Nebraska Plains, she said, provided another view of the land.
"That sense of plentitude of land does not happen any more in the East. It's a real bounty that people here may appreciate more if they take a trip to the East."

Not only does the land motivate Oliver to write about the themes of love and death, but so do animals. She said one of her favorite poems is about humpback whales. Watching the humpbacks in the Atlantic Ocean, she explained, is like a sport for me on to something else," said Oliver, who began writing poetry as a teen-ager. "It was always a thing I wanted to do. My education was three things — reading other poets, writing a lot and thinking about things first hand.

"I don't think about writing about an area," she added. "You play hard that commitment shows in her poetry, write Oliver's critic.

One critic wrote: "Mary Oliver's poetry is fine and deep; it reads like a blessing. He special gift is to connect us with our sources in the natural world, its beauties and terrors and mysteries and consolations."

Oliver has written four books, not

PULITZER PRIZE-WINNING poet, Mary Oliver, left, receives compliments from Don Welch, Kearney State College poet laureate and professor of English, after Oliver's reading Thursday on campus.

Hub photo by Nancy
KSC hosts artistry conference

by Lori West
Staff Writer

The Women's Artistry Conference on Oct. 8-9 will explore women's contributions, concerns and experiences in the fine arts and humanities.

The conference is sponsored by the School of Fine Arts and Humanities and the English department and was organized by Kathryn Benzel, assistant professor of English.

A large part of the funding for the program was provided by the Nebraska Committee for the Humanities, an affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

In order to reveal the diversity of women artists, topics presented at the conference will include women theologians, women's literary history, "female" art and feminist aesthetics.

Women students will see professional women artists and scholars presenting a range of career opportunities for women." Benzel said. "Male students will be enlightened by seeing the changing role of women in artistic endeavors."

Speakers will be educators from other colleges as well as KSC. Presentations and panels will focus on women in literature, theology, poetry and the visual arts. The work of artists such as Virginia Woolf, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Clara Schumann and Willa Cather will also be presented.

The keynote address, "Re-envisioning the Female Self: A Collaborative Project," will be given by Estella Leiter of the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay. Leiter, said Benzel, "has done a lot of work with feminist theory and aesthetics."

Two special evening events will also be held in conjunction with the conference. Thursday, Oct. 8, Mary Oliver, author of "American Primitive," and 1984 Pulitzer Prize winner for her poetry, will show her work. Janet Danielson, a pianist, will present a concert of music by women composers Friday, Oct. 9.

All presentations are free to KSC faculty and students. The public will pay $20 for registration, which includes Thursday's banquet and Friday's luncheon, breaks and conference materials.

Other campus events supporting the theme of the women's conference will be two art exhibitions. "Nebraska Women Artists" will be in the Walker Art Gallery and "Women's Artistry: Process—Product—Progress" will be in the Nebraska Art Gallery.

A special exhibit of women student's art will be on display at the Calvin T. Ryan Library. Students should contact Anita Norman in the library with their submissions by Sept. 10 or contact Benzel for more information.

A book exhibit on women's artistry and the feminist theory will also be on display in the Nebraska.

Running concurrently with the conference is the second annual Nebraska Poetry and Fiction Writer's Festival in which there will be panels discussing how to teach creative writing. There will also be open readings of poetry. Anyone wishing to read their poetry should contact Jon Welch, professor of English.
KSC to host Midwestern women's symposium

By NANCY TAYLOR
Hub Staff Writer

KEARNEY — Kearney State College will host the first Midwestern "Women's Artistry: Symposium on Process, Product, Progress" Thursday and Friday.

The event may be the first women's conference in the nation specifically dealing with fine arts, according to Kathryn Benzel, KSC English professor and symposium coordinator.

"NOT ONLY ARE we breaking ground for a women's symposium, but we also have a conference applicable to the various academic disciplines," she said.

"Women's Artistry" will allow presenters and participants to explore women's contributions in the fine arts as theologians, writers, artist, and musicians.

KSC published advertisements in the area last year asking for research papers focusing on women in the arts. Benzel said. Selections for the program were based on the value of the papers, as well as length, and general interest to the public.

Registration for the symposium is 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. Thursday in the Ponderosa Room at the Nebraska State Student Union. A registration fee will be charged, which will cover costs of meals and symposium materials. All events, except evening performances, will be in the Ponderosa Room at the Nebraska State Student Union.

PRESENTERS HAIL FROM STATES INCLUDING NEW YORK, MINNESOTA, WISCONSIN, KANSAS, IOWA AND NEBRASKA.

"Our hope is to draw people from all over the nation, but we can use other sources from surrounding states as well," Benzel said.

"One of the reasons we wanted to have the symposium is there are few courses here that deal with women's issues. There seems to be a core of younger professional women on campus now," she added. "More and more women can use their expertise and they can serve as role models on campus."

Keynote speaker, Estelle Lauter, the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, takes a special interest in women in the arts. She will speak at 10 a.m. Thursday on "Re-Envisioning the Female Self: A Collaborative Project." Her Friday schedule will include a special session at 10 a.m. on contemporary women artists.

BENZEL SAID all of the presenters bring a special perspective to women and the arts. Programs will focus on American and British women, mainly in the 19th and 20th centuries.

The sessions include presentations on Elizabeth Barrett Browning, poet; Elizabeth Butler, artist; and Clara Schuman, musician.

KSC also is presenting three art shows on campus this week by female artists.

In the Nebraska Student Union Art Gallery is an exhibit featuring Kearney area contemporary women artists, Phyllis Main, Anne M. Dunbar and Barb York, all of Lincoln; Barb Avery, Margo Fager and Laury Brown, all of Kearney; Eileen Beren, Orly, Jane Decay, Marquette, Leona Davis, Columbus; Judy Gere, Burwell; and Louise Mulliner, Holdrege; and Carol Schoo, Waco.

An exhibit presented by the Nebraska Museum of Art hangs in the Walker Gallery in the Fine Arts Center. The final show is in the Calvin T. Ryan Library and highlights female students' art.

The symposium program, funded in part by a grant from the Nebraska Committee for the Humanities, includes:

THURSDAY

10 a.m. — Welcome from KSC President William Hester and Betty Buehler-Howe, Dean of the School of Fine Arts and Humanities, introduction by Kathryn Benzel, symposium coordinator, and keynote address by Estelle Lauter of the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay.

1:30 p.m. — Session on Reading Women's Visual Imagery with Linda Lewis of Bethany College, Martha Paschke of the University of North Iowa and Evelyn Hallett of Davenport College.

3 p.m. — Session on Telling the Truth on a Stage with Rosemary Welsh and Marilyn Board, both of the State University of New York at Geneseo, and Deborah Bobek of the Center for the Study of Women in the University of New York at Geneseo.

4:30 p.m. — Performance of "The Eternal Eve and The Newly, Born Woman: Marianne Moore's 'Marriage,'" by Bruce Hennessy, KSC assistant professor of speech.

6 p.m. — Symposium banquet.

8 p.m. — Readings by Mary Oliver, poet, Art Fice Recital Hall. Free admission.

FRIDAY

8:30 a.m. — Session on Uncovering Women's Perspectives with Mary Dula, Assistant Professor of English, Kearney State College; and Mary Ann Turner and Joan Schmidman of the University of Nebraska, Kearney.

10 a.m. — Contemporary Women Artists, a panel discussion by Jane Dyer, artist; Margaret Miller, assistant professor of art, and Mary Beth Karth and Peggy Sniezko, both of Creighton University.

1:30 p.m. — Session on Reconstructing Self in Visual Arts with Mary Ordway, KSC assistant professor of art, Ruth O'Keefe of the University of Nebraska, and Mary Beth Fordby and Peggy Schaefer, both of the University of Nebraska, Kearney.

3 p.m. — Session on Women's Words, a reading and discussion of women's poetry by Mary Jane, and Lea Frotten, both of the University of Nebraska, Kearney.

4:30 p.m. — Performance of "The Eternal Eve and The Newly, Born Woman: Marianne Moore's 'Marriage,'" by Bruce Hennessy, KSC assistant professor of speech.

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Poetry fans rejoice; KSC hosts poetry, fiction writing festival

By NANCY TAYLOR
Hub Staff Writer

KEARNEY — Poetry fans rejoice. Pulitzer prize winner, Mary Oliver, as well as well-known poets and writers statewide will present readings and workshops Thursday and Friday at the Nebraska Poetry and Fiction Writing Festival at Kearney State College.

"A festival like this can give them an opportunity to present their works as well as themselves to the public," said Don Welch, KSC poet-in-residence and festival coordinator.

Most of the poets on the two-day program are warm and open people. Welch said. A number are his personal friends and former students from his poetry classes. Welch said they are coming from all over the state, which pleases him because poetry tends to be an underground activity. Welch said.

"The public, I think, is unaware of how many people write poetry and read it." He said. In addition to the festival programs and workshops being free, a fee will be charged to attend the festivals in the Elkhorn Center where "The Elkhorn Review" annual awards will be presented.

Registration is set for 8:30 to 9 a.m. Thursday in the Fine Arts Center.

There are excellent writers in Nebraska. They are among Nebraska's best natural resources," said Welch, an author of some published books of poetry and recipient of prominent awards for his work.

In putting together the program, he explained he wanted his former students to come. Welch is a former student of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and Mark Sanders, who's working on a long time, college professor and poet "from other walks of life."

The program includes:

Thursday
9:30 a.m. — Readings by William Kloefkorn and Ted Kooser, Fine Arts Recital Hall.
11:31 a.m. — Time to visit with readers and participants, Recital Hall.
1:30 p.m. — Panel discussions and workshops. "Creative Writing Programs in Colleges and Universities" by Susan Davis, Patricia Murphy, Georgia Robertson, Charles Stubbsfield and Elizabeth Peck, moderator, Thomas Hall, Room 106; "Editing Little Magazines and Poetry Fiction Series" by Elizabeth Balsey, Dwight Marston, Mark Sanders and Laura Delavars, moderator, Thomas Hall, Room 107, and "Poetry in the Public Schools" by Don Welch, Thomas Hall, Room 110.
6:30 p.m. — Open readings by 10 poets, Fine Arts Recital Hall.
5-7 p.m. — Banquet, Women's Center.

Friday
9-10 a.m. — Readings by Jim Brutmann and Shirley Buettner, Fine Arts Recital Hall.
10-11:30 a.m. — Coffee and discussion, Fine Arts Center.
10:30-11:30 a.m. — Readings by Richard Dagon and Roy Scheider, Recital Hall.
2-3 p.m. — Festival luncheon with annual awards presentation by "The Elkhorn Review," Nebraska Student Union.
2:30-3 p.m. — Time to visit with poets and reception, Recital Hall.
3:30-5 p.m. — Open readings by 10 poets, Fine Arts Recital Hall.
8 p.m. — Banquet, Women's Center.
Pulitzer poet continues disciplining her writing

by Sheila Sybrant
Staff Writer

Mary Oliver doesn't dwell on the 1984 Pulitzer Prize for poetry she received for "American Primitive." "All any writer is interested in is what they'll do next," she said. What Oliver does next is write. She has no other job to divert her attention from her poetry, except for occasional positions teaching at various universities. She also has had numerous speaking engagements since she received the Pulitzer.

"Although professionally, getting a Pulitzer means that I'm busier," Oliver said, "a mysterious self in my head helps me discipline myself to write every day."

"Although professionally, getting a Pulitzer means that I'm busier, a mysterious self in my head helps me discipline myself to write every day."

Oliver, 52, started writing as a teenager and always had a desire to write. Her first book, published in 1963 in England, is now out of print. "It is like a child that drowned. I don't think of hauling it out of the water."

Since then, she has published seven books, including "American Primitive." Her work has also been published in over 31 magazines.

"I don't, however, think about writing consciously. I just play and look hard and get real imagery from the real world."

-- Oliver

Currently, she is about half-finished with a new book. Each book takes about three to four years to write, she said. Although Oliver had a two-year liberal arts education, she learned mainly by reading other poets, writing a lot and thinking about things firsthand, she said.

"I don't, however, think about writing consciously," Oliver said. "I just play and look hard and get real imagery from the real world."

Oliver lives in Provincetown, Mass., a rural part of New England. She finds the natural landscape rich and full of ideas. Much of her poetry has images from nature, although she tries not to repeat themes too much.

She especially likes poems that "send me on to something else." Her poem about a humpback whale is one of her favorites because "I talk about three things at once."

To write better poetry, Oliver suggests using language naturally. Another philosophy of Oliver's is that "I try to vanish in poems and let the reader be present."