

Roripaugh Reading & VLP Poetry Slam

7 p.m. Thur. Sept. 30 Coffee Shop Gallery, 24 W. Main St.

from Lee Ann Roripaugh's "Snake Song":

I was born in the year of the snake
and maybe this is why
I speak with a forked tongue. I've followed

the vague sibilant thread
of the voice in my head curling
into a tangled snarl

of roots, grass, stems and leaves, so that when
I open my mouth to talk,
a strange song, not mine, comes tumbling out.

Ai-noko, half-caste, I tilt
my head in the mirror first this way
then that—Horikoshi

cheekbones, Caucasian nose, my *ojii-san's*
serious eyebrows
feathering like ink strokes over eyes

not quite green, not quite brown,
in the tranquil white moon of my face.

Lee Ann Roripaugh's first volume of poetry, *Beyond Heart Mountain*, was selected for the National Poetry Series and was a finalist for the 2000 Asian American Literature Awards. Her second volume, *Year of the Snake*, was a winner in the 2003 Crab Orchard Series in Poetry Open Competition Awards. Roripaugh has published her work in numerous journals, including *Ploughshares*, *North American Review*, *Michigan Quarterly Review*, *Prairie Schooner*, *South Dakota Review*, *Puerto del Sol*, *Quarterly West*, and *Crab Orchard Review*. She also received a 2003 Artist Fellowship from the Archibald Bush Foundation. Roripaugh has also won an Academy of American Poets Prize, an AWP Intro Award, and the 1995 Randall Jarrell International Poetry Prize. Her poetry has been included in *Poets of the New Century*, *Asian American Poetry: The Next Generation*, and *Contempora*. Roripaugh teaches in the USD English Department.

A poetry slam is a fun competition for poets. Slam poets, bring at least three poems. Prizes awarded! More info.: call 677-5229.