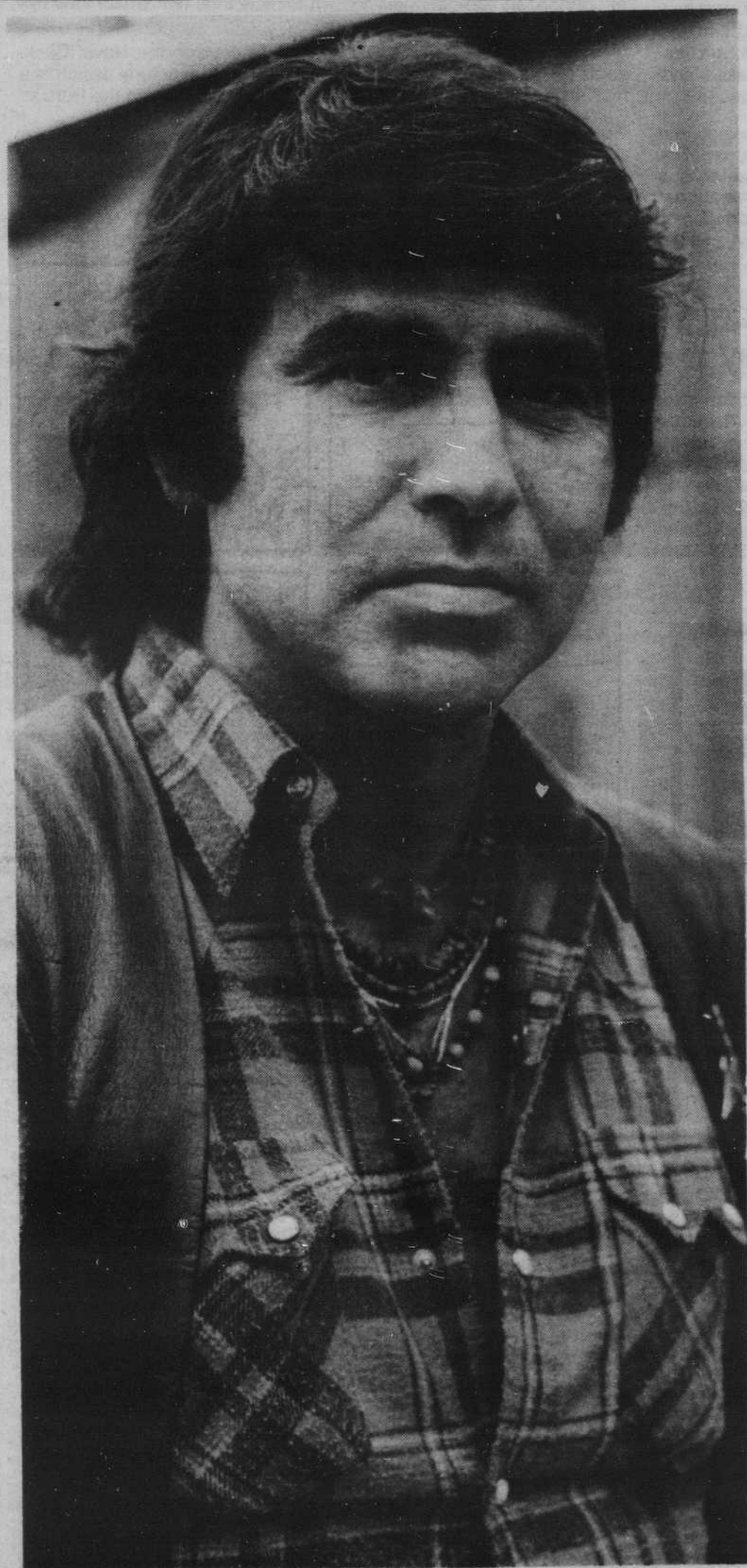


Winter term registration verification forms are available today through the end of the week in 224 Oregon Hall. The office will be open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. to accommodate students.



Photos by Doug Williams

Internationally prominent author Jamake Highwater talked about his book "Song From the Heart: American Indian Painting" to a large University crowd Monday night. The presentation, sponsored by the University Festival of the Arts, also included a slide show of both traditional and contemporary Indian painting. Highwater is also a poet, playwright and photographer and has written about music, dance and culture as well as painting.

Author Jamake Highwater mixes media, but the results usually still reflect his



Mystic vision

By GLENN BOETTCHER
Of the Emerald

Art is a way of seeing, says Jamake Highwater. And what Highwater has seen through his art is a vision both breathtaking and timeless.

Just forget that he is an artist in many media, dealing with many diverse subjects. What Highwater says always is the same when it comes down to an elemental gut feeling. That feeling, however, is not easy to pin down.

It has something to do with the primitive mind. Of his book "Song From the Earth: American Indian Painting," he says, "It is a way to make the Native American mentality more visible. The way it works and sees the world."

But that's not the whole of what he has to say. There's something more, something deeper. Speaking of dance, he explains, "What I'm saying is the body is a spiritual organism."

That's most of it. But there's still more. Finally he talks of his goals as an author. "There is a place in us that connects to something very mysterious, very profound. That's where I try to touch people."

In the end, Highwater's work is all wrapped up in this mystery. He touches people in a place that defies naming. It is deep. It is primitive. It is essential to our culture.

People are recognizing Highwater as a writer who can fill an essential need. He says he often receives letters asking him to act in a guru-like capacity. But he rejects that role, saying, "I'm a writer that just writes."

Yet, Highwater is more than just a writer.

Highwater sees with amazing clarity for a man who claims to be "just a writer." Somehow he becomes, in speaking, both artist and intellectual, both writer and historian.

In Highwater's estimation, an essential change occurred in people's minds during the time of Pericles and the Golden Age. The result is our demystified culture.

"Culture is the only way you have a

sense of who you are," he says. Because our culture has in the past placed more emphasis on pragmatic and monetary achievement than artistic, "gut-level" responses, he says we have lost a sense of who we are.

Highwater's vision stretches to equal the keen insights of a scholar.

"Western culture is in transition. We're in dark ages now, but like all dark ages we don't know it."

Dark ages should not necessarily be taken negatively, he says. "It is an exciting and important transition between the rest of the past and what we're becoming."

What we're becoming may have much to do with the current appeal, both critical and popular, of Highwater's books.

Highwater points to the '60s as one indication of America's move toward an individualized culture. What happened then, he says, gave Americans a sense of identity for the first time.

Highwater himself exemplifies what he refers to as "finding yourself in your own culture." Being of Blackfoot and Cherokee Indian descent, he could not face assimilation into Anglo-American culture, but neither could he accept the present-day conditions of Native American culture. Thus Highwater blended cultures and found a career that was a "lifesaver," he says.

The result of cultural blending is what Highwater calls himself — an Indian intellectual.

"For the past 400 years people have expected to be confronted by the noble savage. Now they are being confronted by the intellectual savage."

Highwater says the intellectual savage concept is not the whole answer. But it helps balance the Indian mentality. No longer is the Native American totally at the mercy of bureaucrats.

He says, "You have to grow up to be primitive, you must be more mature."

It seems clear that Jamake Highwater has seen the power in the primitive mind. And what he has seen has a strong, clear voice.

today

Children from different ethnic backgrounds now have a chance to learn about other cultures through the University's 3-D Multi-Cultural Program. See Page 3.

Karen Herbst has achieved at least one goal of artistry with her plastic Breathing Space #1. Story and photos on Page 6.

Trolley cars may be a part of the future instead of the past, if a proposed freeway alternative in Portland is agreed on. The electric light-rail system is explained on Page 12.