

BEST

## *Antidote for Cabin Fever*

If you haven't been read to since you sat cross-legged in your kindergarten classroom, the Word Theater is a far cry from your teacher's musty blue carpet. The group's recent **Great Writers Series** ran early this summer, and featured 50-odd actors reading the works of dozens of legendary and obscure authors of Western literature — cowboy lit.

Imagine actors alone onstage in a 99-seat attic theater, reading mostly in front of other actors. It's the only event in L.A. where you'll find both A-list actors and a few empty seats.

Actors Bobby Knott and Rex Linn became cowboys reading Zane Grey's *The Last of the Plainsmen* and Walter Van Tilberg Clark's *The Ox-Bow Incident*. Kathy Baker's reading of Willa Cather's *Death Comes for the Archbishop* and Brooke Adams' of Dorothy Scarborough's *Cabin Fever* brought to life the rarely explored experience of the women of the plains. Ed Harris' reading of Grey's *Riders of the Purple Sage* was transportive. The timbre of his voice infused the theater with the irony and wistfulness of a wounded, beating heart alone in the vastness of the Early American West. Elmore Leonard's *Saint With a Six-Gun* seemed written for Troy Garity's funky, urban lilt.

Producer Darrell Larson and founder Cedering Fox have a gift for hatching the perfect marriage of work and writer. Upcoming events include brunches with Chinese writer Ha Jin on October 10 and T.C. Boyle on November 14. On November 8, cast members of *The West Wing* will read *Hearts Aflame*. —Brenna Sanchez

**Great Writers Series** Most readings are held at the MET Theater, 1089 N. Oxford Ave., Hollywood,  
[www.wordtheatre.org](http://www.wordtheatre.org)