

mix **PARANORMAL** ...

with **Romance** ...

and you've got Eleanor Roth's novel

By **BETH PERDUE**
Staff Writer

She may have been writing since she was 16, but this fall when Eleanor Roth published her first novel, she finally accepted the title of 'author' that friends and family had already bestowed upon her.

Despite having multiple stories in magazines and newspapers over several decades of writing, the Dartmouth woman said she still felt uncomfortable being called an author. But with the release of *Rainbow Dust*, a paranormal romance, Ms. Roth finally accepted the description.

"I thought, okay, I don't have to correct them anymore," she said, looking down at the softcover book in her hand and grinning.

In the novel, Ms. Roth combines romance, mystery and the paranormal in an unexpected and enjoyable blend that is perhaps all the more enjoyable because of its surprising storyline.

On one level, the story revolves around Margaret, a young woman with a history of depression who is thrust on a journey of self-discovery and eventual forgiveness. But Ms. Roth adds an unexpected twist to the plot, making one of her main characters, Zeke, a charismatic cowboy who just happens to also be dead.

Zeke and Margaret's meeting on the first page of the novel kicks off Margaret's transformation as she begins to see her life differently and open up to new experiences. Through Zeke's eyes,

Margaret begins to notice aspects of her world she had previously missed and her subsequent transformation from a depressed, barely living young woman to a resourceful and resolute adult is a satisfying read.

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ELEANOR ROTH

Being a spirit doesn't stop Zeke from stealing most of the action, as he inserts himself into Margaret's life doing what he does best, reliving his own adventures through story-telling.

Initially at least, Zeke has the reins and like Margaret, readers will settle in and hang on for the ride.

Yet it's the hint of mystery about their encounter and the feeling of an unspoken connection that will keep people turning pages.

The book's odd mix of spirit communion and Florida ranching came about when Ms. Roth combined two widely diverse personal experiences: one being present at a Hindu mystical celebration, called *Thaipusam*, in Singapore, and the other, signing on to help an unconventional, exuberant Florida cowboy write his memoirs.

Being able to make creative combinations like this is what makes writing

exciting, she suggested.

"The joy is when you put a couple of characters together and what comes out is totally different," she said, smiling.

Although she said she doesn't necessarily subscribe to the life view of people speaking to spirits or communicating through automatic writing, Ms. Roth acknowledged the existence of unexplained phenomena in the world, particularly since she observed similar strange occurrences while on her year-long trip to Singapore in the 1970s.

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Ms. Roth supported her personal experiences with interviews of scientists and psychologists and was surprised when they did not eliminate the possibility of altered states of consciousness.

"They didn't pooh-pooh it. They said there's so much that we don't understand," she said.

A Dartmouth resident since 1972, Ms. Roth moved here from New York when her husband got a job in the area. Two of the couple's three children graduated from Dartmouth High School.

A productive writer, Ms. Roth was already hard at work on her latest work while *Rainbow Dust* was making its way through the publishing process at Treble Heart Books. Working through an agent, she is poised to put another novel out onto the market and has several others waiting in the wings.

Those looking to find out more about Margaret and Zeke can find *Rainbow Dust* at Baker Books, State Road, Dartmouth.