

# Arts & ENTERTAINMENT

THE  
Observer  
NEWSPAPERS

WHAT TO DO, WHERE TO GO

KEELY WYGONIK, EDITOR • 313-953-2105

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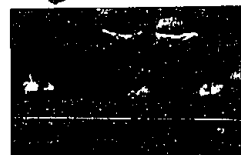
**FRIDAY**  
Gloria Sobel, Marvin Nachman and Kate Vivian in SRO's "Painting Churches" opens at The Burgh in Southfield. Call (810) 827-0700.

**SATURDAY**



Violinist Sarah Chang, 15, recognized world over as one of classical music's most gifted artists, will be performing with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. Call (313) 833-3700 or (810) 645-6666.

**SUNDAY**



Musica Viva International Concerts presents the Tumburitzans Folk Ensemble in the Smith Theatre for Performing Arts, Oakland Community College, Orchard Ridge campus, Farmington Hills. Call (810) 471-7667 or (810) 645-6666.



Hot Tik: Merry and Fabio in "Forever Tango: The Eternal Dance" a musical celebration now playing at the Fisher Theatre in Detroit. Call (313) 874-1000, extension 0 for information, or (810) 645-6666.

## Through the eyes of children

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN  
SPECIAL WRITER

Children understand the suffering of other children even if those children are a half a world away. The proof is an art exhibit in which children of Ukrainian descent from throughout metro Detroit express their thoughts about the disastrous Chernobyl, this is the Ukrainian spelling, nuclear explosion on April 26, 1986.

From a painting of a Ukrainian flag splattered with blood to an assemblage featuring a small plant barely surviving among the rocks of a Ukrainian landscape, the exhibit focuses on the more than 125,000 people who died as a result of radiation poisoning and the untold number of children already afflicted, or about to become ill with thyroid cancer and leukemia.

According to Ioshena Oleksaniwsky, president of Americans for Human Rights in Ukraine, radiation affected more than 1 million children. The world's worst nuclear accident produced 800 times the radiation released from the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima in 1945. The cover-up and silence of the Soviet government for two weeks afterward cost not only lives, but illness for generations to come.

Skulls and mountains of bodies permeate the paintings, drawings, sculpture, fiber art, and photography in "Chernobyl - 10 Years After Through the Eyes of Children." While some chose to illustrate the flawed Soviet RBMK reactor, children of the Ukrainian American Youth Association assembled a fabric wall mural of the countryside before the accident. Black and red radiation symbols hang from the ceiling throughout the exhibit, the idea of Taras Hayda, a student of the Eaton Academy in Birmingham. As viewers walk through the exhibit, the hazardous material signs heighten sensual awareness that Ukrainian life is filled with poison.

"Since this is the 10 year anniversary of the disaster we wanted to know what Chernobyl means to them, how they perceive it and the leukemia and cancers related to radiation," said exhibition coordinator Devinka Hayda.

"One tragedy seems to happen and we go on to the next one. We wanted people to become aware

that this is an ongoing tragedy. There are a great many children in Ukraine and Belarus who are ill."

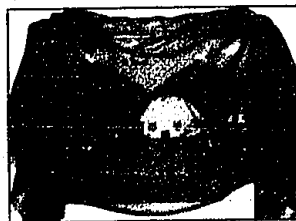
When Chrystyna Nykorak delivered medical supplies to Ukraine in 1992, she could feel the burning of the radiation in her eyes. At an opening reception for the exhibit on April 21 Nykorak, membership director for the Livonia Chamber of Commerce, reiterated Hayda's concerns that the world has forgotten Chernobyl, and the lingering effects it left on all forms of life. Thousands of acres of agricultural land and forests are contaminated with radiation. The strontium and plutonium will remain forever in the bodies of the victims, dead or alive.

"People want to forget. It's important for us to remember. We're doing the exhibit because the planet is not safe. I don't think humanity knows the side effects of something this dangerous," said Nykorak, a West Bloomfield Township resident who created large-scale batik paintings inspired by her trip for the first Chernobyl art exhibit five years after the disaster.

"Some of the artworks have hope, but most of them are like the clay sculpture of the cow with three front legs. We placed a broken egg in the Ukrainian culture. The radiation is affecting human structures and genes. If the egg cracks you no longer have the life force."

Taras Hayda, a student at Cranbrook-Kingswood School in Bloomfield Hills, tells of the destruction rent by Chernobyl in a weaving. Strips of black and white photographs focusing on the emptiness of the streets are woven into the fabric.

"Living with the Monster," a large scale col-



**Veiled Tragedy:** The fabric collage of a peaceful Ukrainian village blanketed by a black veil of radiation by Taras Hayda is titled "Radiation, What Radiation?"

lage of photographs by Larissa Haliv of Farmington Hills, forces the viewer to study the images and pause in thought. A fabric collage of the Ukrainian countryside by Taras Hayda is covered with a black veil symbolic of the radiation.

"The exhibit is to remind the people, both Ukrainians and Americans, of what happened in Chernobyl and what can happen," said Myron Fedoriv, a pharmacist from Royal Oak, spent two years in Kiev, Ukraine working directly with the ministry of health as an employee of a U.S. government organization establishing hospital partnerships.

That is why Josephine Love, co-founder of Your Heritage House, agreed to host the exhibit. "In general children's museums present the pleasant side of life. I think it was important that children have some awareness of Chernobyl and the ongoing suffering," said Love.

The real tragedy is that four of the five reactors at the Chernobyl nuclear plant are still operating. According to Oleksaniwsky there were 109 nuclear accidents at the Chernobyl plant in 1984.

There is a ray of hope for the people of Ukraine in the form of the Children of Chernobyl Relief Fund. The outpouring of generosity has helped to ease the suffering with 19 air transports and five by sea of donated medical supplies and clothing.

"For the last six years we've been collecting funds, clothing, food supplements, vitamins and over-the-counter drugs. Those we ship to orphanages, hospitals and sanatoriums," said Roma Dyhdalo, director of the relief fund's Michigan chapter. "We're trying to convince the American public there is a need. It's not hysteria; this is the fact. On a visit to an oncological clinic there when we delivered supplies, I spoke with a mother of two children who have thyroid cancer and another mother with three children all with thyroid cancer. People do not have enough money for expensive cures or traveling. People don't realize what kind of life people have there. The reason we're always asking for vitamins is because the children are malnourished. There's no fresh fruit or vegetables."

**Danger:** The radiation symbol in this mixed media artwork by Christina Papa reminds viewers of the tragic victims of Chernobyl, lest we forget.

**CHORNOBYL:** "10 YEARS AFTER THROUGH THE EYES OF CHILDREN"

What: An art exhibit to memorialize the victims of Chernobyl, Ukraine by metro Detroit children of Ukrainian descent.

When: 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Friday, Saturdays and Sundays by appointment through June 30.

Where: Your Heritage House, a children's fine arts museum, 110 E. Ferry, (at John R), two blocks north of the Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit.

Cost: Admission is free, donations will go to the Children of Chernobyl Relief Fund. Call (313) 871-1607 for information.

To make a donation: Make checks payable to Children of Chernobyl Relief Fund, Box 0537, Warren 48090-0537. For more information call (810) 754-0285.

Donations of clothing and other necessities may be dropped off at DNIPRO, 26402 Ryan Road in Warren. Call (810) 754-0553 for hours.

## ARTISIRY COVERS HER QUILTS

Fabric artistry: Merry Silber of Birmingham displays one of the creative quilts of Ludmila Uspenskaya. Silber is co-curating a show of Uspenskaya's quilts, which resemble paintings.



BY MARY KLEMIC  
STAFF WRITER

Ludmila Uspenskaya is an artist who "paints" with needle and thread and fabric.

She turns a quilt into a canvas upon which she fashions works of art that resemble paintings. Her pieces are exquisite blends of two cultures, American and Russian.

Samples of her creative quilts will be exhibited to May 22 at the Ariana Gallery, 119 S. Main, Royal Oak. The display, "Dreams and Fantasies," opens with a Russian tea reception for the famed artist and a collector's preview 6-9 p.m. Friday, May 3. Call (810) 646-8910.

Merry Silber of Birmingham, an art consultant and quilt expert, spoke rapturously of Uspenskaya's quilts. Silber and celebrated New York quilt artist are curating "Dreams and Fantasies," which will be Uspenskaya's second show in the United States.

"Her works are like paintings. That's what they look like," Silber said.

"They are marvelous fabric paintings ... She says it's fabric collage."

Inspired by the American patchwork quilt, Uspenskaya blends this art form with her own techniques of her textile art,

paintings, fabric collages, theater curtains and tapestries, for which she won awards in the Soviet Union, Australia, Belgium and England.

The gallery will show 23 of Uspenskaya's quilts. Some of the pieces suggest Salvador Dali, such as "Whisper," a softly colored, surreal work featuring lips and mouths. "Big Bouquet" bursts with vibrant color, an arrangement of floral fireworks. In the "Little Pictures Series," smaller images float around a larger one.

"Exotic Landscapes" are dream-like scenes with the hues of jewels.

The fabric itself takes on an

artistic quality, with its intricate sewing that gives a rich texture to each work. The color of the background material can be as rich as that in the images on its surface.

"We are indeed proud to present this prestigious show here in Michigan at the launching of Uspenskaya's American journey," Ariana owner Ann Kuffler said.

Uspenskaya is here on an artist's visa from St. Petersburg, Russia.

"We're having an authentic Russian tea party, with glass tea holders and cube sugar, which is very Russian," Silber said of Friday's reception. "Everybody's invited."