

ART BEAT

Art Beat features various happenings in the suburban art world. Send Wayne County arts news leads to Art Beat, Observer Newspapers, 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia MI 48150, or fax them to (734) 591-7279.

OPENING RECEPTION

"Artists Through the Years," an exhibit featuring past and present Livonia Arts Commissioners, opens with a reception 2:30-4:30 p.m. Saturday, June 2 in the Fine Arts Gallery at the Livonia Civic Center Library, 32777 Five Mile, east of Farmington Road.

The show includes a variety of media and pays tribute to the late Livonia artist Marie Tuthill. For more information, call Livonia's Community Resources Department at (734) 466-2636.

AUDITIONS FOR AMAHL

ConLen Productions is holding auditions for "Amahl and the Night Visitors" 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Saturday, June 9 and 2:30-5:30 p.m. Sunday, June 10 in Livonia. Boys, ages 10-12 with unchanged voices, are needed for the lead role of Amahl, and baritone for the role of King Melchior. Performances will take place in December.

For information or to schedule an appointment, call (248) 888-8528 or send e-mail to conlenproductions@mediacore.net.

WRITING SEMINAR

Are you tired of writer's block? Do you need inspiration to pick up that pen and start writing? How about some writing tips that will give you the opportunity to craft a story?

Cheryl Vatcher can help you during a writing seminar 1:30-3:30 p.m. Saturday, June 2 at the Noble Library, 32901 Plymouth Road, Livonia.

Coming up with ideas is easier than you think. If you've already written a story and want to work

on it Vatcher will help you do that. Vatcher, who earned a master's degree from the University of Michigan's School of Education, has authored articles for several metro Detroit newspapers.

The fee for the seminar is \$35. Call (734) 414-8680 for more information.

SEASON SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Plymouth Symphony Orchestra is offering season subscriptions at a reduced rate through Tuesday, June 5.

The 2001-2002 season, "Alive with Musical Color," spotlights works by Corigliano, Copland, Dvorak, and Gershwin. But the highlight is sure to be when the Plymouth Oratorio Society, Eastern Michigan University Choir and Plymouth Counsellors Choral join the orchestra for Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* on March 16.

So reserve your seats today by calling (734) 451-2112.



Opening reception: The Livonia Arts Commission remembers Marie Tuthill by including her work in an exhibit featuring past and present arts commissioners.

Expressions from page C1

words. Mime is more than white face."

To Lee, mime is theater without words. He frequently quotes Marceau with whom he's taken workshops since 1987. His most recent was in early May at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.

"Marceau says, 'every motion has an emotion. I get excited warming up for a show. I'll be doing sit-ups and crunches. I do them to be aware of the center. When an actor makes a movement he moves from the center,'" said Lee, pointing to his abdomen. "We warm up the center so we can move from it."

Sharing with students

Lee, who began studying mime with Perrault in 1983, now does residencies in which he introduces the art of mime to students in schools all over the state. Whether it's a dance camp in Lansing last week or a workshop at Pinckney High School

this week, Lee uses the opportunity to speak about many of the conceptions about mime.

"People think that we work in the street or at Sea World, or that we're a form of a clown," said Lee. "There's a misunderstanding. Clowns, actors, dancers are members of the same family. I think of us as cousins to clowns."

"American mime is based on illusion like pushing walls," said Lee as he placed his hands in front of him to try to move the invisible wall. "Because of mimes like Robert Shields of Shields and Yarnell, in the late 70s, early 80s mime became popular but from the mid 80s to mid-90s it suffered because of TV and film portrayals of white face mimes as villains or jokes. My hope is for people to realize the difference between street mime and mime in theater so they come to theater to see it. Mime is the core of acting to know what our body can do. Gymnasts, dancers and mimes differ

Festival Schedule

- Brass Tacks Ensemble - Shakespeare's As You Like It June 7-17
- Mosaic Youth Theatre - 2001 Hastings Street June 21-24
- RAT Productions - William Boyer's one-man show William Testament June 28-July 8
- Terpsichore's Kitchen - Dancing in Summer July 12-15
- Annie Gallup - Stay Me With Flagnons July 19-22
- David Burkam/Christina Reising - Goblin Market July 28-29
- Greenhouse Theatre Company - Sudden Light, new works by local playwrights August 2-11
- New Stage Productions - Joseph Zettelmair's Fever Dreams Aug. 16-26

because of the way they use the body - athletically, aesthetically, or dramatically."

Best of two worlds

Reedy became interested in mime because it offers the best of the acting and athletic worlds. Since taking classes with Lee in February, she went on to hone her technique by studying with Marceau in early May at the University of Michigan. Mime seemed like a natural progression for Reedy after taking an

actor's movement class and performing in plays at Washtenaw Community College.

She's especially looking forward to presenting "The Conversation," by Michael Hennessy, with Lee.

"I've always been interested in theater, the way you use your body is so important whether you're a mime or actor," said Reedy. "Mime is athletic and it's acting. It's never dull. It keeps giving me new challenges."

Mime's challenge parallels the

idea behind the Tree Town Performance Festival. Unlike the Performance Network, which presents only equity theater from September to May, the festival enables relatively unknown companies and performers to produce works in a professional setting during 13 weekends in summer.

"We do the festival because throughout our regular professional theater season we don't have the opportunity to showcase these production companies," said David Wolber, marketing director for the Performance Network. "Other theaters close down for the summer. We're keeping the tradition of new works alive. There's so many performers and diverse performers - dance, mime, the Mosaic Youth Theatre, local singer Annie Gallup who's also a storyteller. It's an eclectic mixture of performing arts."

Wolber will direct the festival's final production, a new comedy "Fever Dreams" by Joseph

Zettelmair. The full-length play is sure to have the audience laughing when the female lead meets the man of her dreams, then finds out he really is a dream.

"We can tell interest has grown in the artistic community by the number of proposals submitted," said Wolber. "Production companies get to do work that's their own, produce it, rent the theater from us and tap into our marketing rather than go off on their own. We're helping them to be seen doing what they do best."

And the Performance Network will continue to do their best when the new season opens Sept. 7 with "Taking Leave," a comedy about a forgetful Shakespearean professor.

Have an interesting idea for a story? Call arts reporter Linda Ann Chomin at (734) 953-2145 or send e-mail to lachomin@oe.homecomm.net

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featuring Russ Freeman

Tickets: \$15 Friday; \$30 Saturday & Sunday per day in advance. Weekend passes good for all three days: \$60 (Available only in advance - quantities limited). On sale now at the Star Theatre Southfield (Customer Service Desk), all TicketMaster locations, or charge by phone at (248) 645-6666. Tickets higher at the gate. For more information listen to Smooth Jazz 98.7 or visit www.v98.com.

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