

ARTISTIC EXPRESSIONS



LINDA ANN CHOMIN

Hatred triggers bloodshed in classic tragedy

Evelyn Orbach and Gillian Eaton never dreamed when they began discussing the opening production of the Jewish Ensemble Theatre last spring it would have such impact. But then that was before the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

The importance of a subject seems to be assessed now by whether it occurred "before" or "after" the attacks. JET's *Romeo and Juliet* is no different.

Shakespeare's classic tragedy about two lovers, prevented from uniting due to a long-standing feud between their families, takes on even greater significance as one is Arabic, the other Jewish. Orbach, JET artistic director, and Eaton, *Romeo and Juliet*'s director, initially intended to make a powerful statement that hatred can only end in tragedy. After Sept. 11, the urgency of the message became apparent as we watched rescuers search through the rubble.

JET's version is set in the 1920s in Jerusalem, the 4,000-year-old home of some of the most sacred sites in Moslem, Christian and Jewish religions. The play takes place long before the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948.

Jerusalem was still under British rule, a fact with which Eaton is "a little uneasy." The British-born director/actress says she's struggling with her feelings since the attacks and beginning rehearsals for the play Sept. 17. The tragedy opens Wednesday, Oct. 17 at the Aaron DeRoy Theatre in the Jewish Community Center in West Bloomfield.

"There's Arabs and Jews in the cast," said Eaton, a Plymouth resident. "I'm grateful for the opportunity to deal with the themes of *Romeo and Juliet* to process my own reactions. It's comforting in a small way. Having to collaborate is very cathartic."

"The wider goal of the arts is to uplift, educate and inform but also to cherish ideals. Art reminds us of the greater parts of ourselves. Entertainment can be trivial, this is not trivial entertainment. *Romeo and Juliet* is brilliantly written and how timely it is. The idea of teenage confusion and suicide, family dysfunction. It covers a lot of bases that are important right now. With this theme, it throws the conflict into harsh light, the ancient grudge between the Capulets and Montagues actually kills all the young people. It's all about two people caught up in circumstances beyond their control. It's not a death wish. They are the effect of other people's actions. They do the wrong thing at the end."

Eaton believes "language, and great language lifts and ennobles us and expresses the inexpressible" yet she's not quite sure what Shakespeare's trying to say at the end of the play after the star-crossed lovers commit suicide.

"I know Shakespeare's trying to say something about never forgetting by raising a memorial," said Eaton. "But that's not the answer. The answer is personal change that can't be mandated by the British government or Mr. Capulet or Mr. Montague but by your own heart. It throws out how deeply do we want to change. How are we responsible?"

Stop Hate campaign
Orbach thinks if change is to come it must start with each and everyone of us. That's why she's launched a Stop

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All aboard for Artrain exhibit tracking NASA history

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN
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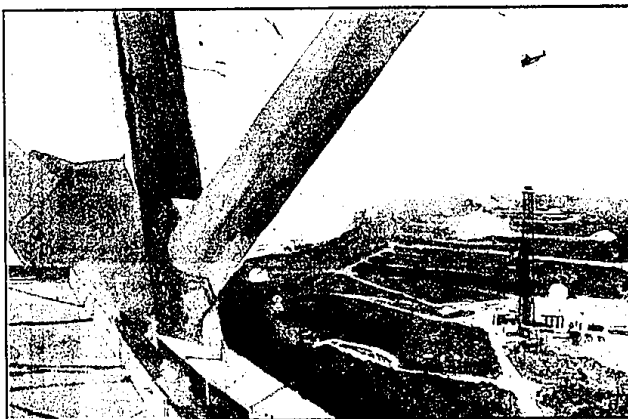
After more than two years of traveling aboard Artrain USA, works from the NASA and National Air and Space Museum collections are still generating as much excitement as they did when they first landed in Ann Arbor.

Artrain USA president Debra Polich expects the Plymouth visit will be no exception, drawing thousands of space and art lovers Saturday and Sunday, Oct. 27-28.

Like the space program, artists' imaginations inspire viewers of the 78 paintings, drawings, prints and sketches on exhibit in *Artistry of Space*. Among the favorites is Norman Rockwell's large-scale oil painting of man's first steps on the moon. The work was painted as a *Look* magazine cover three years before Neil Armstrong actually set foot on the lunar surface. Creativity like Rockwell's led man to believe he could one day walk on the moon.

A 1961 directive by President John F. Kennedy made space exploration a reality. Artrain USA gives visitors a look at the history that followed because NASA administrator James Webb had the foresight to invite Andy Warhol, Robert Rauschenberg and more than 250 other American artists to capture thrilling events such as lift-offs as well as introspective moments of astronauts before a launch. So far Artrain USA visitors in more than 100 cities in 40 states have been able to share their experiences through artist visions of this inner sanctum.

"It's a piece of America that resonates with the American public," said Polich who grew up watching the space exploits on her television in Westland. "We all have some knowledge of the program. The



On site: James Browning Wyeth painted this watercolor in 1965 after climbing the Gemini 4 gantries, the structures supporting the spacecraft before launch.

exhibit gives visitors an opportunity to delve a little further into it. It's also important because it blends the lines between art and science. In general people respond to art as one discipline, science as one discipline. There's not much crossover. But take the language—exploration, discovery—there's a lot of crossover.

"A scientist has to think expansively as does an artist. There's a lot of science in art. Depending on the media artists work in, they need to go through a lot of chemical processes especially in printmaking."

Blast-off Bash

The Plymouth Community Arts Council plans to show visitors exactly what Polich is talking about when they present demonstrations by painters Todd Marsee and Al Weber, woodcarver Pierre Bataille, and stained glass artist Joe Slezak in the Plymouth Cultural Center near the tracks where Artrain rolls into Old Village.

It's all part of the celebration the arts council has planned for the visit which kicks off with a Space Odyssey Masquerade Bash Friday, Oct. 26, at the cultural center. Proceeds go to the Plymouth Community Arts Council to help defray the cost of Artrain USA's visit.

"We're very excited and anxiously awaiting Artrain and the kickoff," said Joyce Costanza, Artrain USA chairwoman for the Plymouth stop. "With Halloween being so close we decided on a Space Odyssey Masquerade Bash. NASA astronaut Anthony England will be here and talk a little about his experience in space. Costumes are optional. We hope to raise money to cover part of the \$13,000 to \$15,000 it costs to bring this to a community."

In addition to money, an Artrain visit requires hundreds of hours of time by volunteers. The arts

Artrain USA

What: The traveling museum exhibits art from NASA and the National Air and Space Museum collections. Admission is free but donations are appreciated.

When: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday-Sunday, Oct. 27-28

Where: On the railroad siding on Theodore Street behind the Plymouth Cultural Center, 525 Farmer.

Gala Evening: Space Odyssey Masquerade Bash, 7-10 p.m. Friday, Oct. 26, at the cultural center. Tickets are \$25. Proceeds go to the Plymouth Community Arts Council to help pay for bringing in Artrain USA. Call (734) 416-4278.

council estimates it will need 100 volunteers to host the Artrain visit that steering committee members have been planning for the last year. More than 800 school children will tour *Artistry of Space* on the Monday and Tuesday following the public showings Oct. 27-28.

"I almost wish we had another 30 days," said Costanza. "We still need 40 volunteers. It's really inspiring to work on the train. I saw the art in Ann Arbor and worked three days on the train. I saw the excitement in the children's eyes. It's space education and space art all coupled together."

NASA history

Three cars of art tell the story of NASA from the formative years of Mercury, Gemini and Apollo to shuttles Discovery, Atlantis and Endeavor, and the tragic loss of the seven-member crew of Challenger in 1986. Art featuring planetary probes Mariner,

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SYMPHONY ON TOUR

Flutist shares his adventures on DSO's European tour



On the road: Ervin Monroe (second from left) performs with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra in Swansea, Wales, before leaving for Nuremberg, Germany.

Editor's note: This is the first of two stories by Ervin Monroe about his experiences on the Detroit Symphony Orchestra's 2001 European tour. The principal flutist sent this installment from Cardiff, Wales, on Oct. 8. The orchestra will visit 12 cities in 18 days. To travel along, visit the Web site at www.detroit-symphony.org for a series of daily postcards and photos from the musicians.

BY ERVIN MONROE
SPECIAL WRITER

The Detroit Symphony Orchestra departed Detroit for Dublin on Oct. 1, marking the beginning of a 12-city European tour. The trip to Dublin was exciting. We all arrived very early at Detroit Metro Airport due to security concerns but passed through check-

points rather swiftly. After a few hours we were on our way.

It seemed only a short time later that we touched down in our stop-over city, Amsterdam. It was about 9 a.m. Tuesday morning European time, but in our hearts we all knew that it was really 3 a.m. (in Detroit). There was a lot of joking and half-hearted "Good Mornings" within the group as we strove to force our bodies into the new time zone.

After three hours of watching a gloomy morning of drizzling rain in The Netherlands, we departed for our first city on tour, Dublin.

The flight was short, a little over an hour. The pilot gave us a weather report for Dublin and forecast the same gloom that covered Amsterdam, but the sun was shining brightly when we landed. I mentioned this to our bus driver, who

laughed and told me an oft-repeated Dublin saying, "Every day here is four seasons."

And so it was during our stay. Rain, sun, cold wind, warm breeze—everyday. The location of our hotel was a blessing from St. Patrick himself. We were directly across the street from the concert hall and across the park from shops, restaurants, museums, etc. Everything was in walking distance—even Trinity College, home to the famous Book of Kells.

After a short nap, my wife, Susan, and I set out on a lengthy walk to see the sights. It was fun to people-watch, and we also noticed some interesting signs posted along the way. A popular bank in town was advertising mortgages on a huge window poster, which

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