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PROVINCETOWN EDITION

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\$2.5 million theater to be built at the base of the Monument

Provincetown Repertory Theatre leases a half-acre

By Marilyn Miller

The Provincetown Repertory Theatre created by Ken Hoyt just three years ago has grown from an ensemble of four to 18 today and is on its way to having a 295-seat theater to be built on the grounds of the Cape Cod Pilgrim Memorial Monument.

Last Thursday, as champagne corks popped, J. Anton Schiffenhaus, chairman of the board of directors of the non-profit Provincetown Repertory Theatre, signed a 50-year lease with Frank Hogan, president of the Cape Cod Pilgrim Memorial Association for a half-acre parcel where the new theater will be built.

The project will cost \$2.5 million. Already, close to \$1 million has been pledged. Actors Julie Harris, who lives in Chatham, and Jason Robards, are honorary chairman of the fundraising drive. The project has the blessings of noted director Jose Quintero, whose productions of Eugene O'Neill's plays were the showcase of the company's 1995 season.

"I'm the happiest man alive," said Hoyt, artistic director. "We're not taking any money at this time until our plans are further developed, which is the prudent way to go about this," said Schiffenhaus, a wealthy businessman with a reputation as a philanthropist and patron of the arts.

He and his wife Joan, who is also a director of the

\$1 million said to be pledged already

new theater group, divide their time between homes in Provincetown and Arizona.

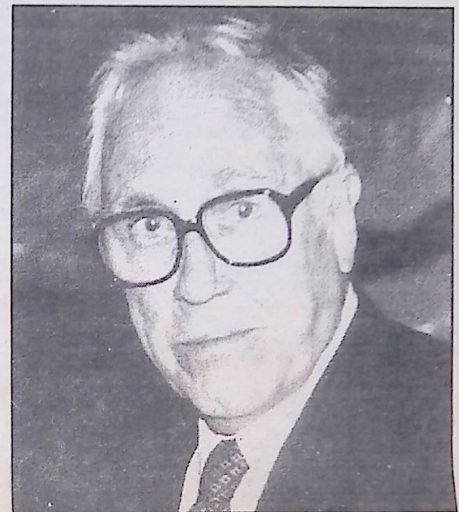
The Schiffenhauses had no plans to get this deeply involved in Hoyt's dream of seeing a theater built in Provincetown, the birthplace of American theater. But Hoyt, a 33-year-old actor from Los Angeles and New York who moved to Provincetown five years ago has a gift for finding the people who can turn his dreams into reality.

Ron Robin, owner of the Mews and a financial backer, recalls how the first time he met Hoyt five years ago, the actor-waiter was talking of his dream of having a theater in Provincetown.

"The more I talked to Ken about this, I realized he was also talking to other people about his idea of a theater. It just blows me away to realize that this fellow relentlessly pursued that idea against incredible odds," Robin said.

"He got the momentum and support for this from other people who have a similar vision and the means to realize it. He has built an incredible group."

Hoyt approached the Schiffenhauses in the fall of 1994 with his dream of starting a company and building a home for it.



Jason Robards at the Monument Thursday night

"He came over to our house and we sat around talking about his idea of starting a rep theater here," Schiffenhaus said. "I thought it was a nice idea, but frankly, I didn't think that much about it."

"Ken didn't know how to get started so I helped him form a non-profit organization and then Joan and I went to Arizona. We stayed in touch, though, and Ken put the company together for its first season in 1995."

The company had one production the first year. When Schiffenhaus saw it, he was impressed and found himself being drawn deeper into Hoyt's dream. Before he knew it, he and his wife were on the board of directors of the fledgling new theater group, which won critical acclaim its first year and came close to breaking even financially, he said.

Hoyt proudly acknowledges that the PRT is "my child," but he credits Quintero with "slapping the baby on the rear end and bringing it to life."

Quintero, renowned director of Eugene O'Neill's plays, founded the Circle in the Square in New York. Hoyt wrote to him in 1995 about his new theater group and his hopes of preserving the theater tradition in Provincetown where O'Neill's first play was produced, but got no response.

Then, at the suggestion of his friend and fellow

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PBG has Carnaville plans under control

Fireworks display is scrapped for this year

Parade theme is TV sitcoms

With Carnaville opening August 20, less than a month away, members of the Provincetown Business Guild are in command, ready to do all needed to make sure this year's parade and events won't be a disappointment to the hundreds if not thousands of visitors who come to town for this event.

The resignation of Larry Wald as chairman of the Carnaville committee came as disappointment to some, but it's not going to prevent this 20th Carnaville from being one to remember, said Sarah Peake, president of the PBG.

"People are pitching in to help," she said. Ron Robin for the fifth year in a row will handle arrangements for the parade, the flamboyant event that draws the biggest crowd with people coming from all over the Cape to see this legendary display of creative and outlandish floats and costumes.

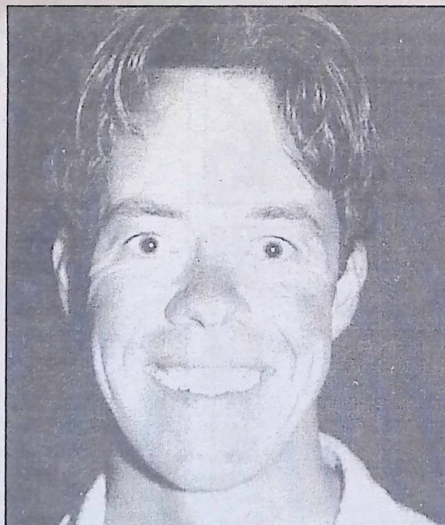
Each Carnaville parade has a theme. This year it's TV sitcoms. "I suspect we're going to see a lot of 'I Dream of Jeannie,'" Peake said.

Gary Reinhardt, owner of Six Webster Place, will handle the street decorations, plus help with the block party, an event featuring kegs of beer, snacks and live music that draws over 1,000 people.

For years, the block party has been sponsored by three guest houses in close proximity to each other—the Chicago House, Six Webster House and the Fairbanks Inn.

But this year, the block party will be held at the

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Ken Hoyt, a waiter's dream

Provincetown library needs 3 times more space

Trustees see building next door as best solution

By Marilyn Miller

The Provincetown Public Library has a big problem, one that's not going to go away.

It's operating with 5,000 square feet of space, a growing circulation that saw as many people using the library in January as used it last August, a traditionally busy month, and even lines of patrons forming up the stairway to check out books.

What is really needed is a building with 15,000 square feet, three times what they have now, said

Maghi Geary, chairman of the library board of trustees.

To prove that point, she and the other trustees, along with Debra DeJonker-Berry, library director, took the selectmen on a tour of the library last week. They pointed out its woeful inadequacies, explaining how lack of space has left them with no room for a computer program and a children's program.

The trustees asked the selectmen for suggestions on how to get the public aware of the need for more

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Mailer takes the pulpit to tell the greatest story ever told

Only an old general who knows war could do it his way

By David Olearcek

For 50 years Norman Mailer's work has reflected the cultural history of America, "my cultural history of America," he said.

And yet again, Mailer's newest book, his thirtieth, "The Gospel According to the Son," is as brash and as daring as he has ever been, written in the first person as the Son of God.

"We're a Christian-loving nation," Mailer said, so this book addresses that infatuation. It is, as well, a personal revelation that spans five decades.

"I had been rereading a lot of my older work," he said, "and I started to see how many references were made to Christ. Even if some were sardonic."

But more than a common thread in Mailer's work, the subject of Jesus Christ and religion is hot right now. Yes, God is everywhere, popular with the soul-searching masses looking for something to believe in as a new millennium approaches.

God has made the cover of the nation's weekly news magazines, will star in a major motion picture, and even entertain at "Creation Theatre," an attraction at a bible-themed amusement park being developed by a former country-music promoter to be called "God's Wonderful World."

Both "Time" magazine and "Newsweek" have had best-selling issues with cover stories on Jesus and angels. The new Geffen, Katzenberg, Spielberg super studio, "DreamWorks," will release its first, and over-budget, big-screen pro-

duction, "God."

Mailer's Gospel, however, parts the sea of Christian commercialism. "The Gospel According to the Son" tells the 2000-year-old story of the Messiah in his own words. This first-person account is one that only a credible and reputable author of our time could attempt. But as Mailer's work has addressed controversial topics from politics to masculinity, his audacity in this book startles.

"If I were an actor playing Jesus Christ, no one would question my work," he said. "People take it for granted. An actor can play any role."

Just as a composer writes in a given key, so does Mailer choose the first person for his Gospel.

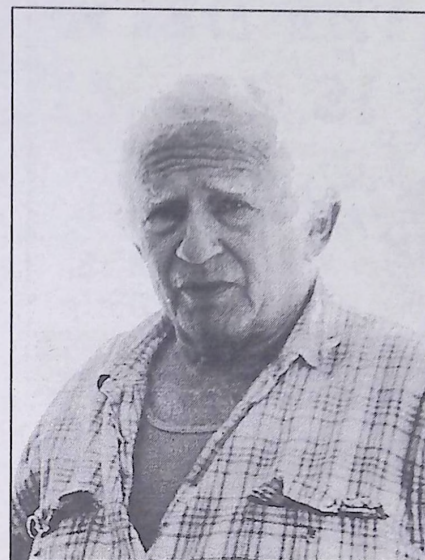
"There was no way to write the book unless I dared go into the first person," said Mailer.

"I anticipate real problems. A young writer is like the calvary soldier riding to the front, waving his sword. Then there's the old general that knows the war.

"I knew the hazards. That doesn't bother me. I try for things at the end of my reach. I didn't want to write a comfortable memoir. I've created a man I can believe is Jesus. I felt close to him. I don't see myself as Jesus in any way at all.

"If I did it in the third person and entered the mind of Jesus, that would have been sacrilegious."

Mailer said he did not do much research to write the book, concentrating instead on the story of



Norman Mailer

Jesus as a novel. "I think it's one of the most incredible stories ever told," Mailer said. "The story is fabulous."

"I wanted to tell the story with all the miracles, which is why I call it fabulous. There was no need to embellish it. I wrote it in a way that believers and nonbelievers could read it.

"I read just the four Gospels carefully," he said. "Mark, Matthew and Luke are synoptic. John is different. It's the most beautifully written, but the least useful as narration."

Mailer adheres closely to the New Testament while depicting the human side of Jesus and the frailty of the human race.

During His forty-day fast on the mountain, Jesus is visited and tempted by the devil. They talk of the prophet Isaiah's death, the myriad of gods respected by the Romans, and God the Father's scorn for women.

"The Devil's right," Mailer said. "Read the Old Testament. It's shocking. Women have always been treated with gender prejudice. I was having fun. Here's Norman Mailer defending women, putting it in the mouth of the devil."

"I agree with their aims," he said, comparing the contemporary women's movement to the Bolsheviks. "The ideal was fabulous, but the overall effect was authoritarian," he said.

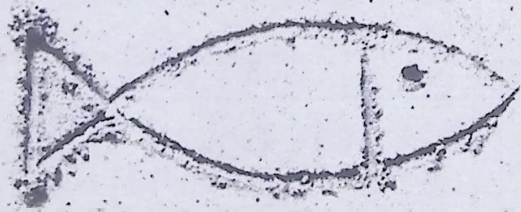
Mailer wrote one draft for "The Gospel According to the Son" and edited the work eight or nine times. "The first draft took a couple of months," said Mailer, but it took over a year and a half of editing.

"I read and researched more after writing the book," Mailer said. "I came to the conclusion that no one knew what happened, which made my work legitimate."

The book is selling and "should do fairly well," said Mailer even though "no one knew what to do with it." Books are usually positioned before they are published, but for Mailer's Gospel "the feeling was to put it out to see if it had legs."

Mailer will read and comment on several passages from "The Gospel According to the Son" tonight at 8 p.m. in the Parish Hall at the Church of St. Mary of the Harbor. Tickets are \$15 and will benefit the Provincetown Public Library. Copies of the book, which Mailer will sign after his presentation, will be on sale as part of the benefit.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO THE SON



NORMAN MAILER