

Thursday, August 29, 1998 Wet Mountain Tribune

"Divide" performance a big hit

The world premier of "Across The Great Divide," written by Myla Lichtman-Fields, noted playwright, presented by the Crystal Mountain Center For The Performing Arts, and performed by the Crystal Mountain Players, was greeted by tumultuous applause, laughter and cries of "Author" at its three performances this last weekend at the Jones Theater in Westcliffe.

The cast of 14, all local thespians, included Glenys Aldrich, Becky and Tom Barrow, Kathy Boullé, Ralph Eissmann, Deb Erikson, Elizabeth French, Lyle Jackson, Maegan Luckett, Liz Michael, Kelly McCracken, Aaron Mortensen, Yarrow Spitzfadden, and Jessica Erin Tannenbaum, some of whom played multiple parts.

This moving story of pioneer women enduring the hardships, and the rewards of crossing the plains, and the Continental

Divide, to reach Colorado, is a story depicted in a tapestry that hangs in the statehouse in Denver; and was enjoyed Friday, Saturday, and Sunday by the residents of the Valley and visitors from all over Colorado. This tapestry provided Mrs. Fields with the inspiration for this play, and it was duplicated exactly for the play by the artistry of Susan Eissmann-Pence, and it provided the centerpiece for staging of the production.

The program was funded in part by the Dramatists Guild Fund, Inc. and the Colorado Council on the Arts, and the production was artistically produced and staged by Anne Kimbell Relph.

Mrs. Lichtman-Fields, who is a graduate of the Juilliard School of Music and Drama in New York, and has been involved in the theater in many capacities from opera to folk music, assisted with the musical direction of the play.

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The cast of "Across the Great Divide" hold a dress rehearsal under a re-creation of the tapestry that inspired the playwright. --Trib photo by Jesse Souza

"Great Divide" to be presented

Across the Great Divide, an original play by Myla Lichtman-Fields, will be presented at the Jones Theater Aug. 21-23.

Tickets are \$5 and may be purchased in advance at the Rainbow Inn and the Emporium in Westcliffe. Reservations may be made by calling the theater at 783-3004. The show is included as part of the regular 1998 season ticket.

The story describes how pioneer women crossed the plains and the Continental Divide to reach Colorado.

A tapestry, created in 1975, inspired Lichtman-Fields to write the play. "As soon as I saw this, I knew that it would be fine material for a drama. It is particularly exciting that it is about this area," Lichtman-Fields said.

The tapestry has authentically been replicated by Sue Eissmann Pence. Pence photographed the original at the Colorado State Capitol in Denver. She then created a cardboard grid tracing, and completed

the drawing on stage material scrim. The replication is the exact size of the original.

The original Women's Gold tapestry is hand stitched embroidery and applique on Irish linen. Over 4,500 hours were contributed to complete the original tapestry. Lyrics from Katherine Lee Bates' "America the Beautiful" borders the work. Stitchers include Dottie Lamm, former Mayor William McNichols, and football player Rosie Greer. A register of contributors is encased with the tapestry.

The story of how Margaret E. Crawford brought roses to the Colorado mountains inspired Women's Gold. Her story along with many other pioneering women will be the play's focus.

"Across the Great Divide" is produced and directed by Anne Kimbell Relph and features the Crystal Mountain Players. Roles include Mother Cabrini; the first American saint, Chipeta, the wife of Chief Ouray of the Ute Indians, dance hall girl Silver Heels, and other luminaries.

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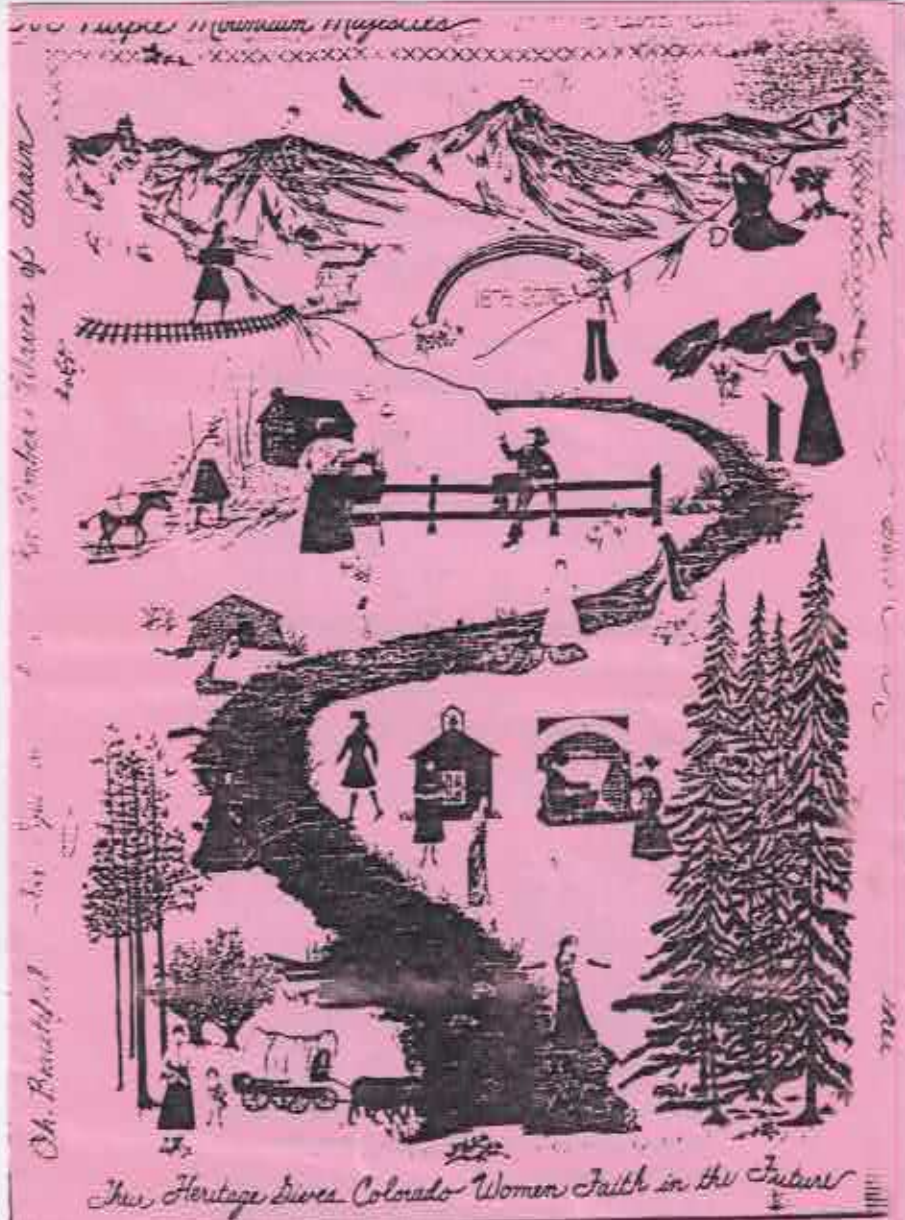
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ACROSS THE GREAT DIVIDE

By Myla Lichtman Fields
 Jones Theater Westcliffe

Produced with support from
 The Colorado Council on the Arts
 The Dramatist Guild Fund, Inc

1998



WESTCLIFFE
Center for the Performing Arts

ACROSS
THE GREAT DIVIDE

An Excerpt From The Full-Length Play
By Myla Lichtman-Fields

Producer and Director
Anne Kimbell Relph

In cooperation with Myla Productions

8/7/13