

DRAMA IN A NEW AGE OF TERROR

BY CATHY PELLETIER
THIS WEEK

ST. CATHARINES — According to Brock University professor, director and playwright Gyllian Raby, we're living in an age of terror.

Her drama students have been "very engaged" in discussing and transferring that sense of terror and its consequences into their production of *The Crucible*, playing in the Sean O'Sullivan Theatre at Brock's Centre for the Arts Nov. 19 and 20 at 8 p.m.

In the aftermath of 9-11, Raby has adapted Arthur Miller's classic script about witch trials in 1690 Salem, drawing parallels to the fear still gripping much of North America today. Miller's play opened in the '50s during the McCarthy era.

"I feel we're living in an age of new McCarthyism," says Raby, who feels Miller's work, warning against political paranoia and scapegoating is relevant now. "Our legislation and paranoia is making us target a small portion of the population. When we hear about Canadians and hostage takings, that can make ordinary people want to

curtail freedoms based on pure paranoia."

In Miller's play, anyone who believes in witches is evil, says Raby. "I think that decent people do panic and point the finger. Good and evil are blurred. We need to talk about it and argue what do we want citizenship to mean? Is it not a worthwhile ideal?"

This production was purposely placed in a Christian fundamentalist setting to distance it from North America, she says.

As co-founder of Calgary's renowned One Yellow Rabbit Theatre, Raby's plays have been produced throughout Canada while her collaborations with Ray Bradbury and Robert Lepage have toured internationally. Visiting Artist at Brock's Drama Department David Vivian, whose work for theatre, film, TV and industry has been seen nationwide, designed the innovative set and costumes for the play. "We wanted to evoke a timeless sense of community under threat," he says. "These are people you will recognize from the 10 p.m. news."

Tickets cost \$10 for adults, \$7 for students/seniors, and are available from the Brock Box Office at 905-688-5550, ext. 3257.