

UNCLE VANYA

by
Anton Chekhov

Salon Varietés
Theatre 2008

PRODUCTION TEAM

Stage Manager	HELEN TOMLINSON
Asst. Stage Manager	Dan Tomlinson, Pauline Naylor
Technical Stage Manager	John Pyne
Props	Pauline Naylor
Prompt	Lucy Heads
Set Design	Henrik Hagensen & John Pyne
Set Construction	John Pyne & Michael Lawrence
Lighting Design	Dave Carney & Henrik Hagensen
Sound Design	Dave Steve Mills
Wardrobe	Siân Hopkins
Balalaika music by	Guy Dearden
Other music	Rachmaninov, Fauré, Debussy
Russian consultant	Irina Millington
Poster & Programme	John Gale & Henrik Hagensen
Production Photographs	Mike Naylor
Publisher	Samuel French, Ltd.

FOR SALVA

Technical Stage Manager	John Pyne
Lighting Engineer	Dave Carney
Sound Engineer	Dave Steve Mills
Property Master	Gina Foster
Publicity Co-ordinator	Lizz Freeman
Front of House	Norma Wilson
Box Office	Brian Hindley

GRATEFUL THANKS TO

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By **ANTON CHEKHOV**

Translation by Mike Poulton

Adaptation and direction by HENRIK HAGENSEN

Characters (in order of appearance):

Marina - <i>the old nurse</i>	JEAN FENTON
Mikhail Astrov - <i>the doctor</i>	BRIAN McDONNELL
"Vanya", Ivan Petrovitch - <i>Sonya's Uncle, manager of his brother-in-law Serebryakov's country estate</i>	ROLAND QUESNEL
Serebryakov - <i>Retired PROFESSOR of Art. Sonya's father</i>	STEPHEN TOMLINSON
Yelena - <i>Serebryakov's second wife</i>	CHRISTIE NICHOLAS
Ilya Telegin, "Waffles" - <i>an impoverished landowner</i>	STEPHEN BURNS
Sonya - <i>Serebryakov's daughter by his first marriage to Vanya's sister</i>	JUNE WILLIAMSON
Maria Vasilyevna - <i>Vanya's mother</i>	DOROTHY CLARKE

Setting & Synopsis of Scenes

A Russian country estate, late nineteenth century.

- ACT I:** The garden on the Serebryakov's estate.
Early September afternoon.
- ACT II:** The dining room.
Some days later, after midnight.

Interval - 15 minutes

- ACT III:** The drawing room.
Late September, early afternoon.
- ACT IV:** Vanya's study.
Some hours later.

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Dear Audience,
Welcome to the Salon Variétés Theatre!
If your seat tonight is upstairs on our balcony, you will pass through a tiny foyer. This room is our library, storage, meeting room and is also well used for rehearsals. We have always called this room, The Chekhov Room. However, this is the first time the theatre has actually put on a Chekhov performance, and we are very proud tonight to be able to present for you "Uncle Vanya", in Mike Poulton's vivid translation from 1996.

Anton Pavlovič Chekhov was born in 1860 and died from tuberculosis in 1904, when he was just 44. His parents were poor, and while Chekhov studied medicine, he provided for his family by his talent for writing. He had though, no literal ambitions and became a doctor in 1884. It was the writer, Grigorovič, who persuaded Chekhov to take his talent seriously, and soon the Pushkin-prize award was honoured to him. The four most famous Chekhov plays are "The Seagull", "Three Sisters", "The Cherry Orchard" and "Uncle Vanya".



The tragicomedy, "Uncle Vanya", was published in 1899. Its first major performance was in 1900 under the direction of Konstantin Stanislavski. The play is unique among Chekhov's major plays because it is essentially an extensive reworking of a play a decade earlier, "The Wood Demon".

He reduced the cast list from almost two dozen, and he changed the climatic suicide of "The Wood Demon" into the famous failed homicide of "Uncle Vanya". In addition, he altered the original happy ending into a more problematic, less final solution.

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All Chekhov's plays have been approached by several different interpretations, played with a lot of dull earnestness, and like silly farces. However, we cannot be true to Chekhov and his lovely characters, if we don't play him honestly with both seriousness and humour. Like life itself! The Danish scientist and poet, Piet Hein said it like this in one of his famous "Grooks":

TAKING FUN AS SIMPLY FUN
AND EARNESTNESS IN EARNEST
SHOWS HOW THOROUGHLY THOU ONE
OF THE TWO DISCERNST

By the end of the 19th century, people didn't always have a free choice to live as they wished. To day luckily we do! But what have we learned? Well, we are almost about to destroy our planet, and it doesn't always seem like we are enjoying and appreciating all the fortune we have. Please, for the next couple of hours, forget your hustle and bustle with the constant noise surrounding us. Open your mind, and join us in exploring Chekhov!

It has been a great pleasure collaborating with the excellent back-stage crew and the brilliant actors, amongst which we are happy to introduce new talent on to our stage, Christie Nicholas (Yelena) and Roland Quesnel (Vanya). This is indeed our hope, that we are able to tell this lovely story with respect for the playwright, though in a way that appeals to modern life.

Enjoy!
Henrik Hagensen,
(director)



Dorothy Clarke



Jean Fenton



Christie Nicholas



June Williamson



Roland Quesnel



Brian McDonnell



Stephen Tomlinson



Stephen Burns