

1. November 20, 1923-unknown- Broadway Original- Jolson's 59th Street Theatre, New York, NY

This production played in repertory with *The Brothers Karamazoff*, *Mistress of the Inn*, *Ivanov*, *The Cherry Orchard*, *In the Claws of Life*, *An Enemy of the People*, *Enough Stupidity in Every Wise Man*, *The Death of Pazuukhin*, *The Lower Depths*

Produced by: F. Ray Comstock, Morris Gest and The Moscow Art Theatre (under the direction of Constantin Stanislavsky)

2. January 01, 1924- unknown- Broadway Original- Jolson's 59th Street Theatre, New York, NY

This production played in repertory with *The Brothers Karamazoff*, *Mistress of the Inn*, *Ivanov*, *The Cherry Orchard*, *In the Claws of Life*, *An Enemy of the People*, *Enough Stupidity in Every Wise Man*, *The Death of Pazuikhin*, *The Lower Depths*

Produced by: F. Ray Comstock, Morris Gest and The Moscow Art Theatre (under the direction of Constantin Stanislavsky)

This production is a return engagement of Uncle Vanya (11/20/1923) "The Moscow Art Theater in its return engagement at the Jolson Theater.

Cast:

Mikhail Lvovich Astrov: Constantin Stanislavsky

Sonja: Alla Tarasova

Unsigned notice in 'World' 29 January 1924, found in the book: Anton Chekov edited by Victor Emeljanow

"A fair-sized audience, which appeared to be intensely interested in the play, saw the first performance. 'Uncle Vanya' is a play not far removed in construction from the old time melodrama thrillers of the American stage. After long detours of what is presumed to be flowery dialogue and graceful gesture, intense, impassioned climaxes are reached, and the audience last night, following the course of the rather broadly written play by use of the programmed synopsis, appeared to recognize these warmer moments and to appreciate them.

The action of 'Uncle Vanya' centers about the emotional torment through which a homely young woman passes in the course of her association with a handsome doctor. The doctor is ignorant of the girl's affection, but is in love with a second lady who has determined to please the unfortunate girl's case for her. In the third act the doctor and the woman he loves are discovered in embrace and there is general disorder in the household. The performance of the doctor by Constantin Stanislavsky is easily one of the most appealing which the director of the Moscow Players has given, and Alla Tarasova as Sonya, the love-stricken girl, is natural and fine in her part. Indeed, there is a smoothness throughout such as has marked all the performances of the company."

Review found in:

Emeljanow, Victor. *Chekhov: The Critical Heritage*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul,

1981. Print.

“The 1899 play was not seen in New York until the visiting Moscow Art Theatre presented it in Russian as part of their touring repertory. The play did not impress the critics as much as the other offering in the repertory although the Russian cast was roundly praised.”

Hischak, Thomas S. *Broadway Plays and Musicals: Descriptions and Essential Facts of More than 14,000 Shows through 2007*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2009. Print.

“UNCLE VANYA,” ANOTHER TCHEKHOFF PLAY

UNCLE VANYA,” which will have its American premiere at Jolson’s tomorrow night and which will be the bill of the Russians for the major part of the coming week, was the second of the plays of Anton Tchekhoff to reach the stage of the Moscow Art Theatre. The story of the way it arrived in the hands of Stanislavsky and his artists and the connection it had with encouraging Tchekhoff to continue his literary efforts in the dramatic form are both of them interesting chapters, not only in the annals of the Art Theatre but in the career of the playwright himself.

Long before the success of the revival of “The Sea Gull” during the first year of the Art Theatre had established Tchekhoff’s fame as a dramatist, a play by the name of “The Demon” had issued from his pen and had found production in several unimportant provincial theatres. Rewritten and retitled, it had been submitted to the theatrical literary committee of the Small Imperial Theatre in Moscow where Tchekhoff’s friends, Lyensky and Youzhin and the régisseur Kondratyeff, were working zealously for its acceptance.

Stanislavsky and his associates, on the other hand, were eager to add it to the growing repertory of the Art Theatre under the spur of the acclaim “The Sea Gull” had achieved. Tchekhoff, however, had returned to Moscow in the Spring of 1899 from his enforced Winter exile in the Crimea too late to see “The Sea Gull” in performance. A close friendship sprang up between him and his interpreting artists, but he felt in duty bound to leave the new manuscript with the rival theatre. A solution of the dilemma soon appeared when the committee of the Small Imperial Theatre demanded certain changes in the third act. Tchekhoff refused to make any revisions, and the outcome of the impasse

was that the Art Theatre snatched the manuscript as it stood, accepted it without question and hurried the play into rehearsal. On the night of Nov. 7, 1899, therefore, “Uncle Vanya” as we know it today was publicly performed for the first time on the stage with which Tchekhoff’s fame as a playwright was inextricably interwoven.

Meanwhile, during rehearsals the author had returned to his southern retreat. A few days after premiere he wrote from Yalta to Mme. Knipper, who had created the rôle of Helena Androleвна and who was later to become his wife:

“The telegrams began coming in the evening when I was in bed. They sent them on to me by telephone. I woke up every time and ran with bare feet to the telephone, and got very much chilled; then I had scarcely dozed off when the bell rang again and again. It’s the very first time that my own fame has kept me awake. The next evening when I went to bed I put my slippers and

dressing gown beside my bed, but there were no more telegrams.

“Yes, dear actress, ordinary medium success is not enough now for all you artistic players: you want an uproar, big guns, dynamite. You have been spoiled at last, deafened by constant talk about successes, full and not full houses: you are already poisoned with that drug, and in another two or three years you will be good for nothing! So much for you!”

How far wrong Tchekhoff was as a forecaster of the future, as well as he was in the rôle of judge of his own work, is seen from the fact that success did not prove insidious to the Art

Theatre, and that any dubious note in the public reception of the new play soon vanished. It is a curious fact that in the quarter century of the Moscow Art Theatre only two plays, aside from those with a spectacular appeal, have scored instantaneous and emphatic triumph at their premières—“An Enemy of the People” and Gorky’s “The Lower Depths.” Like so many other cherished favorites in the Art Theatre repertory, “Uncle Vanya” won its way slowly and unobtrusively, but surely, to the hearts of the theatre’s patrons, and today, over two decades later, it still holds an enviable position.

It was “Uncle Vanya,” too, which shared honors with “The Sea Gull,” and with Hauptmann’s “Lonely Lives” and Ibsen’s “Hedda Gabler,” in the story of the persuasion of Tchekhoff to pursue further the craft of playwright. In the

Spring of 1900 the Art Theatre was writing to him for another manuscript. He refused, urged to that conclusion by lack of confidence in his powers. Thinking that perhaps this self-depreciation was due to the fact that he had never seen either “The Sea Gull” or “Uncle Vanya” on the stage, the entire Art Theatre company set out for the Crimea at the close of the Spring season in Moscow, traveled south, met Tchekhoff at the dock at Sebastopol, gave eight performances there, proceeded to Yalta, where the playwright had built his own house, with his own hands and had laid out his garden with the same personal care, and gave four more performances here.

In one of the souvenirs of Tchekhoff published by the Moscow Art Theatre several years ago, the statement is made: “The popularity of Tchekhoff in the Crimea was great without any theatre to increase it; and here came the whole company of the theatre to which he was attached to show the beloved author his own plays!”

The benign southern sun, the presence of Gorky in the entourage, just then blooming into prime literary fame, the close friendship between the two writers, the inspiration of the sea and the Spring and the success of the creators of this youthful theatre—all combined to give Tchekhoff the necessary stimulus to carry on his labors.

UNCLE VANYA," ANOTHER TCHEKHOFF PLAY

New York Times (1923-Current file); Jan 27, 1924;

ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times (1851-2010)

pg. X2

3. May 01, 1924 – Broadway Revival, Imperial Theater, New York, NY

This production played in repertory with *The Lower Depths*, *The Cherry Orchard*, *In the Claws of Life*, *An Enemy of the People*, *Enough Stupidity in Every Wise Man*, *The Death of Pazukhin*, *Tsar Fyodor Ivanovitch*, *Mistress of the Inn*, *Ivanov*

Produced By: F. Ray Comstock, Morris Gest and The Moscow Art Theatre (under the direction of Constantin Stanislavsky)

4. May 24, 1929- May 26 1929- Broadway Revival, Morosco Theater, New York, NY

Produced by: Irma Kraft

Performances: 2

Cast:

Jules Artfield as Ilya Ilyich Telegin

Anton Bundsmann as Worker

Morris Carnovsky as Ivan Petrovich Voinstsky

Marjorie Dalton as Maria Vasilyevna Voinskaya

Hubert Druce as Alexander Vladimirovich Serebryakov

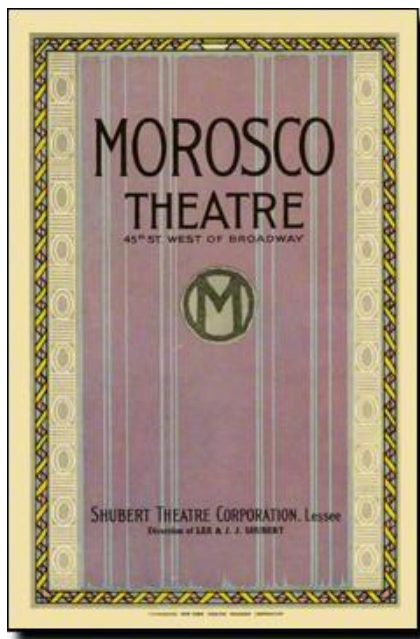
Ara Gerald as Yelena Andreyevna

Rose Kean as Sofya Alexandrovna

Franchot Tone as Mikhail Iovich Astrov

Ludmilla Toretka

“Booked for a series of matinees, the production received such a lackluster notices that the show folded after two of them.” Broadway Plays and Musicals: Descriptions and Essential Facts By Thomas S. Hischak



5. April 15, 1930- July 1930- Broadway Revival, Cort Theatre, New York, NY

Produced and Directed by Jed Harris

Written by Anton Chekhov, Book Adapted by Rose Caylor

Staged by Jed Harris

Costume Design by Herman Patrick Tappe and Fania Mindell

Eduardo Ciannelli as Ilya Ilyich Telegin

Walter Connolly as Ivan Petrovich Voinitsky

Lillian Gish as Yelena Andreyevna

Isabel Irving as Maria Vasilyevna Voinitskaya

Harold Johnsrud as Servant

Kate Mayhew as Maryina

Osgood Perkins as Mikhail Iovovich Astrov

Eugene Powers as Alexander Vladimirovich Serebryakov

Joanna Roos as Sofya Alexandrovna

“An outstanding cast was assembled by producer-director Jed Harris and the revival ran ten weeks. Lillian Gish (Yelena) received the most accolades but also praised were Osgood Perkins (Astrov), Walter Connolly (Vanya), Joanna Roos (Sonya), Eugene Powers, Kate Mayhew. The esteemed production returned on 22 September 1930 [Booth Theater]. The cast remained the same except Zita Johann played Sonya.” “Booked for a series of matinees, the production received such a lackluster notices that the show folded after two of them.” Broadway Plays and Musicals: Descriptions and Essential Facts By Thomas S. Hischak

THE
CORT THEATRE

BERNARD KLAUWANS
Manager

FIRE NOTICE: Look around now and choose the nearest exit to your seat. In case of fire, walk (not run) to that exit. Do not try to beat your neighbor to the street.

JOHN J. DORMAN, Fire Commissioner.

BEGINNING TUESDAY EVENING, APRIL 15, 1930

MATINEES THURSDAY AND SATURDAY

HOLIDAY MATINEE MONDAY, APRIL 21

A JED HARRIS PRODUCTION
CHEKHOV'S COMEDY

"UNCLE VANYA"

ACTING VERSION BY ROSE CAYLOR
SETTINGS DESIGNED BY JO MIELZINER

NOTE: THE AUDIENCE IS REQUESTED TO
REMAIN SEATED DURING INTERVALS.

CAST

(IN THE ORDER OF APPEARANCE)

MARINA, a nurse KATE MAYHEW
MICHAEL ASTROFF, a doctor..... OSGOOD PERKINS

PROGRAM CONTINUED ON FOURTH PAGE FOLLOWING

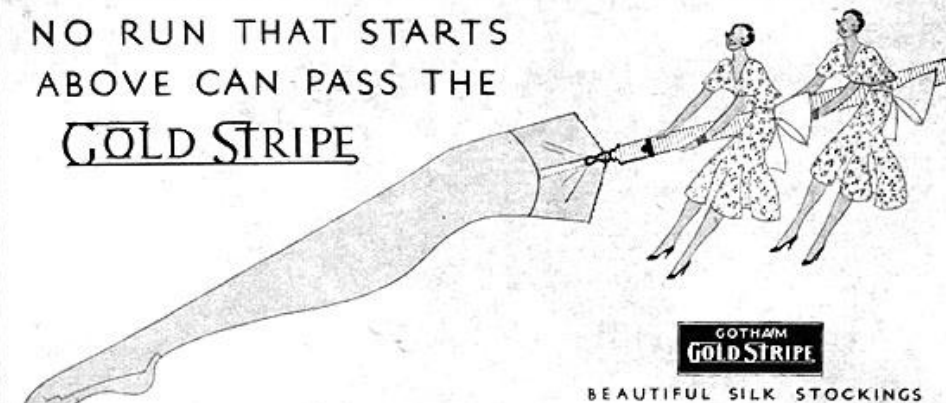


What's the use of
lighting a large
cigar when you've
only time for a
small one?

BETWEEN THE ACTS
LITTLE CIGARS

cort theatre

NO RUN THAT STARTS
ABOVE CAN PASS THE
GOLD STRIPE



**GOTHAM
GOLD STRIPE**

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PROGRAM CONTINUED.

IVAN VOINTSKI (Uncle Vanya).....WALTER CONNOLLY
SONIAJOANNA ROOS
ALEXANDER SEREBRAKOFF, a retired professor....EUGENE POWERS
ILYA TELEGINEDUARDO CIANNELLI
HELENALILLIAN GISH
MME. VOINTSKAYAISABEL VERNON
A SERVANTHAROLD JOHNSRUD

ACT I

An August afternoon in the garden of the Serebrakoff's country estate, the late nineties.

(Interval Three Minutes)

ACT II

In the house. That night.

(INTERMISSION TWELVE MINUTES)

ACT III

The same, a month later.

(Interval Three Minutes)

PROGRAM CONTINUED ON SECOND PAGE FOLLOWING

"A FOOD AND A FEAST"—seems like an odd combination, for desserts are mostly just good tastes and fleeting memories. But for real food and marvelous, lingering flavor buy

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smart, lovely underthings



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Shop — Fifth Avenue and 41st Street

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PROGRAM CONTINUED

ACT IV

Vanya's study. That night.

Costumes worn by Miss Gish in Act I and Act III by Herman Patrick Tappe. Miss Gish's other costumes and costumes worn by the Misses Roos, Mayhew and Vernon by Fama Mindell. Men's costumes by Brooks Costume Co. Production built by Frank Dwyer, Inc., and painted by Bergman Studios

EXECUTIVE STAFF FOR MR. HARRIS

General ManagerRichard Maney

Enjoymint!
after
eating ~



*They aid
digestion*

" A L W A Y S G O O D T A S T E "

6. Sept 22, 1930- Oct 1930- Broadway Revival, Booth Theatre, New York, NY

Produced and Directed by Jed Harris

Written by Anton Chekhov, Translation by Rose Caylor
Staged by Jed Harris

Cast:

Eduardo Ciannelli as Ilya Ilyich Telegin

Walter Connolly as Ivan Petrovich Voinitsky

Lillian Gish as Yelena Andreyevna

Isabel Irving as Maria Vasilyevna Voinitskaya

Harold Johnsrud as Servant

Kate Mayhew as Maryina

Osgood Perkins as Mikhail Iovich Astrov

Eugene Powers as Alexander Vladimirovich Serebryakov

Zita Johann as Sonya

Total Performance: 16

THE BOOTH THEATRE

WINTHROP AMES, DIRECTOR

A. C. Mester, Manager
Florence Doody, Secretary

Margaret Collins, Treasurer
Marguerite Hale, Asst. Treasurer

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JOHN J. DORMAN, Fire Commissioner.

BEGINNING
MONDAY EVENING,
SEPTEMBER 29, 1930



MATINEES
WEDNESDAY AND
SATURDAY

A JED HARRIS PRODUCTION

CHEKHOV'S COMEDY

"UNCLE VANYA"

ACTING VERSION BY ROSE CAYLOR

SETTINGS DESIGNED BY JO MIELZINER

NOTE: The audience is requested to remain seated during intervals.

CAST

(In the Order of Appearance)

MARINA, a nurse.....Played by KATE MAYHEW

MICHAEL ASTROFF, a doctor....." " OSGOOD PERKINS

(Program Continued on Fourth Page Following)



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OPEN ALL NIGHT



A run caught means a stocking
 saved . . . and gold stripes catch
 the garter runs

GOHAM
 GOLD STRIPE

IVAN VOINITSKI (Uncle Vanya)	Played by	WALTER CONNOLLY
SONIA	"	ZITA JOHANN
ALEXANDER SEREBRAKOFF, a retired professor	"	EUGENE POWERS
ILYA TELEGIN	"	EDUARDO CIANNELLI
HELENA	"	LILLIAN GISH
MME. VOINITSKAYA	"	ISABEL IRVING
A SERVANT	"	HAROLD JOHNSRUD

ACT I

An August afternoon in the garden of the Serebrakoffs' country estate, the late nineties.

(Interval Three Minutes)

ACT II

In the house. That night.

(INTERMISSION TWELVE MINUTES)

THESE DAYS YOU MUST KNOW THINGS

Know how to dress, how to breathe, how to eat and a lot
 of other things if you want to keep step. For instance
 you should know the food value and quality of

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 CREAM





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you owe it
to your audience*

KAYSER

Italian* Silk Bloomers	\$2.95—\$3.95
Sansheen* Hosiery	\$1.65—\$1.95
Leatherette* Gloves	\$1.00 and up

At the better shops and at the Kayser Store, 473 Fifth Avenue, near 41st Street, opposite the Library.

*TRADE-MARK REGISTERED.

ACT III

The same, a month later.

(Interval Three Minutes)

ACT IV

Vanya's study. That night.

Costumes worn by Miss Gish in Act I and Act III by Herman Patrick Tappe. Miss Gish's other costumes and costumes worn by the Misses Johann, Mayhew and Irving by Fania Mindell. Men's costumes by Brooks Costume Co. Production built by Frank Dwyer, Inc., and painted by Bergman Studios.

EXECUTIVE STAFF FOR MR. HARRIS

General Manager	Charles Hertzman
General Press Representative	Richard Maney





WHO'S WHO *in the* CAST

OSGOOD PERKINS was graduated from Harvard in 1914 and, aside from Hasty Pudding antics, saw little of the stage until after the war, when he was silently villainous in five motion pictures. His first Broadway gesture was in "The Beggar on Horseback." In this, as in three subsequent plays, "Weak Sisters," "The Masque of Venice" and "Pomeroy's Past," he impersonated a gentleman of the cloth—sometimes acidly, sometimes benevolently, but always effectively. His cleric constituency exhausted, he turned over a new leaf in "Loose Ankles," and since that time has been tough and rough and sinister in "Spread Eagle," "Women Go On Forever" and "The Front Page." He spends many summers abroad and frequently essays a sortie into motion pictures. Married? Yes.



LILLIAN GISH returns to the stage in the Chekhov comedy after an absence of 17 years. She last appeared on a prosceniumed platform in New York in 1913, along with Ernest Truex and Mary Pickford, in "A Good Little Devil" at the Republic. Since "The Birth of a Nation" her fame in pictures has been secure. Among the notable films which she has illumined, are "Intolerance," "Broken Blossoms," "Way Down East," "Orphans of the Storm," "The White Sister," "Hearts of the World," "Romola" and "The Scarlet Letter." Miss Gish made her stage debut at the age of six in a melodrama, "In Convict's Stripes," in Rising Sun, Ohio. She was born in Springfield, Ohio, and has never married.



WALTER CONNOLLY was born in Cincinnati, and became acquainted with flats and parallels in college dramatics at St. Xavier's. Was schooled in touring companies of Sothorn and Marlowe, Ben Greet, and the Coburns, chiefly in Shakespearean repertory. Made his first New York appearance in "Come Out of the Kitchen" with

Continued on page 16



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Who's Who in the Cast

(Continued)

Ruth Chatterton. Mustered out of Marine Corps, he studied in Dublin after the war; then was with Margaret Anglin in "The Woman of Bronze." Was (the losing lover) in "Applesauce," in "Treat 'Em Rough," "The Love Thief," "The Springboard," "Trigger," "The Behavior of Mrs. Crane," "The Happy Husband" and "Possession." More recently he has been advantageously seen in "Merry Andrew," "Stepping Out," "Ladies Leave" and "Your Uncle Dudley."



EUGENE POWERS was only recently the embittered and sardonic Lord Wainright of "Children of Darkness." On the stage for more than twenty years, Powers has given notable performances in "Outward Bound," "The Green Hat," "Kibitzer."

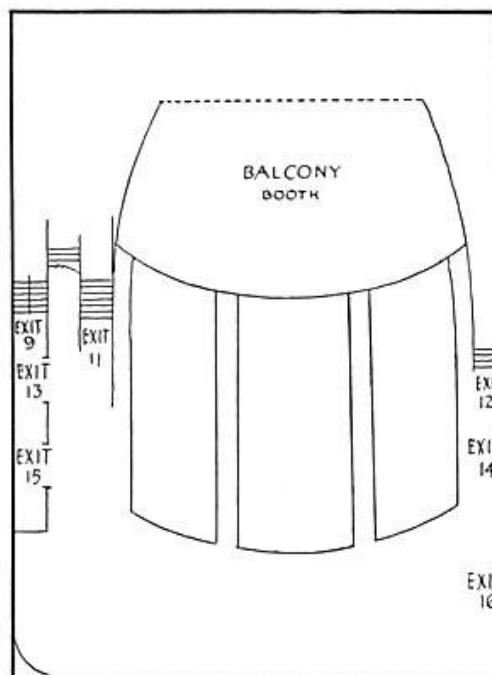
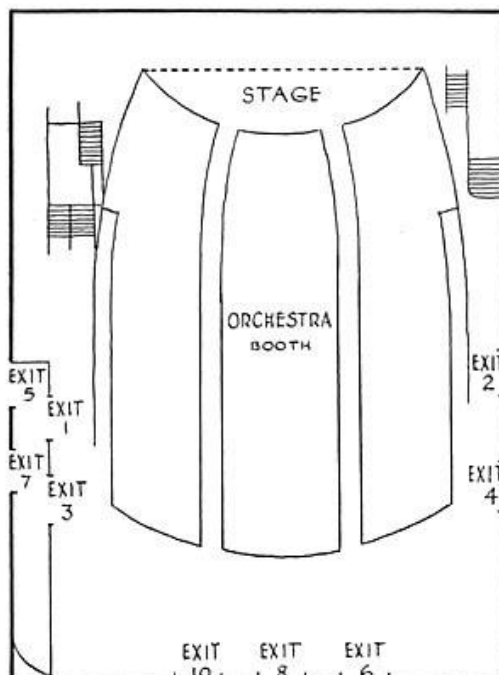
KATE MAYHEW has been on the stage for 71 years. She has played with Charlotte Cushman, Lotta, Maggie Mitchell, James O'Neil, William H. Crane, Mrs. Fiske and the elder Hackett.



EDUARDO CIANNELLI was Louie, the gunman, who suddenly turned into a newspaperman through the offices of the circulation department, in "The Front Page." He was seen this season in "This Man's Town."



SAVE YOUR PROGRAMS for future reference. There are so many occasions when you want to know in what production you saw this or that player or refer to some other editorial feature. Our attractive new binder, designed to accommodate the larger size programs, will be sent postpaid for \$2.00 by the New York Theatre Program Corporation, 108-114 Wooster Street, New York City.



**7. May 13, 1946- June 22, 1946- Broadway Revival, New Century Theatre,
New York, NY**

Produced by Theatre Incorporated (Richard Aldrich: Managing Director) and The Old Vic Company

Written by Anton Chekhov; Translated by Constance Garnett

Staged by John Burrell

Scenic Design by Tanya Moiseiwitsch; Costume Design by Tanya Moiseiwitsch;

Lighting Design by John Sullivan

Cast:

Ena Burrill as Maryina

Bryony Chapman as Maria Vasilyevna Voinitskaya

Nicholas Hannen as Alexander Vladimirovich Serebryakov

Margaret Leighton as Yelena Andreyevna

William Monk as Yefim

Laurence Olivier as Mikhail Ilovich Astrov

Joyce Redman as Sofya Alexandrovna

George Relph as Ilya Ilyich Telegin

Ralph Richardson as Ivan Petrovich Voinitsky

Total Performances 5

Follwing Review taken from the New York Times published on May 19, 1946 in the Arts and Lesisure Section by: Lewis Nichols

'UNCLE VANYA'

The Visiting Old Vic Company Adds Chekhov to Its Local Repertory

By LEWIS NICHOLS

BEFORE the Old Vic brought it back last week, "Uncle Vanya" had collected the dust of library shelves for sixteen years. No doubt every classic or semi-classic should be taken down now and then to prevent total loss from the dry rot of apartment living. New York thus is at least intellectually indebted to the visitors for another glance at Chekhov's "scenes from country life," although New Yorkers may flock to the Century on Russian repertory days more from a sense of duty than one of pleasure. "Uncle Vanya," in this spring of 1946, has a reputation something like Dr. Johnson's woman preacher—the marvel is not that it may not be done well but that it is done at all. The Old Vic also seems to feel this to a certain extent. Unlike the two parts of "King Henry IV," into which it flung itself with good will and abandon, it often seems to remain outside the text of "Uncle Vanya." It gives an air of detachment which implies a conspirator's wink and sometimes it even gives the wink itself.

Little Action

"Uncle Vanya" is a play in which nothing happens, in the theatrical sense; in which the char-

acter sells the estate and the rage of his brother-in-law over the idea. The general mood is one of futility, and there is no denying that the pace is slow and the accent one of overwhelming gloom. Such is the reiteration of despair that "Uncle Vanya" can become dangerous stuff for this cynical age. One misstep on the stage, one moment of carelessness, and the play unfortunately can be made to sound a little like a parody.

Some Dubious Moments

At their best, the members of the Old Vic try to play "Uncle Vanya" for the series of character studies it represents. Within the range of their various abilities they usually try to treat the playwright fairly, and some of them have an abnormally wide range indeed. But the Old Vic also has a less good side in the present instance. Every now and again one of the players will over-accent a line or gesture, will do something so alien to the whole, that the spell of illusion is lost. Players' salaries do not entitle them to say that here is a museum, and this is an earlier and quaint piece and that we, too, think that some of it may appear a little silly under the circumstances. This is not usual with the company, to be sure, but on the open-

acters probe only the darkness of ing night, at any rate, there were their souls, the gloom of their shal- several instances which chopped low futures. An elderly teacher off Chekhov and doused cold water has come back to the estate with over the mood. "Uncle Vanya" ob- a young wife. He is thoughtless, viously must be played with aus- fussy and self-centered. His broth- terity and must be managed with er-in-law by an earlier marriage is firmness.

in despair through personal failure Since the Spring seems to be and a mute love for the newly ar- given over to Laurence Olivier, a rived beauty. The local doctor is not unwarranted gesture, it would a periodic drunkard as well as a seem, let a note say here that his man with keen disappointment in Astroff is excellent. Mr. Olivier's both his lot and the general state playing of the doctor is calm and of the world. The daughter, plain easy, and has a touch of the hu- looking but loyal, is in love with mor which is inner and not exter- the physician, but he, in turn, nal. As he goes about it, the actor grows interested in the teacher's obviously regards Astroff as the wife. Of plot there is only the best part and "Uncle Vanya" the thought of the owner that he may best play ever written; no moment of the evening is beneath him or alien to New York, London or the theatre of 1946. Ralph Richardson also gives a good performance as Voynitsky, the brother-in-law, a flabby, mournful, assorted bundle of nerves and disappointments. Margaret Leighton is the second wife and Joyce Redman the younger daughter. That the Old Vic and Theatre, Inc., its local sponsor, recognize "Uncle Vanya" may be regarded on the side of caviar can be seen in the fact that it appears seldom in the repertory. It will not be given this week or next, and only three times thereafter.

Devised with a production of the



THE
OLD VIC
THEATRE COMPANY

HENRY IV PART I HENRY IV PART II
UNCLE VANYA
OEDIPUS WITH THE CRITIC

THEATRE INCORPORATED

RICHARD ALDRICH, Managing Director
has the honor to present



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MILES MALLESON	JOYCE REDMAN	GEORGE RELPH
MARGARET LEIGHTON	ENA BURRILL	MICHAEL WARRE
SIDNEY TAFER	PETER COPLEY	HARRY ANDREWS
NICOLETTE BERNARD	MICHAEL RAGHAN	CECIL WINTER
DAVID KENTISH	ROBIN LLOYD	GEORGE ROSE
KENNETH EDWARDS	WILLIAM MONK	FRANK DUNCAN
BRYONY CHAPMAN	DIANA MADDOX	JOHN GARLEY
GEORGE COOPER	JOSEPH JAMES	WILLIAM SQUIRE
MAX BRENT	JANE WENHAM	BRIAN PARKER

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(By Arrangement with the British Council)

HENRY IV PART I

Shakespeare

HENRY IV PART II

Shakespeare

UNCLE VANYA

Chekhov

OEDIPUS

Sophocles

English Version by W. B. Yeats

with

THE CRITIC

Sheridan

Directors of The Old Vic

JOHN BURRELL (Chairman)

LAURENCE OLIVIER RALPH RICHARDSON

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Another Winedrawer Robin Lloyd
Justice Shallow Laurence Olivier
Justice Silence Miles Malleson
Davy, Servant to Shallow William Monk
Mouldy George Rose
Wart John Garley
Shadow Frank Duncan
Feeble David Kentish
Bulcalf Joseph James

Lords, Attendants, Soldiers, Citizens: Eleanora Barrie, Bryony Chapman, Julie Harris, Dee Sparks, Jane Wenham, Lawrence Carr, Rudolph Cavell, George Cooper, Will Davis, Frank Duncan, Carl James, Elmer Lehr, Bernard Pollack, John Reilly, Paul Riley, Sandy Roe, William Squire, Al Studer, Alvin Sullum, Richard Wendley.

SCENE
England.

The play is presented in three parts with two intermissions of 10 minutes each.

CREDITS

Scenery built by Brunskill & Loveday; painted by Alick Johnstone. Costumes by B. J. Simmons (London) and L. & H. Nathan, Ltd., and Old Vic Workshops under Susannah Jackson. Shoes by Anello & Davide and Gamba. Wigs by Nathanwigs and Gustave. Properties made by Harry Adams and Jack Lovell. Lighting equipment by Century Lighting Co.

Fri., June 14

UNCLE VANYA

SCENES FROM COUNTRY LIFE

by
ANTON CHEKHOV

From the Russian by
CONSTANCE GARNETT

Staged by
JOHN BURRELL

Scenery and Costumes by
TANYA MOISEWITSCH

Lighting by
JOHN SULLIVAN

CAST

(In Order of Appearance)

Marina (The Family Nurse) Ena Burrill
Astrov (A Doctor) Laurence Olivier
Voynitsky ("Uncle Vanya") Ralph Richardson
The Professor Nicholas Hannen
Yelena (The Professor's Second Wife),
Margaret Leighton
Sonya (The Professor's Daughter by his
First Wife, Vanya's Sister) Joyce Redman
Telyegin ("Waffles") George Relph



for Pleasant Moments



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Marya Voynitsky (Vanya's Mother),
Byrony Chapman
Yefim (A Peasant Servant).....William Monk

SCENE

The Professor's Estate in Southern Russia
at the end of the Nineteenth Century.

ACT I.

Outside the House. An Afternoon in Summer.

INTERMISSION

ACT II.

Scene 1—A Room in the House. A Few Weeks Later.

Scene 2—The Same. About a Fortnight Later. An
Autumn Day.

INTERMISSION

ACT III.

Uncle Vanya's Room. The Same Evening.

Orchestra Under the Direction of HERBERT MENGES
Conductor, HANS SPIALEK

CREDITS

Scenery built in the Old Vic Workshops and painted by Henry Bird. Ladies' dresses made by Maria Garde and Morgan Rendell in the Old Vic Wardrobe. Men's clothes by Morris Angel. Furniture by the Old Times Furnishing Company and Newell Art Galleries. Properties by Jack Lovell and Robinson Bros. Wigs by Gustav and Nathanwigs. Shoes by Anello & Davide. Lighting equipment by Century Lighting Co. Victorian piano by S. L. Curtis, Inc.

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HENRY IV PART I

LAURENCE OLIVIER as Hotspur and MARGARET LEIGHTON as Lady Percy, his wife (above); RALPH RICHARDSON as Falstaff and LAURENCE OLIVIER as Hotspur (right).



HENRY IV PART II

LAURENCE OLIVIER as Justice Shallow (above); RALPH RICHARDSON as Falstaff, JOYCE REDMAN as Doll Tearsheet, ENA BURRILL as Mistress Quickly (right).



UNCLE VANYA

RALPH RICHARDSON as Vanya, LAURENCE OLIVIER as Astrov, MARGARET LEIGHTON as Yelena, JOYCE REDMAN as Sonya (left); RALPH RICHARDSON as Uncle Vanya (below).



OEDIPUS

LAURENCE OLIVIER as King Oedipus, ENA BURRILL as Jocasta (above); RALPH RICHARDSON as Tiresias, LAURENCE OLIVIER as Oedipus (right).



THE CRITIC

RALPH RICHARDSON as Lord Burleigh, LAURENCE OLIVIER as Mr. Puff (above); LAURENCE OLIVIER, PETER COPLEY, GEORGE RELPH, JOYCE REDMAN, NICOLETTE BERNARD (right).



8. Jan 31, 1956- Closing Date Unknown- Off Broadway, Fourth Street, New York, NY

Awards Won- 1956 Clarence Derwent Award

David Ross, Producer

Anton Chekhov, Playwright

Stark Young, Translation

David Ross, Director

Cast:

Clarence Derwent as Serebriakoff Alexander Vladimirovitch

Signe Hasso as Elena Andreevna

Gerald Hiken as Telegin Ilya Ilyich

Peggy McCay as Sofia Alexandrovna

Mary Perry as Marina

Sanford Seeger as A Workman

Olive Templeton as Voinitskaya Maria Vasilievna

Franchot Tone as Astroff/ Michail Lvovich

George Voskovec as Voinitsky/ Ivan Petrovitch

Not quite a review but still a featured article in the New York Times about the production coinciding with the *Uncle Vanya* movie

WITH 'UNCLE VANYA' FROM STAGE TO SCREEN

By MILTON ESTEROW

TEN of the country's busiest actors and actresses completed the other day the whirlwind transferral, literally word for word, of Chekhov's "Uncle Vanya" from the stage to the screen.

For nineteen days, including four rehearsal days, most of them had been shuttling between the Long Island City studio of Marion Parsonnet, scenarist-producer-director of television and motion pictures, and the Fourth Street Theatre off Second Avenue, where the stage version of "Uncle Vanya" has been playing since January.

In giving their all for Thespis, plus a slice of the movie profits, in roughly sixteen-hour working days, their schedule had run something like this: At the studio from 6:30 or 7 A. M. to 5:30 P. M., with several days as late as 7 P. M.; at the theatre from 8 P. M. to 11:30 P. M. To speed up things, the film-makers "bought out" the 177-seat theatre for two recent Saturday matinees at \$531 for each show.

Doubling in Brass

"It's been hectic," said Clarence Derwent, who portrays a retired professor, and is now in his fifty-fourth year on the stage. "But I remember an even busier time. It was in Stratford-on-Avon fifty years ago. I did fifteen Shakespearean plays in three weeks. Of course, doing 'Uncle Vanya' all day is pretty strenuous but it's good for an actor. Actors ought to do it a little more."

The others in the troupe are Franchot Tone, George Voskovec, Peggy McKay, Dolores Dorn-Heft, Gerald Hiken, Mary Perry, Shirley Gale, Sanford Seeger and Ronald Laurence. Although some are not now in the stage cast, all got their "Uncle Vanya" initiation at Fourth Street.

Histrionically, this rare theatrical double play has benefited the company, too. "Having the play under your belt has helped tremendously," said Mr. Voskovec, who appears in the title role. "It's like having a five-month rehearsal period."

"There hasn't been one single retake necessary as a result of an actor fluffing his lines," said

Actors Shuttle From Queens Studio To Theatre for Chekhov Drama

sets, instead of four as on the stage. And we have a musical score by Werner Jannssen.

"Not a single word of the play has been changed. There's not even a change in sequence. It's amazing how it looks as a screen play," said Mr. Parsonnet, himself a Hollywood scenarist for fifteen years. "Chekhov was a master screen writer—the play just cries for the motion-picture technique."

"What we have done is change the cinematic 'Uncle Vanya,' an expert on the Russian language and customs was consulted. Among other things, the cast learned that vodka is not pronounced 'vadka' but 'vodka'; that the true Russian vodka drinker uses only a certain type glass decanter (which was im-

"We've also changed the basic understanding of some of the parts—Elena and Vanya, for example. Vanya is eccentric, interesting, charming but not nutty. Elena is cold and bored, but in essence she enjoys the difficulties and boredom, likes to toy with life and finally runs away from it."

Authenticity

To add authentic touches to the cinematic "Uncle Vanya," an

The film-makers turned down at least one of the expert's suggestions. He had said, "In those days even prostitutes didn't use lipstick." Mr. Parsonnet's explanation was: "On film, lips don't look natural without lipstick—they look white."

Summarizing the venture, Mr.

mediately obtained by Jack Brandt, in charge of props).

Another prop was supplied by Mr. Parsonnet. It's a 250-year-old samovar that belonged to his great-great-grandmother.

"Another thing we learned," said Mr. Tone, who plays Astrov, the country doctor, "was that in those days—somewhere around 1890—when a gentleman said good-bye to a lady he, of course, kissed her hand. But if she leaned forward it indicated you could kiss her cheek. It was a matter of protocol. Furthermore, you kissed only a married woman's hand, not the hand of a single lady."

He is director of television's "Wide Wide World." He added, "It represents a strange melting pot—a true piece of theatre done as a film."

"It is truly the way," concluded Mr. Parsonnet, "we think Chekhov would have made this play into a movie."

AN ENTIRE ADAPTATION WITHOUT REPRESENTATION

By IRA LEVIN

The film version of Mr. Levin's novel, "A Kiss Before Dying," is slated to open locally in the near future. He also adapted "No Time For Sergeants" for the stage.

SEVERAL years ago I wrote a suspense novel called "A Kiss Before Dying," which

Finally the day approached when I—like Crown Productions—would achieve independence. I sat in the barracks with some of my 200 roommates. "When I get out," said one—the comic relief from Brooklyn—"I'm going to manage my father's butcher store." "When I get out," said another, "I'm going back to col-

of "California, Here I Come," I wrote the screen version of my novel, while I, in New York, wrote the stage version of Mac Hyman's novel, while Mac Hyman, in Georgia, counted money. Well, "Sergeants" is safely billeted at the Alvin Theatre, and "A Kiss Before Dying." I am told, will open here soon, with no help from me.

Sidetracked. Maurice Evans pondered that

But me, I'm still in New

Mr. Derwent. He did, however, have at least one uneasy moment at Fourth Street.

"We use some of the stage costumes in the movie. Also, a document—the deed of sale to the estate. Everything has to be back at the theatre at night. One night the deed got lost in transit. I never memorized the deed—I actually read and recited the whole thing—a four-minute speech. I improvised but I'll never know how I got through that night."

Cooperative

Officially, the movie "Uncle Vanya" is being made by the Uncle Vanya Company, Inc. Mr. Tone is president, Mr. Parsonnet is vice president and Betty Kanzell, Mr. Parsonnet's assistant, is secretary.

"It's a cooperative venture,"

"It's a cooperative venture," Mr. Parsonnet said. "The budget is \$300,000 but we're all working at union scale. Everyone has a percentage of the film's profits. The movie will probably open here in the fall.

"Our screen play was adapted by Tone, John Goetz, our director, and me from the Stark Young translation of the play. We wrote the screen play just for the purpose of a production breakdown. Also we use eight

WITH 'UNCLE VANYA' FROM STAGE TO SCREEN: Actors Shuttle From Queens ...

By MILTON ESTEROW

New York Times (1923-Current file); Jun 24, 1956;

ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times (1851-2010)

pg. X5

9. Jan 24, 1971- March 14, 1971- Off Broadway, Roundabout Theatre, New York, NY

Produced by Roundabout Theatre Company and Gene Feist

Playwright Anton Chekhov, Adaption Gene Feis

Director, Gene Feis

Cast:

Thayer David as Professor Serebryakov

Julie Garfield as Sonya

Sterling Jensen as Vanya

Ann Kingsley as Marya Voynitsky

Lyle J. Lorentz as Laborer

Winston May as Michael Astrov

Elizabeth Owens as Helena

Fred Stuthman as Telyegin

Joni Ruth White as Marina

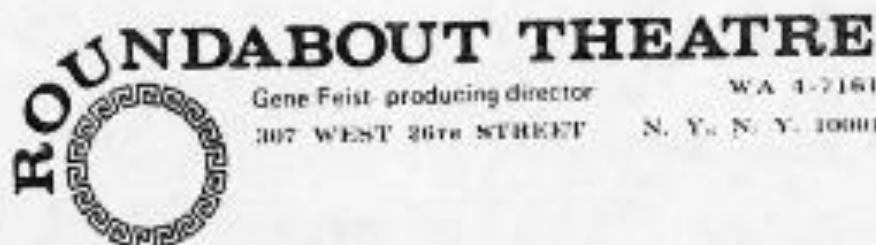
Number of Performances: 50

Awards Won: 1971 Theatre World Award for Julie Garfield

Playfare

Uncle Vanya





Gene Feist, producing director

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307 WEST 26th STREET

N. Y. N. Y. 10001

The Roundabout Repertory Company

presents

Anton Chekhov's
Uncle Vanya

Directed by

Gene Feist

Original Score by

Philip Campanella

Scene Design by

Holmes Easley

Costume Design by

Mimi Maxmen

Lighting Design by

Robert Murphy

The Acting Company

THAYER DAVID, JULIE GARFIELD, STERLING JENSEN, ANN KINGSLEY
NORMAN LIND, WINSTON MAY, ELIZABETH OWENS, FRED STUTHMAN
JONI RUTH WHITE

THE CAST

Professor Alexandre Serebryakov, retired. Thayer David
Hajena, his second wife. Elizabeth Owens
Sonya, his daughter by his first marriage. Julie Garfield
Marya Vaynitsky, the mother of his first wife. . . . Ann Kingsley
Vanya, her son. Sterling Jensen
Michael Astrov, a country doctor. Winston May
Telyegin, an impoverished landowner. Fred Stuthman
Marina, an elderly nurse. Joni Ruth White

Standby for Mr. Jensen: Norman Lind

THE PLACE: A country estate in Russia

THE TIME: summer to fall, 1896

There will be one ten-minute intermission

Uncle Vanya is the 20th production to be offered by the Roundabout Theatre during its five year history of continuous production. Ironically, this play, written in 1896 and first produced by the Moscow Art Theatre in 1899, is the first major drama to comment on what has become our world-wide ecological crisis.

Chekhov was born in Russia on January 17, 1860, and died in Germany in 1904. During the short span of his life he emerged not only as a great playwright, but also as a master of the short story. His name is forever linked with those of Stanislavsky and Danchenko, the founders of the Moscow Art Theatre. It was under their encouragement that all his major dramatic works were written.

The next production in our new playwrights' series March 10 to April 4, Charles Abbott & Son by Lewis S. Salisbury.

OUR NEXT MAJOR PRODUCTION - OPENS APRIL 16TH

Oliver Goldsmith's comedy, "She Stoops To Conquer," has retained its freshness of wit, cleverness of plot manipulation, and sheer humanity for almost two hundred years. The story rushes along with breathless hilarity as cases of mistaken identity trip over each other on the stage.

What the critics said about our recent production of HAMLET:

"Most interesting production...fast moving...imaginative." Mel Gussow, NEW YORK TIMES. . . "Inspired direction. A fine, spirited "Hamlet." Leonard Probst, NBC-TV. . . "Absorbing, provocative, first rate." Emory Lewis, THE RECORD. . . "Outstanding. An extraordinary job!" John Schubeck, ABC-TV. . . "A vibrant production. Handsome, articulate, stirring." Edward S. Hipp, THE EVENING NEWS. . . "It made Shakespeare into the theatre person he is so often forgotten to have been." Martin Gottfried, WOMEN'S WEAR DAILY

about the theatre:

"One of New York's most precious cultural assets." Emory Lewis, THE RECORD. . . "The Roundabout Theatre is a treasure" Alan Bunce, CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR. . . "There are good things happening at the Roundabout" John O'Conner, WALL STREET JOURNAL. . . "They never compromise, New York needs them." Clive Barnes, NEW YORK TIMES. . . "A miracle of a repertory company." Emory Lewis, BERGEN RECORD. . . "They are alive and their audiences know it." Jerry Talmer, NEW YORK POST. . . "The Roundabout Theatre has shown admirable ingenuity." Ross Wetzstein, VILLAGE VOICE.

STAFF FOR UNCLE VANYA

Directed by Gene Feist
Assistant to the Director Louis G. Trapani
Production Stage Manager. Michael Fields
Lighting Designed by Robert Murphy
Lighting Technician Lyle Lorentz
Properties by. Roger Cunningham
Production Assistants. Rebecca Cooke, Linda Bernstein,
Elizabeth McAninch, Tomas Negelow and Stephanie Wolfbauer

STAFF FOR THE ROUNDABOUT REPERTORY COMPANY

Producing Director Gene Feist
Associate Director Sterling Jensen
Public Relations William Campbell
Box Office Manager Gerald D. Bergstrom
House Managers Yvonne Patterson, Peter Bing
House Electrician Ira Wallenstein
Attorney S. Edward Katz
Accountant Raymon Simon
Director of Development Michael Fried

Men's costumes executed by Brooks Van Horn.

Cover Photo: Anton Chekhov reading a new play to the Moscow Art Theatre.

The activities of the Roundabout Theatre have been made possible with the support of the:

New York Foundation
William C. Whitney Foundation
New York State Council of the Arts

The Roundabout Theatre Company, Inc. is a state chartered and Federally tax-exempt non-profit theatre. Grants and donations are tax deductible.

Stage: Enjoying a Strong and Honest 'Uncle Vanya'

UNCLE VANYA, revival of Anton Chekhov's play, adapted and directed by Gene Feist. Score by Philip Campanella; setting by Holmes Easton; costumes by Mimi Maxmen; lighting by Robert Murphy; production stage manager, Michael Fields. Presented by the Roundabout Repertory Company. At the Roundabout Theater, 307 West 26th Street.

Prof. Alexander Serebryakov...Thayer David
Helena...Elizabeth Owens
Sonya...Julie Garfield
Marya Voinitsky...Ann Kingsley
Vanya...Sterling Jensen
Michael Astrov...Winston May
Telyagin...Fred Stuttmann
Marina...Joel Ruth White
Laborer...Lytle Lorentz

By CLIVE BARNES

Chekhov's plays always start too late—at least too late for the characters. Their opportunities are lost in the past, and they can only look to some nebulous future for relief. "Uncle Vanya," one of the most exquisitely wrought of the plays, is no exception. There is no real tragic feeling in Chekhov—only pathos tuned to the pitch of tragedy, which, of course, is why the plays are so touching and so personal.

English-language productions of Chekhov tend toward an undue stressing of Chekhov's autumnal sensibility. Gene Feist's staging of "Uncle Vanya," which opened last night at the Roundabout Theater, eschews sentiment, and is clear, solid and, just a little, stolid. I enjoyed my-

self—I love Chekhov—and this was an honest, fair reading of the play. I recommend it, as a night of theatrical insight, if not theatrical illumination.

"Uncle Vanya" is a play suffused with the beauty of autumn roses. Good people are embittered, and the unjust rule the roost. And yet Chekhov respects decency of spirit, so the defeats are never final, and the audience's vote and the audience's love go to the vanquished.

The Roundabout is that admirable institution, a neighborhood theater in New York City. It stages major classics (and, certainly, we are starved for these in New York) as well as a few new plays, and it deserves well of us all.

This "Uncle Vanya" is perhaps the best production I have seen from the Roundabout Theater. It is not a production of international class. The last "Vanya" I saw had Michael Redgrave as Vanya and Laurence Olivier as Astrov, and the production before that paired Olivier's Astrov with Ralph Richardson's Vanya — and this rep-

resents the level of classic theater I one day want to see in New York. But for the time being we must do the best we can. And this "Uncle Vanya" is good, and has a style and authority of its own.

This theater lends itself to the intimacy of Chekhov, and Mr. Feist's staging, which adroitly adapts the entire play to one interior setting, is conversational and unman-nered.

As Vanya, Sterling Jensen has the sense of probity, frustration and despair needed for the role. He never touches the deeper notes possible to the part—there is a profundity here that Mr. Jensen can indicate but never plumb. It is rather the same way with the wood demon, Astrov, played by Winston May—a role that I now note has, understandably, become a proponent of that fashionable survival art usually (if inaccurately) called ecology. Mr. May plays a heavyweight role very well in a lightweight fashion.

Vanya, Astrov and the conceited and grabbing professor, Serebryakov (rather



Julie Garfield and Thayer David.

clumsily given here by Thayer David) are among them the reasons for the Russian Revolution. They are why the play has a purpose and is more than a record.

Of the other actors I thought that Elizabeth Owens was somewhat charmless as Helena, the Professor's rampant second wife, but I liked

very much indeed the cool passion of Julie Garfield as Sonya. Bruised yet stoic, Miss Garfield more than anyone else in the cast suggested the beauties and depths of this complex and fascinating play.

Stage: Enjoying a Strong and Honest 'Uncle Vanya'

By CLIVE BARNES

New York Times (1923-Current file); Jan 25, 1971;

ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times (1851-2010)

10. June 04, 1973- July 28 1973- Broadway Revival, Circle in the Square Theatre, New York, NY

Produced by Circle in the Square (Theodore Mann: Artistic Director; Paul Libin: Managing Director)

Written by Anton Chekhov; Translated by Albert Todd and Mike Nichols

Directed by Mike Nichols

Cast:

Conrad Bain	Ilya Ilyich Telegin
Julie Christie	Yelena Andreyevna
Lillian Gish	Maryina
Barnard Hughes	Alexander Vladimirovich Serebryakov
Cathleen Nesbitt	Maria Vasilyevna Voinitskaya
George C. Scott	Mikhail Ivovich Astrov
Nicol Williamson	Ivan Petrovich Voinitsky
Elizabeth Wilson	Sofya Alexandrovna
Rod Loomis	Yefim
R. Mack Miller	Worker
Tom Tarpey	Worker

Total Performances: 64

Awards: Tony Award Nominee 1974 Best Actor in a Play George C. Scott, Best Actor in a Play Nicol Williamson, Best Direction of a Play Mike Nichols

PLAYBILL

MAGAZINE

CIRCLE IN THE SQUARE
JOSEPH E. LEVINE
THEATRE



UNCLE VANYA

CIRCLE IN THE SQUARE JOSEPH E. LEVINE THEATRE

CIRCLE IN THE SQUARE, INC.
THEODORE MANN, Artistic Director PAUL LIBIN, Managing Director

presents

GEORGE C. SCOTT
JULIE CHRISTIE
NICOL WILLIAMSON
ELIZABETH WILSON
CATHLEEN NESBITT
BARNARD HUGHES
CONRAD BAIN

and

LILLIAN GISH

in the

MIKE NICHOLS

production of

ANTON CHEKHOV'S
UNCLE VANYA

Scenes from Country Life in Four Acts

Translated by ALBERT TODD and MIKE NICHOLS

Setting and Costumes Designed by

TONY WALTON

Lighting Designed by

JULES FISHER

Hair Styles Created by PAUL HUNTLEY

The Circle In The Square productions are funded by grants from CBS Foundation, First National City Bank, Alex Hillman Family Fund, J. M. Kaplan Fund, National Endowment for the Arts, New York State Council on the Arts, Rockefeller Foundation, Shubert Foundation, and Springate Corporation.

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CAST

(in order of appearance)

Marina, an old nurse	LILLIAN GISH
Michael Astrov, a doctor	GEORGE C. SCOTT
Ivan Voinitsky (Vanya)	NICOL WILLIAMSON
Alexander Serebryakov, a retired professor	BARNARD HUGHES
Ilya Telyegin, an impoverished landowner	CONRAD BAIN
Sonya, daughter of the professor by his first wife	ELIZABETH WILSON
Elena, the professor's wife	JULIE CHRISTIE

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Mrs. Voinitsky, widow and mother of the professor's
first wife CATHLEEN NESBITT

Workman TOM TARPEY

Yefim, a workman R. MACK MILLER

Workman ROD LOOMIS

The action takes place on Serebryakov's estate.

There will be one intermission

UNDERSTUDIES

Understudies and Standbys never substitute for listed players unless a specific announcement for the appearance is made at the time of the performance.

For Alexander Serebryakov — R. Mack Miller; For Ilya Telyegin — Tom Tarpey.

STANDBYS

Marina and Mrs. Voinitsky	ANNE IVES
Sonya	JOANNA MERLIN
Elena	TAINA ELG
Astrov	MICHAEL HIGGINS
Ivan Voinitsky (Vanya)	MICHAEL EBERT



J&B RARE SCOTCH

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Stage: Mike Nichols's 'Uncle Vanya'

By CLIVE BARNES

The difficulty with many all-star productions of classics is simply that on occasion the stars get in your eyes and you can scarcely see the classic. It is much to Mike Nichols's credit that this does not happen in his staging of "Uncle Vanya," which opened last night at the Circle in the Square-Joseph E. Levine Theater. Although at the preview I attended there were plenty of histrionic sparks, the play itself was never lost sight of.

"Uncle Vanya" at its simplest level is a play about unfulfillment. No one gets what he wants, and every character, even the blustering professor, has to settle for second best. As a piece of playwriting, it is a model of economy, and the action passes like the wind through silver birches.

Although "Uncle Vanya" is perhaps less densely textured than either "The Cherry Orchard" or "The Three Sisters," it has always maintained a hold on actors and audiences alike, partly, no doubt, because of the astonishing contrast between the two leading male roles, Vanya and Astrov. These two men, losers both, one a sentimental but rather endearing fool and the other an ecology-minded doctor, seem to represent the folly of indecision on the one hand and of circumstances on the other.

It is nearly 30 years since I first saw "Uncle Vanya" with Ralph Richardson as Vanya and Laurence Olivier as Astrov, and a little more than 10 years since I saw Olivier once again as Astrov, this time opposite Michael Redgrave. Those were duels and duets of a rare magic. The present Broadway play-

The Cast

UNCLE VANYA, a play by Anton Chekhov, translated by Albert Todd and Mike Nichols. Directed by Mike Nichols; setting by Tony Walton; lighting by Jules Fisher; hair styles created by Paul Huntley; production stage manager, Randall Brooks. Presented by Circle in the Square, Inc., Theodore Mann, artistic director, Paul Libin, managing director. At the Circle in the Square-Joseph E. Levine Theater, 50th Street, west of Broadway.

Marina	.....Lillian Gish
Michael Astrov	.....George C. Scott
Ivan Voinitsky	.....Nicol Williamson
Alexander Serebryakov	.....Barnard Hughes
Ilya Telegin	.....Conrad Bain
Sonya	.....Elizabeth Wilson
Elena	.....Julie Christie
Mrs. Voinitsky	.....Cathleen Nesbitt
Yefim	.....Rod Loomis
Workmen	.....Tom Tarpey, R. Mack Miller

ease and well-worn informality.

For all the advantages of arena staging—and the close presence of actors such as Williamson and Scott has an actual physical force here—it is no particular help to the designer, and it is a great credit to Tony Walton (and

the lighting designer, Jules Fisher) how admirable the play looks.

With "Uncle Vanya" there is a terrible tendency for every other actor except Vanya and Astrov to fade into the woodwork, and this terrible tendency has not been avoided here. Julie Christie as Elena, the young wife of the old professor, looks dazzling but seems

bland. Against the pyrotechnics thrown at her by Messrs. Scott and Williamson she seems chaste and undefended.

Elizabeth Wilson, on the other hand, is a very experienced stage actress, and a very fine one, but she is miscast as the unhappy Sonya. She looks, for example, far older than her supposed stepmother, Miss Christie, and although this is possible, it does not appear to help the play. Her performance has little of the special vulnerability called for.

Barnard Hughes blustered effectively enough as the professor, Lillian Gish proved a soft-toned delight as the old nurse, and Conrad Bain, down at heel but nonchalant, was a very good Waffles. Cathleen Nesbitt looked very properly digni-

fied and yielding as the reluctant matriarch.

This "Uncle Vanya" does have its faults, but at its best it represents precisely the kind of classic theater we desperately need in New York City. This is a very special brand of theatrical excitement.

“

ers, Nicol Williamson and George C. Scott, are fine enough—particularly perhaps the latter—and they do, under Mr. Nichols's direction provide a fascinating contrast in acting styles.

Williamson is an internal actor, Scott is an external actor. With Mr. Williamson everything is withdrawn, hidden, turned in upon itself. He looks ratty and frantic, a man barely in control of himself. His arms flail the air, quixotically, his eyes have a manic gleam. His final climactic act of aggression when he tries, unsuccessfully of course, to shoot his tormentor, is presented as an uncoordinated gush of pain.

Mr. Scott goes about his business with a difference. His gravelly, bullfrog voice and his shark's-grin charm are both used ver consciously. He moves with a calm deliberation, a certainty of purpose. The action of the play is reflected in his face almost as if it were a TV

monitor, and the performance—in total variance with Mr. Williamson's free-style agony—is beautifully calculated.

There are many splendid aspects of this production, which is probably the closest we have reached in years to a classic staging of national theater dimensions. Obviously the most important is this opportunity to compare, contrast and enjoy two major actors going about their business with such successfully differing skills. But Mr. Nichols has also done a good job with a somewhat unequal cast.

The translation, by Albert Todd and Mr. Nichols himself, is fresh and idiomatic. Some people may, in places, find it too idiomatic. I do not. To me it seems to be the privilege of the translator to update, subtly but seriously, a translation to make it more immediate to its audience. And Mr. Nichols's staging has the same quality of slippered

By CLIVE BARNES

New York Times (1923-Current file); Jun 5, 1973;

ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times (1851-2010)

pg. 35

“Mike Nichols directed (and adapted with Albert Todd) the star-packed revival that sold out its eight-week engagement. George C. Scott received the most praise for his Dr. Astrof but there was commendations also for Nicol Williamson (Vanya), Julie Christie (Elena), Elizabeth Wilson (Sonya), Lillian Gish, Barnard Hughes, Cathleen Nesbitt, and Conrad Bain.”

Broadway Plays and Musicals: Descriptions and Essential Facts

**11.Dec 09, 1987- Jan 03, 1988- Off Broadway, East 13th Street/ CSC Theatre,
New York, NY**

Produced by Carey Perloff and Producing Director Carol Ostrow

Playwright Anton Chekhov and Classic Stage Company, Translation by Marian Fell

Directed by Maria Irene Fornes

Cast:

Margaret Baker as Marina

Alma Cuervo as Yelena

Don Egan as Workman

Christina Flint as Peasant

Jen Jones as Mme. Voitskaya

Patricia Mattick as Sonia

Jillian Miller as Peasant

Bill Moor as Serebrakoff

Michael O'Keefe as Astroff

Keith Overton as Watchman

Austin Pendleton as Voitski

Susan Walker as Peasant

Ralph Williams as Telegin

Number of Performances: 20

Theater: 'Uncle Vanya'

By MEL GUSSOW

Published: December 15, 1987

MARIA IRENE FORNES'S aberrant version of "Uncle Vanya" (at the CSC Repertory) plummets to the depth of un-Chekhovian absurdity late at night in the professor's dining room. The characters, dressed in nightshirts, lounge around the stage in the dimmest of candlelight. Michael O'Keefe, who has played Dr. Astroff to a standstill, suddenly picks up Uncle Vanya (Austin Pendleton) and cradles him in his arms as if he is a baby in bunting. As might be said in parallel circumstances about King Lear and Cordelia, it is fortunate for Mr. O'Keefe that Mr. Pendleton is a light Vanya.

It is at such moments as this (and, admittedly, at other moments) that one remembers other productions of Chekhov's masterwork. Laurence Olivier as Astroff in his National Theater production did not pick up Michael Redgrave in his arms, and neither did George C. Scott do the same for Nicol Williamson in the Mike Nichols production - or he might have found it difficult to repeat the performance.

Actually, somnambulation may be a key to Ms. Fornes's production. Using an unwieldy translation by Marian Fell, she has made the play languorous (though marked by occasional shouts by various actors). One could stage "The Seagull" during the pauses. Late in this arduous journey, when Yelena asks, "How can we live through the long winter here?" one is tempted to suggest, only by speeding up the tempo.

It would also be a help to alter the performances. Although Astroff is described as being in his late 30's, Mr. O'Keefe is far too youthful to portray the world-weary doctor. The old nurse's statement, "Now you're old and not handsome" earns an unintentional laugh. As

directed, Mr. O'Keefe deepens the jeopardy by intoning lines in a deadly monotone - whether he is delivering a comment on the weather or making a personal confession. Lifting Vanya is not his only odd physical choice. At one point, the actor bows from the waist and backs out of the room as if he is bidding farewell to royalty.

Patricia Mattick misses Sonia's wistfulness, and Alma Cuervo (as Yelena) - though an expressive actress - is not the "shining beauty" of Vanya's observation, a woman who becomes the magnetic center for the men in the play. Other actors suffer a variety of faults, not the least of which is that in manner and speech they seem so American.

Although Mr. Pendleton offers some eccentric line readings - he enters yelling "Yes, yes" at the top of his voice - he is the only one of the principals who begins to approach his character. In the course of the play, he conveys at least a measure of Vanya, a man filled with resentment at the injustice of his own wasted life. But he is performing largely in a vacuum, and he and the others are set further adrift by Donald Eastman's indoor-outdoor set, which allows for characters to walk through imaginary walls. Even the samovar is unconvincing in a production that mistakenly communicates boredom by being boring.

Absurd Waste UNCLE VANYA, by Anton Chekhov; revised and directed by Maria Irene Fornes; from a translation by Marian Fell; scenic design, Donald Eastman; costume design, Gabriel Berry; lighting design, Jennifer Tipton; sound designer, Daniel Moses Schreier; production stage manager, Nancy Harrington. Presented by CSC Repertory Ltd. The Classic Stage Company, Carey Perloff, artistic director; Carol Ostrow, producing director. At 136 East 13th Steet. Marina... Margaret Barker Astroff... Michael O'Keefe Voitski... Austin

Pendleton Serebrakoff... Bill Moor Sonia... Patricia Mattick Yelena...
Alma Cuervo Telegin... Ralph Williams Madame Voitskaya... Jen
Jones Workman... Don Egan Watchman... Keith Overton Peasants...
Christina Flint, Jillian Miller and Susan Walker

**12.Feb 23, 1995- Mar 19, 1995- Broadway Revival, Circle in the Square
Theatre, New York, NY**

Produced by Circle in the Square (Theodore Mann & Josephine R. Abady: Co-Artistic
Directors; Robert Bennett: Managing Director; Paul Libin: Consulting Producer)

Written by Anton Chekhov Translated by Jean-Claude van Itallie

Directed by Braham Murray

Cast:

Gerry Bamman	Ilya Ilyich Telegin
Richard Council	Worker
Tom Courtenay	Ivan Petrovich Voinitsky
Amanda Donohoe	Yelena Andreyevna
James Fox	Mikhail Ivovich Astrov
Elizabeth Franz	Maria Vasilyevna Voinitskaya
Bette Henritze	Maryina
Werner Klemperer	Alexander Vladimirovich Serebry
Kate Skinner	Sofya Alexandrovna
Total Performances 29	

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CIRCLE IN THE SQUARE THEATRE



**UNCLE
VANYA**

OPENING NIGHT: FEBRUARY 23, 1995

CIRCLE IN THE SQUARE

Theodore Mann & Josephine R. Abady

Co-Artistic Directors

Robert Bennett, Managing Director



English Version by **Jean-Claude van Itallie**

starring

Tom Courtenay Amanda Donohoe

James Fox Werner Klemperer

Gerry Bamman Richard Council Bette Henritze Kate Skinner
and **Elizabeth Franz**

Set by

Loren Sherman

Costumes by

Mimi Maxmen

Lighting by

Tharon Musser

Sound by

John Kilgore

Music Composed by

Stanley Silverman

Hair by

Paul Huntley

Casting by

Stuart Howard/Amy Schecter

Production Stage Manager

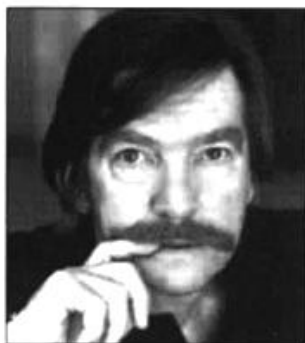
Wm. Hare

Directed by **Braham Murray**

This production is made possible in part by a grant from the
Christian A. Johnson Endeavor Foundation

Circle in the Square Theatre wishes to express its appreciation to **The Theatre Development Fund**

The Circle in the Square Theatre wishes to express its appreciation to the following for their extraordinary dedication and generosity:
The National Endowment for the Arts • The New York State Council on Arts • City of New York Department of Cultural Affairs.



Tom Courtenay



Amanda Donohoe



James Fox



Werner Klemperer



Gerry Bamman



Richard Council



Elizabeth Franz



Bette Henritze



Kate Skinner



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this spring is so *glamorous*—come see!

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CAST

(in order of appearance)

Maryina [NANNY] BETTE HENRITZE
Mikhail Lvovich ASTROV JAMES FOX
Ivan Petrovich Voinitsky [VANYA] TOM COURTENAY
Alexander Vladimirovich SEREBRYAKOV .. WERNER KLEMPERER
Ilya Ilyich TELYEGIN GERRY BAMMAN
Sofya Alexandrovna [SONYA] KATE SKINNER
YELENA Andreyevna AMANDA DONOHOE
MARIA Vasilyevna Voinitskaya ELIZABETH FRANZ
WORKER RICHARD COUNCIL

*THERE WILL BE A 15-MINUTE INTERMISSION BETWEEN ACT II AND ACT III;
AND THERE WILL BE A BRIEF PAUSE BETWEEN ACT I AND ACT II
AND BETWEEN ACT III AND ACT IV.*

The play takes place in and around the family estate.

UNDERSTUDIES

Understudies never substitute for listed players unless a specific announcement for the appearance is made at the time of the performance.

For Nanny/Maria—Angela Thornton; for Astrov/Serebryakov—Richard Council; for Vanya/Telyegin/Worker—Paul Hebron; for Sonya/Yelena—Catherine Dent.

Our name is always in the spotlight.

Harris Levy

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THEATER REVIEW: UNCLE VANYA; A 'Vanya' Of Spite And Fury

By VINCENT CANBY

Published: February 24, 1995

"UNCLE VANYA," the second of Anton Chekhov's four great plays, was first produced by the Moscow Art Theater 96 years ago and, it's probably safe to say, hasn't remained long unproduced, in one form or another, any time since then. Right now we're in a veritable siege of "Vanyas."

Still available at a local movie theater is the adventurous Louis Malle film adaptation of Andre Gregory's "Vanya on 42d Street," featuring Wallace Shawn's remarkable performance in the title role. Coming soon are two more screen versions, Michael Blakemore's "Country Life," set in the Australian outback, and "August," directed by Anthony Hopkins, who also stars in it.

Last night Braham Murray, the English director, opened his new stage production at the Circle in the Square. It stars Tom Courtenay as Vanya and uses Jean-Claude van Itallie's American translation. Among other things, the production is a startling reminder that while the play is forever adaptable, it's not indestructible.

Or, to put it another way, somewhere during the second act, the production made me long to be someplace else, maybe even watching the "Charley's Aunt" that Mr. Murray did some years ago in England with Mr. Courtenay playing Lord Fancourt Babberley. Somewhere along the line, this "Uncle Vanya" got off on the wrong foot, or feet. I say that advisedly. Feet, and what to do with them, figure in what's wrong at the Circle in the Square, but more about that later.

Mr. Murray seems to have locked onto the concept that "Uncle Vanya" is really about a dysfunctional family. That may be true, but only up to a very small point. The term "dysfunctional family" describes a rather dreary situation without illuminating it or putting it into any context. This is the effect of the new production, which works principally as a dramatized synopsis of the unhappy lives of Vanya, his niece Sonya, her windily pompous old father, Serebryakov (a once-famous professor and literary critic), her beautiful young stepmother, Yelena, and the various other members of their extended family.

Missing from the Murray production is any sense of the community on the great rundown estate that is the play's setting. Part of this may be the result of the often impertinent demands made by the Circle in the Square's stage: the audience sits around the four sides, looking down onto the long rectangular space that is the playing area.

To fill that space, and to give every patron an equal opportunity to see what's going on, the actors are often not only so spread out as to seem in different universes, but they must also keep moving and turning arbitrarily. The result is a production that visually reflects the lack of connections between the actors, between actors and text, and between play and audience. This is fatal to a comedy that, for all of the disappointments and antagonisms it lays bare, celebrates intimacy and interdependence.

"Uncle Vanya" takes place over the course of one summer in the country, when Serebryakov and Yelena are making one of their infrequent visits to the estate that supports them. Their presence not only ruins the routine of Vanya and Sonya, but also forces them to acknowledge everything they have given up to keep the fatuous old professor and Yelena in comfort elsewhere.

Vanya adores Yelena, but loathes the professor more. Sonya, who loves the drunken, visionary doctor, Astrov, enlists Yelena's aid in her suit, only to realize that Astrov loves Yelena. Yelena, who fell in love with Serebryakov's celebrity when she was still a girl, only now acknowledges her profound disappointment.

"Uncle Vanya" should not be played in slow motion, but it must evoke a mood of leisure, of indolence. Its fearful revelations are prompted as much by unbearable, continuing physical and emotional closeness as by anger and frustration. Instead of comic melancholy, this production emphasizes feelings of spite, impotence, degeneration. The lines one hears most clearly sound as if they were intended to parody Chekhov: "My life is wasted." "I'm in Hell." "You exhaust me." "I disgust myself." "You bore me."

Mr. Courtenay's Vanya is a handsome wreck of a man who makes his first entrance sort of tottering, which can be explained by his having just awakened from a nap. But then he never really stops tottering, seeming always to take one step back before taking a series of steps forward. As you watch his feet, you may suspect that Mr. Murray elected not to direct but to choreograph him. The text sounds declaimed, often with the unexpected inflections intended to make us hear the words more clearly, though their meanings are frequently muddled. Vanya's irony is lost in fury.

The production's most self-assured, fully realized performance is that of Amanda Donohoe, who plays Yelena. The English-born and bred Ms. Donohoe, best known here for her two seasons on the television series "L.A. Law," has the voice and gravely tentative manner that perfectly suit the unhappy beauty.

Another usually fine English performer, James Fox, who plays Astrov, sails through his role at speed, as do most of the other actors. Werner Klemperer's Serebryakov is adequate and conventional, as is Gerry Bamman's Telyegin, the family hanger-on nicknamed Waffles. It doesn't help that Mr. Klemperer and Mr. Bamman look somewhat alike, with their bald heads and full beards, which suggests a blood tie not in the script.

Kate Skinner is very earnest as the miserable Sonya, while Elizabeth Franz (remember her as Sister Mary Ignatius?) plays Vanya's loftily unsympathizing mother, who much prefers the professor to her son.

Mr. Murray's production skims across the surface of this heartbreaking and exalting play as if it were a vat of boiling chicken broth: dangerous to the touch. Anger and petulance have replaced Chekhov's evocation of longing and resignation. Gone, too, is the revivifying sense of imperfect humanity stumbling through history, sometimes heroically. **UNCLE VANYA** By Anton Chekhov; English version by Jean-Claude van Itallie; directed by Braham Murray; set by Loren Sherman; costumes by Mimi Maxmen; lighting by Tharon Musser. Presented by the Circle in the Square Theater. At 1633 Broadway, at 50th Street. **WITH:** Tom Courtenay (Vanya), Amanda Donohoe (Yelena), James Fox (Astrov), Werner Klemperer (Serebryakov), Gerry Bamman (Telyegin), Elizabeth Franz (Maria) and Kate Skinner (Sonya).

“There were decidedly mixed notices for the production by Jean-Claude Van Itallie, and the players, with reactions ranged from an honest moving mounting to a stiff and lifeless one.”

Broadway Plays and Musicals: Descriptions and Essential Facts

13. April 30, 2000- June 11, 2000- Broadway Revival, Brooks Atkinson Theatre, New York, NY

Produced by The Roundabout Theatre Company (Todd Haimes: Artistic Director; Ellen Richard: Managing Director; Julia C. Levy: Executive Director of External Affairs; Gene Feist: Founding Director)

Written by Anton Chekhov; Translated by Mike Poulton

Directed by Michael Mayer

Cast:

Derek Jacobi	Ivan Petrovich Voinitsky
Laura Linney	Yelena Andreyevna
Brian Murray	Alexander Vladimirovich Serebrny
Roger Rees	Mikhail Ivovich Astrov
Jonah Bay	Servant
Torben Brooks	Worker
James Coyle	Yefim
Rita Gam	Maria Vasilyevna Voinitskaya
Greg Keller	Servant
David Patrick Kelly	Ilya Ilyich Telegin
Anne Pitoniak	Maryina
Amy Ryan	Sofya Alexandrovna

Total Performances 49

Nominations Tony

2000 Best Featured Actress in a Play, Amy Ryan

2000 Best Scenic Design, Tony Walton

Drama Desk Awards

2000 Outstanding Revival of a Play [nominee]

Produced by The Roundabout Theatre Company (Todd Haimes: Artistic Director; Ellen Richard: Managing Director; Julia C. Levy: Executive Director of External Affairs; Gene Feist: Founding Director)

2000 Outstanding Actor in a Play [nominee]

Derek Jacobi

2000 Outstanding Featured Actor in a Play [nominee]

Brian Murray

2000 Outstanding Director of a Play [nominee]

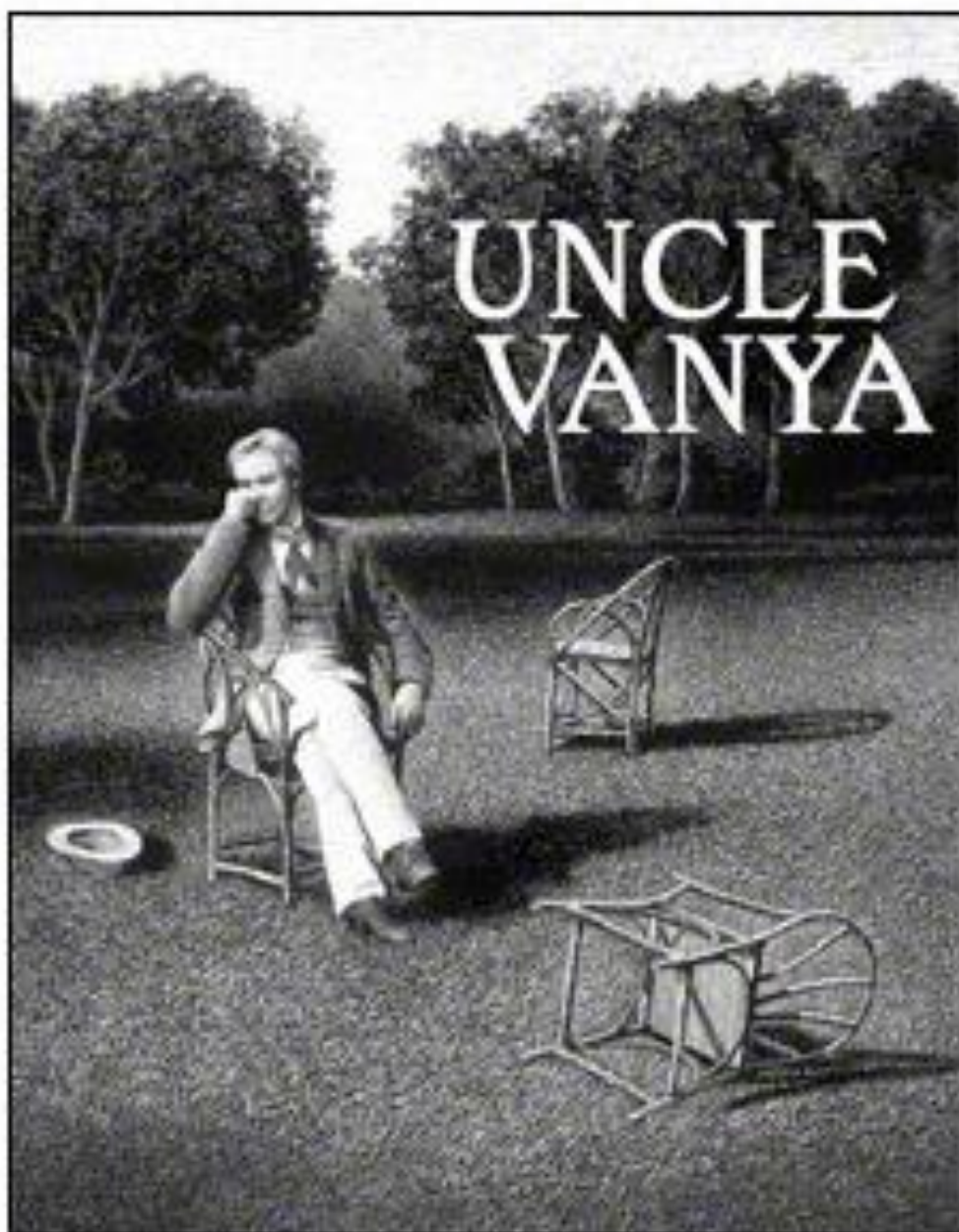
Directed by Michael Mayer

2000 Outstanding Set Design of a Play [nominee]

Scenic Design by Tony Walton

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BROOKS ATKINSON THEATRE



OPENING NIGHT: APRIL 30, 2000

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ROUNDAABOUT THEATRE COMPANY

TODD HAIMES, Artistic Director
ELLEN RICHARD, Managing Director
JULIA C. LEVY, Executive Director, External Affairs

Derek Jacobi Laura Linney Brian Murray Roger Rees

UNCLE VANYA

by
Anton Chekhov

Translated by
Mike Poulton

Rita Gam David Patrick Kelly Anne Pitoniak Amy Ryan
Jonah Bay Torben Brooks James Coyle Greg Keller

Set and Costume Design by
Tony Walton

Lighting Design by
Kenneth Posner

Original Music and Sound Design by
David Van Tieghem

Hair/Wig Design by
Paul Huntley

Vocal Consultant
Elizabeth Smith

Fight Director
J. Steven White

Director of Production
Nancy Harrington

Technical Supervision by
UNITECH

Production Stage Manager
Lori M. Doyle

Costing by
Jim Carnahan, C.S.A.

Founding Director
Gene Feist

Associate Artistic Director
Scott Ellis

Director, Artistic Development
Jim Carnahan

Press Representative
Boneau/Bryan-Brown

Director of Marketing
David B. Steffen

Directed by
Michael Mayer

This production supported in part by generous grants from the Eleanor Naylor Dana Charitable Trust, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs Cultural Challenge Program, and The Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation.

Roundabout Theatre Company is a member of the League of Resident Theatres.
www.roundabouttheatre.org

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CAST

(in order of appearance)

Astrov	ROGER REES*
Marina	ANNE PITONIAK*
Vanya	DEREK JACOBI*
Telegin	DAVID PATRICK KELLY*
Serebryakov	BRIAN MURRAY*
Sonya	AMY RYAN*
Yelena	LAURA LINNEY*
Maria Vasilyevna	RITA GAM*
Laborer	TORBEN BROOKS*
Yefim	JAMES COYLE*
Servants	JONAH BAY, GREG KELLER

Time:

Mid-July through late September, 1899

Place:

A Russian country estate

THERE WILL BE ONE FIFTEEN-MINUTE INTERMISSION.

FLASH PHOTOGRAPHY IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED

UNDERSTUDIES

Understudies never substitute for leading performers unless a specific announcement is made at the time of the performance.

For Vanya / Astrov – Torben Brooks*; for Serebryakov / Telegin – James Coyle*;
for Maria / Marina – Jane Cronin*; for Yelena / Sonya – Julia Gibson*;
for Yefim – Jonah Bay; for Laborer – Greg Keller

Production Stage Manager: Lori M. Doyle*

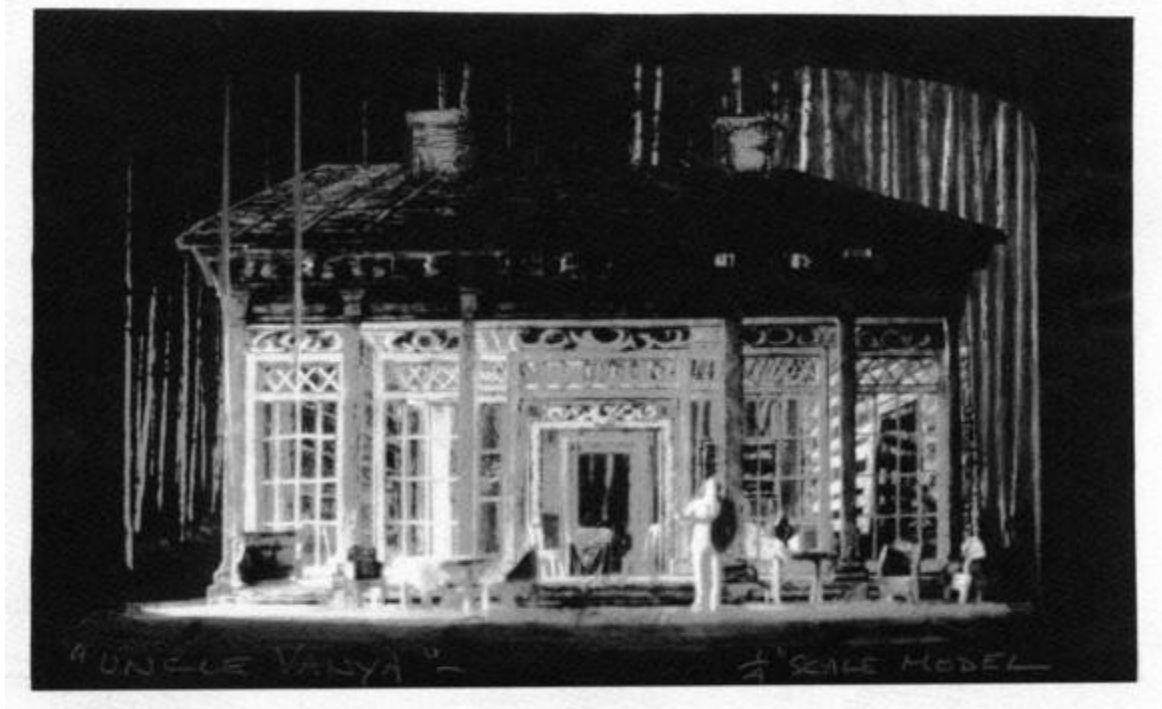
Stage Manager: Andrea J. Testani*

*Members of Actors Equity Association, the Union of Professional
Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

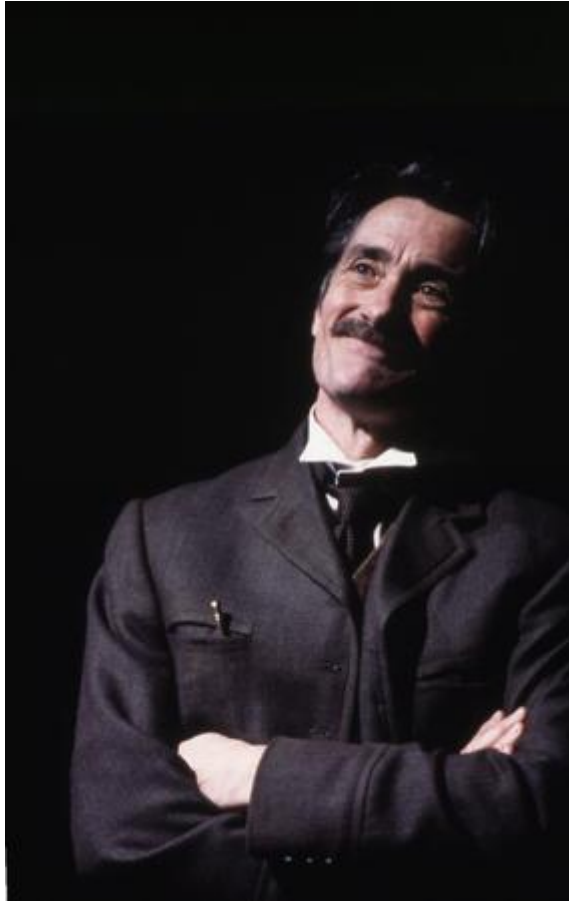
WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

DEREK JACOBI (Vanya). In a few months Derek Jacobi will complete 40 years as an actor. He has been very, very lucky, and has had a wonderful time. Mr. Jacobi began in repertory in Birmingham, UK. He then spent 10 years with the National Theatre under Sir Laurence Olivier, five years with Prospect Theatre Company doing a traveling classic

repertoire, and three years with the RSC under Terry Hands. Mr. Jacobi is best known to American audiences for his New York theatre credits including *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *Breaking the Code*; his television credits including "I, Claudius" and "Cadfael I, II & III"; and his film credits including *Henry V*, *Dead Again* and *Hamlet*.



Set Model



http://archive.roundabouttheatre.org/index.php/Detail/Object/Show/object_id/4711

THEATER REVIEW; Chekhov Is Recast: Laughter Plays Painkiller

By BEN BRANTLEY
Published: May 1, 2000

"Scenes From Country Life" is the official subtitle that hangs, with the humility of a disclaimer, from the brooding masterpiece known as "Uncle Vanya." But such self-effacing modesty doesn't fit the guffaw of a production that opened last night at the Brooks Atkinson Theater. No, some other appellation is required, something with a more vaudevillian punch. Perhaps something like "Uncle Vanya, or Take My Life . . . Please."

Anton Chekhov, meet Henny Youngman. The director Michael Mayer's ill-advised new interpretation of the 1897 drama for the Roundabout Theater Company, which manages to dim even the luster of the extraordinary British actor Derek Jacobi, seems determined to trace the borscht belt back to Mother Russia.

This is a world of stand-up sufferers, folks who never look more contented than when expounding on their profound unhappiness directly to the audience from the center of the stage. These complaints are usually delivered in loud, attention-demanding voices and embellished with big, flapping gestures. Get thee behind me, Stanislavski.

The idea of Chekhov's theatrical chronicles of disappointment as comedies has long been a subject of interpretive debate. Americans, in particular, have recently seemed most comfortable in emphasizing the farcical aspects of the playwright, as if that were the only way to avoid being boring in portraying people who are terminally bored. Several seasons ago, the physically overwrought Lincoln Center production of "Ivanov," which starred Kevin Kline, turned existential ennui into something like an aerobics class.

from the principle that in Chekhov's world life must be acknowledged as one big joke, albeit one without an explanatory punch line. The characters -- as embodied by an ensemble that includes, in addition to Mr. Jacobi, such estimable performers as Roger Rees, Brian Murray and Anne Pitoniak -- have accordingly arrived at the conclusion that given the futility of it all, you might as well laugh. This isn't, in theory, a terrible idea. But as executed here, it leads to a broad, disconnected style of performance that is as short on compassion as it is on psychological continuity. There are a few lightning flashes that

illuminate the pain in the forced frivolity, mostly from Mr. Jacobi and Mr. Rees.

But by and large, you don't believe that these noisy showoffs even know one another, much less that they are capable of inflicting deep mutual pain. It is a sure sign that there has been serious miscalculation when the audience starts laughing during Sonya's final consoling speech to Vanya about life's cruelties.

Your heart aches for Amy Ryan, the young actress playing Sonya, but then your heart aches for pretty much everyone, though for reasons unintended by Chekhov. Ms. Ryan plays one of the country drudges whose lives are thrown out of joint when the estate on which they toil is visited by Sonya's father, the pompous professor Serebryakov (Mr. Murray), and his beautiful young wife, Yelena (Laura Linney).

These cosmopolitan arrivals are diverting and destructive for the provincial stay-at-homes like Sonya's embittered uncle, Vanya (Mr. Jacobi), and the more vibrant Astrov (Mr. Rees), one of Chekhov's piercing portraits of a disillusioned doctor. Astrov and Vanya are both in love with Yelena, while Astrov is worshiped by the unlovely Sonya. This doesn't keep everyone from being bored, bored, bored.

At least that's what the script, translated here in a doggedly vernacular manner by Mike Poulton, tells us. The feelings that emanate from the stage are mostly autoerotic. This has something to do with the widely divergent acting styles on display and probably more to do with the sense that the performances only rarely tally with the descriptions given by the characters of themselves and of one another.

Yelena, for example, is famously talked about as being charismatically listless, a languishing mermaid. (Janet McTeer took the idea to

fascinating, somnambulistic extremes in the London production of 1992.) Yet Ms. Linney, who has previously registered most appealingly on stage ("Sight Unseen") and film ("The Truman Show"), is here as brisk, vital and exhortative as a gym teacher who all but shouts most of her lines.

And where is the dutiful, long-suffering Sonya everyone keeps talking about? Ms. Ryan comes across as an impatient, testy virago, her face plastered with a frown that says, a la Paddy Chayevsky, "I'm mad as hell and I'm not going to take it anymore!"

Mr. Murray brings his juicy flamboyance to the dry-as-dust Serebryakov and as a consequence registers as something closer to a minor Dickensian villain than anything out of Chekhov. Nor do Ms. Pitoniak as the comforting old nanny, David Patrick Kelly as the pathetic hanger-on known as Waffles and Rita Gam as Vanya's annoying and unloving mother provide any anchoring sense of credibility.

It is these smaller roles that are most essential in creating the atmosphere that defines and circumscribes the major characters. And that thick, enclosing ambience just isn't evident here, for all the show's glamorous production values: Tony Walton's truly ravishing set, David van Tighem's tapestry of rural sound effects and Kenneth Posner's handsomely moody lighting.

Mr. Rees and Mr. Jacobi could obviously, in other contexts, do marvelous things with their assigned parts. But here, being fed little emotionally by the other performers, they are forced to overcompensate with jokey flourishes and exaggerated line readings.

Since Mr. Rees is a familiar presence on the New York stage, Mr. Jacobi is the sadder casualty. This master of psychological nuance, so memorably seen in New York with the Royal Shakespeare Company, certainly isn't lacking in stylishness here, or in intriguing ideas about his character, whom he has played before in England.

His Vanya isn't the constricted, emotionally cramped creature of Ian McKellen's fine performance opposite Ms. McTeer for the Royal National Theater. He is instead extravagantly effete and discontented, given to grand gestures that he regrets as soon as he makes them.

This tendency is most spectacularly realized in Vanya's gale-force tantrum in Act III. It's a bravura moment, but so much of Mr. Jacobi's preceding performance has been pitched so close to that same level that it doesn't jolt as it should.

It is Mr. Jacobi, however, who provides the evening's only real moments of fresh insight. In particular, he gives a tantalizing new dimension to the relationship between Vanya and his sister, whose name he cannot mention without melting into misty affection.

Of course, the sister is long dead when the play begins. That she is half of the only believable relationship to be found in this "Uncle Vanya" is a sad indication of the production's failings.

“An outstanding cast of British and American actors could not bring to life the Roundabout Theatre revival that the press called sterile and artificial.”

Hischak, Thomas S. *Broadway Plays and Musicals: Descriptions and Essential Facts of More than 14,000 Shows through 2007*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2009. Print

Uncle Vanya

By [David Finkle](#) • May 2, 2000 • [New York City](#)



Roger Rees, Derek Jacobi, and Laura Linney In his major plays, Anton Chekhov assiduously demonstrates how much "anguish" there is in "languish." His world-weary characters--insisting almost boastfully that they're bored, tormented, wretched--flaunt their pain even when laughing through their tears. And there is plenty of that, because the breast-beating histrionics can be so excessive they often unintentionally amuse even the breast-beaters themselves. That, of course, is part of the reason Chekhov maintained he was writing comedies.

He was: tragi-comedies. It's almost as if he can be heard chuckling to himself in the wings while proclaiming, "This is no joke." Take [Uncle Vanya](#), wherein every one of the focal characters believes that life has passed him or her by, that hope is fruitless, and that the most anyone can expect from a bone-tiring existence is getting through the day. Vanya, for instance, has chosen to administer the family estate with plodding diligence for 25 years, although the property isn't his. It's been inherited by his niece, Sonya, the daughter of his deceased sister, although Sonya's father, Serebryakov, thinks he's master of the house.

But just as Vanya's innards are pecked at by his brother-in-law's grandiose behavior, Serebryakov--a self-important academic--is gnawed by gout. Or is it rheumatism? Doctor Astrov, who regularly drops in to treat the uncooperative professor, passes his idle hours by figuring out how to preserve the vanishing forests. He's been distracted from his avocation, however, by Serebryakov's wife, Yelena, a young and surpassingly beautiful woman. Yelena, suffering the consequences of having indentured herself to an older man, can't respond to Astrov's attentions--or to those of the love-struck Vanya. Yet she's not so dim that she doesn't see how much the unexciting Sonya pines for Astrov and how little of that longing Astrov notices, much less plans to requite.

It could be said that the affliction common to these specimens of landed gentry is their having too much time to think about themselves. "I might shine but I give no light," Vanya remarks in Mike Poulton's translation, now on view at Broadway's Brooks Atkinson Theatre. Astrov uses virtually the same words when expounding on his predicament as a lonely man entering middle age. The others bat similar adjectives and nouns--"waste" is a frequent one--at one another. Indeed, the only characters excused from debilitating anxiety are the servants and laborers who either don't have the luxury of indulging themselves or, like the aged Marina, have learned to keep philosophically quiet about their plight.

The world of *Uncle Vanya* is one in which every ineffectual action is hilarious or wrenching--often both simultaneously. Perhaps the most famous episode in Chekhov's works is Vanya's attempt to shoot Serebryakov. Enraged by the self-absorbed essayist's suggestion that the estate be sold to pay debts, Vanya grabs a pistol and chases Serebryakov through a good part of the 26-room mansion, shooting twice and missing both times. This humiliating, thigh-slapping sequence may be the most indelible metaphor for futility in all of dramatic literature.

Which leads to the matter at hand: Michael Mayer's up-and-down production of *Uncle Vanya* for the Roundabout Theatre Company. Mayer knows that Chekhov is mocking, deploring, pitying, and commemorating squandered lives. He knows--who doesn't?--that Chekhov is presciently sensitive to the complicated emotions with which a dying social class is facing its terminal illness. (The Chekhov oeuvre may be all anyone needs as a prerequisite to grasping the basic causes of--indeed, the historical imperatives for--the Russian revolution.)



Laura Linney and Brian Murray Mayer's *Vanya* is presented on a set that designer Tony Walton has populated with elegant but vulnerable-looking birches surrounding an elegant but deteriorating house of odd, oppressive chambers. The director is most successful in the first of Chekhov's four acts. (As is common with Chekhov nowadays, the play is performed with only one intermission.) He gets it right when Marina explains that the professor's arrival with Yelena has thrown the household schedule out-of-whack, when Vanya and Astrov reveal the lacerating boredom that dogs their camaraderie, when Serebryakov and Yelena pass along the terrace without making much of a stir. In one of the touches that distinguish Mayer's direction, Yelena carries a parasol that hides her face so Vanya has to peek under it before uttering one of his saucy, searing jibes.

The director's grip begins to loosen as the play progresses, however. When Vanya goes on his rampage at the end of Chekhov's third act, Mayer can't find the correct way to balance the tragic and comic elements. Vanya's barreling after the flummoxed professor is cause for hysteria, but Mayer has been unable to stop the chaos from being just plain chaotic. The effect is deadening.

Mayer makes another mistake that seriously undermines Chekhov's purposes. At moments during the play, some of the characters--Vanya, Astrov, Yelena--are on stage alone, talking to

themselves. Evidently, Mayer is uncomfortable with this convention, for he treats the confessional speeches as asides to the audience. Chekhov, of course, never intended any such thing. He wanted observers to feel as if they were peering through the walls to observe the constricted lives eroding inside. (On Walton's set, the walls are made of birch beams.) The playwright couldn't have meant for his characters to peer conspiratorially out.

The cast Mayer has assembled is also hit-and-miss. In any review of *Uncle Vanya*, it's standard to start by discussing the actor in the title role--on this occasion, Derek Jacobi. For the moment, however, he'll be by-passed. Roger Rees as Astrov is the drama's heartbeat. His presence on stage--stretching, yawning, pacing-- as the audience enters suggests that a play called *Doctor Astrov* is about to commence. Sporting a thick mustache and looking dapper in a fatigued way, Rees fills every moment with charming resignation, resigned charm. The speech in which he attempts to explain conservation to the uninterested Yelena is only one of his magnetic turns; what he does with a prop as negligible as a pencil is masterful.

Next to Rees, Jacobi seems more than that he's supposed to. It should be needless to say that Jacobi has flawless technique. He does nothing that fails to pinpoint Vanya's frustration at having so thoroughly sacrificed his opportunities with no thanks forthcoming. When he tells Yelena that "it's all too much for you to move," he dithers like her with amusingly exaggerated gestures. When he chases Serebryakov, his normally ruddy face is even ruddier. When he sits down at play's melancholy end to pay the overdue estate bills for linseed oil, he's acceptance itself. And yet, craft only takes Jacobi so far. Something at Vanya's core is missing--the throbbing humanity profoundly present in Rees' performance.

Of the others, Brian Murray makes Serebryakov's narcissism loathsome but real; in his final minutes, he even manages to show some of the dignity Yelena had at one time seen in him. Amy Ryan finds the pathos and impatience in Sonya, especially when cutting short Yelena's fumbled compliments. Sonya's declaration that plain women don't want to be praised for hair or eyes or bone structure rings with unpleasant truth. Anne Pitoniak is properly dignified and wise as Marina, and Rita Gam is properly dignified and foolish as Vanya's forever-reading mother, Maria Vasilyeva. David Patrick Kelly, whose ability to play soothing guitar serves him as it has in previous roles, cowers and kowtows well as a hanger-on.

Laura Linney is Yelena, and she doesn't entirely pass muster. She certainly meets the physical requirement; she moves with dignified flair in Walton's delicate costumes. But the performance occasionally goes flat. In a production where the women speak with American accents while--somewhat disconcertingly--the men speak with English accents, Linney intones her lines prosaically. Perhaps she's listened too carefully to Astrov's comment that Yelena has a vacancy sign hung on her brain. Yelena isn't supposed to be dim; after all, she sees some things more clearly than even the critical, enthralled Astrov does. She's an intelligent woman who's retired her intelligence because it gets her nowhere. Somebody--Mayer would be the likely choice--might remind Linney of this.

Not, then, an *Uncle Vanya* for the ages, but also not a bad one to have around for the time being, certainly for as long as Roger Rees continues demonstrating exactly how Astrov can be performed for utmost heartbreak.

**14.Jan 10, 2003- March 02, 2003- Off Broadway, Bouwerie Lane Theatre,
New York, NY**

Jean Cocteau Repertory, Producer

David Fuller, Producing Artistic Director

Playwright Anton Chekhov, Translation John Murrell
Director Eve Adamson

Cast:

Amanda Jones as Sophia Alexandrovna
Harris Berlinsky as Ivan Petrovich Voinitsky
Christopher Black as Ilya Ilych Telegin
Eileen Glenn as Marina
Angus Hepburn as Alexander Vladimirovich
Brian Lee Huynh as Yefin
Marlene May as Maria Voinitskaya
Craig Smith as Mikhail Lvovich Astrov
Elise Stone as Elena Anreyevna

THEATER IN REVIEW; 'Uncle Vanya'

By D.J.R. BRUCKNER

Published: February 7, 2003

There is more than one "Uncle Vanya" in town, you know. The much-buzzed production by the Donmar Warehouse of London at the Harvey Theater of the Brooklyn Academy of Music is not alone. As the third offering of its 32nd season, the Jean Cocteau Repertory is presenting a very creditable "Vanya" through March 2 at the Bouwerie

This is one in which the audience laughs often in the first two acts, especially at the title character (Harris Berlinsky) and the country doctor, Astrov (Craig Smith). Their competition for the affection of Elena (Elise Stone) is ridiculous enough, but in this conception so is Astrov's assumed worldliness and Vanya's wallow in victimhood. One has to guess that Chekhov, who complained that his Russian audiences

a century ago were too dull to recognize he was satirizing many of his characters, would have enjoyed this laughter. It also makes the hopeless resignation of the play's end more searing.

Ms. Stone's Elena is less aloof and more sexually assertive than she is in most portrayals; that, unexpectedly, makes Elena more vulnerable. And Vanya's niece, Sonya (Amanda Jones), who is painfully vulnerable most of the time, at the end appears unreasonably, but not unbelievably, strong; her only hope, of reward in the next world, is powerfully felt and infinitely sad.

In fact, except for the histrionics of Angus Hepburn as the aged academic, Serebriakov, everyone in this cast seems to take seriously Chekhov's plea to keep his plays simple, "as natural as possible." Chekhov was not a hectoring moralist; Serebriakov is an old fool, but while his selfishness is contemptible, he is not culpable. Here he sounds as though he might be, and that note is discordant.

Otherwise, the general reticence of this cast allows Chekhov's language to be heard acutely; as a result, the performance has the directness, clarity and force of his best stories. D.J.R. BRUCKNER

**15.Feb 12, 2009- March 15, 2009- Off Broadway, East 13th Street/ CSC
Theatre, New York, NY**

Producer, Classic Stage Company

Playwright Anton Chekov, Translation by Carol Rocamora

Directed by Austin Pendleton

Cast:

Cyrilla Baer as Marina

Andrew Garman as The Watchman

Mamie Gummer as Sofya Aleksandrovna

Maggie Gyllenhaal as Yelena Andreevna

Delphi Harrington as Yoynitskaya / Maria Vasilyevna

George Morfogen as Srebryakov / Aleksandr Vladimirovich

Denis O'Hare as Voynitsky / Ivan Petrovich

Peter Sarsgaard as Astrof / Mikhail Lvovich

Louis Zorich as Telegin / Ilya Ilyich

Award Nominations: 2009 Lucille Lortel Award Nomination

Outstanding Featured Actress, Mamie Gummer

2009 Drama League Award Nominations

1. Distinguished Revival of a Play
2. Distinguished Performance, Denis O'Hare

2009 Artios Award Nomination

NY Off-Broadway Theatre: Drama, James Calleri





Provincial Russians, Getting Very Physical

By [BEN BRANTLEY](#)

Published: February 12, 2009

Nothing, but nothing, feels settled in Austin Pendleton's hyperkinetic new production of "Uncle Vanya," which opened on Thursday night at the Classic Stage Company with a cast that includes Denis O'Hare, Peter Sarsgaard and Maggie Gyllenhaal. Now you might argue that an agitated indecisiveness suits the plays of Chekhov, in which people trapped in the provinces are itching to escape their dull lives.

In this case, though, the sensation that everything's up in the air — and unlikely to fall into place before the final curtain — is generated less by the restless ambivalence of Chekhov's characters than by the jittery performances of the undeniably gifted actors playing them. You start to think how differently things might have turned out for the discontented denizens of this great comic drama had Ritalin been available in Czarist Russia.

Mr. Pendleton has said that he learned from his work with the director Nikos Psacharopoulos that, contrary to popular perception, Chekhov's characters are an active, driven kind of people. They are always, Mr. Pendleton said, "tilting at windmills." And there's sure plenty of tilting — and jumping and running and falling down — in his "Uncle Vanya."

From the moment the show opens, with its title character (Mr. O'Hare) pacing, pacing, pacing through Santo Loquasto's two-tiered set, this "Uncle Vanya" is a perpetual-motion machine. When a vodka-soaked character needs to sober up, he jogs in circles. Stolen kisses turn into frantic heavy petting sessions, and arguments into schoolboy wrestling matches. And when Vanya pours forth his litany of grievances in a monologue, with a thunderstorm rumbling loudly in

the background, he might as well be the mad King Lear, raging on the heath.

Even in quieter moments, these hearty folks remain unstintingly hands-on — grasping, claspings, cuffing and massaging one another. The effect is of a reunion of alumni of the Esalen Institute, determined to show they can still get in touch with themselves by touching others.

I can understand the reasoning behind Mr. Pendleton's attack on the play. He's trying to shake the stiffness and stasis out of a classic and to loosen his cast out of brooding poses. You might even say that his approach is not unlike that of Chekhov, who in "Uncle Vanya" (as in many of his plays) jolts his habit-stifled estate dwellers out of their lethargy by introducing the catalyst of urbane visitors who stir up dormant hopes and resentments.

But the impression here is less of people running after elusive dreams than of actors running after elusive roles. You're always conscious of the scrabbling sound of performers digging deep into their psyches in search of buried emotions, as if you were sitting in on a session at the Actors Studio. Everyone still seems to be trying on insights for size.

Unlike the recent Broadway revival of "The Seagull" (in which Mr. Sarsgaard appeared to better advantage) this production never stays still long enough to achieve emotional focus. Nearly all of the performers have tears in their eyes at some point, and I didn't doubt that they felt real emotions. The problem is, they didn't make me feel them too.

Given the credentials and talent of the cast, which also includes Mamie Gummer and George Morfogen, the show's relentless activity inevitably produces some lovely moments, but they never coalesce into a continuous stream of time, of life being lived as we watch. You find yourself wishing that you could snip out the better fragments of each performance and edit them together in a film. (That, by the way, was exactly what Louis Malle did in "Vanya on 42nd Street," a 1994 film about Andre Gregory's work in progress on the same play.)

I think, for example, of Ms. Gummer as the long-suffering, hard-working Sonya confiding at a late hour to the man she adores — Astrov, the dashing, burned-out doctor (Mr. Sarsgaard) — that she loves “to nibble at night,” as she goes to fetch food for him with conspiratorial glee. Or of Mr. Morfogen as the gouty and tyrannical professor, Serbryakov, rising uncomfortably from a chair with a cane to say angrily to his much younger wife, Yelena (Ms. Gyllenhaal), “Ever since I became old, I find myself repulsive.” Such moments brim with colliding emotions and with individual emotional histories.

You may remember that the beauteous, glamorous Yelena is loved by both Vanya and Astrov, and that it’s Astrov she is drawn to. But there isn’t much choice between her would-be suitors, as Mr. O’Hare and Mr. Sarsgaard are giving almost interchangeable performances. They are both excellent actors and seemingly very different ones. But here each registers as a fidgety, randy adolescent, subject to wild mood swings and sudden outbursts.

Ms. Gyllenhaal, a charming film actress (“The Dark Knight”) who offstage is Mr. Sarsgaard’s partner, certainly matches the other characters’ descriptions of Yelena as a languorous beauty. She wears Suzy Benzinger’s sleek-fitting period dresses like the mermaid Vanya says Yelena is, and she walks in a slow-motion haze, like one hypnotized by her own attractiveness. But her clear, matter-of-fact voice doesn’t have much variety here.

Like most of her fellow performers, Ms. Gyllenhaal is given to many moments when you can’t tell whether she’s laughing or crying. This of course is appropriate to a playwright whose works are suspended between comedy and tragedy. But that laughing-crying bit is used here so often, and so exaggeratedly, that it becomes as mechanical and meaningless as a conditioned reflex.

The production values, for the record, could scarcely be better: Ms. Benzinger’s costumes, Jason Lyons’s lighting and the sound design by Ryan Rumery and Daniel Baker are all first-rate. And Mr. Loquasto’s elaborate, multiroom set is astonishing, so complete that you feel you

could set up house there (and live a lot more happily than Vanya and company).

Yet the thoroughness of the technical side of the production only underscores the incompleteness of the performances. Within Mr. Loquasto's carefully detailed, solidly built environment, Mr. Pendleton's cast members scamper around like a bunch of kids who have the run of their rich parents' house for the weekend.

No wonder the old Nanny played by Cyrilla Baer addresses this lot as if they were her charges in a day care center. There is clearly much potential in this lively brood, but they have yet to grow up into real, fully formed characters.