

Uncle Vanya

Scenes from country life

A version of the play
by Anton Chekhov

by
Brian Friel

23rd - 27th March
&
30th March - 3rd April 2004



Stoke-on-Trent
Repertory
Theatre

£1

Welcome!

Welcome to Stoke-on-Trent Repertory Theatre! We hope that you enjoy your evening with us. Here's a little information that first-time visitors may find helpful.

The car park will be open from 6.30pm on performance evenings until the theatre bar closes. Overspill parking is available in the Staffs University car park. Neither the Rep nor the University can accept responsibility for damage to or loss of vehicles.

The Bar is open from 6.45pm until 11.00pm on show nights. Drinking-up time is 20 minutes afterwards. Coffee, tea and confectionery are available in the Foyer from 6.45pm. All interval drinks may be ordered before the performance, to avoid having to wait your turn later.

Smoking is not allowed in the auditorium, nor in certain parts of the foyer; neither is photography or the taping of the performance.

Booking Information

Our Box Office is open on the Monday preceding each Rep production from 5.00 - 8.00pm, and during the run of the show.
Tel: 01782 209784.

With Internet access, you could place a provisional order AT ANY TIME using the On-line booking facility at
www.stokerep.org.uk

Book tickets in office hours from Music Mania,
4/5 Piccadilly Arcade, Hanley.
Tel: 01782 206000.

Friends of the Rep

Friends of the Rep organise regular social and fund-raising events, and have raised thousands of pounds for our theatre. To join in the fun, and help the Rep at the same time, please contact Brian Harvey on 01782 393026.

Do you know someone who might benefit from advertising their business/organisation in a Rep programme this season?
A good investment at only £25 + VAT.

To reserve space, please ring Alison Wicks on **01782 619921**, or write to her at the theatre.

The Crew

Director:	Ken Lowe
Assistant Director:	Alan Clarke
Stage Director:	Tina Campbell
Set Design	Brian Hadley
Stage Manager:	Bill Hancock
Construction Crew:	Mike Adams, Alan Hulme, John Beeston, Stuart Campbell, Peter Logan, David Bryan, David Attenborough
Lighting Designer:	Malcolm Rushton
Lighting Technician:	Jamie Wood
Sound Design:	Paul Jones
Sound Technician:	Ade Harrison
Properties:	Janet Clarke
Assisted by:	Debbie Morrey, Madge Beech
Costume Supervisor:	Georgine Machin
Assisted by:	Daphne Ratcliff
Company Photographer:	Peter Croft

We are indebted to the rest of the Backstage Crew, and to the Front-of-House, Bar and Coffee Bar Staff - Members, Friends, Young Rep members and other helpers. All are volunteers who give up their time week after week, and without whom we could not provide the standard of production and customer service you have come to expect at the Rep.

Anton Chekhov & Brian Friel

Anton Chekhov is Russia's greatest dramatist and 'Uncle Vanya' is one of his four masterpieces, together with 'The Seagull', 'The Cherry Orchard' and 'The Three Sisters'. All are described as 'comedies', but perhaps only in the sense that they deal with the follies of human life, what Elena calls 'these petty squabbles, these corroding jealousies, these small domestic hatreds that eat away at our lives.' Underneath these everyday tensions, personal tragedies are experienced.

The text being used is not strictly a translation but a VERSION of Chekhov's play by the noted Irish dramatist, Brian Friel, author of 'Philadelphia, Here I Come', 'Translations' and 'Dancing at Lughnasa'. His aim is to carry 'across the text over a gap of a hundred years and across the divide of language and culture and then re-present the story in a language that keeps faith with the subtitles of the original but whose rhythms and nuances we respond to today.' This version was first performed at the Dublin Theatre Festival in 1998.

The Cast

ALEXANDER SEREBRYAKOV, retired professor:	Trevor Barlow
ELENA, his young second wife:	Ann Williams
SONYA, his daughter by his first wife:	Caroline Keen
MARIA VOYNITSKY, his widowed mother:	Mary Bartholomew
VANYA VOYNITSKY, her son:	Charles Bartholomew
MIKHAIL ASTROV, country doctor and forester:	Derek Yeomans
ILYA TELEGIN, an impoverished landowner:	Martin Alcock
MARINA, the family nanny:	Jackie Clarke
YEFIM, night watchman:	Ian Brereton
LABOURER, on the estate:	Keith Williams

The action takes place on the remote
Serebryakov estate in 1895.

Act 1

In the garden: a warm afternoon.

Act 2

The drawing-room: a night some days later.

INTERVAL

Act 3

The drawing-room.

The next day-early afternoon.

Act 4

Vanya's study. Late evening, the same day.

**PLEASE ENSURE THAT
MOBILE PHONES ARE
SWITCHED OFF
DURING THE PERFORMANCE**

THE
ARTS
COUNCIL
OF ENGLAND

We are indebted to the
St. John Ambulance
Brigade, whose
members voluntarily
attend all our
performances.

The Story

On a remote Russian estate Vanya and his niece, Sonya, have worked tirelessly for years to maintain its upkeep and to support Alexander Serebryakov, a professor of Art, who is Sonya's father, originally married to Vera, Vanya's sister, now dead. They live in a close-knit community with Vanya's mother, Maria, the family nanny, Marina, and a bankrupt local landowner, Telegin, whom they have befriended. Periodically they are visited by a local doctor and ecologist, Dr. Astrov. The decision of the now retired professor and his young and beautiful wife, Elena, to return to the estate disturbs its routines and plays havoc with all their emotions.

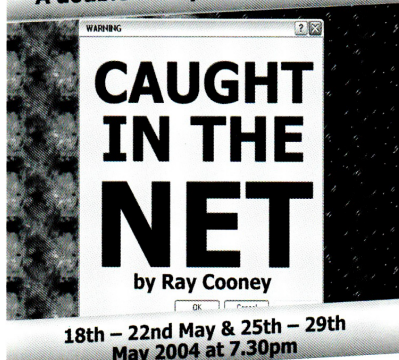
The play, as so often in Chekhov, begins with an arrival and ends with a departure. It explores the feelings of its central characters, all of whom yearn for something that they believe would fulfil their lives but which they are afraid to express until the tensions become unbearable. As Elena pleads with Vanya: 'Help us to be reconciled with what we have.' Such a reconciliation, through patience and endurance, is finally voiced in Sonya's closing words, one of the most moving passages in all dramatic literature.

Our Next Production....



Stoke on Trent Repertory Theatre

A double act by a double dealer



In Performance

Chekhov's play was first performed at the Moscow Art Theatre in 1899, directed by Konstantin Stanislavsky, the great director of all Chekhov's plays, who also played Astrov, with Chekhov's wife, Olga Knipper, as Elena.

The first British performance was at the Aldwych Theatre, London, in 1914. Amongst a considerable number of revivals, most noteworthy were:

- 1945. Old Vic Company, with Laurence Olivier (Astrov), Ralph Richardson (Vanya) and Margaret Leighton (Elena).
- 1963. National Theatre, with Olivier (Astrov), Michael Redgrave (Vanya) and Rosemary Harris (Elena).
- 1970. Royal Court Theatre, with Paul Schofield (Vanya) and Colin Blakely (Astrov).
- 1982. National Theatre, with Michael Bryant (Vanya), Dinsdale Landen (Astrov) and Cherie Lunghi (Elena).
- 1988. Vaudeville Theatre, with Michael Gambon (Vanya), Imelda Staunton (Sonya), Jonathan Pryce (Astrov) and Greta Scacchi (Elena).
- 1992. National Theatre, with Ian McKellen (Vanya) and Antony Sher (Astrov).

A local amateur performance was presented by The Etceteras at the Mitchell Memorial Theatre in 1972, when the late Peter Legge played Vanya and Ken Lowe played Astrov—both Repertory Players members.

Coming Up Soon....

Caught in the Net

by Ray Cooney

18th - 22nd May & 25th - 29th May 2004

Deckchairs in the Bar

- a Summer Entertainment & Rep fund-raiser
15th - 19th June 2004

The Children's Crusade

by Paul Thompson.

A Young Rep Production

14th - 17th July 2004

Artist in the Gallery

In the Gallery this time we have a home-grown stable of artists—all are, or have been, members of the Rep. Some have exhibited here before, and others have been enticed to come out of their reticence and share their work with us.

Paul Clarke was a professional artist, and used to run the Rep Gallery for a number of years. Perhaps primarily an abstract artist, we are showing a number of his drawings.

Joan Cooper has some fine cross stitch work and **John Cooper** describes his work as mixed media paper-craft.

Verity Haddow exhibits some cross-stitch, whilst **Di Halstead** has been persuaded to put in a couple of her watercolours. **Irene** and **Jim Mort** have left their walls pretty bare by letting us have their decoupage and cross-stitch respectively.

Gordon Toon exhibits some constructions and tortured polystyrene. **Gill Walley** has been persuaded to show us some of her photographs. **Ted Walley** has exhibited mainly watercolour paintings here before, but this time we are showing some of his gouache work.

There are also a few other painters present, whose works usually adorn our members' walls. Many thanks to all who have loaned us their work.

If you can, please take time to wander up to the Gallery and take a look at some very interesting pieces....

Customer Surveys

Many thanks to all of you who completed Customer Surveys during the previous two Rep productions. We taken into account your comments, and have already responded to some suggestions:

- More tables and chairs ordered for the foyer.
- Ice cream freezer to be purchased.
- Designated area within the foyer for smokers. Foyer to become completely 'non-smoking' by 1st September 2004.



For details of the rest of our exciting 2003/4 season, join our FREE mailing list. Simply give your name & address to a member of staff.

Spotlight on a Member

Norma Davies



It was about twenty years ago when I plucked up the courage to help at the Rep. My first job was cutting out fabric leaves for the set of *The Long, the Short and the Tall*. "Yes," I thought, "I can do this!" I continued to work backstage, and took charge of props for several productions. I was sometimes dragged in to the prompt corner for rehearsals, and was amazed at the occasional loose interpretation of the script!

My appearance on the Rep stage came at the age of thirty in *Penny for a Song* and then *No More Sitting on the Old School Bench*, playing the 'nameless drudge' each time. This was twenty years after my debut as a soldier in a school play (dressed as a man and stuck at the back, being taller than all the boys in my class). So twenty years on, I tried again - not, I believe, with much improvement or any more enjoyment! During *School Bench* the power failed and the stage was plunged into darkness. What could I do but clean the stage from top to bottom, my hands shaking so much that I could hardly hold the mop! I also tried a summer show, where I discovered that dancing was not my forte either. "Is this my hobby?" I thought, "You must be joking!" - and decided to go underground as soon as possible, or at least behind the scenes, where I'd feel less exposed.

Since then, my roles have been of an administrative nature. Over the years I've taken turns at serving as Secretary to the Players Executive Committee, Membership Secretary, Cast Committee Member and Chair of the Production Committee, as well as doing regular Front-of-House and Coffee Bar duties.

At the Rep I've met people from all walks of life, with whom I wouldn't normally come into contact. Some have become good friends. I also met my partner, Dave Finn. So the Rep is an important part of my life - like an extended family, really. It's frustrating and rewarding; you argue and you make up again. For anyone who wants a hobby that can make lots of friends and give you lots of laughs, the Rep may be just the place!