



The final scene of *Uncle Vanya* at the Moscow Art Theatre premiere, October 1889



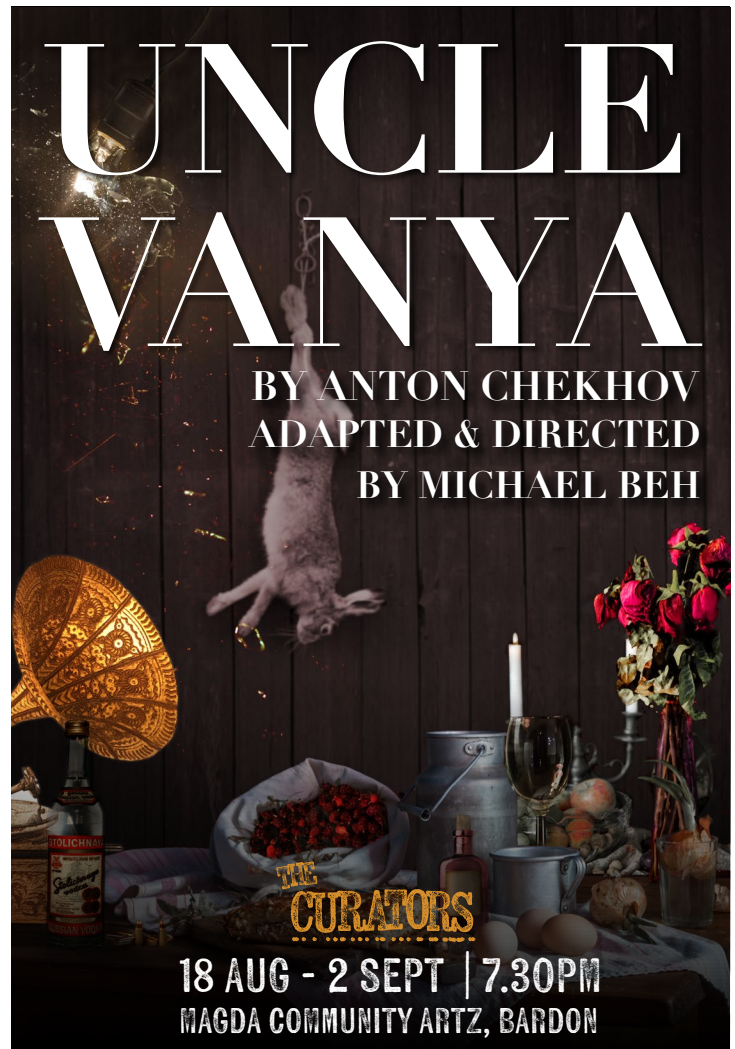
In an effort to reduce our carbon footprint the biographies for this production are located on our web site at curators.com.au.

Thanks

Mervyn Langford, Jan Mandrusiak, Andrei and Daniela Wightman, Gregg Goriss, Genevieve Ganner, Natasha Seaman, Svetlana Morini

heartBeast Theatre, Retro Metro, 4MBS Classic FM
Scenestr, Brisbane Circle

Photography by
Bulimba Studios and Bec Taylor Photography



The Curators in association with Magda Community Artz present

Uncle Vanya

by Anton Chekhov

Cast

David Patterson	Vanya (an uncle)
Sherri Smith	Sonia (his niece)
Renaud Jardin	Astrov (his friend, a doctor)
Lisa Hickey	Yelena (his brother-in-law's second wife)
Warwick Comber	Serebryakov (his brother-in-law)
Jan Nary	Marina (his nanny)
Amanda McErlean	Mdme Voinitskaya (his mother)
Brent Schon	Telegin (his niece's godfather)

Creatives

Michael Beh	Director
Michael Beh	Set & Costume Designer
Peter Crees	Sound Designer
Emily Allen	Lighting Designer
Mark Richardson	Stage Manager
Jacob Hoopert	Assistant Stage Manager
Paige Williams	Technical Crew
Peter Crees	Marketing & Publicity Manager
Helen Strube	Artistic Associate

Produced by Peter Crees and Michael Beh

A fake, 17th century flintlock pistol is used in this production.

There will be an interval of 20 minutes.

Toilets are located underneath the building behind the red door and out front.

Please respect our residential neighbours.

A still life is a world where action seems to have ground to a halt, but really it hasn't. Within that picture so much is occurring. It is a place of shadows and refractions; of possibilities and lost opportunities; where the many relationships smash together to create a vision made up of the splintered shards of life.

So it is with *Uncle Vanya*, Chekhov's most wonderful play that tackles family relationships boiling over. It is action that we all know. And all that action occurs inside an old country house where there is a lot of it - all related to love - past love, lost love, imagined love, unrequited love, forbidden love. Chances are taken. Living is seized.

Memory is a pervasive element, one of the most potent characters never sets foot on the stage. She is Vanya's long dead sister, mother to Sonia, first wife to Serebryakov, beloved daughter to Mdme Voinitskaya. Her meaning hangs over the play like a pall.

And whilst there is sadness and anger and regret there is also great joy, happiness and elation. This wonderful play truly is the stuff of life. We pay homage to its author for a vision that has lasted over one hundred years and still plays truthfully with every breath taken, word spoken and action made.

I hope that you enjoy the play as much as we have enjoyed our journey to stage it. This first adventure by **The Curators** has been an inspiration. Our goal to create a muscular, contemporary version of a much loved world classic has seen us transgress style, dive into improvisation, make vintage pictures and play with form in order to curate and present the play that you will witness.

Immense thanks to this dynamic, talented, hungry cast, our fantastic crew and most importantly to Peter Crees, our tireless producer. But it would not have been possible at all without the support of Mervyn Langford and Magda Community Artz, a Brisbane bijou that reminds me of Melbourne's La Mama in the inner city, Brisbane 'burbs - a place to take risks, explore the new and reinvent the old.

I wonder what Chekhov would think?

Michael Beh



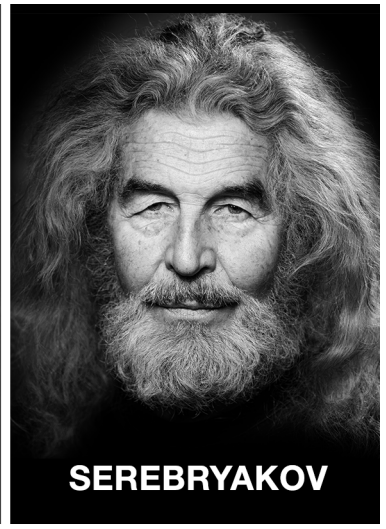
VANYA



SONIA



YELENA



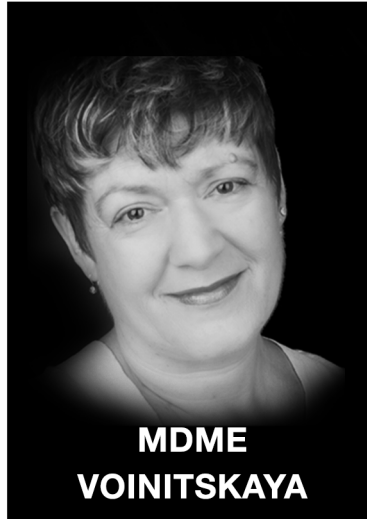
SEREBRYAKOV



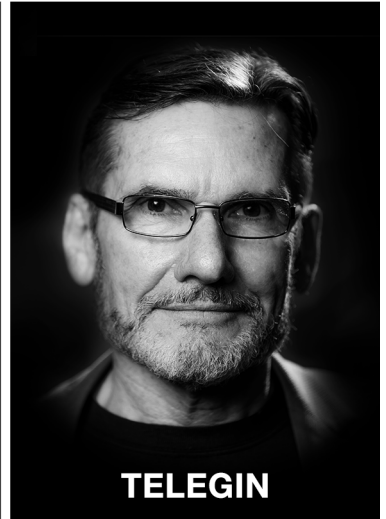
ASTROV



MARINA



**MDME
VOINITSKAYA**



TELEGIN

**“WHAT WILL I DO WITH ALL OF THIS LOVE? THIS
WONDERFUL FEELING OF MINE IS BEING WASTED AND LOST.
MY LIFE WILL GO WITH IT.”**

VANYA, UNCLE VANYA, ACT 2

Why Stage Uncle Vanya?

Just over 20 years ago I remember walking up the stairs at the Yale Cinema in New Haven, Connecticut. Snow swirled about me. It was Thanksgiving night. I was going to see *Vanya on 42nd Street*; the film Louis Malle made of Andre Gregory's iconic staging of Uncle Vanya in the derelict shell of the once glorious New Amsterdam Theatre. I was in the MFA Directing Program at Carnegie Mellon in Pittsburgh, studying with the Moscow Arts Theatre School. My friend Paul, was meant to have had the gig of stage managing Gregory's production but that had never eventuated. Somehow this made me feel connected to what I was about to watch. I sat down in one of the old seats. The film began. I was hooked. A love affair began. I have wanted to stage this play ever since. And that is just the seed of the story.

Michael Beh

Who was Anton Chekhov?

A Russian. A Doctor. A Writer. A Husband. An Environmentalist. A Visionary. Born on January 29, 1860, in Taganrog, Russia, he died of tuberculosis on July 14, 1904, at the age of forty-four. He was the son of a grocer and the grandson of a serf. At 16 he cared for his family when his father abandoned them. He graduated in 1884 with a degree in medicine, and began to freelance as a journalist and writer of comic sketches and one act plays.

By 1887 he was a literary success in St. Petersburg but it was not until the Moscow Art Theatre production of *The Seagull* (1898) that he enjoyed his first overwhelming success. He bought an estate near Moscow, gardening, planting entire forests and a cherry orchard. He married the actress Olga Knipper. In 1899, he gave the Moscow Art Theatre a revised version of *The Wood Demon*, now titled *Uncle Vanya*, followed by *The Three Sisters* (1901) and *Cherry Orchard* (1904), all of which would become masterpieces of the modern theatre.

Chekhov & Music

“...Chekhov is the dramatist of goodbyes; goodbyes to hopes and ambitions, goodbyes between lovers.

Yet out of this concept of life, which might be thought ‘depressing,’ Chekhov makes a work of art which moves us and exalts us like a beautiful piece of music. It is not in a mood of depression one leaves the theatre after seeing a Chekhov play. How true it is that a good play should be like a piece of music! For our reason it must have the logical coherence of fact, but for our emotions the sinuous unanalysable appeal of music. In and out, in and out, the theme of hope for the race and the theme of personal despair are interwoven one with the other. Each character is like a different instrument which leads and gives way alternately, sometimes playing alone, sometimes with others....”

(1967) *Producer's Note* Laurence Olivier