

The Cherry Orchard

By Anton Chekhov

Translated by Jean-Claude van Itallie

Directed by Jenny Lord

Cast

Lyubov Andreyevna Ranevskaya, 'Lyuba' Katherine Renee Turner
Leonid Andreyevich Gayev, 'Lyonya,' her brother Hayward Leach
Anya, 'Anichka,' her daughter Emma Pfitzer Price
Varvara Mikhailovna, 'Varya,' her adopted daughter Bianca Crudo

Yasha, her butler Liam McKenna
Firs, longtime servant of the Gayev family Jordan Geiger*
Avdotya Fyodorovna, 'Dunyasha,' the maid Sekai Abeni
Semyon Panteleyevich Yepikhodov, clerk on the estate Jalen Coleman
Pyotr Sergeyevich Trofimov, 'Petya,' former tutor Tom Blyth
Charlotta Ivanovna, Anya's governess Jules Latimer

Yermolai Alexeyevich Lopakhin, born in the village Shaun Anthony
Boris Borisovich Simeonov-Pishchik, a neighboring landowner Mike Braugher
Stranger Mike Braugher

*Mr. Geiger is an alum of the Drama Division, Group 41.

There will be a ten-minute intermission after Act 2.

Vocal Coach Susan Finch
Alexander Technique Coach Carolyn Serota
Production Activities Manager James Gregg

Special thanks to Mike Braugher (design), Michael Rudko and to everyone who loaned clothing items to us, including Richard Feldman, Tracie Lane, and Carlyle G. Leach (Hayward's dad), who provided a closetful!

While the final Rehearsal Projects of the Second Year have been traditionally referred to as the Chekhov slot, the students have also at this time in their training worked on plays by Ibsen, Strindberg, Gorky, O'Casey, and Odets. The students are asked to begin to integrate all the skills of the training in order to enter the lives of people of another time and place, embodying those characters with the imaginative and emotional depth demanded by the sensibility and artistry of these great writers of modern naturalistic drama.

Room 306

Wednesday, May 2, 2018 at 1:30pm

Thursday, May 3, 2018 at 7:00pm

Friday, May 4, 2018 at 3:30pm

Anton Chekhov (1860-1904) finished *The Cherry Orchard*, his last play, in January 1904. He died six months later.

Time: 1903

Place: the ancestral estate of the Gayevs, some distance outside Kharkov

Act 1, May.	The former nursery.
Act 2, June.	A meadow on the grounds of the estate.
Act 3, August.	A drawing room.
Act 4, October.	The former nursery.

Smash your vodka bottle, lie down on the couch and pick up a book.

—Chekhov, in a letter to his brother Nikolai, March 1886

It doesn't seem to me that it is the job of writers of fiction to decide questions like God, pessimism, etc. The writer's task is only to describe those who have said or thought something about pessimism, how, and in what circumstances. The artist should not be a judge of his characters or what they say, but an impartial witness...I have no responsibility other than to be talented, by which I mean that I must be capable of distinguishing between testimony which is important and testimony which is not, be skilled at illuminating my characters and speaking in their language. [He] takes me to task for ending the story with the phrase: 'Nothing can be understood in this world.' He believes that the psychologically perceptive artist must understand—that is what his psychological gifts are for. But I don't agree. It's time for writers, especially writers of real artistic worth, to realize...that in fact nothing can be understood in this world.

—Chekhov, in a letter, May 1888

Note on the text:

'Poshlost' is an untranslatable Russian word that appears in *The Cherry Orchard*. It's often translated as 'vulgar' or 'common,' which doesn't fully express the nuances of the Russian. Vladimir Nabokov wrote a famous little essay on its meanings: "Corny trash, vulgar clichés, Philistinism in all its phases, imitations of imitations, bogus profundities, crude, moronic, and dishonest pseudo-literature—these are obvious examples."

A quick and vivid description: poshlost isn't farting in public—it's farting in public and saying 'excuse me.'