



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Chekhov's Poignant 'The Cherry Orchard' Helps Culver City Public Theatre Cap Successful 6th Season

Culver City, California-- Culver City Public Theatre ("The Public") will round out its highly successful 2004 mainstage season with Anton Chekhov's timeless, wistful classic *The Cherry Orchard*. With a humorous, passionate portrait of a disappearing way of life, re-discover the grace and humor of this masterpiece of the modern theatre. Performances, appropriate for family audiences of all ages, are scheduled for the **Saturday and Sunday weekend afternoons at 2pm on August 14-15, 21-22 and 28-29 in beautiful Dr. Paul Carlson Memorial Park. Admission is Free.**

With this production, The Public concludes its 6th season of bringing free, professional, summer theatre to Los Angeles-area audiences. The Public is currently enjoying a highly anticipated staging of Ibsen's powerful drama *An Enemy Of The People* which followed a well-received run of Noel Coward's hilarious *Hay Fever*.

The Cherry Orchard, Chekhov's last great play, is a "laughter through tears" mix of drama and comedy that is rich with memorable and eccentric characters who face a turning point in their lives which brings to the surface tragic, romantic and even farcical situations.

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“*The Cherry Orchard* perfectly caps The Public’s 2004 theme of presenting classic works that continue to be socially and politically relevant to today’s audience”, enthuses Co-Executive Producer Kyle Nudo.

Director Gregg W. Brevoort explains, “*The Cherry Orchard* is hard to categorize. Chekhov himself insisted that it was a comedy. In rehearsal, the cast and I are discovering just what he meant! These characters are quirky and peculiar and there are some very funny moments. Yet, the more serious themes and undercurrents remain uncompromised.”

Mr. Brevoort (www.GBrevoort.com) returns for his 2nd season having previously mounted The Public’s highly lauded production of *All’s Well That Ends Well*. Earlier this summer he helmed *Henry IV, Part 1* for the prestigious Virginia Shakespeare Festival. Brevoort is the former Artistic Director of New Jersey’s Holmdel Theatre Festival and now leads The Public’s Artistic Advisory Board following a string of critically acclaimed productions for a number of highly-regarded venues throughout the country - including sold-out stagings of *Betrayal* and *Angel Street* (both for the Penobscot Theatre), *Redwood Curtain* (Dorset Theatre Festival), *Richard III* (The Barnstormers), *The Glass Menagerie* (Off Broadway, New York City), *Scotland Road* (Holmdel) and *Waiting For Godot* (in Alaska).

Anton Chekhov, Russia’s most honored playwright and a noted philanthropist, was born to modest surroundings but rose to prominence with his Pushkin Prize winning story, “The Steppe” before turning to theatre. His most recognized works, *The Seagull*, *Uncle Vanya*, *The Three Sisters* and *The Cherry Orchard* were all celebrated milestones at the prestigious Moscow Art Theatre. His style emphasized internal drama and unusual characters while focusing on tragicomic aspects of banal events in their lives.

The Public has chosen a very audience-accessible and succinct adaptation by Oscar-nominated screenwriter Trevor Griffiths (“Reds”, “Country”, “Fatherland”), whose plays have included *Comedians* and adaptations of works by Chekhov and Lawrence.

Heading the large cast is stage veteran Melody Gillette as Madame Ranevsky, the play’s compelling matriarch. Gillette also appears in The Public’s Children’s Popcorn Theatre staging of *Rumpelstiltkin* in a delightful turn as Aunt Cockatoo and is well-known to L.A. audiences for performances with a variety of companies in productions that include *Cabaret*, *The Tempest*, *The Diary Of Anne Frank* and *The Importance Of Being Earnest*.

Tom Hyer (who played leading roles in The Public’s 2003 productions of *All’s Well*, *Oedipus Rex* and *Scapin*) co-stars as her supportive brother Gayev and is joined by Company Members Andrea

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Westby and Jenny Martin as Ranevsky's daughters Varya and Anya respectively, Ken Kamlet as Trofimov the eternal student and Markus Cummings in the dual roles of Yasha and The Stranger.

Other cast members include Dean Edward (praised by the L.A. Times for his performance earlier this summer in The Public's production of *Hay Fever*), Eric Billitzer, Liz Federico, Mike Disch, Scott Gist and Diane McGee.

Costumes are designed by Diane McGee and an imaginative outdoor stage setting has been designed by director Gregg W. Brevoort.

The inaugural production of the "**Children's Popcorn Theatre**" performs in tandem with The Public's mainstage season and admission will be Free for children of all ages. Kyle Nudo directs ***Rumpelstiltskin***, the classic Grimm's fairy tale. **Performances are scheduled for weekend afternoons at 12:00 Noon from July 24th-August 15th.**

Culver City Public Theatre, which operates under a Letter of Agreement with Actors' Equity Association (the union of American theatrical actors and stage managers), continues an 18-year tradition of presenting an annual summer season of free, outdoor, classical theatre in beautiful Dr. Paul Carlson Memorial Park, located at the corner of Motor Avenue and Braddock Drive (near the 405 and 10 Freeways) in historic Culver City, CA. The public is invited to bring their lawn chairs and blankets to attend the productions that are intended for young and adult audiences alike.

The Public has experienced enormous artistic and financial growth during each year of operation. Its productions are attended by approximately 2,000 patrons each season.

Culver City Public Theatre is an incorporated, not-for-profit 501(c)3 organization that is sponsored by the Culver City Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Services and by the generous contributions and grants from the City of Culver City, The Cultural Affairs Commission and The Culver City Parks and Services Foundation. Additional funding comes from donations from local businesses and patrons.

For general information call (310) 712-5482 or visit the official website at www.CCPT.org.

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Culver City Public Theatre Presents *The Cherry Orchard*. L-R: Melody Gillette (Madame Ranevsky), Jenny Martin (Anya) and Tom Hyer (Leon Gayev). Photo Credit: Kyle Nudo



Culver City Public Theatre Presents *The Cherry Orchard*
L-R: Melody Gillette (Madame Ranevsky) and Jenny Martin (Anya).
Photo Credit: Kyle Nudo



Culver City Public Theatre Presents *The Cherry Orchard*
L-R: Jenny Martin (Anya) and Ken Kamlet (Trofimov).
Photo Credit: Kyle Nudo

Note: Full sized originals are available as well as additional images from Culver City Public Theatre productions and individual cast-member headshots. We will happily provide these photos by email or snail-mail upon request or they may be downloaded at www.ccpt.org/PressRoom.htm