



АНТОИ СЕКНОВ'S

THE

СЕНЕЯУ

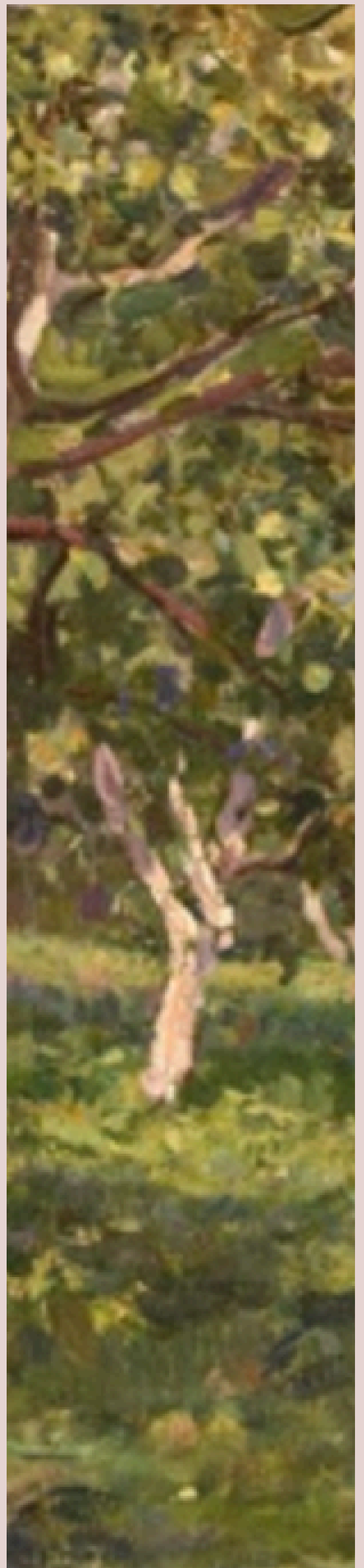
ОЯСНАЯД



Study Guide by Shelley Graham, Dramaturg

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Dramaturgy Websites

Are you interested in learning even more about our BYU production of *The Cherry Orchard*?



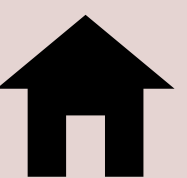
An exciting part of BYU Theatre is our collaboration with student and faculty dramaturgs who create resource websites for each production. The website for this production, with even more historical context and behind the scenes information, can be found [here](#).

Also, you can visit the TMA [“4th wall dramaturgy website”](#) anytime to learn more!



Anton Pavlovich Chekhov

Anton Chekhov (1860–1904) was a Russian playwright and short-story writer, widely regarded as one of the greatest literary figures in history. Born in Taganrog, Russia, Chekhov initially trained as a physician but pursued writing to support his family. His works revolutionized both the short story and modern drama, emphasizing subtle character development and the complexities of human experience. His plays explore themes of societal change, unfulfilled dreams, and human resilience.





Moscow Art Theatre, 1904

History of *The Cherry Orchard*

Chekhov wrote *The Cherry Orchard* in 1903, during the final year of his life, while battling severe illness. From his seaside home in Yalta, he learned of its opening at the Moscow Art Theatre just months before his passing. It was inspired by personal experiences and his observations of the decline of the aristocracy. The play would revolutionize modern theatre with its innovative blend of realism, symbolism, and its focus on character driven storytelling.



BYU Adaptation

Director Adam Houghton spent many hours creating the “adaptation” of *The Cherry Orchard* for this production, culling various public domain translations and editions to build a unique and fresh perspective on the story for the BYU theatre community.



In early rehearsals, director, dramaturg, and cast worked to smooth out the flow of dialogue and give the actors a chance to explore character from a rich textual foundation. Like the brightly colored and intricately patterned fabrics of the folk culture from this period, Houghton’s script presents a beautiful portrait of Chekhov’s Russia.



Costume Design

by Jessie Stier

In researching the play and the time period for her preliminary design sketches, Jessie found the following quote by Chekhov:

Don't tell me the moon is shining; show me the glint of light on broken glass.



Firs, Act 1

What are some details in these costumes that tell you more about who these characters are?



Charlotte, Act 2

To Jessie, this epitomized her approach to realism in her designs. It means using subtle details in the characters' clothing that show who they truly are.

You can see some of those subtle details in Jessie's final costume renderings pictured here.



Set Design

by Milinda Weeks



Set designer Milinda Weeks and assistant set designer Cosette Philbrick created the above scenic rendering early in the design process. Milinda says she was inspired by a combination of old Russian cuckoo clocks and the trunk of a cherry tree when creating the circular wood-grained flooring space. Entrances and exits at either side suggest that perhaps the lives of these characters, up until this point, have continued in cyclical fashion and without much change.

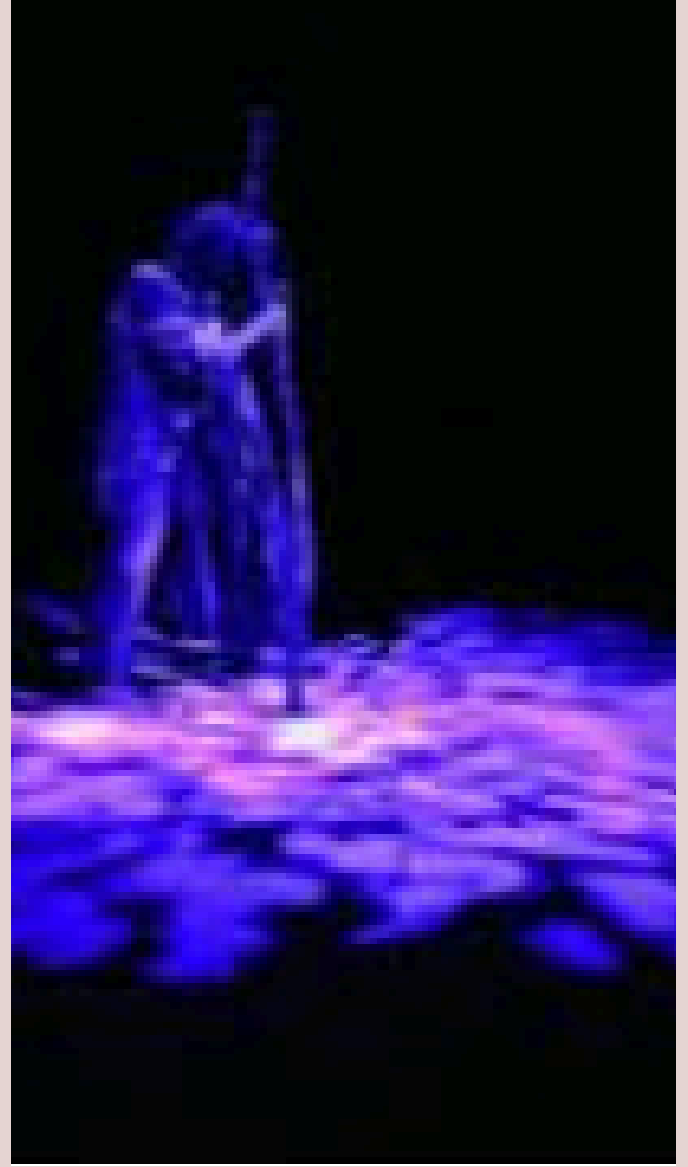


Makeup and Hair Design

by Cammi Baker

In her research for hair and makeup design representing 1904 Russia, Cammi often describes the style as “soft, rounded, and natural.” Her renderings are an effort to take real photos of the actors and layer the designs subtly onto those photographs. Director Adam Houghton was drawn to the antique qualities of the renderings, remarking that they remind him of hand-touched colorized family history photos.





Lighting Design

by Aubree Schuck

There are two things at the top of the priority list for our lighting designer: one is creating a sense of the passage of time through the seasonal changes in the story, using both color and shape. A “gobo” is a carefully cut screen placed in front of a light in order to create shape (like window panes or leaves on a tree.) The other priority is punctuating some of the more poetic moments in the story in collaboration with sound, (for example, when the sound of an axe against a tree trunk is heard.)

What do you see when you hear that sound?



SOUND DESIGN

by Paige Northrup

When first presenting her ideas for the sound design, Paige suggested that one of the most important elements to her would be the punctuating of the poetic. She wanted the subtle sounds to reinforce the poignant emotional moments on stage. The two moments she chose as integral to the



storytelling of sound were described in two of the more famous stage directions in theatre history: the “sound of a string breaking, which dies away sadly,” and the sound of “an axe against the trees” in the cherry orchard. These are sounds which color the emotional tenor of this show.

Do you hear them?

