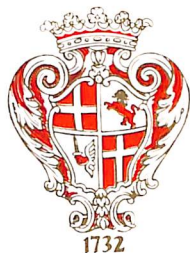

TEATRU
MANOEL

1344

1445





KOPERATTURI

AND

THE CATHOLIC INSTITUTE

present

THE SNEEZE

Plays and stories by **ANTON CHEKHOV**

adapted by **MICHAEL FRAYN**



directed by
CARMEL S. AQUILINA

Friday, 24th January, 1992
Saturday, 25th January, 1992
Sunday, 26th January, 1992

THE SNEEZE

Act I

DRAMA

Storyteller	John Suda
Pavel Vasilyevich, a writer	Manuel Cauchi
Murashkina, a lady with literary ambitions	Monica Attard
Luka, a manservant	Michael Tabone

Monica Attard

THE ALIEN CORN

Storyteller	Monica Attard
Kamyshev, a landowner	Alfred Mallia
Champagne, his former French tutor	Michael Tabone
Masha, a servant	Rita Zammit

Alfred Mallia

THE SNEEZE

Storyteller	Manuel Cauchi
Brizzhalov, a very senior Government official	John Suda
His wife	Stephanie Farrugia
Chervyakov, a very minor Government official	Michael Tabone
His wife	Rita Zammit

M. Tabone
Rita Zammit

THE BEAR

Popova, a widow	Monica Attard
Smirnov, a landowner	Manuel Cauchi
Luka, an elderly footman	Alfred Mallia
Workers	Carmel S. Aquilina
	Ray Ebejer
	Henry Scerri

Act II

THE EVILS OF TOBACCO

Nyukhin **John Suda**

THE INSPECTOR-GENERAL

Storyteller	Stephanie Farrugia
A traveller	Alfred Mallia
A cart driver	Michael Tabone

John Suda

SWAN SONG

First Actress	Stephanie Farrugia
Second Actress	Rita Zammit
Svetlovidov, an actor	Manuel Cauchi
Nikita Ivanich, a prompter	Alfred Mallia

Stephanie Farrugia

THE PROPOSAL

Chubukov, a landowner	Michael Tabone
Natalya Stepanovna, his daughter	Monica Attard
Lomov, a neighbour	John Suda

Backstage

Stage manager	Raymond Ebejer
Asst. stage manager (book)	Joe Pace
Asst. stage manager (props)	Henry Scerri
Set	Raymond Ebejer
Make-up	Lina Galea Cumbo
Wigs	Michael Galea
Costumes	Connie Schembri
Sound	John Bruno
Publicity	Alfred Mallia
Poster	Manuel Cauchi
Secretaries	Tania Borg
	Gwann Abela OFM

Michael Galea
Connie Schembri

For the Manoel Theatre

Lights	Vanni Laus
Stage carpenters	Emmanuel Dalli
	Francis Mifsud
Booking clerk	Michelle Mangion

Director's Note

It is hardly possible, perhaps, to define as “chekhovian” the master’s own one-act plays. They are in a different vein from the four great dramas he wrote later. He called them “jokes” and “vaudevilles” and they were intended purely as entertainment. Michael Frayn’s adaptation of them and of some of Chekhov’s short stories does more than credit to these larger than life classics of the comic theatre.

To translate Chekhov’s “joke” as “farce” in the English way would be to tread dangerous ground. The latter usually depends upon panic usually generated by a sense of guilt and the fear of some form of social disgrace. What drives the characters in Chekhov’s work is a sense of outrage, of fury at the failure of others to recognize their claims. In one sense, these pieces could be considered to be the first attempts of the most promising apprentice on his way to his own unique magic.

In the first act, we witness the besieging of the artist by art, his absorption in the puppet-kingdom of life and fate’s attempts to demolish him — Chekhov walks this hazardous road to its very end, the dawn of the strange love which breaks at the end of “The Bear”. A sense of release highlights the second act: release from the terrors of married life, from the hold of despotic power, from the horrors of art itself. A release leading to the compromise between the little people in “The Proposal”.

The “jokes” are in a different mode from the four great dramas. They do, however, ring a bell.

Carmel S. Aquilina

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Nicky Farrugia

