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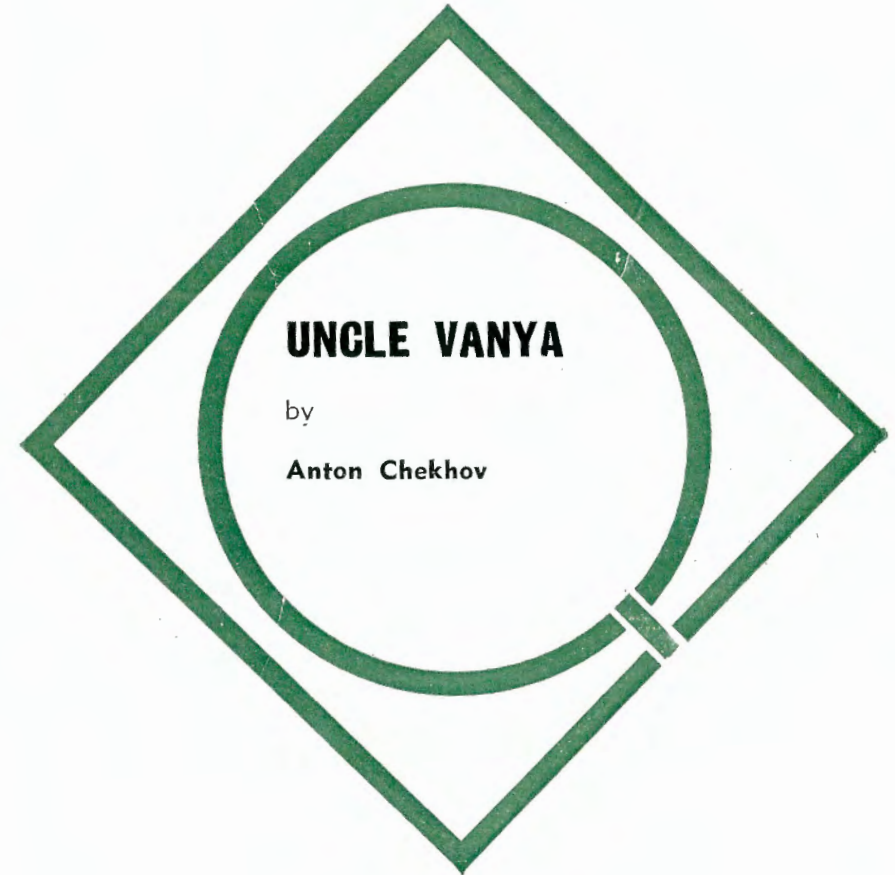
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## UNCLE VANYA

by

Anton Chekhov

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### THE QUESTORS IS A CLUB THEATRE

Only members may book tickets, and membership  
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December 15th at 7.45 p.m. in the Bernard Shaw Room  
THE QUESTORS FILM SOCIETY presents  
**THE GENERAL (Buster Keaton)**  
Members Season Tickets. Guests 5/-

December 31st to January 11th at 7.45 p.m.  
(excluding 2nd and 6th January)

### THE SHAUGHRAUN

by Dion Boucicault.  
Members free seats are NOT available.  
Tickets 6/6 and 4/6

Box office open  
for advance booking  
during the interval  
of **UNCLE VANYA**

January 19th at 7.00 p.m. in the Shaw Room  
THE QUESTORS FILM SOCIETY presents  
**INTOLERANCE**  
(U.S.A. 1916)  
Members Season Tickets. Guests 5/-

January 25th, 26th, 28th, 29th, 31st, February 1st at 7.45 p.m.

### TANGO

by Slawomir Mrozek  
Members free tickets available. Guests 7/6 and 5/-

February 1st at 11.00 a.m. in the theatre

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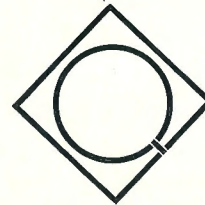
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**THE QUESTORS THEATRE**

FIRST PERFORMANCE

**SATURDAY, 7th DECEMBER, 1968**

**ANTON PAVLOVICH CHEKHOV** was born in 1860 in Taganrog, the son of a small shopkeeper and the grandson of a serf. At the age of 19 he went to Moscow University to study medicine and qualified as a doctor five years later.

He had been writing for the cheapest kinds of humorous journal in order to earn money to keep himself and the members of his family going, but by about 1885 he was getting stories published in more serious magazines and when in 1888 he was awarded the Pushkin Prize of Literature for a volume of his short stories, he had already achieved no little fame. It was about that time that he wrote his first full-length play to be produced, *IVANOV* (the earlier *PLATONOV* was not produced until long after his death). There followed a number of what he liked to call his "vaudevilles" — one-act farces which were, and still are, enormously popular.

*THE WOOD DEMON*, an earlier version of *UNCLE VANYA*, was written in 1889 and produced in Moscow, but it was a flop. For the next few years Chekhov wrote very little for the theatre, but his next major play, *THE SEAGULL*, was to prove one of the great landmarks of the modern theatre, although it all but disappeared without trace. Its first production at St. Petersburg in 1896 was almost jeered off the stage. By great good fortune Nemirovich-Danchenko who with Constantin Stanislavsky founded the Moscow Art Theatre, had been able to see the virtues of the play despite the general chorus of condemnation and, with difficulty, persuaded Chekhov on the one hand to allow the Art Theatre to do it, and on the other hand Stanislavsky and his other colleagues to accept it. The result was a triumphant and extraordinary success which made both Chekhov and the Moscow Art Theatre.

The great significance of the occasion was that Chekhov was writing in an entirely fresh and original way, totally different from the romantic and over theatrical style which was prevalent, and that the Moscow Art Theatre was searching for a truth which exactly matched the style of Chekhov's writing. So, by what seems like a miraculous coincidence, on 17th October 1898 there occurred a revolution in the theatre.

Meanwhile *UNCLE VANYA* had been written and published and had been produced with some measure of success by a number of provincial theatres. After the success of *THE SEAGULL* the Moscow Art Theatre naturally asked Chekhov to be allowed to produce *UNCLE VANYA*. But Chekhov had already promised the play to the Maly Theatre. When, however, the Literary Committee of the Maly Theatre required, as a condition of production, that Chekhov re-write the third act, on the grounds that it was not correct for Vanya to shoot at a distinguished University professor, the play was withdrawn and given to the Art Theatre. Here it was produced in 1899. It did not repeat the spectacular success of *THE SEAGULL*, but developed into a steady success in its second season and has been in the repertoire ever since.

After *UNCLE VANYA*, Chekhov wrote two more great masterpieces, *THREE SISTERS* and *THE CHERRY ORCHARD*, both, like all his other work, shot with humour and gaiety and steeped in a love of life. Then at the age of 44 he died of a consumption which, as a doctor, he must have known to have been killing him for many years.

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"It seems to me that beyond the namable, classifiable emotions and motives of our conscious life when directed towards action . . . there is a fringe of indefinite extent, of feeling which we can only detect, so to speak, out of the corner of the eye and can never completely focus . . ." (T. S. Eliot).

"Chekhov . . . initiates a new literature — the literature of duration as against the literature of sequence, penetrating the the heart of a single moment rather than merely linking a succession of moments." (William Gerhardt).

"Oh why did I write plays instead of stories? I've wasted my themes, utterly wasted them, scandalously and unproductively" (Chekhov in a letter after finishing "Uncle Vanya").

"I saw 'Uncle Vanya' the other day and cried like a peasant woman . . . came home deafened and crushed by your play . . . trembled with admiration for your gifts" (Maxim Gorky).

"Where is the drama? What does it consist of? The play just doesn't move anywhere." (Leo Tolstoy of 'Uncle Vanya').

### EARLIER PRODUCTIONS OF CHEKHOV'S PLAYS BY THE QUESTORS

Uncle Vanya (1941); The Cherry Orchard (1943 and 1965); The Seagull (1947); Three Sisters (1960: Chekhov Centenary Production); On the Highway (1956); The Bear (1950 and 1965); The Proposal (1940 and 1967); The Wedding (1964); The Anniversary (1952).

Sandwiches and coffee are available in the Bernard Shaw Room before performances and refreshments will be served there during the interval. Sweets and chocolates will be on sale only in the Bernard Shaw Room.

Members of the audience are requested to refrain from smoking in the Auditorium.

A discussion is held after each production by The Questors, to which all members of the audience are cordially invited. The discussion on UNCLE VANYA will be held on Monday, 16th December at 7.45 p.m. in the Bernard Shaw Room.

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## UNCLE VANYA

Scenes from Country Life

by Anton Pavlovich Chekhov. Translated by Ronald Hingley

Characters in order of appearance:

Marina (an old nurse) ..... MARY HODLIN  
Michail Astrov (a doctor) ..... COLIN PRONGER  
Vanya Voynitsky ..... KENNETH CONINGTON  
Alexander Serebryakov (a retired professor) ..... DAVID GOWER  
Yelena (his wife) ..... JANE DEWEY  
Sonya (his daughter by his first wife) ... SUZANNE ROBINSON  
Ilya Telegin (an impoverished landowner) ..... NED GETHINGS  
Marya Voynitsky (the widow of a Privy Councillor and mother  
of the professor's first wife and of Vanya) ... JOAN ROBERTS  
A Labourer ..... PHILIP IRVING

The Action takes place on Serebryakov's estate.

### ACT I

The garden. An afternoon in May.

### ACT II

The dining room. A few weeks later. Night.

INTERVAL OF 15 MINUTES

### ACT III

The drawing room. Early September.

### ACT IV

Vanya's room. The same evening.

Directed by ALFRED EMMET  
Assisted by DANNIELLE GRUNBERG and TONY WORTH  
Production Assistant MALCOLM HIGNETT  
Designed by JOHN ROLFE  
Russian Adviser NINA FROUD

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**OSWELL BLAKESTON.** One man shows at the Drian Gallery, the Grabowski Gallery, etc., and in group and mixed shows at The Leicester Galleries, The Trafford Gallery, Signals, etc. Many exhibitions in the provinces and abroad. He is a writer as well as a painter, his latest publication being a surrealist thriller "And Then The Screaming Started" (Hutchinson, 25s.).

**HALIMA NALECZ.** Studied art in Warsaw and Paris. Helped to found the New Vision Art Centre in London and then the Drian Gallery which she continues to direct. Both galleries are well known through the world for international exhibitions of avant-garde work. Her own paintings are in many important collections and have been represented in many exhibitions, and her last one-man was at The Ewan Phillips Gallery. She has designed decor for ballets and opera and her paintings were featured in the film "The Millionairess."

**NICHOLAS TIDNAM.** A young art master who studied at The Camberwell School of Art. Has exhibited at The Mercury Gallery, Rowland, Browse & Delbanco and The Folio Society. His paintings have been bought by many educational committees.

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