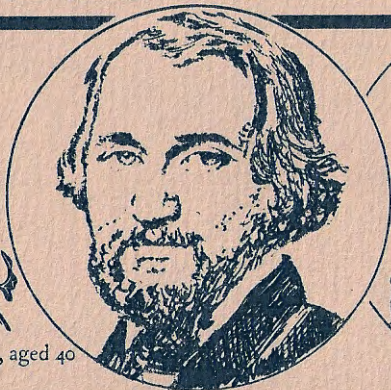

» TURGENEV «

A MONTH IN THE COUNTRY



Ivan Turgenev, aged 40



Pauline Viardot, aged 24

THE QUESTORS THEATRE COMPANY



THE QUESTORS THEATRE COMPANY

First performance April 9th 1983

This production of *A Month in the Country* is presented as a tribute to The Questors President, Sir Michael Redgrave, who celebrated his 75th birthday last month.

MICHAEL SCUDAMORE REDGRAVE

- 1908 Born in Bristol on March 20th.
Educated at Clifton College and Magdalene College, Cambridge.
Actor with A.D.C. and Marlowe Society, as well as becoming recognised as a leading Cambridge poet and editing a literary magazine.
- 1931-34 Taught modern languages at Cranleigh School. Directed and played in school productions, including *Hamlet* and *King Lear*, attracting much distinguished notice.
- 1934 Professional debut as Roy Darwin in *Counsellor-at-Law* for the Liverpool Repertory Company.
- 1935 Married Rachel Kempson after acting with her at Liverpool.
- 1936-7 Played at The Old Vic, under the direction of Tyrone Guthrie, including Orlando to Edith Evans's Rosalind.
- 1937-8 Played in John Gielgud's season at The Queen's Theatre, including Bolingbroke, Charles Surface, and Tusenbach under the direction of Michel St. Denis.
- 1939 Lord Monchensey in *The Family Reunion*.
- 1940 Macheath in *The Beggar's Opera* at Glynedebourne, and at The Haymarket Theatre under the direction of John Gielgud.
- 1943 Played Rakitin in *A Month in the Country* for the first time.
- 1944 Played the lead in, and co-directed, *Uncle Harry*, hailed as his most triumphant success to date.
- 1947-8 Macbeth in London and on Broadway.
- 1949 Rakitin for the second time.
- 1950 Hamlet at The Old Vic and at Elsinore.
- 1951 Prospero, Richard II, Hotspur, and Chorus in *Henry V* at Stratford.
- 1952 Frank Elgin in *Winter Journey*.
- 1953 Shylock, Lear and Antony at Stratford.
- 1955 Hector in Giradoux's *Tiger at the Gates*.
- 1956 Directed *A Month in the Country* in New York.
- 1958 Benedick and Hamlet at Stratford.
President of The Questors Theatre.
- 1959 Knighted.
Played the lead in his own adaptation of Henry James's *The Aspern Papers*.
- 1962 Vanya at Chichester and later at The National Theatre.
- 1963-4 Claudius, Henry Hobson, and Solness in *The Master Builder* at The National Theatre.
- 1965 Played Rakitin for the third time in his own production at Guildford, and at The Cambridge Theatre.
- 1972 Father in *A Voyage Round My Father* at The Haymarket Theatre, and on a tour of Canada and Australia.

A MONTH IN THE COUNTRY

by Ivan Turgenev

translated by Ariadne Nicolaëff

Cast in order of speaking

HERR SCHAAF, <i>Kolya's German tutor</i> . . .	Michael Davis
ANNA, <i>Arkady's mother</i>	Mary Hodlin
NATALYA, <i>Arkady's wife</i>	Sarah Andrews
MIKHAIL RAKITIN, <i>a friend of the family</i>	Phillip Clayton-Gore
LIZA, <i>Anna's companion</i>	Anne Renn
KOLYA, <i>Arkady's son</i>	Benjamin Rowlands
ALEKSEI BELYAYEV, <i>Kolya's Russian tutor</i>	Robert Jones
MATVEY, <i>a servant</i>	Ned Gethings
SHPIGELSKY, <i>the doctor</i>	Nevile Cruttenden
VERA, <i>Natalya's ward</i>	Victoria Lord
ARKADY ISLAYEV, <i>a wealthy landowner</i> .	Colin Pronger
KATYA, <i>a servant</i>	Cecily Blyther
BOLSHINTSOV, <i>a neighbour</i>	Bill Rudderham

Directed by David Pearson

Sets designed by John Stacey

Music composed by Don Kincaid

The action takes place on Islayev's estate.

- | | |
|---------|--------------------------------------|
| ACT I | The drawing room — before dinner. |
| ACT II | The garden — the next day. |
| ACT III | The drawing room — the next morning. |
| ACT IV | An unused room — the same evening. |
| ACT V | The drawing room — the next morning. |

Time — the early 1840s.

There will be an interval of 15 minutes between Act III and Act IV.

Patrons are respectfully asked to refrain from taking refreshments into the auditorium.

Stage Manager Alec Atchison
Deputy Stage Manager John Clayton
Assistant Stage Managers Doug Arundel, Carina Choy-Warry,
Philipppa Forster, Jill Gee,
Tina Harris, Wendi Harrison,
Doug King, Caroline McMahon,
Marion Sellwood, Andy Stephens,
Martin Stoner, Hilary Thompson,
Chris Sydenham, David Palmer,
Tim Hayward, Tony Dodd
Costumes designed and made by Barbara Hutchins
assisted by Jean Derby, Grace Lacaille,
Valerie Palmer, Lesley Backshall,
Kathleen Harrington
Properties Iris Phelps
Construction Bob Charles, Paul Watkins, Tina Harris
assisted by Members of the crew
Lighting Brian McLoughlin
assisted by Mari King, Paul Watkins, Liz Wood
Sound Brian McLoughlin
assisted by Angie Elton, June Malcolm
Wardrobe Mistress Grace Lacaille
Stage Floor laid by CABARET

OPEN DISCUSSION

on **TUESDAY, 19th APRIL** at 7.45 p.m. in the **BERNARD SHAW ROOM.**

After you have seen a show, you like to talk about it with your friends, if only in the car on the way home. You like to read what the critics thought, to hear other people's views and to see how far they accord with your own, to learn something more about the play, the author, the stage interpretation. All this adds to the pleasure of theatre going.

At The Questors we provide you with just such an opportunity at the Open Discussions held after each of our main productions, with the added attraction of some eminent theatre personality who generously comes to lead it.

The Discussion on this production will be lead by

PETER COTES

widely experienced director, actor and writer of many theatre books, who has done just about everything there is to do in the theatre and therefore brings a wealth of experience to the task. Older playgoers will remember Peter Cotes as one of the pioneers of the avant garde British Theatre of the fifties.

NOTE THE DATE

TUESDAY, 19th APRIL
at 7.45 p.m.
in the **BERNARD SHAW ROOM**

All are welcome

Admission is free

"The essence of the play is, I am persuaded, comic and anti-romantic"

Sir Michael Redgrave

Turgenev's reputation as a dramatist rests, almost entirely, on *A Month in the Country*. Written in 1850, and immediately banned on the grounds of immorality, it was a public display of his private relationship with Pauline Viardot, a married woman and one of the finest opera singers of her time. Turgenev lived with the Viardots as "a friend of the family". He openly identified himself with Rakitin and it is his own voice we hear in Rakitin's bitter outburst in the last act against the shame and agony of romantic love. Love is depicted throughout not as the blissful moonlight and roses affair of popular culture, but as "a poison", "an infection" and "a disease".

The play expresses Turgenev's fatalistic sense (also found in his later novels) that life can only be lived as a version of farce or comedy, and that even at its most serious moments something will happen to undermine its dignity.

Human suffering is seen by Turgenev, if not by all his audience, as grotesque and comic.

Turgenev considered the work as a novel in play form, and was not surprised by the almost universally bad reception given to the first production in 1872.

" . . . my comedy deserves to be a fiasco. It is for that reason that I have given up writing for the stage; it is not for me."

The play had its first great success on the stage in 1879 and gradually entered the theatrical repertoire to become one of the most admired and frequently acted of nineteenth century plays. It is said to have formed the basis of Chekhov's dramaturgy — its resemblance to, for example, *Uncle Vanya* is certainly striking.

EXHIBITION

In the West Foyer there is a display of photographs, programmes and other material about Sir Michael Redgrave's 25 years as President of The Questors.

COMING EVENTS

THE QUESTORS PREMIERE FESTIVAL APRIL 21—30

April 26—30 In the main theatre

THE MIDNIGHT SUN

by David Mowat

Set against the background of topical issues such as Polish defectors, statelessness, contract marriage and the problems of immigrants, Mowat's play unfolds as a comedy, examining with a wry humour the self-interest of individuals even when a stranger deprived of state, home and mind comes among them.

April 21—24 In the studio

QUESTORS WRITERS

Three new plays by Robert Jones, Jim O'Connor and Phillip Sheahan.

April 25—30

A selection of late-night shows, rehearsed readings, discussions and an evening of poetry.

May 12—15 In the studio

THE LAST DAY OF NOVEMBER

by John Yorath

South London Theatre Centre present a new play dealing with the amazing events of the 85 years between the opening of Joseph Paxton's Crystal Palace at the Great Exhibition of 1851, and its destruction by fire on November 30th 1936.

May 19—28 In the main theatre

CABARET

Book by Joe Masterhoff. Music by John Kander. Lyrics by Fred Ebb. Based on the play *I Am a Camera* by John van Druten and stories by Christopher Isherwood.

Berlin in the 1930s before the start of the Third Reich. Yet already, beneath the tap-dancing feet of the girls in the infamous Kit Kat Klub, can be distinguished the sinister sound of the goose-step.

HOTPLATE. *In the upper foyer during all main theatre productions delicious food is available from 6.30 pm.*

Also attractive and varied cards for sale.

PLANT A PLANT FOR THE QUESTORS

We will be needing items to sell at the annual plant sale on May 21st and 22nd so take a few extra cuttings or plant a few extra seeds to provide a good variety of stock.

OPEN MEETINGS. Every Wednesday at 7.45. If you would like to know more of The Questors activities join us in The Grapevine for information and tour.