

Uncle Vanya 1994

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Celebrated Russian actress and artist, Oxa Meleshkina, has travelled to Britain to direct the forthcoming Questors production of Uncle Vanya, Anton Chekov. See below for story.

Classic Chekov

CLASSIC Russian drama and a dynamic director combine to make the spring production at the Questors Theatre an unmissable date.

Uncle Vanya, by Anton Chekov, is directed by Oxana Meleshkina, (see picture, top left), the artistic director of a Moscow arts centre. Also a celebrated actress and artist, Oxana is one of the most highly regarded directors in Eastern Europe. During her last visit to Questors two years ago, she directed an inventive and exciting production of *The Typists* in the Studio.

Everything about Oxana's approach to *Uncle Vanya* promises an interesting and unconventional

show. The production features a strong cast of experienced Questors actors, an evocative set and live music performed by Don Kincaid.

The Russian Minister of Culture has invited the company to take this production to Moscow in August, where it will be produced at the prestigious Maly theatre, as part of the Chekov Festival. A second tour is planned for September, when the play will visit Mainz in Germany.

A stimulating and memorable evening of theatre is guaranteed.

Uncle Vanya opens tomorrow night, and runs until May 7th. See briefing for booking details.

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► BEHIND THE SCENES

WHEN Questors Theatre's artistic director David Emmet invited Russian director Oxana Meleshkina over to work on a production of Murray Schisgal's *The Typists* two years ago, it was a resounding success. Now she's back at Mattock Lane, Ealing, with her own startling interpretation of Anton Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya* which opens tomorrow (Saturday).

A doctor of philosophy, actress, director and artist, Oxana divides her time between Czechoslovakia and Russia, where she is artistic director of a Moscow arts centre that specialises in improvised theatre.

She formed links with Questors after meeting David Emmet in Moscow. Interviewing her with the help of a translator, Oxana said: "We don't have anything like Questors in Russia. I like the



Guest director: Oxana Meleshkina

Chekhov goes native

idea of a club where the actors, backstage team and audience are both involved in the theatre. I would like to see something similar set up in Russia."

Oxana said theatre is flourishing in Russia despite the financial crisis. Her work with the arts centre is very avant garde, providing a chance for performers and artists from mime, music, drama and visual art to work together. She said: "Everybody gets together and participates. We don't rehearse we just get on the stage and see what develops. It seems to go down well. We took a production to Germany last year and it was very well received."

Right now her energy is concentrated on *Uncle*

Vanya. The company is taking its production to Moscow to take part in the Chekhov Festival in August.

Uncle Vanya opens tomorrow (Saturday) and runs until May 7. Details 081 567 5184

