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*Shirley Oaks Hospital, Poppy Lane,  
Shirley Oaks Village, Croydon, CR9 8AB*

the mitre players  
present

# THE CHERRY ORCHARD

By Anton Chekhov  
Translated by Michael Frayn  
Directed by Paul Smith

At the Mitre Theatre  
Trinity School, Shirley Park

Thursday 29th October to  
Saturday 31st October 1998  
at 7.30pm



# A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Dear Friend,

Good evening and welcome to the fifth and penultimate show of the Mitre Players twenty-fifth anniversary year.

Fresh from another successful tour to Dawlish with 'Merrily We Roll Along' we went straight into rehearsal for tonight's production of 'The Cherry Orchard'. Variousy described as a tragedy and a comedy, tonight we have most deliberately gone for the humour. That is a dangerous thing to admit. I just hope you think the same in a couple of hours time.

Of no doubt at all is the tone of our next, and probably biggest production 'Turnabout', to be produced at Trinity School on 3rd, 4th and 5th December. In one way this looks back at our history as we are reviving an original Martin Tyrrell and Colin Warnock production first performed in 1977. More importantly it looks forward as it is a production undertaken jointly with the school. We are very fortunate in having the Head of Drama at Trinity, Eric Jones (no relation) to direct for us. The cast of 60 is split roughly half and half, Mitres and schoolboys, or, I should say, split roughly half and half present and future Mitres.

Set in Victorian England, it tells the tale of a boy and his father who magically 'change places'. Full of good songs and typical high jinks, it is a show not to be missed.

I hope to see you there and trust you will enjoy tonight's show.

Have a great evening.

**Warwick Jones**  
Chairman



## CAST IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

<b>Dunyasha</b> , the chambermaid.....	<b>Claire Lee</b>
<b>Lopakhin</b> , (Yermolay) a businessman.....	<b>Steve Humfress</b>
<b>Yepikhodov</b> , the estate clerk.....	<b>Paul Beard</b>
<b>Firs</b> , the footman.....	<b>Michael Cheesman</b>
<b>Anya</b> , Ranyevskaya's daughter.....	<b>Fiona Rae</b>
<b>Ranyevskaya</b> , (Lyuba) a landowner.....	<b>Vivien Smith</b>
<b>Charlotta Ivanovna</b> , the governess.....	<b>Morven Rae</b>
<b>Varya</b> , Ranyevskaya's adopted daughter.....	<b>Julia Ascott</b>
<b>Gayev</b> , (Lenya) Ranyevskaya's brother.....	<b>Warwick Jones</b>
<b>Simeonov-Pischik</b> , a landowner.....	<b>John Bartle</b>
<b>Yasha</b> , the footman.....	<b>Paul Bardlay</b>
<b>Trofimov</b> , (Petya) a student.....	<b>Nick Lawson</b>
<b>Passer-by</b> .....	<b>Martin Garnett</b>
<b>Stationmaster</b> .....	<b>Martin Garnett</b>

## PRODUCTION TEAM

<b>Director</b> .....	Paul Smith
<b>Stage Manager</b> .....	Gillian Bartle
<b>Production Manager</b> .....	Julia Ascott
<b>Lighting Design</b> .....	Alan Bishop
<b>Sound</b> .....	James McLeod
<b>Costumes</b> .....	Carol Harrington
<b>Properties</b> .....	Sue Carter
<b>Technical crew</b> .....	Geoff Saw, Julian Parsons, Alan Collins, Adam Tibbalds, Andy Thompson
<b>Prompt</b> .....	Mary Holton
<b>Choreography</b> .....	Joan Armfield
<b>Photography</b> .....	Marcus Ascott
<b>Programme</b> .....	James Miller
<b>Box Office</b> .....	Paul & Julia Beard
<b>Front Of House</b> .....	Sheila Garnett & Ian Brown
<b>Refreshments</b> .....	Christina Lyon-Williams
<b>Foyer Display</b> .....	Phil Evans
<b>Scenic Artist</b> .....	Steve Humfress

# THE CHERRY ORCHARD

## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Many fine and learned words have been written about **'The Cherry Orchard'** before and since it was produced in 1904. Even before he had written it, Chekhov committed many of his ideas to paper and critics the world over have thrown their ideas into the melting pot as to their understanding of what was recently described as 'the greatest play of the century'.

Debate continues as to whether it is a comedy as Chekhov described it. Is it a story of love or of loss? Are the characters representations of the past, the present and the future of Russia? In approaching such a well known piece with these attendant questions, the actors and director have to develop their own solutions and find a footing they feel sure of. The process of rehearsing and working through such a script opens the eyes to many thoughts not immediately obvious; it is a process of enormous fun and satisfaction. The more we have delved, the more fascinating it has become. However, we do bear in mind a note given in the introduction to the translation by Michael Frayn; 'There is no simple formula for playing it, or for responding to it, the problem it sets us is the problem of life itself.'

**Paul Smith**  
Director

*The Mitre Players would like to thank  
The Headmaster and the Governors of  
Trinity School for the use of school  
facilities.  
Thanks also to Lorna & Arthur Vince,  
Alan Garth, Graham Kellas,  
John Bertram, Eric Jones and everyone  
else who has assisted with this production*

## THE MUSIC

The music for this production comes from two sources. Anton Arensky; Variations on a Theme of Tchaikovsky. Born in Novgorod in 1861, Arensky was a friend of Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninov was one of his pupils; Chekhov was also a friend of Tchaikovsky and he knew and corresponded with Rachmaninov.

This work, written in 1894, is based on the fifth of Tchaikovsky's **'Sixteen Children's Songs'**, composed in 1883: the theme of 'children' is a thread which passes throughout **'The Cherry Orchard'**. The final variation being a tribute to Tchaikovsky who had died before Arensky's work was complete. The music in Act Three is taken from the folk tradition of Byelorussia, played on locally made instruments.

## THE PLAY

**The action takes place on Ranyevskaya's estate. Russia. 1904**

### ACT ONE

Ranyevskaya's house - the old nursery - A May morning

### ACT TWO

A field nearby - June

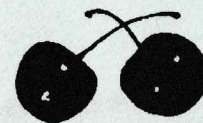
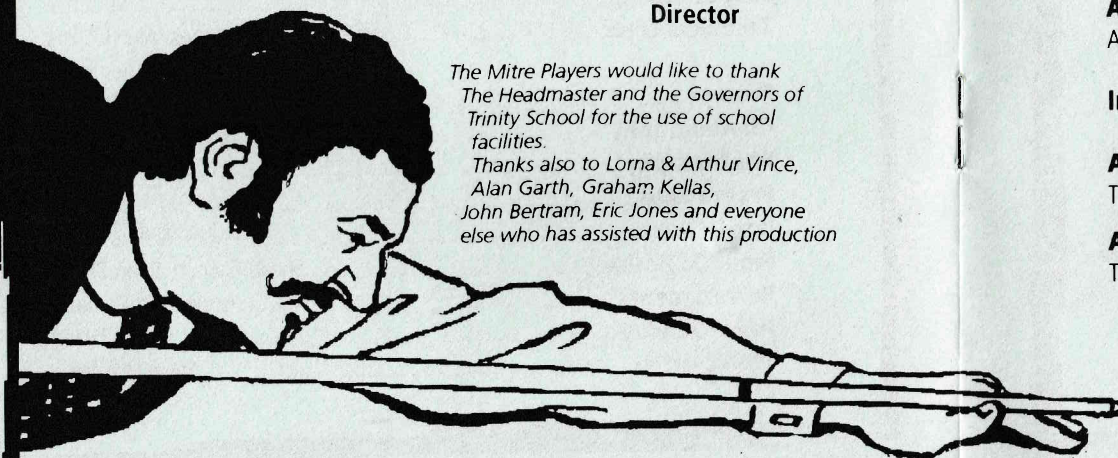
**Interval of 20 minutes**

### ACT THREE

The ballroom / dining room - August

### ACT FOUR

The old nursery - October



## BIOGRAPHIES

### Paul Smith (Director)

An intermittent director for The Mitre Players, Paul's last venture in charge was the epic 'Nicholas Nickleby'. In between times, he is happy to play anything on stage ranging from Koko in 'The Mikado', Bottom in 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' and Charley Wykeham in 'Where's Charley?'. By way of light relief Paul is Fundraising Training Manager for Marie Curie Cancer Care.

### Julia Ascott (Varya)

Julia joined the Mitre Players in 1974 and since then has been involved in over 60 productions. She enjoys 'serious' acting (that's a laugh) and is finding the stoney faced Varya a real challenge. Previous roles include Puck in 'The Dream' and Aldonza in 'The Man Of La Mancha'. Last October she directed 'The Elephant Man'.

### Paul Barclay (Yasha)

Sadly, this is Paul's last production with the Mitre Players, before he goes to Australia. This is probably just as well, as he thought Chekhov was the driver of the USS Enterprise. Previous shows include 'Merrily We Roll Along' and 'Robin Hoodlum'. When in Melbourne, Paul hopes to become a member of the Australian Opera.....mailing list.

### John Bartle (Simeonov-Pischick)

John has been involved in over fifty Mitre productions but strangely doesn't get any better. He was last seen as Sir Francis Chesney in 'Where's Charley?', and before that impersonating Al Capone in the Mitre pantomime 'Robin Hoodlum'.

### Paul Beard (Yepikhodov)

Paul joined the Mitre Players for a one-off production of 'Quasimodo' in 1991 and has been involved in almost every production ever since. Usually found in cameo character roles or directing his own plays for the Mitre Players prior to them being published and performed world-wide. Like Chekhov his talent probably won't be discovered until he's dead and the copyright has expired.

### Michael Cheesman (Firs)

Michael has been a Mitre Player since 1989 and has been in many different kinds of show. On the whole he prefers the classics, so is happy to appear in 'The Cherry Orchard'. Previous shows include 'The Elephant Man', 'The Dream', 'After The Fall' and 'On The Razzle'.

### Martin Garnett (Passer-by & Station Master)

Martin is delighted to be adding Chekhov to Shaw, Shakespeare, Miller, Warnock & Tyrrell in his C.V. It is after all the Mitre's 25th anniversary and they need something memorable ....listen for the voice key change.....anything could happen - you have been warned.

### Steve Humfress (Lopakhin)

Jobless - homeless - hopeless - why else would he be doing this play. At least it's a couple of hours in the warm and the part requires the pretence of financial prosperity. If you should spot him outside East Croydon station - spare a bob or two. Never the less Steve is one of our most multi talented members.

### Warwick Jones (Gayev)

Last year Warwick played Treves in 'The Elephant Man' portraying a man much younger than himself. This year he is demonstrating his versatility by playing a man much older than he is but he attributes this ageing by 20 years to being chairman of The Mitre Players.

### Nick Lawson (Trofimov)

Nick is a new addition to the Mitre Players who also happens to be an old boy of Trinity (hooray!). Like Trofimov, Nick is something of a perpetual student, what with one university or another he hasn't had time for any acting since Trinity. We hope this will be the first of many productions with us.

### Claire Lee (Dunyasha)

From a maiden-mad-man in 'Robin Hoodlum' to a man-mad-maid (en) in 'The Cherry Orchard', the diversity of Claire's acting range is astounding. Audience members of a nervous disposition should not be put off by the fact that her 'love interest', Mr Paul Barclay, actually played her mother in their last production together.

### Fiona Rae (Anya)

Having previously appeared in pantomimes and 'Quasimodo' for the Mitres and several shows for CODA, Fiona is enjoying her first serious role. As she is known for her sober, serious nature she feels that the part of Anya is made for her.

### Morven Rae (Charlotta Ivanovna)

Morven is usually found strutting her stuff with CODA or The Miller Centre but is enjoying her first full length Mitre production, especially as Charlotta is such a nut-case (type casting again!). Rehearsals have been most entertaining largely due to Morven practising her conjuring tricks!

### Vivien Smith (Ranyevskaya)

Vivien joined the Mitre's in 1986 for 'Haggis in Wonderland'. Apart from appearing as various witches, courtiers, beggars and even schoolgirls! - she's enjoyed playing hapless women, - most notably Mrs Nickleby and now Ranyevskaya. Is someone trying to tell her something? She also directs and acts with the Matchbox Theatre.

## The Mitre Players & Trinity School present



# TURNABOUT



An Original Christmas Musical

by Martin Tyrrell & Colin Warnock

Directed By Eric Jones

at Trinity School, Shirley Park

Thursday 3rd to Saturday 5th December 1998 at 7.30pm

(Saturday Matinee at 3pm)

Tickets: Adults £5. Students £2

from Paul Beard on 0181 651 4119