

Press October 07:

AARHUS INTERNATIONAL THEATRE COMPANY presents

WOOD DEMON A romantic, funny play, Chekhov's early masterpiece rediscovered by AAITC.



WOOD DEMON

You people call me a Wood Demon, but I am not the only one. You've all got a demon inside you and you are all wandering in dark woods and feeling your way. - Krushchov

It is always fascinating to encounter early drafts or versions of works that move through promise to fulfilment. A perfect example of this is Chekhov's *The Wood Demon*. Chekhov himself initially dismissed it. Seven years later, however, he rewrote it as *Uncle Vanya*.

We take our hat off to Mikhail Belinson for putting on this odd, uneven but brilliantly promising play. Chekhov wrote it in 1889 when he was 29. At times, the play feels more like dramatised fiction than drama. But the promise is all there in the swift characterisations, the hilariously painful and painfully hilarious situations, the nagging sense of unachieved lives. Anybody who likes Chekhov will want to see it. The theme may be familiar: the tragedy of wasted, trivial, boring lives. The approach, however, is much lighter.

PLAY DATES

2007

October: 5th - 11th & 15th - 24th

all nights at 19:00

TICKETS

100kr. / 70kr. / 50kr. **Foreigners FREE**

Booking: +45 86760073 or +45 50525733 or at www.aaitc.dk

PERFORMS AT

AAITC

Jægergårdsgade 152, 3C

8000 Århus C.



Morten Svartveit, Lena Sandvand, Maria Y. Mouni, Hartvig Hansen, Jarle Bertnsen, Jo A. Haavind, Sarah M. Berge, Daniel A. Fjellgaard, Morten J. B. Olausen



PRODUCTION

Director: Mikhail Belinson

Light design: Mikhail Belinson

Set: Vladimir Korshunov

Producer: Thomas Biehl

THE PLAY

Voynitsky, who has scrimped and saved his whole life at great personal cost to find his livelihood - and, by extension, his life - threatened at the worst possible moment.

"In the play I portray a disgusting, selfish, provincial fellow who for twenty years has been reading works on art but understand nothing about the subject - a man who brings despondency and gloom to all those near him, who is not accessible to laughter and music - and who, despite all this, is undoubtedly happy." Chekhov

THE WRITER

"All I wanted was to say honestly to people: 'Have a look at yourselves and see how bad and dreary your lives are!' The important thing is that people should realize that, for when they do, they will most certainly create another and better life for themselves 'Please, understand that your life is bad and dreary!'" - Chekhov

Writer and dramatist. Anton Pavlovich Chekhov (1860-1904) was born the son of a grocer and grandson of a serf in Taganrog. After his father fled Taganrog because of bankruptcy, Chekhov's family was kicked out of their house by a former lodger. Chekhov rejoined his family in Moscow with his father in 1879. Chekhov began writing short stories during his days as a medical student at the University of Moscow. Chekhov's first career was as a writer of humorous material and he began contributing to minor magazines under the pen name of Antosha Chekhonte in 1880. His reputation grew when he published his first story collection "Motley Stories". His next collection "In the twilight" won him the Pushkin Prize in 1888. "Ivanov", Chekhov's first play, a fairly immature work compared to his later plays, examines the suicide of a young man very similar to Chekhov himself in many ways. His next play, "The Wood Demon" was also fairly unsuccessful. In fact, it was not until the Moscow Art Theater production of "The Seagull". In 1899, Chekhov gave the Moscow Art Theatre a revised version of "The Wood Demon", now titled "Uncle Vanya". Along with "The Three Sisters" and "The Cherry Orchard", this play would go on to become one of the masterpieces of the modern theatre. During Chekhov's final years, he was forced to live in exile from the intellectuals of Moscow. He died of tuberculosis in 1904, in a German health resort. Since his death, Chekhov's plays have become famous worldwide and he has come to be considered the greatest Russian storyteller and dramatist of modern times.



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