

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAVEN
THEATER ARTS PROGRAM
PROUDLY PRESENTS

**THREE
SISTERS**
BY ANTON CHEKHOV
TRANSLATED BY
MADELEINE GEORGE

NOVEMBER 15, 16, 17, 18 - 7:30 PM
BUCKNALL THEATER

Three Sisters

by Anton Chekhov

Translated by Madeleine George

The translation of THREE SISTERS was developed and in January of 2022
produced by Two River Theater in Red Bank, NJ
John Dias Artistic Director / Michael Hurst, Managing Director

“Three Sisters” (George) is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals
on behalf of Samuel French, Inc. www.concordtheatricals.com

Director - Meg Savilonis

Choreographer - Diana Harris

Music Director - D. Edward Davis

Dramaturg - Sydney Guye

Stage Managers - Hannah Clavelle, Alexa Maniccia, Claire Pike

Set Designer - Emily Nichols

Costume Designer - Marissa Menezes

Lighting Designer/Production Electrician - Ryan White

Assistant Production Electrician - Ryan Fasula

Sound Designer - Alex Martin

Props Designer - Julia Morrison

Technical Director - Kevin DeChello

House Manager - Maddie Hoffman

Box Office Manager - Holden Newton

Marketing, Social Media & Publicity - Amanda Thompson

Light Board Operator - Julia Morrison

Sound Board Operator - Tim Fraedrich

Run Crew - Olivia D'Antona, Ryan Fasula, Micah Freeman-Stephens,
Abigail Robbins, Jaeley Sughrue

Build Crew - Wyatt Cashman, Ryan Fasula, Micah Freeman-Stephens,
Maddie Hoffman, Claire Pike

Lighting Crew - Achilles Beumel, Dylan Custer, Ryan Fasula,
Taina Hilario, Maddie Hoffman, Alexa Maniccia, Julia Morrison,
Holden Newton, Emily Rivera

Wardrobe Crew - Angelina Greathouse, Ashley Laudano, Angie Paulus,
Nashaly Rose, Jaeley Sughrue, Audra Theberge

Sound Crew - Tim Fraedrich, Alex Martin, Holden Newton

Paint Crew - Wyatt Cashman, Ryan Fasula, Alyssa Gillies,
Casey Hallock, Oliver Kirchner, Alexa Maniccia, Joe Oliveria,
Emma Parker

Music Credits

Elements of "Akh Vy Seni Moi Seni," traditional Russian folk song

"Colored Pencils" by D. Edward Davis

Elements of "Do You Realize??" by Wayne Coyne, Steven Drozd, Michael
Ivins and Dave Fridmann

Elements of "God Save the Tsar" by Alexei Lvov

Elements of "Lyubvi vse vozrasty pokorny" by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Elements of "A Maiden's Prayer" by Tekla Bądarzewska-Baranowska

Elements of "Some Enchanted Evening" by Richard Rodgers and Oscar
Hammerstein II

Cast of Characters

Olga Sergeyevna Prozorova	Alyssa Gillies
Masha (Maria Sergeyevna Prozorova)	Angelina Greathouse
Irina Sergeyevna Prozorova	Angie Paulus
Andrey Sergeyevich Prozorov	Nick Sullivan
Natasha (Natalia Ivanovna)	Emma Parker
Doctor Ivan Romanovich Chebutykin	Audra Theberge
Aleksandr Ignatiyrvich Vershinin	Jose Resto
Baron Nikolai Lvovich Tuzenbach	Casey Hallock
Vassily Vassilyevich Solyony	Joe Oliveira
Fyodor Ilyich Kulygin	Oliver Kirchner
Aleksey Petrovich Fedotik	Erin Nezezon
Vladimir Karlovich Rode	Robyn Cruz
Anfisa	Ari Keelan
Ferapont	Md Abdulla Al Mamun
Musicians	D. Edward Davis and Amanda Thompson
Maid	Jaeley Sughrue
Soldiers	Olivia D'Antona and Micah Freeman-Stephens

There will be one 15-minute intermission.

Please turn off all electronic devices. Photography and video recording of any kind are strictly prohibited.

Please note there will be a gunshot sound and light haze effects.

Understanding Russian Names

In Russian culture, naming is a very structured tradition. Each person has three names: their first, patronymic, and last names. As in the U.S., their first, or given, name is chosen by their parents. The patronymic name is taken from their father (“patronymic” comes from the Greek word “pater,” for “father”), and is dependent on the person’s gender. For a male, his patronymic name is his father’s first name with either “-evich” or “-ovich” added to the end. For a female, her patronymic name is her father’s first name with either “-evna” or “-ovna” added to the end. Their last name, again as in American tradition, is their surname or family name, though they do take feminine and masculine forms (with females typically having their names end in “-a”).

From this, we can look at the names in *Three Sisters* and start to understand them. The Prozorov siblings all have the same root patronymic name (“Sergeyev-”), with the sisters--since they have the same father--sharing a patronymic name; we can reverse-engineer their names to tell their father’s name was Sergey. Vassily Vassilyevich Solyony, therefore, was named after his father, which is why his patronymic name is his first name, Vassily, with the “-evich” suffix added to it.

Russian culture also has specific customs surrounding nicknames and diminutives (shortened forms of names). There are standard nicknames for Russian first names, as there are in English names. While an American might call an Alexander “Alex,” a Russian would call an Aleksandr “Sasha.”

In *Three Sisters*, many characters are called shortened names throughout the show. Masha (from Maria) and Natasha (from Natalia) are the only two who are predominately called their diminutive, but others, such as Olga (“Olya”), Irina (“Ira”), and Kulygin (“Fedya,” from “Fyodor”) also get called them.

Russians also use more diminutive names, commonly to show their affection towards a person. Either a person’s given name or the shortened form is taken and add a variety of suffixes, typically “-echka,” “-enka,” “-ushka,” “-usha,” “-ik,” among others. These names are typically used among family and close friends, and gives us the nicknames in the play like “Olyushka,” “Mashenka,” “Irechka,” and “Andriusha.”

Dramaturg's Note: About Time

In *Three Sisters*, time is ambiguous. It is very present, through clocks chiming, questions about time, and long philosophical discussions, but little about time is actually set in stone. Even in the original text, it is unclear how much time actually passes from beginning to end. The time passing on stage does not always match how long passes for the audience; some of the time jumps between scenes are clearly explained, while others are left more open to interpretation. While Chekhov's original play premiered in 1901, it is unclear when exactly the play is set, if it takes place in 1901 or years earlier (through tracking cultural references, like the Panama Affair, it takes place no earlier than 1897, though this has been debated).

This ambiguity becomes even clearer in Madeleine George's translation, which was largely written during lockdown in 2020 and is set simply at "the end of an era." George does not specify which era--it could be, like Chekhov's, the end of the nineteenth century, or perhaps it is the twentieth, or another era all together. George was writing at the start of a new era, one defined by a blurring of time, as people were isolated from their normal reality. This allows our production to explore the melding of eras and time, where they overlap, and what their differences are. She also modernizes the play without fully taking it out of its vague turn-of-the-century setting, helping ensure that it can still resonate with today's audiences. She switches out references to nineteenth century Russian poetry for ones to Shakespeare, and she adds in a Rodgers and Hammerstein love song written decades after Chekhov's death. This production's deliberate melding of periods enhances George's anachronisms, especially as characters philosophize and slip through time.

Within the play, the characters discuss their theories about time and the future at length, guessing what life will be like in a hundred, three hundred, a thousand years. They each have different ideas on what the reason for life is and how that will translate into the future. Now, in 2023, we are over 120 years from when this play was first written and have the unique possibility to start to see if any of them are right. Is life the same as it ever was (or, as it was for this group of characters)? Have we managed to make life "unimaginably beautiful," or are we at least on our way to doing that? While we may never know for sure why life is the way it is, or how it will be, perhaps we can accept it as it is and keep on living, keep moving forwards.

Special Thanks

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Nancy Savage
Noah Swatt
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This production is entered in the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KCACTF). The aims of this national theater education program are to identify and promote quality in college-level theater production. To this end, each production entered is eligible for a response by a regional KCACTF representative, and selected students and faculty are invited to participate in KCACTF programs involving scholarships, internships, grants and awards for actors, directors, dramaturgs, playwrights, designers, stage managers and critics at both the regional and national levels.

Productions entered on the Participating level are eligible for invitation to the KCACTF regional festival and may also be considered for national awards recognizing outstanding achievement in production, design, direction and performance.

Last year more than 1,500 productions were entered in the KCACTF involving more than 200,000 students nationwide. By entering this production, our theater department is sharing in the KCACTF goals to recognize, reward, and celebrate the exemplary work produced in college and university theaters across the nation.