



The Cherry Orchard

Anton Chekhov , Tom Murphy (Translator)

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Published to tie in with the world premiere at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin

In Chekhov's tragi-comedy - perhaps his most popular play - the Gayev family is torn by powerful forces, forces rooted deep in history and in the society around them. Their estate is hopelessly in debt: urged to cut down their beautiful cherry orchard and sell the land for holiday cottages, they struggle to act decisively. Tom Murphy's fine vernacular version allows us to re-imagine the events of the play in the last days of Anglo-Irish colonialism. It gives this great play vivid new life within our own history and social consciousness.

The Cherry Orchard Details

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Author : Anton Chekhov , Tom Murphy (Translator)

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From Reader Review The Cherry Orchard for online ebook

James says

Book Review

4 out of 5 stars to The Cherry Orchard, a tragedy and comedy all rolled into one, published in 1904 by a great Russian, Anton Chekhov. I'd heard of this play during my high school years, but never actually read it. In college, I had a course in modern drama and theatre, where this was one of the 16 plays we read: 1 per week for the 4 month course. Our school also performed a theatrical version a later semester where I participated in some backstage work. We also did a video and literary analytical comparison. I know the play well. Commentary on society. Discussion of values. Choices. Understanding what you will give up for what you need to have. The themes in this one are so large, it's often hard to discuss them without getting animated.

Additionally, The Cherry Orchard was the piece that I did my technical and textual analysis on, so I had strong opinions and theories about the characters and the action. When I saw the video, I was a bit shocked at some things, but I also realized that many things were done in the way that I would have done them. The whole discussion/argument about the play being a comedy or a tragedy is one that comes to mind. I thought while reading the piece that it was mostly a tragedy. The Ranevskys were losing their estate and cherry orchard. I had sympathy and pity for them. Then, I thought more about how it was played in the video, and what the narrator had to say. I also recalled the action in the play and realized that the action is external, and therefore, it depends on the way that characters are played by the actors. It was the acting, at least for me, which showed the tragic side of the play in the video. When Lopakhin is announcing at the end that he is now the owner of the estate and the orchard, the staging and directing was brilliant. The entire stage was silent, and the characters all stood around Lopakhin. The orchestra was playing a little bit also, and Lopakhin began his speech. He was somewhat hysterical, but also vindicated. Watching this scene is what convinced me that the play was more tragic than comic.

The actress who played Madame Ranevsky was a great actress. When she broke down about losing the estate with her brother Gayev, there were more tragic tones to the play. It was hard to decide exactly how I felt about the piece because there were the interruptions to let the narrator talk for awhile. Overall, I liked the version because it appeared very classic. By classic, I mean in the lines and the dark colors. I wish that I saw the actual orchard. I felt a little deprived because the orchard was the focus of the piece.

There were parts that were left out also that I wish I could have seen acted. In my opinion, the entire play should have been put on, and then afterwards, the narrator should have commented on it. They could have held flashbacks and then remind us of specific scenes that were played in a certain way, etc. The end was good when Firs was left alone. I like that part. He was on the couch and I wondered what was going to happen. When I read the play, I thought that he was going to die, but I was unsure about his character in the film. There was a lot of discussion about the sounds of the piercing harp string and the axe at the end when the orchard was being cut down. This discussion was very interesting because it helped me to understand the importance of the sounds before I gave my textual analysis.

About Me

For those new to me or my reviews... here's the scoop: I read A LOT. I write A LOT. And now I blog A LOT. First the book review goes on Goodreads, and then I send it on over to my WordPress blog at <https://thisismytruthnow.com>, where you'll also find TV & Film reviews, the revealing and introspective 365 Daily Challenge and lots of blogging about places I've visited all over the world. And you can find all my

social media profiles to get the details on the who/what/when/where and my pictures. Leave a comment and let me know what you think. Vote in the poll and ratings. Thanks for stopping by.

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Lea says

"Oh, will you understand

My soul's deep restlessness?"

The last play in my book of three Chekhov's plays. I don't quite understand how is The Cherry Orchard Chekhov's most famous play because I found it less appealing than Three Sisters, which was my favorite, or Uncle Vanya. The characters seem less developed and the classic themes that are explored in each play didn't hit the note with me as the others, even though I can see a great value in this one too.

The most dominating subject of the play was the relativity of any one's position in society during the time of great economic and political changes. The play portrays the slow downfall of the aristocracy as their position is replaced with people from lower class that now have new opportunities. From reading about Chekhov's life, it is evident why that theme interested him, as he himself was coming from the family that didn't have high social status, and made it with his own talent and effort. He financed himself during medical school and became a doctor and in time one of the most famous Russian writers.

Lopakhin was the character that portrays perfectly Chekhov personal struggles. Chekhov father was very strict, fanatic and came from a lower class in society. I think this dialogue can reveal the way Chekhov felt in some sense, his escape in art and his haunting feeling of low self-esteem coming from a tyrannical father and his social status, that couldn't be eradicated even with highest education.

LUBOV. I'm quite sure there wasn't anything at all funny. You oughtn't to go and see plays, you ought to go and look at yourself. What a grey life you lead, what a lot you talk unnecessarily.

LOPAKHIN. It's true. To speak the straight truth, we live a silly life. [Pause] My father was a peasant, an idiot, he understood nothing, he didn't teach me, he was always drunk, and always used a stick on me. In point of fact, I'm a fool and an idiot too. I've never learned anything, my handwriting is bad, I write so that I'm quite ashamed before people, like a pig!

My dear friend from medical school adores Chekhov's short stories, so she recommended his work to me, and I'm glad she did. These plays were only an introduction as I really want to read his complete opus. This style, wit, and cleverness in describing human thought are indeed brilliant and inspiring to me. His philosophy seems so close to my perspective on life and my love for existentialism. Nothing but respect for my fellow doctor that became a giant of Russian literature. Looking forward to spending more time with him.

To escape all the petty and deceptive things which prevent our being happy and free, that is the aim and meaning of our lives. Forward! We go irresistibly on to that bright star which burns there, in the distance! Don't lag behind, friends!

Florencia says

This play was an enjoyable read for me. It is about a once aristocratic family, now impoverished and forced to sell everything, including their beautiful cherry orchard, that seemed to be the main thing they cared about, the reason of their pride. Even though they were about to lose everything they owned, they were in some sort of denial because they didn't (or couldn't) do anything to solve that situation. And while this family was in decline, a new kind of rich people arose: the once serfs were making their own money and gaining their place in society. "New money", like Rose DeWitt's stuck-up mother would say. Rich people in decline trying to save their social position can be really unpleasant. They are willing to do anything to maintain their status. However, this family just stayed there, doing nothing... Some friends gave them possible solutions for their problem, and they did nothing.

The characters are likable, each one in their own way. The main one is Lyubov, a widowed landowner that also lost a son. She's a mixture of different kind of emotions and apparently unwilling to let go the past (something I can relate to, very much). Her brother, Leonid, adds a comedy element that I always enjoy. This play can be funny, witty and also heartbreaking. It has several things to consider that makes it an interesting book to read.

Nov 25, 13

* Also on my blog.

Kelly says

This play is one of the most desperately sad things I have ever seen. It is a portrait of a family struggling in a period where old and new Russia are scraping up against each other in a way that is physically painful to watch. I saw a performance of this while on study abroad at Oxford, and I went to a bookstore after the performance so I could read this over and over again to myself. These characters express so much and just accomplish so desperately little at the end of the day. Some of these people would be silly if they weren't so sad. I didn't even have the heart to get frustrated with the characters, all I could do was just watch, wistfully. Which I think is a part of the mood that Chekhov seems to want to induce, at the least. A stillness that comes over the audience as much as the characters.

Issa Deerbany says

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Jason says

It's true what they say. Chekhov's got guns!

This is a great play about the decline of the Russian aristocracy, its implications for the working class rising to fill the vacancies left by those cash-stricken families, and the complications propagated by these changes, namely the social inadequacies of those who get sucked into this newfound vacuum.

I read *Three Sisters* recently and while I did like the play, it did not shake my maracas as much as I had hoped it would. There are intertwining themes between the two plays (and perhaps among Chekhov's plays in general), such as the emphasis placed on working—as both a route to happiness as well as a practical method by which to quantify one's worth—but I think overall *The Cherry Orchard* has more going on, and has characters that are (to me) more interesting.

Take Lubov Andreyevna, for example. Lubov is the matriarch of the high-society family which is about to lose its beloved cherry orchard (along with the rest of the estate, too, but they all seem to be concerned only with the pretty trees) on account of a cash flow shortage that prevents them from paying their mortgage. These solvency problems are reflected in the predicaments of other landowners in the play, as well, like those of Simeonov-Pischin, who is constantly seeking a loan. Lubov has difficulty facing the gravity of the situation, having lived all her life in general ease and comfort, not having to work, and assumes things will naturally work themselves out in her favor. (They do not, by the way.) And yes there are tears and sadness but the tears are reigned in quickly, and Lubov demonstrates some surprising resolve at her capacity to adapt.

There are also other characters I liked. Lopahkin is the former peasant who represents the “new money” in turn-of-the-century Russia, though he does not always know the best way to handle his fun status bump. Fiers, a servant of the older generation, is at a complete loss to absorb the changes occurring around him while Yasha, his young counterpart, is almost embarrassing in his insolence, clearly not knowing his place (Fiers's view) or perhaps percipient in recognizing what is happening and putting his native chameleonic qualities to good use.

In the end, I empathized with most of the characters in this play, feeling the acute twinges of pain in seeing

the symbolic orchard meet its inevitable fate, but it is a pain swiftly assuaged. These characters reconcile themselves to their respective futures, and do so stoically, choosing to view the loss of the orchard not as an end per se, but as merely a different bud from which their new lives will thenceforth germinate.

Nazanin says

[illegible]

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[illegible]

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FeReSHte says

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Beata says

Chekhov masterfully presents the social and economic changes which affected Russian landed gentry after the abolition of serfdom in the 1860s.

Kenny says

"Life has gone by as if I never lived"

Firs (ACT IV)

Anton Chekhov, **THE CHERRY ORCHARD**

I've read **THE CHERRY ORCHARD** many times, but for the first time I understood that it was written by a man who knew he was dying. The dying Chekhov realized he was part of a dying breed in a dying country. Although he had no idea what lie ahead, he knew change was coming to Mother Russia.

What matters in Chekhov's last play, and in Trevor Griffiths translation, is way that chance affects our lives; the unpredictability of our lives. In **The Cherry Orchard** such seeming insignificances dramatically occur as: an inopportune remark about the weather; an errant stick with which Varya bashes Lopakhin on the head; many social blunders and the comedy/tragedy of humankind summons large on Chekhov's canvass. Additionally, we discover grief over the death of a child and deep concerns over the fate of a family estate with its famous, obsolete cherry orchard as well as varying objectives and ideologies over the need for money to exist. Chekhov called his play a 'theatre of mood with submerged life in the text'. **The Cherry Orchard** may have more meaning today than it has since it was first premiered.

The destruction of the cherry orchard has less to do with the unhappy removal of something once cherished, than the fact that it remaining is blocking progress on many levels. Even Madame Ranevskaya lives entirely in the past and holds onto nothing in the present. The play is also about the decline of one era and the unknown onset of another. Much like the world we live in today.

Brina says

I have chosen to begin my 2018 reading year with a number of shorter yet significant reads. I noticed that my 2017 began in a similar matter so I am noticing that I use January to ease into my reading for the year. A square on classics bingo is to read a classic play so I selected Anton Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard*, a play

in four acts which wrote within a year of his death. In this timeless and still often performed drama, Chekhov details the dichotomy between Russian social classes on the dawn of the revolutionary era as he poignantly creates classic archetypes.

Already a premier playwright with the success of *The Three Sisters* and *The Seagull*, Chekhov was asked to write a comedic play to be performed during Moscow's 1903 theater season. My version of the play contains excerpts of letters written by Chekhov to both his wife and the play's future director and producer. In this correspondence, he writes of the illness that would take his life within a year and also of his struggles to produce a comedy. He wrote certain characters with specific actors and actresses in mind and aimed for a three act play that ended up being four. In the end, *The Cherry Orchard*, his work about the potential sale of a summer estate, resulted as a drama, rather than the comedy that his producers had aimed for. This moving piece may have had a few comedic moments, but the play was hardly a light hearted story.

Madame Ranevskaya has returned to Russia from Paris with her daughter Anya upon learning from her brother Leonid Gaev that their family estate needs to be sold as the family fortune has been used up and they have no rubles left to live on. The estate holds both positive and sad memories for Ranevskaya as both her husband and son passed away there, yet, the cherry orchard on its property holds a place near and dear to her heart. Ranevskaya would rather not sell her estate as it has been in the family for generations and both her family and the serfs who have lived on it known no other existence. Yet, Ranevskaya lives a rich woman's life either in Russia or abroad and her lifestyle can not maintain the upkeep of her family's home for the long term. She desires to marry off her daughters Anya and Varya even though neither has expressed an interest in doing so, in hopes that their marriages will decrease her expenditures, allowing her to keep her estate.

Although Chekhov has created love interests for both Anya and Varya, their futures are left to the reader's imaginations. Perhaps, in a more modern retelling of the play, the girls' futures are decided, but in Chekhov's original, that aspect of the play is left hanging. Meanwhile, a local merchant named Yermolai Alexeyevich Lopahin, a former servant whose family has worked for the Ranevskaya family for generations, desires to buy the estate for himself to keep it within the family. His dream is to create a number of summer homes on the property in order to generate funds for the Ranevskayas so that they do not have to sell their heirloom to outsiders. Yet, Lopahin's plan comes with one caveat: to chop down the cherry orchard which will always hold special memories for Madame Ranevskaya. This tension between the serfs and upper classes, epitomized in this sale of the estate, lasts the duration of the play and plays out as the tragedy that Chekhov desired. As a result, I found the play to be heartfelt, which would not have had this effect if Chekhov had indeed penned the comedy that his producer had originally demanded.

With a week gone by in 2018 and many quality shorter reads behind me, I am ready to move full steam into my reading year. As I am a mood reader, I still do not know where this year will take me, but I have many potential memorable reads lined up. Moving through the board for classics bingo is a good start, and *The Cherry Orchard* has been a memorable play to read indeed. I hope to revisit Chekhov's other plays in the future as they have been well received and performed countless times over the last century.

4 stars

Piyangie says

The Cherry Orchard is a story that portrays the end of an era of landed gentry in Russia. With the fall of the

Lyn says

Checkov's Cherry Orchard delves into themes and ideas of cultural futility amidst political and cultural change.

First produced in 1904, Checkov is documenting the in-between time, between the dying aristocracy of the past and the post-industrial age of the future, and though he is not quite an apologist for the old times, he is inclined to lament the way things are going. Yet the change is inevitable as beautifully symbolized by the portrait crashing own on the man.

A brilliant study of the contrast between old and new Russia.

Duane says

Chekhov described The Cherry Orchard as a comedy, but as a reader it's hard to view it in any way other than a tragedy. It's another work of literature that depicts the declining Russian aristocracy which would end 13 years later with the Russian Revolution, and made permanent in 1918 with the murder of the Royal Family.

The play opened in theater to great success in Jan. 1904, but Chekhov would die 6 months later at the age of 44, cutting short a life and career that would leave us with some of the best plays and short stories ever written.

Nayra.Hassan says

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Mohammed-Makram says

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Ahmad Sharabiani says

????????? ??? = Vishnevyyi sad = The Cherry Orchard, Anton Chekhov

The play concerns an aristocratic Russian landowner who returns to her family estate (which includes a large and well-known cherry orchard) just before it is auctioned to pay the mortgage. Unresponsive to offers to save the estate, she allows its sale to the son of a former serf; the family leaves to the sound of the cherry orchard being cut down. The story presents themes of cultural futility – both the futile attempts of the aristocracy to maintain its status and of the bourgeoisie to find meaning in its newfound materialism.[citation needed] It dramatises the socio-economic forces in Russia at the turn of the 20th century, including the rise of the middle class after the abolition of serfdom in the mid-19th century and the decline of the power of the aristocracy.

Characters: Anya Andreyevna Ranevskaya, Varia, fiica adoptiva a Ranevskaei, Gaev Leonid Andreevici, fratele Ranevskaei, Lopahin Iermolai Alexeevici, negustor, Trofimov Piotr Sergheevici, student, Simeonov-Piscik Boris Borisovici, mosier, Charlotta Ivanovna, guvernanta, Epihodov Simion Panteleevici, contabil, Duniasa, fata in casa, Firs, lacheu, Iasa, tinar lacheu, Lyubov Andreyevna Ranevskaya

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