



The Plays of Anton Chekhov

By Anton Chekhov, Paul Schmidt

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These critically hailed translations of *The Seagull*, *Uncle Vanya*, *The Three Sisters* and the other Chekhov plays are the only ones in English by a Russian-language scholar who is also a veteran Chekhovian actor.

Without compromising the spirit of the text, Paul Schmidt accurately translates Chekhov's entire theatrical canon, rescuing the humor "lost" in most academic translations while respecting the historical context and original social climate.

Schmidt's translations of Chekhov have been successfully staged all over the U.S. by such theatrical directors as Lee Strasberg, Elizabeth Swados, Peter Sellars and Robert Wilson. Critics have hailed these translations as making Chekhov fully accessible to American audiences. They are also accurate -- Schmidt has been described as "the gold standard in Russian-English translation" by Michael Holquist of the Russian department at Yale University.

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The Plays of Anton Chekhov By Anton Chekhov, Paul Schmidt Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Library Journal

Chekhov left a legacy of four major dramas as well as hundreds of short comic sketches and stories. Strongly influenced by the Symbolist movement, Chekhov drew upon his personal experiences in depicting the lives of the Russian landed gentry. The period 1996-2004 marks the centennial of the premieres of his best-known plays and brings a renewed appreciation of his place in modern drama. The translations of *The Three Sisters*, *The Seagull*, *Uncle Vanya*, and *The Cherry Orchard* by Rocamora (theater, Tisch Sch. of the Arts, NYU) remain faithful to the period flavor of the original while being fresh and fluid for modern American actors and audiences. Rocamora also provides a lengthy biographical sketch of Chekhov, which is useful for an understanding of his works. A respected translator, dramaturge, actor, and playwright, Schmidt intends to re-create in American English vernacular the vitality and humor of Chekhov. In this, he succeeds admirably, particularly in some of the short comedies, such as *The Proposal*. Schmidt's translations seem the more contemporary of the two work under review, and he makes use of many common vulgarisms in the comedies—presumably bringing them closer to what Chekhov's audiences were familiar with. Both titles offer fine contemporary translations that are a pleasure to read. If your collection can support only one "complete Chekhov," go with Schmidt; otherwise, these two titles complement each other and can be recommended for all modern drama collections. —Howard E. Miller, St. Louis
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Review

"Both an actor and a Russian scholar, Schmidt sets out to give us a Chekhov who makes sense...The result is a surprisingly lively Chekhov, colloquial and clear, which will come as a revelation to those who know the playwright through the widely read but rather stiff British translations....Schmidt's Chekhov should be the first choice for any American reader."-- "Atlantic Monthly"

Language Notes

Text: English (translation)

Original Language: Russian

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Keisha Kent:

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