

Brian Friel
**COLLECTED
PLAYS**

Volume Five

Edited by Peter Fallon



FABER & FABER



Gallery Books

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**UNCLE
VANYA**

*A version of the play
by Anton Chekhov*

Characters

ALEXANDER SERABRYAKOV, retired professor
ELENA, his wife, aged 27
SONYA, daughter by his first wife, Vera Petrovna
MARIA VOYNITSKY, widow of a Privy Councillor and mother
of the Professor's first wife
VANYA (IVAN) VOYNITSKY, her son, aged 47
MIKHAIL ASTROV, a doctor, aged 37
ILYA TELEGIN, an impoverished landowner
MARINA, on old nurse/nanny
YEFIM, watchman/retainer
LABOURER, on Serebryakov estate

The action takes place on the Serebryakov estate.

Uncle Vanya was first produced at the Gate Theatre, as part of the Dublin Theatre Festival, on 6 October 1998, with the following cast:

ALEXANDER SEREBRYAKOV	T P McKenna
ELENA	Susannah Harker
SONYA	Donna Dent
MARIA VOYNITSKY	Ann Rowan
VANYA (IVAN) VOYNITSKY	Niall Buggy
MIKHAIL ASTROV	John Kavanagh
ILYA TELEGIN	Eamon Morrissey
MARINA	Daphne Carroll
YEFIM / LABOURER	Ciaran Reilly

<i>Directed by</i>	Ben Barnes
<i>Set Designed by</i>	David Gaucher
<i>Costumes by</i>	Jacqueline Kobler
<i>Lighting by</i>	Rupert Murray
<i>Assistant to Director</i>	Thomas Conway

Úna Ní Dhubhghaill provided the literal translation on which this version of *Uncle Vanya* was based.

THE YALTA GAME

*based on a theme in
'The Lady with the Lapdog'
by Anton Chekhov*

Characters

DMITRY DMITRICH GUROV, 39

ANNA SERGEYEVNA, 22

The Yalta Game was first produced at the Gate Theatre, Dublin, on 2 October 2001, with the following cast:

DMITRY DMITRICH GUROV

ANNA SERGEYEVNA

Ciarán Hinds

Kelly Reilly

Directed by

Set Design by

Costumes by

Lighting by

Composer

Sound by

Karel Reisz

Eileen Diss

Dany Everett

Mick Hughes

Conor Linehan

John Leonard

Úna Ní Dhubhghaill provided the literal translation of 'The Lady with the Lapdog' on which *The Yalta Game* was based.

THE BEAR

*a vaudeville
after Anton Chekhov*

Author's Note

Anton Chekhov was twenty-eight when he wrote *The Bear*. It is a young man's play, simultaneously pushy and tentative, fastidious and crude, technically derivative but already sending out early signals of that distinctive Chekhovian voice. It was a *very popular play*. It provided him with an income for so many years that he referred to it deprecatingly, defensively, as *The Milch-Cow*.

When the play was first produced in 1888 he shied away from classifying it publicly, a puzzling reticence he practised all his life. (Not one of his plays is called a tragedy. He referred coyly to *The Seagull* and *The Cherry Orchard* as 'comedies'. He described *Three Sisters* as 'a drama in four acts'.) Privately he called *The Bear* 'a joke', 'a mangy little vaudeville', 'all tra-la-la', 'a piffling little Frenchified vaudeville'. He wrote to his poet friend Yakov Polonsky, 'Just to while away the time I wrote a trivial little vaudeville in the French manner.' He was always skilled in the technique of deflecting scrutiny.

But the word 'vaudeville' persists. It is a theatrical category that no longer exists. But in the late nineteenth century those *pièces en vaudeville* were hugely popular. When their energy began to dim they found a second wind on the variety stage. There they were called sketches. And perhaps that is how we should look at *The Bear*, as a vaudeville/sketch. Its ambition is to hold our attention briefly, to entertain us, and to make us laugh at people whose over-the-top behaviour barely disguises their terrors and confused hopes. But *The Bear* engages for another important reason: it is an early trial piece by the man who reshaped twentieth-century theatre.

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Characters

ELENA IVANOVA POPOVA, a young and attractive widow

LUKA, Elena's frail and ancient manservant

GREGORY STEPANOVITCH SMIRNOV, mid-forties; very physical and very energetic; landowner and ex-soldier

Time and Place

The action takes place in the drawing room of Elena Popova's comfortable country house. A very hot afternoon in the summer of 1890.

The Bear (after Chekhov) was first produced, with *Afterplay*, at the Gate Theatre, Dublin, on 5 March 2002, with the following cast:

ELENA IVANOVA POPOVA

LUKA

GREGORY STEPANOVITCH SMIRNOV

Flora Montgomery

Eamon Morrissey

Stephen Brennan

Directed by

Designed by

Lighting by

Robin Lefèvre

Liz Ascroft

Mick Hughes

Úna Ní Dhubhghaill provided the literal translation on which this version of *The Bear* was based.

AFTERPLAY

Author's Note

I called this piece *Afterplay* because it revisits the lives of two people, Andrey Prozorov and Sonya Serebriakova, who had a previous existence in two separate plays. Both plays were written by the same author one hundred years ago.

These two people came from very different fictional backgrounds and we meet them again now approximately twenty years after their previous fictional lives ended. Sonya was then in her twenties and Andrey in his early thirties. Now re-animated and re-imagined they are middle-aged. They cannot escape their origins, of course; those experiences that their creator furnished them with are still determining experiences. Part of Andrey is still an only boy, confused, motherless, reared in a remote provincial town by a domineering father and three restless sisters. Sonya is still wrestling with a difficult estate and is still as deeply and as hopelessly in love with the local doctor as she was all those years ago. But they have had new experiences in the twenty year interval. And what interested me was what those experiences might be and how they might blend into and adjust those early defining lives.

Had I created these two characters in the first place I would feel free now to reshape them as I wished. But they are not mine alone. I am something less than a parent but I know I am something more than a foster parent. Maybe closer to a godparent who takes his responsibilities scrupulously. So when I consider the complex life Anton Chekhov breathed into Sonya and Andrey one hundred years ago I believe that that life can be carried forward into this extended existence provided the two stay true to where and what they came from. That means that the godfather has to stay alert at all times to the intention of their first begetter.

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Characters

SONYA SEREBRIAKOVA

ANDREY PROZOROV

Afterplay was first produced, with *The Bear* (after Chekhov), at the Gate Theatre, Dublin, on 5 March 2002, with the following cast:

ANDREY

SONYA

John Hurt

Penelope Wilton

Directed by

Designed by

Lighting by

Robin Lefèvre

Liz Ascroft

Mick Hughes

PERFORMANCES

Music

Pre-curtain: 'I'll Wait for You'. Piano.

'You Promised to Marry Me'. Piano. Played twice.

'On that Clear Field of Hurasky'. Piano.

'A Stream is Running'. Piano.

'On that Javorina Plain'. Piano.

Dvořák's *String Quartet in F-major*, Op.96 — finale — bars 38-84.

Janáček's *Second String Quartet* — first movement — first 9 bars.

Janáček's *Second String Quartet* — third movement — bars 29-50.

(The 'lullaby' sequence)

'I'll Wait for You'. Piano.

Janáček's *Second String Quartet* — second movement — bars 1-11.

Janáček's *Second String Quartet* — second movement — the flautato ('nightingale') sextuplets.

Janáček's *Second String Quartet* — first two movements in full — offstage (approximately 12½ minutes). Final two movements in full — onstage (approximately 13½ minutes).

Characters

LEOŠ JANÁČEK, composer
ANEZKA UNGROVA, graduate student

Musicians

RUTH, first violin
JUDITH, second violin
MIRIAM, viola
JOHN, cello

Time and Place

The present. Janáček's work room in Brno, capital of Moravia.

Performances was first produced at the Gate Theatre, Dublin, on 30 September 2003, with the following cast:

LEOŠ JANÁČEK	Ion Caramitru
ANEZKA UNGROVA	Niamh Linehan

RUTH	Nicola Sweeney
JUDITH	Jana Ludvíčková
MIRIAM	Fay Sweet
JOHN	Tony Woollard

<i>Directed by</i>	Patrick Mason
<i>Designed by</i>	Joe Vaněk
<i>Lighting by</i>	Paul Keogan

Nicola Sweeney, Jana Ludvíčková, Fay Sweet and Tony Woollard make up the Alba String Quartet whose performance of *Intimate Letters* is woven through the play.

**THE
HOME
PLACE**

Characters

MARGARET O'DONNELL
CON DOHERTY
SALLY CAVANAGH
JOHNNY MACLOONE
CHRISTOPHER GORE
DAVID GORE
DR RICHARD GORE
PERKINS
CLEMENT O'DONNELL
MARY SWEENEY
TOMMY BOYLE
MAISIE MCLAUGHLIN

Set

Most of the action takes place on the unkempt lawn in front of The Lodge, the home of Christopher Gore and his son, David. The only house-interior we see is the breakfast room at right angles to the stage right. The French windows in this room open on to the lawn.

The house is approached by an (unseen) avenue off right. A crescent of trees encloses the entire house and lawn; it seems to press in on them. This meniscus is most dense down stage left. (Left and right from the point of view of the audience.)

Time and Place

Summer, 1878. Ballybeg, County Donegal, Ireland.

The Home Place was first produced at the Gate Theatre, Dublin, on 1 February 2005, with the following cast:

CHRISTOPHER GORE	Tom Courtenay
MARGARET O'DONNELL	Derbhle Crotty
DR RICHARD GORE	Nick Dunning
CON DOHERTY	Adam Fergus
JOHNNY MACLOONE	Michael Judd
PERKINS	Pat Kinevane
MARY SWEENEY	Brenda Larby
SALLY CAVANAGH	Laura Jane Laughlin
CLEMENT O'DONNELL	Barry McGovern
DAVID GORE	Hugh O'Connor
TOMMY BOYLE	Bill Ó Cléirigh/Kenneth McDonnell
MAISIE MCLAUGHLIN	Leanna Duke/Ciara Lyons

Directed by

Set/Costume Design by

Lighting by

Adrian Noble

Peter McKintosh

Paul Pyant

HEDDA GABLER

*A version of the play
by Henrik Ibsen*

Characters

HEDDA GABLER (29), daughter of General Gabler and wife of George Tesman

GEORGE TESMAN (33), research graduate in cultural history

JULIANA TESMAN (65), George's aunt

BERTHA (60), Juliana's maid

EILERT LOEVborg (33), writer and sociologist

THEA ELVSTED (26), wife of a resident magistrate

JUDGE BRACK (45)

Time and Place

The Tesman house in a fashionable part of the city.

The year 1890.

Act One — early morning in September.

Act Two — that afternoon.

Act Three — dawn, the following day.

Act Four — that evening.

Set

A large drawing room decorated in dark colours and carefully furnished — a round table, chairs, an armchair, a footstool, a porcelain stove, an upright piano.

In the left hand wall (left and right from the point of view of the audience) a door leads to the hall. In the right hand wall a French window with the curtains pulled back. Through this window we see part of a verandah and autumn trees.

In the back wall of the drawing room a wide doorway with its curtains pulled back. Through it we see a smaller room with decor and furnishings similar to the drawing room — round table, sofa, chairs, terracotta ornaments. Clearly visible on a wall in this smaller room is a large portrait of an elderly General Gabler, Hedda's father, resplendent and formidable in full military uniform.

There are several bunches of fresh flowers on the drawing-room table, on top of the piano and in vases around both rooms.

Hedda Gabler was first produced at the Gate Theatre, Dublin, as part of the Dublin Theatre Festival, on 30 September 2008, with the following cast:

HEDDA GABLER
GEORGE TESMAN
JULIANA TESMAN
BERTHA
EILERT LOEVBOG
THEA ELVSTED
JUDGE BRACK

Justine Mitchell
Peter Hanly
Susan Fitzgerald
Billie Traynor
John Light
Andrea Irvine
Andrew Woodall

Directed by
Designed by
Lighting by
Music by

Anna Mackmin
Lez Brotherston
Oliver Fenwick
Denis Clohessy