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The Seagull

Anton Chekhov

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Anton Chekhov : The Seagull before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Seagull:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Struggling for artistic recognitionBy John P. Jones IIIBinging on Chekhov. Cdric Gras excellent L'hiver aux trouses (Essais - Documents) (French Edition) concerning his travels in the Russian Far East has proven to be the impetus to read more of Chekhovs plays, before I tackle his substantial account of his own Far Eastern travels, Sakhalin Island (Alma Classics) . I just read and reviewed Uncle Vanya.

Chekhov's life was relatively short, dying from tuberculosis at the age of 44. His essential plays were written in the last decade of his life. *The Seagull* was first produced in 1896. Artists, their aspirations, tribulations, insecurities, and given the human condition, conflicts, as they search and attempt to convey, the deeper meaning of life. That is the central theme in *The Seagull*. There is a play within a play. As was common before the digital age, in the rural areas of Europe, in the 19th century, writing and producing plays was a common pastime, on the estates where the peasants produced enough surplus value to permit the landowners a bit of surplus time. I often think of the theater that was built into the rather modest chateau of George Sand, with sitting capacity for 20, at most. Constantine Trepleff is 25 years old; he is insecure with his life's accomplishments. He barely got through college, and must grow up in the shadow of his now deceased father, a famous actor. He has written a new play. It is to be produced outside, yet the attendees are probably only 10 or so. A stage has been built for the occasion, with a curtain that will be pulled, to reveal the rising moon on the other side of the lake. Chekhov provides enough of the dialogue to reveal that it is rather execrable, with all life having vanished from the earth, yet everything is in one grand cosmic union. Irina Arkadina is Constantine's mother. Speaking of insecurities, she pretends to be 32 years old when he is not around; in actuality, she may only be 42. She was also an actress. The play is produced on the estate of her brother, Peter Sorin, who is in his 60s. The principal actress in this play within the play is Nina Zarietchnaya, who is the sometimes chaperoned daughter of a rich landowner, who decries the Bohemian atmosphere at the Sorin's estate. Chekhov provides a representative of other stock character-types in rural 19th Century Russia: There is an impoverished school teacher, Simon Medvedenko; Chekhov himself was a country doctor, so he includes one Eugene Dorn, who is in his 50s; Shamraeff and his wife are the managers of the estate, extracting that surplus value, and they have a daughter, Masha. Boris Trigorin is an accomplished writer, yet another person that makes Constantine insecure. Enough characters to attend an outdoor play, and for Chekhov to stir the pot with, in terms of their relationships. Coleridge's poem resonates across the Russian steppe, almost a century after its publication. Don't kill albatrosses, and don't kill seagulls; such actions are indeed bad omens. Chekhov remains the quintessential observer and chronicler of 19th century rural Russian life. It is a good play, yet I find those artist squabbles can veer towards the tedious. Overall, 4-stars.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Dark Comedy, great translation. Not for everyone. By Shelleyd73 As some people have said, this is not for you if you are looking for a bit of "light reading". However, it is very well written, and this is a wonderful translation. It is certainly something that will stay with you for a few days after you are finished. Personally, I found it a bit hard to get into at first, but after a couple of pages, I was hooked through to the very end. "In all the universe nothing remains permanent and unchanged but the spirit." It is a story of life. The characters are not heroic, they are simply people who are muddling their way through life, dealing with disappointments, seeking approval, and above all, wanting to be loved. It contains tragedy, for sure, but also contains comedy. It isn't the "in your face" obvious comedy that we have grown so accustomed to, but it is still bright and refreshing. If you enjoy Russian literature, this is certainly one to add to your list. If you don't, or if you don't have much experience with it, and are looking to expand your reading horizons, this might be a good one to start with. The translation is wonderful and makes for an enjoyable introduction for the uninitiated. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Classic Chekhov By Margaret A. Gates Honestly, I'm not that much into Russian drama but read this for an European Drama class. It would help to understand Russians at the time period this play was written. The characters were self-absorbed. Lots of angst in this play. It was fairly interesting to me but again it's Russian.

David French's brilliant translation of *The Seagull*, in collaboration with Russian scholar, Donna Orwin, is at one and the same time a revitalization of a Russian theatre classic, and French's personal tribute to one of the greatest playwrights of all time. Cast of 5 women and 8 men.

Attractively printed with brightly colored covers..... Whatever is currently on your library's shelves, these adaptations would be an exciting addition. (Kliatt) Language Notes Text: English, Russian (translation) From the Inside Flap Anton Chekhov's *The Seagull* is considered one of his most haunting and atmospheric character studies. A would-be playwright is at war with his egoistic mother while the town has become intoxicated by a sensational author. And as the alluring newcomer steals away Kosta's only love, their new romance could have devastating consequences. An L.A. Theatre Works full-cast performance featuring: Calista Flockhart as Irina Nikolayevna Arkadina T.R. Knight as Konstantin Treplev Stephen Collins as Yevgeny Dorn Gordon Clapp as Ilya Shamrayev Logan Fahey as Semyon Medvedenko Cindy Katz as Polina Andreyevna Dakin Matthews as Pyotr Sorin Bess Rous as Masha Josh Stamberg as Boris Alexeyevich Trigorin Kira Sternbach as Nina Directed by Rosalind Ayres. Translated by Christopher Hampton. Recorded by L.A. Theatre Works before a live audience at the James Bridges Theater, UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television in September 2012.