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**MEDIA PAGE:** [**www.northcoastrep.org/press**](http://www.northcoastrep.org/press)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

***THE CHERRY ORCHARD* AT NORTH COAST REPERTORY THEATRE**

**CAPTURES DELIGHT AND WISTFULNESS**

**OF TIMELESS COMIC MASTERPIECE**

**By Anton Chekhov, in a version by Jean-Claude van Itallie**

**Performances Beginning Wednesday, March 8, 2023**

**Running Through Sunday, April 2, 2023**

**Directed by David Ellenstein**

Solana Beach, CA – Anton Chekhov’s beloved masterwork is a rich tapestry of the human condition woven into a humorous and haunting tale. With universal themes of societal upheaval, love, loss, grief, envy, and ambition, ***THE CHERRY ORCHARD*** remains as relevant and powerful today as it was when it first premiered in 1903. Serious theatre-lovers will not want to miss this classic tale of heightened human drama.

David Ellenstein directs Richard Baird,\* Ted Barton,\* Michael Louis Cusimano,\* Amanda Evans,\* Jackson Goldberg,\* Sofia Jean Gomez,\* Katie MacNichol,\* Riley Osburn, Michael Raver,\* James Thomas Snyder, James Sutorius,\* Katie Tang,\* John Tessmer, and Bruce Turk.\* Christopher M. Williams\* is the Stage Manager; Matt Fitzgerald is the Assistant Stage Manager. The design team includes Marty Burnett (Set Design), Matthew Novotny (Lighting Design), Elisa Benzoni (Costume Design), Rachel Hengst (Props Design), and Evan Eason (Sound Design).

\*The actor or stage manager appears through the courtesy of Actors’ Equity Association. For photos, go to [www.northcoastrep.org/press](http://www.northcoastrep.org/press).

***THE CHERRY ORCHARD*** previews begin Wednesday, March 8. Opening Night on Saturday, March 11, at 8pm. It will play Wednesdays at 7pm, Thursdays through Saturdays at 8pm, Saturday and Sunday matinees at 2pm with Sundays at 7pm through March 26. There will be a talkback with the director and actors on **Friday, March 31.** A performance has just been added on **Wednesday, March 22, at 2pm**. North Coast Repertory Theatre is located at 987 Lomas Santa Fe Drive, Solana Beach, CA 92075. Tickets: Previews - $57 **(including Friday preview at 2pm)**, Weeknights/Wed. & Sat. Matinees - $63; Sat. Eve. & Sun. Mat. $68; Sun Night - $60. Seniors, Students, Military & Educators - $3 off admission. Call 858-481-1055, or visit [www.northcoastrep.org](http://www.northcoastrep.org) to purchase tickets.

**WHAT: NORTH COAST REPERTORY THEATRE presents**

 ***THE CHERRY ORCHARD***

**By Anton Chekhov, in a version by Jean-Claude van Itallie**

 **Directed by David Ellenstein**

**CAST:** Richard Baird,\* Ted Barton,\* Michael Louis Cusimano,\* Amanda Evans,\* Jackson Goldberg,\* Sofia Jean Gomez,\* Katie MacNichol,\* Riley Osburn, Michael Raver,\* James Thomas Snyder, James Sutorius,\* Katy Tang,\* John Tessmer, and Bruce Turk.\*

**WHERE:** North Coast Repertory Theatre

987 Lomas Santa Fe Drive

 Solana Beach, CA 92075

**SCHEDULE:** **Previews start March 8, 2023**

 **Opens: March 11, 2023**

 **Closes: April 2, 2023**

 **Wed. @ 7pm, Thurs-Sat @ 8PM; Sat & Sun @ 2PM, Sun @ 7pm**

 **Fri (March 10) @ 2 pm**

 **Wed (March 22) @ 2pm**

**PRICES:** Previews $57.00

 Week Nights & Sat. Matinees $63.00

 Sat. Nights & Sunday Matinees $68.00

 Sunday Nights $60.00

**DISCOUNTS:** Seniors, Students, Military & Educators $3.00 off admission. Rush tickets available for $25. Sold 15 minutes prior to showtime.

**BIOS:**

**ANTON CHEKHOV** (Playwright) (January 29,1860 – July 15, 1904) was a Russian playwright and short story writer, who is considered to be one of the greatest writers of short fiction in history. His career as a playwright produced four classics and his best short stories are held in high esteem. Chekhov practiced as a medical doctor throughout most of his literary career: “Medicine is my lawful wife,” he once said, “and literature is my mistress.” Chekhov renounced the theatre after the reception of *The Seagull* in 1896, but the play was revived to acclaim in 1898 by Konstantin Stanislavski's Moscow Art Theatre, which subsequently also produced Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya* and premiered his last two plays, *Three Sisters* and *The Cherry Orchard*. These four works present a challenge to the acting ensemble as well as to audiences, because in place of conventional action, Chekhov highlighted the depths of human nature, the hidden significance of everyday events, and the fine line between comedy and tragedy. Chekhov died of tuberculosis on July 15, 1904, in Badenweiler, Germany.

**JEAN-CLAUDE VAN ITALLIE** (Playwright) (May 25, 1936 – September 9, 2021) was a Belgian-born American [playwright](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Playwright), performer, and theatre workshop teacher. He is best known for his 1966 [anti-Vietnam War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Opposition_to_United_States_involvement_in_the_Vietnam_War) play, [*America Hurrah*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/America_Hurrah)*;* *The Serpent*, an ensemble play he wrote with [Joseph Chaikin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_Chaikin)'s [Open Theatre](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Open_Theatre); his [theatrical adaptation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theatrical_adaptation) of the [*Tibetan Book of the Dead*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tibetan_Book_of_the_Dead); and his translations of [Anton Chekhov](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anton_Chekhov)'s plays.

**DAVID ELLENSTEIN** (Director) Born into a theatrical family, David is an actor, director, producer and playwright. Before joining North Coast Rep in 2003 as Artistic Director, he served in that position for the Los Angeles Repertory Company and the Arizona Jewish Theatre Company (AJTC). He is a veteran of over 300 theatrical productions at theatres from San Diego to Maine, and from Alaska to Miami and most places in between. Davidhas won numerous theatre awards, including the San Diego Theatre Critics Circle Award for “2018 Director of the Year.” David has also appeared in dozens of film and television roles, as well as having been guest faculty for numerous universities including California State Northridge, Cal Arts, and Shakespeare workshops privately. He is the interim Artistic Director of Laguna Playhouse.

**RICHARD BAIRD\*** (Yermolay Lopakhin) is an award-winning actor, director and producer.  Productions at North Coast Rep include: *An Iliad, The Homecoming, Ben Butler, Way Downriver: William Faulkner’s 'Old Man', Holmes and Watson, Betrayal, The Dumb Waiter/The Lover, Ghosts,* and many more. At NCRT he has directed *Dancing Lessons, Amadeus, A Walk in the Woods* and *Of Mice and Men*. Richard is the Founding Artistic Director of New Fortune Theatre Company where he has directed and appeared in *Henry V* (Craig Noel San Diego Critics Circle awards for Outstanding directions and lead performance), *The Birthday Party* (McCann/director), *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* (co-director/Valmont), and most recently *As You* *Like It* (Jaques). Richard has appeared in regional theatres across the country, including The Old Globe, Santa Barbara Theatre Ensemble, San Diego Rep, Backyard Renaissance, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, Portland Centre Stage, Arizona Theatre Company. Shakespeare Santa Cruz, Kingsmen Shakespeare Company, Diversionary Theatre, Intrepid Theatre and Southwest Shakespeare Company [AriZOni Best Actor for *Cyrano* and Petruchio in *Taming of the Shrew*].

**TED BARTON\*** (Pishchik) is pleased to return to North Coast Rep, where he played The Boss in *Of Mice and Men,*Mayor Meekly in *Unnecessary Farce*, and Saunders in *Lend Me a Tenor*. He appeared Off-Broadway at 59E59 in a new play, *Separate and Equal.* He worked at Mark Taper Forum, McCoy Rigby Entertainment, Musical Theatre West, TheatreWorks, Coeurage Ensemble, Foothill Theatre Company, Sacramento Theatre Company, Ensemble Theatre Company, MainStreet Theatre Company, Actors Theatre of Phoenix, Sierra Repertory Theatre, Will Geer's Theatricum Botanicum; California, Colorado, Lake Tahoe, Kingsmen, Shakespeare Festivals; Shakespeare Sedona, Shakespeare Santa Cruz, on a national tour as Matt in *On Golden Pond*, and as an Equity Guest Artist at the University of Alabama. TV: “Our Flag MeansDeath”(HBO Max), “Good Girls” (NBC). Web series: “Ctrl Alt Delete*.”*

**MICHAEL LOUIS CUSIMANO\*** (Yasha) is happy to return to North Coast Rep and to the work of Chekhov, which he studied during a semester abroad at the Moscow Art Theatre, where *Cherry Orchard* received its world premiere! Select Credits: *Lempicka* (La Jolla Playhouse); *The Tale of Despereaux*(Old Globe); *The Last 5 Years*, *On the Twentieth Century*, *The Rocky Horror Show* (Cygnet Theatre); *Once*, *Million Dollar Quartet*, *Big Fish*, *Baskerville* (Lamb’s Players); *Metamorphoses* (Santa Barbara ETC); *Don’t Dress for Dinner* (International City Theatre); and the West Coast premieres of *Desperate Measures*(North Coast Rep), and *Homos, or Everyone in America*(Diversionary). Michael received a Craig Noel Award for “Actor of the Year” for his body of work in 2019. Education: B.F.A. from Carnegie Mellon. IG @koozimano.

**AMANDA EVANS\*** (Varya) is a NYC based actress who started her career as a dancer working with Ben Vereen and Ruthie Henshall on the International tour of *Fosse* and was a Radio City Rockette. She recently performed regionally in *Machinal* (Young Woman) and *Cabaret* (Sally Bowles). Other stage credits include a European Tour of *The Who’s Tommy*, The World Premiere of *Bunnies,* *The Woolgatherer*, *Savage in Limbo* and *Whose Life Is It Anyway*? She has appeared in several dozen independent films and recently starred in the feature film, “Finster,” a psychological thriller which is currently in the distribution phase. She is thrilled and so grateful to be making her debut at North Coast Rep in this great classic.

**JACKSON GOLDBERG\*** (Yepikhodov) is thrilled to make his North Coast Rep debut! He recently starred as Player #2 in Donald Marguiles’ *Shipwrecked* at the Wellfleet Harbor Actor’s Theater, playing 25+ characters. Regional credits include: Liam in *Bad Jews* (American Stage Co. Nomination for Outstanding Lead Actor in a Drama); Doug in *Gruesome Playground Injuries* (4615 Theatre, DC); Inspector Moore in *Post Office* (George St. Playhouse); *Taming Of The Shrew* (IFT); AEA National Tour credits include: 17 characters, speaking in Arabic, Hebrew, and English in *There Is A Field*. Jackson is a founding member of Storyhand Productions. He stars in music videos from legends Sammy Hagar and Joe Satriani. Jackson has a B.A. in Arabic and is from San Francisco, CA. “Dedicated to Judy and Del Himelstein.” <https://jacksongoldberg.squarespace.com/>

**SOFIA JEAN GOMEZ\*** (Charlotta Ivanovna) She/her/hers/Ella

NY credits: *Angels in America: Parts I and II,* Signature Theatre Company, “*Call and Response*” created and directed by Patricia McGregor at the Public Theatre*,* Page 73*,* New World Stages, Manhattan Theatre Club, New Georges, and Lake Lucille Chekhov Project. Regional:Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Shakespeare Theatre Company, The Old Globe, Yale Repertory, Berkeley Repertory, San Diego Repertory, Goodman Theatre, Denver Center Theatre, Baltimore Center Stage, McCarter Theatre Center, Arizona Theatre Company, and The Shakespeare Theatre of NJ. American Theatre Magazine named her as one of the "Actors Playwrights Love." Yale School of Drama, MFA. ICOC Certified Intimacy Captain. Social Media Consultant and Content Creator, Educator, Director, and fierce dog mom.

**KATIE MACNICHOL\*** (Lyubov Ranevskaya) has appeared at North Coast Rep in *Into the Breeches, Same Time Next Year,*and *At This Evening’s Performance.* Broadway: *The Green Bird, Two Shakespearean Actors.* Off Broadway: *The Cider House Rules, King John, The Food Chain.* London: *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside* at Shakespeare’s Globe*.* She has appeared in numerous productions as a member of The Old Globe’s Shakespeare repertory company including *As You Like It, The Winter’s Tale, Twelfth Night, Merry Wives of Windsor* and more. Regional: *Fallen Angels* at Pasadena and Laguna Playhouse, *Good People* at La Mirada and leading roles at Mark Taper Forum, Yale Rep, Williamstown, McCarter, Denver Center, Dallas Theatre Center, Shakespeare Santa Cruz, Shakespeare Theatre of N.J., Baltimore Center Stage, Portland Stage and more. BFA: NYU. MFA: Lesley University.

**RILEY OSBURN** (Anya) is excited and grateful to join this company in telling the beautiful story of *The Cherry Orchard*. Her previous roles include Cecily Cardew in *The Importance of Being Ernest*, Helena in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, and Fiona in *Shrek the Musical*. She attends University of California, Irvine, as a fourth year psychology major, while simultaneously studying Meisner Technique with Lisa Berger. Thank you to the company of *The Cherry Orchard* for a joyous experience. Special thanks to her family, teachers, and close friends for encouraging her. Love you Mom and Dad!

**MICHAEL RAVER\*** (Trofimov) as an actor, Michael Raver has performed at Lincoln Center, The Pearl Theatre Company, National Actor’s Theatre, regional theaters across the country and in film and television. As a playwright, his work has been presented by The Pearl Theatre Company, Sonnet Repertory Theater, Orlando Shakespeare Theatre, The Martha Graham Company, The Bridge Street Theater, Playhouse on Park and many others. He served as a judge for the Ferro-Grumley Award for LGBT Fiction for three years and has contributed pieces for Hamptons Magazine, Classical TV, Ms. Mojo, NYC/Hamptons Monthly, Playbill, Dance Magazine, Cool Hunting, Imagista and Huff Post, among others. He is from New York.

**JAMES THOMAS SNYDER** (Attendant/Crew) is an actor, writer, and director. Growing up in Uruguay, James discovered the theatre as a way to bridge culture through language, and was thrilled to discover the North Coast Repertory Theatre when he moved back to the United States and settled in San Diego. Having worked on previous productions *The Remarkable Mister Holmes, Into The Breeches,* and *Two Pianos, Four Hands*, he is now delighted to be a part of this production of *The Cherry Orchard*. When not on stage, James enjoys making films - such as his international award-winning short, *Customer Service,* which he wrote, directed and starred in. Through whatever medium it may be, he is a storyteller first and foremost.

**JAMES SUTORIUS\*** (Firs) a frequent guest artist at North Coast Rep. His performances include *The Father, (*Best Actor, San Diego Theatre Critics Circle)*,* The Sunshine Boys, and *Trying.* Broadway: *The Farnsworth Invention, Conversations With My Father, The Changing Room*, and *Hamlet.* The Old Globe: *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* (Best Actor Award), *Lincolnesque* (Best Featured Actor Award), *The Price*, and *Savannah Disposition*. La Jolla Playhouse: *Glengarry Glen Ross* (Nominated Best Featured Actor). Other Plays: *Hamlet, Macbeth, As You Like It, Antony and Cleopatra, Merchant of Venice, Henry IV, A Man for All Seasons, A Delicate Balance, Uncle Vanya, The Seagull,* and *The Crucible*. On May 1st and 2nd, he will appear on the North Coast Rep stage in *My Life With Will: An Evening With Will Shakesp*eare *and James Sutorius,* a breezy and nostalgic trip down memory lane.

**KATY TANG\*** (Dunyasha) recently appeared at North Coast Rep in *The Remarkable Mister Holmes*and is thrilled to be back!  Regional credits: *Sweeney Todd, She Loves Me* (South Coast Repertory), *A Christmas Carol* (Denver Center), *Marry Me A Little* (International City Theatre), *Candide* (San Bernardino Symphony), *A Little Night Music*(EastWest Players), *Spring Awakening* (Cygnet Theatre),*The Mikado, Turn of the Screw*(Pacific Opera Project), Independent Shakespeare Company, Laguna Playhouse, Arrow Rock Lyceum, Sacred Fools, Fullerton Civic Light Opera, and LA Opera Outreach. International credits: Susanna in *Le Nozze di Figaro* (Mediterranean Opera Festival, Italy), Sophie in *Werther*, Amour in *Orphée et Eurydice* (La Péniche Opera, France). Tang trained at UCLA & the Ecole Normale de Musique, Paris. She was runner-up Miss CA 2013 and is a two-time Junior Olympian ice-skater.

**JOHN TESSMER** (Vagrant/Station Master/crew) this is John's 20th production with North Coast Rep; shows include *Romeo & Juliet* (twice), *A Christmas Carol* (thrice!), *The* *Tempest*, *Henry IV Part I*, *Twelfth Night*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, *The Tin Soldier*, *Diary of Anne Frank*, *The Miracle Worker*, *The Giver*, *Charlotte's Web*, *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes & the Great Nome Gold Rush*, and *The Sunshine Boys*. John has degrees from Yale and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee; is the Artistic Director of the San Diego Shakespeare Society, and his own company, the La Jolla Theatre Ensemble. He has worked for the Old Globe, La Jolla and Laguna Playhouses, Idaho Rep, Monomoy Theatre, Western Stage, Lamb's Players, Diversionary, Intrepid, Mo'olelo, New Village Arts, New Fortune, the Eugene O'Neill Foundation and Colorado Shakespeare Festival.

**BRUCE TURK\*** (Leonid Gayev) recently appeared at North Coast Rep in *Annabella in July*, *The Homecoming*, *Ben Butler*, and *Same Time Next Year*. Broadway and Off-Broadway credits include the title role in Julie Taymor’s production of *The Green Bird*and numerous appearances with Theatre For A New Audience. San Diego audiences have seen him in fifteen productions of Shakespeare at the Old Globe Theatre (Craig Noel Award). Also Lincoln Center, Brooklyn Academy of Music, ACT, Pasadena Playhouse, Seattle Repertory, McCarter Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, Denver Center, Cincinnati Playhouse, Goodman Theatre, the Shakespeare Theaters in DC, New Jersey and Santa Cruz, and many more. He has been a resident member of Tadashi Suzuki’s Acting Company in Japan, Resident Artist at Hartford Stage, and recipient of the TCG/Fox Fellowship for Distinguished Achievement. Graduate of Northwestern University.

**CHRISTOPHER M. WILLIAMS\*** (Stage Manager) is an actor, director, producer, fight director, stage manager and former Associate Artistic Director of North Coast Rep. Selected theatre credits: 30 mainstage shows at NCRT including *Don’t Dress For Dinner, The Illusion, Gabriel, Dancing Lessons*, and *Desperate Measures; Rothschild & Sons* (Original Off-Broadway cast); *The Drawer Boy, A Moon For the Misbegotten* (AZ Theatre Company); *Angels In America I & II, Lobby Hero* (Actors Theatre); *Noises Off!* (Idaho Shakespeare and Phoenix Theatre); *Romeo & Juliet, Hamlet, Othello, Henry V* (Southwest Shakespeare); *Julius Caesar* (New Village Arts); *I Hate Hamlet* (Intrepid Theatre); *Biloxi Blues, Light Falling Down, The Elephant Man* (Oceanside Theatre). He was also a producer of the WWII feature film, “Walking With The Enemy,” starring Sir Ben Kingsley and Jonas Armstrong.

**MATT FITZGERALD** (Assistant Stage Manager) **j**oined the staff at North Coast Rep in 2019. Matt is an award-winning director, actor and designer and former Artistic Manager of Patio Playhouse. He has a B.A. in Music from San Diego State University.

**DESIGN TEAM**

**MARTY BURNETT** (Set Design) Resident Designer at North Coast Rep since 1992 and has designed more than 200 productions for the theater. Other design venues include: Sahara and Hacienda hotels in Las Vegas, Claridge Hotel, Atlantic City, and Drury Lane Chicago.

**MATTHEW NOVOTNY** (Lighting Design) is pleased to be designing another show for North Coast Rep, where he has designed close to forty shows over the past seven years. Matthew is currently the Lighting Designer in Residence for San Diego Musical Theatre as well as North Coast Rep, and his work can be seen at a wide variety of theatres across San Diego. Matthew holds a B.A. in Technical Theatre from San Diego State and a master’s degree in Lighting Design from Boston University. Matthew is married to his beautiful wife Amanda, with five AMAZING children: Ragan, Harper, Heston, Maddex, and Harrison.

**ELISA BENZONI+** (Costume Design) is thrilled to be working on her eighth season at
North Coast Rep including numerous Craig Noel nominated productions. Elisa has also
worked on over a hundred productions across Southern California with theatres such as
The Old Globe, La Jolla Playhouse, Geffen Playhouse, South Coast Repertory Theatre,
Laguna Playhouse, San Diego Repertory Theatre, Diversionary Theatre and New Village Arts. Being Italian born, Elisa has also had the opportunity to work and perfect her craft in Europe. Elisa holds a costume design M.F.A. from UCSD where she currently is an adjunct
professor.

**RACHEL HENGST** (Props Design) has worked as a Props artisan and Assistant Stage Manager at various theatres around San Diego. Some of her credits include *The Rocky Horror Show*(Cygnet Theatre), *Shockheaded Peter*(Cygnet Theatre), *Mixtape* and *Once*(Lamb’s Players Theatre). She is grateful to work with North Coast Repertory Theatre for the first time. She thanks God and her family for their love and support.

**EVAN EASON** (Sound Design) is thrilled to be making his North Coast Repertory Theatre debut. Some of his previous sound design work includes: *The Mystery of Irma Vep, Eighty-Sixed* (Diversionary); *Measure for Measu*re (USD/The Old Globe); *Into the Woods, Beehive: The 60's Musical* (New Village Arts); *Pick Me Last, Emily Drivers Great Race Through Time and Space* (La Jolla Playhouse). Evan has also worked as an associate and/or assistant sound designer on the following productions: *The Women’s Project* (Clubbed Thumb); *Aubergine, The Humans* (San Diego Repertory); *Twelfth Night* (USD/The Old Globe); *Avenue Q* (New Village Arts).

Concord Theatricals is the world’s most significant theatrical company, comprising the catalogs of R&H Theatricals, Samuel French, Tams-Witmark and The Andrew Lloyd Webber Collection, plus dozens of new signings each year. Our unparalleled roster includes the work of Irving Berlin, Agatha Christie, George & Ira Gershwin, Marvin Hamlisch, Lorraine Hansberry, Kander & Ebb, Kitt & Yorkey, Ken Ludwig, Lin-Manuel Miranda, Dominique Morisseau, Cole Porter, Rodgers & Hammerstein, Thornton Wilder and August Wilson. We are the only firm providing truly comprehensive services to the creators and producers of plays and musicals, including theatrical licensing, music publishing, script publishing, cast recording and first-class production. Concord Theatricals is passionate about cultivating theatre and making it accessible for all. Beginning in 2020, a portion of our commission from every license will be set aside to create a fund for significant annual donations to nonprofit organizations whose emphasis is to support theatre writers and composers, and music and theatre education.

**About the North Coast Repertory Theatre** under the artistic leadership of David Ellenstein since 2003, is a professional Equity theatre, currently celebrating its 41st Season. North Coast Rep has received critical acclaim from media and audiences alike, and has evolved into one of the area’s leading performing arts organizations. North Coast Rep prides itself on employing the majority of its actors from Actors’ Equity Association for its high quality, award‐winning productions, and staging works by established and emerging playwrights. Throughout its history, North Coast Rep has created a platform where artist and audience thrive through the intimacy of live theatre, recognizing the power of theatre to challenge complacency, revitalize the imagination, nurture the unexpected and embrace the variety and diversity in our lives.

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