

**DEAR GUEST!****Thank you for coming!**

As an independent theatre project, *I take your hand in mine...* can only be supported by its audience. We rely solely on word of mouth to promote our show. If you liked our performance, please spread the word and invite your friends to see the show. You can do that on Twitter @ChekhovCollect or on Facebook at *The Chekhov Collective* page and the *I take your hand in mine* event page.

**THE CHEKHOV COLLECTIVE**

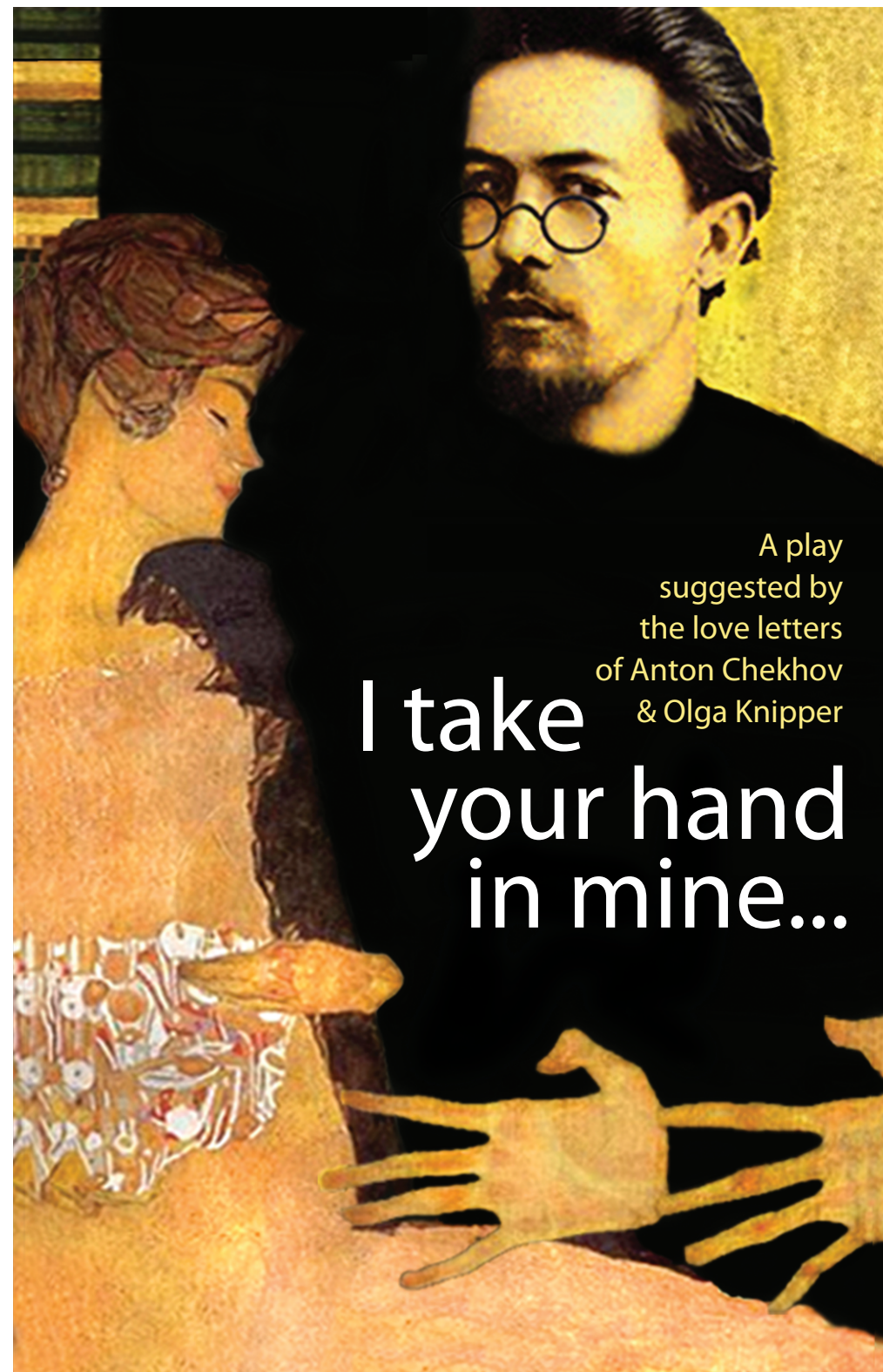
The Chekhov Collective was formed four years ago by a group of actors wishing to explore the works of Anton Chekhov and other classic plays using the techniques of Michael Chekhov, Anton Chekhov's nephew and one of Russia's most honoured actors.  
[www.thechekhovcollective.com](http://www.thechekhovcollective.com)

**THEATRUS**

Theatrus is a theatre group based in Toronto from 2013. Connecting people, ideas and cultures, we strongly believe that in the age of mass media and high-tech, theatre - which places a live human being both on stage and in the audience - has a potential to become one of the most refreshing and breathtaking experiences for every single person.  
[www.theatrus.org](http://www.theatrus.org)

**THANK YOU:**

Gregory and Olga Antimony, Jacob Antoni, Nikolay Chumachenko, Judy Cornish, Shelley Liebembuk, Joanne Mastrocucci, David McCaughna, Elizabeth Miller, Heidi Reimer, Ekaterina Skorobogatova, Joy Tanner, Igor Zhukovsky, Masha Zorich Khesin, St. Luke's United Church and everyone at Tarragon Theatre.



April 6-23 | at TarragonTheatre  
2017 | Extraspace

# I take your hand in mine...

A play suggested by the love letters of Anton Chekhov and Olga Knipper

**Written by:** Carol Rocamora

**Directed by:** Dmitry Zhukovsky

**Costume Design:** Kateryna Maryevych

**Set Design:** Dimitrii Khilchenko

**Lighting Design:** Shawn Henry

**Producers:** Yulia Rubina, Rena Polley

**Presented by:** The Chekhov Collective in association with Theatrus

## CAST

Anton Chekhov ..... Richard Sheridan Willis

Olga Knipper ..... Rena Polley

**Running time:** 90 minutes with no intermission

*I take your hand in mine...* traces the passionate relationship between playwright **Anton Chekhov** and actress **Olga Knipper**. The correspondence that inspired the text – over 400 letters – documents the six-year relationship between the world-famous writer and the star of the Moscow Art Theatre. During those six short years, circumstance – his health, her work – kept them apart for most of that time. He was banished to Yalta in the south for medical reasons; she was committed to Moscow for the theatre season. Author Carol Rocamora weaves the letters into a passionate story of love, longing and despair. Embedded into the everyday are gems of theatre history and insights into Chekhov's creative process.

Anton Chekhov died at the age of 44 from tuberculosis and Olga Knipper died at the age of 90 in 1959. She never remarried.

## A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Although based on the letters of Chekhov, *I take your hand in mine...* is not a play by Chekhov, it's a play about Chekhov. Yet working on the show we wanted to be truthful to Chekhov's poetics, where the most important and interesting things happen not in the words but in-between them.

\*This is a Canadian Actors' Equity Association production under the Artists' Collective Policy.

## BIOGRAPHIES

### Dmitry Zhukovsky (Director)

Dmitry Zhukovsky is a theatre director, producer and acting coach. His theatre career includes about 15 years as an actor and more than 25 years of teaching acting and directing in the leading theatre, TV and film schools in the USSR, Moldova and Russia. A recent arrival to Canada, Dmitry has created Theatrus company and participated in several theatre, educational and art projects including *The...Musician: An Étude* (2014), *Vivisection* (Nuit Blanche 2015), and *Freedom of Expression* (acting training workshop). *I Take Your Hand in Mine...* is Dmitry's second collaboration as a director with The Chekhov Collective after the production of Anton Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard* in 2016. [www.theatrus.org](http://www.theatrus.org)

### Richard Sheridan Willis (Anton Chekhov)

Richard trained at RADA and has worked extensively at theatres throughout the world. Companies include Folger Shakespeare Theatre in Washington, DC; Norway's National Theatre; Peter Hall Company, London; Denver Centre Theatre Co; The Wilma Theatre, Philadelphia. Last year he played Gaev in *The Cherry Orchard* for The Chekhov Collective at Canadian Stage. Recent theatre includes *Breathing Corpses* (Coal Mine), title role in *Julius Caesar* (St Lawrence Shakespeare Festival), *Twelfth Night*, *Henry V* (Folger Library Theatre), *The Clockmaker*, *Vigil* (STC), Henry Higgins in *My Fair Lady* (STONC), Father in *The Railway Children* (Roundhouse Theatre, Toronto), *Catch 22* (Lucille Lortelle, NYC). In 2013 he performed his one-man play *Strolling Player* at the Tarragon Extraspace in the Toronto Fringe Festival, which has also played in the UK and Washington, DC. He is currently working on his next play *Boy Beate*. TV: *Dr. Who*, *Law & Order*, *Flashpoint*, *Nikita*, *Lost Girl*. Film: *The Big Bad Swim*, *Absolution*, *Ghost in the Noonday Sun*. [www.about.me/RichardSheridanWillis](http://www.about.me/RichardSheridanWillis)

### Rena Polley (Olga Knipper)

Rena is an actor, writer, producer and teacher and has worked in theatre, television and film for over twenty years. For The Chekhov Collective she recently played Ranevskaya in *The Cherry Orchard* and Arkadina in *The Seagull*. She was also written, produced and performed in three short films that toured various festivals around the world. Rena has been involved for fifteen years with the Michael Chekhov Association, and continues to study with Joanna Merlin, the last living student of Michael Chekhov. She is a founding member of Michael Chekhov Canada.

### Carol Rocamora (Author)

Carol Rocamora is a translator, director, teacher and playwright, and received her M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania in Russian literature. Dr. Rocamora has translated Chekhov's complete dramatic works and is published by Smith and Kraus. She currently teaches theatre in the Department of Dramatic Writing at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts.