

USC School of Dramatic Arts

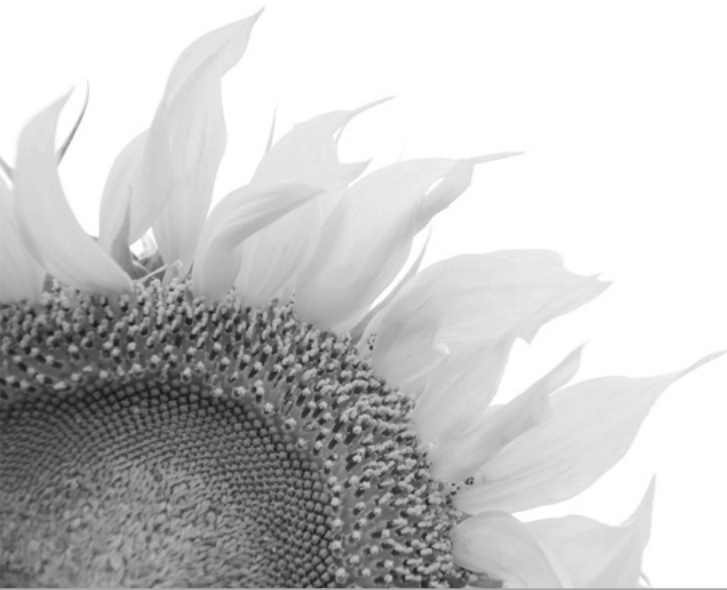
# **WILD HONEY**

**BY MICHAEL FRAYN**

ADAPTED FROM AN ORIGINAL PLAY BY ANTON CHEKHOV

DIRECTED BY **GUILLERMO CIENFUEGOS**

**BING THEATRE NOVEMBER 2-5, 2017**



# USC School of Dramatic Arts

PRESENTS

## WILD HONEY

By Michael Frayn

ADAPTED FROM AN ORIGINAL PLAY BY ANTON CHEKHOV

WITH (in alphabetical order)

Maria Arvinte Talitha Barkow Evangeline Edwards  
Blake Fisher Juston Graber Mattie Harris-Lowe  
Charlie Junkins Nicholas Petroccione Larson Rainier  
Wells Rhodes Taylor Ryan Rivers  
Angie Sarkisyan Alexander Walter

SCENIC DESIGN

Zach Blumner

COSTUME DESIGN

Sonia Mendez

LIGHTING DESIGN

Nicole Eng

SOUND DESIGN

Jacob Magnin

STAGE MANAGER

Lexi Hettick

DIRECTED BY

Guillermo Cienfuegos

Bing Theatre

November 2-5, 2017

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CAST OF CHARACTERS (in order of appearance)

**Dr. Triletzky**

Larson Rainier

**Yakov/Peasant**

Angie Sarkisyan

**Anna Petrovna**

Evangeline Edwards

**Porfiry Semyonovich Glagolyev**

Maria Arvinte

**Sergey**

Nicholas Petroccione

**Colonel Triletzky**

Juston Graber

**Sofya**

Mattie Harris-Lowe

**Marko**

Alexander Walter

**Marya Yerfimovna Grekova**

Talitha Barkow

**Platonov**

Wells Rhodes

**Sasha**

Blake Fisher

**Gerasim Kuzmich Petrin**

Charlie Junkins

**Osip**

Taylor Ryan Rivers

TIME Summer of 1881

PLACE A provincial village in the southern part of Russia

ACT ONE – The Voynitzev Family Estate

ACT TWO – Platonov's house/classroom

There will be one 10-minute intermission.

WARNING Please be advised that this production contains theatrical haze and loud sound effects.

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### PRODUCTION STAFF

VOCAL/DIALECT COACH Anne Burk | FIGHT CHOREOGRAPHER Edgar Landa

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER Chloe Willey | SOUND ENGINEER Mia Glenn-Schuster

STAGE MANAGEMENT MENTOR Scott Faris | SCENIC MENTOR Takeshi Kata | COSTUME DESIGN

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SOUND DESIGN MENTOR Philip Allen | FIGHT CAPTAIN Mattie Harris-Lowe

CREW Kameron Brown, Reese Brucker, Domenica Diaz, Eden Lederer, Kaitlin Maxwell, Matthew Mitchell, Anna Rohlf, Riley Rudy, Eitan Senerman, Luke Simon, Milner Sommers, Matthew Wunsch, Jun Yu

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### SPECIAL THANKS

UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television, Chyna Tucker, Scott Faris, Els Collins, Dean Bridel, Stephanie Shroyer, Elspeth Weingarten, Marilyn Fox, The Cast of *Rhinoceros* at Pacific Resident Theatre

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Assistive listening devices are available in the lobby of the Bing Theatre on a first come, first served basis. We ask patrons to leave a California Driver's License as a deposit for devices.

**DIRECTOR'S NOTE**

In 1920, 16 years after the death of the great Russian dramatist Anton Chekhov, a manuscript was discovered inside a safe deposit box in a Moscow bank that turned out to be a never before seen play. His very first. Written some time in 1881, while he was still a medical student, Chekhov apparently received harsh and dismissive criticism for his first attempt at playwriting, so he buried it. The original is by all accounts the work of a first timer, albeit a first timer who would go on to become one of the geniuses of dramatic literature.

The cover page was missing, so we'll never know what he intended for it to be called. It's been produced under many different titles, such as *A Country Scandal* and *Don Juan in the Russian Manner*. But in English translation, it has most often been named after its main character, Platonov. Platonov had so much promise. A brilliant intellect, coupled with a burning passion for social justice, made him a much admired and loved young man who was certain to achieve great things. Years later, however, all he has become is the local school master of a small provincial village. At the center of the play is Platonov's despair and disappointment in life, which fuels his constant drive for approval and validation — mostly from women. This need destroys his life and the lives of those around him.

By the way, it's a comedy.

That's right — a sex farce about desire, disappointment and despair. British playwright Michael Frayn, who in 1984 adapted the play into the piece you're going to see tonight, saw to it that the comedy that existed in the original was preserved

and highlighted. He also streamlined what was seemingly a first draft by an immature genius still finding his way (apparently the original play if performed uncut would run five or six hours...). So while it is a Chekhovian play to be sure, with its ambiguous blending of the comic and tragic, it is also decidedly a Michael Frayn play. It's also quite interesting to note how Chekhov foreshadows themes, ideas and characters that would appear fully formed in his great later plays. Anna Petrovna, the widowed landowner who's estate is in danger of being lost, is the obvious precursor to Madame Ranevskaya in *The Cherry Orchard*; drunken Dr Triletsky can be seen as a preliminary sketch of Dr. Astrov in *Uncle Vanya*; even Platonov is a first pass at Ivanov. Although, as a character, I personally prefer Platonov — he's much funnier.

Frayn also gave the play a new title — one that I think wonderfully captures so many aspects of the story. The joy and warmth of a beautiful summer's day; a reunion with great friends; people being drawn, like bees, to the Voynitzev estate and buzzing around the queen Anna Petrovna and her chosen drone Platonov; and for the celebration of a newly married couple on their honeymoon. "A month of Wild Honey."

It has been a challenging and gratifying experience working on this play for the School of Dramatic Arts. I'm grateful to SDA Dean David Bridel and Artistic Director Stephanie Shroyer for entrusting me with this production and with these wonderfully talented students. I hope you will get as drunk on the wild honey as we have.

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Guillermo Cienfuegos has directed numerous plays in Los Angeles, primarily at Pacific Resident Theatre, including the current hit production of Ionesco's *Rhinoceros*. Other PRT productions include *Safe At Home: An Evening With Orson Bean*, Harold Pinter's *The Homecoming* and *Henry V*, for which he won the Ovation and LADCC Awards for Best Director. Cienfuegos has also developed and directed seven world premieres at PRT, all of which went on to be published — *The Fried Meat Trilogy*, *My Girlfriend is an Alien!* By Keith Defacto, *Concealing Judy Holliday*, *Lions* and *Julia*, which also transferred to New York's 59E59 Theatre, Off-Broadway. Cienfuegos also directed last year's award-winning production of *Dutch Masters* at Rogue Machine Theatre and has directed at the Blank Theatre Company, Chalk Repertory Theatre and Nom de Guerre.

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Located in Los Angeles, a city synonymous with artistic innovation and excellence, the top-ranked **USC School of Dramatic Arts** is a leader in dramatic arts education. The School uniquely blends artistic training in a conservatory environment with world-class faculty artists and the full academic experience found only within a major research university. This close-knit, supportive environment offers students the freedom to explore their artistic passions. Through programs of the highest caliber, as well as initiatives that provide access to professional experience, students are prepared for leadership in every facet of dramatic arts. For more information, please visit [dramaticarts.usc.edu](http://dramaticarts.usc.edu).

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# SDA17/18 SEASON OF PLAYS

## An Octoroon

By Branden Jacobs-Jenkins  
Directed by Anita Dashiell-Sparks  
MT Sept 28–Oct 1, 2017

## Twelfth Night

By William Shakespeare  
Directed by Kate Burton  
BT Oct 5–8, 2017

## BFA SENIOR ACTING REPERTORY

SDT Oct 12–22, 2017

### Passion Play

By Sarah Ruhl  
Directed by Christopher Shaw

### Punk Rock

By Simon Stephens  
Directed by Lisa James

## Trojan Barbie

By Christine Evans  
Directed by Ken Sawyer  
MT Oct 26–29, 2017

## Wild Honey

By Michael Frayn  
Adapted from an original play by Anton Chekhov  
Directed by Guillermo Cienfuegos  
BT Nov 2–5, 2017

## The Wild Party

Book, Music, and Lyrics  
by Andrew Lipa  
Directed by Vicki Lewis  
MT Nov 16–19, 2017

## MFA YEAR 2 ACTING REPERTORY

SDT Nov 16–19, 2017

### Circle Mirror Transformation

By Annie Baker  
Directed by Jonathan Muñoz-Proulx

### Eurydice

By Sarah Ruhl  
Directed by Stephanie Shroyer

## MFA YEAR 3 ACTING REPERTORY

SDT Feb 2–Mar 4, 2018

### The Matchmaker

By Thornton Wilder  
Directed by Drew Barr

### Buenaza/Cabrón

By David Bridel and the MFA Acting Class of 2018  
Music and Lyrics by Caitlyn Conlin  
Directed by David Bridel

### A Bright Room Called Day

By Tony Kushner  
Directed by David Warshofsky

## Macbeth

By William Shakespeare  
Directed by Natsuko Ohama  
BT Feb 22–25, 2018

## Great Expectations

By Barbara Field,  
From the novel by Charles Dickens  
Directed by Stephanie Shroyer  
MT Mar 1–4, 2018

## The Labyrinth of Desire

By Caridad Svich  
Adapted and translated from Lope de Vega's *La prueba de los ingenios*  
Directed by Denise Blasor  
SDT Mar 29–Apr 1, 2018

## West Side Story

Based on a conception of Jerome Robbins  
Book by Arthur Laurents  
Music by Leonard Bernstein  
Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim  
Directed by Ken Cazan  
Choreographed by Danny Pelzig  
BT Mar 29–Apr 8, 2018

## Don't Go

Created in association with Sojourn Theatre  
SDT Apr 19–22, 2018

## BFA Sophomore Show

Directed by Kathleen Dunn-Muzingo  
MT Apr 19–22, 2018

## New Works Festivals

YEAR 1

### New Play Readings

Apr 30, 2018

YEAR 2

### Playwrights Workshop

Massman Theatre  
Apr 6–22, 2018

YEAR 3

### Play Project

Carrie Hamilton Theatre at The Pasadena Playhouse  
May 25 & 26, 2018

KEY:

SDT = Scene Dock Theatre

BT = Bing Theatre

MT = McClintock Theatre

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**Plays:** General \$15, Seniors \$10, USC Students/Faculty/Staff with ID \$8

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