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**University of Virginia Department of Drama
To Present *Vodka Variations an evening of Chekhov shorts***

OPENING FEBRUARY 19 AT THE RUTH CAPLIN THEATRE

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA – February 6, 2015 – The Department of Drama will present *Vodka Variations an evening of Chekhov shorts* adapted and directed by Associate Professor Marianne Kubik from translations by Constance Garnett and Julius West. The show runs February 19th-21st and 25th-28th at 8:00 p.m. and will be performed in the Ruth Caplin Theatre. Several Chekhov-related events will be held in conjunction with *Vodka Variations*, including a talk-back with the director, cast members, and designers following the performance on February 25; a panel discussion, “Anton Chekhov’s Russia: its Culture, Arts and Influence,” on February 26 at 5:00 p.m.; and *Chekhov Live!*, an original, one-woman show, on February 27 at 5:00 p.m. with Terry Glaser, Adjunct Professor in the Department of Theatre Arts and Performance Studies at the University of San Diego.

Vodka Variations is composed of seven of Anton Chekhov’s early short stories, which director Marianne Kubik has adapted into bite-sized dramas, as well as three of his short plays. The production dives into the colorful world of 1890’s Russia to bring us heartwarming, hilarious glimpses into the events of clumsily-endearing everyday people who are simply trying live their lives as best as they know how. Although the smorgasbord of characters in this show may be aiming for different goals, all of their desires ultimately trace back to similar human themes – the pursuit of love, happiness, and satisfaction with their lives. We see characters make mistakes, chase after the people and things they long for, and face their own particular obstacles in quirky and often ridiculous ways, reminding us just how wonderfully absurd daily life can be.

Kubik, a longtime-lover of Chekhov, began the process of adapting these stories for the stage last May; she read through approximately sixty little, comic tales to arrive at those that will be performed. “I believe some of these short stories that Chekhov wrote at the beginning of his career are among his funniest,” Kubik says. “I fell in love with them because they get to the point and leave just enough secrets that it sparks your imagination to create an even bigger story.” In selecting the pieces, Kubik sought out stories with a lot of action and a lot of dialogue as she wanted to pull as many of Chekhov’s own words as possible. She also sought out stories

with strong women, as most writers of the time period were not shaping many well-rounded female characters, and she wanted to heighten the presence of women within the world of this production. After watching all of these delightfully fun and lighthearted plays, Kubik hopes that people will walk away from *Vodka Variations* “feeling like they’ve had a really good laugh and like they’ve been introduced to a new friend and a new culture with long-standing traditions that we’ve tried to showcase in this production.”

Ticket prices for *Vodka Variations* are \$14 for adults, \$12 for seniors, U.Va. faculty/staff, and alumni association members, and \$8 for students. Full-time U.Va. students may receive one free ticket if reserved at least 24 hours in advance of their desired show date. Tickets can be purchased online at www.artsboxoffice.virginia.edu or by calling 434-924-3376. Tickets can also be purchased in person at the U.Va. Arts Box Office which is located in the lobby of the Drama Education Building, open Monday through Friday from noon until 5:00 p.m.

Anton Chekhov’s Russia: its Culture, Arts, and Influence and *Chekhov Live!*

On February 26 at 5:00 p.m. the Department of Drama will hold a panel discussion “Anton Chekhov’s Russia: its Culture, Arts and Influence” in the Ruth Caplin Theatre. The panel will feature director Marianne Kubik, Katia Dianina, Associate Professor U.Va. Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures; Robert P. Geraci, Associate Professor U.Va. Department of History; Reed Johnson, Ph.D. Candidate U.Va. Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures; and will be moderated by Edith Clowes, Brown-Forman Professor of Slavic Languages and Literatures at U.Va. This event is free and seating is on a first come, first served basis.

Chekhov Live! will take place at 5:00 p.m. on February 27 in the Ruth Caplin Theatre. This hour-long, original, one-person show features creator Terry Glaser, a professor at the University of San Diego, as the great Russian author himself as he talks about his colorful life and works and answers questions from the audience. Tickets for *Chekhov Live!* are free but must be reserved in advance at the U.Va. Arts Box Office, www.artsboxoffice.virginia.edu, or by calling 434-924-3376.

Free parking for all U.Va. Drama performances and events is available at the Culbreth Road Parking Garage, conveniently located alongside the Drama Building.

For more information on the 2014-2015 U.Va. Department of Drama season, visit us online at www.virginia.edu/drama.