

ANTON CHEKHOV'S THE DARLING

New Translation by Victor S. Tkachenko with Lisa Dalton

Directed by Victor S. Tkachenko

Who's Who

Lisa Dalton is available to present a new translation of the Anton Chekhov short story, *The Darling*.

Lisa Dalton has acted in over 50 plays in New York, Los Angeles, Moscow, UK and Texas including at Lincoln Center, La Mama, National tours and Regional Theatres. As an actress/stuntwoman, her films include *The Last Dragon*, *The Highlander*, *The Sensei*, *Compromising Positions*, *Splash*, *Ghostbusters*, *Married to the Mob* and others. Ms. Dalton Appeared on TV in *ER*, *Melrose place*, *Carnivale*, *Saturday Night Live*, *Dr. Quinn* and over 100 Commercials. She has worked with stars such as Meryl Streep, Robert Redford, Cher, Sean Connery, Michelle Pfeifer, Robin Williams, Alan Alda, Tom Hanks, and Madonna. Now based in Fort Worth, awards include DramaLogue in Los Angeles for Outstanding Achievement in Acting, Who's Who Woman of the year 2002, filmmaker awards at the Houston WorldFest and the American Film Institute. Lisa Dalton is the president of the National Michael Chekhov Association, SAG-AFTRA DFW Board member, and Live Theatre League Vice President.

Victor S. Tkachenko is "a world class director, actor and writer, who has devoted his life to both Chekhovs, directing the uncle's plays while teaching the nephews acting methods," according to Pen World Magazine. Mr. Tkachenko directed about 50 modern and classical plays (including all Chekhov's plays) in Russia, Europe, Asia, and North America. He played leading characters of Chekhov's plays, as well as roles in plays by Pushkin, Durrenmatt, Anouilh, etc. Mr. Tkachenko is an author of librettos for five internationally staged musicals and numerous stage adaptations. He is a founder of several theatre companies and centers, including the Michael Chekhov Studio at Anton Chekhov Museum in Moscow, later the Center of Theatre Research at UTW, and Michael Chekhov Center and Festival in Ridgfield. Mr. Tkachenko is a recipient of numerous awards and grants.



Olenka and her Samovar, a very important fixture for any Russian Family. – photo credit: Cara Bowles

Bottom picture: Olenka has many fine experiences during her life, this one during a visit in the market.- Photo credit: Michael Stephens



Running time: 75 minutes plus Q & A.

“Dalton’s finest bit of acting, as she...digs into the emotion. Throughout, she has no problem getting to the heart of the character and Chekhov’s story...an evening of quality storytelling.”
-Special to the Star-Telegram.

LINKS FOR REVIEWS, VIDEO INTERVIEWS, AND MORE!

- <http://www.curtainup.com/fringe11.html#Darling>
- <http://www.nytheatre.com/Review/julie-congress-2011-8-21-a-chekhovs-the-darling>
- resumes.actorsaccess.com/lisadalton
- www.theatrejones.com/listings/20110702173315/2011-07-02/Two-Chekhovs-Productions/The-Darling
- www.thedarling.info
- www.imdb.com/name/nm0198311/

The Darling Summary

This play *The Darling* (Dushechka) is a touching love story and philosophical inquiry as well as a masterpiece by one of the world’s greatest writers and playwrights, Anton Chekhov. Called “a pearl” by Leo Tolstoy, it provokes a highly controversial attitude embodied by its hero Olga Semionovna Plemianikova. Her nickname in Russian is Dushechka. *Dusha* mean *soul* so here we have “little soul” sometimes condescendingly synonymous with ‘sweetheart’ ‘dearie’ or ‘sweetie’. But is she truly a reflection of true love and dedication? That duality and oxymoronic conflict becomes the basis of a question that the audience at each performance will be invited to answer.

The story follows the life and mind of Olenka as she fantasizes, dreams and adores the people around her. Prone to falling in love quickly, Olenka marries Kukin, the pessimistic owner of the summer theatre and adopts his every thought. But when he dies suddenly, she is left opinionless until she meets the optimistic lumberyard manager, Pustavalov. Absorbing his pleasant attitudes does nothing to protect his health, however, and so her lonely life goes. Her quest is a universal one. The audience must decide if the grail brings with it pity, ridicule or admiration.

The current production was rehearsed via Skype as Ms. Dalton is a Fort Worth Texas Resident and director Tkachenko, who currently resides in Westport, CT. Mr. Tkachenko, who also did the translations from the original Russian, met Ms. Dalton at an international conference at a Chekhov Symposium at the Sorbonne in Paris in 2007.

The show is available for tour events, workshops and with Master classes.

Right side Photo Credit:
Michael Stephen

Bottom Photo Credit:
theatre jones.com



For more information about Lisa Dalton, and ‘The Darling’, visit
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www.chekhov.net
Please Email:
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 (818) 761-5404.

REVIEWS AND QUOTES FROM MEMBERS OF OUR AUDIENCE!

"I saw this show last night and it is a fantastic performance by Master Chekhov teacher Lisa Dalton. If you can, you should see it." -Merri Brewer
Creative Arts Theatre and School, Producing Director

"Dalton's finest bit of acting, as she...digs into the emotion. Throughout, she has no problem getting to the heart of the character and Chekhov's story... an evening of quality story telling." – Mark Lowry from 'The Star-Telegram'

"Lisa - you were simply phenomenal! I enjoyed every second of The Darling last night. You were captivating and so engaging in your performance like nothing I have ever seen! Great successes as you move forward in your labor of love!"
-Bobby Brunz (theatre patron)

"Lisa, we really enjoyed the show last night. Thanks for your great work on this!" -Harry B. Parker
Theatre Department chair at Texas Christian University

Lisa, you were brilliant! Thank you for breathing life into those characters!" –Andrew Ballard (Theatre Patron)

"Lisa, we thoroughly enjoyed 'The Darling' tonight and you did an excellent job of bringing the story to the stage. To have such talent is envied. The transitions you had made a perfect delivery... we had such an enjoyable evening!"
– Sherroll (Audience member)

Reviews: New York International Fringe Festival, 2011

[WWW.CURTAINUP.COM](http://www.curtainup.com)

The Internet Theater Magazine of Reviews, Features, Annotated Listings

<http://www.curtainup.com/fringe11.html#Darling>

A. Chekhov's The Darling

Although there's lots of dismaying nonsense at this year's Fringe Festival, A. Chekhov's *The Darling*, as performed by the accomplished Lisa Dalton, is not among the silliness. This dramatization of the author's 1898 short story is appropriately slow, sprawling, and leisurely. Cleanly directed by Victor S. Tkachenko, you won't be jiggled or massaged with any special effects or theatrical gimmickry. But then why mess with Chekhov? He is a master of continuous revelation, and his *Darling* is both a poignant love story and philosophical inquiry into a human soul. The story follows the life and mind of Olenka, a woman who was "always fond of someone, and could not exist without loving." But there's a deeper and more disturbing premise lurking beneath the surface narrative. Olenka's nickname "Dushechka" derives from the Russian idiom meaning a "total lack of one's own personality and identity." And there is the rub! Is the protagonist actually a reflection of pure love and dedication? Or merely a human parasite who must subsume her life in another's identity? **Chekhov would be proud of this solo production with its authentic-looking Russian Samovar, straightforward retelling of his tale (new translation by Victor S. Tkachenko), and Dalton's fine and humane acting. There are splashier, flashier, and more eye-catching shows at the Fringe this year. But *The Darling*, as Leo Tolstoy once aptly described it, is a "pearl."** At IATI Theater. 75 minutes. [Donovan]

A. Chekhov's The Darling

www.nytheatre.com

<http://www.nytheatre.com/Review/julie-congress-2011-8-21-a-chekhovs-the-darling>

FringeNYC Festival Review Julie Congress · August 21, 2011

Entering the theatre, we see a kitchen table with chairs all around it and a samovar on a small table (with matching tablecloth). We are transported to another time. Storyteller and solo performer Lisa Dalton enters and begins to narrate and soon play the characters of Anton Chekhov's story, "The Darling." It is instantly recognizable that this is a short story, not a play. Dalton's slow, sing-songy pace lulls us off into another time. It is reminiscent of being read to as a child.

Olenka, always quick to fall in love, marries Kukin, the dour, jaundiced owner of the Tivoli (the local summer theatre). Olenka loves her husband and the Tivoli. She does the books, she lends the actors money—she invests herself utterly into Kukin's world. The actors call her darling. When Kukin suddenly dies, Olenka loses her personality and her joy. Fortunately for the young widow, the lumberyard manager Pustavalov has set his sights on her and they are married. Olenka now loves her new husband and his lumberyard. Together they shun the Tivoli as an unnecessary entertainment and everything becomes about the lumber business. *A. Chekhov's The Darling* follows Olenka's loves and losses and paints a portrait of a woman who has no opinions of her own, but, chameleon-like, absorbs those around her.

Dalton is an accomplished performer with great physical specificity; making it very clear visually which character she is at any point. When she transitioned from narrator into Kukin, I thought I was watching her melt—her knees seemed to bend further than knees should bend. Dalton is the president of the National Michael Chekhov Association and her work with his Psychological Gesture is very apparent in her performance.

In the program it says: "The current production seeks to let the audience decide whether she's worthy of pity, ridicule or admiration." Watching the performance, I definitely felt as though I was being pushed towards pity/admiration. An air of nostalgia hangs over every word and there is little humor in the performance. Directed by Victor S. Tkachenko (via Skype, as he and Dalton live in different parts of the country) there is precision to the performance and the tone is very clearly set. Given the nature of the story and how Tkachenko and Dalton have chosen to approach it, it is difficult to feel empathy with Olenka, but I do think it is a well-crafted piece of storytelling.

Opened: August 13, 2011

Closed: August 27, 2011

Chekhov show offers strong storytelling

By Mark Lowry,

Special to Star Telegram Fort Worth

Published on Saturday, Jul. 30, 2011 www.theatrejones.com

Anton Chekhov's plays aren't known for action and plot; they're more about relationships and dialogue. Being a good listener is a must. The same might be said of his short stories. Or at least of the one performed by Lisa Dalton, *The Darling*. Dalton, a devotee of the Michael Chekhov method of acting (he was Anton's nephew), is performing the uncle's entire 1898 story at Pantagleize Theatre before it travels to the New York International Fringe Festival.

In the intermission less show, she tells the story, which has been translated by Victor S. Tkachenko, director of the Michael Chekhov Center in Connecticut. He also directs the production (they rehearsed via Skype). Dalton acts out the characters and uses inflection and pace to relate the prose carefully.

It's about a woman who loves and loses often, to the point that it silences her on the matter of outspoken opinion. **That section of the story is Dalton's finest bit of acting, as she cuts back on the stage business and digs into the emotion. Throughout, she has no problem getting to the heart of the character and Chekhov's story.** It's accented with handsome costuming and set design (by Michael Stephens), and Charlie Bowles' sound design adds texture, with an occasional church bell or door knock.

There is some harmless audience participation, and the air conditioning at Pantagleize is on the fritz (there are fans, both electric and hand), but both those things are minor prices to pay for an evening of quality storytelling.



LISA DALTON

LISA DALTON

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EYES: BLUE HT: 5' 8"

ONLINE VIDEO/RESUME <http://resumes.actorsaccess.com/lisadalton>

STAGE	(Selected credits)	
The Darling	Solo show	Pantagleize/NYCFringe 2011
R & M Cinderella	Fairy Godmother	Artisan Center Theater, TX
Meet Me in St. Louis	Katie, Irish Cook	Artisan Center Theater, TX
Much Ado About Nothing	Ursula	Theatre 40 , LA, CA
Mass of the Children	Choir under John Rutter	Carnegie Hall, NY
Christmas Carol	Tiny Tim	La Mama, ETC, NY
Men VS. Women	Lead (DramaLogue Award)	St. Genesius, LA, CA
Wonderful World of Burlesque	Talking Woman/MC	National Tour
The Great Ghost Show	Lead Comedienne	National Tour
MCA Magic of Hollywood	MC/comedienne	National Tour
Powerplay	Chia, (Lead)	Reg. Tour, Bond St. Theatre
Arachne	Arachne	Moscow MCIW
Prologue	Lead	Forest Row, UK
The Good Doctor	"The Actress"	Forest Row, UK
The Flying Doctor	Lucille	La Mama, ETC, NY
The Hunger Artist	Impresario	La Mama, ETC, NY
Meet the Artist	Guest Performer	Vivian Beaumont, NY
Capidome	Chia (lead)	Alice Tully Hall, NY, tour
Puddings	The "Coke" head	Theatre Off Park, NY
Divine Fire	Bett	Theatre Row, NY
Laundry and Bourbon	Elizabeth	Nat Horne Theatre, NY
The Fox	Jill	St. Clement's Theatre, NY
Room Without Corners	Mom	Gardner Stages, LA, CA
Effie's Burning	Dr. Kovac	Close Up Theater, LA, CA
Journey to the Day	Helen	Kent Bateman Theater, LA
Aladdin (Panto)	Jasmine	Theatre 40, LA, CA
Mystery of Eleusis	Baubo	Martin Alley, Pasadena, CA
Playtime in Old Town	MC/Comic	Martin Alley, Pasadena, CA
Little Miss Fresno	Doris	Lionstar Theatre, LA, CA
The Fifth Season	Lorraine	Palisadium DT, NJ
Peep	Roxanne	New Shandol, NY
Mystery Bouffe	Merchant, dir. Leo Shapiro	Wolf Trap Academy, DC
Flaminia's Big Sleep	Franchesquina, dir. Charles Ludlam	Wolf Trap Academy, DC
Way of the World	Lady Wishfort	Black Box Tour, NYU

What a Wicked Woman	Lolo	WAFT, DC
Game Nite	Sis	Riverwest Theater, NYC
Win, Lose, Draw	Lead	Spring Board Theatre, NY
The Surgeons Story	Luisa	LA Playwrights Fest
Pantelone's Purse	Isabella (3 seasons)	Renaissance Faire, NY