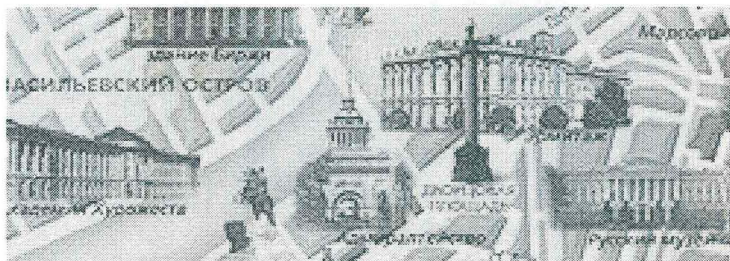


"The governor's house was lit up fit for a ball...Chichikov had to squint his eyes for a moment, because the brilliance of the candles, the lamps, and the ladies' gowns was terrible....Black tailcoats flitted and darted about separately and in clusters here and there, as flies dart about a gleaming white sugar loaf in the hot summertime of July, while the old housekeeper hacks it up and divides it into glistening fragments before the open window; the children all gather round watching, following curiously the movements of her stiff arms raising the hammer, and the airborne squadrons of flies, lifted by the light air, fly in boldly, like full masters, and, profiting from the old woman's weak sight and the sunshine which troubles her eyes, bestrew the dainty morsels, here scatteredly, there in thick clusters. Satiated by summer's bounty, which anyhow offers dainty dishes at every step, they fly in not at all in order to eat, but only in order to show themselves off, to stroll back and forth on the heap of sugar, to rub their back or front legs together, or to scratch themselves under the wings, or, stretching out both front legs, to rub them over their heads, then turn and fly away, to come back again in new, pestering squadrons." N. Gogol, 'Dead Souls'



"...the everyday and the commonplace look somehow extraordinary in Gogol, owing already to the fact that the author, for no apparent reason, has turned his fixed attention on them..."

Andrei Sinyavsky

"We all came out from under Gogol's 'Overcoat.'"

Fyodor Dostoevsky

"Do you like the novel 'Dead Souls'? I like Tolstoy too but Gogol is necessary along with the light." Flannery O'Connor

"I have just read 'Evenings on a Farm near Dikanka'. It amazed me. Here is real gaiety - honest, unconstrained, without mincing, without primness. And in places what poetry! What sensitivity! All this is so unusual in our present-day literature that I still haven't recovered." Alexander Pushkin

BENNINGTON 1999

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MARRIAGE

BY NIKOLAI GOGOL



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"They'd plant it right, but what came up you couldn't say: it's not a water melon, it's not a pumpkin, it's not a cucumber...devil knows what it is!"

N. Gogol, 'The Enchanted Spot'

"For isn't everything in the world arranged with wondrous whimsicality? The gay can in an instant turn into the sad, if one stand and contemplate it overlong, and then God knows what odd notions may not stray into your head."

N. Gogol, 'Dead Souls'

DIRECTOR
Janis Young

MUSIC TRANSCRIBED & ARRANGED
Dan Mohr

SCENOGRAPHY
Sue Rees

LIGHTS COORDINATED BY
Garin Marschall & Ian Greenfield
w/ Marlon Hurt

STAGE MANAGER
Amanda B. Greeves

COSTUMES
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Michelle Dooley
Shishaldin Hanlen
Natasha Heines
Leah Love Sarah McIntyre
Daniel Michaelson
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STEPAN
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IVAN PAVLOVICH OMLETTE
Laurence Cohen

NIKANOR IVANOVICH ANUCHKIN
Matthew S. Sterenchock

BALTAZAR BALTAZAROVICH ZHEVAKIN
Robert S. Keniston

MUSICIANS
Emily Hocker (oboe)
Michael Close (cello)

NIKOLAI VASILYEVICH GOGOL (1809-1852)

Gogol was born March 20, 1809, in Sorochintsy, Ukraine, of Cossack ancestry. Gogol could not speak until he was three and his health was delicate. His mother, devoted to her weak infant, continued to idolize him throughout his life; it may have been from her that Gogol inherited his amazing sense of fantasy. His father wrote plays and sketches and Gogol started to write plays while in high school. In 1829 Gogol settled in St. Petersburg, where he met Alexander Pushkin who greatly influenced his choice of literary material. Enthusiastic praise greeted his first volume of short stories of Ukrainian life, *Evenings on a Farm Near Dikanka* (1831). These folktales were written in Gogol's trademark style, with realistic and sometimes pathetic characters mixing in with oddly fantastic elements. The stories were warmly received by the citizenry of St. Petersburg; the Ukrainian settings were far-away and unfamiliar to the average Russian, who found the white cottages, warm climate and different customs a welcome change.

Gogol's play *Marriage* was written in 1833 one year after *Volume II* was published of *Evenings on a Farm Near Dikanka*. He first placed *Marriage* in a rural setting but was persuaded by his friend Pushkin relocate the event to St. Petersburg; in many ways the play retains its original rural setting and is reflective of the Ukrainian tales. Gogol was a bachelor, who observed around him people being propelled towards marriage for various reasons quite unrelated to the need for love; he considered that the firmly-established comedy plot, in which cardboard lovers wend their way through a complicated set of obstacles, was boring and decided to write a play in which this false love is parodied. First performed in 1843, *Marriage* is constantly turning up in the repertoires of contemporary Russian theatres. Having been made into two Russian films (and having generated the modern play *The Matchmaker*), it continues to be popular more than 150 years after its original appearance.

The suitors in *Marriage* are drawn from the same class of glorified clerks as appear in his subsequent play *The Inspector General*, written in 1835. At the premier of this rollicking satire, although the audience laughed loudly and applauded at length, the generally unfriendly reception by most critics as well as by the corrupt officials who were being parodied, depressed Gogol, who fled Russia for Western Europe.

In Rome, Gogol wrote his major work *Dead Souls* (1842) considered one of the finest novels in world literature. The story, suggested by Pushkin, is a riotous account of a swindler whose transactions with peasants, biologically dead but legally alive, take him through an immense landscape of moral disorder, pompous absurdity, and dim-witted greed. Also in 1842 the first edition of Gogol's collected works was published which included his famous works, *The Overcoat* and *The Nose*. These stories reflect Gogol's type of comic hyperbole seldom equaled in world literature for its invention and lunatic energy.

"God alone perhaps could tell what Manilov's character was. There is a sort of people known by the name of so-so people, neither this nor that, neither Tom of the hill nor Jack of the mill, as the saying goes. It may be that Manilov ought to be put with them. He was a fine man to look at; the features of his face were not lacking in agreeableness, but this agreeableness had, it seemed, too much sugar in it; his ways and manners had about them a certain currying of favor and friendship. He smiled enticingly, was fair-haired, had blue eyes. At the first moment of conversation with him, you cannot help saying: 'What an agreeable and kindly man!' The next moment you do not say anything, and the third moment you say: 'Devil knows what this is!' and walk away; or, if you do not walk away, you feel a deadly boredom." N. Gogol, 'Dead Souls'



"Here you meet singular side-whiskers, tucked with extraordinary and amazing art under the necktie, velvety whiskers, satiny whiskers, black as sable or coal, but, alas, belonging only to the foreign office....Here you will meet wondrous mustaches, which no pen or brush is able to portray; mustaches to which the better part of a lifetime is devoted...mustaches which are wrapped overnight in fine vellum...and are the envy of passers-by. A thousand kinds of hats, dresses, shawls - gay-colored, ethereal, for which their owners' affection sometimes lasts a whole two days - will bedazzle anyone on Nevsky Prospect. It seems as if a whole sea of butterflies has suddenly arisen from the stems, their brilliant cloud undulating over the black beetles of the male sex. Here you will meet such waists as you have never seen in dreams: slender, narrow waists, no whit thicker than a bottle's neck, on meeting which you deferentially step aside, lest you somehow imprudently nudge them with your discourteous elbow.....and what ladies' sleeves you meet on Nevsky Prospect! Ah, how lovely! They somewhat resemble two airborne balloons, so that the lady would suddenly rise into the air if the man were not holding her..." N. Gogol, 'Nevsky Prospect'

PRODUCTION CREW

DEPUTY STAGE MANAGERS **Bronwyn Davies-Mason**
Caro Williams
Kevin Casey

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGERS **Eli Hall**
Carmen De Almeida

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR **Alan Del Vecchio**

COSTUME CONSTRUCTION **Kristy Phinney**
Leah Walsh
Anna Zimmer
Nura Madjzoub
Sarah Courtney
Kaiti Carpenter
Sara Syed
Shishaldin Hanlen
Natasha Heines
Heather Beckett
Matthew S. Sterenchock
Leah Love
Michelle Dooley
Sarah McIntyre
Terry Teitelbaum

SCENE PAINTERS **Allison Krochina**
Sarah Courtney
Nicole Donnelly
KJ Swanson

PROPS **Jenna White**

RUN CREW **Sharan Singh**
Tobias Jelinek
Rebekah Abernathy
Allison Poirot
Summer Shidler
Ryan Nealon

LIGHT/SOUND OPERATER **Elizabeth Williamson**

WARDROBE **Jasmine Hamedi**
Pamela Wilson
Brandi Wilson

CAMILLE HARTMAN'S HAIR STYLING **Staff of Hair n' Now**