FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Oct. 21, 2026
PHOENIX THEATRE @ UVIC
PO Box 3025 STN CSC
Victoria, British Columbia V8W 3P2 Canada

Anton Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard* opens the Phoenix Theatre season

An intimate epic exploring themes of social change that still resonate today

Victoria, BC — This November, Phoenix Theatre embraces the wry humour at the heart of Anton Chekhov's final masterpiece as it opens its 2026/27 Mainstage season. Directed by returning guest artist Carmen Aguirre and presented in Michael Frayn's lively translation, *The Cherry Orchard* runs November 12–21 at UVic's Phoenix Theatre.

Returning from Paris to her family estate and beloved cherry orchard, Madame Ranevskaya discovers the property is deeply in debt and at risk of being lost. As the threat of auction looms, the family clings to memory and tradition rather than face an uncertain future. As old traditions give way to new realities, *The Cherry Orchard* explores what happens when the world moves forward before we're ready to move with it.

> "The text is exquisite... it's a very complicated story, every character is complex, it captures a moment of intense change; social change, political change, historical change. I think that is the overarching theme of the play, social change and revolution," says director Carmen Aguirre.

Chekhov insisted *The Cherry Orchard* was a comedy, even describing parts of it as farce. He was famously frustrated when Konstantin Stanislavski, co-founder of the Moscow Art Theatre, emphasized the play's tragic elements in its 1904 premiere. More than a century later, that tension between laughter and heartbreak continues to shape interpretations of the play.

This production uses a translation by renowned British playwright Michael Frayn, best known for the international hit comedy *Noises Off.* Frayn translated four of Chekhov's major full-length plays, and his lively version of *The Cherry Orchard* captures the playwright's wit and irony, making the classic feel fresh and accessible.

Aguirre returns to the Phoenix Theatre after directing the 2023 production of *Mojada*. An award-winning Chilean-Canadian director, playwright, actor and author, Aguirre has written or co-written more than 25 plays and has appeared in more than 80 film, television and theatre productions.

***The Cherry Orchard* runs November 12–21** at UVic's Phoenix Theatre. Performances are Tuesday through Saturday at 8 p.m., with Saturday and Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. A free pre-show lecture will be held Friday, November 20, at 7 p.m. Subscriptions are on sale now. Single tickets for *The Cherry Orchard* on sale November 2.

THE CHERRY ORCHARD (Frayn) is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French Inc. www.concordtheatricals.

SHOW DETAILS:
What: The Cherry Orchard
When: November 12-21, 2026
Where: Phoenix Theatre at UVic
Tickets: $19-$36 depending on day
Box Office: 250-721-8000
Event Link: phoenixtheatres.ca

PERFORMANCES:
Evening: Nov. 12-14 & 17-21 at 8:00 p.m.
Matinees: Nov. 14, 15 & 21 at 2 p.m.
Lecture: Nov. 20 pre-show lecture

CREATIVE TEAM:
Director: Carmen Aguirre
Set Designer: Carmen Alatorre
Costume Designer: Olivia Mazari
Lighting Designer: Logan Swain
Sound Designer: Gordon Geddes
Choregrapher: Jacques Lemay
Stage Manager: Alexa Rojas Ponce

MEDIA INQUIRIES:
Bernadette McKelvey,
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The Phoenix Theatre at the University of Victoria in British Columbia is one of Canada's most comprehensive and immersive theatre programs. Its productions are integral to the academic requirements of students enrolled in the Department of Theatre's Bachelor of Fine Arts and Master of Fine Arts degrees. Renowned for its innovative productions and commitment to theatrical and academic excellence, the Phoenix Theatre emphasizes a hands-on approach to learning, and students are deeply involved in every aspect of production.

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