

Michael Chekhov

February 8, 1940

POINTS OUTLINED BY MR. CHEKHOV IN CONNECTION
WITH SETTINGS AND PROPERTIES FOR THE
PLAYS TO GO ON TOUR

Twelfth Night:Settings:

1. The style for the costumes and settings must be decided.
2. The whole play must be mainly in three colors - the humorous parts to be in red-gold colors. Olivia's love line to be in violet and lilac, which will merge with the red tones in its darkest parts. Orsino's line to be orange-yellow.
3. The back of the stage must have a curtain which will be painted so that the ornament on it will include all the main colors used in the composition. It must look old and precious and must have the possibility of being parted in several places to give a variety of entrances. To be curved, if possible.
4. There will be about 12 scenes in all. Therefore, a number of small, individual, movable curtains will be required to be used as screens, etc.
5. A number of thin, curved sticks to be painted gold and to be used as arches, fences, lamps, etc.

Furniture:

6. Very limited but it must all give the impression that it is as old and beautiful as the curtain. Perhaps pieces of cloth could be used to change one piece of furniture into several.

The shipwreck scenes need almost nothing except a lamp and some pieces of broken wood. Orsino's scenes need a beautiful throne standing on a little platform and perhaps a little stool. Olivia's scenes - a throne which must be higher than Orsino's. Some stools and perhaps a chair. The Collar scene requires a number of barrels, one large enough in which to put Malvolio, some smaller barrels which can be thrown, a hanging lantern, stools, and perhaps a chair. The Garden scene required four trees which must be movable and a bench. Benches of different kinds will be required for several of the scenes, but perhaps one bench can be adjusted.

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7. A balcony for Olivia's appearances. It need only be big enough for her. The curtain must allow for this and also for the insertion of several windows and grates [gratings].
8. Steps and a platform, if possible.
9. A floor covering like a carpet - it must harmonise with the back curtain and the small curtains or screens.

Properties:

1. A musical instrument for the Fool - like a lute.
2. Swords, daggers of different kinds.
3. Toys - a beautiful, big ball of many colors, smaller balls and different toys which make noises, for the Fool's orchestra.
4. Wine cups, one small barrel of wine, and food.
5. Purses and coins.
6. Letter.

Cricket on the Hearth:

Simple, naturalistic English settings.

The Mother (Fairy Tale):

Settings:

1. The Mother's room in which there is a cradle, a stool, and a clock. A door through which Death enters and windows. This scene is concentrated on the front of the stage. The curtain at the back to be curved like the horizon.
2. & 3. The scene with Night and the scene with Dawn are the same setting - winter night and winter dawn. Heaps of snow - three waves of snow through which the Mother must be able to move. Small houses and churches hidden in the snow, to give the impression that the snow has covered the earth and only parts of the houses are seen. The Mother and Night and Dawn are walking over the houses.
4. The Green House where the plants are kept. This is hanging in the air (black velvet at the bottom will give this

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impression), and a little ladder leads from the earth to it and another ladder from the Green House to the sky, in which there are three naive windows through which the stars can be seen. Through the windows we see the heavens, so the windows must be actual holes so that the light on the sky can be changed and seen.