



23rd March to
2nd April
• 7.30 p.m. •

The Seagull

by Anton Chekhov
in an Irish version by
Thomas Kilroy

Directed by
William Wilkinson
*Humanity encapsulated -
poignant, funny and gripping*

The Seagull

by ANTON CHEKHOV

Translated by Thomas Kilroy
in a version first performed at The Royal Court Theatre, London in April 1981

Directed by WILLIAM WILKINSON

Set Designed by DAVID ELLIS

Lighting Designed by WILLIAM WILKINSON AND LOFT LIGHTING WORKSHOP

Sound Designed by PETE BARTLEY

CAST

Mary	CAROL BOOTS
James	DAVID BENNETT
Peter	JOE WILLIAMS
Constantine	PHIL REYNOLDS
Lily	ELIZABETH MORRIS
Dr Hickey	STUART WATERWORTH
Pauline	JUDY MURDOCH
Isobel Desmond	ANN MULRAINE
Cousin Gregory	JOHN FENNER
Aston	TREVOR THOMAS
Jack	TONY HUBERT
Maid	NAOMI GARDINER

THE SETTING

ACT 1 - The lawn before the Desmonds' house, late afternoon, summer
ACT 2 - The same, a few days later, late morning
Interval
ACT 3 - The Dining room of the Desmonds' house, one week later, mid-morning
ACT 4 - The Drawing room, two years later, evening, mid-November

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our thanks to the Royal Shakespeare Company for the hire of garden furniture.

PRODUCTION STAFF

Stage Manager	Sophie Hamilton
Assistant Stage Managers	Helen Wall, Patricia Huckvale,
Wardrobe	Richard Bargon
Hairdresser	Margaret Shepherd, Alma Jacques
Property Mistresses	Tricia Spelman, Euphemia Dales
Properties	Tricia Spelman
Lighting Operators	Gill Hare, Don Sykes, Liz Hunter
Sound Operators	Pete Bartley, James Sanders
Set Construction	Graham Taylor, Keith Barry, David Ellis,
Theatre Technician	Richard Moore, Ron Grey
Photographs	C Moore
	Christopher Bradbury

Irish touch gives a lift to The Seagull

The Seagull, The Loft Theatre, Leamington

ONE could be forgiven for thinking that The Loft Theatre has been transformed into a little piece of Ireland.

Following November's *Observe the Sons of Ulster* and last month's 50s version of Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors*, with its Irish Syracusans, the latest production is Thomas Kilroy's Irish version of Anton Chekhov's *The Seagull*.

Dramatically it works extremely well. There are strong parallels between turn-of-the-century Ireland and pre-revolution Russia, and the themes of the play — the destruction of innocence, the unattainable lure of fame and success, and the desperate search for inspiration — are universal. Evocative music and a striking, predominantly wooden set, designed by David Ellis, add to the contemplative atmosphere.

It all sounds a bit depressing, but there is a lot of humour running through the play. This comes through strongly in this version, with the interaction of unfulfilled old Peter, played by Joe Williams, agriculturally over-excited Cousin Gregory, John Fenner, and the hugely theatrical Isobel, an excellent performance from Ann Mulraine, providing much pleasure. Similarly impressive are Phil Reynolds as the passionate dreamer Constantine, Trevor Thomas as the English writer Aston, who becomes the object of Constantine's obsessive hatred, and Stuart Waterworth as the imperious Doctor Hickey. There is also an accomplished debut from Elizabeth



AT THE LOFT: Joe Williams, seated, with Carol Boothroyd, Judy Murdoch, John Fenner and Stuart Waterworth. 24.2.79. Morris in the difficult role of Lily. Initially she succeeds in conveying the naive optimism of an unspoilt, pretty young Irish girl, only for her hopes, along with her accent, to disappear as she discovers what life can really be like. - Phil Appleby. *The Seagull* plays at The Loft until Saturday, April 2. Box office 426341.

Emerald Isle an inspired venue for well worn seabird

The Seagull - The Loft Theatre

Chekhov's classic play moves from Russia to Ireland in the latest production from the Loft.



● Ann Mulraine as Isobel Desmond in *The Seagull*. Photo by Neville Collins.

The turbulent social climate shared by both countries at the turn of the century makes the transfer a seamless one.

And Thomas Kilroy's Irish adaptation brings out the humour that is sometimes hidden in the original.

Once again the Loft has come up with an impressive ensemble effort directed by William Wilkinson.

Ann Mulraine stands out as the charismatic actress Isobel Desmond, who seems to suck the energy from the other characters with her powerful personality.

Joe Williams is superb as brother Peter who reflects on what he always meant to achieve but never found the time to do.

And regular Loftier Phil Reynolds plays writer Constantine with the intensity he brings to all his roles.

Making an excellent debut was Elizabeth Morris as the innocent Lily who is crushed by daring to break out of the stifling country society in search of love and fame.

The only criticism of the production, which is on until Saturday, is the drawn-out and over-long final scene.

Julie Cobin

Check out Chekhov

THE SEAGULL - Loft Theatre, Leamington Spa, until April 2. Running time: 2 hr 25 min.

PERFORMANCES of Chekhov are few and far between so they are worth catching when they pass.

This particular production of Thomas Kilroy's Irish *Seagull* is very satisfying, with the Loft company belying its amateur status and doing us - and Chekhov - proud.

The Loft has always seemed to have a special affinity for matters Irish and even if some accents waver wildly in their geographical location, and the final act loses some impetus, the spirit of the play remains constant.

Firmly directed by William Wilkinson, performances by Phil Reynolds, Joe Williams, and Ann Mulraine stand out. Helene Barratt

