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GRAMS

BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS

MELISSA LEO,
CHARLOTTE GAINSBORG



FOCUS
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West
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Chekhov X 4

Reviewed By Hoyt Hilsman

The world premiere of four new translations of Chekhov's one-acts by Nicholas Saunders and Frank Dwyer is a double cause for celebration. Not only are these fresh translations brought delightfully to light by the talented Antaeus Company, the production also marks the debut of Antaeus in its new, permanent home at the NewPlace Theatre Center in North Hollywood. Chekhov's works have long notably lacked dynamic English translations; this has resulted in a string of lifeless, ponderous productions that not only miss the vitality and humor of Chekhov's writing but also lack the important cultural and psychological nuances of Chekhov's world.

The four presented here, each with different directors, capture the spirit of Chekhov's Russia with all its pathos and humor. Chekhov's world is populated with "characters," from the bag lady to the manager of the bank; everyone has an opinion about everything, and everyone feels free to express it, generally in the form of a complaint. And there are no problems too small for Chekhov's characters. Whether it be an attack of gout or a cranky wife, the people in Chekhov's plays regard every little problem as a disaster—which makes them all the funnier.

"Chekhov X 4"

presented by the Antaeus
Theatre Company at the
NewPlace Theatre
Center, 4900 Vineland
Ave., North Hollywood.
Thu.-Sat. 8 p.m., Sun. 7
p.m. Feb. 12-Mar. 21.
\$20-25. (818) 506-5436.