

Los Angeles City College
Department of Drama



ANASTASIA



Anastasia

A Drama in three acts by Marcelle Maurette with English adaptation by Guy Bolton, presented November 29, 30, December 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 1956, by the Associated Students as Production 315 in the twenty-eighth season of the Department of Drama.

Directed by PAUL TRINKA

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Chernov Ken Ellis
Varya June Greenburg
Petrovin Bill Holland
Prince Bounine David Young
Sergei Hal S. Gordon
Anna Linda Baca
Counsellor Drivinitz Michael Sands
Sleigh Driver Marshall Steiner
Charwoman Shelley Morrison
Dr. Serensky Carl Karish
Dowager Empress Gloria Kodil
Baroness Livenbaum Sara Leiber
Prince Paul Jeff Manning

Place: Entire action takes place in Prince Bounine's house on the outskirts of Berlin.

Act 1. January 1926
Act 2. One month later
Act 3. Three weeks later

PRODUCTION STAFF

Stage Manager, SUZANNE STANFILL

Property Master James Grey
Assistants William Dickerson, Bob Payne,
Ben Short, Marshall Tennin
Master Electrician Ed Lozano
Master Carpenter Bill Oswald
Sound Technician James Lanman
Wardrobe Mistresses Susan Bishop, Felicia Grunfeder
Rehearsal Secretary Judy Rose
Display Janiece Northam
House Managers Donna Nelson, Lisa Andermon
Hostess Lola Lynch

FACULTY SUPERVISORS

Faculty Supervisor Norman Mennes
Technical Director S. Barry McGee
Costumes May Rose Borum

STAFF

JERRY BLUNT, *Chairman*
BEVERLY BAKER
MAY ROSE BORUM
ELLEN ALBERTINI DOW
S. BARRY MCGEE
JAMES MCCLOSKEY

NORMAN MENNES
ALICE PARICHAN
BARBARA BURNETT, *Sceneshop Manager*
DAVID DORMEDY, *Sceneshop Assistant*
LINDA BACA, *Secretary and Public Relations*
RICHARD NOYES, *Box Office*

Coming

"MY SISTER EILEEN," Dec. 3-8
"MEMBER OF THE WEDDING," Jan. 10-19

Acknowledgements

Original Music written by Michael Hennigan
and William Wells



THE RIDDLE OF ANASTASIA

By Guy Bolton*

It was in the fall of 1928 that my interest was first awakened to the story of Anastasia. I was a guest at a party, a large party, held, if I remember rightly, in the old Ritz-Carlton where, looking about me, I saw a woman, seemingly young but with eyes that were old, with a scarred face and a twisted mouth. She was seated in a corner and as I looked at her, a woman approached her and, kneeling, kissed her hand. I turned to my hostess and said: "What's going on over there?"

"That," she said, "is the Grand Duchess Anastasia, the youngest daughter of the czar."

"But surely," I protested, "she was killed together with the rest of her family. I remember reading about it in detail and have been haunted by the horror of it ever since."

"If you have been haunted by the horror of it," said my friend, "think of her. I doubt if she ever forgets it."

It was true that I knew the story of the murders but I had missed reading the account of Anastasia's escape. . . .

It wasn't long before the books began to appear. First came a large and well-documented volume by Mrs. von Rathlef-Keilman, the kind lady who befriended Anastasia when she was released from the Dalldorf Mental Hospital. Then in 1931 came *The Real Romanovs* by Gleb Botkin. Gleb, who had been a childhood playmate of the four princesses, was at first a stubborn disbeliever in Anastasia's escape but, after a long personal investigation he became her most ardent champion.

These are but two of the many books and articles dealing with the case of the resurrected princess that have appeared in various languages. Some of these are pro, some con. On both sides the opinions are held stoutly, even with violence. After reading most of what has been written in English and French (the rest is not for me) I am prepared to stick my neck out on the side of the believers.

For those who are not acquainted with the story, the facts are these: On the night of July 17, 1918, the czar, his wife, their four daughters and young son were herded into the cellar of a house in a Siberian mining town and brutally shot. Since the room was small and the assassins were variously armed with revolvers and bayoneted rifles, the chance of any of the victims surviving seems incredible, but it is said that except for their leader, Yourovski, the majority of the Bolsheviks were in a state of reeling drunkenness. After the murders the bodies were carted eight miles to the mouth of an abandoned mine, into which they eventually were thrown. And it was here, if Anastasia's story is to be believed, that two members of the guard, brothers named Chaikovski, discovered that despite multiple wounds the youngest of the four princesses, then seventeen years old, still lived.

Then, so the tale continues, while Yourovski lay sleeping, the Chaikovskis carried the unconscious girl away in a farm cart. Using the jewels sewn in her clothes to support them on the way, they continued, on back roads and forest tracks, to the Rumanian border and across it to Bucharest. The hazards of that long and agonizing trek, the dubious marriage ceremony of Anastasia with the elder Chaikovski, his murder and the renewed journey to Berlin without passport or adequate funds, are a further demonstration that truth is stranger than fiction.

Then on the night of February 17, 1920, on the very day that Anastasia had reached her long-sought goal, she threw herself into Berlin's Landwehr Canal! After her rescue she was committed to Dalldorf Asylum, where she spent two and a half years.

At Dalldorf she steadfastly refused to identify herself, but eventually, assured that she would not be sent back to Russia, she confided her story to one of the nurses, Sister Thea Malinovski. This levelheaded woman, though herself convinced of Anastasia's sanity, saw clearly that such a tale told by the inmate of an asylum would receive little credence, so she sought out some members of the Russian colony who had known the Imperial family and brought them to view the patient. It was their conviction that "Anna Chaikovski" was indeed the Grand Duchess Anastasia that led to her release.

Her further history is a seesaw of recognition and rejection. The czar's cousin, the Grand Duke Andrew; George, Duke of Leuchtenberg, and the Princess Xenia Georgievna all rallied to her support. It was at the home of the princess in Oyster Bay, Long Island, that Anastasia stayed during her sojourn in America.

So completely had Anastasia dropped from sight after her return to Germany in the mid-thirties that I fancied her dead—as did Marcelle Maurette. We were therefore surprised, after an announcement concerning the production of *Anastasia* in Germany, to receive an indignant protest bearing the postmark of a small town in Bavaria, where "Mme. Anastasia Chaikovski" now lives. We replied apologetically and sent a copy of the script to demonstrate to Mme. Chaikovski that she was not being libeled. That she was not, she readily agreed. But it appeared that a biography was about to be published and a conflict, especially in the field of film rights, was indicated. The matter was settled amicably by the authors' ceding a share of their royalties to their heroine.

*Reprinted by permission of *Theatre Arts* magazine from the issue of May 1956.