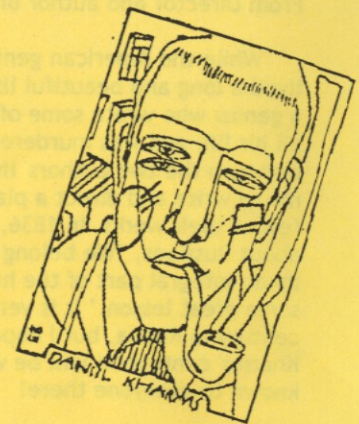


**OUR CHARMING DR. SEUSS'
AND
OUR HARMING D. KHARMS'**



**Russian and East European Studies Center
University of Oregon**

written & directed by J. Nemirovskaya



**May 21, 2004
Agate Hall**



ABOUT DANIIL KHARMS (1905-1942)

On February 4, 1942, when his wife came to leave a parcel for him at the prison hospital, she was told that Daniil Kharms had died on February 2. 'Daniil Kharms' was the main, and subsequently the sole, pen-name of Daniil Ivanovich Yuvachov. The son of a St. Petersburg political, religious and literary figure, Daniil achieved local renown as a Leningrad avant-garde eccentric and a writer of children's stories in the 1920s and 30s. Among other pseudonyms, he had employed 'Daniil Dandan' and 'Kharms-Shardam'. Kharms believed that having just one name can cast an evil spell on a person's life.

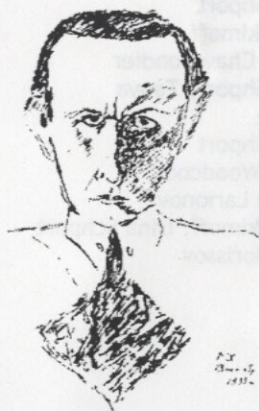
Kharms became one of Russia's greatest children's author. By 1940 he had published eleven children's. However, even in this field of literary activity, anything out of the ordinary was not safe. At the end of 1931, Kharms was arrested, accused of 'distracting the people from the building of socialism by means of trans-sense verses' and exiled to Kursk. Little work was to be had thereafter; Kharms was in and out of favour at Detgiz and periods of near starvation followed. On his general situation in life, Kharms wrote the following quatram in 1937:

We've had it now in life's realm,
Of all hope we are now bereft.
Gone are dreams of happiness,
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Kharms's sensitivity toward suffering intensified his reactions. In 1939 he wrote, "I once saw a fly and a bug fighting. This was so terrible that I ran out into the street and ran the devil knows where." Just as in his writings Kharms created humorous fantasy, so out of his life he created a work of funny and dangerous art. His writings and his life were exploits of courage, some kind of saintly and comic martyrdom. In Soviet society, his behavior was not merely incongruous; it was also provocative. He was arrested dozens of times for wearing Sherlock Holmes or other strange and sometimes absurd outfits. In order to gather crowds for a literary evening of the literary group, OBERIU, Kharms once crawled out on the cornice of the fifth floor of the House of the Book in Leningrad and walked around on it, smoking a pipe, wearing spats, plus fours, and a checked jacket. From time to time he would shout down to the crowd below, "Everybody come to the literary evening of the OBERIU!" He loved acting and the stage. When he went to the theater, he pasted on a false mustache, saying it was indecent for a man to go

to the theater without one. In his diaries, Kharms wrote:

"I am interested only in 'nonsense'; only in that which makes no practical sense. I am interested in life only in its absurd manifestation." His personal dramas are also reflected in the diaries. Kharms' first wife was Esther Marcel-Rusakova, born in France in a family of Russian political emigres who later returned to the USSR. They were accused of being linked to French Trotskyists and arrested. His second wife, Marina Vladimirovna



Durnovo, who survived him and emigrated to Valencia, Venezuela, was from the old aristocracy Kharms and all but two members of his literary group were once again arrested in 1941 and perished in Stalin's concentration camps.

His favorite saying was that by Knut Hamsun, "I am a stranger among my own people. Soon my hour will come."



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On a blustery day early in 1937, a young man named Theodor Seuss Geisel trudged along New York City's Madison Avenue. His manuscript for a children's picture book titled "A Story That No One Can Beat" had just been rejected as "too different" by the 27th publisher, and the disconsolate Geisel was heading home to burn it. Before he could make it to his apartment, however, Geisel literally bumped into a Dartmouth College friend, Mike McClintock, who just three hours earlier had become the children's book editor of Vanguard Press. McClintock brought his friend up to meet his bosses, who agreed to publish the book as long as Geisel agreed to change the title

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Instead, Geisel, now known to most people simply as Dr. Seuss, went on to become one of the most successful and beloved children's book creators of all time, injecting a note of zaniness into the often stodgy world of children's literature with such characters as Horton the Elephant, Yertle the Turtle and the Cat in the Hat. Once voted "least likely to succeed" by his college classmates, Geisel eventually published 44 groundbreaking children's books, selling hundreds of millions of copies in 20 languages. In 1957, Geisel, a perfectionist who worked long hours to produce his seemingly effortless rhymes and illustrations, pushed the boundaries of the children's book world even further. His book, "The Cat in the Hat," using just 225 words, revolutionized the way children learned to read, giving the boot to the "Dick and Jane" primers. Geisel ended 1957 with another literary tour de force as he published his modern holiday classic, "How the Grinch Stole Christmas!" In the years that followed, he solidified his position as the world's most entertaining reading teacher with such books as "Fox In Socks" and "Green Eggs and Ham," which was written using just 50 words.

Born in Springfield, Mass., the young Geisel and his older sister, Marnie, spent long days roaming their neighborhood, made frequent trips to the library and spent summers at a beach cottage in Connecticut. The youngster also became very familiar with the local zoo, where his father was on the board of directors. Ted's

high school yearbook highlights the two sides of the man: while he was voted Class Artist and Class Wit, the pictures of him in the year book all show a tall, darkly handsome, unsmiling young man standing in the back row.

In Dartmouth, despite his growing popularity and renown as an astute wit and party man, Ted continued to remain aloof. Said one classmate: "He was not gregarious in the sense of hail-fellow-well-met; there was no sense of self-importance about him. But when he walked into a room it was like magician's act. Birds flew out of his hands, and endless bright scarves and fireworks. Everything became brighter, happier, funnier. And he didn't try. Everything Ted did seemed to be a surprise, even to him." But Geisel's childhood memories were marred by anti-German sentiment. Other children made fun of the fact that his family, while staunchly American, still retained some German customs.

Despite mediocre grades, Geisel was accepted at Dartmouth College. There, he spent his happiest time writing for a student magazine called Jack-O-Lantern, which used humorous writing and illustrations to comment on the news of the day. Ever creative, Geisel found a way to keep writing for the magazine by signing his verses and illustrations with his middle name. It was the first time -- but not the last -- the world would hear of a man named "Seuss." Most of the early works were published under the pseudonym of Peter Pessimist, including this one about his least liked subject: "It'll just be our luck to be in Latin class when they turn back the clocks."

Despite getting a job writing ad copy for the popular product "Flit," Ted grew quite restless. Reviewing his contract with Flit, he found that one of the things he was not prevented from writing was children's books. From the publication of "Mulberry Street" onward, Geisel -- now Dr. Seuss -- spent most of his time creating children's books.

Interestingly, Dr. Seuss never had children. However, he was like a child in many ways. He delighted in playing practical jokes.

When Geisel died on Sept. 24, 1991, at the age of 87, there was an outpouring of sentiment around the world. The New York Times put the notice of his death on its front page, labeling him a "modern Mother Goose." Time magazine called Dr. Seuss "one of the last doctors to make house calls -- some 200 million of them in 20 languages."

Seuss's children's books also express his commitment to social justice as he perceived it, notably in five of the books. Horton Hears a Who (1954), Horton, an open-minded elephant, finds evidence of a world beyond our familiar one. Like Galileo Galilei or Giordano Bruno the authorities want to punish Horton and destroy the evidence of his discovery. Seuss comes out strongly in favor of intellectual freedom. The Sneetches and Other Stories (1961) written around the birth of the American Civil Rights Movement, this tale of identity politics concerns a huckster who exploits people who want to feel superior to others based on their ethnicity.

The Lorax (1971), though told in full-tilt Seussian style, strikes many readers as fundamentally an environmentalist tract. It is the tale of a ruthless and greedy industrialist (the "Onceler") who so thoroughly destroys the local environment that he ultimately puts his own company out of business. The book is striking for being told from the viewpoint (generally bitter, self-hating, and remorseful) of the Onceler himself. In 1989, an effort was made by lumbering interests in Laytonville, California to have the book banned from local school libraries, on the grounds that it was unfair to the lumber industry. The Butter

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Liar	Sergei Larionov
Liar's Team	Tim Akimoff, Nick Borissov, Tanya Beede, Irina Shport
Mashkin	Sergei Larionov
Mashkin's Commentator	Inna Shport
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First man in Leather Coat (Messenger, Angel)	David Chaverondier
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Yevdokim Ossipovich	Crystal Garcia
Olga Petrovna	Nick Borissov
Samovar	Tim Akimoff
Aunt Katya	Jackie Bangs
Uncle Petya	David Chaverondier
Grandma (Babushka)	Inna Shport
Grandpa (Dedushka)	Chris Sokolowsky
Cat (Amazing Kitty)	Masako Fujiyama
Granddaughter	Kricket Sevriss
Serozha	Sergei Larionov
Nurse	Inna Shport
Old Man	Tim Akimoff
Old man's Puppeteer	David Chaverondier
Old Man's team	Inna Shport, Tanya Beede
State official	Inna Shport
Math Geek	Erica Woodcock
Andrei Semenovich	Sergei Larionov
Two strangers giving directions	Tim Akimoff, Irina Schport
Officer in the prison	Nick Borissov



"Its night before its afternoon.
"December is here before its June.
"My goodness how the time has flewn.
"How did it get so late so soon?

You have brains in your head.
You have feet in your shoes.
You can steer yourself
any direction you choose.
You're on your own. And you know what you know.
And YOU are the one who'll decide where to go....

On May 1, 2004 two one-act plays by Aleksandr Vampilov will be performed in Russian in the Lab Theater in Withycombe Hall (at the corner of Campus Way and 30th St.). When he drowned in 1972, Vampilov was the most significant young playwright in the USSR, both an innovator in his own day and a precursor of later developments in Russian drama.

Incident with a Compositor, written in 1968, takes place late in the evening in a provincial hotel in Siberia and involves an avid soccer fan, Potapov, a young woman, in the neighboring room, Viktoria, the hotel manager, Kaloshin, his wife Marina, her lover Kamaev, and a doctor, Rukosuev, who agrees to play along with Kaloshin's decision to feign madness when he learns that Potapov is a metranpazh from Moscow. Not knowing that the term refers to a compositor, Kaloshin fears he might be a federal official. Suddenly Kaloshin suffers a heart attack and on his deathbed reviews the life he has lead and forgives his wife for her infidelity. Just as suddenly he recovers and decides to go into a new line of work, one he is equally ill-suited to pursue.

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the other hotel guests whom Anchugin summons to assist in figuring out the reason for Khomutov's behavior. It turns out the money is money he saved to give to his mother whom he hadn't bothered to see for six years. She has just died and Khomutov vowed to give the money to the first person to ask for it.

Every year since 1996, except for 2001 when she was on sabbatical in St. Petersburg, OSU associate professor of Russian, Vreneli Farber, has staged a Russian-language play, performed by native speakers of Russian. The casts have included OSU undergraduates, graduates, and staff who have come to Corvallis from various parts of the former Soviet Union. This year the actors have been invited to give a performance at PSU (May 9 at 2:00PM), Willamette University (May 9 at 7:00 PM), and UO (May 23).

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Asst. Directors: Erica Woodcock, Nick Borissov, Kris Santoro
Musical Arrangement: Erica Woodcock
Costumes: Becky Gladstone, VLT, Tanya Beede
Props & Publicity: Masako Fujiyama, Erica Woodcock, Jackie Bangs
Choreography: Julia Nemirovskaya
Lights: Kris Santoro
Stage Setting: Nick Borissov, 2nd Year Russian Students (thanks guys!), CAST
Hair & Make-up: Tanya Beede

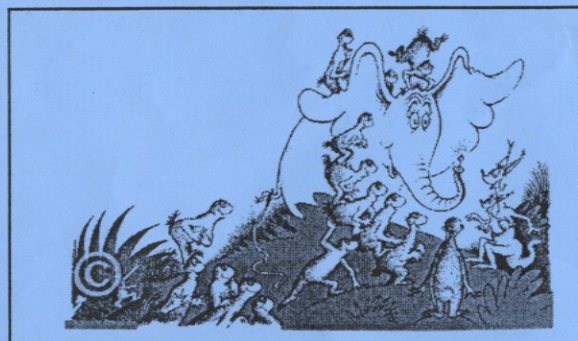
Battle Book (1984) written in Seuss's old age, is both a parody and denunciation of the nuclear arms race, emphasizing the reckless and self-destructive behavior of both sides. Seuss's personal values also are apparent in the much earlier *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* (1957), which can be taken (partly) as a polemic against materialism? the Grinch thinks he can steal Christmas from the Whos by stealing all the Christmas gifts and decorations, and attains a kind of enlightenment when the Whos prove him wrong. When asked if he had a message, Seuss replied: "Any message or slogan? Whenever things go a bit sour in a job I'm doing, I always tell myself, "You can do better than this. The best slogan I can think of to leave with the kids of the U.S.A. would be: 'We can? and we've got to...do better than this.'" With all his words and pleas for sanity, his opposition to the arms race, illiteracy, prejudice, pollution and greed, Ted was speaking to everyone, not just children.

Interesting facts:

Dr. Seuss is the best-selling children's author of all time.

Dr. Seuss' wife, Helen Palmer, also wrote children's books under the Seuss label. The last book Dr. Seuss' ever wrote was a book for "obsolete children" (old peeps) titled *You're Only Old Once*.

When Dr. Seuss was a kid, his mother would soothe him to sleep by chanting rhymes from her childhood. Dr. Seuss credited her with his talent for rhyming.



Dr. Seuss Says...

"Be who you are and say what you want, because those who mind don't matter and those who matter don't mind."

"A person's a person, no matter how small."

"Don't cry because it's over. Smile because it happened."

"Fun is good."

"I meant what I said and I

said what I meant.

"An elephant's faithful one-hundred percent."

"Be who you are and say what you want, because those who mind don't matter and those who matter don't mind."

"Adults are obsolete children."

"I like nonsense, it wakes up the brain cells.

"Fantasy is a necessary ingredient in living.

"It's a way of looking at life through the wrong end of a telescope.

"Which is what I do, and that enables you to laugh at life's realities."

"You're in pretty good shape for the shape you are in."

"I learned there are troubles of more than one kind.

"Some come from ahead and some from behind."

"Today is your day! Your mountain is waiting. So... get on your way."

"If you never did, you should. These things are fun, and fun is good."

"Children want the same things we want.

"To laugh, to be challenged, to be entertained, and delighted."

"How did it get so late so soon?"



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Despite mediocre grades, Geisel was accepted at Dartmouth College. There, he spent his happiest time writing for a student magazine called Jack-O-Lantern, which used humorous writing and illustrations to comment on the news of the day. Ever creative, Geisel found a way to keep writing for the magazine by signing his verses and illustrations with his middle name. It was the first time -- but not the last -- the world would hear of a man named "Seuss." Most of the early works were published under the pseudonym of Peter Pessimist, including this one about his least liked subject: "It'll just be our luck to be in Latin class when they turn back the clocks."

Despite getting a job writing ad copy for the popular product "Flit," Ted grew quite restless. Reviewing his contract with Flit, he found that one of the things he was not prevented from writing was children's books. From the publication of "Mulberry Street" onward, Geisel -- now Dr. Seuss -- spent most of his time creating children's books.

Interestingly, Dr. Seuss never had children. However, he was like a child in many ways. He delighted in playing practical jokes.

When Geisel died on Sept. 24, 1991, at the age of 87, there was an outpouring of sentiment around the world. The New York Times put the notice of his death on its front page, labeling him a "modern Mother Goose." Time magazine called Dr. Seuss "one of the last doctors to make house calls -- some 200 million of them in 20 languages."

Seuss's children's books also express his commitment to social justice as he perceived it, notably in five of the books. Horton Hears a Who (1954), Horton, an open-minded elephant, finds evidence of a world beyond our familiar one. Like Galileo Galilei or Giordano Bruno the authorities want to punish Horton and destroy the evidence of his discovery. Seuss comes out strongly in favor of intellectual freedom. The Sneetches and Other Stories (1961) written around the birth of the American Civil Rights Movement, this tale of identity politics concerns a huckster who exploits people who want to feel superior to others based on their ethnicity.

The Lorax (1971), though told in full-tilt Seussian style, strikes many readers as fundamentally an environmentalist tract. It is the tale of a ruthless and greedy industrialist (the "Onceler") who so thoroughly destroys the local environment that he ultimately puts his own company out of business. The book is striking for being told from the viewpoint (generally bitter, self-hating, and remorseful) of the Onceler himself. In 1989, an effort was made by lumbering interests in Laytonville, California to have the book banned from local school libraries, on the grounds that it was unfair to the lumber industry. The Butter

Battle Book (1984) written in Seuss's old age, is both a parody and denunciation of the nuclear arms race, emphasizing the reckless and self-destructive behavior of both sides. Seuss's personal values also are apparent in the much earlier How the Grinch Stole Christmas (1957), which can be taken (partly) as a polemic against materialism? the Grinch thinks he can steal Christmas from the Whos by stealing all the Christmas gifts and decorations, and attains a kind of enlightenment when the Whos prove him wrong. When asked if he had a message, Seuss replied: "Any message or slogan? Whenever things go a bit sour in a job I'm doing, I always tell myself, "You can do better than this. The best slogan I can think of to leave with the kids of the U.S.A. would be: 'We can? and we've got to...do better than this.'" With all his words and pleas for sanity, his opposition to the arms race, illiteracy, prejudice, pollution and greed, Ted was speaking to everyone, not just children.

Interesting facts:

Dr. Seuss is the best-selling children's author of all time.

Dr. Seuss' wife, Helen Palmer, also wrote children's books under the Seuss label. The last book Dr. Seuss' ever wrote was a book for "obsolete children" (old peeps) titled You're Only Old Once.

When Dr. Seuss was a kid, his mother would soothe him to sleep by chanting rhymes from her childhood. Dr. Seuss credited her with his talent for rhyming.



Dr. Seuss Says...

"Be who you are and say what you want, because those who mind don't matter and those who matter don't mind."

"A person's a person, no matter how small."

"Don't cry because it's over. Smile because it happened."

"Fun is good."

"I meant what I said and I

said what I meant.

"An elephant's faithful one-hundred percent."

"Be who you are and say what you want, because those who mind don't matter and those who matter don't mind."

"Adults are obsolete children."

"I like nonsense, it wakes up the brain cells."

"Fantasy is a necessary ingredient in living."

"It's a way of looking at life through the wrong end of a telescope."

"Which is what I do, and that enables you to laugh at life's realities."

"You're in pretty good shape for the shape you are in."

"I learned there are troubles of more than one kind."

"Some come from ahead and some from behind."

"Today is your day! Your mountain is waiting. So... get on your way."

"If you never did, you should. These things are fun, and fun is good."

"Children want the same things we want."

"To laugh, to be challenged, to be entertained, and delighted."

"How did it get so late so soon?"

Our Charming Dr. Seuss & Our Harming D. Kharms

The University of Oregon, along with the Russian and East European Studies Center (REESC) proudly presents a celebration of Dr. Seuss' centennial and the Russian children's poet of the 1930's, D. Kharms, in a performance by the students of "Russian through Theater" in story based on life and work of D. Kharms' set against a backdrop of poetry, songs, Tango, ballet, and the magic of the absurd!

From Director and author of our play, Julia Nemirovskaya:

''While the American genius, Dr. Seuss, has been appreciated in his country and lived a long and beautiful life, D. Kharms (1905-1940), Dr. Seuss' contemporary and a genius who wrote some of the best Russian children's poems and stories, starved all his life and was murdered by Stalin at the age of 36. The striking difference between the two authors' lives and the striking similarity of their poems prompted me to write and direct a play based on the story of their lives while incorporating a few of their works. In 1836, Pyotr Chaadaev, a famous Russian philosopher, wrote about Russians, 'We belong to that number of nations which does not seem to make up an integral part of the human race, but which exists only to teach the world some great lesson.' It is very true and very sad in regards to most of the 20th century in Russia, but I hope this will change in the 21 century. After all, D. Kharms' centennial will be widely celebrated in Russia in 2005, and he is now known to everyone there!

Thanks to the following people and businesses for their generous support and kind efforts to help make our play a success:

Alan Kimball, The Tango Center, Very Little Theater, Kris Santoro, Becky Gladstone, Zoltoi Petushok, Anatoly Pekel'nyi, Sasha, Pacific Winds Music Company.

And I'd like to add that this production is a miracle and could not happen without the dedication of my brilliant cast and volunteers!"



Дармис
Хармс

