



PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

THE ANTON CHEKHOV GARDEN, RHS HAMPTON COURT FLOWER SHOW, 2-8 JULY 2018

A Russian-style country garden inspired by the work and home of Anton Chekhov.



Anton Chekhov (1860–1904) was one of Russia’s greatest writers, most famous for his plays *The Cherry Orchard*, *Uncle Vanya* and *The Seagull*. The universality of his writing means that his plays are performed to this day throughout the world. Less well known is his passion for horticulture, his work as a doctor and keen interest in humanitarian causes.

A trip the designers took to Russia to research the garden at the Chekhov family estate Melikhovo, has led to an exciting design collaboration between horticulturists, designers and writers; Anna Benn Garden Design and Hannah Gardner of New British Landscapes. ‘The Anton Chekhov Garden’ is sponsored by The Anton Chekhov Foundation and in association with The Royal College of Medicine.

The show garden is viewed through a colourful wooden verandah structure, based on that of his country dacha. Chekhov used the dacha for both his writing and treating patients. The garden is in a bucolic small orchard with a hayrick. A rustic desk, based on Chekhov’s own, is surrounded by a productive tumble of medicinal plants, crops and Russian perennials.

The Designers

Anna Benn is a Russian speaking garden designer based in Oxford. An earlier career as a publisher and then co-author of a literary guide to Russia with Rosamund Bartlett, biographer of Chekhov and founder of the campaign to save chekhov’s house in Yalta, led her to travel extensively in Russia and explore writers houses and gardens. In 2014 she was appointed director of Garden projects by the Anton Chekhov foundation.

Hannah Gardner is an experienced and established horticulturalist. A knowledgeable plantswoman based near Bath she initially qualified with the RHS and the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew. Stints at Great Dixter and Sissinghurst followed before a scholarship year working in horticulture in Japan. Hannah frequently travels to explore gardens and plant communities and writes features for the garden-

ing press and a monthly column for Gardens Illustrated. She founded her own design practice, New British Landscapes in 2010 and is very happy to join Anna in this project.

The Sponsors

The Anton Chekhov Foundation is a Registered Charity, www.antonchekhovfoundation.org which seeks to promote the legacy of Anton Chekhov. The foundation is now fundraising to create a network of respite gardens in health facilities throughout the UK and Russia. The College of Medicine is supporting the vision of The Anton Chekhov Foundation and the show garden will have a permanent on-ward home at The Culm Valley Integrated Health Centre in Devon.

The College of Medicine (and Integrated Health) is a registered charity that explores and champions the role of medicine beyond pills and procedures. It has pioneered the introduction of non bio-medical interventions through social prescription for a range of social, psychological and physical problems. Its aim is to support and enable individuals and communities to take a more effective role in their own health and care. In the context of this garden, the college is keen to demonstrate the role of the arts in health and the value of plants and herbs following two conferences that have shown the medical benefits of both.

For more information please contact Anna Benn Anna.Benn@btopenworld.com or Hannah Gardner info@newbritishlandscapes.co.uk