

ANTON CHEKOV



Anton Pavlovich Chekhov was born on 29 January 1860 (Jan. 17 according to the calendar in use at the time), at Taganrog, Russia, a port on the Sea of Azov. **Chekhov** was a Russian playwright and short-story writer who is considered to be one of the greatest writers of all time. His career as a playwright produced four classics, and his best short stories are held in high esteem by writers and critics. Along with Henrik Ibsen and August Strindberg, Chekhov is often referred to as one of the three seminal figures in the birth of early modernism in the theatre.

Chekhov initially pursued medicine, graduating from the University of Moscow in 1884. After completing his medical studies in 1884, Chekhov became a practicing physician, a career that he continued alongside his literary work. His medical experiences contributed to his understanding of human suffering and the complexities of life, themes that would later pervade his short stories and plays. However, his literary talents quickly overshadowed his medical career. His early stories often depicted the lives of ordinary Russian people, marked by both humour and a touch of melancholy.

Chekhov's plays, including *The Seagull* (1896), *Uncle Vanya* (1899), *Three Sisters* (1901), and *The Cherry Orchard* (1904), revolutionized the theatre. Unlike the melodramatic plays of his time, Chekhov's works focused on the subtleties of everyday life and the inner emotional lives of his characters. Chekhov's innovative use of subtext—where much of the meaning lies beneath the surface—changed the course of modern drama. Throughout his career, Chekhov's work continued to evolve, but he always maintained a focus on human nature, personal struggles, and the complex interplay of humour and tragedy. His stories such as *The Lady with the Dog*, *The Bet*, *The Darling*, and *A Problem* reflect his remarkable ability to portray the ordinary lives of people with deep emotional resonance.

Chekhov's health began to decline in the late 1890s, and he suffered from tuberculosis, a disease that ultimately took his life. Despite his illness, Chekhov continued to write prolifically and remained an active contributor to Russian literary and cultural life. He died on July 15, 1904, in the German resort town of Badenweiler, at the age of 44.

Today, Chekhov is celebrated as one of the greatest writers in the history of literature. His works, which continue to be performed on stages around the world, have a timeless quality that speaks to the universal human experience. His unique ability to blend humour with pathos, his insightful exploration of human psychology, and his innovative approach to narrative and drama have solidified his place as a master of both short stories and theatre.