

THE CHERRY ORCHARD

Theater Will Present Anton Chekov's Play

By JIM GORDON
Lariat Staff Writer

Anton Chekov was displeased with the premier production of his "The Cherry Orchard" six months before his death. Too sentimental, said the Russian dramatist and short story writer—the players and director, he thought, missed his conception of the play as a comedy.

That production, in 1904, was by the Moscow Art Theater under the direction of the famed Constantin Stanislavsky.

Chekov's plays pose similar problems of interpretation today, particularly, said Pat Cook, assistant professor of oral communication, for actors who are unused to the particular stage manner required for Checkovian drama and who have built up standard stage presences over a number of years.

These must be torn down, and this, said Mrs. Cook, is one of the main areas of her work with the Baylor Theater cast who will present "The Cherry Orchard" under her direction Oct. 28 and 29 and Nov. 1-5.

"There isn't any overt dra-

matic action," said Mrs. Cook of "The Cherry Orchard." "The action is within every person."

The play centers on the reactions of a dozen persons to an unpleasant but inevitable reality, a change.

"Two charming, gracious aristocrats are told that their beloved cherry orchard has to be sold to pay their debts. They can't be practical and come to grips with this reality because they're very shallow people and they live in the past," Mrs. Cook said.

"It's a comedy because basically its so objective," she said. The playwright metes out neither praise nor blame but attempts to show people as they really are; he is a detached view, but his affection and compassion for his characters is evident, said Mrs. Cook.

"The Cherry Orchard" is the first play by Chekov Mrs. Cook has directed and the first by that dramatist to be performed at Baylor by the present theater personnel. Mrs. Cook said she decided on "The Cherry Orchard" last spring largely because of the relative unfamiliarity of Chekov at Baylor Theater.