ON THE AISLE
By GYNTER QUILL

Spirit of Chekhov Captured In Baylor Theater Production

The future belongs to the older generation in his
young, Anton Chekhov is saying
The Cherry Or-
to have got the message in the opened Friday night in West-

In other words, youth must serve the play quite well in tricia Cook. They have their
be served. And youth, in turn, some guidance by Director Pa-

The estate is now mortgaged and Varya, her adopted daugh-
ter, has struggled in vain with its management. The future lies in cutting up the land into build-
ing lots, which means cutting down the cherry orchard, as sug-

But Madame Ranevskaya, extravagant, generous and charming, cannot agree to such a wholesale destruction of the life in which she and her brother Gaev lived their charmed childhood. Nevertheless, the estate is auctioned off and Lopahin is the purchaser, and the last act sees her returning to Paris and enforced reunion with her faith-

THE ACTION of the play begins and ends in the nursery, and in between we have “seen” the cherry trees blossom and fade—in the same way that life begins and ends yet spreads its seed and looks to the future.

There are many subtle and delightful moments in the play, but perhaps the most memorable is the scene in the last act when Varya waits in vain for Lopa-

Linda Rodolph and Mercer Harris as the feckless Madame Ranevskaya and her brother capture expressively the bewilderment of those who do not realize the world has passed them by. And Charles Batte plays, with crumbling dignity, to old servant Firs who, at the end, is overwhelmed and abandoned in the empty and boarded-up house, lamenting that life has passed as if he hadn’t existed.

THE REST of the company is generally helpful: Jeannie Gu-
lizia as Anya and Bob Ousley as the perpetual student Trot-

now with whom she is in love and who believes life offers a rosy future; John Seely as the purchaser Lopahin; Liz Brazel as the servant Dunyasha and Guy Boyd as the fumbling, stumbling clerk Yefiodov, Ed Baker as the comical, borrow-

The translation, which flows naturally and unstilted, is a recent one by Tyrone Guthrie and Leonial Kipnis. It is played on the thrust stage of Weston Studio, whose Elizabethan inner and upper stages are paneled over and whose open stage be-
comes a split-level nursery-

drawing room, or, with some imagination and a tiny tree and a bench, the outdoors for Act II. The design is by Larry Roof.

The appropriate period costumes, Western for those who could afford it, Russian for those who could not, were designed by James W. Swain.