

1. Record Nr.	UNISA996217044303316
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Titolo	Interpreting Chekhov / / Geoffrey Borny
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Canberra, Australia : , : ANU E Press, , 2006 ©2006
ISBN	1920942688 (ebook) 192094267X (paperback)
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (324 pages) : illustrations; digital, PDF file(s)
Disciplina	891.723
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Sommario/riassunto	The author's contention is that Chekhov's plays have often been misinterpreted by scholars and directors, particularly through their failure to adequately balance the comic and tragic elements inherent in these works. Through a close examination of the form and content of Chekhov's dramas, the author shows how deeply pessimistic or overly optimistic interpretations fail to sufficiently account for the rich complexity and ambiguity of these plays. The author suggests that, by accepting that Chekhov's plays are synthetic tragi-comedies which juxtapose potentially tragic sub-texts with essentially comic texts, critics and directors are more likely to produce richer and more deeply satisfying interpretations of these works. Besides being of general interest to any reader interested in understanding Chekhov's work, the book is intended to be of particular interest to students of Drama and Theatre Studies and to potential directors of these subtle plays.