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**CATCO Presents *Life Sucks*. March 20-April 7**

***Smart comedy/drama adapted (sort of) from Anton Chekhov's Uncle Vanya***

A contemporary spin on Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya*, a group of relatives, lovers and eccentrics explores life's most perplexing questions and ponder whether life really does suck in Aaron Posner's fresh smart comedy/drama *Life Sucks*. presented by CATCO March 20-April 7.

"Imagine Woody Allen interpreting the Russian playwright and you will understand a fraction of the hysterical angst," said Steven C. Anderson, CATCO's producing director and director of *Life Sucks*., which premiered in 2015.

Posner, co-founder of the Arden Theatre Company in Philadelphia, is well-known for his adaptations, including works by William Shakespeare, Anton Chekhov and Chaim Potok. CATCO produced Posner's adaptation of Potok's *My Name is Asher Lev* during the 2014-15 season. "Posner's work, especially when it comes to classics, presents adaptations in a new light. They are creative and cleverly adapted for contemporary audiences," Anderson said.

CATCO will present *Life Sucks* in the Vern Riffe Center, Studio Two Theatre, 77 S. High St.

"Wise, profoundly humane, hilarious, quirky, endearing and, in countless clever ways, brilliantly faithful to its source," said the *Chicago Sun-Times* about *Life Sucks*. "Life sucks, maybe, but watching the Posner play is pure bliss," according to *DCTheatreScene.com*

Performing in *Life Sucks* is a veteran cast of Ohio actors, including some who are new to the CATCO stage. They include Todd Covert (Dr. Aster), who returns to CATCO after appearing in *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, *The Final Table* and *Henry Ford's Model E*. He has appeared in numerous performances with many central Ohio theatres, include Short North Stage and Weathervane Theatre. John Feather (The Professor) has worked on stage, as a voice actor and in regional commercials and industrial films. Credits include *Midsummer Night's Dream* (Nick Bottom), *Big River* (The King), *Hamlet* (Polonius) and *The Sunshine Boys* (Willie Clark). Mary Trapp Gray (Babs) has appeared in *It's A Wonderful Life: A Radio Play*, *Last Night of Ballyhoo*, *How I Learned to Drive* and *Taking Sides* at CATCO. Recent roles include Nat in Curtain Players' *Rabbit Hole* and Jean in New Players Theater's *Good People*.

They are joined by Josh Innerst (Vanya), an AudioBook narrator and member of the acting company at the American Shakespeare Center, where he has performed in more than 30

productions including *Hamlet* (Hamlet) and *Julius Caesar* (Brutus). Other credits include *Sherwood: The Adventures of Robin Hood* (Cleveland Play House), and *The 39 Steps* (Bootless Stageworks). Anita McFerran (Ella) is making her CATCO debut. Favorite roles include Shadowbox Live's *Chicago* (Hunyak), *American Idiot* (Heather) and *Scrooge* (Isabel); Mad Lab's *Kitezh* (Lily); and Imagine Productions' *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas* (Doatsey Mae). Vanessa Sawson (Pickles) performed in CATCO's play reading of *Skinny* last summer. Originally from Michigan, Sawson has performed with The Purple Rose Theatre (*Diva Royale*), Tipping Point Theatre (*Ripcord*) and Williamston Theatre (*Beau Jest*). Kelly Strand (Sonia) has performed in *Steel Magnolias* and *What the Butler Saw* at CATCO. Favorite recent credits include *Angels in America* at Ensemble Theatre of Cleveland, *Salvage* at None Too Fragile Theatre, and *A Fox on the Fairway* at Highlands Playhouse.

Anderson's directing credits include plays as diverse as the central Ohio premiere and first non-touring production in Ohio of *Fun Home*, as well as *Every Brilliant Thing*, *Eubie!*, *Aspects of Love*, *Educating Rita*, world premiere of *Henry Ford's Model E, I Do! I Do!*, *Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde*, *An Act of God*, *Mothers and Sons*, *Peter and the Starcatcher*, *The Elephant Man*, *Avenue Q*, and the highly acclaimed production of Doug Wright's *I Am My Own Wife*. He has also directed *Candide* and *Hair* at The Ohio State University Theatre Department; *Love! Velour! Compassion!* and *The Taste of Sunrise* at CATCO; *Big River* and *Pippin* at Actors Theatre; *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* at New Harmony Theatre; and *Greater Tuna*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, and *Assassins* at the former Players Theatre Columbus where he served as Associate Producing Director.

*Life Sucks*. ticket prices are Wednesdays, \$20; Thursdays, \$30; Sundays, \$35; and Fridays and Saturdays, \$40. Student tickets can be purchased for \$15 for any performance based on availability and valid I.D. All tickets can be purchased online at [www.catcoistheatre.org](http://www.catcoistheatre.org), at the box office at 39 E. State St. next to the Ohio theatre, by calling 614.469.0939, visiting [ticketmaster.com](http://ticketmaster.com) or calling or visiting any central Ohio Ticketmaster location.

The presenting sponsor for *Life Sucks*. is The Robert Weiler Company.

CATCO and CATCO is Kids' 34<sup>th</sup> season is sponsored by support from The Ohio Arts Council, which helps fund the theatre with state tax dollars to encourage economic growth, education excellence, and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans, and supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.

CATCO also appreciates the support of the Helen E. Sandfort Arts-in-Education and Florence E.K. Hurd Funds of The Columbus Foundation, assisting donors and others in strengthening our community for the benefit of all of its citizens, and the Greater Columbus Arts Council, supporting the city's artists and arts organizations since 1973. Other supporters include The Shubert Foundation Inc. and Nationwide Insurance Foundation.

CATCO and CATCO is Kids' season sponsor is L Brands; season partner is the Columbus Metropolitan Library; and media sponsor is WOSU public media. CATCO is Kids' presenting partner is The City of Columbus Recreation and Parks. For more information, visit [catcoistheatre.org](http://catcoistheatre.org).

CATCO's remaining shows for the 2018-19 season are:

- *Holmes and Watson*  
By Jeffrey Hatcher

May 29-June 16, 2019  
Van Fleet Theatre, CPAC

CATCO is Kids remaining shows for the 2018-19 season are:

- ***Seussical Kids***  
Book by Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty  
Music by Stephen Flaherty, lyrics by Lynn Ahrens  
March 23-24, 2019  
Shedd Theatre, CPAC  
549 Franklin Ave.
- ***Haroun and the Sea of Stories***  
Co-production with Columbus School for Girls  
Adapted by David Tushingham and Tim Supple  
Based on the book by Salman Rushdie  
May 3-12, 2019  
Agnes Jeffrey Shedd Theater, Columbus School for Girls  
56 S. Columbus Ave.

### **About CATCO**

CATCO is central Ohio's professional Equity theatre company, providing quality theatre and educational programs for all ages. The theatre organization has adopted an innovative strategy, building creative alliances that can sustain growth and development. For more information, visit [catcoistheatre.org](http://catcoistheatre.org). Together, CATCO and CATCO is Kids provide quality theatre and educational programs for all ages. The theatres have adopted an innovative strategy, building creative alliances that can sustain growth and development.

### **CATCO Mission Statement**

Theatre is a shared experience that illuminates the mysteries of our humanity. Its magic has the power to transform us whether on stage, in the classroom or in our diverse communities. CATCO creates theatre that delights, challenges, and transports.