

The conflict between art and life

- The play constantly contrasts **different artistic ideals**:
- **Konstantin** wants new, experimental, symbolic art.
- **Trigorin** represents successful, conventional realism.
- This tension explores **what art should be and why people create it** — for truth, fame, or love?

Unrequited love and emotional frustration

- Almost every character loves someone who doesn't love them back:
- Konstantin → Nina
- Nina → Trigorin
- Polina → Dorn
- Masha → Konstantin

The search for meaning and purpose

- Characters struggle with **boredom, failure, and disappointment**.
- Sorin regrets his wasted life; Konstantin feels like a failure; Nina loses her innocence.
- Everyone tries to **find purpose** through love, art, or ambition but fails to hold onto it.

The passage of time and the loss of dreams

- As the play moves forward, idealism fades.
- What begins with youthful passion (Act I) ends in **disillusionment and tragedy** (Act IV).
- In Chekhov's plays, people often start out **full of dreams, passion, and ambition**, but as time passes, those dreams **fade, weaken, or completely die**. **the slow loss or destruction of people's hopes** like how something rots or fades away with time.

Generational conflict

- The younger generation (Konstantin, Nina) dreams of new forms and freedom.
- The older generation (Arkadina, Trigorin) clings to tradition and stability.
- This reflects the **clash between innovation and conservatism**, both in art and in life.



Ilya Repin Barge Haulers on the Volga (1873)



Ivan Shishkin (1889) Morning in the pine forest



A Doss house (1889)
Vladimir Makovsky

Ilya Repin They did not expect him (1884-1888)



Vladimir Makovsky
The collapse of the bank (1881)



Vasili Perov
The village funeral (1861)



Russia in 1533

ACQUISITIONS:

1533-1689

1689-1801

Alexander I
(1801-1825)

Nicholas I
(1825-1855)

Alexander II
(1855-1881)

Alexander III
(1881-1894)

0 250 500 750 mi
0 500 1000 km

