

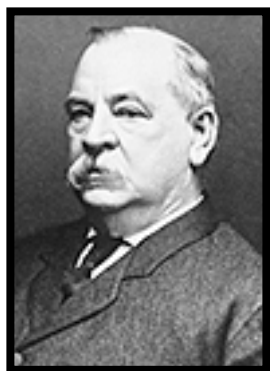
What in the world was going on in 1893?

The School of Theatre's production of *The Sea Gull* is set in Russia in 1893. Find out what was happening around the world at the time!

**April 8** - The first recorded college basketball game occurs in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania between the Geneva College Covenanters and the New Brighton YMCA.

**May 5** - Panic of 1893: The New York Stock Exchange crashed, leading to an economic depression in America. The Depression of 1893 was one of the worst in American history with the unemployment rate exceeding ten percent for half a decade.

**July 1** - U.S. President Grover Cleveland is secretly operated on to avoid further panic that might worsen the financial depression. Under the guise of a vacation cruise, Dr. Joseph Bryant removed parts of his upper left jaw and hard palate. The size of his tumor and the extent of the operation left Cleveland's mouth disfigured so he was fitted with a hard rubber dental prosthesis that corrected his speech and restored his appearance. A cover story about the removal of two bad teeth kept the suspicious press placated.



**July 11** - In Japan Mikimoto Kokichi develops the method to seed and grow cultured pearls. The development of cultured pearls took much of the guesswork out of the pearl industry, allowing it to become stable and predictable, and fostering rapid growth over the past 100 years. Today more than 99% of all pearls sold worldwide are cultured pearls.

**September 4** - English author Beatrix Potter first tells the story of Peter Rabbit. Peter Rabbit was originally created as a letter to the five-year-old son of Potter's former governess. The boy was ill, and Potter wrote him a picture and story letter to cheer him up and help him pass the time.



September 19 - New Zealand becomes the first country in the world to grant women the right to vote.

**October 10** - The first car number plates appear in Paris, France. The earliest plates were made out of porcelain baked onto iron or ceramic with no backing, which made them fragile and impractical. Later experimental materials include cardboard, leather, plastic and during wartime shortages copper and pressed soybeans.

**December 5** - Toronto, Canada produced the first electric car to go 15 miles between charges. Electric cars today can go between 30 - 125 miles between charges.

The School of Theatre  
AT FLORIDA STATE



Did you know?

The Russian name of the play actually translates into *The Gull* in English but has such a history of being performed as *The Seagull* and *The Sea Gull* that FSU chose to stick with the recognizable title.



Anton Chekhov

Growing up Chekhov

Anton Pavlovich Chekhov was born on January 17, 1860 in Taganrog, a small town in the Sea of Azov in southern Russia. His father led a strict household, with the children's time divided among school, working in his grocery store, and strict daily observance of Russian Orthodox Church worship. Chekhov attended school at the local gymnazija (which is a government middle and high school). When his father's grocery store business failed, his family moved to Moscow, leaving Anton behind to finish school. He supported himself for several years by tutoring other students. In 1879 Anton joined his family in Russia and enrolled in Medical School at Moscow State University. He graduated from Medical School in 1884 and would go on to practice medicine intermittently throughout the rest of his life. It was never a source of income for him, as he mostly treated peasants and poor workers at provincial clinics free of charge.

Chekhov the writer

Throughout the late 1880s and into the early 1890s, Chekhov makes the transition to become a critically recognized writer. *The Sea Gull* was first staged in St. Petersburg in 1896 to disastrous results and was re-premiered in December of 1898 at the Moscow Art Theater with much more success. Written in 1895-1896, *Uncle Vanya* was first staged in 1897 in the Russian Provinces. In October of 1899 it opened to great success at the Moscow Art Theater. *The Three Sisters* premiered in 1899 to mixed reviews, and in 1904 *The Cherry Orchard* (written in 1903) premiered.

Personal life

In 1884 Chekhov suffered his first hemorrhage from tuberculosis. Being a doctor he knew that living with the disease was essentially a death sentence, though he hid the disease's existence from others for many years. In 1899 he left Moscow for the warmer climate of Yalta on the Crimean Sea. Chekhov married Olga Knipper in 1901. Knipper played Masha in *The Three Sisters*, Elena in *Uncle Vanya*, and Varya in *The Cherry Orchard* throughout her career. In April 1904 Chekhov's doctors sent him abroad to a spa in Badenweiler Germany as his health continued to decline. He died on July 2, 1904 from complications of tuberculosis and was buried in Moscow.



Anton Chekhov

# The Sea Gull

## Cast of Characters

taken from *Chekov: Four Plays* by Carol Rocamora

Unlike English words, Russian words contain only one accent. In general, accented e is pronounced as in "yet."

**Irina Nikolayevna Arkadina:** Ee-ree'-na Nee-kah-lah'-yuhv-nuh Ahr-kah'-dee-nuh

**Konstantin Gavrilovich Treplev:** Kuhn-stahn-teen' Gahv-ree'-luh-veech Tryep'-lyihf (Kost'-yuh)

**Pyotr Nikolayevich Sorin (Petruha):** Pyo'-tur Nee-kah-lah'-yuh-veech So'-reen (Pee-troo'-shuh)

**Nina Mikhailovna Zarechnaya:** Nee'-nuh Meee-khai-luhv-nuh Zah-ryech'-nuh-yuh (kh is a hard h sound. Example: khai rhymes with the word why)

**Ilya Afanasyevich Shamrayev:** Eel-yah' Uh-fah-nah'-syih-veech Shahm-rah'-yihf

**Paulina Andreyevna:** Pah-lee'-nuh Ahn-drey'-yihf-nuh

**Marya Ilyinichna (Masha) (Mashenka):** Mah'-ryuh Eel-yeen'-eech-nuh (Mah'-shuh) (Mah'-sheen-kuh)

**Boris Alexeyevich Trigorin:** Bah-rees' Ah-leek-syey'-yee-veech Tree-go'-reen

**Yevgeny Sergeevich (Sergeich) Dorn:** Yeev-ge'-nee Syer-gey'-ee-veech (Syer-gey'-eech) Dorn

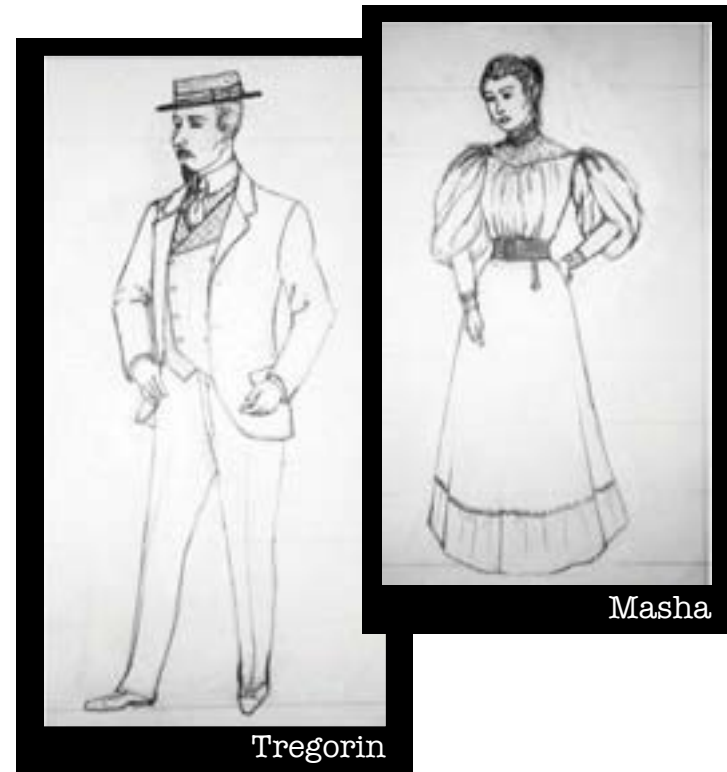
**Semyon Semyonovich Medvedenko:** See-myon' See-myon'-uh-veech Myeed-vyee-dyen'-ko

**Yakov:** Yah'-kuhf

## Did you know?

On October 17, 1896, *The Sea Gull* was first premiered at the Alexandrinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg. But it was a total disaster and booed at by the audience. Playwright Anton Chekhov hid backstage for the last two acts. This was a bleak chapter in the performance history of *The Sea Gull*.

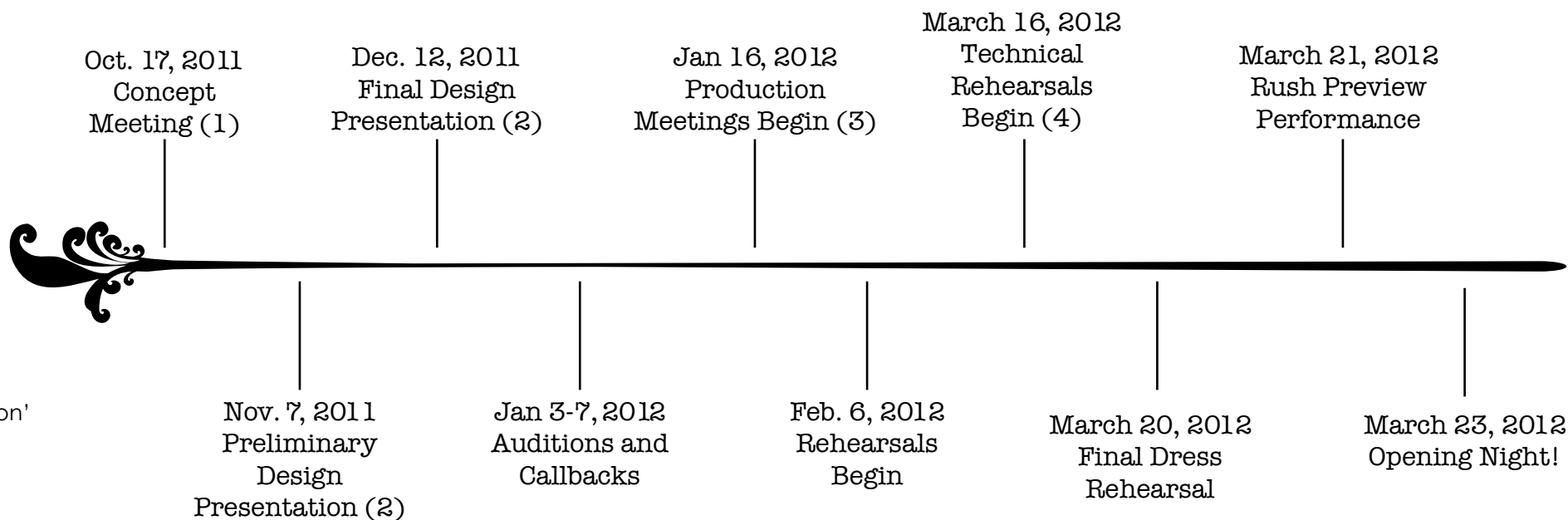
- Bryan Schmidt, Dramaturg



Costume Designs by Christine Marullo

## Tech Timeline

The School of Theatre at Florida State produces six productions each season. Check out the timeline of what it took to make *The Sea Gull* happen!



(1) A concept meeting is the first time the Director, Designers, and the Production Team meet to discuss themes and concepts surrounding the production.

(2) The Design Presentation is a chance for the designers to present their designs to the Director. These designs could be drawings, projections, models, sound clips, or display boards.

(3) Production Meetings, which are led by the Stage Manager, happen weekly throughout the life of a show. They give the production team a change to check in and discuss what is happening with the play.

(4) A Technical Rehearsal is where all of the elements of a play (sound, lights, costumes, scenery, props, and acting) come together to create what will soon be the finished product.

## What's in a name?

In Russia when a couple gets married, the bride often adopts her husband's surname in its feminine version. Typically this happens by adding "-a" though sometimes it occurs by adding "-aya."

For example: Ivanov becomes Ivanova and Stronsky becomes Stronskaya. In most cases the wife and husband never have an identical surname, which often creates translation problems.

## Nickname game!

In Russian culture, specific accepted nicknames are commonly associated with proper names. Often Russian nicknames use the short version of a person's name, and then insert a group of letters prior to the final letter. The most common letters used are -en'k, -echk, -ochk, -ushk, and -yush.

Below is a list of some common Russian names and their associated nickname, including some that appear in *The Sea Gull*.

- Aleksandr: Sasha, Shurik, Sanya, Alik
- Irina: Ira, Irinushka, Irochka, Irusha
- Ivan: Vanya, Ivanushka
- Larisa: Lara, Larochka, Larisochka
- Mikhail: Misha, Mishen'ka
- Mariya: Masha, Manya, Mashen'ka
- Margarita: Rita, Ritulya, Ritochka
- Pavel: Pavlusha, Pasha
- Pyotr: Petruha, Petya
- Vladimir: Volodya, Vova, Vovochka
- Yakov: Yasha, Yashen'k

## Did you know?

The Sea Gull was Director Fred Chappell's first play he directed at FSU 25 years ago!