

Theme of The Swan song

The swan song by Anton Chekhov shows the despair, failure and tragic story of Svietlovidov's life. This play is filled with serious themes. Swan song refers to the final performance or gesture given just before death or retirement. Svietlovidov is about to retire after working as an actor for forty five years, so he gives his final performance.

Chekhov deals with the theme of death and old age. Svietlovidoff is sixty eight years old and spent forty five years acting on stage. He finds that there is not a single person to care for him. He feels that he has become useless. He remembers his past activities, choices and mistakes throughout the play. He is sad because he cannot relive those days.

Chekhov has depicted the attitude of society towards the career in acting. In spite of the fact that art and acting were viewed with more reverence in that time, artists were treated in the exact opposite manner. The only love they received was for their work. The girl with whom Svietlovidov was deeply in love put a condition for him to leave the acting career if they were to get married. This seems to have deeply affected him because he remained unmarried throughout his life and didn't change his career. Hence, attitude of society also has a major impact over psychology of a person.

Svietlovidov was drunk when he poured out all his feelings and emotions to Nikita Ivanich. He thought that he was really old and was not able to perform in the same way he once did. He lamented his condition and compared it with the past. When he started to perform Shakespeare's play with Nikita, he again felt rejuvenated and thought that he was still capable of pulling out another outstanding performance. This illusion about the real condition made it hard for him to change his situation and move on with his life in a
Finally, at the end of the drama, Svietlovidov realized that the time for him to leave the stage had come. He accepted that old age had engulfed his enthusiasm and abilities. His swan song had been sung. This acceptance of reality helped him to cope with his present condition. This theme teaches us that instead of focusing on what we don't have, we should accept the truth of our situation and do what we can to improve it, even if it means letting go.