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LIVING STEREO



SUPER AUDIO CD

MUSSORGSKY
Pictures at an Exhibition
A NIGHT ON BALD MOUNTAIN
AND OTHER RUSSIAN SHOWPIECES

FRITZ REINER
CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA



MODEST MUSSORGSKY (1839-1881)

(orch. Maurice Ravel)

Pictures at an Exhibition

- 1 Promenade 1:51
- 2 Gnomus 2:34
- 3 Promenade 1:05
- 4 Il vecchio castello 4:27
- 5 Promenade 0:34
- 6 Tuileries 0:59
- 7 Bydlo 3:25
- 8 Promenade 0:44
- 9 Ballet of the Chicks in Their Shells 1:12
- 10 Samuel Goldenburg and Schmuyle 2:13
- 11 The Marketplace at Limoges 1:17
- 12 Catacombae, sepulchrum romanum 1:56
- 13 Con mortuis in lingua mortua 1:59
- 14 The Hut on Fowl's Legs 3:28
- 15 The Great Gate at Kiev 5:15

(Recorded December 7, 1957)



PIOTR ILICH TCHAIKOVSKY (1840-1893)

- 16 **Marche miniature**[†] (from Suite No. 1 in D Minor, Op. 43) 2:05

MUSSORGSKY

- 17 **A Night on Bald Mountain** 10:14

ALEXANDER BORODIN (1833-1887)

- 18 **Prince Igor: Polovtsian March** 4:48

TCHAIKOVSKY

- 19 **Marche slave** 10:29

DMITRI KABALEVSKY (1904-1987)

- 20 **Colas Breugnon, Op. 24: Overture** 4:48

MIKHAIL GLINKA (1804-1857)

- 21 **Russlan and Ludmilla: Overture** 5:19

(Recorded March 14, 1959)

Chicago Symphony Orchestra

Fritz Reiner, conductor

(Recorded in Orchestra Hall, Chicago)

Produced by Richard Mohr

Recording Engineer: Lewis Layton

Mastering Engineer: Mark Donahue

DSD Engineer: Philipp Nedel

Remastering Supervisor: John Newton

Reissue Producer: Daniel Guss

Series Coordination: Tim Schumacher

Editorial Supervision:

Elizabeth A. Wright

Design: Red Herring Design

Photography: Sara Foldenauer

These were original three-track stereo recordings; in SACD surround mode, the music will be heard only from the front left, center and right channels.

¹The second half of this program was originally issued on a record called "Festival." Although "Festival" was recorded on three tracks, the Tchaikovsky Marche miniature did not employ the center track. (No documentation exists to explain this anomaly, but it may have been because the work is scored primarily in the treble register.) Therefore, in surround mode, this one selection will be heard from the front left and right speakers only.

For more information about Living Stereo and other Living Stereo SACDs, please visit www.livingstereo-sacd.com

NOTES BY ALFRED FRANKENSTEIN

MUSIC AND ART EDITOR, SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE (1958)

In the 1860s a wave of aesthetic nationalism swept through Russia. Architects like Victor Hartmann abandoned the classic domes and columns that had given St. Petersburg a Roman air and went in for structure and ornament based on medieval and contemporary folk styles. Composers like Modest Mussorgsky sought the materials of a new idiom in Russian folk music and the subjects for opera and song in Russian history and in the life about them. It is scarcely surprising, therefore, that Hartmann and Mussorgsky were friends.

Hartmann died in 1873, and in the spring of the following year about 400 of his works were displayed in the rooms of the St. Petersburg Society of Architects. Mussorgsky attended the Hartmann memorial exhibition, to which he had lent some drawings from his own collection, and wrote a suite for piano inspired by ten of the things he saw there. No one paid much attention

to this work until 1922, when Ravel orchestrated it at the request of Serge Koussevitzky. For half a century, therefore, no special reason existed for interest in the work of Hartmann. His drawings were scattered, most of them disappeared, and several of Mussorgsky's biographers have stated that they are all beyond recovery. The writer of these lines, however, had the good fortune to locate about seventy of the 400 pictures that were in the exhibition Mussorgsky saw. The most important of these may be found in *The Musical Quarterly* for July 1939, and in an illustrated edition of the original piano score published by the International Music Company of New York.

Promenade. The introduction, the theme of which recurs numerous times, conveys an idea of the composer himself wandering about in the picture gallery. It is an awkward, waddly, 11/4 rhythm; Mussorgsky was no sylph.

Gnomus. The picture was a design for a nutcracker in the form of a gnome with huge jaws. Mussorgsky gives us a twitching, jumping homunculus in his music.

Promenade. Mussorgsky marches on until he comes to—

Il vecchio castello. As an architectural student in Italy, Hartmann had been required to make drawings of the famous old buildings he had seen. One of them represented an unidentifiable castle. In order to suggest its scale, Hartmann drew a human figure in the foreground, and incidentally made it look like a troubadour with a lute. Mussorgsky seizes upon this figure as the pretext for a serenade whose burden, in the Ravel version, is carried by the saxophone.

Promenade. A link to—

Tuilleries. A fast, breezy sketch, which Mussorgsky subtitles “Dispute of the children after play.” Hartmann’s drawing was of a group of children and nursemaids in the famous Parisian park.

Bydlo. The title is a Polish word meaning “cattle.” Hartmann’s picture represented a Polish oxcart lumbering down a muddy road on huge wooden wheels. Mussorgsky’s music involves a marching, folk-like tune given out by the tenor tuba.

Promenade. This quiet version of the theme is startlingly interrupted by—

Ballet of the Chicks in Their Shells. A cheeping, pecking scherzo. The picture was a ballet costume. For the picture itself, and the long story that goes with it, the reader is referred to the above-mentioned article in *The Musical Quarterly*.

Samuel Goldenburg and Schmuyle.

This was a drawing of a beggar trying to wheedle something out of a rich man on a street corner in a Polish ghetto. The music begins with the pompous pronouncement of the lordly Samuel Goldenburg; the trumpet comes in with Schmuyle’s chatter, and this continues breathlessly to the end despite Goldenburg’s efforts to fulminate a reply.

The Marketplace at Limoges. Again Mussorgsky seizes upon a purely incidental detail. Hartmann’s drawing was of the façade of the cathedral at Limoges, but in the foreground he sketched some market women and pushcarts. Mussorgsky’s scherzo-like piece reconstructs the lively gossip of these ladies.

Catacombae, sepulchrum romanum.

(The Latin here is as original as the music, as is the case with the title to the following movement.) Hartmann’s picture represented the architect himself and a friend studying a pile of skulls in a catacomb. Mussorgsky’s movement is brief, solemn and climactic, and leads without pause to—

Con mortuis in lingua mortua.

Mussorgsky’s numerous footnotes to the music, all of which can be found in the *Quarterly* article, must be quoted here. The footnote hangs from the title and reads “A Latin text: ‘With the dead in a dead language.’ Well may it be in Latin! The creative spirit of the departed Hartmann leads me to the skulls, calls out to them, and the skulls begin to glow dimly from within.” The reference, of course, is to the preceding picture; here Mussorgsky comments on it, with the *Promenade* theme in a highly elegiac form.

The Hut on Fowl's Legs. Baba Yaga is a Russian witch who lives in a hut supported on four chicken feet and rides through the air in a mortar, which she often uses to grind up human bones for food. Hartmann had designed a hilariously Victorian-looking clock in the form of Baba Yaga's dwelling. Mussorgsky's music, however, deals with her method of locomotion. Baba Yaga flies up and into—

The Great Gate at Kiev. Hartmann had entered a competition for a memorial gateway to be erected in Kiev, but the competition was called off for lack of funds and no Great Gate was ever put up. Hartmann's design is indescribable (without considerable detailed explanation), but it involved a tower in the form of an old Slavonic war helmet, a chapel over the arch, and columns apparently sunk deep into the ground with age, the whole covered with brilliant orange tiles. Mussorgsky's music evokes a great procession through the gate, with the chanting of priests and the ringing of bells; the *Promenade* theme recurs for the final time to bind the entire suite together.

NOTES BY LOUIS BIANCOLLI (1960)

Several decades ago, in the first wild flush of enthusiasm for the novels of Dostoyevsky, Turgenev and Tolstoy, an American scholar remarked that Russian fiction was like German music—"the best in the world." Whatever the truth of the twofold pronouncement, and most of us would not hesitate to subscribe to it if by German music we included Austrian music too, it implies a quality of strong universal appeal in Russian fiction. This appeal derived, in large part, from its confiding warmth and profound involvement in the human condition. There is nothing abstract or impersonal about the great Russian novels. They generate an immediate impact of feeling. Their pages throb with eager life and a passionate search for meaning and fulfillment. Conflict is enacted against a backdrop of measureless night and icy stillness. And over the Slavic expanse, from time to time, come echoes of a sensuous and inviting Orient.

So it is, in many ways, with Russian music. Perhaps not, all things considered, "the best in the world," but certainly, if one is to judge from audience polls of concert preferences, among the most enduring music in popularity. At its most characteristic, Russian music makes a direct and emphatic appeal. If questioned, thousands of music lovers everywhere would admit having been first drawn to the concert repertory through some overture, march, concerto or symphony by a Russian composer, in all likelihood Tchaikovsky. Like Russian fiction, Russian music seems always to be excited about something, constantly on the move toward some coveted goal. Momentum gathers as in a well-told story or drama. Whether it be a tone poem to a Shakespearean theme or a symphony with only a number to guide us, we are at once inveigled into a glowing circle of suspense and anticipation. Some tumultuous action is under way, maybe the grim pounding

spectacle of marching masses, maybe a piano on a high adventure of the spirit.

Name your Russian composer, of those grouped here—Tchaikovsky, Borodin, Mussorgsky, Glinka, Kabalevsky—and see for yourself if this isn't so. At the heart of each composition is a sustained pulse of excitement of some kind. In the overtures of Glinka and Kabalevsky, a buoyant, even gay, exuberance provides the impetus. Theme and rhythm bustle ahead spiritedly, as if to stop were to wither and die. The melodies are coiling threads of grace slipping in and out of the swift fabric. Not a moment is lost in the hearty commotion that subsides only with the last chord. Both these overtures, one from the beginnings of Russian music—Glinka's *Ruslan and Ludmilla*, one from the energetic new Russia of today—Kabalevsky's *Colas Breugnon*, are living entities of bounding gusto and bracing freshness.

Excitement of another order surges through Mussorgsky's flashing tapestry of a Witches' Sabbath. Jagged lightning rips across a spectral landscape. Dances of grotesque savagery follow in ghostly sequence. Through the wild night ring the grisly cries of hideous demons. A bewitched orchestra has sprung into unearthly life. Amid ominous shimmers and lurid flashes the Black Mass is celebrated. Suddenly there is a strange calm, of gentler spirits urging peace. But the frenzy returns, as strings, winds, brasses and drums once more go berserk. Finally a church bell sounds, and the foul hosts of evil fade back into the night. A clarinet chants a matchless theme of solace. Dawn spreads its mantle over the quiet scene. Once again the orchestra serves as a giant narrator endowed with infinite resources to compel attention. This is one of the great ghost stories of symphonic music, told with demonic effects of violins,

woodwinds and brasses far beyond the reach of words. In its teeming color, crashing climaxes, folkish cut of theme and ceaseless tension, *A Night on Bald Mountain* is Russian to the core.

So is Tchaikovsky's *Marche slave*. Mingled here with catchy Serbian tunes and the Russian anthem is a broad somber theme of inexorable motion, as of a grumbling continent on the march. Many would gladly vote this composition their favorite concert march, after making due obeisance to Beethoven, Schubert, Wagner, Elgar, Prokofiev and our own inimitable Sousa. No less Slavic, but with the added bite of Tartar barbarism is the savage *Polovtsian March* that opens the third act of *Prince Igor* and in the opera house is joined by the chorus to signal the arrival of the fearsome Khan. Those who know only the wild and sensuous dances from this opera may thus add another exotic item to their Polovtsian shelf.

Fritz Reiner was internationally recognized as one of the foremost conductors of his time. Born in 1888 in Budapest, he received his musical education at the Academy of Music there. At the age of 23 he became conductor of the Budapest Volksoper and two years later was appointed principal conductor of the Royal Opera in Dresden; while there he worked with Richard Strauss on productions of his early operas and conducted the German premiere of *Die Frau ohne Schatten*. In 1922 Reiner became conductor of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra; nine years later he went to the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia to head the orchestral department. After a decade (1938–48) as music director of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, he joined the Metropolitan Opera. Then, in 1953, he became music director of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, which he built into one of the world's

great ensembles. Ill health forced him to resign his post in 1962, and he died the following year.

Reiner was extraordinary not only as an orchestra builder but also for his broad range of repertoire, both symphonic and operatic. He was equally the master of the delicately balanced sonorities of Mozart and the massive richness of Richard Strauss; he was a champion of 20th-century music, and he could give incomparably lilting performances of the waltzes of Johann Strauss.

On October 6, 1953, RCA Victor made its first experimental "binaural" recordings. At New York's Manhattan Center, Leopold Stokowski conducted a pick-up orchestra in Enesco's *Roumanian Rhapsody No. 1* and Tchaikovsky's *Waltz from Eugene Onegin*. In December RCA continued stereo tests in Manhattan Center with Pierre Monteux and members of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Then, in February 1954, RCA took equipment to Boston's Symphony Hall, where Charles Munch and the Boston Symphony were recording Berlioz's *The Damnation of Faust*. For the first time, RCA engineers captured the performance on both mono and two-track tape. These experiments, combined with further technological refinements employed in Chicago's Orchestra Hall in March 1954, were the first forays into the world of stereo.

THE HISTORY OF LIVING STEREO

At the time that RCA initiated multi-track sessions, disc mastering and consumer playback technology were monaural. RCA Victor proceeded to use two- and three-track equipment to record the world's greatest artists—Heifetz, Piatigorsky, Reiner, Munch, Rubinstein, Fiedler—in anticipation that home technology would catch up to stereo sound. Finally, in 1955, 1/4" 7 1/2ips stereophonic tape players arrived on the consumer market, and RCA released its first Stereo Orthophonic tapes.

Stereo Orthophonic tapes redefined high fidelity. In 1958, the Western Electric Company produced the breakthrough Westrex stereo disc cutter, thereby revolutionizing master disc production. Stereo playback equipment was developed to coincide with the new disc cutting technology. The same year, Living Stereo LP records were launched, ushering in the golden age of stereo high fidelity.

RCA Victor's first two-track sessions in late 1953 and early 1954 were captured on proprietary RCA RT-21 1/4" 30ips tape machines, wired to a pair of mono mixers, each dedicated to one tape track. Neumann U-47 cardioid and M-49/50 omnidirectional microphones were favored, as were RCA-designed LC-1A 15" duo-cone speakers in the control room. Three track recordings were realized on tube amplifier Ampex 300-3 1/2" machines running at 15ips and in later years at 30ips, and were mixed down to 1/4" two-track masters. No equalization was used in the original tracking process; the microphone signals were summed through passive electronics and printed straight to tape. In addition, no equalization was used to alter playback takes for artist approval.

TECHNICAL NOTES

JOHN NEWTON, SOUNDMIRROR INC.

Since the earliest days of recording, engineers have strived to make recorded sound as immediate and thrilling as natural sound. The earliest electrical recordings were made with a single microphone positioned in the hall for optimum balance. The signal was fed to a cutting lathe, and with the advent of magnetic recording, to a monaural tape recorder; a copy of that tape was used to produce the LPs which consumers listened to at home.

With stereo, two microphones were placed in the hall. Signals were fed to a stereo tape recorder and consumers, listening back on two speakers, heard a new "depth" of sound. By placing microphones in the left, center, and right of the hall, engineers progressed to 3-channel recordings, which afforded them greater control over the musical

balances that ended up in the stereo mix. Even as CDs replaced LPs, this same process was often followed.

Today, with the advent of SACD and multi-channel playback, the listener can hear the left, center, and right channels exactly as the engineers heard them at the original recording sessions. In this series of Living Stereo reissues on hybrid SACDs, we have used the 3-channel original tapes whenever they existed; when the material was recorded only in stereo, we used that tape. Some of the SACDs will therefore contain 2-channel, or a combination of 2- and 3-channel material. We used only two or three of the available six channels on the SACD disc because that was the vision of the original producers.

In remastering these tapes, we kept the signal path as short as possible. A Studer-Aria analog tape recorder was

connected with premium Siltech cabling directly to specifically chosen dCS converters. This DSD data is directly encoded on the SACD. Thus the listener is able to hear the output of these converters exactly as we heard it in the studio. The DSD program is essentially identical to the analog tape. What you hear are faithful copies of each historic recording—the pure performance, presented in its original splendor. No signal processing was necessary to "improve" these extraordinary tapes.

Throughout this very exciting project, history came alive as we heard the voices of legendary engineers verbally slating the tapes with the location and date of each session. We were greatly impressed not only with how little the original tapes were edited, but how skillfully engineers edited with their high-tech tool of the day, namely, a

razor blade! Applying the best in 21st-century remastering technology, we believe we have done justice to the best in 20th-century recording technology for a new generation of listeners.

TECHNISCHE ANMERKUNGEN

JOHN NEWTON, *SOUNDMIRROR INC.*

Seit Beginn der Aufnahmetechnologie streben Tontechniker danach, den Klang der Aufnahme so unmittelbar und ergreifend zu erzeugen, wie der natürliche Klang selbst. Die frühesten elektronischen Aufnahmen wurden mit einem einzigen Mikrofon durchgeführt, das in der Mitte des Aufnahmesaals positioniert war, um eine optimal ausgewogene Balance zu erzeugen. Das Signal wurde zu einer Schnittmaschine, und nach der Einführung von magnetischen Aufnahmen zu einer Bandmaschine geleitet. Eine Kopie dieses Bandes wurde dann für die Produktion der LPs verwendet, welche die Käufer zuhause abspielten.

Seit dem Stereozeitalter wurden zwei Mikrophone im Aufnahmesaal platziert. Die Signale wurden zu einer Stereo-bandmaschine geleitet, und die Konsumenten, die die LP auf zwei Lautsprechern abspielten, bekamen einen neuen

Eindruck der „Tiefe“ des Klanges. Durch eine Anordnung der Mikrophone links, mittig und rechts im Aufnahmesaal, gelangten die Tontechniker zu 3-Kanal Aufnahmen. Diese erlaubten ihnen eine größere Kontrolle über die musikalische Balance, was im Stereo Mix aufging. Noch als CDs die LPs ersetzten, wurde dieses Verfahren oft verwendet.

Heute, seit der Einführung der SACD und Multi-Kanal Wiedergabe, kann der Konsument den linken, mittleren und rechten Kanal exakt so wahrnehmen und hören, wie der Tontechniker sie während der ursprünglichen Aufnahmesitzung gehört hat. Für diese Serie von Living Stereo Wiederveröffentlichungen auf hybrid SACDs haben wir die originalen 3-Kanal Bänder verwendet, wann immer diese existent waren. Sofern nur in Stereo aufgenommen wurde, haben wir diese Bänder verwendet. Deshalb enthalten einige dieser SACDs nur 2-Kanal oder

eine Kombination aus 2-Kanal und 3-Kanal Aufnahmen. Wir haben darum auch nur zwei oder drei der sechs auf einer SACD verfügbaren Kanäle benutzt, da dies die Vision der ursprünglichen Produzenten war.

Während des Remastering Prozesses dieser Bänder haben wir den Weg des Signals so kurz wie möglich gehalten. Eine analoge Studer-Aria Bandmaschine wurde durch hochwertige Siltech Kabel direkt mit speziell ausgewählten dCS Konvertern verbunden. Dieses DSD Datenmaterial wurde direkt auf die SACD kodiert. Dadurch ist der Konsument in der Lage, das Ergebnis dieser Konverter exakt so zu hören, wie wir es im Studio gehört haben. Das DSD Programm ist im Wesentlichen identisch mit den analogen Originalbändern. Was Sie hören sind genaue Kopien von jeder der historischen Aufnahmen—die pure Aufführung, präsentiert in ihrem ursprüng-

lichen Glanz. Keine Aufbereitung der Signale war erforderlich, um diese herausragenden Bänder zu „verbessern“.

Im Verlauf dieses außerordentlich reizvollen Projekts wurde Geschichte lebendig, während wir die Stimmen legendärer Tontechniker gehört haben, wie sie den Ort und das Datum der jeweiligen Aufnahmesitzung auf die Bänder gesprochen haben. Wir waren höchst beeindruckt, nicht nur darüber wie wenig die Originalbänder bearbeitet worden waren, sondern auch wie gekonnt die Tontechniker mit dem High-Tech Gerät ihrer Tage gearbeitet haben: einer Rasierklinge! Für eine neue Generation von Hörern glauben wir der Aufnahmetechnologie des 20. Jahrhunderts gerecht geworden zu sein, unter Verwendung der besten Remastering Technologie des 21. Jahrhunderts.

NOTE TECHNIQUE

JOHN NEWTON, *SOUNDMIRROR INC.*

Depuis les tout débuts de l'enregistrement discographique, les ingénieurs rivalisent d'efforts pour que le son enregistré soit aussi immédiat et électrisant que le son naturel. Les premiers enregistrements électriques étaient réalisés avec un seul micro placé dans la salle pour une balance optimale. Le signal était transmis à un graveur, et, avec l'avènement de l'enregistrement magnétique, à un magnétophone monophonique ; une copie de cette bande magnétique était utilisée pour produire les microsillons que le consommateur écoutait chez lui.

Pour la stéréophonie, on a installé deux microphones dans la salle. Les signaux étaient transmis à un magnétophone stéréophonique, ce qui conférait un nouveau « relief » sonore à l'enregistrement écouté par le consommateur sur ses deux haut-parleurs. En positionnant des micros à gauche, au milieu et à droite

de la salle, les ingénieurs ont évolué vers un enregistrement à trois canaux leur assurant un meilleur contrôle de l'équilibre musical du mixage stéréophonique final. Ce procédé a souvent continué à être utilisé alors même que le CD remplaçait progressivement le disque noir.

Aujourd'hui, avec l'avènement du SACD et de la restitution multicanaux, l'auditeur entend les canaux gauche, central et droite exactement comme les entendaient les ingénieurs lors des séances d'enregistrement originales. Dans cette collection de rééditions « Living Stereo » sur SACD hybrides, nous avons utilisé les bandes originales à trois canaux chaque fois qu'elles existaient ; lorsque le matériau n'était enregistré qu'en stéréophonie, c'est cette bande que nous avons utilisée. Certains de ces SACD contiennent donc des enregistrements à deux canaux, ou une combinaison

de matériau à deux et trois canaux. Nous n'avons utilisé que deux ou trois des six canaux disponibles sur les SACD, car telle était la conception des producteurs de l'époque.

Lors du rematriçage des ces enregistrements, nous avons veillé à ce que le parcours du signal soit aussi court que possible. Nous avons directement connecté un magnétophone analogique Studer-Aria à des convertisseurs dCS spécifiquement choisis, au moyen de câbles Siltech haut de gamme. Ce matériau DSD est encodé directement sur le SACD. L'auditeur peut ainsi entendre la sortie de ces convertisseurs exactement telle que nous l'avons entendue en studio. Le flux DSD est essentiellement identique à la bande analogique. Ce que vous entendez est une copie fidèle de chacun des enregistrements historiques : l'interprétation à l'état pur, présentée dans sa splendeur

originelle. Aucun traitement du signal n'a été nécessaire pour « améliorer » ces bandes extraordinaires.

Tout au long de ce projet enthousiasmant, l'histoire est redevenue vivante pour nous grâce à la voix de ces ingénieurs de légende repérant verbalement les bandes en indiquant le lieu et la date de chaque séance d'enregistrement. Nous avons été très impressionnés non seulement par le petit nombre d'interventions sur les bandes originales, mais aussi par le talent avec lequel ces ingénieurs réalisaient le montage nécessaire à l'aide de l'outil de pointe de l'époque : la lame de rasoir ! Utilisant le meilleur de la technologie de mixage numérique du XXI^e siècle, nous pensons avoir rendu justice au meilleur de la technologie d'enregistrement du XX^e siècle pour une nouvelle génération d'auditeurs.