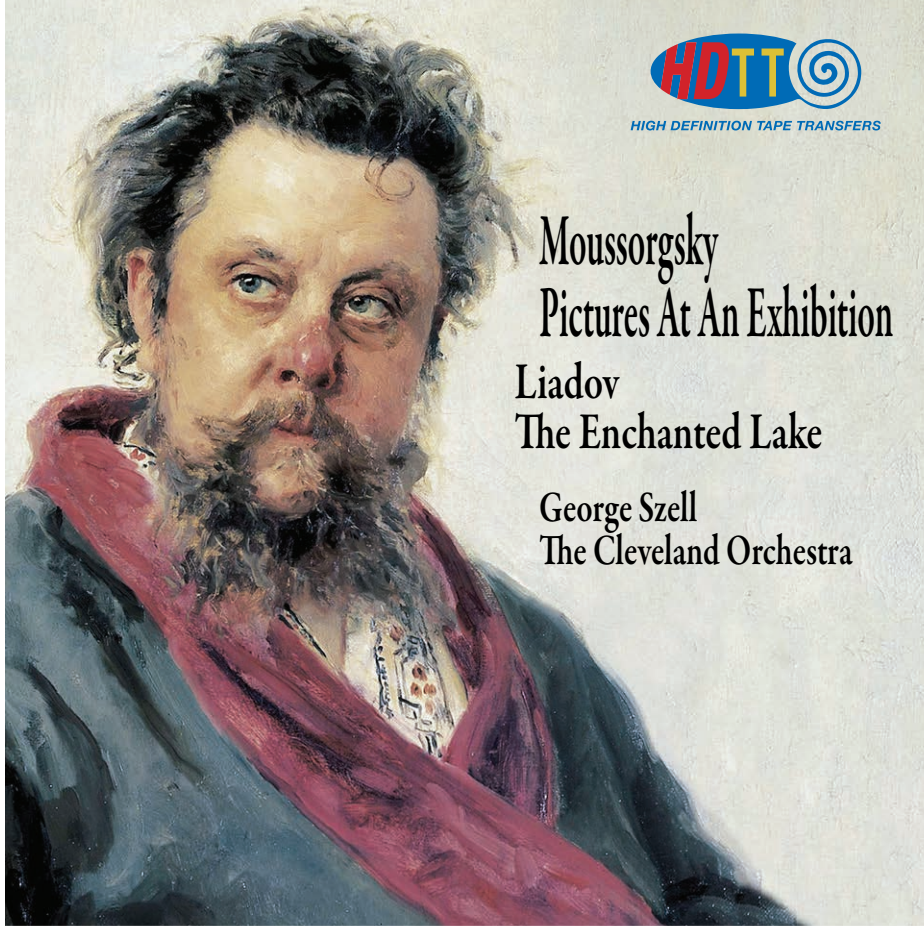


George Szell (born June 7, 1897, Budapest, Hung., Austria-Hungary died July 30, 1970, Cleveland, Ohio, U.S.) Hungarian-born U.S. conductor. He made his debut as a pianist at age 11, and before his 20th birthday he had appeared with the Berlin Philharmonic as pianist, conductor, and composer. He established himself as an opera conductor in various German cities, including Berlin and Prague . When World War II broke out, he settled in the U.S., conducting at the Metropolitan Opera and then serving as musical director of the Cleveland Orchestra . There he imposed stern discipline but won his players' devotion by his own fierce dedication. Under his direction the orchestra became known for its precision in playing and was considered one of the world's finest.

A detailed oil painting of Modest Mussorgsky. He has a full, dark beard and mustache, and his hair is thick and curly. He is wearing a dark blue or grey coat with a prominent red shawl or scarf draped over his shoulders. He is looking directly at the viewer with a thoughtful expression. The background is a light, textured wash of color.

Moussorgsky
Pictures At An Exhibition
Liadov
The Enchanted Lake
George Szell
The Cleveland Orchestra

Modest Mussorgsky, 1839–1881. Pictures at an Exhibition, orchestrated by Maurice Ravel. Completed 1874 (Mussorgsky), and 1922 (Ravel). Scored for 3 flutes (3rd doubling piccolo), 2 oboes (2nd doubling English Horn), 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, alto saxophone, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, tympani, glockenspiel, chimes, triangle, tam-tam, rattle, whip, cymbal, snare drum, bass drum, xylophone, celesta, harp, and strings.

One of Modest Mussorgsky's closest companions was Victor Hartmann, an architect and occasional painter. Mussorgsky was devastated by Hartmann's untimely death at age 39. His anguish was increased by guilt, because he had been walking with Hartmann a few weeks earlier when the artist was forced to stop and rest against a wall, and Mussorgsky had pretended nothing was wrong for fear of frightening his friend.

The following year (1874), an exhibition was organized in honor of Hartmann, and Mussorgsky's visit to that show became the most famous gallery stroll of all time, Pictures at an Exhibition. This masterful piano suite illustrates ten of Hartmann's images, with a recurring "Promenade" theme to illustrate the viewer's progress from painting to painting.

However, Mussorgsky's collection has a little-known secret: of the ten pictures illustrated, only three actually appeared in the exhibition that he attended: The Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks (from a costume design), Baba Yaga's Hut, and The Great Gate of Kiev (from a design that was never built). Of the others, most of were based on pencil drawings, some from Mussorgsky's private collection and others that he had seen elsewhere. The Gnome was a design for a toy nutcracker; Tuileries was a scene of an empty garden (with no quarreling children); Bydlo (Polish for "cattle") was probably a drawing of an oxcart; Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuyle were separate drawings; and the Catacombs were a somewhat fanciful drawing that pictured the artist in the Paris tombs. Finally, two images (The Old Castle and The Market Place at Limoges) seem to have been invented by the composer out of whole cloth.

We now come to Ravel, the master orchestrator. Mussorgsky's piano writing in the suite is as picturesque as can be, achieving mystery, frenzy, humor, and grandeur. It is a work that cries out for orchestral color, and several subsequent composers have

been unable to resist the challenge. The first appears to have been the Russian Tousemalo, but the greatest arrangement is unquestionably Ravel's. A man who would spend hours interviewing instrumentalists to discover new possibilities, yet who had a talent for absorbing different styles, he was the perfect candidate to turn the piano suite into a concert-hall showpiece. In every movement, he selected precisely the right combination of instruments needed to duplicate Mussorgsky's original atmosphere, rising to a grand and glorious finale that leaves the listener feeling as if he had traveled to Kiev specifically to stand in front of that majestic, tragically nonexistent gate.

Though not completing the ballet score that could have announced him definitively to the world in 1909, Liadov was composing one of his most popular orchestral works that year. The Enchanted Lake is a gentle yet colorful fantasy miniature that immerses the listener in the subtleties of a moonlit stillness. It is based on a fairy tale, the font from which Liadov's ideas often flowed, but doesn't so much tell a story as depict a state of being. What little tension there is merely disturbs the overriding calm for a few moments like a wistfully furrowed brow. The composer's own comments on the music describe its "seeming immobility" but his natural gifts as an orchestrator shift the moods of the scene with fascinating exactness. Though woefully inactive as a composer by comparison to his contemporaries, Liadov did have their respect. Mussorgsky recognized and lauded his talents early on and Liadov's teacher Rimsky-Korsakov, though certainly frustrated by the younger man's lack of effort as a pupil at the Conservatory, collaborated on several projects with Liadov when he later returned there as a fellow faculty member. Even Stravinsky, who initially owed Liadov a measure of gratitude for his own fame and success, was ever a champion of his friend's unique artistry. The Enchanted Lake gets little notice among the epic early 20th century musical pronouncements of Strauss and others but this is due only to the volume of Liadov's voice, not its quality. - See more at: <http://www.utahsymphony.org/insight/program-notes/560-liadov-the-enchanted-lake-op-62#sthash.z6NWzVe5.dpuf>

Moussorgsky Pictures At An Exhibition

Liadov The Enchanted Lake

George Szell The Cleveland Orchestra

1. Part I 15:30

Promenade

Gnomus

Promenade

The Old Castle

Promenade

Tuileries

Bydlo

Promenade

2. Part II 15:50

Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuyle

Limoges, the Market Place

Catacombs (Roman Sepulchre)

Con mortuis in lingua mortua

The Hut on Fowls' Legs

The Great Gate at Kiev

3. The Enchanted Lake, Op. 62 6:07



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