

a unifying device throughout; it is a portrayal of the composer himself walking from one painting to the next. The first picture is "Gnomus," inspired by a design for a toy nutcracker that Hartmann drew in 1869. Another promenade is followed by "The Old Castle," a mysterious, lonely evocation built on pedal tones. "Tuileries" is inspired by a watercolor of children at play in the garden of the Tuileries. This bright and impressionistic piece is followed by the heavy tread of "Bydło" (a Polish oxcart). Mussorgsky's setting of "Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks" is a wildly imaginative scherzo. A stern melody in a Jewish-music-derived scale opens "Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuyle," in which a wealthy Jew is portrayed by an insistent repeating figure in the treble, a poor Jew in the bass. The rapid patter of haggling housewives characterizes "The Market Place in Limoges." In another sudden change in mood, "Catacombs," which pictures Hartmann himself touring a vast catacomb of skulls, is rendered in naked chord progressions. "The Hut on Fowl's Legs (Baba-Yaga)" was inspired by Hartmann's design for a fourteenth century-style clock in the shape of a witch's hat. Mussorgsky transforms it into a miniature tone poem about Baba Yaga, the legendary Russian witch who devoured the souls of children. After a grand flourish, the work ends with "The Great Gate of Kiev," inspired by a never-implemented design Hartmann submitted to an architecture competition. Pictures of an Exhibition comes to a close with rich, booming chords which evoke bells.

Although Mussorgsky is known to have played Pictures of an Exhibition in recital, the work did not appear in print until 1886, five years after the composer's death. It remained relatively little known until Ravel made a colorful orchestration of it in 1922, and in this form it has enjoyed even greater popularity than the original.



**Prokofiev**  
**Piano Concerto No. 3**  
**Byron Janis, piano**  
**Kiril Kondrashin**  
**Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra**

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**Moussorgsky**  
**Pictures at an Exhibition**  
**Byron Janis, piano**

For his third concerto for piano and orchestra, Prokofiev looked to the past for inspiration: this concerto incorporates material derived from sketches made between 1911 and 1918. The first movement contains two themes that were written in 1916, plus a chordal passage first sketched in 1911; the second movement contains a theme and variations that was written in 1913, while the final movement uses thematic material from a discarded string quartet begun in 1918. When he began composing this concerto during a holiday in Brittany, Prokofiev wrote, "I already had all the thematic material I needed except for the third theme of the finale and the subordinate theme of the first movement." The Third Piano Concerto is perhaps Prokofiev's best known essay in this genre, and approaches Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninov in popularity and frequency of performance. Its opus number places it just after the "Classical" First Symphony of 1917, and the concerto is, in its way, similar to the First Symphony in a number of ways: both works are lively, acerbic, with brilliant orchestration and a certain transparent texture. Both pieces are also clearly the work of a deft young composer of considerable technical skill; however, the two works differ greatly in regards to their reception. The "Classical" Symphony was reasonably well received in Russia, where it was performed only once before Prokofiev emigrated to the United States. Subsequent performances of the symphony in America were very successful. The Third Concerto, on the other hand, did not fare so well, and after a good premiere in Chicago (along with the opera *Love for Three Oranges*) in 1921, the work was roundly denounced in New York.

The concerto displays much of the "harmonic liveliness," in Nancy Siff's words, of the mid-period symphonies, with its sudden shifts from

key to key and chromatic harmony. The sophistication and bravura generally associated with Prokofiev's music is ever present, as is the humor found in many of his orchestral works. The concerto is in a traditional three-movement concerto form (the only one of Prokofiev's five piano concertos to use the traditional form), beginning and ending with fast movements that flank a slow middle movement. Each movement is about the same length, and the thematic weight and interest is distributed evenly throughout the movements. The work begins with a vivacious opening movement, which includes a humorous march underlined by castanets, followed by the five variations of the second movement, and concludes with a grandiose display of colorful harmonies and virtuosic orchestration. The solo writing for the piano is also virtuosic, and at times quite percussive.

Victor Hartmann, a Russian painter and architect, was one of Mussorgsky's close friends. When Hartmann died in St. Petersburg in 1873 at the age of 41, the composer was crushed. He wrote to the art critic Vladimir Stasov, paraphrasing Shakespeare: "Why should a dog, a horse, a rat have life, and the Hartmanns perish?" In January 1874, the Russian Academy of Arts organized an exhibition of Hartmann's work. Mussorgsky attended the show, where he saw the varied images that became the basis for *Pictures of an Exhibition*. On June 2, Mussorgsky began work on *Pictures*, a musical impression of ten of Hartmann's paintings (plus five "promenades") for piano, and finished the work later in the same month.

*Pictures of an Exhibition* opens with a "Promenade" in 5/4 that serves as

# Prokofiev

## Piano Concerto No. 3

### Byron Janis, piano

### Kiril Kondrashin

### Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra

# Moussorgsky

## Pictures at an Exhibition

### Byron Janis, piano

Producer and Recording Director: Wilma Cozart

Co-Engineer - Robert W. Eberenz

Engineer, Recording Supervisor - C. Robert Fine

Prokofiev: Recorded at Bolshoi Hall, Moscow Conservatory, Moscow: 1961  
by Mercury Records using 35mm Magnetic Film Recording

Moussorgsky: Recorded at Fine Recording for Mercury Records, NYC 1961

Prokofiev Piano Concerto No 3 In C Major, Opus 26 26:49  
1 Andante - Allegro 8:56  
2 Tema Con Variazione 8:56  
3 Allegro Ma Non Troppo 8:57

Moussorgsky Pictures At An Exhibition (For The Piano)  
4 Promenade 1:29  
5 Gnomus 2:25  
6 Promenade 55  
7 Il Vecchio Castle 4:25  
8 Promenade :28  
9 Tuileries 1:00  
10 Bydlo 2:49  
11 Promenade :43  
12 Ballet Of The Chicks In Their Shells 1:13  
13 Two Polish Jews, One Rich, The Other Poor 1:51  
14 Limoges, The Market Place 1:20  
15 Catacombe (Sepulcrum Romanum) 1:47  
16 Cum Mortuis In Lingua Mortua 2:00  
17 The Hut On Fowl's Legs (Baba-Yaga) 2:59  
18 The Great Gates Of Kiev 4:11



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