

MACAL conducts **MUSSORGSKY**



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NEW JERSEY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

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MACAL conducts MUSSORGSKY

- 1** **Dream of the Peasant Gritzko** (orch. V. Shebalin) (12:19)
Clayton Brainerd, bass-baritone • Westminster Symphonic Choir
- 2** **Galitsin's Journey from Khovanshchina: Act 4, Scene 5** (orch. N. Rimsky-Korsakov) (4:37)
- 3** **Introduction to Khovanshchina** (orch. N. Rimsky-Korsakov) (6:21)

Pictures at an Exhibition (orch. M. Ravel) [32:27]

- 4** **Promenade** (1:40)
- 5** I. **Gnomus** *The Gnome* (2:33)
- 6** **Promenade** (0:55)
- 7** II. **Il Vecchio Castello** *The Old Castle* (4:18)
- 8** **Promenade** (0:32)
- 9** III. **Tuileries** (1:08)
- 10** IV. **Bydlo** (2:37)
- 11** **Promenade** (0:41)
- 12** V. **Ballet des Poussins dans leurs Coques** *Ballet of the Chicks in Their Shells* (1:17)
- 13** VI. **Samuel Goldenberg und Schmuyle** (2:18)
- 14** VII. **Limoges – Le Marché** *The Marketplace at Limoges* (1:27)
- 15** VIII. **Catacombæ – Sepulchrum Romanum** *Catacombs – Roman Tombs* (2:09)
- 16** **Cum Mortuis in Lingua Mortua** *With the Dead in a Dead Language* (1:55)
- 17** IX. **La Cabane sur des Pattes de Poule** *The Hut on Fowl's Legs* (3:30)
- 18** X. **La Grande Porte de Kiev** *The Great Gate of Kiev* (5:28)

Zdenek Macal, conductor

New Jersey Symphony Orchestra

Westminster Symphonic Choir, Joseph Flummerfelt, director

Clayton Brainerd, bass-baritone

Total Playing Time: 55:44

Our program on this recording points up a fascinating paradox in the life and music of Modest Mussorgsky. Although widely recognized as one of the greatest talents of 19th century Russian music, Mussorgsky and his music are familiar to most of us only through the filter of other composers' sensibilities.

The real Modest Mussorgsky (1839-1881) would be a classic case for a modern psychiatrist. A hyper-sensitive child, precociously musical, deeply attached to his mother, educated in a rather slap-dash manner, he reached maturity only to face his mother's death, family financial reverses, the endless intrigue necessary to make an adequate living in the Imperial Russian bureaucracy and an increasing addiction to alcohol.

From early youth he was drawn to musical composition and turned out songs, operas, piano pieces and orchestral compositions in which everyone recognized a new, fresh voice with a different approach. He formed deep friendships with many of the outstanding Russian composers of his day, a fairly small group of inward-looking musical zealots. His only trouble (they said) was that he really didn't know how to construct a piece properly, his knowledge of the rules of musical grammar seemed sketchy at best and he almost never finished anything. Nevertheless, they gave him begrudging

recognition. If he hadn't succumbed to his addiction at age forty two, he might well have triumphed over many of his problems.

Continuing the story, Mussorgsky left masses of music, most of it in disorder, flawed or unfinished. To his devoted musician friends this material offered an open invitation to remedy his mistakes with their loving corrective ministrations.

One of these friends was Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (1844-1908), a great composer in his own right, a master of orchestration, highly orthodox in his musical perceptions and tastes. Determined to make Mussorgsky's music more palatable to a wider audience, he took on the task of arranging and editing Mussorgsky's disorganized scores with a vengeance. Through all of his editions and revisions of this music, Rimsky-Korsakov's own presence is evident. His version of *Boris Godunov*, Mussorgsky's operatic masterpiece, is opulent, lavishly orchestrated and comfortable to the ear while Mussorgsky's original is spare, laconic, dissonant and tragic. Rimsky's edition of *Night on Bald Mountain* which has become a popular classic, is a dazzling orchestral showpiece very different from Mussorgsky's original 1867 composition, a spare but striking tone poem, and far more civilized and less savage than Mussorgsky's choral/orchestral version of the same music

which he had inserted into his unfinished opera *Sorochinsky Fair*.

To Rimsky-Korsakov's credit, an opera such as *Khovanshchina* might never have made it into performance at all without his reorganization efforts. Certainly the orchestral *prelude* and *interlude* included in this recording reflect Rimsky-Korsakov at his best. They are suavely orchestrated, sumptuous and brooding, but still retain the truth of Mussorgsky's vision.

To add a final footnote, Vissarion Schebalin (1902-1963) reorganized and re-edited the definitive version of the opera *Sorochinsky Fair* now used and performed throughout the world. Our recording of his version of *Night on Bald Mountain*, called in the opera *Dream of the Peasant Gritzko*, shows how conscientiously Schebalin strove to retain a truly Mussorgsky-like sense of evil and savagery in this music.

Finally we come to Maurice Ravel (1875-1937), at first thought a most unlikely choice to orchestrate the work of an unruly Russian genius. Yet, when the sensitive French composer with his acute feeling for nuance met up with the vivid musical anecdotalism of Mussorgsky's piano composition *Pictures at an Exhibition*, magic happened. It happened so effectively that to most modern listeners Ravel's orchestral version sounds like the urtext while Mussorgsky's piano original

seems a bare-bones reduction. Yet... without that original, in which everything is implied, Ravel could never have conceived the orchestral dress which brings all of Mussorgsky's ideas into sharp focus.

So we are privileged to offer you this powerful selection of Mussorgsky compositions in which the composer and his genius are reflected through the work of three other (mostly) loving collaborators — Rimsky-Korsakov, Schebalin, and Ravel.

Zdenek Macal, who conducts this recording, has a special affinity with the music of Modest Mussorgsky and has led orchestras all over the world in hundreds of performances of this music. Whichever the edition or version, his passion, temperament and knowledge permit the true genius of Mussorgsky's music to shine through. The New Jersey Symphony Orchestra and the Westminster Choir (for this recording turning themselves into a mob of howling banshees under the devilish prodding of Joseph Flummerfelt) all play and sing as if possessed.

THE PROGRAM

1 *Dream of the Peasant Gritzko* (orch. V. Schebalin)

The history of the various revisions of Mussorgsky's unfinished opera *Sorochinsky Fair* is dauntingly complex. Liadov, Cui,

Sakhnovsky and Tcherepnin all were involved at one time or another in trying to bring order to the score. Finally in 1931-32 Vissarion Schebalin produced a version which has become the definitive edition currently in use. In this revision, the great choral/orchestral passage we have recorded occurs in Act 3, Scene 2. The peasant lad Gritzko falls asleep under a tree and dreams he is witness to a Witches Sabbath (St. John's Eve on Bald Mountain). The wild dancing and singing of witches and demons are in praise of the slavic devil Tchernobog. At the height of the revelry, the dawn arrives, church bells chime, religious chants are heard and the orgy comes to an end. Gritzko wakes up and thinks about his dream.

You will recognize much of the familiar orchestral *Night on Bald Mountain* in this music but will surely find many differences in the harmonic structure and the extra dimension brought to the piece by the hair-raising choral outbursts and the demon's bass solos. Listen for the long sustained orchestral chord which signals the flight of the demons immediately followed by many seconds of absolute silence. It's a real theatrical coup!

[2] **Galitsin's Journey – from *Khovanshchina* Act IV, Scene V** (orch. N. Rimsky-Korsakov

[3] **Introduction to *Khovanshchina*** (orch. N.

Rimsky-Korsakov)

These two short orchestral pieces afford a breathing space between the hysterical fervor of the Bald Mountain orgy and the full-scale orchestral grandeur of *Pictures at an Exhibition*. They are played in reverse order from their position in the opera. The *Introduction to Act I* ([3]), sets the scene for the opera. Rimsky-Korsakov's rich setting is highly atmospheric and descriptive. The music depicts a pale winter day as dawn breaks over the Kremlin in Moscow. A slow, sad melody establishes a mood in keeping with the tragic and dramatic action that follows.

Galitsin's Journey ([2]) comes much later in the opera. When the noble Galitsin, one of the more attractive characters in the plot, is forced into exile by his enemies, a procession of his retainers and loyal troops files from the Church of St. Basil and leaves Moscow for Siberia while dejected commoners look on. A gloomy figure in the bass, played on low strings and bassoon, dominates this piece. A sad theme appears and produces an atmosphere of desolation hard to dispel.

Pictures at an Exhibition (orch. M. Ravel)

Victor Hartmann, an artist-architect well thought of in Russia, was a close friend of Mussorgsky's. He died prematurely at the

age of thirty-nine. Mussorgsky, deeply affected, paid tribute to his friend the way he knew best. In conjunction with a posthumous exhibit of the artist's work he composed a suite of piano pieces entitled *Pictures at an Exhibition*. It consisted of a number of separate movements each describing, in vivid music, one of the exhibited works. These pieces are held together by a striking device, a recurring theme called *Promenade*, which describes a spectator moving from picture to picture, his moods changing as he reacts to the different visual impressions he receives.

Although the original composition can be effective when played by a virtuoso pianist, it seldom equals the impact of this orchestral version. Maurice Ravel was commissioned to do this orchestration in 1922 by Serge Koussevitsky who subsequently premiered it in Paris and Boston. It is still generally accepted as the definitive orchestral version.

The music begins with the opening statement of the *Promenade* [4] theme in the brass. Trumpets, horns, trombones and tuba finally soften into strings and woodwinds as the spectator reaches the first picture.

[5] *The Gnome* • The music is evocative of its name — a picture of a grotesque dwarfish figure — the Gnome's spry, jerky movements are portrayed by woodwinds, plucked

strings, muted brass and descending scales.

[6] The viewer strolls on. The *Promenade* theme returns — slower, more thoughtful. The viewer arrives at the next picture.

[7] *The Old Castle* • An ancient fortress, a knight singing to his lady in the tower a plaintive serenade. First the bassoon, then a dulcet alto saxophone spin out the melancholy melody with a soft string accompaniment.

[8] *Promenade* • A brisk reprise for trumpet, trombone and tuba, ending with a plucked string passage.

[9] *Tuileries* • A lively picture of a day in Paris. Children and nurses are chattering and playing. It's a gentle spring day under the trees in April.

[10] With no interruption by the *Promenade* theme we turn directly to another picture, *Bydlo* — a crude Polish farm cart with huge wooden wheels usually pulled by a pair of oxen. The clumsy passage of this conveyance and the sound of its ponderous wheels are well portrayed in this picture. The cart approaches, passes close by, and slowly recedes into the misty distance.

[11] The *Promenade* theme returns in a minor mode as the spectator thinks about the picture just left behind. And then it is time for something very different.

[12] *The Ballet of the Chicks in Their Shells* is a whimsical sketch for a ballet costume designed by Hartmann. The music portrays

the tiny chicks chirping and pecking at their shells from within. Their antic dance gave Mussorgsky and Ravel an opportunity to paint a charming musical picture, with the woodwinds prominently on display. No *Swan Lake* this!

[13] On to another picture. We now confront *Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuyle* — the most vivid caricature in the entire suite of pieces. Goldenberg, a man of wealth, important and pleased with himself, is obviously at his wit's end trying to rid himself of the shrill importunities of his client, the nervous and obsequious Schmuyle. Goldenberg is represented by a pompous string melody. Schmuyle interrupts in the shrill and nagging tones of the trumpet. Both themes overlap until the end, where Goldenberg finally impatiently dismisses his tormentor.

[14] *The Marketplace at Limoges* • We move on immediately to an animated genre scene— Gallic housewives shopping, bargaining, arguing—a lively *allegretto*, vivacious and lighthearted. It concludes surprisingly with a swiftly ascending orchestral figure which takes us to the next picture.

[15] *Catacombs - Roman Tombs* • In little more than two minutes Mussorgsky takes us down into the chilly cells where early Christians worshipped and buried their martyrs. Solemn chords prepare us to contemplate death. This meditation leads to —

[16] *With the Dead in a Dead Language* • Here Mussorgsky returns to the *Promenade* theme, now a processional, mournful and solemn. Just as the mood becomes unbearably oppressive, things brighten up, and ascending harp scales lift us from the city of the dead into a fantastic sky where we encounter —

[17] *The Hut on Fowl's Legs* which represents the legendary house of Baba Yaga — a notorious Russian witch who traveled about in a red hot mortar which she propelled through the air with a pestle, reaching out behind from time to time to rub away her passage with a fiery broom. She was also a dedicated collector of human bones and bodies.

Hartmann conceived of her hut as a kind of infernal clock with legs. Mussorgsky and Ravel turned it into a ferocious *allegro* using the full orchestra, with brilliant brass and percussion effects leading us up and down and up again, virtually clinging to Baba Yaga's broom until we are flung violently into space only to land and finally confront

[18] *The Great Gate of Kiev* • Hartmann's painting of a projected monumental gate he hoped would be erected in the ancient city of Kiev shows a picturesque edifice in Russian folk style, highly ornamented, with golden turrets and many massive bells. What better picture to inspire a grand finale! Here Mussorgsky and Ravel pull out all the

stops to create one of the most impressive climaxes in symphonic literature. The noble, broad beginning theme is twice interrupted by solemn religious chants, which in turn are overpowered by more and more grandiose statements of the main theme. A final transformation of the *Promenade* theme in the full brass is capped by bells, cymbals,

tympani and the full resources of the entire orchestra. We are literally thrust through the great gate convinced it certainly should have been built. What a superb prospectus for an architectural project!

Harry Pack

DREAM OF THE PEASANT GRITZKO

(An approximate transliteration and translation of the Russian text)

Devils and Witches

Sagana! Pegemoht! Astaroht! Aksafat! Sabatan! *etc.*
(mystical incantations...)

Tenemos! Alegremos! Va! *etc.*
(more mystical incantations...)

Parabok, pa'crepche pa'lyubi ti yusni.
Young man, stranger to love, go to sleep.

Parabok, kogo ti pa'lyubil?
Young man, with whom did you fall in love?

Parabok, skyom kvartu pil?
Young man, with whom did you drink so much?

Parabok, tí pa'lyubil bí nas í.
Young man, you should have fallen in love with us.

Snamí vmestye bí pustilsa í plyas.
You should go together with us to dance.

Tsop, tsop, kapotsam! Va! *etc.*
(more mystical incantations...)

Parabok u pilsa vidno, pyan lyazhit byéz vyadanya í nedvezhyim.
This young man has now drunk too much and is unable to move.

Tsop, tsop, kapotsam! Va! Sagana! *etc.*
(more mystical incantations...)

Tchernobog

Nu, pozazhilis mí va pekleh, ne hudob vozhduhom dahkhnüt.
Well! He sleeps for a long time and dreams of breathing the fresh air.

Priyatno pa'gladet na svod'ne besní.
He dreams of his life in the country.

Nötch eta nasha, dö zari, za dewö, parobki moí!
But the night is ours until the sun rises. Go about your business, my people!

Devils and Witches

Sagana! Va! Tsop! Kapotsam! Tchur! Gutz! *etc.*
(more mystical incantations...)

Tchernobog

Ay, vwí dyetki, patéshaitaís!
You children, continue your fun!

Polnä swavít', velichat'. Nötch eta vasha dö zari. Taíshtas, gulaíté! Sagana!
Hold your prayers, enjoy, until the sun rises again.

Satana, pamaginam! Praklatyé!
Oh, Satan, help us! Curse us to hell!

Czech-born **Zdenek Macal**, Music Director of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra since 1993, has received international acclaim, appearing as guest conductor with over 150 orchestras including the Berlin Philharmonic, Royal Philharmonic, London Symphony Orchestra, London Philharmonic, L'Orchestre de Paris, National Orchestra of France, L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Czech Philharmonic, Vienna Symphony, Orchestra della Scala, Stockholm Philharmonic, Hamburg Philharmonic, Munich Philharmonic, and NHK Tokyo and taking part in major international festivals including those in Vienna, Lucerne, Edinburgh, Prague, Zurich, Besançon, Athens, Montreux, Holland and the Casals Festival in Puerto Rico.

Since his American debut with the Chicago Symphony in 1972, Macal has conducted widely throughout North America, regularly leading the New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, National Symphony, St. Louis Symphony, Pittsburgh Symphony, Minnesota Orchestra, Houston Symphony, and the symphony orchestras of Boston, San Francisco, Dallas, Detroit, Atlanta, Montreal and Toronto. Macal has been associated with the NJSO since 1992 when he was appointed Artistic Advisor.

His most recent seasons have included

guest appearances with the St. Louis Symphony, the New York Philharmonic, Boston Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra, Pittsburgh Symphony, National Symphony, New World Symphony, the Juilliard Orchestra, Manhattan School of Music, and internationally with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra, Toronto Symphony, Vancouver Symphony, Montreal Symphony, Helsinki Radio Orchestra, and the West German Radio Symphony Orchestra.

Recording for Delos, Macal has led the NJSO in Dvořák's *Stabat Mater*, and Glière's *Symphony No. 2* and *Red Poppy Suite*, both of which elicited rave reviews. Maestro Macal has also recorded for the EMI, French Decca, Supraphon, Koss and Deutsche Grammophon labels.

Macal has been heard with the Milwaukee Symphony in broadcasts throughout the United States and has been heard with the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra in national radio broadcasts on the National Public Radio network.

Zdenek Macal, who is now a U.S. citizen, was born in 1936 in Brno, Czechoslovakia. At the age of four, he began violin studies with his father, and went on to attend the Brno Conservatory and the Janáček Academy of Music where he graduated with the highest honors in 1960. Macal first received international attention by winning

two prestigious contests, the 1965 International Conducting Competition in Besançon, France, and the 1966 Dmitri Mitropoulos Competition in New York, chaired by the late Leonard Bernstein.

The New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, New Jersey's preeminent performing arts organization, is one of the oldest orchestras in the United States. It was founded in 1922, but traces its roots to 1846, when the Eintracht Orchestra and Singing Society of Newark was founded. Today, the NJSO, a true state orchestra, performs over 150 concerts each season from Englewood to Atlantic City, including Masterworks, Chamber Orchestra, Winter Pops, and Family subscription concerts, an extensive educational program, free summer pops concerts, and many special events. While maintaining an active statewide presence, the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra will also be the resident orchestra in the New Jersey Performing Arts Center, opening in 1997.

Zdenek Macal, Music Director of the NJSO since 1993, has been associated with the Orchestra for a number of years as a guest conductor and as Artistic Advisor since 1992. Prior to Macal, the Orchestra was led by Hugh Wolff, Music Director from 1985-92, an era of great artistic and organizational growth. A fully professional ensemble only since the 1960s, when it was led by

Kenneth Schermerhorn, the NJSO's growth in the 1970s under Music Director Henry Lewis was dramatic, bringing the NJSO into the national spotlight by expanding its geographic reach throughout New Jersey, to Carnegie Hall, the United Nations, and the Kennedy Center.

Since 1985, the NJSO has enjoyed new stature as a nationally and internationally prominent artistic force. During this period the Orchestra has gained outstanding critical acclaim for concerts in New Jersey, frequent performances in New York, at Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center, and concerts abroad.

Almost every great artist of international stature has appeared with the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra. On television, the NJSO has been featured in three PBS specials, including an historic concert with Luciano Pavarotti at Madison Square Garden, and an Emmy Award-winning program with Sarah Vaughan at Newark Symphony Hall.

The Westminster Symphonic Choir is composed of students at Westminster Choir College of Rider University in Princeton, New Jersey. It has performed with major orchestras under virtually every leading conductor of the last 60 years. Recognized as one of the world's leading choral ensembles, the choir has sung over 300 performances with the New York Philharmonic alone. The

Choir has been featured on two recent Delos recordings: Dvořák's *Stabat Mater* with the NJSO and Maestro Macal, and *Singing for Pleasure*, an all-Brahms choral program. The choir has made numerous other recordings, on the Columbia, Deutsche Grammophon, EMI, Philips Classics, RCA, Chesky and Teldec labels.

In addition to its performances with the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, The Westminster Choir's recent appearances have included performances of Britten's *War Requiem* and Debussy's *Le martyre de Saint Sebastien* with Kurt Masur and the New York Philharmonic.

The Choir's principal conductor and artistic director is Dr. Joseph Flummerfelt. Its interim associate conductor is Andrew Megill and accompanist is Nancianne Parrella.

Westminster Choir College of Rider University is one of five colleges of Rider University, whose main campus is in Lawrenceville, New Jersey. A professional college of music with a unique choral emphasis, Westminster prepares students at the undergraduate and graduate levels for careers in teaching, sacred music and performance.

For more than two decades **Joseph Flummerfelt's** musical artistry has been acclaimed in many of the world's finest concert halls. His career has included collaborations with such eminent conductors as Abbado, Boulez, Dohnanyi, Giulini, Leinsdorf, Macal, Masur, Mehta, Muti, Ozawa, Penderecki, Sawallisch, Shaw and Steinberg.

A gifted choral conductor, Flummerfelt made his conducting debut with the New York Philharmonic in 1988 and regularly guest conducts orchestras such as the Fort Worth Chamber Orchestra, the Spoleto Festival Orchestra, the Juilliard Symphony, the Westminster Festival Orchestra, the Orchestra of St. Luke's, and the San Antonio Symphony. Maestro Flummerfelt is the director of choral activities for the Spoleto Festival U.S.A. in Charleston, S.C. (since 1977), and for 22 years was the Maestro del coro for the Festival dei Due Mondi in Spoleto, Italy. He is the chorus master of the New York Philharmonic, the founder and conductor of The New York Choral Artists, and the music director of Singing City in Philadelphia.

Dr. Flummerfelt's honors include le Prix du President de la Republique of L'Academie de Disque Français, two Grammy® nominations, the Mobil Pegasus Award for his "remarkable contribution to the Festival of Two Worlds," and four honorary doctorates.

The award-winning baritone **Clayton Brainerd** was a finalist for both Metropolitan Opera and San Francisco Opera Auditions in 1990. Ever since, his imposing stage presence and magnificent voice have electrified audiences in Europe, Canada and North and South America.

Mr. Brainerd's recent engagements have included appearances as Wotan in *Die Walküre* at Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires, Pizarro with the Nashville Symphony in a concert version of Beethoven's *Fidelio*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah* at New York's Church of the Heavenly Rest, and a debut with the New Zealand Symphony as Wotan in five concert performances of Wagner's *Das Rheingold* — a role in which he previously won acclaim in the Arizona Opera *Ring Cycle*.

Robert Shaw chose Mr. Brainerd to sing Christus in Bach's *St. John Passion* in Portland, which led to subsequent performances with Maestro Shaw, including Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* with the Montreal Symphony. He was heard as soloist with Helmut Rilling and the Stuttgart

Gächinger Kantorei in Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* and *B minor Mass*, which he has also performed with the Calgary Symphony.

During his vocal training at the Opera School and Conservatory of Music in Stuttgart, Germany, Clayton Brainerd appeared in a variety of concerts throughout Germany, including Escamillo in Bizet's *Carmen* with the Stuttgart Summer Festival Orchestra, the Brahms *Requiem* with the German/American Chorus of Baden-Württemberg and a series of *St. Matthew Passions* throughout Europe.

Mr. Brainerd's versatility encompasses not only the Wagnerian repertoire of Wotan, The Wanderer, and Gunther in *The Ring* and the title role of *Flying Dutchman*, but also many roles in the Italian operatic repertoire, including Germont in *La Traviata*, Iago in *Otello*, and Scarpia in *Tosca*. He is also a much sought-after recitalist.

A native of the Pacific Northwest, Mr. Brainerd holds degrees from Portland State University and the Conservatory of Music in Stuttgart.



John Eargle describes VR² and Surround Sound

We are at a new golden age in sound recording. Since the early days of the art of recording, the industry has striven for realism; the improvements of the LP, stereo, and digital technology have each represented great steps forward. Now we are entering the era of *discrete surround sound* playback in the home. **Virtual Reality Recording (VR²)** represents Delos' commitment to this new medium.

In terms of recording technology, each VR² recording begins as a set of multiple stereo program pairs which are mixed into normal two-channel stereo for current CD release, and archived for later mixdown into surround sound. While the actual audio consumer carrier of discrete surround is a couple of years away, this stereo CD can be heard in surround through


Dolby Pro-Logic surround sound decoders, which are at the heart of many home theater systems. Listen, and you will hear the difference.

With the large orchestral and choral resources used in this Mussorgsky program, we made significant changes in the hall to increase its reverberation time at high frequencies. Large expanses of plastic sheeting were placed over the seats on the main floor and in the balcony. "House microphones" were placed about 25 feet (8 meters) from the main microphone array. The effect of this can clearly be heard as an increase in presence and spatiality, especially in the presentation of brass and the wonderful Westminster Choir.

John Eargle

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MODEST MUSSORGSKY

Drawing by J. Répin

(1844-1930)



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