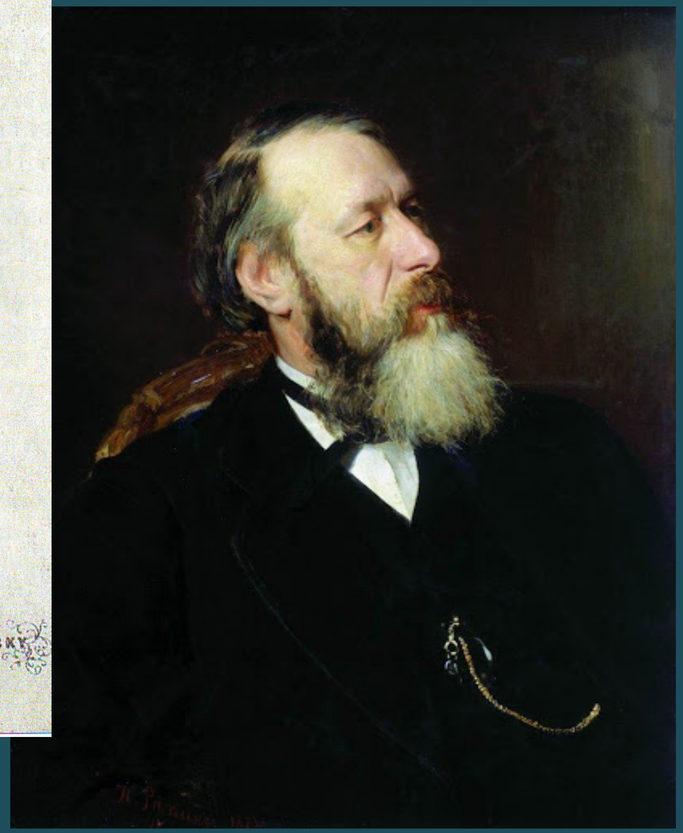
MUSORGSKY
PICTURES AT AN EXHIBITION

Посвящается Владимиру Васильевичу Стасову.

Картинки с выставки.

Воспоминание о Викторе Гартмане.

М. Мусоргского.



Viktor Hartmann (1834-73)

Vladimir Stasov (1824-1906)

Modest Musorgsky (1833-1881)

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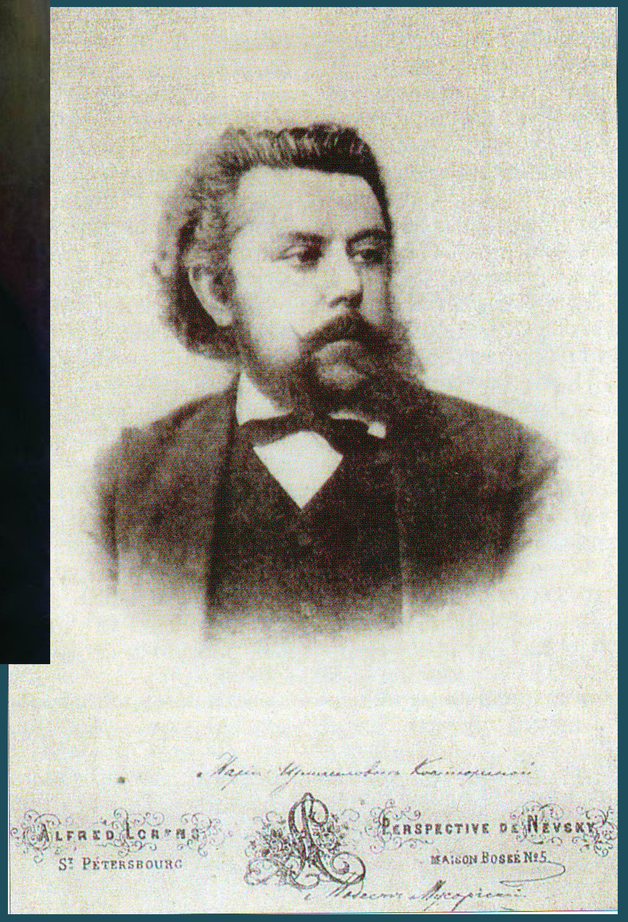

Modest Musorgsky (1833-1881)

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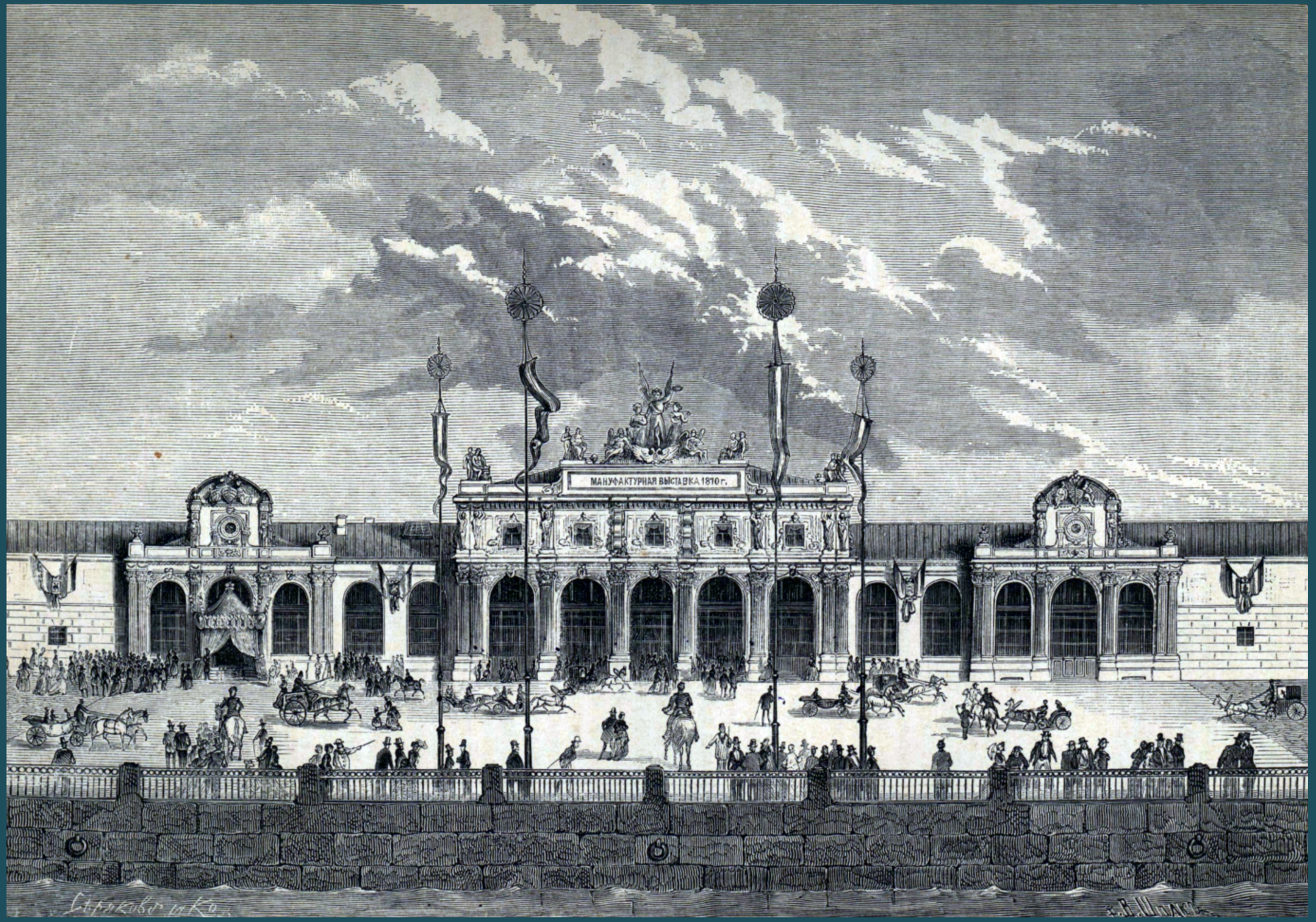
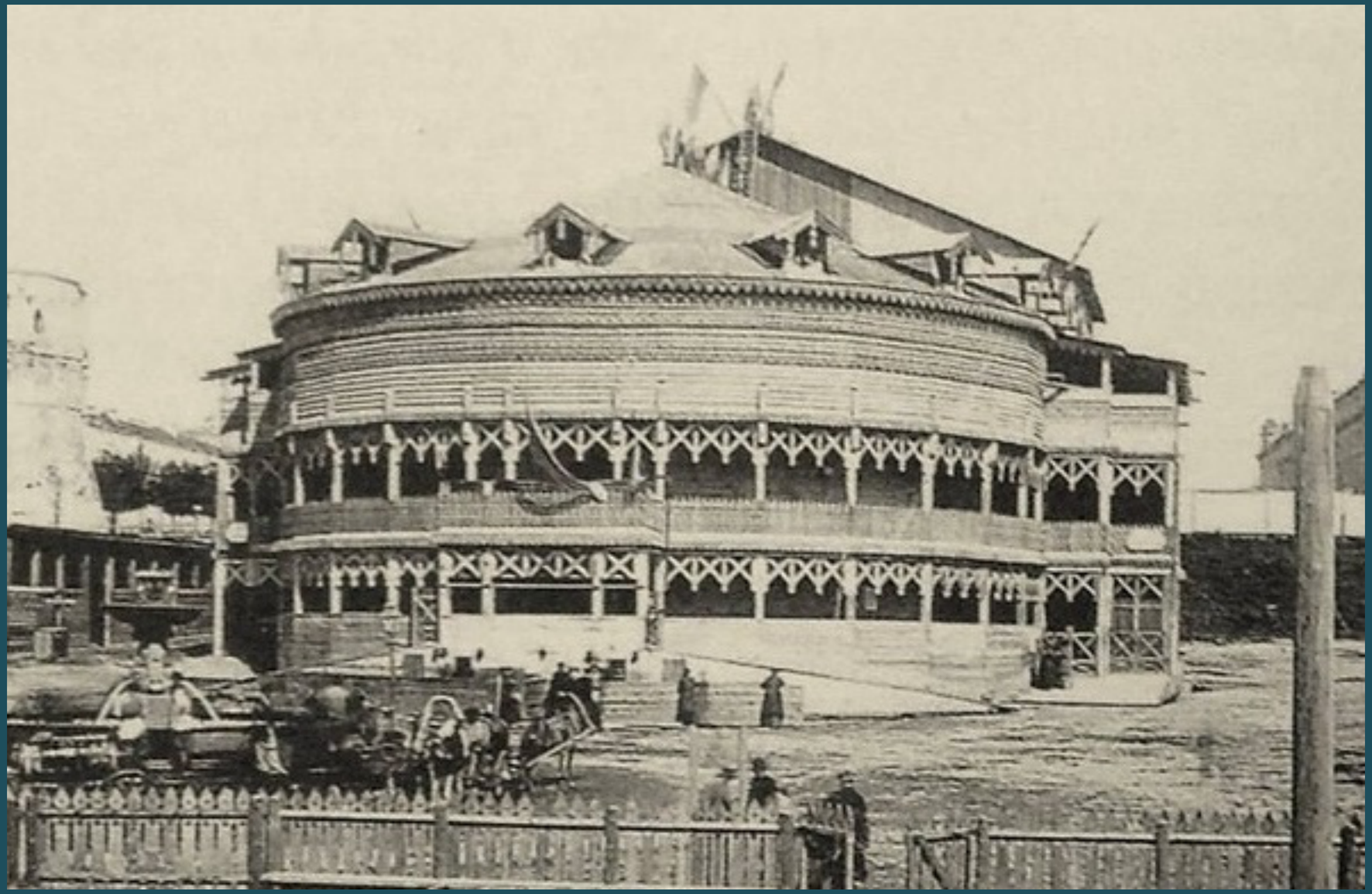

МАНУФАКТУРНАЯ ВЫСТАВКА 1810 г.



The Mamontov Printing House
Moscow

WHEN ORDINARY THINGS ARE TO BE BUILT, HARTMANN IS NO GOOD: HE NEEDS FAIRY-TALE BUILDINGS AND MAGICAL CASTLES, HE NEEDS PALACES AND CONSTRUCTIONS THAT MUST BE WITHOUT PRECEDENT, AND THEN HE CREATES ASTONISHING THINGS.

– KRAMSKOY

Promenade

1. Gnomus
2. Il vecchio castello

[Promenade]

3. Tuileries (dispute d'enfants après jeux)
4. Bydło

[Promenade]

5. **Балет невылупившихся птенцов**
6. 'Samuel' Goldenberg und 'Schmuÿle'

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7. Limoges. Le marché (La grande nouvelle)
8. Catacombae (Sepulcrum romanum)

[Promenade - in the minor]

9. **Избушка на курьих ножках (Баба-Яга)**
10. **Богатырские ворота (в стольном городе во Киеве)** Promenade inside

Promenade

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2. The Old Castle

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10. The Bogatyr Gates (in the great city of Kiev)

Promenade inside

3D render by Hadi Karimi

Franz Liszt

3D render by Hadi Karimi

Franz Liszt

“Russian music is most fortunate to find such sympathy in such a star as Liszt”

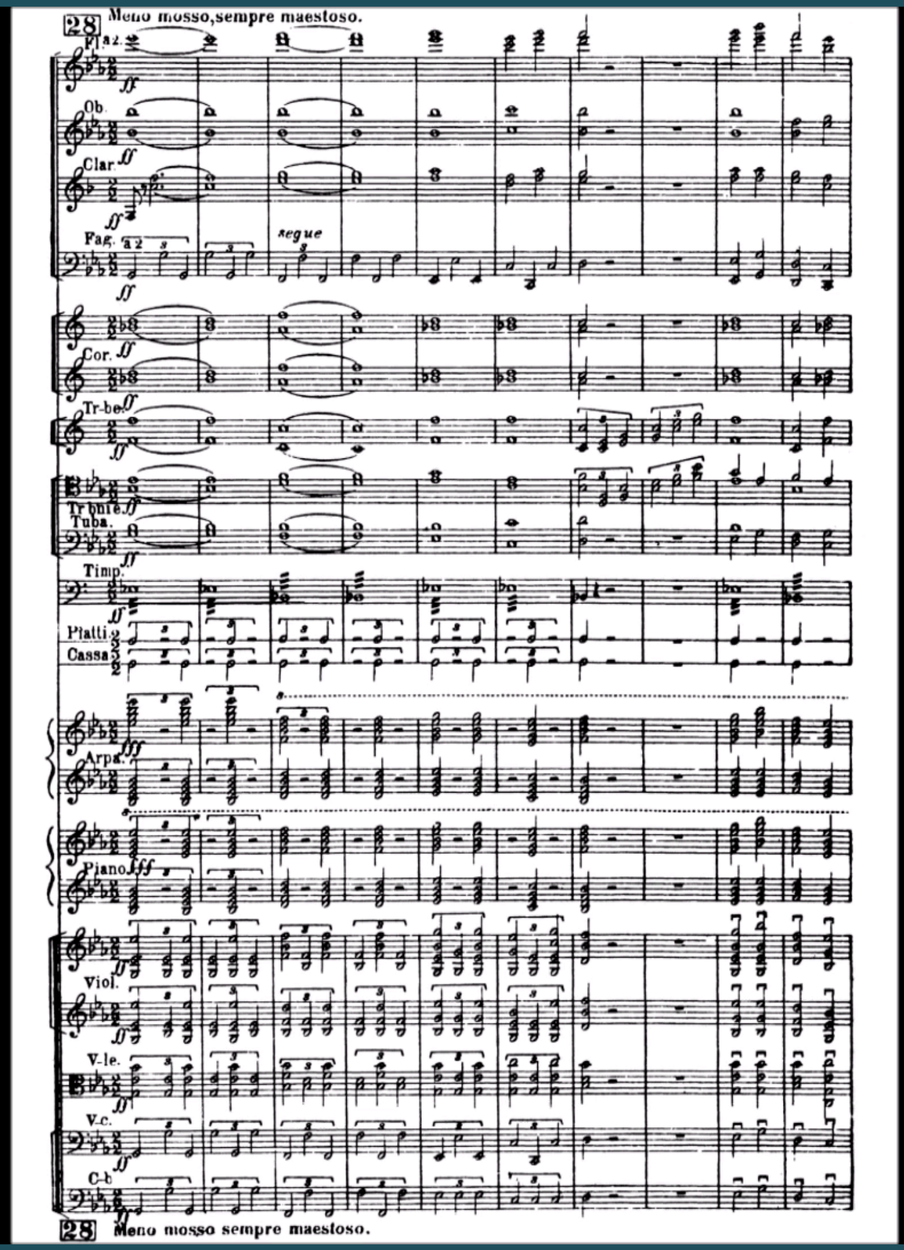
3D render by Hadi Karimi

Franz Liszt

“It is as if I can see Liszt, as if I can hear him, as if you and I are in conversation with him”

1874 Musorgsky composes *Pictures*
1881 Musorgsky dies (from complications due to alcoholism)
1886 *Pictures* is published in Rimsky-Korsakov's edition
1888 Mikhail Tushmalov, a student of Rimsky-Korsakov, orchestrates eight of the pieces
1891 Rimsky-Korsakov conducts Tushmalov's orchestration in a memorial concert

1896 First performance of the piano version in a series of lectures on Musorgsky organised by Marie Olenina d'Alheim (performed by Charles Foerster)
1903 First Russian performance, by Grigory Beklemishev in the Kerzin circle
1922 Ravel creates his celebrated orchestration
1947 Horowitz creates his own arrangement
1956 Richter records the original version (performing it in public more than a hundred times)
1971 Emerson, Lake and Palmer create their own version, mixing their rock arrangements of Musorgsky with new material of their own
1975 Tomita creates an electronic arrangement


28
Meno mosso,sempre maestoso.
Fl.
Ob.
Clar.
Fag.
a 2
segue
Cor.
Tr-be.
Trbnre.
Tuba.
Timp.
Piatti
Cassa
Arpa.
Piano.
Viol.
V-le.
V.c.
C-b
28
Meno mosso sempre maestoso.

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Premiere in Paris
1896

Charles Foerster (1860-1925)
pupil of Liszt
played for Queen Victoria

In a series of lecture-recitals
Organised by Maria Olenina-d'Alheim

Grigory Beklemishev (1881-1935)

Student of Busoni

Russian premiere in 1903

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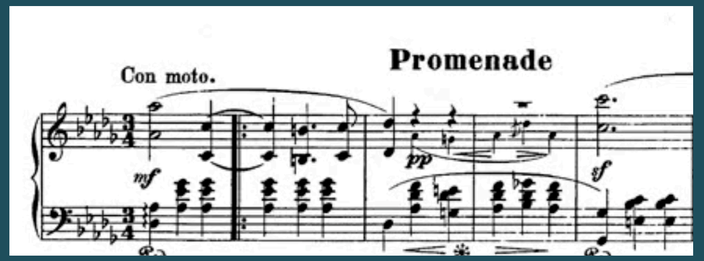
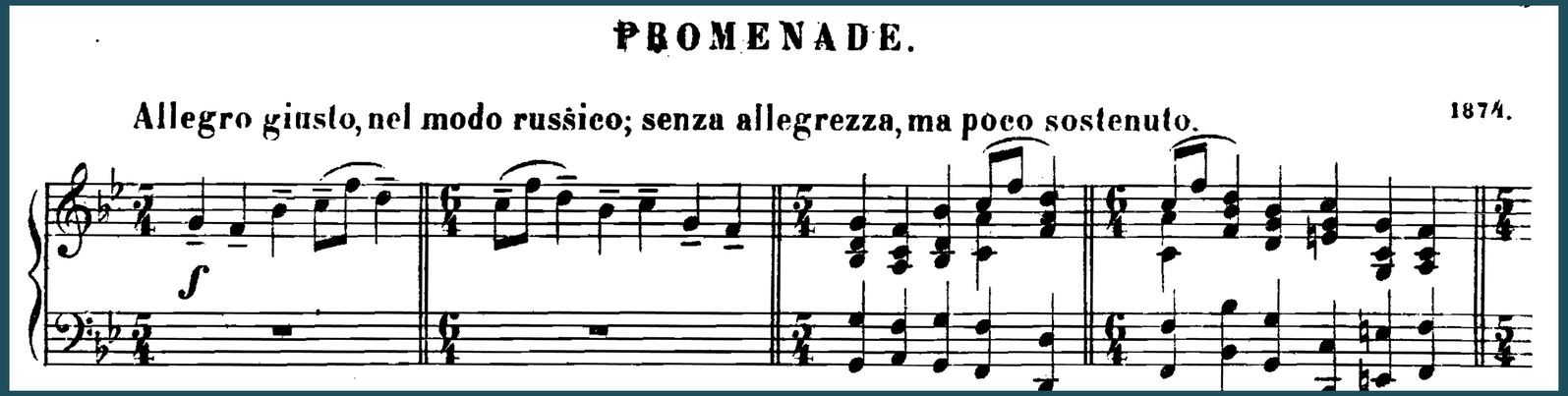
Emerson, Lake and Palmer (1971) : Gnomus

Tomita (1975) : Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks



Schumann Carnaval



- Promenade
- [nel modo russico]

- Russian folk song: solo and chorus
- Irregular meter, 5/4, 6/4, 7/4
- Irregular number of voices: imitation of folk heterophony
- Not a pastiche, but a hyperbole
- “Glinka variations”
- Westernisms and deliberate crudeness (chromatic moves and false relations)

Romantic

subjectivity

travelogue

fantasy

ruins of the past

death

stylised local colour

Realist

portraits

voices

everyday scenes

action in the present

social commentary

humour

highly specific local colour

Promenade

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[Promenade - in the minor]

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Promenade inside

Deleted notes, in French:

Talk of the town: Monsieur Pimpant from Panta-Pantaléon has found
his cow – the one that ran away. “Yes, Madame, that was yesterday”.
– No, Madame, it was the day before yesterday.
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– No, Madame, the cow was not astray at all.

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But the good women of Limoges will have nothing to do with the matter,
because Mme de Remboursac has acquired some very fine porcelain dentures,
while Mr de Panta-Pantaléon’s obtrusive nose obstinately remains as red as a peony.

Musorgsky’s notes in pencil (in Russian)

NB: Latin text: With the Dead in a Dead Language
It would be good to have this in Latin: the creative spirit
of the late Mr Hartmann is leading me towards the skulls;
he addresses them, and the skulls slowly begin to glow

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Promenade inside

Languages:

Russian
Italian
French
Polish
Latin
German (or Yiddish?)

titles, subtitles, unused bits of programme, private remarks

wordplay and in-jokes

Stasov’s explanations

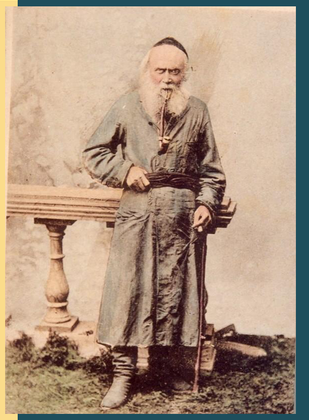
St Petersburg

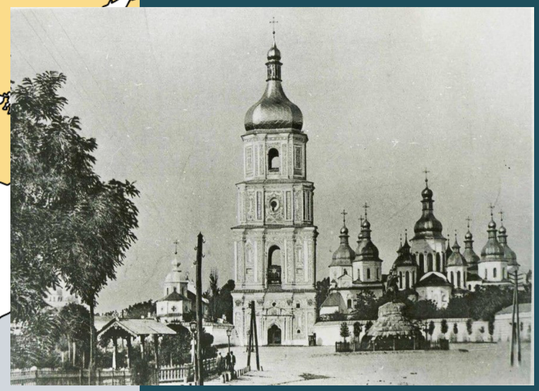
Sandomierz

Kiev

Paris

Limoges





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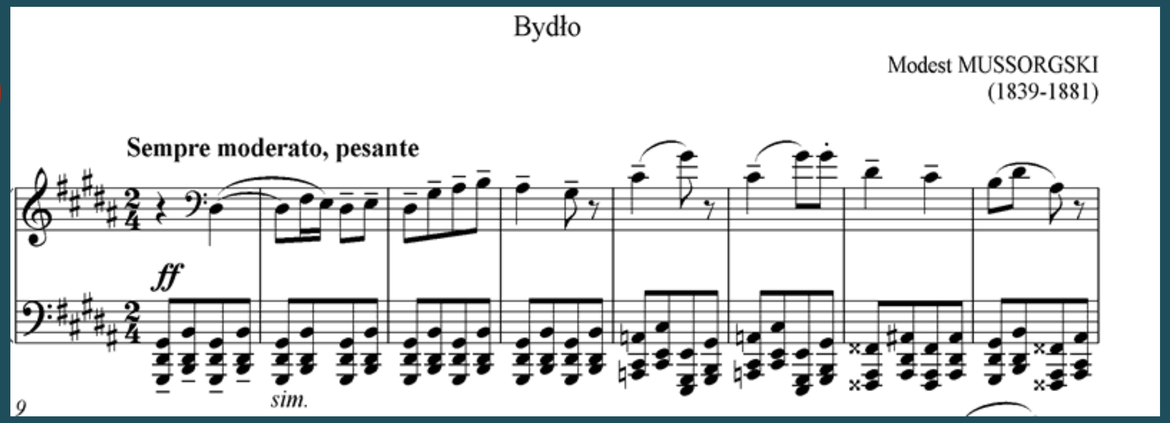
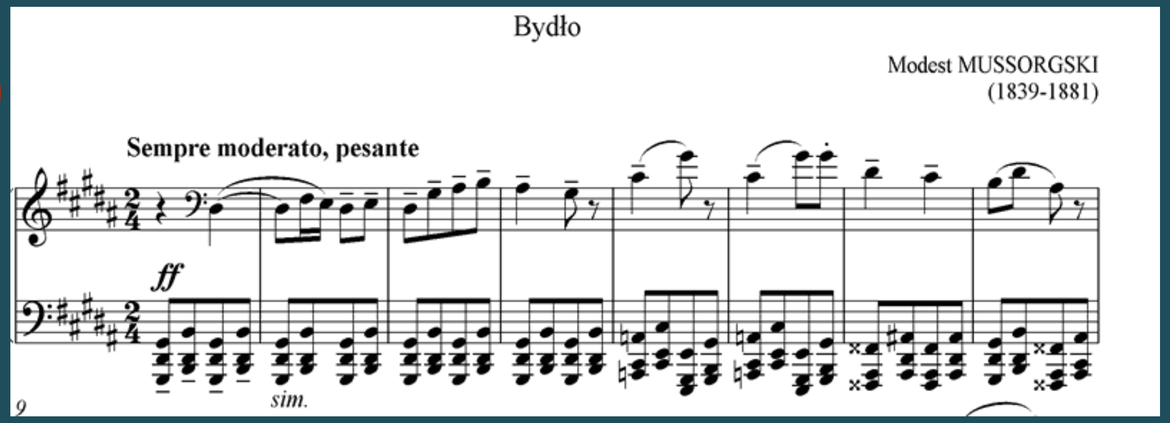


- Bydło [Cattle]
- [Musorgsky's private humorous subtitle: la télègue - the cart]

- The opposite of the previous piece (Tuileries)- focus on the low register - from West to East
- Left-hand texture associated with earthy characters (Varlaam in *Boris Godunov*)
- Deliberately crude and ugly music
- Possibly a reference to a labour song (like Song of the Volga Boatmen) - hauling something heavy
- Could be at the same time a symbol of oppression
- Chopin's left-hand figuration

An 1870s photo of Sandomierz featuring a traditional cart with large wheels

4



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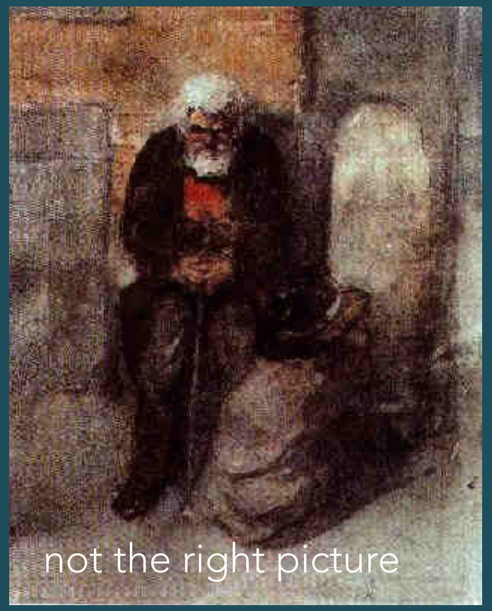
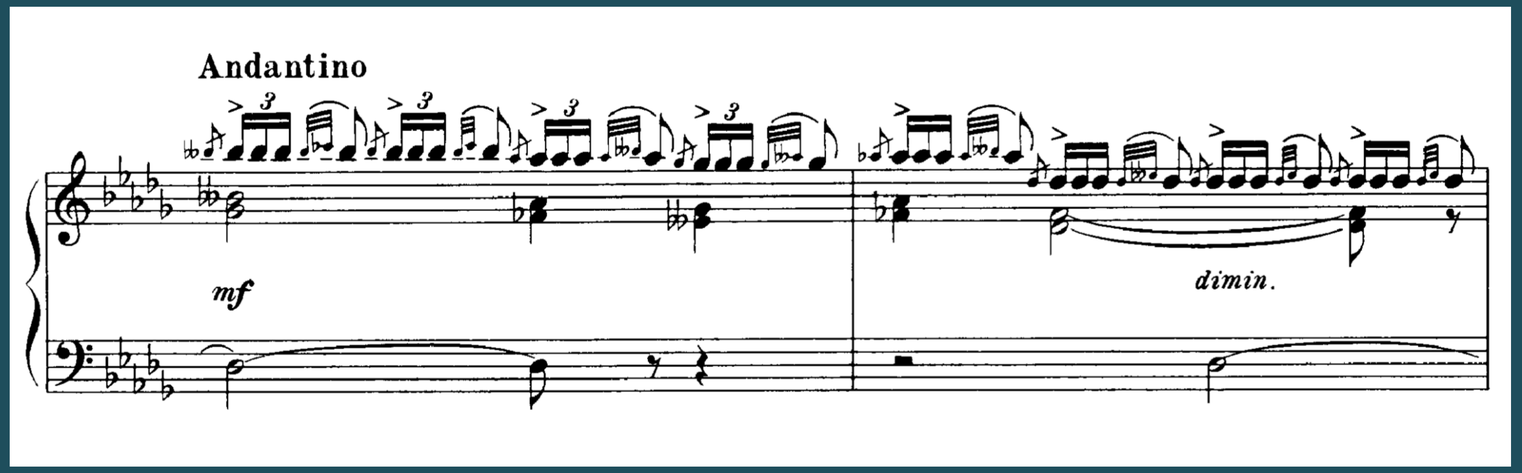


- ‘Samuel’ Goldenberg and ‘Schmuÿle’

- Another registral change
- An argument - two distinct characters
- Imperious “oriental recitative” or synagogue chant vs a cymbalom-inspired material
- Dialogue and overlap
-



- ‘Samuel’ Goldenberg and ‘Schmuÿle’

Maurycy Trębacz
Concert by Yankiel

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[Promenade - in the minor]

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Promenade inside

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- Limoges
- Le marché (La grande nouvelle)
-

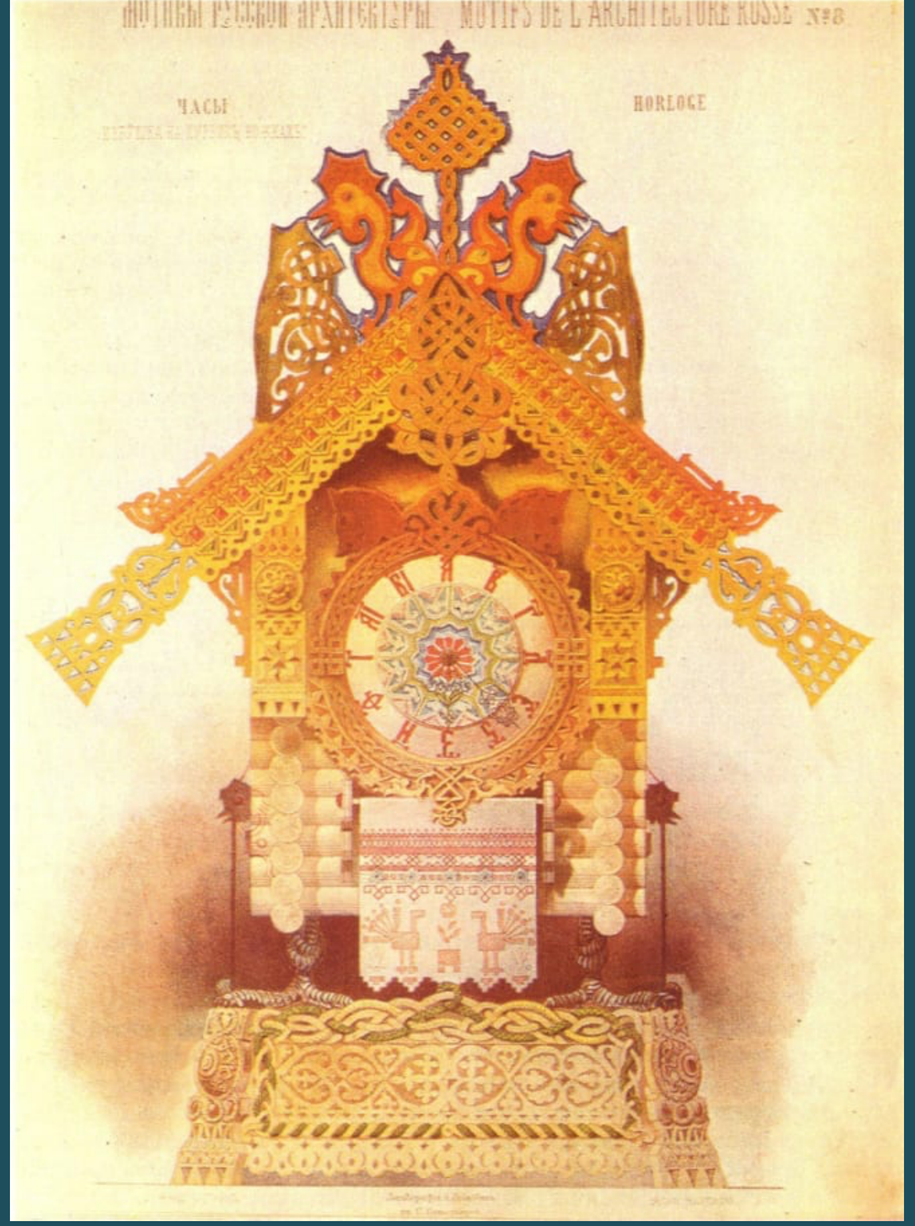
- Back to the high register for another scherzo
- Moto perpetuo genre
- Fascinated by chattering females (several operatic characters)
- The principle of interruption, subverting any regularity

8

- Catacombae (Sepulcrum romanum)
  Catacombs (A Roman Sepulchre)
- Promenade in the minor
- (With the dead in a dead language)

- The greatest contrast yet?
- The echo principle
- Musorgsky communing with Hartmann's spirit: straightened-out Promenade and a chilling chromatic scale
- The tremolo: glowing skulls?
- A cathartic moment of ascension

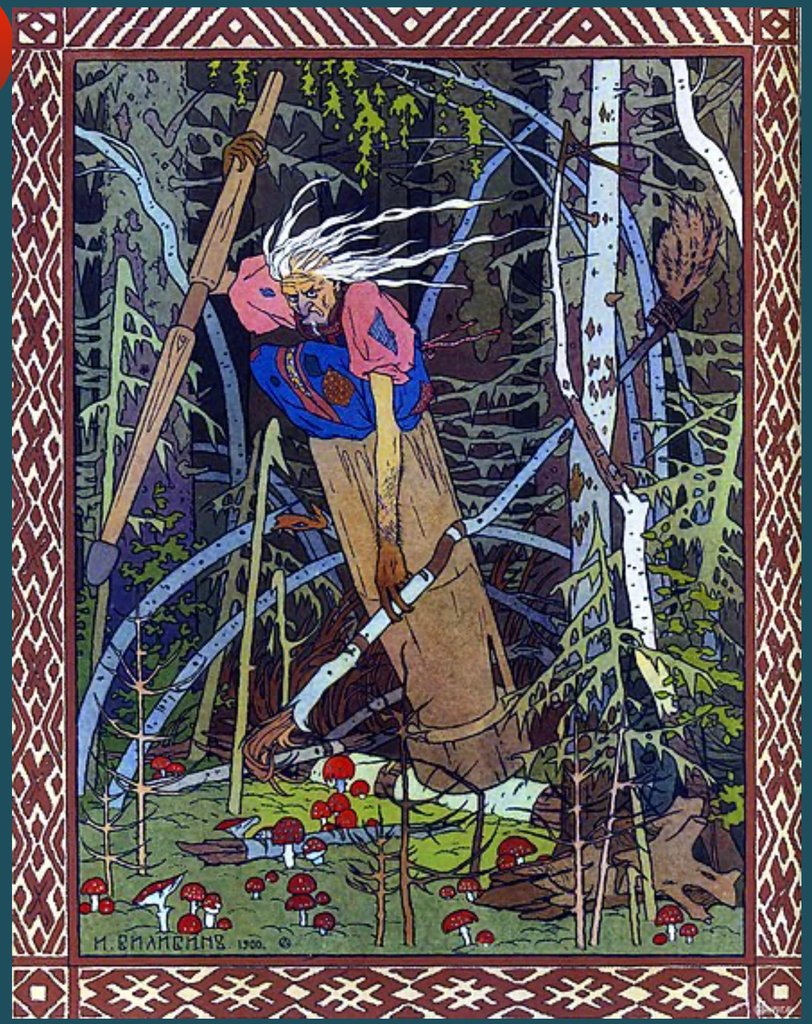
9



- Baba-Yaga
- The Hut on Hen’s Legs

- Another registral shock
- A hellish vision
- Musorgsky’s fascination with the idea of witches’ sabbath
- Folk dance motifs
- The interval of the tritone in the middle (connection to Gnomus) and tremolandos connecting to the preceding piece
- Russian “supernatural” modes
- The witch flies into the next piece
- Possibly a reference to Hartmann’s appearance at an artists’ masked ball wearing a costume of Baba-Yaga

- **Nikolai Roerich, The Hut of Death (1905)**
- Ancient funerary practice
- A wooden house for the deceased placed on tall stumps

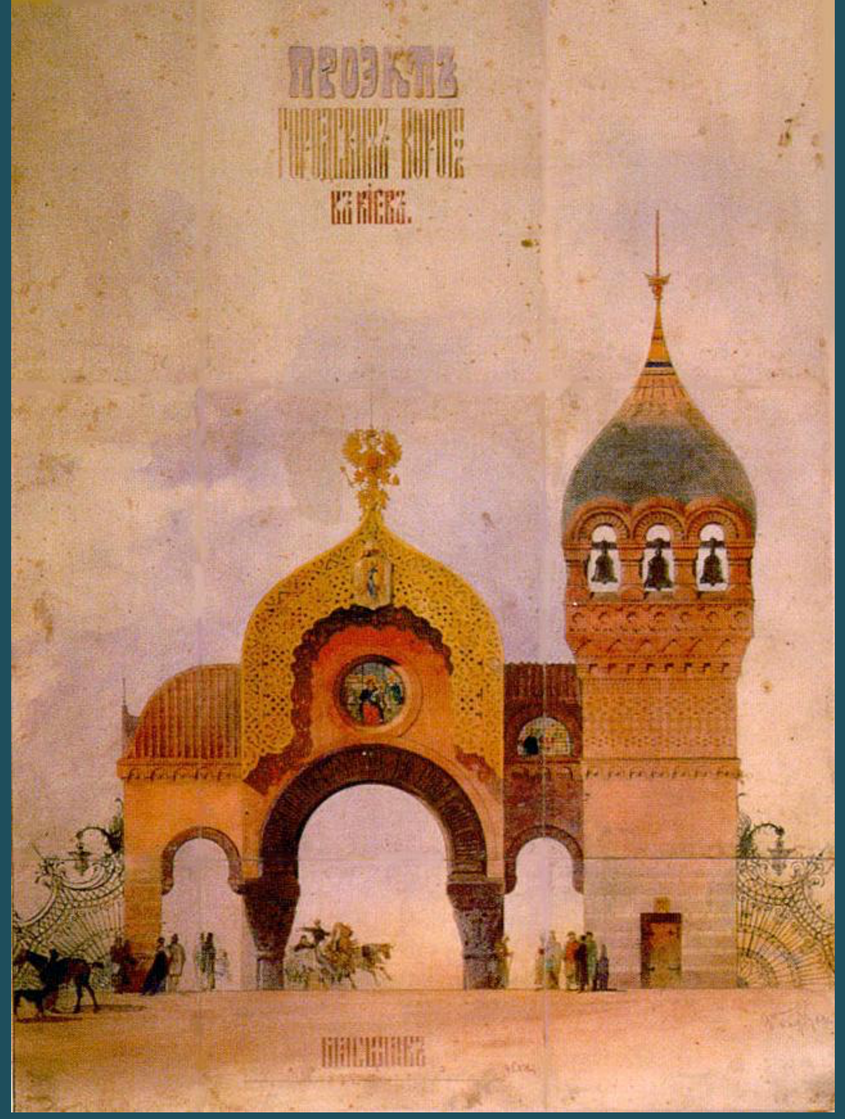


Ivan Bilibin

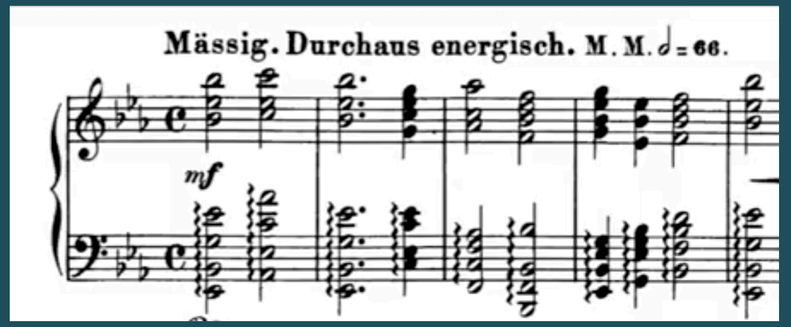
THERE, AMONG THE ROWS OF PLASTER-OF-PARIS GREEK GODS AND GODDESSES, A WITCH WAS TO BE SEEN. THIS WAS BABA YAGA, RUNNING ALONG, WITH RED BRAIDS STREAMING BEHIND HER. A BIG FLOPPY HAT WAS PULLED DOWN OVER HER EYES, HER BONY ARMS PROTRUDED FROM HER SLEEVES. HER FACE WAS PAINTED, WITH A SPARSE BEARD ON HER CHIN, HER GHASTLY EYES GLINTED MALICIOUSLY, AND TUSKS JUTTED OUT FROM HER GAPING MOUTH.

– STASOV

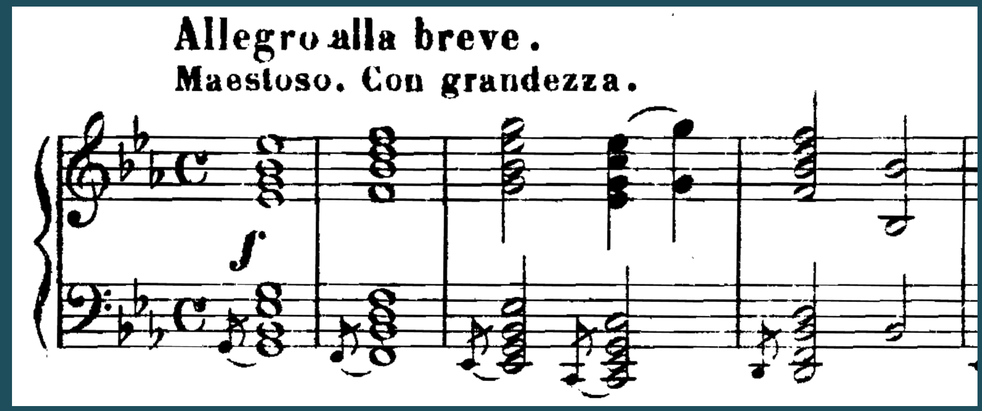
- Baba-Yaga
- The Hut on Hen’s Legs



- The Bogatyr Gate
- (in the great city of Kiev)



Schumann, “Triumphal Arch” from Fantasie in C



- A hymn-like melody, a “glory chorus”
- Connection with Russian Orthodox Church singing
- The bells - Musorgsky’s trademark
- The inner cycle of variations on the Promenade comes to a triumphant conclusion

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Promenade

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[Promenade - in the minor]

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Promenade inside

МУСОРГСКОЙ