



Artist Review Today

The Arts and Talent of Greater Cleveland

Modeste Moussorgsky
(1874)

Promenade

nel modo russo, senza allargare troppo sostenuto

NATASHA TUROVSKY'S

Choreographed Paintings

- Fine Art
- Classical Music
- and Film
- COLLIDE

Show
Special



AN INTERVIEW WITH NATASHA TUROVSKY

By Paul Sykes, International Art Dealer

We are sitting in the Starbucks Coffee on St. Catherine Street

in Montreal drinking lattes while Natasha is showing me her sketchbook with some drawings for the "Pictures at an Exhibition" movie and sketches for some future projects. The movie is a new "choreographed paintings" art form where original art is digitally animated and timed exactly to classical music. It is then projected behind symphonic orchestras as a simultaneous backdrop visual/listening experience for classical music audiences.

Paul Sykes: To my knowledge, this movie is an historical cycle of music being influenced by art (in 1874 Modest Mussorgsky attributed the music to his best friend, Victor Hartman, by going to the museums, picking out his ten favorites, and composing music depicting the paintings) and also about your artwork being influenced by listening to his masterpiece 130 plus years later. The movie combines art and music into a new genre of visual/listening interpretation. How do you feel this movie will affect classical music audiences?

Natasha Turovsky: Once I was wondering out loud, *could this film be of interest to somebody who is not a classical music or visual art lover*, and one film director from NY who had just seen the screening of "Pictures" admitted to me that he hates going to museums and listening to classical music - but he *absolutely loved* this movie. This being the case, there is hope that he might reconsider his dislike for classical music and come to a concert or two. I've also heard comments that this film is the best way to explain classical music to the general public.

PS: How do you feel this movie will impact the art world?

NT: Similarly I guess. This movie gives the person a chance to view art in a completely different setting, and hopefully will induce some interest for visual arts to the public that finds museums and galleries intimidating.

PS: You have an incredible imagination. Where do you get your ideas, and are you ever afraid they might run out?

NT: There are so many ways or ideas (for paintings) to be born... sometimes they appear from nowhere, other times they are developed through sketches. One idea leads to another. Other times they actually come from our life ... Sometimes I look at some of my paintings and ask myself - how on earth did I come up with this -and then there are days that I am afraid that all ideas have left me - for those occasions I calm myself with a thought that I still have at least five full sketch books I didn't use in my paintings yet...I guess the source for ideas is unlimited, and it is just a matter of catching them at the right moment.

PS: Do you spend time sketching everyday to get ideas?

NT: Not Anymore. At one point I made a pact with a friend to create at least one sketch per day. I kept my promise, he didn't. This lasted for about two years. I still sketch a lot in order to develop ideas for my paintings. When I work on a new project I don't start the painting until the composition in my sketches feel right. Though, once I start working on canvas, the composition often takes on a life of it's own.

PS: When do ideas come most often, and would you say classical music influences your ideas?

NT: The ideas can come to me at the most unpredictable times. It could be at a rehearsal or concert, it could be something my father [Yuli] would say during an I Musici de Montreal rehearsal that triggers an idea for the composition. For example, my father may want a "desperate accents" in a particular part of the music, and that moment may inspire a painting to be titled "desperate accents". Since I am also a musician, the classical music definitely influences my works. I paint most of the time with classical music turned on. And I have done several paintings after pieces we have played with IMM, along with several musical cycles such as "Songs of the Earth Cycle" by Mahler and Mussorgsky's "Pictures at an Exhibition" as well as several opera sets for IMM production.

PS: Could you describe the process of working on those musical cycles?

NT: At first I had very hard time with Mahler - I had an incredible desire to paint "Songs of the Earth", yet for two or three months, nothing I was sketching felt right. I was ready to forget the whole thing hundreds of times, yet I couldn't. The "Songs of the Earth" were haunting me. Then one day, about a month before the deadline, I got a feeling; *I can do it*, and ideas started to appear one after the other. I would say that the poems guided me in the general composition of these paintings while Mahler's music influenced the mood and the colors. With "Pictures at an Exhibition", it was a bit different. Mussorgsky's titles of each movement alone gave me ideas. His music is incredibly visual. Some movements are full of humor (Ballet of the Unhitched Chicks), others of despair (Bydlo, Old Castle). A few combine a range of emotions, from frightening to comical (Gnome), and all are united by an incredible sense of movement. Though taking all the titles quite literally, my aim was to recreate the atmosphere and mood of each movement of Mussorgsky's Pictures into my paintings.

PS: And then each movement is timed, created, and executed exactly to the music. Would you say "Choreographed Paintings" is a new movement or genre that combines art and music?

NT: I heard many people who saw the movie declare that this is a new genre - I'm definitely ready to explore this further by creating new "Choreographed Paintings". I already have at least five ideas for future projects that I really want to make happen.

PS: Speaking of future projects, tell me about your next one.

NT: The next one is Tchaikovsky's "Children's Corner" album, arranged for chamber orchestra by my father. I'm already working on drawings. This time, however, I can't help but have in mind that this will eventually be choreographed into a film. Also after working together with the digital

artists who animated my paintings I learned a lot about the process and it's possibilities - this will influence the paintings as well.

PS: How do your parents feel about these projects?

NT: This project is a bit different since it involves my father directly. We worked together on the choreography, and he is there conducting to make the timing of this ballet work during the performance. When I paint, I am on my own, but I also work on the movie with my father.

PS: Isn't your mother, Eleanora, also an artist?

NT: Absolutely, and if not for her, I'd never have painted. For some reason, she knew I could paint. Just to be a good daughter, I took some art classes and fell in love with it immediately. It has completely changed my life.

PS: And your mother is also a fabulous violinist?

NT: She is a fantastic violinist and a fantastic violin teacher. She has always been my teacher.

PS: You also have another oil painting that is rather large hung at the Galleria Mall here in Cleveland. Can you tell us about it?

NT: "A Night at the Opera". It is about 16 feet tall and 33 feet long. I Musici did it as an opera backdrop for a performance for different operas. A very talented Russian born theater director Alexander Marin staged it. It was our second opera collaboration, and he had this crazy idea that I could do this huge painting. At that moment I didn't have his confidence, but as a rule, I never say no! The rest is history. When I see this painting, frankly, I do not know how I did it - or - I know too well!

PS: Your father is going to conduct "Pictures at an Exhibition" with the Cleveland Institute of Music Orchestra. What do you think the students in a college orchestra will learn from this concert/movie experience that will be shown behind them?

NT: Well, I know from experience that you want to be in two places at once, on the stage performing and in the audience watching it!

PS: Do you think this will have a long-term profound affect on them?

NT: I don't know but I am sure that my father will leave a great mark on them. He is an incredible musician and will definitely bring out the best in them.

PS: And after getting to know you, I know that you are gifted in so many artistic and human ways, that you will also leave a great mark on the students as well as the audiences in Cleveland.

NT: Thank you.

NATASHA TUROVSKY EXHIBITS:

Nov. 12, 12-2pm ARTIST REVIEW TODAY
E. 9th & St.Clair, Cleveland

Nov. 12, 6-8 pm FINESTRA GALLERY
4076 Erie St., Willoughby

Nov. 13, 6-8 pm LEGEND ART GALLERY
377 Golfview Lane, Highland H

Nov. 14, 6-8 pm MOCHA MAIDEN GALLERY
17-19 Maiden Lane, Akron

Nov. 15, 6-8 pm BECK CENTER GALLERY
17801 Detroit Ave., Lakewood

" THE GRAND FINALE"

Nov.16, 6-10 pm THE CLEVELAND
INSTITUTE OF MUSIC
11021 East Blvd., Cleveland

ALL EXHIBITS WILL CONTINUE
THROUGH DEC. 31, 2007
ARTIST WILL APPEAR DURING
TIMES LISTED ABOVE

PICTURES at an EXHIBITION **cim**

The Choreographed Paintings of Natasha Turovsky

Presented by

CLEVELAND
INSTITUTE
OF MUSIC

November 16, 2007
The CIM Orchestra
Conducted by Yuli Turovsky



SCHMULYE

CALL FOR TICKETS
216.791.5000

www.mamevents.com