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91423



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Draw a cross through the box (X) if you have NOT written in this booklet

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Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

Level 3 Music Studies 2024

91423 Examine the influence of context on a substantial music work

Credits: Four

Achievement	Achievement with Merit	Achievement with Excellence
Examine the influence of context on a substantial music work.	Examine in depth the influence of context on a substantial music work.	Examine perceptively the influence of context on a substantial music work.

Check that the National Student Number (NSN) on your admission slip is the same as the number at the top of this page.

Answer ONE of the essay questions in this booklet.

If you need more room for your answer, use the extra space provided at the back of this booklet.

Check that this booklet has pages 2–12 in the correct order and that none of these pages is blank.

Do not write in the margins (// // //). This area will be cut off when the booklet is marked.

YOU MUST HAND THIS BOOKLET TO THE SUPERVISOR AT THE END OF THE EXAMINATION.

Achievement

TOTAL 04

INSTRUCTIONS

Write an essay on a substantial music work that you have studied, in response to ONE of the questions below.

Give the details of the work in the box at the top of page 3.

QUESTIONS (Choose ONE)

1. Music works may be closely associated with, or respond to, a specific event or occasion (e.g. a celebration or a natural disaster).
Discuss how such an association has impacted the conception, production, and interpretation of your work.
2. Music is sometimes used to communicate the values or beliefs of a particular person or group of people.
Discuss how the conception, production, and interpretation of your chosen work has been influenced by a set of values or beliefs.
3. "Music is a language that doesn't speak in particular words. It speaks in emotions ..."
Discuss how an intention to communicate emotions through music has impacted the conception, production, and interpretation of your chosen work.
4. Different performances of a music work may lead to changes in musical style, particularly when the context (time or place) is also different.
Discuss how the conception, production, and interpretation of your chosen music work has changed when comparing one performance to another.

Work title(s): Pictures at an Exhibition

Composer(s) / performer(s): Modest Mussorgsky

Genre / style / period: Classical. (1874).

PLANNING

Consider the following aspects of the work:

- its conception
- its production
- its interpretation.

How has association affected it?

Assoc. with:

Exhibitions →
Paintings → ^{Viktor} HARTMANN.

You should aim to write a concise essay of no more than five pages. The quality of your ideas is more important than the length of your essay.

Support your response with musical evidence from the work. Manuscript paper is provided on page 9 in case you wish to include musical quotations.

Begin your essay here:

Question number: 1

~~1874~~
Pictures at an Exhibition is a piece composed by Modest Mussorgsky, a Russian composer, in 1874. This essay intends to discuss how the conception, production, and interpretation of the suite has been impacted by the association with an event.

The piece, a piano suite, was completed by Mussorgsky in 1874. There are, in fact, two major events with which this piece is associated: the death of Mussorgsky's close friend and artist, Viktor Hartmann in 1873, and an exhibition of Hartmann's works (which the piece is named after). The association with these two events is clear when one listens to the piece in a number of ways. Not only are we able to hear Mussorgsky's trip to the aforementioned exhibition,

but we are also sonically reminded of the sadness Mussorgsky feels over the loss of his friend.

The first movement of the suite is entitled 'Promenade', and the theme comes back numerous times throughout the piece. The movement begins with a ^{single piano line.} ~~trumpet solo~~, which is both lonely yet powerful. The point of this and the other Promenades is to represent Mussorgsky himself wandering around the exhibition hall and looking at the paintings. The sense of him walking is accentuated by the usage of the rather asymmetrical 5/4 as a time signature. After two bars of ~~trumpet~~, the ~~brass~~ ^{left hand joins} ~~section~~ joins, adding a feeling of grandeur. ^{After two more bars,} ~~Another two~~ the melody changes a tad, and becomes lighter, ~~bars pass, and the strings join,~~ creating a sense of warmth. ~~taking over and adding warmth.~~ Mussorgsky clearly intends for this movement to be associated with his arrival at the exhibition.

The movement that follows is where we are first introduced to Mussorgsky's sonic association with a painting, 'The

Gnome'. As the Russian art critic Vladimir Stasov described the now lost sketch, the movement is to be associated with a "gnome-like creature, running on crooked legs". I believe that Mussorgsky has captured this well, with the movement using a rapid, ~~downward~~ descending note pattern, ending on an E that's paused for a time. Mussorgsky intends for the listener to associate this pattern with the running of the gnome, just as he himself did. The movement also implements a slower, and lower, section after the rapidness of the scuttling to represent the creepiness of the creature. At the same time, a lighter note pattern is present to represent the association with the rather whimsical side of the creature. The movement ends with an ascending, but crooked, scale. This likely represents the gnome frantically running away. So, Mussorgsky clearly associated this painting and the creature it depicts with a sense of creepiness, whimsy, and frantic. His composition translates these associations well, I find.

As we move around the exhibition with Mussorgsky, we come to another painting. Unlike the other movements, there is no Promenade separating them^{this painting, and the one before.}, likely because they were right next to each other in the exhibition hall. This movement/painting is called Bydło (Polish for cattle) and, as the listener may be able to guess, is associated with a grand cart, drawn by Oxen. While the sense of this cart being huge is not captured extremely well in the original piano version, it is in the orchestrated variant by Ravel. It opens with a solemn, yet stoic tuba solo marked pianississimo, and a simple quaver bassline. ~~To~~ In order to properly associate the painting with a heavy cart that approaches, then passes, Ravel uses a gradual crescendo that lasts until the climax, when the cart is right by you. Here, we have the whole orchestra playing, invoking the grandeur of the huge cart, as well as a snare roll, which makes it feel as though the ground is shaking. We then hear the reverse, as the orchestra dies down again to represent the cart disappearing off into the distance.

The next movement I will discuss is called "With the Dead in a Dead Language", and comes immediately after the movement 'Catacombs'. This movement is heavily associated with Mussorgsky's sadness, as the music combines the eeriness of the catacombs with the Promenade theme. ~~It would be~~ It's evident that the painting of the skull-filled catacombs stuck with Mussorgsky as he wandered away from it. It's likely that he was reminded of Hartmann in this moment, and he wanders away feeling melancholy. Interestingly, the movement is a sort of bittersweet-sounding iteration of the Promenade, which may imply that while Mussorgsky is sad, he also wishes to associate the moment with his happiness that there are still parts of his friend that survive, that being his art.

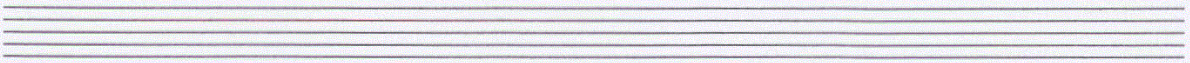
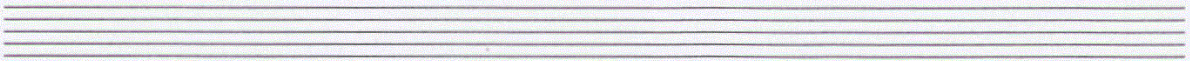
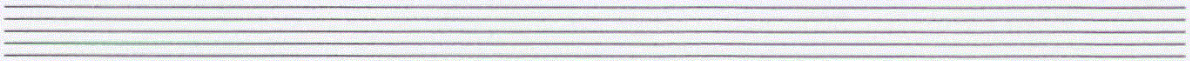
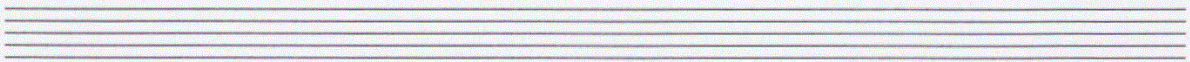
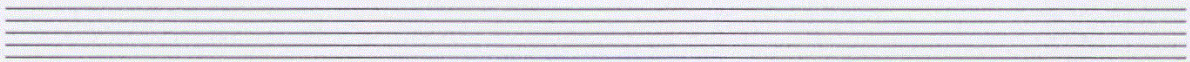
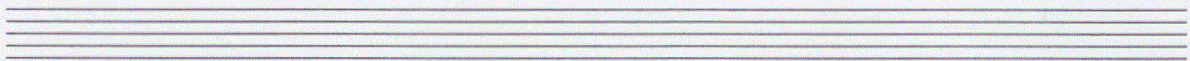
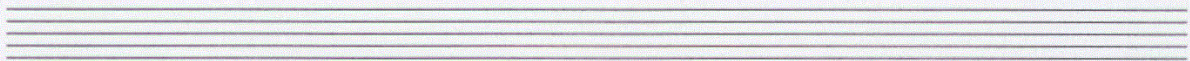
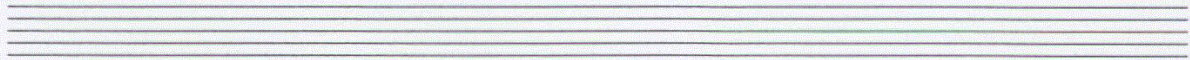
So, to conclude, the Pictures at an Exhibition suite is a remarkable and heartfelt tribute to Viktor Hartmann by Mussorgsky. The piece, while obviously associated with Mussorgsky's visit to the

(cont'd on extra space).

MUSICAL QUOTATIONS

Make sure it is clear which part of your answer any quotation relates to.

Promenade theme.



Extra space if required.
Write the question number(s) if applicable.

QUESTION
NUMBER

exhibition, it's perhaps more subtly associated with Hartmann. The piece would never have come to fruition had Mussorgsky not been friends with Hartmann or visited the exhibition. He decided that an audible tribute to Hartmann needed to be made, and the visit also needed to be associated with it. The production of this piece was fuelled by Mussorgsky's sadness. I can safely say that his work was successful in ~~it~~ being associated with the aforementioned points, as everyone today who analyses this piece interprets it as being representative of the exhibition venture, and Mussorgsky's grief over Hartmann. This ~~pie~~ piece is marvellous. Funny, touching, and grand. It's associated with a visit to an exhibition by a Grieving Friend, and is Mussorgsky's most famous work for very good reason.

Extra space if required.
Write the question number(s) if applicable.

QUESTION
NUMBER

(Cont'd from second paragraph).

The weight of the cart is, again, accentuated by the time signature or cut time (2/2), which reinforces the lumbering motion of the oen and generally makes the repeated baseline feel heavier.

Extra space if required.
Write the question number(s) if applicable.

QUESTION
NUMBER

91423

Achievement

Subject: Music Studies

Standard: 91423

Total score: 04

Q	Grade score	Marker commentary
One	A4	This essay responds to the question by demonstrating a basic understanding of the association of the work studied with a specific event or occasion. The work is of appropriate substance for this level. The musical evidence is very simple and used to support statements – more specific reference to musical ideas would have significantly enhanced this response. While clear links have been established between the occasion and the music work, more detail and musical analysis is required for a higher grade, including more in-depth discussion of the way the context has shaped different aspects of the conception, production, and interpretation.