

MUSORGSKIJ'S SENSORY JOURNEY: *PICTURES AT AN EXHIBITION* AS A KINAESTHETIC MUSICAL EKPHRASIS

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Abstract

This study investigates Modest Musorgskij's Pictures at an Exhibition as a paradigm of musical ekphrasis, focusing on how the work evokes sensory and bodily experiences beyond mere visual representation. Unlike visual arts, music suggests imagery without explicitly denoting it, allowing listeners to engage with art through an embodied, rather than solely auditory, perception.

By extending Gibson's concept of affordance to the musical domain, it is explored how sound offers action possibilities that transcend passive contemplation, activating sensory-motor dynamics in the listener. This interaction involves kinaesthetic imagery, which enables a physical experience of music even without overt physical action. Neuroscientific studies support this view, documenting the activation of motor and premotor areas of the brain during musical listening.

The analysis of the pictures reveals how Musorgskij, through percussive textures, articulated dynamics, and complex rhythmic patterns, transforms the exhibition visitor into a physical and empathetic participant, inducing a corporeal and cognitive journey. Musorgskij's work is a process of sensory-motor mediation in which music embodies and transmits complex perceptive and emotional experiences.

Keywords

Musorgskij, Musical Ekphrasis, Embodied Cognition, Kinaesthetic imagery

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