

GRAMOPHONE

SEPTEMBER 09

Soundbites | For the record

Gallery view {Piano sketch}

No, this is not desperate measures in the face of the global recession, but a rather striking promotional shot for *Pictures Reframed*, a collaboration between pianist Leif Ove Andsnes and South African visual artist Robin Rhode.

Together they have produced a visual interpretation of Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*. "Mussorgsky's music is incredibly strong but it's also very open and experimental," writes the pianist. "The main thing isn't the notes themselves, but the composer's grand vision. For me

therefore, the original version of the work remains almost as a sketch that is open for transformations and changes." He insisted that in performance the projection of the film will be flexible, enabling it to follow his musical interpretation.

The piece includes a piano being slowly submerged in a dock (Andsnes has already been filmed playing at the top of a mountain – he's obviously developing a new sport of "extreme piano"). Given that an exhibition – of Viktor Hartmann's paintings – inspired Mussorgsky to compose his work

in the first place, it's pleasing to see the reverse happening now.

Selected performances include: Lincoln Center, New York (Nov 13, 14); Jack Singer Concert Hall, Calgary (Nov 16); Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels (Nov 24); Tchaikovsky Concert Hall, Moscow (Nov 27); Konserthus, Stockholm (Nov 29); Kampnagel, Hamburg (Dec 1); QEH, London (Dec 4).

EMI Classics will release a CD of the work, and a book and DVD of the project, in November. Visit the project's website www.picturesreframed.com for details.

