

Japanese wizard transforms 'Pictures'

Electronic performances of music written for conventional instrumentation have the habit of falling into one of two categories. One is that of the charming, tinkling treatment, wherein any composition is gutted of dignity or primal drive and is turned into what one might, if driven to it, refer to as a delightful bit of fluff, suitable for background music at a wine tasting or champagne dinner party. The works of some composers lend themselves nicely to this treatment, such as Vivaldi, Corelli, J.S. Bach & Sons and the ever-popular Mozart.

The second category is that of the bombast, popularized by perpetually perambulating Britons Emerson, Lake and Palmer. Their crass, pyrotechnically-augmented adaptation of Mussorgsky's "Pictures at an Exhibition" set new standards for vulgarity and crass musical bastardization, but suggest what might be done to other composers more deserving of this heavy handed treatment, such as Beethoven, Verdi, or Tchaikovsky.

Third category
Happily, there is a third category, the sole occupant of which is a young Japanese wizard named Isao Tomita. Creator of a brilliant disc of electronic treatment of Debussy selections, *Snowflakes Are Dancing*, he has now turned his attentions to Mussorgsky and

David Ware omelet

has produced what may stand as being one of the finest recordings of "Pictures at an Exhibition" ever to be released.

Embodying the rude electricity that animates Mussorgsky's piece, Tomita's "Pictures" best exemplifies the potential contribution of electronic instrumentation to previously-composed

works. Peculiarly effective is his use of an effect that resembles nothing so much as a not-quite-human choir, lending a shimmering aural gloss to the "Promenade" interludes and the awesome "Great Gates of Kiev." Electronic wizardry adds a new dimension to "The Waltz of the Unhatched Chicks" as well, with strikingly realistic sounds of fledgling birds chirping in rhythm, and an innocuously soft cats' meow dropping in unexpectedly.

One clinker

Every album must of course have at least one clinker but Tomita manages to avoid this until the final selection, "The Great Gates of Kiev," to which he adds a false ending that resembles a cosmic, synthesized flatulation.

This single quibble aside, Tomita's work stands as a monument of taste and respect for the original composition. He has taken a great original and expanded its possibilities as only Sviatoslav Richter has been able to do on piano, and in so doing has created a masterpiece.

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Andy, Bob, Bill, Dan, Dale, Lyle, Lynn, Regi, Rich, Russ, Steph & Jay finally got together on something...



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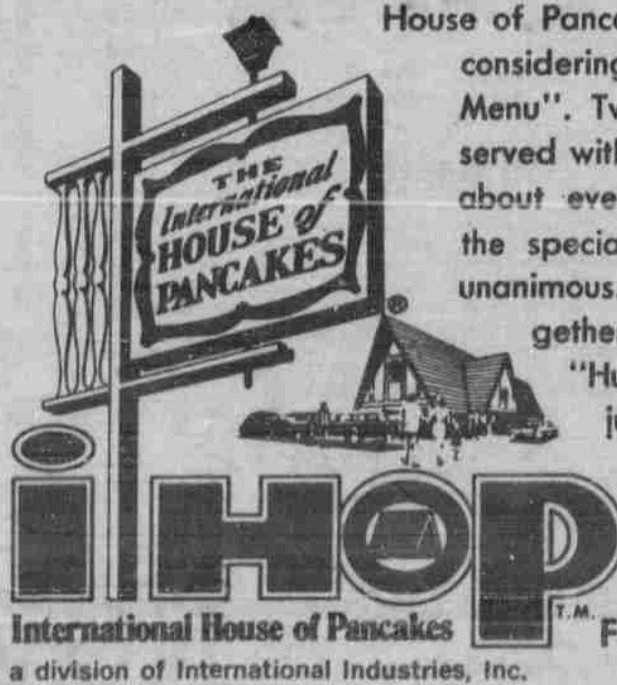
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| 9 TUNA MELT Tuna salad and processed American Cheese grilled in butter. | 10 OUR OWN HAMBURGER Two 100% ground beef patties served open faced on a sesame seed bun. |
| 11 VEAL PARMESAN MELT Veal steak with melted Swiss Cheese, Italian sauce, onions, served on rye bread. | 12 BACON, LETTUCE & TOMATO Bacon, lettuce, and tomato slices with mayonnaise, served on toast. |

...lunch at the IHOP

It used to be that the group at the office could never agree on anything. Dan's a Democrat and Jay's a Republican. Lyle's a conservative while Rich takes the liberal views. Regi loves winter sports while Lynn would rather sun by a swimming pool. Bob loves to bowl while Dale wouldn't miss a baseball game. It looked like a hopeless case, but we finally got them to all agree on one thing—lunch at the International

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