

## Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov - The legend of the invisible City of Kitezh (1995)

Written by bluesever

Thursday, 24 November 2011 10:20 - Last Updated Thursday, 10 April 2014 11:56

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Disc: 1 1. Prelude (Praise of Solitude) 2. Act 1: Ach du Wald, mein Wald 3. Act 1: Was soll das heisst, Herr mein Gott? 4. Act 1: Doch wenn dann der Fruling hier Einzug halt 5. Act 1: Gesegnet seien die sussen Lippen 6. Act 1: Die Schutzen brauchen nur auf dem loichten Feld zu erscheinen 7. Act 1: Woher stammst du, Madchen? 8. Act 2: Zeig, Michailuschka, zeig, du Schelm 9. Act 2: Aud dem tiefen See Jar stiegen einst zwolf Auerochsen 10. Act 2: Zeig, Michailuschka, zeig, du Schelm 11. Act two - Was macht mir das schon aus 12. Act 2: Hehe Kinder! Die Schellen klingen 13. Act 2: Weshalb verjagt ihr ihn? [play](#) 14. Act 2: Spielt auf, lasst die Gusli erklingen 15. Act 2: Seid still, Bruder, es blasen Trompeten 16. Act 2: Hai-da! Hai-da! 17. Act 2: Haltet ein, ihr gottlosen Heiden 18. Act 3: Sied gegrusst, Leute von Kitesch! 19. Act 3: Fjodor! Freund! Leidvoller Blinder! 20. Act 3: O Ruhm, nichtiger Ruhm 21. Act 3: Knabe, du bist der Jungste hier 22. Act 3: Wunderbare, himmlische Konigin 23. Act 3: Oi, ihr wahren Getreuen! 24. Act 3: Gott, der Herr, breitet uber Kitesch seinen schutzenden Mantel

Disc:

2

1.

Act 3: Interlude, The Battle Near Kershenez 2. Act 3: Hier ist es: Der Eichwald und der See 3. Act 3: Oi, ihr tartarischen Krieger! 4. Act 3: Weine nicht, weine nicht, schönes Madchen! 5. Act 3: Horst du mich, Madchen... 6. Act 3: Oi, Taubchen, ich bin frei 7. Act 4: Oi, unmöglich, weiter zu gehen, Grischenka! 8. Act 4: Gott, habe Erbarmen mit Grischenka! 9. Act 4: Wer stitzt da neben dir, Furstin? 10. Act 4: Grischenka!...Er hort nicht...Fortgelaufen 11. Act 4: Wappne dich mit Hoffnung

[play](#)

12. Act 4: Bist du es, helles Licht meiner Augen? 13. Act 4: Der Brautigam ist gekommen 14. Act 4: Gott versprach den Suchenden 15. Act 4: Die Turen des Paradieses haben sich geoffnet 16. Act 4: Gottes Gnade uber dich, Furstin 17. Act 4: Hier gibt es keine Klagen

Prince Yury Vsevolodovich - Pavel Daniluk Princeling Vsevolod Yur'yevich - Sergei Naida Fevroniya - Elena Prokina Grishka Kuter'ma - Vladimir Galuzin Fyodor Poyarok - Samson Isumov Page - Nina Romanova First Upright Citizen - Alexei Shestov Second Upright Citizen - Mikhail Nikoforov Bard - Oleg Zdanov Beggar - Alexander Tsimbalov Bedyay - Movsar Mintzaev Burunday - Vladimir Vaneev Sirin - Victoria Lukyanets Alkonost - Aleksandra Durseneva Wiener Symphoniker Vladimir Fedoseyev - conductor, 1995

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The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh and the Maiden Fevroniya is an opera in four acts by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov. The libretto was written by Vladimir Belsky, and is based on a combination of two Russian legends: that of St. Fevroniya of Murom, and the city of Kitezh, which became invisible when attacked by the Tatars. The opera was completed in 1905, and the premiere performance took place at the Maryinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg, on February 7, 1907. The world premiere was given in Saint Petersburg, Russia at the Mariinsky Theatre on 20 February (O.S. 7 February), 1907. The scenic designers were Konstantin Korovin and Apollinary Vasnetsov. A year later, the opera was given its premiere at the Bolshoy Theatre, Moscow, Russia on 15 February 1908. Scenic designers were Korovin, Klodt, Vasnetsov. The first performance out of Russia took place at Barcelona's Gran Teatre del Liceu, February 1926.

### Synopsis

Time: Summer of the 6751st year of the creation of the world

Place: Unspecified location beyond the Volga River

### Prelude

'Hymn to the Wilderness', an orchestral depiction of the scenery of forest wilderness.

### Act 1

Kerzhenskii Woods.

These wild forests with dense thickets and bogs are the home of Fevronia (and her "brother", a tree creeper), who lives in a hut. She is besotted with dreams and poetical fancies, and is a daughter of nature, being on friendly terms with the birds and wild animals, and knowing all the mysteries of the forest. One day she meets a young prince in the forest, who has been hunting and has lost his way. He is Vsevolod, son of Prince Yuri of Kitezh, and he falls for her beauty,

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spiritual integrity and love of people and of nature. They sing a love duet, in which he places a ring on her finger, but this is interrupted by the sound of the hunting party from afar. He bids her farewell and goes to find the party, while she learns to whom she has become betrothed.

### Act 2

Ivan Bilibin 173.jpg

#### Little Kitezh on the Volga

Holiday festivities are going on in the market place in this place, because the wedding procession of Princess Fevronia is expected to come through. The people crowd around the buffoon and laugh at the bear's antics. An old psaltery-player comes and sings a solemn song. The rich townfolk, who think Prince Vsevolod should have married a girl with better family connections, persuade Grishka Kuterma (the local drunkard) to mock the princess. The procession approaches to the sound of bells, and (in an old custom) the wedding guests throw honey-cakes, ribbons and coins into the crowd as the bride's 'ransom'. The people chase away Grishka and the procession takes up a wedding song.

Suddenly the merrymaking is interrupted as the town is surrounded by an army of invading Tatars. There is a sorrowful lamenting chorus of the people. Fevronia is captured by the Tatars and is racked by anxiety for the fate of her bridegroom and the city of Greater Kitezh, which the Tatars will attack next. But Grishka agrees to betray Russia and to lead the Tatars to the city, while Fevronia prays that it be rendered invisible.

### Act 3

#### Scene 1 - Great Kitezh

Hearing of the invasion, the people of Greater Kitezh gather in the main square in arms, in dead

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of night. The prince's huntsman Fyodor Poyarok, whom the Tatars have blinded, tells them of the atrocities committed at Little Kitezh. A boy announces that the Tatars approach. The people prepare for battle, and the Prince leads a battalion which sings a chorus of resolution to fight to the end. Then, a golden fog rises over the Lake and shrouds the city, hiding it from the enemy: only the church bells drone faintly. But a fierce battle breaks out on the banks of the river Kherzhenets. A symphonic interlude, composed around the battle-song theme and another representing the Tatar hordes, depicts the grim scene, and introduces:

### Scene 2 - At the lake Svetlyi Iar

After a long trek through the wilderness, Grishka has led the Tatars to the edge of the lake. Unable to see the city for the fog, the Tatars accuse him of treachery and tie him to a tree, intending to kill him in the morning. They make fires and share out their loot. Two of the Tatar leaders, Burundai and Bedyai, quarrel over Fevronia and Bedyai is slain. The Tatars, preparing for night, sing a dismal song about ravens flocking to carnage. They sleep, and Fevronia is heard mourning Vsevolod, who has fallen in battle. Grishka, tormented by fear and remorse, begs her to release him, and she does so believing that kindness will heal his soul. But he is haunted by nightmares, in which the chimes of the Kitezh bells become distorted in his brain. He rushes to drown himself, but stops at the shore as the dawn shows that while the city remains invisible, the reflection of the city can be seen in the water, and the bells ring out ever louder. The Tatars are stricken with fear by the sight and disperse.

### Act 4

#### Scene 1 - Kerzhenskii Woods

In pitch darkness Fevronia and Grishka, exhausted, struggle through the wilderness. Grishka is delirious, and after singing a song about the devil and dancing wildly he runs off screaming. Fevronia is lulled to sleep by the sounds of the forest. In her dream the scene is transformed, with fantastic blossoming flowers, candles in the trees, and fairy songbirds. The mythical bird of sorrow, Alkonost, appears to tell her she must die. She welcomes death, and her prince appears to lead her to Kitezh. A second bird, Sirin, promises immortality. The enchantment comes out irresistibly in the Symphonic Interlude leading to:

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### Scene 2 - The Invisible City

The scene is in the legendary city of beautiful people with gracious hearts. Fevronia and Vsevolod, Prince Yuri and Fyodor Poyarok all reappear. Fevronia sends a message of hope to Grishka, telling him that one day he too will find the way to the Invisible City. Vsevolod leads his bride to the altar with wedding songs, and a Hymn of Joy, as a solemn chorus, ends the opera. Good, Love and Justice are victorious.

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