

Editorial: Alexander Scriabin (1)

Alexander Scriabin remains, without a doubt, one of the most exciting figures of early 20th century music. With a musical thought that was incontestably modern, magnified by an extravagant philosophical, aesthetical and theosophical perspective, Scriabin constructed a demiurgic aura during his lifetime, which not even the ringleaders of Stalinism and Zhdanovism were able to destroy in the '30s-'50s. (I find it significant that in 1940, during the heyday of socialist realism in the Soviet Union, Soviet musicologist Arnold Alshvang was able to publish a volume on Scriabin!)

The way in which the Russian composer has been perceived remains a vast and complex subject, and the 2015 commemoration of 100 years since his death has rekindled discussions and debates about Scriabin's reception today. As such, most of the studies that make up this issue (as well as a future issue, in 2016) of *Musicology Today* are drawn from a musicology conference organized this year, on May 4th, by the National University of Music Bucharest and dedicated to the Russian composer.

What can still be written about Scriabin a century after his death? Does his music still have an impact today? To these questions, the authors of this issue offer possible answers. **Lincoln Ballard**, for instance, dismantles the myth that Scriabin was repudiated and willfully forgotten in the first years that followed the Bolshevik revolution. **Composer Nicolae Coman** relates – in a confessional tone – his encounter with Scriabin's music and the formative impact it had on his own musical thought. Pianist **Lena Vieru** sheds light on Scriabin's piano sonatas, striking a proper balance between the perspective of the performer and that of the rigorous musicologist. **Anna Levy** and **Gregory Myers**, in an article they co-author, follow the trail of Scriabin's enigmatic, grandiose and utopian *Mysterium* in a detective-like fashion, taking the late opuses (57 to 74) as key clues to a possible reconstruction of the *Prefatory Act*.

Four perspectives, therefore, on a fascinating figure, without whom the landscape of 20th century music would have surely been different: Alexander Scriabin.

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