

**Lincoln M. Ballard**

*The Lost Golden Age of Scriabin's Early Posthumous Reception*

This article shatters the myth of Scriabin's neglect post mortem by tracking the activities of performers and State officials who ensured his music's sustained presence in Russia. Chief among them was Lenin's Commissariat for Public Education, Anatoli Lunacharsky, who programmed and lectured on Scriabin's music for Bolshevik festivals. Lunacharsky believed that communal art could enlighten and unify the masses, and he vowed to educate the public by celebrating their pre-Revolutionary cultural heritage. By selecting Scriabin's music for political rallies and State anniversaries, Lunacharsky drew explicit links between the composer's quest to enlighten the masses and Marxist-Leninist tenets. Helping Lunacharsky to execute his cultural mission was Arthur Lourié, who served as head of the State music division (MUZO) from 1918-1921. In private circles, Scriabin's legacy benefitted from the efforts of Russian symbolist philosopher Viacheslav Ivanov. Like Lunacharsky, Ivanov believed that music was the art form best suited for social betterment, and he regarded Scriabin as a national hero whose music could heighten the public's spiritual consciousness. Scriabin's enduring popularity during this forgotten period deserves greater recognition, as it provides a long-overdue corrective to his early posthumous reception, and demonstrates that pre-Revolutionary culture was not entirely eradicated after 1917, but in fact provided the building blocks of early Soviet culture.

**Lena Vieru Conta**

*Scriabin and His Piano Sonatas*

This study presents the rapid evolution of musical language and ideas in Scriabin's piano sonatas, from Post-Romanticism to an entirely new cosmogonic understanding. The first part presents Scriabin's more general musical thought: his philosophical perspective, as well as stylistic and aesthetic choices from the various stages of his career. The second part evinces the specific aspects of the sonata form as practiced by Scriabin – from the composer's formal rigor to his specific "hidden pragmatism."

**Anna Levy, Gregory Myers**

*Envisioning and Reconstructing the Prefatory Act  
from Alexander Scriabin's *Mysterium**

A full century ahead of his time, Scriabin was history's first major multimedia artist. His *milieu* was mystical, symbolic, abstract, and philo-theosophical. In the decade leading up to his death in 1915, Scriabin was consumed with the creation of his *Mysterium*, an apocalyptic spectacle of gargantuan proportions that embraced the cosmos. Set in the Himalayas, it involved literally a cast of millions, and was to embrace all the senses; it was to go beyond the aural, to engage the ear but also the

eye, the olfactory, the tactile and the gestural, in a word, to be fully experiential. Unfortunately, at the time of his untimely death at age 43, Scriabin had completed only the text and a few dense musical sonorities for its *Prefatory Act*.

With so little extant material, could a reconstruction even be possible? To begin, the most authentic surviving part of Scriabin's *Mysterium* is its core, his collection of remarkable poetry penned in the spirit of Russia's *Silver Age*. As the point of departure, to find the corresponding embodiment of his musical ideas and the maturation of his own musical language we must look to his last completed orchestral composition, the Op. 60, *Prometheus – The Poem of Fire*. Then to fully realize a production only those compositions from the same period as *Mysterium's* inception, i.e., the Opuses 57 to 74, works that embrace the same stylistic and philosophical aesthetic, would be selected. These late works embody every word, intonation, breath and emotion conveyed by Scriabin's text. The following paper explores the musical path to a realization of the *Mysterium* through an assembly and examination of these late works.

**Nicolae Coman**

*Alexander Scriabin from a Contemporary Perspective*

This essay sheds light on the impact that Scriabin's music and cosmogonic understanding had on the author, throughout his life. Various memories are related – from his first encounter with Scriabin's music in 1952 to visiting Scriabin's house in Moscow in the 1970s. Subtle and personal comments reflect the author's perception of Scriabin's style. Nicolae Coman highlights, among others, Scriabin's role in configuring his own system as a composer.