

Alexander Scriabin

Three Orchestral Miniatures

arranged for Orchestra by
Jeff Gorbbski

OMS1513

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About the Composition

Alexander Scriabin (1872 – 1915) was a Russian composer and pianist, and one of the most innovative of early modern composers, providing inspiration for fellow Russian luminaries as Stravinsky, Shostakovich, and Prokofiev. Scriabin, whose compositional style was influenced by Chopin, composed early works that are characterized by late Romantic tonal language. Later in his career, independently of both Arnold Schoenberg and Charles Ives, Scriabin developed a markedly atonal and much more dissonant musical style, which accorded with his Theosophist and own personal beliefs.

Scriabin's piano works, extensive in both their range and scope, are rivaled by few composers other than Chopin, and his ten published sonatas for piano have been compared to Beethoven's for their contribution to the genre.

The *Orchestral Miniatures* are orchestrations of three Scriabin piano preludes which come from Scriabin's early period, when his music was most accessible to his audiences.

The 24 Preludes that comprise Opus 11, composed over the course of eight years between 1888–96, are perhaps the most commonly performed of Scriabin's piano works. Romantic, lyrical, and full of scintillating harmonies, they are both a challenge to play and a delight to hear. Despite the key of E-major in #9, the lower voices often contain C-sharp minor passages, while the upper voices remain relatively consistently within the bounds of E major, giving the piece a unique tone color.

The two preludes of Opus 27 were published in 1901 near the end of Scriabin's early compositional style. They hallmark Scriabin's predilection toward dominants and added chord tones (particularly 13ths), immediately evident in the opening measure of #2 with the upper melody beginning on a B-natural over a tonic C-major chord.

Opus 13 was published in 1895 and consists of 6 piano preludes. #3 features two contrapuntal lines: the upper being smooth and linear, whereas the lower line (featured in the solo cello) is graceful and strident, sweeping across two octaves.

Scriabin (with support from other composers like Rimsky-Korsakov) felt that sight and sound reinforce each other and that the different aural harmonic qualities of music can be enhanced by displaying the harmony's complimentary color. “The color underlines the tonality,” Scriabin told the British psychologist Charles Myers in 1915, “it makes the tonality more evident.” Based on Scriabin's own chart, the following colors could be used to enhance the performance of each miniature:

- Orchestral Miniature 1: Turquoise
- Orchestral Miniature 2: Red
- Orchestral Miniature 3: Dark Orange

Finally, though these pieces are published in numerical order as a set, they can be played in any order or individually.

About the Composer

Dr. Jeff Gorbcki is a composer, arranger, orchestrator, and educator. He holds a doctorate in Education, with degrees in music and music composition. When he retired, he had been the percussion studio director at Carson-Newman College for seven years. While there, he wrote for and conducted the percussion and marching percussion ensembles, having composed and arranged many pieces during his tenure. He also taught composition, orchestration, and other music classes. He has lectured at several national and international conferences and has written for various trade publications and journals. He was then, and still is, a champion for the performance of student compositions, particularly large ensemble works. Dr. Gorbcki is currently a freelance arranger/orchestrator, and still teaches composition and orchestration online to students willing and eager to learn the craft.

TRANSPosed SCORE

Three Orchestral Miniatures

Alexander Scriabin

I. Op. 11, No. 9

arranged by Jeff Gorbcki

Andantino $\text{♩} = 66$

Flute 1
Oboe 1
Clarinet in B \flat 1-2
Bassoon 1
Bassoon 2
Horn in F 1-2
Timpani (F# - D#)

mf
mp
mf
mp
mp
mf
mp

This section of the score covers the woodwind and timpani parts. It begins with a 3/4 time signature and a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The tempo is marked 'Andantino' with a quarter note equal to 66 beats per minute. The woodwinds play melodic lines with various dynamics, while the timpani part is mostly silent.

Andantino $\text{♩} = 66$

Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Cello I
Cello II
Contrabass

mf
mp
mp
mf
mf
mp

This section of the score covers the string parts. It continues with the same 3/4 time signature and key signature. The strings play a variety of rhythmic and melodic patterns, with dynamics ranging from mezzo-forte to mezzo-piano.

II. Op. 27, No. 2

Andante ♩ = 54

rit.

a tempo

Flute 1-2

Oboe 1-2

Clarinet in B \flat 1-2

Bassoon 1-2

Horn in F 1-2

Timpani (G-A-D)

Percussion Chimes

Detailed description: This section of the score covers woodwinds and percussion. The woodwinds (Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon, Horn) have melodic lines with various dynamics (mf, mp) and articulations. The percussion parts (Timpani and Chimes) are mostly rests.

Andante ♩ = 54

rit.

a tempo

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello I

Cello II

Contrabass

Detailed description: This section of the score covers the string ensemble. The Violin II, Viola, Cello I, and Cello II parts have melodic lines starting in the latter half of the page. Dynamics include mp and mf. The Violin I and Contrabass parts are mostly rests.

mp < *mf*

III. Op. 13, No. 3

Andante ♩ = 55

Flute 1-2
Oboe 1-2
Clarinet in B \flat 1-2
Bassoon 1
Bassoon 2
Horn in F 1
Horn in F 2

The woodwind section score is for a 3/4 time signature in the key of D major. The Flute, Oboe, and Horn parts are mostly silent, indicated by rests. The Clarinet in B \flat and Bassoon parts enter in the fifth measure with a melodic line starting on a whole note, marked *mf*. The Clarinet part includes a triplet of eighth notes in the fifth measure, marked with a first ending bracket and the number 3.

Andante ♩ = 55

Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Solo Cello
Cello
Contrabass

The string section score is for a 3/4 time signature in the key of D major. Violin I and II play a melodic line starting on a whole note, marked *mp*. Violin I includes a *div.* (divisi) instruction. The Viola part also starts on a whole note, marked *mp*. The Solo Cello part plays a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, marked *mf*, with triplet markings (3) under the notes. The Cello and Contrabass parts are silent, indicated by rests.