ASSC 23 POSTER SESSION

Title: A. Scriabin and the “Birth of Consciousness” in Music

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Abstract: 1.40

The figure of the Russian composer Alexander Scriabin has held a mysterious fascination to this day. At the turn of the 20th century the Russian Mystic Symbolist movement was in full bloom and Scriabin was hailed as a prophet.

Symbolists believed in “unreal reality” and that the sound frequencies can transform consciousness. The hypothesis here is that Scriabin tried to convey abstract philosophical categories and spiritual realms in his music, which could be described as the “birth of consciousness” or the awakening of the mind, for which in his time Scriabin was seen nearly a schizophrenic. As Carl Jung noted: “Consciousness…is like a child that is born daily out of the primordial womb of the unconscious “ (CW II, par. 935). Scriabin assigned an epigraph to Sonata N5: “I summon you to life, secret yearnings! You who have been drowned in the dark depths Of the creative spirit, you timorous Embryos of Life, it is you that I bring daring”. It was his life’s ambition to create a multisensory drama Mysterium capable of transforming universal consciousness through an act of theurgy which he planned in India. His synesthesia inspired him to include colour-organ into the score of his sympohonic work Prometheus. Scriabin wanted to create ‘divine’ harmonies. He reinterpreted triton “dissonance” from something unpleasant to the sequences of altered Dominant sevenths giving them “tender” and “dazzling” effects. Piano Opuses 71, 73, and 74 are the sketches for unfinished Mysterium, Preparatory Act. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8-1cio4jCmQ Sonata N9 nicknamed “Black Mass”, is more describing darkness of unconsciousness rather than ritual of the evil. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YvLDzQuXSBM

Recent studies on consciousness can reveal new evaluation to the heritage of the composer.