

# Skryabin Philosophy and the Music of Desire: Unlocking the Secrets of the Divine



Alexander Scriabin, the enigmatic Russian composer and pianist, left an indelible mark on the musical landscape with his groundbreaking compositions and philosophical writings. His unique brand of mysticism,

influenced by Theosophy and other esoteric beliefs, deeply permeated his musical language, creating a distinct synthesis of music, philosophy, and spirituality. In his seminal work, "Skryabin Philosophy and the Music of Desire," musicologist Faubion Bowers meticulously explores the intricate relationship between Scriabin's philosophical ideas and his musical output.



## Skryabin, Philosophy and the Music of Desire (Royal Musical Association Monographs Book 19)

by Kenneth M. Smith

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 2427 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 171 pages  
Screen Reader : Supported



### Scriabin's Philosophical Quest

Scriabin's philosophical journey began in his early years, where he developed a fascination with the writings of the French philosopher Hippolyte Taine. Taine's theory of art as the expression of the artist's personality struck a chord with Scriabin, who saw his music as a reflection of his innermost thoughts and emotions. As his studies progressed, Scriabin delved into the realms of Theosophy, a spiritual and philosophical movement that emphasizes the interconnectedness of all living beings. Theosophy's teachings on reincarnation, karma, and the evolution of consciousness resonated deeply with Scriabin's artistic and spiritual sensibilities.

## **Theosophy and Divine Desire**

Scriabin became increasingly convinced that music held the power to evoke the highest spiritual states and facilitate the evolution of consciousness. He believed that music could create a direct connection to the divine, allowing listeners to experience a profound sense of unity and ecstasy. Central to Scriabin's philosophy was the concept of "divine desire," a longing for the ultimate union with the divine. This desire, he believed, could be awakened and expressed through the transformative power of music.

## **Musical Manifestations**

Scriabin's philosophical ideas found their expression in his musical compositions, which gradually evolved from traditional tonality into a highly chromatic and dissonant style. He used unconventional harmonies, complex rhythms, and extended structures to create a sense of mystery and otherworldly transcendence. His piano pieces, such as the Sonatas Nos. 5-10, explore the depths of human emotion, ranging from intense passion to ethereal spirituality.

In his orchestral works, such as "Prometheus: The Poem of Fire," Scriabin sought to create a Gesamtkunstwerk, a total work of art that combined music, color, and light. The work's vast orchestration, including an organ, choir, and theremin, was intended to evoke a cosmic experience, where the audience could witness the evolution of consciousness and the triumph of divine desire.

## **The Mysterium**

The culmination of Scriabin's philosophical and musical endeavors was his unfinished magnum opus, "Mysterium," a vast and ambitious work that he envisioned as a ritualized performance to facilitate a collective spiritual awakening. The Mysterium was to be performed in a specially designed temple, where the audience would be immersed in a multisensory experience of sound, light, and incense. Scriabin's writings and sketches for the Mysterium reveal his belief that music could serve as a bridge between the physical and spiritual realms, leading to a transformative communal experience.

## **Critics and Legacy**

Scriabin's music and philosophy were met with mixed reactions during his lifetime. Some critics praised his innovative spirit and boundless imagination, while others dismissed his work as pretentious and dissonant. Despite the controversy, Scriabin left a profound legacy on 20th-century music. His influence can be heard in the works of composers such as Igor Stravinsky, Olivier Messiaen, and Karlheinz Stockhausen, who shared his belief in the transformative power of music.

Alexander Scriabin's "Skryabin Philosophy and the Music of Desire" is a groundbreaking work that unlocks the secrets of this enigmatic composer's mind. Faubion Bowers' meticulous research and analysis reveals the intricate relationship between Scriabin's philosophical ideas and his musical output. Through his profound exploration of divine desire, Scriabin created a musical language that sought to evoke the highest spiritual states and facilitate the evolution of consciousness. His legacy continues to inspire and provoke, reminding us of the transformative power of art and its ability to transcend the boundaries of the physical world.

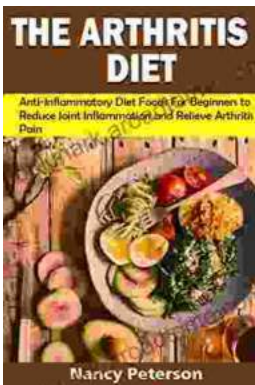


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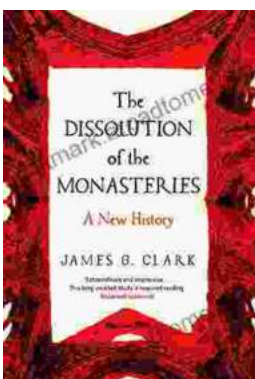
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