



COLLEGE OF MUSIC

University of North Texas College of Music

Doctoral Lecture Recital | Wednesday, April 19, 2023 | 6:30 pm | Recital Hall

Ted Powell, piano

**SCRIABIN'S PROMETHEUS: PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS
IN A TRANSCRIPTION FOR SOLO PIANO**

Alexander Scriabin (1872–1915) composed primarily for his instrument, the piano. He did, however, compose five major works for orchestra and a piano concerto. Scriabin's last work for orchestra, *Prometheus: Poem of Fire*, exemplifies his mature compositional style. Although commonly referred to as a symphony or tone poem, the piano plays a central dramatic role, giving the piece a concerto-like quality. Scriabin included a part for *clavier à lumières*, or color organ, meant to project colored lights in the performance space according to the composer's association of color with sound. In Greek mythology, Prometheus stole fire from the gods and gave it to humankind. Although Scriabin did not include an explicit program in the musical score, his inspiration for composing *Prometheus* merged the ancient myth with his recent fascination with Theosophy, exalting humanity's will and creativity with a spiritual reverence that resonated with the ideals of the Symbolist era. Like his fourth symphony, a transcription for two pianos of *Prometheus* exists, published in 1913 by Scriabin's friend and colleague, Leonid Sabaneev (1881–1968). Although Scriabin's third and fourth symphonies have been transcribed for solo piano, there is no available solo transcription of *Prometheus*. The purpose of this dissertation is to contribute a solo transcription of *Prometheus* to the piano's rich literature in that genre. Furthermore, the dissertation aims to identify and examine the problems encountered in transcribing this work for solo piano and the decision-making that led to musically acceptable solutions. Throughout the process of arrangement, one major question became apparent: What informs the transcription? In turn, this question and its numerous answers served as a guide during the transcription's realization and are the focus of the project.

Prometheus: Poem of Fire,

Opus 60 (1910).....Alexander Scriabin (1872–1915)
arr. for solo piano Ted Powell

Seven hundred eighty-third program of the 2022–2023 season
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