

Alexander Scriabin
Etude in C# Minor

Op. 2, No. 1

arranged for mallet duet by Brian Slawson



Etude in C# Minor by Alexander Scriabin, arranged by Brian Slawson
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Program Notes

With the exception of one piano concerto and a small number of orchestral pieces, Russian composer Alexander Scriabin wrote exclusively for solo piano. Although his early etudes were very much influenced by Chopin, his later fascination with mysticism and free thought inspired innovative chords built on fourths, polytonality, and a deep approach to chromaticism. Scriabin was just 15 years old when he composed this etude in 1887. Due to fluctuating tonal centers commonly found in Scriabin's works, key changes were common. In later works, however, he avoided the use of key signatures entirely, another of his innovations.

Performance Notes

After centuries of music making in strict tempos, the late 19th Century marked a new era in rhythmic thinking. New pedaling techniques on piano created added value to inner harmonic voices, prompting new relationships in rhythmic conformity. As a result, applying profound liberties to tempo became a popular approach, particularly in slow pieces.

Although "bending" the tempo is the composer's intent, doing so with a predictable ebb and flow (in the dynamics as well) will serve the music kindly. I recommend listening to Vladimir Horowitz playing this piece (CBS Masterworks) to hear how the score comes to life when the music has ample room to breathe. For two players to sound as one will likely be the extreme challenge in mastering this mallet duet arrangement.

While using soft mallets, pay special attention to the inner voices, keep the attitude somber, and try to think as "one."

- Brian Slawson

Instrumentation

Vibraphone
Marimba (5-octave)

Level: Med-Advanced
Approx. playing time: 3'00"

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Alexander Scriabin
arr. Brian Slawson

Andante ♩ = 52

Vibraphone

Marimba

V

M

6

11

16

3

mf

mp

p

pp

Sample Image

21 *mf* *mp* rit.

26 ♩ = 50 *f* *mf* *f* *mp*

31 *p*

35 3 *p*

40

Sample
Image