



## **JAEDEN IZIK-DZURKO**

**2022 Winner**

**XX Paloma O'Shea**

**Santander International  
Piano Competition**

## **SCRIABIN**

**Fugues, WoO 12 and 13**

**Nocturne, WoO 3**

**Piano Sonata, Anh. 39**

## Alexander Scriabin (1872–1915)

### Fugues, WoO 12 and 13 • Nocturne, WoO 3 • Piano Sonata, Anh. 39

Moscow-born Alexander Scriabin (1872–1915) occupies a unique position in early 20th-century music. His work, situated at the twilight of Romanticism and the dawn of Modernism, reflects an epoch preoccupied with transcendence and the limits of expression. Building on the idioms of Chopin and Tchaikovsky, he extended harmony, texture and pianistic colour to unprecedented extremes while engaging with the philosophical, Symbolist and mystical currents of the Russian Silver Age. Within this dynamic cultural matrix, Scriabin emerged as a trailblazer, translating the spiritual and aesthetic aspirations of his time into a musical syntax that remains uniquely his own. Across little more than two decades, his output traces one of the most concentrated and radical stylistic evolutions in Western art music, moving from sophisticated salon miniatures to ecstatic and imaginative sonatas.

Scriabin himself was as enigmatic as his art, merging music, philosophy and esoteric speculation in texts that often obscure as much as they reveal. To engage with him is to navigate the shifting boundaries between composer, thinker and seer – a complex personality whose fascination endures. A formidable player despite a handspan of barely an octave – his right hand permanently injured as a student, reportedly from overreaching in pursuit of Rachmaninov – Scriabin performed almost exclusively his own works. This self-contained repertoire, paired with his visionary persona, fostered a mystique that has invited reverence, provoked doubt, and stimulated inquiry across generations. While his orchestral music has fluctuated in reception, it is through his keyboard writing that Scriabin's artistry remains most immediate and compelling.

Here, Jaeden Izik-Dzurko illuminates Scriabin's early investigations into form, texture and harmonic invention, offering a portrait of a young artist negotiating inherited conventions while glimpsing the radical possibilities of his own musical ingenuity – a path that would, over the next two decades, establish him as one of the most distinctive voices in early 20th-century piano writing.

The *Fugue in F minor, WoO 12* (1888), stands among Scriabin's earliest extant contrapuntal exercises, demonstrating his facility with imitative texture and motivic balance. While its framework follows academic norms, there are glimpses of individuality in the rhythmic elasticity and expressive shaping of its subject. Careful voice leading and harmonic clarity reveal an unusually sophisticated sense of tension and release – techniques he would later deploy in freer, more adventurous harmonic contexts.

Written several years earlier, the *Nocturne in A flat major, WoO 3* (second version, 1884–86), situates the young composer in conversation with Chopin's melodic and harmonic language. Its cantabile line, poised over gently rocking accompaniment, exudes introspection and tenderness. Compared with the earlier version, this revision reveals a more fluid and confident hand – its harmony richer, textures more pliant, and phrasing more continuous – transforming a gifted student's imitation into a foretaste of the distinctive expressive world that would later define Scriabin's art. Subtle chromatic inflections and unexpected tonal turns already point beyond convention, prefiguring the harmonic daring that would become one of his hallmarks.

The second *Fugue in F minor, WoO 13* (1888), demonstrates increased contrapuntal assurance and expressive scope. Its subject, more assertive in contour, unfolds with lush harmonic experimentation and dramatic pacing, producing a more cohesive musical argument. Even within the discipline of counterpoint, Scriabin was beginning to assert a distinctively personal intensity.

Finally, the fragmentary *Piano Sonata in G sharp minor, Anh. 39*, composed in 1892 during the final year of Scriabin's studies at the Moscow Conservatory, expands this exploration to a larger canvas. Though incomplete, the surviving pages outline sweeping thematic gestures and an emergent sense of tonal trajectory. These sketches hint at long-range development thinking and contrast, marking the earliest stirrings of the sonata as a medium for psychological depth and harmonic innovation. Beyond mere student exercises, these fragments anticipate the structural imagination and visionary language that would characterise his mature piano works.



Photo: Waldy Martens

## Jaeden Izik-Dzurko



Canadian pianist Jaeden Izik-Dzurko is internationally recognised for the depth, sincerity and clarity of his artistry. A Gold Medallist at the 2024 Leeds International Piano Competition and a recipient of a Borletti-Buitoni Trust Fellowship, he made history as the first Canadian to win the Grand Prize at the Concours musical international de Montréal. He has performed in many of the world's leading concert halls, including Carnegie Hall's Weill Recital Hall in New York, Hamburg's Elbphilharmonie, Gewandhaus Leipzig, the Salle Cortot in Paris, Auditorio Nacional de Música in Madrid and London's Wigmore Hall. His orchestral partnerships include the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal, Bilbao Orkestra Sinfonikoa and the National Symphony Orchestra Ireland. He has also earned top prizes at the Hilton Head, Maria Canals and Paloma O'Shea Santander International Piano Competitions. Born in British Columbia, Izik-Dzurko studied at the University of British Columbia and The Juilliard School, and is currently continuing his training in Europe with Jacob Leuschner and Benedetto Lupo.

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In this selection, prize-winning Canadian pianist Jaeden Izik-Dzurko explores the evolving language of Alexander Scriabin's piano works. The four pieces heard here illuminate Scriabin's early investigations into form, texture and harmonic invention, offering a portrait of a young artist glimpsing the radical possibilities of his own musical ingenuity. Jaeden Izik-Dzurko's Scriabin and Rachmaninov recital is available on 8.574658.

Alexander  
**SCRIABIN**  
(1872–1915)

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|----------|---|-------------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>Fugue in F minor, WoO 12 (1888)</b>                            | <b>3:08</b> |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Nocturne in A flat major, WoO 3 (1884–86) (second version)</b> | <b>2:53</b> |
| <b>3</b> | <b>Fugue in F minor, WoO 13 (1888)</b>                            | <b>3:07</b> |
| <b>4</b> | <b>Piano Sonata in G sharp minor, Anh. 39 (1892) (fragments)</b>  | <b>1:31</b> |

**Jaeden Izik-Dzurko, Piano**

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