An orchestration of the

Sonata no. 3 in F-sharp minor, Op.23

by Alexander Scriabin

Olga Maria de Castro Martins Amaro

Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Music at the University of Stellenbosch.

March 2009

Supervisor:

Professor Hans Roosenschoon
By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the owner of the copyright thereof (unless to the extent explicitly otherwise stated) and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted if for obtaining any qualification.

Olga Maria de Castro Martins Amaro, March 2009

Copyright © 2009 Stellenbosch University
All rights reserved
Abstract

The work presented herewith is an orchestration of one of the most idiomatic piano pieces composed by Alexander Scriabin: the Sonata no.3 in F-sharp minor, Op. 23.

This particular orchestration involved a process of profound examination and comprehension of the form of the sonata, as well as understanding the role of each instrument of the symphony orchestra, and how they could contribute to an orchestral reconstruction of Scriabin’s work. The re-creation of the piano part, and the whole experience that supported this challenge, resulted in the individual production in which my particular interpretation of Scriabin’s music reflects the maturity of an absorbed investigation of his style of composition.
Opsomming

Die werk wat hiermee aangebied word is ‘n orkestrasie van een van die mees idiomatiese klavierwerke van die komponis Alexander Skriabin, sy Sonate nr. 3 in Fkruis mineur, op. 23.

Die orkestrasie daarvan het ’n diepgaande ondersoek en begrip van die sonate se vorm behels, benewens insigte ten opsigte van die bydrae wat orkesinstrumente tot die rekonstruksie van Skriabin se werk kan maak. Die herskepping van die klavierpart, en die omvattende ervaring wat hierdie uitdaging ondersteun het, het gelei tot ‘n individuele skepping waarin my besondere vertolking van Skriabin se musiek deur ‘n boeiende ondersoek van sy komposisiestyl weerspieël word.
Contents

Abstract i

Opsomming ii

A. Introduction iv
   1. Definition of orchestration v
   2. Rationale
      2.1 An orchestration as text x
      2.2 The transition from one text to another xi
      2.3 The Sonata no. 3 in F-sharp minor, Op. 23 xiv
         by Alexander Scriabin
   3. Objectives xvii
   4. Sources and research approach xviii
   5. Methodology and structure
      5.1 Transcription versus orchestration xxiii
      5.2 Instrumentation and timbre xxiv
      5.3 Texture: Its vertical dimension xxvi
      5.4 Texture: Its horizontal dimension xxvii
      5.5 Pedal tones xxx
      5.6 Articulation and rhythmic notation xxx
      5.7 Dynamics: Re-reading the dynamic topology xxxii
   6. Conclusion xxxii
   7. Sectional division of Scriabin’s 3rd Piano Sonata xxxiii
   8. Instrumentation xxxiv

B. Bibliography xxxv


D. Piano Text: Sonata no.3 in F-sharp minor, Op. 23 [p. 3 - 27]
A. Introduction

The orchestration of the Sonata no. 3 in F-sharp minor, Op. 23 by the Russian composer Alexander Scriabin (1871/1872 – 1915) form the main body of this thesis. It comprises a full-score of 129 pages and is referred to in the discussion that follows as Orchestra Text, and can be found in Part C of the document as a whole. Part D, referred to as Piano Text, is the original of the Sonata and is included here in order that the reader has the opportunity to draw comparisons between the two texts, and to facilitate a grasp of the orchestration which was created from it.

The discussion that follows in Part A aims to provide a broad but necessary explanation of what we understand by the term Orchestration, and the merit of it as a research problem. Furthermore, the rationale and objectives of the thesis, the resources and approach to this research, and finally, the research methodology and structure thereof are explained.

However, I should point out that my course of action is to be concise for the reasons given at the end of the section that provides perspectives on the music sources that were consulted, and my particular research approach.

Therefore, this introduction should be seen as a summary of the most salient issues that come to the forefront when such an undertaking as an orchestration of a piano work is embarked upon. Any conclusions that are reached are reflected in the main part of the thesis, i.e. Part C: Orchestra Text, and should be read in conjunction with Part D: Piano Text.
1. **Definition of Orchestration**

The meaning of the term Orchestration seems to be ambiguous. Most encyclopedic entries on the term offer various definitions. In some instances Orchestration is defined as something apart from Instrumentation whilst according to other sources Instrumentation is considered integral to orchestration.

Kreitner et al (2009) describes orchestration as “The art of combining the sounds of a complex of instruments (an orchestra or other ensemble) to form a satisfactory blend and balance. The term ‘orchestration’ is often used to denote the craft of writing idiomatically for these instruments. ‘To orchestrate’ has also come to mean to score for orchestra, a work written for a solo instrument or small ensemble”.

According to the same author Instrumentation “...by itself is a more general term, denoting the selection of instruments for a musical composition, either as part of the composer’s art or by the performers for a particular performance”.

How the concept of Arrangement is defined, on the other hand, creates the impression that there is much overlap between our understanding of what the craftsmanship of both Orchestration and Arrangement involve. Ellingson (2009) defines the latter as “The reworking of a musical composition, usually for a different medium from that of the original”. He goes on to say that “In the sense in which it is commonly used among musicians, however, the word may be taken to mean either the transference of a composition from one medium to another or the elaboration (or simplification) of a piece, with or without a change of medium. In either case some degree of recomposition is usually involved, and the result may vary from a straightforward, almost literal, transcription to a paraphrase which is more the work of the arranger than of the original composer”.
Transcription is another concept about which there seems to be different interpretations.

“Transcriptions are usually made from manuscript sources of early (pre-1800) music and therefore involve some degree of editorial work. It may also mean an Arrangement especially one involving a change of medium (e.g. from orchestra to piano)” (Boyd 2009).

Finally one encounters situations where the terminology Orchestration, Arrangement and Transcription are used by musicians and scholars as interchangeable concepts.

As the orchestra as phenomenon developed over the past five centuries, the symphony orchestra literature and its instrumentation evolved by comparison to the same extend. Orchestral conventions that seemed to have applied at one given moment were turned upside down at a later stage. Orchestral texts became increasingly complex. Hence the study of orchestration, like other sub-disciplines in music, is a comprehensive one. Reference works help us to acquire basic knowledge and abilities whilst the most important findings are made when we study the orchestral works of composers in more detail.

Nevertheless, it is interesting that there exists relatively few resources on the craft of Orchestration. Apart from the Grand traité d’instrumentation et d’orchestration modernes (Paris, 1843) by Hector Berlioz, manuals on orchestration are limited to: Orchestration – A practical handbook, Wagner, J. (1959); Principles of Orchestration, Rimsky-Korsakov (1964); The Technique of Orchestration, Kennan (1970); Orchestration, Piston (1973); Anatomy of an Orchestra, Del Mar (1983); Thinking for Orchestra, Leibowitz and Maguire (no date of publication given); The Study of Orchestration, Adler (the latest edition is from 2002).
A very well-known example, one that was informed by a very long gestation process – approximately 30 years, interrupted between 1873 and 1907 - is the handbook compiled by Nikolay Andreyevich Rimsky-Korsakov and finalized by his student, Maximilian Steinberg. From the foreword to this reference work it seems that Rimsky-Korsakov aimed at compiling an extensive manual that would include all aspects of orchestration, instrumentation and organology. It is rather meaningful that, in the end, he decided it was sufficient enough to have something that highlighted examples from his own *oeuvre* only. Conversely, other reference sources such as Piston, Kennan and Adler for instance, offer much more in terms of the ranges of instruments, their functioning etc, but in comparison to Rimsky-Korsakov’s book they are somewhat superficial when it comes to examples from the literature.

When creating a new work in the orchestral medium many composers have shown a preference towards making sketches in a reduced (piano type) score before embarking on the orchestration itself. This procedure may give rise to the impression that the orchestration of a work is a mere craft, devoid of any creative considerations, adding little more to the musical work as such. However, when examples by composers of works in this genre of the last 100 years are scrutinized, the integration of the creative process with that of the craft of orchestration becomes apparent. Sound colour mixtures and sound balance become progressively more detailed, articulation in all its manifestations is taken greater care of, and superior technical competencies are required from performers. In other words, composition and orchestration becomes more or less synonymous concepts. Both are creative processes which are informed by knowledge and dexterity. Hence Orchestration is definitely not the same discipline as Transcription.
Generically, a study of orchestration as discipline encompass any of the following:

Acquaintance with aspects of all instruments of the symphonic- and wind band literature; a study of the most common arranging techniques and orchestration practice.

For specific aspects of orchestration a selective study of ensemble- and orchestral literature is indicated. Important are the characteristics of various instruments, their ranges and transpositions, including their technical possibilities and limitations.

In addition, the role of various groupings in the orchestra along with their layout in the score, different but typical textures, the mixture of instrumental timbres and the orchestration of vertical sonorities such as chords for instance, motoric versus static sounds, as well as aspects such as articulation, dynamics and balance of the overall sound, are all features of an orchestral work that can be defined and discussed.

Consequently, acquiring skills with regards to the instrumentation and arrangement of piano music - specifically with groups of instruments in mind - in preparation of and as an introduction to significant orchestration and composition projects, develops the orchestrator’s knowledge and experience of idiomatic orchestration techniques.

The list of aspects that feature in most undergraduate orchestration courses can be expanded by including the following:
• Principles and procedures that enhance the organisation and structure of the symphony orchestra’s sound, creating a clear texture; sound groups – woodwinds, brass, percussion and strings - and their organisation.

• Textures: monophonic- and chordal textures; polyphonic-, homophonic-, and poly-thematic textures; poly-rhythmic-, heterophonic- and representational textures.

• Effective tonal distribution: experimenting with various harmonic factors, clarity of timbre; balance of melodic components to enhance clarity and dynamic control; extended instrumental choirs; antiphonal techniques.

• Motoric activity: equilibrium between fragmentary and continuous movement; various types of heterophony; mixtures of diverse and/or overlapping articulations; rigorous articulation, pointilism and punctuation.

• Timbre: subtle timbre mixtures; various types of timbre distribution; contrast between high and low pitches; the orchestral tesitura and extreme registers.
2. Rationale

2.1 An orchestration as text

When the skill of orchestration becomes the topic of research in a Masters thesis it raises a number of interesting questions. One of the questions for which there seems to be no straightforward answer is whether or not Orchestration as discipline can be considered akin to research in its long-established sense. Another question is whether the ontology of Orchestration is comparable to that of Composition for which there seems to be reason enough to accept it as a research equivalent. In both cases a music text is produced which can be contextualized in a number of ways. To clarify what is meant by a music text, I reiterate and paraphrase from an article (in Dutch) by Mark Delaere:

The music text as a historic artefact, with all its aesthetic, analytical, psychological, music-theoretical, music-sociological, acoustic, music-historical and composition-technical dimensions, is perhaps a worthy departure point for an interaction with other disciplines.

During the act of composition, the composer has for the most part the sounding result in mind, that which is observed by the listener [performer]. S/he creates an aesthetical object in the literary as well as etymological meaning of the word. The implicit listener [interpreter] is strongly present in the creative process for, one assumes, the composer cannot create without considering the sound outcome of his/her ideas.

Conversely the listener is not detached from the composer. Listening is directed towards an experience of the artistic dimension of the work and, to some extent, to reconstruct the musical thought processes of the composer.
The listener is presented with a collection of sounds of which s/he tries to grasp the coherence and aesthetic meaning thereof.

Owing to its inability and its emancipation, a score [a music text] is an incomplete representation of musical relationships. On the basis of the symbols used, and its contextual information, a score bring into being an identifiable work (Delaere: 2006).

Therefore, I am convinced that the production of a music text, be it a composition or an orchestration, brings into existence an object that can have various ramifications as a research problem and research outcome.

2.2 The transition from one text to another

The French composer, Maurice Ravel (1875–1937), apart from creating an exemplary orchestral work such as the ballet *Daphnis et Chloé* (1909–12) for instance, produced many of his works in both a piano and orchestral version. Although I am mindful of the fact that the composer may have initially sketched out all these works in the format of a reduced score which, by its very nature, is similar to a piano score, the following table shows very clearly which orchestral works were originally intended for the piano, as well as instances where the piano version seems to be derived from the orchestral one (Kelly: 2009).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Orchestral work</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Piano work</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Rapsodie espagnole</em></td>
<td>1907-8</td>
<td><em>Sites auriculaires, 2 pf</em> (Habanera)</td>
<td>1895-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Pavane pour une infante défunte</em></td>
<td>1910</td>
<td><em>Pavane pour une infante défunte</em></td>
<td>1899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ballet Ma mère l’oye</em></td>
<td>1911</td>
<td><em>Ma mère l’oye, pf 4 hands</em></td>
<td>1908-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Valses nobles et sentimentales</em></td>
<td>1912</td>
<td><em>Valses nobles et sentimentales</em></td>
<td>1911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Alborada del gracioso</em></td>
<td>1918</td>
<td><em>Mirroirs (Alborada del gracioso)</em></td>
<td>1904-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Le tombeau de Couperin</em></td>
<td>1919</td>
<td><em>Le tombeau de Couperin</em></td>
<td>1914-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>La valse, poème chorégraphique</em></td>
<td>1919-20</td>
<td><em>La valse</em></td>
<td>1920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Tzigane, rapsodie de concert</em></td>
<td>1924</td>
<td><em>Tzigane, vn and pf</em></td>
<td>1924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Bolero</em></td>
<td>1928</td>
<td><em>Bolero, pf 4 hands</em></td>
<td>1929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Menuet antique</em></td>
<td>1929</td>
<td><em>Menuet antique</em></td>
<td>1895</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Whereas Ravel made piano reductions of two orchestral works by Claude Debussy, i.e. *Nocturnes* and the *Prélude à l’après-midi d'un faune*, he orchestrated this composer’s *Sarabande* from *Pour le piano*. He also made an orchestration of Robert Schumann’s extensive piano work, *Carnaval* (Kelly: 2009).

But Ravel’s fame as orchestrator of piano music rests by and large upon his version of Modest Mussorgsky’s monumental work, *Tableaux d’une exposition* (Pictures at an exhibition). This, and the fact that Mussorgsky’s piano work has captured the imagination of numerous orchestrators, becomes clear in a Doctor of Music dissertation by Jason Klein. The latter discusses and evaluates versions by Funtek, Goehr, Ravel, Stokowski, Tushmalov, Wood and others (Klein: 1980).

In a thesis that compares the two orchestrations by Ravel and Funtek – incidentally, they were created at the same time - Heidi Van Wyk comes to the following conclusion when she says: “In analysing the different approaches of the two orchestrators, it becomes clear that Ravel is more adventurous and daring by going as far as to change, alter, omit and add notes, dynamics, articulations and rhythms not found in the original. Funtek seems quite reluctant to do this and reserves it for the rare occasion” (Van Wyk: 2004).

The Ravel orchestration has been, for a long tome now, considered the most significant work to be studied by any prospective orchestrator. In addition, the fact that recordings of the aforementioned orchestrations by Funtek and Stokowski have become commercially available in recent times comes to show that there continue to be a great interest in the fascinating discipline Orchestration really is.
Thus, one can rightly say that the orchestration of piano music often poses an enormous challenge. One of the most obvious problems to bridge is how one manifestation of a musical work, in this case a typical idiomatic and pianistic text, can be reshaped into another manifestation which is specifically appropriate for a symphony orchestra. In such an instance the challenge is also to demonstrate a well-grounded technical knowledge of orchestral instruments and their idiomatic utilization.

As a departure point at least, the orchestration should aim to capture a stylistic and authentic interpretation of the work so being adapted. The process of orchestrating a piano work is a creative skill which requires, on the one hand, the combined experiences of the idiomatic characteristics of piano and orchestral music. On the other hand, the final product as an orchestration is the integration of knowledge about research topics such as instrumentation and timbre, articulation and dynamics, as well as texture in all its manifestations.

Each orchestration, especially when it involves a transition from the medium of piano music to that of the symphony orchestra, is unique. From the outset there are no standard formulae to follow. With an orchestration in mind each piece has particular features which, in essence, depend on the form and texture of the work. On the one hand, though to a certain extent only, this determines how the orchestration of it will be shaped.

Conversely, once the piece is examined and divided into segments and layers – a procedure that I have endeavoured to achieve throughout – what evolves after that is not merely an inevitable process.
2.3 *The Sonata no. 3 in F-sharp minor, Op. 23 by Alexander Scriabin*

My choice of the Sonata is a very personal one. From my point of view, speaking as a pianist, Scriabin is one of the most interesting composers of his time. Initially, Scriabin’s music encompass a process of discovering: understanding what lies behind his thoughts, trying to reconstruct the essence and comprehending that which the composer was probably looking for when he conceived this work. But his music embraces poetry and mysticism. In the way the work unfolds melodically and harmonically, and the shape of it all takes possession of you as it comes into being - any constraint turns out to be an allusion.

In the case of Scriabin, the majority of his works are for the piano. Interestingly, by comparison, his orchestral output is modest. Works with opus numbers are catalogued from Op. 1-74 though Op. 50 and 55 do not appear in the list. Seven of the works so indexed are written for orchestra whilst the remainder are composed for piano (Powel 2009).

It is also important to point out that my experience as an orchestrator had a great influence on which composer I decided on in the end. When performing piano works by Scriabin the main attraction is the approach according to which one is in search of the best suitable sound for specific passages. As every phrase has a different shading, finding the most convincing sound colours becomes an amusement through trial-and-error. In the process of adapting the piano part into an orchestral score it is incredible what is discovered and what can be recorded. We have a full symphony orchestra, the spectrum of all colours at once - absolutely fascinating!
The 3rd Sonata, reproduced in Part D of the thesis (and referred to as Piano Text), besides being one of the most well-known and popular works of his first cycle of compositions, is a work that amalgamate an array of mysticism and profundity that exemplifies features of Romantisism which has become so unique in this Russian composer’s music. The contrast between the powerful 1st movement - full of almost jazzy harmonies on the one hand, and settled rhythms on the other - and the beauty of the spiritual 3rd movement is simply fascinating.

The simplicity of the second movement - acting almost as an interlude - and the tempest of the 4th movement are reasons of immense interest when one can dissect the piano part and re-create it, giving the work another body. Where the reverberation of the piano pedal notes becomes an orchestral resonance with a different colour - a colour of a group of strings back there, con sordini, senza vibrato - a full brass section decree a powerful character which is certainly more alive than the octaves that the piano left hand tries to bring out in a climax section, whilst the right hand is busy building up the background melody. In this regard, when it comes to finding our own interpretation of a work, the number of possibilities a symphony orchestra presents are endless.

I performed the Sonata many times and construed that orchestrating the work would make me more attentive in respect to its form, and being more sensitive towards colouring of phrases. For when one orchestrates music timbre becomes one of the main considerations in shaping it.
To the same extent that my understanding of Scriabin’s work developed - especially how I imagined its orchestration - and the way I encountered feedback on the work in progress and could build on the various evaluations of my work, I got more confident with the craft that such a project demands. I believe that this reiterative process cultivated the orchestration here demonstrated.

For me, as a performer, orchestration does not only represent a creative side of my musical instinct. It is a way of examining a particular work profoundly and gaining knowledge of it.

I believe that sound colour becomes decisive – in a contradictorily sense it guides as much as it gives rise to freedom. Orchestration becomes a search for the right solution when there are several possibilities. This is not just about what it is that Scriabin wrote in his score from a stylistic and technical point of view, neither is it just a reflection on Scriabin’s own orchestral music. In my opinion orchestration has a lot to do with your own comprehension and interpretation of the work.
3. Objectives

Building up on ground work about instruments and techniques of orchestration are primary steps in understanding the whole process of creating a rather new and innovative piece of music. Also, the examination of orchestral scores, and looking through other piano works that have been orchestrated, are part of a background process comparable to literature study in conventional research.

As departure point an orchestration project should aim to materialize a stylistic orchestration as much as possible. The orchestrator should be very meticulous with regards to articulation, dynamics and sound balance, as well as textural considerations. Especially the articulation of woodwind instruments require special care. Likewise, in the case of string instruments, much attention should be given to bowing – the employment of slurs in string music, in conjunction with the prevalent dynamic markings and the context of the music, differ a lot from the phrasing and slurs we find in piano music - and the type of bowing, i.e. various kinds of staccato and legato, to mention a few considerations. Generally, the strings of the orchestra offer numerous opportunities for very particular characterization which require unequivocal performance indications. It goes without saying that there should be occasion for personal preferences which may proceed differently from what normally would be considered standard practice. In the final analysis the end result must be of publication quality.
With regards to instrumentation a further challenge is to prove that one has the knowledge of orchestral instruments, their idiomatic employment in the orchestra, as well a developed sensibility concerning an aspect such as sound and texture stratification, and its resultant sound blend in the context of ensemble and orchestral music.

The aim of such a project is therefore to enrich and refine knowledge and proficiency in orchestration – to expand upon skills that were previously embedded by undergraduate studies in this regard.

A further aim, with an orchestration in mind, is to explore the work in another fashion and examine it analytically, something that could certainly lead to a better understanding and interpretation of the original piano work.

4. Sources and research approach

The Sonata no. 3 in F-sharp minor, Op. 23 for piano was composed in 1897, and is one of ten piano sonatas with opus numbers that the composer created during his lifetime. There exist two sonatas without opus numbers (Powel: 2009).

The piano sonata is cast in four movements and consists of 542 bars of music:

I. Dramatico  II. Allegretto;  III. Andante;  IV. Presto con fuoco

This work is referred to as Piano Text and is reproduced in Part D of the thesis.
One issue that one needs to take cognisance of when transforming a work from an original
construct, such as a piano score, to another realization is what the copyright implications
are. According to the documents on the website of the International Confederation of
Societies of Authors and Composers (CISAC), a world-wide organisation that works towards
increased recognition and protection of creators’ rights, the “…international standard for
protection, established by the Berne Convention, is the life of the author and fifty years
after his death. However, in many countries, such as the United States and many European
countries, the protection is extended for the life of a work’s author plus an additional
seventy years. Once the term expires, the work enters the public domain where it can be
freely used by anyone” (CISAC 2009).

Bearing Alexander Scriabin’s birth and death dates 1871 (1872) – 1915 in mind, and the
publication date of the Sonata no. 3 in F-sharp minor, Op. 23 which is 1898, then an
orchestration of this work poses no contravention of the composer's or publisher's rights.

In preparation to orchestrating Scriabin’s piano sonata the first two symphonies were
examined - works that date from the same period as the piano sonata.

Symphony 1 in E major, Op. 26 (1899-1900), is scored for Piccolo (3rd flute), 2 flutes, 3
oboes, 3 clarinets, 2 bassoons – 4 horns in F, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba – timpani,
glockenspiel, harp- mezzo-soprano and tenor solo, mixed choir – strings.
Symphony No. 2 in C minor, Op. 29 (1901), is scored for 3 flutes, 2 oboes, 3 clarinets, 2 bassoons – 4 horns in F, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba – timpani – strings.

The instrumentation of the Piano Concerto, Op. 20 is given as: Piccolo (3rd flute), 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons – 4 horns in f, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones – timpani – strings.

Although this work was considered at some point during my research, I came to the conclusion that the two symphonies offered ample examples of Scriabin’s own orchestration style.

By examining the abovementioned symphonies by Scriabin special attention was given to the instrumentation as such: if there is anything particular in how Scriabin writes for the instruments of the symphony orchestra, and whether these works reveal any characteristic preferences in his use of instruments. One interesting example is that in both symphonies Scriabin employs the double bass as an individual instrument – it happens seldom that this instrument is utilized in the very customary function of doubling the violoncello line, nor is it used in conjunction with other instruments such as bassoon or tuba that play a bass role. It stands to reason that a number of orchestral works by other composers were consulted. One such example is the Nocturnes (1897-9) by Claude Debussy. This and the other works are not listed in the Bibliography for the reasons given further on.
To identify and integrate various solutions to an orchestration problem is something the orchestrator needs to be continuously aware of. But, at the same time, this ability relies much on the personal taste and creativity of the orchestrator and does not guarantee logical formulae to effect a successful orchestration. An integrated technique implies that the aforementioned considerations, i.e. instrumentation, orchestral texture, dynamics, articulation and phrasing are dependent on one another and equally part of the process as a whole.

In my own experience the orchestrator only recognise them in an abstract manner more fully when, at a later stage, the work has progressed substantially. When the orchestral score is critically looked at from the ‘outside’ so to speak, this looking in, and reflecting on the outcome, brings about a new perspective, opening the way to evaluate one’s actions. However, in as much as the so identified solutions contribute to the creation of convincing musical objects they cannot be used as inflexible guidelines for any orchestration per se.

In its very nature, therefore, an orchestration bear a resemblance to a series of experiments in which the results of one impact on that of another. In my opinion this gives cause to justify the impossibility of following a certain set of rules relentlessly when a piano work is orchestrated. The only directive to be applied is the orchestral-analytical understanding of the work and from there on it is simply unwarranted to try and separate the devices.
In orchestrating the piano work by Scriabin I have excluded allusions to other disciplines such as those mentioned earlier in the “Rationale” section (p. x) of this Introduction (Delaere: 2006). A comprehensive literature study about the composer Alexander Scriabin – including matters such as his composition method in general, his piano style specifically, and the significance of his oeuvre in the context of Russian art music of the period he lived in - was not my intention from the very outset. Neither was it my aim to provide the reader with a performance and recording history of Scriabin’s works, or any critical reaction to them that is documented.

If, on the other hand, my objective was to contextualize the composer’s music from all angles - more particularly the Piano Sonata no.3 – and, simultaneously, do justice to my approach in respect of the orchestration and relevant information about the methodology thereof, the scope of such a venture would far exceed the boundaries of this thesis. Consequently I had to limit the extent of what is discussed considerably.

The commentary on the orchestration of Scriabin’s 3rd Sonata presented herewith in the following section, Methodology and structure, should not be seen as an attempt to explain the process in the greatest of detail, i.e. a step-by-step account of how a work for piano is orchestrated. Rather, it is an overview of the most significant problems one encounters in realizing a finished music text of this nature.
Nevertheless, it is important to mention that this section focuses on particular aspects that one resolves through trial-and-error – experiences that, as they are developed, become a framework of reference for the orchestration as a whole.

5. **Methodology and structure**

During my research I discovered the importance of the following issues. I shall present them in a kind of chronologically order, and as they complement one another.

5.1  **Transcription versus orchestration**

The first question that occurred to me when I embarked upon the orchestration of Scriabin’s Sonata is whether I was dealing with an Orchestration or Transcription of the work?

Initially I tried to stay as true to the piano score as possible. In my opinion this is to be recommended as a starting point in order to discover the composer’s intentions. As a result, what I did was closer to a transcription (i.e. literal translation/rewriting) of the piano score, and not yet, in my opinion, an adaptation nor an orchestration.

There was nothing innovative added by me. I was afraid of giving the work a new body and reluctant of using more notes than the ones Scriabin wrote. I was trying to accommodate all the notes of the piano version, distributing them through the different instruments which, in retrospect, was not all that wise an approach.
5.2 Instrumentation and timbre

The choice of instrumentation, orchestral texture, dynamics, articulation and phrasing is the result of various considerations that, in accordance to the structure of the piece – its stratification and segmentation - end up merging and becoming part of an autonomous production.

If this is anything to go by, as well as what Scriabin’s contemporary, Rimsky-Korsakov, has to say on page 22 of his book *Principles of Orchestration*, then the make-up of the woodwinds in pairs, and for good balance 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones (2 tenor and 1 bass) and tuba seems to have been the norm in Russian music of the time. However, three trumpets is more common, and the tuba is not a must but certainly adds power to the bass register (Rimsky-Korsakov: 1964).

It is common practice with woodwind in pairs to find that some of the instruments are doubling; often one of the flutes - with woodwind it is always the second player that doubles - double on piccolo; likewise 1 oboe doubles on *cor anglais*, and 1 clarinet doubles on bass clarinet. In this configuration the bassoons do not double.

This was also very much the practice in Russia (Rimsky-Korsakov: 1964). When we get to Scriabin’s *Le Poème de l’extase*, op. 54, he certainly uses doubling in the woodwind.
As far as the notation of transposing instruments are concerned, people have varying opinions. There is certainly merit in writing everything at concert pitch initially, and do the transpositions later. Some people are of the opinion that it is important to get the orchestration as good as possible and worry about technicalities such as transposition later. However, I believe it is better to do the transposition straight away.

Professional clarinet players have both the B-flat and A instruments. The point is that the fingering they use is exactly the same, so switching from one instrument to the other is not such a big deal, provided there is enough time allotted to this. This brings me to the key of F-sharp minor, the opening tonality of the Sonata, and F-sharp major: for a clarinet in B-flat this means reading in G-sharp minor/major or A-flat minor/major. By employing the clarinet in A in this instance the key that the player reads in becomes A minor and A major respectively, two keys that are much easier to deal with.

Bass parts/lines in an orchestration can become problematic in that they are partly the same and partly not, resulting in a muddle. We should remember that when we have movement in the bass, and especially the contrabass, little of it is heard when a lot of other things are going on as well. Therefore with such a figure it is always better to let the cello and bass be either in unison or, more often, in octaves. Adding bassoons and/or tuba to such a line add clarity to the timbral bass mixture.
5.3 *Texture: Its vertical dimension*

When orchestrating a typical piano work one has to bear in mind that the music is more often than not also the result of a physiological reality: the two hands of the performer creating the sounds, and the fact that the sounds produced on piano normally has an attack-and-decay characteristic. Therefore the locality of melodic material and of harmonic accompanimental figuration is by-and-large determined by this physiological reality.

This beckons that the different components the music is made up are to be recreated, bearing in mind that the tonal spectrum of the orchestra is far more complex in that it allows a multiplicity of elements simultaneously. For instance, the placing of melody in the tonal spectrum could be the same as for the piano; or it could be lower or higher. Doubling of the melody in octaves etc. is also very common. This can also lead to reconsidering the type of texture the piano is busy with and changing that into something else for the orchestra.

Here our understanding of various textures such as monophonic, chordal, homophonic, polyphonic, polythematic, heterophonic etc. is vital in considering the possibilities the piano score project towards an orchestral construct of the work.

And, whereas the jumping of chords between different registers is very common in the piano literature, it is not very typical of good orchestration, even when the harmony is the same. There are exceptions of course.
With regards to making the most of a homophonic texture one would proceed to analyse the chords that Scriabin wrote in both the LH and RH of the Piano Text, and copy them onto two staves in a simplified notation; high notes of the LH should be written in the treble clef. Then make sure you know what chords they are and how they function in the key that the music is in at that moment. Subsequently, look at how they connect from one moment to the next, and whether this is, in terms of voice leading, what you want to hear. There are instances where it appears like a chord change but Scriabin keeps the same harmony. So the question is whether you want to do the same or deviate slightly from it?

What one will also find in the end is that the number of chord members vary from one chord to the next. So, you either have to delete some of them, or double notes either at unison or the octave to ensure that for one phrase, at least, you can play the chords with the same number of instruments. Then only would you consider which instruments.

5.4  **Texture: Its horizontal dimension.**

The 4\textsuperscript{th} movement of the Sonata (refer to Piano Text in Part D of thesis) is a good example that illustrates a particular approach in adapting the piano texture for the symphony orchestra. The left hand pattern is, at the speed indicated, not a distinct part at all – it is rather an effect of movement.
Therefore it creates many opportunities for re-composing this part to become idiomatic for the orchestra. In this context the 16\textsuperscript{th} notes on the 3\textsuperscript{rd} beat is less distinct than what it looks like on paper and, hence, one feels inclined to ignore it at first. With all this movement going on, one may not be convinced that the main pulses need to be emphasized too much. Nevertheless, this should become more important as the dynamic level rises. Anyhow, this would make more musical sense!

The left hand pattern outline harmony, and it is this aspect, its presence, one has to ensure all the time. However, a re-composition of this dimension is also required depending on the dynamics – if the music goes louder you certainly need to spread the harmonic content, especially higher, which will involve doubling members of the chord. Bearing the above in mind, I have made a few examples of how I would do it:

5.4.1 I prefer using the strings for movement that needs to be subtle (soft). If one decide to keep strings as basis and the dynamic grows, I add some woodwind (triplets, duplets) and then the brass – in the order of horns, and then trumpets etc – to reach a very good crescendo/climactic point. This approach i.e. strings + woodwind + brass is just one such approach.

5.4.2 It is possible, with some adaptation to the type of instruments you employ, to use the woodwind as a group in order to create this movement, or to utilize the brass on its own.
5.4.3 Furthermore, an antiphonal approach, though not too much of it, can also be very useful to get away from the monotonous effect the motoric character this LH part has.

5.4.4 Naturally, the RH part, split between the melodic and contrapuntal elements, also requires careful consideration. But it seems to me that this aspect is much easier to orchestrate and control. Finally there are moments when an important bass line must be highlighted.

From this it should be evident that one should have clear intentions in terms of how you wish the different musical subjects, or sections of this movement to be presented i.e. by differentiating them in terms of timbre and texture, in fact very much as Scriabin is doing himself, but in a pianistic fashion. Yet, in my opinion, the larger sections call for subdivisions, i.e. that phrases (statement and answers), as well as motives within phrases, should be highlighted within the context of the larger picture.

By this I do not mean huge contrasts of timbre unless the musical context does suggest this strongly. What I rather have in mind is adding colour/weight, or adding to the punctuation that is already there.

In a similar manner we could consider the dotted rhythm bass line: when is it appropriate to play with one instrument only, and when should it be doubled etc?

Likewise the melodic material of the RH should be considered. Especially the triplet figure that first appears in bar 11. Later on this figure becomes very important for its repeated appearances create the impression of development.
A quick glance at the Orchestra Text will reveal that I have realised this, and tried to articulate it, in the orchestration. However, I realise now that there are moments, especially when the figure occurs in a medium to low register, that it might not be heard significantly enough.

5.5 *Pedal tones*

The allusion to piano pedal, and the necessity of creating inner strands in contrast to activity, pedal tones contribute towards the dynamic shaping of the music. Pedal tones have a kind of centrifugal function in securing an organic whole. Perusing orchestral scores by Ravel makes one particularly aware of the necessity of this device.

5.6 *Articulation and rhythmic notation*

The staccato notation in the piano score often signifies a non legato/leggiero performing style. Suffice it to say that the composer definitely does not requires legato. When woodwind instruments read separate notes they tongue each one separately, something that is very similar to mezzo staccato on the piano, especially if the speed of the music is taken into account as well.

For strings this comment only applies to a certain degree: notes that are bowed with separate bow strokes sound different from a group of notes that are played all with one interrupted bow movement. The usage of staccato indications is, therefore, not required all the time in the orchestra as they may result in a different sound than the one intended by the piano part.
Piano articulation, however, should certainly be reconsidered when sustaining pedal is being used. In such cases the articulation is employed to evoke a certain characteristic of attack of sound, whilst the pedal ensures resonance and the reverberation of the sound as a whole.

Articulation becomes more important as one approaches the high register of the orchestral tone spectrum. This is where the difference between legato and staccato becomes more noticeable. On the other hand, bass notes are slow to speak and, therefore, their articulation is also different.

The 1st movement of the Sonata presents a good example of a staccato indication on a triplet figure that cannot be taken too literally when converting it to an orchestral instrument. If this figure must sound detached, then tenuto signs under a slur for woodwind, or strings, might be one possibility. But it could also just be notated without any articulation and slur which means that woodwind will tongue every note, and strings will play them with separate bow strokes. Yet, to the other extreme, one could stress each note. My feeling is, however, that this figure can be played legato, especially in the opening of the movement – other articulation possibilities can be explored as the movement develops.

Initially I have adhered to Scriabin’s rhythmic notation too much. It suffices as piano notation, making the articulation clearer. But listening to how I perform the opening for instance, there is far more resonance than the page of music at first suggests because of pedalling, and this has an impact on how we notate the music for the orchestra.
5.7  *Dynamics: Re-reading the dynamic topology.*

One should take a particular look at the dynamics of the piano part and ask yourself to what extent does this inform the orchestration?

The 1st movement presents a good example of this kind of problem. It starts off at forte, and only at bar 130 reaches fortissimo (three F’s). Does this mean that we should only have the entire symphony orchestra playing at the very end of the movement, and not begin the piece with the full symphony orchestra? In the final analysis it becomes necessary to plan the orchestration of each movement by considering, for instance, different orchestrations (there is no need to write every possibility in full) for every appearance of subjects etc., and also reconsider the dynamic levels of these appearances.

6.  **Conclusion**

As an enriching experience, orchestration becomes one of the most interesting and exciting ways of getting to know a musical work. Not only did it have a profound effect on my interpretation of the Sonata as a performer, but it also changed the way I imagined what orchestration is about. My vision became broader to accommodate a course of experimentation, a point of conjecture, establishing one’s own and individual concept about musical performances.

The work in question by Scriabin posed a huge challenge to me due to its diverse textures and unique ambience, and the fact that it is so typically pianistic. How this is achieved can be gleaned from the Orchestra Text (Part C of the thesis) and how this compares to the Piano Text (Part D) from which the orchestration originated.
7. **Sectional Division of Scriabin's 3rd Piano Sonata**

The following table does not represent a descriptive analysis, or an analysis in any other musicological sense. Rather it indicates the segmentation of the work that presented itself for demarcation in the orchestration process. The section numbers are indicated in the Orchestra Text (Part C).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Movement</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Bar numbers</th>
<th>Page - orch</th>
<th>Page - pno</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1-23</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>3-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>24-42</td>
<td>5-9</td>
<td>4-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>43-54</td>
<td>9-11</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>55-74</td>
<td>12-16</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>75-94</td>
<td>17-21</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>95-102</td>
<td>22-23</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>103-120</td>
<td>24-28</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>121-132</td>
<td>28-31</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>133-144</td>
<td>31-33</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1-16</td>
<td>34-38</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17-30</td>
<td>38-40</td>
<td>10-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>31-50</td>
<td>41-44</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>50-72</td>
<td>45-49</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>73-82</td>
<td>50-52</td>
<td>12-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>82-100</td>
<td>52-56</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1-16</td>
<td>57-61</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17-24</td>
<td>61-63</td>
<td>14-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25-32</td>
<td>63-66</td>
<td>15-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>33-43</td>
<td>66-69</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>44-50</td>
<td>70-72</td>
<td>16-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>51-58</td>
<td>72-74</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1-24</td>
<td>75-80</td>
<td>18-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>25-36</td>
<td>81-83</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>37-58</td>
<td>84-88</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>59-70</td>
<td>89-91</td>
<td>20-21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>71-106</td>
<td>92-100</td>
<td>21-23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>107-124</td>
<td>101-104</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>125-136</td>
<td>105-107</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>137-158</td>
<td>108112</td>
<td>24-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>159-182</td>
<td>113-118</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>183-201</td>
<td>119-122</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>202-224</td>
<td>123-126</td>
<td>26-27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>225-235</td>
<td>127-129</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. Instrumentation

2 Flutes
2 Oboes
2 Clarinets in A/B-flat
2 Bassoons

4 Horns in F
2 Trumpets in C
3 Trombones
1 Tuba

Timpani

Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Violoncello
Double Bass
B. Bibliography


Leibowitz, R and Maguire, J. Date unknown. *Thinking for Orchestra*. New York: G Schirmer


C. Orchestra Text

An orchestration of the Sonata no.3 in F-sharp minor, Op. 23 by Alexander Scriabin