



European Skryabin Society

Europees Skryabin Genootschap

Alexander Scriabin's Symphony No. 1, Op. 26, in E major was written in 1899 and 1900. It is an ambitious first symphony, consisting of six movements the last of which has a chorus and two vocal soloists. I. Lento II. Allegro drammatico III. Lento IV. Vivace V. Allegro VI. Andante

History:

The symphony had its first performance in Moscow in March 1901 under the direction of Vasily Safonov, but was not especially well received. Fifteen years later the critic Arthur Eaglefield Hull wrote that the First Symphony was "a masterly work of great beauty".

Finale:

The finale is a paean to the sovereignty of Art, a theme common in Scriabin's works. The Mezzo-soprano begins the movement with "O highest symbol of divinity, supreme art and harmony, we bring praise as tribute before you", and the piece concludes with Mezzo-soprano, Tenor and—finally—Chorus singing "Ruling omnipotently over the earth, you lift man up to do glorious deeds. Come all peoples everywhere to Art. Let us sing its praises."

The full translation of the text of the final movement is roughly as follows:

O wonderful image of the Divine, Harmony's pure Art! To you we gladly bring Praise of that rapturous feeling. You are life's bright hope, You are celebration, you are respite, Like a gift you bring to the people Your enchanted visions. In that gloomy and cold hour, When the soul is full of tumult, Man finds in you The spry joy of consolation. Strength, fallen in battle, you Miraculously call to life, In the exhausted and afflicted mind You breed thoughts of a new order.

An endless ocean of emotion you Breed in the enraptured heart, And sings the best songs of songs, Your high priest, by you enlivened. On Earth gloriously reigns Your spirit, free and mighty, Man lifted by you Gloriously conducts the greatest feat. Come, all peoples of the world, **Let us sing the praises of Art! Glory to Art, Glory forever!**