CHAPTER 2
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Arthur Vincent Lourié (1892-1966) was a Russian composer and writer whose output was affected by his religious and philosophical beliefs. "In his own words, Lourié can be characterized as 'an artist who differs from other musicians by the elaboration of esthetical experience in poetry and plastic arts.'" The present author came to know of him while researching works on Stravinsky, in which Lourié is portrayed during the 1920’s as an important confidant of and literary spokesperson for Stravinsky. Lourié’s earlier activities in Russia brought him more notoriety than he was to experience in later years. In the 1910s, he was one of the only composers involved with Russian Futurism, at which time he experimented in his compositions with quarter-tones and graphic notation. In 1917, the Bolsheviks appointed him as the first Music Commissar of their new regime. In addition, Lourié was an effective publicist and winning lecturer; he wrote articles which "remain to this day interesting documents in the history of art during the first half of this century." His articles, many written after Lourié left Russia, and several written on Stravinsky’s behalf, merit a scholarly review, as does his music.

1Camajani, 35.
2Felix Roziner, 37.
Early Years

Lourié was born on May 14th, 1892 in St. Petersburg, Russia. Before the Inquisition his ancestors had fled from Spain to France, eventually settling in Russia. His middle to upper class family consisted of himself, his parents, two brothers and two sisters. His father, Serge, was a timber merchant, an agnostic, and a "typical representative of the liberal intelligentsia." Lourié described his mother Anna (nee Levitin) as the "gentlest of creatures," and a devout Jew who observed all the Holy Days. Both parents died of hunger during the German siege of Leningrad (1941-1944). One brother, Alexander, died young and the other, Jacob, died shortly after he enlisted for World War II. The fate of Lourié’s sister Beata is unknown, and the other sister, Clara lived and presumably died in Moscow. Her son, Alexis Teissier, is one of the only known living relatives. He is a writer and the heir of the Lourié estate, including the manuscripts used for this thesis.

Lourié’s mother gave her young son Arthur piano lessons. She was an amateur musician who played Beethoven, Schubert, Chopin, Schumann and piano transcriptions of Wagner’s operas. At school Lourié was given the nicknames "Chopin" and "a square root from Beethoven." While Lourié played Chopin's Polonaise Militaire the other children would march around to the music.

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1 Unless otherwise indicated most of this information, although not footnoted in each case, is attributed to the Graham manuscript. Ch. 1, footnote 14.

At least one schoolmate played piano duets with Lourié. Piano remained his primary instrument.

His "delirium of music" started from his early childhood. He would sit under the piano while his mother played and listen intently to the "rumbling reverberation of the sounds." As seen in the following quote, Lourié romanticized the life of the composer. "I wished to have the destiny of a composer. The destiny of Chopin, of Schumann, particularly of Schumann. I was lost in my phantasies, completely immersed in them." One of his treasured musical memories was hearing Wagner’s Tannhäuser, conducted by Mahler at the Vienna Opera House, when he took a trip with his mother at age twelve. Lourie apparently had a closer affinity with his sensitive and musically-minded mother than with his father. His father discouraged the youth’s enthusiasm for music wondering why he should compose when Tchaikovsky had already composed all the best music.

When he was eight Arthur Lourié’s poor health forced the family to move to Odessa. The warmer climate helped the boy’s chronic bronchitis and weak chest. In addition to being a musician, he was a swimmer and dreamed of being a cyclist. His boyhood interests included reading the Greek and Latin languages that he studied at school. Along with the popular teenage magazines that his parents subscribed to for him, he read Homer, Greek mythology, and books bought from second-hand dealers, including Don Quixote, and works by Jules Graham, 4.

Ibid., 5.
Verne, Charles Dickens, and Mark Twain. Also in Lourié’s possession was a set of composer biographies published by Pavlenkov House.

Not neglectful of his Jewish ancestry, the young Lourié had an interest in religion. Then, and throughout his life, Lourié’s inquisitive mind led him along a mystical path. Isaac Louria, a sixteenth century Jewish philosopher and mystic, was one of the family’s famous relatives. This is an early account of Lourié’s spiritual journey in his own words:

Much to the surprise of my free-thinking father I insisted on having my Bar-Mitzvah, and studied Hebrew with a teacher. On the day of my Bar-Mitzvah, my father took me to the synagogue where I was given a small Torah to read, and I was exceedingly proud of my coming of age.

This experience at the age of thirteen inspired Lourié to read the entire bible, this time in the Russian language. In Lourié’s words: "At the age of 14, . . . I realized that the New Testament ensues the Old one. My conversion to Christianity came by itself, without any outside interference." Seven years later in 1921 his faith was made public through a Catholic baptism at the Malta Chapel in St. Petersburg.

Ironically, around the time of his conversion, Lourié was not allowed to study at the Gymnasium because of a Jewish quota. Instead he studied at the trade school, the Lycee, in Odessa. Even though he had been kept out of the more academic college preparatory gymnasium, his intellectual curiosity was not hindered. At age fifteen when he was at the Lycee he became involved in a social

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Ibid., 1.

Ibid.
circle of enlightened youths who read Hegel and Schopenhauer in order to expand their world view. Such a hunger for learning and an interest in philosophy remained evident throughout Lourié’s life. Although his father had wanted him to study law, in 1909, after this secondary education, Lourié enrolled at the Conservatory of Music in St. Petersburg.

At the Conservatory, Lourié and Sergei Prokofiev were rumored to be the two most accomplished pianists. Lourié related: "We were not acquainted in those days, but meeting in the Conservatory’s corridors we glared at each other like two tigers." The other students were intimidated by Lourié’s talent and only reluctantly would volunteer to play after him in class. His first piano teacher at the conservatory, Vladimir Drozdov, served more as a theory tutor than a piano instructor. His second teacher Marie Barinov was more influential, having studied with Joseph Hofmann and Ferruccio Busoni. When Busoni visited in 1912 Lourié befriended him. He accompanied Busoni as a guide on an excursion through the St. Petersburg bookstores and submitted his compositions to Busoni for review. He also took composition and theory at Petersburg University with Alexander Glazounov. Although he spoke of Glazounov positively in a later article, Profanation et Sanctification du Temps, disagreements with this teacher

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Ibid., 7.


"Arthur Lourié, Profanation et Sanctification du Temps, ed. Jean Mouton (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1966). This is a partial anthology of Lourié’s writings
served as one of the reasons Lourié, unlike Prokofiev, did not take his final exams. Extracurricular social and intellectual pursuits had kindled a rebellion against his teacher's conservatism, and Lourié found that he could educate himself by exchanging ideas among his peers.

**Russian Futurism**

As early as 1912 these peers included the Bohemian circle of artists that met in the Montmartre of St. Petersburg, a literary club named the “Stray Dog” or, in Russian, "Brodyachaya Sobaka." At this night cabaret Lourié often played piano and the dancer Olga Glebova Soudeikina acted and sang. Sergei Soudeikin, her husband at the time, decorated the club with his fantastic artwork. This Bohemian group consisted of the most forward looking poets, artists, and writers of that day. They met and discussed artistic ideas and became known as the Russian Futurists because of their ideological association with the Italian Futurist movement. The group included the poets Velemir Khlebnikov, Vladimir Majakovsky, Aleksay Kruchonikh, Yelena Guro, Leonid Andreyev, and Fyodor Sologub; and the painters Sergei Soudeikin, Tatlin, Miturich, Lev Bruni, Georgiy Yakulov, Nikolay Punin, as well as the brothers Vladimir and David Burlyuk. Lourié was the only musician actively involved, although there was a lesser-
known musician, Michail Matjusin, who wrote one popular futuristic opera, The Victory over the Sun."

The members of the Russian Futurist Movement sought to create works with symbolic significance and originality. According to Gojowy, Futurism is a "revolution of elements, a thinking in new relations." After a series of lectures in St. Petersburg and Moscow by the Italian founder of Futurism, Filippo Tomaso Marinetti, the Russian Futurists wrote the Petersburg Futurist Manifesto of 1914. This "answer to Marinetti" discussed the common artistic principles of the movement. They believed in an artistic Utopia that was a fusion of painting, poetry, and music under the same principles. Three artists collaborated on this Manifesto: Lourié, the painter Georgiy Yakulov, and the poet Benedikt Lifshits. The musical portion was Lourié's contribution. Gojowy summarizes some ideas from the Manifesto.

All three artists foresaw an arbitrary spectrum, an arbitrary depth, and the independence of tempo as a method of embodiment and a method of unimpeachable rhythms for all three art forms. The painters should turn from fleeing points of perspective and take up dissonance, the poets should differentiate word groups according to their heating point and abolish the accidental method of obvious metaphors, and finally music should develop new forms out of primitive synthesis and out of the substantiality of elements."

More is said about the aesthetics and specific musical manifestations of Futurism throughout the thesis, particularly in the next chapter.

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Gojowy, Hindemith 8, 3.

Ibid., 5.


Ibid.
The creative endeavors of the Futurists followed French and Italian models and brought Russia to the forefront of European culture.\(^1\) This era in Russia’s history (from 1905 to 1917) has been deemed the Silver Age, the Russian equivalent to the Italian Renaissance.\(^2\) The artists of this Silver Age included the Futurists and others closely associated with Lourié--Osip Mandelshtam, Vsevolod Mayerhold, Uvacheslav Ivanov, Anna Akhmatova, Michael Kuzmin, and Alexander Blok. The aesthetic ideas of Futurism can be seen as precursors to two German developments, the Bauhaus movement of 1919\(^3\) and the avant-garde music of the Schoenberg school.\(^4\) This is in part because of *Der blaue Reiter* in Munich, a collaborative group of expressionistic Russian and German artists including Wassily Kandinsky and Franz Marc, the founders, and Paul Klee.\(^5\) Their publication by the same name contains some of Schoenberg’s first aesthetic statements, and early compositions by Webern. Such articles are alongside those by Russian contributors, including Nikolai Kulbin, the founder of Russian Futurism. He wrote an article for *Der blaue Reiter* about “‘free music’ in

\(^{1}\)Ibid.

\(^{2}\)Gojowy, *Hindemith* 8, 1.

\(^{3}\)Gojowy, World Congress, 3.

\(^{4}\)Gojowy, World Congress, 7. Both of these German movements were influenced by Busoni’s aesthetics, which had informed the Russian Futurists earlier.

\(^{5}\)Gojowy, World Congress, 1.
quartertones and microintervals." This was also the period in which Dadaism flourished in Zurich and Berlin.\footnote{Ibid.}

Nikolai Kulbin was very fond of Lourié, praised his intelligence, and served as his mentor. Lourié recalled that "Nikolai Ivanovich loved me and took me with him everywhere."\footnote{Ibid., 3. The futurist Ukrainian composer Yefim Golishev (1897-1970) had been a founder of the dadaist "November Group" in Berlin.} The writer Alexander Blok was also an important friend and influence. Lourié stated he loved Blok more than anyone else in his life. In his own words, "Blok was the most perfect human being I have ever met."\footnote{Roziner, 36.}

Blok and Lourié had similar outlooks on Russia’s future. In *Notes on the New Order*, Lourié wrote: "At the dawn of the Russian revolution, we were in humanism’s last stages. The poet . . . welcomed the revolution, believing it meant the purification of the old world. Then he sensed the decay of his universe and, unable to overcome his despair died at an early age."\footnote{Graham, 13.}

Another significant person in Lourié’s life at this time was the post-symbolist poetess Anna Akhmatova. Lourié met Akhmatova at the "Stray Dog" in 1912. In 1913 Lourié married Yadviga Tsybulskaya, another piano student at the Conservatory; however, because of the relationship with Akhmatova, the marriage lasted less than a year.\footnote{Sitsky, 105.} The affair with Akhmatova, on the other hand,
lasted until the beginning of the first World War. Akhmatova, out of concern for her husband, rejoined him.\(^2\) After 1918 Akhmatova had a new husband, the poet and Assyriologist Vladimir Shileiko, yet she left him to share an apartment in St. Petersburg with Lourié and Olga Soudeikina. This took place around 1921, by which time Olga Soudeikina was apparently Lourié’s new amorata. Nonetheless, the three remained close and enjoyed the arrangement, until Lourié and Soudeikina emigrated to Europe.

Lourié and Akhmatova collaborated on works and inspired one another. At least fourteen of Akhmatova’s poems refer to Lourié.\(^3\) The Poem Without a Hero (1941) refers to Lourié, Olga Glebovna Soudeikin, the novelist Yuri Yourkun, and the poet Michael Kuzmin.\(^4\) Lourié first set Akhmatova’s poetry to music in the piece Prayer Beads - Ten songs for the poems of Akhmatova (1914), one year before Prokofiev’s Poèmes d’Akhmatova. Also on several occasions, Lourié used texts by Akhmatova for his Chant Funebre (1921) for four-part chorus and twelve wind instruments, written for the death of his friend Blok. Numerous songs by Lourié also used texts by Blok, yet Akhmatova wasn’t fond of him. She was jealous of

\(^2\)His only child, Anna Lourié, is from this first marriage, and, although in 1917 he wrote a set of children’s piano pieces for her, Royal’v detskoy, there is no indication that the two kept in contact or were close.

\(^3\)Roziner, 37. Her husband, the writer Nikolay Stepanovich Gumilyov, was drafted to serve in the Army. Lourié served in a guard’s battalion of sappers.

\(^4\)Ibid.

\(^5\)Kuzmin and Lourié would stay awake until the early morning hours discussing and sharing their works of art, poems and books. The two listened to Mozart’s Don Giovanni, The Marriage of Figaro, and works by Monteverdi.
Blok, and her comment that he was the "tragic tenor of the epoch" may have strained her relationship with Lourié. Although the two chose separate paths, Lourié's experience with Akhmatova had a lasting emotional significance for him. "He could never free himself from her image, and searched it in every woman who intimately entered his life."

Music Commissar

Lourié's prominent position among Russia's avant-garde musicians brought him the approval of the new Bolshevik government. A non-musically educated friend of Benedikt Lifshits, one of the writers of the Petersburg manifesto, reflects on the musical trends during this era.

I . . . had to trust what Kul' bin and Lourié himself said . . . that none other than he Artur Vincent Lourié, had been chosen to open a new era in music. Scriabin, Debussy, Ravel, Prokofiev, Stravinsky--we had already gone beyond them."

The Futurists accepted the Bolshevik revolution because they, like the Bolsheviks, rejected the old order--more specifically the 'old' art--and wanted to replace "form and content by what was entirely new." In 1918, Lourié accepted the appointment as the first Musical Commissar for the People's Commissariat of Education and Culture headed by Anatoly Lunarcharsky. Other leftist types were put in high bureaucratic positions: Valerij Brjusov in the literary division,

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32 Ibid., 22.
33 Graham, 12.
34 Roziner, 36.
Vsevolod Meyerhold in the theatrical division, and Wassily Kandinsky and Marc Chagall in art divisions.

Lourié, as commissar, controlled many aspects of musical life during these turbulent early years of the Russian revolution. He was responsible for the state orchestra and for nationalizing music publishing, the conservatories, and theaters. Since he was in control of publishing he could promote the new avant-garde music, even though he had to deal with a limited budget and a shortage of paper. He also organized "people's concerts" and confiscated instruments for the government. Stradivarius and Amati violins were taken from the wealthy and placed in the "so-called state collection of old string instruments." Sometimes however, because of his position, Lourié could confiscate an instrument and then immediately restore it to the owner "in the guise of 'tools of production.'" He also closed down the Russian Music Society and the Jewish Folk Song Society.

Once Lourié was criticized by his old professors at the Conservatory. They sent a complaint to Lenin, and Lourié was brought in for questioning. However, during their discussion, Lourié's ideas and the eloquence in which he expressed them

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*Roziner, 37.
*Ibid.
*Sitsky, 88.
himself so impressed Lenin that instead of a reprimand he was given full support. At the end of the conversation Lenin said, "In case your department needs anything just write me a note and address it to me personally. It will reach me." In spite of the prohibitive character of the Bolshevik government Lourié from 1918 to 1922 was able to promote new music.

In the early days of the upheaval there was no contact between art and politics, and the social and political life of the country developed in one direction, and its culture and art in another, almost independent of political circumstances. During this period, art occupied an aristocratic privileged position.

Another role for the commissar was that of music ambassador. Lourié was to maintain artistic relations with the outside world, and this involved arranging visits and interchanges of artists between Russia and Europe. He also formed the Association of Contemporary Music, which helped him establish professional connections abroad. During this same time, Lourié became acquainted with Edgard Varese who had set up the International Composers' Guild. One location for the Guild was in the United States and a second one was established in Berlin through the cooperation of Ferruccio Busoni. Lourié made frequent visits to Moscow and the Provinces, and on at least one occasion made a visit to Europe, from which he didn't return.

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42 Graham, 17.


44 Sitsky, 88.

Defection to Europe

As an official on government business, Lourié visited Berlin in 1922 and decided to defect. It is not certain whether this was his intent before he arrived. Yet because of this decision the Soviets shunned him for this treason. "Perhaps more than anyone else of the time, Lourié was subjected to savage vilification by the Soviet regime who saw him, with Sabaneev, as a traitor and deserter." Lourié's decision to leave was prompted by his growing awareness of the oppressive Communist system and his curiosity about the creative life of Europe. Because he was in disagreement with the anti-religious sentiment of the government and had no "sympathy for the machine age," he left, though at the height of his success and influence.

Once in Germany he became active in the International Guild of Composers, and associated with Busoni, Edgar Varèse, Alois Haba, Philipp Jarnach, and Ernst Krenek. Varèse's wife remembers her husband and Lourié taking walks during the middle of the night. Varèse would question the ex-commissar with great interest about the future of the new regime. Busoni also shared Lourié's broad intellectual interests. As pianist-composers the two surely discussed the new scalar constructs and harmonies outlined in Busoni's Sketch of a New Esthetic of Music. Busoni inspired Lourié and two other futuristic

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*Sitsky, 88.

Ibid.

Ibid., 105.


Camajani, 35.
composers--Yefim Golishev from Russia and Leo Ornstein from America.\textsuperscript{a} Lourié lived in Berlin until sometime in 1923 when he moved to Wiesbaden. While in Berlin he met and married Tamara Persitz, who had helped him in his emigration. She allowed him to devote all his time to music, although in the later 1920s she left him.

Shortly after Busoni died in 1924, Lourié left Germany with official permission to establish residence in Paris.\textsuperscript{b} There he composed, wrote, and played piano in chamber ensembles and performed as a soloist.\textsuperscript{c} Once Lourié settled in Paris he began his close association with Stravinsky. The two had already exchanged letters, yet in France the relationship was encouraged by musical collaborations and common acquaintances. In Chapter Four this relationship will be discussed at length. During his early years in France, the second closest person to Lourié after Stravinsky was Jacques Maritain, the Catholic philosopher.\textsuperscript{d}

Along with being a personal friend, Maritain was Lourié's interpreter and promoter.\textsuperscript{e} One of the first articles on Lourié's music, if not the first, was written

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{a}Gojowy, World Congress, 7.}
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{c}Roziner, 38.}
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{d}Gojowy,Hindemith, 6.}
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{e}Gojowy, "Mit dem Beiklang," 20.}
by Maritain in 1936. Lourié was already a Christian, yet now he was encouraged to explore and develop his beliefs further. Maritain's wife Raissa introduced Lourié to many people in France, and he became surrounded by close friends. Many of those friends belonged to a group of Catholic writers which included the Maritains, Georges Bernanos, Mme. Leon Bloy, and her daughter. This involvement influenced his belief system, and consequently his musical activities and philosophical perspective. This Catholic influence was antitraditional, and Lourié admits to being antitraditional himself, as well as politically inclined to the left, against Facism. Lourié's beliefs and aesthetics are explored further in Chapter Four when they are compared with Stravinsky's.

In contrast to the evidence that Lourié was a socialite and an active performer during his Paris years, Downes argues that Lourié was a secluded artist trying to forge a new identity. "For some three years Lourié studied, discouraging or directly opposing such performances of his music as were occasionally possible, although writing a number of critical articles which connoted his artistic change of objective." Both views may present some truth,

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" Gojowy, "Mit dem Beiklang," 20. His composition A Cristo crucificado ante el mar as well as his article "Notes on the New Order," Modern Music, 1941 substantiate these traits.

"Downes, 9."
because--although he met frequently with both Stravinsky and Maritain--Lourié would have also needed time alone in order to write his articles and music.

**Late Period in the United States**

France could have become Lourié’s second home, had he not been a Jew, and had Hitler not stormed into France. As the Germans approached France, Lourié fled in June 1940 to the unoccupied zone of Amélie-les-Bains in the eastern Pyrenees. By May 12, 1941 an invitation from Koussevitzy made asylum to the United States possible, first for Lourié and later for his wife. Before leaving France, in November of 1941, he had married a countess related to the Czars, whom he had known since 1932. She, Elizaveta Belevskaya-Zhukovskaya, remained his wife until his death and was herself a gifted sculptress.\(^6\)

Lourié’s career was never as successful in the United States as it had been in both Europe and Russia. Living in New York City, San Francisco, and Princeton, he and his wife experienced continual financial difficulties. In the States Varèse was apparently the only compositional contemporary close to him.\(^6\) The two participated in a discussion group on the "Future Mechanization of Music"\(^6\) and were the only composers that attended the funeral of Bela Bartok in 1945.\(^6\) Koussevitzy was Lourié’s main musical supporter. (In 1931 Lourié had written Koussevitzy’s biography.) Other conductors occasionally took notice--for

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\(^{60}\)Griffin, 32.

\(^{61}\)Gojowy, *Hindemith* 8, 6.

\(^{62}\)Ibid. This took place in Paris during 1930.

\(^{63}\)Gojowy, "Zeittafel," 40.
instance Leopold Stokowski, Charles Munch, and Ernst Ansermet—but, Lourié's loyalty to Koussevitzky burnt some bridges. Because relations between Stokowski and Koussevitzky were strained, Lourié didn't go out of his way to befriend Stokowski. After Koussevitzky's death in 1951 performances of his music became even less frequent.

In the 1940s Lourié worked on the advisory board of *Modern Music* and also contributed many manuscripts, not directly attributed to him, that were broadcast on *The Voice of America*. In the 1950s, the Louriés were supported by a fellow Russian artist, introduced to them in 1946 by an acquaintance from the Novosel’e journal. Irina Graham, a writer of Russian heritage became close to both Lourié and his wife. When Lourié had a heart attack in 1949, Graham was by his side. Her husband had died earlier that year and she decided to contribute what money she had to the welfare of the couple. She paid the rent for their apartment in New York and they stayed with her part of the year in San Francisco. Lourié asked Graham to write the libretto for his opera, *The Blackamoor of Peter the Great*. The manuscript is dated 1949-1955, yet wasn’t orchestrated until 1961.

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Camajani, 38.

Gojowy, "Zeittafel," 40.


Gojowy, *Hindemith* 12, 138. Arthur Lourié and Graham exchanged many letters. Lourié sent her some three hundred and sixty-seven letters, and Graham sent him some eight hundred and ninety-eight. These at one time were deposited at the New York Public Library. Either in late 1996 or early 1997 they were removed. This suggests to this author that the relationship was quite intimate.
During his later years, after 1961, Lourié and his wife Ella lived in Princeton. Jacques Maritain offered them the use of his Princeton house after the death of his wife. A Princeton professor interested in Russia's Silver Age and the poetry of Osip Mandelshtam befriended Lourié, and helped him reestablish contact with Akhmatova. Two of his late works were written with texts by Akhmatova, including one to the text Poem without a Hero which she completed in 1962. Lourié dedicated his piece of the same name to the memory of Olga Soudeikina. Toward the end of his life, Lourié's musical endeavors were silenced and his artistic energies focused on graphic drawings. During 1964 he suffered a collapse from uremia that affected his hands and feet. Although he did not compose after this, in this year he created over two hundred pictures by maneuvering a pen with his mouth. These drawings are in a style similar to Picasso, and some are inspired by and have titles which correspond to the titles of his musical compositions.

Lourié never found success in the States nor in the music of his day. "His spiritual evolution made it imperative that he voluntarily retire from the market place in order to fulfill himself." This fulfillment came through his collaborations

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*Roziner, 86.


*Kapko-Foretic, 36.

*Camajani, 36.
with fellow artists and his journey for spiritual insight and knowledge. Towards the end of his life his religious beliefs were still very important to him. He reportedly attended mass on a daily basis. In March of 1966 Lourié experienced great grief upon the news of Anna Akhmatova's death, and on October twelfth of the same year he died in Princeton at the age of seventy-four.

**Comparisons to Stravinsky's Biography**

Many comparisons may be made between Stravinsky's biography and Lourié's. Both were introduced to the arts at an early age and shared music with childhood friends, with whom they played piano duets. Later each as a composer found inspiration from the other arts. Both enjoyed reading (Lourié the classics and Stravinsky plays) and learning languages. In each case one parent was ambivalent or critical of their child’s musical hobby, and the other parent musically inclined and more supportive. Lourié listened to his mother at the piano, whereas Stravinsky listened to his father preparing for operatic roles.

Another similar life experience was that both struggled with poor health, had large families, and had a brother that died at an early age. Each composer had early religious experiences and training. Lourié saw the example of his mother's devotion to Judaism, read Hebrew, and had a Bar-Mitzvah. Stravinsky's family required him to attend special Orthodox holy services and read the bible, although they themselves apparently had no sincere convictions. One difference

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72 Michael Oliver, *Igor Stravinsky* (London: Phaidon, 1995), 37. Lourié’s father made statements that Tchaikovsky had already written the necessary music; whereas, Stravinsky’s mother compared her son unfavorably throughout his career to Scriabin.
in their spiritual journeys was that Stravinsky turned away from religion and stopped attending church at age eighteen, which was approximately the age in which Lourié joined the Catholic Church. Given their similar experiences, it is not surprising to find the two together later as comrades, communicating in their native language on foreign soil.

If Lourié and Stravinsky shared so many common traits and experiences, why then have Lourié’s music and contributions remained for the most part unknown, while Stravinsky’s output has found a large audience? The reason behind their divergent paths could have been a matter of talent, but other factors were surely involved as well. This is of course a matter of speculation, nonetheless, one factor could have been the difference in their personalities. "Lourié, with his wide reading, his very considerable culture, was clearly the more ‘serious’ musician." He was a religious mystic, and his idealism, perfectionism, as well as his general laziness, were a hindrance to his worldly success. Additionally, Lourié seemed to lack the self confidence necessary to become his own spokesperson. Even in his later years he exhibited modesty about his talent. Irene Graham, whose manuscript has provided much of the information for this chapter, stated:

Arthur Lourié’s piano playing had a magical quality. The mystery of the sound, the enchantment of it, was revealed to him. When he touched the piano it sounded like the inner voice of the artist.

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Roziner, 40.

Ibid., 35.
himself; he was well aware of this and, not wishing to disclose himself, never played before strangers.

On the other hand, Stravinsky promoted himself with vigor. He was aware of his image and worked to preserve it. He had an industrious work ethic, which may have been encouraged because of his need to provide for a large family. In the 1930s, when he needed money, he pursued conducting and composed pieces that he himself could perform, some say to the detriment of his compositional output. "Lourié’s fundamental prejudice was that of creator versus the performer; he himself did not, after leaving Russia, perform much in public, and it is clear that the philosophe in Lourié rejected the romantic role of the performer in favor of the more private world of the composer." For all these reasons Lourié was a composer-writer rather than a composer-conductor-performer.

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Graham, 5.

Roziner, 40.