Apollo (Apollon, 1909–1917) was the last elite art literary journal in Late Imperial Russia. Throughout the tumultuousness of WWI, the Revolution of 1917, and a more general political instability, it celebrated Apollonianism. This recently reassessed Nietzschean category symbolized, in new terms, a “call for order” and marked the beginnings of the New Neo-Classicism in various arts, e.g., in literature, painting, graphic arts, and architecture. At the same time, however, as a pre-Avant-Garde periodical, it announced Archaism and Primitivism as new directions for the visual arts.

This paper will examine the title and the program of the periodical (the text) in connection with its cover page (the image), which was designed by Leon Bakst, one of the foremost Russian graphic designers and illustrators at the time. Such an intermedial analysis of the text-image relationship allows for three narratives to unfold: one told by the title (written words), another by the image (visual narrative), and a third is told by the interrelation of image and text. The main concern of this paper will be to investigate how Apollo was manifested and how all three narratives might be “read” in the context of the Russian culture of the early twentieth century.

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