

Tomb of the Unknown Composer

(Le Tombeau du Compositeur Inconnu)
for Violin, Viola, and Violoncello



Bill Robinson

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(*Le Tombeau du Compositeur Inconnu*)

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Composed September 11—November 15, 2010

Revised and orchestrated Dec. 17, 2024—February 22, 2025

Duration: about 19 minutes

for Eric Pritchard

Originally, this trio was intended as a sketch for the first three movements of a symphony, which would have an extra movement as a finale. Soon after finishing this trio, I came down with a lingering case of bronchitis, which eventually morphed into bronchiectasis, and I abandoned the larger scale version. In December 2024, after two title changes, I finally set about orchestrating this trio, which included revisions to the original trio.

This piece harks back to Ravel's *Le Tombeau de Couperin* mostly to take advantage of the cool title, and to point out the presumption of composers like myself who labor in almost total obscurity. Ravel took great liberties with the form, and I do the same. I don't include any of Ravel's music explicitly in this piece, as taking the title is sufficient larceny. My debt to Ravel is in the fabric of most of my music.

The second movement's title refers to the famous bicycle ride of Dr. Albert Hofmann, respected Swiss chemist, who took the world's first acid trip in 1943. He died at age 102 in 2008. The music approximates a toccata.

The third movement, despite its title (*Pavane pour un enfant terrible*) taken from Ravel's *Pavane pour une infante défunte*, is one of the most serious and dark movements I've written.

This trio, then titled *Ananda Trio*, was first performed at Duke University on February 22, 2011 by Eric Pritchard, violin; Yoram Youngerman, viola; and Elizabeth Marshall, cello.

cover art: Greenwood Memorial Park, Centralia, WA, The Daily Chronicle, 3/10/2017

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Publisher Parrish Press, Garner NC

3rd Edition, February 2025

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Tomb of the Unknown Composer

An Excellent Tempo (♩ = 56)

I. Prélude

[7']

Bill Robinson

Violin

Viola

Cello

p

p

6

mp

mp

mp

11

16

ff

ff

ff

22

Measures 22-28 of the score. The music is in 3/4 time. The first staff (treble clef) starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic, followed by a mezzo-forte (*mf*) and mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic. The second staff (alto clef) also starts with *f*, *mf*, and *mp*. The third staff (bass clef) starts with *f*, *mf*, and *mp*. The music features a variety of note values, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests.

29

Measures 29-34 of the score. The music continues in 3/4 time. The first staff (treble clef) features a series of eighth notes and rests. The second staff (alto clef) features a series of eighth notes and rests. The third staff (bass clef) features a series of eighth notes and rests.

35

Measures 35-41 of the score. The music is in 3/4 time. The first staff (treble clef) starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic, followed by a crescendo (*cresc.*). The second staff (alto clef) starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic, followed by a crescendo (*cresc.*). The third staff (bass clef) starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic, followed by a crescendo (*cresc.*). The music features a variety of note values, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests.

42

Measures 42-48 of the score. The music is in 3/4 time. The first staff (treble clef) starts with a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic. The second staff (alto clef) starts with a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic. The third staff (bass clef) starts with a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic. The music features a variety of note values, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests.

TUC Mov. 1

49

3

51

53

56

4 59 TUC Mov. 1

ff ff ff p pizz.

66

p mp mp

71

arco mp

76

cresc. f cresc. f cresc. f

81

ff *ff* *mf* *mp*

87

ff *mf* *mp*

92

cresc. p. a p. *cresc. p. a p.* *cresc. p. a p.*

95

mf *dim. p. a p.* *dim. p. a p.* *dim. p. a p.*

TUC Mov. 1

6

101

pp

ff

pp

pp

105

ff

ff

107

pp

ff

109

pp

ff

132

p *pp* *p*

p *pp* *p*

p *pp*

139

p

145

mf *mf* *mf*

151

ff *ff* *ff*

155

3 3 3 3

159

ff *dim.* *(mf)* *ff* *dim.* *(mf)* *ff* *dim.* *(mf)*

165

(mp) *(p)* *pp* *(mp)* *(p)* *pp* *(mp)* *(p)* *pp*

171

pp *rit.* *pp*

Toccata velocipedia (♩ = 160 mcg)

Violin

Viola

Cello

ff

11

17

24

33

3/4

42

3/4

51

3/4

Poco meno mosso (♩ = 140 mcg)

58

mp

mp

mp

66

66

72

72

80

accel. ----- $(\bullet = 160 \text{ mcg})$ **Toccata velocipedia**

80

f *cresc.* *f* *cresc.* *f*

89

89

ff *ff* *ff*

95

pp

p

p

p

This system contains measures 95 through 101. It features three staves: Treble, Bass, and a lower Bass staff. The music is in a key with one flat and a 3/4 time signature. Dynamics include *pp* (pianissimo) and *p* (piano). The notation includes various note values, rests, and slurs.

102

ff

This system contains measures 102 through 106. It features three staves: Treble, Bass, and a lower Bass staff. The music continues with various note values and slurs. A dynamic of *ff* (fortissimo) is present at the end of the system.

107

ff

ff

This system contains measures 107 through 111. It features three staves: Treble, Bass, and a lower Bass staff. The music continues with various note values and slurs. Dynamics of *ff* (fortissimo) are present on the first and second staves.

112

This system contains measures 112 through 116. It features three staves: Treble, Bass, and a lower Bass staff. The music continues with various note values and slurs.

120

pp

pp

This system contains measures 120 through 127. It features three staves: Treble, Bass, and a third staff (likely Cello/Double Bass). The music is in 4/4 time. Measures 120-121 show a melodic line in the Treble staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#). Measures 122-123 show a melodic line in the Bass staff. Measures 124-125 show a melodic line in the Treble staff. Measures 126-127 show a melodic line in the Bass staff. The dynamics are marked *pp* (pianissimo) in measures 126 and 127.

130

p

p

pp

p

This system contains measures 130 through 137. It features three staves: Treble, Bass, and a third staff (likely Cello/Double Bass). The music is in 4/4 time. Measures 130-131 show a melodic line in the Treble staff. Measures 132-133 show a melodic line in the Bass staff. Measures 134-135 show a melodic line in the Treble staff. Measures 136-137 show a melodic line in the Bass staff. The dynamics are marked *p* (piano) in measures 130, 132, and 134, and *pp* (pianissimo) in measures 131 and 133.

138

mf

f

ff

mf

f

ff

mf

f

ff

This system contains measures 138 through 142. It features three staves: Treble, Bass, and a third staff (likely Cello/Double Bass). The music is in 4/4 time. Measures 138-139 show a melodic line in the Treble staff. Measures 140-141 show a melodic line in the Bass staff. Measures 142 shows a melodic line in the Treble staff. The dynamics are marked *mf* (mezzo-forte) in measures 138, 140, and 142, *f* (forte) in measures 139 and 141, and *ff* (fortissimo) in measures 140 and 142.

143

This system contains measures 143 through 150. It features three staves: Treble, Bass, and a third staff (likely Cello/Double Bass). The music is in 3/8 time. Measures 143-144 show a melodic line in the Treble staff. Measures 145-146 show a melodic line in the Bass staff. Measures 147-148 show a melodic line in the Treble staff. Measures 149-150 show a melodic line in the Bass staff.

152

pp ff

162

pp ff

molto rit.----- a tempo

170

Poco meno mosso (♩ = 140 mcg)

179

ff pp p

16

188

194

202

Toccata velocipedia (♩ = 160 mcg)

213

220

Poco meno mosso (♩ = 140 mcg)

rit. -----

228

235 **Toccata velocipedia** (♩ = 160 mcg)

245

252

Poco meno mosso (♩ = 140 mcg)

259

269

277

III. Pavane pour un Enfant Terrible

[6']

19

Grave (♩ = 64)

Violin

Viola

Cello

pp *p* *mp*

7

mf *f* *mp* *p*

14

cresc. *(mp)* *(mf)*

20

f *p*

25

f *pp* *pp* *pp*

32

cresc. *(p)* *(mp)* *cresc.* *(p)* *(mp)* *cresc.* *(p)* *(mp)*

39

rit. ---- *a tempo*

(mf) *f* *p* *(mf)* *f* *p* *(mf)* *f* *p*

46

pp *cresc.* *pp* *cresc.* *pp* *cresc.*

53

p *(mp)* *mf*

58

p

64

cresc. *(mp)* *(mf)* *f*

70

ff *pp*