

Ananda Concerto

(Violin Concerto No. 1)

arranged for Violin and Piano
edited by Eric Pritchard

Dec. 25, 2006—May 4, 2007; 2nd movement revised January 2013
Duration: about 21 minutes

As a youngster, before starting violin lessons, I would go to the basement, get a dowel, and saw it across my arm pretending to play a new violin concerto. Many years later, it has remained a dream to create one; but no longer able to play myself, a practical opportunity eluded me. However I now am collaborating with Ananda-Eric Pritchard, and so the natural thing seems to be—write him a concerto! There is also a piano reduction of the orchestral parts suitable for performance.

From 1980 through 1982 I composed the *Goldbug Variations*, at first for two pianos and then arranged for full orchestra, and also for five synthesizers. It was too long, difficult, and a touch immature; the piano version had one performance for an audience of 25 in 1982. Drastically edited and re-written, it forms the basis for the second movement of this concerto. In early 2013, I dropped the first two variations and added one at the end, adapted from a new set of *Goldbug Variations* composed for harpsichord. This, along with a small change to the first movement, makes this third edition.

This concerto includes four horns, two tenor trombones and a bass trombone. The first performance, in 2009, by the Raleigh Civic Chamber Orchestra under Randall Foy and with Eric as soloist, required reduction of forces to two horns and bass trombone, hence there is also a chamber orchestra arrangement. This was of the first edition.

About the various exotic terms in this score; “Ananda” is a Sanskrit word roughly meaning “bliss”, and is Eric’s spiritual name. The first movement’s title is a Hindu mantra frequently used by devotees of Krishna, and translates as “homage to the blessed son of Vasudeva”. The last movement is an expansion of the one-minute finale of the 11th Sonata for Solo Violin, first performed by Eric, which originally was in a set of 64 movements from 1979 related to the changes of the *I Ching*. Hence the Taoist pun on “hoe-down”, and the Transfiguration from its former version. The deep inner meaning of “Hayseedic” is best left for others to elucidate.

Naturally enough, this work is dedicated to Ananda-Eric Pritchard in deep appreciation for his friendship and high degree of dedication to musical and spiritual ideals. The solo violin in the score has his bowings, while the solo extracted part has his bow directions and fingerings. I have simplified the earlier piano transcription, but the pianist may still find some notes expendable.

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