

# Tomb of the Unknown Composer

(*Le Tombeau du Compositeur Inconnu*)

## for Violin, Viola, and Violoncello

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.

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