

American Dances

for Violin and Piano

January 21—March 30, 2008; revised Nov. 26—Dec. 1, 2024

Duration: ~24 minutes *for Eric Pritchard*

American Dances is one of a series of pieces written for Eric Pritchard, first violinist of the Ciompi Quartet of Duke University, originally as a string quartet. At Eric's request, I arranged this work for violin and piano. This is very much an arrangement and not a simple transcription, so any comparison with the quartet will find significant variance.

After the premiere performance of the string quartet in 2013, I was not satisfied with the first movement, and recomposed it in 2024, during the presidential election. This motivated me to give it a new title, *Harris Waltz*, in honor of Kamala Harris and Tim Walz, in their failed attempt to stop Donald Trump from having a second term as president. The second movement, *Texas Two Step*, pays at least nominal tribute to the state of my birth and home for many years. I can't claim much authenticity in its two-stepness but at least it's fairly up-tempo and in 4/4, and appropriate for a formal and rather crazed square dance. The third movement was originally written just before the birth of Aaron Pritchard, son of Eric and Laura; during the revisions of 2024, Aaron was quite sick and undergoing difficult treatments, thus the new title to this movement, *Dance for the seriously ill*. The last movement stems from the inspired fiddling and great musicianship of the Roma people, as well as barn dances.

In 2024, I made major revisions in the piece, and orchestrated it to become *Symphony No. 4: American Dances*.

This piece requires the sostenuto pedal in several places, which should be clear by the context. I have used three staves instead of two for the piano in brief passages in the middle two movements, as this makes the score much more legible.

Bill Robinson

Publisher Parrish Press Garner NC 4th Edition December 2024

billrobinsonmusic.com