

FOUR VIOLIN CONCERTO

by

John Burge

— **Violins and Piano Score** —

Duration: approximately 25 minutes

A recording of this work can be obtained from the Canta Arya School for Strings:

www.cantaaryastrings.com

About the music...

For many years John Burge has been an accompanist, arranger and composer for the Canta Arya School for Strings in Kingston, Ontario. Directed by Karen Kimmett, this school has produced some wonderful young violinists and is keenly supported by parents and volunteers. After a group of violinists of approximately the same age had performed the Vivaldi Four Violin Concerto a number of times, John Burge was inspired to compose his own Four Violin Concerto for these same musicians. The resultant work is in a traditional three-movement design and was written with a piano accompaniment.

While the work may have been composed for young musicians, it is fair to state that the music has made very few compromises and is technically difficult, artistically challenging and substantial in that it takes 25 minutes to perform all three movements. Underlying the first movement is a repeated chord pattern heard initially in the solo violins that provides an accompanimental pattern used throughout much of the movement giving the music a kind of minimalist texture at times. Both the opening thematic material and a more lyrical idea introduced later are developed and reprised in a traditional first-movement design that even includes a cadenza for all four soloists. The second movement has a very free structure that shifts between slow chordal passages and longer melodic lines some of which are played in unison by all four violins. The last movement is a light-hearted rondo that includes a fugal episode that is both rhythmically and dissonantly intense.

The individual movements of this works were premiered separately in 2008 and 2009 at different concerts in Kingston, Ontario. In June of 2009, the following four violinists made a recording of this piece for the Canta Arya School's first CD: Eric Burge, Annie Foreman-Mackey, Calvin Rubens and Mikela Witjes. At some point, the composer hopes to orchestrate the piano part for full orchestra so that the work can be realized in a true concerto fashion.

About the composer...

Dr. John Burge (b. 1961) holds degrees in Composition and Theory from the University of Toronto (B.Mus. and M.Mus.) and the University of British Columbia (D.M.A.). Since 1987 he has been teaching at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario where he is a Full Professor. He has written a significant body of vocal, chamber, and orchestral compositions but he is particularly well known for his choral music. Many of his choral works have been published by the Boosey and Hawkes Music Publishers. His work for SSA choir and orchestra entitled, *Angels' Voices*, received the 2006 Outstanding New Choral Composition Award from the Association of Canadian Choral Conductors and was performed in New York City's Carnegie Hall in 2005.

Over the past two decades, a number of Canadian string orchestras have commissioned John Burge to compose new works for their ensemble such that he has written a large number of works for strings. Some of these compositions, such as *Upper Canada Fiddle Suite*, are amongst his most popular works being repeatedly performed, recorded and broadcast. The recording of his string orchestra piece, *Flanders Fields Reflections*, by Sinfonia Toronto on the Marquis Classics label, received the 2009 Juno Award for the Best Canadian Classical Composition. A passionate advocate for Canadian music, he was a member of the Executive of the Canadian League of Composers from 1993-2007, serving as President from 1998-2006.

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for The Canta Arya Strings, Kingston, Ontario, and their Music Director, Karen Kimmett

Concerto for Four Violins

Allegro moderato ♩ = 112

John Burge

Violin 1 *mp* *p*

Violin 2 *mp* *p*

Violin 3 *mp* *p* *solo* *f*

Violin 4 *solo* *f* *sfp*

Piano *p*

8

1

2 *solo* *f* *sfp*

3

4

Piano

14

1 *f*

2 *sfp*

3

4

Piano

20 **A**

1 *p* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

2 *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

3 *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

4 *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

5 *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *fp* *fp* *fp*

6 *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *fp* *fp* *fp*

29 *rall.*

1 *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff*

2 *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff*

3 *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff*

4 *ff* *ff* *ff* *ff*

5 *sfz* *mfp* *mfp* *mfp* *mfp* *rall.*

6 *sfz* *mfp* *mfp* *mfp* *mfp* *rall.*

35 **B** *a tempo*

1 *mf dolce* *p*

2 *mf dolce* *p*

3 *mf dolce* *p*

4 *mf dolce* *p*

5 *mp* *p* *mp* *p*

6 *fp* *a tempo* *(sempre p)*

41

Musical score for measures 41-46. The score is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It features four staves (1-4) and a grand staff (5-6).
Staff 1: *mp* → *mf* → *p*
Staff 2: *f dolce* → *p* → *f(sub.)*
Staff 3: *p* → *f(sub.)* → *p*
Staff 4: *p* → *mf* → *p* → *f(sub.)* → *p*
Staff 5: *mp* → *p* → *mp* → *p*
Staff 6: Piano accompaniment with a steady eighth-note pattern in the bass line.

47

Musical score for measures 47-52. The score is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It features four staves (1-4) and a grand staff (5-6).
Staff 1: *f(sub.)* → *mp* → *mf* → *f*
Staff 2: *p* → *mp* → *mf* → *f*
Staff 3: *mp* → *mf* → *f*
Staff 4: *mp* → *mf* → *f*
Staff 5: *mp* → *mf*
Staff 6: Piano accompaniment with a steady eighth-note pattern in the bass line.

53

C

Musical score for measures 53-58. The score is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It features four staves (1-4) and a grand staff (5-6).
Staff 1: *f* → *f* → *fp* → *fp* → *f* → *fp*
Staff 2: *f* → *f* → *fp* → *fp* → *f* → *fp*
Staff 3: *f* → *f* → *fp* → *fp* → *f* → *fp*
Staff 4: *f* → *f* → *fp* → *fp* → *f* → *fp*
Staff 5: *f* → *p* → *f* → *p*
Staff 6: Piano accompaniment with a steady eighth-note pattern in the bass line.

59

1 *fp* *f* *fp* *fp* *f* *fp*

2 *fp* *f* *fp* *fp* *f* *fp*

3 *fp* *f* *fp* *fp* *f* *fp*

4 *fp* *f* *fp* *fp* *f* *fp*

f *p* *f* *p*

65

1 *fp* *f* *fp* *fp* *f* *fp*

2 *fp* *f* *fp* *fp* *f* *fp*

3 *fp* *f* *fp* *fp* *f* *fp*

4 *fp* *f* *fp* *fp* *f* *fp*

fp *mf* *fp*

71

1 *fp* *ff* *mp*

2 *fp* *ff* *mp*

3 *fp* *ff* *mp*

4 *fp* *ff* *mp*

mf *p*

II.

Largo ♩ = 66

accel.

Più mosso ♩ = 80 rit.

Musical score for measures 1-9. It features four staves (1-4) and a piano accompaniment (Pn.). The tempo is marked 'Largo' with a quarter note equal to 66 beats. The score includes dynamic markings such as *f*, *mp*, *p*, and *p (sub.) rit.*. The piano part includes the instruction *p cresc. e accel.*. The time signature changes from 3/8 to 2/4 and back to 3/4.

A Tempo Largo

Musical score for measures 10-16, marked 'A Tempo Largo'. It features four staves (1-4) and a piano accompaniment (Pn.). The tempo is marked 'Tempo Largo'. The score includes dynamic markings such as *p dolce*, *mp*, and *p*. The piano part includes the instruction *mp*.

Musical score for measures 17-24. It features four staves (1-4) and a piano accompaniment (Pn.). The score includes dynamic markings such as *mp*, *p*, *mf*, and *f*. The piano part includes the instruction *f*.

23 *rit.* **B** *poco a poco a tempo* *(a tempo)*

1 *mf* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

2 *mf* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

3 *mf* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

4 *mf* *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

rit. *poco a poco a tempo* *(a tempo)*

p

29

1 *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *mf* *p* *f*

2 *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *mf* *p* *f*

3 *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *mf* *p* *f*

4 *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *mf* *p* *f*

p *mf*

35 **C**

1 *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p*

2 *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p*

3 *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p*

4 *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p*

mf *p* *sostenuto*

p *mf* *p*

accel.

42

1 *mp* *espr.* *cresc.*

2 *mp* *espr.* *cresc.*

3 *mp* *espr.* *cresc.*

4 *mp* *espr.* *cresc.*

mp *p* *mp* *p* *cresc.*

D Più mosso ♩ = 80

48 (V)

1 *mf* *f*

2 *mf* *f*

3 *mf* *f*

4 *mf* *f*

mf *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf (sempre)*

54

1 *mf* *mf* *mf*

2 *mf* *mf* *mf*

3 *mf* *mf* *mf*

4 *mf* *mf* *mf*

sf *sf* *sf*

60 *rit.* *8va*

1 *mf* *mf* *f* *ff*

2 *mf* *mf* *f* *ff*

3 *mf* *mf* *f* *ff*

4 *mf* *mf* *f* *ff*

sfp *sfp rit.* *sfp* *sfp* *mp* *p*

66

1 *p* *p* *p* *p* *mf* *p*

2 *p* *p* *p* *p* *mf* *p*

3 *p* *p* *mf* *p* *p* *p*

4 *p* *mf* *p* *p* *p* *p*

73 **F**

1 *f* *mp < mf* *mp > p* *mp > p* *mp > p* *mf > p*

2 (no cresc.) *mp > p* *mp < mf* *mp > p* *mp > p* *mp > p*

3 (no cresc.) *mp > p* *mp > p* *mp < mf* *mp > p* *p*

4 (no cresc.) *mp > p* *mp > p* *mp > p* *mp < mf* *p*

III.

Allegro vivace ♩ = 144

Musical score for measures 1-4. It features four staves (1-4) and a grand staff (Pn.). Staves 1-4 contain melodic lines with triplets and accents, marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The grand staff provides harmonic support with chords and bass notes, marked with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic.

Musical score for measures 5-9. Measures 5-8 feature a dense texture of triplets in all four staves, with dynamics ranging from *ffp* to *ff*. Measure 9 is marked with a box 'A' and features a change in dynamics to *ff* in the upper staves and *mp* in the grand staff. A *p (sempre)* marking is present at the end of the section.

Musical score for measures 10-14. Measures 10-11 are mostly rests for the upper staves. The grand staff continues with a rhythmic pattern, marked with *fp* and *mf*. Measures 12-14 show a more active melodic line in the grand staff, with dynamics of *mf* and *fp*.

16 **B**

1 *mf* *mp* *f*

2 *mp* *f* *p*

3

4

5 *p* *mf* *p* *mp* *p*

6

22 **C**

1 *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

2 *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *mf* *p* *p*

3 *solo* *mf* *f dim.*

4

5

6

28

1 *mp* *p* *cresc.* *f p* *f p*

2 *mp* *p* *cresc.* *f p* *f p*

3 *(non-solo)* *p* *cresc.* *f p* *f p*

4 *solo* *mf* *f* *f p* *f p*

5 *(no cresc.)* *cresc.*

6

34 D

1 *f p* *f (sempre)* *f*

2 *f p* *f (sempre)* *f*

3 *f p* *fp cresc.* *f*

4 *ffp cresc.* *f*

mf *f* *mf*

39

1 *f* *più f*

2 *f* *più f*

3 *f* *più f*

4 *f* *più f*

f *mf* *f* *mf*

44 E

1 *ff*

2 *ff*

3 *ff*

4 *ff*

cresc. *p (sub.)* *(l.h.) (sempre p)* *(r.h.)* *mf*

49

1
2
3
4

fp
mf
p

(r.h.)

55

1
2
3
4

mp
p < *mp*
mp
mf
mf
p

mp
p
mp
p

mp
p
mp
p

F

61

1
2
3
4

f
mf
f
mf
f
mp
mp

mf
p (no cresc.)
p

(sempre *p*)