

A Father's Love for His Daughter: Introducing Alicia's Piano Books by Ananda Sukarlan

Ananda Sukarlan (b. 1960)

- Indonesian composer and pianist
- First Indonesian listed in the *2000 Outstanding Musicians of the 20th Century*
- Work commissioned and performed by the Associated Board of the Royal School of Music (ABRSM)
- Compositional styles
 - Distinct blend of old and new, traditional and avant-garde
 - Integrates Western and non-Western musical elements
 - Utilization of Western forms such as Fugue, Variations, and Waltz
- Solo piano works include:
 - 13 short pieces from *Just a Minute!* for the left hand alone
 - 24 *Rapsodia Nusantara* (Archipelago Rhapsody)
 - 183 educational pieces in *Alicia's Piano Books*

Alicia's Piano Books (2009-2016)

- A set of six books that consists of 183 piano pieces
- Ranging from elementary to early advanced levels
- Initially written for Alicia Pirena, Sukarlan's daughter, in order to help her progress in her piano study
- Later the set was expanded and dedicated with both educational and entertainment purposes to other young musicians
- Each volume is designed with distinctive objectives:
 - Books 1 and 2
 - Mostly lyrical and expressive music, composed during the time period when Sukarlan was commissioned to write music for the film *Romeo Juliet*, a movie directed by the Indonesian award-winning film-director Andibachtiar Yusuf
 - Book 3
 - Ensemble pieces were added in order to encourage young piano students to participate in chamber music
 - Book 4
 - Collection of short pieces, which Sukarlan wrote as a musical diary of his daily life
 - Book 5
 - Dedicated to Sukarlan's friends, either for a special event in their lives, or as a token of appreciation
 - Book 6
 - Devoted to children who have physical disabilities such as hand malformations and paraplegia
- To purchase the set, visit the website: <http://anandasukarlancenter.com/>

Alicia's First Piano Book (2009)

- Falling in Love
 - A bi-rhythmic piece for the early intermediate students
 - Left hand plays in 6/8 while right hand plays in 3/4
 - Ends with *pelog* (Do Ra Me Se So Le Te) – a heptatonic tuning employed for Javanese gamelan



Figure 1: "Falling in Love," mm. 1-5, from Ananda Sukarlan's *Alicia's First Piano Book*.

Alicia's Second Piano Book (2011)

- 1 Minute for Japan
 - Composed after watching the news about the terrible impact of Japanese earthquake and tsunami in 2011
 - A late elementary piece for the left hand alone
 - Constructed with E Japanese Mode (Do Ra Me So La) and ends surprisingly on E Dorian Mode (Do Re Me Fa So La Te)



Figure 2: "1 Minute for Japan," mm. 1-5, from Ananda Sukarlan's *Alicia's Second Piano Book*.

Alicia's Third Piano Book (2013)

- Differences Unite
 - A late intermediate piece dedicated to Sukarlan's friends, Nia and Chris
 - Melody swaps between hands, and polyrhythms of 3 and 2 interchanges on every beat – symbolizing two parties who could be diametrically opposed
 - Ends with both hands playing equally important melodies – exemplifying the love relationship where both parties are equal



Figure 3: "Differences Unite," mm. 1-6, from Ananda Sukarlan's *Alicia's Third Piano Book*.

Alicia's Fourth Piano Book (2014)

- Call me but love...
 - Inspiration came from Alicia when the father and the daughter were analyzing the scene in Act 2 of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*
 - An early advanced piece which alternates between slow and fast themes
 - Includes metric modulation and rhythmic complexity such as 2 against 3, 2 against 5, and 3 against 4



Figure 4: "Call me but love...," mm. 23-25, from Ananda Sukarlan's *Alicia's Fourth Piano Book*.

Alicia's Fifth Piano Book (2015)

- 12 + 1 is a Lucky Number
 - Written for a friend, Vivienne, on her 13th birthday
 - An early intermediate piece composed in the ABA form
 - The letters V-I-V-I-E-N-N-E are included in the score and is meant to help enhance the playing of eighth notes which interchange between both hands – thus creating conversation-like passages



Figure 5: "12+1 is a Lucky Number," mm. 7-10, from Ananda Sukarlan's *Alicia's Fifth Piano Book*.

Alicia's Sixth Piano Book (2016)

- Variations of Ibu Sud's "Kupu-Kupu Yang Lucu"
 - Based on a famous Indonesian children's song composed by Ibu Sud (1908-93)
 - The title means "a funny butterfly" in the Indonesian language
 - An early advanced piece composed with a theme and five variations
 - The action of the butterfly is mimicked through the manipulation of tremolos, double thirds and sixths, uninterrupted flow of triplets, march-like rhythms, and double octaves



Figure 6: "Variations on Ibu Sud's 'Kupu-Kupu Yang Lucu,'" mm. 1-7, from Ananda Sukarlan's *Alicia's Sixth Piano Book*.

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