

W. Jay Sydeman

Astrid Duo
for Violin and Cello
(c. 1985)

Allegro $\text{♩} = 120$ *pizz* *arco* *13* *3* *7* (ASTRID II) *Andante*

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First page of manuscript

The short *Astrid* duos were written in 1985 after having spent two years in Fair Oaks (Calif.) teaching at the Rudolf Steiner College. Astrid Tiersch is a eurythmist (a sort of “spiritual” dance initiated by Steiner) and they were performed as such.

The style is pantonal and engaging, with the exception of the third movement which has a definite Brahmsian lyrical cast. Of compositional interest is that movement 4 is like a brief development of movement 2, while the stylistic discrepancies between movement 1 and 3 are vast... the “Brahms-like” third movement being diametrically opposed to the acerbic first movement.

– W. Jay Sydeman, February-March 2011

W. Jay Sydeman’s life mirrors the breadth and variety of his music. Born in New York in 1928 and educated at Manhattan’s Mannes School of Music, he quickly became one of the most sought-after and honored composers of his generation, receiving commissions from such prestigious groups as the Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, the Tanglewood Music Center, and the Boston Symphony, which premiered his orchestral work in memory of John F. Kennedy in 1966. “Sydeman uses a whole battery of far out techniques,” wrote the *New York Times*, “but he has an uncanny ability to throw in the whole avant-garde machinery as if it were the simplest, most normal way of making music in the world ... More than many of his colleagues, he seems to know what will sound well, and he works for some remarkably attractive, pure textures. His sounds seem to grow from a physical sense of exactly what material is right.”

In 1970, after a heady period that included awards from the National Institute of Arts and Letters, the Boston Symphony Orchestra and Library of Congress, Sydeman left New York – and composition – to begin a journey of personal and artistic exploration.

“Around 1980,” he has written, “I returned to composition – at first a large number of choral works which reconnected me to the source of all music – the human voice. Out of this new lyric impulse have evolved all of my works since that time – more romantic, more accessible. I create music for the musician.”

– Howard Hersh,
Artistic Director of “Music Now”

Sydeman is part of a composers’ group in Nevada City annually producing the “Wet Ink Festival of New Music.” He now lives in Mendocino and hosts a bi-weekly program on KZYX, “The Mind of a Composer,” 10 am to noon on Mondays, introducing and commenting on contemporary music.

Duration: I. Allegro – circa 1:00
II. Andante – circa 1:30
III. Andante, molto rubato – circa 3:30
IV. Adagio – circa 0:30
I. Allegro (da capo) – circa 1:00

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I.

Allegro ♩ = c. 120

Vln

VC

f *mp* *p* *f*

ff stacc. *f stacc.* *mp* *p*

mp *sfz* *f* *mp*

mp stacc. *mf stacc.* *sfzpp*

pizz. *arco* *pizz.* *arco*

3 *3* *3* *3*

A

14 *mp*

mf *mp* *f*

pizz.

27

espr.

f

espr.

f broad

dim. - - - - -

35

pizz.

mp mysterious

pp

a tempo

p

mf sul pont.

44 arco *f* ord. *f* *stacc.* *mf sub.* *mp* *pizz. p* *acc.* *stacc.* *mf sub.* *mp* *pizz. p*

II.

Andante ♩ = c. 88

Con sord. *p* spooky *mp* warm

Con sord. IV V O *pp* *mp* pizz. arco

5 poco a poco sul pont. ord. *mp*

9 pizz. *p* Senza sord. arco *mp* rubato, broad *mp* rubato, broad *passionate*

A Senza sord.

13

17

p

21

non-vib.

p sub.

B

vib.

non-vib.

vib.

p sub.

+

+

26

Con sord.

rit.

espr. (ord. vib.)

Senza sord.

V.S.

attacca

III.

Andante, molto rubato ♩ = c. 60

Brahmsian

mp

pizz. *arco*

mp

5

p

solo

8

rit.

A

11

solo

f *a tempo*

f *mf*

p sub.

p sub.

15

cresc.

cresc.

3

18

mf

mf

3

B

21

pp wispy, poco vib.

solo

pp *mp*

3

23

solo

mp

poco rit.

V.S.

26

a tempo

poco rit.---

a tempo

p sub. flaut.

30

p sub. flaut.

3

34

p sub.

mp

cresc.---

p sub.

mp

cresc.---

37

f

rit.

ff

mp

a tempo

f broad

ff

mf

D

41

poco rit.---

E

45

a tempo
pizz.

arco

p sub.

p sub.

3

49

rit.---

a tempo

poco rit.-

3

52

pp sub.

a tempo

p

allarg.-

a tempo

pp sub.

56

F

rit.-----

a tempo

59

molto rit.---

a tempo

rit.---

pizz.

pizz.

IV.

Adagio ♩ = c. 72

Musical score for movement IV, Adagio. The score is in common time (C) and 2/4 time. It features a piano (p) and a cello (c) part. The piano part starts with a first position (I) and a mezzo-piano (mp) dynamic. The cello part starts with a mezzo-piano (mp) dynamic. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings like *sfz*, *p*, *f*, *mf*, and *arco*. The piece concludes with the instruction "To First Movement **attacca**".