

W. Jay Sydeman

Two Pieces
for Viola and Piano
(c. 1992, revised)

Two short movements, written for the committed amateur violist (and pianist) during the period when I attended various chamber music workshops in California. This is an attempt to expand the somewhat limited repertoire for this combination. The music is straightforward with a somewhat lyrical first movement and a dance-like *allegro* following.

– W. Jay Sydeman, April 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. Andante espressivo – circa 1:30
II. Allegro – circa 1:45

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I.

Andante espressivo ♩ = c. 48

Viola

Piano

mp espr. *cresc.*

mp *cresc.*

4

A

mp

7

p sub. *mp*

allarg.-----*a tempo*

mp

8^{vb}

p sub. *mp*

allarg.-----*a tempo*

mp

8^{vb}

II.

Allegro ♩ = c. 200

Musical score for measures 1-5. The piece is in 3/4 time. The right hand starts with a rest in measure 1, followed by a quarter note G4 in measure 2, and a quarter note A4 in measure 3. The left hand plays a bass line of quarter notes: G2, F2, E2, D2, C2. Dynamics include *mf* in the right hand and *mf* in the left hand.

Musical score for measures 6-10. The right hand continues with quarter notes: B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4. The left hand continues with quarter notes: B1, A1, G1, F1, E1, D1, C1, B0. Dynamics include *mf* in the left hand.

Musical score for measures 11-15. Measure 11 is marked with a box 'A'. The right hand has a melodic line with accents: G4, F4, E4, D4, C4, B3, A3, G3. The left hand has a bass line with accents: G2, F2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1, F1, E1, D1, C1, B0. Dynamics include *mf* in the left hand.

16

Fine

B
20

p *mf* *mp*

25

rit.-----a tempo

30

Musical score for measures 30-33. Treble clef with a key signature of one flat. The melody features eighth and quarter notes with slurs. The piano accompaniment consists of chords in the right hand and sustained notes in the left hand.

C

34

Musical score for measures 34-37. Treble clef with a key signature of one flat. The melody continues with eighth and quarter notes. The piano accompaniment includes chords and a melodic line in the left hand starting in measure 36.

38

pp **D** *espr., somewhat mysterious*

p

allarg.-----*a tempo (first time)*

pp

8vb-----*loco*

Musical score for measures 38-41. Treble clef with a key signature of one flat. Measure 38 has a whole rest. Measure 39 starts with a dynamic of *pp* and a tempo change to *allarg.* Measure 40 returns to a dynamic of *p* and a tempo change to *a tempo (first time)*. Measure 41 has a dynamic of *pp*. The piano accompaniment features chords and a melodic line in the left hand with an *8vb* and *loco* marking.

43

Musical score for measures 43-47. The top staff is a single melodic line in treble clef. The bottom two staves are a grand staff in bass clef. Measure 43 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music consists of eighth and quarter notes with various accidentals. The grand staff accompaniment features chords and single notes, with some notes beamed together.

48

E

Musical score for measures 48-52. The top staff is a single melodic line in treble clef. The bottom two staves are a grand staff in bass clef. Measure 48 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). A box containing the letter 'E' is placed above the first measure of the top staff. The music continues with eighth and quarter notes. The grand staff accompaniment features chords and single notes, with some notes beamed together.

53

Musical score for measures 53-57. The top staff is a single melodic line in treble clef. The bottom two staves are a grand staff in bass clef. Measure 53 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots. The grand staff accompaniment features chords and single notes, with some notes beamed together.

Three times,
each time
faster, then
D.C. al Fine