

W. Jay Sydeman

Trio
for Viola, Cello and Piano
(c. 1985)



I had a somewhat brief flirtation with the viola in the '80s, to the extent that I attended and performed in chamber music workshops. It seemed to me there was (sadly) a somewhat limited repertoire for viola, cello and piano, and as there were some colleagues of that description, I wrote this work.

The first movement is quite pretty (I believe that is the right word, believe it or not), and the second quite gracious (ditto). Apparently these qualities lie latent in my personality and it only took a viola to nudge them forth. Musicians sharing these personality quirks might enjoy performing this piece, or might not... or something.

As for details – the viola and cello play independent counterpoints in the first movement while surrounded by arpeggiated figures in the piano, all in the context of a somewhat (pretty) sad expression. The second movement is an (almost) dance in a 20th century courtly manner (if that is imaginable). There is some strenuous playing in all parts. All of that being said, the language as well as technical demands of the piece reflect the fact that it was written for amateurs. so are tonal and not overly demanding. Perhaps the second “dancy” movement is a bit quirky. but who says that amateurs can't have their quirks – particularly as the word “amateur” actually means “lover of”.

– W. Jay Sydeman, July 2012

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 espressivo – circa 4:45
 II. Grazioso – circa 3:00

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Trio

for Viola, Cello and Piano

W. Jay Sydeman
(c. 1985)

I.

Andante espressivo $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 88$

Viola

Cello

Piano

1 2 3 4 5

5

6 7 8 9

9

A

f

allarg. - - - a tempo

mf

Reo. Reo. Reo. Reo. Reo. *

12

Reo. Reo. Reo. Reo.

15

mf

dim.

dim.

allarg. - - - a tempo

dim.

Reo. Reo. Reo. Reo. *

B

19

Musical score for section B, measures 19-22. The score consists of three staves: Bassoon (B♭), Double Bass (C), and Piano (G). Measure 19 starts with a rest in the Bassoon and Double Bass, followed by eighth-note patterns. The piano has eighth-note chords. Measure 20 begins with a bassoon solo. Measure 21 shows a transition with eighth-note patterns in all three voices. Measure 22 concludes with a piano solo. Performance instructions "Reo." and "*" are placed under specific notes.

23

Musical score for section B, measures 23-26. The score continues with three staves. Measures 23 and 24 feature eighth-note patterns in the Bassoon and Double Bass, with the piano providing harmonic support. Measure 25 is a piano solo. Measure 26 concludes with a piano solo. Performance instructions "Reo." and "*" are placed under specific notes.

27

Musical score for section B, measures 27-30. The score continues with three staves. Measures 27 and 28 show eighth-note patterns in the Bassoon and Double Bass. Measure 29 is a piano solo. Measure 30 concludes with a piano solo. The piano part includes a dynamic instruction "allarg.-". Performance instructions "Reo." are placed under specific notes.

C

31

p sub.

a tempo

p sub.

Rwd. * Rwd. Rwd. Rwd. Rwd. Rwd. *

35

rit. - - - - - *a tempo*

Rwd. Rwd. Rwd. *

38

D

mp

rit. - - - - - *a tempo*

mp

Rwd. * Rwd. Rwd. *

42

45

accel. ----- a tempo

Reo. Reo. Reo. Reo.

48

Reo. * Reo. * Reo. *

Poco meno mosso $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 80$

56

58

60

This page is blank to facilitate page turns.

64

F

66 pizz.

mf

mf

67

68

mf

69

70

71

72

73

74

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81

82

83

84

85

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87

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997

998

999

1000

68

70

Tempo I $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 88$

73

II.

Grazioso $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 126$

5

8

p sub.

p sub.

p sub. mp

c

c

c

11

A

poco rit. - - - - - *a tempo*

mp sub.

mp sub.

c c

13

arco

p

più mosso

a tempo

poco più mosso

mf

mp

Reo.

16

pizz.

mf

arco

mf

mp

tr

sfzp

Reo. *Reo.* *Reo.* *

19

Rcd.

fp

Rcd.

21

mf

Rcd.

Rcd.

23

p

mf

mp

Rcd.

Rcd.

Rcd.

mp

6

B

25 pizz. arco

28

30

C

32

pizz.

mp

mf

mp

sempre secco

36

D

39

p sub.

mf

arco

mp

p sub.

Musical score for orchestra and piano, page 42, measures 1-4. The score consists of four systems. The top system (measures 1-2) features two bass staves in 2/4 time with a key signature of one flat. The middle system (measures 3-4) also has two bass staves in 2/4 time with a key signature of one flat. The bottom system (measures 1-4) features a treble staff and a bass staff in 3/4 time with a key signature of one sharp. Measure 1 starts with eighth-note patterns in the bass. Measures 2-4 show more complex harmonic changes with various note heads and rests. Measure 4 ends with a dynamic marking of *mf*. The piano part in the bottom system includes dynamics like *mp*, *p*, and *mf*, as well as slurs and grace notes.

Musical score for orchestra and piano, page 14, measures 45-50. The score consists of four staves. The top staff is for the strings (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Cello), the second staff is for the bassoon, the third staff is for the piano (right hand), and the bottom staff is for the piano (left hand). Measure 45 starts with a dynamic *mp*. Measure 46 begins with a dynamic *p*. Measure 47 starts with a dynamic *pp*. Measure 48 ends with a dynamic *p*.

51

54

58

62

Reo. *

Reo. Reo. *

Reo. *

Reo.

66

F

mp

mp

Reo. *

70

f

f

3

6

74

Reo. Reo.

78

pizz.

pizz.

mf

82

p

p

G.P.

G

86 arco
 \mp

(pizz.)
 \mp

sempre secco

89

p

p

rit. - - - - -

p

Reo.

$*$