

W. Jay Sydeman

Conversations “Linda”
for Flute and Violin
(or for Two Violins)
(c. 1990, rev. 2013)

This is an accessible work both for performers and listeners, with quite a bit of humor interspersed between some lyricism and *gemütlichkeit*-ness. (Is there such a word?) In any event, these are truly “conversations” in which both instruments engage each other and make appropriate (or not) comments. The expressive third movement contrasts the “twitterish” qualities of the lighter, faster movements (written ten years before the internet discovered same).

Movement 1: Up to letter A, the flute leads introducing several motives which will be taken up by the violin, finally evolving into a canon at B ending quite playfully. Movement 2 carries “playful” to an extreme, with violin interrupting the flute until the exasperated flute says “Shut up pea brain.” Thank heavens, Movement 3 gets back to some serious musical expressive business, but (sad to say) the fourth movement continues this bizarre dialogue with the violin chasing the flute all over the place until they both give up, repeating a rather banal closing phrase.

– 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. Andante con moto – circa 1:30
- II. Allegro – circa 0:45
- III. Andante espressivo – circa 3:00
- IV. Allegro – circa 1:30 (3:00 with repeat)

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(c. 1990)

I.

Andante con moto ♩ = c. 102

Fl *mp*

Vln *mp*

4 *p*

8 *f* *mp* *mf* *mp* *arco*

14 *mf* *p* *poco rit. - - a tempo* *pizz.* *arco* *mp*

17 *f* *p* *più mosso rit. - - a tempo* *mp*

20 *mf* *p* *p* *mf*

24 **B** *f* *p* *(p)* *f* *mp*

28 *p* *mp*

33 *staccatissimo*

Più mosso ♩ = c. 116

38 *mf* *pp* *mp* *pizz.*

II.

Allegro ♩ = c. 138

mf *p sub.* *mf*

arco *pizz.* *arco* *mf*

4

mp *mp* *mf*

pizz.

A

7

mp *mf* *mf* *mp* *mf*

arco

10

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

12

p *pp*

pizz. arco

p *pp*

15

mf *f* *p sub.*

mf *f* *mf*

pizz.

B

18

p *f* *pp*

complacent and smug

22

Meno mosso ♩ = 98

f

G.P.

24

f

arco

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III.

Andante espressivo ♩ = c. 56

The musical score consists of two staves. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a 3/4 time signature, and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The tempo is marked 'Andante espressivo' with a quarter note equal to approximately 56 beats per minute. The first two measures are marked *mp* *molto rubato*. The second staff begins with a bass clef, a 3/4 time signature, and a key signature of one flat. It also starts with *mp* *molto rubato*. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings. Measure 4 is marked *mf*. Measure 7 is marked *solo*. Measure 10 is marked *solo*. The piece concludes with a double bar line and the instruction 'V.S.' (Vincenzo Scacchi).

4 *mf* *solo*

7 *solo*

10 *solo* V.S.

A

13

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

Poco più mosso ♩ = c. 120

16

p *(pizz.)* *solo arco*

B Tempo I ♩ = c. 56

21

mp *mp*

24

mf *mf*

27

solo

30

Musical notation for measures 30-31. The top staff features a melodic line with slurs and triplets. The bottom staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving lines.

32

Musical notation for measures 32-33. The top staff continues the melodic line with slurs and triplets. The bottom staff continues the accompaniment. A 3/4 time signature change is indicated at the end of measure 33.

C

35 *mp*

Musical notation for measures 35-37. Measure 35 is marked with *mp*. The top staff has a melodic line with slurs. The bottom staff includes *pizz.* and *arco* markings, with *mp* dynamics.

38

Musical notation for measures 38-39. The top staff has a melodic line with slurs. The bottom staff is marked *solo* and *mf*.

40

Musical notation for measures 40-42. The top staff has a melodic line with slurs and *solo* markings. The bottom staff includes *mp* and *pizz. arco* markings.

43

Musical notation for measures 43-44. The top staff has a melodic line with slurs. The bottom staff is marked *pizz.*

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IV.

Allegro ♩ = c. 126

The musical score consists of two staves. The first staff begins at measure 1 with a melody starting on a half note G4, moving through A4, B4, and C5. The second staff provides accompaniment with chords and moving lines. Measure 5 marks the beginning of a section with a key signature change to one flat. Measure 8 is marked with a box labeled 'A'. Measure 11 features a key signature change to two flats. Measure 14 continues the two-flat key signature. Measure 16 is marked with a box labeled 'B'. The score concludes with a 'V.S.' (Vincenzo) instruction. Dynamic markings include *mp*, *mf*, *f*, *p*, and *mp*. Articulation includes *pizz.* and *arco*.

18 *mp*
p *f*

20 *mp* C

23 *p* *mp* *mp*

28 *mp* *mp*

31

33 D *f* *mf*
f *ff*

35

f

Musical notation for measures 35-36. The upper staff features a melodic line with slurs and accents, while the lower staff provides a harmonic accompaniment. A dynamic marking of *f* is present.

37

pizz.
mp

Musical notation for measures 37-38. The upper staff continues the melodic line. The lower staff includes a *pizz.* marking and a dynamic marking of *mp*.

E
39

p *mp*
arco *mf* *p*

Musical notation for measures 39-40. A boxed letter **E** is in the left margin. The upper staff has dynamics *p* and *mp*. The lower staff has an *arco* marking and dynamics *mf* and *p*.

41

f
f

Musical notation for measures 41-42. Both staves feature a dynamic marking of *f*.

43

dim.
dim.

Musical notation for measures 43-44. Both staves feature a *dim.* marking.

45

p (optional repeat) *f*
p *f*

Musical notation for measures 45-46. The upper staff has dynamics *p* and *f*. The lower staff has dynamics *p* and *f*. The text "(optional repeat)" is written between the staves.