

W. Jay Sydeman

Overturino
(quasi-Prokofiev)
for Piano and Snare Drum
(c. 1992)

Overturino for Piano and Percussion opened the 2003 Composers' Cooperative contribution to the Music in the Mountains Festival in Grass Valley, CA.

It's light and lively, and brings the music of Prokofiev to mind... at least the light, lively (as opposed to the heavy, harsh) music of that composer, which might have called for timpani. (Or cymbals... well enough of that.) The snare drum is restrained, just adding splashes of rhythmic color to the piano part which in itself is quite colorful. An unusual and quite charming way to open a program, or maybe close it as encore piece in a piano recital should there be a spare snare drummer lurking about.

– W. Jay Sydeman, October 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: circa 1:15

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Premiere performance:

June 23, 2003, Matthew Darling (snare) and Dmitriy Cogan (piano). Music in the Mountains Music Festival. Amaral Family Festival Center, Grass Valley CA. Fourth Annual Festival of New Music, presented by Nevada County Composers' Cooperative.

Edited and engraved by Rick Shinozaki (Albany, CA), consulting with the composer.

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(quasi-Prokofiev)

for Piano and Snare Drum

W. Jay Sydeman
(c. 1992)

Allegro ♩ = c. 150

Snare Drum

Piano

6

11

A

16

B

20

26

C

32

32

pp

p

mp

p sub.

(*♪=♪*)

37

37

f

pp

f sub.

p

D

sub

43

43

p

pp

mp

pp

mp

sub

47

tr
mp \rightrightarrows ppp

very short

rit.-

pp

loco
mp

8vb

E
51

a tempo

54

p

mf

56

Musical score for measures 56-60. The score is written for a single melodic line and a piano accompaniment. The melodic line starts in common time (C) with a forte *sfz* dynamic, followed by a 3/4 time signature change. The piano accompaniment features chords and moving lines in common time, 3/4, and 2/4 time signatures. Dynamics include *f sub.*, *pp*, and *f*. A *mp* dynamic is indicated below the piano part with a dashed line.

F

61

Musical score for measures 61-64. The score is written for a single melodic line and a piano accompaniment. The melodic line starts in 2/4 time with a *tr* (trill) and *fp* dynamic, followed by *f* and *mp* dynamics. The piano accompaniment features chords and moving lines in 2/4 time. Dynamics include *ff* and *mp sub.*. A *8vb* dynamic is indicated below the piano part with a dashed line.