

W. Jay Sydeman

Two-Part Inventions
for Solo Piano
(c. 1986)

Hail to J.S. Bach! (Almost.) These twelve two-part inventions do homage to the original, but also play on the word “inventions” as they are quite quirky and full of endless variety. They are strictly in two parts as the Bach, but the counterpoint is not imitative. Instead, they traverse a variety of moods and styles from Scarlatti to the now – from melancholic to jolly romps.

– W. Jay Sydeman, February 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:	1. Andante – circa 0:45	8. Serious but delicate – circa 0:50
	2. Fun! – circa 0:30	9. Melancholic, molto rubato – circa 1:00
	3. Pesante – circa 1:15	10. Jolly – circa 0:30
	4. Playful – circa 0:35	11. Quasi-Scarlatti – circa 0:45
	5. Graceful – circa 0:30	12. Quasi-Scarlatti – circa 0:55
	6. Rhythmic – circa 0:30	
	7. Stately and very rubato – circa 1:20	Total: circa 12:00

To contact the composer:

Jeanne Duncan, Sydeman Archive Publications
707-962-0394
www.williamjaysydeman.com

Edited by Rick Shinozaki and Irene Jacobson, and engraved by Rick Shinozaki (Albany, CA) in consultation & collaboration with the composer.

Two Part Inventions, Part 1

for Solo Piano

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Andante ♩ = c. 84

1

mp

poco misterioso

mf

4

p

mf

mp

7

kinda jolly

12

mp

p

16

Fun! ♩ = c. 120

2 *mp*

4

8

11 *p sub.*

15

The musical score is written for a piano. It begins in G major (one sharp) and common time. The tempo is marked 'Fun! ♩ = c. 120'. The score is divided into five systems, each with two staves. The first system is marked 'mp' (mezzo-piano). The second system starts at measure 4. The third system starts at measure 8. The fourth system starts at measure 11 and is marked 'p sub.' (piano, subito). The fifth system starts at measure 15. The piece features a variety of time signatures: common time, 3/4, 2/4, and 3/2. The melody is primarily in the right hand, with a more active bass line in the left hand. The piece ends with a double bar line at measure 15.

Pesante ♩ = c. 60

3 *mf*

sempre semi-stacc.

6

Poco più mosso e molto rubato

10 *espr.*

Tempo I

13 *mp rit. e dim. poco a poco*

8vb

18 *(rit. e dim. poco a poco)*

(8vb)

Playful ♩ = c. 110

4

mp

4

7

12

15

The musical score is written for piano (mp) and consists of five systems of music. The first system is marked with a large '4' and a piano dynamic 'mp'. The second system is marked with a '4'. The third system is marked with a '7'. The fourth system is marked with a '12'. The fifth system is marked with a '15'. The music is in G major (one sharp) and common time (C). The first system features a treble clef with a melody of eighth and sixteenth notes, and a bass clef with a simple accompaniment. The second system continues the melody and accompaniment. The third system introduces a 3/4 time signature change. The fourth system continues the 3/4 time signature. The fifth system concludes the piece with a final cadence.

Graceful $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 80$

5

tr
mp

4

8

tr

11

15

poco

Rhythmic ♩ = c. 133

6 *mf*

5

9

13

16 *p*

The musical score consists of five systems of music, each with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The first system (measures 6-7) is marked *mf* and features a complex rhythmic pattern with eighth and sixteenth notes. The second system (measures 8-9) continues the pattern with a change in time signature to 2/4. The third system (measures 10-11) shows a further change to 3/4. The fourth system (measures 12-13) returns to 2/4. The fifth system (measures 14-15) is marked *p* and features a more melodic line in the treble clef. The final measure (16) is a whole note chord in the bass clef.

Stately and very rubato ♩ = c. 80

7 *mp*

6 *allarg. a tempo*

11 *rit.----- a tempo*

16 *rit.----- a tempo* *slow roll* *allarg.-*

22 *a tempo* *rit. e dim.-----* *pp*

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Two Part Inventions, Part 2

for Solo Piano

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Serious but delicate ♩ = c. 85

8 *mp*

7 *p*

12 *mf*

18 *mf* *mp* *p*

26 *mp*

Melancholic, molto rubato ♩ = c. 65

9 *p* *p* *p* *p*

* slight rit., and immediate a tempo

5 *p* *mp* *p* *p*

10 *mf* *mp* *accel.*

13 *rit.* *mp*

17 *rit.*

Jolly ♩ = c. 150

10

mf

mp

mf

5

mp

mf

9

mf

mp

Meno mosso subito ♩ = c. 145

14

mp

mf

17

mp

Quasi-Scarlatti ♩ = c. 140

11

mp

7

p *p* *mf*

12

mp *p* *mp* *mf*

17

mp

22

mp

Quasi-Scarlati $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 104$

12

mp *tr*

6

tr *pp* *tr* *mp*

11

p *tr* *tr* *mp*

16

p *tr* *loco* *p* *mp*

20

pp *pp* *8vb* *8vb*