

More About SONATINA FOR HORN AND PIANO

Way back in the mid 1960s, when I was a high school horn player trying his hand at music composition, I wrote a few solos for my instrument and piano: three caprices and a 3-movement sonatina. I meant them for myself, but the only ones I ever actually played in public were the first and third caprices. Along with the second caprice, the sonatina never made it off the page into the realm of sound, and now has been lost for decades. That is probably a good thing!

Forty years later, in 2004, after having written somewhat more mature sonatinas for trumpet and flute, I composed another one for horn. Except for the second movement *chaconne*, which I played one time as a church offertory, I still haven't played it in public...and I am not likely to, because, of the thirteen wind sonatinas in my series, this is one of the longest and hardest. So I'll leave its performances to more dedicated and proficient horn players than myself.

The preface to the score describes the piece in some detail:

As the title indicates, **Sonatina for Horn and Piano** closely follows sonata form on a somewhat smaller scale. Tonality and tonal relationships are basic to sonata form, and in this sonatina, the tonal relationships within and between the movements are all based on seconds.

The first movement, *Allegro moderato*, is a fairly strict sonata-allegro in C minor.

The *Andante tranquillo* second movement is a chaconne in Db major, a Neapolitan relationship to the outer movements.

The finale, *Allegro con spirito*, is an abridged sonata-rondo in the home key of C minor.

There is some thematic interconnection between the three movements. The ground melody of the chaconne is a direct variation of the principal theme of the first movement, and the rondo theme is related to it as well. The episodes of the rondo are derived from the piano bridge at the beginning of the second subject of the first movement. Except for the descending fifth that begins the principal theme of each movement, most of this isn't obvious on casual listening, but it provides the composition with a considerable degree of thematic unity.