

The Seventeenth and Eighteenth Commissioned Works  
of the American Accordionists' Association  
Composers Commissioning Committee,

Paul Pisk: *Adagio and Rondo Concertante*, for Two Accordions & Orchestra  
David Diamond: *Sonatina*, for Solo Accordion

No. 9 of an Ongoing Series on the Commissioned Works of the AAA

2022 update and expansion of the original version that appeared in the  
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For the seventeenth and eighteenth AAA commissioned works, Composers Commissioning Committee Chair Elsie Bennett returned to two previously assigned figures of note, Paul Amadeus Pisk (1893-1990) and David Diamond (1915-2005). The reader may recall discussions in this series about both the men and their earlier compositions in the 2002 and 2004 issues of the *AAA Festival Journal*. The first commission of Paul Pisk was his solo *Salute to Juan*, and that of Diamond, *Night Music*, for accordion and string quartet.

Pisk and Diamond were the first re-commissioned composers since Paul Creston and Henry Cowell made their second contributions to the accordion's contemporary repertoire. Creston ultimately produced a total of four works for the AAA, the first two of which were completed before the presently discussed pieces (see the 1998 and 1999 issues of the *Journal*); and Cowell contributed his two compositions before the subjects of this article were assigned (see the 2000 and 2002 *Journal* issues).

The contract dates of the presently examined compositions fall into the "golden age" of the CCC, the late 1950s and early 1960s, when multiple commissions were successfully carried out by some of the country's—and world's—most famous composers. In the AAA's continuing desire to commission more works for accordion with other instruments, Elsie Bennett persuaded Pisk to accept a November 10, 1961, contract initially stipulating a double concerto for two accordions and string orchestra following the lead of the previous August contract with Louis Gordon for his *Aria, Scherzo, and Finale*, for solo accordion and orchestra, and the earlier Diamond *Night Music*, for accordion and string quartet (both explored in the 2004 issue of the *Journal*). These actions were followed by two solos, however, in 1962: Diamond's *Sonatina* and George Kleinsinger's *Prelude and Sarabande* (respective contract dates: January 15 and 18).

Five commission contracts were ultimately offered by Bennett in 1962 following the three of 1961. However, of the total of eight contracts for the two years, two did not

come to fruition. These were for Ulysses Kay (1917-95), the only other African American composer besides William Grant Still, to be approached by the AAA, and Hollywood composer Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco (1895-1968). The two remaining contracts for 1962 that were eventually realized were Ernst Krenek's brilliant solo *Toccata* and Robert Russell Bennett's *Psychiatry*, for accordion and string quartet.

Kay had once accepted a contract, in 1959, but returned it a month later, explaining that his present commitment to previously assigned commissions did not allow him sufficient time to carry it out. Undaunted, Ms Bennett commissioned him again two years later, on November 24, 1961, and he accepted the new offer with enthusiasm, even coming up with a tentative title, "Rondo Fantasie." But he unfortunately proved unable yet again to find the time to realize this goal before the contract deadline of May 1, 1962. The matter was never pursued again.

Highly respected post romanticist and film composer Castelnuovo-Tedesco also accepted his contract (dated September 15, 1962), but his similar load of compositional duties, a half year's serious illness, and his ultimate death in 1968 prevented this project from ever being realized. He had at least written for the accordion once before, in combination with clarinet, guitar, violin, percussion, and narrator, in his incidental music to Robert Nathan's collection of poems entitled *Morning in Iowa* (1953). He was also Hollywood's most sought-after film score mentor, having taught such notable composers in that medium as John Williams, Nelson Riddle, Henry Mancini, and accordionists/arrangers Dominic Fontiere and Jack Preisner.

Paul Pisk: *Adagio and Rondo Concertante*

Regrettably, Paul Pisk's second commission suffered in similar ways due to a number of mishaps that prevented it from being premiered near the time of its completion. To date, I can find no documentation of its having ever been performed, a situation that can and should be corrected.

Pisk was Professor of Music at The University of Texas, in Austin, and Willard "Bill" Palmer\* and Bill Hughes, of the famous and groundbreaking classical accordion duo Palmer and Hughes, were on the music faculty of the University of Houston and had worked with the composer on his first AAA commission, *Salute to Juan*. For this reason, Elsie Bennett asked the elder of the two, Palmer (Hughes had been his student at one time), to talk to Pisk about composing a double concerto for two accordions and string orchestra. Pisk was favorable to the idea and accepted a commission contract on November 10, 1961.

In the copious correspondence that followed between Palmer and Bennett regarding this agreement, Bennett expressed a few concerns: 1) a work requiring as many musical forces as this would be very expensive to perform and would not likely get very many hearings though, on the other hand, she conceded, it was important that the AAA commission as many different forms of music for the accordion as possible; 2) Pisk, though highly respected in the classical music world, was not as famous in America as



Paul Pisk, Willard "Bill" Palmer, and Bill Hughes around the time of the two Pisk AAA commissions.

other AAA composers who had written for accordion and orchestra such as Creston and Cowell and therefore might not draw much interest from orchestral impresarios; 3) she was also somewhat disappointed that the work did not conform to the three-movement format of the classical and romantic era concerto but followed a shorter slow introduction and fast second movement plan instead.

Regarding these worries, Palmer assured Bennett that they did not pose serious problems for this endeavor; and, regarding the third point, he asserted that the two-movement format was in many ways a much better, less pretentious choice than that of a lengthy, complicated three-movement concerto and that such a more compact work would likely get more performances and enjoy greater public popularity. For examples he cited the very popular and often performed *Konzertstück* of Carl Maria von Weber for piano and orchestra, and Saint-Säens' *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso*, for violin and orchestra. In any event, the commission was approved by the AAA governing board and carried out.

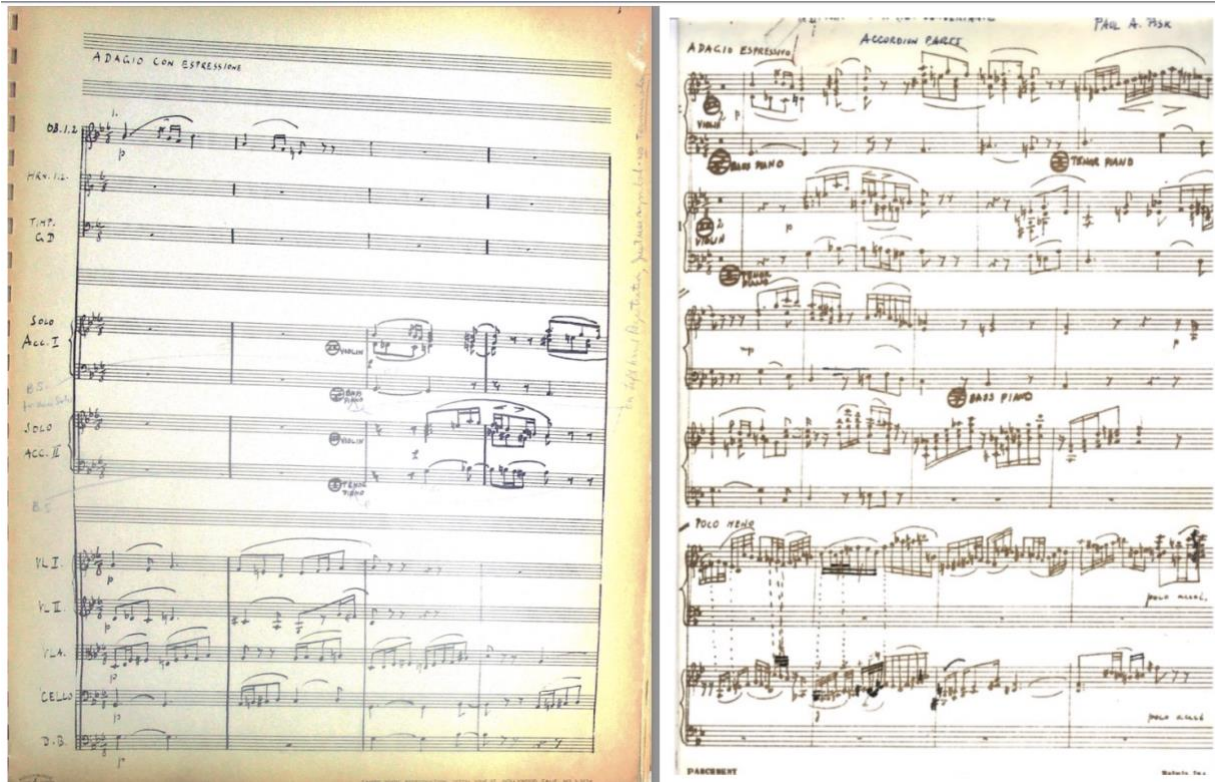
Pisk wrote to Bennett in late February 1962 that the draft for the piece was finished and that he had sent the accordion parts to Palmer for editing and providing registration. By now the composer had added pairs of oboes, horns, and timpani to the score, thus officially elevating the status of the accompanying string ensemble to that of orchestra. It was at this point that the project hit a snag. Palmer felt the accordion parts were more difficult and labor intensive than the piece merited, and, with the composer's qualified permission, proceeded to simplify them somewhat, in the hope that an easier version would encourage more performances in the future.

Perhaps Palmer was right in observing that the accordion parts were challenging, but in my opinion, they are far from impossible to master and are significantly less difficult than a number of other AAA commissioned works (especially Paul Creston's accordion concerto and his *Fantasy*) that have enjoyed frequent performances. In any event, this new development meant that much more work would have to be done in the editing than originally anticipated. To complicate things more, the project had to be halted by Palmer for about six months due to a troublesome convalescence from ear surgery; and if this was not enough of a problem, Hughes was also temporarily disabled a little later from surgery to remove a cyst from his spine. After this, both men's faculty duties intensified at the University to such a point that the editing had to be laid aside for an indefinite period.

By September 1967 (five years past the contractual deadline of June 1962!), the score was still untouched, and Bennett finally had to reluctantly ask Palmer to send it to her so that she could have Joseph Biviano and Eugene Ettore finish the job of editing. To what degree this task was carried out is unknown since no revised version of the score appears to be extant.

Another complicating factor in bringing the work to the public was the issue of who would give the official premier performance. Naturally, that honor should have gone to Palmer and Hughes since they had initiated the commission and consulted frequently with the composer, who in turn had dedicated the work to them. Joan Sommers, Professor of Accordion at the University of Missouri in Kansas City, expressed interest in having it performed at her school, but Palmer held to the conviction that the dedicatees must premier the work, after which Sommers or anyone else would be welcome and encouraged to perform it as well. But time continued to pass, and nothing ever came of either plan, the first of which was rendered permanently impossible in 1978 with Hughes's tragic and untimely death from cancer at age 52. \*\* Sadly, the piece remains unheard as of this writing in 2022.

Fortunately, Palmer did at least arrange for the work to be published by Alfred Music, which also published the highly popular and still widely used Palmer/Hughes accordion teaching method. This likely did not come to pass either, however, if its absence from its current and very exhaustive online catalogue is any indication.



First page of the Adagio: Verifax copies of Pisk's hand-written manuscript scores for full orchestra (left) and extraction of the two accordion parts (right) that he sent to Elsie Bennett. Missing is a third rendering of the score for the two accordions with piano reduction of the orchestral score which Pisk claimed in a letter to Bennett he had previously mailed to her. Elsie Bennett papers.

It is clear from this unfortunate situation that all three normal and professionally expected renderings of the work—1) a full conductor's orchestral score along with all instrumental parts, 2) accordion parts only, and 3) accordion parts plus piano reduction of the orchestral part (when such is finally achieved)—need to be engraved, printed, and, at least for the second and third items just listed, published and easily available to the public for purchase. (The first listed item is usually rented from a publisher and not for sale). If the third proposed format on this list alone had been published in the 1960s, this highly deserving work could have at least been, and could still be, inexpensively performed by just three musicians (two accordionists and a pianist) as has often been done by two artists (accordionist and pianist) with such published and purchasable forms of Creston's Concerto and his *Fantasy*. (I, myself, have performed the Creston concerto twice with orchestra and twice with piano accompaniment because the scores were available in these forms.)

In the correspondence between Pisk and Bennett, it is revealed that Pisk apparently did create a score with the orchestral piano reduction and mailed it to Bennett along with handwritten manuscripts of the two accordion parts alone and the full 2-accordion/orchestral score. The latter two survive in the Bennett papers but not the first, unfortunately. Of course, nothing would be better than to hear the *Adagio and Rondo*

*Concertante* performed with full orchestra, as intended. Would it not be wonderful if such could take place at the site of its conception, the University of Houston?

As for the music itself, Elsie Bennett requested a brief description and formal outline of the composition from Pisk, as was her custom with all the commissioned composers so that she could include their works in her press releases and publicity articles on them. Pisk complied in a letter dated October 16, 1962, with the following practical and succinct account:

The *Adagio and Rondo Concertante* . . . is written for two solo accordions, treated equally as virtuoso instruments and an accompanying orchestra which also takes part in the thematic content of the piece. The two movements belong together, not only in key and mood but also through motivic relations. The Adagio begins after two bars' orchestral introduction with a melodious main theme in G-minor. The melody here is, as it is throughout the whole work, distributed between the two accordions. In the second phrase they imitate each other contrapuntally. The middle section is more dramatic; here rich figuration is used to accompany the melodies. In the center, a solemn, chordal section is placed after which the previous material is repeated in slightly different order. The Adagio ends with the first theme in the major key. The fast Rondo begins with a dance-like, gay tune which is played by the orchestra, then by the soloists. It dominates the whole movement and appears four times in different shapes and keys. In between are two contrasting ideas, the one with chords and scale figures, the second in quiet, expressive melodic character. Also, these two themes reappear. At the end, a coda is added in which both soloists are able to display their technical skill. The end is gay and brilliant.

The Adagio is highly romantic and chromatic in nature, giving it an almost nineteenth century flavor at times. The rhythm is quite conventional, as well, usually in a flowing, lilting sextuple or triple meter. The texture is richly contrapuntal and natural, showing the influence of his teacher, Arnold Schönberg, himself not only one of the greatest and most influential composers of the twentieth century, but one of the most highly revered and sought-after mentors of theory and composition as well. One of Schönberg's strengths as a teacher was his ability to impart solid compositional skill and artistry to his students' writing without necessarily imposing his atonal and twelve-tone serial techniques on their personal musical styles (though many, such as Ernst Krenek, studied with him with that plan in mind). He was more interested in producing superior musicians than disciples and always respected their individuality. Thus, such students as Pisk and the renowned Hollywood composer Erich Wolfgang Korngold could retain their preferred post-romantic and neoclassical musical languages and still learn from the great master.

The texture of the Rondo is simpler than that of the Adagio, but somewhat freer harmonically, allowing considerably more chromatic chordal combinations and added tertian structures (usually in the form of freely applied seventh chords of different sorts) at times. As the composer says, the tonality is still in G, but with frequent transpositions

to other keys with the returning themes in the rondo scheme. The three alternating themes Pisk describes fall into an eight-section form with coda:

A / B / A<sup>2</sup> / C / A<sup>3</sup> / B<sup>2</sup> / C<sup>2</sup> / A<sup>4</sup> / Coda

Beginning on measure no. 1 37 82 114 169 190 244 272 276–286 (end)

The principal theme (A) is a simple, playful, “sing-songy” theme in 6/8 time. The fifth through eighth sections (A<sup>3</sup> / B<sup>2</sup> / C<sup>2</sup> / A<sup>4</sup>) present the now extensively and playfully altered themes in truncated form, adding to the intensity of the drive to the exciting, climatic coda.

The Adagio and the initial A, B, and C themes of the Rondo are partially excerpted in Examples 1-4 below. Since there is no engraved score, I copied the excerpts from the orchestral manuscript copy submitted by Pisk to Elsie Bennett into a notation program that also allows a fair MIDI representation of the sound, available here by double clicking on the speaker icon with each example. As may be observed, the strings are visually displayed in a single grand staff.

Example 1. Beginning of the Adagio of *Adagio and Rondo Concertante*

The musical score for Example 1 is presented in a grand staff format with four systems. The top system is for the Oboe, the second for Accordion 1, the third for Accordion 2, and the bottom for Strings. All parts are in 6/8 time and the key signature has two flats. The Oboe part starts with a melodic phrase marked 'p'. The Accordions play chords and simple rhythmic patterns. The Strings play a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes, also marked 'p'.

Acc. 1

Acc. 2

Str.

This block contains the first system of musical notation, covering measures 4 and 5. It features three staves: Acc. 1 (top), Acc. 2 (middle), and Str. (bottom). Each staff has a treble and bass clef. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). Measure 4 begins with a 4-measure rest in all staves. In measure 5, the Acc. 1 staff has a melodic line with a slur over the first two notes. The Acc. 2 staff has a similar melodic line. The Str. staff has a bass line with a slur over the first two notes and a rhythmic pattern in the second half of the measure.

Acc. 1

Acc. 2

Str.

This block contains the second system of musical notation, covering measures 6 and 7. It features three staves: Acc. 1 (top), Acc. 2 (middle), and Str. (bottom). Each staff has a treble and bass clef. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). Measure 6 begins with a 6-measure rest in all staves. In measure 7, the Acc. 1 staff has a complex melodic line with many sixteenth notes. The Acc. 2 staff has a melodic line with a slur over the first two notes. The Str. staff has a bass line with a slur over the first two notes and a rhythmic pattern in the second half of the measure.

(End of Example 1)





**Allegro molto**

Oboe

Strings

Accordion 1

Accordion 2

Strings

Acc. 1

Acc. 2

Str.

*f*

*f*

*mf*

*m*

B. S.

Example 2. First occurrence of Theme A, beginning of the Rondo of *Adagio and Rondo Concertante*

The image displays a musical score for three instruments: two accordions and a string ensemble. The score is in 6/8 time and G major. The first system (measures 37-44) shows the initial entry of theme B. The two accordions play a melody, with the first accordion starting on a whole note and the second on a half note. The strings provide harmonic support with a bass line. The second system (measures 45-52) continues the theme with more complex rhythmic patterns and dynamics. The first accordion has a five-measure rest at the beginning of the system. The second system includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings like *p*.

Example 3. First occurrence of theme B of the Rondo, measures 37-44 of Rondo.



Example 4. First occurrence of theme C of the Rondo, measures 114-127 of Rondo.

Hoping that the *Adagio and Rondo Concertante* would soon be completed and well on its way to a premiere performance, Bennett wrote a short mention of it that included the composer's brief analysis quoted above for the December 1962 issue of *The Music Trades* magazine. Though this concert was not to happen (at least yet, as of this 2022 writing!), Pisk, owing to his first commissioned accordion piece, *Salute to Juan*, was nevertheless one of five highly deserving and distinguished AAA-contributing composer honorees, the others being Henry Brant, Alexander Tcherepnin, Louis Gordon, and Otto Luening, at a special awards ceremony three years later, in March 1965, at the Statler

Hilton Hotel in New York (described in the previous article of this series in the 2004 *Journal*). Pisk, though unable to be there in person, humbly expressed his gratitude later to Bennett for this recognition in a brief note:

[The award] should really be shared with me by the AAA, since it is through their generosity that various present-day composers have been inspired to contribute to original literature for the accordion. I am happy that I could take part in it. My hope is that this commissioned music be widely used and that it will open new avenues for contemporary music.

Hopefully, the work Pisk never lived to hear will be “widely used” in the not-too-distant future. The *Adagio and Rondo Concertante* is a significant contribution to the contemporary classical accordion repertoire that has been denied to audiences far too long and impatiently awaits its formal public christening.

David Diamond: *Sonatina*

Following the successful completion of his *Night Music*, for accordion and string quartet, Elsie Bennett next asked David Diamond in a letter of September 15, 1962, to write a solo piece. Diamond, living in Florence, Italy, at the time, replied within a week that it would be his pleasure to do so.

Always reticent about his music and personal career, Diamond refused to give any but the slightest descriptions of either of his AAA commissions when he had completed each and Bennett requested information on them for publicity. All he would say about *Night Music*, for example, had to do mainly with the title. The quintet was dedicated to the memory of his recently deceased friend and fellow composer (as well as earlier AAA commissionee) Wallingford Riegger. (See the third article in this series, which discusses Riegger’s *Cooper Square*, in the 1999 issue of the *Journal*.) Riegger had always liked to take long walks in New York in the evenings, and Diamond would often accompany his friend in this recreation, engaging him in interesting conversation, as he explains in some notes he dictated to Bennett in an interview (not always in complete sentence form):

Free three-part form. Slow fast slow [movement tempo scheme]. Create an atmosphere of quality of night which WR always liked in walking. . . . Could be considered a nocturne. While it gives off [the] quality of 1961, I wanted to capture the quality of the past as well, like Mozart in his *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*. Basically, it is a nocturne which has the quality of an elegy. The cello pizzicato in fast section has the function of the bass player in a jazz combo.

As can be seen, there is no description of the form of each movement or the harmonic and contrapuntal structures in prominent use. He was no less restrained in discussing his new accordion solo, to which he gave the generic eighteenth-century title *Sonatina*. Only a few words can be found on it, and this only in a May 1963 letter to Bennett:

Now about the *Sonatina*. I am expressly making it simple because I want it available to non-professionals, too. I will soon be sending it to you. . . . I should prefer an editing job from Mr. Biviano, and he will be credited with the editing: that is, I want his registrations, fingerings, etc. I have tried some unusual harmonic combinations, and in order to keep them he may want to re-indicate the left-hand notation. All this let him do without changing the sound of my notes (the pitches). It is in three movements. I think you will like it.

Diamond sent the completed manuscript to Elsie Bennett on June 1, 1963, well within the contractual deadline (despite his busily working on five other compositions during the 1962-63 period, the most time consuming of which was *This Sacred Ground*, based on Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, for baritone, children's chorus, adult chorus, and orchestra).



11/1/61 EBS + DAVID DIAMOND  
 11/1/61 JOE BIVIANO + DAVID DIAMOND

Elsie Bennett and Joseph Biviano conferring with David Diamond, November 1, 1961.  
 Elsie Bennett photo album

*Sonatina* was subsequently published by Southern Music in 1966. Joseph Soprani gave the premiere performance on a late Friday afternoon concert made up exclusively of AAA commissioned works at the Donnell Library, in New York City, on February 21, 1964. The event was broadcast on WNYC-AM and FM as part of the Municipal Broadcasting System's twenty-fifth American Music Festival. Three other accordionists, Robert Conti, Kathy Black, and Janice Simon, also performed, playing Henry Cowell's *Iridescent Rondo*, Kleinsinger's *Prelude and Sarabande*, Elie Siegmeister's *Improvisation, Ballad, and Dance*, Robert Russell Bennett's *Four Nocturnes*, Otto Luening's *Rondo*, William Grant Still's *Aria*, Paul Creston's *Prelude and Dance*, and the New York premiere of Henry Brant's *Sky Forest* \*\*\*(an accordion quartet).



Elsie Bennett was very pleased with the concert and that Diamond was present to hear his new piece; but she was equally disappointed that this historic event was not taped as the radio station had promised beforehand. Diamond had lived most of the time in his Florence residence until 1965 due to the repressive atmosphere created for him and many other people in the arts by the McCarthy era House Committee on Un-American Activities but was in America at this time due to his accepting the Slee Professorship for the spring 1963 semester at the State University of New York in Buffalo. He returned to Florence shortly after the Donnell Library concert.

Joseph Soprano around the time of the *Sonatina* premiere.

Regarding *Sonatina*'s number of movements (three), tempo scheme of the movements (fast, slow, fast) and lengths of movements (fairly short, thus explaining the diminutive title "sonatina" rather than "sonata"), Diamond's rendering approximates the eighteenth-century formula prevalent in the keyboard works bearing that generic title by such masters and contemporaries of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven as Clementi and Kuhlau.

However, rather than construct his first movement on the classic and thematically complicated eighteenth- and nineteenth- century "first movement sonata form" model developed and used so often by the masters of those times (be it for sonatas or sonatinas), Diamond chose to employ and develop only a single motif that permeates his entire first movement (*Allegro moderato*): a group of three eighth-note values, often in descending melodic motion and in parallel harmonic thirds, landing on a longer sustained value. This rhythmic pattern of short-short-short-long values permeates the entire movement, regardless of which directions the pitches move in each instance. Therefore, this procedure precludes the notion of a second or third contrasting theme, as one would expect to encounter in a true sonata or sonatina format and is more of a through-composed form stressing and developing only one principal motif from beginning to end. (See Example 5 below.)

**Allegro moderato** (♩ = 116)

*p* *leggero e delicato*

*pp* *p* *molto*

*f* *mf* *mp*

Example 5. David Diamond *Sonatina*, beginning of first movement. Instances of the “short-short-short-long” rhythmic motif that threads through the entire movement are bracketed in red.

Nonetheless, one can convincingly assert that the spirited, tightly organized and cleverly developed melodic activity and brevity of the movement captures the brisk, terse character of the lively and vivacious first movements of the Clementi and Kuhlau sonatinas from an earlier age and that all intermediate level piano students still pass through on their way to the lengthier and more demanding sonatas of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven.

The second movement (Andante) is in the accustomed slow tempo found in most of its eighteenth-century predecessors’ middle movements. The mood is relaxed and flowing with long, unbroken phrases and occasional moments of imitative and non-imitative counterpoint. The latter is often the result of suspensions of pitches from one beat into the next, as can be observed in the descending melodic and harmonic sequence in measures 2 and 3 (see Example 6 below). These melodic procedures conspire to create a variety of chromatic seventh and extended-third harmonies (9<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 13<sup>th</sup> chords) that result in a kind of dreamy, freely chromatic harmonic milieu not all that unfamiliar in mid-twentieth-century jazz and popular song arrangements.

Example 6. Beginning of second movement of Diamond *Sonatina*, displaying free, but carefully voiced chromatic counterpoint and resulting chromatic harmonies

At least three times the music makes dramatic crescendos as the melodic line climbs to high climatic points. The ending is nevertheless tranquil and cadences on an inverted, jazzy C-major seventh chord (or incomplete E-thirteenth chord, depending upon one's aural perception).

Example 8. Ending of second movement of Diamond's *Sonatina*.

The finale (*Allegro, ben ritmato*) is similar in form to the first movement but is hard driving in both an urgent and cheerful way throughout, with much shifting and strongly accented syncopation that often deliberately throws the listener's ear into amused confusion regarding where the perceived downbeat of the measure is at any given time. Regarding harmony, the occurrence of parallel mostly perfect 4ths and 5ths, suggesting brief streams of quartal or quintal harmony, are noticeably more frequent in this movement than its two predecessors, as can be observed in Example 9, particularly at measure 4 and beyond.



*8va*  
**Allegro, ben ritmato** (♩ = 100)

Example 9. Beginning of third movement of Diamond's *Sonatina*, with syncopated phrasing and occasional streams of perfect 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> dyads.

Like the first movement, the last concludes with a dashing and dramatically altered return of its opening theme before a final crashing downward to a simple, unexpected, concluding G-major triad.



David Diamond and Mogens Ellegaard going over *Sonatina*. Elsie Bennett home, Brooklyn, New York. March 10, 1963. Elsie Bennett photo album.

Diamond succeeded very well in his intention to create a piece that is technically and expressively within the means of both professionals and determined amateurs. While many serious accordion students can quite readily master the *Sonatina*, it is a mature enough work to fit into any professional performer's recital program as well. What better proof of this claim than to witness the great Mogens Ellegaard playing over the work with Diamond himself! (See photo.) This dual purpose of salesmanship was certainly the aim of Mozart in many of his sonatas, though the Clementi and Kuhlau sonatas were more suitable for the developing intermediate or early

advanced student. The same may be argued of the Diamond *Sonatina*. Accordion students experiencing their first taste of contemporary concert music should therefore find *Sonatina* to be a very accessible and enjoyable addition to their repertoire.

As if to prepare accordion students for the level of difficulty required of the *Sonatina*, Diamond accepted a third and final AAA commission four years later that employed him

to write a comparatively easier solo suitable for the intermediate level student. The result was *Introduction and Dance*, explored in a later article of this series.

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Notes:

\*Past AAA President, the late Faithe Deffner, wrote a thorough account of and deeply touching and well deserved tribute to the late Bill Palmer (who died in 1996) and his invaluable legacy to the concert and pedagogical accordion worlds which may be read at [www.accordions.com/index/art/willard.shtml](http://www.accordions.com/index/art/willard.shtml).

\*\*Bill Palmer wrote a similarly exhaustive and loving tribute to the memory of his former student, later colleague at the University of Houston, and dear friend, Bill Hughes, at the time of his passing in 1978 that may be found at [http://accordions.com/memorials/mem/hughes\\_bill/index.shtml](http://accordions.com/memorials/mem/hughes_bill/index.shtml).

\*\*\**Sky Forest* had another New York performance soon after this article was written, this time performed by Beverly Roberts Curnow, Rita Weinbuch Davidson, Lenny Feldmann, and myself at The Graduate Center of the City University of New York on December 9, 2005. See separate article on the CUNY concerts.

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AAA commissioned works news and upcoming performances that occurred in 2005:

Diamond's *Sonatina* was also performed by Beverly Roberts Curnow on March 10, 2005, as part of the concert "From Frosini to Foss" at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. It, along with Diamond's *Introduction and Dance*, was performed again by me on August 28 as part of the eleventh annual AAA Master Class and Concert Series at the Tenri Institute, New York City, in which, among other things, Diamond's accordion music was discussed at length.

Other AAA commissioned works not mentioned above that I had the privilege to perform in 2005 at either Tenri or the December 9 CUNY concert were Louis Gordon's *Aria, Scherzo, and Finale*, with the composer playing the orchestral reduction on the piano, Gary William Friedman's *Accordion Samba*, for accordion, cello, bassoon, and scat singer, Elie Siegmeister's *Improvisation, Ballade, and Dance*, Otto Luening's *Rondo*, and Normand Lockwood's *Sonata Fantasy*.