

Biography

Brian Wilbur Grundstrom

A composer equally accustomed to writing for orchestra, opera, film, theater, chorus, piano, and chamber ensembles, Brian Wilbur Grundstrom's voice includes a strong affinity for long melodic lines, distinctive tonal harmonic vocabulary, engaging rhythms, skillfully executed counterpoint, and dramatic imagery.

Audiences take to his compositions immediately, finding in his music traces of Copland and Puccini, along with dramatic lines evocative of a film score.



Classically trained in piano as well as music theory from Gettysburg College, he continued orchestration and composition studies with John David Earnest.

Based on Ernest Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, Grundstrom has written a new lyrical grand opera in two acts, with libretto by David M. Dorsen.

Soprano Indra Thomas, one of the foremost Aida's in the world today and a regular at the Metropolitan Opera and other top opera houses, premiered one of Maria's arias from

Grundstrom's opera, accompanied by the Rome Symphony Orchestra in Georgia led by Maestro Jeffrey Dokken.

With Parma Recordings and Maestro Miran Vaupotić, the London Symphony Orchestra recorded the opera's overture.

Also with Parma Recordings and conducted by Maestro Erik Ochsner, Grundstrom's CD, *An Orchestral Journey*, was released in 2016 under the Navona Records label with distribution by Naxos.

Grundstrom's orchestral music has been performed by: Orquestra Sinfônica do Teatro Nacional Claudio Santoro (Brasília, Brazil), La Orquesta Sinfonica De Loja and La Orquesta Sinfónica de Guayaquil (Ecuador), Symphony Orchestra of Northern Virginia, SONOS Chamber Orchestra, North/South Consonance, Shippensburg Festival Orchestra, Trinity Chamber Orchestra, George Washington University Orchestra, NIH Philharmonia, Oconomowoc Chamber Orchestra, Holyoke Civic Symphony, and The Queer Urban Orchestra.

Other ensembles include Sunderman Woodwind Quintet, Chamber Music by Candlelight by Baltimore Symphony Orchestra musicians, CoroAllegro, Colla Voce and The New Jersey Gay Men's Chorus. His music was also seen on the Kennedy Center Millennium Stage.

Grundstrom won Outstanding Emerging Artist in the 2013 DC Mayor's Arts Awards, and has received eight fellowships from the D.C. Commission on the Arts and Humanities. His awards also include Encore from American Composers Forum, Composers Assistance Program from the American Music Center and ASCAPLUS from ASCAP. He has received four Peer Awards from Television, Internet & Video Association of DC (TIVA-DC) including a Gold Peer Award for *Children of Zeus* – a 46-minute work for chorus and orchestra commissioned by Maestro Jeffrey Dokken and the Symphony Orchestra of Northern Virginia, CoroAllegro and St Marie's Choral Arts.

A member of ASCAP, Grundstrom attended the ASCAP/ NYU Buddy Baker Film Music Workshop. His features include *Arc of Light: A Portrait of Anna Campbell Bliss* and *2 Minutes Later*, in addition to writing music for many short films. His studio includes the latest in technologies, including Vienna Symphonic Library, and he is able to render his orchestral compositions at high professional standards.

SONOS Chamber Orchestra Director Erik E. Ochsner writes "Many audiences cringe at the thought of new music. We had such positive feedback from audiences on how much they enjoyed Grundstrom's work. It is modern, yet tonal."

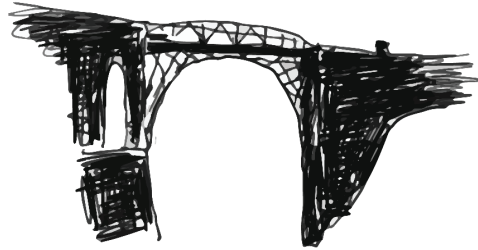
Maestro Jeffrey Dokken writes about *American Reflections* for Strings and Harp: "The polyphony of the work is nothing short of genius. Truly. The relationship between the parts is so well written. Having your work on the program was wonderful. It truly embodies the best of American contemporary classical music. It is rhythmically enticing, harmonically satisfying and interesting, makes full use of what a string section can do, shows a broad spectrum of colors without forcing anything, provides several 'eye closingly beautiful moments', and keeps the audience engaged from beat one."

His compositions can be heard at www.brianwilbur.com.



Compositions and Performances

Opera For Whom the Bell Tolls



Fighting Fascism and Sacrificing for Love

A New Opera in Two Acts

Libretto by David Dorsen based on story by Ernest Hemingway

(2023) 2 hours 37 min. excluding one intermission

2 soprano, 2 mezzo, 1 alto, 4 tenor, 2 baritone 3 bass

Large: 2222 4331 timp perc harp strings

Medium: TBD

Small: Cl, Piano, V1, V2, Va, Vc, Cb

Aria Will He Love Me? by Rome Symphony Orchestra, Maestro Jeffrey Dokken and Indra Thomas

Rome City Auditorium, Rome Georgia, Feb 11, 2023

Workshop Performance Reading, Jeffrey Sean Dokken, Music Director

Church of the Epiphany, Washington DC, November 20, 2022

Leads: Alan Naylor (Robert Jordan), Eliza Bonet (Pilar), Kelly Curtin (Maria), Sean Pflueger (Pablo)

Comprimario: Danielle Bendjy, Suzanne S. Chadwick, Cosmo Clemens, Aurelio Dominguez, Santiago Alfonzo Meza, Derrick Miller, Jose Sacín, Lori Şen, Daniel Sherwood, Antony Zwerdling

Orchestra: Luke Wedge (Violin I), Tanya Whisnant (Violin II), Chris F. Epinger (Clarinet), Adelya Shagidullina (Viola), Robert Battey (Cello), Kate Easton (Contrabass), Hee Young Cho & Minji Nam (Piano)

Piano Vocal Reading Act 1 Scene 4, Maestro Erik Ochsner with Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg in attendance

Composer's DC residence July 22, 2015

Tenor Jesús Daniel Hernández, soprano Kelly Curtin, mezzo Suzanne S. Chadwick and baritone Jose Sacín

Act 1, Scene 4 recorded by Maestro Erik Ochsner and Parma Recordings.

Omega Recording Studios, May 13, 2016

Tenor Jesús Daniel Hernández, soprano Kelly Curtin, mezzo Suzanne S. Chadwick and baritone Jose Sacín.

Libretto Reading, Robert Barnett Director, National Opera Center, NYC, March 15, 2018

Scene Maria Meets Robert Jordan, vocal recording & video, soloists: Kelly Curtin, Alan Naylor, Aurelio Dominguez, Jose Sacín, June 24, 2021

Scene Robert Jordan Doesn't Teach English video premiere July 20, 2021

Brazil's National Orchestra - Orquestra Sinfônica do Teatro Nacional Claudio Santoro, Maestro Cláudio Cohen and soloists: Jeffrey Sean Dokken, Alan Naylor, Eliza Bonet, Malte Roesner, Aurelio Dominguez, Lori Şen, Jose Sacín, Antony Zwerdling, Gustavo Ahualli. Support by the DC Commission on the Arts & Humanities.

Interview with Christina Scheppelmann, General Director of Seattle Opera for "Robert Jordan Doesn't Teach English" Video premiere July 20, 2021

Overture recorded on February 26, 2022 by the London Symphony Orchestra with Maestro Miran Vaupotić Parma Recordings, released October 28, 2022

Overture performed by Symphony Orchestra of Northern Virginia, Maestro Jeffrey Dokken, George Washington Masonic Memorial Theatre, Alexandria VA, March 13, 2022.

Chorus and Orchestra



Children of Zeus

(2017) 46:00 min. (3342, 4331, timp, perc, hrp, SSAATTBB chorus, strings)

i. Hercules (6 min.)

'Hercules & Co.' by Arthur Guiefterman

cynicism for the Half man half God, the strongest of all men

ii Aphrodite (9 min.)

Adapted from the 'Homeric Hymns'

Beautiful melodies for the Goddess of Love, beauty, pleasure and procreation

iii. Ares (10 min.)

Adapted from assorted writings on Ares

Loud and Militaristic for the God of War and Chaos

iv. Dionysus (11 min.)

'Oedipus at Colonnus'

Lush and Mysterious for the God of Wine and Religious Ecstasy

v. Apollo (9 min.)

'Hymn to Apollo' by John Keats

A hypnotic refrain for the God of music, poetry, arts, oracles, archery, medicine, sun, light and knowledge

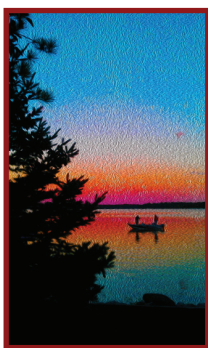
◇ CoroAllegro, Delaware Choral Society and the Symphony Orchestra of Northern Virginia

Jeffrey Sean Dokken Music Director

◇ Baby Grand, Wilmington Delaware, April 29, 2017

◇ Masonic Temple in Alexandria, Virginia, June 3, 2017

◇ Great Mills High School, Great Mills, Maryland with St. Maries Choral Arts, June 4, 2017



Imagine a Day

... in Lake Country

Lyrics by Robert Barnett, based on poem by Courtney Bella

(2019) 21:00 min (2211, 2110, timp, perc, hrp, adult chorus SAB, children chorus SAB, strings)

◇ Oconomowoc Chamber Orchestra, Roberta Carpenter Music Director, and

Oconomowoc Community Choir, Lynn B Carlstein, Music Director

Oconomowoc Arts Center, Oconomowoc, WI, April 14, 2019

Orchestra



Contentment

Poem for Orchestra

(1999) 11:20 min. (2222, 4331, timp, perc, hrp, strings)

- ◇ Orquestra Sinfônica do Teatro Nacional Claudio Santoro, Maestro Jeffrey Dokken
Teatro Pedro Calmon, Brasília, Brazil, December 13, 2016
- ◇ La Orquesta Sinfonica De Loja, Ecuador, Maestro Jeffrey Dokken,
Centro Cultural "Alfredo Mora Reyes, June 29, 2018

Jubilation!

Dance for Orchestra

Jubilation! is an exciting dance in 5/4 for full orchestra, climaxing with a big energetic ending.

(2000) 8:45 min. (3333, 4331, timp, xyl, vibr, mar, perc, strings)

- ◇ George Washington University Orchestra, Director Nancia D'Alimonte
Lisner Auditorium, Washington DC, Nov. 19, 2006
- ◇ Queer Urban Orchestra, BWG orchestral conducting debut,
Church of the Holy Apostles, New York City, November 21, 2010
- ◇ La Orquesta Sinfonica De Loja, Ecuador, Maestro Jeffrey Dokken,
Centro Cultural "Alfredo Mora Reyes, June 29, 2018

Variations on Fanfare for Lake Country

Theme by Crawford Gates

Commissioned by Oconomowoc Chamber Orchestra

(2019) 9:00 min. (strings)

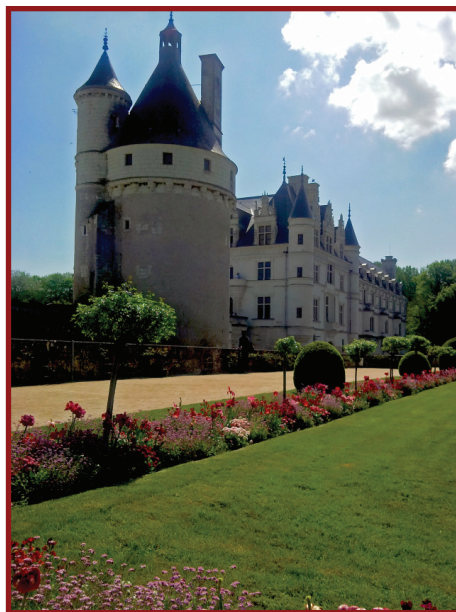
- ◇ Oconomowoc Chamber Orchestra, Roberta Carpenter,
Oconomowoc, WI, April 14, 2019 & November 3, 2019



American Reflections for Strings and Harp

Commissioned by SONOS Chamber Orchestra
(2009) 12:00 min. (v1 solo, v2 solo, va solo, vc solo, harp, strings)

- ◇ SONOS Chamber Orchestra, Director Erik E. Ochsner
 - ◇ Good Shepherd Church May 12, 2009
 - ◇ Merkin Concert Hall, NYC May 13 2009
 - ◇ First Baptist Church of White Plains May 16, 2009
- ◇ Guayaquil Symphony Orchestra, Jeffrey Dokken guest conductor
 Teatro Sanchez Aguilar, Ecuador July 10, 2015



Chenonceau

Music for Wind and String Quintets
Commissioned by Max Lifchitz and North/South Consonance

(2013) 12:48 min. (Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon, Horn, Strings)

- ◇ North/South Consonance, February 16, 2014,
 Christ & St. Stephen's Church, 120 West 69th Street, NYC-performed with solo strings
- ◇ La Orquesta Sinfonica De Loja, Ecuador, Maestro Jeffrey Dokken
 Centro Cultural "Alfredo Mora Reyes, June 29, 2018)

Suite For Chamber Orchestra

(fl, ob, cl, bn, hn, timp, strings)

I. Before the Fall! (2001) 10:45 min.

Before the Fall! was almost completed before that defining moment of September 11th, yet there is a dark side to the piece that seems to forebode. Coincidentally, the title also portrays the sense of loss felt as summer fades away and the anticipated dread of the cold and dark as winter approaches. In some sense, the events that shape our world are just as seasonal and uncontrollable as the weather.

II. Avalon (2002) 11:30 min.

Avalon is the mystical island of healing that King Arthur went to after his battle. This piece represents the slow and necessary healing process following a dramatic event. Mysterious and epic sounding, Avalon has a free-style beginning with interjecting little motives -- then transitions and builds upon these interjections to a steady and foreboding feel with string pizzicato. The color and character changes subtly as the piece slowly climaxes and relaxes.

III. Celebration! (2002) 8:30 min.

Celebration! deals with the joy and celebration of life that we need to express after coming to terms with the darker side. With all its excitement and vigor, as well as its interesting unexpected turns, *Celebration!* makes a great concert opener!!!

Entire Suite:

- ◇ NIH Philharmonia, Director Nancia D'Alimonte
St. Elizabeth Catholic Church, Rockville MD, October 20, 2007
- ◇ Symphony Orchestra of Northern Virginia, Director Jeffrey Dokken
James Lee Community Center Theater, Falls Church VA, November 5, 2011

Before the Fall only:

- ◇ Trinity Chamber Orchestra, Richard Fazio Director, October 15, 2006, St Ann's Church Washington DC

Celebration only:

- ◇ SONOS Chamber Orchestra, Director Erik E Ochsner
Trinity Church, NYC 2003, February 2003
- ◇ Trinity Chamber Orchestra, Richard Fazio Director
Trinity Theater, Washington DC, January 2005
- ◇ Festival Chamber Orchestra Series, Artistic Director Dr. Blaine Shover, Shippensburg PA, July 2005
- ◇ Holyoke Civic Symphony, Artistic Director David Kidwell, Holyoke MA, May 2008
- ◇ Oconomowoc Chamber Orchestra, Roberta Carpenter, Oconomowoc, WI, April 14, 2019

Theater

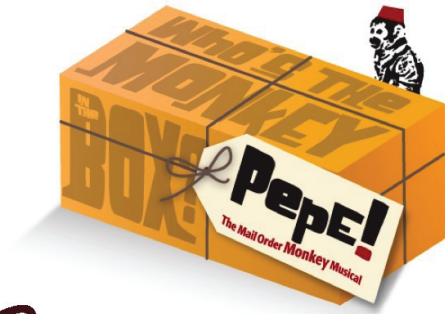


A Day at the Museum

**Commissioned by The New Zenith Theatre for the New York International Fringe Festival.
Written by Robert Barnett and directed by Ed Wierzbicki.**

(2008) 35 min. underscore

- ◇ Capital Fringe Festival 2011, Washington DC, Director Perry T. Schwartz, BWG Producer



Pepe! The Mail Order Monkey Musical

Lyrics by Jon Gann and Andrea King www.pepelives.com

(2009) 45 min.

◇ 2009 Capital Fringe Festival -

Also Music Director of production and Recording Engineer of cast recording.

Cookin' Up Numbers

Music by Tom Berger, Book & Lyrics by Yvonne Roen

Music Director & Orchestrator

◇ 2010 Capital Fringe Festival

Film

Separation Smackdown (2020) short Tohubohu Productions/William R. Coughlan
The Golden Cage of Television (2019) short Tohubohu Productions/William R. Coughlan
Bombshell (2018) short Tohubohu Productions/William R. Coughlan
The Least Among Us (2017) short Tohubohu Productions/William R. Coughlan
Believe Me (2017) short Tohubohu Productions/William R. Coughlan
Separation Smackdown (2020) short Tohubohu Productions/William R. Coughlan
The Golden Cage of Television (2019) short Tohubohu Productions/William R. Coughlan
Bombshell (2018) short Tohubohu Productions/William R. Coughlan
The Least Among Us (2017) short Tohubohu Productions/William R. Coughlan
Believe Me (2017) short Tohubohu Productions/William R. Coughlan
The Rest of Your Life (2017) short Tohubohu Productions/William R. Coughlan
Winston (2016) short Tohubohu Productions/William R. Coughlan
The Greater Evil (2015) short Tohubohu Productions/William R. Coughlan
Codependence Day (2015) short Tohubohu Productions/William R. Coughlan
Uke & Trust Me (2014) short Tohubohu Productions/William R. Coughlan
Residence Evil (2013) short Tohubohu Productions/William R. Coughlan
Game of Assassins (2013) additional music Evan Evans/The Composers Collective
The Writer's Dilemma (2013) short Tohubohu Productions/William R. Coughlan
The Monopoly Club (2013) short Meghan Reynolds
The Backseat Driver (2012) short Tragedy Plus Time/Rob Rafferty
At Last (2012) short Tohubohu Productions/William R. Coughlan
Nocturnal Agony (2011) feature Nubia Filmworks
Arc of Light: A Portrait of Anna Campbell Bliss (2011) feature Cid Collis Walker
Touched by a Lawyer (2011) short Tohubohu Productions/William R. Coughlan
Green House (2011) short Tohubohu Productions/William R. Coughlan
Uncertainty Principle (2010) short Tohubohu Productions/William R. Coughlan
Final Etiquette (2011) short Jack Kearney
Liability (2010) short Tohubohu Productions/William R. Coughlan
Smithsonian Recruitment Video (2009) short by Sonnett Media Group/Dan Sonnett
The Red Wind (2009) short by Stephen L. Carr

Number One with a Bullet (2009) short Tohubohu Productions/William R. Coughlan
Please Forward (2009) short 48 Hour Film Project 2009 DC Best of Selection) Tohubohu Productions/William R. Coughlan
Convergence (2007) feature by Zero Point Productions/Gary Wheeler & John Strawbridge
Sadie's Waltz (2007) short by Mobius Films/Edward R. Tyndall
Deconfliction (2007) short by Mobius Films/Edward R. Tyndall
You Pay Your Dues (2007) short (Best of 48 Hour Film Project 2007) by Tohubohu Productions/William R. Coughlan
2 Minutes Later (2007) feature by Robert Gaston
Milind Soman Made Me Gay (2007) short by Harjant Gill
The Pride of the Maasai Mara (2007) short by Sonnett Media Group/Dan Sonnett
A Tree Grows in Brooklyn (2007) short by Attey Production/Yetta Myrick
Four Seasons (2007) short by Ahreum Kim
The Tea Party (2006) short by Attey Production/Yetta Myrick
The Mane Attraction (2006) short (National Film Challenge) by Sonnett Media Group/Dan Sonnett
Machinations (2006) short (Winner, Best Sci-Fi National Film Challenge) Tohubohu Productions/William R. Coughlan
A Date With Dennis (2006) short by Director Taylor Burns
Reunion (2006) short by Director Andy Bely

Chamber Music



Suite Remembrance

(2007) (Clarinet, Bassoon and Piano)

I. Seduction 3:45 min.

II. Langsyne 0:58 min.

III. Grandeur Days 1:23 min.

IV. Dream Waltz 2:16 min.

V. Distant Memories 4:36 min.

◇ Angela Murakami, Robin Gelman, BWG, (above) Kennedy Center, November 27, 2007

◇ Brian David Jones, Ben Williams, Laurie Vivona-Bunn April 16, 2009, George Mason University, VA



Music II for Wind Quintet

Music for Piano Solo II has been orchestrated into a fun lively piece for winds.

(2005) 15:05 min. (Fl, Ob, Cl, Hn, Bn)

- ◇ Trinity Chamber Players: Robin Dawn Gelman, Robin Barr, Jay Chadwick, Angela Murakami, Julianne Martinelli with BWG (above)
 - ◇ Oakton, VA June 2005
 - ◇ Alexandria, VA, June 2005, recorded by Steve Antosca
- ◇ Ensemble A la Carte
 - ◇ The Westchester, Washington DC, July 17, 2006
 - ◇ Kennedy Center, November 27, 2007
- ◇ Chamber Music by Candlelight/Baltimore Symphony Orchestra musicians, 2nd Presbyterian Church, Baltimore, April 25, 2010
- ◇ Sunderman Woodwind Quintet
 - ◇ Gettysburg College, Gettysburg, PA, October 18, 2013

The Benefit of Going to Law

This intimate song presents the wit and humor of Benjamin Franklin

(2004) 4:45 min. (Guitar and Soprano)

- ◇ J. Andrew Dickenson and Yeonjune Suh on November 9, 2005 and July 11, 2005
 - ◇ Encore Performance Incentive award with J. Andrew Dickenson from the American Composers Forum
- ◇ Harlie Sponaugle and Warren Zwicky
 - ◇ Friday Morning Music Club November 9, 2007
 - ◇ Kennedy Center, Nov. 27, 2007

Choral



My Letter from Carl

Lyrics by Joseph Shapiro

Commissioned for the New Jersey Gay Men's Chorus and Director Steven A Russel

Carl writes his dear friend Joey to tell him how much he is missed.

(2007) 9:00 min. (TTBB Chorus, Piano and Oboe)

◇ New Jersey Gay Men's Chorus, Unitarian Universalist Church, Titusville NJ, June 15, 2007

◇ New Jersey Gay Men's Chorus, Crescent Avenue Presbyterian Church, Plainfield NJ, June 16, 2007



How I found Sam

Lyrics by Jim Skofield

commissioned for San Francisco's Colla Voce

(2006) 7:00 min. (TTBB Chorus and Piano)

Fun and upbeat

◇ Colla Voce, Steve Ng Director

◇ Fairfield Center for Creative Arts, Fairfield CA June 11, 2006

◇ St John the Evangelist Church, San Francisco CA July 9, 2006

◇ Salle Pierre-Mercure, OutGames, Montreal, August 1, 2006, sold-out



Tessitura Mission Statement

Tessitura Mission Statement Chorus (2005) 3:33 min. (SATB and Piano)

Commissioned for the Tessitura Network annual conference in Boston, a thirty member volunteer chorus sang the network's mission statement set to music, under the direction of BWG. Tessitura is a performing arts organization software.

◇ Annual Conferences from 2005 to 2019 in various cities in the USA and Canada

Simple Town

(1997) 9:00 min. (TTBB Chorus and Piano)

The joys of growing up gay in rural America.

Piano

Piano Works

Music for Piano Solo I (1985) 6:30 min.

A short lyric atonal piece for piano solo

◇ BWG, Gettysburg College, Gettysburg PA 1985

Music for Piano Solo II (1990) 16:00 min.

Using all 88 keys, this upbeat melodic journey explores different tonal centers and textures, including a "hoe-down"

◇ performed by Guy Livingston in his "One Minute More"

Music for Piano Solo III (1994) 12:00 min.

This tonal piece is defined by its melodic landscape.

◇ Pianist Craig Randal Johnson received a Performance Incentive Fund from the American Composers Forum to perform this work.

Music III for Two Pianos (1995) 13:00 min.

Music for Piano Solo III is orchestrated with plenty of counterpoint to make a lively jubilant piano duo.

◇ BWG performed with Jay Egelberg, Steinway Hall, NYC 1996

◇ Shiphrah Meditz, Cameron Dennis, Kennedy Center, November 27, 2007

Music for Piano Solo IV (Crystalline Textures) (1996) 12:30 min.

A response to minimalism, Crystalline Textures was written as an exercise in "transparent" or "crystalline" textures.

◇ BWG, Steinwall Hall 1997

◇ Ruth Rose, Kennedy Center, November 27, 2007

Honors

Peer Awards (2021) *Robert Jordan Doesn't Teach English* from Ernest Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (Bronze for Music, Original Song and Silver for Visual Effects) from Television, Internet & Video Association of DC (TIVA-DC)

Gold Peer Award (2017) *Children of Zeus* (Music, Original Song) from Television, Internet & Video Association of DC (TIVA-DC)

Bronze Peer Award (2017) *Children of Zeus* (Live Event) from Television, Internet & Video Association of DC (TIVA-DC)

Global Music Awards (Nov. 2017) Silver for *Children of Zeus*

Outstanding Emerging Artist, Annual Mayor's Arts Awards, Washington DC (2013)

Silver Peer Award (2012) for *Arc of Light: A Portrait of Anna Campbell Bliss* from Television, Internet & Video Association of DC (TIVA-DC)

Nomination, 2009 **OUTmusic Awards**, New York City

Bronze Peer Award (2008) for *Sadie's Waltz* from Television, Internet & Video Association of DC (TIVA-DC)

D.C. Commission on the Arts and Humanities (Artistic Fellowship: 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2016, 2017, 2019, 2020, Sister Cities Grant with Brasilia 2020,2022)

ASCAPPlus (2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013,2020)

Composers Assistance Program from American Music Center (2007, 2009)

Encore from American Composers Forum (2005)

ASCAP/NYU Buddy Baker Film Music Workshop (2005)

Rick Baitz Film Music Workshop (2011)

Discography



An Orchestral Journey, Erik Ochsner Director, Omega Recording Studios Orchestra, Parma Recordings, Navona Label, released via Naxos August 12, 2016. Includes: *Contentment*, *Jubilation*, *Suite for Chamber Orchestra*, *American Reflections* and *Chenonceau*.

Overture from For Whom the Bell Tolls, recorded on February 26, 2022 by the **London Symphony Orchestra** with Maestro Miran Vaupotić Parma Recordings released Fall 2022.



Brian Wilbur Grundstrom
Composer

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