

Chorus and Orchestra



Children of Zeus

2017 46 minutes

3342, 4331, timp, perc, hrp, SSAATTBB chorus and strings

Commissioned by Symphony Orchestra of Northern Virginia and Maestro Jeffrey Sean Dokken (in picture above with BWG)

i Hercules (6min) cynicism for the half man half God, the strongest of all men ('Hercules & Co.' by Arthur Guierman)

ii Aphrodite (9min) beautiful melodies for the Goddess of Love, beauty, pleasure and procreation (Adapted from the 'Homeric Hymns')

iii. Ares (10min) Loud and Militaristic for the God of War and Chaos (Adapted from assorted writings on Ares)

iv. Dionysus (11min) Lush and Mysterious for the God of Wine and Religious Ecstasy ('Oedipus at Colonnus')

v. Apollo (9min) a hypnotic refrain for the God of music, poetry, arts, oracles, archery, medicine, sun, light and knowledge ('Hymn to Apollo' by John Keats)

Imagine a Day ... in Lake Country

2019 21 minutes

2211, 2110, timp, perc, hrp, adult chorus SAB, children chorus SAB, strings



Commissioned by Oconomowoc Chamber Orchestra & Maestra Roberta Carpenter

Lyrics by Robert Barnett, based on poem by Courtney Bella

The interplay between the adult and youth voices are designed to dramatize how the youthful innocence and embrace of the wondrous in Courtney Bella's poem engage, revive, and finally restore the

faith of the adult voices in their internal childhood that they can turn to for rejuvenation, having lost it in the daily demands of adult life.

The adult voices are drawn to the youthful invitation to "imagine" in the opening stanzas, reviving memories of treasured childhood summers. But as the adult voices are drawn back to their youthful selves, the poem also evokes a sense of regret and guilt as the adult voices awaken to how they have lost touch with the open embrace of life that they once enjoyed when they were young. As they try to regain and hold dear their younger selves through memories of summertime, their self-doubts and the demands of their adult lives remind them how much they have been lost by losing connection with the child within them. Yet even as they struggle with inner turmoil, the youthful voices of Courtney's concluding stanza reassures and reminds them there is still time for them to "wonder and think" and discover that their child is there within them if only they look and "imagine."

Large Orchestra

Contentment, Poem for Orchestra*

1999 11 minutes

2222,4331,timp,perc,hrp,strings

A lyric poem for orchestra

Premiere by Orquestra Sinfônica do Teatro Nacional Claudio Santoro, Brasilia, Brazil & Maestro Jeffrey Sean Dokken



BWG conducting Jubilation!

Jubilation! Dance for Orchestra*

2000 9 minutes

3333,4331,timp,xyl,vibr,mar,perc,strings

Premiere by George Washington University Orchestra & Maestra Director Nancia D'Alimonte

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

Chamber Orchestra

Suite for Chamber Orchestra*

31 minutes

flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, horn, timpani, strings

Premiere by NIH Philharmonia & Maestra Nancia D'Alimonte

I. Before the Fall! 2001 11 minutes

Premiere by Trinity Chamber Orchestra & Maestro Richard Fazio

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 12 minutes

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 freestyle 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 minutes

Commissioned by SONOS Chamber Orchestra & Maestro Erik Ochsner

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!

Chenonceau*

2013 13 minutes

flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, horn, solo or ensemble strings

Commissioned by Max Lifchitz & North/South Consonance

Chenonceau, one of the most magnificent French castles in the Loire Valley, is known for the formal el-



egance and beauty of its gardens. A visit on a beautiful day last May with the tulips in their prime inspired the piece. The music starts with one of the composer's favorite compound meters, which combine groups of varying number of beats. A 4/4 meter consists of eight eighth-notes, which have been re-grouped in a pattern of 3 + 3 + 2. This compound meter propels the piece forward, and can be easily juxtaposed against 4/4.

String Orchestra

American Reflections for Strings and Harp*

2009 12 minutes

v1 solo, v2 solo, va solo, vc solo, harp, strings

Commissioned by SONOS Chamber Orchestra & Maestro Erik Ochsner

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. ~ Maestro Jeffrey Dokken

Variations on "Fanfare for Lake Country" by Crawford Gates

2019 9 minutes

Commissioned by Oconomowoc Chamber Orchestra & Roberta Carpenter

Gates' melody was the basis for this strings-only composition, creating a piece that was equal parts Grundstrom and Gates. The melody was deconstructed, and the fragments used as source material. At first, the melodic fragments are repeated in all the various parts, followed by the full theme going from section to section. Accompanying the theme were again figures created from these fragments, and different twists and turns maintain interest and keep it fresh. The overall structure is fast, slow, fast -- to provide contrast, and to provide a sense of return when the theme is presented in its entirety at the end.

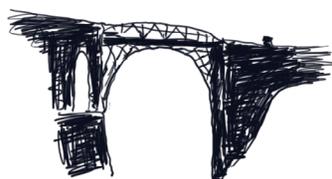


Opera For Whom the Bell Tolls

*Fighting and Sacrificing
for Love and Honor in War*

Libretto by David Dorsen

Book by Ernest Hemingway



The story takes place in the mountains of northern Spain during the Spanish Civil War in 1937. Hemingway portrays the lives of a band of partisans involved in the terrible destruction and violence of war. The characters are richly drawn and we see how they grapple with issues of love, loyalty and betrayal. Although there is a 1943 film starring Ingrid Bergman and Gary Cooper, opera is perhaps best suited to highlighting the intensity of emotion felt by this small band as they attempt to complete their military mission.

The opera is in progress. **Act I, Scene 3** (24 min) was professionally recorded, with premiere opportunity.



Piano vocal reading at the composer's residence, Washington DC (left to right) Music Director Erik Ochsner, Tenor Jesús Daniel Hernández, Soprano Kelly Curtin, Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg, Composer Brian Wilbur Grundstrom, Librettist David Dorsen, Mezzo Suzanne S. Chadwick, Baritone Jose Sacin, (Pianist Richard Seaton not pictured)

***Released on "An Orchestral Journey" CD with Maestro Erik Ochsner at Omega Recording Studios. Distribution by Naxos on Navona Records by Parma Recordings.**



Brian Wilbur Grundstrom Composer

BG

Compositions for Orchestra



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, a distinctive tonal harmonic vocabulary, engaging rhythms, skillfully executed counterpoint, and dramatic imagery.

Audiences take to his compositions immediately, finding in his compositions traces of Aaron Copland, Kurt Weill and Samuel Barber. His work has been performed in New York City, Washington DC, San Francisco, Baltimore, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Wisconsin, Virginia, New Jersey, as well as internationally in Montreal, Ecuador and Brasilia.

Classically trained in piano as well as music theory from Gettysburg College, he has continued orchestration and composition studies with John David Earnest. His awards include Outstanding Emerging Artist in the 2013 DC Mayor's Arts Awards, seven artist fellowships from the D.C. Commission on the Arts and Humanities, and four Peer Awards from TIVA-DC, including a Gold Peer Award for Children of Zeus – a 46-minute work for chorus and orchestra commissioned by Maestro Jeffrey Dokken. 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."

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