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Composer, Brian Wilbur Grundstrom, Nominated for National Music Award

New York, NY/Washington, DC – Composer Brian Wilbur Grundstrom has been nominated for an OUTMusic award for his composition “The Bridge Club” from *Pepe! The Mail Order Monkey Musical*. Grundstrom composed the score for the musical that premiered during Washington, D.C.’s Capital Fringe Festival this past summer.

Pepe! The Mail Order Monkey Musical debuted to complimentary reviews from *The Washington Post* and *Washington City Paper*. The play, originating from Washington Glass School founder Tim Tate, is a true tale from 1968, when he and his brother, Chris, ordered a live monkey from an ad in the back of a comic book. Needless to say: monkey arrives, mayhem ensues.

Grundstrom was invited to write the score for the musical, 12 (including two instrumental) pieces in all, a new challenge for Grundstrom whose typical compositions are modern classical pieces written for orchestra or chamber ensembles.

“I was thrilled to be a part of this quirky, funny and memorable musical,” says Grundstrom. “It is so different from anything I’ve ever set notes to, but I loved it. Writing a Broadway –style musical required working within very specific restraints, and I used more music theory than I do writing for concert orchestra.”

Grundstrom’s lessons were not limited to composition, however.

“I discovered that I really enjoyed working with the singers in the capacity of music director,” he says. “Bringing the actors into the recording studio before the performances allowed me to solidify the notes, as well as learn more about the whole recording and mastering aspect. Finally, running the sound in the theater and equalizing the orchestral tracks I created to accompany the singers on the fly gave me a new appreciation for the art of acoustics.”

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Lyricist and *Pepe!* director, Jon Gann says that collaborating with Brian was a “great experience.”

“Brian and I worked together very well – we had a single vision of how the sound of the show should be. *Pepe!* Was the number one selling musical of the Fringe Festival - five sold out performances – in the largest venue and the only ones who recorded the soundtrack. “

The OUTMusic Awards will take place in New York City on Tuesday, December 8 2009. OUTMusic is the premier 501c3 non-profit organization that is dedicated to honoring, supporting and advocating on behalf of under-represented openly LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) recording artist & performers.

The recording from *Pepe! The Mail Order Monkey* is available from CD Baby, with music by Brian Wilbur Grundstrom, and lyrics by Jon Gann & Andrea King. Go to <http://www.cdbaby.com/cd/bwgrundstrom2>. The *Bridge Club* as well as more music from Brian Wilbur Grundstrom can be heard online at www.brianwilbur.com. For more information on *Pepe!* please go to www.pepemonkey.com.

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For photos or to arrangements to conduct an interview, please contact VERB! Communications at 410.439.4695 or via email at lisa@verbcommunications.com