

Artist Statement by Jonathan Manness

Description of my style: My current music draws from the reflections of personal experiences or of someone else's documented experiences. Even though I compose for multiple genres, my music is meant to engage performers and audiences without compromising my own artistic integrity. Ultimately, the emotional undertones of the material become the basis of my work.

Philosophy and Approach: Music has an ability to transcend those emotional undertones better than the most eloquent language. I choose to express my art through music because even the most commonplace experiences sound extraordinary when the music captures the exact emotion of a person or society. Whether or not my music reflects the only perspective of an event, my music represents a point of view.

Influences: I have been very fortunate to have studied with these professional musicians and scholars who have influenced my thoughts on music and have always encouraged me to pursue a career in the arts – Nancy Dowlin, Kenneth Lauder Milch, Frank Kaderabek, Alexander Rosin, Sterling Murray, Robert Maggio, Mark Rimple, Peter Paulsen, and Deniz Hughes to name a few within the past five years. My undergraduate education at West Chester University influenced me to create my own art; my graduate education at New York University has given me the confidence to make music my career. A contemporary jazz composer, Maria Schneider, fits closest into my style, philosophy, and approach to composing and has also been major inspiration.

Accomplishments:

Degrees: BM in Music Theory and Composition, West Chester University, West Chester, PA (*summa cum laude*); MM in Music Theory and Composition with a Concentration in Scoring for Film and Multimedia, New York University, New York, NY (May 2009).

Honors and awards: In 2008, Korean Cultural Service NY and New York University Creative Collaboration Grant for the project "Dance Production of Paula Underwood's *Who Speaks for Wolf*," ASCAP's "I Create Music" EXPO recognized my submission for "Score a 'Film Your Issue' Short" as "among the very best"; in 2007, Pi Kappa Lambda National Music Honors Society, the West Chester University Award for Student Research and Creative Activities, and the David Leibig Memorial Grant; in 2006, the West Chester University Foundation Grant, the Michael Falcone Jazz Scholarship, and the Charles and Margherita Gangemi Theory and Composition Scholarship; in 2005, the Student Professional Development Award from Pi Kappa Lambda; in 2003, the Simon Ford Music Scholarship and the Northampton Township Lions Club Memorial Scholarship.

Selected performances of music: In 2009 includes scoring a short-feature by Ruth Du entitled "Clusterphobia" and a jazz arrangement collaboration with jazz singer Grace Testani. November 2008 was the premiere of *Who Speaks for Wolf* for modern dance. April 2007, the American Brass Quintet read "Punxsutawney Fails to See His Shadow!" for brass quintet. "Last Call" for string quartet airs on "New Music Philadelphia," a webcast that features Philadelphia composers. "Bolivia," an arrangement for jazz band, is available on two promotional CDs: *West Chester University Recorded Live at the Kimmel Center* and *Writer's Cramp*.