

BRIAN CURRENT

Composer

The music of Brian Current is renowned for its energy, wit and daring bravado.

A Guggenheim Fellow (2005) and recipient of the Barlow Prize (2003), Brian Current is counted among the leading composers of his generation in North America.

His music has been performed in the US by the American Composers Orchestra at Carnegie Hall and the Indianapolis and Oakland Symphony Orchestras, and in Canada by the Winnipeg & Vancouver Symphony Orchestras, the Esprit & CBC Radio Orchestras and the Nouvel Ensemble Modern as well as in Europe by the Warsaw National Philharmonic.

His works have also been performed on the Monday Evening Concerts in Los Angeles and at the VOX Festival of New York City Opera.

Among Brian Current's recent and forthcoming premieres are pieces for the San Francisco Contemporary Music Players, the St. Lawrence String Quartet, the Ultima Festival in Norway, and a Koussevitzky Foundation commission for Symphony Nova Scotia.

Born in Ottawa, Brian Current began his career as keyboard player with a bar band. "Songs I was writing for the band became more and more symphonic, and I just really wanted to break out from what bands are supposed to do".

He decided to devote himself to composition while studying at McGill University in Montréal, continuing on to earn a Ph.D. at the University of California at Berkeley, where he was also active as a conductor.

He has conducted with New Music Concerts, Soundstreams, the CBC's In Performance and On Stage and the Esprit Orchestra's new Waves Festival. Since 2006, he has been artistic director of the New Music Ensemble of the Royal Conservatory in Toronto.

Of his approach to music, Current says "I really want it to be extroverted. In many ways it has to jump off the stage. One of the things I'll tell audiences, students and patrons is that this is not meant to be relaxing. To stay alive, the music has to be interesting. I picture myself in the audience — and I am someone who very easily gets bored."

Brian Current's *For the Time Being* won grand prize in the CBC National Competition for Young Composers in 2001. The work subsequently won a prize at the International Rostrum of Composers in Paris and opened the inaugural concert of the Warsaw Autumn Festival.

His new CD, *This Isn't Silence: Works for Symphony Orchestra (2008)* was nominated for a Juno Award and featured in a CBC broadcast conducted by the composer.

One of his recent works, a 35-minute piece for narrator and symphony orchestra entitled *A Young Person's Guide to new Music for Symphony Orchestra (This Isn't Silence, Part II — 2007-2008)* is available for online preview upon request.

(Quotations from an article by Bob Clark in the Calgary Herald, April 2, 2008).