

## Biography

Earning widespread notice for his richly colored and superbly crafted scores, **Pierre Jalbert** (b. 1967) has developed a musical language that is engaging, expressive, and “immediately captures one’s attention with its strong gesture and vitality” (American Academy of Arts and Letters). Among his many honors are the Rome Prize, the BBC Masterprize, a Guggenheim Fellowship, the Fromm Foundation commission, the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center’s Stoeger Award, given biennially “in recognition of significant contributions to the chamber music repertory”, and an Academy award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

Jalbert has drawn inspiration from a variety of sources, from plainchant melodies to natural phenomena. His music has been performed worldwide in such venues as Carnegie Hall, Wigmore Hall, Lincoln Center, the Kennedy Center, and the Barbican. Recent orchestral performances include those by the Boston Symphony, the National Symphony, the Houston Symphony, the Cabrillo Festival Orchestra, and the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra under Louis Langrée. His *Violin Concerto* was recently premiered by a consortium of three orchestras and soloists; Steven Copes with the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, Margaret Batjer with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, and Frank Almond with the Milwaukee Symphony. His recent orchestral song cycle, *From Dusk to Starry Night*, written for mezzo soprano Sasha Cooke, was recently performed in Montreal with the Orchestre Métropolitain, under the baton of Cristian Macelaru. He has served as Composer-in-Residence with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, the California Symphony under Barry Jekowsky, and Music in the Loft in Chicago. Select chamber music commissions and performances include those of the Ying, Borromeo, Maia, Enso, Chiara, Escher, Del Sol, and Emerson String Quartets, as well as violinist Midori. Three new CDs of his music have been recently released: *Violin Concerto*, with Margaret Batjer and the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra conducted by Jeffrey Kahane, *Piano Quintet* and *Secret Alchemy*, performed by the Jupiter String Quartet and Bernadette Harvey, piano, and *Piano Trio No. 2*, performed by the Morgenstern Piano Trio.

Born in Manchester, New Hampshire, to parents of French-Canadian ancestry, Jalbert grew up in northern Vermont. He began piano lessons at the age of five, immersing himself in the classical repertoire. Growing up, he also heard French and English folk songs and Catholic liturgical music, gaining a deep respect for music that communicates powerfully with an economy of means.

Following undergraduate studies in piano and composition at Oberlin Conservatory, Jalbert earned a Ph.D. in Composition at the University of Pennsylvania under principal teacher George Crumb. He won the Rome Prize in 2000-2001, and earned the BBC Masterprize in 2001 for his orchestral work *In Aeternam*, selected from among more than 1,100 scores by a jury that included Marin Alsop, Sir John Eliot Gardiner, and Sir Charles Mackerras. *In Aeternam* has been performed by the London Symphony Orchestra, the Budapest Symphony, the Seattle Symphony, the National Symphony, the California and Hartford Symphonies, and the Orlando Philharmonic among others.

Jalbert's music is tonally centered, incorporating modal, tonal, and sometimes quite dissonant harmonies while retaining a sense of harmonic motion and arrival. He is particularly noted for

his mastery of instrumental color: in both chamber works and orchestral scores, he creates timbres that are vivid yet refined. His rhythmic shapes are cogent, often with an unmistakable sense of underlying pulsation. Driving rhythms often alternate with slow sections in which time seems to be suspended.

Jalbert is Professor of Music at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music in Houston, and he is a co-founder of Musiqa, a Houston-based new music collective. His music is published by Schott Helicon Music Corporation, New York.