

Steven J. Kukla | biography



As a composer for film and television, Mr. Kukla's work appears regularly on networks such as TruTV, The Discovery Channel, Animal Planet, and the History Channel, and his credits include *Forensic Files*, *Murder By The Book*, *Medical Detectives*, and *Science of the Unexplained*, among others. Most recently, Mr. Kukla scored music for the History Channel documentary *Valkyrie: The Hitler Conspiracy*, a companion documentary to the feature film *Valkyrie*. His most recent films were Onkar Mandlekar's *Colt* (2011) Debra Chow's *Til Death Do Us Part* (2010), Annie Tu's *Irasshai* (2010), and Zach Mekelburg's *Lifesource* (2010). He is a winner of UCLA's 2009 Henry Mancini and Lalo Schiffrin awards, and the

2010 Jerry Goldsmith Memorial Award.

Kukla's music has been performed by the North Carolina Symphony Orchestra, the North Carolina Pops Orchestra, the Sparks Wind Quartet, the United States Air Force Band of Liberty and other ensembles throughout the United States. He has written works for various solo artists and chamber ensembles, including a wind octet for the Narada Ensemble (Paris), a wind quintet for the Tradewinds Wind Quintet (Boston), and a string quartet for the Gainsborough Quartet (Boston). His works have been performed in several venues throughout the United States, among them Boston's Jordan Hall and Aspen's Harris Hall.

Kukla's works cover a wide range of styles, from classical concert music to film scores and other popular genres such as rock and jazz. He blends an intense love of folk music, particularly Irish and Eastern European, with his appreciation for classical masters such as Bartok, Stravinsky, and Shostakovich. He also deeply respects the music of Jerry Goldsmith, Ennio Morricone, Thomas Newman and many other film composers.

Born in Tennessee and raised in North Carolina, Mr. Kukla began studying piano at age eight. Soon after, he began oboe studies which he pursued alongside composition until shortly before he graduated from high school.

Mr. Kukla's principal teachers have been Michael Gandolfi and Paul Chihara; he has also studied with Steven Stucky, Lee Hyla, George Tsontakis, and Malcolm Peyton. Having earned his BM in Music Composition from the New England Conservatory in 2006 and an MM in 2008 from the same institution, he also holds an MA in film scoring from the University of California at Los Angeles.