

THOMAS G. McFAUL

Biography



EDUCATED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS, CHAMPAIGN/URBANA,

McFaul studied music history and music theory, along with trombone and piano. After graduate study in musicology and ethnomusicology, he joined the new music group [Time](#) with two other U of I composers, and moved to Buffalo, New York, where the group received commissions and performed new works with Lukas Foss and the Contemporary Music Ensemble at the State University of New York at Buffalo.

After seven months in Buffalo, the group moved to New York City where it played regularly at the Electric Circus. Involved in the Electric Ear series, the group performed new original pieces, mixing rock styles with the classical avant garde. The band premiered William Russo's *Civil War*. The band also performed works by Mel Powell, Jon Hassel, Lynn David Newton (founding member of Time), and other contemporary composers.

In 1969, McFaul began playing keyboards on recording dates for records and commercials. He recorded with Eric Weissberg's band Deliverance, and also recorded with Bob Dylan on the album *Blood on the Tracks*. He appears as a composer/keyboard player with the [John Tropea](#) group on New York Cats Direct. Through his association with other studio musicians, McFaul began to write and arrange commercials and became a staff composer at David Lucas Associates. In 1973 Lucas and McFaul formed the partnership Lucas/McFaul. Together they also built The Warehouse recording studio.

Over a period of thirty years McFaul composed and produced music for virtually all major advertisers. These include original music and arrangements for Ford, Mercedes Benz, Budweiser, Michelob, Miller, TWA, Delta, Gillette, Carnation, Ivory, Pillsbury, Wrigleys, Wendy's, McDonalds, Pepsi, and AT&T. Long running campaigns have included GE's, *We Bring Good Things to Life*. He wrote more than ninety percent of all the music recorded for GE over a period of twenty-five years, an advertising campaign that became a hallmark of corporate advertising in the US.

McFaul has received many industry awards, including [Clios](#) for Pepsi's Dancing Bottles (1980), his adaptation of the Beethoven Sixth Symphony for Lincoln Mercury (1983), his production of This Bud's for You (1987), and his arrangement of Kodak Looking for America (1985). His score for the Pepsi astronauts commercial *Floats* received recognition at the Cannes Festival and was the first American commercial to be aired in the Soviet Union. His *Singing Cat* for Meow Mix scored the highest Burke score (a recall awareness test), in the history of advertising.

Opera News interviewed McFaul regarding his *Michael J. Fox Goes to the Opera* for Diet Pepsi as beginning a trend toward the use of opera in commercials.

In 1985, McFaul joined Sunday Productions where he wrote, produced and arranged musical campaigns for Pepsi, Diet Pepsi, Mountain Dew, Coca-Cola, and many others.

McFaul produced commercials with some of the best known jazz and pop artists including: Ella Fitzgerald, Roberta Flack, George Benson, Ricky Scaggs, Bill Monroe, The Gatlin Brothers, Patti LaBelle, Marcus Miller, Randy and Michael Brecker, Paul Shaffer, Johnny Hartman, Vickie Sue Robinson, Janet Jackson, Phoebe Snow, Julius Baker, Richie Havens, Tom Scott, Gloria Estefan, Leon Redbone, Patti Austin, Ashford and Simpson, Dr. John, B. B. King, Michael Bolton, and Luther Vandross. He has also worked with both vocal soloists and instrumentalists from the Metropolitan Opera, the New York City Opera and the New York Philharmonic.

In the summer of 2001 McFaul produced the debut CD of the [Fry Street Quartet](#), recording works from their Carnegie Hall debut.

McFaul's charity work includes helping to write, produce, and perform two reviews for the World Hunger Project, founded by Harry Chapin. In 1989 McFaul wrote and performed the theme song for the nuclear disarmament benefit at the West Bank Café. In 1992 he produced a major concert on behalf of the Yale Comprehensive Cancer Research Center, for which he received a special honor from Yale University. He has also written pro bono music for broadcast on behalf of Cease Fire, Hunger in America, The Red Cross, The Thurgood Marshall Scholarship Fund, and The Kosovo Relief Fund, to name a few.

McFaul spent two years in the BMI Workshop writing songs for musical theater.

In 2001, McFaul completed his setting of the Latin Mass for five soloists, chorus, and orchestra. The [Mass in C minor](#) is a project of large scope, over an hour and a half in length.

It is the most ambitious project I have ever attempted. The mass, as a text, as poetry, offers an extremely wide range of human emotion. As a composer, it is an enormous challenge to compose in a form that has embodied some of the richest, most profound music in the Western canon.

In 2005, McFaul completed writing a string quartet, and also a set of solo piano pieces. He continues to compose music, and along with his wife Ellen, is an enthusiastic [gardener](#). They live in Southport, CT.

Copyright © 2002–2011, Thomas G. McFaul