

Ken Davies Biography

Long Bio

A Wisconsin native now living on the Gulf Coast of Mississippi, Ken Davies (www.kendavies.net) has had his choral, keyboard, instrumental and electroacoustic chamber music performed at numerous academic new music festivals across America and beyond. A three time winner of Mississippi Arts Commissions' prestigious Performing Arts Fellowship in Composition, his award-winning works have been performed by first rate concert performers like Chialing Hsieh, Rebecca McNair, Sarah Schneider Busman, Rebecca Ashe, Ellen Elder, Adam Clarke, David Loucky, Charlie Vernon, Sarunas Jankauskas, Virginia Thompson, Jonathan Warburton, Richard Kravchak, Ben McIlwain, James Boldin, Jason Bergman, Carol Shansky, Joseph d'Auguste, and many others.

His music has been presented at festivals such as Society of Composers, National Association of Composers USA, Christian Fellowship of Art Music Composers, American Trombone Workshop, International Clarinet Association ClarinetFest, College Music Society, Electronic Music Midwest, Wisconsin Composers Alliance, Electroacoustic Barn Dance, Southeastern Composers League, Music On The Bayou, Electrobrass, Parma Music Festival, London New Wind Festival (UK), and Sonic Coast Festival (UK).

He studied trombone at the University of Wisconsin at Madison with Robert Gutter (B.Mus 1967) and attended graduate school at Yale School of Music where he studied trombone with John Swallow. Following a few years as a freelance trombonist and arranger in New York and Boston, he accepted a position as trombonist with the 12-piece rock-fusion group Nick Russo & Gabriel's Brass based in Orlando, Florida and under contract to Walt Disney World from 1972-82. In Orlando, he was also active as a successful private brass teacher and commercial arranger. He wrote arrangements for several released recordings as well as two television Christmas specials which aired nationally in the top 40 major TV markets and on which he was also conductor and trombonist.

In 1991, he took a Graduate Teaching Assistantship at Middle Tennessee State University and completed his M.A. in trombone in 1993, studying trombone with David Loucky and composition with Thom Hutcheson. He continued composition studies at the University of Colorado at Boulder with Luis Gonzalez, Richard Toensing and Joseph Lukasik. At a 1994 composers concert at Boulder, his *Amplitudes* for two trumpets, trombone and bass trombone created notable attention for its stunning use of mouthpiece pops, group tremolos, sharp planed dissonance, and multi-mute effects. He was awarded the Cecil Effinger Composition Fellowship in 1995 and completed his M.M. in composition in 1996. His 1998 choral work, *God, The Artist Of Creation* for SATB choir and organ was

commissioned and recorded by the St. Barnabas Episcopal Choir of Denver who had received a commissioning grant from the American Guild of Organists for their national convention in Denver that year. His 1999 trombone etude book, *20 Pieces in Changing Meters* was endorsed by some of America's most respected trombone professors and continues to find use at several colleges.

Moving to Mississippi in 2002, Ken established his own ASCAP publishing firm, Kenvad Music. He has received grants from the Mississippi Arts Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts. Among awards are his *Three Pieces* for bass trombone and piano, winner of the Eastern (now American) Trombone Workshop National Composition Competition (2009), and Mississippi Music Teachers' Association Commissioned Composer of the Year (2013). His wife, Judy, writes award-winning poetry and manages publishing. Their studio cat, Darius Meow, still lives at home and supervises compositions.