



JAY ALAN ZIMMERMAN

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B I O G R A P H Y

Jay Alan Zimmerman is the composer/author of several stage musicals including his INCREDIBLY DEAF MUSICAL (seen at The Duke on 42nd Street and selected “Pick of The Fringe” by The Washington Post) and A ROYAL SOAP OPERA (with Prospect Theatre at The Clurman), as well as the award-winning short film musicals PAWNS and LOVE BURNS. He scored the plays BOOTH and OUR BRUTUS, which were both Fringe First Award winners at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival and had New York and London productions.

Christened “Broadway’s Beethoven” by John Znidarsic of the Lincoln Center Songbook Series, his songs have been performed by many Broadway performers but Jay—like Beethoven—has never lived in complete silence. The son of Midwestern music theory professor, he was born with normal hearing and studied piano, saxophone, oboe, and performed frequently as a boy soprano.

After studying music, theatre, and performance at the University of Iowa and Webster University’s Conservatory of Theatre, he moved to New York where his first musical was developed at the A.S.C.A.P. Musical Theater Workshop with a panel of experts including Comden & Green, Terrence McNally, Frank Rich, Charles Strouse, and many other Broadway luminaries. But mild high frequency hearing loss propelled him to switch careers and earn a B.F.A. in film from NYU’s Tisch School of the Arts. However, he couldn’t leave music and instead created film musicals and scored numerous films while continuing to be commissioned to score a variety of theatrical, classical, experimental, dance, and children’s projects.

These include over 30 children’s songs commissioned by MONDO music and Warner/Chappell and the following dance/aerial works: DO NOT CALL IT FIXITY—Special Music Award, Grand Prix International Video Danse Festival and selected North American film in the MOMA retrospective, Georges Pompidou Centre, Paris; THE LAST LEAF—Best Score, First Run Festival, NYC; OUT OF PLACE—a dance score using audio from 9/11 and interviews with displaced survivors; and THE SUNLIGHT ZONE—an experimental soundscape for aerial performance.



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As his hearing progressed to profound deafness with constant tinnitus (ringing in the ears), Jay has experimented with visual music performance and creation techniques. These explorations are evident in the use of rhythmic video projections and live captioning during his *Incredibly Deaf Musical*, in the use of physical movement through aerial and dance incorporated into his variety shows at The Zipper Factory Theatre, the integration of sign language and captioned ASL during his solo works produced by Dixon Place, and in his recent visual music installations such as: *ROBOTICUS*—a symphony performed by the League of Electronic Musical Urban Robots and two video screens; *PUNCTUATED THOUGHTS*—a video integrated song cycle that premiered at The Zipper Factory Theatre, NYC; *ART/SONG*—an installation and performance series that merged live vocalists with projections of their vocals rendered by real-time frequency analysis software, installed in chashama's Times Square gallery; and *WINDOW MUSIC*—a multimedia visual music installation commissioned by the Hearing Health Foundation and presented at the New York Academy of Medicine.

In spite of only hearing some sound below middle C, Jay continues to create heartfelt and whimsical works about the contradictions of life, the extraordinary hidden in the mundane, and the fascinating we all hope to discover. He lives in New York City with his wife, the painter Lisa Ingram, and son.