

HENRY DEHLINGER

C O M P O S E R

LONG BIO (1100 Words)

Henry Dehlinger is an American contemporary classical composer, hailed by *Gramophone* as “a master of myriad styles planted largely in tonal soil.”

Known for vocal, choral, and orchestral [works](#), Dehlinger expresses a modern musical language that is eclectic while being rooted in the American symphonic vernacular. Musicologist James Melo says, “Dehlinger has been one of the most successful practitioners of polystylism, a distinctly 21st-century musical style that draws from multiple influences, genres, traditions, and techniques.”

Audiophile Audition's Steven Ritter calls Dehlinger's works “stunningly superb” and “formidably essential listening!”

“Dehlinger shapes music to illuminate the meaning of the text,” adds *Gramophone's* Donald Rosenberg about Dehlinger's vocal oeuvre, “The songs are diverse in atmosphere and harmonic language... and the writing is rich, often rapturous.”

Equally celebrated are Dehlinger's stylish jazz [arrangements](#), with their melodic lines and edgy vocal and piano writing throughout. *Fanfare Magazine* calls them “superbly judged, from the lyricism through to the stride.”

“Just as impressive,” writes *Journal of Singing's* Gregory Berg, “is how Dehlinger weaves together those fragile pastel shades with the bold brassiness of stride piano. In lesser hands, the result would be musical chaos; Dehlinger makes it work perfectly.”

Born and raised in San Francisco, Dehlinger studied piano and sang in the San Francisco Boys Chorus during his formative years. His mentors were piano virtuoso Thomas LaRatta, choral conductor William "Doc" Ballard, and voice teacher Edith Doe Ballard. He earned a reputation as a prodigious talent, singing with the San Francisco Opera and performing with major orchestras under conductors such as Riccardo Chailly and Edo de Waart. He graduated from Santa Clara University where he studied piano with Hans Boepple.

Major works premiering this season include:

[Cosmic Cycles](#) (2023) - In partnership with NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center, National Philharmonic presents the May 2023 world premiere of Dehlinger's seven-movement symphonic suite, which will be played live against the backdrop of out-of-this-world images, animations, and groundbreaking visualizations from the Hubble and James Webb Space Telescopes.

[Requiem](#) (2021) - Dehlinger's seven-movement setting of the Requiem Mass with additional texts by James Joyce and John Donne is scored for mixed chorus, soloists, and orchestra and premieres at the 2022-23 season opening concert of Choralis. It was composed in loving memory of the composer's friend, Neil Dellar, a patron of the arts with a splendid baritone voice who was active on the board of Choralis.

Highlights from the 2021-22 season include:

[Kohelet: A Cantata in Five Movements](#) (2019) - Composed for the Washington Master Chorale, Santa Clara Chorale, Santa Clara University Choirs, and the San José Chamber Orchestra, it combines Biblical Hebrew verse with lush, modal melodies, energetic meters, and colorful harmonic textures. It premiered March 20, 2022, in Washington, DC and made its West Coast premiere on May 21, 2022, in Santa Clara, California.

Dehlinger drew his inspiration for *Kohelet*, in part, from Leonard Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms*, a work he performed in his youth as a chorister with the San Francisco Boys Chorus. Like *Chichester*, *Kohelet* is an ecumenical blend of Judaic antiphonal singing and Christian choral tradition that is alternately boisterous and reverent.

[Return to the Moon](#) (2021) - This powerful anthem for brass, timpani and percussion marked the rollout of NASA's *Space Launch System*, the world's most powerful rocket and main launch vehicle of the Artemis lunar program, during a televised ceremony on March 12, 2022, at the Kennedy Space Center.

[The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock](#) (2017) - Dehlinger's sweeping rhapsody for voice and orchestra premiered at National Philharmonic's 2021-22 season opening concert. Composed for Metropolitan Opera soprano Danielle Talamantes and inspired by the famous poem by T.S. Eliot, *Prufrock* uses the melodic and rhythmic contours of the text's stream of consciousness narrative to dictate mood and melodic character.

[Amore e'l cor gentil sono una cosa](#) (2019) - A pièce d'occasion written for the Florence, Italy nuptials of two of the composer's closest friends, this vocal-orchestral setting of text from Dante's *La vita nuova* premiered during a concert broadcast on PBS television. *Opera News* called it, "a loving and clever duet, and a true gem of a song."

Other notable compositions include *City Dusk* (2022), a chamber setting of F. Scott Fitzgerald's beautifully noir poem for baritone and string quartet; *Serenade & Scherzo* (2021), a chamber work for viola quintet; *Fantasia in Groove* (2021), a concert suite of urban impressions of Los Angeles for cello and piano; *Ring Out, Ye Bells* (2021), a setting of African-American poet Paul Laurence Dunbar's reverent Christmas hymn; *I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day* (2021), a new choral setting of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's famous Christmas poem; *Hodie!* (2020), Dehlinger's Christmas concert opener for mixed chorus; *Preludes of T.S. Eliot* (2020), a setting

of Eliot's four-part poem that explores themes of isolation in modern urban life and which Dehlinger wrote in response to the coronavirus pandemic; *Memorial Day* (2020), a setting of Joyce Kilmer's eponymous poem for TTBB chorus, trumpet in C, and snare drum and Dehlinger's tribute to the fallen men and women of the U.S. armed forces; *Cello Sonata in C Minor* (2020); and *Three Choral Songs on James Joyce* (2019).

His catalog of art songs include *At That Hour When All Things Have Repose* (2019); *Bahnhofstrasse* (2019); *On the Beach at Fontana* (2019); *Simples* (2019); *Alone* (2019); *Flood* (2019); *Strings in the Earth and Air* (2019); *Night Piece* (2019); *Tutto è sciolto* (2019); *A Memory of the Players in a Mirror at Midnight* (2019); *Questa fiamma* (2017); *Requiescat* (2017); *Fragrance* (2016); and *The Mount* (2015).

Dehlinger's latest album, *At That Hour: Art Songs by Henry Dehlinger*, was released in October 2020 by Avie Records. This world premiere recording of his vocal solo works adds to the list of critically acclaimed collaborations with soprano Danielle Talamantes and her bass-baritone husband, Kerry Wilkerson. It is featured on Spotify's *High Notes* playlist, representing "the best new releases in opera and vocal music."

Dehlinger's other recordings include *Evocations of Spain* (2011), a solo recital of piano works by Isaac Albéniz and Enrique Granados; *Canciones españolas* (2014), a recital of Spanish art songs by Enrique Granados, Manuel de Falla and Joaquín Turina and Dehlinger's first musical collaboration with Danielle Talamantes; and *Heaven and Earth: A Duke Ellington Songbook* (2016), also with Talamantes, featuring Dehlinger's arrangements of Ellington jazz standards, which *Audiophile Audition* called, "a knock-your-socks-off performance that leaves you hankering for much, much more."

Dehlinger is a voting member of The Recording Academy and ASCAP. Dehlinger, his wife Lauren, and their Shetland Sheepdogs, Spy and Summer, divide their time between Northern Virginia, just outside Washington, DC, and Northern California.

His official website is: www.HenryDehlinger.com.

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