HENRY DEHLINGER

COMPOSER

LONG BIO (1,329 Words)

San Francisco-born Henry Dehlinger is an American composer known for his choral and symphonic works. He is described as “a master of myriad styles” by *Gramophone's* Donald Rosenberg. "Dehlinger's music does wonders," adds *The Washington Post's* Michael Andor Brodeur, who characterizes Dehlinger's rich orchestrations as “an unexpected emotional punch.”

He also has a celebrated body of art songs and chamber works. “Dehlinger shapes music to illuminate the meaning of the text,” *Gramophone’s* Donald Rosenberg writes of Dehlinger’s vocal oeuvre, “The songs are diverse in atmosphere and harmonic language...and the writing is rich, often rapturous.” *Audiophile Audition’s* Steven Ritter calls Dehlinger’s works “stunningly superb” and “formidably essential listening!”

Dehlinger’s stylish jazz arrangements are equally celebrated, 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.”

This 2022-23 season, Dehlinger is collaborating with NASA and the National Philharmonic on creative projects that bridge the gap between art and science. Notable among them is *Cosmic Cycles, A Space Symphony*, a monumental suite of seven symphonic poems inspired by images of space that premiered May 11, 2023 at Capital One Hall in Tysons, VA with Maestro Piotr Gajewski conducting. Stunning images from the Hubble and Webb Space Telescopes and richly rendered 3D animations, simulations and visualizations created by NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center are projected on a vast HD screen while the music is performed LIVE.

The Washington Post's Michael Andor Brodeur writes, "Throughout the work, Dehlinger effectively builds atop the foundation of a searching four-note motif that echoes other monolithic melodies we’ve come to connect with the cosmos, including the clarion dawn of Strauss’s “Also sprach Zarathustra” or John Williams’s five-note hello from the film “Close Encounters of the Third Kind." But this theme becomes the basis for a harmonically rewarding wander through the stars."

Agence France-Presse news editor Daniel Stublen comments, "It could be the ultimate blend of art and science -- a new seven-suite "space symphony" inspired and illustrated by NASA's latest mind-boggling images."

Also notable is Dehlinger’s *Return to the Moon, A Fanfare to Artemis*. This powerful anthem 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 Washington Post called it "the most traditionally triumphant-sounding skyward salute of the evening — the Space Force could learn a thing or two. But with its big blasts of brass, it was also a reminder of what we want from the heavens in the first place: a sign that someone's listening."

Other recent premieres include:

Nocturno, a duet composed for Metropolitan Opera soprano Danielle Talamantes and tenor David Portillo that draws on Dehlinger's Nicaraguan heritage. Premiering May 11, 2023 at the Mexican Cultural Institute of Washington, DC, it is a setting of a poem by Rubén Darío, the Nicaraguan poet who initiated the Spanish-language literary movement known as *modernismo* and whose lifelong patron was progressive Latin American leader José Santos Zelaya, the composer's great-great-grandfather.

Requiem, a jubilant setting of the Requiem Mass with additional text by James Joyce and John Donne. It was composed for Choralis, the Washington, DC-area chorus praised by the *Washington Post* for "the power and rhythmic vitality of its singing," and 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. It premiered October 30, 2022.

Kohelet, A Cantata in Five Movements for mixed chorus, soloists and orchestra premiered March 20, 2022, in Washington, DC, and enjoyed its West Coast premiere May 21, 2022, in Santa Clara, CA. Commissioned by the Washington Master Chorale, Santa Clara Chorale, and Santa Clara University Concert Choir, Kohelet combines Biblical Hebrew verse from Ecclesiastes and Song of Songs with lush, modal melodies, energetic meters, and colorful harmonic textures. Dehlinger drew his inspiration for Kohelet, in part, from Leonard Bernstein's Chichester Psalms. Like Chichester, Kohelet is an ecumenical blend of Judaic antiphonal singing and Christian choral tradition that is alternately boisterous and reverent.

The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock, Dehlinger's sweeping rhapsody for voice and orchestra, premiered at National Philharmonic's 2021-22 season opening concert. Also composed for 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 is 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 May 23, 2021 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*, a chamber setting of F. Scott Fitzgerald's beautifully noir poem for baritone and string quartet; *Serenade & Scherzo*, a chamber work for viola quintet; *Fantasia in Groove*, a concert suite of urban impressions of Los Angeles for

cello and piano; *Ring Out, Ye Bells,* a setting of African-American poet Paul Laurence Dunbar's reverent Christmas hymn; *I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day,* a new choral setting of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's famous Christmas poem; *Hodie!*, Dehlinger's thrilling Christmas concert opener for mixed chorus; *Preludes of T.S. Eliot*, a setting of Eliot's four-part poem that further explores themes of isolation in modern urban life and which Dehlinger wrote in response to the coronavirus pandemic; *Memorial Day*, 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*; and Three Choral Songs on James Joyce.

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

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. *Gramophone's* Donald Rosenberg calls them "finely honed Dehlinger mini-dramas." He also adds, "the performances whet the appetite for further Dehlinger repertoire."

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 critically acclaimed recital of Spanish 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."

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.

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: https:// HenryDehlinger.com.

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