

HENRY DEHLINGER

COMPOSER & CREATIVE THINKER

STANDARD BIO

600 Words

American composer Henry Dehlinger stands out in the world of contemporary classical music. Hailed by *Gramophone* for his “vibrantly colorful palette” and “exquisite piano-playing,” he has produced an impressive catalog of music for choruses, chamber ensembles, orchestras, and solo vocalists. Fourteen of his compositions—three choral works, one chamber work, and ten art songs—made their world premieres this 2019-20 season alone.

Henry’s musical vocabulary exemplifies a modern but tonal American aesthetic. Merging classical and vernacular elements, he renders themes from a diverse palette of musical styles to amplify the texts he sets. These rich musical fragments are then woven into meaningful aural experiences that *Audiophile Audition* calls “stunningly superb” and “formidably essential listening!”

Noted New York musicologist James Melo observes, “Henry 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. He is also a major champion of vocal and choral music, and his polystylism allows him to chart a wide range of emotions, allusions, and images.”

Equally celebrated are Henry’s stylish arrangements of the *Duke Ellington Songbook*. With their melodic lines and edgy vocal and piano writing throughout, they have achieved widespread appeal. *Fanfare Magazine* calls them “superbly judged, from the lyricism through to the stride.”

Henry’s recent projects include *Kohelet*, an epic cantata in five movements for mixed chorus, soloists and orchestra. Co-commissioned by the Washington Master Chorale and the Santa Clara Chorale, it combines lush, modal melodies, energetic meters and colorful harmonic textures with Hebrew text from *Ecclesiastes* and *Song of Songs*.

The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock, premiering at the National Philharmonic at Strathmore, is a sweeping rhapsody for voice and orchestra that Henry adapted from the famous poem by T.S. Eliot. Composed for Metropolitan Opera soprano Danielle Talamantes, it uses the melodic and rhythmic contours of Eliot’s stream of consciousness narrative to dictate mood and melodic character.

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Henry's choral works are accessible to a broad range of ensembles and have been performed by professional, volunteer, and high school choruses from across the country. His choral songs adapted from poems by James Joyce—*Night Piece*, *Strings in the Earth and Air* and *Bahnhofstrasse*—are especially admired and continue to be performed.

His vocal chamber repertoire includes *Preludes of T.S. Eliot*, a setting of Eliot's four-part poem that explores themes of modern urban life, and *Amore e 'l cor gentil sono una cosa* ("Love and the gentle heart are one and the same"), a love sonnet from *La vita nuova* by Dante Alighieri and the composer's wedding gift to two of his closest friends.

Henry's eagerly awaited fourth album is scheduled to be released in fall 2020. *At That Hour* is the world premiere recording of Henry's compositions for solo voice and marks the beginning of his association with AVIE Records, the UK-based independent classical music label. It was recorded over three days at Sono Luminus studios in rural Boyce, Virginia, with soprano Danielle Talamantes and bass-baritone Kerry Wilkerson and produced by Grammy-winning producer Erica Brenner.

Born and raised in San Francisco, Henry grew up studying piano and voice. His mentors were piano virtuoso Thomas LaRatta and choral conductor William "Doc" Ballard, artistic director of the San Francisco Boys Chorus, both of whom Henry credits for his early success as a musician. 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 later graduated from Santa Clara University where he studied piano with Hans Boepple. Henry's official website is www.HenryDehlinger.com.

August 2020