

HENNING KRAGGERUD

Violin/Composer

Norwegian violinist Henning Kraggerud is Artistic Director of the Arctic Philharmonic Chamber Orchestra. His extraordinary reach as an artist is a result of his versatility and passion for music as well as the genuine quality to his playing and beauty of his performances. His teaching and educational writings provide fascinating insights into his multi-faceted approach to music-making, while his composing, arranging, and improvising — frequently bringing his own works into the concert hall — recall the spirit of the old masters such as Josef Suk and Eugène Ysaÿe.

Henning's eminence as a soloist and play-director have led to invitations time and again to many of the world's most significant orchestras, most recently the Royal Danish Opera Orchestra, Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, Deutsche Kammerakademie Neuss, Toronto Symphony, Baltimore Symphony, Danish National Symphony, Tonkünstler Vienna, BBC Scottish Symphony, Tasmanian Symphony, and Macao orchestras. In past seasons, Henning has performed twice at the BBC Proms in London's Royal Albert Hall as well as with the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl and the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra at Carnegie Hall.

Henning is a prolific composer whose works are performed by many prominent musicians and orchestras around the globe. His largest-scale work to date is entitled *Equinox: 24 Postludes in All Keys for Violin and String Orchestra*. Commissioned, premiered, and recorded by the Arctic Philharmonic Chamber Orchestra with Henning as soloist, the work was composed as a musical counterpart to a story specially written by world-famous author Jostein Gaarder, and has been hailed as "a fascinating composition to return to over and over again" (MusicWeb International). In 2017 Henning composed a version for violin and piano, premiered in Norway in 2018 with pianist Clare Hammond and Jostein Gaarder narrating.

His most recent composition, *Romantarctica*, was co-commissioned by the Arctic Philharmonic and the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra, the world's northern and southernmost professional symphony orchestras respectively. The work received its world premiere in Tromsø in February 2021 and its southern hemisphere premiere in Tasmania in May 2023. Henning's output as a composer also includes *Pregghiera*, commissioned and performed by the Brodsky Quartet in 2012; *The Last Leaf*, given its first performance in 2014 by the Britten Sinfonia; cadenzas for two of Haydn's cello concertos commissioned by Clemens Hagen in 2015; and *Victimae Paschali* for choir and orchestra commissioned by the Trondheim Chamber Music Festival. In 2017, the Ostrobothnian Chamber Orchestra commissioned and performed *Topelius Variations* for string orchestra, which Henning performed again later that year in an extensive national tour with the Australian Chamber Orchestra.

With his ever-present spirit of discovery, Henning gave the twenty first century premiere of the Johan Halvorsen Violin Concerto with the Norwegian Chamber Orchestra at the 2016 Risør Chamber Music Festival. Originally premiered in 1909 the concerto was subsequently considered lost until its re-discovery over on hundred years later. Henning went on to play the work with the Oslo and Bergen Philharmonic orchestras and in 2017 released a recording on the Naxos label with the Malmö Symphony Orchestra and Bjarte Engeset, leading BBC Radio 3's *Record Review* to comment, "It's difficult to imagine more ardent advocates for this sleeping beauty of a piece". In 2019 Henning gave the first ever performances of the work in Poland with the Poznan Philharmonic and in Finland in 2018 with the Kymi Sinfonietta.

Henning regularly performs at major festivals and venues on both violin and viola with recent collaborations at Wigmore Hall, King's Place, Bruges Concertgebouw, Berlin Konzerthaus and Budapest's kamara.hu festival, with artists including Steven Isserlis, Joshua Bell, Lawrence Power, Leif Ove Andsnes, Håvard Gimse, Kathryn Stott, Natalie Clein, Christian Ihle Hadland, Christian Poltéra, and Jeremy Menuhin.

In 2015 Henning became International Chair in Violin at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester and in 2017 received a Fellowship. Passionate about musical education, Henning is a Professor at the Norwegian Academy of Music (NMH). In 2018 he was a jury member at the Leeds Piano Competition and at the Menuhin Competition in Geneva where he also performed the opening concert with Orchestre de la Suisse Romande under Marin Alsop.

Among Henning's eclectic discography of 18 discs is a Naxos recording of Mozart Concertos Nos. 3, 4 and 5 with the Norwegian Chamber orchestra. The disc included Henning's own cadenzas and was awarded an ECHO Klassik Award as well as chosen as Classic FM's Album of the Week, NDR Kultur's CD of the Week, Editor's Choice in Classical Music Magazine, Recommended in The Strad, and featured on BBC Radio 3's *Record Review*.

On the Simax label, Henning's most recent releases with the Arctic Philharmonic Chamber Orchestra include Tchaikovsky's *Serenade* and Violin Concerto with *Ragnarok/The Sun's Daughter* by Kraggerud, Beethoven/Kraggerud *Metamorphoses*, *Goldberg Variations* and *Topelius Variations*, featuring Henning as violinist, composer, and arranger, and *Between the Seasons*, a collaboration with world-famous author Erik Fosnes Hansen. Henning's own works on the latter were hailed by MusicWeb International as "truly great music, accessible and beautiful... should be heard by every music lover" while the Four Seasons were praised as "one of the best recordings — maybe the best — of the Vivaldi cycle". Also for Simax, Henning has recorded the complete solo sonatas of Ysaÿe, on a disc which won the prestigious Spellemann CD award. On the ACT label, he released a disc entitled *Last Spring* which explored improvisations on Norwegian folk music with jazz pianist Bugge Wesseltoft.

Born in Oslo in 1973 Henning studied with Camilla Wicks and Emanuel Hurwitz. He is a recipient of the Grieg Prize, the Ole Bull Prize, and the Sibelius Prize.

Henning Kraggerud plays on a 1744 Guarneri del Gesù, provided by Dextra Musica AS, a subsidiary of Sparebankstiftelsen DNB.

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