



BIOGRAPHY

ALEX BERKO, composer/pianist

LONG BIO (505 words)

The “stirring” (*New York Times*) music of American composer **Alex Berko** (b. 1995) is characterized by a balance of intimacy and power, a keen sense of lyricism and emotional sensitivity, and a love of narrative. Berko’s music often poses questions about our personal environments and relationships to one another and he is interested in weaving listeners through intimate stories and perspectives with universal values.

Berko’s music has been widely performed throughout the U.S. and abroad by orchestras, choirs, and chamber ensembles. His recent collaborators include the Monterey Symphony, Cape Symphony, Plymouth Philharmonic, Bloomington Symphony, Donald Nally, The Crossing, Craig Hella Johnson, Conspirare, NOTUS Contemporary Vocal Ensemble, Cathedral Choral Society and the Washington National Cathedral, Del Sol String Quartet, Boston New Music Initiative, Arabic/jazz artist Nai Barghouti and jazz/folk duo Kate McGarry and Keith Ganz.

Most recently, Berko received a 2021 ASCAP Morton Gould Award for his orchestra piece, *Among Waves*. Another recent project in collaboration with composer Daniel Bayot and the LeBron James Family Foundation landed Berko a regional EMMY® for his music. His work has also received national recognition from the Society of Composers, Inc. (SCI/ASCAP commission), The American Prize (Choral Music Division), American Choral Directors Association (Brock Memorial Prize), DownBeat Magazine (Best Arrangement) and the Cleveland Institute of Music. (Carl E. Baldassarre Composer/Performer Award) Additionally, he has held fellowships or residencies at Big Sky Choral Initiative, RED NOTE New Music Festival, Atlantic Music Festival, Glen Deven Ranch in Big Sur, California Summer Music, and NYU/ASCAP Film Scoring Institute. He is currently the composer-in-residence with Luzerne Music Center (NY).

Berko’s *Lincoln* was recently included on The Crossing’s album, *Rising w/ The Crossing* released by New Focus Records. The album was met with critical acclaim: It has been nominated for a 2021 GRAMMY® for Best Choral Performance and was included in The 25 Best Classical Music Tracks of 2020 by the New York Times and NPR’s A Diary Of Classical Albums For A Troubled 2020.

Berko is currently pursuing his MM in composition at Rice University’s Shepherd School of Music as a Brown Fellow, where he teaches music theory and ear training at the Shepherd School of Music Preparatory Department. Berko holds a BM in composition, an outside concentration in piano, and a certificate in entrepreneurship from Indiana University’s Jacobs School of Music. Originally from Cleveland, Berko received extensive training at the Cleveland Institute of Music preparatory division. He is a student of Anthony Brandt, Pierre Jalbert, Karim Al-Zand, David Dzubay, Claude Baker, Aaron Travers, Don Freund, Keith Fitch, Stephen Stanziano (composition) and Jean-Louis Haguenaer, Edmund Battersby, and Sandra Shapiro (piano).

Recent and upcoming projects include a work for orchestra, singer, and narrator jointly commissioned by Cape Symphony and Plymouth Philharmonic, a work for Rice University’s Shepherd School Symphony, choral works for The Crossing, Conspirare and the Miró Quartet, *Stare at the Sun*, and *Constellation Men’s Ensemble*, and a Brazilian-inspired chamber piece for cellist Caio Alves-Diniz and guitarist Luis Chacon.

Berko currently resides in Houston with his partner, Laura and his puppy, Riley.

MEDIUM BIO (296 words)

The “stirring” (*New York Times*) music of American composer **Alex Berko** (b. 1995) is characterized by a balance of intimacy and power, a keen sense of lyricism and emotional sensitivity, and a love of narrative. Berko’s music often poses questions about our personal environments and relationships to one another and he is interested in weaving listeners through intimate stories and perspectives with universal values.

Berko has collaborated with the Monterey Symphony, Cape Symphony, Plymouth Philharmonic, Bloomington Symphony, Donald Nally, The Crossing, Craig Hella Johnson, Conspirare, NOTUS Contemporary Vocal Ensemble, Cathedral Choral Society and the Washington National Cathedral, Del Sol String Quartet, Boston New Music Initiative, and jazz/folk duo Kate McGarry and Keith Ganz. Most recently, Berko was selected as the winner of the 2019 American Prize in Choral Music and recently won a Regional EMMY® for his work with the LeBron James Family Foundation. His work has also received national recognition from the Society of Composers, Inc.

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(SCI), American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP), American Choral Directors Association (ACDA), and the Cleveland Institute of Music. Additionally, he has held fellowships or residencies at Big Sky Choral Initiative, RED NOTE New Music Festival, Atlantic Music Festival, Glen Deven Ranch in Big Sur, California Summer Music, and NYU/ASCAP Film Scoring Institute.

Berko is currently pursuing his MM in composition at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music. He holds a BM in composition, an outside concentration in piano, and a certificate in entrepreneurship from Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music. Originally from Cleveland, Berko received extensive training at the Cleveland Institute of Music pre-college division. He is a student of Pierre Jalbert, Karim Al-Zand, David Dzubay, Claude Baker, Aaron Travers, Don Freund, Keith Fitch, Stephen Stanziano (composition) and Jean-Louis Haguenaer, Edmund Battersby, and Sandra Shapiro (piano).

SHORT BIO (133 words)

The "stirring" (*New York Times*) music of American composer **Alex Berko** (b. 1995) has been performed by the Monterey Symphony, Cape Symphony, Bloomington Symphony, The Crossing, NOTUS Contemporary Vocal Ensemble, Del Sol String Quartet, and the Boston New Music Initiative among many others. His music has received national recognition from ASCAP/SCI, ACDA, The American Prize, The Television Academy Foundation, Cleveland Institute of Music, and more. Berko is currently pursuing his MM in composition at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music. He holds a BM in composition with an outside concentration in piano and a certificate in entrepreneurship from Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music. Upcoming projects include a works for Conspirare and the Miró Quartet, Rice University's Shepherd School Symphony, and a Brazilian-inspired chamber piece for cellist Caio Alves-Diniz and guitarist Luis Chacon.