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# Discoveries from the Fleisher Collection

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Saturday, October 8th, 2005, 5:00-6:00 p.m.  
(special time this month—we're moved to the 2nd Saturday)

- Harry Hewitt (1921-2003). Prelude to Spoon River (1944), 4:22. National Polish Radio Symphony Orchestra, David Oberg. Opus One 193
- [Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel](#) (1805-1847). Overture in C (1830), 10:28. Women's Philharmonic, JoAnn Falletta. Koch 3-7169.
- Hewitt. Prelude for Strings, Nos. 9, 13, 8. 7:58. National Polish Radio Symphony Orchestra, David Oberg. Opus One 196
- [Meyer Kupferman](#) (1926-2003). Ostinato burlesco (1944), 8:25. Japan Philharmonic, Akeo Watanabe. Soundspell 111

These are three very different composers who nevertheless share firsts with us today. The *Prelude to Spoon River* is the first orchestral work of Harry Hewitt to receive a performance. He composed this originally to underscore a radio broadcast of the *Spoon River Anthology* by Edgar Lee Masters, and later orchestrated this for a 1944 New York Little Symphony performance at Carnegie Recital Hall. It is this version that we hear today. This is a good example of Harry's work, as are his *Preludes* for strings. His hundreds and hundreds of compositions usually strive to set a mood and to stay focused on that mood. Harry's music is unfailingly gentle and sweet, and this reflects the composer so many knew in Philadelphia. He was recognized by the American Composers Forum for his decades-long work promoting and presenting the music of his fellow composers, especially the ones just starting out. Harry knew that the first performance can be the difference in encouraging a composer to stay on the path toward becoming an artist.

Meyer Kupferman was akin to Harry Hewitt in his collaborative spirit beloved by many, although his music could hardly be more contrasting. His first orchestral work, *Ostinato burlesco*, written when he was 18, is a charging rhinoceros of a work, loud, brutal, and unforgiving. But it is a world of fun to hear! He would later go on to write many works using serial techniques and jazz, often using both in the same piece, but the *Ostinato* is neither: a totally intuitive blast of expressionism, mixed, perhaps, with a little bit of Hollywood.

The *Overture* of Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel is her first and only work for orchestra. In a different world from both Kupferman and Hewitt, it is steeped in the classicism she learned from her training and from her younger brother, Felix. She was encouraged in her musicianship, but discouraged to become a published composer, so it took a long time and the work of many, like The Women's Philharmonic, to find and propagate her music. Fleisher is now the depository for the performing library of that fine orchestra, so we are honored to continue their legacy by supporting music just like this *Overture*.

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Hosted by [Kile Smith](#), Curator of the Fleisher Collection, and [Jack Moore](#), Program Director of WRTI. In *Discoveries from the Fleisher Collection* we uncover the unknown, rediscover the little-known, and take a fresh look at some of the remarkable treasures housed in the Fleisher Collection of Orchestral Music in the [Free Library of Philadelphia](#). The Fleisher Collection is the largest lending library of orchestral performance material in the world. For recording details, please go to our [web page](#). For a detailed list of all our shows, please visit our [archives](#).