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Saturday, May 5th, 2007, 5:00-6:00 p.m.

- [Friedrich Kalkbrenner](#) (1785-1849). Piano Concerto No. 4 in A-flat major. Howard Shelley, piano and conductor, Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra. Hyperion CDA67535. 28:17
- [Louis Moreau Gottschalk](#) (1829-1869). Souvenir de Porto Rico. Eugene List. Vanguard OVC 4050. 6:01
- Gottschalk, arr. Hershy Kay. Grande Tarantelle for Piano and Orchestra. Reid Nibley, Utah Symphony Orchestra, Maurice Abravanel. Vanguard OVC 4051. 7:10

On this program the entertainment aspect of classical music takes center stage. Two 19th-century pianist-composers—one French, one American—made a lot of money writing for their instrument and playing in front of enthusiastic—even swooning—audiences. Friedrich Kalkbrenner was the biggest draw in Europe before Chopin, and Louis Moreau Gottschalk enjoyed a meteoric career on three continents; and on one day in Paris, they met.

The 15-year-old wunderkind Gottschalk, an exotic American from exotic New Orleans, no less, toured Europe in 1845 and played a highly regarded recital at Pleyel Hall in Paris. Many luminaries heard him that day, including Chopin who warmly greeted him afterward. (Gottschalk had played one of Chopin's concertos.) Kalkbrenner, for years a touring artist for the Pleyel Piano Company, was there, and Gottschalk visited the great man the next day. Gottschalk was a fine performer, Kalkbrenner observed, but could benefit from piano lessons from him and besides, what was he doing playing the likes of Liszt and Chopin? If he really wanted to make a mark in the world, he should play a composer everybody loves: Kalkbrenner!

While the older man's ego was second to none, it was true that not too long before, he had been the toast of Europe. His technique was flawless and brilliant, and he wrote his music to showcase his pyrotechnics. While his concertos, including the Fourth (lent for this recording by the Fleisher Collection), aren't known for their profundity, they do exhibit clean lines, logical development, and a genial spirit—all that, and lots of fast notes. His was a classical, Clementi-influenced approach, soon to be overshadowed by more muscular playing on the heavier instruments still evolving.

Gottschalk went on to take the North and South American continents by storm. He decided to leave other composers behind and play his own works, taking inspiration from his Creole heritage to create music bubbling with the influences of Latin America. Spanish, African, Indian, Portuguese, and French styles all went into the mix. Not only that, but his spicy harmonies and jaunty rhythms foreshadowed ragtime and jazz. Audiences ate it up.

He was, like Kalkbrenner, largely forgotten after his death, but the pianist Eugene List did much to revive interest in him, convincing the great orchestrator Hershy Kay to arrange the *Grande Tarantelle*. Two composers from two different worlds take different approaches to the same instrument, and show that they're still quite entertaining.

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](#).