

Listen to

# Discoveries from the Fleisher Collection

on WRTI 90.1 FM Philadelphia or online at [wrti.org](http://wrti.org). Encore presentations of Discoveries every Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. on WRTI-HD2

---

Saturday, September 1st, 2007, 5:00-6:00 p.m.

- [Johann Strauss Jr.](#) (1825-1899). *Vergnügungszug* (Pleasure Train), Polka schnell, op. 281 (1864). Vienna Philharmonic, Carlos Kleiber. Sony SK48376. 2:49
- [Victor Herbert](#) (1859-1924). *Babes in Toyland*, selections (1903). Eastman-Dryden Orchestra, Donald Hunsberger. Arabesque 6547. 8:13
- [Victor Herbert](#). *Panamericana* (1901). Eastman-Dryden Orchestra, Donald Hunsberger. Arabesque 6529. 3:39
- [Victor Herbert](#). *Mlle. Modiste*, selections (1905). Eastman-Dryden Orchestra, Donald Hunsberger. Arabesque 6529. 10:07
- [Stephen Cohn](#). *American Folk Music Suite, Finale* (2002). City of Prague Philharmonic Orchestra, Mario Klemens. [At Peace Media TT-CD](#). 9:58
- [Victor Herbert](#). *Ah! Sweet Mystery of Life from Naughty Marietta* (1910). Jeanette MacDonald, Nelson Eddy. Orchestra conducted by Lehman Engel. RCA LP 1738. 3:16

Do you remember the German car commercial touting the benefits of *Fahrvergnügen*, or “driving satisfaction”? Well, we suppose a *Vergnügungszug* is a train ride of satisfaction—or a “Pleasure Train” as some have it—but however it’s translated, it’s a jaunt on a luxury railcar to exotic locales. Composers often write pieces about the latest technology, and when the Association of Industrial Societies pays you for a piece celebrating the railroad, you jump at the chance, even if you’re Johann Strauss Jr. and you’re terrified of trains!

Then we take in some light music on the American side with one of our greatest tunesmiths, Victor Herbert. Born in Ireland and educated in Germany, Herbert moved to New York with his bride, where they both accepted positions with the Metropolitan Opera—she as a leading soprano, he as a cellist. From that point in 1886 until his death in 1924, Herbert had an impact on more aspects of American music than perhaps anyone else in the history of the country. A brief overview of his accomplishments merely hints at his reach: one of the world’s finest cello soloists; conductor of the Pittsburgh Symphony; co-founder of ASCAP; member of the Met Orchestra and the New York Philharmonic Society; one of the shapers of the 1908 Copyright Law; founder of the Victor Herbert Orchestra; and composer of three operas, three major works for cello and orchestra, the first original American film score, music for the *Ziegfeld Follies*, and—most famously—54 operettas. Many of his works are in the Fleisher Collection, and we hear a sampling of his lighter fare today, including selections from *Mlle. Modiste*, the premiere of which he dreaded. He feared it might be too “operatic” but it turned out to be his biggest success, yielding not one, not two, but *six* hit tunes.

Folk tunes have always played a big part in music we call “American,” and the contemporary composer Stephen Cohn has composed a lovely work at the request of a modern company, not unlike Strauss did 140 years ago. For a series of family-health-oriented CDs, Cohn put together a suite for various combinations of instruments, culminating in the orchestral *Finale* we hear today. It’s expertly done, and the Emmy-winning composer uses the instruments efficiently, showing the prowess he acquired writing for film, television, and Motown Records, as well as for ensembles such as the Arditti Quartet. Strauss, we think, would be proud.

---

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](#).