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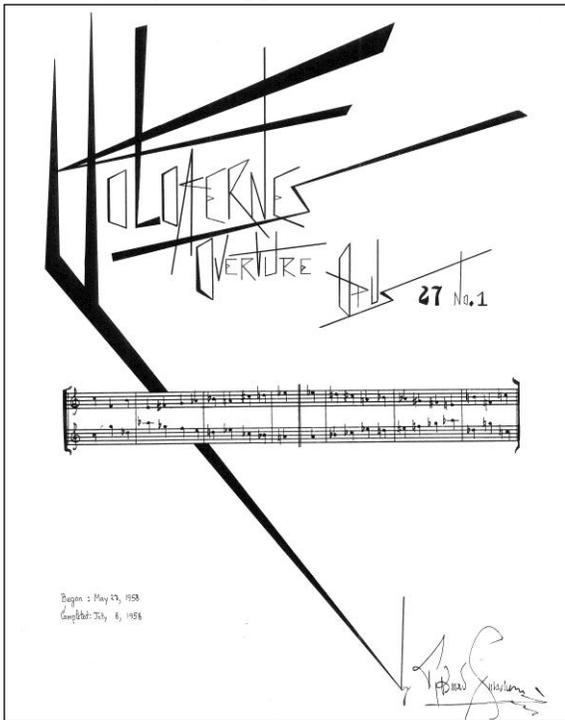
Discoveries from the Fleisher Collection

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

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

- [Gene Gutchë](#) (1907-2000). *Holofernes Overture* (1958). American Symphony Orchestra League, Julius Hegyi. Archival. 6:43
- Gene Gutchë. *Piano Concerto in Three Movements* (1955). Bernhard Weiser, piano, Summer Session Sinfonietta, James Aliferis. Archival. 29:29

Romeo Maximilian Eugene Ludwig Gutschë left Germany to see the American Wild West, worked the wheat harvest north from Texas, and ended up in St. Paul. But for a side trip to study at the University of Iowa, he lived most of his life by a lake in Minnesota, where he composed fascinating pieces of robust individuality and approachableness (reflected in his idiosyncratic calligraphy).



This is the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Gene Gutchë (the name, and spelling, he went by). Even though he was born in Berlin and took piano lessons from Ferruccio Busoni, he was an entirely American-trained composer. His is a strong, unique voice, full of energy, power, and melody. The *Holofernes Overture* is based on the story of the Israelite Judith who slew Holofernes, the Assyrian general. While Gutchë had intended to update the story to the American South, the overture is all that exists from his proposed opera. It is one of his most-performed works, and for that we must thank the [American Symphony Orchestra League](#), which recorded this in 1959 as part of a project promoting the works of American composers.

The *Piano Concerto in Three Movements* is a brilliant demonstration of his gifts. The solo part is by turns muscular and romantic, and the orchestra sounds much bigger than it actually is. The palette, enhanced by the addition of an alto saxophone, is bright and clean. Many conductors—including Dorati, Mester, Rudolf, Schippers, and Zinman—have come to appreciate the intelligence and open-hearted exuberance of his music. The Cincinnati and National Symphony Orchestras, the Rochester and Florida Philharmonics, and the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra among many others have premiered or commissioned his works.

[The Schubert Club](#) in St. Paul continues to uphold Gutchë's legacy by encouraging performances of his works throughout the country, and the Fleisher Collection houses all of the orchestral titles of this refreshing voice in American music.

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](#).