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# Discoveries from the Fleisher Collection

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Saturday, May 3rd, 2008, 5:00-6:00 p.m.

- Horatio Parker (1863-1919). *Cahál Mór of the Wine-Red Hand* (1893). Patrick Mason, baritone, Odense Symphony Orchestra, Paul Mann. Bridge 9254. 14:14
- Parker. *Organ Concerto*, Op. 55 (1902). Franz Hauk, organ, Ingolstadt Philharmonic, Alfredo Ibarra. Guild GMCD 7182. 20:43

Many American composers of the 19th century studied in Germany and brought back with them the newest harmonic trends. One of the best of them was the New Englander Horatio Parker. Today we hear two newly recorded works of Parker's for orchestra, one with solo baritone, and the other for solo organ.

In Munich, Josef Rheinberger took on the young Parker as a student in 1882. Parker impressed him not only with his compositional talent, but also with his organ performance technique, because within two years Parker soloed in the premiere of Rheinberger's first *Organ Concerto*. The student took note of the instrumentation of the piece, since, in his own *Organ Concerto* of 1902, he likewise omits the woodwinds from the orchestra, relying only on brass, timpani, and harp to accompany the strings and solo instrument. Munich was also a Wagnerian hotbed (Rheinberger had been a vocal coach at the court opera during Wagner's time there), and it's hard to miss that harmonic landscape in Parker's music.

Back in the United States, Parker rode an increasingly successful career as composer, organist, conductor, professor, and administrator from New York to Boston to New Haven, where he became Dean of the School of Music at Yale University. Organizations large and small clamored for his music. The Boston Symphony Orchestra premiered *Cahál Mór of the Wine-Red Hand*, his rhapsody for baritone and orchestra, in 1893. He soloed in his own *Organ Concerto* with a number of major orchestras, and the Metropolitan Opera paid him \$10,000 in 1912 for his opera *Mona*.

The text of *Cahál Mór* is from the poem by James Clarence Mangan. It recounts a dream about a mythical hero, but the subtext is Irish independence. The wine-red hand refers to Mór's violent overthrow of aggressors, yet the action in the poem is only hinted at. As with the concerto, Parker uses chromaticism and excellent craftsmanship to elicit a wide range of colors and a full sound from his forces. These are fine works by a highly respected composer, whose music and influence remain a landmark in the music of America.

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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](#).