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Discoveries from the Fleisher Collection

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Saturday, August 2nd, 2008, 5:00-6:00 p.m.

- **Harry Hewitt** (1921-2003). Symphony No. 32, Op. 478. National Polish Radio Symphony orchestra, David Oberg. Opus One 196. 24:47
- **Zygmunt Stojowski** (1870-1946). Suite for Orchestra in Eb, Op. 9. Podlasie Philharmonic Orchestra in Bialystock, Marcin Nalecz-Niesiolowski. Dux 0625. 24:20

Two orchestras in Poland have recently recorded two works: one by an American composer and one by a Polish composer who moved to America. On this program we listen to the 32nd symphony of Philadelphia composer Harry Hewitt, then the *Suite for Orchestra* of the post-Romantic Polish-American composer Zygmunt Stojowski.

Hewitt composed over 3,000 works—surely one of the most prolific outputs by any composer—but received few performances. While barely promoting himself, he dedicated much of his energy to helping other, usually younger, composers in the Philadelphia area through decades of giving concerts and publishing newsletters. He and his wife were unfailingly upbeat in these endeavors, and many musicians remember the tall composer hunched over his tape recorder at his concerts, headphones on, with a smile of pure pleasure for everyone parading before his twinkling blue eyes. Such was his level of altruism that at times concerts would not even include a work of his own. Composers often received a note from him after the concert, filled with astute and encouraging observations.

While he did enjoy some success when he came east from his native Detroit, including performances with the New York Little Symphony in the 1940s, none of his symphonies have ever been performed. This one-movement final symphony, though, is a fine example of the inner, meditative Hewitt, different from but not opposed to the affable public persona. He left no narrative for it, but the work travels from event to mood on a journey that is strangely compelling.

Stojowski's travels took him from his native Poland to the Paris Conservatoire, then to the United States. His teachers included Zelenski, Dubois, Delibes, and Paderewski, a stellar line-up. Even more luminous, perhaps, is the fact that when he showed today's *Suite* to the famously sour Brahms, Brahms...liked it! Not only Brahms, but Tchaikovsky (who died before he could conduct a scheduled performance of the *Suite*), Godard, von Bülow, Elgar, and Beecham loved his music.

He moved to New York City in 1905, helped to establish the Institute of Musical Art, which we know today as the Juilliard School, and lived the rest of his life in America. His two piano concertos are played at times (he himself was a brilliant pianist), but this *Suite* is a shining example of his melodic and orchestral gifts. With a polonaise, cracovienne, and first-movement variations on a Polish version of a *Salve Regina*, it shows him also to be a true son of Poland, deeply infused with the spirit of the homeland of his youth.

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, at the Parkway Central Library of 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](#).