

Next on

Discoveries from the Fleisher Collection

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Encore presentations of the entire *Discoveries* series every Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. on WRTI-HD2

Saturday, November 7, 2009, 5:00-6:00 p.m.

[Salomon Jadassohn](#) (1831-1902). Piano Concerto No. 2 in F minor (1887). Markus Becker, piano, Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra, Michael Sanderling. Hyperion 67636. Tr 4-6. 23:51

[Gloria Coates](#) (b.1938). Symphony No. 7 (1991). Stuttgart Philharmonic, Georg Schmöhe. CPO 999392-2. Tr 4-6. 25:16

The 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall is on November 9th, 2009. Inspired by this historic event, the American composer Gloria Coates (who has lived in Germany for years) dedicated her seventh symphony "to those who brought down the Wall in PEACE." Salomon Jadassohn was an eminent composer, pianist, conductor, and teacher in Germany. Although he died in 1902, his works were banned by anti-Semitic followers of Wagner in the 1930s. Fortunately, his music (ironically influenced by Richard Wagner) is beginning to be heard once again.



Jadassohn attended the Leipzig Conservatory shortly after its founding by Felix Mendelssohn and eventually taught piano and composition there. He had studied piano with Ignaz Moscheles and Franz Liszt, and among his influences in composition were Liszt and Wagner. He was a well-respected teacher who produced manuals on harmony, counterpoint, and orchestration that were used for years. Grieg, Delius, and one of last month's composers on *Discoveries*, George Chadwick, all studied with him.

His many works, including this inventive second concerto, are wonderful examples of the Romantic idiom. But Jadassohn never achieved first-rank fame. The bigger star in Leipzig at the time was Carl Reinecke, who directed the Conservatory and conducted the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra. Moreover, the music of Jadassohn and other Jewish composers was labeled "degenerate" by the Nazis, so his posthumous reputation never gained the traction that sometimes occurs for composers in succeeding generations.



With the increase in recordings of unheralded composers (greatly encouraged by the Fleisher Collection), that barrier to his music is only now coming down. However, the powerful Symphony No. 7 of Gloria Coates celebrates the 1989 demolition of a literal wall, the one built by the Communists in 1961 to separate East and West Berlin. This symphony is not a programmatic piece, but it's hard not to hear an homage to the perseverance and ultimate victory of those who lived to witness the end of that calamity.

Her 15 symphonies have to be more than any woman has ever composed, and Coates uses a favorite technique in her Seventh: the orchestral glissando. Slow, insistent slides, up and down throughout the various sections of the ensemble, are surprisingly compelling in their strength. This is formidable and exciting music. While she counts Bach and Palestrina as her biggest influences (and a close study reveals her love of counterpoint), one detects a patient unfolding similar to the first hearing of a Bruckner symphony, with sudden epiphanies along the way. Another surprise is that Coates studied with Otto Luening, who studied with Ferruccio Busoni, who studied with... Jadassohn.

May the walls continue to fall.

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](#).