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## Discoveries from the Fleisher Collection

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**Saturday, January 2, 2010, 5:00-6:00 p.m.**

**Alexander Glazunov** (1865-1936). *The Seasons*, Winter, Introduction, Scene, and Two Variations (1899). Royal Scottish National Orchestra, José Serebrier. Warner 61434. Tr 5-8. 5:36

**Glazunov**. Symphony No. 1, "Slavyanskaya," E major, Op. 5 (1882). Royal Scottish National Orchestra, José Serebrier. Warner 68904. CD2, Tr 5-8. 34:17

**Glazunov**. Dance, from *Salome* (1909). Royal Scottish National Orchestra, José Serebrier. Warner 69627. Tr 7. 7:13

Alexander Glazunov is a transitional figure in Russian classical music. He combined forces once thought to be opposed—nationalism vs. cosmopolitanism, country vs. city, East vs. West—and by so doing, he helped to establish the formidable musical legacy of Russia. In his compositions, he proved that this fusion could succeed.

He was born late enough to miss the contretemps among Balakirev, Rubinstein, and others concerning the propriety of folk styles in concert music. His precociousness has something to do with it; at only 16 and already studying with Rimsky-Korsakov, he heard the premiere of his first symphony (conducted by Balakirev). It is a delightful amalgam of popular and classical sensibilities and was an immediate hit. The music-loving businessman Belyayev (who played in a community orchestra) took notice and started a company to publish the music of Glazunov, Rimsky-Korsakov, and other illustrious composers. It grew into a giant among classical music publishing houses and is still in existence today.

Glazunov quickly became one of the leaders of the new Russian music. He worked with Rimsky-Korsakov to edit and finish works of Borodin; his memory was so phenomenal that he was able to write down Borodin's Overture to *Prince Igor* after hearing it played once. He became a professor at the St. Petersburg Conservatory in 1899, the year he completed his ballet, *The Seasons*. In 1905 the Conservatory made him its Director (after he resigned in protest of their firing of Rimsky-Korsakov), and soon after, amid international tours with concert upon concert of his music, he wrote *Salome*. He left Russia in 1928, following many other artists who could not work under the increasingly oppressive regime. He married, moved to Paris, and died there in 1936.

While the critical reception to his music is mixed, he is important because he solidified trends during a time of upheaval. He improved and updated educational standards at the highest levels. His compositions are lyrical, intelligent, and often brilliant. He was a wizard orchestrator, following in the steps of his teacher and good friend, Rimsky-Korsakov. These are no mean accomplishments, and it takes a strong, determined, and exceptional musician to take these on, let alone succeed. Glazunov succeeded.

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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, 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](#).