

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, May 1, 2010, 5:00-6:00 p.m.

[Edward MacDowell](#) (1860-1908). Second Suite, "Indian," IV. Dirge (1891-95). Ulster Orchestra, Takuo Yuasa. Naxos 8.559075, Tr. 9. 6:19

[Curt Cacioppo](#) (b.1951). *Lenape Refrains* (2009). Philadelphia Classical Symphony, Karl Middleman. Live recording. 33:30

[Jerod Impichchaachaaha' Tate](#) (b.1968). *Shakamaxon*, II. Moccasin Game (2008). Philadelphia Classical Symphony, Karl Middleman. Live recording. 9:15

One of the ways to understand a nation's music is to listen to the music of its indigenous peoples. On this *Discoveries* we'll hear music written by, and inspired by, American Indians.

Dvorak said that Americans should use their nation's folk music to create a national identity. MacDowell didn't buy it, not accepting the idea of so-called "American" or any other kind of music. Music was music, whether it came from Germany (where he studied), or a book of American Indian tunes, where he found inspiration for his *Indian Suite*. The "Dirge" especially moved him, and scholars have pointed out its recurrence in later works of his. He told people that he wrote it partly to honor the death of his teacher, Joachim Raff. In any case, he wasn't trying to write anything authentically American or American Indian. He was simply composing, using whatever materials attracted him. "I do not believe in 'lifting' a Navajo theme," he once wrote, "and furbishing it into some kind of a musical composition and calling it American music. Our problem is not so simple as all that."

Curt Cacioppo's *Lenape Refrains* is an extensive work built on tribal songs and rhythms. Along with the string orchestra it involves American Indian percussion, harp, clarinet, chanting by the instrumentalists, and, in this performance, solo singing by the composer himself. American Indian music and performance practice has been a passionate study of Cacioppo's for many years. He has traveled around the country learning and performing, and he often incorporates elements of it into his concert works.

Lenape Refrains is played without pause: I. Intimations under the Elm, II. Colloquy in the Branches, III. Sunlight through the Leaves, IV. Braiding Song and Circle Dance [listen to percussion and solo voice], V. Storm, Parody and Lament, VI. Blessing Song [a beautiful clarinet solo here], VII. Stomp Dance and Lullaby, VIII. Tarantella.

Jerod Impichchaachaaha' Tate is a fast-rising composer, and as a citizen of the Chickasaw Nation, he brings the experience of his own heritage into music for the concert hall. His flute concerto *Tracing Mississippi*, for instance, depicts the tragedy of the forced relocation of the Chickasaws and others in the 1830s, infamously known as the Trail of Tears. *Shakamaxon* takes its name from the Lenape Indian village situated on the Delaware River in Philadelphia, on what is now Penn Treaty Park. It was here (under the same elm referenced by Cacioppo), that the 1682 Treaty of Friendship between William Penn and Chief Tamanend was signed. As a model of enlightened cooperation, it became famous throughout the world. In 1831, Chief Justice John Marshall declared that "few events in history have stronger claims on our serious reflection, on our humanity, our sense of rights... [it] furnishes a practical lesson on the influence which intelligence, real friendship, and justice may acquire."

The Moccasin Game evokes Lenape dances. Tate writes, "Moccasin games can be very intense and have always fostered healthy competition within American Indian communities. This movement is meant to depict the natural banter of the game, and to honor the determination and perseverance of the Lenape people." *Shakamaxon* was commissioned by the Philadelphia Classical Symphony, as was the Cacioppo and the soon-to-be-premiered *Wissahickon Scenes* by Maurice Wright. In their various ways they help us understand a bit more about America and its 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, 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](#).