

**CULTURAL COUNTERPOINTS:
Examining the Musical Interactions between the U.S. and Latin America**



**Galván, Gary (La Salle University, Free Library of Philadelphia):
“El Dorado in Philly: Latin American Symphonic Music in the Fleisher
Collection”**

Abstract:

While *la Musica* may have fostered the legend, it is *la musica* that makes the Edwin A. Fleisher Collection of Orchestral Music at the Free Library of Philadelphia the El Dorado of Latin American symphonic music. Believing that no collection of orchestral music could be considered complete without the inclusion of the works of South and Central American composers, Philadelphia music philanthropist Edwin Fleisher began working directly with the United States Government in the 1940s to establish and cement cultural relations and personally commissioned Nicolas Slonimsky to visit Latin America in 1941-1942 in order to secure Pan American orchestral works so that they might be copied for the Fleisher Collection. Fleisher also attracted enthusiastic support from valuable resources such as Walter Burle Marx, Francisco Curt Lange, the Pan American Union, and the Library of Congress to mark the Federal Music Copying Project's enlarged entrance into the field of producing full performance sets of unpublished contemporary South and Central American orchestral music. Ultimately, Fleisher amassed the largest collection of orchestral performance sets of Latin American orchestral music in the world. Through my research into this collection, I have recently uncovered over 70 uncatalogued Latin American works on microfilm which lack complete materials for performance. This presentation examines the history of the copying project through primary source documents, addresses the collection's inestimable value to researchers and performers worldwide, and postulates a plan for moving this hidden treasure from the page to the stage.

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Editorial Disclaimer:

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