

## Musical Treasure Chest #32

For many years for me Thanksgiving and its following weekend were associated with a very special music festival down in the Catskills, the Windham Chamber Music Festival. Founded by composer and baritone Robert Manno and his wife violinist Magdalena Golczewski, the festival was comprised of a series of summer performances (in which I could never play because of Glimmerglass Opera) and then a single performance always the Saturday after Thanksgiving. Rehearsals for this post-Thanksgiving concert would happen all day on Friday and then part of the day on Saturday. I began playing in probably 2003 and continued playing with them all the way through 2014. The orchestra, which was usually only strings, consisted of retired Metropolitan Opera Orchestra musicians, as well as New York City freelancers—all fabulous players. The repertory would include some of the outstanding string orchestra literature such as the Dvorak and Elgar Serenade for Strings, David Diamond Rounds, Britten Simple Symphony, and then, by expanding a bit with extra instruments, works such as the *Adagietto* from Mahler's Fifth Symphony and the chamber orchestra version of Copland's *Appalachian Spring*.

I was honored to be principal second violin of the orchestra. Surrounded by incredible players and inspired by the caliber of their artistry, I always looked forward to these two intense days. And getting to know these musicians and their "stories" was a pleasure. I loved working with Bob and Magdalena and hearing their tales of life at the Met. Generally on my immediate right in the orchestra was Theodore (Teddy) Arm, who was assistant concertmaster. A stellar violinist and a man with a magnetic personality, sitting near him was a joy. He always had something nice to say about my playing and was so encouraging and friendly that you just wanted to give 100 percent all the time. And by meeting Teddy there at the Festival, I worked up my courage to ask him to play with Musicians of Ma'alwyck which he did many times. We played some great repertory together including the Schumann and Gardner Piano Quintets, a brilliant transcription of the Enesco First Rumanian Rhapsody for chamber ensemble, and many other wonderful works. Most recently he played with us on the Brahms B-flat major sextet in January of

2020 and then joined us again on February 29<sup>th</sup> for our *Schaltjahr Ball*, for which he played both as concertmaster and then as soloist in Hubay's brilliant *Hejre Kati*.

Teddy and his delightful wife Marilyn recently moved to Oregon, so between COVID and distance, playing with Musicians of Ma'alwyck is a bit more difficult now. But I have such fond memories of his performances with us. I thought I would share a piece from the repertory he played with us, and while it is not Teddy playing, you will get an idea of the beauty of the piece.

The first concert Teddy played with us featured the **Moritz Moszkowski Suite for Two Violins and Piano, op 71**. Moszkowski, nearly forgotten today, was a very popular pianist and composer in the last decades of the 1800s and first decade of the 1900s. Born in Poland, and then educated and initially employed in Berlin, he eventually established himself in Paris. A sought-after teacher he included among his students Thomas Beecham, Josef Hoffmann, and Wanda Landowska. Not surprisingly, he left a lot of compositions for piano, including concerti and lots of solo piano pieces. Vladimir Horowitz often included Moszkowski's solo works on his recital programs. But he also composed chamber music, including, in 1903, the delightful Suite. In four movements, the Suite is filled with great romantic gesture, soaring melodies, driving rhythms and even light-heartedness. I think you will be enthralled by this piece. I am sorry it is not programmed more often. This YouTube version is live from the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival and features Giora Schmidt and Bella Hristova, violins with Victor Asuncion, all great musicians. (You will have to keep clicking on the next YouTube to hear all four movements).

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UJQB\\_M22lv8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UJQB_M22lv8)