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Ormandy

American Light Music

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Producer's Note

Eugene Ormandy's association with American light music began shortly after his arrival in the United States. One of his early acoustic recordings was of Victor Herbert's "Kiss Me Again" from the opera, *Mlle. Modette*. He later recorded with a salon orchestra Lucius Hosner's *Southern Rhapsody*, whose finale, combining *Deux* and *Maître River* in counterpoint, is reminiscent of Herbert's *American Fantasy*. (Both of those early recordings were contained in an Ormandy centenary tribute I transferred for Biddulph in 1999, WHL 064/5).

During his long Philadelphia tenure, Ormandy recorded much light music side-by-side with more substantial classics. The recordings here come from two sessions held three months apart in 1952. While the Herbert repertoire shared studio time with a group of Johann Strauss works, the Kay ballet suite was part of a typical Philadelphia Orchestra marathon session along with recordings of Liszt's First Piano Concerto and Hungarian Fantasia with soloist Claudio Arrau and an entire album devoted to music from *Tristan und Isolde*.

Victor Herbert (1859 – 1924) was an Irish-born cellist and composer who was sent to study in Stuttgart by his German stepfather. Herbert was already an established soloist and ensemble player with compositions for cello and orchestra to his credit when his wife, a singer at the Vienna Court Opera, was engaged by the Metropolitan Opera in New York. Becoming an American citizen, he took on conducting posts in New York and Pittsburgh in addition to his work as a soloist before putting them aside to concentrate on a burgeoning career as an opera composer.

While such Herbert melodies as "Ah, Sweet Mystery of Life", "I'm Falling in Love with Someone" and "Gypsy Love Song" had kept him popular into the 1950s, the piano music of Louis Moreau Gottschalk was less well known when Broadway arranger **Hershey Kay** (1919-1981) adapted his work into a suite commissioned by the New York City Ballet and premiered in 1951. Gottschalk (1829 – 1869) was a New Orleans-born, Paris-trained (by Hector Berlioz, among others) pianist and composer who toured widely in North and South America. Kay structured his ballet as an old-time minstrel show, with dances, magical illusions and comedians, interpolating three non-Gottschalk minstrel tunes into the "Wallflower Waltz" and "Sleigh of Feet" sections. Rather than produce a "period"-style arrangement, Kay clothed the music in Broadway and popular idioms, and includes a sly nod to *Pennsylvænia* in the "Wallflower Waltz".

The Herbert works were originally issued on two 10-inch LPs, one for the concert works and the other for the opera poppours. These were later reissued as two sides of a 12-inch disc (ML-5376), which was the source for the present transfers. (Attentive listeners will note car horns outside the Academy at 1:26 and 1:51 in Track 3. In addition, the noise at 1:56 in Track 4 is on the master tape, and appears on all LP copies.) None of the recordings on this program has been reissued commercially on CD, nor did Ormandy or the Philadelphians ever re-record any of the repertoire, making this reissue of particular interest to collectors. **Mark Ober-Thorn**

FULL PROGRAMME NOTES CAN BE FOUND ONLINE AT WWW.PRISTINECLASSICAL.COM
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Ormandy

The Philadelphia Orchestra

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American Light Music

Victor Herbert

Pan American • American Fantasy • Irish Rhapsody
Selections from Naughty Marietta & The Fortune Teller

Hershey Kay

Cakewalk - Ballet Suite

Columbia Studio recordings, 1952

 **Mark Ober-Thorn**

Ormandy American Light Music

VICTOR HERBERT

- 1 **Pan American** (arr. Otto Langey) (3:52)
- 2 **American Rhapsody** (9:50)
- 3 **Irish Rhapsody** (13:28)
- 4 Selections from **Naughty Marietta** (arr. Harold Sanford) (8:11)
- 5 Selections from **The Fortune Teller** (arr. Otto Langey) (8:29)

HERSHEY KAY **Cakewalk – Ballet Suite**

(adapted and orchestrated from the music of Louis Moreau Gottschalk)

- 6 **Grand Walkaround** (3:06)
- 7 **Three Variations** (8:23)
 - Wallflower Waltz
 - Sleight of Feet
 - Perpendicular Points
- 8 **Frisbee** (3:57)
- 9 **Magic Act** (8:19)
 - Entrance of the Magicians
 - Venus and the Three Graces
 - The Wild Pony
 - Pas de Deux
 - Rideout
- 10 **Finale: Gala Cakewalk** (3:35)

The Philadelphia Orchestra Eugene Ormandy

Producer & Audio Restoration
Engineer: **Mark Obert-Thorn**

Cover artwork based on a
photograph of **Eugene Ormandy**

Tracks 1–5
Recorded 13 May 1952

Tracks 6–10
Recorded 17 February 1952

First issued on American Columbia
AAL-21 (Tracks 1–3), AAL-28 (Tracks
4–5) and ML-4616 (Tracks 6–10)

Recorded in the
Academy of Music, Philadelphia

Total duration: **69:10**

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