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From the New World: Victor Herbert and His Second Cello Concerto

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Abstract
Among his instrumental music, Victor Herbert's Second Cello Concerto, op. 30 (1894) in particular deserves greater attention, not only because it has become standard repertoire but because of its historical importance as a stimulus to Antonín Dvořák. An analysis of the piece reveals a subtly crafted composition that brilliantly exploits the resources of the cello—Herbert's own instrument—and that builds upon the composer's earlier work for cello and orchestra. The work also exhibits that stylistic amalgam of Irish, German, and American elements that characterize Herbert's operetta scores. Scholars have long appreciated the fact that the piece helped inspire Dvořák to attempt a cello concerto of his own (1895). But Herbert, as has been suggested in the case of George W. Chadwick, might have influenced Dvořák's "American" music more generally. In turn, Dvořák's music—in particular, his "New World" Symphony—seems to have left its mark on Herbert's Second Concerto. In short, Herbert and Dvořák—colleagues at New York's National Conservatory in the early 1890s—engaged in a sort of musical dialogue, one that reflected differing ideas concerning nationalism and American music.

Victor Herbert's Second Cello Concerto, op. 30 (1894) is one of the few American nineteenth-century orchestral works to have established itself in the repertoire, as evidenced by recent releases by cellists Lynn Harrell and Yo-Yo Ma, among others. Even so, few histories of American music have paid the Concerto or any of Herbert's other concert works much attention. Gilbert Chase, Richard Crawford, and H. Wiley Hitchcock, for instance, allude only to his "'standard' works," "concertos," and "classical works," while Charles Hamm makes no reference to Herbert's concert work whatsover.[1] Joseph Horowitz mentions Herbert's Cello Suite and Second Cello Concerto by name but basically in order to help illumine the careers of Anton Seidl and Antonín Dvořák.[2] Scholarly interest has focused, rather, on Herbert's contribution to the lyric stage, including not only his approximately forty operettas but his two operas, *Natoma* and *Madeleine*.[3]

[1] Gilbert Chase, *America's Music, From the Pilgrims to the Present* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987), 371; Richard Crawford, *America's Musical Life: A History* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001), 363, 527; H. Wiley Hitchcock, *Music in the United States: A Historical Introduction*, 3rd edn. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1988), 63; and Charles Hamm, *Music in the New World* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1983).

[2] Joseph Horowitz, *Classical Music in America: A History of Its Rise and Fall* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2005), 160, 161, 229; Wilfrid Mellers overlooks Herbert entirely; see his *Music in a New Found Land: Themes and Developments in the History of American Music* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1966).

[3] On *Natoma*, see Harold Briggs, "The North American Indian as Depicted in Musical Compositions, Culminating with American 'Indianist' Operas of the Early Twentieth Century, 1900–1930" (M.M. thesis, Indiana University, 1977); and Michael V. Pisani, "'I'm an Indian Too': Creating Native American Identities in Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-Century Music," in *The Exotic in Western Music*, ed. Jonathan Bellman, 218–57 (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1998). On *Madeleine*, see Edward Hagelin Pearson, "Victor Herbert's 'Madeleine,'" *Opera Quarterly* 13/4 (Summer 1997):

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This oversight seems understandable, considering that Herbert's operettas plainly overshadow everything else he composed both in scale and significance. Edward N. Waters, whose 1955 biography remains the principal source of information about the composer and his work, spoke, in this context, of Herbert's "supreme position as a composer of operetta."[4] Still, some of the concert work, in particular, Herbert's more ambitious orchestral compositions—including not only the Second Concerto, but the Suite for Cello and Orchestra, op. 3 (1883), the First Cello Concerto, op. 8 (1884), the *Serenade for Strings*, op. 12 (1888), the *Irish Rhapsody* for orchestra (1892), *Hero and Leander*, op. 33, for orchestra (1900), and *Columbus*, op. 45, for orchestra (1903)—have endured and deserve greater consideration than they have received.

A study of the Concerto in particular seems warranted not only because of its special success, but more generally because the piece helps broaden our understanding of Herbert's career and legacy, one of the most remarkable in the history of American music. Moreover, in light of the close relationship between Herbert and Dvořák at the time of the work's composition—that is, in the midst of Dvořák's own American works—the work further raises intriguing questions about national identity as they relate to both composers. A brief overview of Herbert's output in turn can help better frame our understanding of the Concerto.

This essay accordingly sketches Herbert's career, with special attention to the matter of national styles; considers in some detail his First Cello Concerto, composed in Germany before his emigration to the United States and available only in manuscript; explores in greater depth his Second Cello Concerto; and finally places the latter work in the context of the composer's association with Dvořák in the early 1890s. This final section summarizes and furthers ongoing scholarly inquiry regarding the influence of Herbert's Second Cello Concerto on Dvořák's Cello Concerto in B minor while contrasting both men's views on the issue of nationalism and American music.

An Irish-English-German American Composer

Victor Herbert was born in Dublin on 1 February 1859, the maternal grandson of famed Irish writer, painter, and composer Samuel Lover. His father, a barrister, died when Victor was two or three years old, and his mother, Fanny, traveled back and forth between Dublin and her father's home in Sevenoaks, England, before marrying a German physician, Wilhelm Schmid, and moving in 1866 to Stuttgart, where she had a second son.[5]

The young Victor learned to play the piano, the flute, and, above all, the cello, which he studied with Bernard Cossman in Baden-Baden (1874–76). He subsequently toured Europe as a cellist in a variety of orchestras (at one point, he may have played alongside the violinist-composer Charles Martin Loeffler, whose career

59–75; see also John Dizikes, *Opera in America: A Cultural History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993).

[4] Edward N. Waters, *Victor Herbert: A Life in Music* (New York: Da Capo Press, [1955] 1978), 400.

[5] Waters's *Victor Herbert* is the basic source for this biographical sketch.

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paralleled his in a number of ways). Already fluent in English and German, he now learned to speak Italian and French (for his 1913 opera, *Madeleine*, he would prepare his own English translation of the French play *Je dine chez ma mère*). During these early years, he also acquired his lifelong admiration for the music of Berlioz, Liszt, and Wagner, whom he considered—along with Beethoven—preeminent among composers.[6] The period's great piano virtuosos—not only Liszt but also Hans von Bülow and Anton Rubinstein—made a lasting impression as well.

In 1881, he returned to Stuttgart, where he studied theory and composition at the Conservatory with Max Seifritz (1827–85) and played in the Royal Orchestra, with whom he performed a number of concertos and other such pieces—including his own Suite (1883) and First Cello Concerto (1884). In 1885, he joined the faculty of the Neue Stuttgarter Musikschule, where he met his future wife, the Viennese dramatic soprano Therese Förster. The following fall, the two married and left for New York for joint employment with the Metropolitan Opera, where Herbert played in the pit under Anton Seidl and Walter Damrosch, and Therese sang—during her first and essentially only season there—the roles of Elsa, Elizabeth, and Aïda.

Herbert soon after left the Metropolitan himself to pursue an active career as conductor, cellist, teacher, and composer. As a conductor, he served as Seidl's assistant for the latter's famed Brighton Beach concerts; assumed the helm of Patrick Gilmore's celebrated concert band of the Twenty-second Regiment of the New York National Guard (1893–98); became the director of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra (1898–1904); recorded extensively with his own Victor Herbert Orchestra; and appeared as a frequent guest with leading American orchestras. His orchestral repertoire ran largely to the Romantics, but he also performed the music of such contemporaries as Strauss, Puccini, Debussy, and, among Americans, Henry Hadley and Edward MacDowell.

As a cellist, Herbert similarly participated widely in numerous chamber and orchestral ensembles, assuming the solo parts in concertos by Joachim Raff, Carl Reinecke, Rubinstein, and Camille Saint-Saëns, as well as Brahms's Double Concerto. As one of the foremost cellists of his time, he played in the New York Philharmonic from 1887 to 1898, and for a few years headed the cello class at the country's leading school of music, the National Conservatory (1888–ca. 1893).[7]

Herbert's earliest stage works included the operettas *La Vivandière* (1893, since lost), *Prince Ananias* (1894), and *The Wizard of the Nile* (1895), which eventually traveled to Vienna, Prague, and London (a notable achievement for an American operetta of the period), and which established him as one of America's foremost composers for the lyric stage. For nearly three decades afterwards, even as he wrote more serious pieces and led various ensembles, he produced close to two operettas a year, including such hits as *The Serenade* (1897), *The Fortune Teller* (1898), *Babes in Toyland* (1903), *The Red Mill* (1906), *Naughty Marietta* (1910), and *Sweethearts*

[6] Ibid., 227.

[7] Waters guesses that Herbert joined the faculty of the National Conservatory around 1889 (Waters, *Victor Herbert,* 52), but Emanuel Rubin states that Herbert already was on the faculty by 1888. See Rubin, "Jeanette Meyers Thurber and the National Conservatory of Music," *American Music* 8/3 (Autumn 1990), 299.

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(1913). Meanwhile, he wrote two operas: *Natoma* (1911), a grand opera set in California of 1820, about the eponymous Indian maid who rescues her Spanish companion from a forcible abduction; and the less successful *Madeleine* (1913), a bittersweet one-act work, set in France in 1770, about the personal travails of the eponymous prima donna—a work that exhibited the influences of Puccini and Debussy, and that probably represented Herbert at his most adventurous.

Herbert also wrote what is believed to be the first full orchestral score for a feature film, namely, Thomas Dixon's *The Fall of a Nation* (1916, most of the score lost). Moreover, from that same year until his death, he regularly composed music for Florenz Ziegfeld, including one collaboration with Irving Berlin (*The Century Girl*, 1916), one with Jerome Kern (*Miss 1917*, 1917), and a whole series of Follies. He wrote his last instrumental piece, *A Suite of Serenades* (1924), for Paul Whiteman, who premiered the work at the same historic recital that launched Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*. An expert orchestrator, Herbert scored *Suite of Serenades* for the Whiteman band himself, much as he supervised the orchestrations of all of his operettas.

In addition to these sundry activities, Herbert busied himself in public affairs, tenaciously suing a musical magazine for libel in 1902, successfully advocating for copyright reform in 1909, helping to found the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) in 1914, supporting patriotic causes (he became a US citizen in 1902), and offering encouragement and advice to younger composers, including Gershwin. "Victor Herbert was as fully involved in public musical life as Charles Ives was detached from it," observes Richard Crawford.[8] As a famed virtuoso, a distinguished teacher, a beloved conductor, an eminent public figure, and a popular and influential composer for the lyric stage, the motion pictures, and the concert hall, Herbert had an American musical career that could only be compared to that of the similarly versatile Leonard Bernstein.

Like Bernstein and other conductor-composers, in particular those attracted to the musical stage, Herbert was nothing if not eclectic; appropriately enough, the four movements of his swan song, *A Suite of Serenades*, were titled "Spanish," "Chinese," "Cuban," and "Oriental." However, his deep affection for Irish music and culture undergirded all—surprisingly so, perhaps, considering that he left Ireland behind him at age seven. "I'm Irish, you know, Irish to the core," he stated in 1916.[9] His good friend, the music critic James Huneker, confirmed, "He has plenty of Celtic fancy, passion and humor in his mental make-up." Pianist Harold Bauer similarly spoke of Herbert's "Irish humor," adding, " . . . he seemed to enjoy speaking German more than English, although on the other hand, nothing could be more natural than his occasional lapses into Irish, sometimes with lots of 'brogue.'"[10] Herbert spoke frequently of the rich tradition of Irish song, and, though Episcopalian, lent his name and prestige in support of Irish independence.

[8] Crawford, *America's Musical Life*, 363.

[9] Herbert, quoted in Waters, *Victor Herbert*, 496.

[10] James Huneker, quoted in Waters, *Victor Herbert*, 64; Harold Bauer, quoted in Waters, *Victor Herbert*, 238–39.

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The influence of Irish music, which took most obvious expression in those works that employed Gaelic themes, such as the *Irish Rhapsody* and the operetta *Eileen* (1917), seemed to inform the composer's overall style, including an inclination towards pentatonic melodies, grace notes, Scotch snaps, and harp and flute sonorities; and was reflected even more vaguely in his intense lyricism (though this intersected with his orientation as a cellist), his droll wit, and his tendency toward the pastoral. This Irish connection could be heard forcibly from the start, though how self-conscious Herbert was concerning such matters remains largely undocumented.

At the same time, he absorbed what suited him from such early heroes as Berlioz, Liszt, Wagner, and, among more contemporary figures, Tchaikovsky, Dvořák, Strauss, and others. (The connection to Wagner was especially direct, as Herbert's mentor, Anton Seidl, was himself a Wagner protégé; but in many ways Herbert remained closer to Liszt than to perhaps anyone else.) For his operettas and lighter pieces, he similarly drew upon a wide range of musics, including the work of Franz von Suppé, Jacques Offenbach, the Strauss family (in his earlier years, he played in the Strauss Orchestra under Eduard Strauss), Sir Arthur Sullivan, and eventually Franz Léhar. Indeed, as suggested by the *Suite of Serenades*, he engaged a wide array of international popular styles, partly in response to a long series of stage works variously set in Italy, France, Holland, Germany, Ireland, Hungary, Algeria, India, Persia, New Orleans, and so forth. His catholicity extended to Jewish cantorial singing, which Herbert, a philo-Semite like Huneker, very much admired.[11]

Edward Waters emphasized the "eclectic and international" aspects of Herbert's musical style: "He had the daintiness of the French, the solidity of the German, the sensuousness of the Viennese, the playfulness of the Irish."[12] At the same time, aside from some occasional use of ragtime rhythms, Waters could find nothing distinctively American about the music—one of the central themes of his landmark monograph. One might argue that Herbert's eclecticism, as it developed in the course of his career, itself betokened his American provenance. But more to the point, he often employed these various international traditions in highly individual ways that revealed his ear attuned to the vernacular of his adopted country: to native band traditions, Tin Pan Alley, vaudeville, and Broadway. Especially in his lighter scores, he captured the world of *fin-de-siècle* New York in strikingly unique and memorable ways, comparable to Gershwin's later evocation of Jazz Age Manhattan. Herbert's mature work accordingly comprises a kind of aural complement to those depictions of New York life found in the novels of William Dean Howells and Edith Wharton.

What enabled Herbert to re-create himself so thoroughly as an American—his general conviviality and bigheartedness, his affection for his adopted country, or perhaps his Irish-German background (given that German and Irish immigrants and descendants dominated New York's musical life at the turn of the

[11] Edward N. Waters, "American Musical History—and Victor Herbert," *Notes* 13/1 (December 1955): 40; for Huneker, see Joseph Horowitz, *Wagner Nights: An American History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 329.

[12] Waters, *Victor Herbert*, 573.

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century)—remains a matter of conjecture. How this particular accommodation of new and old world traditions compares not only with other Americans generally, but especially with that of such later émigré composers as Vernon Duke and Kurt Weill, might be profitably studied as well. This essay will have occasion at least to consider the Second Cello Concerto alongside comparable works by Dvořák. But few émigrés imposed themselves on the American scene as deeply as Herbert; through his potent influence on such figures as Kern, Gershwin, and Max Steiner, he even helped define the sound of Broadway and Hollywood of the early twentieth century.

The common appraisal of Herbert's mature work as fundamentally Germanic in outlook and style thus minimizes not only his strong Irish identity and his cosmopolitan embrace of various European traditions but his molding of international conventions into an influential American style. The music of his later years in particular was surely less Germanic than that of many native-born American contemporaries, like some of his Boston colleagues associated with John Knowles Paine. And though Herbert's national transformation, so to say, did not occur overnight—Eric Salzman writes, in this context, "Herbert's musical life and style did not change drastically after his arrival in American in 1886. Musically speaking, New York and much of musical America was a German colony and Herbert fit right in"[13]—the difference, say, between the Suite, op. 3 (1883), and the *Suite of Serenades* (1924), with its hootchy-kootchy finale, is "drastic" indeed. How many composers bridged the world of Liszt and Wagner and that of Irving Berlin and Cole Porter with such finesse and ease? Surprisingly, scholars of American art music of the period 1880–1920 have had little to say about all this, as they have paid Herbert's music, for all its prominence and success, scant attention, especially as compared to his New England contemporaries.[14]

The First Cello Concerto

Even before the Second Cello Concerto, Herbert had had notable success writing for cello and orchestra, as evident from not only the First Cello Concerto but from his earliest surviving work, the delightful Suite for Cello and Orchestra, op. 3. Premiered by the twenty-four-year-old composer with the Royal Stuttgart Orchestra on 23 October 1883, and dedicated to his former cello teacher, Bernard Cossman, this five-movement piece ("Allegro moderato," "Scherzo," "Andante," "Serenade," and

[13] Eric Salzman, liner notes, *Victor Herbert* (Nonesuch Digital 9 79107-1 F, 1985).

[14] See, for example, Joseph A. Mussulman, *Music in the Cultured Generation: A Social History of Music in American, 1870–1900* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1971); Alan Howard Levy, *Musical Nationalism: American Composers' Search for Identity* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1983); Alan Howard Levy, "The Search for Identity in American Music, 1890–1920," *American Music* 2/2 (Summer 1984): 70–81; Macdonald Smith Moore, *Yankee Blues: Musical Culture and American Identity* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985); Barbara L. Tischler, *An American Music: The Search for an American Musical Identity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986); Nicholas Tawa, *The Coming of Age of American Art Music: New England's Classical Romanticists* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1991). See also, from an earlier era, Aaron Copland, *Music and Imagination* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1952), in which Herbert's name failed to surface in the context of the author's search for a "usable past."

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"Tarantelle") is virtually a concerto itself, though not really symphonic or virtuosic enough to warrant that designation. Elegantly scored and warmly lyrical, with a good measure of fantasy and wit, the Suite helped establish Herbert's reputation as a composer, and remains impressive today, especially measured against the standards of such older contemporaries as Carl Goldmark (1830–1915), Josef Rheinberger (1839–1901), and the innovative cellist-composer Georg Goltermann (1824–98), whose A minor Cello Concerto became one of Herbert's signature pieces.

The Suite also has historical interest because it shows Herbert's individuality, if not fully developed, at least intact at this stage. Some of this involves features—such as the use of pentatonic melodies—that suggest Herbert's Irish roots, as do, more generally, the music's delicacy and informality. Such a finely wrought accommodation of the German tradition, which has about it the whiff of modernity, might be compared to such kindred spirits as Grieg, Elgar, and MacDowell. What kind of music Herbert would have written had he stayed in Germany remains anyone's guess, but his move to the States might not have been mere happenstance, but rather something of an artistic imperative. For he reasonably could expect to find in New York—with its large Irish and German populations—a hospitable environment to a man of his background and temperament.

About two years prior to this expatriation, Herbert wrote his first full-scale cello concerto, completing the work, reports Waters, in 1884 or "more likely" 1885. He premiered the piece with the Royal Stuttgart Orchestra on 8 December 1885. This First Concerto, a manuscript copy of which resides at the Library of Congress, has three movements. The first movement, "Allegro con spirito" (originally "Allegro maëstoso"), more fantasy than sonata, opens with a stately, almost ceremonial theme, set forth by the orchestra, that presents a series of four-measure phrases, each comprising a basic two-bar motive repeated twice. The cello subsequently plays this main theme in diminution, an ingenious touch (though Herbert perhaps first composed this cello theme and then decided to begin the movement with an augmented version for orchestra). The rest of the movement essentially builds on one or another of this theme's motives, a procedure that provides the music with an organic wholeness, even at the expense of a certain variety. On a larger level, the movement unfolds a rather askew ternary form involving a large opening section in D major, a slightly slower and more introspective middle section in F major that winds its way to a freely improvised cadenza in the tonic minor, and a brief recapitulation in D major.

The ternary second movement, like similar efforts by Brahms and others, functions as both slow movement and scherzo. The "Andante" outer sections feature a sweetly swaying 9/8 melody, somewhat like a barcarolle, while the middle section, *Scherzo vivace*, scampers charmingly in 3/8. As in the first movement, Herbert moves from a sharp key (in this case A major) to a flat key (once again F major) for the middle section before returning to the original tonality. Also like the first movement, the recapitulation is rather perfunctory, but more in proportion to the other sections.

The finale, "Allegro fantastico," can be diagrammed roughly as in A (D major)–B (G minor)–C (B-flat major)–A (D major)–C (D major) form, with a dramatic introduction and a brilliant coda. The movement's three main ideas all evoke

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country dancing of one sort or another, sometimes with Spanish inflections, thereby anticipating—as does the "Tarantelle" finale of the Suite—the play of international styles as found in the composer's later operettas.

The First Concerto was received favorably at its premiere—one critic tellingly found its clarity and grace reminiscent of French music—and Herbert occasionally performed the piece in later years, as in a concert with Theodore Thomas in December 1887 (when the work appeared as a last-minute substitution for an excerpt from Weber's *Euryanthe*).[15] However, the piece never achieved the popularity of even the Suite, let alone the Second Concerto. At the same time, Lynn Harrell's 1988 recording of the work helped bring it some long overdue attention. "Talk about buried treasure!" exclaimed Dennis D. Rooney in one review of the recording.[16] Another commentator, Andrew Lamb, even thought this early concerto to have "more melodic appeal" than its famous successor, and Harrell similarly claimed the First "a better piece than the Second—there's more variety for a start."[17]

The First Concerto surely merits continued revival, but for all its charm, it lacks the drive and intensity of Herbert's Second Concerto; Waters himself, in this context, found some of the work's episodes "a bit protracted."[18] The great appeal of the work clearly lies in its effective cello writing, which affords the soloist an opportunity to passionately sing, soar, and scurry against a discreetly warm and supple, if sometimes rather thin, orchestral accompaniment.

The Second Cello Concerto

Herbert essayed his Second Concerto nearly ten years after his First, at the height of his reputation as a cellist, and just prior to embarking on his career as an operetta composer. He performed the solo part at the premiere on 9 March 1894, in an afternoon public rehearsal with Seidl and the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, and played it again in concert on the evening of 10 March. Waters reports that Herbert "had been working strenuously on the piece since the summer of 1893, devoting to it all the skill and craftsmanship at his command."[19]

The New York critics, accustomed to concertos of a sort described by the *Tribune* as in "the light-waisted style," reacted guardedly to a work—especially one for cello and orchestra—so ambitious in tone, scoring, and formal construction (even if slighter in scale than the First Concerto).[20] In a largely approving review

[15] Waters, *Victor Herbert,* 20, 40; program, New York Philharmonic (10 December 1887), New York Philharmonic Archives, courtesy of Richard Wandel, associate archivist, New York Philharmonic Archives.

[16] Dennis D. Rooney, review of Victor Herbert, *Cello Concertos 1 & 2; 5 Pieces for Cello & Strings,* with Lynn Harrell (cello) and the Academy of St. Martins-in-the-Fields, Neville Marriner (conductor) (London 417 672–2, 1988), *The Strad* 100 (February 1989): 147.

[17] A. N. L., review of Victor Herbert, *Cello Concertos 1 & 2; 5 Pieces for Cello & Strings,* with Lynn Harrell (cello), *Gramophone* 66 (October 1988): 60; Harrell quoted in Stephen Johnson, "The Total Effect," *Gramophone* 66 (October 1988): 539.

[18] Waters, *Victor Herbert*, 20.

[19] Ibid., 84.

[20] *Tribune*, quoted in Waters, *Victor Herbert*, 86.

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for the *World* that borrowed freely from Arthur Mees's extensive program note, Reginald de Koven even wondered whether "by emphasizing the importance of the orchestral side of the work the composer has run the risk several times of dwarfing the interest and importance of the solo part."[21] Mees had anticipated such a reaction by pointing out that the score "is symphonic in character. The orchestra is not merely a meaningless adjunct to the solo instrument, with an occasional tutti as a source of relief, but the two supplement each other and are closely allied in publishing the composer's ideas. The thematic structure, too, is symphonic, for the component parts of the different themes are exhaustively made use of in the course of the work."[22] The relative novelty of the work's symphonic intentions apparently distracted early commentators from observing how virtuosic the solo part actually was, and, moreover, the extent to which the texture, though rich and resplendent, was carefully designed to allow the solo part to shine through.

The symphonic nature of the score, as mentioned, involves not only its ample instrumentation, which consists of cello solo, two flutes, two oboes, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, percussion, and strings, but its formal design, in that the work's "three movements," as the program note states, "are closely connected, growing as it were the one out of the other," an approach very possibly influenced by Saint-Saëns's First Cello Concerto (1872).[23] The opening "Allegro impetuoso" even leads directly into the slow middle movement, while the finale essentially consists of material drawn from the two preceding movements. Nor did Herbert use Roman numerals to demarcate one movement from another; indeed, these movements, though commonly referred to as such, can perhaps better be thought of as "sections" or "parts." The ensuing analysis of this work—the piano reduction of which is widely available in published form—hedges such difficulties by referring to the work's three main divisions as the opening "Allegro," the "Andante," and the closing "Allegro," respectively.

The piece opens, *Allegro impetuoso*, with two "motives" (again to quote the program notes) that generate the entire work (Example 1). The four-measure motive *a* might be considered the work's motto theme; opening with a hemiola superimposed over the prevailing triple meter, it contains minor-second cells that move dramatically by minor ninth and tritone. Motive *b*, played by some higher instruments, overlaps the last two measures of the motto theme. This echoing motive starts with the same falling second as found in motive *a*, but reshaped into a more waltzlike, though still syncopated, fragment; indeed, the waltz, as genre and gestus, hovers about the entire work, including the middle "Andante" section. By way of motives *a* and *b*—especially the former—Herbert quickly arrives in the tonic key, E minor, at which point the cello enters, *Lento*, in common time with a recitative-like *dramaticamente* melody (henceforth, the dramatic theme) derived from the two principal motives, against tremolos in the

[21] De Koven quoted in Waters, *Victor Herbert*, 86.

[22] Waters, *Victor Herbert*, 84–86; Arthur Mees, program note, Philharmonic Society of New York (9 and 10 March 1884), New York Philharmonic Archives.

[23] Waters, *Victor Herbert*, 84.

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Example 1. Victor Herbert, Concerto no. 2 for Cello and Orchestra, ed. Leonard Rose (New York: International Music Company, 1962), mm. 1–4.

Example 2. Herbert, Cello Concerto no. 2, rehearsal 1.

strings (Example 2). The music cadences before returning to the 3/4 introductory music.

The music again arrives in E minor, but this time, an impetuously waltz-like *Più Allegro* commences (Example 3). The soloist puts forth a new, more urgent and long-breathed melody (henceforth, the impetuous theme) that arguably marks the start of the opening section proper (A), one that will eventually cadence in the

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Più Allegro

Example 3. Herbert, Cello Concerto no. 2, rehearsal 3.

Example 4. Herbert, Cello Concerto no. 2, 11 after rehearsal 3.

tonic key ninety-one measures later (at rehearsal 8). In its general shape and pitch content, the impetuous theme derives from the opening motto, but has an intense character of its own, with a basic five-measure design (suggesting three units of common time and one unit of triple time) of heady metrical asymmetry. As the theme moves into the subdominant (at 11 after rehearsal 3), it neatly subsumes motive *b* as well (Example 4). As in his earlier cello concerto, one can only guess whether Herbert derived his two opening motives from this theme, or vice versa; but in any case, this very question epitomizes the music's organic wholeness.

Before cadencing in E minor, the music wanders briefly into C major; but a German augmented sixth chord in G minor leads to a passage in the dominant of F (rehearsal 6), at which point the orchestra and cello embark on an impassioned

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Example 5. Herbert, Cello Concerto no. 2, rehearsal 11.

dialogue, with the soloist digging into some resonant double- and quadruple-stops (the latter including a rustic-sounding open fifth drone in the bass, an arduous maneuver occasionally omitted by even professional cellists). This extended C dominant-seventh harmony in turn functions, in another augmented sixth capacity, to bring the music around to a long cadential gesture in E minor that features broken octaves and running sixteenth notes in the cello. Such small- and large-scale uses of the German augmented sixth chord as found here provide a coloring and drama highly characteristic of Herbert's style.

The next section (B) starts (at rehearsal 8) with a bold restatement of the impetuous theme for the whole orchestra in the tonic key. As the music makes its way to the dominant, the soloist reenters (at 5 after rehearsal 9) with the motto theme, first in B major and then, expanded, in D major; this latter music then pivots back to the dominant of B minor.

A change of key signature from one to two sharps (denoting this arrival in B minor) intimates the start (at rehearsal 11) of a new section (C). Against a texture reminiscent of the introduction, the cello puts forth a melody that synthesizes the motto and dramatic themes, but softer and more lyrical in profile (henceforth, the motto-dramatic theme) (Example 5). This C section incorporates developmental ideas derived from both sections A and B, here including a climactic drive towards G major before subsiding back to B minor and settling, via a final *Lento* transformation of the dramatic theme (here played by the orchestra), on F-sharp major. The concerto's slow middle part, "Andante tranquillo" (which opens with a key signature of five sharps), completes this codetta-transition with a *pianissimo* and *dolcissimo* progression that suavely cadences in B major, one measure before the cello reenters with this new section's main theme.

The opening "Allegro" thus can be seen as roughly approximating the exposition or perhaps double-exposition of a traditional sonata form, in that it comprises an introduction in the tonic, a first-theme group (A and B) that modulates to the dominant, and a second-theme group (C) and codetta in the dominant. However, the music makes a less schematic impression that this would suggest, in large part because the "first theme" (the impetuous theme) barely registers as the start of an exposition per se; and even more so, because the "second theme" (the motto-dramatic theme) strongly recalls the introduction. The music, in this respect, follows

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Example 6. Herbert, Cello Concerto no. 2, rehearsal 21.

along the lines of the even more idiosyncratic opening movement of Herbert's First Cello Concerto.

In contrast, the relatively short "Andante" that arrives on the heels of this opening "Allegro" is in a clear three-part form, with a brief *Più mosso* interlude that concludes with a transition (at first *Molto più lento*, and then *Lento*) that leads back to the opening *Andante tranquillo* material. The *Più mosso* has its own key signature of three sharps, betokening its F-sharp minor tonality.

The opening section of the "Andante" essentially comprises one long *semplice* theme in B major played by the soloist, except for the final phrase, at which point the upper winds briefly take up the melody (henceforth, the tranquil theme). This sweetly songful music, with its softly pulsing accompaniment, clearly anticipates the more familiar Herbert of *Babes in Toyland* (Example 6). With its open fifth drone, its anapestic gestures, and its gentle mordants, the theme relatedly features that seemingly Irish—or Irish American—quality that many listeners over the years have discerned in Herbert's music.

In contrast to the earlier impetuous theme, with its tendency toward irregular phrases, the tranquil theme comprises a series of four-measure phrases, which helps enhance its *tranquillo* and *semplice* intentions. Still, this theme—which can be diagrammed as a–b–c–a^1–a^2–a^3/b^2—has asymmetries of its own. Phrase *a* comprises the main theme; *b*, an extension that moves to the dominant, F-sharp major; *c*, a bridge that confirms the new tonality; a^1 and a^2, also in F-sharp major, something of a development; and a^3/b^2, a *dolcissimo* codetta of seven measures, again in the dominant, essentially forged from the opening two phrases. Moreover, most of these phrases feature in the orchestral accompaniment appoggiaturas on the strong beats of the common-time meter, which lends the music a slightly yearning quality comparable to some Tchaikovsky; meanwhile, the prominent A-naturals (and their enharmonic equivalents) in the *dolcissimo* codetta gives that music a modal cast more reminiscent of, say, Grieg.

This modal ambiguity helps prepare the F-sharp minor tonality of the *Più mosso* middle section, which has some modal shadings of its own, including an evocative cadence on a C-sharp minor triad at the end of its first phrase (Example 7). The material, *energico*, incorporates something of the *b* phrase of the preceding *Andante tranquillo*, but its head motive more decidedly recalls the work's motto theme; this

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Più mosso

Example 7. Herbert, Cello Concerto no. 2, rehearsal 24.

Allegro (Tempo I)

Example 8. Herbert, Cello Concerto no. 2, rehearsal 30.

small interlude thus reestablishes some of the urgency of the opening "Allegro." At the same time, the theme, which looks ahead to some of the composer's later "gypsy" music as found in *The Fortune Teller*, has a character of its own, marked by strong accents and rhapsodic rhythms, including prominent use of the Scotch snap.

This *Più mosso* episode comprises only three phrases, all of which begin identically in F-sharp minor, a repetitiveness that contributes further to the music's folkish quality. The first phrase cadences on a C-sharp minor triad, as mentioned; the second phrase, on a C-sharp major triad; while the third modulates smoothly a tritone away to G major. The violins and violas—and later the clarinet—now enter, triple *pianissimo*, with the main tranquil theme in G major, subtly reharmonized, with the soloist entering tentatively with triplets. This false recapitulation soon gives way to the true reprise, as a G-dominant-seventh chord resolves deliciously into B major and the resumption of a five-sharp key signature.

The fairly literal reprise that follows omits the aforementioned *c* phrase; rather, Herbert moves directly into the a^1 music, but transposed up a fourth, so that he can remain in B major. Moreover, the section is rescored for maximum delicacy, with the opening phrases played by the first violins, diviso, in octaves, and accompanied by elegant filigree in the solo cello part. Finally, Herbert extends the codetta to bring the music to rest on a luminous B major triad.

After a brief pause, the work launches back into the E minor "Allegro" (Tempo I) with a version of the impetuous theme in the bassoons (later joined by the lower strings) against implied tonic and dominant harmonies above (Example 8). This

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effective transition quickly leads to a restatement of the principal theme by the orchestra, comparable to the music that opens section B of the initial "Allegro," but now tensely supported by a dominant pedal, so that the passage does not sound like an arrival. The music (at rehearsal 31) doubles back to some of the work's introductory music, but the cello enters, not with the dramatic theme, but to music identical to that found in section A (at rehearsal 4).

A fairly exact recapitulation follows, though (at 4 before rehearsal 34) the cello rather than the orchestra initiates the aforementioned impassioned dialogue (at rehearsal 6). A more significant change occurs soon after (at 10 before rehearsal 35), as Herbert adapts the concluding pages of the first "Allegro" (beginning at 9 after rehearsal 15) and moves, briefly, to F major and then to a long dominant preparation in C major, with the music actually arriving in C major (including the appropriate key signature) following a dramatic rising chromatic scale for the soloist.

In the tradition of Romantic cyclic form, the subsequent section, *Poco più mosso*, opens with the tranquil *Andante tranquillo* theme in the cello (Example 9)—now recast to fit the prevailing 3/4 meter (so that each measure corresponds to single beat of the "Andante")—supported by that delicate version of the work's impetuous theme presented earlier (initially at 12 before rehearsal 18); and occasionally articulated by reminiscences of the motto theme in the horns. This reprise of the tranquil theme proves rather free, and by the time the orchestra takes up the tune (at rehearsal 39), the melody truly begins to deviate, eventually leading, first, to music reminiscent of the motto-dramatic theme (at rehearsal 40); then, the introduction (at rehearsal 41); and then, once again, music of a sort heard later in section C (compare the music at rehearsal 42 with that beginning 9 after rehearsal 15). Accordingly, this *Poco più mosso* section, like the preceding one, ultimately moves towards that material that closes the first "Allegro." But the music now moves from C major to E major, as opposed to the preceding section, which had modulated from E minor to C major.

The subsequent arrival at the tonic major at the start of the next and final section, *Un poco meno*, immediately imparts a coda-like quality to the music (Example 10). That a staccati transformation of the impetuous theme appears perkily in the woodwinds against arpeggiated passagework in the cello helps give a further sense of encroaching finality. The music briefly detours into E-flat major and yet another transformation of the tranquil theme in the cello, before a B-augmented triad grandly leads to the concerto's climax in E major, in which the brass and the solo cello, *tutta forza*, state the tranquil melody, while the winds and strings put forth the lyrical motto-dramatic theme; but this latter melody appears neither in minor nor over dominant harmonies as before (see rehearsal 11 and rehearsal 40), but rather squarely in a blaze of E major (Example 11).

The music that follows (at rehearsal 45) more definitely constitutes the work's coda proper. In contrast to the concerto's inclination towards thematically driven material, this coda basically features flashy passage work for the soloist, though each of its three phrases concludes with a version of motive *a* sounding out in the orchestra. At the third and final statement of the motto theme, the cello joins in as well, and both cello and orchestra complete this phrase with a final triple *fortissimo* cadence derived from motive *b* (Example 12).

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Poco più mosso

ff

mf

motive a

Example 9. Herbert, Cello Concerto no. 2, rehearsal 37.

The final "Allegro" can thus be seen as a recapitulation of all the primary themes against a tonal landscape that moves from E to C and back to E again, with some echo of classical precedent in having transitional material from the exposition transposed up a fourth. Consequently, the concerto as a whole comprises a kind of sonata form, with the outer "Allegro" sections resembling an exposition and recapitulation, respectively, and the middle "Andante" substituting for a development section, an understandable accommodation of sonata form by a highly lyrical composer who had no strong attraction to developmental procedures per se.

Such a form clearly serves the work's lovely and expert solo writing, which constitutes the music's primary appeal. But though some of the soloistic passages pose considerable technical challenges—cellists rate the concerto as one of the most difficult in the repertoire—the work offers, as mentioned, few purely pyrotechnical gestures. What impresses, rather, is the sheer beauty of the writing and the assured

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Example 10. Herbert, Cello Concerto no. 2, rehearsal 43.

Example 11. Herbert, Cello Concerto no. 2, 9 after rehearsal 44.

and masterful use of the instrument's lyrical capabilities, enhanced by some skillful indications for fingerings and shifting strings, and some effective use of glissandos, harmonics, and the like. For much of the outer "Allegro" sections, the tessitura sits warmly in the octave above middle C; while for the "Andante," the writing circles

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Example 12. Herbert, Cello Concerto no. 2, rehearsal 47.

even more comfortably around middle C. Herbert reserves the instrument's more extreme registers to help articulate beginnings and ends of larger sections, or to intensify the work's more climactic moments.

In contrast, the work's orchestral writing seems most notable for its ability to stay out of the soloist's way. Herbert accomplishes this not only through restrained handling of the strings and winds (including frequent use of staccato, pizzicato, tremolo, and mutes), but through minimal employment of the brass. Otherwise, the orchestration seems more serviceable than anything else, with the work's few tutti passages sometimes exhibiting a rather Victorian heaviness. As with the work of some other virtuoso-composers, the Second Concerto naturally raises the question whether the music Herbert wrote for himself generally surpasses his other instrumental compositions because such pieces are simply more inspired, or because their solo writing offers certain compensatory attractions.

Although Edward Schuberth and Company published a reduced score for cello and piano in 1898, and Edwin F. Kalmus released the orchestral score at about the same time, the Second Concerto actually proved slow to establish itself. The New York Philharmonic revived the piece in February 1907, when cellist Elsa Ruegger, who had played it in Pittsburgh with Herbert on 16 January 1903, performed the concerto under the baton of Wassily Safonoff. But the orchestra did not program the work again until ninety years later when cellist Lorne Munroe performed it with James DePriest in June 1993, followed by cellist Yo-Yo Ma and Kurt Masur in January

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1995.[24] The work especially seemed to suffer eclipse in the years immediately after Herbert's death, so much so that by the time that Emanuel Feuermann announced his intention of performing the Concerto in 1940 to Olin Downes, as reported in the *New York Times*, the work plainly had become something of an obscure novelty.[25] (Feuermann unfortunately never lived to perform the whole work, though in 1942, shortly before he died, he recorded a test pressing of an abbreviated version of the "Andante" with, almost certainly, pianist Albert Hirsch.[26])

The postwar period witnessed a turning point in the work's history, with landmark recordings by Bernard Greenhouse in 1953 (with Max Schoenherr and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra) and Georges Miquelle in 1958 (with Howard Hanson and the Eastman-Rochester Orchestra), followed by a new publication of the short score, edited by Leonard Rose, in 1961.[27] Subsequent recordings, including those by cellists Julian Lloyd Webber (with Sir Charles Mackerras and the London Symphony Orchestra), Lynn Harrell (with Neville Marriner and the Academy of St. Martins-in-the-Fields), Yo-Yo Ma (with Kurt Masur and the New York Philharmonic), and James Kreger (with Djong Victorin Yu and the Philharmonia Orchestra), further helped solidify the work's current status as standard repertoire.[28]

These commercial recordings were rather alike in terms of overall interpretation, notwithstanding varied liberties taken by the featured artists. The very first recording—that by Greenhouse and Schoenherr—proved perhaps the most romantic of all, with the soloist dramatically spinning out the music's long lines. The Miquelle-Hanson release was similarly impressive, in large part because Hanson—who may well have seen Herbert as a vital forbear—imbued the orchestral part with rare clarity and zest.

As for later recordings, the Webber-Mackerras release seemed notable for its tenderness, including an especially sweet "Andante." Lynn Harrell, who surpassed Greenhouse in terms of sheer impetuosity, introduced some arguably gratuitous embellishments in the solo part, including a large cadenza inserted in the final "Allegro." Ma delivered an extraordinarily polished and nuanced reading, with effortless handling of the work's most taxing demands and scrupulous attention to phrasing and dynamic markings (though for some reason, he altered the rhythms

[24] New York Philharmonic programs, New York Philharmonic Archives.

[25] Olin Downes, "Speaking for the Czechs," *New York Times*, 21 January 1940.

[26] Annette Morreau, *Emanuel Feuermann* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 332.

[27] Victor Herbert, Cello Concerto no. 2, op. 30, on Edward MacDowell, *Indian Suite, op. 48*, with Bernard Greenhouse (cello) and Vienna Symphony Orchestra, Max Schoenherr (conductor) (American Recording Society ARS-111, 1953); Victor Herbert, *Concerto no. 2 for Violoncello and Orchestra, op. 30*, with Georges Miquelle (cello) and Eastman-Rochester Orchestra, Howard Hanson (conductor) (Mercury MG 50163, 1958); Victor Herbert, Concerto no. 2, op. 30, ed. Leonard Stein (New York: International Music Co., 1961).

[28] Victor Herbert, *Concerto no. 2 in E minor, op. 30*, with Julian Lloyd Webber (cello) and the London Symphony Orchestra, Sir Charles Mackerras (conductor) (EMI Records CDC 7 47622 2, 1986); Victor Herbert, *Cello Concertos 1 & 2; 5 Pieces for Cello & Strings*, with Lynn Harrell (cello) and the Academy of St. Martins-in-the-Fields, Neville Marriner (conductor) (London 417 672-2, 1988); Yo-Yo Ma, *Concertos from the New World*, with the New York Philharmonic, Kurt Masur (conductor) (Sony Classical SK 67173, 1995); and James Kreger, *New York Cello Masterpieces*, with the Philharmonia Orchestra, Djong Victorin Yu (conductor) (Guild Music GMCD 7235, 2001).

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in the measures just before rehearsal 23 and 28). The most recent release—that by Kreger and Yu—contained some fine playing by the soloist as well.

Herbert and Dvořák

The few scholars who have written about the Second Concerto have done so not so much for itself, but because of its role as a likely stimulus for Dvořák's own Cello Concerto (1894–95). The evidence for this turn of events—consisting as it does of the two scores in question, along with reminiscences by Herbert and by Dvořák's New York amanuensis and companion, the Czech American Joseph Jan Kovarik—is mostly circumstantial, but compelling nonetheless and can be summarized as follows.

In late 1891, Dvořák (1841–1904) signed a two-year contract to serve as the director of the National Conservatory in New York; he arrived in America the following September, assuming his duties on 1 October, which included leading the school orchestra and teaching composition (his students included Will Marion Cook and Rubin Goldmark). He spent the summer break of 1893 in the Midwest, mostly in Iowa. After a summer in Prague in 1894, he extended his contract and returned to New York, where he directed the conservatory for a third and final year before returning to his homeland for good in April 1895.

Dvořák composed some of his most enduring pieces during his American years, including the Ninth Symphony (1893, "From the New World"), premiered by Seidl and the New York Philharmonic on 16 December 1893; the F major String Quartet (1893, "American"), premiered on 1 January 1894; the E-flat major String Quintet (1893, "American"), premiered on 12 January 1894; and the Cello Concerto in B minor (8 November 1894–9 February 1895), completed in New York, but revised upon Dvořák's return home, and premiered by cellist Leo Stern and the London Philharmonic under the composer on 19 March 1896.

When the fifty-one-year-old Dvořák joined the conservatory in 1892, he found the thirty-three-year-old Herbert already on staff as the school's principal cello teacher. Whether or not he knew anything about Herbert prior to his arrival, he came to admire the young man's cello playing, and the two struck up a friendship, including convivial gatherings at Herbert's beloved Luchow's restaurant.[29] They also played music together. In 1920, Herbert remembered in particular a reading of Dvořák's "beautiful" Piano Trio in E minor (1891, "Dumky"), with the composer at the piano and Michael Banner on violin. "Dr. Dvořák was not a great pianist," recalled Herbert, "but his playing was intensely musical, of course."[30]

Herbert remained at the conservatory for at least Dvořák's first year there (he probably left after the 1893 spring semester), during which time he saw the older man two or three times a week. He recalled—again in 1920—that Dvořák often could be found in the school's "front room" at work on his compositions, playing and singing in the process. As someone who "knew a good deal about" the "New

[29] John C. Tibbetts, "Dvořák's New York: An American Street Scene," in *Dvořák in America: 1892–1895*, ed. John C. Tibbetts (Portland: Amadeus Press, 1993), 37.

[30] Waters, *Victor Herbert*, 88.

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World" Symphony, he also confirmed that "the very talented" Harry Burleigh "had the privilege of giving the Dr. some of the thematic material" for this work. Herbert participated as a cellist in the first performances of the "New World" Symphony by the New York Philharmonic under Seidl, and in later years, conducted the work himself with the Pittsburgh Symphony and the New York Philharmonic. Remembering Dvořák as "most kind and unaffected," and as someone who "took great interest in his pupils," Herbert wrote, "We all loved him, for he was so kind and affable—his great big beautiful eyes radiated warmth—and of such childlike simplicity and naturalness—and when he left us we lost not only a master-musician whose presence had had a marked influence on musical activities in N.Y. but a most admirable, lovable friend."[31]

The two men even came close to a collaboration of sorts when playwright-producer Steele MacKaye approached both composers (in Dvořák's case, in late 1892, in Herbert's, either late 1892 or early 1893) about furnishing the music for a pantomime spectacle about Columbus, *The Great Discovery*, in conjunction with the 1893 Chicago World's Fair and the four hundredth anniversary of Columbus's discovery of America. Modelled after Bayreuth, *The Great Discovery*—or *The World Finder*, as it became known—was to be produced in an enormous "Spectatorium" and to feature new orchestral and choral music conducted by Anton Seidl. Before the project was abandoned, Herbert began composing music that eventually made its way into his orchestral suite, *Columbus* (1903). MacKaye's son and biographer, Percy, supposed that Dvořák's preliminary work on *The World Finder* similarly evolved into the "New World" Symphony, hazarding that a comparison of the "music-scenario" of *The World Finder* and the "New World" Symphony would "prove interesting."[32] A comparison between *Columbus* and the "New World" Symphony likewise proves interesting, at least for underscoring the differences between Herbert's Wagnerian-impressionist conception, so suitable to MacKaye's dramatic stage pictures, and Dvořák's more symphonic effort.

Dvořák attended the world premiere of Herbert's Second Cello Concerto on 9 March 1894 in the company of Kavarik. Kavarik remembered that Dvořak was "very anxious to hear the work," and that he commented afterwards, "that fellow [Herbert] played wonderfully." The next day, Dvořák further mentioned that he was especially intrigued with a "clever spot" in the concerto (one in which Herbert used the trombones "without overpowering the solo instrument in the least," as he later told Kovarik) and after dinner, the two returned to hear the work's second performance, even though ordinarily Dvořák "rarely cared to go out evenings." A few days later, as Kovarik recalled, "Dvořák borrowed the score of the concerto—then in manuscript—and looked it over with much satisfaction. 'Wonderful!' was all he said."[33] Kovarik's account accords with Herbert's own recollection of Dvořák coming backstage after one of the performances of the concerto, throwing his arms

[31] Ibid., 87–88.

[32] Percy MacKaye, *Epoch: The Life of Steele MacKaye, Genius of the Theatre, in Relation to His Times & Contemporaries, a Memoir*, vol. 2 (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1927), 362 n., see also 311–463; and Waters, *Victor Herbert*, 69–70.

[33] Joseph J. Koravik, "Dr. Dvořák As I Knew Him," *Fiddlestrings* 1/3 (1919): 3–4; Jan Smaczny, *Dvořák: Cello Concerto* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 15–16.

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about him, and saying, in front of some of the members of the orchestra, "*Famos! famos!—ganz famos!*" (Splendid! spendid!—entirely splendid!).[34]

In his early days, Dvořák had composed his own cello concerto (an unacknowledged work left in short score, 1865) as well as a cello sonata (1871, lost), but he had come to regard the cello as best suited for ensemble playing, not as a featured instrument. As he told one student, even after completing his great concerto of 1895, "Its middle register is fine—that's true—but the upper voice squeaks and the lower growls."[35] However, he transcribed two small piano pieces for cello and piano—Rondo and *Silent Woods*—in 1891 for himself and cellist Hanus Wihan to play on tour, and in October 1893, he obliged Wihan by transcribing both works for cello and chamber orchestra as well. Wihan wanted Dvořák to write more music for him, and the latter began work on an aborted cello sonata in the summer of 1893 perhaps with this hope in mind. Then, in November 1894, he began work on his Cello Concerto in B Minor, which he largely completed the following February. (Dvořák dedicated the piece to Wihan, who, because of scheduling conflicts, could not premiere the piece as originally planned, and who did not perform it until 25 January 1899, after some other cellists had done so.[36])

That Dvořák had heard and studied Herbert's "spendid" concerto in the interim—in March 1894 to be exact—would suggest that the work played some part in his decision to write a cello concerto of his own; Jan Smaczny, an authority on the Dvořák concerto, even refers to the experience as "the road to Damascus." Plausibly, Dvořák also consulted with Herbert while writing the work, even though the latter had apparently left the conservatory by then. At the least, Dvořák might have played through some of the music for him, as he did in New York for Dutch cellist Josef Hollmann, though Herbert makes no mention of the concerto in his 1920 reminiscence.[37]

It seems that Herbert's work helped convince Dvořák of the feasibility of the cello concerto as a genre. But did anything in particular about the work influence Dvořák? Identifying the "clever spot" as that passage (at 5 after rehearsal 25) for solo cello, *quasi cadenza*, accompanied by a sustained triple *pianissimo* chord played by three trombones, two horns, and double basses (Example 13), Smaczny locates comparable use of soft trombones in Dvořák's concerto; he further reasons that Herbert helped determine not only Dvořák's actual writing for the trombone choir but his very inclusion of the trombone, an instrument not found in the Czech's earlier concertos for piano and violin. Indeed, the instrumentation for the Dvořák concerto exactly duplicates that of Herbert's, except that the former also employs a tuba and has the second flute double on piccolo.[38]

However, as Smaczny also notes, the actual scoring for these two works differs considerably. The Herbert concerto principally has the soloist converse alternately with the entire ensemble or with various sections (including some effective

[34] Waters, *Victor Herbert,* 88.
[35] Smaczny, *Dvořák,* 1.
[36] Ibid., 1–14, 86–93.
[37] Ibid., 14, 86.
[38] Ibid., 17–18.

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Example 13. Herbert, Cello Concerto no. 2, 5 after rehearsal 25.

Example 14. Antonin Dvořák, Cello Concerto in B minor (Miami, Fl.: E. F. Kalmus, [s.d.]), mvt. 2, mm. 157–59.

exchanges with the cello section), whereas Dvořák's far more intricately textured concerto features a kaleidoscope of rich colors, including contrapuntal dialogues between the soloist and individual members of the wind and brass sections. Similarly, in more general matters of style, form, and tone, the two works—although both rooted in the German Romantic tradition—contrast notably, with Herbert closer to Liszt and Dvořák nearer to Brahms.

A stronger case perhaps could be made for the influence of Herbert's solo cello writing on Dvořák. Smaczny, for instance, observes a passage just before the recapitulation in the first movement of the Dvořák, one that involves busy passage work followed by an accented low note and a chromatic scale upwards, that echoes a similar gesture in the Herbert (just before rehearsal 37, which Smaczny refers to as the work's "recapitulation").[39] And Dvořák surely remembered the cello writing at Herbert's "clever spot" (see Example 13) when composing some similar music toward the end of his slow movement (Example 14). Other correspondences can be found as well, though these might more simply reflect the general instrumental practices of the day: compare, for instance, various spots in Herbert's "Andante" (at 1 before rehearsal 25) and concluding "Allegro" (at rehearsal 43) with passages

[39] Ibid.

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Example 15. Antonin Dvořák, Symphony no. 9 in E minor (Miami, Fl.: E. F. Kalmus, [s.d.]), mvt. 1, mm. 9–14.

from the second movement (at 1 after 5 rehearsal) and finale (at rehearsal 10) of the Dvořák, respectively. "Features such as these do not, *in toto*, add up to a major debt to Herbert," concludes Smaczny. ". . . . But the role of Herbert's Concerto as exemplar and ultimately progenitor cannot be ignored or belittled; without Herbert's pioneering work it seems doubtful that Dvořák would have composed the concerto request by Wihan."[40]

In a recent study of the Dvořák concertos, Iacopo Cividini extends this investigation by suggesting that Herbert's B major *Andante tranquillo* theme (see Examples 6 and 9)—in particular, the idiomatic sweep of its opening rhythmic gesture—inspired the head motive of the first movement of Dvořák's Concerto, including, possibly, its tonal center of B; given that this head motive also resembles the main theme of the finale to the "New World" Symphony, Cividini further suggests that the Herbert melody served as a kind of mediator between this latter symphonic idea and the opening theme of the Dvořák Concerto.[41]

Because Smaczny and Cividini naturally focus on Dvořák, not Herbert, their investigations generally sidestep an intriguing part of the equation: Dvořák's probable influence on Herbert. As mentioned, during the period just prior to his concerto, Herbert became a particular admirer of the "Dumky" Trio and the "New World" Symphony—two compositions, perhaps not coincidentally, in E minor, like Herbert's subsequent concerto. True, Herbert began his concerto in the summer of 1893, some months before the world premiere of the "New World." But as mentioned above, he became familiar with the symphony while Dvořák worked on it in early 1893 (the work was begun on 10 January and completed on 24 May). Indeed, the "New World" might well have been a precipitating catalyst in getting Herbert started on his own work for the Philharmonic. The concerto's very motto (see Example 1) seems a direct response to the *fortissimo* motto near the start of the "New World" Symphony, Dvořák's motive of D–E-flat–A, with its bold tritone, appearing transposed as A-sharp–B–E-sharp (Example 15).

And if the "Andante" theme mediated between the finale of "New World' and the first movement of the Cello Concerto, as Cividini suggests, could that finale

[40] Ibid., 19.

[41] Iacopo Cividini, *Die Solokonzerte von Antonín Dvořák: Eine Lösung der Konzertproblematik nach Beethoven* (Tutzing: Schneider, 2007), 317–21.

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movement have left its imprint on the "Andante" theme? Notwithstanding its similarity, too, to the slow movement of Schubert's E-flat major Piano Trio (also idiomatically conceived for cello), this same "Andante" theme bears some resemblance as well to the famous melody from Dvořák's "Largo" movement, much as the secondary theme of the "Andante," with its alternating F-sharp minor and C-sharp minor harmonies (see Example 7), recalls the subordinate theme from the "Largo." More generally, Herbert's score shows a clear advance—certainly over the *Serenade* of 1888—in its use of chromatic and modal inflections in a way that suggests the influence of Dvořák. As also mentioned, Herbert himself spoke of Dvořák's "marked influence on musical activities in N.Y."

In short, Herbert and Dvořák apparently engaged in a sort of dialogue, with Dvořák's "New World" Symphony very possibly inspiring in various ways Herbert's Second Cello Concerto, which in turn served as a stimulus and primer for Dvořák's Cello Concerto in B Minor. If Dvořák followed Herbert's lead in using the triangle in the finale of his concerto, as Smaczny suggests, it seems worth noting that Herbert's writing for the triangle resembles Dvořák's use of the instrument in the "New World" Symphony (though Herbert had featured the triangle in his First Cello Concerto as well).[42]

This comparison between Herbert and Dvořák offers some new perspectives on those issues of nationalism that surround both men. As is well known, after arriving in New York, Dvořák espoused the use of the American vernacular, notably musics associated with African Americans and Amerindians, though also extended to American folk musics in general.[43] He himself adopted a somewhat Americanized style, variously related by scholars to black (or black-inspired) and Indian (or Indian-inspired) folk and popular music as well as to the American landscape; a style whose "key constituents," as defined by Smaczny and others, include "pentatonic figures, driving ostinati, direct utterance and pastoral tone."[44] Significantly, Herbert's music had long featured these very traits, raising the question of how Herbert might have influenced the Czech master's American style, the sort of query that already has engaged Chadwick scholars.[45] Dvořák no doubt gained some familiarity with Herbert's music early on, perhaps those short pieces for cello and piano performed on a 20 December 1892 concert that also featured Dvořák's Piano Quartet in E-flat Major.[46]

At the same time, some of these resemblances on Herbert's part—in particular, the inclination towards pentatonicism—primarily involved Herbert's longstanding

[42] Smaczny, *Dvořák,* 17.

[43] See Tibbetts, "Dvořák's New York"; Antonín Dvořák, "Music in America," *Harper's Magazine* 90 (1895), 424–34; Miroslav Ivanov, *In Dvořák's Footsteps: Musical Journeys in the New World*, trans. by Stania Slahor, ed. Leon Karel (Kirksville, Mo.: Thomas Jefferson University Press, 1995).

[44] Smaczny, *Dvořák,* 20; along these lines, see also David Beveridge, "Sophisticated Primitivism: The Significance of Pentatonicism in Dvořák's American Quartet," *Current Musicology* 24 (1977): 25–36; and Michael Beckerman, "Dvořák's Pentatonic Landscape: The Suite in A major," in *Rethinking Dvořák: Views from Five Countries*, ed. David R. Beveridge, 245–54 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996).

[45] For some consideration of the Dvořák-Chadwick connection, see Mark Germer, "Dvořák Among the Yankees; George Chadwick and the Impact of the Boston School," *Rethinking Dvořák,* 237–43.

[46] Waters, *Victor Herbert,* 67.

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affection for Irish folk music—he had, after all, written the folkloric *Irish Rhapsody* in early 1892—rather than for any identifiably American music per se. Indeed, although Herbert was "much impressed" with the singing of some black factory workers in Richmond in 1892, while at work at the Concerto and in direct response to Dvořák's pronouncements, he doubted—as reported by the *New York Herald*—"whether there will be found enough original material in negro melody to warrant the hope of making much of it." "It was often beautiful singing, of a weird, rather mournful character," the *New York Herald* further paraphrased him as saying, "but there was not much that could be made use of in music of a more ambitious type."[47]

Little wonder, then, that for all his obvious high regard for the "New World" Symphony, Herbert reacted skeptically to the hype surrounding the work. When asked in this same *New York Herald* piece "if he thought it [the "New World"] would have any influence upon future compositions in this country," he answered with a laugh, "Yes, if the composers are Dr. Dvořáks."[48] Herbert shared such skepticism—in particular, the notion of basing an American music on "negro melodies"—with a number of esteemed colleagues, including, as Adrienne Fried Bloch has shown, John Knowles Paine, George Chadwick, and Amy Beach. In this sense, Herbert plainly shared some sensibilities with his Boston colleagues.[49]

But what we find nonetheless in the Second Concerto—as compared not only with Dvořak's works of the early 1890s, but to some extent even with Herbert's earlier music—is a growing and pronounced individuality that would have deep ramifications for the development of American music. Some of this involves its tone, which might be described as frank and direct, and one that alternatively involves some somber melodrama, sweet sentiment, and carefree humor. In terms of form and style, one further notes some distinctive features as follows: 1) considerable rhythmic vitality, epitomized by the syncopations, polyrhythms, and unusual phrase lengths found in the impetuous main theme; 2) a tuneful melodic language; 3) rich seventh, ninth, and thirteenth chords; 4) a particularly delicate orchestral palette; and 5) an unacademic approach to form. If this style—which admittedly recalls at times the likes of Tchaikovsky and Grieg, as mentioned—seems in some sense American, it might be in part because such music filtered down to—and up from—the commercial avenues of Broadway, Tin Pan Alley, and eventually Hollywood. The rich sequence of ninth and thirteenth chords accompanying the "Andante" theme,

[47] Herbert, paraphrased in "Negro Song Writers," *New York Herald* (18 June 1893); see also Michael Beckerman, *New Worlds of Dvořák* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2003), 240–41. Herbert, who by this time had begun to explore "American melodies" for possible use for the aforementioned MacKaye extravaganza, apparently viewed this particular issue—at least at this point in time, or at least reported in the *New York Herald*—as primarily of concern to black composers: "[W]hether he [the Negro] will succeed in absorbing scientific instruction, while retaining his faculty for adapting what he hears, is a problem yet to be solved, but highly interesting and well worth solving." I say "apparently," because it is not clear whether this last statement reflects Herbert's thoughts or those of his interlocutor.

[48] "Dr. Dvořák's Great Symphony," *New York Herald*, 16 December 1893.

[49] Adrienne Fried Block, "Dvořák, Beach, and American Music," *A Celebration of American Music: Words and Music in Honor of H. Wiley Hitchcock*, ed. Richard Crawford, R. Allen Lott, and Carol J. Oja, 256–80 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990). For some discussion of Dvořák's influence on American composers of his time, see also Merton Robert Aborn, "The Influence on American Musical Culture of Dvořák's Sojourn in America" (Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, 1965).

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for instance, clearly looks ahead to the harmonic language of Kern and Gershwin, while a similar sequence of seventh chords (at 9 after rehearsal 18) anticipates Bernard Herrmann's score to *Vertigo*. Relatedly, the music resembles—and might have been influenced by—the music of MacDowell, who had returned to the States in 1888 and who premiered his acclaimed Second Piano Concerto (1886) under Theodore Thomas in New York in 1889. As late as 1924, at the very end of his life, Herbert declared MacDowell, "of course . . . America's *greatest* composer."[50]

This likeness to MacDowell sheds additional light on Herbert's relationship with Dvořák. For like MacDowell, Herbert was in the process of creating an individual style by the time Dvořák arrived in America, a style that already had implications for the future of American music, with the *Irish Rhapsody* (1892), for instance, looking ahead to music as different as Max Steiner's score to *Gone With the Wind* (1939), Leroy Anderson's *Irish Suite* (1947), and Marc Blitzstein's *Juno* (1959). Herbert's individuality allowed him to absorb something from Dvořák without sacrifice to his personal manner; such individuality presumably formed an aspect of the Second Cello Concerto that helped earn it—over and above the work's technical finesse and idiomatic savvy—the admiration of Dvořák.

In the ensuing years, Herbert would develop, refine, and popularize his personal style, especially in his operettas, much as MacDowell would do in his late character pieces for piano. But the Second Concerto remains noteworthy not only for its continued viability but because of its historical importance: for in addition to serving as a stimulus to Dvořák, the Concerto helped forge, in its own way, a distinctive music "from the new world."

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[50] Waters, *Victor Herbert*, 552.

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