

PRELUDE, FUGUE RIFFS

News for Friends of
Leonard Bernstein
Spring/Summer 2019



**Leonard
Bernstein**
at 100

COURTESY OF AMERSON ENTERPRISES, INC. (MUSIC DIVISION)



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To Our Readers

As the *Leonard Bernstein at 100* celebrations begin to subside, we're catching our collective breath, trying to make sense of all that we've experienced: the whirlwind of performances; the exhibits and documentaries; the books and articles and re-issues of recordings. What a marvel it's been.

But it's the people who have amazed us the most: the performers who gather Bernstein's music to their hearts, then share it with their public; the audiences—so varied in age, in nationality, in field of interest; and the presenters—all those folks who cooked up the myriad celebrations, from theatre companies to universities to dance companies, from museums to libraries to orchestras of every stripe—and beyond.

And perhaps best of all are the young people. What a rare opportunity the centennial has been for introducing Leonard Bernstein to a new generation of performers and young audiences. Not surprisingly, kids really respond to the galvanic energies of Bernstein music. We saw it happen to the kids in the *Artful Learning* programs nationwide; in school systems like the one in Darien, CT that explored Bernstein all year long; and in the El Sistema-inspired youth orchestras around the country, whose young members shared the song "Somewhere" in a special arrangement created just for them.

There is something about the combined elements of emotionality, deep spiritual longing, and the sheer joy of existence in Bernstein's music-making, that makes his public feel authentically connected to him. All that dynamism and sensitivity and, yes, love that Bernstein put into the world has come pinging back at all of us through these centennial celebrations—and nothing could have been more touching.

J.B. ■

1944: Bernstein's *Annus Mirabilis*

by Heather Wallace

Leonard Bernstein's legendary Carnegie Hall debut with the New York Philharmonic on November 14, 1943, was just the starting point for several extraordinary accomplishments that took place in little more than a year, causing Bernstein's double career as a conductor and composer to skyrocket.

Toward the end of 1942, Bernstein was rushing to complete his *Symphony No. 1: Jeremiah* for entry into a competition organized by the New England Conservatory. Although the symphony did not win the competition, *Jeremiah* was destined for great success. Bernstein sent the work to both his Tanglewood mentor, Serge Koussevitzky, and his Curtis Institute conducting teacher, Fritz Reiner, for feedback. Reiner loved it and immediately invited Bernstein to conduct it with the Pittsburgh Symphony, while encouraging him to add a more uplifting fourth movement. In a letter to his friend and mentor Aaron Copland, Bernstein wrote, "He is most anxious for the fourth movement; insists it's all too sad and defeatist. Same criticism my father had, which raises Pop in my estimation no end. I really haven't the time or energy for a fourth movement. I

seem to have had my little say as far as that piece is concerned."

Catching wind of Reiner's enthusiasm for the piece, Koussevitsky invited Bernstein to premiere it in Boston. But *Jeremiah* was already slated to have its premiere in Pittsburgh. Bernstein conducted his symphony there with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra on January 28, 1944 (just two months after the Carnegie Hall debut), with mezzo-soprano Jennie Tourel as the soloist. The performance was a complete success. Three weeks later, Bernstein conducted his piece with the Boston Symphony, where it triumphed once again. In March and April, he conducted it four more times with the New York Philharmonic. The New York Music Critics Circle voted *Jeremiah* "outstanding new classical work of the season."

Guest conducting invitations began flooding in to Bernstein's representative, Arthur Judson [1881-1975], the founder of Columbia Artists Management. Bernstein made several conducting debuts with orchestras throughout North America, greatly broadening his repertoire in the process. On March 7, 1944, 25-year-old Bernstein made his international debut, conducting Les Concerts Symphoniques de Montréal (now the Orchestre symphonique de Montréal). The performance got



a rave review in the *Montreal Star*: “The strings of this orchestra have never before produced such quantity and quality of tone or so much fineness of shading.”

Bernstein received similar praise later that summer for his conducting debuts with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra at the Ravinia Festival and the Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl, as well as other outdoor concerts in Montreal and New York. In the fall, he led the New York Philharmonic in five different programs; gave a series of radio concerts in Detroit; and conducted the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, his tenth orchestra in that year.

Throughout this busy time, another facet of Bernstein’s career was also gaining momentum. In the fall of 1943, the young choreographer Jerome Robbins knocked on the door of Bernstein’s studio apartment above Carnegie Hall, to discuss an idea he had for a one-act ballet about three sailors on shore leave in New York City. Instantly, a great partnership was born.

Bernstein found time to compose the thirty-minute score of *Fancy Free* in between his conducting engagements. The Ballet Theatre (later the American Ballet Theatre) premiered the work at the Metropolitan Opera House on April 18, 1944 (just four months after the Carnegie Hall debut). *Fancy Free* was a huge success, breaking Met box office records, with performances extended for an additional two weeks. Bernstein conducted additional performances in San Francisco and at the Hollywood Bowl.

Following the success of *Fancy Free*, the scenic designer Oliver Smith persuaded Robbins and Bernstein to develop their ballet into a Broadway musical. Smith and his friend Paul Feigay produced the show, with the esteemed George Abbott directing. Robbins was pushing for Arthur Laurents to write the book (Laurents later wrote the book of *West Side*

Story) and for John La Touche to pen the lyrics (La Touche later wrote lyrics for *Candide*). But Bernstein insisted on bringing in his friends Betty Comden and Adolph Green. From June to December of 1944, the three young authors wrote and composed *On the Town*, expanding on *Fancy Free*’s story of the three sailors. The new show followed the sailors’ 24-hour shore leave in New York City, tracking their amorous adventures on the eve of their steaming off to war-torn Europe, to meet what fates they could not know.

Following a tumultuous ten-day tryout in Boston, *On the Town* triumphantly premiered on Broadway on December 28, 1944, at the Adelphi Theatre (barely a year after the Carnegie Hall debut). As Jack O’Brien of the Associated Press put it, “a reviewer gets an opportunity to heave his hat into the stratosphere, send up rockets and in general start the sort of journalistic drooling over a musical comedy that puts an end to all adequate usage of superlatives.” MGM immediately bought the rights to *On the Town* for a subsequent movie.

This abundance of activity—including Bernstein’s New York Philharmonic stipend; major city conducting fees; a recording contract with RCA Victor; publishing proceeds; income from *Fancy Free*; *On the Town* royalties; and proceeds from the *On the Town* movie rights—jointly led to a tenfold increase in Bernstein’s income in 1944 and 1945.

Bernstein also managed to find time for his political and humanitarian causes. Despite his parents’ concerns regarding his outspokenness, Bernstein proudly told the press, in reference to *Jeremiah*, about his sense of identification with the Jews in Europe and their terrible plight at the hands of the Nazis. He spoke at a pro-Roosevelt rally and appeared in “An Evening with Paul Robeson... under the auspices of: The Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee, the Council on African Affairs,” as referred to in Bernstein’s already copious FBI file.



FRED PALUMBO. COURTESY OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS NEW YORK WORLD-TELEGRAM & SUN COLLECTION

This feverish flurry of conducting and composing successes propelled Leonard Bernstein to the status of a must-have conductor for orchestras worldwide, and a must-get composer for both the concert hall and the stage. Thus it was in that very compressed period that the foundation for the rest of Bernstein’s legendary career was firmly set. ■

Heather Wallace is the Digital Media and Promotions Manager at The Leonard Bernstein Office.

Bernstein in 1944.

Left: Articles and programs from 1944.

Artful Learning Update



Director Thomas Grube oversees the capture of a dynamic Artful Learning classroom.

by Patrick Bolek

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!

Boomtown Media, based in Berlin, Germany, secured funding from two European foundations to create a global awareness message that education must improve how students learn if they are to be productive and confident in a changing world. An *Artful Learning* School provides that hope. Two documentary short films will be created from a week-long residency film shoot in Napa, California. One film will be a case study that follows a student and family through their day, intertwined with their learning experiences at Willow Elementary. A second film will demonstrate the creative and innovative approaches embedded at Willow Elementary through the *Artful Learning* model. The premiere of both documentary shorts, under the direction of Thomas Grube and produced by Uwe Dierks, is slated for late 2019. Glimpses of classroom



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learning; Original Creation demonstrations; and interviews with students, educators, and artists are just some of the upcoming highlights.

BUILDING THE ARTFUL LEARNING TEAM AND MORE...

Through a combination of the *Artful Learning* Board of Directors' action and the awarding of a generous grant, the executive team has expanded to include Executive Assistant Claire McCall and Development Consultant Jerold

Kappel. The grant also provides funding to continue development, build awareness, and add additional schools across the nation.

MAGNET SCHOOLS OF AMERICA CONFERENCE April 10-14, 2019

Federal magnet funding has energized *Artful Learning* Schools in California, Florida, and Michigan in the past decade—and now, the Magnet Schools of America have recognized these schools as “schools of Excellence and Distinction” - their highest honors.

Willow Elementary (Napa, CA), Midway Elementary School of the Arts (Sanford, FL), and Dwight Rich School of the Arts (Lansing, MI) continue to reimagine their schools by empowering students, educators, teaching artists, and communities.

Artful Learning will be sponsoring Booth 9 at the conference in Baltimore, Maryland, promoting the concept of *Empowerment Through Transformation*. The conference draws thousands of administrators, educators, and advocates of the magnet platform and will be an excellent opportunity to showcase and further expand the model.

Patrick Bolek serves as the Director, Advancement Consultant and Lead Master Trainer for Artful Learning.

Kids Celebrate Bernstein

Works by Agnes Zionica, Grade 2 and Kimball Atha, Grade 3, Holmes School.

The Darien, CT school system has spent the year focusing on Leonard Bernstein. Elementary school students participated in a poster project. The results were festive!



Bernstein, Blitzstein and Weill

by Rebecca Schmid

Leonard Bernstein's own brand of serious music theater was shaped by two figures: The American composer Marc Blitzstein, who played a key role in the reception of Kurt Weill in the U.S., and Weill himself. Bernstein's career had become intertwined with that of Blitzstein in his student years. In 1939, while studying at Harvard, he mounted a production of Blitzstein's *The Cradle will Rock* which Blitzstein later wrote "packed a thrilling wallop for me." Bernstein in turn saw the composer, who was 13 years his senior, as a "giant who had written those notes which seduced my soul."

The Cradle will Rock marked a new phase in Blitzstein's career in which he pursued the ideal of socially relevant music theatre combining elements of both European modernism and American vernacular. At the encouragement of Bertolt Brecht, the "play in music" explored the struggle between union workers and the ruthless Mr. Mister in the fictional town of Steeltown, U.S.A. Allusions to Weill's *Die Dreigroschenoper* are only thinly veiled, particularly through the numbers of the prostitute, Moll, as the show takes on the hypocrisy of capitalist society.

Weill's work was also an eye-opener for Bernstein. He had encountered a recording with Lotte Lenya singing the role of Jenny in 1937 which he later recalled made him "instantly" fall in love. But he credited Blitzstein in large part for his intimacy with the music. "Through Marc I came to feel that I knew Kurt Weill," he wrote. "His drives, his courage, his foibles and his great humanity."

If Blitzstein's own contact with Weill had been limited, his English adaptation of *Die Dreigroschenoper*, *The Threepenny Opera*, started an American renaissance for the German émigré's pre-exile works (it was also the most lucrative undertaking of Blitzstein's career). Bernstein conducted the premiere at



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Marc Blitzstein and Leonard Bernstein at Tanglewood.

Brandeis University in 1952 during the same festival that unveiled his opera *Trouble in Tahiti*. Dedicated to Blitzstein, the score of that opera was finished in the cabin outside Saratoga, New York, where the elder composer had been working on his musical drama, *Reuben Reuben*.

As Bernstein rose to international fame, he remained a champion of Blitzstein's work. He premiered Blitzstein's *Airborne Symphony* with the New York City Symphony and, in 1955, tried to convince the artistic administration of La Scala to mount the opera *Regina*. Bernstein was so passionate about the drama's historic importance that he had published a preview piece in the *New York Times* upon its 1949 premiere, writing of an operatic tradition that is "wholly an outgrowth of our culture."

It was against this backdrop that he created *Trouble in Tahiti* which, like *Regina*, offers an unflinchingly honest portrayal of American domestic life in an idiom that veers freely between the popular and the melodramatic. The "opera in seven scenes" was in some ways a problem child. Blitzstein admitted to friends while "lively musically," *Trouble in Tahiti* suffered from a "dreary" story and "somewhat inept lyrics." Bernstein himself called the work "half-baked" after the premiere (he

would write the sequel *A Quiet Place* three decades later, which in the 1984 version incorporates the first opera as a flashback). But Bernstein's score is a formal experiment that created an important stepping stone toward *Candide* and *West Side Story*.

Even more so than by Blitzstein, that path was paved by the innovations of Weill, who had probed the possibilities of a mixed genre defying the boundaries between opera and musical theatre. The development began in his collaborations with Brecht and continued in the U.S. The "musical play" *Lady in the Dark* weaves together dream sequences with the everyday life of a magazine editor as she undergoes psychoanalysis. The "American opera" *Street Scene* explores stories of thwarted romance at a New York apartment house, quoting Wagner and Puccini while integrating a range of popular idioms.

Weill's ambitions may have been too lofty, for *Street Scene* has not maintained a foot in commercial theatres but rather opera houses. *West Side Story*, on the other hand, entered the mainstream (foremost through the 1961 film version) as it told of warring Puerto Rican and Caucasian-American factions on

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The Celebration Continues

RAVINIA

by Craig Urquhart

Ravinia's multi-season celebration of Leonard Bernstein, which kicked off during his centennial last summer, enters its second year curated by conductor Marin Alsop. The celebration of Bernstein as artist, activist, and educator will continue through his music as well as that of composers he championed. In addition to concerts in all three of Ravinia's concert venues, an exciting fourth venue, the newly constructed Ravinia Music Box Experience Center, will open this summer featuring a futuristic installation about Bernstein.

The festivities will begin on July 20 with an encore performance of *MASS*, which the *Chicago Tribune* declared one of the best concerts in 2018. As with last year, this performance will feature the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO), Chicago Children's Chorus, and the Highland Park High School Marching Band, with Paulo Szot returning in the role of Celebrant, and Marin Alsop conducting.

Next up will be two performances of Bernstein's opera, *Trouble in Tahiti*, starring Patricia Racette and Paulo Szot, with the CSO conducted by Alsop.

The Knights, conducted by Erik Jacobsen, will reprise their acclaimed Boston production of *Candide*, with choreography by John Heginbotham.

Songfest, Bernstein's settings of texts by a diverse grouping of American poets, will feature singers from Ravinia's Steans Music Institute and the Caroga Arts Ensemble, under the baton of Alexander Platt.

Two iconic films, *West Side Story* and *On The Waterfront*, will be screened with live orchestra performing Bernstein's music. David Newman will conduct.

The Bobby Sanabria Mutiverse Big Band will perform selections from their 2019 Grammy-nominated album *West Side Story Reimagined*.

Composers that Bernstein championed will also be represented. Conductor Lionel Bringuier and pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet will join the CSO in a performance of Gershwin's *Concerto in F* in a program that also includes two Bernstein favorites, Stravinsky's *Firebird Suite* and Ravel's *Mother Goose Suite*. Bernstein's admiration for the music of Gustav Mahler will be celebrated with a performance of *Mahler's Symphony No. 8: Symphony of a*

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Thousand, Alsop and the CSO and chorus performing. The soloists will be sopranos Angela Mease, Leah Crocetto and Joëlle Harvey; mezzo sopranos Michelle DeYoung and Kelley O'Connor; tenor Joseph Kaiser; baritone Paulo Szot; and bass Ryan Speedo Green.

Jamie Bernstein will join Marin Alsop and the CSO for *Lenny: A Musical Portrait*. This evening of symphonic works, songs, and stories will evoke the spirit of Bernstein as composer, activist, and family man. Guest artists include pianist André Watts, baritone Paulo Szot, and mezzo soprano Michelle DeYoung.

Ravinia President and CEO Welz Kauffman said, "There aren't enough hyphens to string together all of Bernstein's titles and accomplishments, and Ravinia's multi-season celebration is hoping to present a well-rounded remembrance of both the common man and the superstar artist who did so much to shape our musical tastes and further our understanding."

For more information: <https://www.ravinia.org>



Pacific Music Festival 30th Season

This summer the Pacific Music Festival (PMF), an international educational music festival founded in Sapporo by Leonard Bernstein, is celebrating its 30th season. Bernstein founded PMF in his last months, as part of his commitment to educating young musicians and fostering international mutual understanding through music. Bernstein said, "The Pacific Music Festival is one very large aspect of this commitment, which I hereby make for the rest of my life."

The heart of PMF is the Orchestra Academy, made up of

young musicians from all parts of the globe, who are chosen through auditions. They receive instruction from a faculty of musicians from the Vienna Philharmonic, Berlin Philharmonic, and leading orchestras of the United States.

PMF 2019 will feature Christoph Eschenbach, who took on the role of PMF Artistic Director the year after Bernstein's passing, and has gone on to serve in the role nine times. Maestro Eschenbach will lead Mahler's *Symphony No. 8* in celebration of the 30th anniversary.

The annual Leonard Bernstein Memorial Concert will be held this year on July 13, with the PMF Orchestra led by Marin Alsop, who attended the first season of PMF as a protégée of Bernstein. The festival will culminate with Shostakovich's *Symphony No. 4* led by current PMF Artistic Director Valery Gergiev.

The Festival runs from July 6 until August 2.

For more information: <https://www.pmf.or.jp/en/>

“Nothing More Than This?": *Candide* as Existential Vaudeville at Komische Oper Berlin

by David Savran

Imagine a world that persistently rewards the rich and powerful while immiserating the masses. Imagine a paternalist cartel that scapegoats minorities and refugees, while treating women like chattel to be bought, coddled, and dumped. Voltaire did so in his 1759 novella *Candide* by observing—and ruthlessly satirizing—the world around him. Leonard Bernstein and his many collaborators did so two centuries later in their controversial musical/opera. Sixty years on, Director Barrie Kosky, at Komische Oper in Berlin, has followed suit and succeeded rapturously in resurrecting *Candide* by underscoring both its historicity and its disturbing contemporaneity.

The theatrical dynamism of Bernstein's *Candide* lies in the violent contradiction between the ravishing beauty and wit of its score and the relentless succession of horrors that comprises its plot. This contradiction is not a flaw; rather it is the crux of the piece's unique brilliance and power. Because a realistic production is unthinkable, most directors emphasize the farcical, fantastical nature of *Candide*'s brutalities and the two-dimensionality of its protagonists. Barrie Kosky does as well, but by radicalizing the clash between the sublime and the ridiculous, he turns it into what he calls an “existential vaudeville” that takes *Candide*'s sparkling comedy seriously by mining it for tragedy. For all its silliness, Kosky's *Candide* disproves Leibnizian optimism by depicting the realest of all possible worlds as a merry-go-round of exploitation, greed, and slaughter. In underscoring this message, Kosky's vaudeville (based on John Caird's 1999 version for the Royal National Theatre) mines the intriguing parallels between Bernstein's operetta and two plays that took the world by storm during the decade of *Candide*'s launch, Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* and *Endgame*. Like Beckett's plays, Kosky's new production honors *Candide*'s



MONIKA RITTSCHAUS

absurdist logic as the inexorable law of a ruthlessly arbitrary and unjust world. In recognizing the piece's kinship with its absurdist contemporaries, this production exposes the philosophical fatalism that underlay the post-World War II boom years of Bernstein's heyday and illuminates the darkest corners of our own world.

Candide's contradictions are nowhere more apparent than in the “Auto-da-fé.” Kosky's is a contemporary media event, complete with cameras and boom microphones, which climaxes in the hanging of Pangloss and flogging of Candide. The throngs of merrymakers are joined by a chorus line of leggy, can-canning show “girls” (both women and men) in Vegas-style bright blue and white one-pieces, with oversized feather headdresses and trains. The trials of Pangloss and Candide are preceded by two others, the first of a pair of cartoonish Jews and the second of a refugee couple carrying plastic tote bags (the woman wearing a head scarf). Both groups are nonchalantly condemned and machine-gunned, then hastily dragged off-stage by the show “girls.”

Kosky's pair of unmistakably contemporary refugees is but one of many examples of the renewed relevance his *Candide* contrives. The first act closes with Candide and

company (along with the chorus) en route to the New World in three large rubber dinghies that clearly evoke the leaky, makeshift barks that refugees are forced to take while fleeing from North Africa to Europe. In Surinam, *Candide*'s servant Martin, “the most wretched, pessimistic person” *Candide* could find, is re-generated as a woman-played-by-a-man street-sweeper in the tradition of the scene-stealing, comic travesty roles of Monteverdi and Cavalli. Martin's carnivalesque drag (as working-class executor of distinctly feminized labor) gives his misanthropy a fascinatingly grotesque twist.

For all *Candide*'s trials and tribulations, it is questionable whether Voltaire's protagonist ends his journey an enlightened man. Bernstein's hero, however, especially in later editions of *Candide*, is given a moment of illumination, an elegiac aria “Nothing More Than This” that follows his ridiculously overdue acknowledgment of Cunegonde's venality. In Kosky's production, the performance of this aria has resonances that reach far beyond Cunegonde's betrayal, becoming a bitter rejection of Pangloss's irresponsible optimism and a tragic acknowledgment of the precarity and evanescence of earthly things.

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Scene from *Candide* at Komische Oper, Berlin.

Remembering Sono Osato (1919-2018)

by Carol J. Oja

Sono Osato, the original “Ivy Smith” in *On the Town* of 1944, passed away in December at age 99. A brilliant dancer in America’s golden age of ballet, Osato was prominent within a generation of ballerinas, including Agnes De Mille, who brought ballet to Broadway musicals. Osato exhibited personal and political courage, challenging the racial restrictions that defined performance in the mid-twentieth century.

Born in 1919, Osato was *Nikkei*—that is, a child of the Japanese diaspora—whose father Shoji Osato immigrated from Japan. Her mother, Frances Fitzpatrick, was an American of Irish-French-Canadian descent. Because of race-based immigration laws at the time, Frances lost her American citizenship when she married a Japanese national. Sono was born in Nebraska and moved with her family to Chicago, where in 1934—at age 14—she auditioned successfully for the Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo. Thus as a teenager, Sono was suddenly working in a renowned transnational troupe, made up largely of Russian exiles. The New York

newspaper *PM* later asserted her to be the company’s “youngest member and its first American.”

One of Sono’s signature roles with the Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo was “The Siren” in George Balanchine’s *The Prodigal Son*, which premiered in 1938. At the start of World War II, the troupe relocated to New York City, and Sono moved to Ballet Theatre, which was then a relatively new American company. She became a celebrity, attracting the attention of major photographers including George Platt Lynes. Sono’s initial Broadway role was in Kurt Weill’s *One Touch of Venus*, which opened in 1943. For it, she won the first Donaldson Award (a predecessor of the Tony Awards) for Best Female Dancer.

While Sono danced in New York City, her father Shoji was targeted by the anti-Japanese hysteria of World War II. The day after Pearl Harbor, he was arrested and detained in Chicago by the F.B.I., despite the fact that his government records, obtained under the Freedom of Information Act, show no sign of subversive activity. Rather he was presumed guilty because of professional associations with the Japanese tourist bureau, having drawn on his national heritage to forge business alliances across borders.

Xenophobia also impacted Sono’s career. In the spring of 1942, when Ballet Theatre toured Mexico, she could not obtain a passport because of her Japanese heritage. The next year, under Executive Order 9066 which aimed to remove all people of Japanese ancestry from the West Coast, she was prohibited from performing with the troupe in California.

Then miraculously—courageously—Sono was hired for the starring role in *On the Town*. There she played a character crowned as “Miss Turnstiles,” a beauty queen of the subway, and she did so in an era when no Asian American stars appeared on Broadway or had the slightest chance of winning real beauty pageants. Furthermore, *On the Town*’s interracial casting

flirted with what was then called miscegenation. As a central plot-line of the show, a sailor named Gabey—played by John Battles, an actor of Caucasian heritage—pursued Sono’s Ivy. A promotional photo shows Osato standing seductively over Battles, giving a sense of how brazenly their on-stage romance was portrayed.

Because of Shoji’s detention, he could not attend his daughter’s opening night on Broadway. Yet Sono continued to dance. She also became active politically—for example, demonstrating on behalf of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, which was defying Franco’s dictatorship in Spain, and also against Jim Crow segregation in the theaters of Washington, D.C. *The Pacific Citizen*, published by the Japanese American Citizens League, followed her activities, writing in 1946 that Sono “is now as well known for her social conscience as she is for her dancing and acting.” After *On the Town*, she appeared in the Broadway show *Ballet Ballads* (1948) and the Hollywood film *The Kissing Bandit* (1949).

In the early 1950s, Sono faced a new set of hurdles because of the Communist-hysteria blacklist. In her remarkable autobiography *Distant Dances* (1980), she recounted the damage that resulted, including the loss of a hoped-for career in television. She returned to the stage in 1955, this time in a revue titled *Once Over Lightly* with Zero Mostel and Jack Gilford, with comedy sketches by the young Mel Brooks. The show was not successful, however, and Sono essentially retired from performance.

Sono Osato married Victor Elmaleh (a real estate developer and entrepreneur) in 1943, and she is survived by their two sons, Niko and Antonio. ■

Carol J. Oja is the author of Bernstein Meets Broadway: Collaborative Art in a Time of War (Oxford University Press), which includes a chapter about Osato.

Sono Osato posing in her “couch girl” costume for *On the Town*, together with John Battles.



PHOTO: ROBBINS DANCE DIVISION, THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS.

Remembering André Previn (1929-2019)

by John Mauceri

Sitting down with André Previn for a chat was an exercise in a kaleidoscopic history of 20th century music. For three years he welcomed me into his apartment where he sat at his desk, surrounded by stacks of papers, books, and scores, accompanied by the frequent interjections of his cat.

Previn had been severely challenged by old age, and when asked “How are you?” would usually answer, “It doesn’t matter.” His death at the age of 89 was not particularly surprising, but it still was a shock to realize that he surely was the last musical titan to emerge out of World War II and the racial policies of the Nazis. Were it not for the vagaries of his native country, the Berlin-born Previn might have become Germany’s wunderkind instead of America’s.

Since he was eleven years younger than Leonard Bernstein, Lenny’s life and career cast a mighty shadow onto André’s. When Previn began conducting lessons with Pierre Monteux, the old maestro asked his pupil if he had been watching Leonard Bernstein. When Previn answered in the affirmative, Monteux said, “I have never known an orchestra to play louder because I jumped in the air.” Lesson taken. The press liked to see André as the “next Bernstein,” and has hardly stopped looking for the next Bernstein even today. But just as there will never be another Leonard Bernstein, their will never be another André Previn.

What they had in common remains pretty obvious: early signs of genius, catholicity of taste, pianistic virtuosity, media attention, compositions ranging from one grand opera to chamber works and musicals, and a profound international success with the standard European classical repertory. They occasionally met—most famously for a performance of Beethoven’s *Triple Concerto* at Wolf Trap’s celebration of Bernstein’s 60th birthday, with Yehudi Menuhin and Mstislav Rostropovich as co-soloists.

But André was his own man and

was in fact quite unlike Bernstein, making it important to celebrate his genius as uniquely his own. Previn, for example, became Previn in Hollywood, working during a time when the first World War II refugee composers—Rozsa, Waxman, Tiomkin and Korngold—were still active, and the next generation, the American born and trained Jerry Goldsmith, Elmer Bernstein, Alex North, and Bernard Herrmann were emerging; Previn’s abilities as a composer, arranger, and conductor were first noticed and celebrated there; his work on *My Fair Lady*, *Gigi*, and *Porgy and Bess* were the culmination of an astounding facility that garnered him four Academy Awards. His dry sense of humor was clearly on display when he recently spoke to me of his first picture, *The Sun Comes Up*, which starred Jeanette MacDonald and Llassie. (“There was a lot of barking but not much dialogue in a Llassie movie. I got to write a lot of music.”) André was eighteen years old and was smart enough to take that assignment seriously, leading to what could have been a lifetime job.

André surprised everyone when he left Hollywood, slamming the door by writing a book called *No Minor Chords* that many saw as perpetuating the idea that Hollywood is run by idiots and charlatans. But André wanted other things, things to fill his soul, and he did just that by composing his own music and becoming a major conductor and teacher, much as Lenny did. More of a fixture on British television, Previn was a household name in the UK.

And he was a brilliant jazz musician. He may have looked at jazz as a hobby, but his achievements in the world of jazz made him famous to a previously untapped audience by combining jazz with Broadway for the first time. When I asked him about his 1959 album, *André Previn and His Pals—West Side Story*, he said that Columbia Records agreed to record it because Bernstein had heard Previn perform his take on the score and encouraged the company to bring André and his jazz colleagues into the studio.



GUY DELORT

The first time André and I met, our conversations included: how to beat the opening bars of Brahms’s *Third Symphony*; Boulez’s opinion of Shostakovich (“He is not a composer.” “Pierre, you’re joking.” He was not.); how he recorded *My Fair Lady* with Rex Harrison’s insisting on performing the musical numbers live to the camera; our shared history with his MGM piano colleague Mel Powell (my composition teacher and the man who played *Tom & Jerry* cartoon sound tracks with André); his love for his composition teacher Mario Castelnuovo Tedesco; his next book; and music he was writing for Renée Fleming. He was kind and soft-spoken, though he could rise to episodes of titanic anger when he sensed injustice or incompetence. It should come as no surprise that he held very strong opinions.

During those three years that I visited André Previn, I somehow expected that he would last forever, answering questions that spanned eighty years of making music. Now it is up to us—those who were privileged to know him—to retell his stories. ■

Maestro John Mauceri conducted Sony Classical’s recently released world premiere recording of Danny Elfman’s Violin Concerto. His second book for Alfred A. Knopf, For the Love of Music—A Conductor’s Guide to the Art of Listening, is scheduled for publication in September.

Violinist Yehudi Menuhin, cellist Mstislav Rostropovich, Leonard Bernstein, and pianist André Previn.

IN THE news

Grammy Hall of Fame



The Grammy Hall of Fame recently announced 25 new recordings to be inducted this year, including Leonard Bernstein conducting the premiere recording of his

theatre piece, *MASS*. *MASS* now joins Bernstein's other inductee recordings: the *Complete Mahler Symphonies* with The New York Philharmonic (NYP)/London

Symphony Orchestra; his recording of Shostakovich *Symphony No. 5* (NYP); the Barber *Violin Concerto* (NYP with Isaac Stern); Ives: *Symphony No. 2* (NYP); and Copland: *Appalachian Spring* (NYP).

Bernstein's daughter, Jamie Bernstein, remarked, "My siblings and I are thrilled that our father's piece *MASS* is getting its due from the Grammy Hall of Fame. Of all his compositions, *MASS* is the most personal—the one into which he put the most of himself. So in honoring the piece, the Recording Academy honors Leonard Bernstein himself—in all his multifacetedness, all his melodiousness, and all of his enormous heart." ■

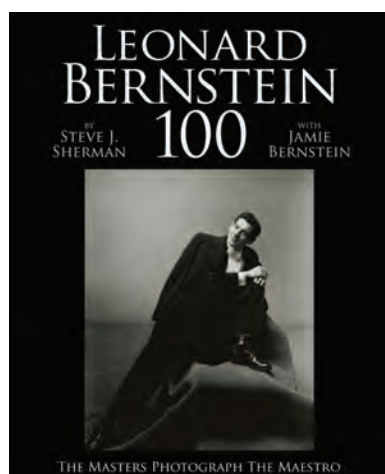
Leonard Bernstein 100

As part of the celebrations of Leonard Bernstein's Centennial, photographer Steve J. Sherman, together with Jamie Bernstein, assembled 100 iconic photos of the Maestro in a handsome and informative book published by powerHouse Cultural Entertainment, Incorporated.

The reviews have been outstanding.

"*Leonard Bernstein 100* by Steve J. Sherman with Jamie Bernstein, is a love affair between Leonard Bernstein and the camera, with invaluable information about the maestro's life and career... This book opens the door to the maestro as nothing else can... As we turn the last page, we are left with a sense of knowing this man, and being a better person for it. This is a book that is read once, and then once again, and again – each time gaining new insight into a true maestro."

– Judith Reveal, *New York Journal of Books*, January 2019



"There is a range of emotions that informs the images... The book features many unpublished photos of Mr. Bernstein by some of the most famous photographers in the world, from Irving Penn to W. Eugene Smith, Richard Avedon, and Henri Cartier-Bresson. After all, master does recognize master."

– Rena Silverman, *The New York Times*, LENS December 11, 2018

"This handsome tome is a photographic tribute to Leonard Bernstein in his centenary year... The photographs themselves are beautifully reproduced, one to a page so that you are able to see them in a fairly large size that brings out the quality... A splendid gift for the Bernstein aficionado."

– Mike Langhorne, *Classical Source*, January 2019

"An elegant, captivating collection of significant photographs to celebrate the iconic 20th Century composer/conductor's Centennial in 2018... This rich trove gives generations to come an unforgettable, enlightening glimpse into the life of an artist who changed the face of culture in the 20th century—a life documented by many of the most important photographic artists of that era."

– The Boston Symphony Orchestra – website shop, December 2018 ■

Theatrical Reviews

WONDERFUL TOWN: Vienna

Wonderful Town, in an acclaimed Volksoper Wien co-production with the Dresden Staatsoperetta, has been delighting Vienna audiences.

The title roles of Ruth and Eileen Sherwood were played by Sarah Schütz and Olivia Delauré. Drew Sarich sang the role of Robert Baker. The production was directed by Matthias David and choreographed by Melissa King. James Holmes conducted.

“a grand finish of the Bernstein Year” – Magazine: Vormagazin
“Wonderful Town at the Volksoper is an all around successfully good mood evening. No wonder the viewers couldn’t stay in their seats at the end.” – Mottingers Meinung

TROUBLE IN TAHITI, A QUIET PLACE; Aachen, Germany

The Aachen State Theater recently presented Bernstein’s two operas, *Trouble in Tahiti* and *A Quiet Place*. The Director Nina Russi chose the chamber orchestration of *Trouble in Tahiti* and the 2013 adaption of *A Quiet Place*, both adapted by Garth

Edwin Sunderland, Music Editor of The Leonard Bernstein Office. They were presented on the same evening. *Trouble in Tahiti* had Fanny Lustaud as Dinah and Ronan Collett as Sam. For *A Quiet Place* the four main characters were Wieland Satter as Old Sam; Katharina Hagopian as Dede (daughter); Fabio Lesuisse as Junior (Son); and Patrick Cook as Francois (Dede’s friend.) The Symphony Orchestra of Aachen was led by Christopher Ward.

“What an evening!”
 – Die Deutsche Bühne
“A visitation of this production is highly recommended”
 – Der Opernfreund
“... a moving scenic execution of Bernsteins bitter society satire”
 – Online Music Magazine

ON THE TOWN: Leipzig

Musikalische Komödie/Oper Leipzig recently presented *On The Town*. The production, in German, was directed by Cusch Jung, with musical direction by Christoph-Joannes Eichhorn. The cast featured Jeffrey Krueger as Gabey; Benjamin Sommerfeld as Ozzie; and Andreas Rainer as



Chip. Ivy Smith was performed by Patricia Klages; Hildy Esterhazy by Zodwa Selele; Claire De Loone by Nora Lentner. Melissa Jung was Lucy Schmeeler and Sabine Töpfer Madame Dilly. The role of Pitkin W. Bridgework was performed by Michael Raschle.

The sold-out performances received highly complimentary press:
“three truly entertaining thrilling hours” – Die Deutsche Bühne
“voluptuous, sensual, vivid and magnificent” – Kultur Regional „
“Just when the piece is over, you immediately wish it to start all over again” – kultur-extra.de ■

Scene from
On the Town in
Leipzig.

West Side Story Down Under

This year *West Side Story* is taking Australia by storm.

Most recently the **Handa Opera on Sydney Harbor** presented a new production of *West Side Story* directed by Francesca Zambello with choreography by Julio Monge. Native Aussies Alexander Lewis and Julie Lea Goodwin performed Tony and Maria.

“...this West Side Story is a solid success. In fact, in many important ways it might be the most successful spectacle floated yet.”

– Daily Review, Jason Whittaker

In addition, **Opera Australia** and **GWB Entertainment** will present the BB Group production of the original production of *West Side Story*. This production is directed by Joey McKneely, who also recreates the timeless original Jerome Robbins choreography. The musical supervisor is conductor Donald Chan. The young Australian cast will feature Todd Jacobsson as Tony and Sophie Salverson as Maria. In addition to performances in Australia, this production will also be seen in Germany. ■

WEST SIDE STORY

PERFORMANCE DATES

April 6 -28 Melbourne, Australia: Melbourne Arts Center

June 25 – July 3 Cologne Germany: Musical Dome

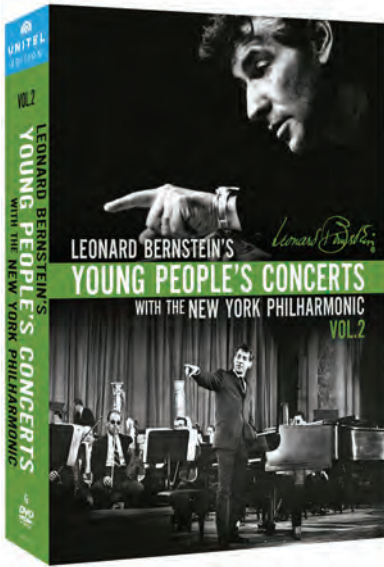
July 6 – 14 Berlin, Germany: Staatsoper Unter den Linden

July 17 – August 8 Dresden, Germany: Semperoper

August 16 – October 6 Sydney, Australia: Sydney Opera House

October 10 – October 27 Canberra, Australia: Canberra Theatre Centre

November 28 – December 15 Adelaide, Australia: Adelaide Festival Centre



New Releases

Major Entertainment, in conjunction with Unitel, are presenting a new release of *Leonard Bernstein's Young People's Concerts* with The New York Philharmonic. Previously only available in the United States, the groundbreaking series has been digitally remastered on DVD and Blu-ray for worldwide distribution.

The 52 programs will be released in three volumes. Volumes 1 and 2 are currently available, with Volume 3 coming soon.

Major Entertainment has also released numerous DVDs of other Bernstein performances.

For more information: <https://www.cmajor-entertainment.com>

(continued on page 14)

Leonard Bernstein at 100: Jeremiah Soloists



Bernstein's *Symphony No. 1, Jeremiah*, was particularly well represented during the Centennial season. Here are the many mezzo sopranos who sang the searing final movement of the symphony. ■

Top to Bottom, Left to Right:

Row 1: Annie Rosen; Clara Osowski; Claude Eichenberger; Elisabeth Kulman; Elizabeth DeShong; Guadalupe Barrientos; Jenny Carlstedt; Huiling Zhu; Jamie Barton; Jennifer Johnson Cano

Row 2: Hadar Halevy; Jessica Gillingwater; J'Nai Bridges; Kate Symonds-Joy; Kelley O'Connor;

Laura Beckel Thoreson; Liane Keegan; Marie-Nicole Lemieux; Rinat Shaham

Row 3: Sasha Cooke; Shira Karmon; Sophi Koch; Stephanie Foley Davis; Susan Platts; Tamara Mumford; Tatia Jibladze; Vera Savage; Zlata Khershberg; Zoie Reams

Bernstein, Blitzstein and Weill, *continued*

(*continued from page 5*)
the streets of New York. There are numbers that lean toward opera (the “Tonight” Quintet), more catchy songs (“I Feel Pretty”) and those that reside somewhere in between (“Maria”).

Candide, meanwhile, which premiered a year before *West Side Story*, in 1956, pays homage to the likes of Cunegonde and Bellini while maintaining a distinctly American carefree spirit, satirizing the hunt for communists during the McCarthy era while reveling in the glamour of Old World culture. Looking back through the lens of today’s world, it is easy to become nostalgic for a time when it was so self-explanatory for artists to cross the Atlantic, philosophically and otherwise. If Bernstein died before realizing his vision of an opera about the Holocaust, *Candide* is a biting satire that shows the possibility of a better world in which people are not judged by their social status, religious background or political affiliations.

Despite a life-long struggle to reconcile his inner tension between the pensive composer and the jet-setting conductor, he managed to produce stage works that combine his gifts as a communicator and musical craftsman. That did not stop

Stephen Sondheim from rewriting “The Saga of Jenny” from *Lady in the Dark* as “The Saga of Lenny” upon Bernstein’s 70th birthday, teasing him about the inability to make up his mind: “Poor Lenny/Ten gifts too many/the curse of being versatile/ To show how bad the curse is/We’ll need a lot of verses/and take a little Weill.” As the lyrics tacitly acknowledge, Bernstein drew important impulses from the émigré composer as he created works that both educate and entertain. The comparison of scores by Weill, Blitzstein and Bernstein continues to reveal how a specific tradition was absorbed and transformed into musical hybrids that remain beloved on stages around the world. ■

Rebecca Schmid is completing her dissertation about the compositional reception of Weill in the music theatre works of Blitzstein and Bernstein at the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. She contributes regularly to the Financial Times and International New York Times and has moderated and written program notes for such organizations as the Karajan Music Tech Conference, Metropolitan Opera and Salzburg Festival.

Candide, *continued*

(*continued from page 7*)

Like Bernstein, Kosky does not end *Candide* in disgust or resignation. Rather, his staging of the social collective in the final number squarely addresses the contemporary world of which we are citizens. This world, moreover, is represented literally in Kosky’s production by the repeated appearance of characters carrying small globes. When Voltaire is revealed at the top of the show, wearing a gargantuan wig, he is carrying a globe. During the opening scene in the Westphalian schoolhouse, a large colored map of the world hangs on the back wall bearing the legend: world climate zones. Just before the final number, a huge inflated globe

appears upstage and slowly rolls toward the audience, only to be intercepted by *Candide* and Cunegonde and then hoisted aloft and gently spun by the chorus. The presence of this miniature planet gives a new meaning and urgency to one of the most resplendent finales in all musical theatre. “This is our world,” it seems to say, “now threatened by man-made apocalypse. Guard it well, protect it, make our garden grow.” ■

David Savran is the Vera Mowry Roberts Chair in American Theatre; Distinguished Professor of Theatre and Performance; and at The Graduate Center, City University of New York. ©David Savron used by permission

[Note to Readers]

Selected Performances

Dear Readers,

Leonard Bernstein at 100 is well into its second spectacular year, and the tally on the database has soared past 5,000! As there are still quite a number of performances upcoming, we continue to experience our wonderful problem of lacking the space to list them all in this newsletter. And so, for a complete listing of upcoming performances, we request once again that you visit our website:

<https://leonardbernstein.com/at100>

Prelude, Fugue & Riffs will be sent upon request.

Please send all correspondence to:

Craig Urquhart

Prelude, Fugue & Riffs

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e-mail: curquhart@leonardbernstein.com

We appreciate notice of any performances or events featuring the music of Leonard Bernstein or honoring his creative life and we shall do our best to include such information in forthcoming calendars.

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Leonard Bernstein

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LOOKING ahead

New Releases, continued

(continued from page 12)

BelAir Classiques has recently released the Opéra de Toulon's 2018 production of *Wonderful Town* on DVD and Blu-ray. This production was directed by Olivier Bénèzech with musical direction by Larry Blank.

Westdeutscher Rundfunk has released a 3 CD collection: *Leonard Bernstein Piano and Chamber Music*. This collection features pianist Benjamin Nuss performing the complete solo piano works of Bernstein, and features the pianist/conductor Wayne Marshall performing the chamber music of Bernstein with soloists Maria Kliegel, cello; Marice Steger, recorder; and others. ■

