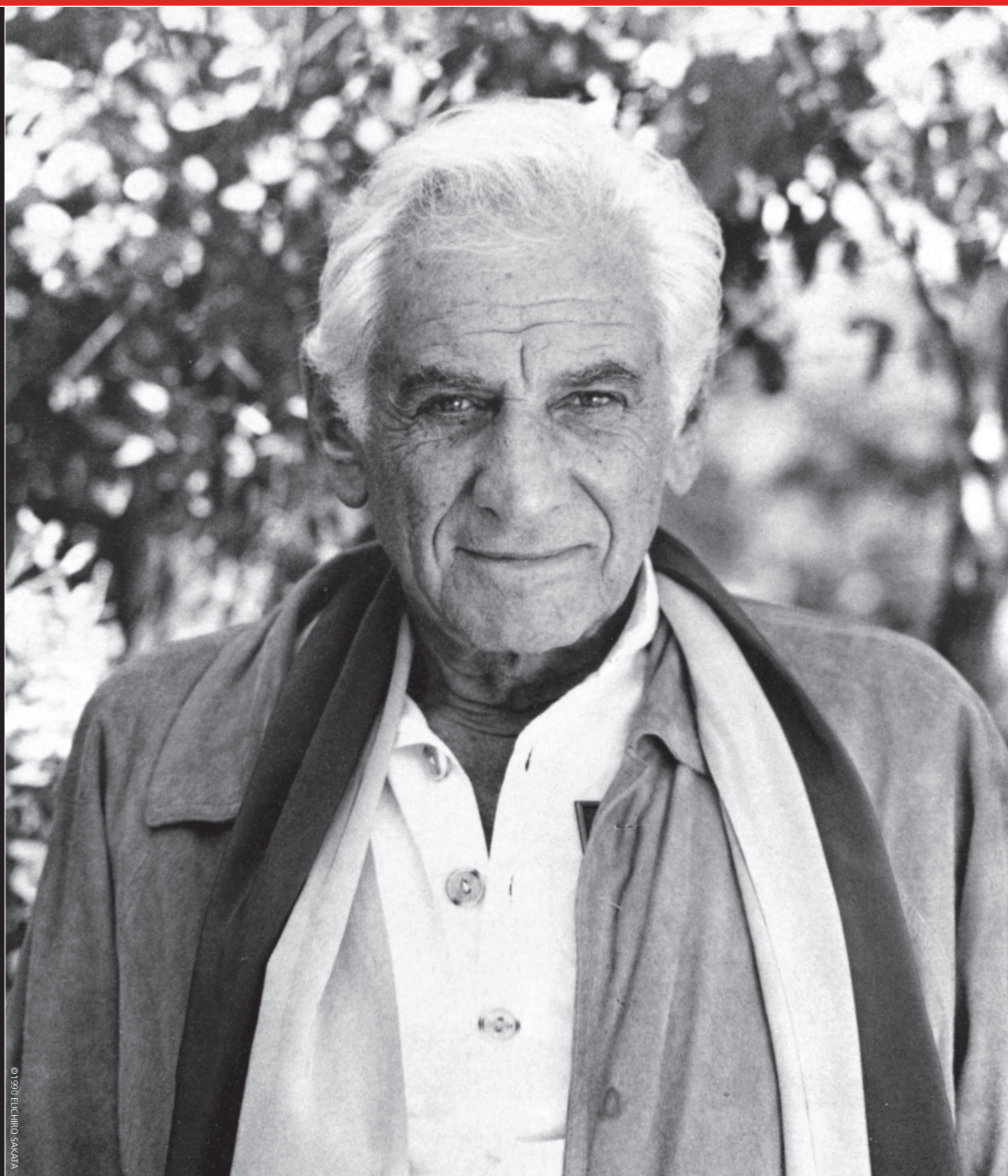


# PRELUDE, FUGUE RIFFS

News for Friends of  
Leonard Bernstein  
Summer 2020

# &



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# To Our Readers

This issue is remarkable for a number of reasons. First, it is our last paper-printed issue. From now on, *PF&R* will be an electronic newsletter—easily found, read, or downloaded on [leonardbernstein.com](http://leonardbernstein.com). We hope our readers will be flexible about this shift; we regret it ourselves, but times change, and it's the wise thing to do.

Speaking of times changing... the second noteworthy aspect of this issue is its publication in the midst of twin crises: our global wrestling match with the Coronavirus pandemic, and our national agony over racism and police brutality. We could have used Leonard Bernstein's artistry this summer—as well as his activist voice.

Although we sorely miss Bernstein's live presence, part of us is glad he's not here to experience the heartbreak of so much sickness and sorrow. An additional loss is the devastation of our cultural world. Once we find our way back to some kind of normal life, it will still be a long time before we gather in an enclosed space to listen to, say, *Chichester Psalms* performed by a densely packed orchestra and an even more densely packed chorus—or to watch a large cast of *Jets* and *Sharks* rumbling on the floor of a Broadway stage. But yes, these days will return. And while we wait, we eagerly anticipate Steven Spielberg's film remake of *West Side Story*, scheduled for release this December.

Another reason to be a little glad that Leonard Bernstein is not here during the Coronavirus pandemic is that he would have been very, very bad at social distancing. We count our blessings where we can—and we wish all our readers the best of health and plenty of activist strength. We look forward to meeting you online in the future. J.B. ■

## Welcome to the 70th Edition of

Yes, the 70th issue—and what a good time to review and reflect on the publication.

After Leonard Bernstein's death on October 14, 1990, the worldwide outpouring of grief and disbelief was overwhelming. There were so many cards and letters to the family and office of Bernstein that it was impossible to answer them all. The friends and fans wanted to know: what next? How do we keep this legacy alive, for all of us here now as well as for future generations?

It was this challenge that led to the creation of *PF&R*. Harry Kraut, the Executive Director of Amberson, decided that a newsletter with information about past, current and future events would be a good way to communicate with the many friends, fans, and business associates of Bernstein throughout the world.

The premiere issue of *PF&R* was mailed out in Autumn 1991, a year after Bernstein's death. This issue explored Bernstein's final visitation with his musical *Candide*, which he conducted in London in December 1989 and recorded for subsequent video distribution. The issue included special articles by librettist/lyricist Richard Wilbur and music journalist David Patrick Stearns.

There were articles by three young conductors, all of whom have gone on to thriving careers: Marin Alsop, Carl St. Clair, and Eiji Oue. Each shared their unique remembrances of their teacher. Michael Tilson Thomas also shared his thoughts about Bernstein and contributed an article about Bernstein's *Orchestral Suite from A Quiet Place*. And Bernstein's longtime friend and director of his concert films, Humphrey Burton, wrote about commencing his research on his now definitive biography of Bernstein.

The issue also reported about the many memorials held worldwide to honor Bernstein. All in all, a promising start for a new publication.

Over the years *PF&R* has had scores of contributors sharing their thoughts about the Maestro and his legacy. Members of the Bernstein

Family—Alexander, Jamie, and Nina, as well as brother Burton and cousins Michael and Karen—have shared memories. There were even a few posthumous contributions from Leonard Bernstein himself!

Bernstein's close business associates, such as Schuyler Chapin and Harry Kraut, and several of Bernstein's assistants—Jack Gottlieb, Charlie Harmon and Craig Urquhart—have also contributed over the years, as have those currently working on Bernstein musical projects, such as Jacob Slattery, Heather Wallace, and Music Editor Garth Edwin Sunderland.

The list of contributing music journalists is impressive. A partial list includes *New York Times* journalists Warren Hoge, Allan Kozinn, Tim Page, Anthony Tommasini, Rebecca Schmidt, and Daniel Wakin; London-based writers Richard Morrison and Ed Seckerson; and German journalist Klaus Geitel as well as Sedgwick Clark from *Musical America*.

As Bernstein's life also included so many recordings and television projects, *PF&R* has included many a fascinating report from behind the scenes. We heard from recording collaborators John McClure, Hanno Rinke, Hans Weber, and Jobst Eberhardt as well as the people who helped make the *Young People's Concerts* such a success: Roger Englander, Mary Rodgers, Candy Finkler, and Mary V. Ahearn.

The impressive roster of musicians who have shared in these pages reflects the scope of Bernstein's influence and mentorship during his lifetime. Conductors alone include Marin Alsop, Michael Barrett, Boris Brott, Donald Chan, JoAnne Faletta, Alexander Frey, Kristjan Järvi, John Mauceri, Michael Morgan, David Newman, Eiji Oue, Jonathan Sheffer, George Steel, and Michael Tilson Thomas.

Composers Ned Rorem, David Del Tredici, and Daron Hagen have shared their insights on their colleague.

We also learned about working with Bernstein and performing his music from such performers as singers Barbara Cook, Kelley Nasieff,



# Prelude, Fugue & Riffs (PF&R)



and Reri Grist; and violinists Robert McDuffie, Vadim Gluzman, and Clemens Hellsberg, who became the Director of the Vienna Philharmonic.

Bernstein's multifarious professional friendships are represented by contributions from Mayor Teddy Kolleck of Jerusalem; Dr. Mathilda Krim, founder of AMFAR; Carlos Moseley of the New York Philharmonic; Clive Gillinson of Carnegie Hall; librettist Stephen Wadsworth; Professor Peter Weiser of Vienna; and ABC anchorman Peter Jennings, to name just a few.

PF&R would not have been a true reflection of its subject without the warm and lively contributions from his lifelong friends and collaborators: Betty Comden and Adolph Green, Phyllis Newman, Sid Ramin, Stephen

Sondheim, and Stephen Schwartz among many others.

And an enormous shout-out is due to Frank Borsa and Jeffrey Wallace of BorsaWallace, the design firm that has faithfully worked with us since the beginning. They get all the credit, and our endless gratitude, for giving PF&R its excellent (and oft-imitated) look and feel.

*Prelude, Fugue & Riffs* has become a comprehensive and informative overview of all things Bernstein. As the world is changing, we must announce that this issue will be our last print version. But fear not: PF&R will continue to be produced, and it is our hope that the new digital version will be even more informative and engaging, using the latest technologies to embed further resources into the publication. The digital publication, as well as an archive of all 70

issues of the newsletter, will now be available online at [www.leonardbernstein.com/news/newsletter](http://www.leonardbernstein.com/news/newsletter).

We thank you, our loyal readers, for your enthusiastic support over the years, and we encourage your letters to the editors, as well as contributions to the Memory Project at [www.leonardbernstein.com/memories](http://www.leonardbernstein.com/memories).

Jamie Bernstein and Craig Urquhart—  
Editors

Be sure to sign up for PF&R online by adding your email to our list on our website at [www.leonardbernstein.com](http://www.leonardbernstein.com) or by writing to us at [pf@leonardbernstein.com](mailto:pf@leonardbernstein.com).







# Beethoven and Bernstein

by Arnd Richter

In September 1989, while in Bonn conducting several concerts as part of the 33rd Beethovenfest, Leonard Bernstein took the opportunity to visit the Beethoven House on Bonngasse. He left behind a musical message, hand-written on the back of an envelope, signing it “L.B.—unfortunately not *van*”.

“I’m rather a nut on the subject.” Bernstein attributed these words to himself, in a fictitious dialogue entitled “Why Beethoven?” that appears in Bernstein’s first book, *The Joy of Music*. If you transfer this question to the artistic existence of Leonard Bernstein, it cannot be answered in one sentence. Bernstein’s relationship with Beethoven is close, complex and multi-dimensional—as we can witness through Bernstein the conductor, the music educator, and also the composer.

Early on, Beethoven’s music made a lasting impression on Bernstein. At the age of 14, he attended a solo recital by Sergei Rachmaninoff with his father Samuel in Boston, where they heard one of Beethoven’s late piano sonatas—music which left the father completely cold, but profoundly moved the son.

The political activist Leonard Bernstein considered Beethoven a kindred spirit, often invoking him when it came to making sweeping humanitarian statements. For example, at the ceremony commemorating the 10th anniversary of the United Nations Charter in New York on October 24, 1955, Bernstein conducted the New York Philharmonic in the Kyrie and Gloria from the *Missa solemnis* as part of the program.

And most famously, on Christmas 1989, Bernstein conducted a legendary performance of the Ninth Symphony at the Schauspielhaus (now the Konzerthaus) in East Berlin to celebrate the fall of the Berlin Wall. For the occasion, Bernstein famously made one small alteration in Schiller’s text, changing the word “Freude” (“joy”) to “Freiheit” (freedom). When interviewed

about this change, Bernstein said, smiling: “I’m pretty sure Beethoven wouldn’t mind.” As a gesture of political inclusiveness, the Maestro reinforced the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra with members of the Sächsische Staatskapelle from Dresden; the orchestra of the Kirov Theatre in Leningrad; the London Symphony Orchestra; the New York Philharmonic; and the Orchestre de Paris.

Whenever the goal was to attract a large audience, Bernstein soon turned to Beethoven. At the benefit concert for the New York Philharmonic’s pension fund on May 15, 1960, Bernstein combined the *Choral Fantasy* Op. 80 with the Ninth Symphony, a work that was important to him from the first time he performed it in 1952. As evidence, Bernstein wrote euphorically to his parents: “My first performance of Beethoven’s Ninth was a triumph! I have been very worried about this event—the big test in every conductor’s life.”

From 1958 to 1969, Leonard Bernstein was Musical Director of the New York Philharmonic. During this time, many recordings were made under his baton—including a cycle of all nine Beethoven symphonies.

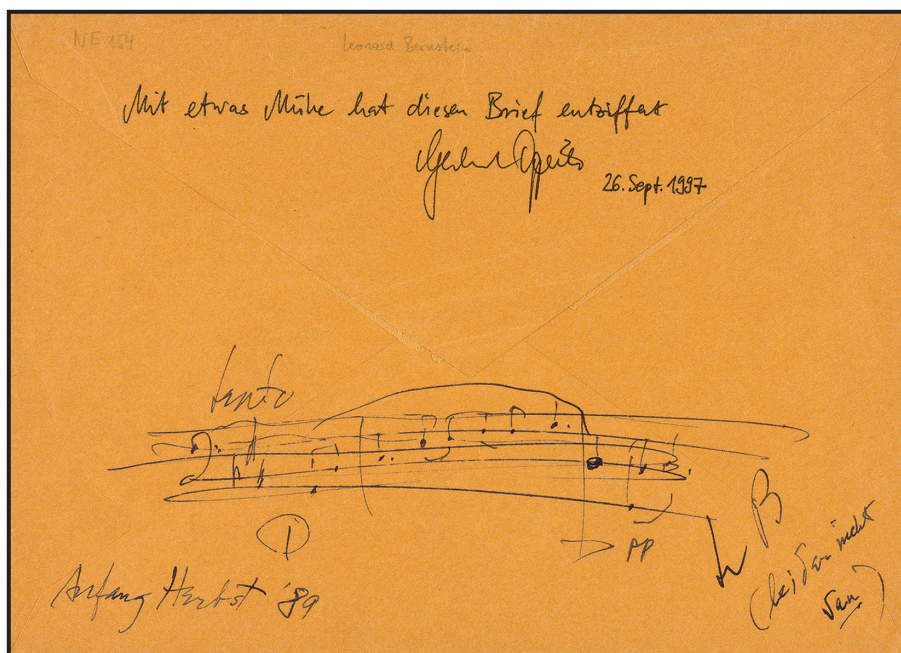
In early April 1966, Leonard Bernstein made his debut with the Vienna Philharmonic, becoming a wel-

come guest in Beethoven’s city on the Danube. Bernstein’s first Beethoven program in the Austrian capital came three years later, in May 1969, with three performances of the *Missa solemnis*. Then, in the early 1980s, he recorded all nine Beethoven symphonies with the Vienna Philharmonic. These live recordings were released by Deutsche Grammophon as a clear counterweight to the heavily and painstakingly edited studio recordings of Herbert von Karajan. Especially when it comes to Beethoven, Bernstein and Karajan are considered artistic antipodes to this day.

Two of Bernstein’s Beethoven recordings with the New York Philharmonic—the “Eroica” and the Fifth—were all but revolutionary for the times: the discs featured spoken introductions from the conductor himself. These were but two examples of Bernstein’s lifelong commitment to communicating verbally with his audiences about the music he was presenting.

Beethoven always played an important role in Bernstein’s various television presentations. On Bernstein’s very first television appearance, as part of the *Omnibus* series, he famously launched his exploration of the Fifth Symphony by walking across the opening page of the score,

(continued on page 11)



# Isaac Stern at 100: Lenny and Isaac

Leonard Bernstein and Isaac Stern recording *Serenade*; and at the premiere in Venice (bottom right).



COURTESY SONY CLASSICAL

by Gino Francesconi

A concert at Carnegie Hall on September 27, 1960, was the first event after the Hall had been saved from demolition and purchased by the City of New York in June. Taking part in that evening's concert was the

New York Philharmonic, conducted by Leonard Bernstein. The soloist was Isaac Stern, the very person who had convinced the City of New York to purchase Carnegie Hall for its historical significance. This was a time when old buildings weren't saved, but came down to make room for new ones going up. Lincoln Center was going up; Carnegie Hall was slated to come down. Isaac Stern saw it a little differently: Carnegie Hall could become a music academy that would train future musicians who would one day appear at Lincoln Center.

After intermission, as Isaac stepped through the stage right door to perform the Beethoven *Violin Concerto*, the audience rose and cheered. He recalled he was so emotionally overcome that he broke a string on his violin during the first movement. The concertmaster, John Corigliano, quickly gave his violin to Isaac while he changed the broken string, and then switched them back flawlessly. At the end of the performance the audience erupted into roars and applause. Isaac later recalled: "Lenny leaned over to me and said into my ear, 'Isn't it wonderful to be young and famous!'"

It was a remarkable moment out of many moments the two musicians shared over their 43-year association. They were two of the most extraordinary musicians of their day, but also so much more: social activists, educators, mentors, cultural ambassadors, and fathers.

Isaac Stern was born on July 21, 1920, in Kremenetz, in what was Poland and is now Ukraine. Leonard Bernstein's parents were born about 50 miles away, in the 1890s, in what was Russia and is also today Ukraine. Isaac was ten months old when his family immigrated to the west coast of the US. Sam Bernstein was seventeen, and Jennie Resnick twelve, when they respectively immigrated to the east coast, where Leonard was born, in Lawrence MA, in 1918.

Isaac was not a child prodigy. He didn't touch a violin until he was 8, and that's only because his friend across the street was playing a violin. Lenny didn't touch a piano until he was ten, when Aunt Clara gave the family her piano. Both boys made up for lost time and went beyond what anyone could foresee. Isaac made his recital debut at age ten, and per-



COURTESY SONY CLASSICAL



formed everywhere he could to anyone who would listen. He found a mentor in conductor Pierre Monteux with whom he made his debut with the San Francisco Symphony at seventeen.

Members of Sam Bernstein's family in Russia had been rabbis, and he wanted no less for his son than the best education possible: Boston Latin School and then Harvard. Music yes, musician, no! Yet young Lenny organized children's musicals, played the piano, taught the piano, composed, absorbed as much music as he could, and performed everywhere and to anyone who would listen. Like Isaac, he found a mentor in a conductor: Serge Koussevitzky.

Isaac's New York debut at Town Hall, in 1939, was a disappointment. As Isaac said, "The critics told me: not bad, but go home and practice." He spent hours riding a double-decker bus up and down Central Park West deciding his future. "Do I take that orchestra job in the Midwest or do I go home and work like crazy towards another try at New York?" He went home to San Francisco and practiced and performed non-stop. Meanwhile, Lenny was also working his way to New York.

Both made their Carnegie Hall debuts in 1943. Isaac's, on January 8th, met with rave reviews. Lenny's last-minute takeover for indisposed conductor Bruno Walter, on November 14th, made the front page of the New York Times. For Isaac, Carnegie Hall was "my musical bar mitzvah." For Lenny, Carnegie Hall made him known around the world.

They first performed together in Rochester, New York in 1947, and shortly thereafter, in Palestine, soon to become Israel. Both fell in love with the spirit of the young country. Both gave generously of their time, Isaac performing all over and Lenny leading the Palestine Orchestra and becoming Music Advisor to its subsequent incarnation, the Israel Philharmonic. He invited them to tour the US, in 1951, and before they set off on their 55-concert 40-city tour, the orchestra attended a gala at the Waldorf Astoria, followed

by a performance with Leonard Bernstein and Isaac Stern.

It was Isaac for whom Lenny composed his *Serenade, after Plato's Symposium*. They performed the premiere in Venice, Italy. A few nights before the premiere Isaac recalled they went to dinner and talked into the night: "...two friends opening their hearts talking about music, about family, our intimate dreams...that was one of the very special moments of my life."

The day of the performance Lenny wrote a note: "Isaac, my Isaac: Whatever happens tonight, fair or foul or flop, I want you to know how much I will always cherish your work on our Serenade. Nobody can play like you, and nobody can play the piece as you can. I have an eternal debt to you, and besides, I love you anyway. Thank you with all my heart. Lenny 12 Sept. 1954."

They would perform many times together for pension funds, for endowment campaigns, for benefits to raise money for causes such as the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, and sometimes just for fun. Their talks led to what would become the National Endowment for the Arts. They would make more than a dozen recordings together, winning a Grammy Award for the Samuel Barber *Violin Concerto*, which the composer said was the most beautiful performance of it he ever heard.

Little did Isaac Stern know, while riding that double decker bus up and down Central Park West in 1939, that both he and Leonard Bernstein would eventually live on that same street, nine blocks from each other.

Lenny died, in 1990, at the age of 72. His friend Isaac died on September 20, 2001, at the age of 81. Both had memorials at Carnegie Hall. ■

*Gino Francesconi has been associated with Carnegie Hall for 46 years. In 1986, he established Carnegie Hall's first archives and the Rose Museum, in 1991.*



COURTESY SONY CLASSICAL



COURTESY LIBRARY OF CONGRESS MUSIC DIVISION

# Dybbuk and Fancy Free:

## New Sinfonietta Orchestrations of Bernstein Ballet Scores



New York City Ballet in Jerome Robbins' *Dybbuk*.

by Garth Edwin Sunderland

The Leonard Bernstein Office announces the availability of new sinfonietta orchestrations of Bernstein's ballet scores *Dybbuk* (for 21 musicians) and *Fancy Free* (for 18). On June 14th of last year, as the Finale of the Bernstein Centennial in New

York City, the Lost Dog New Music Ensemble gave the world premiere of the orchestrations, with Bernstein specialist Jayce Ogren conducting. Garth Edwin Sunderland, the Leonard Bernstein Office's Vice President for Creative Projects, and Artistic Director of Lost Dog, created the new orchestrations. He writes:

Much of my work with the Bernstein legacy has been on the later, lesser-known works, which reveal a composer fully in command of the vast possibilities that music offered to him, and able to synthesize them effortlessly through his own unique voice and enormous, iconic self. *Dybbuk*, a dark masterpiece for both its creators, serves Lost Dog's mission to shed light on repertoire that's been unjustly neglected or overlooked, and it's deeply rewarding to fulfill this mission even with a composer now as universally beloved as Leonard Bernstein. Working with *Fancy Free* has been an absolute delight—it's been incredibly rewarding to spend time with this exuberant, brash, and simply terrific score. It is the hope of the Leonard Bernstein Office that these new orchestrations will allow more ballet companies and chamber ensembles the opportunity to bring these works to new audiences around the world.

### DYBBUK (1974)

Premiered by New York City Ballet in 1974, and conceived in collaboration with his long-time creative partner Jerome Robbins, the ballet is an abstraction, more than an adaptation, of the classic Yiddish drama by S. Ansky. The play tells the story of Channon and Leah—pledged to each other at birth, her father instead marries her to another, despite their true love. Channon is visited by “The Messenger”, turns to the Kabbalah, and becomes a Dybbuk, a vengeful spirit. He possesses Leah, is exorcised, and the two lovers are finally united in death, and oblivion.

The Bernstein/Robbins work is not, however, a story ballet. Though its overall shape follows the play, it is a series of tableaux-in-movement inspired by dramatic moments from the Ansky source. Bernstein later wrote, looking back on the work:

... Ansky's *Dybbuk* is really a drama about dualisms—Good and Evil. Ends and Means. Male and Female. Justice and Necessity. Self and Society, etc., with all their problematic intercombinations, and especially the duality of the so-called True World as opposed to this world in which we seem to reside. In Ansky's sense, 'this world' is really limited to the tiny but teeming area of the Russian-Polish ghetto; the True World is the world of angels, the ten spheres, the sources of Being.

For both Robbins and Bernstein, the work was a pathway to exploring their Jewish identity. But for Bernstein, it was also a chance to show what he could do. At the time, the hegemony of serialism in American concert music formed its own oppressive community, and the broad popularity of Bernstein's music was often greeted with a sneer from the establishment. The material of *Dybbuk* is created from three sources—an octatonic scale, used for music representing “This World”, and infused with Bernstein's Jewish/Ukrainian heritage; three tone rows, used for the music representing the



“True World”; and Kabbalistic numerology, which deeply informed the technical construction of the entire score. Bernstein’s incredible skill at synthesizing vastly different styles of music from the entire spectrum of human expression is on bold display. Nevertheless, the score was dismissed by a *New York Times* critic for its ‘pre-vaillingly tonal... conservative’ tone.

*Dybbuk* is music unlike anything in Bernstein’s catalogue. Over the course of the score it becomes increasingly wild and savage, culminating in the terrifying “Exorcism”, which features a dazzling 7/8 canon in which the voices enter on different, disruptive off-beats, and building to a terrifying, apocalyptic climax. The score contains moments of great beauty as well, in particular the searingly passionate pas-de-deux between Leah and the demon who possesses her.

#### FANCY FREE (1944)

The *Times*’ preview of the premiere of *Dybbuk* was headlined “The *Dybbuk* is not *Fancy Free*.” True enough. If *Dybbuk* is the music you would least expect from Bernstein, *Fancy Free* is “exactly” what you would expect from him!

Following closely on the heels of his breakthrough success with the *Symphony No. 1: Jeremiah*, *Fancy Free* was a huge hit at its 1944 premiere at American Ballet Theater. Here were two of the most promising young American artists in their disciplines—both Bernstein and Robbins were just 25 at the time—bringing elements of popular dance and jazz into the hallowed halls of ballet. There’s a terrific energy to the work, a thrilling sense of “we’re gonna show you what we can do!” The tremendous reaction to the ballet led to the whirlwind creation of the hit Broadway musical *On The Town*, which premiered just 8 months later.

The ballet follows three sailors on leave in New York City, on the prowl for adventure, and (of course) girls. While the surface of the music is bright, snappy, and joyful, the score is also tremendously sophisticated. Dissonance abounds, and the rhythmic vibrancy is the result of



Sebastian Villarini-Velez, Harrison Coll, and Roman Mejia of New York City Ballet in Jerome Robbins’ *Fancy Free*.

precocious craftsmanship. The music is often hierarchical, with different musical concepts superimposed (the opening and closing movements employing a bass line in 3/2 under a melody in 4/4), or simply playful, as in the drunken, multi-metric waltz that keeps stubbornly stumbling away from 3/4.

History has come round on Bernstein—the global celebration of his Centennial has shown the depth of feeling for both the man and his music. His talent was extraordinary, his reach as a communicator and composer unparalleled. It is my hope that these new sinfonietta orchestrations will allow more organizations to perform *Dybbuk*, and allow it at last become recognized as an integral part of the most important legacy in American music; and to allow *Fancy Free* to bring smiles to even more faces, as one of Bernstein’s most popular and dazzlingly iconic works. ■

*Garth Edwin Sunderland is Vice President for Creative Projects for The Leonard Bernstein Office. He is also a composer, performer and interdisciplinary artist, and artistic director of the Lost Dog New Music Ensemble.*

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VI. THREE DANCE VARIATIONS  
Variation I. (Galop)

Presto (♩ = 160)

# Joey, Donald & *West Side Story*



CHRISTOPHER DUGAN

Donald Chan and Joey McKneely working together on *West Side Story*. Below, left: Chan conducting. Below, right: McKneely rehearsing the cast.

by Craig Urquhart

It all began in Milan, in the year 2000. *West Side Story* (WSS) was to be performed for the first time at La Scala Opera House. It was decided that Joey McKneely would direct and Donald Chan would conduct. The production was a major success and led to a twenty-year collaboration between the two of them, overseeing the thousands of performances of the work produced by BB Promotions that have toured the world.

Joey McKneely was first introduced to *West Side Story* by Jerome

Robbins himself, when McKneely danced in *Jerome Robbins' Broadway*. This association led to the selection of McKneely to direct the La Scala Opera House production—his directorial debut—and to reproduce the original choreography. Since then, his productions of *West Side Story* have been produced throughout the world, including at the Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris and at the Sadler's Wells Theater in London, where it was nominated for an Olivier Award for Best Revival.

“My collaboration with Donald Chan is one of my most cherished working relationships ever in musical theater,” said McKneely. “Not only has it been the longest—twenty years no less—it has been completely intertwined with my work in WSS. When we met back in 2000 with our premiere at La Scala, we instantly knew to trust each other with our knowledge of the show and to allow each other’s passion to be our driving force. Don knows every bar of music, every note of this score in his bones. Watching him conduct this score is extraordinary. And because of his in-depth understanding of Bernstein’s score, I was able to unearth a level of emotion as a director that I only knew by dancing the choreography with Robbins. Together, we created a production

that opened a new generation to the mastery of WSS. I could not have done it with anyone else but Don.”

A musician of diverse and accomplished talents, Donald Chan has worked as conductor, music director, and composer with the most esteemed names in American music. Chan’s career has encompassed many of the most important, influential works of American musical theater.

*West Side Story* is the show that he is most often called upon to conduct, serving as musical director for more than 3500 performances of *West Side Story*, more than any other conductor.

Chan reflected, “Over the twenty years of working with Joey, I was able to watch him grow into a really first rate director and choreographer. His ability to get the best out of his performers was amazing: detail, detail, detail! Every time we started a new production, he was able to add a new dimension to his work. It was never just the just old same rework, which made our collaboration that much more fun. We made them laugh, we made them cry, and we made great work out of the productions.

“What made it all worthwhile was when Jamie Bernstein came to see our work and said ‘Lenny would have been proud.’ WSS has taken us around the world several times, and what a thrill it has been. We’ve lasted more than most marriages, and it has been a wonderful journey.” ■



NILVA BOHEME



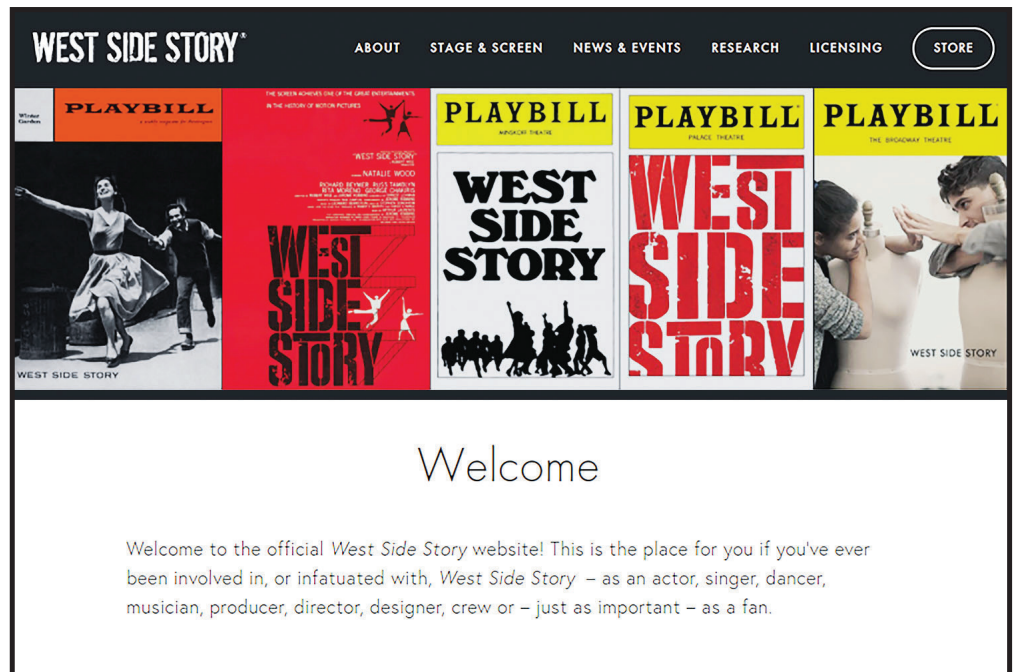
ALISTAIR MUIR



# West Side Story Website Re-design

We're excited to announce the re-design of our official *West Side Story* website!

If you've ever been involved in or infatuated with *West Side Story*—as an actor, singer, dancer, musician, producer, director, designer, crew or, just as importantly, as a fan—[westsidestory.com](http://westsidestory.com) is the place for you. At [westsidestory.com](http://westsidestory.com), you can indulge your fascination with this landmark musical in any number of ways. We invite you to read about how the authors gradually developed the show's concept and structure. (Did you know the original idea was for warring street gangs of Catholics and Jews?). On our "Lyrics" pages, compare the song lyrics for the original Broadway production and the 1961 film version. (Did you know only the Sharks' girlfriends sing "America" in the original theatrical version?) Our "Stage & Screen" pages give you an overview of the different iterations of the musical, from the original Broadway production to the upcoming 2020 film adaptation directed by Steven Spielberg. We've also included a calendar with details about *West Side Story* performances worldwide, and a news section with the latest articles, topical editorials, production



reviews, and interviews. For those wanting to dive deeper into *West Side Story*, we've put together a comprehensive research guide, including audio/visual materials, a bibliography, and links to online resources. *West Side Story* is truly everywhere, and speaks to us today as urgently as ever through its themes of immigration,

racism, and love striving to rise above hatred and prejudice. As we continue to add content and new features, we hope you enjoy the fresh look and feel of [westsidestory.com](http://westsidestory.com) while you explore one of the world's most beloved musicals. ■

## Beethoven and Bernstein (continued)

(continued from page 5)

which was painted on the television studio floor.

Not only as a conductor, but also as a composer, Leonard Bernstein often made references to his musical idol. A sequence from the Ninth Symphony became the motivic basis for the second orchestral meditation in Bernstein's *MASS*. Another clear Beethoven quote can be found in the song "Somewhere" from *West Side Story*. Bernstein's daughter Jamie says: "That song embodies all my father's yearning for a world in which we care for one another. You can hear the message right away, in that upward-reaching opening interval. And, in a felicitous additional

connection between Bernstein and Beethoven, that opening phrase happens to be a near-perfect quotation from the slow movement of Beethoven's fifth piano concerto!"

In the fictitious dialogue mentioned earlier, Bernstein wrote: "Beethoven broke all the rules, and turned out pieces of breath-taking rightness. Rightness—that's the word! Whenever you get the feeling that whatever note succeeds that last is the only possible note that can rightly happen at that instant, in that context, then chances are you're listening to Beethoven."

This thought recurs frequently whenever Bernstein made public statements about Beethoven.

Compositional perfection, combined with downright revolutionary non-conformism and an unconditional commitment to liberty—these made Ludwig van Beethoven a figure with whom Leonard Bernstein passionately identified throughout his entire life. ■

*Arnd Richter is a German music journalist. Since September 2019 he has been manager of the Grammy-winning WDR Big Band. He is also curating a special exhibition on Bernstein and Beethoven for the Beethovenhaus in Bonn.*

*Translation: Alexa Nieschlag*

# Remembering Richard Ortner (1948-2019)

by Nina Bernstein Simmons

The Tanglewood “guide” is possibly the world’s greatest summer job for teenagers. You don’t really have to take anyone on tours; it’s more about manning various campus gates, guarding of backstage areas, answering questions and delivering mail. If you were lucky enough to have this job in the 1970’s (and all three of us Bernstein kids were), you were extra blessed to have as your colleague one Richard Ortner.

When I was a guide, in 1978 and 1979, Richard was in his late twenties and he was my boss. But the job hierarchy felt somehow beside the point. He felt like a peer: we were all working toward the same thing. Richard was passionate about creating the kind of environment in which the best music-making can happen, especially by young people. He was a fun, inspiring leader whose passion

rubbed off on all of us.

We lost Richard last year, at the tragically young age of 71. By then, he had retired from his post as the president of the august Boston Conservatory at Berklee, a post he held from 1998 to 2017. But it was during his many administrative positions in his years at the Tanglewood Music Center and at the Boston Symphony Orchestra that we got to know—and adore—him. In the 1990s, he and I became neighbors up in Columbia County, NY. He shared cuttings from his garden and advised me in my early horticultural efforts.

The last time I saw Richard was at composer Yehudi Wyner’s house in Boston. Jamie and I were in town for a Bernstein centennial event, and Yehudi thought it an excellent occasion to gather us all together. Two of Yehudi’s children, Isaiah and Cassia, who were also guides and became my dear friends during those magical



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Tanglewood summers, were there with their spouses. It was a splendid and convivial evening—full of great food, jokes, and good cheer.

I’m glad to have that last image of him: keen and curious and oh, so kind. ■

# A Tribute to Nick Webster (1937-2020)



HENRI GROSSMAN / THE NY PHILHARMONIC DIGITAL ARCHIVES

by Barbara Haws

Albert Knickerbocker (Nick) Webster arrived at the New York Philharmonic in 1962 as Assistant to the Manager, Carlos Moseley. The Orchestra and its Music Director, Leonard Bernstein, were moving into a new concert hall—its first new home since 1891. Most of the logistics of the move to Lincoln Center, and a great deal of the behind-the-scenes ops, fell to Nick.

The new air-conditioned facility made it possible to reimagine

the concert season. Year-round programming was now possible—which meant that for the first time, the musicians could be hired for fifty-two weeks, providing them with job security and a fair living wage. The Philharmonic Archives shows how important a role Nick played in pulling together all the data and projections required for the Orchestra’s management to take on such a huge responsibility. And it would be this issue – adequate pay and working conditions for the musicians—that Nick would tirelessly champion throughout his career at the Philharmonic and in the orchestra world at large.

In addition to working with Leonard Bernstein, Nick was at the helm during the tenures of Pierre Boulez, Zubin Mehta and Kurt Masur. Although working with conductors and soloists was certainly inspiring, his first love was the orchestra: the musicians and their families.

In his role as Assistant Manager,

Nick was the person who got all the New York City agencies to agree to the free Parks Concerts in all five boroughs, one of his most beloved accomplishments.

Nick had a particular dedication to the Philharmonic Archives. He insisted that the collections move out of the Avery Fisher Hall basement into a new state-of-the-art facility—and that the Archivist should have a window! It was this new facility that made the argument for Leonard Bernstein’s conducting scores and parts to come back to the Philharmonic. Nick always thought outside the box—and like Bernstein himself, envisioned a world where music was essential to making it a better place. ■

*Barbara Haws is the Archivist Historian Emerita of the New York Philharmonic. In 2018 she matriculated at Oxford University as a DPhil candidate writing about U.C. Hill, the founder of the Philharmonic.*



# Hans Weber (1930-2020):

## A Personal Appreciation

by Charlie Harmon

Charlie Harmon was Leonard Bernstein's assistant from 1982 through 1985. His memoir of those years, *On the Road and Off the Record with Leonard Bernstein*, was published by Charlesbridge, an imprint of Imagine Books, in 2018. His close association with Leonard Bernstein's longtime colleague and friend, Hans Weber, who died on March 7, 2020, moved Mr. Harmon to share the following remembrance.

Leonard Bernstein's long-time colleague and friend Hans Weber died at his home in Hildesheim, Germany, on March 7, 2020, two months shy of his ninety-first birthday. As a condolence to his wife Klara, their daughter Antje and son Jan, I offer this brief reflection on one of Leonard Bernstein's most highly respected colleagues.

From 1976 to 1990, Hans Weber was the recording producer for Leonard Bernstein's Deutsche Grammophon recordings, which now number nearly two hundred titles. As chief of the recording crew, Mr. Weber was responsible for every aspect of the finished product, whether it was an all-American album with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the ballets of Stravinsky with the Israel Philharmonic, or another American album featuring the music of Charles Ives with the New York Philharmonic. Among the many collaborations between Mr. Weber and Leonard Bernstein, the most monumental were the complete orchestral works of Beethoven, Brahms, Schumann, and Mahler.

Shortly after Leonard Bernstein's death, Mr. Weber recollected, "It was not easy for me to be the occasional critical counterpoint among the chorus of enthusiasts, yet I believe that LB appreciated having me as his objective ear in the control room." In fact, Mr. Bernstein often claimed that Hans Weber possessed "the best ears in the business." Equally valuable were his musical memory and discretion. Decades after the fact, he could recall individual performances with



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Hans Weber and Leonard Bernstein review a score.

precision, including finer points and pitfalls ("there were problems," was the most caustic phrase Mr. Weber would ever say), and even the timings of individual movements.

Leonard Bernstein retained final approval of all his DGG recordings, via listening sessions usually shoe-horned into concert weeks abroad. During the months when he and Stephen Wadsworth wrote *A Quiet Place*, there was no time to travel, so Hans Weber came to New York, schlepping the tapes of thirteen works and the boxy playback console.

As I drove us to Connecticut, Mr. Weber commented on the reckless truck drivers on the interstate, so for contrast I detoured through sedate Greenfield Hill with its landmark church on the green. He admired the bucolic charm but chuckled at the founding date of seventeen-hundred-and-something. A couple years later, Mr. Weber took me to his local church in Hildesheim: the mammoth cathedral, one of Germany's most historic, completed in 1020. *Ach ja, jetzt ich verstehe.*

On that January afternoon in 1983 in Connecticut, LB put his opera manuscript aside and plunged right in to the listening session. After three hours he suggested a pause for dinner, but he wasn't in a good mood. The mental shift from conductor to composer was a perennial hurdle for LB. For four months he had been a diligent composer; it was distract-

ing to hear works by Copland and Gershwin and Brahms when what he most needed in his head was the music of Bernstein.

In a fit of temper, LB cut the dinner short, and nudged Hans Weber back to the listening session, with nine or ten works to go. The studio took on the atmosphere of a college all-nighter before a critical exam. Around one in the morning, they'd reached the fourth symphony of Johannes Brahms, one of the two works in which Brahms wrote for a triangle. The triangle sounded especially insistent. In fact, it kept on going, throughout the third movement, like an unstoppable wind-up toy. "I spliced this myself!" Mr. Weber shouted, as he stopped the tape.

*And* the ringing continued! It was the telephone on LB's desk. LB's sister Shirley had a question about that week's crossword puzzle in *The Guardian*, a perfectly legitimate phone call for LB at that late hour. It certainly changed the mood that night, and when Mr. Weber returned to the Deutsche Grammophon offices and told this story, he got a resounding guffaw from his colleagues.

The Bernstein legacy owes a great debt to Hans Weber, whose career blazed atop the heights of serious music in the 20th century. Everyone who knew him will always cherish his high standards and his collegial friendship. ■

# IN THE news

## Bernstein After 100: The Leonard Bernstein Office Looks Ahead

**L**eonard Bernstein at 100 offered us an unprecedented opportunity to re-examine the Maestro's life through several lenses: composer, conductor, educator, humanitarian, and more. We heard thousands of performers playing his works for millions of audience members—on all seven continents—making Bernstein the second most-performed composer (after Beethoven) on the planet!

Over the next decade, we will harness the Centennial's momentum and embark on projects and initiatives that continue to maintain Bernstein's legacy through artistic planning, research, music publishing, academia, licensing, museum exhibitions, online resources, and much more.

There's a lot on the horizon in the coming years. For example, later this year we will see the release of Steven Spielberg's adaptation of *West Side Story*. A year or two later we can expect the release of the Bradley Cooper-produced and directed Leonard Bernstein film, starring Cooper himself as the Maestro.

There will be more anniversaries—such as the 50th anniversary of MASS in September 2021—and many windows of opportunity to share Lenny's enthusiasm and love for music.

One of our fundamental goals is to bring Bernstein's legacy to a wider global audience through new and future technologies—through an expanded web presence, online courses, streaming platforms, and more. Given the uncertainty in the live performance industry in recent months, we have begun to explore ways of sharing Bernstein's vast video catalog online. The best way to keep up-to-date with what we're doing is through our social media channels; more info can be found at the end of this article.

Speaking of social media: this year, we're engaging in a campaign around Beethoven's 250th birthday in December 2020, utilizing a wealth of archival footage, recordings, and writings about the great German composer that Bernstein produced throughout his career. Bernstein, after

all, said of Beethoven's 200th birthday celebration: "It's almost like celebrating the birthday of music itself."

We will continue to encourage young musicians at all levels to perform Bernstein's works and to inspire new choreographers to feel how Bernstein's music dances. We keep a close watch on emerging young conductors, aspiring Bernstein scholars, and contemporary journalists who are always surprising us with fresh perspectives and interpretations. Our office is open to help point people in the right direction for all things Bernstein.

We look forward to the new connections we will develop over the next 100 years as we continue to nurture our warm relationships with the many orchestras, conductors, performers, universities, museums, and venues that we've had the honor to work with for over 60 years, as well as the various festivals to which Bernstein had a close connection: Schleswig-Holstein Musik Festival, Pacific Music Festival, Ravinia, Tanglewood, and

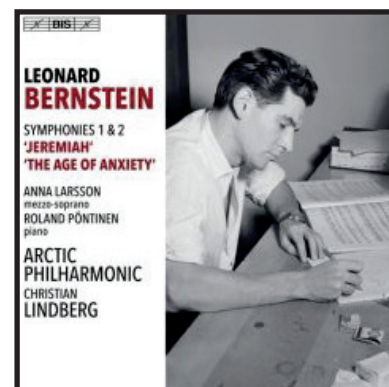
## New Recordings

**T**he ORF Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra with the Wiener Singakademie Company of Music has released a recording of Bernstein's MASS. This live recording features Vojtěch Dyk as the Celebrant and is conducted by Dennis Russell Davies. The recording received 5 stars from All Music.

Bernstein's *Symphonies No. 1: Jeremiah* and *No. 2: The Age of Anxiety*, have recently been released on BIS records. This recording, by The Arctic Philharmonic, is conducted by Christian Lindberg and features Contralto Anna Larsson and pianist Roland Pöntinen.



Naxos has recently released as part of their American Classics series the Wolf Trap Opera, National Orchestral Institute



Philharmonic's recording of *Songfest* conducted by James Judd.

Additionally, Sony Classics has issued a box set honoring the violin-



the Leonard Bernstein Festival for the Creative Arts at Brandeis University, to name a few.

We're excited about expanding Bernstein's *Artful Learning* program, a proven educational reform model—bringing it to new and international schools and sharing Bernstein's love for learning with lifelong students everywhere. Likewise, through our social media channels, we seek to educate, as well as entertain, new generations.

Several new orchestrations of Bernstein's works, including *Anniversaries for Orchestra*, *Trouble in Tahiti*, *On The Town*, *Dybbuk*, and *Wonderful Town*, will be heard for the first time throughout the world. We are also enthusiastic about our continued partnership with Bernstein's foremost record labels, Sony Classical and Deutsche Grammophon. In addition, we look forward to promoting new recordings from across the entire industry.

In the world of film with live orchestra, *West Side Story* (1961) saw a record number of performances over the past five years, and we're looking to bring *On The Waterfront* (1954) to fresh eyes and ears — especially since the story of corrupt labor practices has become prescient in the growing, app-driven gig economy. We're eyeing Marlon Brando's Centennial in 2024

for a public reexamination of this essential film and a compelling opportunity to shed light on Bernstein's revolutionary film score.

We're always and forever grateful to the archivists and librarians who keep Bernstein's collections safe and available to the public, especially those at The Library of Congress, New York Philharmonic, Boston Symphony Orchestra, and Vienna Philharmonic.

As we embrace a twenty-first century approach to celebrating Lenny, we'd like to share our mission statement with you:

*The Leonard Bernstein Office (LBO) sustains and strengthens Leonard Bernstein's legacy by inspiring global engagement with his work as a composer, conductor, educator, and humanitarian. Through licensing, promotion, music editing, publishing, and advising, the LBO embodies the vision of one of history's most influential American figures and furthers his lifelong devotion to the transformative power and joy of music.*

Be sure to follow us on social media and subscribe to PFR digitally by writing to [pfr@leonardbernstein.com](mailto:pfr@leonardbernstein.com).

Instagram @leonardbernsteinofficial  
Facebook.com/LeonardBernstein  
Twitter: @LennyBernstein ■

## A Few Upcoming Milestones

**2020**

September 25: 40th Anniversary of *Divertimento for Orchestra*

**2021**

January 19: 60th Anniversary of *Fanfare for JFK Inauguration*

May 15: 75th Anniversary of *European conducting debut, Czech Philharmonic*

May 27: 40th Anniversary of *Halil*

September 8: 50th Anniversary of *MASS*

September 2021: 60th anniversary of *West Side Story Film*

**2023**

February 25: 70th anniversary of *Wonderful Town*

June 19: 40th Anniversary of *A Quiet Place*

August 23: 80th Anniversary of *I Hate Music!*

November 14: 80th Anniversary of *NYP debut*

**2024**

April 3: *Marlon Brando Centennial*

October 1: 70th Anniversary of *On The Waterfront film*

December 28: 80th Anniversary of *On The Town opening*



ist Isaac Stern. This set features the complete analogue recordings by Stern. Included is the premiere performance of Bernstein's *Serenade*



with the composer conducting, as well as performances of *Concertos* by Bartok, Beethoven, Berg, and Prokofiev conducted by Bernstein. ■



Sony has also released a box set celebrating the great singer Eileen Farrell, which includes her collaborations with Bernstein. ■

# ASU Production of *MASS* Honored



COURTESY ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts to participate in the monumental collaboration.

Brian DeMaris, associate professor and artistic director of ASU Music Theatre and Opera in the School of Music, said he had always been intrigued by Bernstein's *MASS*, knowing it to be one of those pieces that can be best understood through experience.

"This has been one of the most meaningful artistic ventures I've ever been a part of. I'm very grateful for the recognition, so well deserved by all 300-plus individuals involved," DeMaris said.

The ASU production of Bernstein's *MASS*, including guest artist Jubilant Sykes, was made possible by funding from the ASU School of Music and a Mellon Foundation Grant through the Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts. ■

The Arizona State University School of Music's production of Bernstein's *MASS* placed first in Collegiate Division VIII of the 2018/19 National Opera Association

Opera Production Competition. The school put on the production to honor the Leonard Bernstein Centennial. More than 300 people came together from across the

## [Note to Readers]

Dear Readers,

The Coronavirus pandemic has had a devastating effect on the performing arts. It will be some time before people will feel comfortable gathering in enclosed spaces to hear music, watch dance, or experience live theatre. Just two years ago, we had so many performances of Bernstein music to report that we couldn't fit them all in these pages; now we have no live performance calendar to share with you at all.

A world without live music is a diminished one. However, we applaud the musicians and organizations that have embraced alternative formats to bring music to us. We encourage you all to support these efforts—and we look forward to the day when once again, live audiences can gather to enjoy Bernstein's music. ■

**Prelude, Fugue & Riffs** will be sent upon request.

Please send all correspondence to:

Craig Urquhart

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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.

**Prelude, Fugue & Riffs** is a publication of The Leonard Bernstein Office, Inc.

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Design: *BorsaWallace, NYC*

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# Stephen Sondheim Turns Ninety

by Jamie Bernstein

Stephen Sondheim—Leonard Bernstein’s friend and colleague, and our beloved Bernstein family friend—just turned ninety years old. That’s a lot! We were thrilled to witness all the celebrations and the hoopla; he deserves them all.

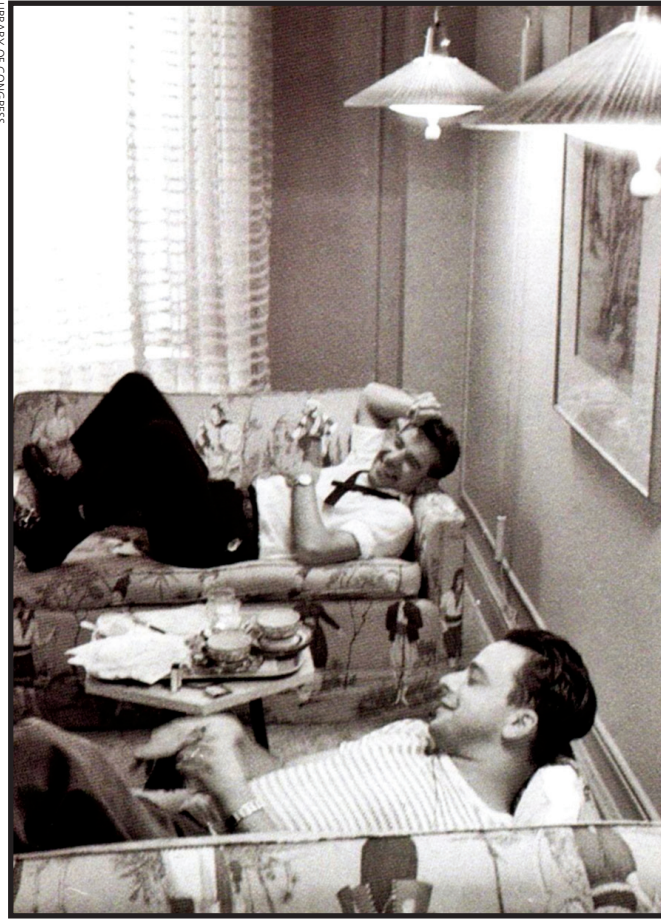
Steve came into our lives as the lyricist for *West Side Story*. I was all of three or four when their collaboration began; Alexander was a toddler, and Nina wouldn’t be born for another few years. But in essence, Steve had always been in our lives. He was far more than just our dad’s collaborator. He was also our dad’s fellow wordplay hound. The two of them competed relentlessly over anagrams, crossword puzzles, and all manner of word games. They infuriated and delighted each other by regular turns. Our mother, Felicia Montealegre, loved Steve too; she appreciated his rapier wit as well as his utter intolerance for any sort of dunderheadedness.

We were disappointed that the crowning point of the Sondheim

ninetieth birthday festivities—the opening of a superb new revival of his show *Company*, scheduled to take place on the birthday itself—was canceled, along with all other Broadway performances, in the midst of the Coronavirus pandemic. This was a terrible shame—although we suspect that the little misanthropic corner in Steve’s soul might have been relieved to be spared the relentless attention (and the obligation to dress up).

But that misanthropic corner is smaller than it used to be; the Steve we know today is actually quite sunny, generous, and one of the most optimistic people we know. Our impression of Steve these days is of a man surrounded by love, and dogs, and Connecticut countryside: someone who, over the decades, wrestled many demons to the ground and created prodigious works of art in the process. Steve, we salute you. Thanks for being an inspiration and a good friend. Onward, please! ■

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Leonard Bernstein and Stephen Sondheim working on *West Side Story* in Washington, 1957.

# Sir Humphrey Burton



COURTESY CHRISTINA BURTON

We offer heartfelt congratulations to Leonard Bernstein’s friend and colleague, the legendary broadcaster and esteemed Bernstein biographer, Sir Humphrey Burton.

Burton was recently knighted by Charles, Prince of Wales, as part of the 2020 New Year Honours, for his services to classical music, the arts, and the media. ■

121 West 27th Street  
Suite 1104  
New York, NY 10001

# Leonard Bernstein

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## LOOKING ahead

### Bernstein Conducts Beethoven

“No composer has ever lived who speaks so directly to so many people,” said Leonard Bernstein of Ludwig van Beethoven. Bernstein was a significant interpreter of Beethoven’s music, and recorded much of the repertoire multiple times. In celebrating Beethoven’s 250th anniversary, Sony Classical has re-released Bernstein’s first recorded cycle of Beethoven symphonies, made with the New York Philharmonic between 1958 and 1964. Also included are a collection of Beethoven overtures, first released in 1970, and the *Missa solemnis* recording of 1960.

All recordings are newly or recently remastered. Soloists include Martina Arroyo in the Ninth Symphony, as well as Eileen Farrell



and Kim Borg in the *Missa solemnis*.

Bernstein described Beethoven’s work as “perhaps the closest music has ever come to universality,” a goal to which Bernstein himself aspired

through his composing and education work, as well as in his conducting. These recordings are a testament to the unique bond between two great musical communicators. ■