

**2025–2026 | 126TH SEASON**  
**MARIAN ANDERSON HALL**

# THE PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA

Thursday, June 4, at 7:30

Friday, June 5, at 2:00

Saturday, June 6, at 8:00

Sunday, June 7, at 2:00

**Yannick Nézet-Séguin** Conductor

**Hélène Grimaud** Piano

**Emily D'Angelo** Mezzo-Soprano

**Gershwin** Piano Concerto in F

I. Allegro

II. Adagio—Andante con moto

III. Allegro agitato

## Intermission

**Bernstein** Symphony No. 1 (“Jeremiah”)

I. Prophecy

II. Profanation

III. Lamentation

**Bernstein/orch. Ramin & Kostal** Symphonic Dances from *West Side Story*

This program runs approximately 1 hour, 45 minutes.

These concerts are part of the **Dr. Alan Cohen and Ms. Michele Langer Visiting Pianist Fund**.

Hélène Grimaud’s appearance is sponsored by the **Robert Heim and Eileen Kennedy Visiting Artist Fund**.

Philadelphia Orchestra concerts are broadcast on WRTI 90.1 FM on Sunday afternoons at 1 PM and are repeated on Monday evenings at 7 PM on WRTI HD 2. Visit [www.wrti.org](http://www.wrti.org) to listen live or for more details.



# THE PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA

The world-renowned Philadelphia Orchestra strives to share the transformative power of music with the widest possible audience, and to create joy, connection, and excitement through music in the Philadelphia region, across the country, and around the world. Through innovative programming, robust education initiatives, a commitment to its diverse communities, and the embrace of digital outreach, the ensemble is creating an expansive and inclusive future for classical music. In June 2021 the Orchestra and its home, the Kimmel Center, united. Today, The Philadelphia Orchestra and Ensemble Arts brings the greatest performances and most impactful education and community programs to audiences in Philadelphia and beyond.

Yannick Nézet-Séguin is now in his 14th season with The Philadelphia Orchestra, serving as music and artistic director. His connection to the ensemble's musicians has been praised by both concertgoers and critics, and he is esteemed by the musicians of the Orchestra, audiences, and the community. In addition to expanding the repertoire by embracing an ever-growing and diverse group of today's composers, Yannick and the Orchestra are committed to performing and recording the works of previously overlooked composers.

The Philadelphia Orchestra takes great pride in its hometown, performing for the people of Philadelphia year-round, at the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts, throughout the community, over the airwaves, and online. The Kimmel Center has been the ensemble's home since 2001, and in 2024 Verizon Hall at the Kimmel Center was officially rededicated as Marian Anderson Hall in honor of the legendary

contralto, civil rights icon, and Philadelphian. The Orchestra's award-winning education and community programs connect, uplift, and celebrate nearly 40,000 Philadelphians and 250 schools from diverse communities annually, through inclusive arts education and vibrant engagement that reflect our city's voices and expand access to creative opportunities. Students, families, and other community members can enjoy free and discounted experiences with The Philadelphia Orchestra through programs such as the Jane H. Kesson School Concerts, Family Concerts, Open Rehearsals, PlayINs, and Our City, Your Orchestra community concerts.

Through concerts, tours, residencies, and recordings, the Orchestra is a global ambassador and one of our nation's greatest exports. It performs annually at Carnegie Hall, the Mann Center, the Saratoga Performing Arts Center, and the Bravo! Vail Music Festival. The Orchestra also has a rich touring history, having first performed outside Philadelphia in its earliest days. In 1973 it became the first American orchestra to perform in the People's Republic of China, launching a now-five-decade commitment of people-to-people exchange through music.

Under Yannick's leadership, the Orchestra returned to recording with 15 celebrated releases on the Deutsche Grammophon label, including the GRAMMY<sup>®</sup> Award-winning *Florence Price Symphonies Nos. 1 & 3*. The Orchestra also reaches thousands of radio listeners with weekly broadcasts on WRTI-FM and SiriusXM. For more information, please visit [www.philorch.org](http://www.philorch.org).

# MUSIC AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



London Nordeman

Canadian-born conductor and pianist **Yannick Nézet-Séguin** is currently in his 14th season with The Philadelphia Orchestra, serving as music and artistic director. An inspired leader, Yannick is both an evolutionary and a revolutionary, developing the mighty “Philadelphia Sound” in new ways. His collaborative style, deeply rooted musical curiosity, and boundless enthusiasm have been heralded by critics and audiences alike. *The Philadelphia Inquirer* has said that under his baton the Orchestra is “at the top of its considerable form”; the Associated Press has called it “a premier orchestra at its peak”; and *The New York Times* wrote, “the ensemble, famous for its glowing strings and homogenous richness, has never sounded better.”

Yannick has established himself as a musical leader of the highest caliber and one of the most thrilling and sought-after talents of his generation. He became the third music director of New York’s Metropolitan Opera in 2018. In addition, he has been artistic director and principal conductor of Montreal’s Orchestre Métropolitain since 2000. In 2017 he became the third-ever honorary member of the Chamber Orchestra of Europe. He served as music director of the Rotterdam Philharmonic from 2008 to 2018 (he is now honorary conductor) and was principal guest conductor of the London Philharmonic from 2008 to 2014. He has made wildly successful appearances with the world’s most revered ensembles and at many of the leading opera houses.

Yannick has shown a deep commitment to expanding the repertoire by embracing an ever-growing and diverse group of today’s composers and by performing and recording the music of underappreciated composers of the past, including Florence Price, Clara Schumann, William Dawson, Lili Boulanger, Louise Farrenc, and William Grant Still. In 2018 he signed an exclusive recording contract with Deutsche Grammophon. Under his leadership The Philadelphia Orchestra returned to recording with 15 releases on that label, including *Florence Price Symphonies Nos. 1 & 3*, which won a GRAMMY® Award for Best Orchestral Performance in 2022.

A native of Montreal, Yannick studied piano, conducting, composition, and chamber music at Montreal’s Conservatory of Music and continued his studies with renowned conductors, most notably Carlo Maria Giulini; he also studied choral conducting with Joseph Flummerfelt at Westminster Choir College. Among Yannick’s honors are an appointment as Companion of the Order of Canada; Companion to the Order of Arts and Letters of Quebec; an Officer of the Order of Quebec; an Officer of the Order of Montreal; an Officier de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres; *Musical America’s* 2016 Artist of the Year; ECHO KLASSIK’s 2014 Conductor of the Year; a Royal Philharmonic Society Award; Canada’s National Arts Centre Award; the Prix Denise-Pelletier; the Oskar Morawetz Award; and honorary doctorates from the University of Quebec, the Curtis Institute of Music, Westminster Choir College of Rider University, McGill University, the University of Montreal, the University of Pennsylvania, Laval University, and Drexel University.

To read Yannick’s full bio, please visit [philorch.org/conductor](http://philorch.org/conductor).

# SOLOIST



Mar Hemreck

French pianist **Hélène Grimaud** made her Philadelphia Orchestra debut in 2000 and has enjoyed many collaborations with her friend Yannick Nézet-Séguin. A deeply passionate and committed musical artist, her multiple talents extend far beyond the instrument she plays with such poetic expression and technical control. She has established herself as a wildlife conservationist, a human rights activist, and a writer; her deep dedication to her musical career reflected in, and amplified by, the scope and depth of her environmental, literary, and artistic interests.

Ms. Grimaud was born in 1969 in Aix-en-Provence and began her piano studies at the local conservatory with Jacqueline Courtin before going on to work with Pierre Barbizet in Marseille. She was accepted into the Paris Conservatory at age 13 and, just a few years later, in 1987, she gave her well-received debut recital in Tokyo. That same year, renowned conductor Daniel Barenboim invited her to perform with the Orchestre de Paris; this marked the launch of her musical career, characterized ever since by concerts with most of the world's major orchestras and many celebrated conductors. Between her debut in 1995 with the Berlin Philharmonic under Claudio Abbado and her first performance with the New York Philharmonic under Kurt Masur in 1999—just two of many notable musical milestones—she made a wholly different kind of debut: In upper New York State she established the Wolf Conservation Center. Her love for the endangered species was sparked by a chance encounter with a wolf in northern Florida. Her engagement doesn't end there: She is a member of Musicians for Human Rights, and, for a number of years, also found time to pursue a writing career, publishing four books that have appeared in various languages. It is, however, through her thoughtful and tenderly expressive music-making that she most deeply touches the emotions of audiences. In addition to collaborating with the world's leading orchestras, she performs numerous recitals around the globe and chamber music at the highest level.

In the 2025–26 season, in addition to these performances with The Philadelphia Orchestra, Ms. Grimaud performs Gershwin's Piano Concerto in F with prestigious orchestras including the San Francisco and Cincinnati symphonies, the New York Philharmonic, the Tonhalle Orchestra Zurich, and the Gewandhaus Orchestra Leipzig, among others. Further highlight of the season include a United States tour with the Dallas Symphony performing Schumann's Piano Concerto, additional orchestral engagements, and solo recitals and chamber music performances. Her recordings have been critically acclaimed and awarded numerous accolades, among them the Cannes Classical Recording of the Year, the Choc du Monde de la musique, the Diapason d'or, the Grand Prix du disque, the Record Academy Prize (Tokyo), the Midem Classic Award, and the ECHO Klassik. Her prodigious contribution to the world of classical music was recognized by the French government, which appointed her Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur.

# SOLOIST

Mark Pillai



Mezzo-soprano **Emily D'Angelo** makes her Philadelphia Orchestra debut with these performances. Beginning with her professional operatic debut at age 21 as Cherubino in Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* at the Spoleto Festival dei Due Mondi, she has been constantly in demand at the world's top opera companies. Following the release of her second album, *freezing*, for Deutsche Grammophon, she was named the 2025 recipient of Opus Klassik's "Female Singer of the Year" award, one of classical music's most coveted honors. In addition to these

current performances, highlights of the 2025–26 season include returns to London's Royal Opera House in the title role of Handel's *Ariodante* in a new production by Jetske Mijnsen and conducted by Stefano Montanari and the Vienna State Opera as Sesto in Mozart's *La clemenza di Tito* led by Pablo Heras-Casado and newly staged by director Jan Lauwers. She also debuted with the London Symphony in Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius* with Antonio Pappano.

In recent seasons Ms. D'Angelo has made a host of widely acclaimed debuts. She opened the 2024–25 season at the Metropolitan Opera starring as Jess, the leading role in two-time Tony Award-winning composer Jeanine Tesori's opera *Grounded*, a role she created in the world premiere with Washington National Opera in 2023. Following her company debut with the Berlin State Opera as Cherubino, she subsequently made an auspicious role debut as Octavian in Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier* and returned to Idamante in Mozart's *Idomeneo*. Her artistic bond with the Vienna State Opera includes her house debut as Dorabella in Mozart's *Così fan tutte* followed by performances as Octavian and as Donna Elvira in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. With the Bavarian State Opera she has been heard as Cherubino, Idamante, and as Juno in Claus Guth's new staging of Handel's *Semele*. With London's Royal Opera she made her house and role debut as Sesto and was swiftly re-invited for another role debut, Ruggiero, in a new Richard Jones production of Handel's *Alcina*. For the Paris Opera's Palais Garnier, she gave her first performances as the title role in *Ariodante*, as Sesto in Handel's *Julius Caesar*, and as Siebel in Gounod's *Faust*, in tandem with appearances as Rosina in Rossini's *The Barber of Seville* for her company debut. A frequent guest at the Metropolitan Opera, she has also been heard as Cherubino and in a role debut as Prince Charming in an English-language presentation of Massenet's *Cinderella*. During her tenure as a member of the Metropolitan Opera's Lindemann Young Artist Program, she performed the roles of Annio in *La clemenza di Tito*, Second Lady in Mozart's *The Magic Flute* (company debut), and Sister Mathilde in Poulenc's *Dialogues of the Carmelites*, conducted by Music Director Yannick Nézet-Séguin and broadcast in movie theaters across the world as part of the Met's *Live in HD* series.

Ms. D'Angelo is a Deutsche Grammophon exclusive recording artist. Her debut album, *energeia*, presents music from the 12th and 21st centuries. It was named the best Canadian classical album of 2021 by the CBC and received JUNO and *Gramophone* awards in 2022.

# FRAMING THE PROGRAM

## PARALLEL EVENTS

1925

**Gershwin**

Piano Concerto  
in F

**Music**

Berg  
*Wozzeck*

**Literature**

Dos Passos  
*Manhattan  
Transfer*

**Art**

Kokoschka  
*Tower Bridge*

**History**

Scopes Trial

1942

**Bernstein**

Symphony No. 1

**Music**

Copland  
*Rodeo*

**Literature**

Wilder  
*The Skin of Our  
Teeth*

**Art**

Bonnard  
*L'Oiseau bleu*

**History**

World War II:  
Germans reach  
Stalingrad

1957

**Bernstein**

*West Side Story*

**Music**

Shostakovich  
Symphony  
No. 11

**Literature**

Fleming  
*From Russia, with  
Love*

**Art**

Noguchi  
*Endless Coupling*

**History**

USSR launches  
Sputnik 2

The final subscription concerts of The Philadelphia Orchestra's 126th season celebrate two towering 20th-century American composers: George Gershwin and Leonard Bernstein.

The program opens with Gershwin's Piano Concerto in F, originally called the *New York Concerto*. He built on the fantastic success of his *Rhapsody in Blue*, written the previous year, by fusing a jazz inspiration with a more classical approach to form. Gershwin's model inspired many other composers, including Aaron Copland and Bernstein.

At age 23 Bernstein began writing the first of his three symphonies and soon afterward made his legendary conducting debut with the New York Philharmonic as a last-minute replacement in a nationally broadcast concert. His three-movement "Jeremiah" Symphony uses texts from the biblical Book of Lamentations. Decades later Bernstein stated that many of his compositions are "about the struggle that is born of the crisis of our century, a crisis of faith. Even way back, when I wrote 'Jeremiah,' I was wrestling with that problem."

The concert concludes with excerpts from Bernstein's brilliant musical *West Side Story*, which updates Shakespeare's story of young lovers to 20th-century New York. We hear the suite of Symphonic Dances from his vibrant score, including favorite moments such as "Mambo," "Rumble," "Maria," and "Somewhere."

The Philadelphia Orchestra is the only orchestra in the world with three weekly broadcasts on SiriusXM's *Symphony Hall*, Channel 76, on Mondays at 7 PM, Thursdays at 12 AM, and Saturdays at 4 PM.

# THE MUSIC

## Piano Concerto

George Gershwin

Born in Brooklyn, September 26, 1898

Died in Los Angeles, July 11, 1937



George Gershwin's career is an American success story, tempered (as with Mozart and Schubert) by death in his 30s cutting it tragically short. Born to Russian-Jewish immigrants in Brooklyn, he grew up in a poor household. As was the case for his slightly younger Brooklyn contemporary Aaron Copland, music offered opportunities. But while Copland went to study abroad as an American in Paris, Gershwin dropped out of high school and started working his way up as a "song-plugger," playing Tin Pan Alley tunes for perspective customers at a music store. Soon he was writing his own songs (his first big hit was "Swanee" in 1919) and enjoying success on Broadway.

The signal event of his early career came at age 25, on Tuesday afternoon, February 12, 1924, at a concert in New York's Aeolian Hall given by Paul Whiteman and his Palais Royal Orchestra. Gershwin played his *Rhapsody in Blue*, composed in the space of just a few weeks and then quickly orchestrated by Whiteman's favored arranger, Ferde Grofé. The *Rhapsody* was an enormous success with the capacity audience, as well as with most of the critics. The following year Gershwin became the first composer featured on the cover of *Time* magazine. His fame and wealth continued to grow.

**Another Immediate Success** Immediately after attending the *Rhapsody* premiere, Walter Damrosch, conductor of the New York Symphony Orchestra (later the New York Philharmonic), contacted Gershwin with a commission to write and perform a larger-form piano concerto. While the *Rhapsody* had paved the way for a new genre of a "jazz concerto," Gershwin longed to write a big "serious" score that he could call his own. Since the *Rhapsody* had been orchestrated by Grofé, his sense of "ownership" was less than complete. He commented: "Many persons had thought that the *Rhapsody* was only a happy accident. Well, I went out, for one thing, to show them that there was plenty more where that had come from. I made up my mind to do a piece of absolute music. The *Rhapsody*, as its title implied, was a blues impression. The Concerto would be unrelated to any program." It was therefore with pride that he forged ahead with the Piano Concerto in F—using the working-title of *New York Concerto*—which he orchestrated himself.

Gershwin was overwhelmed at the time with theatrical projects but started sketching the new work in May 1925. Most of the composition took place that summer at the Chautauqua Institution, the celebrated educational, religious, and cultural oasis in Western New York.

“Every day between 2:00 and 6:00 and evenings between 8:00 and 10:00 you will find me diligently writing notes,” Gershwin wrote to his sweetheart, Pauline Heifetz, sister of violinist Jascha, in July, “playing piano or praying (you’ve got to pray in Chautauqua) to the God of Melody to please be kind to me and send me some hair-raising ‘blues’ for my second movement.”

Gershwin completed the Concerto’s orchestration by mid-November and, at his own expense, arranged for a reading with 55 musicians at the Globe Theater with William Daly conducting. Gershwin and Damrosch gave the premiere at Carnegie Hall on December 3. The piece ended the concert, which also featured Alexander Glazunov’s Fifth Symphony and a suite by Henri Rabaud. The work triumphed, with the *New Yorker* critic stating that “Gershwin’s piano concerto is about the most important new work that has been aired in this hamlet of ours in many somethings, and when we say ‘important’ we’re not using a nicenellie for ‘dull.’” Gershwin went on to play the piece many times, including with The Philadelphia Orchestra under Alexander Smallens in January 1936.

The Concerto was a success everywhere. “Of all those writing music of today,” wrote Samuel Chotzinoff of Gershwin in an oft-quoted review for the *New York World*, “he alone actually expresses us.” The composer Morton Gould, a friend of Gershwin’s who, 10 years later, would become the rehearsal pianist for the original production of *Porgy and Bess*, called the Concerto “a unique and highly original piece that bypassed all the fashions and trends.”

**A Closer Look** Gershwin wrote his own program note for the three-movement Concerto, short and to the point:

The first movement [**Allegro**] employs the Charleston rhythm. It is quick and pulsating, representing the young, enthusiastic spirit of American life. It begins with a rhythmic motif given out by the kettledrums, supported by other percussion instruments, and with a Charleston motif. ... The principal theme is announced by the bassoon. Later, a second theme is introduced by the piano.

The second movement [**Andante con moto**] has a poetic nocturnal atmosphere which has come to be referred to as the American blues, but in a purer form than in which they are usually treated. The final movement [**Allegro agitato**] reverts to the style of the first. It is an orgy of rhythms, starting violently and keeping to the same pace throughout.

—Paul J. Horsley/Christopher H. Gibbs

*Paul J. Horsley is performing arts editor for The Independent in Kansas City. Previously he was program annotator and musicologist for The Philadelphia Orchestra and music and dance critic for The Kansas City Star.*

*Christopher H. Gibbs is James H. Ottaway Jr. Professor of Music at Bard College and has been the program annotator for The Philadelphia Orchestra since 2000. He is the author of several books on Schubert and Liszt, and the co-author, with Richard Taruskin, of The Oxford History of Western Music, College Edition.*

*The Piano Concerto in F was composed in 1925.*

*George Gershwin himself was the pianist in the first Philadelphia Orchestra performances of the work, in January 1936; Alexander Smallens was on the podium. The Concerto has been played on regular subscription concerts only a handful of times before this week: in December 1966 with pianist Philippe Entremont and Eugene Ormandy; in September 1998 with Garrick Ohlsson and Wolfgang Sawallisch; in January 2003 with Jon Kimura Parker and Bobby McFerrin; in November 2012 with Kirill Gerstein and Giancarlo Guerrero; in 2017 with Parker and James Gaffigan; and in October 2023 with Daniil Trifonov and Yannick Nézet-Séguin, although it has often been performed on summer concerts at the Mann Center and in Saratoga.*

*The Orchestra recorded Gershwin's Piano Concerto in 1967 for CBS with Entremont and Ormandy and in 2023 for Deutsche Grammophon with Trifonov and Nézet-Séguin.*

*The score calls for solo piano, piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, cymbals, gong, orchestra bells, slapstick, snare drum, suspended cymbal, triangle, wood block, xylophone), and strings.*

*The work runs approximately 30 minutes in performance.*

# THE MUSIC

## Symphony No. 1 (“Jeremiah”)

Leonard Bernstein

Born in Lawrence, Massachusetts, August 25, 1918

Died in New York City, October 14, 1990



When the “Jeremiah” Symphony premiered under Leonard Bernstein’s baton in January 1944, he was a young star on the rise. The previous year, the 25-year-old had made headlines when he stepped in without rehearsal for an ailing Bruno Walter to lead a New York Philharmonic subscription concert that was broadcast on national radio. Despite the excitement, World War II was raging in Europe, and Bernstein could hardly remain unaffected. His First Symphony creates an allegory for the tragedy of the Holocaust and the uncertain

road forward for humanity through a biblical tale: The prophet Jeremiah forecast the destruction of Jerusalem at the hands of the Babylonians, in the 6th century B.C., and urged reform, or a new covenant, with God.

**Crisis, Faith, and Fame** The Symphony first took shape shortly after Bernstein’s graduation from Harvard as a song from the Book of Lamentations. He then added two movements in time for a competition at the New England Conservatory (which, as fate would have it, he did not win). Yet the Symphony quickly became a success, traveling from its Pittsburgh premiere to New York and four other American cities as well as Prague and Jerusalem. Serving as soloist in the first performances was Bernstein’s close collaborator, the mezzo-soprano Jennie Tourel, who had enjoyed a prominent career in Paris before emigrating.

“Jeremiah” is the first of three symphonies that Bernstein understood as a continuous journey, from the “destruction, consolation and resignation” in “Jeremiah,” to the “search for faith” in “The Age of Anxiety” (Symphony No. 2), to the crisis of both faith and tonality explored in “Kaddish” (Symphony No. 3). While the composer Aaron Copland called his protégé a “hopeless romantic” with regard to what he called the First Symphony’s “Jewish melos,” Bernstein remained committed to exploring a spiritual crisis that he considered synonymous with the 20th century. The work bears a dedication to his father, Sam, a shrewd but deeply religious businessman who had once discouraged his son’s career in music.

**A Closer Look** In program notes for the work’s premiere, Bernstein acknowledged “Hebrew thematic” material in the second and third movements while maintaining that “other remembrances” of liturgical music were “a matter of emotional quality.” The late scholar Jack Gottlieb, however, documented numerous concrete references. The composer spins out fragments of religious melodies into a tightly woven yet inventive sonata form, reinforcing a sense of spirituality while also illuminating the need to constantly redefine

one's relationship to it.

The opening movement (**Prophecy**) tells of Jeremiah's plea with the Israeli people. The mournful prophecy theme, which is lifted from standing (or "Amidah") prayers, is first stated in the horn and will germinate in various guises throughout the orchestra. A solo flute melody, followed by a chorale in brass, introduces a brighter passage, but it is not long before a sense of doom returns. An affirmation of faith then emerges with pounding chords across the orchestra, followed by a return to the prophecy theme in the strings and woodwinds.

The inner **Profanation** movement illustrates chaos and pagan debauchery with syncopated rhythms and colorful orchestration that point to *West Side Story*. March-like passages are interleaved with melodies that could be from another Bernstein musical (an episode including trumpets and maracas in particular reveals his innate showmanship). The theme of profanation then returns with even more force, underscored by timpani and cymbals.

**Lamentation** concludes the Symphony in Mahler-like fashion with a song that Bernstein described as "the cry of Jeremiah as he mourns his beloved Jerusalem." Sparse accompaniment in the horns and woodwinds underscores an image of the empty city until the strings introduce an urgent chord. Following a rousing orchestral interlude, a pair of solo flutes foreshow a melody from the "Simple Song" in his 1971 stage work *MASS* with a theme that continues to sigh as it is passed to the strings.

Bernstein reveals his gift for organic unity as the prophecy motive surfaces in the violins and woodwinds before the singer returns with fuller backing from the orchestra to lament sin and destruction. The Symphony ends with an ambiguous shimmer of hope implying the possibility of renewal. Bernstein, however, considered the sense of peace at the end of the work "a kind of comfort, not a solution." It was not until *MASS* that the journey approached a conclusion, with a collective ritual that paves the road to personal faith.

—Rebecca Schmid

*Rebecca Schmid, Ph.D., is an independent scholar and faculty member at Webster Vienna Private University. Her writings about Bernstein have appeared with Cambridge University Press.*

*Bernstein composed his Symphony No. 1 in 1942.*

*The Philadelphia Orchestra first performed the "Jeremiah" in March 1965, with Elyakum Shapira conducting and Betty Allen as the mezzo-soprano soloist. The last subscription performances were in May 2017, led by Yannick Nézet-Séguin with mezzo-soprano Sasha Cooke.*

*The Symphony is scored for three flutes (III doubling piccolo), two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, E-flat clarinet (doubling bass clarinet), two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, cymbals, maracas, snare drum, suspended cymbal, triangle, wood block), piano, strings, and mezzo-soprano soloist.*

*Bernstein's Symphony No. 1 runs approximately 25 minutes in performance.*

## From The Book of Lamentations

### **PEREQ 1.1-3**

*Ēcha yashva vadad ha-ir  
Rabati am  
Hay'ta k'almana;  
Rabati vagoyim  
Sarati bam'dinot  
Hay'ta lamas.*

*Bacho tikkeh balaila,  
Vdim'ata al lecheya;  
Ēn la m'nachēm  
Mikol ohaveha;  
Kol rēcha  
bag'du va,  
Hayu la loy'vim.*

*Galta Y'huda mēoni,  
Umērov avoda;  
Hi yashva vagoyim,  
Lo matsa mano-ach;  
Kol rodf'eha hisiguha  
Bēn ham'tsarim*

### **PEREQ 1.8**

*Chēt chata Y'rushalyim  
(Ēcha yashva vadad ha-ir  
... k'almana.)*

### **PEREQ 4.14-15**

*Na-u ivrim bachutsot  
N'go-alu badam,  
B'lo yuchlu  
Yig'u bilvushēhem.*

*Suru tamē kar'u lamo,  
Suru, suru al tiga-u ...*

### **PEREQ 5.20-21**

*Lama lanetsach tishkachēnu ...  
Lanetsach taazv'enu ...  
Hashiv'enu Adonai ēlecha ...*

### **CHAPTER 1.1-3**

How doth the city sit solitary,  
That was full of people!  
How is she become as a widow!  
She that was great among the nations,  
And princess among the provinces,  
How is she become tributary!

She weepeth sore in the night,  
And her tears are on her cheeks;  
She hath none to comfort her  
Among all her lovers;  
All her friends have dealt  
treacherously with her,  
They are become her enemies.

Judah is gone into exile because of affliction,  
And because of great servitude;  
She dwelleth among the nations,  
She findeth no rest.  
All her pursuers overtook her  
Within the narrow passes.

### **CHAPTER 1.8**

Jerusalem hath grievously sinned ...  
How doth the city sit solitary  
... a widow.

### **CHAPTER 4.14-15**

They wander as blind men in the streets,  
They are polluted with blood,  
So that men cannot  
Touch their garments.

Depart, ye unclean! they cried unto them,  
Depart, depart! touch us not ...

### **CHAPTER 5.20-21**

Wherefore dost Thou forget us forever,  
And forsake us so long time? ...  
Turn Thou us unto Thee, O Lord ...

# THE MUSIC

## Symphonic Dances from *West Side Story* (orchestrated by Sid Ramin and Irwin Kostal)

Leonard Bernstein



As early as 1949, Leonard Bernstein and two of his friends, choreographer Jerome Robbins and librettist Arthur Laurents, were toying with the idea of a Broadway musical that adapted Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* into a modern New York setting. But deciding exactly which social struggle to portray in this adaptation proved to be difficult, and the project languished for several years. When the brilliant young lyricist Stephen Sondheim joined the team, the original creators hit on the idea that rival white and Hispanic street gangs on the Upper West Side of New York City would be the basis of the story's conflict, and production moved ahead quickly. Excited by the project's rapid development, the composer declared "I hear rhythms and pulses and, most of all, I can sort of feel the form."

The "rhythms and pulses" Bernstein was hearing were the sounds of Latin music—mambo, Latin jazz, and conga, for example; sounds that were gaining popularity in the late 1950s. Bernstein's senior thesis at Harvard University, which discussed the influence of Latin music on the emerging "American style" of composition, was in some ways a preparation for his work on this new Broadway musical. And once it was determined that one of the rival gangs would be Puerto Rican, the musical qualities of the score for *West Side Story* fell into place.

**An Emphasis on Dance** *West Side Story* opened on Broadway in the fall of 1957. It was a moderately popular success with audiences, but the critical response was mixed. Although in many ways it was a traditional Broadway musical, *West Side Story* included two important innovations that made it stand out: It was unusually violent and tragic (with onstage deaths at the end of both acts) and it incorporated dance into the musical to a degree never seen on the Broadway stage before. The composer himself said, "So much was conveyed in music, including an enormous reliance upon dance to tell plot—not just songs stuck in a book."

Instead of handing off the dance numbers to an assistant, Bernstein composed the dances himself. He had already written two fully fledged ballet scores as well as two successful Broadway musicals (*On the Town* and *Wonderful Town*). Not only could he handle standard song forms and dance music, but he also knew how to orchestrate, how to conceive larger musical structures as part of a dramatic narrative, and how to write symphonically for the stage.

There are three orchestral versions of the music from *West Side Story*. For the original Broadway stage show, Bernstein closely supervised the orchestrations of Sid Ramin and Irwin Kostal, scored for a lean, 30-piece pit ensemble. In 1961 Ramin and Kostal re-orchestrated the

score for the film version, using a much larger orchestra. Though Bernstein wasn't entirely pleased with this richer orchestration, Ramin and Kostal both won a GRAMMY Award and an Oscar for their work on the *West Side Story* movie soundtrack. As they were wrapping up the orchestrations for the film version, a benefit concert was planned to honor Bernstein, who had just extended his contract as music director of the New York Philharmonic. With the popularity of *West Side Story* reaching a peak, and a movie version about to be released, the music simply had to be included on the program. Ramin and Kostal chose selections from the orchestral film score, and Bernstein re-ordered them into a new sequence based not on their order in the show but according to their musical relationships. As the Symphonic Dances from *West Side Story*, these selections were premiered on February 13, 1961, by the New York Philharmonic, with Lukas Foss conducting.

**A Closer Look** While audiences will recognize many of the popular songs from the show in the Symphonic Dances, there are a number of famous tunes that are conspicuous by their absence, including “America,” “I Feel Pretty,” “One Hand, One Heart,” and the ever-popular “Tonight.” But Bernstein may have thought too many familiar melodies would weaken the musical structure of this single-movement symphonic work.

The piece opens with a nervous and dramatic Prologue that depicts mounting tensions between the rival Jets and Sharks. This leads without a break into the fantasy dream sequence (“Somewhere”) in which the gangs peacefully co-exist in a friendly and serene world. This fantasy continues in the Coplandesque Scherzo, only to be interrupted by the music of the high school Mambo. It is at this dance that Tony and Maria meet, dancing together (Cha-Cha) and then speaking to each other for the first time (Meeting Scene). In the “Cool” fugue, the Jets try to alleviate some of the rising unease, but the agitation spills over into the Rumble, where the respective leaders of each gang are killed. The hymn-like Finale, which alludes to the “Somewhere” theme, characterizes the story’s central ideas of tragedy and love.

—Luke Howard

*Luke Howard is associate director of the School of Music at Brigham Young University, and for many years wrote program notes for The Philadelphia Orchestra, the Aspen Music Festival, and Utah Opera. His research focuses on classical music in popular culture and the reception histories of well-known concert works.*

*West Side Story was composed in 1957, and the Symphonic Dances were orchestrated in 1961.*

*The Philadelphia Orchestra first performed selections from West Side Story in November 1961, with Arthur Fiedler. The Symphonic Dances were first played in July 1976 at the Robin Hood Dell West, led by Bernstein himself. The most recent appearance of the work on subscription concerts was in October 2024, conducted by David Robertson.*

*The Dances are scored for three flutes (III doubling piccolo), two oboes, English horn, two clarinets, E-flat clarinet, bass clarinet, alto saxophone, two bassoons, contrabassoon, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, bongos, chime, conga drums, cowbell, cymbals, drum set, finger cymbals, gong, güiro, maracas, orchestra bells, police whistle, tambourine, tenor drum, timbales, triangle, vibraphone, wood block, and xylophone), harp, piano (doubling celesta), and strings.*

*Performance time is approximately 25 minutes.*

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# MUSICAL TERMS

## GENERAL TERMS

**Cadence:** The conclusion to a phrase, movement, or piece based on a recognizable melodic formula, harmonic progression, or dissonance resolution

**Chorale:** A hymn tune of the German Protestant Church, or one similar in style. Chorale settings are vocal, instrumental, or both.

**Chord:** The simultaneous sounding of three or more tones

**Coda:** A concluding section or passage added in order to confirm the impression of finality

**Dissonance:** A combination of two or more tones requiring resolution

**Fugue:** A piece of music in which a short melody is stated by one voice and then imitated by the other voices in succession, reappearing throughout the entire piece in all the voices at different places

**Harmonic:** Pertaining to chords and to the theory and practice of harmony

**Harmony:** The combination of simultaneously sounded musical notes to produce chords and chord progressions

**Intonation:** The treatment of musical pitch in performance

**Legato:** Smooth, even, without any break between notes

**Meter:** The symmetrical grouping of musical rhythms

**Polyphony:** A term used to designate music in more than one part and the style in which all or several of the musical parts move to some extent independently

**Rhapsody:** Generally an instrumental fantasia on folksongs or on motifs taken from primitive national music

**Scherzo:** Literally “a joke.” Usually the third movement of symphonies and quartets that was introduced by Beethoven to replace the minuet. The scherzo is followed by a gentler section called a trio, after which the scherzo is repeated. Its characteristics are a rapid tempo, vigorous rhythm, and humorous contrasts. Also an instrumental piece of a light, piquant, humorous character.

**Sonata form:** The form in which the first movements (and sometimes others) of symphonies are usually cast. The sections are exposition, development, and recapitulation, the last sometimes followed by a coda. The exposition is the introduction of the musical ideas, which are then “developed.” In the recapitulation, the exposition is repeated with modifications.

**Syncopation:** A shift of rhythmic emphasis off the beat

**Tempo:** The speed of music

**Timbre:** Tone color or tone quality

**Tonality:** The orientation of melodies and harmonies toward a specific pitch or pitches

## THE SPEED OF MUSIC (Tempo)

**Adagio:** Leisurely, slow

**Agitato:** Excited

**Allegro:** Bright, fast

**Andante:** Walking speed

**Con moto:** With motion

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