The Art of the Score

**West Side Story**

**Tuesday, September 12, 2023, 7:30 p.m.**
16,922nd Concert

**Wednesday, September 13, 2023, 7:30 p.m.**
16,923rd Concert

**Thursday, September 14, 2023, 7:30 p.m.**
16,924th Concert

**Sunday, September 17, 2023, 2:00 p.m.**
16,925th Concert

David Newman, Conductor

Wu Tsai Theater
David Geffen Hall at Lincoln Center
Home of the New York Philharmonic

This program will last approximately three hours, which includes one intermission.

The performance is a presentation of the complete 2021 film of *West Side Story* with a live performance of that film’s entire score.
West Side Story in Concert (2021; New York Premiere of score performed live to complete film)
David Newman, Conductor

20TH CENTURY STUDIOS Presents

A STEVEN SPIELBERG Film

WEST SIDE STORY

ANSEL ELGORT
ARIANA DEBOSE
DAVID ALVAREZ
MIKE FAIST
with RITA MORENO
and introducing RACHEL ZEGLER

Music Conducted by
GUSTAVO DUDAMEL

Executive Music Producer
MATT SULLIVAN

Music Arranged by
DAVID NEWMAN

Supervising Vocal Producer
JEANINE TESORI

Film Editors
MICHAEL KAHN, ACE
SARAH BROSHAR

Production Designer
ADAM STOCKHAUSEN

Director of Photography
JANUSZ KAMINSKI

Executive Producers
RITA MORENO
DANIEL LUPI
ADAM SOMNER
TONY KUSHNER
Produced by
STEVEN SPIELBERG, p.g.a.
KRISTIE MACOSKO KRIEGER, p.g.a.
KEVIN McCOLLUM

Original Choreography by
JEROME ROBBINS

Choreographed by
JUSTIN PECK

Based on the Stage Play
Book by
ARTHUR LAURENTS

Music by
LEONARD BERNSTEIN

Lyrics by
STEPHEN SONDHEIM

Play Conceived, Directed and Choreographed by
JEROME ROBBINS

Lyrics by
STEPHEN SONDHEIM

Music by
LEONARD BERNSTEIN

Screenplay by
TONY KUSHNER

Directed by
STEVEN SPIELBERG

Soundtrack available on

West Side Story (2021) © 20th Century Studios and West Side Story ® Associates ™

THERE WILL BE ONE INTERMISSION.

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Notes on the Program

**West Side Story (2021)**

Leonard Bernstein

No film — drama, comedy, or musical — can claim a closer connection to the New York Philharmonic and its home at Lincoln Center than *West Side Story*. As the opening shot pans over construction rubble to a sign announcing the new Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, the Jets burst into the scene to the indelible music by Grammy and Tony Award–winning Leonard Bernstein. *West Side Story’s* composer was named Music Director of the NY Phil in 1957, the same year the musical opened on Broadway. In 1959 Bernstein led Philharmonic musicians (in music by Copland, Beethoven, and others) at Lincoln Center’s groundbreaking ceremony. The following year music from *West Side Story* entered the Orchestra’s repertoire, where it has remained a staple ever since.

The first film version of the musical, released in 1961 and starring Natalie Wood, Richard Beymer, Rita Moreno, George Chakiris, and Russ Tamblyn, was partially filmed on the streets near where Lincoln Center now stands, among tenements of the San Juan Hill and Lincoln Square neighborhoods that had been condemned, and shortly after demolished, as part of New York City Planning Commissioner Robert Moses’s “slum clearance” in the name of progress. Steven Spielberg’s reimagining of *West Side Story* keeps the action around that same period, and in fact makes the dislocation of an entire population and its mix of cultures more explicit.

Spielberg’s version, with a screenplay by Tony Kushner (*The Fabelmans; Lincoln; Angels in America; Caroline, or Change*), highlights the turmoil that displacement caused, while bringing social issues and characters more in line with contemporary views. The Sharks, this time cast with actors of Latin heritage, converse in a mix of English and untranslated Spanish. The character Anybodys is transgender (rather than being a “tomboy”), portrayed by nonbinary actor iris menas. Characters on both sides have more rounded lives and motivations. Maria’s job on the cleaning crew of Gimbels department store at Herald Square takes her out of the neighborhood, in contrast to her more sheltered work at a nearby bridal shop in the earlier film. Tony tries to stay away from the Jets to avoid a parole violation, after serving time for nearly killing someone.

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**In Short**

**Born:** August 25, 1918, in Lawrence, Massachusetts

**Died:** October 14, 1990, in New York City

**Work composed:** the musical, principally 1955–57, co-authored by Jerome Robbins (creative concept and choreography), Arthur Laurents (book), and Stephen Sondheim (lyrics)

**World premiere:** the musical, August 19, 1957, at the National Theatre in Washington, DC, Jerome Robbins, director; the Steven Spielberg film adaptation, November 29, 2021, at the Rose Theater, Jazz at Lincoln Center, New York City

**New York Philharmonic premiere:** these performances mark the first live-to-film presentation of the 2021 version in New York City

**Estimated duration:** ca. 156 minutes
in a previous rumble. Doc’s drug store is presided over by his widow, Valentina, played by Rita Moreno, who became the first Latina to win an Academy Award, as Best Supporting Actress, for her portrayal of Anita in the 1961 film. (History repeated itself in 2022, when Ariana DeBose, who is of Afro–Puerto Rican heritage, took home the Best Supporting Actress Oscar for her turn as Anita.)

What remains constant is the original score, featuring such iconic songs as Maria, Tonight, and America, written by Bernstein with lyrics by a then-unknown Stephen Sondheim. Bernstein and West Side Story co-creators Jerome Robbins (creative concept and choreography) and Arthur Laurents (book) had originally conceived of a musical riff on Romeo and Juliet set among Jewish and Catholic families on the Lower East Side. News reports of juvenile delinquency and gang violence on the Upper West Side inspired them to turn the concept into territorial conflict between the newly arrived Puerto Rican Sharks and the “American” Jets, who were not far removed from their own immigration stories. The Jets were imagined as sons and grandsons of Irish, Italian, and Eastern European immigrants; Tony is identified as Polish.

The 2021 film’s changes to musical sequences add depth to those realities. The Sharks sing La Borinqueña, the Puerto Rican anthem, in defiant response to an encounter with the Jets and dismissive cops. “Somewhere,” traditionally a duet between Tony and Maria, is sung by the Puerto Rican Valentina. Her own marriage to the white Doc lends a new poignance to the lyrics, from the perspective of someone who has lived through too many conflicts.

West Side Story (2021) was filmed on location across New York City (with Paterson, New Jersey also standing in for a much–changed Upper West Side), keeping the connection to place foremost. Tony and Maria ride the 1 train to The Cloisters at the upper edge of

The NY Phil Connection

Music from West Side Story has long been a staple of New York Philharmonic performances, from celebrity-studded songfests to live-to-film screenings of the 1961 movie. Hardly a surprise given that its composer, Leonard Bernstein, led the Orchestra as Music Director from 1958 to 1969, before becoming Laureate Conductor. He worked with collaborators Sid Ramin and Irwin Kostal to create Symphonic Dances from West Side Story in 1961, reordering the selections for their orchestral, not narrative, sense. The NY Phil premiered the piece on February 13, 1961, and went on to perform it 20 times under Bernstein’s direction. The Orchestra still plays it frequently as a favorite piece in its repertoire.

New York Philharmonic

Leonard Bernstein, MUSIC DIRECTOR

1960 - 1961
Carnegie Hall

PROGRAM OF MUSIC BY LEONARD BERNSTEIN

Part I
Overture to “Candide”
AARON COPLAND, Conductor

Symphony No. 1 (“Jeremiah”) Prophecy (Agnus Dei) Prolamation (Vivace con brio) Lamentation (Lento)
VLADIMIR GOLECHMANN, Conductor JENNIE TOUREL, Soloist

Symphonic Dances from “West Side Story” (Premiere)
LUKAS FOSS, Conductor

INTERMISSION
Manhattan, a location of particular significance to him. (The One Hand, One Heart sequence was actually filmed at the Church of the Intercession in Washington Heights). An exuberant America takes to the streets in bright sunshine, amid a colorful swirl of storefronts and pedestrian life. Justin Peck’s choreography, which draws upon Jerome Robbins’s original dance movement throughout the film, culminates here in a traffic-stopping pachanga dance.

The Philharmonic connection remains just as strong. Spielberg requested that the NY Phil record the soundtrack (though when the pandemic stopped the Orchestra’s recording sessions, some additional music was recorded by the Los Angeles Philharmonic) under the direction of Gustavo Dudamel, who will become the Orchestra’s Music and Artistic Director in the 2026–27 season. There is always a place for the NY Phil, and us, in West Side Story.

**Instrumentation:** three flutes (all doubling piccolo), two oboes (one doubling oboe d’amore), English horn, four clarinets (one doubling E-flat clarinet and three doubling bass clarinet), two bassoons and contrabassoon, three saxophones (soprano doubling alto, alto doubling tenor and baritone, tenor doubling baritone and bass), four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, harp, piano (doubling celesta), electric guitar, acoustic guitar, timpani, chimes, orchestra bells, vibraphone, xylophone, cymbals, tam tam, brake drum, castanets, claves, cowbells, finger cymbals, quiro, maracas, police whistle, ratchet, slide whistle, tambourine, temple blocks, triangle, wood block, bongos, tom toms, bass drum, pitched drums, snare drum, timbales, conga drums, drum set, and strings.

— Rebecca Winzenried, former Program and Publications Editor at the New York Philharmonic

**Somewhere New**

In one of the most significant changes to West Side Story, director Steven Spielberg gives the song Somewhere to Valentina, a new character created by screenwriter Tony Kushner for Rita Moreno. Valentina is both a nod to Moreno’s involvement in the earlier film and a character whose presence provides a through line to the neighborhood’s history.

“We decided that Somewhere needed to go from the first person to the third person,” Spielberg said at the time of his film’s release. “Somewhere had to reflect [Valentina] mourning the loss of her husband, the last desperate connection between Maria and Tony, and the aftermath of Anita losing Bernardo. There’s a place for all four of those characters. Maybe there is, maybe there isn’t, but she’s singing for everyone, including herself.”

Valentina is alone in the store as she begins to sing quietly, reflecting on her husband, Doc. She has just learned of the deadly consequences of the rumble. Moreno has said that her version had a different undercurrent. “I thought it should have a bit of anger under it. It’s not just, ‘There’s a place for us,’ but ‘I know there’s a place for us.’ I’ve always felt she’s saying, ‘Somewhere, somehow, damn it, there is a place for us.’” Moreno added: “It wasn’t so much anger as, ‘I’m determined that things are going to change’ … and the exhaustion of that.”
A Tale of Two Names

Two neighborhood names are referenced by Lt. Schrank in *West Side Story*: Lincoln Square and San Juan Hill. While one name is still in use today, the other is not.

The name Lincoln Square is still attached to the area from roughly 59th Street to 72nd Street, west of Central Park. Lincoln Center takes its name from that moniker, the origins of which are unclear. In the early 20th century the area was inhabited primarily by residents from Ireland, Italy, Germany, Russia, and Greece. By 1950, the population also included a significant number of Puerto Ricans who had arrived in New York City after World War II.

Neighborhood boundaries are never absolute, and community memories suggest that the San Juan Hill name was actively used throughout the lower 60s west of Columbus Avenue and beyond. The origins of the name are also unclear, but San Juan Hill has been described as a predominantly Black neighborhood since the late 1800s, with the arrival of African Americans from Southern states and Afro-Caribbeans. In the early 1900s it was a vibrant area of low-rise housing where musicians lived and worked, such as jazz great Thelonious Monk and stride pianist James P. Johnson, composer of *Charleston*, the song that launched the well-known dance craze.

Over time, an estimated 8,100 families and more than 800 businesses have been displaced from both neighborhoods by projects like the Amsterdam Houses as well as the Lincoln Square Urban Renewal Project. The area’s cultural history is being re-examined at Lincoln Center. Etienne Charles’s *San Juan Hill*, incorporating sounds and stories of the neighborhood, was premiered by the New York Philharmonic at the opening of the new David Geffen Hall in October 2022. *San Juan Heal*, Nina Chanel Abney’s colorful artwork displayed on the hall’s entire 65th Street facade, continues to pay homage to the neighborhood’s influence. Learn more at the Legacies of San Juan Hill website at LincolnCenter.org/SanJuanHill.
FILM CONCERT PRODUCTION CREDITS:


Technical Director: Epilogue Media, Inc.

Sound Engineer: Marty Bierman

Original Orchestration: Leonard Bernstein with Sid Ramin and Irwin Kostal

Additional orchestrations: Garth Edwin Sunderland

Music Preparation: JoAnn Kane Music Services

Film Preparation for Concert Performance: Ramiro Belgardt

President, Disney Music Group: Ken Bunt

SVP / GM, Disney Concerts: Chip McLean

VP, Disney Concerts: Gina Lorscheider

Operations, Disney Concerts: Brannon Fells and Royd Haston

Business Affairs, Disney Concerts: Darryl Franklin, Leigh Zeichick, Phil Woods, Narine Minasian, Elena Contreras, Addison Granillo, Christy Swintek and Svetlana Tzaneva

Marketing, Disney Concerts: Stacy Satz and Roger Weeks

Marketing, Leonard Bernstein Office, Inc.: Heather Wallace

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David Newman is one of today’s most accomplished creators of music for film. In his 30-year career he has scored more than 110 films, ranging from War of the Roses, Matilda, Bowfinger, and Heathers to the more recent Girls Trip, Night School, and Serenity. His music has brought to life the critically acclaimed dramas Broke-down Palace and Hoffa, comedies such as Galaxy Quest and Throw Momma from the Train, and award-winning animated films including Ice Age, The Brave Little Toaster, and Anastasia. He holds an Academy Award nomination for his score to Anastasia. In 2021, after a decade of conducting numerous live music-to-film concerts for the classic West Side Story film, Newman arranged the score for Steven Spielberg’s bold new reimagining of the legendary Leonard Bernstein and Stephen Sondheim musical, earning him a 2022 Grammy nomination.

As a conductor, Newman appears with leading orchestras throughout the world, including the New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Royal philharmonic orchestras; Boston, Chicago, and San Diego symphony orchestras; Philadelphia and Cleveland Orchestras; and the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin and Schleswig-Holstein Festival Orchestra. In autumn 2017 Newman conducted the New York Philharmonic in the World Premiere of the live-to-picture presentation of John Williams’s epic film series Star Wars — Episodes IV, V, VI, and VII. In summer 2020 he conducted the world premiere of his score for the film Galaxy Quest live with the San Diego Symphony during Comic-Con, and in autumn 2021 he was invited by the Academy Museum of Motion Pictures in Los Angeles to conduct its inaugural concerts of The Wizard of Oz, live to picture, with the American Youth Symphony.

Newman is the son of nine–time Oscar–winning composer Alfred Newman, and the creation and conducting of music has been a lifelong passion. An active composer for the concert hall, his works have been performed by the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Indianapolis Symphony, and Long Beach Symphony, as well as at the Ravinia Festival, Spoleto Festival USA, and Chicago’s Grant Park Music Festival. He also composed a violin–orchestra suite for prodigious Korean American violinist Sarah Chang based on songs from West Side Story.

Passionate about nurturing the next generation of musicians, David Newman has served on the faculty of the Aspen Music Festival in the Film Scoring Program.
Jaap van Zweden became Music Director of the New York Philharmonic in 2018. In 2023–24, his farewell season celebrates his connection with the Orchestra’s musicians as he leads performances in which six Principal players appear as concerto soloists. He also revisits composers he has championed at the Philharmonic, from Steve Reich and Joel Thompson to Mozart and Mahler. He is also Music Director of the Hong Kong Philharmonic, since 2012, and becomes Music Director of the Seoul Philharmonic in 2024. He has appeared as guest with the Orchestre de Paris; Amsterdam’s Royal Concertgebouw and Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestras; Vienna, Berlin, and Los Angeles philharmonic orchestras; and London Symphony, Chicago Symphony, and Cleveland orchestras.

Jaap van Zweden’s NY Phil recordings include David Lang’s prisoner of the state and Julia Wolfe’s Grammy-nominated Fire in my mouth (Decca Gold). He conducted the first performances in Hong Kong of Wagner’s Ring Cycle, the Naxos recording of which led the Hong Kong Philharmonic to be named the 2019 Gramophone Orchestra of the year. His performance of Wagner’s Parsifal received the Edison Award for Best Opera Recording in 2012.

Born in Amsterdam, Jaap van Zweden became the youngest-ever concertmaster of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra at age 19 and began his conducting career almost 20 years later. He was named Musical America’s 2012 Conductor of the Year, was profiled by CBS 60 Minutes on arriving at the NY Phil, and in the spring of 2023 received the prestigious Concertgebouw Prize. In 1997 he and his wife, Aaltje, established the Papageno Foundation to support families of children with autism.

The New York Philharmonic connects with millions of music lovers each season through live concerts in New York and around the world, broadcasts, streaming, education programs, and more. In the 2023–24 season — which builds on the Orchestra’s transformation reflected in the new David Geffen Hall — the NY Phil honors Jaap van Zweden in his farewell season as Music Director, premieres 14 works by a wide range of composers including some whom van Zweden has championed, marks György Ligeti’s centennial, and celebrates the one-hundredth birthday of the beloved Young People’s Concerts.

The Philharmonic has commissioned and / or premiered important works, from Dvořák’s New World Symphony to Tania León’s Pulitzer Prize–winning Stride. The NY Phil has released more than 2,000 recordings since 1917, and in 2023 announced a partnership with Apple Music Classical, the new streaming app designed to deliver classical music lovers the optimal listening experience. The Orchestra builds on a longstanding commitment to serving its communities — which has led to annual free concerts across New York City and the free online New York Philharmonic Shelby White & Leon Levy Digital Archives — through a new ticket access program.

Founded in 1842, the New York Philharmonic is the oldest symphony orchestra in the United States, and one of the oldest in the world. Jaap van Zweden became Music Director in 2018–19, following titans including Bernstein, Toscanini, and Mahler. Gustavo Dudamel will become Music and Artistic Director beginning in 2026 after serving as Music Director Designate in 2025–26.
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David Geffen Hall

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