

TABLE OF CONTENTS

4 Notes on the Shows and Songs

MASS

9 A Simple Song* ¹

ON THE TOWN

17 Some Other Time ¹

PETER PAN

20 My House ¹

23 Who Am I? ³

1600 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE

26 Take Care of This House ³

WEST SIDE STORY

30 I Feel Pretty ²

37 I Have a Love ¹

40 Somewhere ³

44 Tonight ¹

WONDERFUL TOWN

50 A Little Bit in Love ¹

Pianists on the recording: ¹ Jamie Johns; ² Ruben Piirainen; ³ Richard Walters

* Sonora Slocum, flute

Notes on the Shows and Songs

MASS

A theatre piece for singers, players and dancers. Music by Leonard Bernstein. Text from the liturgy of the Roman mass, with additional texts by Stephen Schwartz and Leonard Bernstein. First performance: September 8, 1971, Kennedy Center, Washington, D.C. Directed by Gordon Davidson; choreographed by Alvin Ailey; conducted by Maurice Peress.

Selection:

A Simple Song

Composed for the opening of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, Mass unconventionally and innovatively combines liturgy in Latin and English with contemporary theatre. The score is also eclectic, with music for traditional boys choir, classical singers as well as rock singers, with rock musicians integrated into a traditional orchestra in the pit. The abstract story takes place during the celebration of a mass, and explores modern, personal issues of faith and experience. "A Simple Song" (A Hymn and Psalm) is sung by the Mass celebrant (originally a high lyric baritone) at the beginning of the show.

ON THE TOWN

Musical in two acts. Music by Leonard Bernstein. Lyrics by Betty Comden and Adolph Green. Book by Betty Comden and Adolph Green, based on an idea by Jerome Robbins. First performance: December 13, Boston. Broadway opening: December 28, 1944. Director of the original production: George Abbott. Choreographer: Jerome Robbins.

Selections:

I Feel Like I'm Not Out of Bed Yet

Lonely Town

Lucky to Be Me

Some Other Time

On the Town was the first Broadway musical success for a remarkable group of collaborators: Leonard Bernstein, lyricists/librettists Betty Comden and Adolph Green, and choreographer Jerome Robbins. Robbins and Bernstein had worked together in early 1944 on their ballet *Fancy Free*, which chronicled the one-day shore leave of three sailors in New York. By the spring they realized this material would make great musical comedy. Bernstein asked Comden and Green, his friends from a little known night-club act, to write the lyrics and book for the show. Veteran George Abbott directed the project. Bernstein wrote an entirely new score, not using any music from *Fancy Free*. Besides many inventive songs, the score featured musical passages that highlighted dazzling choreography by Robbins, which helped to further elevate the stature of dance on the Broadway stage. These interludes also showed Bernstein's unique, substantial theatre styles as a composer. Comden and Green brought their comic timing into their writing, realizing their own words in portraying the characters Claire and Ozzie onstage.

LEONARD BERNSTEIN

August 25, 1918 - October 14, 1990

Leonard Bernstein was born in Lawrence, Massachusetts. He took piano lessons as a boy and attended the Garrison and Boston Latin Schools. At Harvard University he studied with Walter Piston, Edward Burlingame-Hill, and A. Tillman Merritt, among others. Before graduating in 1939 he made an unofficial conducting debut with his own incidental music to the Aristophanes play *The Birds*, and directed and performed in Marc Blitzstein's *The Cradle Will Rock*. Subsequently, at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, Bernstein studied piano with Isabella Vengerova, conducting with Fritz Reiner, and orchestration with Randall Thompson.

In 1940 Bernstein studied at the Boston Symphony Orchestra's newly created summer institute, Tanglewood, with the orchestra's conductor, Serge Koussevitzky. Bernstein later became Koussevitzky's conducting assistant. He made a sensational conducting debut with the New York Philharmonic in 1943. Bernstein became Music Director of the orchestra in 1958. From then until 1969 he led more concerts with the orchestra than any previous conductor. He subsequently held the lifetime title of Laureate Conductor, making frequent guest appearances with the orchestra. More than half of Bernstein's 400-plus recordings were made with the New York Philharmonic.

Bernstein traveled the world as a conductor. Immediately after World War II, in 1946, he conducted in London and at the International Music Festival in Prague. In 1947 he conducted in Tel Aviv, beginning a relationship with Israel that lasted until his death. In 1953 Bernstein was the first American to conduct opera at the Teatro alla Scala in Milan, in Cherubini's *Medea* with Maria Callas.

Beyond many distinguished achievements as a composer of concert works, Bernstein also wrote a one-act opera, *Trouble in Tahiti* (1952), and its sequel, the opera *A Quiet Place* (1983). He collaborated with choreographer Jerome Robbins on three major ballets: *Fancy Free* (1944), and *Facsimile* (1946) for American Ballet Theater, and *Dybbuk* (1974) for the New York City Ballet. Bernstein composed the score for the award-winning film *On the Waterfront* (1954) and incidental music for the Broadway play *The Lark* (1955).

Bernstein contributed substantially to the Broadway musical stage. He collaborated with Betty Comden and Adolph Green on *On the Town* (1944) and *Wonderful Town* (1953). For *Peter Pan* (1950) he penned his own lyrics to songs and also composed incidental music. In collaboration with Richard Wilbur, Lillian Hellman and others he wrote *Candide* (1956). Other versions of *Candide* were written in association with Hugh Wheeler, Stephen Sondheim and other lyricists. In 1957 he collaborated with Jerome Robbins, Stephen Sondheim and Arthur Laurents on the landmark musical *West Side Story*, which was made into an Academy Award-winning film. Bernstein also wrote the Broadway musical *1600 Pennsylvania Avenue* (1976) with lyricist Alan Jay Lerner.

In 1985 the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences honored Bernstein with the Lifetime Achievement Grammy Award. He won eleven Emmy Awards in his career. His televised concert and lecture series were launched with the "Omnibus" program in 1954, followed by the extraordinary "Young People's Concerts with the New York Philharmonic," which began in 1958 and extended over fourteen seasons. Among his many appearances on the PBS series "Great Performances" was the acclaimed eleven-part "Bernstein's Beethoven." In 1989 Bernstein and others commemorated the 1939 invasion of Poland in a worldwide telecast from Warsaw.

Bernstein's writings were published in *The Joy of Music* (1959), *Leonard Bernstein's Young People's Concerts* (1961), *The Infinite Variety of Music* (1966), and *Findings* (1982). Each has been widely translated. He gave six lectures at Harvard University in 1972-1973 as the Charles Eliot Norton Professor of Poetry. These lectures were subsequently published and televised as *The Unanswered Question*.

Bernstein received many honors. He was elected in 1981 to the American Academy of Arts and Letters, which gave him its Gold Medal. The National Fellowship Award in 1985 applauded his life-long support of humanitarian causes. He received the MacDowell Colony's Gold Medal; medals from the Beethoven Society and the Mahler Gesellschaft; the Handel Medallion, New York City's highest honor for the arts; a Tony award (1969) for Distinguished Achievement in the Theater; and dozens of honorary degrees and awards from colleges and universities. Bernstein was presented ceremonial keys to the cities of Oslo, Vienna, Bersheeva, and the village of Bernstein, Austria, among others. National honors came from Italy, Israel, Mexico, Denmark, Germany (the Great Merit Cross), and France (Chevalier, Officer and Commandeur of the Legion d'Honneur). Bernstein received the Kennedy Center Honors in 1980.

In 1990 Bernstein received the Praemium Imperiale, an international prize created in 1988 by the Japan Arts Association and awarded for lifetime achievement in the arts. He used the \$100,000 prize to establish initiatives in the arts and education, principally the Leonard Bernstein Center for Artful Learning.

Bernstein was the father of three children — Jamie, Alexander and Nina — and enjoyed the arrival of his first two grandchildren, Francisca and Evan.