



LOUISVILLE
masterchorale

A CELEBRATION OF COPLAND, BERNSTEIN AND GERSHWIN



Sunday, March 17, 2019 at 3:00 p.m.

COMSTOCK CONCERT HALL

Welcome to the final subscription concert of our 8th season! What a great season it has been—starting off with Elijah in the Fall, collaborating with the Louisville Youth Orchestra for some Holiday Magic in December and now finishing with these wonderful pieces from our American heritage—classics by any definition—by twentieth century Jewish composers. They combined their own, and many other, ethnic traditions into a remarkable and uniquely American body of work.

With this concert underway, we turn our focus to our next season, the 9th. We will be busy between subscription series, of course. We have a tradition of presenting free performances to senior living facilities, youth programs and homeless shelters. We'll continue to do that , and more, while we prepare for the season. That season promises to be an exciting one—we'll continue with the repertoire our audiences love and present some choral fireworks as well as time-honored composers and works. We've also got some changes in mind –but more on that later.

In the meantime, we hope you will love today's program and be eager for more.

Thanks,



Mark Walker
Artistic Director

A CELEBRATION OF COPLAND, BERNSTEIN AND GERSHWIN

FANFARE FOR THE COMMON MAN

Aaron Copland

CHICHESTER PSALMS

Leonard Bernstein

Micah Arnold, treble

Mary Wilson Redden, soprano

Kathleen Regneri, mezzo soprano

Bill Coleman, tenor

Alexander Redden, baritone

"THE PROMISE OF LIVING" from *The Tender Land*

Aaron Copland

———— INTERVAL ————

RHAPSODY IN BLUE

George Gershwin

Dror Biran, piano

PORGY AND BESS MEDLEY

George Gershwin

Judith Youngblood, mezzo soprano

Lewis Washington, baritone

arr. Ed Lojeski

Sunday, March 17, 2019

COMSTOCK CONCERT HALL
UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE



The Kentucky Arts Council, the state arts agency, provides operating support to Louisville Master Chorale with state tax dollars and federal funding from the National Endowment for the Arts.



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PRECONCERT PROGRAM



Dr. John R. Hale is the Director of Liberal Studies and Adjunct Professor of Archaeology at the University of Louisville. Dr. Hale is a graduate of Yale University, with a Ph.D. from the University of Cambridge, and is both a distinguished instructor and author. His many awards include the Panhellenic Teacher of the Year Award and the Delphi Center Award. Professor Hale has published reports on his research in *Antiquity*, *Journal of Roman Archaeology*, *Scientific American*, and other journals; and his fieldwork has been featured in documentaries on the Discovery and History channels. When his first book, *Lords of the Sea: The Epic Story of the Athenian Navy and the Birth of Democracy*, was published in 2009, *The New York Times* reviewer called him “an intellectually serious historian who knows how to tell war stories.” His engaging style and commanding knowledge are appreciated by concertgoers throughout our community.

TEXT:

CHICHESTER PSALMS

I

PS. 108, VS. 2:	<i>Urah, hanevel, v'chinor' A-irah shahar!</i>	Awake, psaltery and harp: I will rouse the dawn!
PS. 100, ENTIRE:	<i>Hariu l'Adonai kol haarets. Iv'du et Adonai b'simha. Bo-u l'fanav bir'nanah. D'u ki Adonai Hu Elohim. Hu asanu, v'lo anahnu. Amo v'tson mar'ito. Bo-u sh'arav b'todab, Hatseirotav bit'hilah, Hodu lo, bar'chu sh'mo. Ki tov Adonai, l'olam has'do, V'ad dor vador emunato.</i>	Make a joyful noise unto the Lord all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness. Come before His presence with singing. Know ye that the Lord, He is God. It is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves. We are His people and the sheep of His pasture. Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, And into His courts with praise. Be thankful unto Him, and bless His name. For the Lord is good, His mercy is everlasting, And His truth endureth to all generations.

II

PS. 23, ENTIRE:	<i>Adonai ro-i, lo ehsar. Bin'ot deshe yarbitseini, Al mei m'nuhot y'nahaleini, Naf'shi y'shovev, Yan'heini b'ma'aglei tsedek, L'ma'an sh'mo. Gam ki eilech B'gei tsalmavet, Lo ira ra, Ki Atah imadi. Shiv't'cha umishan'techa Hemah y'nahamuni. Ta'aroch l'fanai shulchan Neged tsor'rai Dishanta vashbemen roshi Cosi r'vayah. Ach tov vahesed Yird 'funi kol y'mei hayai, V'shav'ti b'veit Adonai L'orech yamim.</i>	The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, He leadeth me beside the still waters, He restoreth my soul, He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness, For His name's sake. Yea, though I walk Through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, For Thou art with me. Thy rod and Thy staff They comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me In the presence of mine enemies, Thou anointest my head with oil, My cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy Shall follow me all the days of my life, And I will dwell in the house of the Lord Forever.
PS. 2, VS. 1 -4:	<i>Lamah rag'shu goyim Ul 'umim yeh'gu rik? Yit'yats'vu malchei erets, V'roznim nos'du yahad Al Adonai v'al m'shiho. N'natkah et mos'roteimo, V'nashlichah mimenu avoteimo. Yoshev bashamayim Yis'hak, Adonai Yil'ag lamo!</i>	Why do the nations rage, And the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together Against the Lord and against His anointed. Saying, let us break their bands asunder, And cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens Shall laugh, and the Lord Shall have them in derision

III

PS. 131, ENTIRE:

*Adonai, Adonai,
Lo gavah libi,
V'lo ramu einai.
V'lo hilachti
Big'dolot uv'niflaot
Mimeni.
Im lo shiviti
V'do mam 'ti,
Na f'shi k 'gamul alei imo,
Kagamul alai na f'shi.
Yalhel Yis'rael el Adonai
Me'atah v'ad olam.*

Lord, Lord,
My heart is not haughty,
Nor mine eyes lofty, Neither
do I exercise myself In great
matters or in things Too
wonderful for me.
Surely I have calmed
And quieted myself,
As a child that is weaned of his mother,
My soul is even as a weaned child.
Let Israel hope in the Lord From
henceforth and forever.

PS. 133, VS. 1:

*Hineh mah to v,
Umah naim,
Shevet ahim
Gam yahad.*

Behold how good,
And how pleasant it is,
For brethren to dwell
Together in unity.

We plow and plant each row with seeds of grain.
By lending a hand, bring out from the land,

by lending an arm, bring out from the farm,
bring out the blessings of harvest.

Give thanks there was sunshine, give thanks there was rain.
Give thanks we have hands to deliver the grain.

Come join us in thanking the Lord for his blessing.
O let us be joyful. O let us be grateful to the Lord for His blessing.

The promise of ending in right understanding
is peace in our own hearts and peace with our neighbor.

O let us sing our song, and let our song be heard.
Let's sing our song with our hearts, and find a promise in that song.

The promise of living, The promise of growing,
The promise of ending is labor and sharing our loving.

THE PROMISE OF LIVING

Libretto by Horace Everett (pseudonym of Erik Johns)

The promise of living with hope and thanksgiving
is born of our loving our friends and our labor.

The promise of growing with faith and with knowing
is born of our sharing our love with our neighbor.

The promise of living, the promise of growing
is born of our singing, in joy and thanksgiving.

For many a year we've known these fields
and known all the work that makes them yield.

Are you ready to lend a hand? We're ready to work,
We're ready to lend a hand. We'll bring in the harvest.

By working together we'll bring in the harvest,
the blessings of harvest.

We plant each row with seeds of grain,
and Providence sends us the sun and the rain.

PORGY & BESS MEDLEY

"Summertime"

Summertime,
And the livin' is easy.
Fish are jumpin'
And the cotton is high.

Oh, your daddy's rich
And your ma is good lookin',
So hush little baby
Don't you cry

One of these mornings
You're going to rise up singing
Then you'll spread your wings
And you'll take the sky

But till that morning
There's a'nothing can harm you
With Daddy and Mammy standing by

“My Man’s Gone Now”

My man's gone now
Ain't no use a listenin'
For his tired footsteps
Climbin' up the stairs
Ole Man Sorrow's
Come to keep me company
Whisperin' beside me
When I say my prayers
Tellin' me the same thing
mornin', noon, an' evenin',
that I'm all alone now
since my man is dead.

“I Got Plenty o' Nuttin”

Oh, I got plenty of nothin'
And nothin's plenty for me,
I got no car, got no mule
I got no misery

The folks with plenty of plenty
they got a lock on the door.
They're afraid somebody's gonna go 'n' try
to rob 'em while they're goin' out
and tryin' to make some more.

What for?

I got no lock on the door,
that's no way to be.
They can steal the rug from the floor,
that's O. K. with me.
'Cause the things that I prize,
like the stars in the skies,
all are free.

Oh, I got plenty of nothin'
And nothin's plenty for me.
I got my gal, got my song,
Got heaven the whole day long.

Got my gal,
got my Lord,
got my song.

“It Ain’t Necessarily So”

It ain't necessarily so.
It ain't necessarily so.
The things that you're libe
to read in the Bible:
It ain't necessarily so.

Li'l David was small but oh my!
Li'l David was small but oh my!
He fought big Goliath
who lay down and dieth.
Li'l David was small but oh my!

Wadoo. Zim bam boddle-oo
Hoodle ah da wa da
Scatty wah!

It ain't necessarily so.
It ain't necessarily so.
They tell all you chillun
the devil's a villun
But 'taint necessarily so!

I'm preachin' this sermon to show
It ain't nessa, ain't nessa,
Ain't nessa, ain't nessa,
ain't necessarily so!

“Bess, You Is My Woman”

Porgy:
Bess, you is my woman now, you is, you is!
An' you must laugh and sing and dance
for two instead of one.

There's no wrinkle on my brow, nohow,
Because the sorrow of the past is all done, done.
Oh, Bess, my Bess!
The real happiness is jes' begun.

Bess:
Porgy, I's your woman now,
I is, and I ain't never goin' nowhere
'less you shares the fun.

Porgy:
Bess, you is my woman now an' forever.
This life is just begun.
Bess, we two is one now an' forever.

Bess:
But I ain't goin'! You hear me sayin',
If you ain't goin', wid you I'm stayin'!
Porgy, I's your woman now!
I's yours forever -
Mornin' time an' evenin' time an'
summer time an' winter time.

Porgy:
Oh, Bess, don' mind those women.
You got your Porgy, you loves your Porgy.
I knows you means it, I seen it
in your eyes, Bess. We'll go swingin'
through the years a singin',
Mornin' time an' evenin' time an'
summer time an' winter time,
we's happy now, we is one.

Bess:
Mornin' time an' evenin' time an' summer time an' winter time.

Porgy:
Mornin' time an' evenin' time an' summer time an' winter time.

“Oh Lawd, I’m On My Way”

Oh, Lawd, I'm on my way,
I'm on my way to a Heavenly Land,
I'll ride that long, long road,
if you are there to guide my hand.
Oh, Lawd, I'm on my way,
I'm on my way to a Heavenly Land -
Oh, Lawd, it's a long, long way,
but you'll be there to take my hand.

ORCHESTRA

VIOLIN I

Jack Griffin
Isabella Christensen
Elizabeth Smith
Drew Sarette

VIOLIN II

Annie Daigle
Evan Vivic
Betsy Osoffsky

VIOLA

Laura De St Croix
Alisson Reber

CELLO

Yoonie Choi

DOUBLE BASS

Patti Docs

FLUTE

Kathy Karr
Jana Flygstad

OBOE/ENGLISH HORN

Jennifer Potochnic
Katherine Alberts

CLARINET

Andrea Levine
Marilyn Nije

BASSOON

Matt Karr
Chris Reid

SAXOPHONE

Hunt Butler, Alto #1
Megan Pund, Alto #2
Melody Welsh-Buchholz,
Tenor
Brandon Bell, Baritone

FRENCH HORN

John Gustley
Diana Morgen
Tyler Taylor

TRUMPET

Stacy Simpson
Anne McNamara
Erika Howard

TROMBONE

Brett Shuster
Donna Parkes
Anastasi Fafalios

PERCUSSION

John Harris
David Millburn
Terry O'Mahoney

HARP

Louisa Ellis

ARTISTIC LEADERSHIP



MARK WALKER, Louisville Master Chorale's Conductor and Artistic Director, has extensive experience in Choral Conducting, Organ Performance, Choral Music Education, and Liturgical Church Music. He currently serves as Director of Music and Organist at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in nearby La Grange, Kentucky. He has served parishes in Kentucky, Tennessee, Texas, and North Carolina and has taught in schools in Kentucky and North Carolina. Walker has a Bachelor's Degree in Music from Western Kentucky University and a Master's Degree in Organ Performance from East Carolina University.

His conducting experience with extended choral-orchestral works includes the works of Bach, Beethoven, Handel, Mozart, Mendelssohn, Vaughan Williams, Vivaldi, Rheinberger, Pergolesi and contemporary composers Tavener, Lauridsen, Paulus, and Rutter. As an organ recitalist, Walker has performed extensively throughout the Eastern and Southern U.S. He currently serves regularly as conductor and organist for various Diocesan events in Louisville, and during the summer of 2011 served as both choral conductor and guest organ recitalist for the National Associations of Pastoral Musicians Conference. He also served as Dean of the Louisville Chapter of the American Guild of Organists in 2011-13.

LOUISVILLE MASTER CHORALE

SOPRANO

Conra Cowart
Marilyn Cross
Jessica Mills
Nancy Morris
Viki Perry
Randy Peters
Miriam Pittenger
Mary Redden
Stephanie Smith
Diane Watkins
Maria Whitley
Ruth Wright

ALTO

Nancy Appelfhof
Theresa Bauer
Ashley Cook
Anne-Karrick Deetsch
Carole Dunn
Barbara Ellis
Jeanne Marie Groene
Carolyn Makk
Julie Nichelson
Nancy Nikfarjam
Linda Olsavsky
Kathleen Regneri
Marsha Roberts
Lucy Vose
Shiela Wallace
Elizabeth Weaver
Brenda Weeks
Judith Youngblood

TENOR

Alex Brackett
Rob Carlson
Bill Coleman
Millard Dunn
Tommy Fitzgerald
Jackson Harmeyer
Sean McKinley
Troy Overton
Alan Ramirez
Gregg Rochman
Jonathan Smith
Wesley Thomas
Claude Wise

BASS

Louie Bailey
Daniel Blankenship
John R. Hale
Frederick Klotter
Rick Mook
John O'Neil
Laurence Pittenger
Alexander Redden
Hans Sander
William Schauf
Lewis Washington

DR. RICK MOOK, Louisville Master Chorale's Assistant Conductor, has two decades of scholarship and performance. He has engaged a wide range of musical repertoires, from renaissance motets, *fin-de-siecle* choral-orchestral works, jubilee and gospel quartet styles to Hip-hop turntablism. He holds a BA in Music and Religion from the University of Rochester, where he studied conducting, vocal performance, and bassoon at the Eastman School of Music under the guidance of Dr. David Harman, Dr. William Weinert, and Dr. Thomas Folan. He then earned a Ph.D. in Music History at the University of Pennsylvania and served on the faculty of the Herberger School of Music at Arizona State University for over 9 years.



JACK GRIFFIN is Concertmaster and Production Manager with the Louisville Master Chorale. He has held the Principal Viola position with the Louisville Orchestra since 1984, having joined the Orchestra during high school. He received his Bachelor's Degree from the University of Louisville and has also studied at The Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music and Indiana University.

Griffin owns Commonwealth Musicians which provides ensembles such as string quartets, jazz ensembles and other musicians for functions such as weddings and corporate events.

THANKS FOR YOUR HELP

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SOLOISTS



DROR BIRAN, piano, Biran has been described by the *Waterloo-Cedar Falls Courier* as “mesmerizing in the intensity and emotionalism of his playing. His fingering in the fast passages was breathtaking, and the loving care he gave to the sweetly lyrical passages was riveting.” *The Cleveland Plain Dealer* added, “his fortissimos crashed and roared, but next to them came pianissimos that whispered seductively... he has technique to burn and uses it effectively.” Biran’s superb tonal control combined with interesting phrasing and voicing has won him consistent critical acclaim and enthusiastic audiences.

Born in Israel, Biran is a top prizewinner of several national and international piano competitions. He is a graduate of the Givatayim Conservatory where he studied with Mrs. Lily Dorfman, as well as the Rubin Academy of Music at Tel-Aviv University where he studied with Professor Arie Vardi. Biran received his Doctoral degree from the Cleveland Institute of Music where he studied with Mr. Paul Schenly and Dr. Daniel Shapiro.

Biran won top prizes at the M.K Ciurlionis International Piano Competition (1995), and the Cleveland International Piano Competition (1997) where he also received a special prize for the best performance of works by Chopin. His honors include the first prize at the “Pilar Bayona International Piano Competition” in Zaragoza, Spain (1998), first prize at the Israeli Rubin Academy Piano Competition (1998) and the Rafi Goralnik prize for pianists, in the Aviv Competition (2000). Biran has been a recipient of multiple scholarships from the America-Israel Cultural Foundation for distinguished musicians.

Biran has performed widely as a soloist with major orchestras including the Lithuanian Philharmonic Orchestra, RTVE Symphony Orchestra of Spain, Johannesburg Philharmonic Orchestra, Louisville Orchestra and the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra. He has played under the batons of Etinger, Rodan, Gueller, Gacia Asensio, Mester, Lane and others. His concert tours have taken him to the United States, Israel and South America, along with Eastern and Western Europe.

As a chamber musician Biran has appeared on a regular basis with different music ensembles such as Carmel and Aviv String Quartets. He has also performed with members of the Cleveland Orchestra in different venues. His concerts have been broadcast by WUOL, WCLV, WQXR, The Voice of Music – Israel and Classic FM South Africa, among others. Biran can be heard on the JMC (Jerusalem Music Centre) labels featuring ballades by Brahms and Chopin.

Prior to his current appointment at the University of Cincinnati, College-Conservatory of Music, Biran taught at the University of Louisville, Youngstown State University and Case Western Reserve University.



MICAH ARNOLD, treble, is 13 years old and in the eighth grade at Highlands Latin School where he sings under the direction of Dr. Louie Bailey. He has been with the St. Francis in the Fields Evensong Choir under the direction of Dr. Jim Rightmyer for 6 years. He has sung in 4 operas since age 6 and has been in KY Opera’s Dead Man Walking and Amahl and the Night Visitors. Micah also enjoys playing the piano and is an avid birder and cyclist.



MARY WILSON-REDDEN, soprano, has been a featured performer in the Louisville area for over 20 years. In addition to serving as resident soloist with the Louisville Bach Society, she has performed with groups including the Louisville Youth Choir, the Bellarmine Schola Cantorum, Kentucky Opera and the Louisville Chorus. She has toured internationally with the Stephen Foster Story and the Louisville Vocal Project. A graduate of Western Kentucky University with a Bachelor’s Degree in Music Performance, she is a soloist with the Choir of Calvary Episcopal Church.



KATHLEEN REGNERI, mezzo soprano, is well known to Louisville audiences for her many solo performances in both the soprano and mezzo-soprano repertoire. She performed countless works with the Louisville Bach Society and more recently has performed with the Choral Arts Society. She is a graduate of the University of Louisville School of music.



JUDITH YOUNGBLOOD, mezzo soprano, has spent most of her musical career in opera as a singer, stage manager, and director. She is a long-time member of the Kentucky Opera chorus as well as a member of the new Nevertheless Arts Ensemble. Judith is a regular cantor in area Catholic parishes. She holds a BFA in music theatre from Millikin University and a Masters of Music in vocal performance from Northwestern University.



BILL COLEMAN, tenor, has performed extensively in the Louisville area in a variety of ensembles including the Cardinal Singers, the Choral Arts Society, the Louisville Bach Society, and the Louisville Chorus. Highlights include performances as soloist in Mozart’s Requiem and Schubert’s Mass in C with the University of Louisville Honor Choir, Bach’s St. Matthew Passion, B-Minor Mass and Monteverdi’s Vespers with the Choral Arts Society of Louisville, and Boccherini’s Stabat Mater with Louisville’s period instrument ensemble Bourbon Baroque. He attended the University of Louisville.



ALEXANDER REDDEN, baritone, is a veteran soloist in and around the greater Louisville area. He has been featured as a soloist with the Louisville Bach Society, Kentucky Opera, Louisville Vocal Project, Louisville Chorus, Louisville Youth Choir, Bellarmine University, the Youth Performing Arts School Choirs, Calvary Episcopal Church and the Stephen Foster Story. He toured Italy with the Louisville Vocal Project, performing concerts in many historic venues including St Peter’s Basilica in the Vatican. He holds a Bachelors Degree in Music from Western Kentucky University.



LEWIS WASHINGTON, baritone, has been a soloist/recitalist in the Louisville area for many years. He performed with The Stephen Foster Story while attending The School of Church Music at Southern Seminary. He has performed in works ranging from Bach’s St John Passion to Stephen Schwartz’s Godspell and in highlights from Gershwin’s Porgy and Bess. He has also participated in world premieres of works by Raymond Horton. Engagements have also included the educational tours at elementary schools and the NightLights series with the Louisville Orchestra.

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PROGRAM NOTES

When we look back at European history, our enormous outrage at the Holocaust sometimes prevents our seeing the vicious antisemitism that flourished in Eastern Europe well before the First World War. The number of Jews who fled persecution in the last decades of the nineteenth and the first decades of the twentieth century led, in this country, to the passing of the Emergency Immigration Act of 1921, which set a quota on immigration at 3% of the number of people from that country already living in the United States. The parents of all three of this afternoon's composers were in this country before the quota was imposed.

Fanfare for the Common Man

Aaron Copland's father, Harris, had left Russia in 1870, and by 1877 he was living and working in Brooklyn. Aaron would describe his father as "all business." Aaron's mother, Sarah Mittenthal, was born in Russia and grew up in Illinois and Texas. When Sarah was nineteen her family moved to New York City. And on 25 October 1885 she and Harris Copland were married. Their son Aaron was born on 14 November 1900.

Harris Copland was a successful business man. He built Copland's Department Store in Brooklyn and he and Sarah managed the store until they retired in 1922. Sarah Mittenthal was musical: she played the piano and sang. As it became clear that music was the love of Aaron's life, most of his support at home came from his mother. But after he became a successful composer, his father would brag to his friends that his son's music was being played by the famous *Russian* conductor, *Koussevitzky*! Koussevitzky would, in fact, play an important role in Aaron Copland's life, as he would in Leonard Bernstein's.

In 1922, Eugene Goossens, conductor of the Cincinnati Orchestra, invited several American composers to compose fanfares. For the duration of the Second World War he intended to open each of their concerts with one of these fanfares. In his letter of invitation he wrote that he wanted "to make these fanfares stirring and significant contributions to the war effort," and he suggested that each composer give his fanfare a title that would support his purpose. Some have suggested that Copland took his title from a speech made by Henry A. Wallace in 1942, "The Century of the Common Man." Copland himself said, late in his life, "I sort of remember how I got the idea of [calling it] 'A Fanfare for the Common Man'—it was the common man, after all, who was doing all the dirty work in the war and the army. He deserved a fanfare."

And Copland wrote him a monumental fanfare!

The Chichester Psalms

Joan Peyser begins her biography of Leonard Bernstein by quoting his father: "Every genius had a handicap; Lenny had a father." She follows by pointing out that Sam Bernstein was wrong, that everything he did "was conducive to his son's establishing his great career." She explains, "Gentle support appears to induce indolence, while the father who insults, degrades, humiliates his son appears to stimulate the aggression necessary for the combat inherent in a life in the arts." And then she points out that when Sam Bernstein came to the United States in 1908 he was sixteen years old and alone. Back in the Ukraine the only Jewish musicians he had seen were *klezmers*, itinerant players who made a poor living at weddings and bar mitzvahs. He himself had survived steerage to



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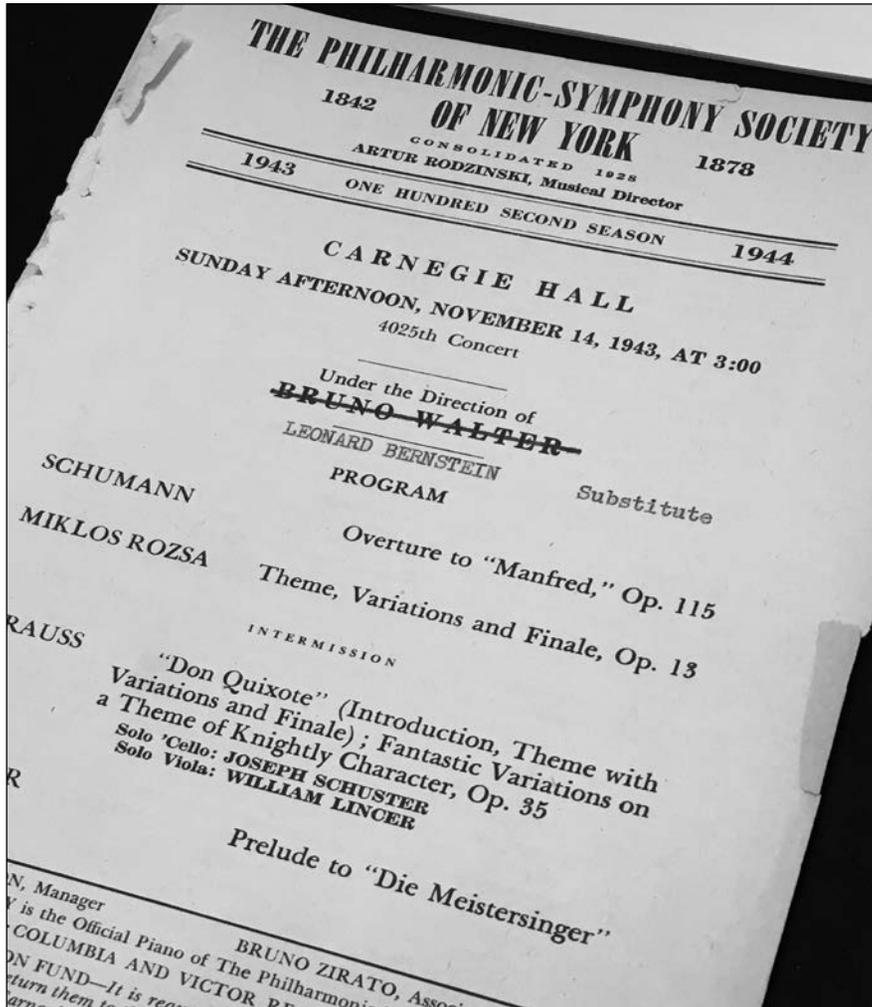
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get to this country and then by hard work and determination built a successful beauty supply business. He would tell his son, "If you were a Koussevitzky, a Toscani, a Rachmaninoff, but how many of these people are there around anyhow?" Sam Bernstein had no idea of how talented his son was! He was heard to ask, after seeing his son conducting, "But what does it pay?" However, Sam was at the concert on 14 November 1943, when Lenny became, overnight, the most famous conductor in America. Bruno Walter was scheduled to conduct the New York Philharmonic in a concert that CBS would broadcast nationwide. But Bruno Walter caught the flu, and the young assistant conductor of the Philharmonic had to conduct the concert, unrehearsed. The next morning the story of Bernstein's success was on the front page of *The New York Times*.



Later in his life Bernstein insisted that "from the time of my entrance until the time of my last exit I remember nothing... [but] I do remember giving the upbeat for the *Manfred* Overture because it's a very tricky piece to begin..." According to the *Times* article, "Mr. Bernstein received hearty applause at the end of the [*Manfred*] overture, but was recalled four times when he concluded the Rozsa variations." It's hard to believe that Bernstein didn't remember four curtain calls before the Intermission.

Bernstein was very proud of his Jewish heritage. This was the source of tension when he conducted the Vienna Philharmonic, some of whose musicians were vocally antisemitic. But from the beginning it must have been a joy to play under his direction. And even today, thanks to TV and DVD, it is a joy to watch him conduct.

On 10 December 1963, The Reverend Walter Hussey wrote to Bernstein, "I hope you will forgive me for writing to you and will not think me presumptuous." Bernstein at that time was already one of the most famous young American composers, by this time writing primarily for the Broadway stage (*West Side Story*, 1957, probably the score he will be most remembered for). Hussey was Dean of the Cathedral in Chichester, on the south coast of England. He went on to explain that "the choirs of Chichester, Salisbury and Winchester combine for a short festival each year," and he wondered if Bernstein "would be willing to write something for us." He suggested perhaps a setting of Psalm 2 ("or some part of it" he adds). Dean Hussey in fact had a history of commissioning works from contemporary composers, among them Benjamin Britten's *Rejoice in the Lamb*. Bernstein accepted the commission. A lengthy correspondence followed. On 24 February Bernstein wrote to the Dean: "a conception occurred to me that I find exciting. It would be a suite of Psalms, or selected verses from Psalms... The music is all very forthright, songful, rhythmic, youthful. The only hitch is this: I can think of these Psalms only in the original Hebrew. [Does this] present difficulties of an ecclesiastical nature?" The Dean wrote back on 2 March 1965: "I do not think that there is any ecclesiastical objection to the use of Hebrew."

On 11 May 1965 Bernstein wrote to the Dean, "The psalms are finished, *Laus Deo*." He went on to describe his work. No program notes could describe it better.

- I. Opens with a chorale (Ps 108, vs 3 [verse 2 in the final score]) evoking praise; and then swings into Ps. 100, complete, a wild and joyful dance, in the Davidic spirit.
- II. Consists mainly of Ps. 23, complete, featuring a boy solo and his harp, but interrupted savagely by the men with threats of war and violence (Ps. 2, vs 1-4) This movement ends in unresolved fashion, with both elements, faith and fear, interlocked.
- III. Begins with an orchestral prelude based on the opening chorale, whose assertive harmonies have now turned to painful ones. There is a crisis; the tension is suddenly relieved, and the choir enters humbly and peacefully singing Ps. 131 complete, in what is almost a popular song (although in 10/4 time!)... In this atmosphere of humility, there is a final chorale coda (Ps. 133, vs. 1) – a prayer for peace.

The *Chichester Psalms* is one of the most significant, most challenging, and most moving pieces in all of Bernstein's work.

The Promise of Living

Leonard Bernstein heard Aaron Copland's *Piano Variations* in 1936 and fell in love with the piece. The two met in 1937 at a dance recital, on Copland's birthday (14 November). They became very close friends. Copland's biographer Howard Pollack suggests that "Without Bernstein, Copland probably would not have found so large a public for his music; without Copland, Bernstein certainly would not have written the kind of music that he did." Copland helped Bernstein with his scores. "Sit down and write what comes into your head," Copland told him, "if it's good it will be American." And Bernstein regularly programmed Copland's music in his concerts around the world.

Aaron Copland wrote some of his most successful music in the 1940s and 1950s: *Lincoln Portrait*, *Rodeo*, and *Fanfare for the Common Man* (all in 1942); *Appalachian Spring* (1944); *Symphony No. 3* (1946); the score for the film *The Red Pony* (1948); *Old American Songs*, first set (1950); and *Old American Songs*, second set (1952). In 1954 he decided to write an opera.

Twentieth-century American composers lived in one of two worlds (or both): entertainment (the Broadway stage, movies, popular songs, jazz) and so-called serious music. With *Rhapsody in Blue* George Gershwin proved that a musician with enough talent and imagination could live in both worlds. Leonard Bernstein, almost from the beginning of his career, took up residence in both worlds. For Aaron Copland, the only composer of the three to study in Europe, including three years in Paris with Nadia Boulanger, work in the purely entertainment world was limited to film scores (*The City*, and *Of Mice and Men*, both 1939, and *The Red Pony* in 1948).

However, some of his best known work was written for the stage. Not the Broadway stage, but the stage of modern dance or voice recital. For example his *Lincoln Portrait* (1942) is written for orchestra with a narrator reciting Lincoln's words. And his settings of *Old American Songs* (sets one and two) lift traditional American songs into the sphere of serious music.

His opera *The Tender Land* (1954) was supposed to be the first great American opera. (Gershwin had written *Porgy and Bess* in 1935, calling it a "folk opera," but the critics and the public, even in 1954, couldn't agree on what to call it.)

As far as the critics were concerned, *The Tender Land* was a failure right from the start. The audience on opening night was enthusiastic. The librettist Erik Johns said that a woman came up to him after the concert in tears. But the critics did not know what to make of the piece. The problem seems to have been a difference in expectations. *The Tender Land* didn't feel like a grand opera because it wasn't. There was no big dramatic conflict, no villain and no hero, no satisfying resolution at the end of the piece.

The scholar Christopher Patton argues that Copland and Johns at first did not have a clear sense of what they were creating, a new approach to opera. After opening night, Johns did recognize this and wrote to Copland suggesting revisions and explaining what he felt was the power of the piece. "Our work," he said, "is in the nature of an operatic tone poem." Once Copland grasped this concept, and he and Johns rewrote it focusing on characterization, it has grown in popularity.

Copland's inspiration came from *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, a book published in 1941 documenting, through photographs by Walker Evans and words by James Agee, the lives of poor sharecroppers in the south during the depression. Christopher Patton says that, "Evans's art parallels Copland's in important ways. It is clear and uncluttered...and there is tremendous emotional power in its direct depictions of America and its people." The drama in the photographs, Patton points out, "is not the drama of violent conflict, but of inner turmoil, caught in the stillness of a black-and-white photograph." And that is exactly the drama Copland and Johns wanted to present in their "operatic tone poem." Johns reports that he and Copland "kept coming back to the faces of [a] mother and daughter: one still a mother but passive and stony; the other, not yet hardened by the grim life." The focus at the end of the opera is on that daughter.

"The Purpose of Living," a chorus which includes every member of the cast, closes the first act of the work. It evokes a strong sense of what the lives of the characters are like, of their values, the importance of their caring for one another, and of working the land. It has become one of Copland's most often performed, best loved, choruses.

Rhapsody in Blue

George Gershwin's father came from Russia to the United States in 1892 or 1893, in order—he said—to marry a young woman he had fallen in love with before either of their families had emigrated. They married on 21 June 1895 and lived among family and friends on New York's lower east side. They had four children: Israel (Ira, b. 6 December 1896), Yakov (George, b. 26 September 1898), Arthur (b. 14 March 1900), and Frances (b. 6 December 1906). George grew up on the streets of New York. When someone asked him later in his life what he had played when he was a child, George replied, "Hooky." One day when George was twelve, a van appeared outside their second-story flat. They unloaded a piano and hauled it up to the Gershwin flat. George startled his older brother (who *had* been taking piano lessons) by sitting down and playing, with both hands, all the way through a popular tune. George had a friend Ira didn't know about whose family had a piano. But once the Gershwins had their own piano, George went looking for lessons. He was hungry to learn about music. And that hunger lasted his whole life, a life tragically cut short by a brain tumor when George was thirty-eight.

George Gershwin was one of the most successful songwriters in the country when he, like Bernstein, became famous overnight. The story of Paul Whiteman's famous concert of jazz-influenced music in New York's Aeolian Hall on 12 February 1924 is well known. The concert was ambitiously titled "An Experiment in American Music." Gershwin and Whiteman had discussed his writing something for the concert. But George was surprised to learn from a newspaper article announcing the concert that he was "at work on a Jazz Concerto." The concert was just a month away. All Gershwin had to do, Whiteman told him, was produce a two-piano score. From this Ferde Grofé would orchestrate the piece for Whiteman's band.

The concert began with "Livery Stable Blues," recorded for the first time in 1917 and believed now to be RCA's first jazz single. Whiteman's program was a long one. Gershwin's *Rhapsody* was next-to-last, and apparently the audience was getting restless. But the clarinet glissando grabbed their attention. When the piano was playing alone, much of Whiteman's score was blank. At one point there was, in Gershwin's handwriting, "Wait for nod."

When the *Rhapsody* was finished the auditorium exploded with applause, loud and long. Gershwin had to take several bows. Two days later Carl Van Vechten wrote to him, "The concert...was a riot, and you crowned it with what...I am forced to regard as the foremost serious effort by any American composer. Go straight on and you will knock all Europe silly."

Porgy and Bess

When Gershwin read DuBose Heyward's popular novel *Porgy*, he knew immediately that he wanted to write an opera based on the book. He wrote to Heyward, who liked the idea, but things were complicated. For one thing, Heyward's wife was already working on a play based on the book. That was OK with Gershwin. A play might offer them a better place to start.

The play, still called just *Porgy*, opened to a successful run in New York, produced by the Theater Guild (which would also produce the opera). The plot of the novel (and the play and the opera) is not difficult. There is plenty of conflict. In act I, the proud, quick-tempered, violent Crown kills Robbins in a fight and has to flee Catfish Row, leaving his woman Bess (a prostitute and a drug addict) behind. She moves in with the crippled beggar Porgy, whose mode of transportation is a thrown-together cart pulled by a goat. Porgy and Bess fall in love, but when the whole community holds a picnic on Kittiwah Island, Crown shows up and forces himself on Bess, who is unable to resist him. Later, a lethal hurricane gathers the community inside, behind locked doors. When Clara sees her husband's boat

upside down on the water, she rushes out into the face of the hurricane to try to save him. Crown, who has returned to take refuge in Catfish Row, goes out into the storm to try to save her. When he sneaks back to claim Bess, Porgy kills him. The police carry Porgy away as a “material witness.” Bess, not sure that Porgy will ever return, is seduced by Sportin’ Life, who takes advantage of her drug habit, and she leaves Catfish Row with him. Porgy comes back to find her gone.

Heyward’s novel ends in bleakness and despair. Porgy hears that Bess has gotten drunk with several men, who carry her off the Savannah where they intend to keep her. Porgy is left with his goat, “alone in an irony of morning sunlight.” In the play and the opera Bess is seduced by Sportin’ Life and leaves with him for New York. Porgy gets out of jail and comes home to find her gone. Rouben Mamoulian, the director of the play and the opera, rewrote the ending so that Porgy, when he discovers that Bess is gone but still alive, calls for his goat (“Bring my goat!”) and sets off, heading north to find her. In the opera he has Gershwin’s exuberant music to send him on his way.

The opera opens with a brief overture that becomes, on the piano, “Jazbo Brown Blues,” at the end of which we hear “Summertime,” for the first time. This is the first song in our medley. Clara is singing to her baby in her arms. The men are shooting craps, which leads to the fight in which Crown kills Serena Robbins’s husband. Serena sings the heartbreaking “My Man’s Gone Now.” In Act II Crown has fled and Bess has moved in with Porgy, who sings his happy “I Got Plenty of Nuttin.” At the picnic Sportin’ Life sings “It ain’t necessarily so.” Gershwin describes Sportin’ Life as “a humorous, dancing villain, who is likable and believable and at the same time evil.” But by the end of the opera we are apt to think of him more as evil than humorous and likable.

The last two songs in the medley are “Bess, you is my woman now,” a duet from Act II sung by Porgy and Bess after they are back together, and, from Act III, “Oh Lawd, I’m on my way,” Gershwin’s exhilarating music that sends Porgy on his way, affirming Porgy’s love for Bess (“I ain’ care what she done...Bring my goat!”), and his determination against impossible odds to get to New York and find her.

The first song we hear in the opera is “Summertime.” Clara is singing to her baby held in her arms. The next time we hear the song is in Act II, in the middle of the hurricane. Clara, whose husband Jake is still at sea in the storm, hugs her baby tightly to her breast and, the music rising...out of Gershwin’s violent hurricane music, sings “Sumertime” to the child. It has become a desperate lullaby. The last time we hear the song is in Act III. Clara has died in the storm after giving her child to Bess for safe keeping. Bess sings “Summertime” to the child, wanting to comfort the child, fully aware now of the ironies it contains. This use of one song, probably Gershwin’s most famous, demonstrates Gershwin’s sense of how the action of a drama can change the significance, and to some extent the meaning of a song. All of those meanings are lost when the song is put into a medley with other songs from the opera.

The Emergency Immigration Act of 1921 was passed primarily in order to reduce the number of Jews fleeing persecution in eastern Europe. It stayed in effect until the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, which eliminated the National Origins Formula and, once again, changed the make-up of the population of the United States. And by then the Jews who wanted to emigrate had another destination they could choose, their own country.

Program notes by Millard Dunn.

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