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## **“LEONARD BERNSTEIN AT 100” WILL HONOR THE LIFE AND CAREER OF THE LEGENDARY CONDUCTOR AND COMPOSER**

### **Two-Year Centennial Celebration Kicks off at The John F. Kennedy Center on September 22, 2017, Followed By More Than 1,000 Events on Six Continents**

The Leonard Bernstein Office today announced “**Leonard Bernstein at 100**,” a two-year global celebration of the life and career of the 20th century cultural giant, featuring more than 1,000 events on six continents. A kickoff at **The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts on Friday, September 22, 2017** will officially launch the celebrations which continue worldwide **through the end of August 2019**.

The announcement at **Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts** in New York was hosted by film and television actor **Alec Baldwin**, who is also the radio broadcast host of the New York Philharmonic, Bernstein’s orchestra for many years. **Jamie Bernstein, Alexander Bernstein** and **Nina Bernstein Simmons** spoke about their father’s legacy. Joining them to celebrate Bernstein’s contributions were **Yannick Nézet-Séguin**, Principal Conductor of The Philadelphia Orchestra and Music Director Designate of The Metropolitan Opera; celebrated actress **Whoopi Goldberg**, who spoke of Bernstein’s humanitarian work and social activism; and rising soprano **Julia Bullock**, who paid tribute to Bernstein the composer with a performance of Bernstein songs, accompanied on the piano by **Michael Barrett**.

Leonard Bernstein’s range of accomplishments was uniquely broad; in the new millennium, his legacy resonates more than ever. “Leonard Bernstein at 100” will celebrate the career of this monumental artist by focusing on four pillars of Bernstein’s legacy: his work as a **Composer; Conductor; Educator;** and **Activist/Humanitarian**.

“Leonard Bernstein at 100’ will explore my father’s legacy from every angle - and that’s a lot of angles,” Jamie Bernstein said. “I’m thrilled to be part of this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to connect his multiple achievements to the 21st century, as well as introduce his legacy to new generations.”

Festive performances and events will take place in U.S. cities Bernstein held dear to his heart — **New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Washington D. C., Los Angeles, San Francisco** — and in additional cities such as **Austin, Atlanta, Houston, Tucson**, and many others.

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Bernstein was a man of the globe, and so there will be major events in **London, Paris, Berlin, Vienna, Prague, Rome, Budapest, and Warsaw**, as well as in **Japan, China, India, Brazil, Australia, South Africa and Israel** — and the list goes on. (For more complete listings, visit [LeonardBernstein.com/news/calendar](http://LeonardBernstein.com/news/calendar).)

Several **documentary films** are in the making, covering a broad range of topics in Bernstein's life. His musicals will receive revivals throughout the world, including a **worldwide tour** of the acclaimed BB Promotion's *West Side Story*; productions of *Wonderful Town* in Germany and Austria; and performances of *Mass* in London, Paris, Los Angeles, Glasgow, and Austin. Bernstein's opera *A Quiet Place* will be presented in Vienna and Budapest, among other cities.

In addition, the **Grammy Museum** is preparing a major Leonard Bernstein exhibition — including artifacts from his composing studio (on loan from **Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music**) — which will travel over two years to cities across the United States.

The Leonard Bernstein Collection in the Music Division of the **Library of Congress**, contains close to 400,000 letters, manuscripts, photographs, and more. Currently, about 1,400 items from the collection are available online, but the Library is in the process of digitizing thousands of additional items from the collection — including, for the first time, musical sketches — which will be added to the site and made widely available for researchers and scholars.

The **Leonard Bernstein Memory Project** is a growing collection of Bernstein-related memories from around the world. Fans and friends of Bernstein are invited to contribute their reminiscences on the newly renovated Centennial website. (For more information, visit [LeonardBernstein.com/memories](http://LeonardBernstein.com/memories).)

## COMPOSER

As a theatre composer, Bernstein and his collaborators brought us such outstanding shows as *On The Town*, *Wonderful Town*, *West Side Story* and *Candide*. As a composer for the concert hall, Bernstein's scores united diverse musical elements at a time when it was frowned upon to do so. His courage in mixing genres paved the way for future generations of composers to take similar risks.

Bernstein's compositions embraced the world in which he lived. For example, his *Symphony No. 2: The Age of Anxiety*, explored the psychic damage of World War II. His musical *Candide* was devised as a protest against the evils of McCarthyism in the 1950s. *West Side Story* confronted head-on the bitter ramifications of bigotry and prejudice. His prophetic *Mass* from 1971, which expresses a war-torn nation's crisis of faith, brings together musical styles as diverse as America itself.

Bernstein's breadth as a composer will be well represented in the wide variety of performances during the Centennial period. Starting in September, **The Kennedy Center** will offer a season's worth of presentations devoted to Bernstein's composing legacy, including an evening titled "Bernstein on Broadway" in September, and performances of Bernstein's concert works throughout the season. Later in the year, the **New York City Ballet** and **American Ballet Theater** will present several ballets choreographed to Bernstein's music.

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In late October, the **New York Philharmonic** will begin its own centennial presentations with Bernstein's *Serenade (after Plato's Symposium)*, featuring soloist Joshua Bell, as well as Bernstein's *Symphony No. 1, "Jeremiah."* In the same month, **Carnegie Hall** will kick off its 127th season with Nézet-Séguin conducting **The Philadelphia Orchestra** in Bernstein's *Symphonic Suite from On the Waterfront* and *Symphonic Dances from West Side Story*. In addition, the **Ravinia Festival** in Highland Park, IL will celebrate Bernstein's compositions throughout its 2018 summer season.

In Europe, where Bernstein was revered, there will be a multitude of centennial events. Orchestras and concert halls where Bernstein had strong connections will be participating.

The city of Vienna will celebrate Bernstein with concerts by the **Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra**, **Tonkünstler Orchestra**, **Volksooper Wien**, and **Neue Oper Wien**, among others. There will also be full festivals in the **Konzerthaus Wien** and the **Musikverein**. The **Santa Cecilia Orchestra** in Rome and the **London Symphony Orchestra** and the **BBC Symphony Orchestra** will focus on Bernstein's compositions. Additional concerts will be held in Berlin, Budapest, Paris, Prague, Warsaw, and many other music capitals.

The **Fugard Theatre** production of *West Side Story* will take over the **Cape Town Artscape Opera House** in South Africa, while the **BB Productions tour of West Side Story** will visit China, Australia, Singapore, Thailand, the Philippines, and Japan.

## CONDUCTOR

Bernstein's legacy as a conductor is unequalled. Its very beginning is now legend: on November 14, 1943, Bernstein stepped in at the last minute for ailing conductor Bruno Walter, in a nationally broadcast concert, which created a sensation that was reported on the front page of *The New York Times* the next morning.

Bernstein went on to conduct the great orchestras of the world for over four decades, creating a priceless trove of audio and video recordings that comprise a masterwork of the symphonic repertoire. **The New York Philharmonic Leon Levy Digital Archives** hosts a vast collection of Bernstein's marked scores.

Bernstein's voluminous, award-winning recordings for **Deutsche Grammophon** and **Columbia Masterworks (Sony)** remain landmarks to this day. Both recording companies are issuing commemorative box sets and remastered recordings. There will also be new recordings of Bernstein's music, performed by the successive generations of musicians he inspired.

Among the many ensembles Bernstein worked with over four decades, he was especially well-known for his performances with **the New York Philharmonic, the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and the National Symphony Orchestra** in the U.S.; and overseas, with **the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, the London Symphony Orchestra, the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, the Santa Cecilia Orchestra, and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra.**

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Leonard Bernstein influenced and taught a generation of conductors who went on to lead major orchestras of their own. Many of today's foremost conductors will be honoring Bernstein, including **Marin Alsop, John Axelrod, Gustavo Dudamel, Christoph Eschenbach, Valery Gergiev, Alan Gilbert, Kristjan Järvi, John Mauceri, Andris Nelsons, Sir Anthony Pappano, Sir Simon Rattle, Yutaka Sado,** and **Michael Tilson Thomas**, among others.

## EDUCATOR

A pioneering educator, Bernstein early on saw the potential of television as a means of communicating the joy of music to young people. Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic brought orchestral music directly into the living rooms of families across America and around the world. Several generations were inspired and motivated by the *Young People's Concerts* — 53 programs that still set the standard for music education that engages, delights, and entertains.

Bernstein's lifelong method of using the arts as a springboard for acquiring all kinds of knowledge lives on in the educational reform model **Artful Learning**. The model, developed by Bernstein's son Alexander, is being used in scores of schools around the United States. Not only do Artful Learning students acquire knowledge; they retain that knowledge by learning how to think creatively.

Three of the music festivals with which Leonard Bernstein was closely associated — **the Tanglewood Music Festival, the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival and the Pacific Music Festival** — will pay special attention to his contributions during the Centennial period.

## HUMANITARIAN

Through his music-making, Leonard Bernstein found innumerable ways to speak out against the injustices of the world. Over the decades, his music — as well as his own voice — advocated courageously for causes from civil rights to anti-fascism to AIDS awareness. His role as a citizen-artist provides an inspiring model for the politically engaged artists of today.

Bernstein's humanitarian efforts began early in his career. In 1948, Bernstein led an orchestra of 17 Jewish survivors in a **concert at Landsberg and Feldafing Displaced Persons camps**. Later that year, he conducted for soldiers in the Negev desert as the state of Israel was being forged.

In the 1950's, the **State Department** sent Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic far and wide as good-will ambassadors, from Latin America to the **Soviet Union**. While in Moscow, Bernstein went out of his way to invite to his concert the writer Boris Pasternak, who was out of favor with the Soviet government.

In the 1960's, Bernstein was an active participant in the Civil Rights Movement, and an outspoken anti-war activist in the early 1970s. In the 1980s, his efforts focused on protesting the nuclear arms race, as well as advocating for research and resources for the AIDS crisis. Such organizations as **Music for Life**, the **Gay Men's Health Crisis**, and **amFAR** continue to do the work that Bernstein's early efforts helped to make possible.

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In 1989, Bernstein **refused to accept a National Medal of the Arts** in protest of the first Bush Administration's policies toward the National Endowment for the Arts. Later that year, Bernstein conducted a historic performance of **Beethoven's Ninth Symphony to celebrate the fall of the Berlin Wall**. The Christmas Day broadcast was watched by millions worldwide. For the occasion, Bernstein changed Schiller's wording from "Ode to Joy" to "Ode to Freedom."

To honor his late wife Felicia, who devoted much of her life to social justice issues, Bernstein started the **Felicia Montealegre Bernstein Fund at Amnesty International**. This fund provides resources and organizing support for Amnesty workers worldwide.

Bernstein frequently expressed his **political views through his music**. An enthusiastic supporter of President John F. Kennedy, he composed and conducted a special fanfare for Kennedy's 1961 inauguration. Following Kennedy's assassination in 1963, Bernstein dedicated his *Symphony No. 3: Kaddish*, to the slain president. Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis subsequently commissioned Bernstein to compose his theater piece *Mass*, to inaugurate The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington D.C. in 1971. The work had a pointed anti-war sensibility, which so alarmed the Nixon Administration that the President was persuaded to skip the Kennedy Center inaugural.

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For more information about "Leonard Bernstein at 100," please go to [leonardbernstein.com](http://leonardbernstein.com).

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