

University of South Carolina School of Music presents

Bernstein MASS

A Theatre Piece for Singers, Players and Dancers

March 2, 3 and 4, 2018



LEONARD BERNSTEIN - Composer

Leonard Bernstein at 100 is the world-wide celebration of the 100th birthday of Leonard Bernstein, the composer, conductor, educator, musician, cultural ambassador and humanitarian, officially beginning on August 25, 2017, Bernstein's 99th birthday, and continuing through his 100th year until August 25, 2019.

Few composers capture their time and become the iconic voice of their age. Leonard Bernstein found his "voice" in the early 1940s and projected the sound of urban and urbane America from the period of World War II to the anti-war movements of the 1970s and the restoration of freedom in Europe, with the fall of the Berlin Wall and Soviet communism.

Writing for small ensembles, symphony orchestras, Broadway, film and opera houses, Leonard Bernstein projected a simple message of understanding and hope employing both complex and simple forms and styles - yet always sounding like "Bernstein," a voice best known in his score to *West Side Story*.

Exploring his output, one finds the famous and obscure — works that both are reflective of their times and somehow also preserve and encapsulate them. Everywhere one hears

his internal struggle to sound inevitable as the tumultuous era of the second half of the 20th century unfolded itself. He is as once linked with the music of Benjamin Britten and Dimitri Shostakovich, as well as George Gershwin and Aaron Copland.

While his music finds its spiritual home in his world view, his music speaks with a New York accent, even though he was born in Massachusetts. His love affair with Europe and his sensitivity to his Russian and Jewish roots are never far from his lyrical expressivity, with its fragile sense of optimism, its loneliness, its humor and its demand for acceptance. All of this is wrapped in the rhythmic propulsion of a great American urban landscape. He has left us an aural image of his time and place and, at the same time, an eternal voice of humanity.

– John Mauceri



Read more at
www.leonardbernstein.com



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