

LEONARD BERNSTEIN

CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION CONCERT



MOORES SCHOOL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA, HOUSTON
FRANZ ANTON KRAGER, CONDUCTOR

5-CHANNEL HIGH-RESOLUTION IMMERSIVE SURROUND SOUND



LEONARD BERNSTEIN

CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION CONCERT

- 1 **Samuel Barber** - Overture to The School for Scandal 9:34
Leonard Bernstein - Symphony 1, Jeremiah
- 2 Prophecy 6:59
- 3 Profanation 7:08
- 4 Lamentation *Melanie Sonnenberg, mezzo-soprano* 11:02
- 5 **Symphonic Dances from West Side Story** 22:14
Excerpts from *Candide*
- 6 Overture 4:49
- 7 I am Easily Assimilated *Melanie Sonnenberg, mezzo-soprano* 5:18
- 8 Glitter and Be Gay *Krista Renée Pape, soprano* 7:23

Produced & Recorded by John Gladney Proffitt
Master recording LPCM 24/192k, 5.0 channel immersive surround sound
2.0 stereo mixdown - John Proffitt
Blu-ray Audio mastering - Robert Witrak, HDTT

Download the complete Liner Notes at

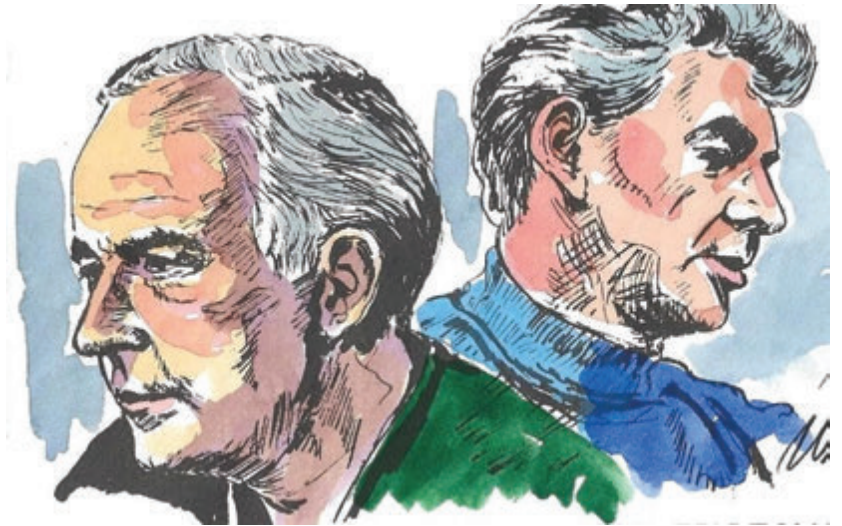
www.highdefaptetransfers.com/products/leonard-bernstein-centennial-celebration-concert

BARBER: THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL

The year 1931 found the young Samuel Barber, barely into his twenties, studying in Rome and ready to embark on a new challenge: writing his first work for orchestra. The nephew of famed contralto Louise Homer, Barber had proven himself a kind of prodigy; at ten years of age, he began to write an opera, and at fourteen he entered the newly-founded Curtis Institute, where he would meet his future partner Gian Carlo Menotti.

The inspiration for Barber's work was a 1777 play, *The School for Scandal*, by Irish playwright Richard Brinsley Sheridan (a play which coincidentally served as the basis for [a new opera at Moores last season]insert). The play is a dazzling display of wit and charm, with a good deal of heady repartee and containing the usual plot twists and send-ups of polite society.

Barber's music appropriately instills this mood, alternating humor with (his soon-to-be-famous) pathos, and all masterfully orchestrated. Barber did not intend his piece to be an overture in the traditional sense; rather than an adjunct to a stage play, the overture is instead inspired by the character of the play.



With work on the piece finished, Barber sent the score to Fritz Reiner, then the conductor of the Curtis Orchestra, with a request that it be performed; Reiner declined. The premiere would not take place for another two years, when in 1933 the Philadelphia Orchestra performed it at an outdoor concert, one which Barber was unfortunately unable to attend. The work was a success, and has in the ensuing years become one of the composer's most often-performed works.

BERNSTEIN: SYMPHONY NO. 1, Jeremiah

Few composers reached the level of eclecticism achieved by Leonard Bernstein. Indeed, in addition to his work as a composer (itself encompassing the worlds of classical, musical theater, and popular styles), he kept extraordinarily busy as a conductor and pianist. Within his compositional output, the composer of *West Side Story* and *Mass* found expression for his Jewish heritage in works such as the *Chichester Psalms* and two of his symphonies. This influence took root early in his life; Bernstein recounted that his first musical memory was of an incantation at temple around 1926.

The first of his three symphonies, subtitled "Jeremiah," was written in 1942, a few years after Bernstein left Curtis, and when he was sharing a New York apartment with Adolph Green (who would later record the role of Dr. Pangloss in *Candide*). The symphony is cast in three movements, the last of which had been sketched as early as 1939, soon after the composer graduated from Harvard. Scored for mezzo-soprano and orchestra, this movement sets Hebrew texts from the Book of Lamentations. After adding on the first two move-

ments (thus creating his first large-scale orchestral work), Bernstein sent the piece to conductor Fritz Reiner, who expressed his enthusiasm for the new symphony. Reiner enlisted Aaron Copland in an attempt to persuade Bernstein to add a fourth, cheerier movement, which Bernstein declined to do. Nevertheless, the conductor invited Bernstein to conduct the premiere at the Syria Mosque with the Pittsburgh Symphony in 1944. The symphony almost immediately received widespread acclaim and would lay the groundwork for future such large-scale, probing works.

BERNSTEIN: SYMPHONIC DANCES FROM WEST SIDE STORY

The 1950s were a busy time for Leonard Bernstein. In addition to regular work conducting the New York Philharmonic (he was appointed music director in 1957), he maintained a grueling schedule performing elsewhere, and famously starred in several episodes of the CBS series *Omnibus*, delivering a fresh style of music appreciation and education. And somehow, amidst all of this, he still found time to compose some of his most enduring works, including *Candide* and *West Side Story*.

The idea which became *West Side Story* grew from a suggestion made to Bernstein from choreographer Jerome Robbins and librettist Arthur Laurents: an up-to-date retelling of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. The original concept, of a Jewish girl falling in love with a Catholic boy, was to be titled *East Side Story*, but the creative team felt that resetting this as a gang conflict might hold more dramatic possibilities.

A synopsis of the resultant musical is likely unnecessary, but suffice it to say that the Robbins/Laurents/Bernstein version contains all of the drama and passion of Shakespeare's original concept. The musical opened in Washington, D.C. in August, 1957, then proved a hit on Broadway, where its original production ran for 772 performances (not including the subsequent tour and return to New York). In 1961, Bernstein, eager to further pursue this huge success, assembled a suite of instrumental excerpts, among which stand out two popular numbers: "Somewhere" and "Maria." As always, the listener can hear in this music Bernstein's wide variety of influences, from the Afro-Cuban music of the Caribbean, to noirish film references (underscored in the orchestration by Sid Ramin and Irwin Kostal), to the composer's classical inclinations ("Cool" hides a good deal of complexity under its ebullient exterior).

BERNSTEIN: SELECTIONS FROM CANDIDE

At the same time he was busily writing *West Side Story*, Bernstein was also hard at work composing *Candide*, a sort of hybrid operetta and musical whose surface gaiety and charm belie the piece's troubled genesis and the composer's penchant for constant revision. Like *West Side Story*, *Candide* is based on classic literature: in this case, Voltaire's absolutely scathing novella. The plot follows a naive, simplistic young man (*Candide*), his love (*Cunegonde*), and their compatriots as they travel the world, moving repeatedly from trauma to sorrow to joy, all the while questioning the philosophical underpinning they once took for granted.

The original idea for *Candide* came from Lillian Hellman, a playwright for whose play *The Lark* Bernstein had written incidental music. Hellman wrote the original libretto, but quickly became disillusioned with the work, and before long the piece had attracted a virtual pantheon of great writers, some of whose contributions were

ultimately not used: James Agee, Dorothy Parker, John LaTouche, and (in a later version), Stephen Sondheim. The original production was a failure, and Bernstein and his collaborators went on to create at least five further versions.

The Overture has become a popular concert work due to its boldness and colorful scoring. In it Bernstein quotes two themes: first, the opening scene in which students receive tutelage from their know-it-all philosophy teacher ("The Best of All Possible Worlds"); the second, a sweeping, lyrical duet between Candide and Cunegone ("Oh, Happy We").

"I Am Easily Assimilated" is a tango in which the Old Lady, Cunegonda's duenna, a woman who has seen more than her fair share of troubles (including the "missing the half of [her] backside"), sings of how she has survived: namely, by adapting to each new challenge.

The operetta's show-stopping, Offenbach-esque aria is "Glitter and be Gay," in which Cunegonde moves from understandable self-pity to a state of enamourment of the trappings of wealth.

Notes by Mark Buller (MSM DMA '15). www.MarkBullerComposer.com

The 110+ member Moores School Symphony Orchestra (MSSO) is conducted by UH Director of Orchestras, Franz Anton Krager. As a major ensemble, the MSSO performs as a musical partner with many of the Moores School's departments and studios, including Opera and Ballet. The high level of its performances has been hailed by international artists and critics alike as a student ensemble of professional quality and versatility. The MSSO appears regularly with world-class performing artists, and has been featured at several Texas Music Educators Association conventions, as well as at The Midwest Clinic in Chicago. The MSSO has been broadcast on American Public Media nationally and Houston Public Media in Southeast Texas.



Membership in the MSSO is open, by audition, to all graduate and undergraduate students at the University of Houston. During a typical school year, the MSSO performs an average of twice monthly, and engages all of the major orchestral genres including full orchestra, chamber orchestra, opera, oratorio, and ballet. The MSSO collaborates on a regular basis with the Moores Opera Center, Moores School Choirs, and the Houston Ballet Academy. It is a leading ensemble in the area of new music as well as being an important repository for the standard literature. The MSSO also sponsors the annual Moores School Concerto

Competition. As an accompanying ensemble, the MSSO performs with soloists including MSM faculty, major guest artists, and students selected through the Moores School Concerto Competition. Many MSSO graduates have gone on to become professional level orchestra musicians, conductors, and leading music educators in the field.

American born and trained, conductor Franz Anton Krager has made his artistic presence felt both at home and abroad with performance engagements in some of the world's most celebrated concert halls and musical centers. Since making his prize-winning European conducting debut in Copenhagen's Tivoli Koncertsalen in 1978, Krager has led orchestras in the Leipzig Gewandhaus, Moscow's State Kremlin Palace, Manchester England's Bridgewater Hall, Birmingham England's Adrian Boult Hall, Guangzhou China's Xinghai Music Center, the Sydney Opera House, The Hague's Congresgebouw, Kazan's State Philharmonic Hall in Russia, Guadalajara's Degollado Theater, and Sarasota's Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall. His affiliations with leading music festivals include the Lancaster International Concert Series and Lichfield and Aberystwyth International Arts Festivals in the U.K., the Festival Internacional de Santa Lucía in Mexico, and the Texas Music Festival and Interlochen National Music Camp in the U.S. Krager has led the Houston, Russian State, Traverse City Michigan and Florida West Coast symphonies, Romanian and Kazan State Philharmonics, and orchestras in Berlin, London, Chicago, Paris, Singapore, Leipzig, Bratislava, Monterrey, Pordenone, Ingolstadt, Neuss, and Honolulu. In 2015, he was appointed Principal Guest Conductor of the North Shore Chamber Arts Ensemble in Chicago.

Krager is Music Director and Chief Conductor of the Texas Music Festival, Founding Co-Artistic Director for the Virtuosi of Houston, Artist-in-Residence at The Kinkaid School and Evaluator/Clinician for the Orchestra America National Festival. Krager holds the Hourani Endowed Professor of Music, Director of Orchestras, and Chair of the Conducting Department at the University of Houston Moores School of Music, where he has brought the orchestra and orchestral conducting program into international prominence. The Moores School Orchestra is heard frequently on National Public Radio and has commercially recorded the music of Thomas Fortmann, Percy Grainger, Michael Horvit, Peter Lieuwen, Robert Nelson, and Stephen Shewan on the Divine Art (Métier), Albany, MSR Classics and Newport labels.

For HDTT, Krager has recorded Surround-Sound Blu-Ray Audio discs with both the Moores School Symphony Orchestra and the Texas Music Festival Orchestra, including the Mass No. 3 in F-Minor [As reviewed in the American Record Guide, "Performers include the large Houston Symphony Chorus, the quite good Moores School Symphony, part of the University of Houston....The orchestra is only a small step from famous professional groups, and the chorus has the strength to put the Mass over convincingly. Conductor Krager has a fine concept of Bruckner and holds things together very well....This is a very fine job all around..."] and Symphony 7 in E-Major of Anton Bruckner; the Roman Trilogy of Ottorino Respighi [As reviewed in MusicWeb International, "I have to put my cards on the table and say that nothing could possibly



outclass the playing and interpretation of Reiner and the CSO but this festival orchestra holds its heads high and emphatically does not fail the listener: if one did not know they were students one would not guess. Franz Anton Krager, 'American born and trained' it says proudly in the notes, is clearly one very fine trainer himself!"]; the Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini by Rachmaninoff; Symphony 2, Resurrection, by Gustav Mahler; Joseph Jongen and Francis Poulenc, "Music for Pipe Organ and Symphony Orchestra"; Also sprach Zarathustra by Richard Strauss, coupled with The Planets by Gustav Holst; and "In the Shadow of Stalin, 1938"-Alexander Nevsky by Sergei Prokofiev, coupled with Symphony 5 by Dmitri Shostakovich.

Recognized as "rich and fluent...creamy voiced" by The New York Times and "a master and virtuosa of voice" by Opernwelt, Melanie Sonnenberg, mezzo-soprano, has enjoyed a successful international stage and concert career. With her distinctive, critically acclaimed interpretations spanning some sixty roles, she has appeared with the Teatro San Carlo, Hamburg Staatsoper, Salzburg Festival, Graz Opera, Tokyo Yoyogi Arena, New York City Opera, Washington National Opera, and the companies of Ontario, Edmonton, Dallas, Seattle, Pittsburgh, St. Louis, San Diego, New Orleans, Austin, and Fort Worth, among others. Her film and television credits include Das Rheingold and Die Walküre for Austrian Radio & Television, Cavalleria Rusticana for "Live from Lincoln Center", and The Merry Widow, with Beverly Sills, for "Great Performances" on PBS. Her commercial recordings include performances on the Albany, Reference, House of Opera, Lincoln Center Series, and HDTT labels.

Sonnenberg is Professor of Voice in the Moores School of Music at the University of Houston, where she teaches voice, song repertoire, and vocal pedagogy. She is the director of The Institute of Vocal Studies and has served as a master clinician and lecturer in Europe, Russia, and throughout the United States.

Krista Renée Pape, soprano, is already sparking interest from opera directors and conductors. As of 2018, she is a first-year graduate student in vocal performance and pedagogy in the Moores School of Music at UH. Her roles at the Moores Opera Center include Sarah in The Ballad of Baby Doe, Gretel in Hänsel und Gretel, Caterina in L'amico Fritz, and Kitty Packard in the regional premiere of William Bolcom's opera, Dinner at Eight. She has performed as soloist with the Corpus Christi Symphony Orchestra. While completing her Bachelor of Music at UH, Pape also trained and performed with The Institute of Bel Canto Studies at the 2017 Texas Music Festival.

LEONARD BERNSTEIN
CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION CONCERT

5 October 2018, Moores Opera House

University of Houston

TRACK	TITLE	TIME
1	Samuel Barber - Overture to The School for Scandal	9:34
	Leonard Bernstein - Symphony 1, Jeremiah	
2	Prophecy	6:59
3	Profanation	7:08
4	Lamentation Melanie Sonnenberg, mezzo-soprano	11:02
5	Leonard Bernstein - Symphonic Dances from West Side Story	22:14
	Leonard Bernstein - Excerpts from Candide	
6	Overture	4:49
7	I am Easily Assimilated Melanie Sonnenberg, mezzo-soprano	5:18
8	Glitter and Be Gay Krista Renée Pape, soprano	7:23

Moores School Symphony Orchestra

Franz Anton Krager, conductor

Produced & Recorded by John Gladney Proffitt

Master recording LPCM 24/192k, 5.0 channel immersive surround sound

2.0 stereo mixdown - John Proffitt

Blu-ray Audio mastering - Robert Witrak, HDTT