

SEPTEMBER 6, 2024 7:00 PM

BRYANT PARK

AMERICAN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

BEYOND *the* HALL

ASO AMERICAN
SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA

**BRYANT
PARK** PICNIC
PERFORMANCES

Presented by **BANK OF AMERICA** 

AMERICAN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

The American Symphony Orchestra (ASO) was founded in 1962 by Leopold Stokowski with the mission of providing great music for everyone. Leon Botstein expanded that focus when he joined the ASO as Music Director in 1992 by creating concerts that explore music through the lens of the visual arts, literature, religion, and history, as well as by reviving rarely performed works that audiences would otherwise never hear performed live.

The ASO's signature programming includes its *Vanguard Series*, which features concerts of seldom-performed orchestral repertoire presented at Carnegie Hall, Bryant Park, and other historic venues, and its *Chamber Series*—curated by ASO's musicians—offering concert programs dedicated to reflecting the diverse perspectives of American culture. During the summer, the ASO

is the orchestra-in-residence at Bard's SummerScape and performs at the Bard Music Festival. All of the ASO presentations comprise a year-round series of vital and innovative programming for audiences of all backgrounds.

As part of its commitment to expanding the standard orchestral repertoire and ensuring accessibility to musical masterpieces, the ASO offers free streaming of exclusive live recordings on its digital platform, ASO Online. Content includes SummerScape operas, chamber performances, and short films. In many cases, these are the only existing recordings of some of the forgotten works that have been restored through ASO performances.

For more information, please visit americansymphony.org

SCOTT JOPLIN

TREEMONISHA: OVERTURE

SUITE

FLORENCE PRICE

OF DANCES

BERNARD HERRMANN

PSYCHO SUITE

KLEINE

KURT WEILL

DREIGROSCHENMUSIK

LEONARD BERNSTEIN

THREE DANCE

EPISODES FROM

“ON THE TOWN”



BEYOND THE HALL

LEON BOTSTEIN, CONDUCTOR

SCOTT JOPLIN (1868-1917)

Overture to *Treemonisha*, 1911

FLORENCE PRICE (1887-1953)

Suite of Dances, 1933

BERNARD HERRMANN (1911-1975)

Psycho Suite, 1960

KURT WEILL (1900-1950)

Kleine Dreigroschenmusik (Little Threepenny Music), 1928

LEONARD BERNSTEIN (1918-1990)

Three Dance Episodes from "On the Town," 1945

This evening's concert will run approximately 1 hour with no intermission.

Continuing a partnership forged in the wake of COVID-19, the American Symphony Orchestra presents this concert in partnership with the Bryant Park Corporation.

This performance is funded in part by the Kurt Weill Foundation for Music, Inc., New York, NY.

This performance is funded in part by the Music Performance Trust Fund.

The ASO's Vanguard Series is made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.

This program is supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council.

UPCOMING PERFORMANCES

Bach at St. Bart's

January 24, 2025 at **St. Bartholomew's Church**

Long associated with the instrumental genre, C.P.E. Bach is most well-known for his concertos, sonatas, and symphonies, yet his vocal works are rarely heard gems. The ASO presents both a U.S. premiere and an unfamiliar choral treasure in this program that marks the orchestra's return to St. Bart's in NYC.

Tapping into the Twenties

March 23, 2025 at **David Geffen Hall, Lincoln Center**

The ASO's first concert at the new David Geffen Hall focuses on music from composers who came of age in the 1920s, including works by John Alden Carpenter, Erwin Schulhoff, William Grant Still, and Edgard Varèse. The concert features soloist Orion Weiss on piano.

Strauss's Guntram

June 6, 2025 at **Carnegie Hall**

Guntram reveals a young Strauss positioning himself as the successor to Wagner in his very first opera. Strauss's mastery of orchestral writing combines with the ethereal melodic arcs that anticipate his later, famous works like *Salome*, *Elektra*, and *Der Rosenkavalier*. Following last season's presentation of *Daphne*, the ASO brings another rarely performed Strauss opera to center stage at Carnegie Hall.

For more information and tickets, please visit our website: americansymphony.org

ASO Online

americansymphony.org/online

In addition to our live performances, the ASO provides digital content on our streaming platform, ASO Online. Content includes live video recordings of Bard SummerScape operas, video recordings from our live chamber performances, and short films, all of which you can enjoy in your home for free.

Gurre-Lieder

September 13, 2024 on ASO Online

A short film about the American Symphony Orchestra's massive undertaking of Arnold Schoenberg's *Gurre-Lieder*. The film takes a behind-the-scenes look at the rehearsal process leading up to the highly anticipated March 22, 2024 performance at Carnegie Hall with context provided by music director Leon Botstein and chorus director James Bagwell. The film will be released in conjunction with the 150th anniversary of Schoenberg's birthday.

FROM THE MUSIC DIRECTOR

BEYOND THE HALL By Leon Botstein

This concert program tries to put a dent—so to speak—in a prejudice (if prejudices had metal surfaces like cars) too many of us still share: that there is a fundamental tension between popular music and classical “art” music, particularly in America. There is none; great music thrives in all genres from Taylor Swift to John Cage. Indeed, the historical record—the facts—tell a different story. In North America, part of our geographic region’s musical culture came from European immigrants. But as the Czech composer Antonin Dvořák (who arrived in the United States in the 1890s to lead a conservatory), observed, the future of American music depended on a quite different inheritance. Dvořák believed that only if we developed our unique non-European legacies—the culture of the descendants of the slaves brought forcibly to America from Africa, and that of the indigenous populations threatened with extinction—and integrated European practices with them could American composers write memorable and great music.

It has been the constant interaction between traditions of art music and popular genres that has made the collaboration of these twin sources of American musical culture fruitful and lent distinction and distinctiveness to American music for the concert hall, theater, home, street, church, and dance hall. On today’s program, the work of Scott Joplin and Florence Price reveal the riches of one of America’s unique sources, the cultural expressions of its Black population, particularly in dance and music (ragtime, for example). Song and dance specific to that American experience form the basis of Price and Joplin’s musical compositions even when they employ the sonorities of the opera and symphony orchestra. Price and Joplin vindicate Dvořák’s opinion about America’s musical destiny.

One can regard Broadway, Hollywood, and America’s theater and movie industry

comparable arenas of cross-fertilization between the European and the American experience, as well as bridges between the popular and the classical. On this program we have music by Bernard Herrmann, famous not only for his collaborations with Alfred Hitchcock but also with Orson Welles on *Citizen Kane*. Several years ago, the ASO performed a fine neglected European style symphony of Herrmann’s. Herrmann was enormously productive in many genres. He wrote operas and radio music. He was as brilliant as he was prolific. And he was a tireless champion of the music of Charles Ives, another truly original musical voice whose music derived its power from the use of popular tunes.

Leonard Bernstein deliberately cultivated an eclectic range that crossed the line separating the pop song from what once was dubbed “long haired” music. Bernstein wrote for Broadway, films as well as the concert stage. Perhaps his most compelling music from the 1940s was written for the dance: the ballet *Fancy Free* and the terrific Broadway show, *On the Town*. The lively and expressive transparency of Bernstein’s dance music evoke an open, egalitarian and generous democratic sensibility and a love of freedom that were crucial to communicate during the years of World War II. The fact that one of the stars of the first run of *On the Town* was Sono Osato, the great Japanese American dancer and actress was a source of pride for Bernstein in 1945 and ought not go unremembered today.

Kurt Weill was forced to flee Germany after the seizure of power by the Nazis in 1933. He ended up fashioning two distinct careers: one American and one European. Turning his back on Europe, Weill started anew in America. It is therefore ironic that the one work by Weill that left the strongest mark on American popular and classical music was his most celebrated achievement, *The Threepenny*

Opera, a work from his European past. In Europe and America, Weill, like Bernstein, sought to break down distinctions between the classical and the popular by writing music of subtlety and sophistication that had immediate mass appeal. The music from *The Threepenny Opera* on today’s concert possesses a magic that has sustained a resilient popularity all over the world.

In this way, this ASO program, which highlights the interconnections between the classical and the popular, and the interplay between the distinctive American experience and traditions brought from Europe is a celebration of equality, excellence and freedom and how these crucial virtues might be cultivated and protected in a modern democracy.



Leon Botstein, Conductor
Photo by Ric Kallagher

Leon Botstein has been music director and principal conductor of the American Symphony Orchestra since 1992. He is also music director of The Orchestra Now, an innovative training orchestra composed of top musicians from around the world. He is co-artistic director of Bard SummerScape and the Bard Music Festival, which take place at the Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing Arts at Bard College, where he has been president since 1975. He is also conductor laureate and principal guest conductor of the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra, where he served as music director from 2003–11. In 2018 he assumed artistic directorship of the Grafenegg Academy in Austria.

Mr. Botstein is also active as a guest conductor and can be heard on numerous recordings with the London Symphony (including a GRAMMY-nominated recording of Popov’s First Symphony), the London Philharmonic, NDR–Hamburg, and the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra. Many of his live performances with the American Symphony Orchestra are available online. His recording of Paul Hindemith’s *The Long Christmas Dinner* with the ASO was named one of the top recordings of 2015 by several publications, and his recent recording of Gershwin piano music with the Royal Philharmonic was hailed by *The Guardian* and called “something special...in a crowded field” by *Musicweb International*.

Mr. Botstein is the author of numerous articles and books, including *The Compleat Brahms* (Norton), *Jefferson’s Children* (Doubleday), *Judentum und Modernität* (Böhlau), and *Von Beethoven zu Berg* (Zsolnay). He is also the editor of *The Musical Quarterly*. For his contributions to music he has received the award of the American Academy of Arts and Letters and Harvard University’s prestigious Centennial Award, as well as the Cross of Honor, First Class from the government of Austria. Other recent awards include the Bruckner Society’s Julio Kilenyi Medal of Honor for his interpretations of that composer’s music and the Leonard Bernstein Award for the Elevation of Music in Society. In 2011 he was inducted into the American Philosophical Society.

NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

By Daniel Goldmark, Case Western Reserve University

Scott Joplin
Overture to *Treemonisha*
Born November 24, 1868 in Texarkana, TX
Died April 1, 1917 in New York, New York

Composed 1911
Premiered on January 28, 1972 in Atlanta, Georgia
Conducted by Robert Shaw
Performance Time: Approximately 8 minutes

JOPLIN

While all the composers on this program worked in a variety of genres and styles, Scott Joplin's (1868–1917) success almost entirely came from his compositions for piano, in particular piano rags—which makes the existence of his opera, *Treemonisha*, all the more unusual: the opera was never completely staged in Joplin's lifetime, and only received a full performance more than a half century after the composer's death. While there were Black composers in the late 19th century who received training in European compositional forms like the opera or the symphony, few had the financial means or societal support to see their works published or performed in large venues. Racism and cultural stereotyping kept Black composers relegated in the public's eye to spirituals and gospel, and later to forms of popular music like blues and jazz. Thus the challenge Joplin faced in wanting to create an opera, drawing on the style of music he knew best, was all the more formidable.

The exact date and place of Joplin's birth are unknown, although it was around 1868 and either in Shreveport, Louisiana, or somewhere near Marshall, Texas. Equally mysterious are his early years as a musician, although we do know he was in Sedalia, Missouri by 1896, where his earliest piano compositions were

published by local music publisher John Stark. The syncopated rhythms that his pieces explored with such beauty and virtuosity, referred to as “ragging” or “ragtime,” become so popular and pervasive that piano rags became a genre of their own in the music publishing business, with everyone hoping to cash in with their own take. Few were as compelling or original as Joplin's, however, and his became the standard against which most others were judged. Eventually ragtime rhythms showed up in forms of music as well, from Sousa's marches to pieces by Debussy and Stravinsky, among many others. Following the runaway popularity of the “Maple Leaf Rag,” Joplin relocated to St. Louis, Missouri, where he continued to write piano rags, but also wrote *A Guest of Honor* (1903), a one-act “ragtime opera” made up of 12 individual rags. The work was performed only a handful of times, mostly in small towns, as well as once in St. Louis. The tour was cut short when someone made off with the receipts. His publisher refused to publish the score, and no sign of *A Guest of Honor* has surfaced in more than 100 years. But Joplin was not finished with opera, not yet.

Joplin biographer Edward Berlin points to Will Marion Cook—Oberlin-educated, Dvořák-trained,

JOPLIN

and Joplin contemporary—as another likely person to experiment by bringing together the practices of European opera with the au courant sound of ragtime. Cook collaborated with poet and writer Paul Laurence Dunbar produced shows including *Clorindy, or The Origin of the Cakewalk* (1898) and *In Dahomey* (1903). While the latter production, in particular, featured some of the biggest names in Black theater of the time—Bert Williams, George Walker, Aida Overton, among others—it marked a shift in musical theater overall, bringing together a range of styles, including minstrelsy, musical comedy, vaudeville. The productions made no immediate impression on the mainstream (read: white) opera world. Perhaps this was the state of things that Joplin had in mind as he worked to create his *new* ragtime opera.

By 1907, Joplin was talking about a new opera project: *Treemonisha*. The story centers on a baby girl who magically appears under a tree to a recently freed Black couple “somewhere in the State of Arkansas, Northeast of the Town of Texarkana and three or four miles from the Red River”; the parents name the girl Monisha, then change it to *Treemonisha* because the girl so loved to play under the tree where they found her. The action itself takes place in 1884; *Treemonisha* is 18 and seeks to raise her community out of ignorance, represented through the machinations of conjurers who prey on the superstitions of those

around her. Joplin describes, in his preface to the score of the opera, the meaning of the very first notes of the overture: “This strain of music is the principal strain in the opera and represents the happiness of the people when they feel free from the conjurers and their spells of superstition.”

Joplin published a piano-vocal score of the opera himself in 1911, but struggled to find financial support for a production. A full staging of the opera never occurred in the composer's presence; he died in 1917. *Treemonisha* finally had its premiere in the midst of a surge of interest in Joplin and his work that occurred in the 1970s. A new generation of listeners took interest in Joplin following numerous recordings of his piano rags, beginning with a 1970 album of eight rags realized by pianist and musicologist Joshua Rifkin, *Scott Joplin: Piano Rags*. A collection of all of Joplin's known rags was published two years later, and the pervasive use of Joplin's rag “The Entertainer” in the hit 1973 film *The Sting* further pushed Joplin's name and music into the general public's consciousness. After years of effort and research, a fully staged production of *Treemonisha* took place at the Atlanta Memorial Arts Center in 1972; numerous other productions have since followed. Joplin's dream was finally realized.

FLORENCE PRICE*Suite of Dances (for orchestra)*

Born April 9, 1887, Little Rock, Arizona

Died June 3, 1953, Chicago, Illinois

Composed 1933

Premiere information unknown

Performance time: Approximately 6 minutes

Florence Price (1887–1953) was born in Little Rock, Arkansas, in 1887. Her mother (also named Florence) provided her with her earliest musical training on the piano, with the young performer having her first recital at age four; she sold her first musical composition to a publisher at age 11. Following her graduation from high school, Price was educated at Boston's New England Conservatory of Music, one of the few musical institutions in the country that accepted Black students; one of her teachers included the eminent composer (and NEC director) George Chadwick. She returned to the South to teach music for almost 20 years before she and her family moved to Chicago, where her work as a composer began achieving national attention. A well-known story is that she became the first Black woman to have a work played by a major symphony orchestra when the Chicago Symphony performed her first symphony, in 1933. Price continued to compose both orchestral works and especially songs, which were taken up by significant performers including Marian Anderson, who premiered many of Price's vocal works. It was Price's arrangement of the spiritual "My Soul's Been Anchored in de Lord" that Anderson performed as part of her recital on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial on Easter Sunday, 1939, attended by 75,000 in person and countless more who heard the concert broadcast nationally.

Scholar Douglas Shadle notes that the *Suite of Dances* is probably Price's best-known work: an adaptation she created of an earlier trio of solo piano works, *Three Little Negro Dances*, which were intended as teaching pieces for her students. The songs are based on familiar folk dances, especially notable with the clearly syncopated tunes. Theodore Presser published the pieces individually in 1933,

and again as a set in 1949 as part of a teaching methods book; Presser also printed the dances in their extremely popular music magazine *The Etude*, which provided current music news, teaching tips, good advice and, best of all, new music, for musicians and music teachers all over the world. The piano pieces were eventually arranged by Erik W. G. Leidezén for concert band and quickly gained popularity with ensembles around the country, among them the U.S. Marine Band.

Price's work has been known and celebrated since her passing, but was almost entirely missing from the active performance repertory, as the greater classical music industry has largely omitted or ignored music by women and/or people of color. New attention came to her story recently when a significant collection of her unpublished manuscripts, papers, books, and other materials were found in an abandoned house, about to be refurbished, in a small Illinois town in 2009; the house turned out to have been Price's summer home at one time. The papers fortunately joined other Price materials already in the collection of the library of the University of Arkansas. Scholars including Shadle, Samantha Ege, and the author of Price's first biography, Rae Linda Brown, have helped to bring information about Price's background to the public's attention, and more and more of her formerly unknown music is being performed and recorded.

BERNARD HERRMANN*Psycho: A Narrative for String Orchestra in Three Parts (edited by Christopher Husted)*

Born June 29, 1911 in New York, NY

Died December 24, 1975 in Los Angeles, CA

Composed 1960

Film score from Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho* (1960)

Performance Time: Approximately 14 minutes

Bernard Herrmann's promise as a composer came early, winning a composition prize at age 13. He studied music at NYU (with Percy Grainger) and at Juilliard (with Albert Stoessel). His career began, like so many others at the time, on radio, as a composer for CBS radio. One of his many assignments included writing music for radio dramas created for CBS by John Houseman and Orson Welles of the theater company the Mercury Theatre. Herrmann's music thus appears on one of the most infamous radio broadcasts of all time, Welles' 1938 radio dramatization of H.G. Wells' novel *The War of the Worlds*. At the same time, Herrmann's career writing for the concert hall was thriving; his works from this time include a cantata (*Moby Dick* (1940)) and a symphony (1942), culminating with the completion of his opera, *Wuthering Heights* (1951).

Herrmann's work with Welles at CBS led to the upstart young director calling upon the equally upstart composer (Herrmann was only four years older than Welles) to provide the score for Welles' first film, *Citizen Kane* (1940). Herrmann's next film score, for *The Devil and Daniel Webster* (also known as *All that Money Can Buy* (1942)), garnered Herrmann his first—and only—Academy Award (from a total of five nominations). Herrmann's long list of credits reads like a Golden Age of Hollywood role call; we find him working with some of the most influential, successful, and/or notorious directors in Hollywood, including Joseph Mankiewicz, William Dieterle, Michael Curtiz, Fred Zinnemann, J. Lee Thompson, François Truffaut, Brian De Palma, and Martin Scorsese. Dramas seemed to be his stock in trade, not only in film, but also on television, for which he also became a prolific composer: he created the opening and closing credit music for the first season (1959–60) of *The Twilight Zone* and

for six episodes of the series, as well as for numerous episodes of *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*. Some of his most memorable film scores include the blaring four note brass motive that announced the wicked intentions of villain Max Cady (Robert Mitchum) in *Cape Fear*; the score proved so indelible that when Martin Scorsese remade the film in 1991, they retained Herrmann's score (albeit in an altered form, overseen by Elmer Bernstein).

Herrmann's longest and arguably most famous partnership, however, was with Alfred Hitchcock: he worked on nine of Hitchcock's films, including as a sound consultant for *The Birds*. Many stories around the inception and production of the music for *Psycho* exist; one is that Herrmann, a master of orchestration, deliberately chose to use only a string orchestra, as he put it, "to complement the black-and-white photography of the film with a black-and-white score." Perhaps the most astonishing fact is that Hitchcock had not intended to use music at all during the infamous shower scene, and that Herrmann's score uses just the violins to achieve the stabbing, screeching sounds that perfectly illustrate the on-screen crime. Herrmann commented, "People laugh when they learn it's just violins... It's just the strings doing something every violinist does all day long when he tunes up. The effect is as common as rocks." Another enduring sound from *Psycho* comes in "The Madhouse," which may be one of the most suspenseful and influential cues from the film; the excruciatingly deliberate pace of the held notes, as each dissonant line comes slowly into conflict with the next before releasing the tension, dovetailing with yet another, anxiety-inducing note, remains the exemplar for so many tense scenes in cinema, television, and video games.

KURT WEILL***Kleine Dreigroschenmusik***

Born March 2, 1900 in Dessau, Germany

Died April 3, 1950 in New York, NY

Composed in 1928

Premiered on February 7, 1929 in Berlin, Germany

Conducted by Otto Klemperer

Performance Time: Approximately 22 minutes

Kurt Weill (1900–1950) no doubt learned much about the power of musical drama from his father, a cantor in Dessau, Germany. The young composer was mentored by composers and theater musicians alike, and many of his early efforts were stage works. So much of his output—and so much of his fame—centers on dramas, including songspiels, musical comedies, ballets, operettas, radio dramas, incidental music for plays, and so on.

The work that in many ways defined his career was *Die Dreigroschenoper* or “The Threepenny Opera,” a collaboration with writer Bertolt Brecht; the show was adapted from John Gay’s *Beggar’s Opera*, a ballad opera—that is, an opera made up of popular or traditional songs that alternate with spoken dialogue—which has been performed regularly since it first appeared in 1728. Like its progenitor, the newly-created songs in *Die Dreigroschenoper* teem with references to current cultural themes, political issues, and social controversies—all of which would be excised when Weill created an instrumental suite of the tunes.

The show appeared during a time in Weill’s life when he was especially productive. *Die Dreigroschenoper* premiered on August 31, 1928; within a few years of its premiere he also worked on a comic opera, a one-act opera, the Mahagonny songspiel—later the *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny* (another collaboration with Bertolt Brecht); another comic opera, radio music, incidental music for numerous other shows and productions, works of his own, songs and workers’ choruses.

The popularity of *Die Dreigroschenoper* and its tunes led to a variety of works based on the original in some way; the first was this instrumental suite,

a collection of eight of the most memorable melodies from the show, scored for a “wind ensemble” of 16, including banjo, guitar, piano, and bandoneon. Weill wrote a letter to his publisher in February 1929, stating: “I heard the *Kleine Dreigroschenmusik* (I deliberately avoided using the word ‘suite’) yesterday at rehearsal; I am very content with it. There are eight numbers in all new, concert versions, with some new intermediate strophes and an entirely new orchestration... I believe the piece can be played an awful lot, since it is precisely what every conductor wants: a snappy piece to end with.” *Kleine Dreigroschenmusik* officially premiered at the Berlin Staatsoper on February 7, 1929, conducted by Otto Klemperer, who also featured the suite at a performance just a few weeks prior on a program with pieces by Berlioz (*Rákóczy March*) and Johann Strauss II (*Emperor Waltz*).

Die Dreigroschenoper took on an entirely new life—a veritable renaissance—in the late 1940s, when the American composer Marc Blitzstein, who saw the show in Germany in the late 1920s, began adapting some of the lyrics into English. Earlier translations had been made, but none had been successful or had met with Weill’s approval. Weill died at age 50; he never got to see the wild success of Blitzstein’s production—which opened in 1954—or the renewed popularity of his songs, in particular the transformation of “The Ballad of Mack the Knife (*Die Moritat von Mackie Messer*)” into “Mack the Knife,” which became a wildly popular hit for both Louis Armstrong and Bobby Darin, and was recorded by dozens of other artists.

BERNSTEIN

LEONARD BERNSTEIN***Three Dance Episodes from “On the Town”***

Born August 25, 1918 in Lawrence, MA

Died October 14, 1990 in New York, NY

Composed 1945

Premiered on February 3, 1946 in San Francisco, California

Conducted by Leonard Bernstein

Performance time: Approximately 11 minutes

Leonard Bernstein (1918–1990) stands apart from the other composers on the program not because of his compositional output, but rather because so much of his fame came from his career as a conductor. Like everyone else on this program, he too experimented in diverse forms, was known to many for one style, wished to be taken seriously as a composer, and yet did not refrain from working in genres that were not seen as being “serious.”

On the Town was inspired in part from an earlier commission, from the choreographer Jerome Robbins, to score a ballet around the idea of three sailors on leave in New York City, which became *Fancy Free* (1944). As musicologist Carol Oja has shown, several genres come together in *On the Town*, including the war musical, itself a unique framing device particular to the 1940s, when both Broadway musicals and war stories (in films and stage musicals) were at a particular peak; the stories often try to diffuse anxiety about the war with comedy, and include shows like Irving Berlin’s *This is the Army* and Cole Porter’s *Something for the Boys*. *On the Town* also evinces many characteristics of the late 1930s/early 1940s screwball comedy, with the various shenanigans that occur as the trio race around the city; some of these silly situations also remind us of the mischief of comic opera. Bernstein infuses the score with references to—or complete excursions within—popular genres of music at the time, rather than staying entirely within one sound or style.

On the Town premiered on December 28, 1944, and was an immediate hit, garnering rave reviews; it ran for 462 performances, closing on February 2, 1946, followed immediately by a national tour, which ran for

four months. Bernstein created the suite we’ll hear tonight in 1945, during the show’s original run. He dedicated the movements to the female leads of the original production: the first movement goes to fashion and art icon Sono Osato, who played Miss Turnstiles, aka Ivy Smith; movement two is for Betty Comden, who not only played Claire De Loone (!) in the show but also co-wrote the lyrics and book with her writing partner, Adolph Green (who played Ozzie in the show); and the third goes to Nancy Walker, who starred as the brash and brassy Bruennhilde “Hildy” Esterhazy.

The composer described the episodes by saying, “I believe this is the first Broadway show ever to have as many as seven or eight dance episodes in the space of two acts... The essence of the whole production is contained within these dances... That these are, in their way, symphonic pieces rarely occurs to the audience attending the show, so well integrated are all the elements.” Indeed, the suite provides a thrilling and evocative overview of the emotional highs and lows of the two-act musical, perhaps best captured in episode three, “Times Square,” which displays the joyful abandon and innocence of the three sailors as they go on their quest, with Bernstein’s up-down, jarring sounds meant to evoke the feeling of the biggest and most exciting city in the world. Osato herself perhaps best described the music: “Lenny’s music was brash, bold, frantic, and funny, capturing the pulse of New York Life. It was symphonic, jazzy, atonal, and operatic. It was low-down, honky-tonk, and ‘hot.’”

Leon Botstein, *Conductor*

Violin I

Cyrus Beroukhim,
Concertmaster
Yukie Handa
Ashley Horne
Patricia Davis
James Tsao
John Connelly

Violin II

Pauline Kim Harris,
Principal
Wende Namkung
Ragga Petursdottir
Diane Bruce
Dorothy Strahl
Alexander Vselensky

Viola

William Frampton,
Principal
Sally Shumway
Shelley Holland-Moritz
Rachel Riggs

Cello

Eugene Moye,
Principal
Wayne Smith
Annabelle Hoffman
Sarah Carter

Bass

Jordan Frazier,
Principal
Jack Wenger
Richard Ostrovsky

Flute

Anna Urrey,
Principal
Rie Schmidt

Oboe

Alexandra Knoll,
Principal

Clarinet

Shari Hoffman,
Principal

Benjamin Baron

Lino Gomez

Alto Sax

Lino Gomez

Tenor Sax

Todd Groves

Bassoon

Gina Cuffari,
Principal
Joshua Butcher

Horn

Karl Kramer-Johansen,
Principal
Chad Yarbrough

Trumpet

Gareth Flowers,
Principal
John Dent
Zachary Silberschlag

Trombone

Richard Clark,
Principal
Nicole Abissi
Christopher Olness,
Bass Trombone

Tuba

Kyle Turner,
Principal

Timpani

David Fein,
Principal

Percussion

Jonathan Haas,
Principal
Kory Grossman
Javier Diaz

Harp

Victoria Drake,
Principal

Piano

Christopher Oldfather,
Principal

Banjo

Scott Kuney

Accordion

William Schimmel

Personnel Manager

Matthew Dine

Orchestra Librarian

Marc Cerri

ASO Board of Trustees & Administration

Dimitri B. Papadimitriou, *Chair*
Hans-Jürgen Knoch, *Vice Chair*
Jon R. Carter, *Treasurer*
Nermin K. Ahmad
Lawrence E. Apolzon
Helen Baron
Miriam R. Berger
Michael Dorf
Jack Kliger
Shirley A. Mueller, Esq.
Eileen Rhulen

HONORARY MEMBERS

Joel I. Berson, Esq.
L. Stan Stokowski

ASO ADMINISTRATION

Oliver Inteeworn, *Executive Director*
Ally Chapel, *Marketing Director*
Natasha Nelson, *Development & Operations Manager*
Sebastian Danila, *Library Manager*
Tony Melone, *Operations Consultant*
Koszyn & Company, *Fundraising and Development Council*
James Bagwell, *Principal Guest Conductor*
Zachary Schwartzman, *Assistant Conductor*
Richard Wilson, *Composer-In-Residence*

American Symphony Orchestra Patrons

The American Symphony Orchestra Board of Trustees, staff, and artists gratefully acknowledge the following individuals, foundations, corporations, and government agencies who help us to fulfill Leopold Stokowski's avowed intention of making orchestral music accessible and affordable for everyone. We value the generosity and vital support of all donors.

MAESTRO'S CIRCLE

Arthur F. and Alice E. Adams
Charitable Foundation
The Frank and Lydia Bergen
Foundation
Miriam R. Berger
Jeanne Donovan Fisher
Howard Gilman Foundation
Rachel and Shalom Kalnicki
Anna-Maria and Stephen Kellen
Foundation
Hans-Jürgen Knoch
Leon Levy Foundation
National Endowment for the Arts
New York City Department of
Cultural Affairs
New York State Council on
the Arts
Dimitri B. and Rania
Papadimitriou
The Spektor Family
Foundation, In memory of
Anya Botstein
The Spektor Family
Foundation, In memory of
Mira J. Spektor
Wade Family Trust
Richard and Adene Wilson

STOKOWSKI CIRCLE

Lawrence E. Apolzon
Gary M. Giardina
E. Nakamichi Foundation
James and Andrea Nelkin
Music Performance Trust Fund
Dr. Irene Rosner David
Michael Simkin
Tony Weida

Zbigniew Ryzak
The David and Sylvia
Teitelbaum Fund

BENEFACTORS

Anonymous
Jon R. Carter
Jeanne Heernan
Alan Mallach
Otto Nielsen
Theodore and Vicki Peck
Thomas P. and Cynthia D.
Sculco Foundation
Felicitas S. Thorne
Sidi Wang

PATRONS

Anonymous
Nancy L. Banks
Block Family Foundation
Paul Corneilson
Constantin Friedman
Jonathan Haas
George A. Hirsch
Hospitality Committee for
United Nations Delegations
In memory of Laura Flax
Patricia Kiley and Edward Faber
John D. Knoernschild
John D. Metcalfe
Val Schaner
Ruth and David E. Schwab II
Patricia Ross Weis
Irene Zedlacher

CONTRIBUTORS

Anonymous
Murray J. Aronson
Elena Baker
Manuel Balbontin
Helen Baron
Alison Bell
Thomas Bell

SUSTAINERS

John and Joanne Baer
Mary Ellin Barrett
Richard C. Celler

Michael Crabbe
Robert Deutsch
Jeremy Friedman
Helen Garcia
Linda Goldstein
Gene Haldeman
Oliver P. Inteeworn
David Kernahan
Erica Kiesewetter
Peter Kroll
David Kunstler
Arthur S. Leonard
Carol Lilienfeld
Nancy Lupton
Alan Mallach
Charles McCracken
James McGrath
Christopher McNew
Martin and Lucy Murray
Mr. Kenneth Nassau and
Ms. Lee Hebner
Maury Newburger
Clary Olmstead and
Kathleen Heenan
Roland Riopelle
Corrine Shea
Richard Sime
Michael and Judith Thoyer
Mary R. Wagner
William C. Zifchak

CONTRIBUTORS

Anonymous
Murray J. Aronson
Elena Baker
Manuel Balbontin
Helen Baron
Alison Bell
Thomas Bell

Yvette Bendahan
Mona Yuter Brokaw
Patricia R. Brophy
Diane Bruce and John Sinclair
Robert Chaves
Maxine Cutler
Thomas J. De Stefano
Dale Djerassi
Alexandra MacDowell-Djerassi
Bonnie-Jean Dorsey
Marc Embree
Jitka Frajboska
Christopher H. Gibbs
Diva Goodfriend-Koven
Jean Harris, In honor of
Ron Sell
Andrée Hayum
Rafael Santos Hernandez
Linda Herskowitz
George A. Hirsch
Drs. Russell and
Barbara Holstein
Hudson Guild
Peter Haring Judd Fund
Oliver Jakob
David Kunstler
Mary Ann Lang
Eleanor Langevin
David Laurenson
Harris Lehrer
Richard Leonard Giving Fund
Michelle Lowes and Paul Hyde
Stephen J. McAteer
Keith John McCarthy
Robert Meyer
Ruth Milts
Steven Morvay
Eugene Moye
Karen Olah

American Symphony Orchestra Patrons

CONTRIBUTORS (cont'd)

Frances Pandolfi
Mather Pfeienberger
Emanuel Phillips
David Pozorski
Anthony Richter
Brigitte Roepke
Rochelle Rubinstein
Henry Saltzman
Margret Sell
Georgi Shimanovsky
Peter Sloane
Mary Summers
Michael Watson
Donna Welensky
William Whitaker
Myra and Matthew
Zuckerbraun

SUPPORTERS

Anonymous
Murray Aronson
David Aubrey, In honor of
Beatrice Aubrey
Rudy Beutell
Gregory Clark
Marsha Clark
Sara DeYoung
William Frazier
Lis K. Froding
Laurie Glenn
Margaret Goldberg
Eric Holtz
Cyma Horowitz
Margaret Kennedy
Steven Kent
Sallie Killian
Bjoern Knittel
Christopher Kong

Philippe Lebard
Sheila Lehman
Aleksandr Livshits
Pam Loree
Karen Madden
Karen Manchester
Cynthia Marion
Loretta Hunt Marion
Rosaleen Mazur
Maximilian McEachern
Karen Mercer
Gladys Oldano
Lois Padawer
Richard Pleak and
Jon Weatherman
Morey Ritt
John W. Roane
Robert and Barbara
Rothenberg
Charles Schneider

Peter Schneider
Sangram Sisodia
Ellen Stelling
Marlene Walker
Selden Wasson
Peri Widener
Jacqueline M. Williams, PhD

FRIENDS

Kenneth Adamo
Sue Adler
A.A. Aidala
Anonymous
David Badler
Jeanne Bartlett
Marc Basch
Daniel B. and Gisela Berkson
Robert Blacker
James Jaffe
Raissa Ravitcher

The Kurt Weill Foundation, Inc. promotes and perpetuates the legacies of Kurt Weill and Lotte Lenya by encouraging an appreciation of Weill's music through support of performances, recordings, and scholarship, and by fostering an understanding of Weill's and Lenya's lives and work within diverse cultural contexts. It administers the Weill-Lenya Research Center, a Grant and Collaborative Performance Initiative Program, the Lotte Lenya Competition, the Kurt Weill/Julius Rudel Conducting Fellowship, the Kurt Weill Prize for scholarship in music theater, and publishes the Kurt Weill Edition and the Kurt Weill Newsletter. Building upon the legacies of both Weill and Lenya, the Foundation nurtures talent, particularly in the creation, performance, and study of musical theater in its various manifestations and media. Since 2012, the Kurt Weill Foundation has administered the musical and literary estate of composer Marc Blitzstein. www.kwf.org.

Music plays a special part in the lives of many New York residents. The American Symphony Orchestra gratefully acknowledges the support of the following government agencies that have made a difference in the culture of New York:



This program is supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council.



The ASO's Vanguard Series is made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature.

KEEP US ON POINT! SUPPORT THE ASO

Since 1962, the American Symphony Orchestra has done something incredible: presented the widest array of orchestral works, performed at exceptional levels of artistry—and offered at the most accessible prices in New York City.

EVERY DOLLAR COUNTS. Please donate at any level to safeguard the ASO's distinctive programming now and ensure another season!

HOW TO DONATE: Make your gift online: americansymphony.org/support
Make checks payable to: **American Symphony Orchestra**
Mail to: American Symphony Orchestra, 1330 Avenue of the Americas, Suite 23A, New York, NY 10019

For questions or additional information: Call **646.237.5022** or email development@americansymphony.org.

BECOME AN ASO MEMBER

We offer memberships at three levels with benefits including complimentary concert tickets, invitations to exclusive Member events, and more!

ASO Members in attendance this evening receive a special discount at nearby restaurants including Le Botaniste and L'adresse.



ASO Members were also invited to pre-concert reception on the lawn with light refreshments and a meet-and-greet with members of the orchestra.

To explore our membership levels and to secure these special perks at our next concert, join the ASO family today! Visit: americansymphony.org/membership or call **646.237.5022**

