

AMERICAN CLASSICS

BERNSTEIN Chichester Psalms

On the Waterfront • On the Town

Bournemouth Symphony Chorus and Orchestra • Marin Alsop



Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990)

On the Waterfront - Symphonic Suite • Chichester Psalms • On The Town - Three Dance Episodes

Leonard Bernstein was one of the most prodigious musicians America has ever produced. As conductor, performer, teacher, and musical personality, his restless spirit and unparalleled charisma established him as a consummate figure in American music. His twelve-year directorship of the New York Philharmonic, as well as the production of his *Omnibus* and *Young People's Concerts* programmes for television, helped introduce the world of music to countless people of all ages. As a composer and man of multifarious tastes, defying musical categories, Bernstein fashioned original music to fit stage, screen, church, concert and recital hall. Perhaps no other musician of the twentieth century has led so diverse a musical career and has touched so many through the love of music.

The music to Elia Kazan's 1954 film, *On the Waterfront*, represents Leonard Bernstein's only original movie score. Starring a young Marlon Brando, Eva-Marie Saint and a surplus of stars, the Academy Award-winning movie is widely considered one of the greatest films of all time. Bernstein's Oscar-nominated score captures the essence of New York, the city the musician called home for most of his life. Though the film itself was stimulating, he often found the experience confining, lamenting the lost music that ended up on the dubbing-room floor and writing to his friend Aaron Copland, "Hollywood is exactly how I expected it, only worse". Bernstein fashioned a six-movement suite from the film score the following year, incorporating some of the discarded material. An atmospheric solo horn that begins the work conjures a dark, urban landscape, invoking the misty East River docks. Saxophones, muted trumpets and percussion give the work a real city feel. *Terry's Theme*, after the longshoreman character played by Brando, is heard in the middle and end of the suite, contrapuntally intertwined with the opening motive. Throughout, Bernstein contrasts anxious, frenetic rhythms with music of a more lyrical, human nature, a hallmark of the

composer's mature style. The suite is dedicated to Bernstein's son, Alexander Serge, named in honor of Koussevitsky, Boston Symphony director and Bernstein's mentor.

The 1964-1965 New York Philharmonic season was to have been a sabbatical year for its director, as Bernstein wished to concentrate solely on composing. His principal focus was on a musical adaptation of Thornton Wilder's *The Skin of Our Teeth*, partnering with the team of Betty Comden and Adolph Green, with choreography by Jerome Robbins. Although this project was never to get off the ground, another offer presented itself early in 1965. Walter Hussey, Dean of Chichester cathedral in the English south-coast county of Sussex, wrote to the composer and offered to commission a work for the combined choirs of Winchester, Salisbury and Chichester cathedrals for an annual summer music festival. His request coincided with one of the few moments of relative quiet in the musician's life; Bernstein immediately got to work, composing the score in his New York apartment, and completing the orchestration in Fairfield, Connecticut, in May 1965.

Bernstein devoted much of his sabbatical year to experimentation in twelve-tone composition, but ultimately rejected the strict orthodoxy of the doctrine, claiming that, for him, it was not honest. He proudly called his *Chichester Psalms* "the most B-flat majorish tonal piece I've ever written", working on the premise that, in his work, tonality equals optimism. Perhaps because of its harmonic simplicity and universal text, the *Chichester Psalms* has become one of Bernstein's most performed works. The honour of the first performance did not, in fact, go to the Chichester choir. In July 1965, Bernstein conducted the New York Philharmonic in a slightly altered version with a mixed, adult choir. The all-male version was first performed later the same month in England.

Scored for mixed choir, boy solo, strings, three trumpets, three trombones, two harps and percussion,

the three-movement work sets, in Hebrew, complete and partial psalms. The first movement begins with a suitably rousing Psalm 108 (Awake, psaltery and harp! I will arouse the dawn) and concludes with the complete Psalm 100 (Make a joyful noise unto the Lord all ye lands), the latter in a dancing 7/4 meter, the choir complemented by some colourful percussion. This music, featuring reworked material from the aborted *The Skin of Our Teeth*, dies away with the pattering of bongos. A tranquil A major distinguishes the second movement and the boy solo sweetly intoning Psalm 23 (The Lord is my shepherd) is accompanied by two harps. A surprising interruption disrupts the calm and a blistering *Allegro feroce* is established, the shouting choir exclaiming *Lamah rag'shu?* (Why do the nations rage) over a frenzied orchestra. Bernstein here uses music cut from the Prologue to *West Side Story*, and reworked slightly to fit the Hebrew text. It is not difficult to imagine Sharks and Jets squaring off to this music. But soon the plaintive A major melody returns and the boy solo joins a quiet chorus in the final lines. Brittle, sustained string chords open the final movement, the longest of the three, before settling into a rippling 10/4 meter of an impressionistic nature. In the coda, from Psalm 133 (Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity), Bernstein unites the affirmative text with sumptuous music in a serene moment, the hushed choir concluding an expressive, final *Amen* on the note G. Despite the Hebrew text, there is scarcely any traditional Judaic musical material in *Chichester Psalms*, as utilized in the earlier *First Symphony* ("Jeremiah"), *Re'ena*, and *Third Symphony* ("Kaddish"), continuing with the

Mass of 1971 and the ballet *Dybbuk* of 1974, each an expression of the composer's faith.

Bernstein's awesome contribution to American musical theatre began in 1944 with *On the Town*, a story - a significant reworking and expansion of the earlier ballet *Fancy Free* - of three sailors, each of whom encounters a particular set of adventures on shore leave in New York. The story and music capture the gaiety and spirit of the great city. The show opened in Boston, followed quickly by New York, and established Bernstein, with collaborators Jerome Robbins, Betty Comden and Adolph Green, as a potent force in musical theatre. The successful show could claim many firsts: it was the first American musical written by a symphonic composer, the first show to be bought by a film company for a movie adaptation, and the first show on Broadway to feature white and black dancers together. The 26-year old Bernstein extracted some music from the show and reorganized it with the title, *Three Dance Episodes from "On the Town"*, underscoring the leading rôle that dance plays in the musical. The first episode, *The Great Lover*, establishes the jazzy, bustling mood; the central episode introduces *Lonely Town*, one of the composer's most memorable melodies. But the final episode, *Times Square*, featuring lively, swinging tunes of a peculiarly New York cast, is the epicentre of the musical suite, much as that famous intersection is the point of orientation to New Yorkers, as long as one remembers, as the song instructs, "*the Bronx is up but the Battery's down.*"

Sean Hickey

Conductor's Note

I first fell under the spell of Leonard Bernstein when I was nine years old and my father took me to hear him conduct the New York Philharmonic. Not only was Leonard Bernstein the most thrilling, exciting person that I had ever seen, but after I heard him, I immediately knew that I wanted to become a conductor, an ambition that never waned.

One of the happiest days in my life came in 1988 when I was a conducting fellow at Tanglewood and was selected to conduct a work on a concert with LB. Studying with him; spending time with him; hearing his stories and his passionate views - these were life altering and life shaping experiences that I will always treasure. To have a hero is a rare occurrence. To have a hero that exceeds one's expectations is a gift beyond measure.

How can I describe Bernstein's greatness? It wasn't just that he was a superb conductor; a wonderful composer; a brilliant thinker; and a charismatic personality. As Stephen Sondheim wrote to celebrate Bernstein's seventieth birthday: "Poor Lenny, Ten gifts too many!" For me, it was his ability to "connect the dots", his ability to carry his every experience over into another discipline. His limitless curiosity about everything around him and his boundless generosity were contagious. Above all, he was a man of great convictions, a true humanitarian who set the bar

extremely high for all of us.

His *Chichester Psalms*, like all of his compositions, offers a glimpse into Bernstein's soul. Simply by his choice of a Hebrew text for a première in the Church of England we see Bernstein's deep desire to embrace and include everyone in the experience. And in his selection of biblical psalms, we see Bernstein's understanding of those archetypal needs we all share.

"*Awake and be joyful!*", a fun, jazzy invitation disarms us and draws us in. Psalm 23 "*The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want...*" transports us to some very personal childhood moments. Bernstein features a boy soprano with angelic ladies voices to complete the memory and bring to life the beautiful simplicity of the psalm. But life is not that simple. He interrupts this moment with the reality of what man has inflicted upon himself: "*Why do the nations rage and the people imagine a vain thing?*" There is an orchestral interlude that speaks the abstract language that binds us all together and makes the transition to contrition.

The final a cappella moments of *Chichester Psalms*: "*Behold how good, and how pleasant it is, For brethren to dwell Together in unity.*" are the essence of Leonard Bernstein for me and why I miss him so very much.

Marin Alsop

Bournemouth Symphony Chorus • Director: Neville Creed

The Bournemouth Symphony Chorus, founded in 1911 by Sir Dan Godfrey, has become established as one of the country's leading large vocal ensembles. It gives regular concerts with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra in Bournemouth, Poole, London and throughout Southern England, records extensively, and has appeared at the Proms and many other Festivals. It tours abroad regularly, with recent visits to America, Italy, Israel and Paris. It won a Grammy Award in America for its recording of *Belshazzar's Feast*. For its ninetieth birthday in 2001, it commissioned a major new cantata, *Voices of Exile* from the composer Richard Blackford, with new poems by Tony Harrison, with first performances in Poole and at the Royal Festival Hall.

Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra

Founded in 1893 by Sir Dan Godfrey, the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra has had among its Principal Conductors some of the finest musicians in the world, including Rudolf Schwarz, Constantin Silvestri, Sir Charles Groves and Paavo Berglund. More recently Andrew Litton raised the orchestra's standards to new levels, crowning its centenary season with a triumphant début tour of the United States in April 1994, followed by Yakov Kreizberg and débuts at the Musikverein, Vienna, the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam, and Carnegie Hall, New York. In October 2002, Marin Alsop became Principal Conductor, the first woman to hold this title for any British symphony orchestra. The name of the orchestra is internationally known through over three hundred recordings, including the award-winning release of Anthony Payne's sketches for Elgar's *Symphony No.3* with Paul Daniel, and the symphonies of Vaughan Williams with the former Chief Guest Conductor Kees Bakels and Paul Daniel for Naxos, and through overseas tours. In addition to its recording and international touring commitments, the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra is dedicated to providing orchestral music across the South and West of Britain, with a varied programme of educational and outreach commitments, and makes regular appearances in major festivals and concert-halls throughout the country.

Thomas Kelly

Thomas Kelly is now thirteen years old and has been a pupil at St Paul's Cathedral School since 1997. He has served as Head Chorister of the Cathedral Choir from 2002 to 2003. As a St Paul's Cathedral Chorister, he has taken part in many important services and events in the Cathedral. These include the 100th Birthday celebrations for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother and Her Majesty the Queen's Golden Jubilee service in 2002. In addition to singing, he plays the piano and the flute, and although he very much enjoys his music-making, he does not think that he will be a professional musician. He becomes a music scholar at The King's School, Canterbury, in September 2003.

Marin Alsop

Principal Conductor of the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra since Autumn 2002, Marin Alsop won the Royal Philharmonic Society Conductor of 2002 award. Following her Samuel Barber cycle with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra is a further series of recordings of works by Barber with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. Recent guest appearances have included the Chicago Symphony, New York Philharmonic, London Symphony and London Philharmonic, with further engagements with the Munich Philharmonic, Philadelphia and Los Angeles Orchestras. Marin Alsop studied at Yale and at the Juilliard School and won the Koussevitzky Prize at Tanglewood, where she was a pupil of Leonard Bernstein, Seiji Ozawa, and Gustav Meier.

Chichester Psalms

- 2 Ps. 108, vs.2: Urah, hanevel, v'chinor!
A-irah shaḥar!
- Ps. 100: Hariu l'Adonai kol haarets.
Iv'du et Adonai b'simḥa
Bo-u l'fanav bir'ninah.
D'u ki Adonai Hu Elohim.
Hu asanu, v'lo anaḥnu.
Amo v'tson mar'ito.
Bo-u sh'arav b'todah,
Ḥatseirotav bit'hilah,
Hodu lo, bar'chu sh'mo.
Ki tov Adonai, l'olam ḥas'do,
V'ad dor vador emunato.

- 3 Ps. 23: Adonai ro-i, lo eḥsar.
Bin'ot deshe yarbitseini,
Al mei m'nuhot y'naḥaleini,
Naf'shi y'shovev,
yán'heimi b'ma'aglei tsedek,
L'm'an sh'mo.
Gam ki eilech
B'gei tsalmavet,
Lo ira ra,
Ki Atah imadi.
Shiv't'cha umishan'techa
Hemah y'naḥamuni.

Ta'aroch l'fanai shulchan
Neced tsor'rai
Dishanta vashemen roshi
Cosi r'vayah.
Ach tov vahesed
Yird'funi kol y'mei ḥayai,
V'shav'ti b'veit Adonai
L'orech yamim.

Awake, psaltery and harp:
I will rouse the dawn!

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.

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: Lamah rag'shu goyim
Ul'umim yeh'gu rik?
Yit'yats'vu malchei erets,
V'roznim nos'du yaḥad
Al Adonai v'al m'shiḥo.
N'natkah et mos'roteimo,
V'nashlicbah mimenu avoteimo.
Yoshev bashamayim
Yis'hak, Adonai
Yil'ag lamo!

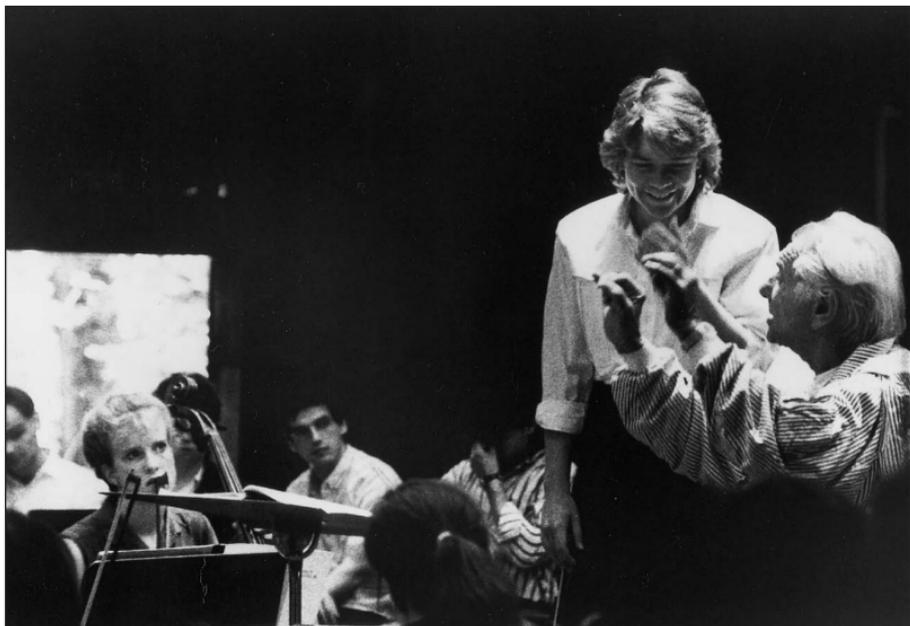
Why do the nations rage,
And the people imagine a vain thing?
The kings of the earth set themselves,
And the rulers take counsel together
Against the Lord and against His anointed.
Saying, let us break their bonds asunder,
And cast away their cords from us.
He that sitteth in the heavens
Shall laugh, and the Lord
Shall have them in derision!

4 Ps. 131: Adonai, Adonai,
Lo gavah libi,
V'lo ramu einai
V'lo hilachti
Big'dolot uv'niflaot
Mimeni.
Im lo shiviti
V'domam'ti
Naf'shi k'gamul alei imo,
Kagamul alai naf'shi
Yaḥel 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 tov,
Umah naim,
Shevet aḥim
Gam yaḥad.

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



Leonard Bernstein and Marin Alsop

(Photo used courtesy of Marin Alsop)



AMERICAN CLASSICS

Commissioned in 1965 by the Dean of Chichester, Bernstein's colourful *Chichester Psalms* is one of the composer's most successful and accessible works on religious texts, contrasting spiritual austerity with impulsive rhythms in a contemplation of peace. The composer fashioned his Oscar-nominated score to the 1954 movie *On the Waterfront* into a symphonic suite, skilfully capturing the oppression of the New York dockyards in the '50s. The *Three Dance Episodes* were extracted from the popular *On The Town*, Bernstein's first successful foray into musical theatre.

Booklet notes in English
Kommentar auf Deutsch

*Sung texts in Hebrew
transliteration and
English translation

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Leonard
BERNSTEIN
(1918-1990)
Chichester Psalms

Thomas Kelly, Treble[†]
Elizabeth Franklin-Kitchen, Soprano*

Victoria Naylor, Alto*

Jeremy Budd, Tenor*

Paul Charrier, Bass*

**Bournemouth Symphony
Chorus and Orchestra**
Marin Alsop

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|----------|---|--------------|
| 1 | On the Waterfront – Symphonic Suite
from the Film
Chichester Psalms* | 19:25 |
| 2 | I. Psalm 108 vs. 2, Psalm 100 | 3:31 |
| 3 | II. Psalm 23, Psalm 2 vs. 1-4[†] | 5:59 |
| 4 | III. Psalm 131, Psalm 133 vs. 1 | 8:23 |
| | On the Town – Three Dance Episodes | |
| 5 | I. The Great Lover | 1:56 |
| 6 | II. Lonely Town: Pas de Deux | 3:26 |
| 7 | III. Times Square: 1944 | 5:10 |



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American flag, folk artist, 1880s

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