What I Ask of You


The following remarks are taken from the commencement speech delivered by Leonard Bernstein to the graduating class of Johns Hopkins University on May 30, 1980. Somewhat discouragingly, the Maestro’s words remain relevant to us all today.

What I am asking of you, and what you must ask yourselves, is this: Are you ready to free your minds from the constraints of narrow, conventional thinking, the rigorous dictates of a received, logical positivism? ... Are you ready to dare to free your minds from the constraints we, your elders, have imposed on you? Will you accept, as artists do, that the life of the spirit precedes and controls the life of exterior action; that the richer and more creative the life of the spirit, the healthier and more productive our society must necessarily be?

If you are ready to accept all that — and I am not saying that it’s easy to do — then I must ask if you are ready to admit the ensuing corollaries, starting bravely with the toughest one of all: that war is obsolete. Our nuclear folly has rendered it obsolete, so that it now appears to be something like a bad old habit, a ritualistic, quasi-tribalistic obeisance to the arrogance of excessive nationalism, face-saving, bigotry, xenophobia and, above all, greed. Do you not find something reprehensible, even obscene, about the endless and useless stock-piling of nuclear missiles? Isn’t there something radically wrong with nation-states’ squandering the major portion of their wealth on military strength at the expense of schools, hospitals, libraries, vital research in medicine and energy — to say nothing of preserving the sheer livability of our planetary environment? Why (continued on page 6)


Leonard Bernstein grew up in a world of stark political contrasts: the Depression, Roosevelt and the New Deal, Nazism and World War II — a world full of evil and damage tempered by powerful forces of good. In his middle life, the forces of good suffered the assassinations of Martin Luther King and the two Kennedy brothers.

Through it all, Mr. Bernstein retained the idealism of his youth. Surely by creating beauty, he felt, and by sharing it with as many people as possible, one could ultimately tip the balance in favor of brotherhood and peace — the human equivalents of musical harmony. This was the force behind Leonard Bernstein’s political beliefs, which he was not shy about sharing with the world. Nor was he afraid of any of the various epithets — Liberal, Jew, Radical Chic, Commie-Pinko-Fag — stuck like so many Post-its to his coattails. He spoke out and fought doggedly for the causes he believed in. He donated fees, wrote letters and campaign songs, even entire musical works, in order to communicate his desire and hope for a better world.

Mr. Bernstein did not always act prudently. His passion sometimes got the best of his logic. But when he conducted Beethoven’s NINTH SYMPHONY in Berlin on Christmas 1989 to celebrate the fall of the Wall, the feeling that he had attempted to convey all his life was at its most palpable that if enough hearts would open themselves to the beauty of great music, there would be no room left in them for evil, greed or hate. In this political season, we need his music more than ever.
The BETA Fund

BETA Fund Supports Music Outreach

Prior to the Concert Series, the children in the program participate in a series of workshops to introduce them to basic musical concepts, orchestra instruments and the stories/fables with their musical themes. Teachers receive instructional material, including guides, song sheets and music, in order to familiarize the children with the contents of the upcoming concerts. The concerts themselves bring exciting new dimensions to concert programming and are a comprehensive, enriching experience for young people with limited access to such exposure.

The success of these concerts may best be described by second-grader Neil, who writes: “I've seen the Music Outreach Program. It helps you learn many things. We had two visits from them. They taught us about instruments, dancing around the world, talking with our hands in Hawaiian, singing and rhythm bands. Music Outreach taught me to work with all kinds of people.”

A choral ensemble of students from P.S. 199 perform at the Music Outreach Demonstration Concert at Alice Tully Hall.

The Politics of Play

My father created the Bernstein Education Through the Arts (BETA) Fund with the conviction that all people, throughout their education and after it, do want to learn, can find joy in learning, and that the arts are essential in that process. He believed that through “playing” music, math, theater, history, words, etc., people learn not only about the subject itself but about the connections between disciplines, the happy results of hard work and, most importantly, about themselves. He saw learning as an active process, not one of merely receiving knowledge. As is the case with other views he assumed obvious and unarguable, his educational philosophy is a political thicket.

Last year I taught drama for middle-schoolers in Brooklyn, NY. One day an administrator warned me that he felt the kids were “having too much fun” in my class. Perhaps we did get a little loud on some days — it was Drama, after all — but I think he was equating “fun” with “not learning” and, by implication, “no fun” with “learning.”

In the United States, school is conceived as a joyless place. After a few years of “play” in elementary school, children are suddenly told, “OK, it’s time for serious studying. NO MORE PLAYING AROUND!” Not only are most children unprepared for this splash of cold water, but it transforms the experience of going to school — of learning itself — from one of “wanting to” to one of “having to.” Students learn to sit silently in rows as they are told what is important, good, bad, beautiful, worthy and true. The arts, active learning, collaborative learning, and creative thinking have no place in such a classroom. They would (and do) subvert it.

Learning through the arts requires personal, emotional investment on both sides. It forces the learner to ask hard, often unanswerable questions. At this point, the role of the teacher becomes that of collaborator in discovery, not authority with all the “right answers.” In facing and accepting ambiguity, teacher and student together transcend what is known and comfortable. The prospect that a teacher may not have all the “right answers” — that the new cliché, “empowerment of students,” implies the relinquishing of absolute power by teachers and a sharing of responsibility with students — is, for better or worse, a political matter of the classroom and, in the end, of society.

Alexander Bernstein is President of the Bernstein Education Through the Arts (BETA) Fund.
Lenny and Israel

by Teddy Kollek

As I sit to write about my friend Lenny, I still find it hard to believe that he is not composing a new work in his apartment on 72nd Street or teaching a master class in Tokyo or preparing for the summer performances at Tanglewood or en route to Jerusalem to conduct a special concert here. He is deeply, deeply missed.

Different friends knew different sides of Lenny. I of course was always closely involved with his commitments to Israel in general and Jerusalem in particular. It would be impossible to cover the full extent of this involvement with all of us here, but I would nevertheless like to share a few special memories of Lenny in Israel.

He was always a part of us. He was with us in our joys as well as our sorrows. His love for our country and our city was an integral part of his being. He was always a part of us. He was with us in our joys as well as our sorrows. His love for our country and our city was an integral part of his being.

In 1948, Lenny conducted concerts in makeshift desert halls for the soldiers of the fledgling State of Israel. Years later, when he performed in the modern facilities of Tel Aviv's Mann Auditorium and Jerusalem's Binyaney Ha'oomah, he often told the story of these early days.

One of his most memorable concerts took place in June 1967, shortly after the reunification of the city, when the amphitheater of the Hebrew University campus on Mount Scopus was again accessible. The conditions were less than ideal. The acoustics were terrible, the wind wreaked havoc with the music stands, the barking of wild dogs in an area deserted for nineteen years was never entirely coordinated with the music, the dust of two decades swirled freely around. Amidst this, Lenny — with Isaac Stern by his side — gave the performance of a lifetime, “Hatikvah on Mount Scopus.” It expressed the hopes with which we all looked to the future. And if all these hopes have not yet been fulfilled, they remain in our hearts and in our souls — and in Lenny’s music, which was an inspiration for our efforts to foster coexistence and tolerance through mutual understanding.

There were other special occasions we shared. Lenny joined us for the dedication of the Hassenfeld Amphitheater in the Sultan’s Pool, below the Old City Wall, where he concluded a memorable evening with Viennese waltzes to celebrate my roots. On my 77th birthday, at a fundraising event for Jerusalem which took place in New York, Lenny touched the hearts of all present with the performance of music he had just written to a Yiddish poem by Yaacov Segal. Just a year later, he gave the proceeds of a concert in Vienna to enable us to subsidize a concert in Jerusalem which would be open to all, to the new immigrants just arriving on our shores, to the elderly and handicapped for whom special arrangements were made, to those veteran Jerusalemites for whom the price of a concert ticket is usually beyond their budget.

One could only be amazed, time and time again, by Lenny’s singular energy. He was a great composer, an extraordinary musician, a talented educator, a devoted father, but also a warm friend and a true Zionist.

Teddy Kollek is the Mayor of Jerusalem.

A Reflection About Lenny

by The Very Rev. James Parks Morton

It is difficult to imagine that Leonard Bernstein is gone. Two years after his death, his name is still the first that comes to mind when we are planning events on behalf of humanitarian causes. Lenny could always be counted on. At the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, he was passionately committed to our plea for peace. He truly understood, both emotionally and intellectually, that it was time to stop the foolish marathon of nations either creating ever-more-deadly nuclear arsenals or indulging in the grisly terrors of conventional war.

Lenny was a great contemporary advocate for the ancient commandment, Thou Shalt Not Kill.

Throughout his life, Lenny gave of himself, writing articles, making speeches, and conducting peace initiatives around the world. In all he undertook, he showed three matchless qualities. The first was his everyday morality. He lived what he believed. I often watched him interact with children and with homeless music lovers who flocked to his Cathedral concerts. Neither his genius nor (continued on page 7)
Human rights had not yet entered the lexicon of American households in the 1970s... except in the household of Leonard and Felicia Bernstein. Felicia Montealegre Bernstein was from Chile, and Chile's military regime was ravaging her country's people with human-rights abuses. Between 1973 and 1977, thousands of political activists, their colleagues and their families were tortured, killed or "disappeared." The Bernsteins not only cared deeply about persecution in Chile and elsewhere, but also translated their concerns into action by supporting Amnesty International's work. The Bernsteins wanted to see people protected from political killing, torture and mass arbitrary arrest.

Felicia Bernstein did not live to see the fall of Chile's brutal dictatorship. To honor his late wife and to continue their joint struggle for human rights, Leonard Bernstein established the Felicia Montealegre Bernstein Fund of Amnesty International USA to provide much-needed support for human-rights activists with few resources beyond personal dedication.

The Fund was the first of its kind at Amnesty. In the early 1980s, when the Fund began disbursements, most of Amnesty's national sections, which organized and serviced grassroots operations in individual countries, were straining to survive. In Western countries the situation was a bit easier after Amnesty won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1977, but elsewhere in the world, sections struggled by on minuscule budgets. Through the Felicia Montealegre Bernstein Fund, Amnesty workers worldwide received critical organizing assistance. For example, the Fund enabled the Argentina section to hold a series of training sessions for its volunteers. It provided funding for membership campaign mailings in Trinidad and Tobago and for office equipment in Israel. The Venezuela section purchased its first postage meter and the Ecuador section was able to buy a photocopier.

The Treasurer of Amnesty USA in the early 1980s, who was also one of the Fund's first trustees, took special delight in his stewardship. His last contact with Leonard Bernstein had taken place several decades earlier, at a youth camp in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. "Uncle Lenny," as the boys called him, was the camp music coordinator. As for the Treasurer-to-be, he was a painfully shy boy facing the imminent and distressing prospect of singing before a large audience of campers and parents. "Just hold this broom, sing to the broom, and forget about everything else," Uncle Lenny told him. The boy took his advice, and the performance was a success.

Through the Felicia Montealegre Bernstein Fund, Leonard Bernstein once again helped people to speak out. He knew that oppression thrives in an environment of silence and he assisted countless human-rights advocates in making their voices heard.

Felicia Bernstein would probably have found great satisfaction in the progress of human rights in her native Chile. Amnesty's Chile section, which arose as the military waned, requested and received a typewriter from the fund in 1983. In 1985, the Fund assisted the Chileans in purchasing audio-visual equipment. By the fall of 1990, Amnesty's Chile section was able to present a splendid, internationally televised concert series entitled "An Embrace of Hope."

These concerts took place in the Santiago Sports Stadium, site of unspeakable torture in the 1970s. In the 1990s, a celebration of freedom and dignity radiated from that same stadium throughout Latin America and the world. Meanwhile, AI Chile has become the largest Amnesty International section in Latin America.

The woman honored by the Felicia Montealegre Bernstein Fund and the man who established it both understood, profoundly and personally, how precious freedom and dignity can be.

John G. Healey is Executive Director of Amnesty International, USA.
Leonard Bernstein & AmFAR

by Mathilde Krim, Ph.D.

I first met Lenny a very, very long time ago, under a blistering Israeli sun, when the world was young, liberty still new to that land, and its nation exulting in a just-completed concert hall in Jerusalem. Lenny crowned that day with his music and his passion for life and for his people. To us and to him, laughter and tears came easily that night, but the tears were mostly of joy.

Tears of another kind began to be shed too often in New York in the early eighties. I had become deeply disturbed by a new and mysterious epidemic that was mercilessly killing young men. With a few others, I was struggling to raise funds for the American Foundation for AIDS Research (AmFAR), so as to ensure that all that could be done to confront the killer would be done.

Lenny also wanted to understand and he wanted to help. In 1986, he and Harry Kraut brought us a beautiful idea. Before we awarded our last grants that year, they proposed to raise money quickly with a special concert in which all kinds of artists would perform pieces other than from their repertoires. And so it was that six short weeks later, on a cold December night, Aaron Neville and Linda Ronstadt sang “Ave Maria” together, Isaac Stern played “Fiddler on the Roof,” Bernadette Peters performed the First World War song, “My Buddy,” and Hildegard Behrens sang “Falling in Love Again.” The evening ended with a standing and swaying audience joining the performers in singing “Some­where” from WEST SIDE STORY. There wasn’t a dry eye in the house. It was another Lenny “miracle night,” unforgettable for its intensity, beauty and depth of emotion. It also provided manna from heaven to several unfunded but most deserving AIDS research projects.

Lenny came back to me again, in 1988, with a proposal for a major event at Carnegie Hall to be called “Music for Mathilde.” I was stunned that he, from Olympus, should think enough of me to suggest such a title. He had followed our work and had become informed about the growing calamity of AIDS and the meager government efforts to fight it, particularly in the development of treatments. In the course of a number of conversations with him, I succeeded not only in changing the name of this concert to simply “Serenade,” but also in explaining the possibility that AmFAR could organize practicing physicians — whom we would also train and support — into a nationwide network to test promising new drugs at the community level, so as to greatly increase the number of people with AIDS who would have access to new treatments. This was, in 1988, a daring new idea, but one of unquestionable humanitarian value. Lenny and Harry Kraut liked it.

“Serenade” took place in December of 1988 and played to a packed house at Carnegie Hall, including a group of nurses who worked in AIDS wards around the city. Once again, an extraordinary assortment of Lenny’s friends and admirers had been assembled, from James Levine to Plácido Domingo, from Meryl Streep to Steve Martin. It was one of the most heartwarming evenings we have ever had for AmFAR, true to the spirit of the man who inspired it. For me, it was certainly the apogee of my life.

Most importantly, “Serenade” raised the first million dollars for AmFAR’s community-based clinical trials program, which went on to create a nationwide network of 45 cooperating HIV/AIDS clinical research centers. One year later, the government joined in funding community-based clinical research. People with AIDS all over the United States are now greatly benefiting from the know­how, the experience and the research of hundreds of participated physicians. Hard work and new hope have begun to dry many tears of despair, thanks to the man who helped us get it all started, Leonard Bernstein.

Dr. Mathilde Krim is Founding Co-Chair and Chairman of the Board of the American Foundation for AIDS Research (AmFAR).
**In the News**

**A Jewish Legacy: Call for Papers**

In honor of Maestro Leonard Bernstein's 75th birthday, The American Society for Jewish Music and The Elaine Kaufman Cultural Center are sponsoring Leonard Bernstein: A Jewish Legacy scheduled to take place from October 17 through 19, 1993, at The Elaine Kaufman Cultural Center, 129 West 67th Street, in New York City.

The conference will include concert-lectures and premiere performances of Bernstein compositions and will explore three aspects of Maestro Bernstein's Jewish Legacy: his humanitarian and political activism; sacred and liturgical themes in his works; and the cultural outreach in Bernstein's life and his Jewish heritage.

The planning committee welcomes other ideas for the conference. Those interested in presenting papers exploring issues of Maestro Bernstein and the Jewish heritage he drew upon should send proposals no longer than one double-spaced typed page along with a biographical resume to Bernstein Conference, c/o The American Society for Jewish Music, 129 West 67th Street, New York, NY 10023, or fax Jack Gottlieb, President of the ASJM, at (212) 315-0643.

---

**1600 Pennsylvania Avenue**

The "lost" Bernstein musical play, 1600 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, has become a theatrical legend. With book and lyrics by Alan Jay Lerner, 1600 went through tortuous out-of-town tryouts and closed on Broadway in 1976 after seven performances. Now, in a version restored as closely as possible to its earliest form by musical-theater scholar Erik Haagensen, 1600 has been resurrected by the Indiana University Opera Theater. First presented in April for a one-night workshop, the production played this summer both in Indiana and to sold-out houses at Washington's Kennedy Center. The critics say...

- "Without question, this is a score worth hearing. It is at various times inventive, solemn, humorous, soulful and stirring." — J. Wynn Rousuck, THE BALTIMORE SUN
- "1600, now restored to its original greatness, is a stirring, deadly-serious reminder of our country's fragile greatness." — Octavio Roca, THE WASHINGTON TIMES
- "It's immediately clear why this musical was so eagerly anticipated." — Daniel Selznick, VARIETY

---

**Bernstein Scores to NY Philharmonic**

Leonard Bernstein's music library has been given to the New York Philharmonic, to be made available to scholars and musicians at Lincoln Center.

Included in Maestro Bernstein's library are scores to LA MER marked by Arturo Toscanini, a first edition of Beethoven's NINTH SYMPHONY, and numerous scores inscribed to Mr. Bernstein by composers, including Aaron Copland. (Mr. Bernstein's scores of his own compositions are not included in this collection.)

The donation of scores in the Bernstein collection to the New York Philharmonic was made by the board of the Springate Foundation, which includes Mr. Bernstein's three children. An official ceremony to mark the transfer of the collection took place on September 22, 1992.

---

**What I Ask of You, continued**

(continued from page 1)

are we behaving in this suicidal fashion?

We need desperately to cultivate new fantasies, ones that can be enacted to make this earth of ours a safe, sound and morally well-functioning world, instead of a disparate collection of societies limping along from crisis to crisis, and ultimately to self-destruction. We are told again and again that there is food enough on this planet to supply the human race twenty times over; that there is enough water to irrigate every desert. The world is rich, nature is bountiful, we have everything we need. Why is it, then, so hard to arrive at a minimal standard below which no human being is allowed to sink? Again, we need imagination, fantasy — new fantasies, with the passion and courage to carry them out. Only think: if all our imaginative resources currently employed in inventing new power games and bigger and better weaponry were reoriented toward disarmament, what miracles we could achieve, what new truths, what undiscovered realms of beauty!
New Kultur Releases

Two new Bernstein videos, TROUBLE IN TAHTI and A CELEBRATION IN VIENNA, have been released in September by Kultur Video. TROUBLE IN TAHTI, written by Bernstein in 1951, is a short opera in which Bernstein’s signature lyricism is applied to witty social satire. This historic performance, directed by Bill Hayes, is conducted by Bernstein himself and features Nancy Williams, Julian Patrick, Antonia Butler, Michael Clark and Mark Brown, performing on an animated set.

A CELEBRATION IN VIENNA is a special program written, narrated, performed and conducted by Leonard Bernstein in honor of the 200th anniversary of Ludwig van Beethoven’s birth. In it, the Maestro discusses and performs excerpts from some of Beethoven’s greatest works, including the PIANO CONCERTO NO. 1 IN C MAJOR, “ODE TO JOY” from SYMPHONY NO. 9, as well as scenes from the rehearsal and performance of FIDELIO at the Vienna State Opera. Mr. Bernstein is joined by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra and the Vienna State Opera Chorus, along with the outstanding talents of Plácido Domingo, Gwyneth Jones and Shirley Verrett.

Music Publishing Events

Boosey & Hawkes announces the publication of three works by Leonard Bernstein: ARIAS & BARCAROLLES, DANCE SUITE and SYMPHONY NO. 1, “JEREMIAH”. The first two have never appeared in print, while the latter is now available in a definitive version edited by Charlie Harmon.

ARIAS & BARCAROLLES, in its original version for mezzo-soprano, baritone and piano duet, has been published as an easy-to-read, full-sized vocal score. This is welcome news to performers of the piece who, until now, have had to sing and play from copies of the nearly illegible autograph manuscript.

SYMPHONY NO. 1, “JEREMIAH,” which was not originally published by Boosey & Hawkes, has been out of print for more than forty years. This new edition incorporates corrections and changes reflecting Bernstein’s definitive view of the work, and is published as a full-sized score.

Finally, DANCE SUITE, the five-movement work for brass and quintet written by Bernstein for American Ballet Theatre’s 50th Anniversary Gala in January 1990, appears as a score with parts. Each movement is dedicated to an important figure in ABT’s history: “Antony,” “Agnes,” “Misha,” “Mr. B.,” and “Jerry.”

Young People’s Concerts Republished

In October 1992, Anchor Books reintroduce Leonard Bernstein’s classic YOUNG PEOPLE’S CONCERTS with the New York Philharmonic.

Begun in January 1958, these YOUNG PEOPLE’S CONCERTS were so acclaimed that Bernstein gathered in 1962, and then revised and expanded in 1970, ten of his scripts into one book. The new Anchor Books edition of the YOUNG PEOPLE’S CONCERTS brings back into print the previously published scripts and introduces several that have never before been transcribed. Replete with musical examples, illustrated and edited with the assistance of longtime Bernstein colleagues, LEONARD BERNSTEIN’S YOUNG PEOPLE’S CONCERTS will delight both young people and adults.

A Reflection About Lenny, continued

(continued from page 3)

his intolerance of hypocrisy in high places. He was never afraid to stand up for what he thought and felt, even when this entailed personal risk. He pointedly refused a White House medal for the arts, for example, during the recent controversy over the National Endowment for the Arts and the “People With AIDS” exhibit.

Along with this intolerance, however, came his terrific wit. His sense of humor always made the truth a cause for celebration, not simply assent. When Lenny spoke, people listened. His voice — the voice of a just man working for just causes — will never be silenced.

The Very Rev. James Parks Morton is Dean of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine.
## Calendar of Events

*Partial Listing. Please note that all dates and programs are subject to change.*

### October

1. **Milwaukee:** THREE MEDITATIONS FROM MASS, SYMPHONIC SUITE FROM ON THE WATERFRONT; Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra; Zenek Macal, conductor; Uihlein Hall.
2. **Kansas City, MO:** SERENADE; The Kansas City Symphony; Stephanie Chase, violin; William McGlaughlin, conductor; The Lyric Theatre.
3. **Reggio Emilia, Italy:** CANDIDE; Orchestre de Reggio Emilia; Giuseppe Grazioli, conductor.
4. **Brussels:** HAIL, CANDIDE OVERTURE; Orchestre Philharmonique de Bruxelles; Jacques Delecote, conductor; Abd El Kader Hall.
5. **San Jose, CA:** THREE DANCE VARIATIONS FROM FANCY FREE; San Jose Symphony Orchestra; Leonid Grin, conductor; Center for the Performing Arts.

### November

1. **Kansas City, MO:** SERENADE; The Kansas City Symphony; Stephanie Chase, violin; William McGlaughlin, conductor; The Lyric Theatre.
2. **Reggio Emilia, Italy:** CANDIDE; Orchestre de Reggio Emilia; Giuseppe Grazioli, conductor.
3. **Green Bay, WI:** SYMPHONIC SUITE FROM MASS FOR VIOLONCELLO AND ORCHESTRA; Orchestre Philharmonique de Strasbourg; Jacques Delecote, conductor; Philippe Jovet, flute; Palais des Beaux-Arts.
4. **San Jose, CA:** THREE DANCE VARIATIONS FROM FANCY FREE; San Jose Symphony Orchestra; Leonid Grin, conductor; Center for the Performing Arts.

### December

1. **Milwaukee:** THREE MEDITATIONS FROM MASS, SYMPHONIC SUITE FROM ON THE WATERFRONT; Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra; Zenek Macal, conductor; Uihlein Hall.
2. **Reggio Emilia, Italy:** CANDIDE; Orchestre de Reggio Emilia; Giuseppe Grazioli, conductor.
3. **Brussels:** HAIL, CANDIDE OVERTURE; Orchestre Philharmonique de Bruxelles; Jacques Delecote, conductor; Abd El Kader Hall.

---

### Notes to Readers

*Prelude, Fugue & Riffs will be sent free of charge upon request. Please send all correspondence to: Craig Urquhart

Prelude, Fugue & Riffs
25 Central Park West, Suite 1Y
New York, NY 10023
Fax: (212) 315-0643*

Tax-deductible donations to The Bernstein Education Through the Arts (BETA) Fund, Inc. may be sent in care of the same address.

We appreciate notice of any performances or events featuring the music of Leonard Bernstein or honoring his creative life and shall do our best to include such information in forthcoming Calendars.

---