

LEONARD BERNSTEIN'S YOUNG PEOPLE'S CONCERTS:
A CRITICAL OVERVIEW

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ABSTRACT

During his lifetime, Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990) led a varied musical career as conductor, composer, performer and author. He was also a well-known television personality - it was largely through his appearances in this mass medium that he became the leading 20th-century icon of American music culture.

The New York Philharmonic Young People's Concerts were perhaps the most successful of Bernstein's television programs, running for 15 seasons on CBS from 1958-1972. In this critically-acclaimed series, Bernstein addressed the nation on a multitude of musical issues, and conducted the New York Philharmonic in performances of various works. Through his personal charisma and natural gifts for teaching and communication, he succeeded in attracting many viewers from the mass television audience, and, as a result, sparked a renewed, large-scale interest in the subject of Classical music.

This thesis is a critical study of Leonard Bernstein's televised Young People's Concerts from several different perspectives. Chapter One provides the necessary historical background material to the Young People's Concerts and discusses their production, format and general

content. Chapter Two assesses the popular and professional reactions to the concerts, including selected commentary from various critics. Bernstein's predecessors in the field of music appreciation and his own approach as an educator are highlighted in Chapter Three, followed by a fourth chapter exploring his positions on certain matters of music philosophy and aesthetics, as suggested in the series. In closing, the findings of the thesis are summarized. Ultimately, it is hoped that the reader will gain some impressions and specific knowledge of Bernstein's Young People's Concerts along with insights into their role in and impact on 20th-century music culture.

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

There is little doubt that Leonard Bernstein (1918-1990) will be remembered as one of the preeminent figures in American music culture of the 20th century. First rising to national prominence in 1943 as a 25-year-old conductor, this pervasive musician achieved early success with his musicals On the Town and West Side Story and went on to enjoy a varied career as conductor, composer, pianist, television personality and author. After being appointed music director of the New York Philharmonic in 1958, he became more and more the glamorous figure on the New York music scene, inspiring a large and loyal public following. Subsequently, as a result of the wide-scale public identification with his work, he developed the reputation of a Classical music popularizer, an image that was exceedingly difficult for him to shake in later years when he attempted to gain acceptance and recognition as a scholar (The Harvard Lectures) and composer of serious art music.

In regard to Bernstein's activities throughout the 1950s and 1960s, it becomes apparent that a large part of his popularizer reputation was built upon his television

appearances on such network programs as Omnibus, New York Philharmonic Young People's Concerts and Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic. In particular, the televised Young People's Concerts series was of paramount importance in this respect, as its lengthy fifteen-season run and wide-ranging appeal helped to establish Bernstein as a household name to countless adults and children. In every way, the Young People's Concerts embodied Bernstein's personal philosophy toward music during this era,¹ including a foremost desire to break down the pre-existing cultural barriers between mainstream Americans and the subject of Classical music.

The Young People's Concerts: Resources

To this writer's knowledge, no individual study has ever been undertaken regarding Bernstein's Young People's Concerts, for several possible reasons. First of all, music and broadcasting is a relatively new field to be explored on a scholarly level. As a result, much of the information that was needed for this type of project had to be gathered first hand from scattered newspaper reviews and magazine articles. Specialized resources such as the CBS Producer's

¹From this point onward, references to "Young People's Concerts" should be understood as synonymous to the television series entitled New York Philharmonic Young People's Concerts.

Handbook (New York Philharmonic Young People's Concerts with Leonard Bernstein: Tenth Season) and the Museum of Broadcasting's booklet, Leonard Bernstein: The Television Work, were also vital for filling in certain missing details that could not have been found elsewhere.

In addition, there was an added difficulty of viewing the Young People's Concerts. Obviously, Bernstein's programs are no longer seen on television, although at least one was rebroadcast as recently as December, 1978.² For a time, beginning in 1965, the programs were made available on 16mm film for use in schools, usually free of cost, by the Bell Telephone System.³ However, as many years have passed since the programs were distributed in this manner, it is unlikely that one would find the 16mm films still being used in the school systems today.

Though they are rare, one may find some remaining 16mm film copies of the Young People's Concerts in major metropolitan libraries with audio-visual departments. Curiously, the black and white copies from the earlier years of the series are often in better viewing condition than

²Jack Hiemenz, "Bernstein on Television: Pros and Cons," High Fidelity and Musical America (April 1980): MA 15.

³"Young People's Concerts on Film: Offered for Use in the Schools," Music Educators Journal 51 (February/March 1965): 145.

some of the later colour films, which are frequently subject to a severe reddening effect due to the decomposition of chemicals used in the film-making process.⁴ In fact, many of the later films have deteriorated to a point where they are completely unwatchable because of this problem.

The best place for now viewing the Young People's Concerts is at The Museum of Broadcasting in New York City, which maintains a complete set of the programs on videotape. This location is likely the only one where a complete set remains, except for the original copies of the programs which have been safely locked away in a Manhattan vault.⁵ Once this initial hurdle of viewing the tapes is surmounted, the Young People's Concerts quickly reveal themselves to be a fascinating record of musical events of 30 years past.

The Young People's Concerts: Historical Background

The televised Young People's Concerts under Leonard Bernstein appeared on the CBS network from 1958-1972. Designed to be a series of specials with Bernstein leading the Philharmonic and addressing young listeners on various

⁴Information provided by Toronto Reference Library, audio-visual department.

⁵Roger Englander, "No Balloons or Tap Dancers: A Look at the Young People's Concerts," in Leonard Bernstein: The Television Work (New York: Museum of Broadcasting, 1985), 34.

musical topics, the concerts were originally broadcast live from Carnegie Hall on selected Saturdays throughout the fall, winter and spring months. For each program, interestingly enough, two identical concerts were presented for two sets of paying audiences. An early 12:00 noon concert served as a full dress-rehearsal for CBS and Philharmonic personnel to correct any last minute problems, while a later 2:30 p.m. concert was the actual one used in the television broadcast.

Beginning in the third season, the Young People's Concerts ceased to be broadcast live, and became prerecorded on videotape. As a result, the programs were often aired months after the dates of the original concerts.⁶ As well, in 1962, the Young People's Concerts underwent a change in their taping location, when the New York Philharmonic moved from Carnegie Hall to Philharmonic Hall (now Avery Fisher Hall) in the Lincoln Center.

Generally, four programs were produced for each television season of the Young People's Concerts. One exception to this rule, however, occurred in the very first year of the series (1957/58), when arrangements could not be made to televise the final concert. Due to public demand, this concert, entitled "What Makes Music Symphonic?," was

⁶For individual broadcast dates see Appendix.

re-created the following December, and broadcast as the first program of the new television season.⁷

Other exceptions to the established norm of four concerts per season occurred during the latter part of the series. As the list in the Appendix reveals, there were only three concerts by Bernstein in 1968/69, three in 1969/70, two in 1970/71, and two in 1971/72. In this case, the dwindling number of concerts seems to have been directly related to the 1969 departure of Bernstein as music director of the Philharmonic. Although Bernstein continued to be associated with the orchestra as conductor laureate, it is likely that he no longer wanted or was able to devote the same amount of time to the Young People's Concerts. As a result, other (guest) hosts were frequently featured on separate televised Young People's Concerts during these years, including Aaron Copland, Dean Dixon, Yehudi Menuhin and Peter Ustinov. However, in viewing the video tapes of these substitute hosts, it becomes apparent that none were able to deliver the same combined package of popular charisma, communicative power, knowledge and inspiration that Bernstein had previously brought to the series.

In 1972/73, the series was finally handed over on a

⁷"Young People's Concerts," New York Philharmonic Young People's Concerts with Leonard Bernstein: Tenth Season (New York: CBS Television Network Press, 1967), 2.

permanent basis to Michael Tilson Thomas. Under Thomas's direction, selected Young People's Concerts continued to be broadcast for three more years under the broader auspices of CBS's Festival of Lively Arts for Young People. As the tapes of his programs reveal, Thomas was gifted in similar ways to Bernstein, in that he provided a youthful, exuberant approach to music appreciation and exhibited a natural ease in front of the cameras. Nevertheless, audience interest declined upon his takeover as musical director of the series.⁹ Most likely this was not Thomas's fault, however, but due to the fact that maestro Bernstein was a hard act to follow.

In looking back over the years before Bernstein's involvement, it is apparent that the Young People's Concerts were, in fact, a long established tradition with the New York Philharmonic. For 33 years the orchestra had presented the Young People's Concerts as part of their regular seasonal offerings, beginning with a first concert led by composer-conductor Ernest Schelling on 26 January 1924. Schelling, nicknamed "Uncle Ernest" by his followers, had spent the last seventeen years of his life presiding over the series in an effort to interest young people of a teen

⁹Howard Shanet, Philharmonic: A History of New York's Orchestra (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1975), 465.

and pre-teen age in symphonic music.⁹

Initially, Schelling gave two series of 5 or 6 concerts at Aeolian Hall in New York, although the exact number of concerts fluctuated from year to year. He also offered some additional Young People's Concerts at various other locations around New York City. Eventually, for economic reasons, his main series of Young People's Concerts were moved to the larger Carnegie Hall in 1927.¹⁰

After Schelling died, the Young People's Concerts passed through the directorship of several regular conductors with the Philharmonic, including Rudolph Ganz (1940-47), Igor Buketoff (1950-52) and Wilfred Pelletier (1953-57). In the years between 1947-1950 the series had no permanent music director, suggesting perhaps that it had become a lower priority for the Philharmonic. Instead, guest conductors Leon Barzin, Walter Hendl, Leopold Stokowski, Bruno Walter, Dimitri Mitropoulos and Dean Dixon shared the responsibilities. Franco Autori, also a guest conductor during this period, continued to be featured for some time afterwards into the Buketoff and Pelletier eras.¹¹

⁹Olin Downes, "For Young People: Philharmonic Special Series Will Have Thirtieth Anniversary Next Saturday," New York Times, 17 January 1954, section II, 7.

¹⁰Shanet, 240-243, 460; also Downes, 7.

¹¹Shanet, 497-610.

Even after Bernstein was appointed music director of the Young People's Concerts in 1957/58, the tradition of guest conductors for the series was still somewhat in evidence. Thomas Schippers, for instance, presented two of his own, separate Young People's Concerts on 23 November 1957 and 1 November 1958. Likewise, for the following season, Howard Shanet presented another non-televised Young People's Concert on 21 November 1959.¹² After Shanet's concert, however, Bernstein became the sole leader of the series until the late 1960s.

Although the concerts had passed through many different hands up until 1957, it seems that their format and general tone had remained basically the same over the years. Howard Shanet, himself a guest conductor for a Young People's Concert, remarked that during the Pelletier era, the concerts were "not conspicuously different from those that Ernest Schelling had presented three decades earlier."¹³ Pelletier, like Schelling, talked briefly and informally to his young audience, conducted the Philharmonic

¹²For references to the Schippers and Shanet concerts see Edward Downes, "Philharmonic Young People's Concert At Carnegie Hall Is a Howling Success," New York Times, 24 November 1957, 84; Edward Downes, "Philharmonic Gives Youth Concert Bow," New York Times, 2 November 1958, 80; Eric Salzman, "Music For Young at Carnegie Hall," New York Times, 22 November 1959, 85.

¹³Shanet, 321.

in various works drawn from the Classical symphonic repertoire and used slide presentations to further illustrate certain points. In addition, Pelletier's concerts also featured some stage performances of ballet and opera, and involved the audience in folk-song singing. Each of the concerts was usually assigned a central theme which was explained in simple program notes handed to the children.¹⁴

Unfortunately, it seems that with the adherence to more traditional methods of presentation, a certain degree of stagnation began to set into the Young People's Concerts. The concerts were not inspiring the children of the mid-1950s to the same extent as they had in earlier years and were desperately in need of a more updated, refreshed approach and a leader more in tune with contemporary youth. To accomplish this kind of series overhaul, the Philharmonic looked to the talents of the youthful, popular and versatile Leonard Bernstein, who had recently worked with the orchestra as a guest conductor during the 1956/57 season.

At about the same time, the Philharmonic administration was also concerned with the need to expand all of its youth programs in general. The feeling was that the various youth-oriented activities of the orchestra,

¹⁴One upcoming theme for the Pelletier concerts, for example, was "the story of the symphony." Downes, 7.

including the Public School Concerts, Young People's Concerts and Student Ticket Program, were simply not reaching enough children to be effective. In 1958, for example, a New York Times article by Howard Taubman reported that for the previous year, the Public School Concerts had only been able to reach a total of 1.2% of the high school students in the city.¹⁵ Likewise, the same article noted how the Philharmonic's Student Ticket Plan was also failing to reach enough students because of the fact that not enough reduced-rate tickets were being made available, and because the concerts often fell on nights not convenient for most students to attend.

Even the Young People's Concerts, as Taubman pointed out, were somewhat limited in their past concert-only format, as they had only been able to serve 3,300 children at a time in Carnegie Hall, most of who came from middle and high income families. In fact, by its thirtieth year, the concerts had been attended by a total of only 500,000 subscribers.¹⁶ Since this was a rather small figure compared to the large potential audiences available through modern mass media such as radio and television, it would

¹⁵Howard Taubman, "For the Young: Philharmonic Re-examines Approach To Concerts For School Children," New York Times, 2 February 1958, section II, 9.

¹⁶Downes, 7.

seem that the Philharmonic was indeed long overdue in expanding and improving its contemporary youth programs.

With the desire for increased expansion in their youth programs, then, it is not surprising that the Philharmonic supported the concept of taking their Young People's Concerts to network television. And, as will be documented in Chapter Two, the televised concerts were extremely successful in this regard, attracting a North American audience of millions. Moreover, along with this substantially expanded audience in North America, the concerts also had an international impact, reaching television viewers in such countries as Italy, Germany, Belgium, Austria, Norway, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Portugal, Argentina, Japan, the Philippines, Australia and New Zealand.¹⁷ In this sense, the audience for the televised Young People's Concerts was ultimately expanded far beyond original expectations.

Leonard Bernstein's Involvement

When Leonard Bernstein became involved with the Young People's Concerts, he was a 39-year-old conductor with an impressive list of credentials. A graduate of the Boston

¹⁷"The Young People's Concerts," in New York Philharmonic Young People's Concerts with Leonard Bernstein: Tenth Season, 3.

Latin School (1936) and Harvard University (1939), Bernstein had received additional training at the Curtis Institute of Music and at the Berkshire Music Center, where, in the latter case, he had studied conducting under Serge Koussevitzky. Several years later in 1943, he rocketed to fame during his much-publicized debut concert with New York Philharmonic. It has been described in many sources how Bernstein, a dashing, young assistant conductor, served as a last-minute replacement for the ailing Bruno Walter.¹⁸

During the decade of the 50s, Bernstein's renown spread in several different directions. Already the successful composer of the ballet Fancy Free and musical On the Town, Bernstein continued his work on other composition projects including Wonderful Town, Candide, On the Waterfront and West Side Story. From 1951-1956 he was head of the Conducting Department at the Berkshire Music Center and was also a Professor of Music at Brandeis University, where he taught a graduate composition class for several years.¹⁹ During the 1956/57 season, he returned to the New York Philharmonic as guest conductor.

¹⁸See, for example, John Ardoin, "Leonard Bernstein at Sixty," High Fidelity 28 (August 1978): 53-54 and Leonard Bernstein, "Aaron Copland: An Intimate Sketch," High Fidelity and Musical America 20 (November 1970): 55.

¹⁹John P. Reidy and Norman Richards, Leonard Bernstein (Chicago: Children's Press, 1967), 67.

When considering all of Bernstein's activities during the 1950s, however, one item in particular stands out as being a direct precursor to The Young People's Concerts: Bernstein's work on the television program Omnibus. Bernstein wrote and narrated a number of scripts for this critically-acclaimed magazine-style cultural program which was financed by the Ford Foundation and hosted by Alistair Cooke. Originally broadcast on CBS commencing in 1953, Omnibus was later picked up by ABC (1956-57).²⁰

Like his last-minute substitution for Bruno Walter in 1943, Bernstein's initial appearance on Omnibus seemed predestined. The producers of the series had been working with another musician on a segment involving Beethoven's sketchbooks but were not achieving the desired results. One of the producers then suggested contacting Bernstein, with whom he had previously worked for On the Town.²¹ The resulting 45-minute script that Bernstein wrote and narrated for the program ("Beethoven's Fifth Symphony" [1954]) became

²⁰Frederic A. Leigh, "Educational and Cultural Programming," in IV Genres, ed. Brian Rose (New York: Greenwood Press, 1985), 369. There is also some indication that at least one Omnibus program with Bernstein appeared on a third network - NBC - on 23 March 1958, according to Leonard Bernstein: The Television Work (New York: Museum of Broadcasting, 1985), 52.

²¹Joan Peyser, Bernstein: A Biography (New York: William Morrow, 1987), 234.

one of the best segments of Omnibus.²²

Upon watching a tape of Bernstein's first television appearance on Omnibus,²³ one notices immediately how well-suited Bernstein is for that medium. Cutting a dashing figure and speaking in low, earthy tones, he presents his subject material in a clear, interesting fashion and with ever-present enthusiasm. Shunning traditional literary-narrative music-appreciation tactics, he chooses instead to approach the music in a more technical fashion, enlightening viewers on the inner workings of notes and orchestration. Notable too is the manner in which he exploits the visual aspect of the medium to his full advantage. When the opening phrases of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony are performed and analyzed, for example, he has the members of NBC Symphony of the Air play their instruments while standing on a giant section of the score painted on the studio floor.²⁴ In this way, he ingeniously devised a means by which to demonstrate more clearly the connection between the notes,

²²Some of the material for this first Omnibus program had been presented six years earlier for a small group of musicians at Tanglewood. Peter Gradenwitz, Leonard Bernstein: The Infinite Variety of a Musician (Leamington Spa: Berg Publishers, 1987), 75.

²³Leonard Bernstein, "Beethoven's Fifth Symphony" on Omnibus (CBS Television, 1954), videocassette.

²⁴Photographs of this giant score can be found in the photo plate section of Leonard Bernstein's book The Joy of Music (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1959).

orchestration and instrumentalists.

The successful reaction to Bernstein's first appearance on Omnibus surprised television executives, who were uncertain if a Classical music lecture would be able to sustain the attention of a growing mass television audience.²⁵ But, as the response to this and subsequent Omnibus programs demonstrated, audiences were definitely stimulated by Bernstein's presence. With respect to another Omnibus segment entitled "The Art of Conducting," for instance, Bernstein remarked that

[w]e had letters from plumbers, sociologists, little children and old men. Apparently, hundreds of people identified themselves with the conductor, standing in front of their screens with rulers and pencils in their hands and giving the beat and tempo. Even musicians liked it.²⁶

Eventually, Bernstein wrote and narrated a total of seven scripts for Omnibus which were later adapted and published in The Joy of Music. These were, in chronological order: "Beethoven's Fifth Symphony" (1954), "The World of Jazz" (1955), "The Art of Conducting" (1955), "The American Musical Comedy" (1956), "Introduction to Modern Music" (1957), "The Music of Johann Sebastian Bach" (1957) and "What Makes Opera Grand?" (1958). The accessible and analytical style of these scripts mark much of Bernstein's

²⁵"Talent Show," Time, 2 January 1966, 32.

²⁶"Talent Show," 32.

later approach for the Young People's Concerts.

In 1957, Leonard Bernstein was appointed co-director of the Philharmonic along with Dmitri Mitropoulos. Besides sharing conducting responsibilities for the regular subscription series, Bernstein was also assigned full directorship of the Young People's Concerts. This seemed particularly to impress New York Times critic Howard Taubman, who praised Bernstein for taking on the important task of youth concerts rather than "delegating [them] entirely to a guest or assistant conductor."²⁷

In trying to determine the person(s) most responsible for getting the Young People's Concerts on the air during this first year, all signs point to Bernstein himself. Bernstein, first of all, would have had a strongly vested interest in the concept, recognizing how the televised concerts would provide an excellent public forum for his talents, and secondly, he was probably the most capable figure in seeing this idea realized, since he had made prior connections to the networks through Omnibus. In fact, according to Bernstein's own account, he approached CBS chairman William S. Paley with the proposal and Paley

²⁷Taubman, 9.

agreed to it in just 15 minutes.²⁸ A deal was struck and the first season of televised Young People's Concerts went ahead as scheduled.

In the following year, Bernstein was assigned the full directorship of the New York Philharmonic, becoming the first American-born, American-trained conductor to lead a major orchestra in the United States. Significantly, with his increased prestige and responsibilities, he did not discontinue his work on the Young People's Concerts, but continued to devote much time and effort to the series. At the same time, he also initiated another television series, Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic (1958-62). This studio-produced program was a second lecture/concert series, this time intended for adults, which also highlighted performances from recent Philharmonic tours of Japan, Moscow, Berlin, and Venice.²⁹ Several scripts from this series were later incorporated into Bernstein's second book, The Infinite Variety of Music (1966).

Also in the fall of 1958, Bernstein commenced with his Thursday night Preview Concerts, which were open-dress-

²⁸Joan Peyser, 310. Roger Englander also confirms that Bernstein approached Paley with the idea in "No Balloons or Tap Dancers: A Look at the Young People's Concerts," 29.

²⁹Robert Saudek, "A Personal Note," Leonard Bernstein: The Television Work (New York: Museum of Broadcasting, 1985), 13.

rehearsals of the concert in the regular subscription series. Besides giving the orchestra an extra night of practice before facing the critics, Bernstein used these concerts as an opportunity to speak to the public about various musical issues. Although some members of the audience did not care for his sometimes very informal chats and entertaining stage manner, the concerts were actually very well attended with 99% of the seats being sold in the first year.³⁰ Like his television work on Omnibus and Young People's Concerts, the Preview Concerts seemed to spring from the same basic impulse - Bernstein's desire to break down the traditionally "elitist" barriers that were barring the American public from achieving a true appreciation or enjoyment of Classical music.

But, of all of Bernstein's pedagogically-oriented activities during his years with the Philharmonic, it would seem that he made his most lasting and significant contribution through the Young People's Concerts. While his other television series and the preview concerts were discontinued after a few years, the Young People's Concerts continued to flourish under Bernstein, for a total of 15

³⁰"The Hard Sell," Newsweek 13 October 1958, 77; and Harold C. Schonberg, "What Bernstein is doing to The Philharmonic," Harper's 218 (May 1959): 43-46. Schonberg notes Bernstein's tendency towards exhibitionism at the Preview Concerts with the line "he talks, plays the piano, occasionally sings, does some dancing."

seasons.

In retrospect, perhaps one of the overall reasons why the Young People's Concerts were able to achieve such long-lasting success was because they held a great deal of personal importance to Bernstein himself. This was most aptly demonstrated by the fact that he continued to be involved with the concerts throughout his sabbatical year with the orchestra (1964/65), and even after he had officially retired as music director of the Philharmonic in 1969. Later on, when reminiscing about his past, he also expressed his personal satisfaction with his work on the Young People's Concerts, saying "I am prouder of these fifty-odd shows than of almost anything else I have done in the way of teaching."²¹

Production of the Young People's Concerts

With regard to the overall development of the Young People's Concerts, it is indisputable that Bernstein was the primary force, since all of the scripts were originally conceived, written and narrated by him. To ensure quality and continuity from program to program, however, a specific team of editors also worked closely with Bernstein in script preparation sessions, which began months in advance of the

²¹Peyser, 235.

taping dates. This team included Mary Rodgers, an author of children's books, who checked for clarity and simplicity in Bernstein's choice of words; John Corigliano Jr., who would offer musicological arguments; Ann Blumenthal, who kept track of the timing; Jack Gottlieb, who catalogued music examples for the orchestra's cue sheet; and Candy Finkler, who recorded all word changes in the scripts.³² From all accounts, Bernstein took these conferences very seriously and continued to make revisions until the scripts were exactly to his liking.

Following the script-writing stage, Bernstein expressed a similar concern with the production aspects of his Young People's Concerts. In a 1958 interview, for example, he remarked

[y]ou know, I've been told that doing four children's concerts is a pipe. But putting them on TV means I have to do four TV shows. The concerts originate from the stage at Carnegie Hall. I have to keep in mind that there are 3000 children in the auditorium and perhaps 3,000,000 watching at home. Do I play to the auditorium or to the cameras? And you know how difficult it is to televise an orchestra. What do you do after the first five minutes of showing the violin bows marching in unison?³³

³²Englander, 32. Jack Gottlieb was Bernstein's personal assistant at the time, and later edited Leonard Bernstein: A Complete Catalogue of his Works: Celebrating his 60th Birthday, August 25, 1978 (New York: Amberson Enterprises, 1978).

³³Leonard Bernstein, quoted in Bob Stahl, "Musician With a Cause," TV Guide, 18 January 1958, 19.

An answer, at least in part, to some of Bernstein's concerns regarding the visual side of the program appear to have been provided by Roger Englander, producer-director of the Young People's Concerts. Englander, well-experienced in the television medium, had previously worked on a number of musical and non-musical programs, including the 1947 production of Menotti's The Medium and The Telephone. Later, he became stage director and producer for the New York City Opera (1959-63) and director of Thomas Scherman's "Little Orchestra Society."³⁴ In 1969, he went on to produce the historic Vladimir Horowitz recital concert, and with his "quiet, disciplined, musically responsive" camera techniques was able to please Horowitz despite the pianist's long-standing bias against televised concerts.³⁵ Along with his teaching activities at various colleges and universities, he continued to direct and produce the Young

³⁴Biographical information from "Roger Englander: An Adroit Way With the Camera," in New York Philharmonic Young People's Concerts with Leonard Bernstein: Tenth Season, 1-3. Thomas Scherman's "Little Orchestra Society" was another, more simplified and purely entertaining series of live children's concerts founded in 1949. Like the Philharmonic's series of Young People's Concerts, they have continued up until the present day.

³⁵Brian Rose, Television and the Performing Arts (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986), 105. Rose mentions that, in order to accommodate Horowitz's desire to be taped at Carnegie Hall, the camera crew was required to wear velvet slippers and sprinkle talcum powder between the floor boards of the stage.

People's Concerts after Bernstein's departure, for the series' entire 18-year run.

In regard to his work on the Young People's Concerts, Englander was directly responsible for the planning and framing of different camera shots. With his 6-8 cameras he employed a variety of techniques to capture Bernstein, the orchestra and the audience on film, including "wide views, close-ups, tracking shots, rapid-fire montages, and slow, languorous dissolves."³⁶ More important, however, was the manner in which he executed the various shots to correspond exactly to the musical score.³⁷ As a result, his end-product was far from being a random compilation of shots, but rather an artistically conceived visual creation which mirrored the mood and formal structure of each musical work.³⁸

Beyond the work of Roger Englander, it is important to note in passing that numerous other people were involved in the production process of the televised Young People's

³⁶Englander, 32. Special inserts were also occasionally coordinated on camera during Bernstein's talks to display words, titles of works, paintings and drawings.

³⁷Much of this was due to the fact that Englander was one of the first American television directors able to read a musical score. Rose, Television and the Performing Arts, 102.

³⁸For some examples of Englander's technique, see Chapter Two, 72-75.

Concerts. These chiefly included the 106 Philharmonic musicians, and the 75 production and technical support personnel who were employed as assistant directors, assistant producers, camera operators, and audio and lighting engineers. With the addition of the New York Philharmonic staff and Bernstein's personal assistants, the number of personnel needed for each broadcast rose to the astounding total of 220.³⁹ Under the artful direction of Englander and Bernstein, this large crew of skilled personnel were able to achieve a new high level of quality in adapting the concert-style programs to television.

In comparison, many other concert-style television programs were not nearly as successfully conceived as the Young People's Concerts. Lacking musically sensitive directors, these other concerts were often visually bland, with little variety in visuals, or, in the other extreme, overly distracting visually, with too many "discrepancies between what one saw and heard."⁴⁰ There were also pitfalls

³⁹Englander's comments would suggest that the production process of the "live" Young People's Concerts was considerably more complex than other contemporary programs. The 6-8 cameras alone were twice the number used in regular studio broadcasts. Roger Englander, "Behind the Scenes at a Young People's Concert Broadcast," in New York Philharmonic Young People's Concerts with Leonard Bernstein: Tenth Season, 2.

⁴⁰Nicholas E. Tawa. Art Music in the American Society. (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1987), 232-233. Such criticisms could apply, for example, to the early

in their tendency to project an "elitist" image of Classical music. This was the major criticism that Howard Taubman was applying to "Festival of Music" (a program which appeared on prime-time NBC television in 1956), for example, when he explained how its "pedestal" approach to Classical music was a deterrent to many viewers.⁴¹

As a result of such problems as visual boredom and viewer alienation, ratings for Classical music concerts often plummeted. In response, network heads would become increasingly suspicious of Classical music and schedule it into weaker time slots. This, in turn, would induce even lower ratings and often lead to cancellations.⁴²

A case in point can be found in the demise of two regularly scheduled concert-style programs on commercial television, The Bell Telephone Hour and The Voice of Firestone. Both of these programs had been previously well-established staples on the radio airwaves, featuring performances by such artists as Fritz Kreisler, Rose Bampton, Ezio Pinza, José Iturbi, Lily Pons, Jascha Heifetz

televised concerts of the Boston Symphony or Philadelphia Orchestra.

⁴¹Howard Taubman, "Worth Doing: But Music on TV Needs A Mature Approach," New York Times, 5 February 1956, section II, 9.

⁴²Tawa, 230-231.

and Lauritz Melchior.⁴³ However, when The Voice of Firestone was adapted to television, its stiff, formal and visually dead quality resulted in it being dropped by NBC in 1954. Although the series was later given a second chance by ABC, low ratings once again forced it off the air a second time in 1959, despite the fact that it had a commercial sponsor willing to cover all production costs.⁴⁴ The lighter-toned The Bell Telephone Hour, with its mix of Classical, popular and jazz performers, was initially more successful in sustaining a television audience. However, after it increased the serious Classical content of its programs and covered (in a documentary fashion) such topics as the opening of Barber's Anthony and Cleopatra at the Metropolitan Opera or the Spoleto Festival, it too, met cancellation by the NBC network in 1968.⁴⁵

Unquestionably, the market-oriented treatment of Classical music programs was grossly unfair to the minority audiences of both of these programs. Undeniable, however,

⁴³Thomas A. DeLong, "Reaching Out: The Classical Touch of Radio," in The Museum of Broadcasting's Classical Music Collection (New York: Museum of Broadcasting, 1987), 8.

⁴⁴The reasoning was that low ratings for Voice of Firestone would pull down ratings for the other programs to precede or follow it. Jack Gould, "Victim of Ratings: 'Voice of Firestone Succumbs to Harsh Economics of Television Industry,'" New York Times, 19 April 1959, section II, 11.

⁴⁵Rose, 107.

was the fact that commercial television programming in the late 1950s was shifting more and more toward the centralized tastes of mainstream America. Bernstein's long-term success on the Young People's Concerts, therefore, became a landmark victory for the continued survival of Classical music on commercial television during this era, as it demonstrated that Classical music could still be made accessible to a mass-television audience if it were presented with the right approach.

Format of the Young People's Concerts

For most of the Young People's Concerts, Bernstein's mode of presentation usually followed a fairly standard pattern. A typical concert would begin, for example, with Bernstein conducting the orchestra in a movement or brief excerpt from a Classical work and then introducing the audience to some key issues about the topic at hand. These issues would be expanded into a lengthier talk and illustrated through the use of various musical examples performed by the orchestra or by Bernstein himself at the piano keyboard. Sometimes full movements or complete works would be featured. For the program finale, Bernstein would then frequently close with a rousing work such as his own Overture to Candide, ("Overtures and Preludes" [1961]). This concluding gesture was probably adopted for reasons of

accessibility, to leave the live audience members and television viewers on a "high" note. However, it is significant that on a few occasions, such as for "Who Is Gustav Mahler? (1960)" or "Thus Spake Richard Strauss" (1971), he also effectively closed his programs with works of a more serious, introspective character.

As mentioned above, each individual concert was oriented around a specific topic or theme which was indicated by the title of the program (see Appendix). Such topics could be theoretical (examining a certain musical concept), or more generally historical and/or analytical (centering on the works of various composers). In all cases, works corresponding to the designated topic would be performed by the orchestra or guest soloists. By comparing the music featured on the series with the list provided in Howard Shanet's Philharmonic: A History of New York's Orchestra, one can see that most of the music was drawn from the orchestra's regular seasonal repertoire which, during Bernstein's tenure, leaned predominantly toward works from the late-19th and early-20th centuries.

When looking more closely at the program content, it also becomes apparent that the majority of the Young People's Concerts can be categorized according to three main subdivisions: (1) programs on music fundamentals; (2) programs celebrating composers and their works; and (3)

"Young Performers" programs.⁴⁶

The first type of program involves almost all of those Young People's Concerts designated by interrogative-style titles, such as "What Does Music Mean?" (1958), "What Does Orchestration Mean?" (1958), "What Is a Melody?" (1962), and "What Is Sonata Form?" (1964). Other programs which also explored specific musical concepts or stylistic genres can likewise be grouped here, including "Humor in Music" (1959), "Folk Music in the Concert Hall" (1961), "Musical Atoms: A Study of Intervals" (1965) and "The Anatomy of a Symphony Orchestra" (1970).

It was for this first type of concert that Bernstein tended to give his longest and most technically-oriented talks, which were frequently illustrated by numerous music examples. These music examples were usually drawn from the Classical repertoire, but could also be taken from folk or popular music (see Chapter Two). Despite the fact that his talks were generally longer, such programs generally represented some of Bernstein's best and most original commentary for the series, since he was able to give free reign to his pedagogical instincts.

Notable, too, is the fact that many of these "music

⁴⁶It should be noted that, since this is the first time the Young People's Concerts have been analyzed with respect to format and content, the identification of the categories is original.

fundamental" programs appeared in the first two years of the series, and that several of these were adapted into the 1962 book Leonard Bernstein's Young People's Concerts.⁴⁷ It is likely that the lengthier verbal content of the selected scripts along with their high degree of originality were the main factors in determining their suitability for publication.

The second major subdivision of the Young People's Concerts involves those programs focusing on the music of various composers. In the cases of "Who Is Gustav Mahler?" (1960), "Aaron Copland's Birthday Party" (1961), "Happy Birthday, Igor Stravinsky" (1962), "A Tribute to Sibelius" (1965) and "A Birthday Tribute to Shostakovich" (1966), the programs were scheduled to coincide with the anniversary year celebrations of the respective composers' birthdays. Programs on Hindemith ("The Genius of Paul Hindemith" [1964]), Ives ("Charles Ives: American Pioneer" [1967]) and Beethoven ("Forever Beethoven!" [1968]) were also featured. Several of the programs such as "Berlioz Takes a Trip" (1969) and "Thus Spake Richard Strauss" (1971) were designed to focus on one single work of a particular composer.

⁴⁷The 1962 version of the book included the first six programs of the series as well as "Folk Music in the Concert Hall" (1961) and "What Is Impressionism?" (1961). The 1970 revised edition added "What Is a Melody?" (1962) and "Musical Atoms: A Study of Intervals" (1965).

In regard to this second type of program, Bernstein occasionally supplied his audiences with a few historical details about the composers' lives, but usually preferred, instead, to spend most of his time analyzing musical passages for the audience and performing musical selections. Musical performance, in fact, was given a somewhat greater prominence here than in the "music fundamental" programs where shorter excerpts tended to be used.

Some of the most successful programs of this second type were when Bernstein was able to relate some of his own personal insights into the selected composer's music. A prime example of this occurred in "Who Is Gustav Mahler?" (1960), in which he discussed the "divided man" aspects of Mahler and his music, and then related this to his own experience of being a conductor and composer. Similarly, in the Ives program ("Charles Ives: American Pioneer" [1967]), Bernstein introduced the audience to his own theory about the meaning behind Ives's Unanswered Question. In this way, he made the content of the programs seem fresh for both the experienced musician and those new to Classical music.

The third major subdivision of the Young People's Concerts incorporates the nine "Young Performers" programs which began on an annual basis in 1960. These programs were set apart from the regular Young People's Concert format since they had very little commentary by Bernstein.

Instead, they were designed primarily to spotlight the talents of young, upcoming performers.⁴⁸ Many of these young performers were of a very high caliber and had been selected from a pool of mass auditions.⁴⁹

As far as their ages were concerned, most of the young performers were in their mid-teens, with the entire age spectrum ranging from 9 to 24.⁵⁰ While some of the guests performed on more unusual instruments such as the accordion, harp, glockenspiel or were vocalists, pianists and string players tended to predominate for the most part. On 8 of the 9 programs, a number of young assistant conductors with the Philharmonic were also given the opportunity to appear with the orchestra.

Without Bernstein in the spotlight, the success of the young performers programs rested largely on the charisma and virtuosity of the featured individuals. A number of the young performers, including André Watts, Anita Darian, Heidi Lehwalder and Gary Karr, for example, carried off their

⁴⁸Some young performers were also featured, from time to time, as guest soloists on the regular Young People's Concerts.

⁴⁹Helen Coates, Bernstein's personal secretary and former piano teacher, screened candidates in these auditions before recommending them to Bernstein. Ross Parmenter, "Philadelphia Boy Is Hailed in Debut as Pianist," New York Times, 2 February 1963, 5.

⁵⁰"Young Performers," in New York Philharmonic Young People's Concerts with Leonard Bernstein: Tenth Season, 1.

pieces with such artistry that there was no question as to their ability to sustain audience interest. More infrequent were performances that were of a lesser quality or those that seemed designed to attract viewers in a "gimmicky" fashion. Perhaps two rare cases where the latter criticism might apply was when identical-twin duo-pianists took the stage in the "Young Performers" programs of 1962 and 1968.

Of all of the young performers who went on to lead successful performing careers after their appearances on Bernstein's Young People's Concerts, it was probably the 16-year-old pianist André Watts whose career received the fastest launching. After his dazzling performance of Liszt's Piano Concerto No. 1 in E-flat Major on the Young Performers concert of 15 January 1963, he was asked, just two weeks later, to replace Glenn Gould as guest soloist in a concert for the Philharmonic's regular subscription series.⁵¹ Soprano Veronica Tyler ("Young Performers" [1961]) and cellist Stephen Kates ("Young Performers" [1963]) also rose quickly to the top of their fields after their appearances on the Young People's Concerts, when they went on to win awards at the Tchaikovsky Competition. Tyler, Kates and Watts were subsequently invited back to the Young People's Concerts, to appear in the 1967 "Alumni

⁵¹Gould cancelled because of illness. "A Giant & a Prince," Time, 8 February 1963, 60.

Reunion" program.

Besides identifying the above three categories, two other general observations about the series can be made: (1) a substantial amount of 20th-century American music was featured on the programs and (2) the programs frequently involved the music of and/or appearances by Aaron Copland.

It is significant and commendable, first of all, that Bernstein chose to include a substantial amount of 20th-century music and, more specifically, 20th-century American music within his Young People's Concerts. This reflected a desire on Bernstein's part to make Americans more aware of their own musical heritage and was an extension of his programming aims for the regular subscription concerts, where, in his first few years, he increased the American content of his programs from about 4% to 30%.⁵²

The American compositions featured on the Young People's Concerts included works by George Gershwin, Charles Ives, Randall Thompson, Walter Piston, Aaron Copland, William Schuman and Paul White. Although some more noticeably dissonant sounds arose in works such as the finale of Ives's Symphony No. 2 or Copland's Dogmatic movement from Statements for Orchestra, the music of the

⁵²Shanet, 347.

above composers was, for the most part, traditional and written in the first half of the 20th century. Works from the 12-tone school of American composers were generally avoided. However, music of a more "avant-garde" nature was represented to a certain limited extent by Lukas Foss's Phorion, Otto Luening and Vladimir Ussachevsky's Concerted Piece for Tape Recorder and Orchestra, Copland's Concerto for Piano and Orchestra and Larry Austin's Improvisations for Orchestra and Jazz Soloists.

The incorporation of American content into the Young People's Concerts was actually part of the larger sphere of Bernstein's interests and activities concerning American music. First, as already mentioned, he had been involved with introducing American music into the Philharmonic's main subscription series. As a result, the second Young People's Concert on "What Is American Music?" (1958) derived much of its source material from his recent survey in the main Philharmonic concert series, where he had traced the growth and development of American music from its earliest days.⁵⁹ Similarly, the later program "Jazz in the Concert Hall" (1964) reflected Bernstein's continued interest and support of the subject since he had first written on the jazz influences in the music of Gershwin for his 1939 Harvard

⁵⁹Details about this survey are highlighted in Gradenwitz, 6-8.

University thesis.⁵⁴ The music of Ives, too, held a great deal of personal interest for Bernstein, for during these years he single-handedly resurrected Ives's Symphony No. 2 and to have developed a long-lasting interest in the composer's Unanswered Question, which he later discussed at his Harvard Lectures.

However, of all the 20th-century American composers mentioned above, no other received as much exposure as Aaron Copland. Indeed, Copland's music probably received the most attention of any composer's work on Bernstein's Young People's concerts, since his compositions (or excerpts therefrom) were performed 17 times on eight different programs. Furthermore, of these eight programs, three were exclusively dedicated to his music. "Second Hurricane, by Aaron Copland" (1960) featured the composer's play-opera performed by a group of high school students, while "Aaron Copland's Birthday Party" (1961) and "A Copland Celebration" (1970) were concerts in honour of the composer's 60th and 70th birthdays. Copland also appeared in person as a guest conductor on "What Is American Music?" (1958), "Aaron Copland's Birthday Party" (1961), and was featured as piano soloist for his own Concerto for Piano and Orchestra in

⁵⁴Bernstein's Harvard thesis ("The Absorption of Race Elements into American Music") is reproduced in Findings (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982).

"Jazz in the Concert Hall" (1964). In addition, Copland substituted as host for Bernstein on a separate Young People's Concert of 1969, for which he wrote and narrated his own script entitled "Music for the Movies."⁵⁵

It would appear that this proliferation of Copland and his music on the Young People's Concerts stemmed from a number of causes. The two musicians, first of all, were close friends bound by a mutual interest in composition. Bernstein, at one point, acknowledged this, calling Copland his "elder brother" and the "closest thing to a composition teacher [he had] ever had."⁵⁶ There were other common ties as well. As Joan Peyser has pointed out, Copland, like Bernstein, had come from a Russian-Jewish background, had lived in an urban environment, had taken a liberal, left-wing political stance and was a homosexual.⁵⁷

Beyond these aspects of friendship, however, there were other reasons for Copland and his music to be frequently featured on the Young People's Concerts. Foremost is the fact that Copland's music was some of the most broadly popular of its era. Its embodiment of the

⁵⁵In "Music for the Movies," Copland discussed and conducted the music from his own film scores, including The Red Pony, The City and Something Wild.

⁵⁶Leonard Bernstein, Findings, 338.

⁵⁷Peyser, 53.

American experience was an easily exploitable feature for Bernstein to draw upon in his talks, and one which would assuredly trigger a strong identification reaction among American television viewers. It is also possible that the frequent Copland appearances on the Young People's Concerts were linked to Bernstein's own superstitions, since, for some time, he had considered Copland, and in particular, Copland's birth date, to be his personal "good luck charm."⁵⁸ This had resulted from the fact that the two had originally met on Copland's 37th birthday (14 November 1937), and that Bernstein had later received his big break with the Philharmonic on the same date in 1943. As Bernstein once remarked: "Two of the most important events of my life occurred on that day, the first in 1937, the second in 1943 - and so I never forget Aaron's birthday."⁵⁹

With these explanations in mind, then, it is easier to comprehend why Aaron Copland appeared so often on the Young People's Concerts. In particular, it is especially clear why he was given two birthday tributes when other

⁵⁸Bernstein had other rituals and superstitions about his career, such as his necessity of getting absolutely clean before every performance, and his wearing of the Koussevitzky cuff-links and Mitropoulos cross that had been bequeathed to him. Gradenwitz, 120.

⁵⁹Leonard Bernstein, "Aaron Copland: An Intimate Sketch," High Fidelity and Musical America (November 1970): 53.

composers were fortunate to receive one.⁶⁰ Perhaps Bernstein's heavy reliance on Copland compositions can be attacked, for not allowing a fairer representation of contemporary works by other American composers to be heard.⁶¹ However, at the same time, it is incontrovertible that the Copland works provided a very accessible means by which to expose a mass television audience to 20th-century music.

To summarize, then, this chapter has discussed how the Young People's Concerts were already a long-established tradition with the New York Philharmonic when Leonard Bernstein assumed directorship and revitalized the series beginning in 1957/58. By taking this concert series to network television, Bernstein provided a welcome opportunity for home viewers to gain exposure to a diversity of musical issues, concert repertoire and the talents of many young, upcoming Classical performers.

As Classical music on television, it is evident that the Young People's Concerts were a landmark success in how to adapt a concert-style setting to the demands of a television format. Much of the success of this rests in

⁶⁰The tendency of Bernstein to give Copland multiple birthday tributes was also later evident in Findings, in which Bernstein recognized the composer on his 70th, 75 and 79th birthdays.

⁶¹See Chapter Four, 120-123.

Leonard Bernstein's and Roger Englander's careful planning of such elements as the scripts, visuals and overall format. With their finished product, these individuals proved that it was possible to produce a television program on Classical music that maintained the integrity of the music and yet did not alienate television viewers. Now, with the background and nature of the programs well established, we will next explore the reactions to the series by the live audiences, television audiences and professional critics.

CHAPTER TWO

REACTION TO THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S CONCERTS

Reaction to Leonard Bernstein's Young People's Concerts can be examined on two main fronts: the popular and the professional. On the popular level, some factors to be considered include the reactions of the concert-hall and television audiences, the total number of viewers that the programs were able to draw, and the type of viewer that was most likely to be attracted. Professional response, on the other hand, can be gauged by looking at the various critical reviews of the Young People's Concerts, particularly those with comments relating to Bernstein's style of presentation, his choice of material, the visual impact of the program, and the difficulties encountered with the televised-concert format. After considering both the popular and professional responses, it will then be possible to draw some conclusions as to the overall success of The Young People's Concerts with respect to their ability to reach and educate a mass audience on the subject of music appreciation.

Live Response

The audience response,¹ when Bernstein first took the podium for the Young People's concerts on 18 January 1958, was quite favorable. The children who comprised most of the live audience at Carnegie Hall were attentive and receptive to Bernstein's unconventional style of presentation which relied heavily on his own personal explanations and demonstrations at the piano keyboard. As Harold C. Schonberg glibly observed, "no paper airplanes flew, nor was there a mass exodus to the watering points of Carnegie Hall."² From the beginning, Bernstein's extroverted showmanship and non-condescending means of expression were a winning combination for his youthful listeners.

In the concerts that followed, Bernstein continued to build a good rapport with his live audiences. His style of communication remained direct and simple, and he persisted in giving interesting talks with a varied choice of concert repertoire. By the third season, additional variety was added to the series through the regular

¹The remarks in this section are based on evidence from the films themselves and the observations of selected critics.

²Harold C. Schonberg, "Bernstein Offers A Lesson in Music: He Conducts, Talks, Plays the Piano and Sings at T.V. Concert for Children," New York Times, 19 January 1958, 81.

scheduling of guest artists and the initiation of the annual Young Performers programs.

Particularly in the early programs, it is clear that Bernstein generated much positive reaction from the young audience through his characteristic manner of speech that used the vernacular and frequently employed colorful, humorous expressions. Often, these attention-getting remarks were metaphors and analogies offered in conjunction with technical explanations to help clarify his ideas about a work's character. For example, in a discussion of Ravel's Bolero ("What Does Orchestration Mean?" [1958]), Bernstein explained the orchestration techniques and melodic construction of the work and then summed it up as "a kind of very high-class hootchy-kootchy music." Similarly, in an analysis of a portion of Haydn Symphony No. 102 ("What Is Classical Music?" [1959]), Bernstein remarked that one theme "skitter[ed] all over the place like a little dachshund puppy." Juvenile and simplistic as such expressions were, they obviously found a resonance in the younger members of the audience and helped them to identify more closely with the music. Though the frequency of these remarks later diminished, they never entirely disappeared. In the 1966 concert entitled "A Birthday Tribute to Shostakovich," for instance, Bernstein was heard remarking that a section of Shostakovich's Ninth Symphony was like "Mickey Mouse leading

a football cheer."

A strong, spontaneous reaction from the live audience was likewise felt when Bernstein unexpectedly introduced popular music into his concert programmes. This occurred on a number of occasions when, by way of illustrating a point, the maestro would sit at the piano and proceed to play and sing his own raspy renditions of recent hit tunes. Early on, in the fourth program entitled, "What Makes Music Symphonic?" (1958), for instance, the Elvis Presley single, I'm All Shook Up, was recalled in order to demonstrate sequencing techniques. Other programs subsequently made use of Beatles songs, including I Love Her for a demonstration of form ("What Is Sonata Form? [1964]"), and Help in Bernstein's discussion of intervals ("Musical Atoms: A Study of Intervals" [1965]). On the latter occasion in particular, Bernstein's reference to the musical theme of the current Beatles movie "drew wild applause from the tiny listeners, parents and big sisters who packed the hall for the 2:30 performance."³

In the 1966 program, "What Is a Mode?," Bernstein outdid himself with regard to his practice of making references to popular music. This program, dealing with the topic of ancient church modes, included a profusion of

³Richard D. Freed, "43rd Season Opens at Youth Concerts," New York Times, 24 October 1965, 85.

popular tunes, such as My Baby Does the Hanky Panky, You Really Got Me Going, Along Comes Mary, Norwegian Wood, and Secret Agent Man. Because all of these well-known popular songs possessed melodies constructed out of various modes, Bernstein was able to incorporate them into his lecture and, as a result, make a rather esoteric topic immediately contemporaneous to his group of 1960s listeners. Like his vernacular-infused style of speech, such unorthodox references to popular music engendered a great deal of delight in the children and teens of the live audience, who felt that Bernstein was speaking their language.

Finally, response from the live audience was also more evident in those programs when they were asked to be direct participants. Like Bernstein's use of colorful expressions, instances of audience participation primarily occurred early in the series, in episodes like "What Is American Music?" (1958), "What Does Orchestration Mean?" (1958), "What Makes Music Symphonic?" (1958), and "Humor in Music" (1959), in which the audience was asked to perform such tasks as clapping their hands in a steady pulse while the orchestra played in syncopated rhythms, singing Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star to a number of different syllables that imitated the timbre of various orchestral instruments, singing Frère Jacques in a round, and singing Frère Jacques in minor key. Though there was nothing exceptional about

these drills, which could have been carried out by any elementary school instructor, Bernstein, once again, had the right knack of making them seem exciting and fun. Judging from the magnitude of response, the members of the live audiences clearly enjoyed this type of interaction.

In the middle and later programs, audience participation dropped off to become practically non-existent as Bernstein seemed generally to become less concerned with including it in the programs. As will become evident in the present study, this probably was due to the fact that the televised aspects of the program had taken priority over the needs of the live concert audience. The most conspicuous exception to this, of course, was the 1968 program, "Quiz-Concert: How Musical Are You?" Here, a large role for the audience was generated when Bernstein tested his listeners on their listening skills and musical knowledge.⁴

Otherwise, there was only sporadic use of audience participation, like in "Musical Atoms: A Study of Intervals" (1965), where the audience was given an exercise in singing intervals. Even so, on these limited occasions it is still apparent that the direct participation had a stimulating effect on the live concert audiences.

⁴Dean Dixon attempted a similar type of concert when he acted as the guest host for the series in 1971. His "Participation Concert," however, lacked the excitement of Bernstein's.

If there were any negative reactions among the audiences attending Bernstein's Young People's Concerts, it was when Bernstein's talks stretched on for an extra long time, or when certain long or more complex pieces of music were introduced. When this happened, more so after the first couple of years, the attention span of some younger listeners was noticeably challenged. In "The Genius of Paul Hindemith" (1964), for example, one reviewer observed that "some [children] were too young for the intricacies of Hindemith and toward the end of the show, seemed to lose maximum concentration."⁵ Likewise, in "Jazz in the Concert Hall (1964)," a children's piece (Journey into Jazz) was followed by two lengthy and more difficult compositions by Aaron Copland and Larry Austin which "taxed the comprehension of the youngsters considerably more despite the customary prefatory explanations by Bernstein."⁶ Similar comments also appeared concerning "What Is Sonata Form?" (1964) and "The Latin American Spirit" (1963). Still, many other programs continued to receive a good response from the live audience, including "Who Is Gustav Mahler?" (1960) and "What Is Impressionism?" (1961), in

⁵Robert J. Landry, "Young People's Concert," Variety, 26 February 1964, 53.

⁶Herm Schoenfeld, "Philharmonic Young People's Concerts," Variety, 18 March 1964, 30.

which some considerably longer musical excerpts were used.

As far as the series of live concerts was concerned, then, it is evident that Bernstein enjoyed a high level of popularity as conductor for the Young People's Concerts. Most of the children in his live audiences were able to relate very well to his simple manner of speaking and showmanship, and as a result, responded with great enthusiasm to the concert proceedings. The positive response was also heightened on those occasions when the audience itself was directly engaged in participation, or when Bernstein, in his talks, made references to popular music. Although some of the programs eventually became more taxing for the youngest listeners in attendance, a positive overall response was still very much in evidence throughout the series.

Response of Television Audience

The Young People's Concerts were also a success with television audiences;⁷ this was more so than originally anticipated, as producer-director Roger Englander noted that "we expected the concerts to be televised only for a season

⁷This kind of response, as will be shown, can be quantified through the total number of viewers.

or two."⁸ However, during the first few years, many fan letters poured in from people across the United States and Canada, with requests for scripts or the chance to audition for the program. Teenagers formed clubs to watch the program when it was broadcast live from Carnegie Hall and later on videotape from the Lincoln Center, and the demand for the live concert tickets themselves increased dramatically, until the Young People's Concerts were sold out years in advance.⁹

One unexpected boost to the program's popularity occurred in late 1961, as a result of network politics. Newton Minnow, the American Federal Communications Commissioner of the time, gave a speech at a broadcasting convention in which he denigrated television's "vast wasteland" and called for a better quality of network programming.¹⁰ CBS, in response, decided to counter his attack by moving their critically acclaimed Young People's

⁸Roger Englander, "No Balloons or Tap Dancers: A Look at the Young People's Concerts," in Leonard Bernstein: The Television Work (New York: Museum of Broadcasting, 1987), 32.

⁹By 1967, the waiting period for the tickets was approximately three years. "The Young People's Concerts," in The New York Philharmonic Young People's Concerts with Leonard Bernstein: Tenth Season (New York: CBS Television Network Press, 1967), 2.

¹⁰Brian Rose, Television and the Performing Arts: A Handbook and Reference Guide to American Cultural Programming (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986), 102.

Concerts out of weekend afternoons, into weeknights at 7:30 p.m. In this new, prime-time slot, the series remained for approximately five and a half seasons, until a change in network priorities once again forced it back to the weekend cultural ghetto.¹¹

This shift to prime-time television greatly benefitted the Young People's Concerts in two important ways. First, it gave the show a status beyond a weekend children's program and enabled it to attract a commercial sponsor. The Shell Oil Company was the first to give the series financial backing, followed by the Bell System, Polaroid and Kitchens of Sara Lee.¹² Many of the commercials that subsequently appeared were an extension of the program's educational theme and aimed to explain some of the technological wonders of the world to children and teens. Secondly, the move to prime time offered Bernstein a chance to pitch his program to a larger segment of the population and increase its overall exposure. Many of the viewers watching television on weeknights had not previously

¹¹Although in "No Balloons and Tap Dancers: A Look at the Young People's Concerts," Englander quotes the prime-time life of the series as three years, contemporary television listings in the New York Times reveal that it remained in the 7:30 p.m. weeknight time slot until the 1966/67 season.

¹²Roger Englander, "No Balloons or Tap Dancers: A Look at the Young People's Concerts," 34.

seen the program, since they did not normally watch television on the weekends. As a result, the move to prime time increased the overall viewership of the program, until it was reaching, in the mid-1960s, an average audience of over four million Americans.¹³

Although the Young People's Concerts had a substantial television following and were well-known in the popular culture of the day, it cannot be implied, however, that everyone in America watched the program. The Nielsen ratings for other popular prime-time programs, in fact, tell a different story. In 1965, for instance, top-ten weekly programs such as Bonanza or Batman could respectively attract audiences of over 17 million and 12 million. Moreover, many of the hour-long prime-time music specials during the 1960s, which provide perhaps a closer point of comparison, also boasted higher ratings, since popular entertainers such as Perry Como or Frank Sinatra could routinely draw in audiences of 10 million.¹⁴ Clearly, when

¹³Roger Englander quotes the figure of four million viewers in "No Balloons or Tap Dancers: A Look at the Young People's Concerts," 30. This average figure is confirmed by Nielsen ratings found in Robert Lee Bailey, An Examination of Prime Time Network Television Special Programs: 1948 to 1966 (New York: Arno Press, 1979), 259-305, although the listing shows that a few individual programs had slightly higher ratings. "Musical Atoms: A Study of Intervals" (1965), for example, pulled in an estimated audience of about 6 1/2 million.

¹⁴Bailey, 259-305.

compared to the ratings of these other programs, Bernstein's Young People's Concerts emerge as having had a more moderate amount of mass appeal.

Nevertheless, four million viewers becomes an impressive figure once other factors are taken into consideration, including the program's radically different format. Unlike the usual prime-time fare, where the emphasis was increasingly on pure entertainment, The Young People's Concerts were essentially an educational program initially promoted for children, and, beyond that, a series dealing with the difficult subject of Classical music. Despite the program's reputation for breaking down cultural barriers and the positive influence of the cultural explosion of the 1960s, the latter point in itself would have been enough to deter a certain percentage of television viewers who perceived Classical music as part of an elitist, snob culture, and therefore something they were not interested in watching. Englander alluded to this perennial problem with audiences and Classical music programs when he stated:

Good music is for special audiences. They're building up, but it isn't the big explosion people have been talking about. The number of people who go to concerts is great, but then the number of people alive is great. It's still pretty hard to get somebody who just doesn't want to watch a

piano recital to watch it.¹⁵

Furthermore, the series also differed from other regular concert-style programming on commercial television, including The Bell Telephone Hour which (in its prime) offered a light mix of Classical music, popular music and jazz and an endless stream of talented performers. Bernstein's Young People's Concerts, on the other hand, challenged the viewers considerably more, by having them follow musical talks complete with technical explanations of such things as melody, orchestration, intervals and sonata form. Moreover, it encouraged audience members to listen to some newer works not drawn from the standard repertoire. With these additional factors in mind, then, it was a testament to Bernstein's popular drawing power that he was not only able to attract four million viewers, but also keep them from switching the dial.

One further observation that needs to be made in coming to terms with the impact of the televised Young People's Concerts, regards the audience make-up. At the outset of the series, it was clear that Bernstein's Young People's Concerts were primarily intended for children and young teens, in keeping with the New York Philharmonic's

¹⁵Roger Englander, "Music on TV - What Works, What Doesn't," High Fidelity and Musical America (October 1969): MA 11.

established tradition for this type of concert. Although various sources quote slightly different age limits, it is apparent from viewing the concerts that most of the children in attendance were relatively young, approximately between 8-14 years of age. Coupled with this is the fact that Bernstein's speech in the earliest programs is obviously more tailored to suit the comprehension levels of the youngest listeners.

A youthful image was also propagated by other means, including much of the early publicity surrounding the Young People's Concerts. Contemporary magazines such as Time and Newsweek, for instance, pictured Bernstein signing autographs for an eager group of children. The corresponding articles then proceeded to discuss the series from the perspective of a new, "up-beat" music show for the younger crowd, although some hints were dropped that parents might also find it interesting.¹⁶ Furthermore, the program's opening sequence also upheld the image of a "children's program," as it focused on the hordes of children first lining up and then filing into Carnegie Hall.

However, as the series progressed, a subtle shift in tone became evident. For one, there began to be less conscious use of the colourful and simplified expressions

¹⁶See "Lennie's Kindergarten," Time, 17 March 1958, 70; "So the Young May Feel," Newsweek, 2 March 1959, 83.

that were liberally scattered throughout the first few programs. Also, there appeared to be a diminished concern with teaching a "set" lesson on music rudimentaries to a group of children than simply allowing the central themes of the programs to unfold with many angles of interest. Concomitantly, glamorous newspaper advertisements started to appear, and beginning in 1962, the opening title shot of children entering the concert was replaced by a scene of the shiny, new Lincoln Center. By the early- to mid-1960s, it was apparent that Bernstein's programs were no longer aimed only at children, but towards a more general television audience.

The shift in tone probably started to occur once Bernstein and others became aware of the actual types of television viewers that the Young People's Concerts were drawing. As Leonard's sister Shirley recounts in her 1963 book Making Music, the voluminous fan mail indicated that the program was attracting not only children and young teens, but also a great number of adults, many of whom wrote to express their own sense of personal inspiration through the program.¹⁷ In 1964, this high degree of adult interest was confirmed when a CBS survey found that 83% of the Young

¹⁷Shirley Bernstein, Making Music - Leonard Bernstein (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica Press, 1963), 166.

People's Concerts viewers were, in fact, adults, with children and teenagers respectively accounting for only 11% and 6% of the television audience.¹⁰

With the aging of Bernstein himself, the shift towards a more adult content was most conspicuous in some of the later episodes. Some "mature" themes began to emerge, such as in the 1969 episode "Berlioz Takes a Trip," where Bernstein describes the Symphonie fantastique as the first psychedelic "drug trip." Likewise, other later programs also began to incorporate a heavier philosophical content. In "Forever Beethoven!" (1968), for example, the viewer received Bernstein's speech on "Beethoven, freedom and democracy." Similarly, "Thus Spake Richard Strauss" (1971) also contained a philosophical theme, this time discussing Strauss's tone poem Thus Sprach Zarathustra in relation to the writings of Nietzsche. Clearly, the more advanced nature of these topics is a solid indication that the program was no longer solely intended for children. Even the live audiences attending these later concerts tended to reflect this new feeling, since a much higher proportion of adults and older teens were visible.

From the perspective of a television program, then, it is clear that Bernstein's Young People's Concerts drew an

¹⁰Val Adams, "Young People's Concerts Are for Young in Heart," New York Times, 30 August 1964, section II, 15.

exceedingly good response from television viewers. After starting out as a series of weekend specials primarily aimed at children, the program secured greater prestige and reached a wider base of television viewers once it was moved into prime time. Significantly, the programs eventually became most popular among the adult segment of the television audience, who enjoyed watching Bernstein just as much as or more than children did. As a result of this high percentage of adult viewers, the program surpassed its original mandate by becoming a music appreciation program not only for youth, but for all.

Professional Reaction

Professional reaction to Bernstein's Young People's Concerts can be determined by looking at various reviews and articles drawn from a number of contemporary sources. Particularly in the early years of the series, Bernstein's television appearances sent ripples of excitement through the media and, as a result, the Young People's Concerts saw coverage in most major newspapers and magazines. While the New York Times initially reviewed the concerts live at Carnegie Hall, the majority of other publications reviewed it from the perspective of a television program.

Like the reactions of the live and television audiences, professional response at the outset of the series

was extremely positive, often euphoric. Time magazine described the show as a "bracing, fact-filled musical kindergarten for young and old," while Newsweek claimed that Bernstein had done "more to make good music meaningful to children than any other man since Walter Damrosch used radio in the 30s."¹⁹ Variety, with its emphasis on popular culture, was especially receptive to Bernstein, hailing him as "perhaps the best tv performer of the era," one who "makes his artistry felt throughout the country."²⁰ As a group, most critics wholeheartedly welcomed Bernstein's new venture and praised his fresh, enthusiastic approach to music appreciation.

Positive reviews of the Young People's Concerts continued to be in evidence throughout the mid-60s, when the programs were seen on prime-time television. Critics frequently commended Bernstein for his role in the concerts, and acknowledged that he had done much to raise music appreciation to a new level of sophistication. Often, their individual reviews highlighted his ability to communicate clearly and non-condescendingly and his talent for presenting material in an interesting fashion. The

¹⁹"Lennie's Kindergarten," Time, 17 March 1958, 70; "So the Young May Feel," Newsweek, 2 March 1959, 83.

²⁰Robert J. Landry, "Leonard Bernstein," Variety, 30 March 1960, 39.

entertainer facet of the Bernstein personality was also widely recognized. One 1966 New York Times review went so far as to bill him "The Swinging Maestro."²¹

Beyond their comments on Bernstein's style of presentation, critics also noted the program's impact on the adult segment of the population. In a review of "Folk Music in the Concert Hall" (1961), for instance, one writer remarked:

While his [Bernstein's] concerts are presumably aimed at the youngsters, his contagion and enthusiasm are picked up by adults as well. He provides lessons that can be profitable to all age groups, and gives music appreciation one of its most valuable boosts.²²

This was to become a sentiment expressed by many other reviewers over the course of the series. However, even with this acknowledgment of the high level of adult interest, most critics continued to address the concerts primarily from the perspective of a program for "young people."

Complementing the favourable critical response was the recognition granted from various professional institutions and organizations. In total, over fifty awards were bestowed on the series. These included six Emmys from the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences; multiple awards

²¹Jack Gould, "TV: Bernstein, the Swinging Maestro," New York Times, 24 November 1966, 87.

²²Robert J. Landry, "Young People's Concert," Variety, 12 April 1961, 27.

from the Thomas Alva Edison Foundation, Sigma Alpha Iota,²³ Ohio State University Institute for Education by Radio and Television, Saturday Review; and one award from the National Conference of Christians and Jews. The program was also acknowledged internationally by the Prix Jeunesse (Munich) and an award from the International Television Festival (Prague).²⁴ No doubt, along with his tours with the Philharmonic, the exposure and recognition that Bernstein gained through the broadcasting of his youth programs greatly helped to secure the conductor's national and international reputation. In their ability to draw nearly unanimous praise, the Young People's Concerts were certainly one of Bernstein's most successful lifetime ventures.

1) Critical Concerns

Though it is undeniable that the critical response was overwhelmingly favourable, a few writers did occasionally voice some concerns over certain aspects of the Young People's Concerts. Some areas that were often

²³Sigma Alpha Iota is a national fraternity of professional musicians, teachers and students of music.

²⁴"Awards," in New York Philharmonic Young People's Concerts with Leonard Bernstein: Tenth Season (New York: CBS Television Network Press, 1967), 1-2. One of the six Emmy Awards is not listed here, but appears in Leonard Bernstein: The Television Work (New York: Museum of Broadcasting, 1985), 51.

questioned, for example, involved Bernstein's style of presentation and his choice of program content.

Opinions were mixed, first of all, on whether Bernstein spent too much time talking. In this area, the maestro's tendency to be chatty and embark on lengthy illustrated explanations was a deviation from the tradition of past Young People's Concerts conductors, who generally kept their dialogues much briefer. As one critic wrote, "it's hard to say whether conductor Bernstein should offer more music and less exposition - or even the other way around ... A good tune needn't be explained for enjoyment, yet the exposition helps unlock many of the mysteries of what makes good music."²⁵

Certain reviewers, however, definitely felt that Bernstein's loquaciousness posed a problem at times. About "Happy Birthday, Igor Stravinsky" (1962), for example, Art Woodstone remarked that "the intricacies of Stravinsky's Petrouchka suite were delineated quite neatly, though perhaps with a bit too much of the Bernstein hyperbole."²⁶ Similarly, another critic found that the more technically-oriented discussion of intervals in "Musical Atoms: A Study

²⁵Murry Horowitz, "Young People's Concerts." Variety, 11 November 1964, 54.

²⁶Art Woodstone, "N.Y. Philharmonic Young People's Concerts," Variety, 28 March 1962, 34.

of Intervals" (1965) was "too long a stage wait for the joyful sounds of the first movement of Brahms's and the finale of Vaughan Williams's Fourth Symphonies."²⁷ About the Emmy award-winning program "What Is Sonata Form?" (1964), still another critic quipped that the young students in the audience "often seemed as if they were waiting for the recess bell because the professor talked too much."²⁸

For the most part, however, one has to admit that Bernstein's musical talks were well-handled. Although there may have been the occasional misjudgments in the timing, Bernstein was generally able to speak in an informative manner which was successful in sustaining audience attention. Especially when his talks were spiced with interesting music examples and demonstrations at the keyboard, the time seemed to pass very quickly.

Of course, Bernstein could not always be accused of too much talking. In the nine "Young Performers" programs and "Alumni Reunion" (1967), his introductions to the music were kept to a minimum while the performers themselves were given center stage. The programs entitled "What Is Impressionism?" (1961), "The Road to Paris" (1962) and "The

²⁷John Horn, "Bernstein's Return - A Pleasure," New York Herald Tribune, 30 November 1965, 19.

²⁸Paul Gardner, "Music Maestro," New York Times, 7 November 1964, 54.

Latin American Spirit" (1963) likewise contained a lesser amount of verbal exposition due to increased length of their musical content. Nevertheless, in many Young People's Concerts, Bernstein's talks characteristically took up a substantial part of the hour. This talkativeness was not a feature unique to the Young People's Concerts, but rather something common to Bernstein's other work of the time, including the Omnibus programs and Philharmonic Preview Concerts. It simply seemed to grow out of his genuine enthusiasm for speaking about music.

Some critics also expressed concern over the level of program content for the Young People's Concerts. Their feeling was that Bernstein's choice of music and subject material was sometimes too difficult for the children in the audiences, especially the younger ones. About the episode "Humor in Music" (1959), for example, a reviewer remarked that "in spite of Mr. Bernstein's clever exposition of the more sophisticated kinds of musical jokes, the children obviously took more readily to the simpler varieties."²⁹ Similarly, with regard to a program on Charles Ives (1967), another critic suggested that "Ives may be too profound and personal a composer for children - or even most adults - to

²⁹Eric Salzman, "Bernstein Leads Humor Concert," New York Times, 1 March 1959, 78.

comprehend."³⁰ Several other programs were also criticized for the more advanced nature of their content, including the 1964 episodes "The Genius of Paul Hindemith," "Jazz in the Concert Hall," and "What Is Sonata Form?"

Granted, the above criticisms of the program content might have been partly justified by the reviewers' own observations of the children in the concert hall. As mentioned earlier, some of the audience children were seen to be less attentive during the longer talks or more complex works. However, particularly in those programs in which modern, 20th-century works were presented, some of the resultant criticisms seemed to have been also fuelled by outside factors, including the reviewer's own musical preferences, that certain types of "adult" music were inappropriate for the ears of children. In a combined review of "What Is Impressionism?" (1961), "What Is a Melody?" (1962) and "What Is Sonata Form?" (1964), for example, one critic concluded that "after Mozart, Debussy's music seem[ed] the most acceptable to children of all that Bernstein played."³¹

³⁰Howard Klein, "Bernstein Offers Young People At Philharmonic a Taste of Ives," New York Times, 22 January 1967, 58.

³¹Keith Spence, "Television," Musical Times 109 (February 1968): 163. The musical repertoire for these programs is listed in the Appendix.

Fewer of the regular critics complained of the opposite problem, that the content of Bernstein's programs was oversimplified or exaggerated. This complaint only occasionally surfaced, like in the reviews of "Who Is Gustav Mahler?" (1960) and "Unusual Instruments of Present, Past and Future" (1960). With respect to the Mahler program, a Variety critic found that Bernstein's discussion "would have been entirely persuasive had he not had to oversimplify somewhat for his youngish audience."³² For the program on unusual instruments, another critic accused Bernstein of exaggerating the idea that "an extensive understanding of history could be obtained merely by listening to old instruments (and old music)."³³ However, in most reviews, the charges of simplification or exaggeration were usually dismissed very quickly, as the critic moved on to other aspects of the program. Apparently, with so much of merit to discuss about the programs, the reviewers were willing to give Bernstein more leeway in this respect. Perhaps, too, the perception that the Young People's Concerts were still primarily a "children's program" had tempered some of these criticisms.

³²Art Woodstone, "N.Y. Philharmonic Young People's Concerts," Variety, 10 February 1960, 38.

³³Eric Salzman, "Bernstein Leads at Youth Concert," New York Times, 27 March 1960, 84.

ii) Harsher Criticisms

As demonstrated thus far, most of the negative criticism surrounding Bernstein's style and approach to the Young People's Concerts was of a milder variety, centering on such issues as whether his talks were too long or his presentations too difficult or overly simplified. This is not to say, however, that Bernstein was without harsher critics during the period. It was just that harsher criticism usually occurred in conjunction with his other conducting duties at the Philharmonic, including, for example, the Preview Concerts and regular subscription series. For these events, the criticisms about Bernstein's mannerisms on and off the podium were more frequent. It seems that a certain number of critics were willing to accept Bernstein's lively, entertaining style as suitable for the masses on national television, but drew the line when he brought it into the formal concert setting. Here they felt that Bernstein, the entertainer persona, had got out of hand.

Of all the major music critics, it was probably Paul Henry Lang who spoke most adamantly against Bernstein's ventures with the Philharmonic. As his writings reveal, Lang had severe doubts about Bernstein's true abilities as a conductor and basically saw him as a self-serving, shallow entertainer. In one Herald Tribune article of 1962 entitled

"The Incredible Mr. Bernstein," his criticisms were particularly acerbic, when he attacked everything from Bernstein's frequent absences from the Philharmonic to his recent concert spat with pianist Glenn Gould.³⁴

In the same article, however, Lang also revealed a willingness to extend his sharper criticisms to Bernstein's television programs of the time (Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic and the Young People's Concerts). These programs are referred to as "the product of a recklessly acquisitive mind." Bernstein, according to Lang, had failed to provide his programs with either substantial material or authoritative commentary:

Mr. Bernstein puts together in a rather haphazard fashion a sort of scrapbook of odd information fished from a variety of sources and persons. He spreads his net wide, with the result that a good deal of the haul has connections of only the flimsiest sort with the topic at hand. Much of this material has been garnered second hand, but there is a certain amount of first-hand matter which, oddly enough, is usually the least convincing stuff. It is what one might expect to pick up from a communicative fellow of a musical cut in a bar...³⁵

When considering the Young People's Concerts from

³⁴Paul Henry Lang, "The Incredible Mr. Bernstein," New York Herald Tribune, 15 April 1962, section IV, 1,6.

³⁵Although Lang partially absolves himself from these criticisms ("This method may have its place in the useful task of educating children and childlike adults...") it is still clear that he himself takes a very dim view of Bernstein's television programs.

this hyper-critical perspective, one cannot deny that there is a grain of truth in what Lang says. Indeed, the programs were sometimes very much like a musical "scrapbook," since they covered a very wide range of subjects and musical styles. Likewise, Bernstein's discussions did not always go into scholarly depth, but instead chose to introduce several different interesting points about the music or topic at hand.

But whether this amounts to an overall deficiency is highly debatable. Bernstein's sometimes eclectic choices of music and "show-and-tell" approach to music appreciation definitely had their advantages. First, they provided a fresh, updated approach to music that helped to "air out" the stale routine of past music appreciation and make classical music more accessible to modern listeners. And furthermore, they represented a workable approach for the medium of television, one that allowed Bernstein to connect with and sustain the attention levels of the new, mass audience. This latter point was of paramount important for the continued life of the series, since the programs had to remain a viable product for commercial television or face cancellation. In his distaste for the Bernstein personality, it would seem, then, that this was one major factor Lang had overlooked.

In fact, if Bernstein had taken a more traditional

approach to music appreciation, it is likely that his programs would have lost much of their appeal and impact. This was actually demonstrated by those few occasions when Bernstein actually did set aside his usual manner of presentation in favour of a more traditional approach, including, the Petrouchka segment of "Happy Birthday, Igor Stravinsky" (1962) and "Fantastic Variations" (1968). In both cases, Bernstein primarily acted as a narrator who alternated a detailed account of the story behind the music with various musical excerpts. He did not, however, give much of his own personal commentary or demonstrations. As a result, both of the programs seem to lack the normal verve of the other Young People's Concerts, and rather quickly degenerate into sleepy reminiscences. In this writer's opinion, the "usual" Bernstein approach was far more preferable. Not only was it more interesting, but also more inspired.

As a further attack on Bernstein's work, some of the major music critics of the time, including Lang and Harold Schonberg, complained of another of Bernstein's characteristics: his tendency toward egocentricity. From a point early in his tenure with the Philharmonic, it had been apparent that Bernstein had enjoyed drawing the attention almost entirely to himself while relying minimally on the talents of others. While some were able to accept this as

the price of his individuality, others felt that it was simply the manifestation of an overly inflated ego.

The criticism that Bernstein ran a "one-man show" could also be aptly applied to his work on the Young People's Concerts. With the exception of those episodes in which guest artists appeared, Bernstein did tend to dominate the stage for most of the hour, particularly during his animated talks and demonstrations at the piano keyboard. During the orchestral excerpts as well, he made an equally photogenic and engaging subject, and the camera never strayed too far away. Moreover, the programs themselves were comprised of Bernstein's own ideas, script, and his choice of music. In essence, he dominated almost every facet of the Young People's Concerts, while the New York Philharmonic played a secondary role.

In itself, this kind of pervasive control was not entirely disagreeable. Perhaps it was even necessary for the program's continued success on television since it allowed Bernstein to shape his materials into an end-product with mass appeal. And, because it was Bernstein whom people admired, and tuned in to watch, it was not unexpected that he would become the "star" of the programs.

However, Bernstein's total control started to become more disagreeable on the odd occasions when he attempted to make his talks seem more grandiose and far-reaching than

necessary. When this happened, there was a greater tendency toward viewer manipulation, and it sometime appeared that Bernstein was trying to convince his audience through the sheer force of his words. Perhaps the worst offender in this respect was "Forever Beethoven!" (1968), in which the viewer received a speech on the relationship between Beethoven's composition technique and democracy, including the following excerpt:

Real freedom must contain the freedom to 'unchoose' as well as 'choose.' To censor oneself, to limit oneself ... that is the whole meaning of democracy, the kind of freedom on which we base our hopes for a peaceful future world just as it is the meaning of freedom in a great musical composition ... In Beethoven, as in democracy, freedom is a discipline combining the right to choose freely with the gift of choosing wisely.³⁶

Though the above material is couched in nicely phrased sentiments, the connections between freedom, democracy and Beethoven's approach to composition are at best, questionable. The passage sounds more designed to stir up patriotic feelings about the system of American democracy than to enlighten the viewer further about the composition techniques of Beethoven. Fortunately, however, such extreme instances of personal propagandizing were rather rare in the Young People's Concerts, and therefore

³⁶Personal transcript taken from Leonard Bernstein, "Forever Beethoven!" (CBS Television, 1968), videocassette. In subsequent cases where personal transcripts are used, the source medium will be similarly indicated.

cannot be regarded as a criticism of the series as a whole. Such criticisms are perhaps more valid in regard to Bernstein's later television work of 1970s and 1980s.⁹⁷

iii) Visuals and Format

Besides matters of Bernstein's choice of content, style, and overall approach, the program's visuals were another area receiving critical attention. Over the years, many reviewers praised the polished visual style of producer-director Roger Englander. Variety reviewer Mike Gross, for example, described Englander's camerawork as "neat and fluid" and found that it "brought a sense of movement to the session."⁹⁸ Murry Horowitz also noted the program's camerawork, finding that "[p]roducer-director Roger Englander handled the cameras with care and dexterity."⁹⁹ Similarly, the New York Times hailed Englander as "extremely adept at mobile camerawork" and

⁹⁷See Jack Hiemenz, "Bernstein on Television: Pros and Cons," High Fidelity and Musical America (April 1980): MA 14-15; Leon Botstein, "The Tragedy of Leonard Bernstein," Harper's No. 266 (May 1983): 39-40, 57-62.

⁹⁸Mike Gross, "N.Y. Philharmonic Young People's Concerts," Variety, 22 January 1958, 47 and Mike Gross, "Young People's Concerts," Variety, 27 April 1960, 34.

⁹⁹Murry Horowitz, "Young People's Concert," Variety, 24 January 1962, 34.

observed that he "always [kept] the viewer interested."⁴⁰

As mentioned previously, an important part of Englander's technique was his ability to "orchestrate" the program visuals to correspond to the style and formal structure of the musical works being performed. His visual effects were particularly striking in episodes like "Two Ballet Birds" (1969), for instance, where the quick-changing, high-impact visual sequences were well-suited for the dramatic mood of Stravinsky's Firebird, or in "What Is a Melody?" (1962), in which the slow, floating tracking shots matched the concept of seamless melody as found in Hindemith's Concert Music for Strings and Brass. Much of Englander's success in this light, no doubt, came from his own aesthetic appreciation of music which included an ability to read a score.⁴¹

Other subtle visual touches included instances where Englander picked up on a very specific comment that Bernstein had made about a musical composition. When Bernstein spoke of a great, wheeling galaxy of stars in relation to Ives's Unanswered Question ("Charles Ives: American Pioneer" [1967]), for instance, Englander managed

⁴⁰Paul Gardner, "Music, Maestro," New York Times, 7 November 1964, 54.

⁴¹Brian Rose, "Classical Music on Television," in The Museum of Broadcasting's Classical Music Collection, 12.

to incorporate a sequence where the camera slowly rotated on its axis within the orchestra, capturing the string players with a very eerie, surreal effect. Similarly, his wide-angled, long shots of the full stage and orchestra during Hoedown from Billy the Kid ("A Copland Celebration" [1970]) appeared to mirror Bernstein's previously stated references to the work's "wide-open spaces." In both cases, the special visual effects were incorporated extremely well, without excessive distraction to the music being played.

The only time Englander's visual style appeared to be somewhat incongruous with the music was in the La Mer sequence of "What Is Impressionism?" (1961). Although a special lens was briefly used at one point to give a blurred Impressionistic effect, some of the other visual sequences during the performance seemed rather abrupt and halting for the musical style. Particularly in the first movement, close-ups of the orchestra members became too intrusive, and clashed with the visual images one would normally associate with Impressionism. The fault, however cannot be ascribed entirely to Englander, since he largely appeared to be following Bernstein's conducting style for this segment.

With respect to program visuals, reviewers also liked how Englander and his camera crew were able to capture the spontaneous reactions of the different children in the live audience. These sequences were usually shot during the

longer musical excerpts and were designed to catch the children off-guard, in various stages of attention or inattention. Some humorous and poignant moments were often the result. In "Happy Birthday, Igor Stravinsky" (1962), for instance, the camera picked up what one reviewer described as "the poorly stifled yawn, the ear-picker, the earring plucker and a translucently beautiful child."⁴² Since adult viewers in particular seemed to enjoy such sequences, it is understandable why they were allowed to be left in rather than edited out.

While Roger Englander's visual innovations were drawing praise from those reviewing the concerts from the perspective of a television program, critics attending the live concerts were becoming increasingly concerned with problems that the televised-concert format had engendered. They felt that the bright studio lights, television cameras, and teleprompter were distractions for the live audience and interfered with the ability to enjoy the live concert. After the 1966/1967 season, this criticism became even more prevalent when the introduction of colour film dictated that still brighter studio lighting be used.

Eventually an article surfaced in the New York Times examining the whole question of whether the Young People's

⁴²Art Woodstone, "N.Y. Philharmonic Young People's Concert," Variety, 28 March 1962, 34.

Concerts were still actual "concerts" or if they had simply metamorphosized into the taping of a live television program with a studio audience.⁴³ According to the author, many felt the latter was true, including a number of irritated parents attending the concerts, who resented having to pay \$4.00 per ticket when they were forced to endure the discomforts of a television taping.

Roger Englander, however, was quick to counter that the integrity of the original concert format had been maintained despite the presence of the television crew. The Young People's Concerts, he averred, were "probably the least produced show on television" and essentially a "reportage" of a live event.⁴⁴ The live audience was not missing out on anything, since all of the pictures and scores shown on television were also displayed in the concert hall where they were made large enough to be seen by everyone.

Nevertheless, despite Englander's argument, it appeared that the necessary environment for taping a television program did interfere, to a certain degree, with the live audience's ability to enjoy the concerts. This is

⁴³Ronald Eyer, "Are Those Concerts Still Concerts?" New York Times, 22 January 1967, section II, 17.

⁴⁴Roger Englander, quoted in Eyer, "Are Those Concerts Still Concerts?" 17.

evident from the television programs themselves - with their frequent close-up shots of the various solo performers and orchestra members, it is not hard to imagine that the television cameras would have been very intrusive at times, not only for the audience members but also for the performers.

Coupled with this is the observation that a shift apparently occurred in at least one area of the program's original format. As mentioned earlier, the amount of direct audience participation generally declined as the series progressed and, as a result, a more distant feeling seemed to develop between Bernstein and his live audiences in some of the later programs. Thus, all things considered, there does seem to be some validity to the suggestion that the televised aspects of Bernstein's Young People's Concerts had begun to supplant parts of the original concert format.

In assessing the overall reaction to Bernstein's Young People's Concerts, therefore, it becomes evident that the programs were very successful on both the popular and professional fronts. First, on the popular level, the concerts received a positive response both from live audiences and viewers in the television audience. With the move to prime time, the popularity of the series continued to increase among the television audience, until the Young People's Concerts were attracting a substantial following of

over four million viewers, including a surprisingly large number of adults.

The Young People's Concerts were also a success on the professional level. Reviewers of the concerts were practically unanimous in their praise of Bernstein, and frequently noted how his program had provided a stimulating, and yet more sophisticated, approach to music appreciation. Most of the negative criticism surrounding the programs was relatively minor, and questioned such matters as the length of Bernstein's talks and whether the content was suitable for children. Also, some complaints eventually surfaced from the live audience members, who felt that the emphasis on the televised aspects of the program had begun to interfere with their own enjoyment of the concerts. On the whole, however, critical response to Young People's Concerts was overwhelmingly good.

Because of their combined success on the popular and professional levels, Bernstein's Young People's Concerts were in the fortunate position of being able to enjoy a remarkably long run of fifteen years on commercial television. While the high critical acclaim served to bolster the program's reputation in professional circles, the popular appeal of Bernstein continued to draw in the viewers and enabled the program to remain a viable product for commercial television. As a result, the programs

succeeded in reaching a considerable number of people over the years and educating them with respect to music appreciation. In the end, Bernstein had inspired with his programs not only the few thousand children in the concert hall, but several new generations of North Americans.

CHAPTER THREE

BERNSTEIN AS AN EDUCATOR

All my life I've been a compulsive teacher - sometimes to the point of driving my children or my friends mad with lecturing on any subject that may strike me as interesting, however unimportant or irrelevant to them. In this respect I resemble my late father - a fine upstanding businessman who should have been a rabbi...¹

As this quote from a 1981 television program reveals, Bernstein felt a very strong pedagogical urge throughout his lifetime. Specifically, in regard to his musical career, this tendency was manifest in a number of ways, including his instruction of budding young conductors, orchestral musicians and composers, his implementation of the Philharmonic Preview Concerts, and his books and articles. Perhaps, however, his fundamental love of teaching music was most clearly pronounced in television programs such as the Young People's Concerts, where he took on the difficult challenge of trying to reach a large and varied audience of television viewers.

So far, this thesis has touched on Bernstein's success as an educator on the Young People's Concerts, in

¹Leonard Bernstein, Bernstein/Beethoven #1 (CBS Television, 1981), videocassette.

terms of such issues as his gift for verbalization and his popular appeal. I will now examine some additional aspects of Bernstein in this role, with a focus on his overall approach to teaching music appreciation. As well, an investigation into the influences that may have been exerted on Bernstein by his teachers and other notable figures in the field will further provide some insights into Bernstein's approach and attitude as a music educator for the masses.

Bernstein's Predecessors

As mentioned earlier, a number of conductors beginning with Ernest Schelling and continuing with Rudolph Ganz and Wilfred Pelletier had led the New York Philharmonic series of Young People's Concerts for many years. In addition to these people, however, the outside contributions of several other major figures can be recognized as setting early precedents to Bernstein's later work on the televised Young People's Concerts.

Theodore Thomas (1835-1905), for example, was one of the first musicians to become involved with the educating of Americans with respect to Classical music on the large scale. This German-born violinist and conductor established his own, private orchestra in the late 1850s and then embarked on numerous concert tours throughout New York,

Chicago and Cincinnati. On these tours he performed many concerts with an express educational purpose in mind: to expose Classical music to people who had little or no previous contact with it. Later, his educational efforts in this regard were concentrated along one particular strip of the Midwest which, because of his lasting influence, became known as the "Thomas Highway."²

In regard to his pedagogically-oriented concerts, Thomas's goal as a music educator can be seen as very similar to that of Bernstein - he wanted to make "good music popular" amongst the American public.³ Nevertheless, one major difference from Bernstein's approach is evident. Thomas had an intense dislike of any music written under the influences of "popular" taste, American or otherwise, and relied almost solely on the music of the German masters, with Beethoven and Wagner being his personal favourites. This rather "closed" attitude of Thomas was apparently no obstacle for his listeners of the time. It is doubtful, however, whether the average modern-day American listener,

²During his tenure as conductor for the New York Philharmonic (1879-91) and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (1891-1895), Thomas also led some youth concerts. James W. Snowden, "The Role of the Symphony Orchestra Youth Concert in Music Education" (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 1968), 19.

³Howard Shanet, Philharmonic: A History of New York's Orchestra (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1975), 167.

accustomed to a more strongly dominant popular culture, would react as positively.

Leopold Stokowski (1882-1977) could be considered another early forerunner to Bernstein. In the 1920s and 1930s, this conductor and composer led the Philadelphia Orchestra on radio broadcasts and exploited the possibilities of exposing symphonic music to the public through film (e.g. Fantasia, The Big Broadcast of 1937). He also successfully interested many teenagers and young adults in Classical music through his well-known series of Philadelphia youth concerts commencing in 1933, which developed the reputation of being highly entertaining.⁴ In addition, Stokowski, like Bernstein, had the opportunity to appear on television's Omnibus (1952). During this guest appearance, he led viewers through a mock art gallery and talked about the pictures that had inspired Moussorgsky's Pictures at an Exhibition.⁵ Later on, he was also invited by Bernstein to appear on one of the later Young People's Concert ("Bach Transmogrified" [1969]), where he conducted his own orchestral transcription of Bach's Little Organ Fugue in G Minor. Through these kinds of activities, then,

⁴Snowden, 28-29.

⁵Brian Rose, "Classical Music on Television," in Television and the Performing Arts: A Handbook and Reference Guide to American Cultural Programming (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986), 99.

Leopold Stokowski also demonstrated a marked desire to make Classical music accessible to the general American public.

Walter Damrosch (1862-1950) was probably the most direct predecessor to Bernstein and his work on the Young People's Concerts. Son of a conductor father and an opera-singer mother, Damrosch came to America at age 9 and made his own debut as a conductor at age 23, taking on engagements with the New York Oratorio Society, New York Symphony Society and the Metropolitan Opera. Besides his conducting activities (which were often sharply criticized), Damrosch became an enterprising fund raiser on the New York music scene, enjoying the company and support of such prominent figures as Andrew Carnegie.⁶ His brother Frank was also involved in the New York music scene, as a supervisor for school music and the leader of the Young People's Symphony Concerts which he had founded in 1898. Walter, who had also led his own series of children's concerts in the past, eventually took over his brother's main youth concert series when Frank was made director of the Institute of Musical Art.⁷

It should be noted that (Walter) Damrosch's Young People's Symphony Concerts had an impact on English music

⁶Walter Damrosch, My Musical Life (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925), 92.

⁷Damrosch, 328.

patron Sir Robert Mayer and his wife, when they were visiting the United States in 1919.⁹ Upon returning to England the couple implemented a similar series of Children's Concerts in 1923, which they ran, with the help of various conductors, for the next 50 years.⁹ By encouraging children to "love" music and attend concerts on a regular basis, the Robert Mayer Youth Concerts had an astounding impact in 20th-century England on the continued propagation of audiences for symphonic music.¹⁰

Returning to Walter Damrosch, however, it is important to mention one particular activity of his later years that would most clearly pin him down as a major predecessor to Bernstein in the field of general music appreciation. This was his pioneering efforts on radio that brought classical music appreciation lessons to the American public. The NBC Music Appreciation Hour with Walter Damrosch and the NBC Symphony, as Damrosch's program was

⁹Sir Robert Mayer, "My First Hundred Years," a lecture given to the British Institute of Recorded Sound, 3 December 1971, 4.

⁹Sir Robert Mayer, Memorandum: "The Robert Mayer Concerts," 27 November 1972, Sir Robert Mayer Archive, William Ready Division of Archives and Research Materials, McMaster University Library, Hamilton, Ontario.

¹⁰An extensive collection related to Mayer's activities can be found in the Sir Robert Mayer Archive, William Ready Division of Archives and Research Materials, McMaster University Library, Hamilton, Ontario.

titled, was a staple in the regular classroom lessons of millions of school children during its run from 1928-1942.¹¹

On his radio broadcasts, Damrosch talked to his young listeners in a kindly, patient manner, and prepared them to listen to symphonic music by relating composer anecdotes or the traditional stories associated with the works. Since the programs were designed to complement music programs in the school system, the difficulty of the lessons could vary, depending on what level of student - elementary or intermediate - they were intended for.¹² A number of symphonic recordings would be played during the broadcast, with Damrosch, like Bernstein, occasionally making use of a piano to highlight certain key points about a work.¹³

Although Damrosch was well-received in his early years on the radio, his programs can be criticized today for a number of reasons, including their patronizing tone and frequent inaccuracies. His method of encouraging youngsters to memorize great melodies by writing words to the tunes likewise merits criticism. As Harold C. Schonberg once reiterated, "goodness knows how many potential music lovers

¹¹"About Walter Damrosch," Music Journal 9 (February 1961): 37.

¹²Snowden, 22.

¹³Snowden, 24.

were permanently maimed by this idiotic procedure."¹⁴

Bernstein, as will be explained later, also had similar misgivings about certain aspects of the Damrosch approach.

Nevertheless, strong connections still do exist between the work of Damrosch on his Music Appreciation Hour and Bernstein on the Young People's Concerts. These reside in the general goals of the programs and the means by which they were achieved. Both aimed to bring a better understanding of Classical music to the general American public, particularly youth, and both used a modern electronic media to do so, reaching a vast, untapped audience. And, despite the fact that Bernstein employed different methods than Damrosch did, there is still some sense that he consciously perceived himself to be Damrosch's heir in the field of music appreciation. This is clearly demonstrated, for example, by his adoption in the Young People's Concerts of the familiar Damroschian address "my dear young friends."¹⁵

Figures such as Theodore Thomas, Leopold Stokowski, Robert Mayer, and Walter Damrosch therefore can be considered direct predecessors to Bernstein and his work on

¹⁴Harold C. Schonberg, The Great Conductors (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1967), 346.

¹⁵Damrosch began every broadcast with the expression "Good morning, my dear young friends." "About Walter Damrosch," Music Journal 9 (February 1951): 37.

The Young People's Concerts. All made significant contributions in a pedagogical way, reaching out to youth and a general mass audience, and all used Classical symphonic music to do so. Although Bernstein did not admit to any direct influences from the above figures, some connections seem likely. This appears especially true in the cases of Stokowski and Damrosch, who were well known music personalities in Bernstein's youth.

The Influence of Bernstein's Own Teachers

Some more open admissions of influence occurred in Bernstein's comments about his own teachers. This was particularly evident in a 1963 Young People's Concert entitled "A Tribute to Teachers," in which he discussed his teachers' methods and their individual contributions to his education.

The program left little doubt, first of all, that Serge Koussevitzky had made a deep impression on Bernstein. Bernstein had been a longtime admirer of Koussevitzky and was first given the opportunity to work with the Boston Symphony conductor during the summer of 1940 at Tanglewood. He quickly became Koussevitzky's top student and soon began to regard the conductor as his personal mentor.

Koussevitzky, as Bernstein recalled, had employed the following approach as an educator:

[Koussevitzky] taught his pupils by simply inspiring them. He taught everything through feeling, through instinct and emotions. Even the purely mechanical matter of beating time, four beats to a bar, became an emotional experience instead of a mathematical one.¹⁶

This inspirational method, as Bernstein called it, was something that he believed characterized a great teacher:

You see, teaching isn't just the dry business of scales and exercises. A great teacher is one who can light a spark in you. A spark that sets you on fire with enthusiasm for music or whatever you happen to be studying. And that's where real knowledge comes from - the desire to know.¹⁷

A quote in a Time article likewise supports the notion that Bernstein himself aspired to this kind of approach in his own work as an educator:

We live in our emotions...and that is the area a teacher must reach - and as soon as possible. If you can strike an emotional spark, then you can teach anything.¹⁸

It is evident, then, that Bernstein not only felt a kinship with Koussevitzky as a conductor, but also as an educator, since he adopted much of the latter's inspirational approach to teaching music.

Some of the other figures mentioned on "A Tribute to Teachers" included Harvard Professors David Prall

¹⁶Leonard Bernstein, "A Tribute to Teachers" in Findings (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982), 186.

¹⁷Bernstein, "A Tribute to Teachers" in Findings, 187.

¹⁸"Talent Show," Time, 2 January 1956, 32.

(philosophy and aesthetics), Edward Burlingame Hill (orchestration), Tillman Merritt (counterpoint and harmony), and Walter Piston (fugue), whom Bernstein describes as "one of the wittiest minds he [had] ever encountered." In addition, Curtis Institute instructors Isabella Vengerova (piano), Renée Longy (orchestral score reading) and Randall Thompson (orchestration) were noted. Vengerova, recalled Bernstein, was "[an] adorable tyrant who forced me to listen to myself when I played the piano."

As well, Bernstein's private piano teachers Helen Coates and Heinrich Gebhard were recognized. In his remarks concerning Gebhard, inspiration once again appeared to be a major factor when Bernstein suggested that the Boston pianist "made every lesson a ride on a magic carpet."

Finally, in "Tribute to Teachers," Bernstein paid a very high tribute to Curtis Institute conductor Fritz Reiner, calling him his "greatest living teacher."¹⁹ Reiner, he said, did not use the inspirational method of Koussevitzky, but enforced exactingly high standards from his students, stressed economy of motion in conducting technique, and encouraged his students to "concentrate on getting the sound from the orchestra that the composer

¹⁹An announcement at the end of the program indicated that the 74-year-old Reiner had died before the program was aired.

wanted."

When considering, however, the relative amount of influence exerted on Bernstein by Reiner as compared to Koussevitzky, there would appear to be no contest. The much greater similarities in approach between Bernstein and Koussevitzky are indicative that the latter had a substantially greater impact on Bernstein both as a conductor and educator.

Bernstein's Approach to Music Appreciation

So far, it has been documented how Bernstein had several forerunners in the field of music appreciation and how he was influenced as an educator by his own teachers, in particular, Serge Koussevitzky. Now, some further aspects of his teaching methodology will be examined in greater depth.

As far as Bernstein's overall approach to music appreciation is concerned, first of all, it is clear that he intentionally moved away from traditional teaching methods of the past. Obviously he felt the tactics employed by figures such as Damrosch had oversimplified or sugar-coated the subject of music to make it palatable to children. This was made clear in his first known interview about the Young People's Concerts, for example, when he contended that

[I]t's impossible for me to say, "Dear children, this is your Uncle Lennie speaking" and then tell them about Brother Violin, Sister Viola, Cousin Bassoon, Uncle Contrabassoon and all that. This approach to the instruments bores me to pieces.²⁰

Instead, as the article suggested, Bernstein felt it was his personal crusade to teach young Americans (and their parents) about music at a higher and more sophisticated level.

The inherent problems with teaching music appreciation to a general audience was actually an issue that Bernstein had pondered for several years previous to the Young People's Concerts. In his 1957 article "Speaking of Music," for instance, he had offered his views on a situation that Virgil Thomson had called the "Music Appreciation Racket:"

The racket operates in two styles ... Type A is the birds-bees-and rivulets variety, which invokes anything at all under the sun as long as it is extramusical. It turns every note or phrase or chord into a cloud or crag or Cossack. It tells homey tales about the great composers, either spurious or irrelevant. It abounds in anecdotes, quotes from famous performers, indulges itself in bad jokes and unutterable puns, teases the hearer, and tells us nothing about music.

Type B is concerned with analysis - a laudably serious endeavor - but is as dull as Type A is coy. It is the "now comes the theme upside down in the second oboe" variety. A guaranteed soporific. What it does, ultimately, is to supply you with a road map of themes, a kind of Baedeker to the bare geography of a composition; but again,

²⁰Leonard Bernstein, quoted in Bob Stahl, "Musician With a Cause," IV Guide, 18 January 1958, 18.

it tells us nothing about music except those superficial geographical facts.²¹

Obviously, neither approach was something Bernstein felt helpful or desirable in trying to educate general audiences.

In the Young People's Concerts, therefore, it was apparent that Bernstein was trying very hard to avoid the pitfalls of either extreme. He usually circumvented the simplifications of the Type A program, for example, by refusing to employ pedestrian anecdotes about famous composers or rely on the traditional literary-narrative meanings ascribed to certain works. This was immediately apparent in "What Does Music Mean?" (1958), when, after conducting the William Tell Overture, he turned to his young audience and blatantly explained that the well-known interpretation of the work was invalid: "I hate to disappoint you but it's really not about the Lone Ranger - it's about notes." Later on in the same program, he reinforced this idea with his remarks on Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony: "It's still the same lovely music whether it's about water or sleeping in a hammock."²²

In some ways, the firm stand that Bernstein appeared

²¹Leonard Bernstein, "Speaking of Music," Atlantic Monthly 200 (December 1957): 105.

²²Leonard Bernstein, "What Does Music Mean?" (CBS Television, 1958), 16mm film.

to exhibit against referentialism may have been self-contradictory to a point, considering the numerous times he himself used descriptive phrases and/or musical analogies that consciously or unconsciously referred the audience to elements outside of the music itself. As Chapter Four will determine, there did appear to be a certain incompatibility when it came to Bernstein's real and expressed views on referentialism.²⁹ However, it is significant that he avoided relying on such references exclusively, and mixed in other, more technical terms. In addition, his extra-musical references were frequently created afresh, from his own imagination. In this way he was able to stimulate the interest of the musically inexperienced without boring those audience members who already had some prior knowledge about the works being performed.

In the Young People's Concerts, Bernstein likewise attempted to avoid the inaccessibility of the type B program. Although his talks, particularly in the "music fundamental" programs, incorporated such technical terms as "bitonality," "pentatonic scale," "sonata form," "augmentation," and "syncopation," his explanations of such terms were generally kept very brief, and frequently followed up by colourful analogies that would lead the

²⁹See discussion, 107-112.

audience to a fuller understanding of their meaning. In his analyses of musical compositions, similar tactics were often employed. He would usually focus the audience's attention on just a few important details about the score and then make some extra, personal commentary about the music for added interest.

In his analysis of Sibelius's Second Symphony, movement one ("A Tribute to Sibelius" [1965]), for example, he first illustrated (through reference to various excerpts) how a particular three-note motive of the initial accompaniment recurred with increasing importance. Then he explained how it fit into the larger "tangled mystery" of the symphony:

A special fascination of this music comes from the suspense in its construction, just as in a great detective story. Sibelius is like a great mystery writer who plants clues for you right from the very beginning - clues that point the way, or sometimes puzzle you, but always keep you panting for the next one[s] - and in the end, they all link up, so that when the final light dawns and all is made clear, you feel the thrill of having solved a great mystery.²⁴

In such a way, then, Bernstein, avoided the potential dryness of a Type B program by limiting the total amount of hard information in his talks and trying to add some inspirational commentary, to help his audiences take a

²⁴Leonard Bernstein, "A Tribute to Sibelius" (CBS Television, 1965), 16mm film.

greater personal interest in the works he would be presenting.

However brief, the inclusion of some technical terms and analysis in the discussion appeared to be an important asset of Bernstein's Young People's Concerts. By raising music discussions to a more sophisticated level, they helped Bernstein's talks to avoid degenerating into a pure storytelling or pure entertainment approach. The desirability of this is perhaps no clearer than when one compares Bernstein's approach to that of someone like Peter Ustinov, who appeared on his own, separate Young People's Concert of 1969 entitled "Words and Music."²⁵ Ustinov's constant joke cracking and silly clowning as a bewigged conductor was exactly the kind of undermining approach to teaching Classical music appreciation that Bernstein had proved to be avoidable.

One other notable feature about Bernstein's approach to teaching on the Young People's Concerts concerns his unmistakable use of body language and facial expressions during his conducting. These gestures, highly characteristic of Bernstein's personal style, were at times akin to a pantomime that mirrored the expressive qualities of a piece of music.

²⁵Peter Ustinov, "Words and Music" (CBS Television, 1969), 16mm film.

Leonard Marcus, in "The Demonstrator," first discussed how this aspect of Bernstein's conducting technique could be interpreted as a sort of pedagogical aid:

His graphic display of the music seems to point out to the audience both the nature and the specifics of a piece of music. Bernstein is driven by an urge to communicate and clarify musical ideas for as many people as possible and by any means available. It is basically a pedagogical drive and intentionally or not, it shows in his technique. One can sometimes imagine his baton transformed into a pointer, his orchestra into a blackboard upon which he both illustrates and underlines the music he is performing.²⁶

As far as the Young People's Concerts were concerned, therefore, this tendency also must be considered as an extra, non-verbal means by which he communicated his ideas about the character of the music to his audience.

Depending on the program, these gestures and expressions could play a highly conspicuous role. In "Two Ballet Birds" (1969), for example, after expressing how the soaring swan and flying firebird are symbolically at the heart of Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake and Stravinsky's Firebird, Bernstein's conducting gestures during the performances of these works were nothing less than airborne, complete with some very bird-like "flapping." Similarly, in "Fidelio: A Celebration of Life" (1970), the anguished intensity of

²⁶Leonard Marcus, "The Demonstrator," High Fidelity 13 (May 1963): 33.

Bernstein's involvement with Beethoven is captured in a profile shot when he leads soloist Forest Warren in Florestan's Aria from Act II. Even in a lighter program such as "Humor in Music" (1959), Bernstein's changing facial expressions were able to focus the viewer's attention on the different types of musical humor that he was trying to convey, from satire, wit, and burlesque to musical puns and parody.

It is granted that this kind of extroverted approach in Bernstein's conducting could be potentially criticized as being an unnecessary distraction from the music. Indeed, in a formal concert situation, a certain percentage of experienced concert-goers would likely not want or need such a visual guide to the music that Bernstein provided. However, as a pedagogical technique, it seemed to serve Bernstein well on the Young People's Concerts. It allowed him to give his talk and then reinforce the interpretative ideas he had spoken about from a different angle. It was especially an excellent pedagogical aid for the untutored listener, since it bypassed some of the difficulties associated in speaking directly about music and gave an immediate indication of some of the work's expressive qualities. And, at the same time, it was an especially effective technique for the visually oriented television medium - for the fact that it gave the camera an interesting

subject. Bernstein's expressive body language in fact was probably an essential part of his ability to sustain the interest of many casual television viewers during the longer musical excerpts.

Bernstein's Liberal Ideology and Music Education

Bernstein's approach to music education fell closely in line with his decidedly liberal political stance. His writings in The Infinite Variety of Music, for example, underscored the great importance he ascribed to spreading musical knowledge on a wide scale to all citizens of America. "Until we have a great listening public, and not just a passively hearing one, we will never be a musically cultured nation."²⁷

Bernstein's Young People's Concerts clearly followed from this same ideology in their attempts to take Classical music out of the traditional concert hall and present it to mainstream Americans via television. Furthermore, they demonstrated Bernstein's desire to shake off the traditional elitist trappings usually associated with the subject of Classical music. On his programs, for example, Bernstein was obviously one conductor not afraid to use vernacular

²⁷Leonard Bernstein, "The Musak Muse," in The Infinite Variety of Music (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1966), 20.

phrases in his speech or play snatches of popular music alongside the great classics.

In fact, as his comments during an interview on the Young People's Concerts reveal, Bernstein felt that it was the "elitist trappings," in particular, that were holding back new generations from developing interest in the subject of Classical music:

Children will listen to music if it's presented as a natural function of living ... Why do so many children consider listening to Classical music as a "duty?" ... Because so many adults consider it as a duty, ... as a bitter pill that has to be swallowed in order to become "cultured."²⁰

By cutting down the elitist barriers on his own programs, then, Bernstein hoped to be able to greatly expand the audience interested in Classical music.

The leftist leanings in Bernstein's philosophy also reveal themselves in his choice of guest artists on the Young People's Concerts. Out of the huge pool of available talent, there appears to have been a conscious attempt on the part of Bernstein to include a number of African-American performers. This began with Reri Grist ("Who Is Gustav Mahler?" [1960]) and continued on future programs with appearances by such artists as William Warfield ("Aaron Copland's Birthday Party" [1961]), Veronica Tyler ("Young

²⁰Leonard Bernstein, quoted in Edith Efron, "Bernstein Conducts an Interview," TV Guide, 30 December 1961, 16.

Performers" [1961]), André Watts ("Young Performers" [1963]), Weldon Berry Jr. ("Young Performers" [1963]), James De Preist ("Young Performers" [1966]), Simon Estes ("Charles Ives: American Pioneer [1967]), and the 5-member jazz band which joined the Philharmonic orchestra for Improvisations for Orchestra and Jazz Soloists in "Jazz in the Concert Hall" (1964). In retrospect, it was highly significant that Bernstein used his personal power to enable these deserving artists to appear on national television, seeing that it was an era when the policies and politics of major networks were primarily white-dominated.

Support for the civil rights movements was something manifested in Bernstein's other activities during the decade of the 1960s, as well. He was well known, for instance, to meet privately with civil rights advocates, and during his 1964 sabbatical year, hosted a fund-raiser for the Legal Defense Fund of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. In 1969, after his retirement, he also threw a much publicized party for the leaders of the radical and militant Black Panthers.

It has been suggested that his public involvement with civil rights might have been even stronger during the 1960s, had he not had to curtail some activities while

conductor of the Philharmonic.²⁹ If this were truly the case, than it is likely that the Young People's Concerts provided one of the few public outlets with the orchestra where Bernstein effectively, if moderately, was able to demonstrate his support for the civil rights movement.

It is possible that on the Young People's Concerts Bernstein also intended to demonstrate some support for the mounting feminist cause of the 1960s. A progressive attitude, for example, can be seen by his featuring of three female musicians in nontraditional capacities. Two female conductors, Sylvia Caduff and Helen Quash, for instance, made appearances on young performers programs of 1967 and 1968. Composer Shulamith Ran, a student at the Mannes College of Music, was also showcased as a role model in her craft on the fifth young performers program (1963) of the series.

Moreover, in the fourth young performers program, Bernstein is heard speaking out against the remnant Victorian attitudes surrounding female pianists:

It used to be in the olden days that young ladies by the thousands used to study the piano, just as part of good breeding. It was enough if they could play a little piece at a party - which

²⁹Joan Peyser, Bernstein: A Biography (New York: William Morrow, 1987), 407. Peyser discusses, for example, how Bernstein was put in a compromising position with the Philharmonic, when two black musicians filed a discrimination suit against the orchestra.

was called a social accomplishment. But our three young ladies today have nothing at all to do with that world. They are serious artists.³⁰

By making such a statement and featuring female musicians in nontraditional roles, Bernstein would therefore appear to be a supporter of some progressive feminist ideals.

Nevertheless, some comments on other programs make one somewhat less certain of whether Bernstein is really that progressive in his attitudes toward women musicians. There are references, for example to Vivaldi's "strange all-girl orchestra" on "What is a Concerto" [1959]), as if this concept were still an incomprehensible anomaly and not something that had been prevalent in American cities as little as 30 years ago.³¹ Some dated sexual stereotyping about sound quality (masculine/feminine) was also heard on several occasions, including in Bernstein's introductory speech about (male) cellist Lynn Harrell:

Lynn looks more like a football quarterback than a cellist, but when he plays he can make the cello sound as delicate as a girl or as powerful as, well, a football quarterback.³²

Such comments could always be dismissed, of course, as

³⁰Leonard Bernstein, "Young Performers" (CBS Television, 1963), videocassette.

³¹Nicholas Tawa, Art Music in the American Society (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1987), 136.

³²Leonard Bernstein, "Young Performers" (CBS Television, 1961), videocassette.

commonly accepted attitudes of the era. But, in comparison to his staunch support of the civil rights movement, they do introduce more uncertainties regarding how far Bernstein agreed with or was willing to support feminist causes in the Young People's Concerts.

In the years after the Young People's Concerts, Bernstein continued to maintain his "left-wing" attitudes toward music education. In 1977, he even addressed a House Committee in support of a bill calling for a White House Conference on the Arts. In this speech he made some particularly strong recommendations about music education in the school systems, stating that students should be taught to read music and understand its concepts from a very early age. "No child is tone deaf" he argued, "every child has the natural ability and desire to assimilate musical ideas and comprehend their combinations into musical forms."³³

Whether such goals could ever be accomplished, however, will remain to be seen. The reality of the situation in the last ten years is that shrinking funds, lack of interest, and increased use of non-specialists in music programs have thwarted many attempts to improve the quality of music education in the school system. Certain writers would even argue against the need for universal

³³Leonard Bernstein, "On Education," in Findings (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982), 334.

programs in the first place. Peter Fletcher, for one, would argue against the idea that all children are as "naturally sensitive" to music that Bernstein would imply.⁹⁴ Instead, he would prefer to see music programs reserved for the children who showed interest and aptitude for the subject. Nevertheless, even if Bernstein's hopes for an improved, universal system of music education do seem rather idealistic in the face of present conditions, they still remain an admirable goal.

As far as music education on the large scale is concerned, then, Leonard Bernstein clearly established himself as the major (American) successor to such figures as Theodore Thomas, Leopold Stokowski, Robert Mayer, and Walter Damrosch. By using the modern mass media of television, just as Damrosch had previously used radio, Bernstein was able to reach an ever-increasing American audience with his musical talks on the Young People's Concerts.

In his approach to music appreciation, Bernstein attempted to add a new element of sophistication that he felt had been previously lacking. His efforts in this direction were not only apparent in such aspects as his speaking manner, but also in the content of his lessons,

⁹⁴Peter Fletcher, "Elitism, Egalitarianism, and Method," in Education and Music, (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 124.

which effectively combined some technical references with imaginative descriptive expressions. Although it may seem unusual, Bernstein's highly visible conducting gestures and facial expressions should also be considered as another important aspect of his pedagogical technique, since they most likely reinforced certain interpretive ideas about music for many novice listeners.

Finally, on the personal level, it is evident that Bernstein, the teacher, demonstrated a social conscience, since he supported such issues as the civil rights movement on the Young People's Concerts and aspired to make knowledge of Classical art music the right of all Americans regardless of social class. Above all, however, it is apparent that he was a teacher with a great passion for his subject: one who tried to inspire others to love music as much as he did himself.

CHAPTER FOUR
SOME RECURRENT THEMES AND ISSUES
IN BERNSTEIN'S YOUNG PEOPLE'S CONCERTS

Beyond allowing the opportunity to examine Bernstein's historical context, relationship with the press and contributions as educator, the Young People's Concerts also provide a means by which to examine Bernstein's underlying philosophical and aesthetic beliefs regarding music. Some important recurrent themes addressed in the series, for example, include the questions of meaning in music, music as a language, authenticity in music and new directions in music. Although the treatment of these topics here is by no means exhaustive, this discussion will provide, in a preliminary way, some insights into Bernstein's thinking during the years of the series.

Meaning in Music

To begin, it is interesting to try to determine Bernstein's stance on meaning in music. This was the central issue of "What Does Music Mean?" (1958), the very first program of the series.

Initially, on this program, Bernstein made what

appeared to be a highly formalistic statement regarding the nature of musical meaning:

No matter what stories people tell you about what music means, forget them. Stories are not what the music means. Music is never about things. Music just is. It's a lot of beautiful notes and sounds put together so well that we get pleasure out of hearing them.¹

Several illustrations were then offered in support of this argument, including one instance in which excerpts from Strauss's Don Quixote were played against two different literary backgrounds. For the first performance, Bernstein told the audience a fabricated story about the adventures of Superman, while the second time he supplied the traditional account involving Don Quixote and his companion Sancho Panza. By demonstrating how the extramusical content of a work could be freely substituted in such a way without changing the musical content, Bernstein aptly made his point about how extramusical meanings were only a secondary consideration and not essential to understanding true musical meaning.

Later on in "What Does Music Mean?," it became apparent that Bernstein also wanted to leave some room for emotional aspects in his overall conception of musical

¹Leonard Bernstein, "What Does Music Mean?," in Leonard Bernstein's Young People's Concerts for Reading and Listening, revised and expanded ed. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1970), 63.

meaning, particularly when he suggested that musical meaning was ultimately bound up in the emotional effect that a work of music has on a person:

Music describes emotions, feelings ... The better music is, the more it will make you feel the emotions that the composer felt when he wrote it. Those feelings belong to the music; they're what music is about.²

These emotional reactions, as Bernstein called them, were not always of a quality that could be accurately described in words. Rather, he argued that certain musical emotions were of a special nature and could only be conveyed through the musical medium alone.³ Thus, by the end of "What Does Music Mean?," Bernstein's claim was that music was nonspecific in terms of representing extramusical concepts, but very specific with regard to emotional content.

In this position, of course, Bernstein was not alone. Aaron Copland, for one, had previously offered an almost identical argument about the "special" nature of musical emotions and their relation to musical meaning in his public-minded book What to Listen for in Music:

²Leonard Bernstein, "What Does Music Mean?," 82, 84.

³Bernstein's position that music contained "special" emotions was confirmed in an article that appeared several months later. Henry Brandon, "The Notes - That's What I Mean By Musical Meaning," New Republic, 9 June 1958, 16.

Music expresses, at different moments, serenity or exuberance, regret or triumph, fury or delight. It expresses each of these moods, and many others, in a numberless variety of subtle shadings and differences. It may even express a state of meaning for which there exists no adequate word in any language. In that case, musicians often like to say that it has only a purely musical meaning.⁴

Owing to the close relationship between Bernstein and Copland, it is possible, then, that the latter may have influenced Bernstein to proclaim a similar line of thinking in his initial Young People's Concert.

During the following Young People's Concerts, however, there were few occasions when Bernstein restated the same philosophy. Audience members were really only reminded of it in "What Is Classical Music?" (1959), when Bernstein expounded, for example, that the music of Haydn and Mozart was able to make the listener feel "special, deep" emotions, expressible only through the musical medium itself.

Conversely, the numerous descriptive comments that were heard on many occasions would seem to indicate a greater willingness on the part of Bernstein to discuss music in terms of more specifically referential ideas than he had previously admitted. During "Musical Atoms: A Study of Intervals" (1965), for example, he recalled how a passage

⁴Aaron Copland, What to Listen for in Music, revised ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1957), 15.

in Vaughan Williams's Fourth Symphony reminded him of "a great monster rising from sea." Or, in relation to the first movement of Debussy's La Mer (What Is Impressionism? [1961]), he was heard suggesting that the "first spooky rays of dawn" were built to a climax where the brass chords are left "hanging like a great ball of fire."

On even a few occasions, his approach for an entire program seemed to conflict with his previously stated philosophy that music is nonrepresentational. This was the case, for example, in "Happy Birthday, Igor Stravinsky" (1962), "Fantastic Variations" (1968) or "Thus Spake Richard Strauss" (1971), in which his analyses of the chosen works relied almost exclusively on traditional literary-narrative associations. In "Fantastic Variations," his narration of the traditional story (of Don Quixote) was perhaps the most paradoxical of all, since this was the very piece whose literary-narrative associations he had previously spurned in "What Does Music Mean?" (1958). Part of the way through the program it seemed as if he had remembered this himself when he remarked to the audience "you know, it's a kind of desecration to talk yourself through a piece of music." Nevertheless, he continued to fill up most of his spoken air time with a simple narration of the Don Quixote story, and, as a result, this program lacked something of the fresh originality of the other Bernstein telecasts, particularly

for viewers with previous knowledge of the story. Perhaps "Thus Spake Richard Strauss" was the most successful of the three programs since Bernstein was able to keep the narration of the extramusical ideas (from Nietzsche's writings) during Thus Spake Zarathustra more contained while mixing in other interesting commentary and demonstrations.

One might suspect, therefore, that Bernstein's personal philosophy regarding musical meaning lay much closer to the referentialist viewpoint than he had originally implied during the first Young People's Concert. Though his opening statements in "What Does Music Mean?" (1958) might have suggested pronounced inclinations toward a formalistic view of music, it seems unlikely that Bernstein was ever strongly oriented in that direction. Instead, he probably decided that a more formalistic tone was necessary at the outset of the series in order to make a strong statement about the Damrosch-style approach to music appreciation, which he effectively accomplished. Perhaps as well, the Harvard-educated Bernstein wanted to establish himself as correctly in tune with higher academic thinking of the day which characteristically leaned toward the positivistic.⁵

⁵Joseph Kerman, for example, discusses how positivism was a predominant force in post-war academic music circles. Joseph Kerman, Contemplating Music: Challenges to Musicology (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard

Music as a Language

In 1973, in his Harvard Lectures, Bernstein gained much notoriety by drawing close parallels between the functioning of music and language. During the earlier Young People's Concerts, however, he had also deliberately made many connections between music and "language," albeit in a much simpler, metaphorical sense.

Such references were common, first of all, when Bernstein wanted to stress that a particular composer was writing in a highly original, individualistic style. In "Happy Birthday, Igor Stravinsky" (1962), for instance, he stated that Stravinsky's works are "in a personal style and in a language all his own." Similarly, in "The Genius of Paul Hindemith" (1964), he compared one of Hindemith's architecturally-structured compositions to a composition by Bach, saying "the only difference is in the language." Finally, in "A Copland Celebration" (1970), he also reiterated how "Copland's style is his musical language itself," and that the smaller stylistic variations among different Copland works were representative of different "dialects" within the same language. Copland's Concerto for Clarinet and String Orchestra therefore represented the "big-city vernacular," while his Billy the Kid was "just as

much part of the Coplandnese language, only this time born in the wide open spaces of the American West."

In other programs, references to music in terms of "language" were made on a larger scale. In "Folk Music in the Concert Hall" (1961), for example, Bernstein discussed (in simplified terms) how a country's nationalistic music could be identified by its own musical "accent."⁶ Hungarian music, as he demonstrated, was characterized by its heavy, quick accents on the first beat of the bar, French music by its "smoothness" and "evenness," Spanish music by its "crisp, rhythmic texture," and German music by its "heaviness" and "importance." Likewise, in "What Is American Music?" (1958), references to an American musical "language" were made when Bernstein suggested that the American musical language epitomized "manysidedness," and represented such diverse qualities as "rip-roaring vitality, ruggedness, loneliness, wide-open spaces, sweet homespun American simplicity, and [the] sentimentality that comes out of popular songs."⁷

In assessing Bernstein's usage of the terms "language" or "accents" with respect to music, it is

⁶Bernstein gave a convincing demonstration in this program showing how the nationalistic musical styles grew out of the natural speech patterns of the native languages.

⁷Leonard Bernstein, "A Copland Celebration" (CBS Television, 1970), videocassette.

possible that he could be criticized for being inaccurate or misleading, since music lacks the same symbolic carrying-power of words. However, as far as his discussions in the Young People's Concerts were concerned, it would seem that his use of such terms outside this one area of dispute was rather benign. When he referred to music as a language, it was always clear from the context of the lesson that he was basically talking about stylistic features and therefore no real confusion resulted.

Later, in his 1973 Harvard Lectures, The Unanswered Question: Six Talks at Harvard, Bernstein of course went on to propose much closer parallels between music and language than he had previously suggested in the Young People's Concerts. Such parallels, he claimed, could be found in the realms of poetic expressiveness, grammatical sense and innateness.

Here, perhaps one can question how far Bernstein should have attempted to draw the connections between music and language. Some of his remarks, at times, verge on the spurious, as a result of his moving too far out of his own realm of expertise.^e

However, as far as his comments during the Young

^eSee David Hamilton, "The Unanswered Question: Why?," review of The Unanswered Question: Six Talks at Harvard by Leonard Bernstein, in High Fidelity 25 (April 1975): 71-73.

People's Concerts were concerned, he was in no such danger. His theory of music as a language in the programs was simply not developed to the more detailed extent that it was later in the Harvard Lectures, although the frequency of his "language-related" comments can be taken as a telling sign of things to come.

Authenticity in Musical Performance

On the issue of authenticity in music, Bernstein appeared to support the notion that performers should seek to maintain a high degree of fidelity to a composer's original instructions. This was first implied in "What Is Classical Music?" (1959), for example, when Bernstein defined Classical (art) music as being an "exact" kind of music where the composer "puts down the exact notes and as many directions he can think about ... to help the performers give an exact performance of those notes he thought up."⁹ Although Bernstein went on to acknowledge that there are limits to the number of instructions that can appear on a score, he nevertheless suggested that it was the performer's responsibility to try and interpret "as exactly as possible" what it was the composer wanted.

⁹Leonard Bernstein, "What Is Classical Music?," in Leonard Bernstein's Young People's Concerts for Reading and Listening, revised and expanded ed. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1970), 95.

A similar philosophy was later echoed in "The Sound of an Orchestra" (1965). During this program, Bernstein reiterated that

it is the job of an orchestra, and of its conductor, to interpret a composer's notes as closely as possible to what we imagine the composer wanted - to make the kind of sounds we believe he heard in his mind when he wrote the music. A lot of people have a mistaken idea about the whole matter ... and talk about the "sound" of this or that orchestra. But that is exactly what a great orchestra should not have. Because if it always has its own sound then how could it have the composer's? ... Anything else is a sin of pride.¹⁰

Following from this, he proceeded to give an effective pedagogical demonstration of how such stylistic performance conventions as phrasing, dynamics, vibrato, glissando, rubato would be considered appropriate for one particular era while just as inappropriate for another.

In other programs Bernstein likewise lent support to the cause of authenticity in musical performance. In "What Is a Concerto?" (1959), for instance, he stressed to the audience how different numbers of instrumentalists were required to properly perform concerti from different eras. Likewise, on "Unusual Instruments of Present, Past and Future" (1960), he invited the New York Pro Musica on the program so that they could perform examples of early music

¹⁰Leonard Bernstein, "The Sound of an Orchestra" (CBS Television, 1965), 16mm film.

on their authentic instruments.

Despite this outward show of support for authenticity, however, it is once again questionable how far Bernstein himself would be prepared to follow his own advice. In fact, his conducting performances during this era with the New York Philharmonic were often known to be characterized by the presence of highly-charged personalized sentiment and a tendency toward exaggeration. As Leonard Marcus noted:

With Bernstein, anything from a dolce to a fortissimo may bring on a corresponding change of tempo to heighten the new character of a passage. The surface of a Bernstein performance glitters with color. If the composer indicates staccato, legato, marcato, accelerando, diminuendo, or subito this or that, Bernstein may tack on his own molto to make sure that no one misses it.¹¹

Moreover, Bernstein's ideas concerning the interpretation of Classical music clashed with what he said in the Young People's Concerts regarding popular or folk music. For these latter types of music, he openly promoted the idea that a performer was free to make radically different interpretations, stating in "What Is Classical Music?" (1959), for example, that "popular songs definitely should not be played the way the composer wrote them, the

¹¹Leonard Marcus, "The Demonstrator," High Fidelity 13 (May 1963): 99.

same way all the time."¹² Since no real reasons were given for this conclusion, it would appear that he had adopted the freer outlook on interpretation of popular music, simply from the fact that it was (and still is) a commonly accepted practice.

Finally, Bernstein's stand on authenticity can also be challenged with respect to his comments regarding transcriptions in "Bach Transmogrified" (1969), where he introduced the Stokowski transcription of J.S. Bach's Little Organ Fugue in G Minor. At first, he sounded very enthusiastic about the orchestral work, stating that if Bach were alive today, "he would have most certainly given his music the same full treatment." However, in his next line he suddenly retreated to a more cautious position by saying that he himself was "not completely sold on this argument." Like the matter of interpretation in Classical versus popular music, this kind of dialogue would seem to suggest that there were some conflicting impulses between Bernstein's stated and actual beliefs regarding musical authenticity.

On the matter of authenticity in music, then, it would appear that Bernstein exhibited a more rigid attitude as a teacher on the Young People's Concerts than in his own

¹²Leonard Bernstein, "What Is Classical Music?," 95.

practice as a conductor and performer. On the one hand, he most likely felt obligated to uphold the teachings of such people as Fritz Reiner, who had taught him to strive for fidelity to the "composer's sound."¹⁹ Nevertheless, because of the unmistakable personal stamp on his own musical interpretations, it is questionable whether Bernstein would have ever intended to realize such a philosophy in a very strict sense.

Bernstein's Tastes in 20th-Century Music

Through examining the modern repertoire used for the Young People's Concerts, it becomes clear that Bernstein had definite biases when it came to the types of contemporary music that he would feature on the Young People's Concerts. For the most part, much of the chosen music was in an accessible and markedly tonal style and from earlier in the century. As Chapter One has already pointed out, a number of the 20th-century American composers who fitted into this category were well represented in the series. Little was performed, however, that could be considered serial, electronic or aleatoric.

In fact, there were really only two major instances when electronic pieces were featured: the Concerted Piece

¹⁹See Chapter Three, 90-91.

for Tape Recorder and Orchestra by Otto Luening and Vladimir Ussachevsky (Unusual Instruments of Past, Present and Future [1960]), and the Moog synthesizer version of J.S. Bach's Little Organ Fugue in G Minor (Bach Transmogrified [1969]). Upon watching these programs, it was apparent that Bernstein favoured the former, in which tape-recorded music was combined with a live performance by the Philharmonic. In the latter case, despite his lighthearted attempts at introducing the Moog ("Hello, Hal"),¹⁴ he did not seem at all thrilled about the idea of relegating the entire performance spotlight to an electronic instrument.

In retrospect, it is not surprising that electronic music was treated rather sparingly in the Young People's Concerts. Bernstein's disdain for electronics was, in fact, something that he openly expressed on other occasions during these years. In The Infinite Variety of Music, for instance, he criticized electronics along with serialism and aleatoric music as "hav[ing] already acquired the musty odor of academicism."¹⁵ Or, on another occasion, he eschewed the newer sound innovations of certain popular groups, saying "too many rock groups are too fascinated with electronics.

¹⁴"Hal" was the portentous computer that developed a life of its own in the film 2001: A Space Odyssey.

¹⁵Leonard Bernstein, The Infinite Variety of Music (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1966), 10.

They seem to be saying 'Look, that made a nice noise when I pressed that button; let's do it again.'¹⁶ To speculate, it is possible that this bias had developed out of the fact that the performer-conductor Bernstein did not relish the thought of electronics replacing humans as the vehicles of musical expression.

Bernstein's strong biases against 12-tone music (and serial music as well) were also made apparent by the almost complete absence of it in the Young People's Concerts. There were only a few programs, including "What Does Music Mean?" (1958) and "Farewell to Nationalism" (1964), in which any scraps of 12-tone music were heard or references to 12-tone composition techniques made.

Instead, it was quite evident in the Young People's Concerts that Bernstein's 20th-century musical loyalties lay along the path of tonality. In "Happy Birthday, Igor Stravinsky" (1962), for example, Stravinsky, the 20th-century purveyor of the tonal tradition, was significantly hailed by Bernstein as "the greatest living composer in the world today."¹⁷ Other "tonal" composers like Hindemith and

¹⁶"'The Symphonic Form is Dead' And Other Observations by a New Elder Statesman," Time, 30 August 1968, 49.

¹⁷Throughout the series, it was clear that Bernstein was championing early Stravinsky works as opposed to the later and lesser-known serial compositions by this composer.

Copland also received their own, special tribute programs, while the second Viennese school and their American counterparts were virtually ignored. Charles Ives, perhaps, was the one case in which a more "experimental" composer received a full tribute. Even so, the majority of Ives's works selected for his special program ("Charles Ives: American Pioneer" [1967]) contained prominent, tonally-based American folk tunes that Bernstein made sure everyone heard.

In some ways, it seems unfortunate that Bernstein could not have presented a more representational cross-section of 20th-century works on his programs. He, of all people, might have been able to make the works of certain modern composers more accessible to the public. But, at the same time, it is unlikely that Bernstein, with his strong biases against the music, could have ever pulled off such works with conviction, or convinced the Philharmonic to play them. In the end, it is preferable that he was able to expand the audience's knowledge of 20th-century American music to the extent he did, using works he knew to be accessible.

In Bernstein's Young People's Concerts then, some important recurrent themes included the concepts of meaning in music and authenticity in music. On these issues, it appeared that Bernstein intended to take a position against

referentialism and uphold the premise of fidelity to a "composer's sound." Due to certain inconsistencies in Bernstein's attitudes regarding these matters in the series as a whole, however, it is questionable how far these stated ideals were consistent with his own practiced beliefs.

One of Bernstein's best-defined views on music in the series was in his attitude toward 20th-century composers. From his clear avoidance of 12-tone works and other, more radically avant-garde compositions, it was strikingly evident that Bernstein held strong personal biases against these types of music. Instead, through his championing of tonal composers, it was apparent that he wished the modern musical tradition to be continued along the lines of tonality. This issue, along with the concept of music as a language, would be later explored more fully by Bernstein in his Harvard Lectures.

CONCLUSIONS

In 1969, Leonard Bernstein announced that he was leaving his full-time position as conductor of the New York Philharmonic in order to "concentrate maximally on composing."¹ Within a few years he had also left the Young People's Concerts, moving on to new television projects that included the Harvard Lectures, appearances on Great Performances (PBS) and the 1981 Bernstein/Beethoven series (CBS Cable).² With these programs, and other selected specials, Bernstein continued to maintain his status as the most visible musician on television throughout the 1970s and 1980s. When he was given an opportunity to resume a series of Young People's Concerts, however, he declined, apparently feeling that they were a "closed" chapter of his life, and the work of a "younger man."³

¹Leonard Bernstein, quoted in Harold C. Schonberg, "Bernstein: Wrong Time to Leave?," New York Times, 13 November 1966, section II, 15.

²A listing of these programs can be found in Leonard Bernstein: The Television Work (New York: Museum of Broadcasting, 1985), 59-67.

³As recounted by Barbara Haws, historian/archivist for the New York Philharmonic, in a personal interview.

From his 15 years of Young People's Concerts, it is clear that Bernstein was able to accomplish a great deal. For one thing, he revitalized a series that had been a long-standing tradition of the Philharmonic by adapting it to the needs of a contemporary audience. At the same time, he was able to create a greatly expanded audience for the series by bringing it to national attention on commercial television. As a result of his tremendous long-term popularity, millions of television viewers were exposed to the subject of Classical music who might not have been otherwise.

In addition, the Young People's Concerts became a landmark case of how to adapt a concert-style Classical music program to television. This was largely due to the efforts of producer-director Robert Englander, who, through innovative, and well-coordinated visuals, proved that a televised concert need not be boring. A high level of quality and integrity was likewise apparent in other aspects of the production, including Bernstein's interesting and well-prepared scripts.

With respect to his pedagogical function in the Young People's Concerts, it is clear that Bernstein was fulfilling a primary need to reach out and educate the masses with respect to Classical music. In this way, he can be seen as an heir to such figures as Theodore Thomas, Leopold Stokowski, Robert Mayer and Walter Damrosch, who, in

their own lifetimes, similarly strove to expose youth and the general public to Classical symphonic music.

In assuming the role of musical "missionary" to the masses, however, it would seem that Bernstein surpassed his predecessors. Through his lucid means of communication and popular charisma, he was able to revolutionize the teaching of general music appreciation, by raising it to a new, higher level of sophistication. Particularly notable, in this regard, was his facile incorporation of technical terminology in his discussions about music. Likewise, his occasional offhand references to certain higher philosophical issues also added a more mature perspective to the programs, even if his arguments showed a few inconsistencies throughout the series as a whole.

Bernstein should also be praised for giving welcome exposure to deserving young performers and conductors in the Young People's Concerts. It is probable, in fact, that some of these individual performers owe much of their career successes to the initial opportunities they were given on the Young People's Concerts. Some, as a result, have been inspired to organize their own, similar educational activities. Conductor Seiji Ozawa, for instance, has developed his own series of educational music programs for Japanese Television which were directly modelled on

Bernstein's Young People's Concerts.⁴ Similarly, conductor Boris Brott (a former assistant conductor to Bernstein) has become well known in Canada for his ongoing attempts to raise the level of public interest in orchestral concerts.

The most powerful legacy of Bernstein's Young People's Concerts, however, remains in their historical impact on the mass public. By making Classical music more accessible, Bernstein was able to break down, on a large scale, the contemporary cultural biases that were causing Classical music to be viewed as the domain of the elite. As a direct result of his influence on this program, several new generations of North Americans came to a fuller enjoyment and richer understanding of the Classical music tradition.

⁴Helen Matheopoulos, Maestro: Encounters with Conductors of Today (London: Hutchinson, 1982), 392.

APPENDIX
TITLES, CBS BROADCAST DATES AND DESCRIPTIONS OF THE
YOUNG PEOPLE'S CONCERTS
(1958-1972)¹

1957/58 Season - From Carnegie Hall

What Does Music Mean?
(18 January 1958)

Through references to Rossini's William Tell Overture and Richard Strauss's Don Quixote, Bernstein dispells the notion that musical meaning is linked to the literal interpretation of programmatic titles or ideas. Rather, he reiterates that "music describes emotions, feelings ... The better music is, the more it will make you feel the emotions that the composer felt when he wrote it. Those emotions are what music is about."

Musical Selections²: William Tell Overture (Rossini); Don Quixote (R. Strauss); Pastoral Symphony (Beethoven); Pictures at an Exhibition (Mussorgsky); Symphony No. 4 in F Minor, Op. 36 (Tchaikovsky); Symphony No. 5 in E Minor, Op. 64 (Tchaikovsky); Six Pieces (Webern); La Valse* (Ravel).

¹Titles are listed as they actually appeared on the films and videotapes and vary slightly from the list given by Jack Gottlieb in Leonard Bernstein: A Complete Catalogue of his Works: Celebrating his 60th Birthday, August 25, 1978 (New York: Amberson Enterprises, 1978), 72.

²Musical selections for each program are listed as completely as possible. In many cases, short excerpts or single movements from the larger works were performed. (Complete performances of major works are noted with an asterisk.) It should be assumed that Bernstein is conducting unless otherwise indicated.

What Is American Music?
(1 February 1958)

The development of American art music is traced from its beginnings with composer George W. Chadwick and the early influences of Indian and Negro folk idioms, to the emergence of jazz in the 20th century. Folk and nationalistic elements of various musics are also discussed, leading to the conclusion that contemporary American music definitely has its own definitive traits. American composer Aaron Copland conducts part of his own Symphony No. 3.

Musical Selections: An American in Paris (Gershwin); Overture (George W. Chadwick); New World Symphony (Dvorák); Dance on Place Congo (Henry F. Gilbert); Ragtime (Stravinsky); Rhapsody in Blue (Gershwin); American Festival Overture (William Schuman); Symphony No. 3 (Roy Harris); Symphony No. 2 (Randall Thompson); Mother of Us All (Virgil Thomson); Music for the Theatre (Copland); Billy the Kid (Copland); Symphony No. 3 (Copland) - Conductor: Aaron Copland.

What Does Orchestration Mean?
(8 March 1958)

After a performance of Rimsky-Korsakov's Capriccio espagnol, Bernstein displays an enlarged section of the conductor's score and discusses how the composer has made effective orchestration. "Good orchestration is not just dressing up notes ... It lets music be heard in the clearest and most effective way." The contrasting timbres of different instruments and orchestral families are likewise explored, followed by a complete performance of Ravel's Boléro.

Musical Selections: Capriccio espagnol* (Rimsky-Korsakov); Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun (Debussy); Rhapsody in Blue (Gershwin); Brandenburg Concerto No. 5 (Bach); Peter and the Wolf (Prokofiev); American Symphony (William Schuman); The Soldier's Story (Stravinsky); Boléro* (Ravel).

1958/59 Season

What Makes Music Symphonic?
 (13 December 1958)

Through references to Mozart's Jupiter Symphony and other works, Bernstein illustrates how development holds the key to symphonic music. A common, three-stage plan for development is explained, along with some other developmental techniques including sequencing, imitation, canon, fugue, and augmentation.

Musical Selections: Jupiter Symphony in C Major, K551 (Mozart); Symphony No. 4 in F Minor, Op. 36 (Tchaikovsky); Eroica Symphony in E-flat Major, Op. 55 (Beethoven); Marching Song from Bridge Over the River Kwai; I'm All Shook Up (E. Presley); Romeo and Juliet (Tchaikovsky); Rhapsody in Blue (Gershwin); Frère Jacques; Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 77 (Brahms).

What Is Classical Music?
 (24 January 1959)

Although the term "Classical music" is often used to denote a whole generic category of "exact" music, Bernstein argues that it more accurately describes the style of 18th-century music, where "rules and regulations, shape and form, line and balance," were brought to a "classicism of perfection." Through the performance of various works from Bach, Handel, Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven, the development of Classical style is subsequently illustrated.

Musical Selections: Water Music (Handel); Piano Concerto No. 21 in C Major, K467 (Mozart); Brandenburg Concerto No. 4 (Bach); Overture to The Marriage of Figaro (Mozart); Symphony No. 102 in E-flat Major (Haydn); Egmont Overture (Beethoven).

Humor in Music
 (28 February 1959)

Bernstein demonstrates how musical compositions, such as speech and pantomime, are able to incorporate various forms of humor, including incongruity, wit, satire, parody, puns, and burlesque. The program concludes with a performance of

the fourth movement from Brahms's Symphony No. 4, a composition which Bernstein describes simply as an example of "good humor."

Musical Selections: Ballet Music (Walter Piston); Mosquito Dance (Paul White); An American in Paris (Gershwin); Háry János Suite (Kodály); Symphony No. 88 in G Major (Haydn); Classical Symphony (Prokofiev); Symphony No. 1 in D Major (Mahler); A Musical Joke (Mozart); Polka from the Golden Age (Shostakovich); Burlesque from Music for the Theater (Copland); Symphony No. 4 in E Minor, Op. 98 (Brahms).

What Is a Concerto?
(28 March 1959)

In this final episode of the second season, Bernstein traces the historical development of the concerto, with emphasis on the diminishing size of the solo concertino group. Excerpts from a number of concertos are performed, concluding with the fifth movement of Bartók's Concerto for Orchestra. This work demonstrates the 20th-century return to a larger group of soloists and is, in Bernstein's opinion, "probably the most democratic concerto ever written."

Musical Selections: Concerto for Two Mandolins, Strings and Cembalo in G Major (Vivaldi); Brandenburg Concerto No. 5 (Bach); Sinfonia Concertante for Violin, Viola and Orchestra in E-flat Major, K364 (Mozart); Violin Concerto in E Minor, Op. 64 (Mendelssohn) - Soloist: John Corigliano (violin); Concerto for Orchestra (Bartók).

1959/60 Season

Who Is Gustav Mahler?
(7 February 1960)

In the year marking the 100th anniversary of Mahler's birth, Bernstein conducts a program exclusively devoted to the composer and conductor whom he describes as "a divided man in every single part of his musical life." Reri Grist (soprano), Helen Raab (contralto) and William Lewis (tenor) appear as guest vocalists.

Musical Selections: Symphony No. 4 in C Major - Soloist: Reri Grist (soprano); Symphony No. 2 in C Minor/E-flat Major; Symphony No. 1 in D Major; Des Knaben Wunderhorn - Soloist: Helen Raab (contralto); Das Lied von der Erde - Soloists: William Lewis (tenor), Helen Raab (contralto).

Young Performers
(6 March 1960)

On this first program devoted to young performers, several talented instrumentalists and New York Philharmonic assistant conductors are introduced to the Carnegie Hall audience. For the finale, Bernstein conducts Prokofiev's Peter and the Wolf, with 9-year-old Alexandra Wager narrating.

Musical Selections: Concerto for Cello & Orchestra in B Minor, Op. 104 (Dvorák) - Soloist: Daniel Domb (Cello), Conductor: Kenneth Schermerhorn; Concerto for Violin & Orchestra No. 2 in D Minor (Wieniawski) - Soloist: Barry Finclair (violin), Conductor: Stefan Mengelberg; Peter and the Wolf* (Prokofiev) - Narrator: Alexandra Wager.

Unusual Instruments of Present, Past and Future
(27 March 1960)

Bernstein showcases unusual instruments from the ganza and chocalhos to the theremin and tape recorder. Members of the authentic instrument group, New York Pro Musica, perform three works and, in conclusion, two modern compositions - one for tape recorder and one for kazoo - are premiered.

Musical Selections: Toccata, "Little Train of Caipira" from Bachianas Brasileiras No. 2 (Villa-Lobos); Brandenburg Concerto No. 4 (Bach), Canzon Septimi Toni (G. Gabrieli), Alta (De La Torre) - Soloists for previous three selections: New York Pro Musica; Concerted Piece for Tape Recorder and Orchestra (Luening-Ussachevsky) - Soloist: Vladimir Ussachevsky (Tape Recorder); Concerto for a Singing Instrument (Bucci) - Soloist: Anita Darian (kazoo).

The Second Hurricane by Aaron Copland
(24 April 1960)

Students from the New York City High School of Music and Art perform Aaron Copland's opera The Second Hurricane. Bernstein conducts and provides narration for the opera, which concerns the fictional plight of students who became stranded during a relief mission to the site of a natural disaster.

Musical Selection: The Second Hurricane* (Copland).

1960/61 Season

Overtures and Preludes
(8 January 1961)

Bernstein focuses on the stylistic features of overtures and preludes and discusses their role in symphony orchestra concerts. The New York Philharmonic performs four selections, including Bernstein's Candide Overture.

Musical Selections: Semiramide Overture (Rossini); Leonore Overture No. 3 (Beethoven); Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun (Debussy); Candide Overture (Bernstein).

Aaron Copland's Birthday Party
(12 February 1961)

In honour of his 60th birthday, American composer Aaron Copland is given tribute on the Young People's Concerts. A number of his highly popular and accessible works are performed, along with the more dissonant Dogmatic movement from Statements for Orchestra. The program ends with Copland conducting his own work, El salón México.

Musical Selections: An Outdoor Overture (Copland); Dance from Music for the Theatre (Copland); Grovers Corners from Our Town (the Music for Movies arrangement) (Copland); Hoedown from Rodeo (Copland); Dogmatic from Statements for Orchestra (Copland); Boatmen's Dance and I bought me a cat from Old American Songs (Copland) - Soloist: William Warfield (baritone); El salón México (Copland) - Conductor: Aaron Copland.

Young Performers
(19 March 1961)

Bernstein introduces his second batch of young performers: Veronica Tyler (lyric soprano), Lynn Harrell (cellist), and Jung Ja Kim, "a brilliant young pianist from Korea," while once again, the New York Philharmonic assistant conductors share podium duties. For a finale, Bernstein conducts Britten's Young Person's Guide To the Orchestra, with Henry Chapin, age 12, narrating.

Musical Selections: Concerto for Cello and Orchestra in B Minor, Op. 104 (Dvorák) - Soloist: Lynn Harrell (cello), Conductor: Elyakum Shapira; Concerto for Piano and Orchestra No. 1 in E Minor, Op. 11 (Chopin) - Soloist: Jung Ja Kim (piano), Conductor: Russell Stanger; Hello, Hello from The Telephone (Menotti), Mimi's Farewell from La Bohème (Puccini) - Soloist: Veronica Tyler (lyric soprano), Conductor: Gregory Millar; Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra* (Britten) - Narrator: Henry Chapin.

Folk Music in the Concert Hall
(9 April 1961)

Bernstein demonstrates how folk, or folk-inspired melodies have helped to shape the music of serious composers such as Mozart, Chávez, and Ives. Through his demonstrations at the keyboard, Bernstein also illustrates how folk-songs reflect the rhythms and accents of native languages.

Musical Selections: Symphony No. 39 in E-flat Major, K543 (Mozart); Sinfonia India (Chávez); Songs of the Auvergne (arranged by Canteloube) - Soloist: Marni Nixon (soprano); Symphony No. 2 (Ives).

1961/62 Season

What Is Impressionism?
(1 December 1961)⁹

Bernstein illustrates how the musical counterpart to

⁹The Bernstein Catalogue incorrectly lists this date as 23 November 1961.

impressionistic painting lies in some composers' uses of various compositional devices, including pentatonic or whole-tone scales, modality and bitonality. Also performed is Debussy's La Mer.

Musical Selections: Voiles from Piano Preludes, Bk. I; Poissons d'or from Images, Set II; La Puerta del Vino from Preludes, Bk. II; Golliwogg's Cakewalk from Children's Corner; La Mer* (Debussy); Daphnis and Chloë, Suite No. 2 (Ravel).

The Road to Paris
(18 January 1962)

Bernstein discusses the Parisian influence on three non-French composers of the early 20th century: George Gershwin, Ernest Bloch and Manuel de Falla. In the music of these composers, some strongly French impressionistic elements are perceived, including bitonality and the use of the whole-tone scale.

Musical Selections: An American in Paris (Gershwin); Schelomo (Bloch) - Soloist: Zara Nelsova (cello); Two Dances from The Three Cornered Hat (de Falla).

Happy Birthday, Igor Stravinsky
(26 March 1962)

On the occasion of Igor Stravinsky's 80th birthday, Bernstein salutes the man he calls "the greatest composer in the world today." After a discussion of the evolution of Stravinsky's musical style, the musical score of the early ballet, Petrouchka, is performed in its entirety.

Musical Selections: Greeting Prelude (Stravinsky); Petrouchka* (Stravinsky)

Young Performers
(13 April 1962)⁴

Japanese conductor Seiji Ozawa and virtuoso double bassist Gary Karr are two of numerous artists featured on this third young performers concert. Also appearing are identical twins Ruth and Naomi Segal, duo-pianists, in a performance of Saint-Saëns's The Carnival of the Animals.

Musical Selections: Overture to The Marriage of Figaro (Mozart) - Conductor: Seiji Ozawa; Prayer (Bloch-Antonini) - Soloist: Gary Karr (double bass), Conductor: Maurice Peress; Fantasy on a Theme from the Opera "Moses in Egypt" by Rossini (Paganini-Reinshagen, transcribed for orchestra by Gary Karr) - Soloist: Gary Karr (double bass), Conductor: John Canarina; The Carnival of the Animals (Saint-Saëns) - Soloists: Ruth and Naomi Segal (duo-pianists), Paula Robison (flute), Paul Green (clarinet), Tony Cirone (xylophone), Gary Karr (double bass), David Hopper (glockenspiel).

1962/63 Season - From Philharmonic Hall, Lincoln Center

The Sound of a Hall
(21 November 1962)

After welcoming Young People's Concert audiences to the New York Philharmonic's new home at Philharmonic Hall, Lincoln Center, Bernstein takes the opportunity to introduce some features of the new hall while demonstrating a few basic premises of musical acoustics. In giving his appraisal of the new surroundings, Bernstein recalls expert predictions that it may take "as much as a full year of further experiment[s]" before audiences will have "an absolutely perfect hall."⁵

⁴The Bernstein Catalogue incorrectly lists this date as 14 April 1962.

⁵As it happened, some major renovations to Philharmonic Hall were necessary in years to follow, including drastic modifications to the ceiling, stage and walls of the auditorium. In the mid-1970's the hall was renamed Avery Fisher Hall in recognition of a generous monetary gift from a private patron. See Howard Shanet, Philharmonic: A History of New York's Orchestra (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1975), 371-376.

Musical Selections: Roman Carnival Overture, Op. 9 (Berlioz); The Little Horses from Old American Songs (Copland) - Soloist: Shirley Verrett-Carter (soprano); Concerto for Four Violins and String Orchestra in B Minor, Op. 3, No. 10 (Vivaldi) - Soloists: John Corigliano, Joseph Bernstein, Frank Gullino, William Dembinsky; Tango-Pasodoble from Facade (Walton); 1812 Overture (Tchaikovsky).

What Is a Melody?
(21 December 1962)

Bernstein illustrates the different forms that a melody can take in musical compositions. Besides the more easily recognizable "tunes" (complete in themselves) or symphonic "themes," Bernstein demonstrates how melody can also be found in motives, layered counterpoint, or even in the form of one long, continuous strand as in Hindemith's Concert Music for Strings and Brass, Op. 50.

Musical Selections: Prelude to Tristan and Isolde (Wagner); Symphony No. 40 in G Minor, K550 (Mozart); Concert Music for Strings and Brass, Op. 50 (Hindemith); Symphony No. 4 in E Minor, Op. 98 (Brahms).

Young Performers
(15 January 1963)

For this 1963 young performers program, the talents of four teenage pianists are spotlighted. Joan Weiner, Claudia Hoca and Pamela Paul performing Mozart's Piano Concerto in A Major, are followed by André Watts, who completes the program with Liszt's Piano Concerto No. 1 in E-flat Major. New York Philharmonic assistants once again make an appearance.

Musical Selections: Piano Concerto in A Major, K488* (Mozart) - Movement I Soloist: Joan Weiner (piano), Conductor: Yuri Krasnopolsky; Movement II Soloist: Claudia Hoca (piano), Conductor: Zoltán Rozsnyai; Movement III Soloist: Pamela Paul (piano), Conductor: Serge Fournier; Piano Concerto No. 1 in E-flat Major (Liszt) - Soloist: André Watts (piano).

The Latin American Spirit
(8 March 1963)

Bernstein discusses the genesis of Latin American music from its Spanish, Indian and African roots, and highlights two important features of Latin style: the hard-driving, syncopated rhythms and distinctive instrumental colourings. Works from Brazilian composers Fernandez and Villa-Lobos are showcased along with selections from Copland and Bernstein.

Musical Selections: Batucue (Fernandez); Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5 (Villa-Lobos) - Soloist: Natania Davrath (soprano); Sensemayá (Revueltas); Danzón Cubano (Copland); Symphonic Dances from West Side Story (Bernstein).

1963/64 Season

A Tribute to Teachers
(29 November 1963)

Bernstein pays homage to the various teachers who helped shape his musical career, including Helen Coates, Serge Koussevitzky, Randall Thompson, and Walter Piston. The program concludes with a performance of Brahms's Academic Festival Overture, Op. 80 as a tribute to conductor Fritz Reiner.

Musical Selections: Prelude to Khovantschina (Mussorgsky); Symphony No. 2 in E Minor (Randall Thompson); Suite from The Incredible Flutist (Walter Piston); Academic Festival Overture, Op. 80 (Brahms).

Young Performers
(23 December 1963)

Heidi Lehwalder (harp), Amos Eisenberg (flute), Weldon Berry (clarinet), and Stephen Kates (cello) are the young people chosen for this year's annual young performer's program. In addition, Israeli composer-pianist Shulamith Ran premieres her own work, Capriccio for Piano & Orchestra and Bernstein leads the Philharmonic in the William Tell Overture.

Musical Selections: Concerto for Harp and Orchestra in B-flat Major, Op. 4, No. 6 (Handel) - Soloist: Heidi Lehwalder (harp); Introduction and Allegro for Harp, Flute, Clarinet

and Strings (Ravel) - Soloists: Heidi Lehwalder (harp), Amos Eisenberg (flute), Weldon Berry, Jr. (clarinet), Conductor: Claudio Abbado; Capriccio for Piano and Orchestra (Shulamith Ran) - Soloist: Shulamith Ran (piano), Conductor: Pedro Calderon; Rhapsody No. 1 (arranged for cello and orchestra) (Bartók) - Soloist: Stephen Kates (cello), Conductor: Zdenek Kosler; William Tell Overture (Rossini) - Soloist: Stephen Kates (cello).

The Genius of Paul Hindemith
(23 February 1964)

In this 1964 program, the musical style of the recently deceased German composer Paul Hindemith is discussed and analysed. Despite the fact that this composer's music was initially denounced as "Bolshevik" and "atonal," Bernstein illustrates for his listeners how Hindemith's compositions actually contain much beauty and even joy. In closing, Mathis der Maler is performed.

Musical Selections: String Quartet No. 1; Kleine Kammermusik, Op. 24, No. 2; Mathis der Maler.

Jazz in the Concert Hall
(11 March 1964)

In the final Young People's Concert of the 1963/64 season, Bernstein explores the jazz influence on serious art music. A pedagogical introduction to jazz is first provided by Journey into Jazz, a composition by leading "third-stream" composer Gunther Schuller and following this, two jazz-influenced works by Aaron Copland and Larry Austin are performed.

Musical Selections: Journey into Jazz* (Gunther Schuller, Script by Nat Hentoff) - Conductor: Gunther Schuller; Concerto for Piano and Orchestra (Copland) - Soloist: Aaron Copland (piano); Improvisations for Orchestra and Jazz Soloists* (Larry Austin).

1964/65 Season

What Is Sonata Form?
 (6 November 1964)

Through references to a variety of works, Bernstein explains the concept of sonata form, clarifying such terms as "exposition," "development," "recapitulation," "tonic" and "dominant." For the finale, students from the Mannes College of Music hold up large signs labelled with the above terms, enabling audience members to follow the sonata-form structure of Mozart's Jupiter Symphony, movement one.

Musical Selections: Jupiter Symphony in C Major, K551 (Mozart); Micaela's Aria from Carmen (Bizet) - Soloist: Veronica Tyler (soprano); Piano Sonata in C Major, K545 (Mozart) - Soloist: Leonard Bernstein (piano); Classical Symphony (Prokofiev).

Farewell to Nationalism
 (30 November 1964)

In this 1964 episode, Bernstein explores the theme of 19th-century nationalism in music. The highly nationalistic style of works by Wagner, Mozart, and Tchaikovsky are contrasted with the more recent style of mid-20th-century composers, which, according to Bernstein, "has been getting more and more international."

Musical Selections: Prelude to Die Meistersinger (Wagner); Mazurka in B-flat Major (Chopin); Sempre Libera from La Traviata (Verdi); Symphony No. 4 in F Minor, Op. 36 (Tchaikovsky); Sonata for Flute and Harpsichord in G Minor (Bach); Concerto for Flute, Bassoon, Violin and Bass No. 41 in G Minor (Vivaldi); Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2 (Liszt); Five Pieces for Orchestra Op. 10, No. 1 (Webern); Pieces for Prepared Piano and String Quartet (Mayuzumi); Composition For Twelve Instruments (Babbitt); Incontri fuer 24. Instrumente (Nono); Battle Hymn of the Republic (Steffe); Yankee Doodle; The Moldau (Smetana); Suite No. 1 (de Falla); Fourth of July (Ives); Russian Sailor's Dance (Glière); Columbia. The Gem of the Ocean (Beckett).

Young Performers
(28 January 1965)

For this sixth young performers program, two budding instrumentalists, pianist Patricia Michaelian and violinist James Oliver Buswell IV, are featured in concertos with the New York Philharmonic. In closing, Bernstein conducts Ravel's Mother Goose Suite, which includes such colourful selections as Empress of the Pagodas, Beauty and the Beast, and Sleeping Beauty.

Musical Selections: Piano Concerto No. 20 in D Minor, K466 (Mozart) - Soloist: Patricia Michaelian (piano); Violin Concerto in E Minor, Op. 64 (Mendelssohn) - Soloist: James Oliver Buswell IV (violin); Mother Goose Suite (Ravel).

A Tribute to Sibelius
(19 February 1965)

The music of Finnish composer Jan Sibelius is presented on the Young People's Concerts in celebration of his centennial year. In the first half of the program, Bernstein discusses the nationalistic spirit of Sibelius's music and conducts excerpts from Finlandia and Violin Concerto No. 20 in D Minor. During the second half, Bernstein then analyses some of the structural elements of Symphony No. 2 in D Major, after which this work is performed by the Philharmonic.

Musical Selections: Finlandia; Violin Concerto in D Minor, Op. 47 - Soloist: Sergiu Luca (violin); Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 43.

1965/66 Season

Musical Atoms: A Study of Intervals
(29 November 1965)

Bernstein helps his audience to better understand the concept of musical intervals by comparing them to "building blocs" and "atoms." Interval size is discussed, along with the principle of inversion and the formation of melodic and harmonic intervals. Following this, two works are used to illustrate the sound of different kinds of intervals: the first movement of Brahms's Fourth Symphony for thirds and sixths, and the finale of Vaughan Williams's Fourth Symphony

for major and minor seconds.

Musical Selections: Prelude to Act III of Lohengrin (Wagner); The Blue Danube (Strauss); Help (Lennon-McCartney); Symphony No. 4 in E Minor, Op. 98 (Brahms); Symphony No. 4 in F Minor (Vaughan Williams).

The Sound of an Orchestra
(14 December 1965)

Bernstein argues that a symphony orchestra should not attempt to create a uniform "sound," but should try to interpret each musical composition as closely as possible to what the composer wanted. To accomplish this, adjustments must often be made in such things as phrasing, dynamics, number of players, as well as the use of vibrato, glissando and rubato. Through reference to various excerpts, Bernstein illustrates how certain pieces from the classical repertoire sound, with and without the proper playing techniques.

Musical Selections: Symphony No. 88 in G Major (Haydn); Symphony No. 5 in C Minor, Op. 67 (Beethoven); Symphony No. 7 in A Major, Op. 92 (Beethoven); Symphony No. 1 in C Minor, Op. 68 (Brahms); Iberia (Debussy); The Royal March from L'Histoire du Soldat (Stravinsky); An American in Paris (Gershwin); Hoedown from Rodeo (Copland).

A Birthday Tribute to Shostakovich
(5 January 1966)

The Young People's Concerts pay a 60th birthday tribute to Dmitri Shostakovich, the Russian composer whom Bernstein met on the Philharmonic's 1959 world tour. During the course of the program, each movement of Shostakovich's Ninth Symphony is performed and analysed. This symphony, as Bernstein remarks, is "one of Shostakovich's gayest and most amusing works."

Musical Selections: Leningrad Symphony in C Major, Op. 60 (Shostakovich); Symphony No. 9 in D Minor, Op. 125 (Beethoven); Symphony No. 9 in E-flat Major, Op. 70* (Shostakovich).

Young Performers
(22 February 1966)

After Paul Schoenfield, Stephanie Sebastian, David Oei, and Horacio Gutierrez play sections of Mussorgsky's Pictures at an Exhibition, the corresponding excerpts from Ravel's orchestral arrangement of the work are performed by the New York Philharmonic. Three assistant conductors are featured on the program: James De Preist, Jacques Houtmann and Edo de Waart.

Musical Selections: Pictures at an Exhibition (original piano version by Mussorgsky, orchestral arrangement by Ravel): Promenade, Gnomes - Soloist: Paul Schoenfield (piano), Conductor: James De Preist; Promenade, The Old Castle - Soloist: Stephanie Sebastian (piano), Conductor: Jacques Houtmann; Promenade, Tuileries, Promenade, Ballet of Chicks in their Shells - Soloist: David Oei (piano), Conductor: Edo de Waart; The Great Gate at Kiev - Soloist: Horacio Gutierrez (piano).

1966/67 Season

What Is a Mode?
(23 November 1966)

Bernstein discusses the sound and structure of the ancient church modes, and demonstrates how they have been incorporated into various pieces from the classical and popular repertoires. For a demonstration of the mixolydian mode, Bernstein conducts Danzón from his ballet Fancy Free.

Musical Selections: Fêtes from Nocturnes (Debussy); Scheherazade (Rimsky-Korsakov); Symphony No. 4 in E Minor, Op. 98 (Brahms); Symphony No. 6 in D Minor, Op. 104 (Sibelius); The Sunken Cathedral from Preludes (Debussy); Symphony No. 5 in C Minor, Op. 67 (Beethoven); Danzón from Fancy Free (Bernstein); Various other popular works.

Young Performers
(27 January 1967)

During the introduction to this eighth young performers program, Bernstein comments on the increasing number and quality of young musicians. "America," he speculates, "is

now ready to accept music as a normal and even admirable activity of the young." Among the numerous guest artists appearing are accordionist Steven Dominko, violinist Young Uck Kim, and Swiss-born conductor Sylvia Caduff.

Musical Selections: Sinfonia Concertante in B-flat Major (Haydn) - Soloists: Elmar Oliveira (violin), Mark Salkind (oboe), Fred Alston (bassoon), Donald Green (cello), Conductors: Juan Pablo Izquierdo (movement I), Sylvia Caduff (movement II, III); Accordion arrangement of Piano Concerto No. 2 in F Minor, Op. 21 (Chopin) - Soloist: Stephen Dominko (accordion), Conductor: Sylvia Caduff; Diesen heil'gen Halle from The Magic Flute (Mozart) - Soloist: George Reid (basso); Violin Concerto No. 3 in B Minor, Op. 61 (Saint-Saëns) - Soloist: Young Uck Kim (violin).

Charles Ives: American Pioneer
(23 February 1967)

For this program on the music of Charles Ives, Bernstein pays tribute to the pioneering spirit of "America's first great composer." Through references to various musical excerpts, Ives's unconventional musical style is illustrated and analysed, with emphasis on his favoured technique of alluding to American folk tunes. In conclusion, Bernstein expresses the philosophical thoughts behind the composer's most famous composition, Unanswered Question, followed by a performance of this work.

Musical Selections: The Gong on the Hook and the Ladder (Fireman's Parade on Main Street); Washington's Birthday from Holidays Symphony; The Circus Band-Parade (arranged by Harold Farberman); Lincoln, the Great Commoner - Soloist: Simon Estes (bass-baritone); Unanswered Question.

Alumni Reunion
(19 April 1967)

Bernstein welcomes back three exceptional performers from previous young performers programs: Cellist Stephen Kates, soprano Veronica Tyler, and pianist André Watts.

Musical Selections: Variations on a Rococo Theme, Op. 33 (Tchaikovsky) - Soloist: Stephen Kates (cello); Mi chiamano Mimi from La Bohème (Puccini) and My Man's Gone Now from

Porgy and Bess (Gershwin) - Soloist: Veronica Tyler (soprano); Piano Concerto No. 2 in B-flat Major, Op. 83 (Brahms) - Soloist: André Watts (piano).

1967/68 Season

A Toast to Vienna in 3/4 Time
(25 December 1967)

In joint recognition of the Vienna Philharmonic's and New York Philharmonic's 125th anniversary, Bernstein showcases the works of Viennese masters Johann Strauss, Richard Strauss, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Ludwig van Beethoven and Gustav Mahler. Christa Ludwig and Walter Berry are guest soloists for Mahler's Des Knaben Wunderhorn.

Musical Selections: Wiener Blut (J. Strauss); German Dance No. 3, K605 and Jupiter Symphony in C Major, K551 (Mozart); Symphony No. 7 in A Major, Op. 92 (Beethoven); Des Knaben Wunderhorn (Mahler) - Soloists: Christa Ludwig (mezzo-soprano), Walter Berry (baritone); Waltzes from Der Rosenkavalier (R. Strauss).

Forever Beethoven!
(28 January 1968)

Bernstein discusses the music and compositional methods of composer Ludwig van Beethoven and debunks the myth that Beethoven was "the man who freed music." Following a performance of the Piano Concerto in G Major with soloist Joseph Kalichstein, Bernstein examines the origins of Beethoven's Leonore Overture No. 3 and conducts a complete performance of this work.

Musical Selections: Symphony No. 5 in C Minor, Op. 67; Piano Concerto No. 4 in G Major, Op. 58 - Soloist: Joseph Kalichstein (piano), Conductor: Paul Capolongo; Leonore Overture No. 3.

Young Performers
(31 March 1968)

On this final young performers program, cellist Lawrence

Foster makes his television debut with Saint-Saëns's Cello Concerto No. 1. Bernstein then follows with a discussion and performance of Hindemith's Metamorphoses on Themes by Weber, with Martin and Steven Vann, identical-twin-duo-pianists, performing the original Weber version. Alois Springer and Helen Quash are guest conductors.

Musical Selections: Cello Concerto No. 1 in A Minor (Saint-Saëns) - Soloist: Lawrence Foster (cello), Conductor: Alois Springer; Metamorphoses on Themes by Weber (Hindemith) - Soloists, original Weber version: Martin and Steven Vann (duo-pianists), Conductor, Movement II: Helen Quach.

Quiz-Concert: How Musical Are You?
(26 May 1968)

In this 1968 Young People's Concert, Bernstein leads one of television's first musical quizzes. After excerpts from various works are played by the Philharmonic, the audience is asked to answer questions regarding musical form, style, instruments, orchestration, and composers. In other cases, viewers must also identify what is wrong with Bernstein's conducting technique, or the playing style of individual performers.

Musical Selections: Overture to The Marriage of Figaro (Mozart); Classical Symphony (Prokofiev); Capriccio espagnol (Rimsky-Korsakov); Symphony No. 1 in C Minor, Op. 68 (Brahms).

1968/69 Season

Fantastic Variations
(25 December 1968)

Bernstein conducts excerpts from Richard Strauss's Don Quixote, and discusses the relationship of Strauss's music to the original Cervantes novel. Some aspects of the work's thematic structure are also analysed. Don Quixote, Bernstein notes, was the piece with which he made his New York Philharmonic conducting debut back in 1943.

Musical Selections: Don Quixote (R. Strauss).

Bach Transmogrified
(27 April 1969)

Bernstein demonstrates how the music of J.S. Bach lends itself to different arrangements by introducing two modern versions of Bach's Little Organ Fugue in G Minor, including the orchestral arrangement by Leopold Stokowski, who makes a guest appearance to conduct this work. Also performed is Lukas Foss's orchestral work Phorion, which derives its themes from Bach's Unaccompanied Violin Partita in E Major.

Musical Selections: Little Organ Fugue in G Minor (J.S. Bach): Original Version - Soloist: Michael Korn (organ); Transcription for Orchestra (L. Stokowski) - Conductor: L. Stokowski; Moog Synthesizer Version (Albert Seer); Unaccompanied Violin Partita in E Major (J.S. Bach) - Soloist: David Nadien (violin); Phorion (Lukas Foss).

Berlioz Takes a Trip
(25 May 1969)

In this final program of the 1968/69 season, Bernstein introduces his audience to Berlioz's Symphonie fantastique, which he describes as the "first psychedelic symphony." In the course of performing all five movements, the programmatic aspects of symphony are discussed, including the symbolic significance of the "idée fixe."

Musical Selections: Symphonie fantastique* (Hector Berlioz).

1969/70 Season

Two Ballet Birds
(14 September 1969)

Bernstein compares two famous ballets by two great Russian composers: Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake and Stravinsky's Firebird. The contrasting musical styles of the two composers are analysed, and the general conceptual differences between the two ballets are also noted.

Musical Selections: Pas de Deux from Swan Lake (Tchaikovsky); Firebird Suite (Stravinsky).

Fidelio: A Celebration of Life
(29 March 1970)

In recognition of the Beethoven bicentennial, Bernstein introduces his Young People's audiences to Fidelio, Beethoven's flawed masterpiece. After the historical background of the opera is presented and the problematic nature of the plot discussed, some of the "sublime" musical passages from Act II are performed by four graduates of the opera program at Julliard.

Musical Selections: Fidelio, Act II (Beethoven): Florestan's Aria, Leonore-Rocco Duet, Trio, Quartet, - Soloists: Forest Warren (tenor), Anita Darian (soprano), Howard Ross (bass), David Cumberland (bass-baritone).

The Anatomy of a Symphony Orchestra
(24 May 1970)

After opening with a brief excerpt from Respighi's tone poem, Pines of Rome, Bernstein introduces his audience to the different instrumental families that comprise the modern-day symphony orchestra. The remainder of Pines of Rome is then used to illustrate the imaginative use of these various instruments.

Musical Selections: Pines of Rome* (Respighi).

1970/71 Season

A Copland Celebration
(27 December 1970)

American composer Aaron Copland is honoured a second time on the Young People's Concerts, on the occasion of his 70th birthday. Through performances of Concerto for Clarinet and String Orchestra and the suite from Billy the Kid, Bernstein illustrates how Copland's musical language embraces both the "big city vernacular" and "the wide open spaces of the American west."

Musical Selections: Concerto for Clarinet and String Orchestra (abridged version) - Soloist: Stanley Drucker (clarinet); Suite from Billy the Kid (Copland).

Thus Spake Richard Strauss
(4 April 1971)

Bernstein examines the relationship between Richard Strauss's tone poem Thus Spake Zarathustra and the original writings of German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche. Through reference to various excerpts, Bernstein demonstrates how the central theme of man's struggle for transcendence has been symbolically woven into the formal structures of the Strauss composition.

Musical Selections: Thus Spake Zarathustra (Richard Strauss).

1971/72 Season

Liszt and the Devil
(13 February 1972)

Bernstein conducts Liszt's Faust Symphony and explains the work's relation to the legend of Faust. Liszt's preoccupation with "devil" music is also discussed, with Bernstein speculating that the composer-pianist, himself, was a kind of Faust.

Musical Selections: Faust Symphony* (Liszt)

The Planets
(26 March 1972)

For his final Young People's Concert, Leonard Bernstein directs audience attention to Gustav Holst's orchestral suite, The Planets. Most of the suite's individual movements are performed and analysed, with Bernstein underscoring the composer's intent in portraying the astrological characteristics of each planet. In closing, Bernstein leads the Philharmonic in an improvised movement for the planet Pluto, which had not yet been discovered at the time of this work's writing.

Musical Selections: The Planets (Holst): Mars, Venus, Mercury, Jupiter, Uranus.

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