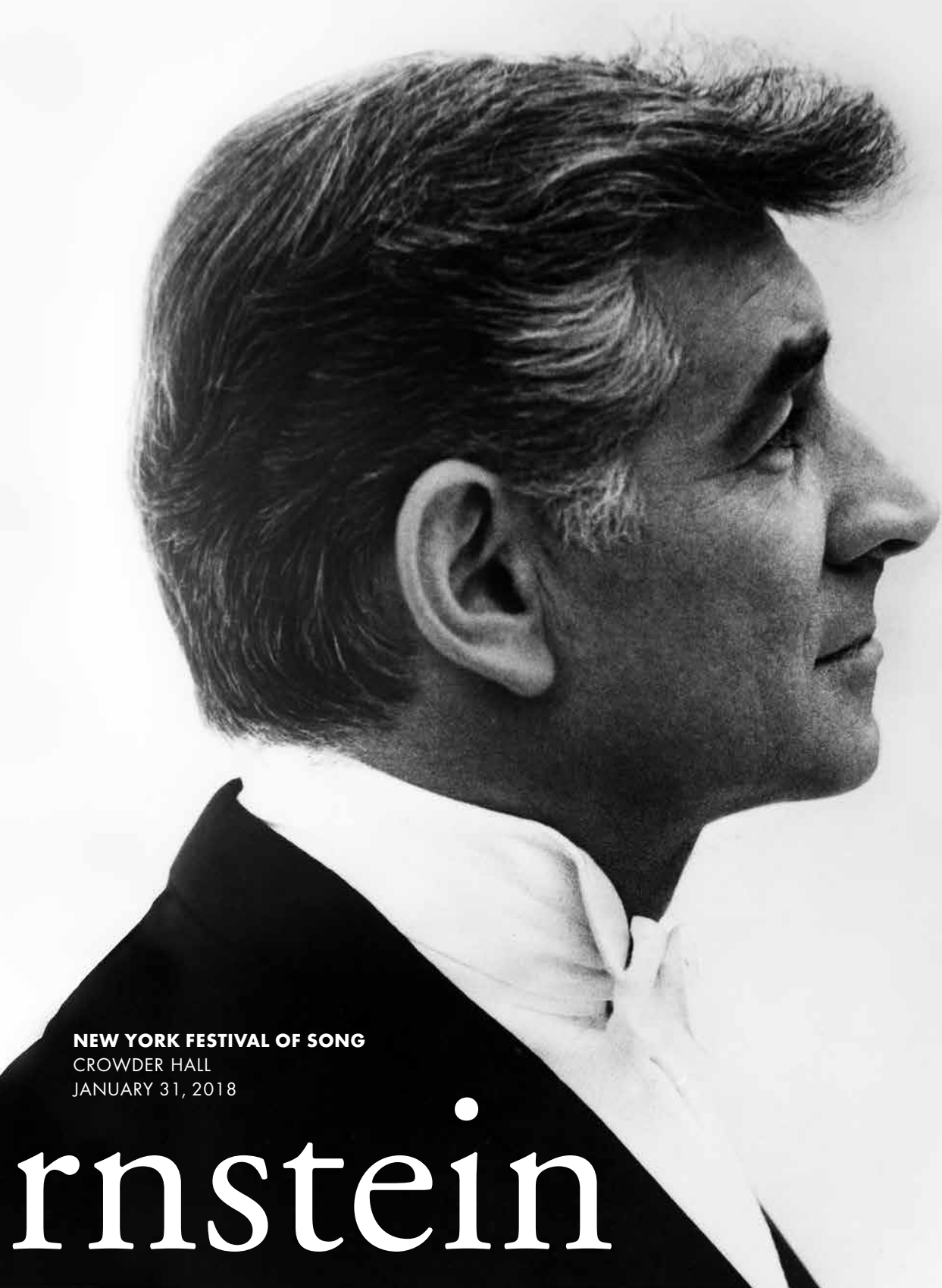


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NEW YORK FESTIVAL OF SONG
CROWDER HALL
JANUARY 31, 2018

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

You're in the middle of what must be the biggest birthday party Leonard Bernstein ever had. This year is the hundredth anniversary of Bernstein's birth, and Tucson's major performing-arts organizations are going all-out to mark the occasion, gathered in the cultural jumping castle that is the Tucson Desert Song Festival. For our part, AFCM is providing even more of a party atmosphere than most of the other organizations; I hope you arrived early enough to enjoy the reception in the lobby, and I think you'll find most of tonight's program to be quite festive. Just please refrain from blowing on noisemakers during the performance, and remember that silly party hats may obstruct the view of audience members behind you.

Tonight's presentation should give you an idea of what AFCM's Now Music series is evolving into. We'd like to offer pre-concert drinks and appetizers as a standard feature of the series, and explore venues beyond the Leo Rich Theater that may be better suited to the performances we've cooked up for you—sometimes because the hall's seating capacity is more appropriate for whatever artists are on stage, or the facilities are better suited to shows that include elements beyond music, or the atmosphere simply seems “cool” and less intimidating to newcomers than a formal concert hall. We will always present classical musicians of the high quality you've come to expect, but we're trying new ways to elevate the experience.

By the way, you may know that we'd originally intended to present tonight's emissaries from the New York Festival of Song in the more intimate Holsclaw Hall, down the corridor, but things just got too big for that venue, so here we are in Crowder Hall—AFCM's home for many decades, until we moved to Leo Rich during Crowder's renovation in the early 1990s, and stayed there except for forays like this.

So now, enjoy the party, and join us as we continue to explore new ways to bring you the finest small-ensemble music.

James Reel

JAMES REEL
President



NEW YORK FESTIVAL OF SONG

JANUARY 31, 2018



New York Festival of Song

Steven Blier, *artistic director*

Michael Barrett, *associate artistic director*

Rebecca Jo Loeb, *mezzo-soprano*

Joshua Jeremiah, *baritone*

Steven Blier & Michael Barrett, *piano*

New York Festival of Song
307 Seventh Avenue
Suite 1206
New York, NY 10001

NEW YORK FESTIVAL OF SONG

Now celebrating its 30th season, New York Festival of Song (NYFOS) is dedicated to creating intimate song concerts of great beauty and originality. Weaving music, poetry, history, and humor into evenings of compelling theater, NYFOS fosters community among artists and audiences. Founded by pianists Michael Barrett and Steven Blier in 1988, NYFOS continues to produce NYFOS Mainstage, its flagship series of thematic song programs, drawing together rarely-heard songs of all kinds, overriding traditional distinctions between classical and popular performance genres, and exploring the character and language of other cultures.

NYFOS has produced five recordings on the Koch label, including a Grammy Award-winning disc of Bernstein's *Arias and Barcarolles*, and the Grammy-nominated recording of Ned Rorem's *Evidence of Things Not Seen* (also a NYFOS commission) on New World Records. NYFOS's discography also includes *Spanish Love Songs* with Joseph Kaiser and the late Lorraine Hunt Lieberson on Bridge Records. Its recently released CD on the GPR label, *Canción amorosa*, also focuses on Spanish song—Basque, Catalan, Castilian, and Sephardic—with soprano Corinne Winters accompanied by Steven Blier.

NYFOS is passionate about nurturing the artistry and careers of young artists and through its NYFOS Emerging Artists program has developed professional training residencies around the country, including The Juilliard School's Ellen and James S. Marcus Institute for Vocal Arts (13th season); Caramoor Center for Music and the Arts (10th season); NYFOS@North Fork in Orient, NY (5th season); Glimmerglass Opera (2008–2010); and San Francisco Opera Center (multiple visits over the last 18 seasons). These intensive programs train young artists in programming and translation, presentation and production, and research and musical style.

NYFOS's concert series, touring programs, radio broadcasts, recordings, and educational activities continue to spark new interest in the creative possibilities of the song program, and have inspired the creation of thematic vocal series around the world.

TONIGHT'S PROGRAM

Arias and Barcarolles
and the Bernstein Songbook

LEONARD BERNSTEIN (1918-1990)

Arias and Barcarolles

Prelude
Love Duet
Little Smary
The Love of My Life
Greeting
Oif Mayn Khas'neh
Mr. and Mrs. Webb Say Goodnight
Nachspiel (Postlude)

This evening's concert
is sponsored by the
generous contribution
of John & Teresa Forsythe,
and is made possible by
a grant from the Tucson
Desert Song Festival.



INTERMISSION

Simple Song (from *Mass*)
I Can Cook Too (from *On the Town*)
Pass that Football (from *Wonderful Town*)
It's Gotta Be Bad to Be Good
Carried Away (from *On the Town*)
The Pennycandy Store Beyond the El
(from *Songfest*)
Somewhere (from *West Side Story*)
We Must Have a Ball
(from *1600 Pennsylvania Avenue*)
Dream With Me (from *Peter Pan*)
Ya Got Me (from *On the Town*)

NEW YORK FESTIVAL OF SONG

JANUARY 31, 2018

STEVEN BLIER

Steven Blier is the Artistic Director of the New York Festival of Song (NYFOS), which he co-founded in 1988 with Michael Barrett. Since the Festival's inception, he has programmed, performed, translated, and annotated more than 140 vocal recitals with repertoire spanning the entire range of American song, art song from Schubert to Szymanowski, and popular song from early vaudeville to Lennon-McCartney. NYFOS has also made in-depth explorations of music from Spain, Latin America, Scandinavia, and Russia. *New York Magazine* gave NYFOS its award for Best Classical Programming, while *Opera News* proclaimed Blier "the coolest dude in town."

Mr. Blier enjoys an eminent career as an accompanist and vocal coach. His recital partners have included Renée Fleming, Cecilia Bartoli, Samuel Ramey, Lorraine Hunt Lieberson, Susan Graham, Jessye Norman, and José van Dam, in venues ranging from Carnegie Hall to La Scala. He is also on the faculty of The Juilliard School and has been active in encouraging young recitalists at summer programs, including the Wolf Trap Opera Company, the Steans Institute at Ravinia, Santa Fe Opera, and the San Francisco Opera Center.

In keeping the traditions of American music alive, he has brought back to the stage many of the rarely heard songs of George Gershwin, Harold Arlen, Kurt Weill, and Cole Porter. He has also played ragtime, blues, and stride piano evenings with John Musto. A champion of American art song, he has premiered works of John Corigliano, Paul Moravec, Ned Rorem, William Bolcom, Mark Adamo, John Musto, Richard Danielpour, Tobias Picker, Robert Beaser, Lowell Liebermann, Harold Meltzer, and Lee Hoiby, many of which were commissioned by NYFOS.

A native New Yorker, he received a Bachelor's Degree with Honors in English Literature at Yale University, where he studied piano with Alexander Farkas. He completed his musical studies in New York with Martin Isepp and Paul Jacobs.

MICHAEL BARRETT

NYFOS Associate Artistic Director Michael Barrett started NYFOS in 1988 with his friend and colleague Steven Blier. In 1992, he co-founded the Moab Music Festival with his wife, violist Leslie Tomkins. From 1994 to 1997, he was the Director of the Tisch Center for the Arts at the 92nd Street Y in New York, and from 2003 to 2012, he was Chief Executive and General Director of the Caramoor Center for Music and the Arts in Katonah, NY.

He has distinguished himself as a conductor with major orchestras here and abroad in the symphonic, operatic, and dance repertoire. A protégé of Leonard Bernstein, he began his long association with the renowned conductor and composer as a student in 1982. He served as Maestro Bernstein's assistant conductor from 1985–1990. He currently serves as music advisor to the Leonard Bernstein Estate.

A champion of new music, Mr. Barrett has conducted and played premieres by Bernstein, Blitzstein, Bolcom, Danielpour, Kernis, Sellars, Harrison, Takemitsu, Del Tredici, John Corigliano, Lowell Liebermann, and John Musto. He has collaborated with the directors Jerome Robbins, John Houseman, Sir Peter Hall, David Alden, Christopher Alden, and Gregory Mosher.

Dedicated to music education, Mr. Barrett oversees the innovative education programs of the Moab Music Festival. He is also active in the creation of new educational programs for symphony orchestras in collaboration with Jamie Bernstein. Their programs have been performed throughout the U.S., Asia, Cuba, and Europe.

Born in Guam and raised in California, Mr. Barrett attended the University of California at Berkeley and is a graduate of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where he studied piano with Paul Hersh, and earned his master's degrees in conducting and piano performance.

REBECCA JO LOEB

Hailed as “a theatrical performer whose rise to watch” (*Opera News*), mezzo-soprano Rebecca Jo Loeb is currently a member of the Ensemble of the *Hamburgische Staatsoper* making such role debuts as Cherubino in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Rosina in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Hänsel in *Hänsel und Gretel*, Bellante in Handel’s *Almira*, which she then premiered at the *Innsbrucker Festwochen der Alte Musik* in the summer of 2014. This season she premieres the role of Oreste in Offenbach’s *La belle Hélène* in Hamburg, which will appear on ARTE TV, sings with the CPE Bach Chor as the alto soloist in Bach’s *Markus-Passion*, and debuts with the Dutch National Opera in Berg’s *Lulu* conducted by Fabio Luisi and directed by William Kentridge.

In the summer of 2013, Ms. Loeb was a finalist at the international Belvedere Competition in Amsterdam and in the summer of 2012, she made her Festival d’Aix-en-Provence debut in the world premiere of George Benjamin’s *Written on Skin* and was subsequently featured on the CD and DVD. She has performed with the Mark Morris Dance Company, the New York Festival of Song, the New Hampshire Symphony, the Tanglewood Music Center, at Central City Opera, and with the Aspen Opera Theatre.

Equally at home in musical theater, Ms. Loeb has appeared with the Boston Pops as Carrie in *Carousel* and Petra in *A Little Night Music*, to critical acclaim. She also made her Broadway debut in a benefit entitled *Ladies Who Sing Sondheim* starring Angela Lansbury and Deborah Monk. Her awards include the Curt Englehorn Scholarship from the Opera Foundation, First Prize in the Lotte Lenya Competition, a 2009 Career Bridges Grant, the Ginney and John Starkey Young Artist Awards at Central City Opera, and the Stanley Medal from the University of Michigan.

JOSHUA JEREMIAH

Described as “rich-voiced” (*The New York Times*) and hailed for his “warmly appealing, burnished baritone” (*Opera Today*), Joshua Jeremiah continues to bring his celebrated performances to theaters throughout the United States. Last season, he toured the Pacific Rim with New York City Opera in concerts of *Carmen* as Escamillo, debuted the opera *Mata Hari* with the Prototype Festival, returned to Arizona Opera as Lassiter in their world-premiere of *Riders of the Purple Sage*, and reprised the title role of *Gianni Schicchi* with the Opera Company of Middlebury. His 2017–2018 season includes Silvio in *Pagliacci* with New Orleans Opera, The Man in *Persona* in his Los Angeles Opera debut, and making his debut with On Site Opera.

Other recent performances include his Arizona Opera debut in the title role of *Rigoletto*, Demetrius in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* with Hawaii Opera Theatre, *Gianni Schicchi* with Mobile Opera, his role debut as Macbeth with Opera Company of Middlebury, Alfio in *Cavalleria rusticana* with the New Jersey Festival Orchestra, his debut with Des Moines Metro Opera as The Foreman in *Jenůfa* and Sonora in *La fanciulla del West*, Escamillo in *Carmen* and Sharpless in *Madama Butterfly* with the Northern Lights Festival, John Sorel in *The Consul* with Opera Santa Barbara, Aeneas in *Dido and Aeneas* to Stephanie Blythe’s Dido with Mark Morris Dance Group at the Mostly Mozart Festival, Ford in *Falstaff* with Opera Louisiane, and Don Pedro in *La Périchole* with New York City Opera.

In concert, he has sung with the New Haven Symphony and Cape Cod Symphony, debuted with Jazz at Lincoln Center in a Rufus Wainwright concert, appeared with New York Festival of Song, and debuted at Alice Tully Hall with the Little Orchestra Society in an all-Victor Herbert program.

NOTES ON ARIAS AND BARCAROLLES

Today is an auspicious double anniversary: the New York Festival of Song is thirty years old, and NYFOS's Founding Advisor Leonard Bernstein is ... well, nearly one hundred. He'll officially round off his century mark on August 25, 2018. But centennial celebrations are planned over the span of two full concert seasons, and NYFOS wanted to get in at the beginning. It seemed appropriate to kick off our Pearl Anniversary by honoring one of our most important mentors.

We are especially excited to be presenting the maestro's very last work, *Arias and Barcarolles*. The title comes from something President Eisenhower said to Bernstein after a concert in 1960. They'd performed a variety of orchestral works, ending with *Rhapsody in Blue*. Eisenhower singled out the Gershwin for special praise, declaring "It had a *theme*. I like music with a *theme*, not all those arias and barcarolles."

Arias and Barcarolles proved to be hugely important to the early success of New York Festival of Song. Our connection to the legendary maestro started with Michael Barrett, who studied under Bernstein before becoming his assistant conductor. Through their close friendship we got wind of an interesting possibility: Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center had commissioned a piece from Bernstein—*Arias and Barcarolles*, it was called—but after receiving it they dragged their heels about putting it in their season. After a while it became clear that CMSLC was jettisoning the work altogether, and *Arias and Barcarolles* was looking for a home. Michael already knew the piece—he'd played early drafts of it with Bernstein. We inquired if we could give the American premiere (it had received a preview performance in Tel Aviv). We received permission, and it opened our second season on a double bill with Brahms's *Liebeslieder Waltzes*.

I admit that I was initially puzzled by *A's and B's*, as it came to be known. For one thing, it was written in so many different styles, from Broadway bounce to twelve-tone anomie. It seemed like a compendium of almost every genre Bernstein had tackled in his forty-plus years as a composer. And the texts, mostly by Bernstein himself, appeared to be intensely autobiographical and self-referential. Working on *A's and B's* was like entering a maze, and I was frequently lost. Eventually we began to see our way through its many enigmas, and we came to treasure every note, every riddle.

Our premiere was a howling success, the music press turned out in droves to write about it, and NYFOS was suddenly in the spotlight. Our subsequent recording of the work won us a Grammy Award for Best Recording of a New Work. Truth to tell, the path to that Grammy was anything but smooth. Four record companies turned down the project, not always very politely, before Koch International chose it to launch their new label. When Plácido Domingo announced our triumph on national television, I had a powerful, guilt-inducing wave of Schadenfreude as I thought back on all the record companies who had rejected *A's and B's*.

It begins with a prelude, an enigmatic declaration of love sung emotionlessly over a turbulent, slashing accompaniment. This leads to the enigmatic (and certainly autobiographical) "Love Song," in which a feuding couple sing obliquely about their troubled marriage using the metaphor of a song. They simultaneously avoid and confront their problems, perhaps restoring their détente, perhaps opening the door to a separation. In "Little Smary" Bernstein retells a bedtime story his mother made up, giving the narrator's baby-talk a supersaturated musical setting reminiscent of Alban Berg. As Michael Barrett explained, "The mother is using simple, singsong language, but the child—the little genius Leonard Bernstein—already experiences the story in the violent colors of the Second Viennese School."

“The Love of My Life” takes us squarely into the therapist’s office as the narrator splutters down dead ends—aleatory twelve-tone rows, jagged declamatory outbursts, a brief Viennese waltz, and a touch of rock ’n roll, before hitting the disturbing truth he’s been unable to face. We next hear the adult Bernstein reflecting on parenthood in “Greeting,” a Copland-esque piece the composer first sketched when his son Alexander was born in the early 1950s.

The surreal, dramatic “Oif Mayn Khas’neh” is the climax of *A’s and B’s*. Built on a beautiful twelve-tone row that magically evokes the sounds of klezmer music, it recounts the story of a wedding disrupted by a crazily gifted red-haired fiddler. It is a perfect metaphor for Bernstein’s own marriage, a loving relationship that aspired to absorb the rigors of the composer’s superstar status as well as his homosexual promiscuity. Sung in Yiddish, the text and translation may be found on page 10 of this program.

“Mr. and Mrs. Webb Say Goodnight” continues the theme of marital strife, but in a comic vein. This mini-operetta mirrors a real incident in the lives of Charles Webb, the Dean of the School of Music at Indiana University, and his wife Kenda, when he canceled a planned move from Indiana to Chicago after his wife had made all the arrangements. Bernstein gives us a little Broadway cantata filled with humor, melody, and tenderness.

The piece ends with “Nachspiel,” a slow waltz with hummed obbligato. Its subtitle is “In memoriam,” a eulogy for departed loved ones. Bernstein originally wrote this song for his mom’s 88th birthday. His lyric wittily saluted two of his great loves, both of whom were 88: his mother and his piano.

The title comes from something President Eisenhower said to Bernstein after a concert in 1960. They’d performed a variety of orchestral works, ending with *Rhapsody in Blue*. Eisenhower singled out the Gershwin for special praise, declaring “It had a *theme*. I like music with a *theme*, not all those arias and barcarolles.”

Arias and Barcarolles was Bernstein’s last contribution to the repertoire of vocal music, and it changed my life—and Michael Barrett’s life—forever. But Lenny had been a primary force in our lives since our childhoods, starting with his indispensable *Young People’s Concerts*, which I saw both on television and live at what was then known as Philharmonic Hall. Bernstein’s shower of gifts continued with the impressive array of his original cast albums—I was practically weaned on *Wonderful Town*—and LPs of him conducting everything from the overture to *Zampa*, to Mahler’s *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*, to Verdi’s *Falstaff*, to the sexiest, slyest *Rhapsody in Blue* I’ve ever heard. I admit that I was always a bit threatened by Lenny’s gyrations on the podium—should anyone be doing those things in public?—but I secretly aspired to his total lack of inhibition. He embodied the highest potential of human life force, and did so with a kind of flamboyance and extravagance that took our breath away. Whatever the flaws of this extraordinary man, Bernstein was a beacon for all American musicians—indeed, for all Americans, period.

Notes by Steven Blier

Oif Mayn Khas'neh (At My Wedding)

Text by Yankev Yitskhok Segal

Translation by Michael Barrett

Oif mayn Khas'neh hot geshpielt
A roiter freylikher Klezmer
Oif dem klenst'n, shtilst'n Fidele.
Geshpielt hot er a troyeriks,
An alt fortsaytik ometik Lidele.
Alte Klezmer hoben shtum gegaft;
Vu hot er der roiter Yung gekhapt?
Oz, b'sakh hakol, nekhtikt er un' tagt
in Derfer
Shpielt oif goyishe shikure
vetshernitses.
Un', b'sakh hakol, kann er hoim a
shaytl Ivry draptshen!
Shlof'n, shloft er oif a hart'n Taptshen.
Ess'n, esst er vu es makht sikh dort'n.
A Shikse shenkt im Rete khlekh fun Garten.
Nor a Vunder un' akhalom iz geven
oif im tsu kuk'n:
Die Aksel un' der Kopp, un' Noz
un'Oyer
Hob'n kishofdik bay im gelakht mit frayer un'troyer,
Un' das gantse darre knokhevate Ponim
Hot gekvoll'n vie a lebedicker Bronnem.
Oif mayn Khas'neh hot der Yung geshpielt.
Oz s'hot fin ort gehuib'n, Fyss hob'n gevollt
A riss tun zikh,
Oyren hob'n zikh farshpitzt vie Shpiets'n;
Un das Fidele hot gekusht, geriss'n,
Gebiss'n shticker biz tsu-vaytik, un geknipp'n
Biz tsum Blut die ongetsoigene Adernstrones,
Azh! Die Alte hob'n zikh gebeten:
HOB RAKHMONUS!

At my wedding a carefree,
red-haired musician played
on the smallest, quietest fiddle.
He played a sad tune,
an old, primitive, unknown song.
The old musicians were struck dumb.
"Where did this red-haired boy learn that?"
"Well after all, he spends his nights and
days in small villages
and plays at all-night gentile
drinking parties.
And, after all, he can barely read a line
of Hebrew!
Sleeping? He sleeps on a hard mat.
Eating? He eats wherever he happens to be.
A shikse gives him radishes from her garden.
But it was a wonder, a miracle,
just to look at him:
The shoulder and the head, and nose and
ear magically
laughed within him with joy and sadness.
and his entire thin, bony face
welled up like a living spring.
At my wedding a boy played,
and people were raised out of their seats.
Feet wanted to tear away,
ears were sharpened like spears;
And the fiddle kissed, tore,
and bit, and went too far,
and cut the taut heart-strings till they bled.
"Azh!" the old ones prayed:
"HAVE MERCY!"

Piano

BY ROXANE BETH JOHNSON

Silence is voices – cancelled stamps on old envelopes, yellow
as squash and stuck like blood on cloth.

Silence is round – littered with the shadows of my mother's
fingers glistening over the piano keys like fog.



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

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and Outreach Librarian, and Julie Swarstad Johnson, Library
Specialist, at the University of Arizona Poetry Center.



We are the music makers,
and we are the dreamers of dreams.
- Arthur O'Shaughnessy

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October 14-15 American violinist Chloé Trevor returns to perform Khachaturian's Violin Concerto and Vivaldi's "Summer" from *The Four Seasons*. Also featured are Dvořák's Slavonic Dances Nos. 5-8.

November 18-19 Paraguay's acclaimed Diego Sánchez Haase conducts Beethoven's "Pastoral" and Rachmaninov's third piano concerto with returning soloist Tbilisi-born Yelena Beriyea.

January 27-28 The Chinese Concert features UA faculty member Jing Xia on the guzheng and Xiaoyin Xheng on the erhu. Composers are Lu Qiming, Xhou Yuguo, Liu Wenjin and Wang Liping and Larry Lang.

March 10-11 SASO's favorite soprano, ChristiAmonson, performs Barber's *Knoxville Summer of 1915*, then joins voices with the SASO Chorus for Poulenc's Gloria.

April 14-15 Christopher Theofanidis' *Rainbow Body*, Wieniawski's Violin Concerto No. 1 with TSO concertmaster Lauren Roth and Rachmaninov's Symphonic Dances.

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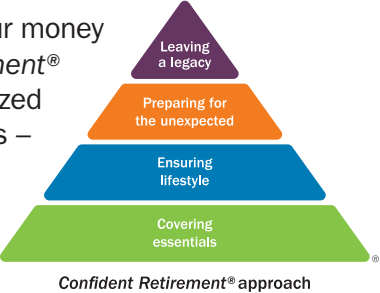
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