

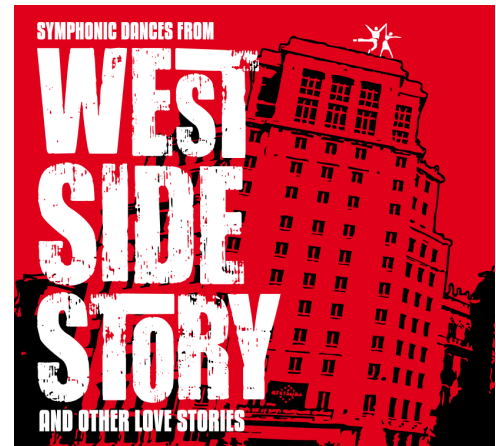
MEDIA RELEASE

Fall in love with Bernstein's music again as the Sydney Symphony performs his most famous works

13, 14 and 15 March, Sydney Opera House

Monday 3 March -- Legendary composer/conductor Leonard Bernstein smashed the barrier between jazz, musical theatre and symphonic music, becoming a legend of 20th-century music. This March, the Sydney Symphony pays tribute to the great 'Lenny' with a performance of music from two of his most-loved Broadway shows – *West Side Story* and *Candide*, conducted by one of the world's foremost interpreters of Bernstein's music, Wayne Marshall.

A modern day version of Romeo and Juliet set in New York City, *West Side Story* burst onto the Broadway stage 51 years ago with audiences going wild over Bernstein's high-voltage percussive score. Its fusion of Latin dance, cool jazz and symphonic sounds revolutionised the whole musical genre.



In a performance that will leave audiences singing and dancing in the aisles, the Sydney Symphony will perform *Symphonic Dances from West Side Story*, which threads together the musical's highlights including 'Maria', 'Somewhere' and 'I Feel Pretty'.

Bernstein wrote the score to *West Side Story* at the same time as writing the score for another Broadway musical, *Candide*. Based on Voltaire's deft, satirical novel of 1759, *Candide* follows the travails of a ceaselessly optimistic hero in a series of wild adventures and astonishing coincidences.

Not long after *Candide*'s original Broadway run, Bernstein's vibrant Overture to *Candide* became a stand-alone orchestral showpiece. Since Bernstein conducted its first concert performance in 1957 with the New York Philharmonic, the Overture to *Candide* has become one of the most frequently performed orchestral compositions by a 20th-century American composer, and the Sydney Symphony will show why with an effervescent performance of the piece.

Throughout his life, Bernstein was an ardent champion of the music of Hungarian Karl Goldmark. And in another nod to Bernstein as part of these performances, the Sydney Symphony will perform Goldmark's most popular piece, *Rustic Wedding Symphony*.

Depicting the nuptials and merrymaking of Austrian villagers, the *Rustic Wedding* takes audiences from the wedding march to a touching love scene in the garden, and finally a boisterous dance in a style that combines tunefulness with rich orchestration. Where *West Side Story* is a tragic love story, Goldmark's *Rustic Wedding Symphony* is a beacon of love and happiness.

If any man is going to do justice to the great Leonard Bernstein and his delectable music it's British conductor Wayne Marshall, who will lead the Sydney Symphony in these performances. Sydney audiences are in for a treat if a review of Marshall's performance of the *Candide* Overture at La Scala in 2001 is anything to go by – "brilliant ... the performance was amongst the best that we have heard for years." (*Corriere della Sera*).

Leonard Bernstein was born in Massachusetts, USA, in 1918, and became one of classical music's most influential figures. Not only was he the first American to be appointed music director of a major American orchestra (New York Philharmonic, 1958 – 1969), but he also blazed the trail in Europe for other Americans to follow. He was the first American to conduct the Berlin Philharmonic, the London Symphony Orchestra and the Royal Concertgebouw, among others. He was also the first American to conduct at La Scala.

Tickets for the 2008 season are now available by phoning the Sydney Symphony Box Office on 8215 4600 or online at sydney-symphony.com.

Watch Leonard Bernstein conduct his *Candide* Overture:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=422-yb8TXj8

For more information on Leonard Bernstein:

www.leonardbernstein.com

For more information on Wayne Marshall:

<http://www.askonasholt.co.uk/green/green/home.nsf/ArtistDetails/Wayne%20Marshall>

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Note to Editors: Concert Details

WEST SIDE STORY

Thu 13 March, 1.30pm

Fri 14 March, 8pm

Sat 15 March, 2pm

Wayne Marshall conductor

GOLDMARK

Rustic Wedding Symphony

BERNSTEIN

Symphonic Dances from West Side Story

Candide: Overture

Tickets from \$56*

Sydney Symphony concert programs are now available online in the week of a performance. Just visit www.sydney-symphony.com and click on calendar date for the concert program you'd like to see.

*Booking fees may apply