

QUEER URBAN ORCHESTRA

LOVE *has no* BOUNDS



SATURDAY, JUNE 22, 2019 - 8 PM
CHURCH OF THE HOLY APOSTLES



Queer We Are

Love Has No Bounds

June 22, 2019

Julie Desbordes, Artistic Director

Ian Shafer, Assistant Director

Anthony Roth Costanzo, Countertenor

Molly Pope, Host

Mothership

Conducted by Ian Shafer

Mason Bates

Man and Man

Anthony Roth Costanzo, countertenor

Conducted by Ian Shafer

Jimmy López

An American in Paris

George Gershwin

INTERMISSION

Love Who You Love

from *A Man of No Importance*

Music by Stephen Flaherty

Lyrics by Lynn Ahrens

Arranged by Nick Johnson

Molly Pope, Vocal

The Best Of Times Is Now from *La Cage aux Folles*

Jerry Herman

Arranged by Bjorn Berkhout

Molly Pope, Vocal

Symphonic Dances from *West Side Story*

Leonard Bernstein

Queer Urban Orchestra

Violin I

Jonathan Bloomfield
Chris Campbell
Brian Harrington
Farzaneh Sarafraz
Phong Ta † §
Liann Wadewitz
Alex Wen

Violin II

Christian Balmaseda-
Lucca
Alva Bostick §
Jonathan Chang •
Laura Flanagan
Andre Gillard
Himani Gupta
Suzanne Lipkin
Cory Pitts
Ligia Sakurai
Renee Slaw

Viola

Emily Bayer
Freddy Hodges
Andrew Holland
Grace Pazdra
Nicholas Singletary §

Cello

Bjorn Berkhout • §
Alex Humesky
Richard Moy
Todd Porter
Brittany Taylor

Bass

Hanxiao Deng
Michael McClure

Flute

Craig Devereaux • §
Scott Oaks

Oboe

Kevin Chavez
Alan Hyde
Brian Shaw

Clarinet

Travis Fraser §
Fran Novak •

Bassoon

Adam Beyt
Charlie Scatamacchia §

Contrabassoon

Norma Kerlin

Horn

Lynn Caron
Steven Petrucelli §
Brandon Travan
Kyle Walker •

Trumpet

Ron Nahass • §
Ismael Pereira
Brian Wang

Trombone

Alex Daggers
Simon Morales
Kevin Schmitt •

Bass Trombone

Matthew Cain

Tuba

Adam Rosenberg

Percussion

Andrew Berman • §
Álvaro Rodas

Harp

Stephanie Babirak

Julie Desbordes, Artistic Director



Julie Desbordes conducts professional and community orchestras in North and South America, her native France and Asia. Currently living in both New York City and Baltimore, her recent international appearances as guest conductor include concerts in Venezuela, Cuba, Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan and Malaysia in recent seasons. Her repertoire stands from master works to premieres of contemporary pieces.

She is the Artistic Director of two orchestras in New York City: the Turtle Bay Youth Orchestra and the Queer Urban Orchestra. Mrs. Desbordes harbors a passion for education and outreach. She is a leader in the El Sistema movement, being invited to conduct many El Sistema inspired youth orchestras internationally, having been runner-up for the Directorship of the Los Angeles Philharmonic's El Sistema-inspired Youth Orchestra program (YOLA), being a featured guest at El Sistema programs nationwide, as well as being featured in a powerful documentary about El Sistema-inspired programs in the US: "Crescendo! The Power of Music" (available on Netflix), by Jamie Bernstein (daughter of Leonard Bernstein).

Mrs. Desbordes made her conducting debut in France with l'Harmonie Municipale de Limoges at age 17. Since then she worked internationally, including debuting on the Asian professional scene in 2016 with the Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestra in Kuala Lumpur.

Equally committed to developing new audience for classical music, she presents numerous innovative programs each season; for example "Queer We Are" this season with QUO, when regular and outreach concerts are designed to represent various aspect of the rich LGBTQIA community via exciting masterpieces of the symphonic repertoire, and where audience and musicians are thought of as one unit to co-create their experience.

Ms. Desbordes holds multiple degrees in both conducting and trumpet from three different Music Conservatoires: Limoges, Bordeaux, and Montreal. Her conducting teachers have included Raffi Armenian and Gustav Meier. In parallel of her professional commitments this season, she also is the Trumpet Faculty at the Peabody Preparatory and she will complete her Doctorate in Musical Arts in Orchestral Conducting at the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore, where she studies with Marin Alsop.

Ian Shafer, Assistant Conductor



Conductor and Oboist **Ian Shafer** enjoys a multifaceted career both on and off the podium. He is delighted to serve in his fourth season as the Assistant Conductor with QUO and his eighth season as its principal oboist. In this capacity he has conducted the annual composition contest winners and concerto soloists as well as several other performances and has proudly served as a board member. Additionally, he has led performances with the Buffalo Philharmonic, the Mannes Orchestra, and the Mannes Community Orchestra, the Christman Opera Company, the Sylph Ensemble of New York, and the Young Artist's Philharmonic of Connecticut. He is honored to lead the Seventh Annual New York High School Honors Music Festival and to have led the Greater Philadelphia Honors Orchestra and the Orchestras of the Crescendo Chamber Music Festival for six seasons.

As an oboist, he has given performances in nearly every major concert hall in New York including a solo recital at Carnegie Hall at which he premiered *Locales*, a work that he commissioned from Mohammed Fairouz. He has also given the world premieres of several other works: *Elegy and Impromptu* by James Adler; *Layers of Earth*, by Lars Graugaard; *Langanaiich-Taragto*; a seven-minute improvised solo to Elizabeth Hoffman's digital score, which later expanded to *Improvisational Spirals* for oboe, dancer, and DJ premiered at the NYSoundCircuit; *Noor Al Salam* (Light of Peace) and *ResoNations* at two "Concerts for Peace" for the delegates of the United Nations.

Mr. Shafer, a dedicated teacher, is a faculty member at the Manhattan School of Music in the Precollege divisions of Oboe performance, Music Theory/Ear-training and at the Special Music School HS at the Kaufman Center. He holds a Professional Studies Diploma in Conducting from Mannes College, a M.M. in Oboe performance from NYU, and B.M. from the Oberlin Conservatory of Music in Composition and Musicology. He has studied conducting with David Hayes, Robert Spano, Louis Lane, Jorma Panula, Alfred Gershfild and Jonathan Coopersmith; oboe with: Bert Lucarelli, Ray Still, and Jonathan Kelly; and composition with Richard Hoffmann, a former student of Arnold Schoenberg. He has several compositions to his credit: *Fugue for Four Trombones*, which was premiered by members of the Chicago Symphony, *Dreams for Woodwind Quintet*, by the Sarasota Orchestra's wind quintet, and *Russian Games*, by the Oberlin Wind Ensemble.

Anthony Roth Costanzo, Countertenor



Photo: Matthew Placek

Countertenor **Anthony Roth Costanzo** began performing professionally at the age of 11 and has since appeared in opera, concert, recital, film, and on Broadway.

Recently named 2019 Musical America Vocalist of the Year, this season Mr. Costanzo produced and starred in *Glass/Handel*, an operatic art installation, at Opera Philadelphia's O18 Festival

and subsequently co-presented by National Sawdust and St. John the Divine in New York. He also returned to the English National Opera in his acclaimed performance of the title role in *Akhnaten* and appeared in concert with Les Violons du Roy in eight cities, the New York Philharmonic, Philharmonia Baroque at Lincoln Center, Boston Baroque, Mercury, and the NDR at the Elphiharmonie, and in recital presented by Celebrity Series of Boston. This summer he appears in concert at the Caramoor Festival, and next season his many engagements include his return to the Met for *Akhnaten* and appearances with Philharmonia Baroque, Les Violons du Roy, and The English Concert (on tour in Europe and the US).

Mr. Costanzo is an exclusive recording artist with Decca Gold, and his first album, *ARC: Glass/Handel* - a collection of arias by Handel and Phillip Glass with Les Violons du Roy - will be released in September 2018.

Costanzo has appeared with many of the world's leading opera houses including the Metropolitan Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, San Francisco Opera, English National Opera, Houston Grand Opera, Opera Philadelphia, Los Angeles Opera, Canadian Opera Company, Glyndebourne Opera Festival, Dallas Opera, Teatro Real Madrid, Spoleto Festival USA, Glimmerglass Festival and Finnish National Opera.

In concert he has sung with the New York Philharmonic, Berlin Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, London Symphony Orchestra, Cleveland Orchestra, and National Symphony Orchestra, among others. He has also been presented in recital in Vancouver, Princeton University Concerts, Duke Performances, and at the Morgan Library in New York. He has performed at a wide-ranging variety of venues including Carnegie Hall, Versailles, The Kennedy Center, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, National Sawdust, Minamiza Kyoto, Joe's Pub, The Guggenheim, The Park Avenue Armory, and Madison Square Garden.

A champion of new work, Mr. Costanzo recently created roles in the world premieres of Jimmy Lopez' *Bel Canto* at the Lyric Opera of Chicago and Jake Heggie's *Great Scott* at the Dallas Opera. He has also premiered works written for him by Matthew Aucoin, Paola Prestini, Gregory Spears, Suzanne Farrin,

Bernard Rands, Scott Wheeler, Mohammed Fairouz, Steve Mackey, and Nico Muhly.

Mr. Costanzo has begun working as a producer and curator in addition to a performer, creating shows for National Sawdust, Opera Philadelphia, the Philharmonia Baroque, Princeton University, WQXR, The State Theater in Salzburg, Master Voices and Kabuki-Za Tokyo. He played Francis in the Merchant Ivory film, *A Soldier's Daughter Never Cries*, for which he was nominated for an Independent Spirit Award, and Simon in Brice Cauvin's *De particulier a particulier*. He is the first countertenor to host a Met Opera Live in HD Broadcast.

In 2012, Mr. Costanzo won first place in Plácido Domingo's international competition Operalia. He is also a 2009 Grand Finals Winner of the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions. He won a George London Award, received a career grant from the Richard Tucker Foundation, and became the first countertenor to win First Place in the Houston Grand Opera Eleanor McCullom competition, where he also won the audience choice prize. He received a Sullivan Foundation Award, and won First Place in the Opera Index Competition, the National Opera Association Vocal Competition, and the Jensen Foundation Competition.

Mr. Costanzo graduated Magna Cum Laude and Phi Beta Kappa from Princeton University where he was awarded the Lewis Sudler Prize for extraordinary achievement in the arts and where he has returned to teach. He received his Masters of Music at Manhattan School of Music and won the Hugh Ross Award for a singer of unusual promise. In his youth, he performed on Broadway and in Broadway National Tours including *A Christmas Carol*, *The Sound of Music*, and *Falsettos*. He began his operatic endeavors playing Miles in *The Turn of the Screw*.

Molly Pope, Host and Special Guest



Molly Pope is a critically-acclaimed cabarettist whose shows have played Joe's Pub, Feinstein's/54 Below, Feinstein's at the Regency, Ars Nova, The Eugene O'Neill Theater Center, OBERON (A.R.T.), Teatro ZinZanni (Joe's Pub Seattle), and the Adelaide Cabaret Festival in Australia. Hailed as "One of downtown cabaret's most adventurous performers"

by the New York Times, she is the recipient of both the 2016 Bistro Award for Creative Cabaret Artistry and the 2016 MAC Award for Musical Comedy. She has been named a Time Out New York "Top Ten Cabaret Act of 2008 and 2012" and a Village Voice Best of NYC 2011 for "Best Singer To Turn Life Into A Cabaret." Most recently she recorded her first album, "An Audience with Molly Pope", live at Joe's Pub. She has also performed at The Cafe Carlyle ("Tales From The Jazz Age"), the Afterglow Festival in Provincetown, The Amber Zone at Sid Gold's Request Room, "Our Hit Parade" at Joe's Pub, Greenwich House Music School's "Uncharted Series" and as a resident artist at The Kimmel Center (Philadelphia) and The Orchard Project. Stage credits include FOUND (Atlantic Theater Co, Philadelphia Theater Co), Horseplay, or the Fickle Mistress (LaMama ETC/Theatre Askew), Dan Fishback's The Material World (Dixon Place).

Special Thanks

Alva Bostick for stage management and always going the extra mile.

Roger Herr for our libations.

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Nick Johnson for baking our amazing concessions.

Luke Melas for website design and consultation.

Scott Oaks for managing our website.

Joe Patrych for sound recording.

Aaron T. Patterson for program notes.

Charlie Scatamacchia for outreach.

Program Notes

The mothership floats high above, an orchestra pulsing rapidly with a heart of techno. At several moments in the piece, various soloists dock with the mothership, dropping in with solos both virtuosic and lyrical. The work was commissioned by Michael Tilson Thomas and the YouTube Symphony, which premiered the work in March 2011 at the Sydney Opera House in Australia.

The piece follows the form of a scherzo with double trio. But while symphonic scherzos historically play with dance rhythms such as the waltz, **Mothership** looks to 21st Century dance music (such as techno) to enliven its journey. The brief solos can be played as written or improvised.

Many thanks to Michael, whose mentoring greatly helped the work on many levels, and to the musicians from around the world who came together in Sydney and helped **Mothership** lift off. -- Mason Bates

May 16, 2015 is, undoubtedly, one of the most eagerly awaited dates in my life. On that day I will exchange vows with Heleno, my love, my friend, my soon-to-be husband. Our journey began more than four years ago, and looking back I can say with confidence that meeting him was one of the greatest gifts that life has bestowed upon me.

Man and Man is originally scored for twelve musicians and countertenor. It begins with three notes that correspond to Heleno's initials: H (B natural), M (E), and L (A). These succession of notes outline two intervals that will play a major role throughout: the fifth and the fourth. The piece flows through several tonal centers, always shifting and refusing to settle until the very end. Toward the last third of the piece, the singer utters the words that gave the title to this song, and it does so by using the same notes and intervals from the opening. This is the climax and it marks the beginning of the poem's final stanza.

The lyrics, written by my friend, renowned playwright Nilo Cruz, are full of joy and optimism toward the future. The piece displays different moods and tempi, all representing the journey of two lovers who go from the initial excitement of romance and passion, passing through joys and struggles, and culminating in a life commitment in front of the altar. The final chord built on A represents our union. The names López and Leitão both begin with L, which stands for the note "la" or A, thus bringing the piece to an end charged with musical symbolism, and signaling a new beginning.

The premiere performance will be an intimate affair. It will take place at Grace Cathedral in San Francisco in front of family and friends. Many of the performers are also good friends of ours, including our soloists, countertenor Anthony Roth Costanzo, and our conductor, Andrés López. It will be, no doubt, a date to be

remembered.

This piece is dedicated to my beloved Heleno and the love that binds us.
April 16, 2015 -- Jimmy Lopez

The writing team of **Stephen Flaherty** and **Lynn Ahrens** are best known for writing the Broadway musicals *Ragtime*, *Once On This Island*, and *Seussical*, which is now one of the most performed shows in America. They have been nominated for two Academy Awards and two Golden Globe Awards.

Flaherty moved to New York City in 1982 and joined the BMI Lehman Engel Musical Theater Workshop, where he met Ahrens. Their first collaboration that was produced was a one act children's show, *The Emperor's New Clothes*, for TheatreWorks USA in 1985. Their next produced musical was *Lucky Stiff*, produced Off-Broadway in 1988 at Playwrights Horizons.

Their first Broadway musical was *Once on This Island*, in 1990, which transferred from Off-Broadway's Playwrights Horizons. The musical was nominated for eight Tony Awards including Best Musical, Best Book and Best Score. The London production of the show won the Olivier Award for Best Musical in 1995. The show was later revived on Broadway in an immersive production at Circle In The Square in December 2017, where it was again nominated for 8 Tony Awards, winning for Best Revival of a Musical. The cast recording of the revival was nominated for the Grammy in 2019.

In 1992, Flaherty and Ahrens were signed by Disney to write the animated musical *Song of the Sea*, a coming of age story about a humpback whale. Though the film was never produced, several key development executives on the project would play a part in Flaherty and Ahrens' later film musical, *Anastasia* (1997).

Also in 1992, Flaherty and Ahrens wrote the musical *My Favorite Year*, based on the film of the same title, with a book by Joseph Dougherty. It was notably the first original American musical to be produced by Lincoln Center Theatre. They would go on to write three additional original musicals for Lincoln Center Theatre: *A Man Of No Importance* (2002, with a book by Terrence McNally), *Dessa Rose* (2005) and *The Glorious Ones* (2007).

The critically acclaimed *Ragtime* (also with a book by Terrence McNally) had its world premiere in Toronto in December of 1996, its American premiere in Los Angeles in June of 1997 and its Broadway premiere in January of 1998, where it ran for two years. It won four Tony Awards, including Best Book and Best Score (for Flaherty and Ahrens), the Drama Desk Award for Best Musical, and was also nominated for two Grammy Awards for its two cast recordings. Its London production (2003) was nominated for the Olivier Award for Best Musical. The show was revived on Broadway in November of 2009, where it was again

critically acclaimed and nominated for the Tony Award for Best Revival of a Musical.

After writing three shows for Lincoln Center Theatre, Flaherty and Ahrens next returned to Broadway with the musical *Rocky*. The show premiered in Hamburg, Germany in October 2012. The musical has a book by Thomas Meehan and Sylvester Stallone, based on Stallone's original screenplay. *Rocky* premiered on Broadway at the Winter Garden Theatre, officially opening on March 13, 2014. The musical was directed by Alex Timbers, with choreography by Steven Hoggett and Kelly Devine, and was nominated for 4 Tony Awards and 7 Drama Desk Awards including Outstanding Musical.

Flaherty and Ahrens' next musical, *Little Dancer*, featured direction and choreography by Susan Stroman. Inspired by the famous Edgar Degas sculpture, *Little Dancer, Aged 14*, the musical had a reading in 2010 at Lincoln Center Theater and a developmental lab production in June 2010. The show premiered at the Kennedy Center's Eisenhower Theater in October 2014. A re-working of the show, now titled *Marie* (after the name of the young ballerina), had its west coast premiere at Seattle's 5th Avenue Theatre in March 2019.

Their next Broadway musical was *Anastasia*, with a book by Terrence McNally, and based on the Twentieth Century Fox films. The show premiered on Broadway in April 2017 after premiering at Hartford Stage in Connecticut the previous year. The show was subsequently produced in Madrid, Stuttgart and on tour in the United States in 2018, with a production in The Hague to open in 2019. During the 2017-2018 Broadway season Flaherty and Ahrens had the rare honor of having two shows running on Broadway at the same time, *Anastasia* and the revival of *Once On This Island*.

For their work in film, Flaherty and Ahrens were nominated for two Academy Awards (for Best Song and Best Score) and two Golden Globe Awards for Twentieth Century Fox's animated *Anastasia* (1997). The team received the Oscar Hammerstein Lifetime Achievement Award in 2014.

A Man of No Importance is based on the 1994 Albert Finney Film and ran at the Mitzi E. Newhouse Theatre at Lincoln Center as part of the 2002-03 season. It won the 2003 Outer Critics Circle Award for Best Off-Broadway Musical and has since been produced at the Berkeley Street Theatre in Toronto, and the Union Theatre in Southwark, from where it transferred to the Arts Theatre in the West End. — *Wikipedia*

I'm not one to lecture
How could I dare
Someone like me who's been mainly nowhere
But in my experience be as it may
You just have to love who you love
You just have to love who you love

Your common sense tells ya best not begin
But your fool heart cannot help plungin in
And nothing and no one can stand in your way
You just have to love who you love
You just have to love who you love

People can be hard sometimes
And their words can cut so deep
Choose the one you choose love
and don't lose a moment's sleep
Who can tell you who to want
Who can tell you what you were destined to be
Take it from me

There's no fault in lovin
No call for shame
Everyone's heart does exactly the same
And once ya believe that, you'll learn how to say
I love who I love who I love
So just go and love who you love

Jerry Herman was born Gerald Sheldon Herman in New York City on July 10, 1931. He grew up in Jersey City, the only child of Harry Herman, a high school gym teacher, and Ruth (Sachs) Herman, a high school English teacher. Both parents were amateur musicians, and he began playing piano by ear at the age of six. He never took lessons, and did not learn to read music. His parents ran Stissing Lake Camp, a summer camp in Pine Plains, New York, where they had worked as counselors. Herman spent his summers at the camp, and in his teens, staged musicals there. Initially, he attended college at Parsons School of Design to study interior decorating, but after he showed some of his songs to songwriter Frank Loesser and was encouraged to pursue composing, he transferred to the University of Miami, where he majored in drama and wrote the school shows. The last of these was a revue called *I Feel Wonderful*, and after he graduated in 1954, his father produced a revised version of it Off-Broadway that opened in October and ran nearly 50 performances.

To support himself, Herman took jobs as a cocktail pianist, working up to writing special material for such nightclub entertainers as Tallulah Bankhead, Jane Froman, and Hermione Gingold. While employed at the Showplace club, he wrote another revue, *Nightcap*, that opened in May 1958 and ran for two years. *Parade*, a revised version of the show, opened in an Off-Broadway theater in January 1960 and ran 90 performances, resulting in a cast album. Herman was next hired to write his first Broadway musical, *Milk and Honey*, an original story about Americans touring Israel and finding romance. It opened October 10, 1961,

for a run of 543 performances, and it was recorded for a cast album. That led producer David Merrick to hire him to write the songs for a musical adaptation of Thornton Wilder's play *The Matchmaker*. The show was called *Dolly: A Damned Exasperating Woman* until Kapp Records hired Louis Armstrong to record a song from it called "*Hello, Dolly!*" It opened on January 16, 1964, and Armstrong's single was on the charts within a month, where it rose to number one, leading to a Song of the Year Grammy Award for Herman. The show won Herman the Tony Award for best score, and it went on to run 2,844 performances, which made it the longest-running Broadway musical in history up to that time. It was made into a movie in 1969, with a soundtrack album that charted. *Hello, Dolly!* was revived on Broadway in 1975, 1978, and 1995, and 2016.

Herman next turned to another musical with a strong female character, an adaptation of Patrick Dennis' novel *Auntie Mame*. Again, it was led by a title song, as Al Hirt, Bobby Darin, and Louis Armstrong all charted with cover versions of "Mame" prior to the show's May 24, 1966, opening; Herb Alpert & the Tijuana Brass had the most popular version at the end of the year, reaching the Top 20. The Mame cast album reached the Top 40 and won Herman the 1966 Grammy Award for Best Score from an Original Cast Show. The musical ran 1,508 performances, and was adapted into a film that opened in 1974 with a charting soundtrack album. It was revived on Broadway in 1983.

Although *Dear World*, Herman's next musical, again featured a strong female lead, it was a more experimental effort based on Jean Giraudoux's allegorical fantasy play *The Madwoman of Chaillot*. Opening on May 31, 1969, it was a commercial failure, running only 132 performances. Involved with the movie versions of *Hello, Dolly!* and *Mame*, Herman did not mount another new musical until 1974, when he returned to Broadway with *Mack & Mabel*, a dual stage biography of silent-film director Mack Sennett and silent-film star Mabel Normand. Running only 66 performances after its October 6, 1974, it was a discouraging failure that led Herman to suppose that his style of musical comedy was out of fashion. He abandoned songwriting and used his interior decorating skills to launch a business buying, renovating, and re-selling houses.

In 1981, *Jerry's Girls*, an Off-Off-Broadway revue of Herman's songs, opened in a night club in New York for a run of two years. It undertook a national tour in February 1984, and finally got to Broadway for a run of 139 performances on December 18, 1985. Meanwhile, Herman had scored a major comeback with *La cage aux Folles*, based on the French comedy film about a gay couple running a club for female impersonators in St. Tropez. Opening on August 21, 1983, it went on to run 1,761 performances. The cast album went gold, and Gloria Gaynor's recording of the defiant song of gay empowerment "I Am What I Am" was a Top Five hit in the Dance/Disco charts. Herman triumphed at the Tony Awards, taking home the award for best score. *La Cage aux Folles* was revived on Broadway in 2004 and 2010. "The Best of Times" is another audience favorite from the show, popularized by Perry Como. - William Ruhlmann

The best of times is now
What's left of summer
But a faded rose?
The best of times is now
As for tomorrow, well, who knows?
Who knows? Who knows?

So hold this moment fast
And live and love
As hard as you know how
And make this moment last
Because the best of times is now
Is now, is now

Now, not some forgotten yesterday
Now, tomorrow is too far away

So hold this moment fast
And live and love
As hard as you know how
And make this moment last
Because the best of times is now
Is now, is now, is now, is now

Gershwin and Bernstein program notes by Dr. Aaron T. Patterson



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An American in Paris

Quick Facts: GEORGE GERSHWIN

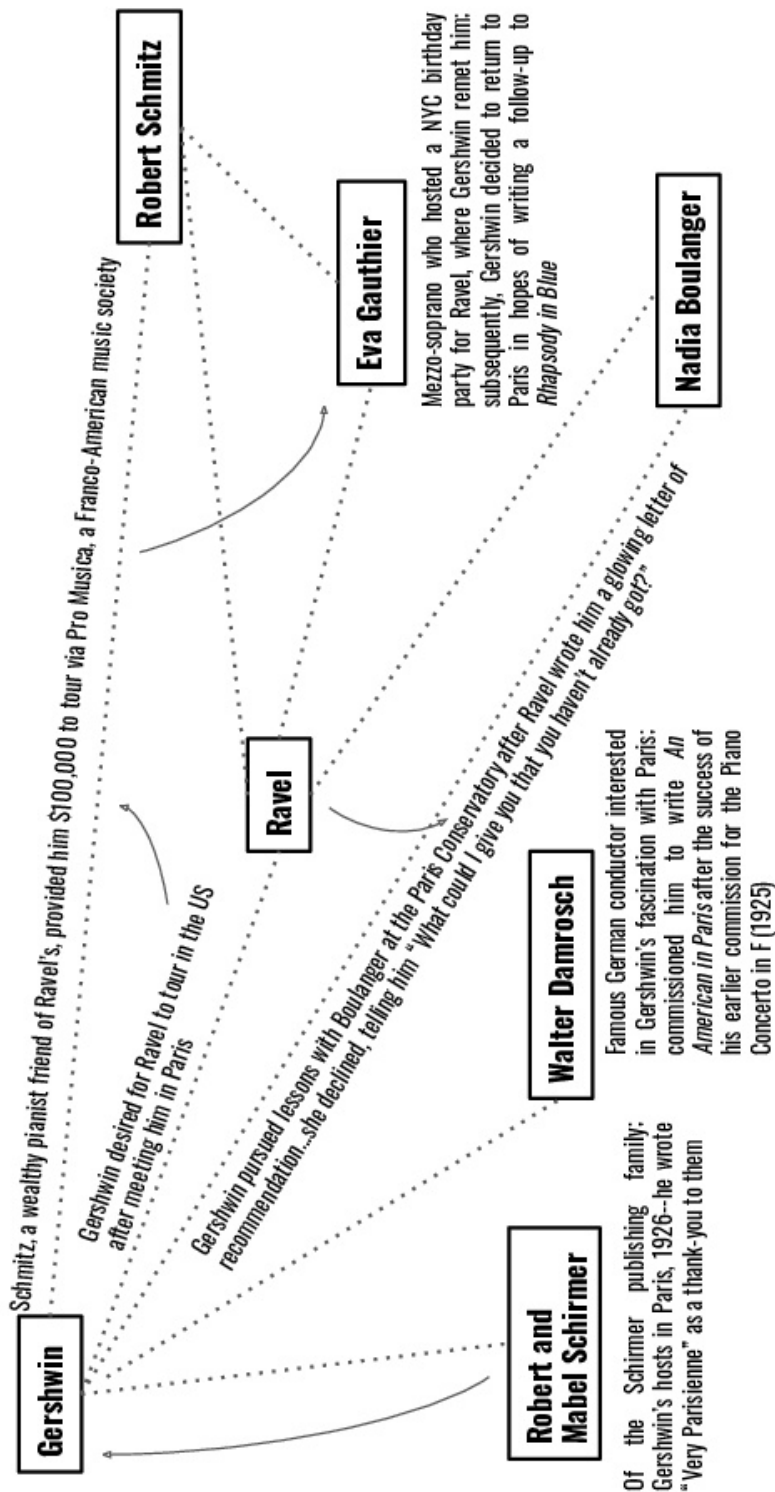
1. Birth name → Jacob Gershowitz
2. Born 1898 in Brooklyn; died 1937 of a brain tumor at age 39
3. Lyricist brother, Ira
4. Left school at age 15 to work
5. Earned \$0.50 on his first published tune (1916)

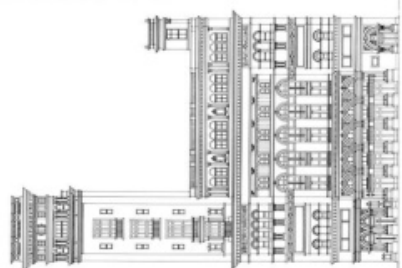
“Why be a second-rate Ravel when you can be a first-rate Gershwin?”

~ Maurice Ravel, when Gershwin asked to study with him in Paris



Gershwin traveled to Paris for the first time in 1926, accompanied by his brother. Enamored with the city, he composed “Very Parisienne,” a rhapsodic ballet that would later metamorphosize into a much larger work...





CARNEGIE HALL - NEW YORK

Musical form: 5 sections,
including French-inspired
“walking” themes contrasted
with American blues

Gershwin was displeased with Damrosch’s
stiff-collared interpretation of the work:
“It’s not a Beethoven Symphony, you
know...it’s a humorous piece, nothing solemn
about it.”

The premiere: December 13, 1928; Carnegie Hall

Critic Edward Cushing claimed the audiences responded with “a demonstration
of enthusiasm impressively genuine in contrast to the conventional applause
which new music, good and bad, ordinarily arouses.”

Programmed alongside works
by Franck and Wagner

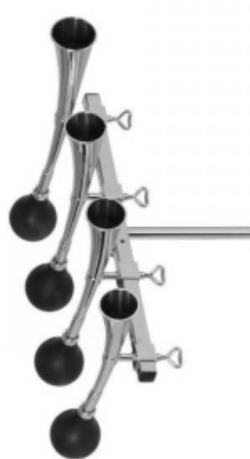
Instrumentation

STANDARD

- 3 flutes (1 doubling piccolo)
- 2 oboes
- English horn
- 2 clarinets
- Bass clarinet
- 2 bassoons
- 4 horns
- 3 trumpets
- 3 trombones
- Tuba
- Timpani, snare drum, bass drum
- Triangle, wood block, cymbals, tom-toms
- Xylophone, glockenspiel
- Strings

ADDITIONAL

- 3 saxophone parts
 - alto and soprano
 - tenor, soprano, and alto
 - baritone, soprano, and alto
- celesta
- 4 taxi horns pitched A-flat, B-flat, D, and A



Symphonic Dances from West Side Story

Quick Facts: Leonard Bernstein

1. Born Louis Bernstein in 1918, son of Ukrainian Jewish family
2. Childhood friends with Sid Ramin, who would later become one of the orchestrators who worked on *West Side Story*
3. Over the course of his career, became friends and colleagues with 20th century arts luminaries including Aaron Copland, Marc Blitzstein, Dimitri Mitropoulos, Fritz Reiner, Adolph Green, Betty Comden, Stephen Sondheim, Serge Koussevitzky, Eleanor Roosevelt, Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, Dave Brubeck, Marilyn Horne, Kurt Vonnegut, and Michael Tilson Thomas
4. Married a Chilean actress, Felicia Montealegre, and had three children--unapologetically sexually open with many men throughout his life
5. One of the last programs he conducted before passing away in 1990 (age 72) was the celebration of the fall of the Berlin Wall

Genesis of the musical

★ Creative team included playwright/director Arthur Laurents, choreographer Jerome Robbins, lyricist Stephen Sondheim, and composer Leonard Bernstein - Sondheim was only 27 years old!

★ Original concept first considered in 1947 as a musical adaption of *Romeo and Juliet* featuring warring Catholic and Jewish families on the Lower East Side



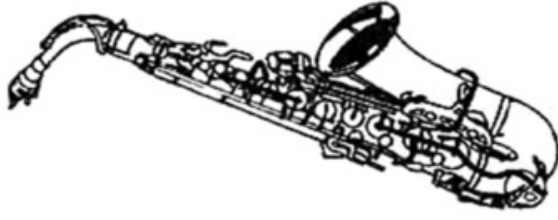
★ By 1956, the show was now about rival teen gangs from the Upper West Side -- it had gone through the names *Gangway!* and *East Side Story*, among others; the now-famous opening sequence was not finalized until the last weeks of rehearsal

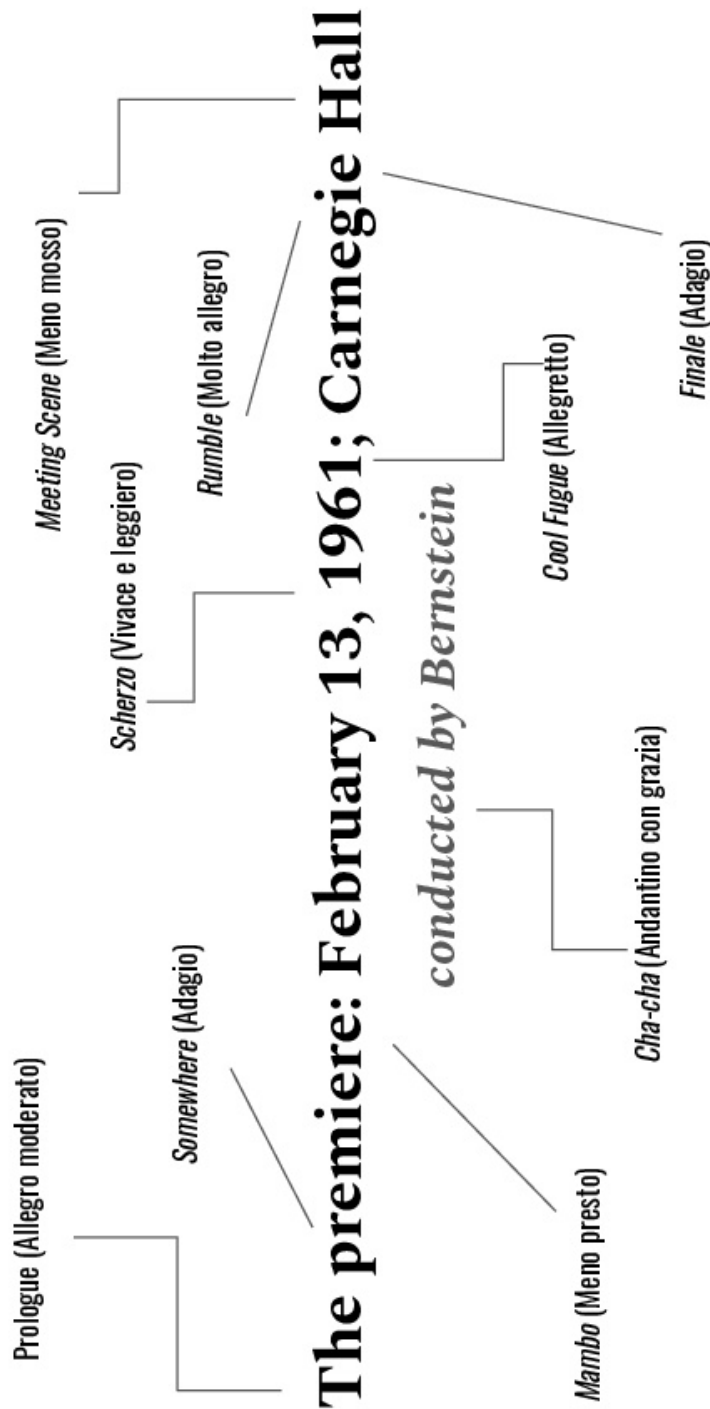
★ Tryouts in Philadelphia and Washington, DC led to the premiere at the Winter Garden in September 26, 1957; the musical ran for 732 performances

★ John Chapman's *New York Daily News* review hailed the show as " ...extraordinarily exciting [...] It takes up the American musical idiom where it was left when George Gerswhin died. It is fascinatingly tricky and melodically beguiling, and it marks the progression of an admirable composer."

Instrumentation

- Unlike the musical (and 1960 film), *Symphonic Dances* includes only one (!) saxophone
- Also unlike the musical, there are viola parts—Bernstein refused to score the show with viola because the Winter Garden Theatre house violists were poor players
- None of the woodwind parts are doubled, despite the original show having five reed books covering twenty-three instruments
- In addition to a standard coterie of strings, woodwinds, and brass, it includes parts for harp, four percussionists, and piano
- Later arranged for band by Paul Lavender





About Our Home: Church of the Holy Apostles

QUO has made its home at the Church of the Holy Apostles since 2010, but Holy Apostles has been welcoming LGBT groups and parishioners since the beginning of the gay rights movement in New York. "I know of few New York City LGBTQ organizations which did not have a home at some point in their history at the Church of the Holy Apostles," says Father Rand Frew, 12th Rector of Holy Apostles.

When QUO violinist Joey Plaster discovered that the Gay Activists Alliance had its headquarters at Holy Apostles in the early seventies, we reached out to Fr. Frew for more information. He shared, "The annual Pride March was announced in the bulletin and verbally, and people were encouraged to take part for the expansion of human rights. The Chelsea Gay Association met at Holy Apostles. The late Vito Russo's documentary, groundbreaking film *The Celluloid Closet* was first previewed and shown at Holy Apostles with commentary by Mr. Russo. The New York City Gay Men's Chorus rehearsed and performed at Holy Apostles." QUO is just one of several groups at Holy Apostles that spread a message of equality and acceptance through music. We're happy to share this space with fellow LGBTQ music performing groups such as The Stonewall Chorale and the Empire City Men's Chorus.



Photo Credit: Mạnh Dũng Nguyễn

About QUO

Founded in 2009, the Queer Urban Orchestra (QUO) is a musical organization dedicated to the promotion of fine arts in the New York City metropolitan area whose membership is open to all adult musicians regardless of age, race, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity. QUO strives to entertain and educate members and audiences alike through performances of classical and contemporary music, promoting equality, understanding, acceptance, and respect.

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Come Play With Us!

Play an instrument? Come and join QUO! Membership is open to all adult musicians regardless of age, race, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Chat us up after the concert or email us at membership@queerurbanorchestra.org

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* This colorful typeface, called the Gilbert font, was inspired by Gilbert Baker (1951 - 2017), an LGBTQ activist, artist and the creator of the iconic Rainbow Flag.

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