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RAVINIA TO HOST TWO-SEASON CELEBRATION OF BERNSTEIN CENTENNIAL WITH MUSIC, MEMENTOS AND MARIN ALSOP

HIGHLAND PARK, IL — To borrow the name of one of his popular tunes: Something’s coming! In 2018 Ravinia will launch a two-season centennial tribute to one of the all-time legends of American music, conductor/composer Leonard Bernstein, and in 2019 will open the Ravinia Music Box experience center with an exhibit of important mementos from Bernstein’s life and storied career, including his personal piano.

“There aren’t enough hyphens to string together all of Bernstein’s titles and accomplishments, and Ravinia is hoping to present a well-rounded remembrance of both the common man and the superstar artist who shaped so much of our musical tastes and understanding,” Ravinia President and CEO Welz Kauffman said. “Of course, there’s the Laureate Conductor of the New York Philharmonic and the Israel Philharmonic and the genius behind *West Side Story*, but there’s also the iconoclast, the man who defended melody in an era that was atonal in so many ways, and the charismatic leader at home at the glitziest parties and in the grittiest political movements. He lived life large, and his legacy merits global celebration.”

Ravinia’s celebration intends to comment on each aspect of the multi-hyphenate’s career with performances of the compositions he penned, films he scored, composers he championed, and artists he influenced. Bernstein’s credits include being Music Director of the New York Philharmonic; a composer of symphonies, the original film score for *On the Waterfront*, and Broadway megahits like *West Side Story* and *Candide*; and host of the popular televised “Young People’s Concerts,” which many fondly recall as their introduction to classical music—a point of pride for the highly regarded mentor.

Central to Ravinia’s celebration will be the two-year appointment of **Marin Alsop**—one of Bernstein’s final protégés—as the first musical “curator” in the festival’s 113-year history. Ravinia introduced Chicago audiences to Alsop between 2002 and 2005 when she led the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in works by Rachmaninoff, Shostakovich, and Corigliano, as well as excerpts from John Adams’s *Nixon in China*. The *Chicago Tribune* said, “Like her famous mentor, Leonard Bernstein, Alsop can be a dervish on the podium when the music is fast, busy, and highly charged. But she is her own

musician in terms of considered emotional response and the way she conveys intensity of feeling to her players.”

“Working with Leonard Bernstein was a dream come true for me. His generosity of mind and spirit changed my life and those of countless others who he never personally met,” Alsop said. “He inspired generations of music makers and music lovers and profoundly influenced the 20th century’s relationship with this universal art form. As conductor, composer, thinker, educator, author, television star, and citizen of the world, Bernstein’s legacy reflects his enormous contributions to society on so many levels. I am honored and thrilled to curate Ravinia’s exciting tribute to this incredible and amazing American icon.”

Alsop is especially eager to bring to Ravinia the CSO premiere of the musical theater masterwork *MASS*, the composer’s mod answer to the 1960s, commissioned by Jacqueline Kennedy for the 1971 opening of the Kennedy Center. Alsop has championed this piece on stage and recording. *MASS* will be the 2018 *One Score, One Chicago* selection. Television host and producer **Humphrey Burton**, who published an extensive biography of Bernstein based on a 30-year friendship and access to the composer’s private letters, will join Alsop in discussions about their friend and colleague.

One Score is just one of Ravinia’s **Reach*Teach*Play** education programs, which provide equitable access to music to 75,000 people in Cook and Lake Counties each year. Building on the legacy of Bernstein’s Young People’s Concerts, the Reach*Teach*Play programs—including El Sistema–based orchestras for schools with no music programs of their own—will focus on Bernstein’s art and influence throughout 2018 and 2019.

Second-generation artist/musician **Jamie Bernstein** will design a “New Young People’s Concert,” which will feature her father’s music for soloists and ensembles along with a tribute to “Lenny the Educator” featuring Chicago Public Schools students in Ravinia’s education programs. She will also host “Late Night with Leonard Bernstein,” an evening of music, anecdotes, and remembrances. Ravinia recently partnered with Jamie Bernstein and the Leonard Bernstein Office to host a Chicagoland brainstorming and information-sharing summit among arts organizations celebrating the 100th birthday (Aug. 25, 2018). Similar summits have been held in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and Los Angeles.

The 2018 gala concert, which benefits the not-for-profit festival and its Reach*Teach*Play programs, will feature Alsop leading the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Chorus, joined by the Chicago Children’s Choir, in the 1965 choral work *Chichester Psalms*, paired with Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony.

Ravinia’s 2018 season will also include the 1954 five-movement concerto for solo violin, strings, and percussion *Serenade (after Plato’s Symposium)*; his first symphony, 1942’s “Jeremiah”; and the CSO premiere of *Slava! A Political Overture*.

Offerings in 2019 will include the 1952 one-act chamber opera *Trouble in Tahiti*, for which Bernstein wrote the libretto about not-so-blissful life in suburbia (which mentions Ravinia's hometown of Highland Park by name).

Participants in **Ravinia's Steans Music Institute**, the festival's onsite summer conservatory, will perform a complete survey of Bernstein's songs over several concerts on the \$10 BGH Classics series, which will also feature the composer's complete piano music performed by **Marta Aznavoorian** (of the Lincoln Trio) and NPR's *From the Top* host **Christopher O'Riley**.

Yet to be slotted are two films accompanied by live orchestra, *West Side Story* and *On the Waterfront*, as well as *Songfest*, a cycle that traces 300 years of American history through the work of 13 poets. Bernstein himself conducted the National Symphony Orchestra in the Chicago premiere of this work (originally commissioned for the 1976 United States Bicentennial) at Ravinia in 1985.

Ravinia plans to program Bernstein events in each of its venues: the Pavilion, Martin Theatre, and Bennett Gordon Hall, along with a new space that is in the works, the Ravinia Music Box "experience center." The Music Box is expected to open in 2019 with a major Bernstein traveling exhibit that will include personal mementos and the composer's piano. The new building, to be erected in underutilized space beyond the north lawn seating area, will include two galleries and a 65-seat theater featuring a paced experience created by BRC Imagination Arts, the creators of the wildly popular Lincoln Museum in Springfield and the Kennedy Space Center Visitors Complex in Orlando.

"We've been working for over a decade with BRC to develop an opportunity for Ravinia's guests to bump into music that might not be their first choice when buying tickets, and we are proud and excited to bring the results to that work to life with Bernstein as the inaugural subject of Ravinia's Box," Kauffman said.

Bernstein's own history with Ravinia began on July 4, 1944, with his CSO debut—just eight months after his astonishing New York Philharmonic debut at Carnegie Hall. He conducted 10 more CSO programs at the festival through July 28, 1956. He returned to Ravinia in 1985 to conduct the National Symphony Orchestra on tour and finally in 1986 as Laureate Conductor with his own New York Philharmonic on tour. As pianist, he performed Ravel's Piano Concerto with Herman Felber Jr. conducting the CSO on July 6, 1944. In addition to his own First and Second Symphonies, *Serenade*, Suite from *Fancy Free*, *Songfest*, Symphonic Dances from *West Side Story*, and Overture to *Candide*, Bernstein also conducted works by Beethoven, Brahms, Casadesus, Copland, Haydn, Liszt, Mozart, Schumann, Shostakovich, Sibelius, R. Strauss, Stravinsky, and Tchaikovsky at Ravinia.

Bernstein Centennial — A Ravinia Celebration: Chronological Listing of 2018/19 Events

Ravinia named Marin Alsop curator of its Bernstein celebrations in December 2015—she was a protégée of Bernstein's and has performed his music all over the world, including with her orchestras in Baltimore, the UK, and São Paulo. This is Ravinia's first time engaging a curator in its 113-year existence. Each of Ravinia venues—the Pavilion, Martin Theatre, and Bennett Gordon Hall, as well as the new venue—will be utilized for these celebrations, the latter featuring the largest traveling exhibit of Bernstein's life, organized by the Grammy Museum, and making its penultimate stop at Ravinia after being shown in Vienna; New York; Washington, DC; Los Angeles; Boston; London; and other cities. Note that artists and programs are subject to change. Artists making their Ravinia debut are marked with a dagger (†). Repertoire being performed at Ravinia for the first time is marked with an asterisk (*).

2018 Season

Thursday, July 12 — Pavilion

Chicago Symphony Orchestra

Marin Alsop, conductor

Joshua Bell, violin

Bernstein:	Overture to <i>Candide</i>
Bernstein:	<i>Serenade (after Plato's Symposium)</i>
Tchaikovsky:	Symphony No. 6

Saturday, July 14 — Pavilion

*Gala Evening Benefiting Reach*Teach*Play*

Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Chorus

Marin Alsop, conductor

Chicago Children's Choir

Vocal soloists TBD

Bernstein:	<i>Chichester Psalms</i>
Beethoven:	Symphony No. 9

Wednesday, July 25 — Pavilion

Chicago Symphony Orchestra

Marin Alsop, conductor

Pianist TBD

Copland:	<i>Appalachian Spring</i>
Gershwin:	<i>Rhapsody in Blue</i>
Stravinsky:	<i>The Rite of Spring</i>

Friday, July 27 — Martin Theatre or Bennett Gordon Hall

Jamie Bernstein, host

Amy Burton, soprano †

John Musto, piano †

Michael Boriskin, piano †

Late Night with Leonard Bernstein

An evening of music, anecdotes, and remembrances

Saturday, July 28 — Pavilion

Youth Orchestra TBD

Conductor TBD

Jamie Bernstein, narrator, developer, and producer

New Young People's Concert

Program to include Bernstein's works for soloist and orchestra; a tribute to Lenny the educator, in celebration of his Young People's Concerts and in Ravinia's Reach*Teach*Play education programs throughout Chicago Public Schools

Saturday, July 28 — Pavilion

Chicago Symphony Orchestra

Marin Alsop, conductor

Vocality

Chicago Children's Choir

Vocal soloists TBD

Bernstein: *MASS* * (CSO premiere)

The centerpiece of Ravinia's celebration will be Alsop's performance of Bernstein's *MASS*, a work never performed at Ravinia or by the CSO, and a work Alsop has performed all over the world and has also recorded to critical acclaim; she was one of the conductors to put this neglected masterwork back on the map. To make this week even more special, Ravinia has invited Humphrey Burton, Bernstein's biographer and video director/producer, to join us for talks and chats with Alsop, illuminating the personal side of Bernstein.

Saturday, August 18 — Pavilion

Chicago Symphony Orchestra

Marin Alsop, conductor

Pianist TBD

Bernstein: *Slava!* * (CSO premiere)

Ravel: Piano Concerto in G major

Shostakovich: Symphony No. 5

Sunday, August 19 — Pavilion

Chicago Symphony Orchestra

Marin Alsop, conductor

Frederica von Stad, mezzo-soprano

Bernstein: Symphony No. 1 ("Jeremiah")

Mahler: Symphony No. 1

Other works to be scheduled in 2018 and/or 2019

Bernstein: *Songfest*

Bernstein: *Candide* *

Bernstein: *Trouble in Tahiti* *

Bernstein's 45-minute chamber opera that delves deeply into suburban American angst and the misery of its inhabitants, even mentioning Highland Park in the opening lines

Bernstein: Score to *West Side Story* (film with orchestra)

Bernstein: Score to *On the Waterfront* *(film with orchestra)

Ravinia's Steans Music Institute Vocalists and Pianists

A Complete Survey of the Songs

Marta Aznavoorian, piano

Christopher O'Riley, piano

Complete Piano Music

Also under consideration

Bernstein:

On the Town *