



WAYNE MARSHALL ORGAN
Gershwin & Bernstein Improvised

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- 1 Improvisation on themes from *West Side Story*,
Leonard Bernstein
- 2 Improvisation on the song *People* from
the film *Funny Girl*, Jule Styne
- 3 Improvisation on themes from *Candide*,
Leonard Bernstein
- 4 Overture to *Wonderful Town*,
Leonard Bernstein
- 5 Improvisation on themes from *Rhapsody in Blue*,
George Gershwin

The music of Gershwin and Bernstein has always been well represented in the jazz world. Both composers understood jazz but both were also classically trained. I have always wanted to represent them on the organ and to show that this most diverse of all instruments can create another dimension outside the more traditional routes of classical music. Improvisation for me means freedom and spontaneity yet at the same time creating an unusual but convincing sound world.

The American MGM musical genre is celebrated here. I love the film *Funny Girl* which features Barbra Streisand in the title role. In it she sings the song *People* which was written by Jule Styne. The film arrangement is one of the best ever, so I hope you enjoy my improvisation based on one of the best songs of all time.

Wayne Marshall



Wayne Marshall

Wayne Marshall is organist-in residence at the Bridgewater Hall in Manchester. He is also in demand as a conductor and became Principal Guest Conductor of Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano Giuseppe Verdi in 2007. As organist, he draws on an exceptionally varied repertoire and performs worldwide. In 2004, he gave the inaugural organ recital at the Walt Disney Concert Hall, Los Angeles. Recent organ recitals include Notre-Dame de Paris, Royal Albert Hall in London, Gewandhaus in Leipzig, Kimmel Centre in Philadelphia, National Grand Theatre in Beijing and Vienna Konzerthaus for their 100th anniversary series. He is also a regular performer at the BBC Proms.

As conductor he has worked with orchestras including the Vienna Radio Symphony, Tonkünstler Orchestra, Brabants Orkest, WDR Cologne, Cherubini Orchestra and Santa Cecilia as well as his regular commitments with Orchestra Verdi. Wayne Marshall's future

engagements include conducting the Brussels Philharmonic, Bergen Philharmonic and Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestras. In 2013/2014 Wayne Marshall will conduct Jake Heggie's Opera *Dead Man Walking* at Opera de Montréal, the revival of Leonard Bernstein's *Candide* and a new production of Kurt Weill's *Mahogany* at the Staatsoper in Berlin.

He has recorded extensively for numerous major record labels and received an ECHO (Deutscher Schallplattenpreis) award for his *Gershwin Songbook* CD. In 1998 Wayne Marshall was the BBC Musician of the Year. In 2004 he received an Honorary Doctorate from Bournemouth University and became a Fellow of the Royal College of Music in 2010. Wayne Marshall has been recently appointed Artistic Director of the Valletta European Capital of Culture 2018.

Lifting the bonnet on the mechanics of composition

In the 1500s, one of the formidable tests for nervous candidates to the post of organist at St Mark's in Venice was to improvise a strict four-part fantasia on a given theme. The Catholic tradition has always required the organist to be a fluent improviser, to fill in liturgical silences, augment the high points in its services and enhance their overall flow. The Lutheran church has a similar emphasis with its tradition of contrapuntal chorale extemporisations - J.S. Bach's reputation for jaw-dropping fugal spontaneity being something of a legend. Outside of the church, improvisation even became something of a sport in the Baroque and Classical eras, with composer-players duelling each other in front of an enrapt audience.

To see a composer improvise is, of course, to be given a hugely valuable insight into their creative spirit and to

lift the bonnet on the mechanics of their compositions. Watching Messiaen improvising, as he did for over sixty years at the organ of La Trinité in Paris, gives a glimpse of the vibrant colours and exquisite sense of timing that were to characterise his work.

The set of improvisations on this disc should send us back to the well-known works of Gershwin, Bernstein and Styne refreshed and able to reappraise them and their composers in a new light.

In picking a medley of songs from Broadway musicals, Wayne Marshall is providing a bridge between a rarified, cloistered world into a completely different space that relies equally heavily on improvisation: jazz. His choice of composers to do so is particularly apt. Gershwin and Bernstein also bridged that divide in their own ways, and they are in many respects close musical

cousins. Just as Bernstein could not be pigeon-holed into any one musical genre or role and seemed to excel in both light and serious styles, so Gershwin is credited with the first successful classical-jazz fusion with his *Rhapsody in Blue*.

Both trained as pianists and were consummate improvisers, enjoying the centre of attention when they spontaneously took to the piano at parties. As ever, though, such ease at the keyboard did not come without

considerable hard graft. The teenage Bernstein writes how he would come home from playing at weddings with 'bleeding fingers and just two bucks' from pianos without ivories on the keys. For Gershwin, years of 'song-plugging' in the cramped cubicles at Remicks, one of the Tin Pan Alley publishers, meant he became adept at transposing songs into any key. The theatre director Rouben Mamoulian marvelled at his improvisational skills, recollecting how '...he would draw out a lovely melody like a golden thread, then juggle it, twist it and toss it around mischievously, weave it into unexpected intricate patterns and hurl it into a cascade of every-changing rhythms and counterpoints.'

Bernstein was equally versatile and had a party-trick which involved dropping the bridge section of Gershwin's *The Man I Love* into any Broadway song and making it work, whatever the context. Much of both composers' lighter music would have originated from such improvisations although, unlike Gershwin, Bernstein was not bound to the piano in order to compose.



(For *Wonderful Town*, he and his librettist locked themselves into a windowless, grey-painted room and chain-smoked each number into existence.)

In an early review of *Wonderful Town*, John Chapman wrote: 'There hasn't been anybody around like Bernstein since George Gershwin for jauntiness,

tricky and intriguing modulations and graceful swoop with simple and pleasant melody'. Indeed, the durability of both composers – and of the third composer on this disc, Jule Styne – has much to do with their ability to combine a strong, well-crafted melody with relatively complex harmonies and challenging rhythms.

As such, their material invites a creative response that is up to the challenge of taking the colourful harmonies and expanding them, and of revelling in the rhythmic possibilities without ever

losing sight of the melody. Many a jazz artist has enjoyed the challenge, so it is particularly fascinating to hear a response on a concert hall organ which emphasises the classical potential of the language as well as giving the instrument a lighter, more popular character than usual.

'There hasn't been anybody around like Bernstein since George Gershwin for jauntiness, tricky and intriguing modulations and graceful swoop'

West Side Story was the third in a series of three Broadway hits composed by Bernstein in the 1950s, at a point where he had yet to sign his contract as the principal conductor of the New York Philharmonic. Marshall takes up the gauntlet of Bernstein's imaginative writing and gives his iconic melodies startling

new clothes in this, the most elaborate improvisation of the set.

'Tonight' is fanfared in the style of a *Vierne sortie en grand jeu* (with altered jazz chords for good measure), 'America' cascades playfully through all registers



Leonard Bernstein in 1955
Photographer: Al Ravenna

and keys, and the 'Cool' riffs rumble menacingly in the depths of the pipes before exploding onto centre stage. An episode in the middle sees 'One Hand, One Heart' lead into a kaleidoscopic compilation of the main themes in foreign, unsettling forms. Then, with a nod to traditional church technique, an ingeniously contrapuntal treatment of 'I Feel Pretty' ushers in a show-stopping finish.

After such exuberance comes a quiet interlude that shows off the soft palette of flutes and the subdued tones of the Swell and Solo manuals. Jule Styne's 'People' was made famous in a recording before *Funny Girl* opened, thanks to a beautifully nuanced version by the musical's star, Barbra Streisand. Its wistfulness and tenderness, the shimmering strings and solo woodwind of its original orchestration, and the

chromatic, questioning harmonies are all captured here.

Bernstein described *Candide* as a 'Valentine's card to European music'. Its often academic, satirical libretto belies playful parodies of the operatic styles of Gounod and Bellini, and it is that playfulness which predominates. Although its stage success has been limited, the show's ebullient overture has remained a concert hall favourite. Marshall conjures up an alternative overture of his own which explores the potential of all the main ideas whilst respecting the original's playful spirit.

Wonderful Town re-established Bernstein's reputation after the heavily criticized *Trouble in Tahiti*, and is filled with gaudy showtunes that lend themselves to the 'theatre organ' treatment given here, with Wurlitzer touches and jazzy grace-notes applied with relish.

Bernstein was full of praise for *Rhapsody in Blue's* achievements and innovations, but also recognised it as 'a string of separate paragraphs stuck together'. In Marshall's rhapsody on a rhapsody, each of these paragraphs is re-imagined and

given a fresh orchestration as almost every stop combination of the organ is exploited. Gershwin had lofty ambitions for what his cross-over piece would achieve, commenting afterwards: 'I succeeded in showing that jazz is not merely a dance, it comprises bigger themes and purposes'. That his material can be made to work so successfully and convincingly for a concert hall organ testifies to just that.

On each of these tracks it can be seen how to extemporise successfully on well-known masterpieces requires an ability to inhabit the composer's imagination and to extend their ideas audaciously in your own individual way. Such a feat of musicianship – whether creating a fugue out of a medieval 'cantus firmus' or breathing new life into Broadway classics - has always been and remains awe-inspiring. A well-structured, polished work unfolds before your ears as if pre-written but actually summoned together in that split second, composed in real-time. It is a creative act that belongs uniquely to that moment and yet reflects a lifetime's patient absorption of idiom, style and skill.

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The Organ

The organ in the Luxembourg Philharmonie was built in 2005 by the German Organ builder Karl Schuke. It has 83 stops on four manuals and pedal.

The stoplist, created in cooperation with Daniel Roth, is designed like a large symphonic ensemble. The sound concept reflects not only the traditional German and French ideas, but also principles of English and American organ building. It is an instrument which can provide symphonic sounds of substantial power or real lightness, from crystal clarity to heavy darkness. The concept offers many possibilities of dynamic variation.

I. Manual

Hauptwerk

- 01. Bourdon (c°) 32'
- 02. Praestant 16'
- 03. Bordun 16'
- 04. Montre 8'
- 05. Principal 8'
- 06. Flûte harmonique 8'
- 07. Salicional 8'
- 08. Gedackt 8'
- 09. Quinte 5 1/3'
- 10. Octave 4'
- 11. Rohrflöte 4'
- 12. Terz 3 1/5'
- 13. Quinte 2 2/3'
- 14. Superoctave 2'
- 15. Cornett V 8'
- 16. Mixtur V-VI 2'
- 17. Cimbél III 1'
- 18. Trompete 16'
- 19. Trompete 8'

II. Manual

- Positif expressif
- 20. Lieblich Gedackt 16'
- 21. Viola da Gamba 16'
- 22. Geigenprincipal 8'
- 23. Flauto amabile 8'
- 24. Piffaro (c°) 8'
- 25. Aeoline 8'
- 26. Quintade 8'
- 27. Principal 4'
- 28. Dulciana 4'
- 29. Fugara 4'
- 30. Sesquialtera II 2 2/3'
- 31. Doublette 2'
- 32. Flautino 2'
- 33. Piccolo 1'
- 34. Harmonia aethera III 2 2/3'
- 35. Mixtur IV 1 1/3'
- 36. Englisch Horn 16'
- 37. Aeoline 16'
- 38. Oboe d'amore 8'

III. Manual

- Récit expressif
- 39. Bourdon 16'
- 40. Diapason 8'
- 41. Cor de nuit 8'
- 42. Flûte à cheminée 8'
- 43. Gambe 8'

- 44. Voix céleste (c°) 8'
- 45. Prestant 4'
- 46. Flûte octaviant 4'
- 47. Viola 4'
- 48. Nasard 2 2/3'
- 49. Flauto traverso 2'
- 50. Tierce 1 3/5'
- 51. Fourniture V 2 2/3'
- 52. Bombarde 16'
- 53. Tromp. harmonique 8'
- 54. Hautbois 8'
- 55. Voix humaine 8'
- 56. Clairon 4'

IV. Manual

- Solo expressif
- 57. Konzertflöte 8'
- 58. Echogambe 8'
- 59. Unda maris (c°) 8'
- 60. Dolce 4'
- 61. Basson 16'
- 62. Tuba 8'
- 63. Cromorne 8'
- 64. Clarinette 8'
- 65. Tromp. en chamade 16'
- 66. Tromp. en chamade 8'

Pedal

- 67. Bourdon 32'
- 68. Principalbass 16'
- 69. Flötbass 16'
- 70. Subbass 16'
- 71. Kontrabass 16'
- 72. Quintbass 10 2/3' (Transm. 77)
- 73. Octavbass 8'
- 74. Bordun 8'
- 75. Violoncello 8'
- 76. Octave 4'
- 77. Dolkan 4'
- 78. Baßaliquot III 10 2/3', 6 2/5', 4 4/7'
- 79. Hintersatz VI 5 1/3'
- 80. Bombarde 32'
- 81. Posaune 16'
- 82. Fagott 16'
- 83. Trompete 8'

Acknowledgements

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For more information about Wayne Marshall visit www.waynemarshall.com

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Wonderful Town by Leonard Bernstein, Betty Comden and Adolph Green
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Manual compass (61 notes), Pedal (32 notes), 6768 pipes, 2 consoles • 10 divisional couplers, 15 sub and super octave couplers, coupler Pedal to Great • Super octave couplers to c5 (windchests with 73 notes) • 3 enclosed manual divisions and partially enclosed pedal • General swell (swell coupler) • Tastenfessel (key sustain) • Solo expressif (Grand chœur) with elevated wind pressure • Free reeds at 16' (manual, pedal) and 8' (pedal) • Positif and Recit with second swell box for certain stops • Adjustable wind supply control for all manuals except Solo • MIDI recording and playback capability.

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|---|---|-------|
| 1 | Improvisation on themes from
<i>West Side Story</i> , Leonard Bernstein | 25.43 |
| 2 | Improvisation on the song <i>People</i>
from the film <i>Funny Girl</i> , Jule Styne | 10.46 |
| 3 | Improvisation on themes from <i>Candide</i> ,
Leonard Bernstein | 15.33 |
| 4 | Overture to <i>Wonderful Town</i> ,
Leonard Bernstein | 4.48 |
| 5 | Improvisation on themes from
<i>Rhapsody in Blue</i> , George Gershwin | 13.25 |

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