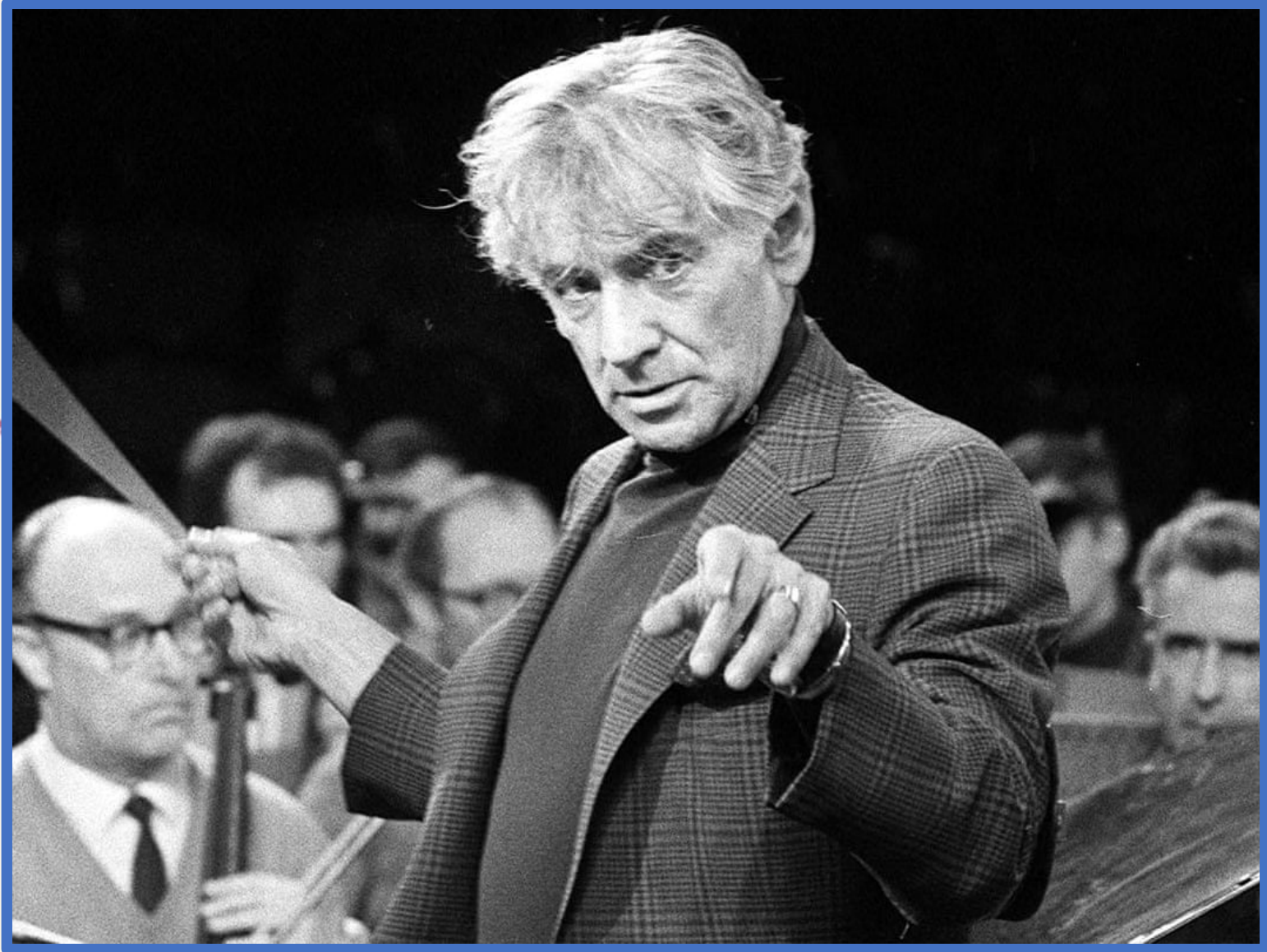




Leonard Bernstein

Composer of the Week





Born in Lawrence,
Massachusetts, U.S.A., in 1918.
Died in New York, U.S.A., in 1990.

He is known as the most famous American composer and conductor of the 20th Century.

He was also an excellent **pianist**.

He was one of the first composers to explore music on television and he made many films for children about composers and The Orchestra.

He founded a series of concerts for children with the **New York Philharmonic Orchestra**.



As a conductor and composer he was very energetic, enthusiastic and just...whacky!



His parents were Ukrainian Jews who had moved to America for a better life and Bernstein often used his Jewish heritage in his music.

This is one of his '**Chichester Psalms**'. A setting of psalms from the Bible, in Hebrew.

The words are from **Psalm 100** and **108**.

“Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands”

How many instruments can you recognise?



His masterpiece is his **MASS**, written for the opening of the Kennedy Centre, New York in 1971.

How many years ago was that?

It is a setting of the Catholic Mass with Hebrew texts and modern songs.

It's for **choir, orchestra, soloists, dancers** and **actors**.

His most famous compositions are his musicals. **Candide**,
On The Town and **West Side Story**.



West Side Story is based on **Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet** – who become Tony and Maria.



The play takes place in New York not Verona, in Italy and instead of two opposing families, there are two gangs, the Jets and the Sharks.



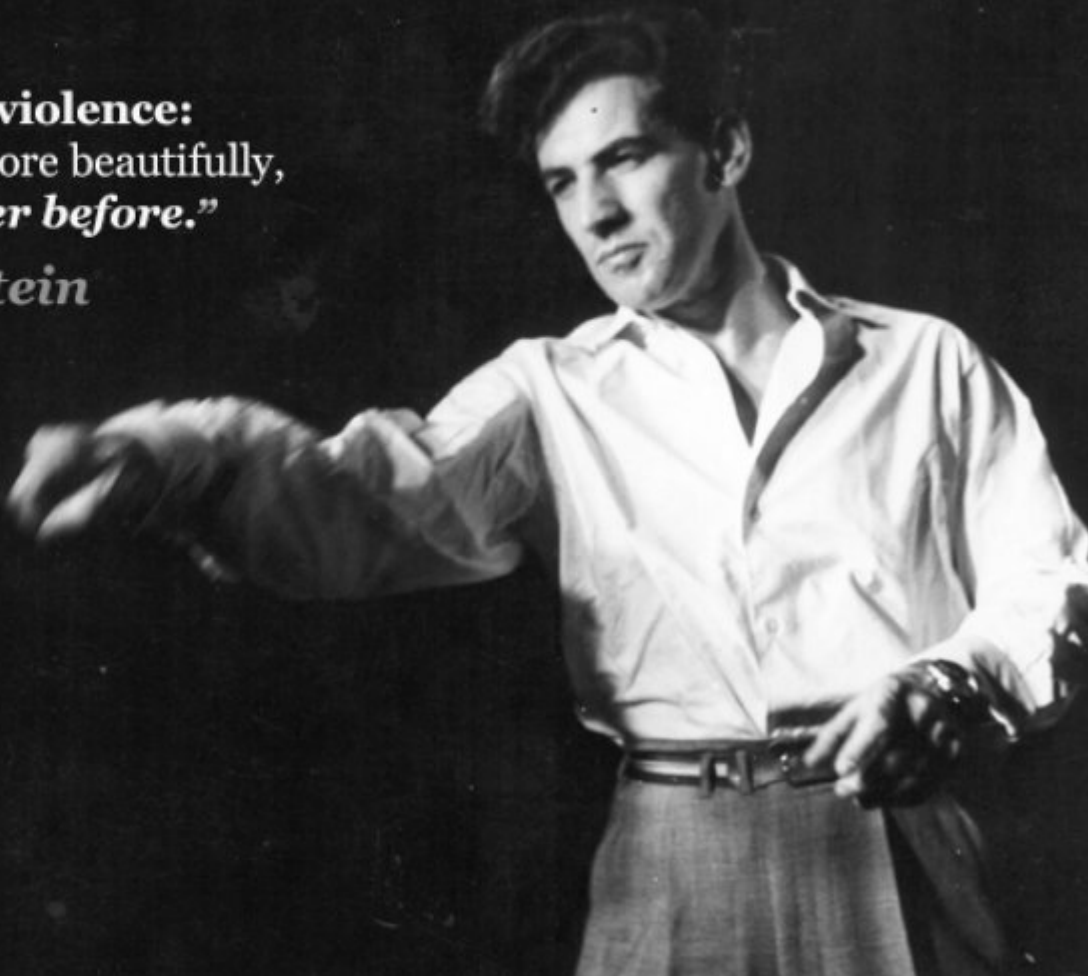
Bernstein believed that all men should be treated equally and he used his fame to help many causes, from banning nuclear weapons, to the rights of black Americans.

He cared passionately about education and thought that music helped children learn and should be included in the teaching of all subjects. He set up a school in America to do just that.

The Leonard Bernstein Centre

**“This will be our reply to violence:
to make music more intensely, more beautifully,
more devotedly than ever before.”**

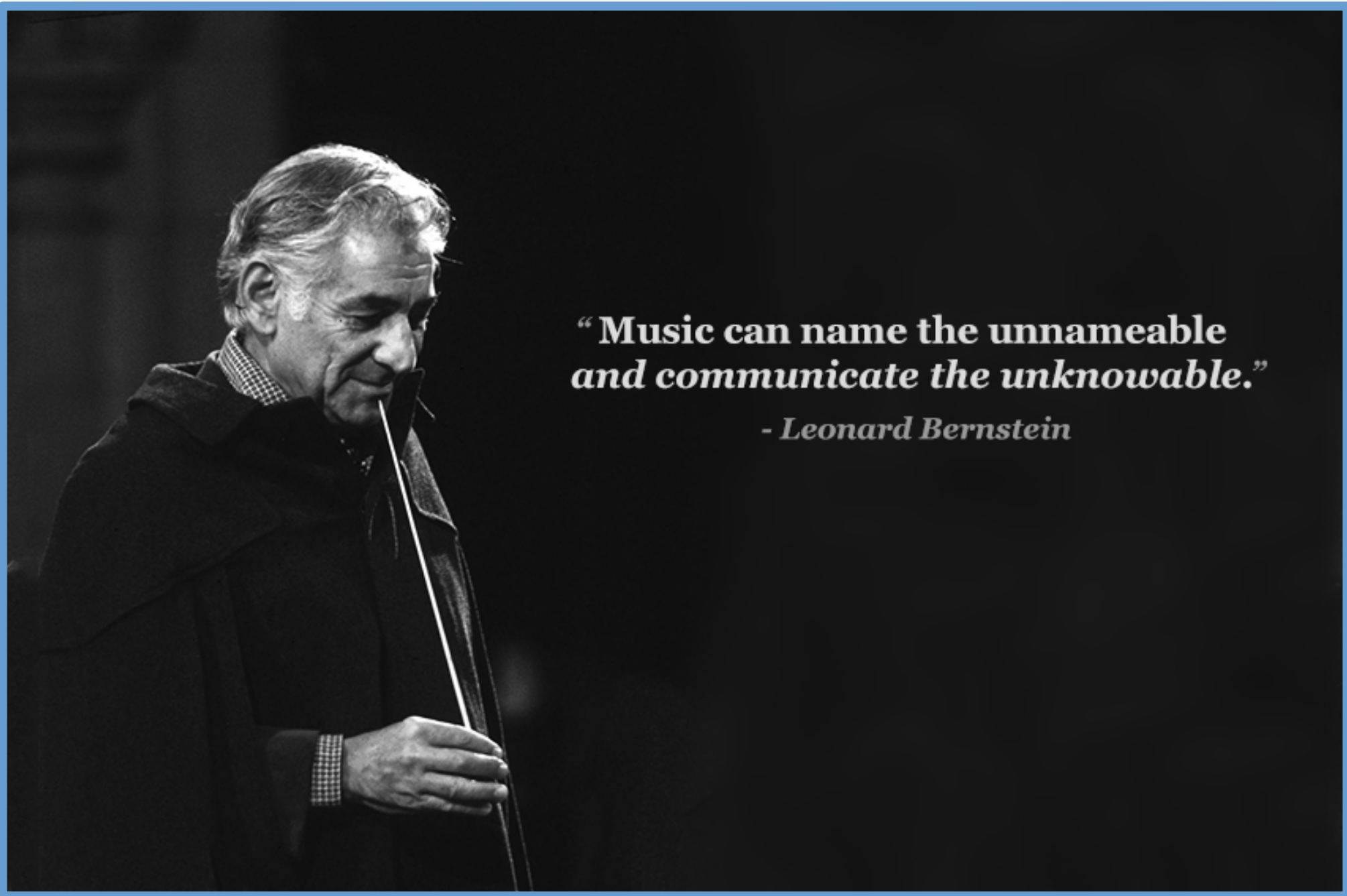
- *Leonard Bernstein*



On Christmas Day, 1989, Bernstein conducted **Beethoven's Symphony No. 9** in East Berlin to celebrate the fall of the Berlin Wall, having conducted the same work in West Berlin the day before.

The fall of the Berlin Wall, meant that Germany was now one country. The concert was broadcast live in over twenty countries to an audience of 100 million people.

What is the song we sing that comes from **Beethoven's Symphony No.9**?



**“Music can name the unnameable
and communicate the unknowable.”**

- Leonard Bernstein

