



High School Concerts
2016



**Romeo and Juliet:
The Nature of Conflict**



L'ultimo bacio dato a Giulietta da Romeo, Francesco Hayez, 1823

On the cover: *The Reconciliation of the Montagues and Capulets over the Dead Bodies of Romeo and Juliet, Frederic Leighton, 1855*



AN
EXCELLENT
conceited Tragedie
OF
Romeo and Iuliet.

As it hath been often (with great applause)
plaid publicuely, by the right Ho-
nourable the L. of *Hunsdon*
his Seruants.



LONDON,
Printed by Iohn Dantet.
1597

How to use the Study Guide

The ASO High School Concert series is currently being redesigned with the goal that the program will become a catalyst for interdisciplinary course of study that will link what are often separate domains. The concerts will serve as the entry point into the curriculum. This year's program will focus on conflict as a unifying theme or motivating idea as seen through the lens of Romeo and Juliet.

This program offers opportunities for interdisciplinary study connecting music with other the fine arts disciplines, language arts and social studies. The Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills emphasize integration of skills and content across topics and subject areas.

For the arts program, TEKS emphasize creativity, collaboration, communication and critical thinking, all of which are skills required for success in the 21st century. Students explore realities, relationships and ideas through active learning, critical thinking reflection and innovative problem solving, all of which are transferable to other domains, strengthening academic performance. Specific skills development in each of disciplines follows four unifying structures: foundations (developing specific literacy in each area), creative expression, historical/cultural relevance and critical evaluation and response. Students are encouraged to explore and experiment, which leads to creative expression and innovative thinking. The arts prepare the student for college and the world holistically and experientially.

The English Language Arts and Reading standards focus on skills such as reading and comprehending, writing and research. Students are expected to be able compose a variety of written texts, identify relevant sources, to evaluate, to listen and respond to others, engage in discussions.

Social Studies standards cover historical context for political, economic and social events as they pertain to people's lives, including war both internally and externally. In addition, students study the relationship between the arts and culture along with the period of time in which they were created. The understanding of culture and historical context are an essential component to the curriculum. Students are expected to use critical thinking skills, to analyze, research using primary and secondary source materials, gather, analyze and interpret data.

Concert Etiquette

Please look over these items before you bring your students to the concert. Discuss the appropriate topics with them, placing special emphasis on concert etiquette.

Have the students discuss proper audience behavior for a Symphony concert.

- Remain seated and quiet while the music plays.

- Do not talk until the applause begins.

- No talking when the music begins again after the applause.

- Be polite and give respectful applause at the end of each musical selection.

- Inform the students that there will be a high school student performing a concerto with the Symphony. Encourage them to be attentive and supportive of the soloist.

- Encourage students to be positive representatives of the school and student body.

THE MUSICIANS will already be seated on the stage, except for the concertmaster. The concertmaster is the first violinist. He is the lead musician in the orchestra. When he comes onstage, the audience applauds, then gets quiet so that he can begin the concert.

THE CONCERTMASTER will lead the orchestra in tuning their instruments. He will signal for an 'A' from the oboe, to which all of the other instruments will tune. The concertmaster will then take his seat.

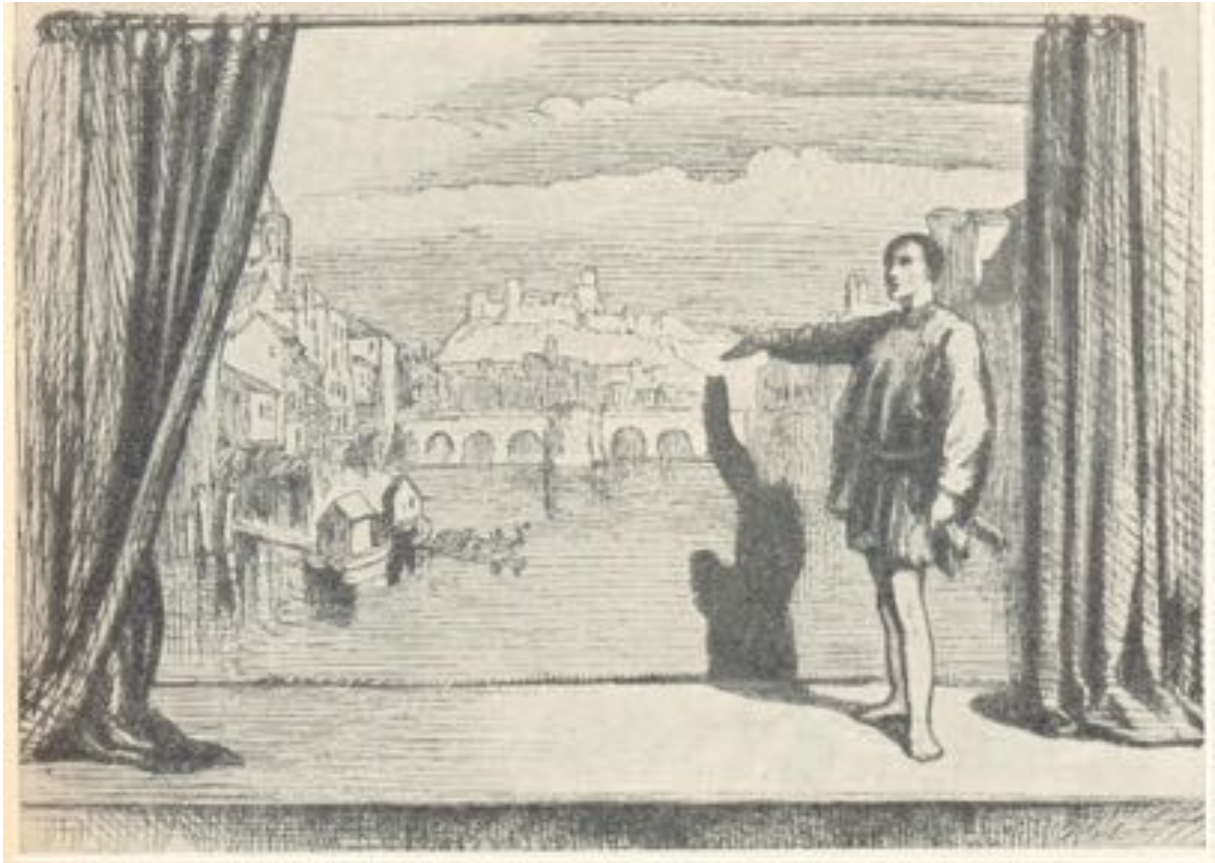
THE CONDUCTOR will enter from 'stage right' (the left side if you're facing the stage). The audience will applaud. The conductor will then mount the podium, raise his arms as a signal for the musicians to get ready to play, and begin the first piece of music.

YOU will know that a piece is over when the conductor puts his arms down and turns to face the audience. This is the appropriate time to clap. If you REALLY enjoyed the piece, you can even politely yell 'Bravo!' as you applaud.

Enjoy the concert!



English Ships and the Spanish Armada, August 1588, painter unknown



Romeo and Juliet, Act I— Prologue, John Gilbert, 1864

CONFLICT

Conflict is a natural aspect of the human experience. According to the Miriam Webster Dictionary, conflict is defined as intense discord between individuals or groups that can lead to disputes, hostility, and aggression. It can be derived from power and property struggles, for example over territory or resources. Typically, it is a disagreement that belies resolution, and can be based on differences of ideas, beliefs, feelings, identity and group membership. Competition can lead to conflict in the form of opposing or incompatible interests or values, and finally it can be internal when the self is beset with opposing motives, drives and needs.

Conflicts range from minor quarrels to feuds, from arguments to fights, disagreements to war. They have been present in all ages. We see depictions of disputes in ancient art such as seen in the Egyptian rock painting to the right. People fight over resources, territory. Feuds between families and tribes have a long history. Taking revenge for the murder of a family member was not only customary, or expected in ancient Greece it was required. In Aeschylus's Trilog *Oresteia*, Orestes is hounded by furies because he killed his mother, and in accordance with the norms of the times he should pay with this life. The trilogy is a stark depiction of the violent tradition of blood money and the rule of vengeance slowly giving way to the rule of law. However, we still see this old norm in places where the family remains the most important arbiter of social order and where tribal dynamics continue to dominate.



Egyptian Artifact, Louvre

Conflict is portrayed through the arts, through music, dance, theater, painting, sculpture, film, photography, literature. The struggles conflict represents span all aspects of human life from the family to the world, and all domains: religious, societal, political. They can be extreme: war or internal debate. Many subjects of art are based on stories driven by conflict; one of these is Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. In this program we will explore music inspired by the play, the play itself, themes of conflict, aesthetic and historical.

Conflict in Music

In music, conflict is represented through tension and resolution; it is a basic element in arousing the emotions of listeners. Tension and resolution is created by various musical devices including, timbre, dynamics, melody, harmony, tempo, rhythm, accents, articulation, repetition, phrasing and texture, which contribute to the emotional content of a piece of music and enhance or relieve tension. Tension and resolution are dependent on building up expectations and then either fulfilling or violating these expectations. Resolution in music refers to the moving from a dissonant note or chord to a note or chord that is consonant. In a sense we can think of tension as a state of instability and resolution as one of stability. Suspense is created when tension does not resolve into the expected resolution, which is instead withheld or delayed by a note or chord that is similar yet different to that which would affect resolution. Conflict in music can be experienced either as a part of the structure of the piece or as means of telling a story. In *Romeo and Juliet* conflict is both the context and the content, it is the means by which the story is told and it is the story itself.

Literary Conflict

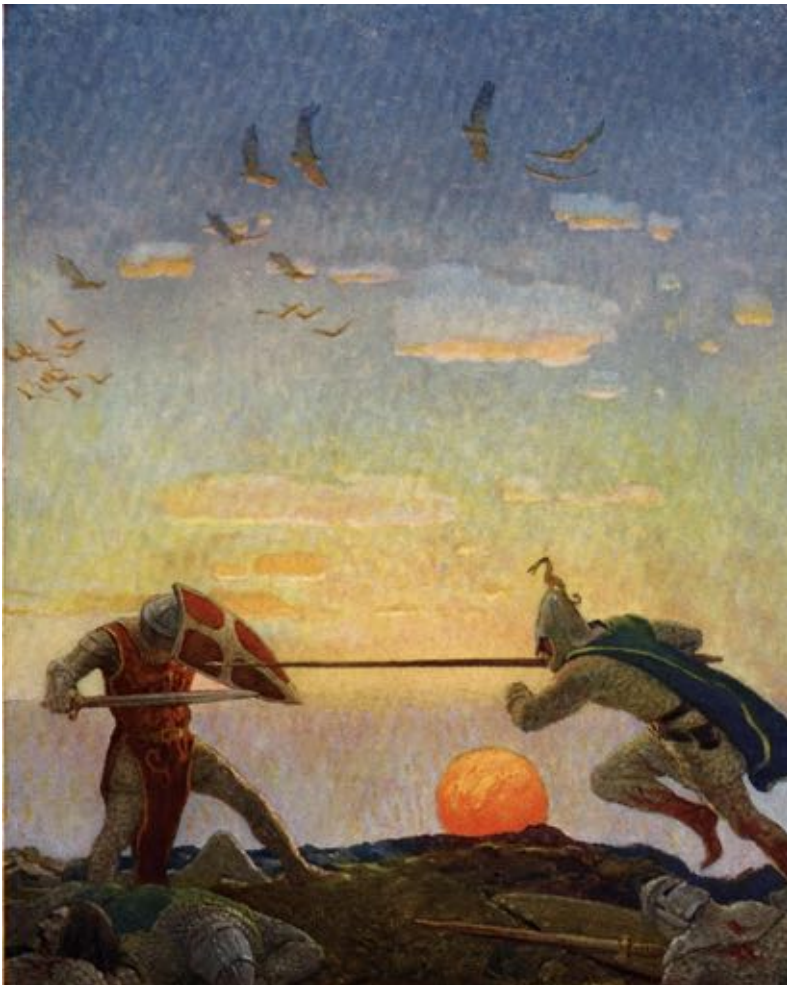
Man against man: stories involving characters against characters and is an external conflict.

Man against society: involves a character or characters in opposition to human institutions or social norms.

Man against nature: In this instance, the character is in conflict with a force of nature or an animal.

Man against self: Here the struggle is internal, within the character, who must either make a moral decision, or vie with his or her own nature, or choose between good and evil.

Historically the concept of literary conflict arose out of the Greek idea of *agon*, which is the essential or core contest in tragedy (Wikipedia). It is conflict that makes a story interesting; it is the force that drives narrative. Literary conflict is derived when two or more characters or forces have opposing objectives. This creates a tension that intrigues the mind to wonder about the outcome and to seek some kind of resolution. Resolution does not mean that everything ends well; it can also be tragic, or even neutral, but it always brings closure.



N. C. Wyeth, The death of Arthur and Mordred – "Then the king...ran towards Sir Mordred, crying, 'Traitor, now is they death day come.'"

Illustration from *The Boy's King Arthur*, Sir Thomas Malory's *History of King Arthur and His Knights of the round Table*.

ABOUT THE AUSTIN SYMPHONY

Mission Statement and History

The mission of the Austin Symphony Orchestra Society, Inc. is to enhance the cultural quality of life for the adults and young people of Austin and Central Texas by providing excellence in music performance and educational programs.

The Austin Symphony Orchestra's first public concert, held on Tuesday, May 2, 1911 at the Hancock Opera House, was conducted by Dr. Hans Harthan. The organization was formally incorporated in 1941 when the orchestra was conducted by Hendrik Buytendorp. Maestro Buytendorp was a former member of the Royal Orchestra in Holland and served eight years as the conductor of the ASO from 1940 to 1948.

Following Maestro Buytendorp, Ezra Rachlin was named conductor for the 1948-49 season which began his 20-year association with the ASO. He initiated many new programs, such as student concerts, the world's first drive-in concert, the presentation of international guest artists and the first Pops concert.

During the 1960's and 70's the ASO went through many changes. In 1971, Mrs. D. J. Sibley, Jr. was elected president and began her tenure as head of the society's board of directors. Under her enthusiastic and determined leadership, a hard-working board was established, and a systematic reduction of the deficit began. During this period, the concept of Symphony Square as a home for the Orchestra was launched under the direction President Jane Sibley and ably assisted by ASO board members Peggy Brown and General Gordon Blood.

With the resignation in 1980 of Maestro Akira Endo, a comprehensive, nation-wide search led to the hiring of a young assistant conductor from the Cleveland Orchestra, Maestro Sung Kwak. His tenure from 1982 through 1996 was marked by growth, professional excellence and wonderful artistry. Moving its home base to the 3,000-seat Bass Concert Hall on the University of Texas campus allowed the Austin Symphony to expand its programming dramatically. December 1997 marked new beginnings with Music Director/Conductor Peter Bay assuming the reins. Mrs. Sibley moved to Chairman of the Board and Mr. Joe R. Long served as President of the Society until 2012. Mr. Long is now Chairman of the Board, with Thomas Neville taking over as Board President. The Austin Symphony officially moved into its new permanent home, the Long Center for the Performing Arts in September 2008 when it began its 98th concert season.

The season includes eight classical concert pairs, September through May, and four Pops concerts. In addition to the concert season, the ASO presents the Young People's Concerts, a High School Concerts series, Halloween Children's Concerts, the annual July Fourth Concert and Fireworks and the summer-long Concerts in the Park. The ASO annually performs around Austin and in other Central Texas communities. In 2010, the ASO introduced the Texas Young Composers Competition & Concert, offering students 18 years of age and younger a chance to have their orchestral compositions performed by the Austin Symphony in a special concert. Over 30 young people have had their works premiered by the ASO. Other educational programs offered include Children's Day Art Park, Building Blocks (for PreK-3rd grade) and more.

The ASO continues to be the leading performing arts organization in Austin through public support and contributions from individuals and corporations.

Peter Bay—*Music Director and Conductor*

Peter Bay is celebrating his 15th full season as Music Director and Conductor of the Austin Symphony Orchestra, and has been Music Director of the Britt Festival Orchestra in Jacksonville, Oregon since 1993. In June 2011 Maestro Bay became Music Advisor of the Hot Springs Music Festival in Arkansas.

Maestro Bay has appeared with sixty-five different orchestras including the National, Chicago, St. Louis, Houston, Dallas, Baltimore, New Mexico, New Jersey, North Carolina, Syracuse, Virginia, West Virginia, Colorado, Hawaii, Jacksonville, Richmond, Alabama, Arkansas, Canton, Eugene, Fort Worth, Springfield, Bochum (Germany), Carinthian (Austria), Lithuanian National, and Ecuador National Symphonies, the Minnesota and Algarve (Portugal) Orchestras, the Louisiana, Buffalo, Rhode Island, Tulsa, Fort Wayne and Reno Philharmonics, the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, the Eastman (Argento's "Postcard from Morocco") and Aspen (Moore's "The Ballad of Baby Doe") Opera Theaters, and the Theater Chamber Players of the Kennedy Center. Summer music festival appearances have included Aspen (CO), Music in the Mountains (CO), Grant Park and Ravinia (IL), Round Top (TX), OK Mozart (OK) and Skaneateles (NY).

Peter is the primary conductor for the ASO's performances with Ballet Austin. He made his Austin Lyric Opera debut in January 2002 with Andre Previn's "A Streetcar Named Desire", conducted Verdi's "La Traviata" in November 2002, Puccini's "Turandot" in November 2003, and Mozart's "The Marriage of Figaro" in April 2005.

Other positions held by Mr. Bay have included Music Director of the Erie Philharmonic, Annapolis Symphony Orchestra, Breckenridge Music Festival (CO) and four different conducting posts with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra and the Richmond Symphony in Virginia. Bay and the Richmond Symphony recorded the US premiere performance of Britten's "The Sword in the Stone" for Opus One Records. His CD "Voices", featuring the percussion ensemble NEXUS and the Rochester Philharmonic, is on the Nexus CD label.

A native of Washington, DC, Mr. Bay is a graduate of the University of Maryland and the Peabody Institute of Music. In 1994, he was one of two conductors selected to participate in the Leonard Bernstein American Conductors Program. He was also the first prize winner of the 1980 Baltimore Symphony Orchestra Young Conductors Competition and a prize winner of the 1987 Leopold Stokowski Competition sponsored by the American Symphony Orchestra in New York.

Peter is married to soprano Mela Sarajane Dailey and they have a son, Colin. Peter is proud to serve on the Musician's Advisory Panel of the SIMS Foundation whose mission is to provide access to and financial support for mental health and addiction recovery services for Austin-area musicians and their families.



John Singer Sargent, *Orestes Pursued by the Furies*, 1921

Conflict and violence have always been a part of the human experience. The ancient Greeks had a system of retribution that involved revenge killing; they would also accept compensation in lieu of killing the person and this was known as “blood price.” It seems the need to retaliate and exact revenge is a deeply felt need. The Furies, or the Erinyes as they were called in Greek—literally the “avengers,” were goddesses of the underworld assigned to ensuring that revenge and retribution were exacted. In this painting, the Furies are hounding Orestes who has murdered his mother at the behest of Apollo. The Furies demand that Orestes “pay” for slaying his mother.



Romeo and Juliet & The Nature of Conflict

High School Concert Series
2016

Tuesday, January 19 McCallum High School 9:15am & 10:30am

Tuesday, January 19, LBJ/LASA, 9:30am & 10:45am

Wednesday, January 20, Austin High School,

Thursday, January 21, Bowie High School, 9:30am & 10:45am

Friday, January 22, Stony Point High School 9:30am & 10:45am

Peter Bay, conducting

Opening Scene:

TCHAIKOVSKY *Romeo and Juliet, Fantasy-Overture*

PROKOFIEV **I. Introduction** from *Romeo and Juliet, Op. 64*

BERLIOZ **I. Introduction** from *Roméo et Juliette*

BERNSTEIN **Symphonic Dances** from *West Side Story*

Balcony Scene

TCHAIKOVSKY *Romeo and Juliet Overture-Fantasy*

PROKOFIEV **VI. Romeo and Juliet** from *Romeo and Juliet Suite No. 1, Op. 64bis*

BERLIOZ **III. Scène d'amour** from *Roméo et Juliette*

Conflict

PROKOFIEV **I. Montagues and Capulets** from *Romeo and Juliet Suite 2, Op. 64ter*

BERNSTEIN **Tonight Quintet** from *West Side Story*

PYOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY

Born in Kamsko-Votkinsk, Russia 1840

Died in St. Petersburg, Russia 1893

Romeo and Juliet Fantasy-Overture

Composed 1869

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky was a Russian composer; he was born in 1840 to a middle class family in the city of Votkinsk. Musically precocious at an early age, with his parents support, he began studying piano at five. Even so, his parents encouraged him to study to be a civil servant and enrolled him at the Imperial School of Jurisprudence in Saint Petersburg. While attending classes, Tchaikovsky continued to study music, and in 1862, Tchaikovsky enrolled in the newly formed St. Petersburg Conservatory where he studied from 1862 to 1865. Among his teachers were Zaremba, with whom he studied harmony and counterpoint, and Anton Rubinstein for instrumentation and composition.



Tchaikovsky by Edwin Evans, 1906

While at the conservatory, Tchaikovsky came into contact with a group of Russian composers known as the The Five, which included Mily Balakirev, Modest Mussorgsky, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, and Alexander Borodin that were adamantly against Western musical influences and promoted the inclusion of folk music and national elements in compositions. Tchaikovsky was criticized by the group for exhibiting too much western influence. Though he was influenced deeply by western techniques and attitudes and stood in opposition to The Five, Tchaikovsky insisted in essence he was Russian. This tension between Western and Russian culture is one of many conflicts that shaped Tchaikovsky's work; one of his artistic goals was to integrate Russian and European influences, believing that they were deeply entwined. Tchaikovsky maintained cordial relations with The Five, but also made every effort to achieve and ensure aesthetic independence.

Tchaikovsky lived most of his life as a bachelor. He entered one unhappy and brief marriage in 1877 with a former student. It lasted less than three months. About this time Tchaikovsky started a relationship with a wealthy widow, Nadejda von Meck, who became his patron for the next 13 years. She offered to subsidize Tchaikovsky with the proviso that they never meet. This unusual relationship, along with increasing commissions, allowed Tchaikovsky to live a comfortable life, replete with various country homes and to devote his time to composing. Success and good fortune did not lead to happiness, and the majority of Tchaikovsky's life was beset by depression and personal crises.

In 1891, Tchaikovsky left for New York in to share in the opening ceremonies for Carnegie Hall. America fascinated him, but he wrote, "I enjoy all this like a person sitting at a table set with marvels of gastronomy, devoid of appetite." Back in Russia, Tchaikovsky wrote the beloved *Nutcracker Suite*, completed in 1892, and began work on his programmatic *Sixth Symphony*, titled the *Pathétique*. Within a week after the premiere in St. Petersburg in 1893, he was dead, supposedly from cholera contracted from drinking unboiled water, perhaps intentionally. There is also some credence given to the theory that he may have been poisoned to prevent revelation of a scandal involving the aristocracy.

Romeo and Juliet Fantasy Overture

Romeo and Juliet, Fantasy Overture

Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet* was composed in 1869; and is a dramatic musical retelling of the tragedy of the young lovers in sonata form. By calling it a "Fantasy" the composer is inviting the listener into an imaginative experience. The genius of Tchaikovsky in this piece is that he distills Shakespeare's play and all of its complexities and into its very essence; it is a piece that invokes mood and emotion.

The piece reflects three elements from the play: Friar Lawrence, the feud between the Montagues and the Capulets, and finally Romeo and Juliet's love for each other. Friar Lawrence is represented in an extended introduction, which has an ecclesiastical feel. The two main themes of the piece follow: the agitated and aggressive theme of the warring Montague and Capulet families, representing the central conflict of the story, and then the beautiful, rapturous and passionate music of the love theme.



Romeo and Juliet, Act I—Scene 1, John Gilbert, pre-1873



The first theme is redolent of a street fight, and demonstrates the hate and hostility that the two families feel for each other. The music is intense and brutal. In contrast, when the love theme sounds, it is sumptuous and hauntingly beautiful, with an underlay of longing and uncertainty. Romeo as a Montague and Juliet as a Capulet are daring to love amidst hate. These two themes are intertwined, and the love theme is overwhelmed by battling families, and we hear conflict destroying love. The ending of the piece has a quality of peace or resolution implying that the families are finally united with the death of Romeo and Juliet; still, there is a suggestion or trace of unease even now.

Act III, Scene 5: Romeo takes leave of Juliet, engraving by James Stow after painting by John Francis Rigaud, 1797

Historical Information

The 19th century was a time of transformation for Europe, due to the industrial revolution and expansion of commerce. As Western Europe made advancements politically and economically, Russia experienced internal conflict between the desire to pursue Western values of individualism, or to reinvigorate Slavic traditions with an emphasis on collectivism and community. During Tchaikovsky's lifetime, Russia was in the throes of this conflict and his work was directly affected by the on-going debate regarding Western influence versus Russian nationalism as described above in his interaction with the Russian composers, The Five. One of the major historical events that took place during the decade in which *Romeo and Juliet* was composed was the emancipation of the serfs in 1861 under Alexander II.

Alexander was the son of the Tsar Nicholas I. He was born April 29, 1818 and acceded to the throne in 1855. Russia was in need of reform; up until then its status as a great power had hidden the fact that its government was inefficient, the country was isolated and economically backward. Alexander inherited the Crimean War from his father, a nasty, bloody conflict that pitted Russia against the French, the English, The Ottoman Empire, and Sardinia, with enormous losses for Russia. The country's serf-based economy could not support the war effort, and the result for Russia was a loss of military dominance. This in turn fueled the need for reform, making it ever more urgent. Alexander initiated several changes including a lessening of censorship, education reforms, and a tolerance for an independent press, however, the most significant change was ending serfdom. Liberal intellectuals advocated for freeing the serfs, but landowners, who benefited directly from the archaic system, strongly opposed it. Alexander tried to balance the interest of the proprietors and the peasants, but ultimately there was no way to ensure that both sides would be satisfied. Even though it did bring about a supply of cheap labor to the cities, stimulating commerce, the landowners were unhappy because they lost their monopoly of influence and the peasants were miserable because they had to buy or rent land from their former owners, often had an overvalued price, thus acquiring debt or falling into poverty.

Alexander's reforms garnered considerable criticism, and he was the target of several assassination attempts. Also, during the 1860s, a movement known as Nihilism emerged, which advocated for the removal of human institutions and laws. Much of its influence was brought about by the hardships following the Crimean War. The Nihilists became politically active in the cause of reform, first trying to engage



Alexander II, Yegor Botkin, 1856

the aristocracy, failing which they turned to the peasants, and thence started the Populist movement called Narodnaya Volya (The People's Will). The government sought to suppress the movement, and in reaction to this a radical branch of the group began to practice terrorism. Several prominent officials were assassinated, either shot or killed with bombs. This was the advent of anarchism as a revolutionary force in Russia. On March 13, 1881, members of Narodnaya Volya succeeded in bombing the carriage of the Tsar as it made its way through streets of St. Petersburg; Alexander was fatally wounded.



The Sinopskiy Battle on the 18th November of the 1853 year (Night after Battle). Ivan Aivazovsky, 1853

Hector Berlioz

Born in La Côte-Saint-André, France 1803

Died in Paris, France 1869

Roméo et Juliette,

I. Introduction & III. Scène d'amour

Composed 1839

Composer, conductor and critic of the Romantic period, Hector Berlioz is known for his expressiveness and sense of the dramatic. Much of his music is passionate, introspective and consumed with the idea of love.

Berlioz did not receive early musical training, but only began to study music at 12 years of age. However, in spite of a lack of formal training, he immediately started to compose. Berlioz was very emotional and poetic, even at a young age he was prone to falling in love. Early on he developed a love of Shakespeare, and was inspired by the music of Beethoven. He was a man who lived by extremes.

Following his father's insistence, at age 18 Berlioz moved to Paris to study medicine, a profession he loathed and which revolted him. However, living in Paris but him in proximity to manner cultural events, one of which was the opera, which he loved. He also met many people in the music profession and his experiences weakened his resolve to become a doctor. Much to his parents chagrin, he left his studies and pursued a career as a conductor, taking up lessons and attending the Paris Conservatory.

Unlike many composers, Berlioz was not a pianist and he did not write solo music for that instrument, nor did he write chamber music. Instead, he is known for his brilliant orchestration and his use of many different genres. Frequently, his works demonstrated a combination of vocal and instrumental music to powerful effect. Berlioz's works significantly influenced the music of Liszt and Wagner. Berlioz was not a writer of abstract or formal music; his works are programmatic and descriptive, conveying mood and emotion. The pictorial and literary quality of his music often engendered works that do not fall into particular categories.

Much like Beethoven, Berlioz inhabited the cusp between Classicism and Romanticism, a transition period where social ideologies as well as cultural values were drastically changing. Organization, clarity, and structure that characterize Classicism gave way to Romanticism's intense emotion and expression. Throughout the course of his life, Berlioz struggled for the acceptance of his new ideas.

Berlioz, literature and Shakespeare

Berlioz was a professed lover of literature, and literary works from Virgil to Goethe provided inspiration for many of his compositions. Along with great contemporary works and those of antiquity, Berlioz had great admiration for Shakespeare, in particular the bard's ability to express human nature through drama and poetry. Berlioz was also intrigued by Shakespeare's innovative approach to dramatic structure; defying formal dictates and adhering to an idiosyncratic and personal depiction of characters and situations. Berlioz sought to achieve similar effects in music; he believed that music could convey images, ideas and feelings; that music could be expressive enough to trigger the imagination. Intensifying his interest in Shakespeare's writing was the presence of Irish Actress Harriet Smithson on the stage in Paris where she



Émile Signol, *Portrait of Hector Berlioz*, 1832.

performed the roles of Ophelia and Juliet. Smithson solidified Berlioz's interest in Shakespeare and inspired an infatuation with her that led, eventually, to their marriage, a union that ended unhappily. Beyond Shakespeare, Berlioz familiarized himself with Romantic texts by such authors as Lord Byron, Sir Walter Scott, E.T. A. Hoffmann, and Victor Hugo.

The Music

Roméo et Juliette – I. Introduction

Roméo et Juliette – III. Scène d'amour

As Berlioz was drawn to drama, and believed musical expression should be expressively dramatic; he found inspiration from Shakespeare in regards to dramatic and poetic content, he found musical inspiration from the works of Beethoven, whose powerful and dramatic symphonies challenged Berlioz to reconsider the significance of instrumental music and its potential to express the human experience and the profound as well as composers such as Weber and Gluck, all three of which created dramatic works. Berlioz was innovative and he brought a new style to orchestral music; his music was considered unconventional and challenging during his lifetime, and he struggled to have his works performed. His music is intro-



George Clint, *The Irish Actress Harriett Constance Smithson*, Oil on canvas, ca 1825–1830

spective and char-

acterized by a sense of melancholy; he often depicts the obsessive quality of idealized love.

GRANDE SALLE DU GARDE-MEUBLE DE LA COURONNE,
Rue Bergère, n° 9.

Dimanche 24 NOVEMBRE 1839, à 2 heures précises,

GRAND CONCERT,
VOCAL ET INSTRUMENTAL,
DONNÉ PAR M.
H. BERLIOZ,
on y entendra, pour la 1^{re} fois,
ROMÉO ET JULIETTE,
SYMPHONIE DRAMATIQUE,
Avec Chœurs, Solos de Chant et Prologue en Récitatif harmonique, composée d'après la Tragedie de Shakespeare, par M. H. BERLIOZ. Les paroles sont de M. EMILE DESCHAMPS.

PROGRAMME DE LA SYMPHONIE.

N. 1. Introduction (in-strumentale). 1 ^{er} PROLOGUE (Petit-Chœur.)	N. 3. 2 nd PROLOGUE (petit chœur). Cantate Solenne de Juliette (chœur et orchestre.) Marche (épique, alternativement instrumentale et vocale).
N. 2. Suite du Prologue. Scherzo vocal pour un solo, avec chœur. Fin du Prologue.	N. 6. Roméo au tombeau des Capulets. Récitatif de Juliette (orchestre seul).
N. 3. Roméo seul. — Bientôt lointain de lui et de concert. Grande fête chez Capulet. Andante et Allegro (orchestre seul).	N. 7. FINAL, chanté par toutes les voix des deux grands chœurs et du petit chœur, et le Père Laurence. Duo des chœurs des Montagues et des Capulets. Récitatif, récit menant et air du Père Laurence.
N. 4. La joute de Capulet silencieux et désemparé. Les jeunes Capulets, sortant de la fête, passent en chantant des réminiscences de la musique du bal (chœur et orchestre). Juliette sur le balcon et Roméo dans l'ombre. Adagio (orchestre seul).	N. 7. Rite des Capulets et des Montagues dans le cimetière; double chœur. Invocation du Père Laurence. Scène de réconciliation; triple chœur.

Contralto solo du Prologue 1	M ^{me} WIDEMAN.	101 VOIX.
Tenor solo du Prologue 1	M. A. DUPONT.	
Le Père Laurence 2	M. ALIZARD.	
Le chœur du Prologue 12	Voix.	
Le chœur des Capulets 42	Voix.	100 INSTRUMENTS.
Le chœur des Montagues 44	Voix.	

L'orchestre sera dirigé par M. H. BERLIOZ.
Maître de chant : M. DIETSCH.

Dimanche 1^{er} Décembre 2nd Concert (*Roméo et Juliette*).
PRIX DES PLACES: 1^{re} Loges, 10 f.; Balcons de Balcon, 10 f.; 2^{ndes} Loges, 6 f.; Balcons d'Orchestre, 4 f.; Loges du Bas-des-Chaises, 3 f.; Parterre 3 f.; Amphithéâtre, 2 f.

On trouve des Billets chez M. BETY, au Conservatoire; et chez M. SCHLESINGER, rue Richelieu, 97.

Impression de YOUNG, par J. J. Smeets, 8.

Handbill for the first performance of *Roméo et Juliette*, 24 November 1839.

Inspired by Beethoven to create symphonic works, *Roméo et Juliette* is Berlioz's third symphony, sub-titled "symphonie dramatique with chorus, vocal solos, and a prologue in choral recitative, composed after Shakespeare's tragedy." is really a choral symphony, a work that incorporates choir and solo vocalists but in its structure conforms to the symphonic form. The precedent for this type of work was the partial inclusion of Goethe's Ode to Joy" in the last movement of Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*. In the work, the orchestra represents Roméo and Juliette while the narrative is portrayed through the chorus. *Roméo et Juliette* is considered by many to be one of Berlioz's greatest works, and certainly one of his most original and innovative.

I. Introduction: The introduction sets the scene for the rival families, the Montagues and Capulets, and foreshadows the conflict that is to come as it is expressed in the fight between the two families in the "Finale." The music is pictorially and emotionally vivid and brings the listener directly into the action. We hear the Capulets and Montagues fighting, and we hear the Prince intervening. The theme of conflict and reso-

lution are introduced, and will recur throughout the work. It is interesting to note that Berlioz uses B minor as the key designating conflict and B major as a return to authority and order. The interplay of these keys demonstrates the tension between conflict and resolution.

III. *Scène d'amour*: Following Shakespeare's model, the love scene is only hinted at by the orchestra and the listener is left to imagine the interchange between the young lovers. Berlioz chose to represent love, which he deemed sublime, to be portrayed through instrumental imagery so as to give the expression imaginative freedom and not to be restricted by the literalness of words. He believed that the very imperfection of the musical language lent the work a beauty and meaning, a richness of emotional texture that mere words could not convey nor attain. Berlioz firmly believed in the power of music to inspire the imagination, and that it did this through music's ability to express ideas, images, and emotions.



Richard Rothwell, *Portrait of Mary Shelley*, 1840.

Romanticism

Romanticism arose in response to the Enlightenment values of reason and order; in contrast it embraced emotion and imagination.

As a reaction against Classicism it rejected balance, clarity, rationality and idealization, and instead embraced passion, subjectivity, individual expression, the irrational, the imagination, the visionary and the transcendent. Nature, representing the unpredictable and the untamed, was a source of inspiration. In all respects the senses were given prominence over intellect, feeling over reason, and there was a belief that the imagination provided ingress to the transcendent; it was a time when the artist as creator reigned supreme. In his compositions, Berlioz exemplified the Romantic spirit; he was able to give full rein to his expression due to the expansion of the instrumentation and harmonic vocabulary, the full use

of the chromatic scale as well as the creation of new genres of music; in addition, there was significant experimentation with combining instrumental with vocal expression. It was a time marked by extraordinary creativity and the mobilization of the imagination.



Eugène Delacroix, *Liberty Leading the People*, oil on canvas, 1830.

Historical Context

Berlioz lived during a time of great transition; this is a period in France called the long nineteenth century and is considered to span the years extending from the French Revolution in 1789 to the First World I in 1914. The French Revolution saw the overthrow of the Ancien Régime, and the execution of Louis XVI followed by great turbulence culminating in the Reign of Terror (1793–1794). In 1804, Na-

napoleon Buonaparte proclaimed himself Emperor and sought to further his insatiable ambitions for imperial dominance such that militarism became the defining characteristic of his regime. After Napoleon abdicated in 1815, for the second time, the country then experienced a restoration of the monarchy. King Louis XVIII returned to the throne, for a second time, in 1815, where he ruled with limited power as a constitutional monarch. He was followed by his younger brother Charles X. Charles was bitter having been in exile since during the Revolutionary years, and he set about reinstating the notion of divine right of kings and the authority of the church. His reactionary attempts led to an uprising in 1830 known as the July Revolution. Charles fled and Louis-Philippe d'Orléans ascended the throne. This new regime was called the July Monarchy and lasted from 1830 – 1848; the period in which *Roméo et Juliette* was composed. This period was dominated by the affluent bourgeoisie and was characterized by a sense of compromise and the primacy of the people. Louis-Philippe came to be known as the “Citizen King” and suited to the constitutional system; he was thought to be liberal. However, he did believe in hereditary rights and the royal privilege to rule. This introduced an ambiguous element as to where in fact authority resided.

There were many challenges to the regime, and things were not really stable, with successive plots to assassinate the King. One of the greatest challenges was Napoleon's nephew Louis-Napoléon's claim to being his uncle's heir; over the years the Emperor's reputation had been revived. There were several plans organized to overthrow the King none of which were successful. Then things be-



Jacques-Louis David, *The Coronation of Napoleon*, oil on canvas, 1804

came calmer, and there was a period between 1840 and 1848 when opposition factions were discouraged and a certain stability took over. Then in 1848 the constitutional monarch was overthrown. This event seems to have been caused partially by economic stress and increasing discontent; the republicans had been unhappy for a long time, and the urban workers were unreconciled with the regime. Finally, Louis-Philippe fled the country for safe harbor in England. Thus, the Second Republic was installed; Charles Louis Napoléon Buonaparte was elected President of the Republic, which lasted from 1848 – 1852. During this period, there were popular uprisings against authoritarian rule all over Europe.

In France, this revolution aligned groups that had divergent values and goals. It was not successful. There was social unrest, considerable political activism, and even a short civil war that took place in Paris. A coup, a peasant revolt in southeastern France, and other resistance forced the President to take action, which lead directly into the Second Empire (1852 – 1870) at which point, with little opposition, Napoléon declared himself Emperor Napoléon III of the Second Empire. Authoritarian and dictatorial, the regime nonetheless saw prosperity in the form of industrialization, urbanization, economic growth and the rebuilding of Paris by Baron Haussmann. The greatest failing of Napoléon's reign was a series of bad foreign policies in which France suffered humiliating military defeats and severe food shortages. It ended with Napoleon III leaving France to be exiled in England. The span of Berlioz's life saw six regime changes, with social upheaval in each, even with periods of stability interspersed. One is left with the impression of volatility and a vacillation between authoritarian and republican systems of governance.

SERGEI PROKOFIEV

Born in Sontsovka, Ukraine (Russia) 1891

Died in Moscow, Russia 1953

***Selections from Romeo and Juliet,
Suites No. 1, Op. 64 bis and 2, Op. 64ter***

Composed 1935

One of the most prolific and celebrated Russian composers of the 20th century, Sergei Prokofiev is well known for many works, including the folk tale *Peter and the Wolf* and the ballets *Romeo and Juliet* and *Cinderella*. Born to an affluent and cultured household, Prokofiev was introduced to music as a child. His mother was an accomplished pianist and nurtured his interest and ability. In 1904, he moved with his mother to St. Petersburg, where he studied at the St. Petersburg Conservatory. As a young composer Prokofiev was known for his modernist approach, and was seen as eccentric.



A period of instability in Russia following upon the Revolution of 1917, caused Prokofiev to fear in 1918 that the civil war between the Red Army and the “Whites” would lead to a takeover of Saint Petersburg by the white forces. This, he believed, would create an environment inimical to experimental music, and he was prompted to leave Russia. Prokofiev spent time in the United States, and then Europe where he completed several commissions for the impresario Sergei Diaghilev, whom he had met on a trip to London in 1914. However, increasingly, Prokofiev was nostalgic for Russia. In the early 1930s he began to take on more commissions from home, one of which was *Romeo and Juliet* for the Kirov Theater. He moved back to Russia permanently in 1936 and settled in Moscow. Due to controversy over Prokofiev’s wanting a happy ending to *Romeo and Juliet*, in contrast to the play, the ballet’s premiere was delayed until 1938.

It was during this time that the Soviet Union established the Union of Soviet Composers, a government bureau that was charged with monitoring Soviet artists and their work and promoted limited outside influence and the use of “Soviet Realism.” This resulted in artistic isolation, and, in particular, Prokofiev and Dmitri Shostokovich were scrutinized for having “formalist tendencies.” Prokofiev attempted to adjust to these restrictions and wrote pieces that would honor Soviet principles, but he found the situation frustrating. During WWII, there was some lessening of these restrictions. Many of the works Prokofiev created at this time are thought to contain elements of anti-Stalinism and a resistance to the horrific repressions of the Soviet regime. Prokofiev continued to compose, but in 1948 the Central Committee of the Communist Party announced the adoption of a new music policy that favored moving away from modernism and cerebralism toward music that is easily assimilated, using styles and techniques from Russia’s past. They accused Prokofiev of having a Western style and they denounced him and his works, in particular his epic opera *War and Peace*. After this episode, Prokofiev’s health began to decline and in addition, he suffered through financial insecurity. At the age of 61, he died of a brain hemorrhage in 1953, ironically on the same day that Stalin’s death was announced.

**Montagues and Capulets,
Romeo and Juliet Before Parting from Romeo and Juliet, Suite No. 2
The Death of Tybalt from Romeo and Juliet, Suite No. 1**

Commissioned by the Kirov Theater, to be performed there and at the Bolshoi in Moscow, Prokofiev completed the score for the full ballet of *Romeo and Juliet* in 1935. However, the two companies objected to the music, in particular the happy ending Prokofiev conceived. The composer believed Romeo and Juliet's love was eternal; he also conceived it as an allegory of youth overcoming tradition, especially one of hate and violence. Thus, he wrote the music so that Juliet wakes up before Romeo kills himself. This ending was controversial and considered inappropriate. Due to the delay in the Ballet's performance, Prokofiev wrote three Concert Suites, extrapolating parts of the ballet into shorter but aesthetically complete works. We will perform excerpts from Suite No. 1 and Suite No. 2. Both are a sequence of character portrayals and scenes rather than full accountings of the story; still, they touch upon the essential dramatic elements of the play.

"Montagues and Capulets" is the first movement of *Suite No 2*. As it begins there is a dark and ominous introductory passage, representing the destructive conflict that exists between the two Veronese families. As the music progresses, it changes into the familiar "Dance of the Knights," which takes place at the Ball held by the Capulets. This section has a heavy, aggressive, pulsating rhythm that is menacing, suggesting the arrogance and pride of the Capulets. The rhythm reinforces the conflict that resides at the core of the story and lays the groundwork for the tragedy to follow, casting shadows on the incipient attraction of Romeo and Juliet.

"Romeo at Juliet's Before Parting" is the fifth movement of *Suite No 2*. In this scene, Romeo and Juliet are parting after their first night together as husband and wife. Juliet is represented by the flute and she is joined by Romeo's motif; a cadence of notes that conjures up joy and hope. These themes merge into ecstatic expression with undertones of anxiety; the music finally gives way to a darker, more threatening expression that presages death.

"The Death of Tybalt," the seventh movement of *Suite No 1*, is concerned with the deepening conflict between the Montagues and the Capulets. It begins with the duel in which Tybalt kills Mercutio and there is a sense of conflict and horror in the music. Then Romeo, resolved to avenge the death of his friend, slays Tybalt. The piece underscores the sense of tragedy that infuses even the presence of love. The music is intense and insistent depicting a defining moment in the story. originally conceived.



Note: Choreographer Mark Morris, has created a version of Romeo and Juliet that uses the happy ending that Prokofiev originally conceived.

Historical Information

Prokofiev lived through a time of profound change, a time when the Russian Tsarist regime was overthrown after centuries over oppression. The Revolution of 1917 was the outcome of centuries of social and economic oppression by the aristocracy of the lower classes. Even with the emancipation of the serfs in 1861, the peasants harbored resentment due to having to make redemption payments for the land and because they could only possess land communally. 1.5% of the population owned 25% of the land, creating systemic unrest. Conditions were exacerbated by rapid industrialization and movement of peasants from the countryside to the cities, resulting in urban overcrowding leading to even greater unrest. Economic instability, a growing dissatisfaction with autocracy creating political upheaval, and hardships caused by WWI brought about conditions that incited the series of conflicts that resulted in the Revolution. Then, in 1918, Civil War broke out between the Red Army, led by the Bolsheviks, and The White Army, made up of the bourgeoisie and other right leaning groups. During this time, the Imperial family was



Russian Revolution of 1917

imprisoned, and eventually assassinated. Out of all of this turbulence, arose the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR).

The Soviet Union was a socialist state formed in 1922 after the Russian Revolution of 1917 until its dissolution in 1991. The Soviet Union was a federation of several countries, 15 in total, whose capital was Moscow, however, politically it was a single-party state with a centralized government. There was no autonomy within the Union. The first leader of the USSR was Vladimir Lenin, but Joseph Stalin came to power after Lenin's death. Stalin initiated many repressive state controlled policies that affected all aspects of society from agricultural collectivization and

state mandated industrialization to what was acceptable expression in the arts. It wasn't until the end of World War II that the Soviet Union took on its role as a world leader, militarily and economically. It became, along with the United States, a superpower and the ideological conflict between these two entities resulted in the Cold War, a multi-decade long battle for global dominance. Khrushchev, who followed Stalin, was eliminated from power in 1964 when he backed down from establishing missiles on Cuba in response to the United States naval blockade. In the 1970's Leonid Brezhnev became the supreme leader of the Soviet Union, following a period of time when he shared power, as General Secretary, with Alexie Kosygin as Premier and Nicolai Podgorny as Chairman of the Presidium. In 1991, the Soviet Union lost its struggle for world dominance due to internal economic and political turmoil. Mikhail Gorbachev tried to enact reforms to counter domestic problems through such policies as perestroika and glasnost, but these efforts were not enough to keep the Soviet Union from collapsing.

Socialist Realism

All art and artistic endeavors in the Soviet Union were subject to censorship and suppression, and music was not an exception. There was a strong emphasis in all artistic expression to honor and celebrate the proletariat, or workers, and to glorify the communist ideology of social progress; conversely, anything that was seen as bourgeois or elite was considered unacceptable. The doctrine of Social Realism was instituted and was a state sponsored bureaucratic policy that governed what was permissible in literature, music, theatre, painting, sculpture and architecture. Social Realism was described as being an historically accurate portrayal of social development through artistic and creative means. This was part of a larger movement where all the creative professions were grouped into associations that would promote communist cultural and political values. All forms of expression that were considered modernist were denounced including formalism, cubism, and impressionism. There was some loosening of artistic criteria beginning in the 1950's, but even so, artists of all types had to be careful not to produce negative images of Soviet life or to be perceived as using forms of expression that would threaten Soviet stability. Works that considered subversive or that were not serving Soviet interests were suppressed.



Stalin, Isaak Izrailevich Brodsky, 1939

Music had more freedom of content, but it was still subject to censorship. There was a common understanding that even when individual expression was encouraged, a Soviet musician was first a Communist; thus, musical composition and performance should be directed by criteria established by the state for the good of the Union. In 1932, the Union of Soviet Composers was created and provided regulatory oversight of creativity in the field of music. One of the outcomes of this type of highly controlled and prescriptive arts policies was to inhibit innovation and experimentation. Formalism in particular was seen as undesirable and works that the authorities felt exhibited this quality were suppressed. Formalism in music is when the meaning of a piece is determined by its form. It is perceived as being elite and bourgeois with little appeal for ordinary working people. To the Soviet authorities, formalism took away from a piece of music the ability to inspire people and glorify the Soviet system. All artists were subjected to the criteria of formalism including writers, poets, film directors, dramatists, actors, and visual artists, all came under the scrutiny of the state.

Soviet Composers

Sergei Prokofiev, considered one of the patriarchs of Soviet music, along with Dmitri Shostakovich and Aram Khachaturian, found several of his works denounced as formalistic and unworthy. The Soviets wanted composers to write music that was simple, tonal, homophonic, and patriotic; composers such as Prokofiev and Shostakovich wanted to write music that was more complex and profound, that explored a deeper element of human experience. It was a difficult situation. Prokofiev, who had a very cultured youth and spent many years abroad, struggled with censorship; he tried to write music that conformed to Soviet dictates and he did write some popular works such as *Peter and the Wolf*. Still, his works were largely considered elitist and decadent. Khachaturian also experienced Soviet displeasure, even though he was less conflicted about his role as a communist composer. He was shocked when his

LEONARD BERNSTEIN

Born in Lawrence, Massachusetts 1918

Died in Brooklyn, New York 1990

West Side Story

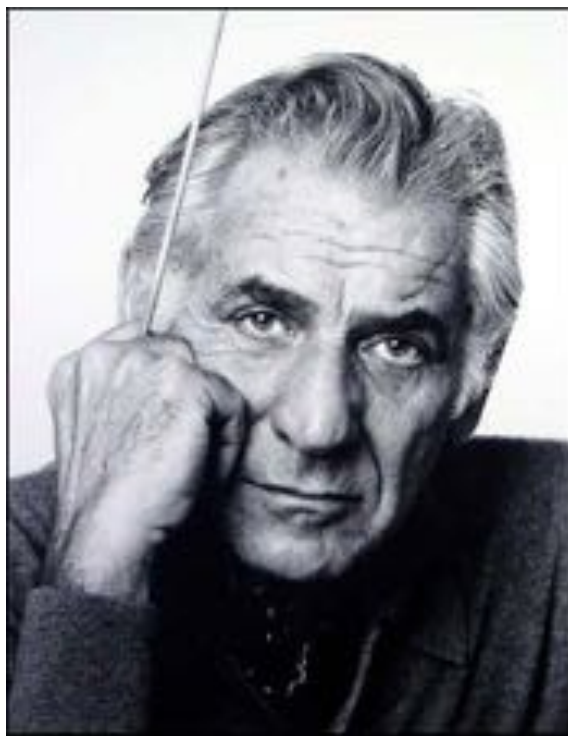
Composed in 1957

Symphonic Dances

I. Prologue (Allegro Moderato)

Tonight Quintet

Leonard Bernstein demonstrated extraordinary musical ability very early on. He took piano lessons as a boy and later studied music with Walter Piston at Harvard University. Subsequently, he attended the renowned Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia, studying conducting with Fritz Riener and piano with Isabella Vengerova and Heinrich Gebhard. In addition, Bernstein studied with Serge Koussevitsky at the Boston Symphony's summer institute in Tanglewood during the summers of 1940 and 1941 and subsequently became Koussevitsky's conducting assistant. Bernstein became instantly famous, when, in 1943, as assistant conductor of the New York Philharmonic he made his conducting debut by having to take Bruno Walter's place on the podium as the Maestro was stricken with flu.

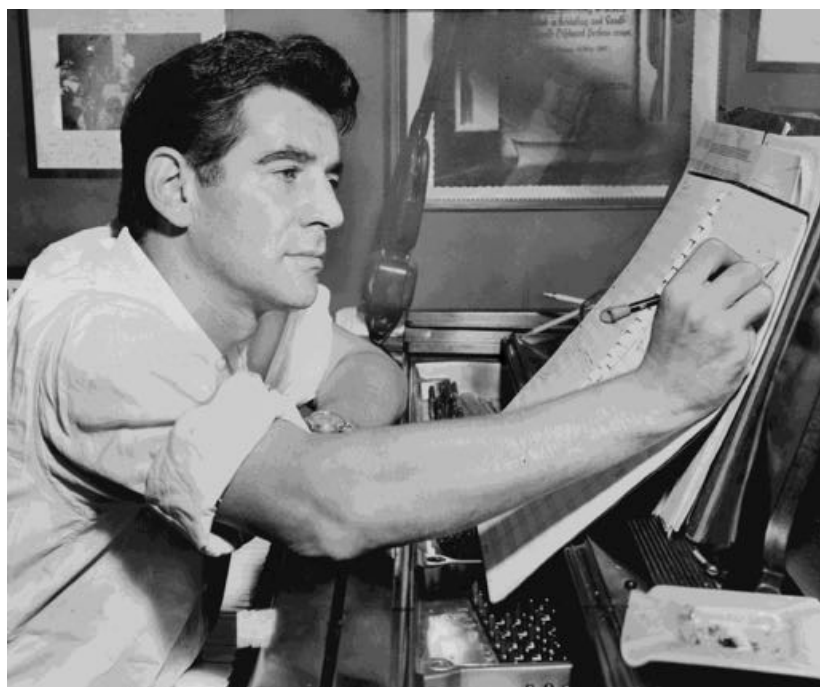


Bernstein, photo by Jack Mitchell,

Bernstein was a versatile musician; in addition to being a world

renowned conductor, he was a pianist, composer and educator. As a composer, Bernstein was prolific, writing music that includes orchestral works, works for theater, chamber music pieces, choral works, vocal music, and various piano pieces. In the late 1950's, his highly successful *Young People's Concerts* series was broadcast by CBS. Bernstein created many concert pieces as well as works for musical theatre, which include *Candide*, *On the Town* and his most famous and beloved work *West Side Story*. After a lengthy, varied and highly celebrated career in music, Bernstein, a longtime sufferer of emphysema, retired from conducting in 1990 on October 9; he died five days later of a heart attack.

Working at the piano, Bernstein annotates a musical score, 1955



West Side Story

An eclectic composer, Bernstein was aware of the melodic and rhythmic possibilities of popular styles. The score for *West Side Story*, in particular, is an example of virtuosic symphonic treatment. *West Side Story* is a musical written by Arthur Laurents, music by Leonard Bernstein, lyrics by Stephen Sondheim, and choreography by Jerome Robbins. The story, set in the Upper West Side of New York, is inspired by Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, and as a tragedy represents a turning point in musical theater. It work focuses on the rivalries and conflicts between different street gangs inhabiting that neighborhood, specifically newly arrived Puerto Ricans against existing Polish and Irish American gangs. In using the universal themes of prejudice, disenfranchisement and the destruction of love through hate, themes profound and disturbing, the work transcends the musical theatre medium. *West Side Story* is highly successful because of its dramatic unity: the music, the book, the lyrics, and Jerome Robbins's choreography are fully interwoven. Characterization, action and exposition are related through all of these elements in a truly innovative manner.

West Side Story debuted September 26, 1957 on Broadway at the Wintergarden.

Symphonic Dances

I. Prologue (Allegro Moderato)

Tonight Quintet

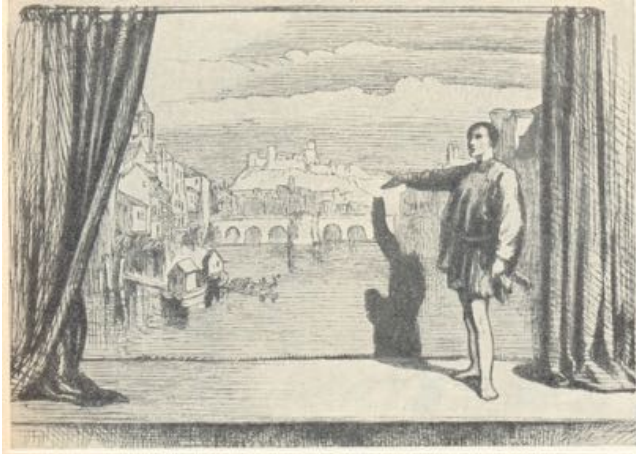
The prologue sets the scene for the action to follow. The play opens with the two gangs, the Sharks and the Jets fighting over territory in the Upper Westside of New York City. The police warn them to stop fighting. The music demonstrates the increasing animosity of the gangs, providing a premonition of escalating violence.

The "Tonight Quintet" takes place prior to the rumble between the Shares and the Jets. It is a contrapuntal chorus that expresses anticipation of the imminent conflict. Emotional intensity is created by the conflicting meters of the vocalists (in double) and the accompaniment (in triple). There are five inter-connected story lines representing the characters' expectations and longings. We hear the two gangs threatening each other, and each blaming the other for igniting the conflict. In opposition to each other, Anita sings of what will take place between her and Bernardo after the fight; Tony and Maria sing of their love and their parts echo each other, while Riff interrupts Tony, asking him to join him and the Jets in their face off with the Sharks. The layers of contrasting vocal parts and stories are blended into a an ensemble, a single expression of divergent desires that is exciting and dramatic. According to critic Frank Rich the Quintet is: "...the fulcrum of the show, dramatically, when everything has become like a train rushing forward, in a tragedy."

American composer and lyricist Stephen Sondheim wrote the lyrics for *West Side story*. He went on to write many more award winning musicals, including *A Little Night Music*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Sunday in the Park with George*, *Into the Woods* and many others.



Stephen Sondheim, circa 1970



John Gilbert, *Romeo and Juliet*, Act I—Prologue, illustration, c. 1864.

*Two households, both alike in dignity,
In fair Verona, where we lay our scene,
From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,
Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.
From forth the fatal loins of these two foes
A pair of star-cross'd lovers take their life;
Whole misadventured piteous overthrows
Do with their death bury their parents' strife.
The fearful passage of their death-mark'd love,
And the continuance of their parents' rage,
Which, but their children's end, nought could remove,
Is now the two hours' traffic of our stage;
The which if you with patient ears attend,
What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend.*

The "Prologue" from *Romeo and Juliet* is a Shakespearean sonnet, a poem written in iambic pentameter, consisting of 14 lines and made up of three quatrains and an ending couplet; sonnets were traditionally used to express love in conflict. The Prologue from *Romeo and Juliet* plays the same role in verse that the Overture from *West Side Story* plays in music, serving to establish the mood and action of the ensuing play and musical.

Synopsis of *West Side Story*

West Side Story involves the age-old theme of two lovers whose destiny is hindered by circumstances beyond their control. In *Romeo and Juliet*, the hero and the heroine come from feuding families, the Montagues and the Capulets. The two lovers in *West Side Story* come from rival New York city gangs, the Jets and the Sharks. The action takes place on the upper west side of the City. The Jets are made up of a mix of ethnic types: Polish, Italian and Irish, who think of themselves as being more American than the Puerto Rican Sharks. Both groups share the same lack of prospects and perpetually feud over territory. Tony, a former Jet, and Maria, the sister of the Shark's leader Bernardo, fall in love at a dance. At this same dance, the Jets challenge the Sharks to fight. Tony tries to extricate himself from any involvement, but Maria wants him to stop the "rumble." To satisfy her, he attempts to halt the fighting. But, when his best friend, Riff, is mortally stabbed by Bernardo, Tony becomes enraged and in turn kills Bernardo. Devastated by this news, Maria still forgives Tony. In the meantime Chico, Bernardo's right hand man who is also in love with Maria, pursues Tony to exact revenge. Maria convinces Anita, Bernardo's girlfriend, to deliver a message to Tony that Maria will come to him so that they can run away together. Tony is in hiding at Doc's Soda Fountain. When Anita arrives, the Jets abuse her. In anger she screams at them to tell Tony that Chico has killed Maria. When Tony hears this, he dashes outside and screams for Chico to kill him too. Then Maria appears and he realizes she is still alive. They run to each other; at that very moment, Chico comes out of the shadows and shoots Tony. Only as all the gang members watch Tony die in Maria's arms do they begin to realize that it is their hate that has brought this about. At the play's end, joined together through death, the Jets and the Sharks carry Tony as Maria follows.

Historical Information

Following WWII large numbers of Puerto Ricans came to New York known as the “Migración” or Great Migration, they came to America looking for opportunity. Simultaneously, the Great Migration of African Americans was also occurring. At this time, there were already groups of Irish, Italian, Jewish and Polish immigrants living in New York, and these groups all competed with each other for work and for housing. Areas of the city became predominantly one group or the other, e.g., African Americans lived in West Harlem while Hispanic groups lived in what became known as “Spanish” Harlem to the East.

Washington Heights and Hell’s Kitchen was largely inhabited by Irish. The youth of these groups, living in crowded conditions without prospects for work,

were frustrated and angry. The Viceroy, a Puerto Rican gang, were in conflict with the Italian Red Wings, while the Irish Jesters fought frequently different black gangs. Many of the conflicts were over territory, what gang members called “turf.” It was in many ways all they possessed; so they protected it with vigilance and violence. They worked at appearing tough, wearing leather jackets and tight jeans; they swaggered and fought with a myriad of weapons, including chains, clubs, and guns; engaging in “rumbles”

was there way of demonstrating just how tough they were. In 1959 a notorious conflict occurred in Hells Kitchen between 45th and 46th street. It was an area known to “belong” to the Irish and off limits to “Spanish” groups. The Puerto Rican Vampires, the Young Lords and the Heart Kings challenged the Irish group to a “rumble,” which ended in the death of 16-year-old Robert Young. It was these groups and their on-going conflicts that inspired West Side Story.



William Shakespeare, possibly by John Taylor, 1610



Liga Puertorriqueña de Brooklyn, 1922

William Shakespeare

English poet and playwright William Shakespeare is the author of a body of literary work considered to be the greatest in the history of English literature.

Shakespeare was born April 23, 1564 in Stratford-upon-Avon in the area of England known as the Midlands. He left Stratford for London sometime in 1586 where he embarked on a life in the theatre. In 1595 he became one of the senior members of the Lord Chamberlain’s men, making him a playwright to the King of England and by 1596 he was so successful that he was granted a Coat of Arms and was allowed to call himself a “gentleman.” Interestingly, Shakespeare died on April 23, the same date as his birth, in 1616.

Romeo and Juliet: The Play

Romeo and Juliet is thought to have been written early in Shakespeare’s career, between 1591 and 1595. It

is a tragedy, but one that incorporates many comedic elements, alternating between dramatic and comic scenes in order to amplify tension and suspense. It is one of Shakespeare's most performed and popular plays. The plot is based on an Italian tale that was translated into English by Arthur Brooke in 1562 under the title: *The Tragical History of Romeus and Juliet*, and is in the tradition of tragic romances that extends into antiquity. Shakespeare took this story and compressed it into a shorter time frame, creating urgency and immediacy; he embellished the story with sub-plots and augmented lesser characters, making the story much more dramatic than in its earlier rendition.

The play has several themes around conflict and opposites. Shakespearean scholar Frank Kermode makes the point that from the prologue throughout the play there is an antithetical relationship between love and strife. So too is there a contrast between lyricism and brutality, for example, the tender aspect of Romeo and Juliet's love vs. the street brawls and violence of the feuding Montagues and Capulets (p.87). These also demonstrate Shakespeare's adeptness of setting up juxtaposition between public events against the private world, and the clash between individual lives and the conventions of the society in which they live. It is in this arena that Juliet disobeys her parents but adheres to the obligations of her marriage, betrays her family but is true to her love. Throughout the play, there is the potential for violence that simmers just under the surface, erupting when triggered by specific situations.



Queen Elizabeth I, The "Darnley Portrait," circa 1575.

Synopsis

The play takes place in Verona and opens with a street brawl between the Capulets and Montagues, so that conflict is evident at the very outset of the play. The two families have a deep and abiding hate for one another. The prince of Verona intercedes and stops the fight; he then announces that anyone who subsequently disrupts the peace will be punished by death.

Romeo, Montagues's son, is moping because he is infatuated with a niece of Capulet's who pays no attention to him. His friends, Benvolio and Mercutio, persuade Romeo to go with them that evening, in disguise to the Capulet ball where he might catch a glimpse of Rosaline. Instead, Romeo meets Juliet and falls in love with her. Juliet's cousin Tybalt notices their attraction. Later, Romeo finds Juliet at her window proclaiming her love for him. Romeo reveals his presence and they decide to marry. The next day, Friar Lawrence, agrees to the union, hoping this will reconcile the families. Shortly thereafter Tybalt challenges Romeo to a duel, but Romeo refuses to fight because he and Tybalt are now related. Mercutio steps in and accepts Tybalt's challenge. Romeo tries to stop them from fighting, but in doing so Mercutio is wounded and dies. Romeo is overcome with grief and anguish at his friend's death, and in this heightened emotional state, he kills Tybalt.

Romeo is banished from Verona with the threat that if he returns he will be executed. However, before leaving, Romeo spends the night with Juliet. Juliet is in a state of grief at Romeo's departure; her father then agrees that she should marry Count Paris. Juliet tries to refuse her father's orders, then begs for the marriage to be delayed, angering her mother. In desperation, Juliet seeks out the help of Friar Lawrence. He gives her a drug that will put her into a deathlike sleep. On the night before she is to wed Paris, she

drinks the potion. The next morning she is found as if dead and placed in the family crypt.

Meanwhile, Friar Lawrence tries to alert Romeo of the plan, but the message is never delivered. Instead, Romeo learns of Juliet's death from a servant. Devastated, Romeo procures poison; he makes his way to the Capulet's crypt. There, he runs into Paris, mourning Juliet's death. Paris confronts Romeo; they fight and Paris is slain; then, Romeo drinks the poison. Juliet recovers consciousness; she wakes to find Romeo dead. In her grief, she stabs herself with his knife. The Montagues and Capulets convene at the tomb along, and find Romeo, Juliet and Paris dead. Friar Lawrence informs them of the love between Romeo and Juliet; the families agree to end their hostilities, and are reconciled in the death of their children.

Elizabethan England and Verona Histories of Conflict

Shakespeare lived during the reign of Elizabeth I of England, which ranged from 1558 – 1603. While it was an era of relative stability, there were still elements of conflict and unrest, especially related to religion and politics. One of the major sources of tension was between Protestantism and Catholicism. Ever since Henry VIII broke away from Rome and made himself the head of the Anglican church so that he could divorce his then wife, Catherine of Aragon, to wed Anne Boleyn, the rift between those who wished to remain loyal to Rome and those who followed Henry was deep and troubled. Elizabeth embraced Protestantism, and worshipping as a Catholic was forbidden, but there were many families, especially in the North of England who covertly defied the Royal dictate. Another source of conflict was the rivalry between England and Spain, which was connected to the religious issue, as Spain was Catholic and the homeland of Catherine of Aragon. Spain attempted to invade England in 1558 with its Armada, which suffered a humiliating defeat by Elizabeth's superior navy. The conflict between the two countries did not end there, and it placed a heavy burden on the English coffers. In addition, the period was riddled with countless plots and conspiracies against the Queen, and there was constant maneuvering amongst her Courtiers for position and influence. Shakespeare's work was produced against the background of such intrigue and courtly maneuvers.

La Divina Commedia di Dante, Domenico di Michelino, 1465

The poet holds the *Divine Comedy*, next to the entrance to Hell, the seven terraces of Mount Purgatory and the city of Florence, with the spheres of Heaven above.

It is probable that the Verona of Romeo and Juliet was beset by conflict, as were many of the city states of Italy at that time. In Canto VI, ll. 106 – 8 of the *Divine Comedy*, Dante refers to the fractious families of the Montecchi and the Cappelletti. It is thought that this alludes to the political tension between the Guelphs, supporters of the Pope, and the Ghibellines, followers of the Holy Roman Empire, that beset the country and the endless warfare that ensued. Dante, himself, was caught up in this rivalry and banished from his beloved Florence.

*Come and behold Montecchi and Cappelletti,
Monaldi and Fillippeschi, careless man!
Those sad already, and these doubt-depressed!*



Ideas for exploration and for making curricular connections:

What does conflict mean to you? Share a personal experience of conflict, orally, through poetry, a story, a drawing, or some other means.

You will hear three versions of a fight between groups: the Montagues and the Capulets in two pieces, the Jets and the Sharks in *Westside Story*. How are these musical interpretations of feuding groups similar and different?

How do the three pieces of music handle the resolution of conflict? Describe and explain.

What is the significance of darkness and light in the play? How are these elements presented in the Tchaikovsky's Overture and the Prokofiev suite?

Explore hostility, aggression and inter-group conflict: families, clans, tribes, nations through the feud between the Montagues and the Capulets and the clash between the Jets and the Sharks. What is the nature of the hostility and aggression in these two instances? How are they the same and how are they different?

How are prejudice, persecution, protest and discrimination evident in inter-group conflict?

Identify, describe and analyze the different conflicts in the play? Conflict between individuals: Romeo vs Tybalt; Juliet against her parents; Juliet and her nurse; Maria vs Anita; Tony vs Bernardo

How do we hear these conflicts in the music: Tchaikovsky, Prokofiev and Bernstein? How are they handled differently by each of the composers? Write and discuss with the class.

What are the roles of obedience, disobedience and authority in the play, in the musical? Are these different from what would be experienced today?

What role does loyalty and betrayal play in Romeo and Juliet and West Side Story?

Inner conflict: Juliet's uncertainty about Romeo; her need to drink the potion against her fear of waking in the tomb; Maria's uncertainty about Tony.

Conflict between the individual and the collective (family, gang, community, country)

Tension in the form of obstacles or delayed expectations as results of threats and provocation.

Dreams vs reality: the hope of love against the reality of hate and violence.

Resolution: death of Romeo and Juliet and reconciliation of Montagues and Capulets; death of Tony and reconciliation of Jets and Sharks.

Literary themes: hostility and its effects on others; the use of deception and its consequences; effects of faulty decision making.

Compare Romeo and Juliet to West Side story. What differences do you see in character plot, and theme? Why do you think these differences exist?

Research Shakespeare: the man and his times and present your findings.

What are the effects of feuds? Create an annotated bibliography.

Research modern themes: suicide, sexuality, parent/child relationships. What are the changes in attitudes portrayed in the play, the musical and the musical works.

Can you identify modern instances of the theme of conflict?

Explore how these conflicts and issues are depicted in literature, theater, in art and in dance.

Analyze and explain the role of conflict or tension in music, literature, visual art, theater and dance.

Research and comment on the historical context for the story of Romeo and Juliet. For example, during Shakespeare's life there was intense conflict between the Catholic and Protestant churches. Catholics were persecuted and repressed. In regards to West Side Story the clash is between Irish and Puerto Rican immigrants: competition, gang formation, rivalry, power.

Search for feuds in other literary, musical or artistic works. What are the effects of feuds? Discuss with class and create an annotated bibliography.

Do some research on one of the modern themes of the play: suicide, teenage sexuality, or parent/child relationship. How have attitudes changed since Shakespeare's time? Write about your findings and discuss with the class.

Do some research on one of the literary themes of the play: family hostility and its effect on the innocent, the use of deception and its consequences, or the effects of faulty decision making. Can you find a contemporary example of these? Write about the topic and discuss with the class.