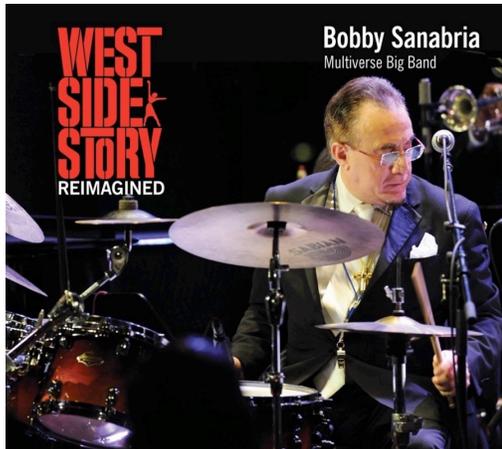


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Booklet

New Release – Street Date - July 20, 2018



Artist: **Bobby Sanabria Multiverse Big Band**

Title: **West Side Story Reimagined**

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All music composed by LEONARD BERNSTEIN (1918 - 1990)

Conception and choreography by Jerome Robbins (1918 - 1998)

Lyric by Steven Sondheim (1930 -)

Book by Arthur Laurents (1917 - 2011)

THE MUSIC

PROLOGUE - arranged by Jeremy Fletcher

Tutti Percussion Soli: Oreste Abrantes - congas,
Matthew González – bongo

Maestro Bernstein's genius in using the tritone (the first two notes of the now iconic three note whistle) sets the stage for everything that is to come forming the basis of many of the melodies in West Side Story. Inspired by the calls of the Hebraic ram's horn trumpet known as the shofar, which is used in religious ceremonies and holidays to announce their beginning, its resounding blasts were historically a call to war. Transferred to the whistles of the streets, it announces the foreboding conflict between the Jets and Sharks. In the West African Nigerian/Yoruba rooted Afro-Cuban religion, Santería, (which is practiced by many Puerto Ricans in NYC), Elegua is the guardian of the crossroads, the spy of the orisha/deities/gods, and the avatar of aché - the positive energy force of the multiverse. All things start and end with Elegua as he is present in every corner of the room watching. Thus he must be praised first and last in any ceremony as he is the one who opens and closes all doors and is gatekeeper to the multiverse. Elegua's number is three and the Prologue's ominous driving melody, based on the three notes of the whistle, is a repetitive three bar phrase that repeats in on itself over the driving Cuban son montuno rhythm mixed with funk. These three bar phrases constantly alter the direction of the clave, the rhythm played over the finger snaps and is the rhythmic keystone that informs Cuban, Puerto Rican, Dominican, and New Orleans' music, seamlessly weaving from one side of the clave to the other without breaking its rhythmic integrity achieving clave counterpoint. A fast shift to swing rhythm represents the first encounter of the Jets and Sharks as their battle for dominance of the neighborhood begins.

JET SONG - arranged by Niko Siebold

Solos: Max Darché - trumpet, Dave Miller - trombone, Peter Brainin - tenor sax, Matthew González - primo barril de bomba, Bobby Sanabria – vocals

Starting with a hard driving shuffle rhythm, the Jets members are represented by each wind section - trumpets, trombones, saxophones. The sudden switch to hard driving double time swing in the sax soli represents the out of control energy, fear, immaturity, and ultimately hate the Jets have of the Puerto Rican Sharks. While the Jets are represented by the hip, cool, dark, progressive, up-tempo jazz of the 50s (bebop) and the three soloists - trumpet, trombone, tenor sax - they suddenly encounter the Sharks who are musically represented by their native Afro-Puerto Rican bomba xicá rhythm which explodes with majesty, force, and aché (energy). But the Jets won't back down and finally have the last word.

AMERICA - arranged by Jeff Lederer

Solos: Chris Washburne - trombone, Andrew Gould - alto sax, Darwin Noguera - piano, Leo Traversa - electric bass

America is perhaps the quintessential song about the immigrant experience in this country. In the case of the Puerto Rican community, another layer of complexity is added in that they/we are not immigrants, but actually migrants, since they/we have been U.S. citizens since 1917. It's antiphonal structure in Bernstein's music and Sondheim's lyrics cleverly expresses both the hopes and optimism of Puerto Ricans traveling to the US in the 1950's, tempered by the realities of discrimination, denial of economic opportunity, and the hardships they were escaping from on the island - in effect a U.S. colony. The arrangement features the Venezuelan rhythm of joropo and the appearance of the national anthems of a number of immigrant/refugee communities that are experiencing a renewed level of discrimination under the current administration. Arranger Jeff Lederer states, "Our definitions of what 'America' is have never been more challenged and the relevance of this song has never been in sharper focus."

NOTE: Bernstein composed the piece utilizing the huapango rhythm from Mexico with elements of the Venezuelan joropo. But the Sharks are Puerto Rican, why do this? The 1950s was the Golden Age of Mexican cinema rivaling Hollywood. NYC based theaters catering to the Puerto Rican community of Spanish Harlem, South Brooklyn, and the South Bronx, exclusively screened these films. Thus, Mexican rhythms like huapango, polka, ranchera, and South American styles like joropo from Venezuela, cumbia from Colombia, samba from Brazil, became part of the Puerto Rican experience in NYC, demonstrating the universality and popularity of all forms of Latin music/culture as well as the cosmopolitan nature of the Nuyorican experience.

GEE, OFFICER KRUPKE - arranged by Jeremy Fletcher

Solos: Shareef Clayton - trumpet w/ plunger mute

The funniest and most politically charged song from *West Side Story*, it's an indictment of how America treats those at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder. Originally set as a circus-like polka mocking its namesake, the Polish American policeman Krupke, in this new setting the song utilizes styles representing the current cultural makeup of NYC. Rhythms like bomba xicá, yuba and plena (Puerto Ricans), a satirical waltz (Europeans), New Orleans second line and funk (African-Americans), bolero (Cubans), merengue/compas (Dominicans/Haitians), up-tempo swing (jazz musicians and their fans), and a low-down, dirty, slow drag shuffle (rockers, beatniks, hipsters, women of the night) all make their appearance in a kaleidoscope of sound. But there's more than meets the eye as this new version suggests that Krupke may be just a "family guy" who digs all of the styles of music (and possibly the people) that he experiences walking the beat that he patrols.

TONIGHT - arranged by Matt Wong

Solos: David Dejesus - alto sax, Takao Heisho - cuica, Peter Brainin - tenor sax, Darwin Noguera - piano cadenza

One of the most endearing songs and memorable melodies of the show, the original version showcased the sweeter side of the romance that developed between Tony and Maria. That sweetness, angst, longing, passion, desire, surprise, anticipation that is a part of any relationship between a couple in love is represented by the sultry bolero from Cuba, the vibrant samba from Brazil, and exciting merengue from the Dominican Republic. Three styles of music that represent passion, courtship, desire, and happiness, and the anticipation Maria has for finding love and happiness in her new home and Tony's search for something beyond his present existence.

GYM SCENE - BLUES/MAMBO - arranged by Danny Rivera, coda arranged by Bobby Sanabria

Solos: David Dejesus - alto sax, Andrew Gould - alto sax, Peter Brainin - tenor sax, Yaacov Mayman - tenor sax, Danny Rivera - bari sax, Kevin Bryan - trumpet

Afro-Cuban jazz was born when the Machito Afro-Cubans under Mario Bauzá's musical direction first began combining jazz arranging technique and soloists with Afro-Cuban rhythms in Spanish Harlem at the Park Palace Ballroom in NYC in 1939. Maestro Bernstein was indeed inspired by his visits to one of Manhattan's other

legendary Latin ballrooms, “The Home of The Mambo” - The Palladium (1948 - 1966) where “The Big 3,” Machito, Tito Puente, and Tito Rodriguez’s orchestras reigned supreme. Located at West 53rd Street and Broadway, it was one block away from Birdland - the home of progressive jazz on West 52nd Street and Broadway. The Palladium represented the zenith of both art forms and where true racial integration in NYC began. But these types of ballroom dances, or should we say “gathering of the tribes” happened in public school gymnasiums and church dances all over New York City as portrayed in West Side Story and were considered neutral zones by gangs. Despite their conflict, the gym dance is the only time the Sharks and Jets experience collective ecstasy through the joy of big band jazz and the explosive mambo.

GYM SCENE - CHA CHA CHA - arranged by Nate Sparks

Solos: Gabrielle Garo – flute

Maestro Bernstein's original conception of the cha cha cha was done in a chamber ensemble context. This transitional piece was used to cool down the audience after the roaring mambo and was played as a backdrop when Tony and Maria first see each other at the dance. After stating/quoting Bernstein's original orchestration, the piece morphs into a full blown big band cha cha cha in the style of the aforementioned “Big 3” for Maria and Tony to dance.

MARIA - arranged by Eugene Marlow, vocals/rhythm arranged by Bobby Sanabria

Solos: Bobby Sanabria - Yoruba chants for Ochún and Changó, drumset, Matthew González - Iyá bata drum

This haunting melody is the most memorable one from the show and a declaration of Tony’s love at first sight for Maria. Here it is framed in the West African-rooted bembé style. The West African Nigerian/Yoruba-rooted ceremonial batá drums, which were brought to 19th century Cuba during the colonial period play ceremonial salute rhythms for the various orisha (deities). The opening vocals are a traditional praise chant for Ochún - the female orisha/deity/goddess of love and beauty representing Maria. Tony’s unleashed passion for Maria is represented by traditional ceremonial chants for Changó - the Lord of the drum, dance, and unbridled male sexual energy. Melodic and harmonic dissonances in the arrangement represent the conflicts that both Tony and Maria are facing and how a true love between individuals from disparate cultures has the potential to overcome these challenges. The increased tempo buildup in the drums and batá represents the intense sexual energy unleashed by their passion for each other.

COOL - arranged by Andrew Neesley

Solos: David DeJesus - soprano sax, Tim Sessions - trombone, Peter Brainin - tenor sax, Shareef Clayton – trumpet

In the original Broadway show of West Side Story, *Cool* is sung by Riff (leader of the Jets) before the rumble. The Jets are itching to fight with the Sharks, but Riff tells them to wait for the rumble and play it ...cool. The hipness and virtuosity of jazz as it is played in NYC is well served by the song as Bernstein treated the music as a jazz fugue in which a short melody or phrase is introduced by one part and successively taken up by others and developed by interweaving them. It creates a sense of tension, release, darkness, confusion, energy, anxiety, and forward motion - framed by the propulsion of the swingin’ jazz rhythm that represents the Jets. This version has added transitional elements of Nujack swing/funk mixed with Afro-Cuban percussion (a slight nod to hip hop culture), and features a sax soli providing a jumping off point for the trombone, tenor sax, and trumpet (the members of the Jets) while the rest of the band swings hard and takes no prisoners. Now that’s cool!

THE RUMBLE/RUMBA - arranged by Takao Heisho

Solos: Yaacov Mayman - tenor sax, Andrew Neesley - trumpet, Matthew González - bongó, Bobby Sanabria - drums, Cadenza: Matthew González - bongó, Oreste Abrantes - congas, Bobby Sanabria - drums

The tension, brutality, fear, hate, madness, violence, senselessness of the two gangs fighting and its eventual consequences is represented by the dissonant harmony and intense rhythm of *The Rumble*. The Afro-Puerto Rican rhythm known as bomba yubá frames the main theme driving the piece. The Afro-Cuban/West African Nigerian/Yoruba-rooted rhythm known as bembé follows as the trumpet solo, representing Tony, tries to stop the rumble. The arrangement comes to a furious climax during the percussion solos in Afro-Cuban rumba

guaguancó style as the bongó and drumset battle representing the two gangs leading to the eventual stabbing death of both Riff (the leader of the Jets) and Bernardo (leader of the Sharks) which will eventually lead to Tony's death.

ONE HAND, ONE HEART - arranged by Jeremy Fletcher

Solos: Armando Vergara - trombone, David Dejesus - alto sax, Gabrielle Garo – flute

One of two duets between the lovers, Tony is portrayed by the lead trombone and Maria by the lead alto saxophone. The style is Brazilian samba-canção/bossa nova mixed with Cuban bolero, referencing the wonderful duets between Brazilian superstars Tom Jobim and Elis Regina and the jazz influenced bolero *filin'* movement of 1950s Cuba. The beautiful introduction from the original is used as an interlude after the solos and sets up the recapitulation of the melody. Fragments of other songs from West Side Story appear as background figures, including *Tonight, I Have a Love, A Boy Like That*. A funky cha cha/son montuno based on *Something's Coming* closes the arrangement adding a sense of completion to our new reimagining of the entire score.

SOMEWHERE - arranged by Jeremy Fletcher

Solos: Ben Sutin - electric violin

In the movie version *Somewhere* is the other vocal duet between Tony and Maria. The solo trombone (Tony) and solo alto sax (Maria) make appearances at key moments. The Venezuelan joropo rhythm captures the pensive hopefulness of the lyrics as Maria and Tony, represented by the haunting violin solo, dream of that time and place that is yet to be and as they will find out, will never come. It comes to an explosive climax with the drum solo representing the intense passionate love they have for each other.

EPILOGUE/FINALE - arranged by Jeremy Fletcher

Solos: David Dejesus - alto sax, the entire orchestra

A reprise of *Somewhere*, the dream has been shattered and morphed into a horrific nightmare as Tony lays dying from the gunshot wound from Chino. The alto sax (Maria) and trombone return, but the trombone (Tony) never completes his melody and Maria must go on alone. She breaks down in denial and grief, as the horns simultaneously improvising, embracing the dissonant free-jazz techniques of Ornette Coleman, simulate her eventual screams sobs, anger, and disillusionment. Maria gathers her strength and the ensemble restates *I Have a Love* while echoes of *Somewhere* float over the top. West Side Story closes with a note of uncertainty, as the final chord is destabilized by an ominous pedal tone. Bernstein's cleverness/ingenuity as a composer is in evidence as the final chord (including the pedal tone) are the same notes as the opening arpeggio (the three notes from the tritone) from the prologue, but played simultaneously. The forward motion of the music has come to a rest, the tale has ended, begging an answer to the question that the story has asked of all of us, "How do we deal with hate?" - but with no certain answer.

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