

Music on the Mountain VIII (September 11, 2010)

American Classics

LEONARD BERNSTEIN / PERESS, MAURICE: ADAPTED

(1918 - 1990) *Overture to West Side Story*

West Side Story is an American musical. The musical's plot and story are based on William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. Set in New York City in the mid-1950s, the musical explores the rivalry between the Jets and the Sharks, two teenage street gangs of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

JOHN WILLIAMS / FOR ITZHAK PERLMAN

(1932 -) *Tango (Por Una Cabeza)*, Mateusz Wolski, violin

The famous tango from *The Scent of a Woman*. A beautiful piece, full of passion and romance.

ANTONIN DVOŘÁK

(1841 - 1904) *Symphony No. 9 in E minor, "From the New World" Largo*

This piece is popularly known as the New World Symphony; it was composed by Antonín Dvořák in 1893 during his visit to the United States. He was convinced that the future music of this country must be founded on what are called Native melodies.

FERDE GROFÉ

(1892 - 1972) *Grand Canyon Suite – On the Trail*

The suite is a series of movements describing a journey into the Grand Canyon. The center movement, "On the Trail" is the most famous: a humorous depiction of the ride that may be undertaken on the backs of patient mules descending to the tumbling waters of the Colorado River at the bottom of the Canyon, and including a stop for a snack in a cabin with a music box.

MORTON GOULD

(1913 - 1996) *American Salute*

Morton Gould worked in vaudeville and on radio, from Tin Pan Alley to Broadway, all the while churning out jingles, symphonies, and everything in between.

SAMUEL BARBER

(1910 - 1981) *Adagio for Strings*

This piece is one of the saddest pieces of classical music ever composed; it was broadcast over the radio at the announcement of Franklin D. Roosevelt's death, the funeral of Albert Einstein and at the funeral of Princess Grace of Monaco, to name a few.

AARON COPLAND

(1900 - 1990) *Variations on a Shaker Melody from Appalachian Spring*

The musical story told is a spring celebration of the American pioneers of the 1800s after building a new Pennsylvania farmhouse. Among the central characters are a newlywed couple, a neighbor, a revivalist preacher and his followers.

GEORGE GERSHWIN

(1898 - 1937) *An American in Paris*

Inspired by the time Gershwin had spent in Paris, it is in the form of an extended tone poem evoking the sights and energy of the French capital in the 1920s. It is one of Gershwin's best-known compositions.