

Interview with Lukas Foss

March 30, 2006, 4 p.m., at his apartment on the Upper East Side, New York

Interviewed by Katherine Lee on 1 cassette tape and 1 minidisc.

Transcribed by Katherine Lee on April 7, 8, 9, 10, 14

Minor editing by Elizabeth T. Craft

Key:

LF = Lukas Foss

KL = Katherine Lee

O = Odie (sp?) – Foss's dog

Italics = emphasized speech

-- = an aside or interrupted speech

,

= if grammatically unnecessary it indicates a brief pause in speech.

...

= a significant pause in speech

(text) = simultaneous speech

[text] = action or editorial insertion for clarity

KL:

My research partner and I were given the task of trying to explore Bernstein's connections with a broader musical world in Boston, so we decided to look at Tanglewood, in particular - because a lot of people in our class are looking at things within the city of Boston. For instance, they're researching into the Samuel J. Bernstein Hair Company, or Boston Latin School, which Leonard Bernstein attended, or Harvard. So we've decided to try and find out as much as we can about Tanglewood. Yeah, basically to add, I guess, to what has already been published. There's a lot of literature out there already we're aware of. But we're just trying to find more for the purposes of this class, and also in connection with the festival that will happen in October at Harvard. So, some of our findings may be presented at a conference in the fall, although we're not exactly sure --

LF:

I have a picture/photo of the wall of Leonard Bernstein and me playing together in Tanglewood.

KL:

Oh, really that would be great to see. (LF: Sure, sure.) Do you remember what year that was?

LF:

It must have been when I was about 20 years old.

KL:

Uh-hum. And was that the first summer of the Berkshire Music Camp?

LF:

Just about, the second year.

KL:

Oh, the second, okay, right. And uh, so, you had met him first at Curtis, though.

LF:

That's right.

KL:

Can you tell me a little about that and do you have memories of when you *first* met him at Curtis?

LF:

Well, we became friends immediately. It was interesting. He was like my older brother. (KL: Yeah) And we stayed friends for 55 years.

KL:

That's amazing. [laughs]

LF:

Yeah. Very nice.

KL:

So, you had come from Paris, right?

LF:

Yes.

KL:

So, you were probably just getting used to a completely different city and a new language and (LF: Yes) all of that.

LF:

Actually, by the time I met Lenny I was pretty good at English.

KL:

Uh-huh.

KL:

[pause] So, at--

LF:

We met in Fritz Reiner's class, conducting class at the Curtis Institute.

KL:

Uh-huh. [pause] And um...so, that's pretty much when your friendship really began, was in that class.

LF:

That's right. Then it went onto Koussevitzky, who was our teacher in Tanglewood.

KL:

Okay, yeah.

LF:

We were his favorite students...he called one of us Dionysian and the other Apollonian.

KL:

Oh really? [Laughs]

LF:

And we were wondering, Lenny and I, which one was which.

KL:

Oh he didn't specify?

LF:

I think it's clear that he was the Dionysian one. [KL laughs]

KL:

So, you were at Curtis for that one year before the Tanglewood camp started, right?

LF:

Yes.

KL:

Can you tell me a little bit about what it was like to study with Fritz Reiner?

LF:

Sure. He was a very, very severe teacher, but at the same time he was kind too. To me, anyway he was very kind. (KL: Uh-hum) I learned a lot from him. (KL: Uh-hum)

KL:

And, uh, I read somewhere that he was very particular about how scores should be studied. Very thoroughly. Did you experience that kind of...?

LF:

Yes, he was demanding, he was very demanding. (KL: Uh-hum)

KL:

So, he basically, did he have the same standards for everybody?

LF:

Yes. [Pause]

KL:

What about Isabelle Vengerova?

LF:

Another teacher we both had in common. (KL:...a pianist)

LF:

Yes. Vengerova [LF correctly pronounces her name]

KL:

Vengerova

KL:

And what was she like?

LF:

She was very, very concerned about what we were doing; she made sure we practiced a lot. (KL: Uh-hum) She was very demanding, very good teacher.

KL:

Uh-huh

LF:

She taught me in her home. Not at Curtis, but in her home. (KL: Oh-okay.) I was a Curtis student of hers.

KL:

Ok, uh-huh. Do you remember, uh, what sort of repertoire you were learning in those days?

LF:

I'm not too sure now. But I think it was quite the usual repertoire... Beethoven sonatas and things like that. (KL: Uh-huh) Quite normal.

KL:

Okay...[pause] Yeah, I actually was a piano major in college [KL laughs]

LF:

You were?

KL:
Yeah, and then I went into Korean music.

LF:
Korean music?

KL:
Uh-huh. So I study Korean music. Quite a jump from piano.

LF:
I see

KL:
...So, when – ‘cause Leonard was also studying with the same piano teacher. But he was studying with her at Curtis, not at her home?

LF:
I think he was studying with her at Curtis, I think... Yes, I’m pretty sure.

KL:
Uh-hum. So you just had a different arrangement then?

LF:
That’s right.

KL:
Okay. And how long did you study with her?

LF:
I think about three, four years.

KL:
Okay. And then, after that, was it when you...was it in ’44 that you went to Boston?...’Cause, I read that you had become the pianist--

LF:
of the Boston Symphony.

KL:
Yeah.

LF:
Yes.

KL:
Do you recall when that was?

LF:
I have to think. By now, I was probably 30 years old. (KL: Oh-okay) That must have been around ‘55. (KL: Uh-hum) I’m not sure.

KL:

Oh okay, sure. [Laughs]...I wanted to just ask you a little bit about Maestro Koussevitzky, and what you learned from him at Tanglewood.

LF:

Well, we were like his kinder, we were his children, you know. It was more like, it was more a friendship than... I learned from him a lot in the sense of the passion for conducting, for doing music. He was passionate about the music he was conducting. That was a good lesson.

KL:

Uh-hum... Do you remember what pieces or what orchestral works you were learning to conduct at that time?

LF:

I guess, Tchaikovsky symphonies. And Koussevitzky did my own works.

KL:

Oh.

LF:

He was really very helpful.

KL:

I see, I see. And did he give you any specific techniques to work on with conducting that differed greatly from Fritz Reiner?

LF:

The emphasis was different. Koussevitzky's emphasis was on, on love for music – that's not technique.

KL:

Uh-huh, yes.

[Long pause]

Do you remember more about Tanglewood and just the fellow students that you met there?

LF:

Well, I met quite a few students there, but the only real friend was Leonard Bernstein.

KL:

Uh-huh. Okay. Yeah, and um, so, did you ever play piano together? I mean, I knew you were studying conducting. Yeah, but at Tanglewood did you ever just go to the keyboard, and - ?

LF:

We did everything together.

KL:

Everything. Ok.

LF:

There's nothing we didn't do. (KL: Uh-huh) It was very exciting. (KL: Yeah, um...)

We tried out each other's new works. When he composed a new work, he would try it on me. When I composed a new work, I would try it on him.

KL:

Yeah? And what was that process like?

LF:

Well, we were concerned about whether our friend liked it or not. (KL: Sure)

What the criticism would be.

KL:

Uh-huh. [Pause] Do you remember some of those works that you were trying out on each other?

LF:

Well, I don't have too good a memory for those long-distance things. (KL: Sure)

It was long ago. (KL: Sure) It might have been my *Song of Songs*, (KL: Uh-huh) it might have been Lenny's early symphony or something. I don't know. I'm not sure now.

KL:

Mm-hmm. So you'd kind of go and critique each other's work (LF: That's right) and make suggestions. That sort of thing.

LF:

That's right. He was of course four years older.

KL:

Yeah. [Pause] I read somewhere that in one of your works – is it the *Baroque Variations*? – one of the movements Leonard Bernstein had some trouble with it and said he went to you for some advice on how to rehearse it.

LF:

Yes, it was number three. The *Baroque Variation* number three, called *Phorion*. (KL: Okay) Yes. He was doing the premiere. (KL: Uh-hum).

LF:

I remember him calling me up saying, "Lukas, your music is so crazy now.

I don't quite understand it. Can you come and explain it to me?" So I said, "Well, when should I come?" "Well now." "Now at 11:00 at night?" "Yes, why not?" "So I did." [Laughs slightly] "So I took a taxi and went to see him at 11:00 at night. By 1:00, he explained it to me."

KL:

Uh-huh. Oh [laughs]... So, you had premiered some of Bernstein's works and he premiered some of yours – so it really was a lifetime relationship that you had. (LF: It was, yes) Did you, I saw somewhere that you composed or you dedicated a piece – the *Variations for New York, New York* to Lenny.

LF:

I did, didn't I? (KL: Yeah, laughing) I forgot. (KL: Uh-huh)

KL:

Were there other works like that you dedicated to him? Or that you had specifically him in mind, for like premiering, or...?

LF:

I don't think so.

KL:

Okay. We were trying to understand a little bit more about Maestro Koussevitzky and his influence on his students, and you mentioned his, just the passion for music that he imparted to his students. Was there also a component of conducting technique, or I guess I kind of already asked that, but *anything* else?

LF:

There wasn't too much about conducting technique. He was not so concerned with technique, I think. (KL: Uh-hum)... But we conducted in Tanglewood, and he watched us and criticized us. A wonderful teacher. 'Cause he was concerned [indistinct]...when we did a good job, he was happy.

KL:

And what if you didn't do a good job?

LF:

Then he was unhappy. (KL: Uh-huh)

KL:

What about repertoire? Were there certain works that Maestro Koussevitzky loved to perform and that in turn, his students ended up performing a lot?

LF:

Well, I think particularly of Tchaikovsky, but I may be wrong and there may be other things like Mussorgsky and--

KL:

The *Khovanshchina*, maybe?

LF:

Yeah, there are other pieces too that he - not just Russian music either. (KL: Uh-huh)...Classics, modern music. (KL: Uh-huh) Hindemith was in Tanglewood at the time. And so he conducted Hindemith's works quite a bit. (KL: Uh-huh) [telephone rings] Hindemith was my teacher at Tanglewood. I don't think he was Leonard's teacher.

[Foss goes to answer the phone and is on the phone for approximately 10 minutes.]

...

...

LF:

Sorry, some people you can't get off the phone.

KL:

Yeah. [Laughs]

LF:

He was talking from Los Angeles.

KL:

Oh I see.

[Foss returns to the couch, at which point Odie (his dog) and his cat climb on too.]

KL:

Very cute.

LF:

Yes, a cute dog.

KL:

And a beautiful cat.

LF:

The cat's beautiful.

KL:

Oh, the eyes are gorgeous... And your cat's name?

LF:

Sammy.

KL:

Sammy. Do they get along?

LF:

Yes. Sammy's more interested in Odie than Odie is in Sammy.

[O snorts and starts to paw at Sammy]

KL:

Wow, they're having a little thing... Um, before the phone rang you were talking a little bit about Hindemith, and I heard some stories about when you were first in Hindemith's studio. [O growls at Sammy] Do you have any other kind of stories about your studies with Hindemith? [O growls]

LF:

I don't know right now, I can't think what I said before, and what I didn't...

KL:

Well, I read that Koussevitzky wrote Paul Hindemith a letter saying...

LF:

Oh that's right. [KL laughs] That's right. I can't... eh-h. Hindemith wrote a letter to Koussevitzky, (KL: Yes) saying I can't teach Lukas (KL: Oh, the other way), because he wants to know, but doesn't want to follow. (KL: Yeah.) He showed me that, he said, "That's wonderful. That's what I want my students to do – to want to know and not to follow, to go their own path. (KL: Uh-huh) I'll make him take you back." (KL laughs) And [indistinct] and then he and I became friends.

KL:

Do you know if Leonard Bernstein had any contact as you did with Hindemith (LF: No) at Tanglewood?

LF:

No, very little with Hindemith. I studied with him but he didn't.

KL:

Uh-huh. So, then Bernstein was just studying [telephone rings] conducting then.

LF:

Yes. [Telephone continues to ring]

LF:

Again, I'm sorry.

KL:

Oh no, it's not a problem.

[LF answers the phone]

...

LF:

That was my wife.

KL:

Uh-huh. Yes, I believe I spoke with her on the phone yesterday, just to confirm today's meeting... So, uh, Leonard Bernstein, then, he just basically studied conducting with Koussevitzky at Tanglewood, then.

LF:

Yes composition teachers like, I think Piston was his teacher, if I'm not mistaken. Right?

KL:

At Harvard, yeah.

[Pause]

KL:

But was he still... You mentioned that you would play pieces, play your own pieces for each other. [LF: indistinct] So he was still composing then, even though he was mainly there as a conducting student.

LF:

He was always composing.

KL:

He was always...huh.

LF:

Very busy person.

KL:

Yeah, it really seems like it.

LF:

I wanted to show you the photograph.

KL:

Oh, I'd love to see it.

LF:

Yeah.

[LF walks slowly over to another room. KL expects that LF will bring the photograph over to the interview area and waits.]

LF:

It's here.

KL:

Oh, I can go there. Yup.

O:

[Barks loudly. Follows KL to another room]

KL:

Oh. That's a great picture. [Faintly]

LF:

[Indistinct]

KL:

Very symmetrical.

[The picture is of Foss and Bernstein playing two upright pianos opposite each other. (Piano backs are lined up) Their wives are standing next to LF and LB, respectively – turning pages. The picture is mounted on a narrow strip of wall in a very small nook]¹

KL:

Do you remember when that photograph was taken?

LF:

Must have been around 1944. (KL: Oh, okay.) Maybe earlier, maybe 1940.

KL:

Uh-hum. So, probably in Boston.

LF:

No, Tanglewood.

KL:

Oh Tanglewood. That is at Tanglewood. (LF: Yes)

¹ Unfortunately, I was unable to take a picture of this...although I suspect the same photograph could be in the Leonard Bernstein LOC archives.

KL:

Did Maestro Koussevitzky ever talk about his vision for Tanglewood, as a kind of educational sort of place for...?

LF:

I'm sure he talked about it, but I don't remember what he said.

KL:

Okay... So I think that's also--

LF:

By the way, Lenny and I saw each other very rarely in Boston because I wasn't that much in Boston.

KL:

Oh, okay... So, did you see him a lot in New York, then?

LF:

Yes, mostly.

KL:

I see. So then, after those Tanglewood years then, you kind of didn't see each other that much.

LF:

We saw each other quite a bit in New York. (KL: Oh, okay) He lived in New York too (KL: Right, right)

KL:

From 1943 or so on. (LF: Yeah)

KL:

Yeah. So how many years did you live in Boston? Do you remember?

LF:

Seven years.

KL:

And where did you live? Did you live in the city or--

LF:

In the city.

KL:

What did you think of Boston?

LF:

I like it. I still go to Boston to teach. (KL: Uh-huh) I went there for 12 years; I've been teaching at Boston University.

KL:

Uh-huh. And I heard that you were in Boston just a couple days ago.

LF:

Yes. [KL laughs] You're well informed.

KL:

Yeah, well Marc told me about that.

LF:

Marc who?

KL:

Marc – the man who called you about our project, and whose wife just had a baby, yeah... Were you at Boston University?

LF:

Exactly.

KL:

And so, do you teach composition or (LF: Yes) conducting?

LF:

Composition.

KL:

Composition, I see. Um--

LF:

But now I don't teach much. (KL: Uh-hum) I have 12 years off. Weekly teaching, but that's over now. (KL: Uh-huh)

KL:

Did you ever have students just come here for lessons? [O pants audibly]

LF:

Occasionally, but that's rare. But occasionally.

KL:

Um... let's see.... [Pause] Raphael Hillyer mentioned to us when he was at Tanglewood that first year in 1940, he shared a room with Leonard Bernstein (LF: Oh, he did?) and Harold Shapero, and I can't recall their names. But they were all in the same room together. (LF: Okay) And he recalled that in Leonard's spare moments he would kind of wander around and go to the restaurants in the area and find these restaurants that had pianos in them. And he would go and then sit at the piano and just kind of improvise. And so, Raphael went along on some of those trips. [O runs around a bit]

LF:

I don't know about that – I never experienced that.

KL:

Uh-huh... You probably were busy studying.

LF:

Lenny playing at restaurants – I've never seen that.

KL:

Uh-huh [laughs]. Did you ever just see him play jazz or improvise on the piano?

LF:

Yes, at parties or so.

KL:

And what was that like?

LF:

Well, he was very good at it. Of course I played his music a lot on the piano too. *The Age of Anxiety*, I recorded (KL: Yes) with him conducting

KL:

Mm-hmm... And uh, I mean, you've done so many different kinds of things... You're a composer, a conductor and a pianist--

LF:

So did Lenny.

KL:

Yeah, [laughs] right... And you also studied with some of the same teachers and so forth... What do you think personally you received from Maestro Koussevitzky? Was it the passion for music that left most of an impression on you?

LF:

I think so.

KL:

And what about Maestro Reiner?

LF:

Well, in that case, it was more the technique. (KL: Uh-huh). He was very technical.

KL:

And they used different kinds of batons, didn't they?

LF:

Yes.

KL:

I can't recall. So who was the one who used the longer one? Is that--

LF:

Reiner.

KL:

Reiner. And what was that for? Just his personal preference or to maybe delineate the beat more or - ?

LF:

Well, Reiner was shorter for Koussevitzky. Maybe that's why.

KL:

Oh really? So he had to have a big stick? [Laughs]

LF:

Maybe, I don't know.

KL:

So then you had to switch styles when you went to Tanglewood, or adapt to--

LF:

A little bit. Mainly you had to do your work, other than that it's adapt.

KL:

I see. So, your own style of conducting then, would you say it's influenced by both teachers and others as well?

LF:

Just those two.

KL:

Uh-huh... And anything else that you've added that's different?

LF:

I'm not sure so, but I don't know. I'm not my own connoisseur.

KL:

Uh-huh. [Laughs]... I wanted to ask about the *Rite of Spring*. I know that there was a revision or a rebarring of the *Danse Sacrale*, the last one – and that was prepared by Slonimsky. And did you ever see that orchestral score that was all switched over to 3/8?

LF:

I don't think Slonimsky ever showed it to me. (KL: Oh) He was a good friend of mine, but he didn't show it to me. I conducted that piece a lot. (KL: Right) I was a good friend of Slonimsky's.

KL:

Uh-huh... And so I take it that you just used the original.

LF:

Yes.

KL:

Uh-huh... But Maestro Koussevitzky preferred to use the version as prepared by Slonimsky, right?

LF:

I'm interested to hear that. I didn't know that.

KL:

Yeah, I read somewhere that that last movement that has so many different changes you know, 3/8, 5/8, whatnot – it keeps changing constantly. He preferred to read that all in 3/8. So he...Slonimsky helped him by rebarring everything. And so, he would conduct off of this score. And my research partner and I – Marc – we went to the Boston Public Library the other day to look at the Koussevitzky collection which is housed there. And what we found was the four-hand version rebarred. One was considerably more marked than the other. But just the piano versions. And we couldn't find the orchestral score, so we were wondering – who has that? [Laughs] And who saw that, you know. But you never encountered it, so...

[Long pause]

Do you like conducting *Rite of Spring*?

LF:

Yes. Very much. Stravinsky was my favorite modern composer.

KL:

And is there a particular era of Stravinsky that you find most appealing to you? 'Cause he went through many phases of...

LF:

I would say from the *Rite of Spring* on to the later works. (KL: Uh-hum) The early works are a little less interesting, but they are also good. (KL: Uh-hum) *Petrushka* is wonderful. (KL: Right) but it's not as original as *Rite of Spring*. (KL: Uh-hum)

KL:

Did you ever see Maestro Koussevitzky conduct *Rite of Spring*?

LF:

I don't remember that, but I'm sure I saw.

KL:

Might that have been your first time seeing it conducted?

LF:

I don't know when the first time I saw *Rite of Spring* was. I can't remember now. (KL: Uh-hum) Toscanini or [indistinct]? I have no idea. (KL: Uh-hum) My memory's not so good.

KL:

Sure, well my memory's not so good, either. [Laughs]

KL:

...We were just trying to figure out what happened to that score, and if other conductors used that score to rehearse from or conduct from. Apparently, somewhere in the literature, it says that Bernstein ran into Slonimsky one time and said, "Oh, I used that score, or I've seen that score and, you know, it's pretty good." [Laughs] So, but we're not exactly sure where it is... Did you ever hear Maestro Koussevitzky conduct Mahler symphonies in Boston?

LF:

Yes.

KL:

And that must have been quite phenomenal. What...

LF:

Yes, in those days I was not such a Mahler fan as I am now. (KL: Oh, I see.) In those days I was not that interested in Mahler.

KL:

Uh-hum... And what were his interpretations of Mahler like? Do you remember, do you recall?

LF:

Not particularly. (KL: Uh-hum) I remember [indistinct]...

KL:

And when did you start liking Mahler more?

LF:

Probably when I was forty. (KL: Okay).

KL:

And did you conduct many Mahler symphonies?

LF:

Quite a few. (KL: Uh-hum)

KL:

And what is your fa – if you could say a favorite one, which one would it be?

LF:

Four or nine.

KL:

Four or nine.

KL:

Ok. Did you ever see Maestro Mitropoulos conduct?

LF:

Yes

KL:

In Boston, or in--

LF:

New York.

KL:

In New York. Ok. See, I guess you weren't here in...I was thinking in terms of Boston. Yeah, I think that it's mentioned somewhere that Bernstein saw Mitropolous conduct in Boston, and that made quite an impression on him. This was when he was at Harvard. And we were just trying, my research partner and I, were trying to figure out or understand more about the interpretation of Mahler by Bernstein's teachers and how that might have influenced Bernstein later when he became kind of--

LF:

I don't think Bernstein needed to have somebody to show him how to interpret something. (KL: No) He can do that himself (KL: Uh-hum). Mitropoulos was amazing in terms of his memory. He could do everything from memory. (KL: Uh-hum) It was amazing but...[telephone rings]

[LF is on the phone briefly]

[Tape ends – KL flips tape]

[Sammy the cat meanders towards KL]

...

KL:

Oh, he slipped out here.

LF:

She likes you.

KL:

Oh. [laughs]

LF:

[Odie proceeds to lick LF] He licks me all the time. (KL: Yeah?) He doesn't have a licker license [KL: laughter]

KL:

No he doesn't. But he manages to get away with it.

[O pants]

KL:

I listened to a recording of you speaking with Leon Kirschner at Harvard (LF: Yeah) in '88, 1988. (LF: Yeah) And it was a very interesting conversation you had. You mentioned that Aaron Copland would encourage a lot of his students, or I guess, people that he was mentoring, to write American music. And do you think, well, I mean, he must have said that to you, for you to say something...

LF:

Well, I didn't need him to say it because I did it anyway.

KL:

You did it anyway, uh-huh.

LF:

Because I came to discover America, because of Aaron Copland's music. (KL: oh really?) So it has a huge influence on me.

KL:

Uh-hum... I mean if you could say what was kinda quintessential about Aaron Copland's work, what would it be? That thing that inspired you?

LF:

American flavor.

KL:

Flavor?

LF:

An open air sound. (KL: Uh-hum)

[Pause]

KL:

So, when did you first meet Aaron Copland? [O barks and scampers around]

LF:

When I was 16, the year after I came to America.

KL:

Oh, okay... And that must have been quite a moment for you.

LF:

It was exciting.

KL:

Did you like, do you remember what the meeting was like? Were you playing something for him or...?

LF:

I showed him my music. (KL: Uh-hum)... He was a good friend, a good mentor. (KL: Uh-hum) And we traveled together to Russia.

KL:

Right, uh-huh. And was that your first time in Russia? (LF: Yeah) Was it a tour? Or were you based in Moscow?

LF:

We were based in, mostly in Petersburg, (KL: Oh, okay) but it was a tour, and we conducted our own music as well as other music, American music on that tour...

KL:

Uh-hum... Did you conduct your own music?

LF:

Also -

KL:

Did you conduct any of Leonard Bernstein's music at that, during that tour?

LF:

I think so, but I'm not sure, 100% sure, but probably did. I'm not sure now (KL: Uh-hum) what I conducted.

KL:

Sure... And what was the reception like in Russia? In St. Petersburg?

LF:

Very good. (KL: Uh-hum) I met Shostakovich over at his house. [KL: Oh my gosh] It was very good – a very interesting trip.

KL:

Yeah... I studied at St. Petersburg Conservatory for about a month.

LF:

You did. So, you speak Russian.

KL:

Oh, goodness no. [Laughs] I know like two words. I was very young when

I went, so that was when I was focusing on piano. And then after my undergraduate degree I went into ethnomusicology. (LF: I see)

LF:

Do you still play the piano?

KL:

No, I gave it up.

LF:

That's too bad.

KL:

I know. So, I'm learning a lot of other instruments, like Korean instruments.

LF:

Good.

[O makes some rumbling sound around the minidisc]

KL:

Yeah.

[Pause]

KL:

Well, I think that might be about it.

LF:

Good.

KL:

Is there anything else you'd like to add, for us?

LF:

I can't think of anything.

KL:

Okay. I will go ahead and... I can give this to you so (LF: Thank you) you can have that for your reference. And if you would like, I can also show you the program for the festival.

LF:

Good.

[Pause]

KL:

So, some of the pieces that are programmed are pretty interesting, I think. There's for instance, a piece by Solomon Braslavsky. I don't know if Bernstein ever mentioned him to you?

LF:

I don't think so.

KL:

Yeah, he was the musical director at the temple that the Bernstein family used to go to. And I guess he was a great musical influence for him and he had studied in Vienna, – but then when he became the music director of this Congregation Mishkan Tefila in Boston, he was kind of fusing his knowledge of classical music with cantorial, like Jewish cantorial music...so yeah, this'll be interesting to see this.

LF:

So this festival is coming up

KL:

Yeah., it's in October. At Harvard.

LF:

I hope I can see some of it.

KL:

Yeah, definitely, I will mention to Professor Oja...maybe we can arrange something special for you, considering that you knew Leonard Bernstein so well and for so long. It would be great to have you at the festival and maybe you could speak, or depending on your schedule--

LF:

It's called the Bernstein festival?

KL:

Yeah. And Carol Oja, she said that she was on a panel on American composers with you, a pre-panel or something.

LF:

Who was that?

KL:

Carol Oja

LF:

Carol Oja.

KL:

...a couple years ago... And then Judith Clurman, who's the director of the

Julliard Chorus, I believe. So they have gone to great trouble to program these works... Oh, and then also part of our class was just interviewing...yeah, we interviewed Harold Shapero and Sid Ramin, who was a childhood friend of Leonard Bernstein's. So that a lot of the interviews are actually built into the class, so the class as a whole prepares for--

LF:

Shapero was a best friend of mine (KL: Uh-hum) But I haven't seen him in years.

KL:

Oh! Well he's just in Boston, you could have seen him—

LF:

We could have, but we somehow didn't get together anymore.

KL:

Ohhh. So you met him too, probably at Tanglewood that first year 1940... And just at the beginning of March, we interviewed Burton Bernstein and Jamie and Nina. So that was pretty neat. They had a lot to say.

LF:

Yeah, sure.

KL:

So it would be wonderful if you could come, certainly the professors would be very happy to make arrangements for you to attend.

LF:

Thank you.

KL:

Thank you very much. Thank you so much for letting me come here and bother you with all these questions.

LF:

[Indistinct] You haven't been bothering at all. It's been fun.

KL:

So I will go ahead and give you this form...Would you like me to just, explain it--

LF:

Am I supposed to sign something?

KL:

Yeah, so this just explains what we'll be doing with the recording. And there are three choices, you can either give permission for this to be used in any

context, or this one – request that my identity be kept anonymous, or the third option is “to be used, but request that you contact me for permission to cite materials for public presentation or publication.

LF:

Which one do you want me to sign?

KL:

Oh, I’m not going to say. It’s all up to you. Whatever you feel most comfortable with.

[Pause]

LF:

I think any context is okay. (KL: Okay)

[Long pause]

KL:

Okay, great. So this one will be for you. And then, yeah, I’ll just set this over here. And then if you could just fill this out for our class.

LF:

Why don’t you take this one?

KL:

Oh, I’ll take this one. Okay.

LF:

I didn’t put a date in it. Is that bad?

KL:

No, I can fill in the date. That’s not a big deal. Today, is what, the 30th?
Yeah.

[O whimpers]

KL:

[Says softly] The pen doesn’t work very well.

LF:

Take this one [hands over pen]

KL:

Oh okay. Thanks.

LF:

It’s yours, isn’t it?

KL:

Oh yeah.

LF:

So keep it.

KL:

Oh I'll need that. [Motions to folder] Those are my directions to get back.
Thank you.

[Cassette recorder turned off]

[O whimpers loudly now]

LF:

Yes, my doggy I know you want food.

KL:

Yeah, it's about time to eat... So, it seems like you're still very busy. (LF:
yeah)

Teaching, (LF: everything) just having meetings and talking--

LF:

I'm less busy conducting than I used to be.

KL:

Uh-huh, yeah

[O proceeds to whimper, whine and bark loudly]

LF:

Yes, doggy, I'll take you out.

-FIN-