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Leonard Bernstein was born in Lawrence Massachusetts in 1918. He became the most famous American-born and American-trained composer, conductor, and pianist, ever. Lenny went to Boston Latin school and then to Harvard to study music. Bernstein performed a famous piano piece written by Aaron Copland at a Boston party. (Lenny loved parties.....)Unknown by Lenny, Aaron Copland was at the party, heard him play, and they became fast friends. Leonard Bernstein names Aaron Copland as his only real composition teacher.

He studied conducting with the famous teachers at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia and began a successful career.



(www.leonard Bernstein.com)



(www.bach-cantatas.com)

He continued studying at Tanglewood and became the assistant conductor of the New York Philharmonic. In an interesting twist of fate, the principal conductor became ill on the day of a nationally televised performance and Leonard stepped in at the last minute. The press glamorized and praised him and he was instantly famous. He conducted numerous orchestras around the country and even in Europe after the end of WWII.

For many years, Leonard Bernstein had his own television show, called, *The Young People's Concerts*. All of America and the world grew to know and love him through these shows aimed at teaching classical music to children. Leonard Bernstein composed musicals, ballets, symphonies and more. His most famous musical was a collaboration with Stephen Sondheim (who also wrote Sweeney Todd and Into the Woods among others.) This famous musical was an American retelling of Romeo and Juliet, a musical set in the gang wars of New York. **West Side Story** is a musical still produced and loved by audiences worldwide.



(latimesblogs.latimes.com)

Leonard was the most famous conductor and composer in the world until his death in 1990.