



# SPHERES OF A GENIUS. HONORING LEONARD BERNSTEIN

A jazz composition competition by JAM MUSIC LAB in cooperation with ORF Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra

## Call for Scores / Composition Competition

### Spheres of a Genius 2020 – Honoring Leonard Bernstein

A jazz composition competition by JAM MUSIC LAB University (JMLU) in cooperation with the ORF Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra (RSO).

The prize-winning work will be premiered on October 8th, 2021 in the Grand Hall of the Konzerthaus Vienna under the direction of chief conductor Marin Alsop. The concert will be recorded by ORF and broadcasted on the Ö1 program. RSO and JMLU are continuing their first collaboration from 2017/18. The composition competition "Spheres of a Genius" was based on the 100th birthday of the jazz composer and pianist Thelonious Monk.

This time "Spheres of a Genius" pays tribute to Leonard Bernstein.

### Idea and outline of the competition

As an artist, Bernstein built bridges in Vienna, and in great cities everywhere. His intelligence, charm, wit, and unimpeachable musical instincts brought people together – musicians and music lovers alike. He mediated between different musical worlds - borrowing freely from contemporary styles like jazz, blues and popular music - then shaped a "classical" sound that became his signature.

Because of his Jewish background, Bernstein held ambivalent views towards Vienna. He forged positive experiences with artists and orchestras, ever mindful of the city's history with National Socialism.

The task of the composition competition relates to the role of Leonard Bernstein as a composer. The winning piece shall succeed in transferring the impulses given by Bernstein towards composed music beyond stylistic barriers into a demanding musical language of the 21st century and shall especially consider the ways in which Bernstein discussed jazz in the concert hall and included jazz elements in his own works.

### The aim of the contest

The composition competition relates to the role of Leonard Bernstein as a composer.

Competitors should aim to create music that reflects the spirit of Leonard Bernstein, his innovation, originality and expressiveness. Special consideration should be given Bernstein's views on reaching across stylistic borders, expanding the language through the use of jazz elements.

The call directs composers to create work that is original, and not quoting from Bernstein. The winning composition must bare evidence of inspiration, rather than imitation."



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## Ensemble and instrumentation

The composition must not exceed 12 minutes.

The orchestral composition must not exceed the following instrumentation

**Orchestra:** 3333 – 4331 – hf – tmp – orchestral percussion (3) – Strings 14-12-10-8-6.

*Woodwinds (3333):* 3 flutes (inc. opt. Piccolo), 3 oboes / cor anglais, 3 clarinets (inc. bass clarinet), 2 bassoons, 1 contrabassoon

*Brass (4331):* 4 horns (F), 3 trumpets, 3 trombones (inc. bass trombone), 1 tuba

*Harp (1)*

*Timpani (1)*

*Orchestral Percussion (3):* marimba, vibraphone etc., to be allocated freely

*Strings (14-12-10-8-6):* 14 first violins, 12 second violins, 10 violas, 8 celli, 6 double basses

Soloists are not provided. The composer will provide the sheet music free of charge.

## Jury and selection process

### Marin Alsop

Principal Conductor and Artistic Director of ORF Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra (RSO)

### Christoph Becher

General Manager, ORF Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra

### Bill Dobbins

Jazzpianist, Composer, Professor of Jazz Studies and Contemporary Media at Eastman School of Music, University of Rochester

### Marcus Ratka

Composer, Rector of JAM MUSIC LAB, Private University for Jazz and Popular Music, Vienna

The decision of the jury will be announced in writing by e-mail one month after the final submission deadline of phase 2.

## Prizes

**1st prize:** The winning composition will be premiered by the ORF Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra in the Grand Hall of the Konzerthaus Vienna on October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021 and broadcasted as part of the Ö1 radio program. The prize money is 5,000 EUR.

**2<sup>nd</sup> prize:** 3,000 EUR

**3<sup>rd</sup> prize:** 2,000 EUR



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## Submission mode and selection procedure

The competition will be carried out in two evaluation runs

### Phase 1 - Sketch and segment

Phase 1 consists of the submission of a meaningful sketch of the entire work as well as a fully elaborated segment of the score with a duration of 1.5 to 2 minutes.

The following components are required for submission:

- fully completed online application form to be found at [www.spheresofagenius](http://www.spheresofagenius)

Additionally, via e-mail to [bernstein@jammusiclab.com](mailto:bernstein@jammusiclab.com)

- a meaningful sketch of the entire work
- a fully completed segment of the score, duration 1,5-2min
- a written abstract of the idea behind the composition, specifics and concepts honoring the guidelines of the competition
- optionally an audio file (Sibelius, Finale etc)
- CV
- a portrait photograph, free to use for promotion purposes related to this competition

The deadline for submission of Phase 1 is **March 20<sup>th</sup> 2021**

3 finalists are selected, who we then invite to continue on to Phase 2.

### Phase 2 - Entire composition

Phase 2 consists of the submission of the entire composition in the range of 10 to a maximum of 12 minutes.

**Deadline for submission is June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2021**

### Other provisions for submission

The competition is international and without age limitation.

All persons who have submitted full application documents in due time are entitled to participate.

The submitted work may not have any prior performances.

Any legal process is excluded.

From now on we recommend that all applicants announce their intended participation via [bernstein@jammusiclab.com](mailto:bernstein@jammusiclab.com)

Please include contact details in order to receive further updates regarding the competition procedure.

The submission documents must be submitted electronically to: [bernstein@jammusiclab.com](mailto:bernstein@jammusiclab.com)