

WEST SIDE STORY

Bernardi-Fumagalli-Gattone trio

The history of the American musical has always been intertwined with that of jazz music: names such as Gershwin, Porter, Berlin have given lifeblood and precious to the African American repertoire, especially with their production for musical theater.

Leonard Bernstein seems, at first, to be an exception, as he appears in the *jazz musician's songbook* less frequently than the aforementioned colleagues. Yet he left us absolute theatrical masterpieces, full of engaging and touching arias. Among these, *West Side Story* definitely stands out, a poetic and poignant elaboration in a modern key of the tragic love story of Romeo and Juliet.

The trio has set its repertoire on the most famous and evocative songs of that particular musical: *Maria, America, Tonight, Cool, Somewhere* have, in fact, become unforgettable pieces that dot Bernstein's sound universe.

The basic idea was, therefore, to propose these musics with the intention of presenting them as real standard pieces with, each, a precise stylistic identity, while always maintaining the flavor and atmosphere of the original music of the great American composer.

To maintain the right atmosphere of a spontaneous and brilliant session, we decided to make the recording live in the studio and in a single day, without any *overdub*. This allowed us to take advantage of the sophisticated equipment supplied to The Forward Studios and to engrave with DSD quality.

Technical notes:

DSD (Direct Stream Digital) is a high-fidelity digital format, created in collaboration with Sony and Philips. Unlike normal PCM formats (e.g. CD, encoded with a sample rate of 44.1 kHz and a bitrate of 16 bits), it uses very high sampling rates (2.8 MHz for DSD64, 5.6 MHz for DSD128, 11.2 MHz for DSD256 etc.), stored as a 1-bit delta-sigma modulated signal. This different way of digitizing the original analog signal leads to a much higher fidelity in reproducing the source material.

The recording of the disc was carried out with a Neve 88R analog bench and Merging Technologies Pyramix system at the frequency of 5.6 MHz (DSD128); the mixes, like the recording, were made

on the Neve 88R bench and then acquired again on the Merging Technologies Pyramix system at the frequency of 5.6 MHz (DSD128). The mastering was carried out by reproducing the mixes from the Merging Technologies Pyramix system at the frequency of 5.6 MHz (DSD128), working it in the complete analog domain and reacquired in the same system, at the frequency of 5.6 MHz (DSD128).

CREDITS:

Paolo Bernardi: piano, arrangements, music*

Renato Gattone: double bass, arrangements, music+

Pietro Fumagalli: drums, arrangements

All music is by Leonard Bernstein, unless otherwise stated.

Prologue

Could be

Hey what's up

Tonight

America

Maria

Maria and Tony*

Cool

One hand, one heart

I feel pretty

Somewhere

Leo's dream*+

Recorded on November 2, 2020 at Forward Studios in Grottaferrata.

We want to thank the many friends who allowed us to realize this project: first of all, Massimo Scarparo; then Andrea Secchi, sound engineer and Carmine Simone, mastering, who gave us their knowledge in using their sophisticated equipment; Walter Impicciatore for his sensitivity in creating a perfect cover; Paolo Cencioni for the magnificent photos; Laura Bianconi for the effective Translation into English of our ideas; Caterina Proietti and Paolo Baiocco, who a few years ago involved us in their show *Our Side Story* to adapt Bernstein's music... everything was born there!

The history of American musicals has always been connected with jazz music: musicians like Gershwin, Porter, Berlin gave vital and precious lymph to the African American musical repertoire with their works and musical theatricality.

At first, Leonard Bernstein seems to be an exception, because he does not appear in jazz

songbooks as often as the above-mentioned colleagues.

Nevertheless, he left some absolute masterpieces, full of engaging and touching arias. Among them, *West Side Story* decisively stands out as a poetical and heartbreaking modern revision of Romeo and Juliet. The BGF trio based their repertoire on the most famous and evocative songs of such a precious musical: *Maria, America, Tonight Cool, Somewhere* are unforgettable songs of Bernstein's musical world.

The tunes are played as jazz standards, but always with their own characteristic atmospheres.

All tracks were recorded live in studio with DSD technology and no overdubs.

Technical notes:

DSD (Direct Stream Digital) is a Hi-Fi digital form, by Sony-Philips.

Differently from the normal PCM formats (for example that of CDs, coded with 44.1 kHz sample rate and 16-bit bitrate), it uses very high sample rates, filed as delta-sigma modulating signal (2.8 MHz for DSD64, 5.6 MHz for DSD128, 11.2 MHz for DSD256, etc.). By using this technology to digitalize the original analog message, a much higher definition of the source material can be achieved.

Recording and mixing were made with Neve 88R analog mixer and imported on Merging Technologies Pyramix system with 5.6 MHz (DSD128) frequency, processed with a complete analog domain and then imported in the same 5.6 MHz (DSD128) frequency system.