

# Elegy, from August 4, 1964

## Steven Stucky

**Born:** November 7, 1949, in Hutchinson, Kansas

**Died:** February 3, 2016, in Ithaca, New York

**Work composed:** 2008

**World premiere:** September 18, 2008, in Dallas, Texas, by the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, Jaap van Zweden, conductor

**New York Philharmonic premiere:** January 24, 2019, Jaap van Zweden, conductor

of Defense Robert] McNamara are beginning to talk about bombing. ... The principal motive from the *Elegy* eventually became the main motive of the whole oratorio once I composed the rest of the music.

Although he was born and raised in Massachusetts, **Leonard Bernstein** today is thought of as a quintessential New Yorker. The Philharmonic’s Music Director from 1958 through 1969, he was a Renaissance man of 20th-century music: a stellar

conductor, composer, and pianist, as well as an educator who inspired a generation of music lovers when the Philharmonic Young People’s Concerts that he conducted became a television sensation. His compositions range from symphonies in the concert hall tradition to stage works like his beloved Broadway hit *West Side Story*.

His comic operetta **Candide** preceded that show by a year. A fantasy based on the novella by the 18th-century author Voltaire, it opens with an invigorating **Overture** that foreshadows the operetta’s humor. Voltaire’s tale revolves around the wide-eyed hero, Candide, whose trips to distant points of the globe invariably turn into dismal misadventures, much though he may be assured by his idealistic tutor that everything is for the best. The novella was written as a charming but persuasive rebuttal to the German philosopher Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibnitz’s metaphysical assertion that “All is for the best in the best of all possible worlds.” Voltaire countered that many things have

## Did You Know?

**MISSING CALL FBI**

THE FBI IS SEEKING INFORMATION CONCERNING THE DISAPPEARANCE AT PHILADELPHIA, MISSISSIPPI OF THESE THREE INDIVIDUALS ON JUNE 21, 1964. EXTENSIVE INVESTIGATION IS BEING CONDUCTED TO LOCATE GOODMAN, CHANEY, AND SCHWERNER, WHO ARE DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:

ANDREW GOODMAN	JAMES EARL CHANEY	MICHAEL HENRY SCHWERNER
AGE: 24	AGE: 34	AGE: 24
RACE: White	RACE: Black	RACE: White
DOB: November 17, 1940	DOB: May 21, 1930	DOB: November 4, 1940
POB: New York City	POB: Memphis, Tennessee	POB: New York City
HEIGHT: 5'10"	HEIGHT: 5'11"	HEIGHT: 5'11"
WEIGHT: 160 lbs.	WEIGHT: 175 lbs. (160 lbs.)	WEIGHT: 170 lbs. (160 lbs.)
HAIR: Dark Brown wavy	HAIR: Black	HAIR: Brown
EYES: Brown	EYES: Black	EYES: Blue
TEETH: Straight	TEETH: None missing	TEETH: None missing
SCAR(S): None	SCAR(S): Scar on left forehead about 1/2 in.	SCAR(S): None

Should you have or in the future receive any information concerning the whereabouts of these individuals, you are requested to notify me or the nearest office of the FBI. Telephone number is listed below.

DIRECTOR  
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION  
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20535

- In June 1964, New Yorkers Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner traveled to Mississippi for the Freedom Summer initiative, which aimed to register as many African American voters as possible in the state, where voter suppression efforts had kept them from the polls. They, and James Chaney of Mississippi, were abducted and killed by members of the Ku Klux Klan.
- The Gulf of Tonkin incident involved gunfire between the USS Maddox and North Vietnamese torpedo boats on August 2, 1964. Reports of a second incident on August 4 (later proven to be false) led to the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, which gave President Johnson authority to use military force in Southeast Asia.

FBI missing poster from 1964

nothing good about them, like violence, shipwrecks, or the Spanish Inquisition.

In its initial Broadway run, in 1956–57, *Candide* played for 73 performances — hardly a stunning success — and Bernstein would go on to alter the piece, again and again, for later revivals. Through all of the show’s transformations, the rollicking Overture remained essentially untouched.

Born in Brooklyn, **Aaron Copland** polished his composing technique in France but returned home to establish what became recognized as a profoundly American sound, a musical language rich in folk inflections and wide-open harmonies that proved irresistible to imitators.

His 1953 opera *The Tender Land* is a fine example of the lyrical aspect of Copland’s Americana. Set in the 1930s, it tells the tale of Laurie, a teenager who is about to graduate from high school and yearns for experiences beyond her life on a farm in the nation’s heartland. The first of the opera’s three acts concludes with *The Promise of Living*, in which Laurie’s family extolls the virtues of hard work

## Did You Know?

- Less than two months before *Candide’s* Broadway opening, **Bernstein** was named Co-Principal Conductor of the New York Philharmonic, alongside Dimitri Mitropoulos.
- The Overture was heard in the Philharmonic’s historic 2008 performance in North Korea, when it was played without a conductor, a tradition first adopted in tribute to Bernstein after his death.

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and neighborly friendship. This expanse has found more success than the opera overall, and it is often performed in a choral setting the composer prepared, with multiple voices rendering each line.

Copland’s *Rodeo* was also a stage work — a ballet choreographed by Agnes de Mille, who said:

It is not an epic, or the story of pioneer conquest. It builds no empires. ... There are never more than a very few people on the stage at a time ... one must be always conscious of the enormous land on which these people live and of their proud loneliness.

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## Overture to *Candide*

### Leonard Bernstein

**Born:** August 25, 1918, in Lawrence, Massachusetts

**Died:** October 14, 1990, in New York City

**Work composed:** completed in August 1956; Hershy Kay assisted with the orchestration

**World premiere:** October 29, 1956, in the first preview of *Candide*, at the Colonial Theatre in Boston

**New York Philharmonic premiere:** January 26, 1957, Leonard Bernstein, conductor

**Most recent New York Philharmonic performance:** July 20, 2018, at Bravo! Vail in Colorado, Bramwell Tovey, conductor



Bernstein in the 1950s