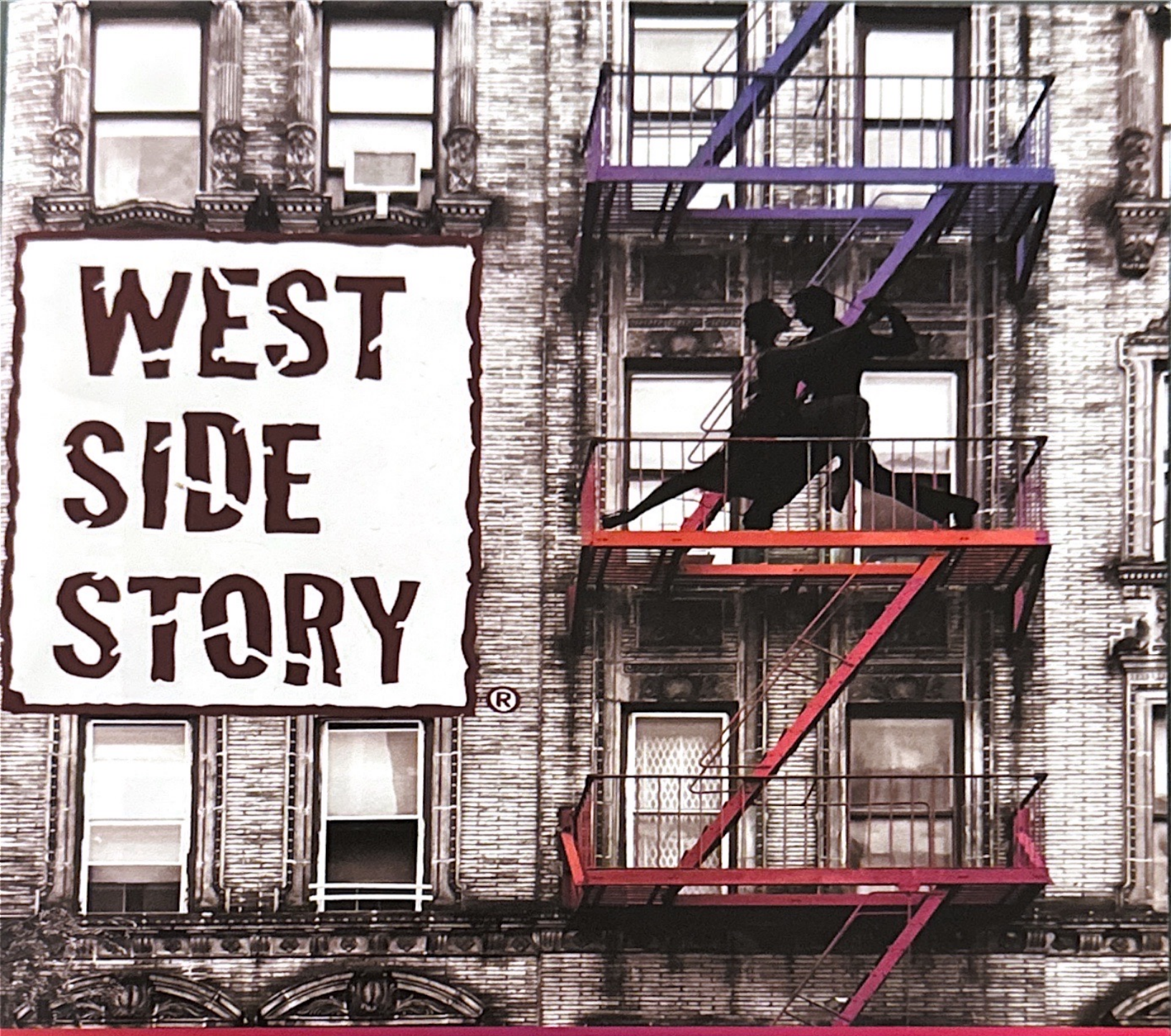


25/26
SEASON

West Side Story

SAT | APRIL 18, 2026

7:30 p.m. | Miller Auditorium

Kalamazoo
Symphony
Orchestra

Masterworks Series



Kalamazoo Symphony Musicians

Julian Kuerti
Music Director
Irving S. Gilmore Conductor's Chair

Raymond Harvey
Music Director Emeritus
Diane Robertson Chair

FIRST VIOLIN

Jun-Ching Lin
Concertmaster
Jane Rooks Ross & Barry Ross Chair

Stefan Hubenov*
Associate Concertmaster
James G. Westin Chair

Emelyn Bashour
Assistant Concertmaster
Preston & Barbara Parish Chair

Mark Portolese
In memory of Krishna Baraily

Marley Haller
Lewis & Sally Iversen Chair

Eleanor K. Pifer

Tigran Shiganyan

Matthew Musachio

Oleg Bezuglov

Jameson Cooper^

Janet Lyu

Yu Xin

Open Chair

Ying-Li Pan

For information about endowing an orchestra chair, contact Suzanne Day Weeldreyer, Vice President of Advancement, SWeeldreyer@KalamazooSymphony.com, 269.359.7004

SECOND VIOLIN

Lisa A. Williams*
Principal
Neill & Ruth Currie Chair

Hsin-Ju Yu
Assistant Principal

Nicholas Naegele‡

Temporarily Open Chair

Benita Barber

Cori Somers

Tatiana Zueva

Open Chair
Eric V. & Margaret Ann Brown Chair

Jean Roberts

Norma-Jean Forshey
Eberts Chair in Honor of Norma Jean Forshey

Dana Duncan-Davis‡

Fahad Awan

VIOLA

Arturo Ziraldo
Principal
Connable/Burdick/Rood Chair

Nicholas Jeffery*
Assistant Principal
William & Fiona Denny Chair

Nora R. Frisk

Sara Churchill

Open Chair

Rebecca Boelzner
Seaver Family Chair

David Beytas

Sava Velkoff

Kathy Connor

Jasper Zientek

CELLO

Igor Cetkovic*
Principal
Diether H. Haenicke Chair

Jinhyun Kim
Assistant Principal
Tomlinson Family Chair

Carol Bullock Russell
Anonymous chair in honor of the KSO's 100th

Calin Muresan

Elizabeth Start
Anonymous chair in honor of Grace Field

Brook Bennett

Jean Hatmaker
Nola Matthews Thole Chair

Allison Rich

Lisa Bressler

David Machavariani

DOUBLE BASS

Charles Ingrassia
Principal
Jerry Mason Chair

Victor Stahoviak
Assistant Principal

Open Chair

Frank Tramp

Brett Armstrong

Jason Niehoff

Noah Krzan
Dick & Kathie Tomlinson Chair

Open Chair



FLUTE

Yukie Ota
Principal
S.U.D. Parish Chair honoring David C. Parish

Nancy Rinaldi Williams
2nd/piccolo
Jim Westin Memorial Chair (flute)
Jacob C. & Naomi B. Stucki Memorial Chair (piccolo)

Jenny Robinson
3rd/piccolo

OBOE

Gabriel Renteria-Elyea*
Principal
Elizabeth Upjohn Mason Chair

Brad Smith
2nd/English Horn
Frizzo Allkins Family Chair

Maria Schneider

CLARINET

Open Chair*
Principal
Marge & Gerry Thomas Chair

Frank X. Silva

Garret Jones

BASSOON

William George
Principal
Norman & Doreen K. Bristol Chair

Alan Palider

Lauren Murphy
3rd/Contrabassoon

HORN

Paul Clifton
Principal
Dr. William H. & Melinda L. Scott Chair

Open Chair
Assistant/Utility
Don & Ann Parfet Chair

Lin Baird^

Margaret Hamilton

Tamara Kosinski‡

Alex Laskey^

TRUMPET

Scott Thornburg
Principal
Stephen Blackwood Chair in honor of Mrs. Geta Patterson

Scott Brickner
2nd/Assistant Principal
Mark Novitch Memorial Chair

Mike Brozick
In memory of Jay Wayne Heckler and son, Jay Scott Heckler

TROMBONE

Edward "Kip" Hickman*
Principal
Miller Family Chair

Leo Ernest Garcias Leite

Jack Noble
3rd/Bass Trombone

TUBA

Robert Whaley
Principal
Jacob C. & Naomi Bersch Stucki Chair

TIMPANI

Mark Guthrie*
Principal
Doris "Dori" Kunkle Chair

PERCUSSION

Kevin Kosnik
Principal
Little & Tyler Family Chair

Judy Moonert

Greg Secor

HARP

Anna Dunlap
Principal
Dorothy Smith Goodloe Chair

PIANO

Reiko Yamada
Principal
Lawrence Schlack Memorial Chair

WMU SCHOLARS

Guanqun Li, *violin*

Ian Berrington, *viola*

Charlie Mueller, *cello*

* Artist in Residence
‡ On Leave | ^ Temporary Appointment

Musician Roster for Tonight's Performance



Photo: Mark Rugnoski

MUSIC DIRECTOR

Julian Kuerti

Irving S. Gilmore Conductor's Chair

Canadian conductor Julian Kuerti has led major symphony orchestras and appeared in renowned opera houses and concert halls on five continents and enjoys close working relationships with many of the leading soloists and singers of today.

Kuerti is Music Director of the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra in Kalamazoo, Michigan, a position he has held since 2018. He has enjoyed a strong relationship with the National Symphony Orchestra of Peru, where he was appointed principal guest in 2019.

Kuerti's Asian and Australasian performances include appearances in Singapore and tours with the Sydney Symphony, the Malaysian Philharmonic, and a five concert tour with the New Zealand Symphony. He was described as the "Epitome of cool graciousness" by The New Zealand Herald for his interpretation of Berlioz's *Symphonie Fantastique.*

In Europe, Kuerti's guest engagements have brought him to the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Frankfurt Radio Symphony, and Stavanger Symphony of Norway on numerous occasions. He has also enjoyed concerts with the Vasteras Sinfonietta, Deustche Radio Symphony, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Aarhus Symphony, Kristiansand Symphony, Orchestre Philharmonique du Luxembourg, and RTE National Orchestra of Dublin.

In North America, Kuerti has appeared with all the major Canadian orchestras, and in the United States with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the symphonies of Houston, Dallas, Cincinnati, Seattle, New Jersey, Milwaukee, Atlanta, Utah and the St. Paul and Los Angeles chamber orchestras. Kuerti has enjoyed collaborations with soloists including Yo-Yo Ma, Leif Ove Andsnes, Leon Fleisher, Itzhak Perlman, Stephen Hough, Lynn Harrell and Peter Serkin.

Previous posts include Principal Guest Conductor of the Orchestre Métropolitain de Montreal and Principal Director of the Orquesta Sinfónica de Concepción in Chile. ■

Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra

SAT | APRIL 18, 2026 | 7:30 p.m. | Miller Auditorium
Julian Kuerti, Conductor
Chía Patiño, Stage Director
Erin Moore, Choreographer

WEST SIDE STORY

Based on a Conception of JEROME ROBBINS

Book by
ARTHUR LAURENTS

Music by
LEONARD BERNSTEIN

Lyrics by
STEPHEN SONDHEIM

Entire Original Production Directed and Choreographed by
JEROME ROBBINS

Originally Produced on Broadway by Robert E. Griffith and Harold S. Prince
By Arrangement with Roger L. Stevens

WEST SIDE STORY
Is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI).
All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI.
www.mtishows.com

ANY VIDEO AND/OR AUDIO RECORDING OF THIS PRODUCTION IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED.
This production contains a theatrical firearm, gunshots, loud noises, and fog.

Please join us in the Grand Tier lobby after the concert for **AfterWORDS,** a conversation with Maestro Kuerti and friends!

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Leonard Bernstein
BORN: 1918, Massachusetts
DIED: 1990, New York City
WORK COMPOSED: 1955–1957

Nearly 70 years after its premiere, *West Side Story* has become an American classic. Most of us can easily recall not only tunes but also lyrics to many of its songs. "Tonight," "Maria," "Somewhere," "I Feel Pretty","America" – all of them attest to the enduring appeal of Arthur Laurents' book, Stephen Sondheim's lyrics, and perhaps most of all, Leonard Bernstein's music.

Dancer and choreographer Jerome Robbins provided the germ for the idea that developed into *West Side Story.* As early as 1949, he approached Bernstein about adapting Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* tragedy to a modern setting, specifically in New York City. Before its eventual crystallization almost eight years later, the project underwent many changes: in geographic locale, the nature of the feud, the particulars of the plot. Dance was a constant through all these metamorphoses. Ballet and its contemporary sisters, modern dance and jazz dance, provided much of the emulsifier for the unlikely ingredients of Broadway musical theatre, mime, Shakespearean-derived drama and traditional opera, all of which comprise significant elements in *West Side Story.*

Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra

APPROXIMATE TIMINGS

ACT I	90 minutes
INTERMISSION	20 minutes
ACT II	45 minutes
TOTAL	2 hours, 35 minutes

The musical opens with a Prologue that is half-danced, half-mimed, thus setting the stage for the tension between two rival gangs. The hero Tony was previously in the Jets gang, but is trying to straighten out his life. Maria's older brother Bernardo leads the rival Sharks. Tony and Maria meet at a community dance that Tony's friend Riff – a Jet leader – persuades him to attend. Although the gym is neutral territory, Riff intends to challenge Bernardo to a fight (a rumble) for neighborhood control. At the dance, Tony and Maria lock eyes and are immediately smitten. Bernardo warns Tony to stay away from his sister. Later that night, however, Tony locates her fire escape, and the two declare their love.

Learning of the impending rumble between the two gangs, Maria implores Tony to prevent it. Tony's intervention fails, and Maria's brother Bernardo kills Riff. Enraged

by his friend's death, Tony kills Bernardo, barely escaping before police arrive at the scene.

In Act II, despite her grief and misery at her brother's death at Tony's hands, Maria agrees to run away with Tony. Bernardo's girlfriend Anita is at first incensed by Maria's involvement with Tony, but Maria convinces her to aid the lovers by delivering her message to Tony, who is hiding from the authorities with the Jets. At a local drugstore, however, a group of Sharks intimidates Anita, treating her abusively. In retaliation, she tells them – falsely– that Maria is dead.

Upon learning this distressing 'news,' a grief-stricken Tony emerges from hiding, roaming the streets in the hope that Maria's murderer will kill him as well. He learns that she is alive just before a Shark shoots him. Tony dies in Maria's arms. She lashes out at the rival gangs, calling them out for three senseless deaths. Because she now has a gun, she asserts, she too could kill, but she finds herself unable to shoot, and sinks down over Tony's body. For the moment, the violence will cease, leaving the outcome of the feud uncertain, but with the possibility of reconciliation.

Not surprisingly, this results in a score charged with vibrant rhythm and a panorama of instrumental color as varied as the teeming Upper West Side of New York City where the story takes place. Bernstein's vivid music captures the sleazy gym, the sweet oblivion of the lovers' first meeting, the raw danger of the rumble, and the surging passion and hatred that course through the story. All these elements lend the music immediacy and drama.

In addition to the immortal songs that grace this rich score, *West Side Story* is noteworthy for its instrumental numbers. The Prologue, Dance at the Gym (which features passages of mambo, cha-cha, and blues), the Rumble, and the ballet sequence all reflect the paramount importance of dance to *West Side Story*.

The instrumental segments also stimulated Bernstein's natural gift for orchestration. He took full advantage of symphonic resources at his disposal. In 1960, three years after *West Side Story* premiered, Bernstein combined these instrumental excerpts into an orchestral score for a New York Philharmonic fund-raising gala. That work, Symphonic Dances from *West Side Story* – entered the mainstream repertoire long before the songs became standard. The 1961 film version starring Natalie Wood, Richard Beymer, Russ Tamblyn, Rita Moreno, and George Chakiris, fast-tracked the popularity of many of the individual songs. They have been part of the great American song book ever since.

West Side Story broke barriers by transforming Shakespeare's 14th-century Verona to the gritty realism of 20th-century urban life. Elegant palaces were replaced by seedy tenements; a romantic balcony by a fire escape; noble families by ghetto dwellers in the nation's largest city. A family feud in the Italian aristocracy became tinged with racism in its transference to urban gang warfare. Yet the warm lyricism and underlying hope of Bernstein's more tender songs ("One Hand, One Heart," "Somewhere," "I Have a Love") softened those jagged edges, mitigating cruelty and hypocrisy in order to focus on the intensely human and heartfelt aspects of this timeless story. ■

—By Laurie Shulman © 2026

West Side Story



Chia Patiño

After ten years as Artistic and Executive Director of the Teatro Nacional Sucre in Quito, Ecuador, stage director and composer Chia Patiño returned to the United States, where she is a stage director and professor at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.

A stage director of various operas, her recent projects include *The Daughter of the Regiment* for Opera Colorado, *La Traviata* for Florida Grand Opera, *Suite* Española 1 and 2 for Houston Grand Opera, *Orpheus & Eurydice* for Seattle Opera and *Florencia en el Amazonas* for Opera Tenerife. Committed to new works, she is directing *Ñomongetá* by Diego Sánchez Haase (the only opera in Guaraní) and next summer she will direct the world premiere of *The House on Mango Street* with music by Derek Bermell and libretto by Sandra Cisneros, and *The Turn of the Screw* by Benjamin Britten.

In Ecuador, she conducted *Dido & Aeneas, Carmen, Manuela and Bolivar, Luisa Fernanda, Faust* and *The Magic Flute of the Andres* as well as the musicals *Spring Awakening, West Side Story* and *Sweeney Todd.* As musical director she directed the Opera Mariachi *Cruzar la Cara de la Luna,* performing in the US and internationally. As a composer, her most recent work was the music for *Guadual*, the first Ecuadorian circus, presented with success in Latin America and Barcelona.



Erin Moore

Erin Moore creates movement for theater and live performance. She currently serves as Associate Choreographer for the national tour of Disney's *Beauty and the Beast,* and her choreography for live and televised performance includes work featured on *The Tonight Show.* Additional credits include Associate Choreographer for *Strike Up the Band* with MasterVoices at Carnegie Hall, as well as *West Side Story* at The MUNY. With a background as a performer, Erin values collaboration and brings a strong physical sensibility, rooted in music to her work.



Photo: Vanessa Prezioso

Cecilia Violetta López

Maria – A hopeless romantic and innocent young girl. She falls in love with Tony and finds herself at the center of the violent conflict between the two gangs. Bernardo's sister.

Celebrated soprano Cecilia Violetta López, has been named one of "Idaho's Top 10 Most Influential Women of the Century" by *USA Today* and has been named one of opera's "25 Rising Stars" by *Opera News.*

She has received accolades for her signature role of Violetta in *La traviata,* which she has now performed with Minnesota Opera, Opera Colorado, Opera Tampa, Opera Idaho, Ash Lawn Opera, The Northern Lights Music Festival, Madison Opera, Pacific Symphony and Virginia Opera.

Ms. López completed a two-year-tenure as a Soprano Resident Artist at Opera San José where she performed Leïla in *Les pêcheurs de perles,* Rosalinde in *Die Fledermaus,* Leonora in *Il trovatore,* the title role in *Suor Angelica,* Lauretta in *Gianni Schicchi,* Nannetta in *Falstaff,* Gretel in *Hänsel und Gretel,* Donna Anna in *Don Giovanni,* and Cio-Cio San in *Madama Butterfly.*

Additionally, Ms. López is an alum of the Caramoor Music Festival where she covered the role of Hélène in *Les vêpres siciliennes.* She is also an alum of the Hawaii Performing Arts Festival where she sang the title role in their production of *L'incoronazione di Poppea.*

In January 2021, Opera Idaho appointed Ms. López as the company's first Artistic Advisor.



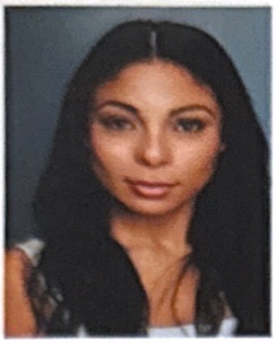
Andrew Bidlack

Tony – A romantic young man and former leader of the Jets, he has found a new lifestyle now. Tony finds himself violently torn between his friendships and love. Falls in love to Maria and meets an untimely death. Genuinely sweet and sincere.

American tenor Andrew Bidlack's current season engagements include his guest appearance at the 20th Anniversary concert for American Lyric Theatre, the principal tenor role of Trout Shue in Madison Opera's world premiere of *Everlasting Faint,* and the roles of Graf von Gloria Cassis *Die Banditen* and Remendado *Carmen* at Oper Frankfurt where he is a regular guest artist.

Career highlights include his Metropolitan Opera appearances as Beppe *I Pagliacci,* the principal tenor role in Iain Bell's world premiere *In Parenthesis* at Welsh National Opera with performances at Covent Garden in 2016; and the role of Lyonnel *Le Roi Arthus* at BARD Summerscape and in Austria's Tiroler Festspiel.

Andrew has appeared in many world premieres, including Bell's *Stonewall* as Andy at New York City Opera; he workshopped Greenhorn/Ishmael in the developmental production of *Moby-Dick* at San Francisco Opera and later sang the role at Dallas Opera and at Chicago Opera Theatre. A graduate of San Francisco Opera's Adler Fellowship, Andrew's body of standard repertoire includes many Rossini/Mozart and bel canto roles.



Daniella Castoria

Anita – Feisty and assertive. She dispenses "older sister" advice to Maria and tries to shield her from the dangers of the gangs. Bernardo's girlfriend and Maria's friend.

Daniella Castoria is a bilingual actress, dancer, and singer known for her dynamic stage presence and versatility across theatre, opera, film, and television.

Born in New York City and raised in New Jersey, she works bi-coastally between Los Angeles and New York, bringing a vibrant East-meets-West energy to every project. Described as a "true triple threat" (The SandPaper), her performances have been praised as "fiercely charismatic" (Indulge Magazine).

Castoria has built a reputation for her electrifying portrayals in *West Side Story*, performing Anita with Gulf Coast Symphony and Surflight Theatre, and appearing as Rosalia / select performances as Anita with LA Opera, where LA Excites called her performance a "lightning rod of the production." This spring she will make her debut with Washington National Opera as Rosalia, with performances at Lyric Baltimore and The Music Center at Strathmore.

A professionally trained triple threat, Castoria graduated summa cum laude with a BFA in Acting for Film and Television in Los Angeles and trained at Broadway Dance Center, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, and Millennium Dance Complex. She is also a passionate educator, director, and choreographer, having staged youth productions such as *Matilda* and *Shrek the Musical*, and currently serves as a judge for national dance competitions.



Ben Horsburgh

Riff – A spritely, quick-tempered leader. He seeks to eliminate the Sharks and establish his own gang's dominance. Tony's best friend, he is eventually murdered by Bernardo.

Ben Horsburgh is a recent graduate of Boston Conservatory at Berklee, where he earned his BFA in Musical Theatre with an emphasis in dance. Born and raised just outside of Boston, Ben has been surrounded by the arts for his entire life. Throughout his artistic journey, Ben has explored many creative avenues, showcasing his passion for performing through hobbies such as circus, magic, piano, and a cappella. In addition to his talent as a performer, Ben possesses a natural eye for cinematography, an innate ear for harmony, and he prides himself on his exceptional ability to acquire new skills quickly and precisely. As he embarks on the next chapter of his career, Ben eagerly looks forward to captivating audiences, seeing the world, and bringing stories to life.



Emiliano Morales

Bernardo – A proud, strong, handsome man. He seeks to carve out territory as a sense of identity for he and his friends. Maria's brother and Anita's boyfriend. Leader of the Sharks.

EMILIANO MORALES is a New York City–based actor, singer, and dancer. He recently returned from touring with the Broadway National Tour of *Chicago the Musical.* Regional credits include *Frozen the Musical* (North Shore Music Theatre), *Othello; Santiago* (Guthrie Theater), *Usurpations* (Theatre Row), and *Bright Star* (Franklin Performing Arts Company). In addition, he has participated in numerous workshops and readings in New York City. Morales holds a BFA in Musical Theatre from Texas State University, where he received comprehensive training in acting, voice, and dance. He remains passionate about bringing authenticity, heart, and vulnerability to every role he takes on, both onstage and off. Emiliano is honored to help bring this story to life, highlighting the power of love and empathy in overcoming division and inspiring audiences to see one another's humanity.

Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra thanks BrandSafway for providing scaffolding used in this performance

BRAND SAFWAY



Owen Smith,
Action | JETS



Riley Bannister,
Anybodys | JETS



Caden Lohr,
A-rab | JETS



Quintin Steers,
Baby John | JETS



Michael Vasilevich,
Snowboy | JETS



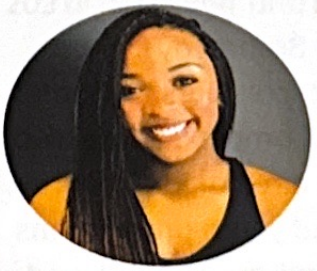
Kevyn Roessler,
Diesel | JETS



Luke Riza,
Big Deal | JETS



Marryn Barney,
Graziela | JETS



Alexandria Ambres,
Pauline | JETS



Anna Cafagna,
Velma | JETS



Kayla Wiese,
Minnie | JETS



Morgan Bodie,
Clarice | JETS



Leandro Ocampo,
Chino | SHARKS



Alex Osborne,
Pepe | SHARKS



Chris Reed,
Indio | SHARKS



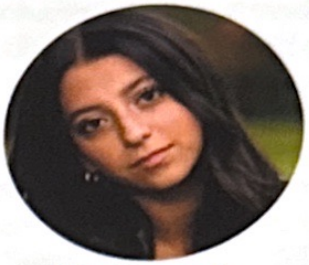
Brandon Wolfington,
Luis | SHARKS



Cayla Nichole Harris,
Rosalia | SHARKS



Isabel Sánchez-Brown,
Francisca | SHARKS



Mia Quesada,
Consuelo | SHARKS



Nadia Rawlins,
Teresita | SHARKS



Ariana Morrison,
Estella | SHARKS



Bella Welling,
"Somewhere" Soloist



Larry Bell,
Officer Krupke



Michael Leinwand,
Doc



Michael Martin
Glad Hand



Todd Avery
Lt. Schrank

Production Crew

Chía Patiño, Stage Director
Erin Moore, Choreographer
Riley Bannister, Dance Captain
Lindsey Cook, Scenic Painter
Savannah Draper, Stage Manager
Jacob Miller, Assistant Stage Manager
Miller Auditorium, Production Carpentry
Sarah Oliver, Costume Designer
Xiaoxiao Lu, Associate Costume Designer
Shelby Loera, Lighting Design
Jesse Cole, Lighting Engineer
AVTEK, Sound Design & Audio Reinforcement
Dave Clemens, Sound Engineer
Kiara Binion with Gals and Ghouls, Hair & Makeup Designer
Lindsay Fleck, Hair & Makeup Assistant
Camille Van Dien, Dresser
Camryn Shankool, Dresser
Jason Styres, Casting Director
Brendan Vincent, Collaborative Pianist
David Sjoquist, Flyman and Deck Chief