

Leon Botstein, President, Bard College

Annandale-on-Hudson, New York

Leon Botstein has been the president of Bard College since 1975, where he is also the Leon Levy Professor in the Arts and Humanities. Dr. Botstein's accomplishments at Bard College speak to his long time advocacy for education reform improved access for the underserved. Under his leadership, Bard has become a premiere American educational institution, as well as an international leader in liberal arts education with joint-degree programs in Russia, the West Bank of the Jordan River, Berlin, and Kazakhstan. Dr. Botstein's model for the reform and acceleration of American high-school education, as described in his acclaimed book *Jefferson's Children: Education and the Promise of American Culture* (1997), has been realized with the great success of Bard's public high school early colleges (BHSEC) in New York, Newark, and New Orleans, which were recognized for their excellence by President Obama. This year the BHSEC model has been implemented in the Cleveland city school district, as well as a program at the Harlem Children's Zone. In addition, Bard's innovative liberal arts-based degree-granting program in prisons throughout New York is planned to expand into a national network. Dr. Botstein is currently chairman of the board of the Central European University and a board member of the Open Society Foundations.



Since 1992, Leon Botstein has also been music director of the American Symphony Orchestra and a conductor of international renown. With the American Symphony he has pioneered the concept of thematic concert programming, relating musical works to themes drawn from history, literature, politics, and the visual arts. He is the undisputed leader in the rediscovery of neglected repertoire; his American premieres of works by Strauss, Hartmann, Dukas, Schmidt, and Chabrier have brought many significant works back to the concert and operatic repertory. Many of his performances are available for download on the Internet, and in the case of some works, represent the sole existing recordings. He has performed with major orchestras throughout Europe and Asia, and his performances may be heard on a prestigious series of Grammy-nominated recordings made for the Telarc, Koch, and New World labels, among others. He is also co-artistic director of the acclaimed SummerScape and Bard Music Festivals, which take place at the Richard B. Fisher Center for the Performing Arts, designed by Frank Gehry for Bard College. From 2003 to 2010 he was Music Director of the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra, the state radio orchestra of Israel, where he now serves as Conductor Laureate.

Dr. Botstein publishes widely on the subjects of music, history, culture, and education. He has written extensively on the historical and political contexts of such major musical figures as Haydn, Mendelssohn, Brahms, Schoenberg, Shostakovich, and Copland, and analyzed the relation of their accomplishments to other disciplines such as the visual arts and literature. Dr. Botstein's writings diverge from the specialized approach of musicology to focus on those aspects of culture that have made serious music a relevant social and cultural force for three

centuries. In this sense, his scholarship mirrors his approach to performance in its intentions to highlight the continued relevance of an expanded musical repertoire to contemporary life. His annual essays for the Bard Music Festival, published by Princeton, are soon to be anthologized in a dedicated volume. For Norton he edited *The Compleat Brahms* (1999). His *Judentum und Modernität: Essays zur Rolle der Juden in der Deutschen und Österreichischen Kultur, 1848–1938* (1991) was translated into Russian (2003). He is editor of *The Musical Quarterly* and, and co-editor of *Jews and the City of Vienna, 1870–1938* (2004). In 2011 he gave the esteemed Tanner Lectures at U.C.—Berkeley on *The History of Listening*; these are forthcoming from Oxford University Press. An anthology of his essays in German are available from Szolnay Verlag in Vienna (2013).

Leon Botstein received M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in history from Harvard. Additional honors include the National Arts Club Gold Medal, the Centennial Medal of the Harvard Graduate School of the Arts and Sciences, the Austrian Cross of Honour for Science and Art, and the Award for Distinguished Service to the Arts from the American Academy of Arts and Letters. In 2009, he received the Carnegie Academic Leadership Award, and was elected to the American Philosophical Society in 2010. In 2012, he received the Kilenyi Medal of Honor from the Bruckner Society of Music and he is also the 2012 recipient of the Longy Conservatory's Leonard Bernstein Award for the Elevation of Music in Society and the University of Chicago's Alumni Medal. In 2013, he was awarded The Foundation for Jewish Culture's Jewish Cultural Achievement Award. The University of Alabama at Birmingham awarded him the Caroline P. and Charles W. Ireland Distinguished Visiting Scholar Prize in 2014.