

BELOVED MAESTRO: LEONARD BERNSTEIN'S JAPANESE EPISTLES AND THE MAKING OF THE WORLD'S MAESTRO

Professor Mari Yoshihara

Department of American Studies

University of Hawai'i at Manoa

7/12 6:30-8:00PM

WEDNESDAY

Collaboration Room 3, 4th floor, Building 18,
Komaba Campus



駒場キャンパス 18号館 4階コラボレーションルーム 3

Buried among the massive Leonard Bernstein Collection at the Library of Congress are personal letters from two unknown Japanese individuals, Kazuko Amano and Kunihiko Hashimoto. When she was eighteen years old, Amano (née Ueno) sent Bernstein a fan letter after reading his magazine essay at a library in Tokyo in 1947. After Bernstein replied with a signed photograph and a letter, they began corresponding as Bernstein made his quick rise to stardom. Every time he toured in Japan, he spent time with Amano and family and treated her as a very special friend. Hashimoto, young enough to be Bernstein's son, met him at the end of the New York Philharmonic's Japan tour in 1979. After spending the night together and seeing him off at the airport, Hashimoto fell deeply in love and subsequently wrote over 350 love letters to Bernstein. The maestro loved him in return, and twice invited him to Europe and often replied in writing or by phone. Hashimoto later became Bernstein's Japan representative and played a key role in some of the maestro's most important projects toward the end of his career. My research explores why these two Japanese individuals came to occupy such an important place in Bernstein's life, situating their relationships in the context of postwar U.S. hegemony in East Asia, development of the global culture industry, politics of sexuality in the two societies, and Cold War cultural diplomacy. By doing so, the talk traces the making of global Bernstein who transformed from an American icon to the world's maestro.



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