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A TRIBUTE TO AARON COPLAND (Senate)

Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I rise today to honor Aaron Copland, the preeminent and prolific American composer. Often referred to as the President of American music, Aaron Copland is an American institution.

Bestowed with virtually every accolade that can be awarded in a lifetime; from the Pulitzer-Prize to an Oscar, from the Medal of Freedom of the Congressional Gold Medal, Copland is enormously accomplished. He has composed operas, ballets, film scores, chamber music, as well as orchestral, choral, and keyboard arrangements. He taught poetry at Harvard and took up conducting when he was well into his fifty's. However, to think of Aaron Copland is not to think of a litany of accomplishments and accolades. Rather, it is to think of American music.

Copland saw this country as his greatest musical inspiration. He remarked once ' I can't say that I went around thinking about creating an American sound; what I wrote was just the way I heard things. I connect American sentiment with a certain reserve in its expression rather than something that carries its bleeding heart all over the place. ' It is clear his view of the world was shaped by living above the family store on Washington Avenue in Brooklyn, NY, during the early 1900's--and it never left him. Years later, following a trip to one of the markets in Tangier, Copland remarked to his traveling companion ' I have seen this all on President's Street in Brooklyn. '

Whether it is 'Appalachian Spring,' 'Billy the Kid,' or 'Fanfare for the Common Man,' Copland's music transcends time and boundaries. His music is a reflection of the American century and

its people. Richard Dyer of the Boston Globe wrote of Copland's music ' Some of it sounds French, some Latin, some American. Some of it is high-minded, some of it serious, some of it very funny. Some of it evokes New England; the most famous evokes the Old West. . . (and) maybe only Midwesterners will know how fully the opera `The Tender Land' realizes that place.' ' Some as comfortable as a summer evening on the back porch . . . at various times it evokes both urban elan and urban loneliness . . . all it takes is a few bars of 'Coplandesque' music to evoke whole eras and areas of our history.'

To hear Copland's music today is to evoke memories of an America we believe may no longer exist but in our minds. From the urban hum of our cities to the silent fields in the countryside; from the loneliness of a single soul lost in the bustle of the city to the isolation of Appalachia; from the swelling of pride that comes with a job well done, a shared joy, or a flag passing by in a parade, this is still America. We are a land that still possesses countless noble acts, endless dreams, and quiet aspirations. We are a country that still wants to do better and tries to do so. We are a people that still believes that we can leave things better than we inherited them. That is Aaron Copland's timeless music. And that is still America.

Virgil Thomson, a colleague of Copland's, once called him ' the voice of America in our generation.' For us, Aaron Copland will always be the voice of all generations in America.

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