

America the Beautiful
SSAA a cappella
CANTUS-001.2

arr. Paul John Rudoï

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AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL

SSAA a cappella

Samuel A. Ward, arr. Paul John Rudoï

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Text and Translation

O beautiful for spacious skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties
Above the fruited plain!
America! America!
God shed His grace on thee
And crown thy good with brotherhood
From sea to shining sea!

O beautiful for heroes proved
In liberating strife,
Who more than self their country loved
And mercy more than life!
America! America!
God shed His grace on thee
Till selfish gain no longer stain
The banner of the free!

From the Composer

America the Beautiful is one of the most ubiquitous patriotic songs of the United States of America. Written over a century ago, the message of the three sets of lyrics (1893, 1904, and 1911) speak to the lofty goals and natural beauty of this nation. I find the universality of its message particularly moving, and in this arrangement I aimed to include a message of community by offering a narrated moment before the final chorus. There are so many wonderful options for that narration, but I limited the options to five excerpted quotes, all lightly adapted to suit the nature and timing of the piece. One, from Walt Whitman's iconic *Leaves of Grass* (1867), is shown within the music on page 2, and the other options can be found on the last page including excerpts from Emma Lazarus' "The New Colossus" (1883), Franklin D. Roosevelt's "Four Freedoms" speech (1941), Jane Addams' *Democracy and Social Ethics* (1902), and Lillian Smith's *Now Is The Time* (1955). Given their dates, all of these quotes are surprisingly relevant when we consider how far we've come, and how far we still need to go, in addressing the needs of others and the systems that brought us to the current moment.

Let us hope and work for a brighter future, as many have before us.

Biography

Paul John Rudoj is an award-winning musician, composer, conductor, vocalist, and entrepreneur dedicated to expanding access to the arts.

As a tenor, he has performed and recorded with acclaimed ensembles across the country, most notably as a full-time member of Cantus. With Cantus, he has premiered dozens of new works, toured four continents, led masterclasses, and championed music education through extensive outreach. Paul's compositions—called "indisputably unique, confident, and innovative" by The American Prize—have been commissioned and performed worldwide. His work has been supported through the Jerome Foundation, ACF, MRAC, MSAB, NEA, and ASCAP, and his music is published through PJR Music (exclusively distributed through Graphite Marketplace) alongside ECS, Walton, Santa Barbara, MorningStar, and Graphite music publishers. Paul is a sought after choral conductor and clinician, and he most recently served as the third Artistic Director of the St. John's Boys' Choir during its 40th Anniversary Season. As co-founder and CEO of Consortio, Paul led the platform in connecting composers and conductors through affordable commissioning models, facilitating dozens of successful new music projects worldwide.

He holds degrees from the Hartt School and the University of Oregon, and studied with Dr. Sharon Paul, Robert Kyr, and Dr. Edward Bolkovac.

America the Beautiful

SSAA a cappella

Katherine Lee Bates (1859-1929)
Walt Whitman (1819-1892)

Samuel A. Ward (1843-1903)
arr. Paul John Rudoi (b. 1985)

Soprano *Solo (or section) mp*

O beau - ti - ful for spa - cious skies, For am - ber waves of grain, For pur - ple mount - ain

Alto *Solo (or section) mp*

S *mf*

ma - je - sties A - bove the fruit - ed plain! A - mer - i - ca! A - mer - i - ca! God

A *mp*

Solo (or section) mp

A - bove the fruit - ed plain! A - mer - i - ca! A - mer - i - ca! God

S

shed his grace on thee And crown thy good with bro - ther - hood From sea to shin - ing

A

shed his grace on thee And crown thy good with bro - ther hood From sea to shin - ing

S

sea! O beau - ti - ful for her - oes proved In li - ber - at - ing strife.

A

In li - ber - a - ting strife. ,

sea! O beau - ti - ful for her - oes proved in strife. Who

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21

S more than life! A -

A more than self their count - ry loved And mer - cy more than life! A -

25

S - mer - i - ca! A - mer - i - ca! God shed his grace on thee 'Til

A - mer - i - ca! on thee!

A - mer - i - ca! A - mer - i - ca! God shed his grace on thee! 'Til

29

S sel - fish gain no long - er stain The ban - ner of the free! Oh

A sel - fish gain no long - er stain The ban - ner of the free! Oh

Soloist (spoken, as a narrator):

I hear America singing, the varied carols I hear,
 Each singing what belongs to him or her and to none else,
 The day what belongs to the day – at night the party of young fellows, robust, friendly,
 Singing with open mouths their strong melodious songs.

33

S Oh A -

A Oh A -

America the Beautiful

mf

unison

S
-bove the fruit - ed plain! A - mer - i - ca! A - mer - i - ca! God

A
-bove the fruit - ed plain! A - mer - i - ca! A - mer - i - ca! God

mf

unison

S
shed his grace on thee And crown thy good with broth - er - hood From

A
shed his grace on thee And crown thy good with broth - er - hood From

f

S
sea to shin - ing sea! From sea to shin - ing sea!

A
sea to shin - ing sea! From sea to shin - ing sea!

f

VOCAL ENSEMBLE

ADDITIONAL OPTIONS FOR NARRATION (mm. 33-38)

From "The New Colossus" by Emma Lazarus:

Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!

From Democracy and Social Ethics by Jane Addams:

In this effort toward a higher morality in our social relations,
we must demand that the individual shall be willing
to lose the sense of personal achievement,
and shall be content to realize their activity
only in connection with the activity of the many.

Adapted from Franklin D. Roosevelt's "Four Freedoms" speech:

We look forward to a world founded upon four essential freedoms:
Freedom of speech and expression—everywhere.
Freedom of worship—everywhere.
Freedom from want—everywhere.
Freedom from fear—everywhere in the world.

From Now Is The Time by Lillian Smith:

Change in a democracy can be brought about quickly or slowly.
The speed depends on its people's honesty of mind,
their values, their humility and knowledge and insight;
and, above all else, on the will to act,
once they realize the need for action.

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