

Preface

This work was inspired by the University of South Dakota Chamber Orchestra. The group performs without conductor. Dr. Ioana Galu, violin and viola professor, and Sonja Kraus, cello professor lead the group from their respective chairs. They are both technically demanding and musically inspiring. My wife Penny and I had the privilege of soloing with the group in April 2017. We had the opportunity to hear the group again this past April and were very impressed by how much the group had grown and matured as an ensemble in just one year.

After the concert, I approached Dr. Galu with the idea of writing a work for the ensemble. She was thrilled and very supportive. Dr. Galu is from Romania and has been in the United States since 2001, earning a master's and doctorate from Bowling Green State University in Ohio and an artist's diploma from the Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music. She has been teaching on the college level since 2004.

Dr. Galu requested a piece that would pay tribute to the United States, her new home. I have composed a number of mashups and medleys, but I wanted this to be more. Rather than a mashup or medley, I would describe this piece as a collage. I wanted to pay tribute to the vast musical heritage of the United States, along with the great contributions of the many immigrant groups that have shaped our country.

This piece can be divided into seven sections. I wanted to open by honoring the Native American culture, the original Americans. My inspiration was a Sioux prayer. The Sioux are known as the First Nations people of North America, from the Dakota region. Special thanks to Butchie Eastman for his beautiful performance on Youtube: (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ODmET6-SHg>).

The prayer melds quietly into the "America the Beautiful" section which is combined with "Oh Shenandoah" and Stephen Foster's "Old Folks at Home" creating an open, flowing, lyrical texture. Brief quotations from "Dixie" and "Yankee Doodle" lead into the patriotic, fourth of July parade section. Several melodies, including "You're a Grand Old Flag," "Yankee Doodle Dandy," "Yankee Doodle" and Sousa's "The Thunderer March" create almost a feeling of dueling bands.

The parade is followed by a Hoedown, or Square Dance, featuring traditional country fiddle music. The strings duel each other, first with "Turkey in the Straw," followed by "O Susannah," "The Devil's Dream," "Polly Wolly Doodle" and "Arkansas Traveler." The hay settles and we are engaged by the soulful music of the African American spiritual. We first hear "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot," which soon combines with "Amazing Grace." Quotes from "She'll be Comin' Round the Mountain," "Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child," "We Shall Overcome" and "Let My People Go" are woven through the fabric.

We are now in the last decades of the nineteenth century, the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, and the beginning of mass immigration to the United States. The dissonance that follows represents the coming of the railroad, the acceleration of the locomotive, and the blowing of the horns. "I've Been Working on the Railroad" becomes the underlying melody, combining with music from many immigrant groups: Irish ("The Irish Washerwoman"), Chinese ("Mòlihuā"), Italian ("O Sole Mio!"), Australian ("Waltzing Matilda"), Mexican ("Cielito Lindo"), French ("Le Marseillaise") and Russian ("Song of the Volga Boatmen"). As more and more melodies enter, the friction and dissonance increases to a point of total chaos.

The dissonance dissolves into a simple, quiet chordal texture which serves as accompaniment to a slow and tentative rendition of "This Land is Your Land." The music gradually gains more energy and confidence, combining with "America the Beautiful" for a rousing ending. This land is all our land. It belongs to all of us. We are all immigrants and are all an indispensable part of the fabric which makes up this country. Our rich heritage is enhanced by immigrants. Hopefully, future generations will enjoy the contributions of those still arriving at our shores.

SAMPLE

to Dr. Ioana Galu

Full Score

An American Dream

Fantasy for String Orchestra

Slow, prayerful, but flowing ♩ = 52

Steven Kruse

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Contrabass

Solo

p

Lakota Indian Prayer Song

a piacere

Solo

mf

(Freely with no clear meter. Grace notes are intended as bending the pitch, a quarter tone below the main note, executed with the same finger.)

(Open palm slap on front of instrument, upper bout)

Solo

mf

mf

mf

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

mf

(Two-hand rapping with finger tips on upper bout.)

p

mf

6

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

drum

p

A

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

mf

p

9

Vln. I *mf* *p*

Vln. II

Vla. *p* **Tutti**

Vc.

Cb. *p*

11

Vln. I **Tutti** *mp*

Vln. II *mp* *mf*

Vla.

Vc. *mf*

Cb.

14 **Moderato** (♩ = c. 104)

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

p

mf

p

Sul G "America the Beautiful"

20

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

mf

mp

mf

mf p

p

sostenuto "Shenandoah"

C

25

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

f

mf

p

p

"Old Folks at Home"

30

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

p

p

Tutti

p

p

34

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

mp

mf

mf mp

38

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

Solo

Solo "D..."

mp

mf

rit.

"Yankee Doodle"

$\frac{2}{4}$

March Tempo ♩ = 120

43

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

Tutti "You're a Grand Old Flag"

mf

Detailed description: This block contains the musical score for measures 43 through 48 of the piece 'You're a Grand Old Flag'. It features five staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass. The key signature is one flat (Bb) and the time signature is 2/4. The tempo is marked 'March Tempo' with a quarter note equal to 120 beats per minute. The score begins at measure 43. The Violin I part has a whole rest. The Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello parts play a melody starting on G4, moving up stepwise to D5. The Contrabass part plays a bass line starting on G2, moving up stepwise to D3. The dynamic is marked *mf* (mezzo-forte). The word 'Tutti' is written above the Violin II staff. A large diagonal watermark 'SAMPLE' is overlaid across the score.

"The Thunderer" March

D

Tutti *ossia*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

Detailed description: This block contains the musical score for measures 49 through 54 of the piece 'The Thunderer' March. It features five staves: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Contrabass. The key signature is one flat (Bb) and the time signature is 2/4. The score begins at measure 49. The Violin I part has a dynamic marking of *f* (forte) and a 'D' in a box above the staff. The Violin I part plays a melody starting on G4, moving up stepwise to D5. The Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello parts play a melody starting on G4, moving up stepwise to D5. The Contrabass part plays a bass line starting on G2, moving up stepwise to D3. The dynamic is marked *f*. The word 'Tutti' is written above the Violin I staff, and 'ossia' is written above the Violin II staff. A large diagonal watermark 'SAMPLE' is overlaid across the score.

55

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

This block contains the musical score for measures 55 through 60 of the piece "An American Dream". It features five staves: Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Contrabass (Cb.). The music is in a key with one flat (B-flat major or D minor) and a 2/4 time signature. The first staff (Vln. I) begins with a dynamic marking of *f* and a hairpin crescendo. The second staff (Vln. II) and third staff (Vla.) play a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The fourth staff (Vc.) and fifth staff (Cb.) play a bass line of eighth notes. A large, diagonal watermark reading "SAMPLE" is overlaid across the entire score.

"The Thunderer" March

60

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

This block contains the musical score for measures 60 through 65 of the piece "The Thunderer" March. It features five staves: Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), and Contrabass (Cb.). The music is in a key with one flat (B-flat major or D minor) and a 2/4 time signature. The first staff (Vln. I) begins with a dynamic marking of *f* and a hairpin crescendo. The second staff (Vln. II) and third staff (Vla.) play a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The fourth staff (Vc.) and fifth staff (Cb.) play a bass line of eighth notes. A large, diagonal watermark reading "SAMPLE" is overlaid across the entire score.

65

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

E

mf

mf

p

p

70

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

p

"Yankee Doodle"
ossia

f

f

"The Thunderer" March

f "The Thunderer" March

f

76

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

"Yankee Doodle Dandy"

f

82

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Cb.

f

V