

AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL

Words by KATHARINE LEE BATES

Music by SAMUEL A. WARD
Arrangement by ROB HOPKINS

Chorus 1

Tenor Lead

Bari Bass

1 O beau - ti - ful for spa - cious skies, For am - ber waves of grain, ——— For

2

3

4

5 pur - ple moun - tain maj - es - ties A - bove the fruit - ed plain! ——— A - mer - i - ca! A -

6

7

8

9

10 mer - i - ca! God shed his grace on thee, ——— And crown thy good with broth - er - hood From

11

12

13

14

America the Beautiful

Chorus 2

15 sea to shin - ing sea. 16 O beau - ti - ful for 17 pa - triot dream 18 That sees be - yond the 19

20 years 21 Thine al - a - bas - ter 22 cit - ies gleam, Un - dimmed by hu - man 23

24 tears! 25 A - mer - i - ca! 26 A - mer - i - ca! 27 A - mer - i - ca! 28 A - mer - i - ca! A -

29 mer - i - ca! 30 God shed his grace on thee, 31 And crown thy good with 32

broth - er-hood From sea to sea, From sea to sea, bright - ly shin - ing sea. A -

From sea to bright - ly shin - ing sea. A - mer - i-ca! —

mer - i-ca! — A - mer - i - ca! —

A - mer - i-ca - mer - i - ca! —

Performance Notes

Katherine Lee Bates, a poet and English Professor at Wellesley College, Massachusetts, wrote the poetry to *America the Beautiful* after taking in the view from the summit of Pikes Peak in Colorado. The poem was published in the *Congregationalist* in Boston on July 4, 1895. Samuel A. Ward, an organist and choirmaster, composed this now-familiar music in 1882, but it first appeared with the poem *O Mother Dear, Jerusalem* in *Parish Choir* in Boston in 1888. It was not until 1910 that the music and the poetry were printed together.

The arranger of this version, Rob Hopkins, has arranged several songs for SPEBSQSA, Inc., including *Sailing Away on the Henry Clay*, *Louisville Lou*, and *Caroline, I'm Coming Back to You*.

The opening duet should be sung quietly and with the most beautiful tone possible. Throughout the song, be sure to give the last word of each phrase full duration (for instance: "grain" and "plain!") so the effect is smooth and not clipped. A slight crescendo in measure 12 and again in measure 31 will build excitement and lead nicely into the final lines of the chorus. Leads should take care to handle the leap to the second syllable of "America" with finesse, and avoid a heavy sound. At the same time, basses should provide a full sound to support the high lead notes.

The key change in measures 25-28 may be most effective if there is a slight crescendo through the entire passage. Likewise, the reiterated bass notes in measures 36-40 will be most effective if the performers make a crescendo to the end while maintaining the tempo and gradually, majestically, intensifying the word inflection of "America!"

As a final note: Questions about the contest suitability of this or any song/arrangement should be directed to the judging community and measured against current contest rules. Ask *before* you sing.