

Thomas Jefferson Suite

for orchestra, chorus and soloists (soprano, tenor and actor)

Text: from the writings of Thomas Jefferson, his friends and colleagues

Music and Libretto: by J. Todd Frazier (b. 1969), with quotations from music popular in Jefferson's time

The "Thomas Jefferson Suite" drawn from the Oratorio "Thomas Jefferson: The Making of America" was commissioned by and is dedicated to the University of Virginia and premiered on October 6, 2017 on the lawn of the University in front of the Rotunda in celebration of the 200th anniversary of the laying of the first cornerstone by Thomas Jefferson.



I. "We Hold These Truths"

pg 1-16

Source:

The United States Declaration of Independence, 1776

II. *"Jefferson and Liberty"

pg 17-72

Source:

Jefferson's First Innaugural Presidential Address 1801

Lyrics to the 18th century song "Jefferson and Liberty"

III. "The Freedom of Thought"

pg 73-122

Source:

Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom, 1777

Report for the Commissioners of the University of Virginia, August 1818

Letter from Jefferson to Henry Lee, May 1825

Letter from Jefferson to John Holmes - discussing slavery/the Missouri question – April, 1820

The epitaph dictated by Jefferson for his gravestone

**incorporating the traditional folk tunes "The Country Courtship", a 1688 English version of the well known "Irish Washerwoman", and "Jefferson and Liberty", an old British Isles tune also known as "The Gobby-O" or "Bay of Bantry" published in an 18th century American manuscript, and serving as Thomas Jefferson's campaign song in the presidential campaign of 1800.*

"We Hold these Truths" has received support from American Festival for the Arts, The Brown Foundation, and The Immanuel and Helen Olshan Texas Music Festival

"Thomas Jefferson: The Making of America" was written for violinist, Henry Rubin and commissioned by Cynthia Rubin
Sources

Setup and Directions

Actor:

Thomas Jefferson

Soloists:

Soprano

Tenor

Chorus:

Sopranos

Altos

Tenors

Basses

Orchestra:

2 Flutes

2 Oboes

2 Clarinets in Bb

2 Bassoons

4 Horns in F

3 Trumpets in Bb

2 Tenor Trombones

1 Bass Trombone

1 Tuba

3 Percussionists: *marimba, xylophone, vibraphone, chimes, tam-tam, field drum, bass drum, *Virginia wind chimes, tambourine, jaw harp, large farm bell, suspended cymbal, mid/large native American drum*

Harp

Piano

Violins I (with solo parts for Concertmaster)

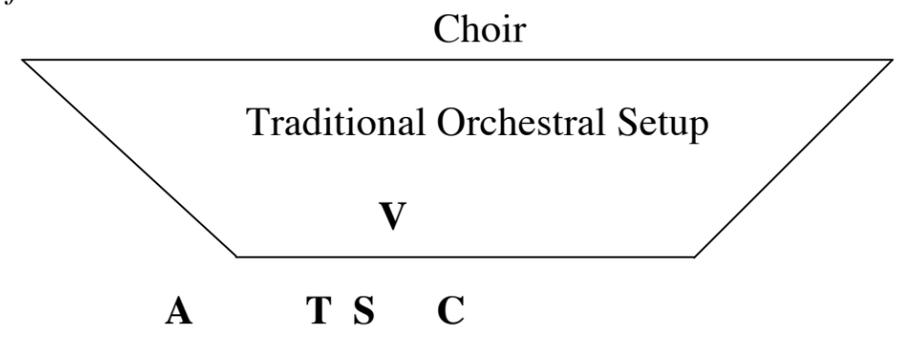
Violins II

Violas

Cellos

Basses

**Virginian wind chimes: an instrument intended to evoke the countryside and Jefferson's Virginia - a medium sized tubular wind chime evoking the tones of distant church bells.*



S: Soprano, represents Martha Jefferson (Thomas' wife), with chair and stand.

T: Tenor, represents Thomas Jefferson, with chair and stand.

V: Violin (concertmaster), represents the Soul of Thomas Jefferson and the role of music as handmaid to his words and thoughts.

C: Conductor, cues all soloists including Actor. Cues are given to begin speaking/acting and are noted in the full score. In movement III, the actor should become familiar with the musical cues, not depending solely on the conductor, for a truly successful interpretation.

A: Actor, male, portrays Thomas Jefferson in period dress and time. This work is told from the personal perspective of Thomas Jefferson, behind closed doors, composing, reviewing, reciting and editing documents, speeches, and letters that shaped both his personal life and the future of America. (Staging option/s: Throughout he is seen in character, sometimes standing and reciting and sometimes sitting (as noted in score, yet Actor may use personal discretion/creativity here), working behind or near his writing desk, with pen (double pen if possible, known as a "Phonograph", and used at Monticello), paper, envelopes, wax letter sealer, Presidential stamp, 5 sided book stand (used at Monticello, the Bible being one noticeable book on the stand amongst others – John Locke was a favorite, as was violin music – both folk music and masterpieces from Europe), and his violin, all arranged on, or near, the desk. As his scenes depict either writing, reading or composing a letter or speech, the actor need not completely memorize his part, and may read from or refer to the text only version or full score. The actors "office" also presents an opportunity to engage a Jefferson, or Colonial club or social/reading group from the community to help authentically "Decorate" the desk and space for the Actor with the aforementioned Jeffersonian accoutrements, leaving room for creativity.)

(D): At the discretion of the Conductor, a Director may be engaged to support the staging and drama of the overall work, primarily in regard to the role of the Actor.

Technical: Creative theatrical lighting may be used for Actor, especially to enhance transitions. Traditional concert lighting should be used for Narrator, Conductor, Musical Soloists and Orchestra.