

#### IV. “Behold Me at Length on the Vaunted Scene of Europe”

**Narrator:**

In 1784 Congress called upon Thomas Jefferson to leave Monticello and represent the United States abroad in France. This request offered a timely opportunity for Jefferson to cut through the fog of grief that preoccupied his mind and days at Monticello and to revive his interest in, and connection to, words, ideas and the affairs of the world. Jefferson agreed to serve as Commissioner to France, deciding to take his two daughters with him.

While in France, Jefferson’s spirit was renewed - an enlightenment spirit of culture, passion, intellectualism, romance and discovery, that included an embrace and further study and admiration of fine wine, food, architecture and agriculture. In 1786 he composed a remarkable letter to an English woman he met in France named Maria Cosway. This extraordinary letter is a unique window into Jefferson’s state of mind at this pivotal time in his life. It describes a struggle for balance between reason and emotion and is set as a fervent, argumentative conversation between two characters - Jefferson’s own head and his own heart – and we are to judge for ourselves the victor.

*(Lights up on Actor, Narrator sits)*

*(As Actor begins to speak, Soprano and Tenor leave stage right and Percussion 1 and 2 move to front – via stage right - with tambourine and jews harp, sitting in Tenor (perc. 2) and Soprano (Perc. 1) chairs to form a "folk trio" with solo violin)*