

About the Show

Take a journey through time and celebrate the multicultural nature of the music of the United States. Matthew Sabatella and the Rambling String Band perform the songs and tell the story that connects traditional folk music, spirituals, fiddle tunes, Appalachian music, ragtime, blues, rhythm and blues, jazz, country, bluegrass, and rock & roll. Immigrants, both voluntary and involuntary, have been carrying their musical traditions to the New World since before the United States became an independent nation. New songs and styles emerged from encounters among diverse people and the unique American experience itself. As America changed, grew, and pushed its boundaries, so did the music.

Please note:

This show addresses sensitive historical realities, including slavery, racism, and segregation. In doing so, it emphasizes the ways in which people, through music, have expressed themselves, survived hardships, and overcome challenges. The show demonstrates how unique forms of American music resulted from the interaction of diverse peoples, despite often unfavorable circumstances.

America's Music

The music in America today is part of a continuum that reaches back to Colonial America and stretches across the Atlantic Ocean to the Old World. Music, instruments, and songs tell the story of the ordinary and extraordinary people who have populated the United States and propelled it into the 21st century. Not only do the lyrics directly reflect the hopes, fears, struggles, sorrows, triumphs, and humanity of the real people who lived history, but to follow the path taken by the music itself is to understand the great cultural stew that is the United States of America. Through this music, you can engage with the strength and beauty that have emerged from the often-troubled history of the United States.

Visit BalladofAmerica.org for more about America's music.

Matthew Sabatella and the Rambling String Band

With vocals, guitar, banjo, fiddle, mandolin, and bass fiddle, Matthew Sabatella and the Rambling String Band connect people with music that is woven into the fabric of the United States. Carrying on the tradition of old-time, pre-bluegrass string bands and songsters, they raise the roof with traditional folk songs, fiddle tunes, old-time country, bluegrass, Appalachian music, ragtime, blues, spirituals, railroad and cowboy songs, work songs, sea shanties, reels, breakdowns, ballads, and more.

Raised on a variety of rock and pop music forms from the second half of the twentieth century, the band members followed the influences of their musical heroes back in time to unearth a treasure trove of American roots music. They perform and record these songs with respect for their essence and place in history while imbuing them with a vitality and intensity that betrays their rock and roll upbringing.

Matthew Sabatella and the Rambling String Band features Matthew on vocals, guitar, banjo, and mountain dulcimer; Jack Stamates on fiddle; Chris DeAngelis on bass fiddle and vocals; and Sean Edelson on mandolin, guitar, and vocals.

Visit RamblingStringBand.com for more information.

Ballad of America, Inc.

A Celebration of America's Music is produced by Ballad of America, Inc. a nonprofit with tax-exempt status as a 501(c)(3) educational organization. Our mission is to preserve and celebrate music from America's diverse cultural history. We envision an engaged and informed citizenry that respects people of varying backgrounds and appreciates how different cultures have contributed to America's musical landscape. We develop and promote online resources and live events that encourage and enable:

- Understanding of the story of the United States
- Appreciation of the different cultures that have contributed to America's musical landscape
- Preservation of America's unique musical heritage
- Participation in music making and the continuation of musical traditions

Visit BalladofAmerica.org for free educational resources that facilitate teaching and learning in these areas.

Before the Show

A Celebration of America's Music is designed to tell the story of the United States from colonial America through the mid-twentieth century in conjunction with the development of relevant musical genres. In that regard, it is not necessary to provide background information on these topics before the show. If students are unfamiliar with general principles of the history of the United States, you may wish to familiarize them, or just let the performance do it for you.

After the Show

The table below links to in-depth articles about the musical genres featured in *A Celebration of America's Music*. You may choose to explore topics of interest to students. Note that the history of these songs and genres generally begins before the era indicated and continues afterward. Era numbers and titles are from the National Center for History in the Schools.

Song	Genre	Era
Lakota Courting Song	Native American Music	1: Three Worlds Meet
Gathering Peascods	Country Dance	2: Colonization and Settlement
Michael, Row the Boat Ashore	Spiritual	4: Expansion and Reform
Pompey Ran Away	Banjo	3: Revolution and the New Nation
Old Joe Clark	Fiddle Tune	4: Expansion and Reform
Gypsy Laddie/Gypsy Davy	Ballad	2: Colonization and Settlement
The Entertainer	Ragtime	7: The Emergence of Modern America
Sitting on Top of the World	Blues	7: The Emergence of Modern America
Sweet Georgia Brown	Jazz	7: The Emergence of Modern America
Choo Choo Ch'Boogie	Rhythm and Blues	9: Postwar United States
Jole Blon	Cajun	7: The Emergence of Modern America
Keep on the Sunny Side	Old-Time/Early Country	7: The Emergence of Modern America
Home on the Range	Western/Cowboy	6: The Development of the Industrial U.S.
New San Antonio Rose	Western Swing	8: The Great Depression and World War II
Hey, Good Lookin'	Honky-Tonk Country	9: Postwar United States
Blue Moon of Kentucky	Bluegrass, Rock & Roll	9: Postwar United States
Maybellene	Rock & Roll	9: Postwar United States

Learning Standards

A Celebration of America's Music addresses the following United States History Content Standards from the National Center for History in the Schools:

- Era 1: Three Worlds Meet (Beginnings to 1620)
 - Standard 2: How early European exploration and colonization resulted in cultural and ecological interactions among previously unconnected peoples
- Era 2: Colonization and Settlement (1585-1763)
 - Standard 2: How political, religious, and social institutions emerged in the English colonies
- Era 5: Civil War and Reconstruction (1850-1877)
 - Standard 3: How various reconstruction plans succeeded or failed

- Era 6: The Development of the Industrial United States (1870-1900)
 - Standard 2: Massive immigration after 1870 and how new social patterns, conflicts, and ideas of national unity developed amid growing cultural diversity
- Era 7: The Emergence of Modern America (1890-1930)
 - Standard 3: How the United States changed from the end of World War (to the eve of the Great Depression
- Era 9: Postwar United States (1945 to early 1970s)
 - Standard 1: The economic boom and social transformation of postwar United States
 - Standard 2: The struggle for racial and gender equality and the extension of civil liberties

Additional Resources

BalladofAmerica.org

Visit the [For Educators](#) section of our website for music articles, primary source strategies, and links to additional Internet resources.

The Story of the United States in 12 Songs

Ballad of America invites you to [download this free PDF](#), with playlists for Apple Music, Spotify, and YouTube. *The Story of the United States in 12 Songs* features songs that are not included in *A Celebration of America's Music*. Experience more than 250 years of American history through the songs of the people who lived it. A free online [Teacher's Guide](#) is also available.

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