

Essential Voices USA Celebrate the American Spirit

by [Sherri Rase](#) | December 2012



CD cover

Essential Voices USA, under the expert direction of Judith Clurman, has just released a new album, “Celebrating the American Spirit.” Co-starring Kelli O’Hara and Ron Raines as soloists, with featured voices as well from the chorus itself, this is a collection that is perfect to mend the fences among patriots on both sides of the aisle. Starting with a moving arrangement of “The Pledge of Allegiance,” the music is full of the open chords we’ve come to associate with “American” music. Open chords reminiscent of the frontier, the abundant sweeping plains, and the take charge spirit that makes us a great nation. These voices blend as closely as if they were one person pledging allegiance. That kind of

accord would come in handy in Congress—Mr. Reid and Mr. Boehner, are you listening?

The program continues with vocal arrangements that remind us of our history, of our personal duty to our country as well as to our community. We are a melting pot, we are a people from everywhere. Several Presidents receive special attention, including Jefferson, Madison, Jackson, Lincoln, Teddy and FDR, Truman, Eisenhower, and JFK, as well as Presidents in the more recent memory including Reagan, Clinton, Bush and Obama.

In addition there is an interesting arrangement of the John Philip Sousa classic “The Stars and Stripes Forever” that begins with the facile agility and smoothness of cocktail music then segues into music that sets the stage for what is to come. If you have patriots in your family—and they should all be MUCH easier to spot after the past few months—then make a gift of music for the holidays. There are days when we need to hear the blend of voices lifted in praise of this country, and this is the music for those days to come when we need to make change together.