

Song of the American Frontier

By Kenneth A. Kuhn

For Piano

Performance time: ~10 minutes

Song of the American Frontier

Music description:

The music is an arrangement for solo piano of several themes and fragments of a folk nature associated with the American frontier. Much of the music seems familiar even if the listener cannot identify any particular theme. The music can be thought of as a tone painting where music conjures grand mental images. The first theme describes a grandeur scene of hills and valleys with a subordinate second theme representing a river flowing through. The third theme brings to mind the majestic image of a thousand head of cattle grazing peacefully on a broad plain. The fourth theme opens with the innocence of a young girl growing up on a farm and becomes broader as she matures. The music builds to a grand cadenza leading to a recapitulation of abbreviated triumphal versions of the first two themes bringing the work to a proud close.

The music was composed between 1973 and 1978. The opening theme began life as a contrasting theme to Prelude No. 4 for piano but that did not work out and another theme took its place. I liked that theme and it reminded me of music associated with the American frontier. That concept drove the development of this and the other themes of this piece. Although the piece is comprised of a number of “songs” the use of the word, song, in the title is singular because I consider the piece taken as a whole to be a single song.

The music was first written on manuscript paper in 1978 and entered into the program, Cakewalk™ in 2003. In 2014 the music was entered into the program Finale™ to make this performer friendly printout.

Performance Notes:

The music is in four parts and is intended to be performed with great feeling with appropriate tempo and dynamic variations.

In part 1 it is important for the left hand to be very fluid and interact with the right hand part sometimes taking a dominant role and at other times taking a background role. The *morendo* marking near the end of this part should be intently followed leading to the soft *larghissimo* transition to part 2.

Be sure to observe the *l'istesso* continuing the *larhissimo* in the first measure of part 2 marked *adagio maestoso*. The rolls should be played a bit slowly – each note should ring.

Part 3 marked *Andante con tenerezza* should be played delicately and with a faster tempo than part 2. The notes marked tenuto should be held extra-long perhaps with a brief pause in the tempo.

Part 4 opens with the main theme from part 2 now played loudly with a return to the tempo of part 2. The music should slow and soften a bit just prior to the cadenza. The cadenza should be played with some *accelerando* but not too much and near its end should slow to the tempo of the main theme. The closing section should be played very loud and majestically. The *alargando* in the last measures should be quite pronounced.

Song of the American Frontier

an arrangement of "frontier" themes

Kenneth A. Kuhn

Performance time: ~10 minutes

$\text{♩} = 60$
Adagio cantabile

Piano

mf

3

4

5

6

7

8

This musical score is for a piano piece titled "Song of the American Frontier". It is written for a grand piano, with a treble and bass staff. The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The score is divided into five systems, each containing a treble staff and a bass staff. The first system (measures 9-10) begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The second system (measures 11-12) includes a *poco rit.* (slightly slower) marking and a *a tempo* (return to tempo) marking. The third system (measures 13-14) features a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic. The fourth system (measures 15-16) includes another *poco rit.* marking, a *a tempo* marking, and a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The fifth system (measures 17-19) begins with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic and ends with a 3/4 time signature change. The bass staff is heavily ornamented with fingerings (1-5) and slurs throughout. The treble staff features various melodic lines, including slurs and ties, and rests.

9 *f*

11 *poco rit.* *a tempo*

13 *ff*

15 *poco rit.* *a tempo* *mf*

17 *mp*

18 19 3/4

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3

This musical score is for a piece titled "Song of the American Frontier". It is written for piano and consists of five systems of music, each with a treble and bass staff. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, slurs, and fingerings. Dynamics include *mf*, *molto rit.*, *mp a tempo*, and *rit.*. The piece concludes with a final 3/4 time signature.

20 *mf*

21 22 23 *rit.*

24 25 *molto rit.* 26 *mp a tempo*

27 28

29 *mp* 30 31

32 33 *rit.* 34

3/4

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35 *mf* *a tempo*

36 37

38 *poco rit.*

39 40 *rubato*

41 *f* *a tempo*

42

43 44

45 *ff*

46

The musical score is for a piece titled "Song of the American Frontier". It is written for piano and features a variety of musical styles and techniques. The score is divided into five systems, each with a treble and bass staff. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The time signature starts as 3/4 and changes to 6/4 at measure 40. The score includes dynamic markings such as *mf* (mezzo-forte), *f* (forte), and *ff* (fortissimo), as well as tempo markings like *a tempo*, *poco rit.* (poco ritardando), and *rubato*. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5 above or below notes. The piece features a mix of melodic lines and complex, rhythmic bass patterns, including many sixteenth and thirty-second notes. The score concludes with a final measure in measure 46.

47 *rit.* 48 *mf* *morendo*

49 50 51 *molto rit.*

52 $\text{♩} = 32$ *Larghissimo; molto sostenuto* 53 54 55 56 *mp*

57 $\text{♩} = 45$ *largo maestoso* 58 59 60 *l'istesso* *mp*

61 62 *poco rit.* 63 *a tempo* 64 65

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66 *poco rit.* *a tempo*

67 68 69 70 *mp*

71 72 73 74 75

76 77 78 79 80 *poco rit.*

81 *a tempo* *mp* 82 83

84 85 86 *rit.* *8va*

Detailed description: This is a piano score for a piece titled 'Song of the American Frontier'. The score is written for piano (p) and includes various musical notations such as treble and bass staves, notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The piece is divided into measures, with measure numbers 66 through 86 indicated. The tempo markings include 'poco rit.' (poco ritardando), 'a tempo', and 'rit.' (ritardando). The dynamic markings include 'mp' (mezzo-piano) and '8va' (octave). The score features a variety of musical textures, including arpeggiated chords, melodic lines, and rhythmic patterns. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D minor). The time signature is 4/4. The piece concludes with a final measure marked '8va'.

(8va)-----

87 $\text{♩} = 80$ *Andante con tenerezza*

mp

88 89 90

(8va)-----

91 92 93 94

(8va)-----

95 96 97 98

mf

99 100 101

102 103 104

3/4

Song of the American Frontier

Maestoso; subito meno mosso

105 $\text{♩} = 60$ *f*

106 107 108

109 110 111 112 113

114 115 116 117 *poco rit.* *pui mosso* *ff*

118 119 120 121

122 123 124 125 *rit.* *dim.* *rattenuto* *mf*

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9

126 *accel.* 127 128 *ff* *rattenuto*

129 *(8va)* 130 131 132 *largo maestoso* *ff* 133 134 135

136 *molto rit.* 137 *a tempo* 138 *allargando* 139

140 *molto allargando* 141 *fff* 142

The musical score is written for piano and features a variety of musical notations and performance instructions. The piece begins at measure 126 with an 'accel.' (accelerando) marking. The notation includes eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together. A 'ff' (fortissimo) dynamic is indicated at measure 128, followed by a 'rattenuto' (rattentivo) marking. The score includes a section marked '(8va)' (octave) starting at measure 129. The tempo changes to 'largo maestoso' at measure 132, with a tempo marking of quarter note = 50. This section features heavy chords and a 'ff' dynamic. The tempo then changes to 'molto rit.' (molto ritardando) at measure 136, followed by 'a tempo' at measure 138, and 'allargando' (allargando) at measure 139. The final section, starting at measure 140, is marked 'molto allargando' and features a 'fff' (fortississimo) dynamic. The score concludes with a final chord at measure 142. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature changes from 4/4 to 3/4 and back to 4/4.