

STAR SPANGLED MUSIC EDITIONS

# The Star-Spangled Banner

for Orchestra

(1943, revised 1951)

Original Tune By  
JOHN STAFFORD SMITH

Arranged and Orchestrated By  
ARTURO TOSCANINI

**Full Score**



Star Spangled  
Music Foundation  
[www.starspangledmusic.org](http://www.starspangledmusic.org)



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Mark Clague, editor

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This Star Spangled Music Edition  
Dedicated to Barbara Haws

Premiered by the New York Philharmonic  
4 July 2014

# Historical Preface

by Mark Clague

Arturo Toscanini (1867–1957) was an internationally renowned Italian conductor and one of the first and most influential radio, film, and television stars of classical music. His meteoric career began at age nineteen and he was appointed principal conductor at Milan’s famed opera house *La Scala* in 1898. Toscanini came to the United States ten years later to direct performances for New York’s Metropolitan Opera and from 1926 to conduct the New York Philharmonic, serving as music director of the orchestra from 1928 to 1936.

Toscanini’s relationship with his homeland’s National Fascist Party and their leader Benito Mussolini grew increasingly strained. This tension burst into controversy over the conductor’s repeated refusals to perform the Italian Fascist anthem “Giovinezza.” In May 1931, Toscanini grabbed headlines across the U.S. after he was physically attacked by partisans in Bologna for refusing to perform the song. His concerts were canceled and he was ordered to leave the city. Soon his Italian passport was suspended. Although Toscanini had run (unsuccessfully) for political office in Italy in 1919 and Mussolini had once praised him as the “greatest conductor in the world,” his refusals made the conductor’s opposition to fascism clear and enhanced his reputation among Western allies as World War II approached. Toscanini took refuge in the U.S. and began conducting the NBC Symphony, an ensemble the network created for him in 1937. That the conductor was the son of a follower of Italian nationalist Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807–82), and that he himself was seen as an Italian patriotic resisting fascism, gave him a sterling political reputation in the U.S.

Toscanini’s passionate embrace of the national anthem of the United States during World War II thus made a political statement. At concerts he would turn on his podium to face his American audiences and lead a collective performance of “The Star-Spangled Banner.” He even arranged Key’s patriotic song for soloist, chorus, and orchestra as part of the U.S. premiere of Giuseppe Verdi’s *Inno delle nazioni* [Hymn of Nations]. Originally composed for the 1862 International Exhibition in London, Verdi’s secular cantata included Italian, French and English anthems. To these, the conductor appended his own arrangements to honor the Western Allies— “The Internationale” (for Russia) and finally Key’s Banner (and the United States) as a new musical climax. Broadcast nationally on January 31, 1943 with the NBC Symphony performing, Toscanini’s Verdi adaptation was praised as a “musical blow against dictators,” in part because the maestro adjusted Boito’s original text to incorporate the phrase “Italia tradita” [Italy betrayed].

On April 8, 1943—about two months after the original Verdi broadcast—Toscanini wrote out a revised orchestral arrangement of Key’s anthem. Adjustments in tempo, key, and instrumentation allowed it to be performed by the NBC Symphony alone for an upcoming “war bond concert” at Carnegie Hall that also featured piano soloist Vladimir Horowitz. Attendees purchased over \$10 million in bonds (about \$138 million in 2014 dollars) to secure tickets for the April 25 performance, and Toscanini announced on air that his original handwritten manuscript for the Banner would be auctioned for additional war bond purchases. The Business Men’s Assurance Company of Kansas City won the prize with a pledge of one million dollars.

After Mussolini’s imprisonment and Italy’s switch to the Allied side in September, Toscanini filmed Verdi’s *Hymn* with American tenor Jan Peerce and the Westminster College Choir for a U.S. Office of War Information propaganda film (on YouTube), released in Feb. 1944 as another war bond initiative. (During the Cold War, however, “The Internationale” section was removed by censors.) The film offers insights into the conductor’s musical realization of Key’s anthem.



In December 1951, Toscanini recreated his patriotic fundraising gambit, donating a second autograph score in his stylized script to the New York Philharmonic. The score was auctioned by Parke-Burnet Galleries in December 1952 and awarded to high bidder William Rosenwald, a Philharmonic board member (1941–75), who donated the manuscript back to the Philharmonic and thus made the current edition possible.

*Arturo Toscanini leading the New York Philharmonic in a performance of “The Star-Spangled Banner” during WWII, photo by Alfred Eisenstadt (courtesy of the New York Philharmonic Archives) Note that all instrumentalists are standing (including bassoonists and cellists).*



Steering clear of the controversies surrounding Igor Stravinsky’s 1941 arrangement,

Toscanini’s Banner uses traditional harmonies, akin to Walter Damrosch’s familiar WWI-era arrangement. The Italian conductor’s original expressive contributions are thus located elsewhere—in the grandeur of the especially slow tempo and rich orchestration, including the added bass voices of English horn, bass clarinet, and contrabassoon. Rolled chords in the winds and strings animate a hymn-like (triadic) presentation of the melody. Key’s lyrical invocation of “rockets” and “bombs” inspires a fervent brass countermelody accompanied by repeated, militaristic notes in the horns. Toscanini sets the final phrase of Key’s text and its vision of freedom as the song’s emotional climax—stretching the tempo, raising the dynamic to its maximum, filling out the harmony with passing tones as well as trills in the inner voices, and extending cadential repose with fermatas. The percussion is also finally unleashed for this climactic *grandioso*, made all the more dramatic because of the limited role for drums and cymbals until this point. Toscanini thus offers a compelling personal tribute to the United States, one that would have been even more impressive when propelled by the maestro’s vigorous conducting style.

## Performance Suggestions

*New York Times* music critic Olin Downs described Toscanini’s demeanor when performing the U.S. anthem as “face to the audience, eyes blazing, wielding the baton with a furious enthusiasm, and, himself, unable to refrain from it, singing.” Note that the three flute parts share only two lines of music, so the score may be performed with only flutes 1 & 3 (fl. 2 tacit). To make the score more broadly accessible the treble clef passage in the cello (mm. 20–22) may be played an octave lower, use alternate part if desired. Possibly because the arranger created this version for his own ensembles with himself conducting, performance indications are sometimes incomplete as Toscanini would have paced and shaped the performance on the podium. This is especially true of the approach to the *Grandioso* (m. 24), where an explosive crescendo in the percussion would likely be supported in other voices, yet this remains unmarked.

## Sources

This edition was made from Arturo Toscanini’s holograph manuscript titled “Star Spangled Banner / AT” held in the archive of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra in New York City. It is dated “Philadelphia 8 April 1943,” and then re-dated “December 13 - 1951 / Arturo Toscanini / New York.” NBC Symphony performance parts preserved in the Toscanini Legacy Papers by the Performing Arts Division of the New York Public Library and the 1944 film *Arturo Toscanini: Hymn of the Nations* were used as concordant sources to clarify readings in the score.

# Instrumentation

3 Flutes  
2 Oboes  
English Horn  
2 Clarinets in B♭  
Bass Clarinet in B♭  
2 Bassoons  
Contrabassoon

4 Horns in F  
3 Trumpets in B♭  
3 Trombones  
Tuba

Timpani  
Military Drum  
Cymbals, Bass Drum

Violin 1  
Violin 2  
Viola  
Cello  
Bass

**Transposed Score**  
Duration: Approximately 2 minutes



Score

# The Star-Spangled Banner

for Orchestra

(1943, rev. 1951)

Lyrics:  
Francis Scott Key  
(1779–1843)

Original Tune by John Stafford Smith  
(1750–1836)

**Allegro Maestoso** ♩=88–90

Arranged and Orchestrated by Arturo Toscanini  
(1867–1957)

Flute 1 & 2

Flute 3

Oboe 1 & 2

English Horn

Clarinet in B♭  
1 & 2

Bass Clarinet  
in B♭

Bassoon  
1 & 2

Contrabassoon

Horn in F  
1 & 2

Horn in F  
3 & 4

Trumpet in B♭  
1 & 2

Trumpet in B♭ 3

Trombone  
1 & 2

Trombone 3

Tuba

Timpani

Military Drum

Cymbals,  
Bass Drum

Violin 1

Violin 2

Viola

Violoncello

Contrabass

[illegible]

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Fl. 1 & 2 *espress.*

Fl. 3 *espress.*

Ob. 1 & 2 *espress.*

Eng. Hn. *mf*

Cl. 1 & 2 *espress.*

B. Cl. *f* *soli* *mf*

Bsn. 1 & 2 *espress.* *f* *soli* *mf*

Cbsn. *f* *mf*

F Hn. 1 & 2 *mf*

F Hn. 3 & 4 *mf*

B♭ Tpt. 1 & 2 *f* *soli* *mf*

B♭ Tpt. 3 *f* *soli*

Tbn. 1 & 2 *f* *soli* *mf*

Tbn. 3 *f* *soli* *mf*

Tba. *f* *mf*

Timp.

M. Dr. *f*

Cym./B.D.

Vln. 1 *espress.*

Vln. 2 *espress.*

Vla. *espress.*

Vc. *espress.* *f* *soli* *mf* *unis.*

Cb. *f* *mf*

