

# Matthew Sabatella

## *Ballad of America Volume 1: Over a Wide and Fruitful Land*

“Gold-throated troubadour Matthew Sabatella was born to make an album like *Ballad of America*.”  
-Jonathan Zwickel *New Times Broward/Palm Beach*

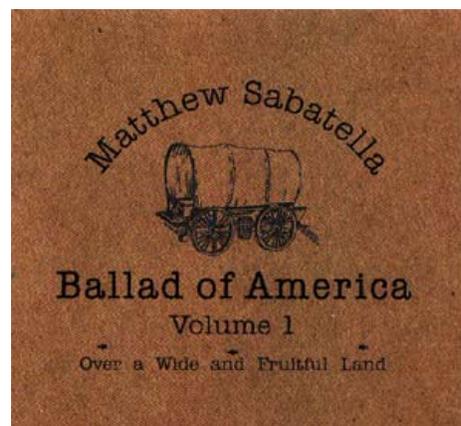
This is the story of the United States of America vividly told through a wealth of traditional folk songs. The journey on the CD begins in the latter part of the eighteenth century when the United States became an independent nation. It follows the paths of the pioneers, sailors, lumberjacks, immigrants, '49ers, farmers, slaves, soldiers, cowboys, and railroaders who moved the country across the continent and into the twentieth century.

The all-acoustic *Ballad of America Volume 1* features Sabatella on guitar with a host of musical guests who make contributions on banjo, fiddle, concertina, resonator guitar, bodhran, harmonica, mandolin, and upright bass. But the focal point of the album is the nineteenth century songs, many virtually forgotten, which Sabatella's mesmerizing baritone voice infuses with an immediacy and intimacy that belies their age.

The package includes a twelve-page booklet containing historical background for each song.

Sabatella's foray into traditional music comes amidst an acclaimed career as a singer/songwriter. His 2001 release, *A Walk in the Park*, was named **Album of the Year** in the Florida Music Awards and he was a nominee in the category of **Best Songwriter**.

In 2005, *New Times Broward/Palm Beach* named Sabatella **Best Acoustic Performer**.



### track listing

1. The Lovely Ohio
2. The Wisconsin Emigrant
3. Shenandoah
4. Once More a-Lumb'ring Go
5. Across the Western Ocean
6. Ho! For California!
7. Sweet Betsy from Pike
8. Old Settler's Song
9. Many Thousand Gone
10. Southern Soldier
11. Oh Freedom!
12. Rambling Gambler
13. Old Chisholm Trail
14. Streets of Laredo
15. Old Paint
16. Paddy Works on the Railway
17. This Old Hammer
18. Wanderin'

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Visit [BalladofAmerica.com](http://BalladofAmerica.com) for more information.

"...Sabatella's best asset is easily his voice, urgent but unforced, sweetly melancholy in telling personal stories and powerfully evocative in rendering antiquated songs intimate again. It's a great gift, and Sabatella wields it with exceptional talent."

**Matthew Sabatella named "Best Acoustic Performer"**

**New Times Broward/Palm Beach - Best of 2005**

"Performer Matthew Sabatella's rich baritone voice perfectly complements stories of common folk... A wonderful resource for units on nineteenth-century American history."

**Naomi Leithold**

**American Library Association's *Booklist***

"...his love of this music is infectious and the arrangements are generally quite good. Recommended."

**Rick Anderson**

**Baker & Taylor's *CD HotList***

"Sabatella has found a mother lode of nearly forgotten gems, many pre-dating the age of recorded music. He sings these work songs, laments and travelogues with a plaintiveness and thorough appreciation of their meanings and origins, and sets them to lively acoustic arrangements."

**Sean Piccoli**

**Sun-Sentinel**

"Gold-throated troubadour Matthew Sabatella was born to make an album like *Ballad of America*. This low-key, acoustic opus is more a Folkways Smithsonian-style history lesson than a random assortment of wispy, coffee shop folk. Casual listeners, watch out: If you pay attention, you might learn something. Nothing if not deeply humanist, these songs reveal the sober, hopeful spirit of the men and women who found fortune, romance, and danger on the open range."

**Jonathan Zwickel**

***Miami New Times***

"Miraculously, Hollywood-based folkie Matthew Sabatella has packaged a history lesson in the guise of a strikingly good album and a nerdaliciously compelling live show that tell the story of western expansion across the American heartland through song... 'It's the kind of thing that will appeal to just about anybody,' Sabatella says of the songs on *Ballad of America Volume 1*, most of which date back to the early 1800s. The crowd at the Bamboo Room reflected that sentiment, as moms, grandmoms, longhairs, blue collars, and a gaggle of wine-sipping, Virginia Slims-puffing ladies all clapped along and sang like ornery lumberjacks to lines like 'And we'll range the wild woods over, and once more a-lumbering go!'"

**Jonathan Zwickel**

***New Times Broward/Palm Beach***

"Matthew's arrangements and deep, rich voice bring these old songs to life. It gives us a sense of place. That's what folk music does -- it roots us in tradition. What he's doing is patriotic as much as anything else. He's giving us a good sense of America."

**Michael Stock**

**WLRN-FM - Host of *Folk and Acoustic Music***

"I really enjoyed the more obscure songs which brought history and past viewpoints to life."

**Arthur Berman**

**CITR-FM - Host of *Pacific Pickin'***

"*Over a Wide and Fruitful Land*, the album's subtitle, rather neatly sums it up. Matthew Sabatella has assembled a credible song list, dappling America's pioneer landscape with evergreen folklore balladry. His wide-ranging vocal approaches are sensitive when desired, dynamic when untethered emotions dictate. The small group arrangements, at times pared back to a single instrument, are the "just right" sort of settings. This project works "because of", not "in spite of", campfire minimalism. Matthew Sabatella surprises in the most delightful ways. And this is only Volume One. Can't wait for the next leg of the trail."

**Eddie O'Strange**

**Host of *Town & Country Radio Show* - New Zealand**