

# *Ballad of America Volume 2: America Singing*

Matthew Sabatella

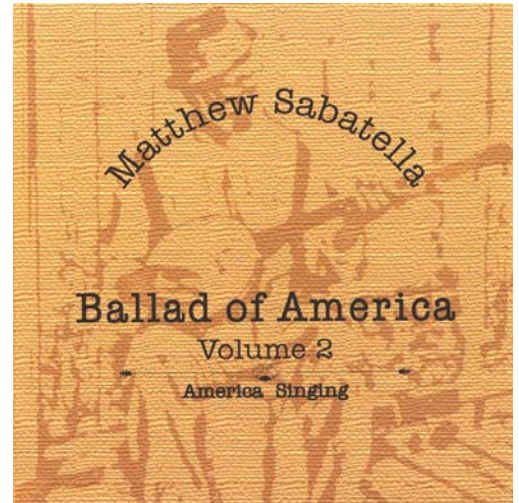
This is the story of the United States of America vividly told through a wealth of traditional folk songs. The songs in this collection are among the most commonly sung in the history of the United States. They present uniquely American musical blends, with roots in European and African traditions and branches that have sprouted countless regional and personal variants throughout the country. Collectively, these songs of work, fun, and love transcend social and ethnic boundaries, painting a broad picture of America during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries when music making was, for many, an integral part of everyday life.

*Ballad of America Volume 1: Over a Wide and Fruitful Land* was released in 2005 to universal acclaim. The album focuses on the Westward Expansion of the United States, following 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 20<sup>th</sup> century.

On the strength of live performances that supported the release of *Volume 1*, New Times Broward/Palm Beach named Sabatella **Best Acoustic Performer**, writing that his "best asset is easily his voice, urgent but unforced, sweetly melancholy in telling personal stories and powerfully evocative in rendering antiquated songs intimate again." On stage and on the new album he plays guitar, clawhammer banjo, and mountain dulcimer. He is backed by the Rambling String Band, which features Lynn Griffith on banjo and vocals; Chris DeAngelis on bass fiddle and vocals; Jack Stamates on fiddle; and Sean Edelson on mandolin.

As the group performed at festivals, museums, libraries, coffeehouses, and nightclubs throughout 2005, their repertoire expanded to include folk songs that were well known compared to the relatively obscure selections that made up the bulk of *Ballad of America Volume 1*. When the musicians entered Liquid Ghost Recording Studios (Boca Raton, FL) in February 2006, their goal was to capture fresh, live performances of songs they felt should be known by every American. They wanted to keep the songs alive in the hearts, minds, and voices of everyone who has heard and sung them, introduce them to anyone who *hasn't* heard and sung them, and help preserve them for future generations to hear and sing.

*Ballad of America Volume 2: America Singing* brings those goals beautifully to fruition.



## track listing

1. Wabash Cannonball
2. Go Tell Aunt Rhody
3. Skip to My Lou
4. Buffalo Gal
5. Blue Tail Fly
6. Oh Susanna!
7. On Top of Old Smokey
8. Bile Them Cabbage Down
9. Down in the Valley
10. Pick a Bale of Cotton
11. I've Been Working on the Railroad
12. Red River Valley
13. Crawdad Song
14. Old Blue
15. Billy Barlow
16. Home on the Range

## vitals

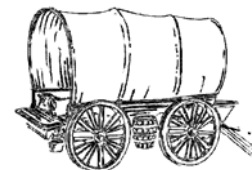
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**BalladofAmerica.com**

**Matthew Sabatella's *Ballad of America Volume 1: Over a Wide and Fruitful Land***

"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'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***

"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**