

Aaron Copland (1900 – 1990) was an American composer, composition teacher, writer, and later in his career a conductor of his own and other American music. He was instrumental in forging a distinctly American style of composition, and is often referred to as "the Dean of American Composers." He is best known to the public for the works he wrote in the 1930s and 1940s in a deliberately more accessible style than his earlier pieces, including the ballets *Appalachian Spring*, *Billy the Kid*, *Rodeo* and his *Fanfare for the Common Man*.

Old American Songs are two sets of songs arranged by Aaron Copland in 1950 and 1952 respectively. Originally scored for voice and piano, they were reworked for baritone (or mezzo-soprano) and orchestra.

At the River (or *Shall We Gather at the River*) is a traditional Christian hymn, written by American poet and gospel music composer Robert Lowry (1826-1899). It was written in 1864 and included by Aaron Copland in his second set of *Old American Songs*.

Dr. Michael Pratt has degrees in music education and music composition from The University of Toledo, The University of Michigan, and Boston University. He studied composition with Pulitzer Prize winning composers Ross Lee Finney and Leslie Bassett at The University of Michigan, and taught music in the public schools for many years in Michigan.

He has sung with The Toledo Choral Society, Toledo Symphony Chorale, Opera!Lenawee, and The University Musical Society Choral Union of The University of Michigan with whom he has performed with The Detroit Symphony Orchestra, The San Francisco Symphony, The Kirov Orchestra, The Russian National Orchestra, The Ann Arbor Symphony, The Lansing Symphony, The Grand Rapids Symphony, The Toledo Symphony, The Birmingham Symphony, The Gabrieli Consort, and The Tallis Scholars.

He has played tuba with The Toledo Symphony, Toledo Concert Band, Toledo Opera, University of Toledo Faculty Brass Quintet, Adrian Chamber Brass, Adrian College Faculty Brass Quintet, The Crosswell Opera House, The Adrian Symphony Orchestra and The Adrian City Band.

He has performed with many notable conductors, including, Valery Gergiev, Michael Tilson Thomas, Neeme Jarve, Mikhail Pletnev, Rafael Fruhbeck de Burgos, Leonard Slatkin, John Adams, Gennady Rozhdestvensky, Paul McCreech, Peter Phillips, Catherine Comet, Eric Kunzel, Margaret Hillis, Martin Katz, and John Finley Williamson.

Michael Pratt is a member of ASCAP.

At the River

from *Old American Songs*

Duration 2:20

Aaron Copland
Arr. Michael Pratt
for Brass Septet

With Dignity ♩ = 72

The score is for a brass septet and is divided into two systems. The first system contains measures 1 through 6, and the second system contains measures 7 through 13. The key signature is two flats (Bb and Eb), and the time signature is 4/4. The tempo is marked 'With Dignity' with a quarter note equal to 72 beats per minute. The dynamics range from *f* (forte) to *mp* (mezzo-piano). A section labeled 'A' begins at measure 7. The instruments are: Trumpet in Bb 1, Trumpet in Bb 2, Trumpet in Bb 3, Horn in F, Trombone, Euphonium, and Tuba. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.