

National Anthems Online

LATVIA: Dievs, svētī Latviju!

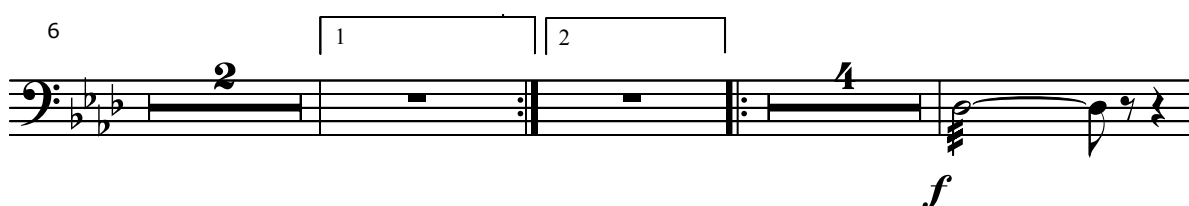
The words and music of this anthem (the title means "God bless Latvia!") were written by the composer, teacher and journalist, Kārlis Baumanis (better known as Baumanis Kārlis). The song first appeared in the second half of the 19th century when a sense of Latvian pride and identity began to emerge. Kārlis Baumanis was evidently the first Latvian composer to use the word "Latvia" in a song lyric. But even so, the concept of "Latvia" was somewhat vague at the time and was used to describe all regions traditionally inhabited by Latvians. Latvia was still part of the Russian Empire and the Tsarist Russian authorities, not known for their enthusiasm in encouraging national sentiments, did not allow the word "Latvia" to be used in the title and text of the song. It was replaced, presumably reluctantly by the word "Baltics".

The first public performance was in 1873 at a Song Festival in Riga. In 1920, the song was recognized as the National Anthem of the newly-independent Latvia. However, the Soviet occupation in 1940 brought a swift end to national symbols, including the anthem. But the enthusiasm for an independent Latvia never faded and on regaining independence in 1990 the song was again restored as the official National Anthem.

♩ = 104

Baumanis Kārlis (1835 - 1905)
Arranged by Colin Kirkpatrick

In Eb, Ab and Db.



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