PREVIEW: THE DECLARATION

By

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Cast of Characters

THOMAS JEFFERSON:	Brilliant, introspective, and conflicted. A gifted writer wrestling with the moral and political weight of drafting the Declaration. His quiet intensity contrasts with the turbulence around him.
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN:	Witty, seasoned, and shrewd. A statesman who uses humor and diplomacy to diffuse tension. He anchors the ensemble with wisdom earned from years of political battles.
JOHN ADAMS:	Fiery, relentless, and principled. He drives the push for independence with unapologetic conviction, often clashing with others but never wavering in purpose.
KING GEORGE III:	Charismatic, commanding, and increasingly unhinged. His numbers blend satire with menace, offering the British perspective while showcasing the unraveling of imperial control.
DAVID RAMSAY:	Passionate historian and observer of revolution. Serves as a narrative bridge, providing context, clarity, and emotional resonance as events escalate.
ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION:	A versatile collective portraying soldiers, delegates, and citizens. They function as the heartbeat of the revolution—shifting from street protestors to congressional voices to the conscience of a nation. The size is optional.

Synopsis

THE DECLARATION is a bold, rhythm-driven musical that follows the emotional, political, and ideological battles that shaped America’s founding. From the unrest of the Boston Tea Party to the heated debates inside the Continental Congress, Jefferson, Franklin, Adams, King George III, David Ramsay, and a passionate ensemble fight to define freedom and risk everything to break from tyranny. Blending contemporary musical language with historical authenticity, the show reveals the personal stakes behind the iconic document and celebrates the moment when words sparked a revolution that changed the world.

When

THE DECLARATION unfolds between 1765 and 1776, spanning the turbulent years that ignite the American Revolution.

Note

Setting:

The setting shifts fluidly between the streets of Boston, Philadelphia’s halls of Congress, private chambers, and symbolic spaces representing the inner thoughts of the founders. The design is intentionally flexible: a blend of period elements and contemporary theatrical language, allowing tables, quills, and candlelight to coexist with rhythmic staging and dynamic transitions. This hybrid environment supports both historical authenticity and modern storytelling, creating a world where political upheaval, personal conflict, and revolutionary ideas collide onstage with immediacy and emotional truth.

Optional Featured Roles:

Male/Female Chorus, British Officers. These roles enhance production scale and provide opportunities for vocal and dramatic contrast.

Together, the cast creates a vivid, human portrait of a nation on the brink—where words ignite conflict, courage reshapes destiny, and the fight for freedom becomes a shared song.

ACT I (THE STAMP ACT - 1765)

SETTING: A split stage.

STAGE LEFT: DAVID RAMSAY’s writing desk with papers, quill, and candlelight.

STAGE RIGHT: KING GEORGE III’s elevated throne with royal crest and court trappings.

STAGE CENTER: A colonial print shop that can transform into Congress halls and Boston streets. A wooden printing press upstage; tables, pamphlets, crates, and lanterns on rolling wagons. Parchment projections can appear on a scrim.

AT RISE:

KING GEORGE sits on his throne STAGE RIGHT, surveying the room with smug amusement.

DAVID RAMSAY sits at his writing desk STAGE LEFT, pen poised, recording history as it unfolds.

The ENSEMBLE and principals occupy the central playing space, ready to become printers, delegates, merchants, and citizens as needed.

ADAMS and JEFFERSON work the press rhythmically.

ENSEMBLE members move like printers, merchants, and townspeople.

FRANKLIN observes with amused restraint.

JOHN ADAMS

Click-clack—press that paper

Clack-click—ink gets braver

Seal wax—drip like labor

Who signs—who pays—who’s savior?

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Year is 1765—mark the date, March 22.

Parliament drops a fee like a hammer: revenue.

They say: “You like troops on your lanes? Then pay dues.”

Stamped paper from London—that embossed bruise.

Stamped. Impressed. Priced. Possessed.

Read the fine print—newspapers, pamphlets, legal writs too.

Your licenses, deeds, even playing cards—who knew?

It’s the first direct hit—straight tax to the chest.

No seats in the House? Then we ain’t impressed.

We ain’t represented—still you set the rent—

“Taxation without representation”—say it with intent.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

No seal on my soul, no tax on my tongue—

We print our own future, the ink’s just begun.

If freedom’s a letter, then let it be bold—

We sign with our courage, not bought and sold.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Ahem—consider economics: squeeze a press and pages crumple.

You’ll gum up trade—your revenue turns humble.

And angry shoppers? That’s thunder in the till.

JOHN ADAMS

We’re not your purse; we’re people with will.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Don’t stamp my heart, don’t price my breath— Freedom’s the mark that outlives death.

You can press my page, try to brand my name, But truth bleeds through every frame.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

October—New York—delegates converge.

Nine colonies in chorus, let the clauses surge.

They draft Rights and Grievances—phrase by phrase,

Legal lanterns lifting in the printer’s haze.

Only our assemblies levy our dues!

Local voices choose the news!

To Parliament -

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Respect the view— The colonies are part of you.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

If liberty’s a lightning jar, then let me hold the storm—

Bottle principles in law, not stamps in uniform.

A levy placed afar—no vote? That’s out of form.

Try logic—watch it swarm.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Write the lines, align the will—

When the pen stands tall, the guns stay still.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

No imports—no lux—shut shutters—cut flux.

Merchants lace ledgers with “No Stamp” bucks.

From Boston docks to Philly stores,

We close those doors till the law restores.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Not a spool, not a bolt, not a card gets flipped—

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Until that Act is canceled, folded, ripped.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Sons of Liberty—lanterns up, streets lit— Not chaos—

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Purpose. That’s the writ.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

No seal on my soul, no tax on my tongue—

We print our own future, the ink’s just begun.

If freedom’s a letter, then let it be bold—

We sign with our courage, not bought and sold.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Picture me in London—tea tepid, wigs towering.

I testify: “Tax at distance—public’s glowering.”

If your aim is revenue, consider:

Anger collects interest quicker than a minister.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Say the word and the street beats answer,

From tavern table to town-hall dancer.

Not for fury—this fight’s for law,

For the right to consent to the burdens we draw.

JOHN ADAMS

Who draws the line?

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

We draw the line!

JOHN ADAMS

Who sets the price?

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

We set the price!

JOHN ADAMS

Who owns this life?

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

We own this life!

JOHN ADAMS

And maybe—just maybe—British merchants own their plight.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

The boycott bites where the ledger bleeds—

Commerce coughs, and Parliament heeds.

Petitions stack like uncut reams,

A mountain of paper fueling dreams.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Gentlemen, repeal the thing. Let trade take wing.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Or double down and hear the ring—

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Of anvils, printing freedom’s spring.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Don’t stamp my heart, don’t price my breath—

Freedom’s the mark that outlives death.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Clock turns—March 18, 1766—read the seal: Repeal.

Relief like rain on a drought-dry field—real feel.

But same-day clause with a velvet heel:

“Declaratory Act”—Parliament’s full power revealed— “In all cases whatsoever.” That’s the line they wield.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

We cheer—then freeze—

THOMAS JEFFERSON

A yes… with a squeeze.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

A victory, sure—

THOMAS JEFFERSON

But hear the warning bell—

A promise that tomorrow may still compel.

Laws repeal. Principles remain.

Mind the clause in the champagne.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Remember the lesson the Stamp Act wrote.

JOHN ADAMS

We have in our future on pages our own.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

No seal on my soul, no tax on my tongue—

We print our own future, the ink’s just begun.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

If freedom’s a letter, then let it be bold—

THOMAS JEFFERSON

We sign with our courage, not bought and sold.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Don’t stamp my heart, don’t price my breath—

Freedom’s the mark that outlives death.

Freedom’s the mark that outlives death.

KING GEORGE III

Ah, my delightful dependents!

Do sit still while I enlighten you.

It seems the colonies have grown chatty— printing opinions without paying royalties.

Unstamped thoughts? How terribly gauche.

Ah, I’m the crown with the crown, baby, look at this crest,

You breathe my air, I tax your chest.

Paper? Stamped. Tea? Priced. Ink? Mine.

Colonial freedom?

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

On

KING GEORGE III

On royal time.

You call it “tyranny,” I call it rent—

You use my army, that’s money well spent!

I fund your forts, your fife, your flair,

And dare you balk?

How very unfair.

Did I hear someone whisper “representation”?

Adorable. You’re represented here—by imagination.

Oh, I sign the laws, I call the plays,

I own your tomorrows and your yesterdays.

So write your protests, print your pleas—

Just make sure they’re stamped—with me.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

“Yes, your Majesty, tax our dreams,

Charge us twice for freedom’s schemes.”

KING GEORGE III

And remember, my precious provinces—

you’re not subjects… you’re assets.

DAVID RAMSAY

Ladies and gentlemen,

lend me your time and your sense of proportion!

I’m David Ramsay, physician by day, historian by compulsion!

The first American to say, “Hey, let’s write this down!”

Before the ink dried on rebellion’s crown!

They called it a tax, I called it trouble,

Britain stamped its will, and the colonies saw double!

A fee for your paper, your license, your will —

But freedom, dear friends, is a hard thing to bill!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

“Stamp Act!

DAVID RAMSAY

Tax fact! Colonial backlash!”

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

“Ink and outrage! Quills clash!”

DAVID RAMSAY

Parliament thought: “Just a penny a page,

What harm could it bring?” — oh, cue the rage!

In taverns and town halls, voices rose bold,

“No taxation without representation!” they told.

And I — yes I — chronicled it all,

From the merchants’ boycotts to the mobs in the hall.

They burned the effigies, they mocked the crown,

They turned every city into protest town!

John Dickinson drafted the Declaration of Rights, you see,
Because Britain forgot what liberty should be!

If Parliament taxes but gives no seat —

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

That’s tyranny in powdered feet!

DAVID RAMSAY

John had flair, I had ink — together we’d sync.

He wrote the revolt; I wrote about the brink!

The British reply:

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

“Oh dear!

DAVID RAMSAY

These colonies think they can write!”

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

“They dare to argue the Empire’s might!”

DAVID RAMSAY

Indeed we did — with feather and fire,

With pamphlets that set the world to inspire!

And in my “History of the American Revolution,”

I penned their defiance — the grand contribution.

For history, my friends, is no quiet affair,

It’s ink and sweat and the courage to care!

I chronicled not kings — but common conviction,

The birth of a nation, with scholarly diction!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Yes I wrote the tale that gave voice to the fight,

From taxed parchment paper to freedom’s first light!

When others swung swords, I wielded a pen —

So we’d never forget how it started — and when!

DAVID RAMSAY

The Stamp Act was Britain’s small miscalculation —

But lucky for me… it made a great publication!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Oh, yah….Oh

DAVID RAMSAY

Oh, The Stamp Act was Britain’s small miscalculation —

But lucky for me… it made a great publication!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Ah

BLACKOUT.

ACT II (THE DECLARATION OF RIGHTS & GRIEVANCES)

SETTING: A delegate chamber within the split-stage world.

STAGE LEFT: DAVID RAMSAY at his writing desk with quill and papers.

STAGE RIGHT: KING GEORGE III on his elevated throne.

STAGE CENTER: Colonial delegates’ chamber with tables, documents, and candles.

AT RISE:

KING GEORGE III sits STAGE RIGHT, surveying the room.

DAVID RAMSAY writes STAGE LEFT.

Delegates assemble at a central table.

JOHN ADAMS

Nine colonies, one table, one aim—

Nine signatures, one rising flame.

Paper meets purpose, ink meets nerve,

Freedom’s a script we’ve learned to serve.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

October 1765—New York City.

We gather with wigs and worry, but the room’s gritty.

The Declaration of Rights and Grievances—our creed,

To tell the Crown exactly what we need.

It called the Stamp Act Congress to stand tall,

Nine colonies united—one voice for all.

Gentlemen, let’s begin—no tantrums, no duels.

Just parchment, ink, and a few golden rules.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

golden rules

JOHN ADAMS

We stay loyal

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Yes

JOHN ADAMS

—but not cheap,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

not cheap,

JOHN ADAMS

Our pockets are shallow,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

And our liberties deep.

JOHN ADAMS

our liberties deep.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

our liberties deep.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

We’re taxed, we’re trapped, we’re tired of decorum,

“Representation,” that’s our quorum.

London decrees, but

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

we’ve got the fees,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Paying rent on rights?

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

That’s a royal disease!

THOMAS JEFFERSON

So they draft it clean, twelve bold lines,

Logic laced in legal rhymes

“We owe allegiance to the King—

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

True.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

But only our assemblies can tax, not you.”

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Who writes the law?

THOMAS JEFFERSON

We write the law!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Who pays the cost?

THOMAS JEFFERSON

We pay the cost!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Whose voice is lost?

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Not ours,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

not ours!

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Not ours,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

If liberty’s a currency, I’m printing change,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Right!

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Loyal to the crown, but reform’s not strange

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Right!

THOMAS JEFFERSON

By what consent do you levy our pay? Without a vote, you’ve gone astray.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Trial by jury—

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Ain’t optional flair,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

It’s justice defined

THOMAS JEFFERSON

by the people’s care. Send that memo to London, with a bow and flair.

JOHN ADAMS

Ben, your logic lands, but my heart’s flame burns,

Rights denied are lessons unlearned.

We plead respect, not revolution—

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Oh….

JOHN ADAMS

Just recognition in our constitution.

We bow to a crown but stand for our name, We pay what’s fair, not what’s claimed.

You can’t tax trust or muzzle the word,

Every heart beats for the right to be heard.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Right to speak, right to plead,

Right to plant our own seed.

Right to stand, right to serve,

Right to be heard—we deserve!

JOHN ADAMS

Petition’s penned, respectful tone,

“We’re loyal subjects—leave us alone.”

Ink still wet, but the message clear,

Freedom whispers—soon we’ll hear.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Hey!

THOMAS JEFFERSON

It’s not rebellion—it’s reason in rhyme,

Justice deferred is injustice in time!

We’re British-born with British rights,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Yet taxed by ghosts who skip our fights!

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Adams, less thunder

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

more lightning—

THOMAS JEFFERSON

You’ll burn the parchment while it’s still drying.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Ah…..

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Then maybe heat’s what wakes their ears,

We’ve paid in pounds, we’ll pay in years!

Compose the creed,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Keep!

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

keep the tone refined,

Respectful ink, revolutionary mind.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

A declaration—measured, not rude……

THOMAS JEFFERSON

A loyal letter with colonial attitude.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Nine….

THOMAS JEFFERSON

colonies—New York, New Jersey—unite!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Nah Nah Nah…..

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Nah Nah…

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Massachusetts to Carolina—ignite!

JEFFERSON + ENSEMBLE: Nah Nah Nah

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Nah Nah…

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Pen to paper,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

pledge to plea,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

“Taxation requires our own decree!”

THOMAS JEFFERSON

requires our own decree!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Nah… Ha, Ha, Ha

THOMAS JEFFERSON

They sign not rebellion, but reasoned phrase,

A promise of law through legal ways.

Yet beneath the seal, a storm is stirred—

Freedom’s heartbeat, faintly heard.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

From ink to action,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

from word to deed,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

We plant the right,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

we sow the seed.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

No throne defines

THOMAS JEFFERSON

what hearts observe,

JEFFERSON + ENSEMBLE: Freedom’s a right we’re born to serve!

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Write it down, sign it proud,

Let London hear our voice out loud.

Not rebels yet, just men who begin—

To claim their right, their origin.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Origin

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Origin

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Origin

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Origin

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Origin

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Origin

Nah, Nah, Nah,…. Nah, no.

KING GEORGE III

Oh, these darling delegates—writing essays as if ink were power! You print, you plead, you preen—but every word you write is still mine.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Oh

KING GEORGE III

I’m the crown, look at this crest, Your breath, your bread—your land’s my nest. You tax my patience, but here’s the twist: Your “rights” exist because I permit!

You want representation? Delightful! You’re represented by my imagination.

Ink your dreams, stamp your cries— The empire hums while your courage dies. You say “liberty,”

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Hey

KING GEORGE III

I say “fee,”

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Oh

KING GEORGE III

You live in history—written by me.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

“Yes, your Majesty, tax our dreams, Charge us twice for freedom’s schemes.”

KING GEORGE III

Remember, my precious provinces— you’re not rebels… just revenue.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da, da-da-da...

KING GEORGE III

rule and decree—

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da da-da-da

KING GEORGE III

property of me!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da da-da-da

KING GEORGE III

Crown on the key - Every paper, every plea—belongs to G3!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da ….

KING GEORGE III

Oh, Belongs to G3!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Oh!

DAVID RAMSAY

October 19th, 1765 — the colonies gathered to complain politely!

The Stamp Act burned their patience brightly. So what did they do?

Oh, a declaration! Twelve colonies in a historic collaboration.

They called it the Declaration of Rights and Grievances,

Which in English means: “Hey, George — enough of these inconveniences!”

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Rights and Grievances! Rights and Grievances!

DAVID RAMSAY

We’re loyal — but you’re testing our leniences!

THE PREMISE WAS SIMPLE, AND RATHER ABSURD

Parliament taxes — we’re not heard!

The colonies said,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

We’re not heard!

DAVID RAMSAY

The colonies said, “We’ll pay our dues,

But not to a Parliament we didn’t choose!”

Now, King George the Third — G3, as the cool kids say —

Believed the sun and the taxes rose his way.

Everything belonged to him — the land, the word…

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Everything belongs to King George the Third!

DAVID RAMSAY

Oh yes — the air we breathed, the ink I spilled,

The paper we stamped, the rights we willed!

John Dickinson drafted that Declaration fine,

With commas, clauses — and a righteous spine!

“We claim the rights of Englishmen true,

And G3 — we’re still loyal to you!”

“For now.” Aha.

They meant it, too!

They weren’t rebels yet, just misunderstood Brits,

Who wanted receipts before paying their bits!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

“Oh dear,”

DAVID RAMSAY

said London, “they sound quite perturbed!”

Yes — and the reply?

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

“Everything belongs to King George the Third!”

RAMSAY + ENSEMBLE: G3! G3! Lord of the fee!

If there’s a penny to stamp, it belongs to me!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Ahh —

DAVID RAMSAY

“We owe allegiance to the Crown.”

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Article Two —

DAVID RAMSAY

“But Parliament, slow your tax down!”

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Article Three —

DAVID RAMSAY

“We have rights, sir, don’t you see?”

Apparently, G3 didn’t.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

From Boston to Philly, they put up their hands,

Demanding respect — and forming new plans.

Ink became protest,

DAVID RAMSAY

parchment became might,

And Ramsay wrote it all — deep into the night!

I chronicled their courage, their cunning, their care,

Each grievance a spark in rebellion’s air!

They weren’t declaring independence — not yet —

But oh, you could feel the powder set.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

“Everything belongs to King George the Third?”

DAVID RAMSAY

Not the story, Your Majesty — that one’s my word!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

So here’s to October, seventeen-sixty-five, RAMSAY:

When rights took ink — and freedom came alive!

They wrote to the King, polite but perturbed, While Ramsay wrote history… and poked G3 the Third!

DAVID RAMSAY

When rights took ink — and freedom came alive!

They wrote to the King, polite but perturbed,

While Ramsay wrote history… and poked G3 the Third!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

History, my friends, is a dangerous word —

DAVID RAMSAY

Especially when everything belongs to King George the Third!

RAMSAY + ENSEMBLE: Ah ….. Oh….

BLACKOUT.

ACT III (THE TOWNSHEND ACT)

SETTING: A continuation of the split-stage world.

STAGE LEFT: DAVID RAMSAY’s writing desk with quill, papers, and candlelight. Pamphlets and correspondence have multiplied, suggesting the growing complexity of events. Ramsay’s space feels more burdened, history accelerating under his pen.

STAGE RIGHT: KING GEORGE III’s elevated throne with royal crest and court trappings. Additional ledgers, tax rolls, and dispatches are visible, reinforcing the bureaucratic machinery of imperial control.

STAGE CENTER: A colonial port city that transforms fluidly into streets, taverns, docks, and assembly spaces. Crates, barrels, shipping manifests, lanterns, and customs tables are arranged to suggest commerce under scrutiny. The space must support rapid shifts between public protest, merchant resistance, and imperial enforcement.

AT RISE:

KING GEORGE III sits STAGE RIGHT, reviewing documents with measured confidence, occasionally gesturing as if issuing orders across the Atlantic.

DAVID RAMSAY sits STAGE LEFT, writing steadily, then pausing to observe the mounting tension between crown and colony before continuing his chronicle.

In the STAGE CENTER, ADAMS, JEFFERSON, FRANKLIN, and the ENSEMBLE move as merchants, dockworkers, customs officials, and citizens. Crates are inspected, papers stamped, goods weighed.

The rhythm is controlled but uneasy—commerce continues, yet distrust hangs in the air.

As the lights settle, the ENSEMBLE freezes briefly between labor

and resistance, caught in the moment before taxation shifts from paper to pressure.

KING GEORGE III

You colonies cost pounds and pence, Your protests make so little sense.

You like your tea, your glass, your lead?

Then pay the tax that paints your shed.

No stamps this time—don’t be cross!

These are duties, a milder gloss.

Imports only—simple math—

Pay at the ports, avoid my wrath.

The revenue funds your governors, judges, and, naturally... loyalty.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Glass, lead, paper, paint, and tea—

All belong to His Majesty!

KING GEORGE III

Raise your cups to the royal plan,

Pay your dues, colonial clan!

Laws from London—neatly signed,

Townshend’s pen and George’s mind!

JOHN ADAMS

June 1767—new decree lands,

Townshend Acts—coins from our hands.

They call it duty—oh, the disguise—

Tax with a wink and powdered lies.

Funds for officials to cut the ties—

No longer paid by us, but by their side.

Governors grin while freedom fades,

London owns the rules we made.

A new Customs Board in Boston—

Search your ships, your homes, your hopes.

The law breathes down your neck like smoke.

And do, do, do….

Taxes on glass—can’t see through that!

Paint the truth, it’ll still look flat.

Paper taxed? Then what’s the cost

of every letter of freedom lost?

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Hey!

JOHN ADAMS

Lead lines heavy, hearts grow sore—

And tea? That’s the final pour.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Hey!

JOHN ADAMS

They fund the governors so they can’t be swayed—

How clever—pay them so they’ll never be afraid… of us.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

No vote, no voice, no say, no choice!

Every duty dulls our voice! Hey!

No vote, no voice, no say, no choice!

Every duty dulls our voice!

No vote, no voice, no say, no choice!

Every duty dulls our voice!

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Boston’s boiling, ink runs red,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Hey!

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Merchants vow—no British bread!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Hey!

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Boycott banners on every wall,

Buy local, brothers—deny the haul!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Hey!

THOMAS JEFFERSON

They tax our trade, they dock our pride,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Hey!

THOMAS JEFFERSON

They push our patience—nation-wide.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Hey!

THOMAS JEFFERSON

So every crate we won’t unload

Is one more spark on freedom’s road.

ENSEMBLE + JEFFERSON: No glass, no tea, no paper decree,

No paint, no lead, no tyranny!

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Write your ledgers, cross the line,

Empty shelves but hearts aligned!

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Letters fly—John Dickinson’s pen,

A Farmer in Pennsylvania again.

He writes: “If once you pay, you’ll pay forever,”

That ink’s rebellion—clever endeavor.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Who’s got goods?

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Who’s got goods?

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

We don’t need ‘em!

Who’s got pride?

THOMAS JEFFERSON

We still feed ‘em!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Still feed ‘em!

THOMAS JEFFERSON

If Britain breaks our liberty,

We’ll brew our own—tax-free tea!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Hey!

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Our tax-free tea!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Hey!

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Ohh..oh

Committees rise from town to town,

Colonial voices circle round.

One people now, one pledge, one word—

“Rights denied shall not be deferred.”

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

We’ll stand, we’ll speak, we’ll fight, we’ll teach,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Till London learns what freedom means to reach. Wo!

JOHN ADAMS

Parliament blinks in 1770’s glare,

Repeals the acts—but leaves one snare:

The tea tax stays, a token chain,

Reminding all who calls the reign.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Glass gone, lead gone, paper gone too—

JOHN ADAMS

But the tea still boils for what we’ll do.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

A penny left unpaid becomes a pound of principle.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Hey!

THOMAS JEFFERSON

They took the duties, but left the spark—

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Hey!

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Now Boston’s waiting in the dark.

We won’t bend the duty line,

No more silence, no more sign.

From pen to port, from ink to flame,

They tax our goods, we’ll change the game!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Oh!

THOMAS JEFFERSON

The Townshend Acts drew the line in sand

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Oh!

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Britain’s law, our counter-stand.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Oh!

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Each duty paid in blood and word—

The birth of freedom has been stirred.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

No vote, no voice, no say, no choice!

Every duty dulls our voice!

No vote, no voice, no say, no choice!

Every duty dulls our voice!

KING GEORGE III

Ah, my tireless colonies—such spirit, such spunk.

So much energy... wasted on disobedience.

You dodge my stamps, you skip my fees,

But duties are destiny—written by me.

Charles Townshend’s name, my royal brand—

A tax in every open hand.

You think resistance makes you free?

How quaint. It only funds... me.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da, da-da-da,

KING GEORGE III

cheers to the crown—

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da, da-da-da,

KING GEORGE III

duties come down.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da, da-da-da,

KING GEORGE III

pour me the tea—

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da, da-da-da,

KING GEORGE III

belong to G3!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Hah!

BLACKOUT.

ACT IV (THE BOSTON MASSACRE)

SETTING: A continuation of the split-stage world, now charged with volatility and imminent violence.

STAGE LEFT: DAVID RAMSAY’s writing desk remains, but the space is darker and more cluttered. Papers are stacked unevenly, pamphlets scattered, ink blotted. The candlelight flickers more aggressively, suggesting urgency and moral strain. Ramsay’s work feels less observational and more burdened, as though history is accelerating faster than he can record it.

STAGE RIGHT: KING GEORGE III’s elevated throne endures, but the atmosphere is colder. Military documents, orders, and dispatches replace earlier ledgers. The throne feels more isolated—commanding yet distant—symbolizing imperial authority issuing force without proximity or consequence.

STAGE CENTER: A snow-lined King Street in Boston that becomes a flashpoint of confrontation between the British soldiers and the colonists. Barrels, crates, stacked firewood, and a sentry post suggest occupation rather than commerce. Lanterns cast uneven pools of light. The space must accommodate crowd movement, military formation, and sudden chaos.

AT RISE:

KING GEORGE III sits STAGE RIGHT, reviewing military orders with detached resolve. He signs a document, seals it, and sets it aside without hesitation.

DAVID RAMSAY sits STAGE LEFT, writing. He pauses, sensing what is coming, then resumes with urgency, as if racing the moment itself.

In the STAGE CENTER, British soldiers stand watch in rigid formation, muskets grounded. The ENSEMBLE moves as Boston townspeople—dockworkers, apprentices, women, sailors—circling

the soldiers with restrained hostility. Snow is implied underfoot; breath hangs in the air.

The rhythm is tense but contained: muttered words, scraping boots, the clink of weapons, the shuffle of the crowd. No violence yet—only the pressure before it breaks. As the lights settle, both sides remain locked in place: authority and anger, order and resistance— balanced on the edge of history.

KING GEORGE III

Boston — how noisy you've become.

Mobs in the streets, taxes unpaid, governors disobeyed!

You need a proper escort of discipline.

I send my redcoats, crisp and bright,

Two thousand men to set things right.

March in step, shine the brass —

Show them how empire handles class.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Two regiments,

KING GEORGE III

boots on stone,

Redcoats claim a city thrown!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Two regiments,

KING GEORGE III

boots on stone,

Redcoats claim a city thrown!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Two regiments, boots on stone,

Redcoats claim a city thrown!

Two regiments, boots on stone,

Redcoats claim a city thrown!

KING GEORGE III

Obedience, my dears, looks best in scarlet.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

October seventeen sixty eight — ships in the bay,

Red rows of order to make us obey.

They call it peace — we call it chains,

Drums in the market, fear in our veins.

JOHN ADAMS

Two thousand troops for sixteen thousand souls —

that’s a quartering plan with lofty goals.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Soldiers in our streets at dawn,

Bayonets where freedom shone.

Order’s mask with iron teeth,

Marching boots beneath our sleep.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

You call it law, I call it fear,

They sleep in our taverns, drink our beer.

Every drumbeat pounds our right to breathe —

Boston’s patience starts to seethe.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Don’t push — don’t shove —

THOMAS JEFFERSON

we’re still free men!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

One more tax and it starts again!

JOHN ADAMS

Commissioners hide behind their pens,

Calling for soldiers to guard their ends.

Protection? Please. It’s occupation —

a bayonet form of conversation.

Every tavern’s talk, every press’s page,

Builds the tension stage by stage.

Boston breathes in powder and rage —

a spark away from history’s stage.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Low Night cold as steel, Custom House door,

Private White keeps watch once more.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Crowd forms, jeers, ice and stone,

“You tax our bread, now take our bone!”

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

“Fire if you dare!"

THOMAS JEFFERSON

“Fire if you dare!"

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

“Fire if you dare!"

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Yah, yah, yah

They’re baiting the barrel, they’re lighting the air,

Snowballs turn bullets —

ENSEMBLE + JEFFERSON: chaos there!

Captain Preston yells

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

“Hold your fire!” —

THOMAS JEFFERSON

but panic breaks and guns conspire!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Five souls fall on King Street’s stones,

Freedom cries in broken tones.

Blood on ice, the city stares,

Liberty dies — then reappears.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Crispus Attucks — remember his name.

First to bleed in the empire’s game.

Adams defends them — justice is due,

Even for men in the King’s red hue.

But verdicts aside, truth rings clear —

Every shot echoes year to year.

Five names written on winter stone,

Each one turns our hearts to stone.

Snow to steam, and ink to flame,

From Boston’s blood was born the name.

We’ll print the truth, we’ll show the world,

The cost of law when guns are hurled.

A massacre — that’s what they’ll read,

And in that word — we plant the seed.

From every snowflake spilled a spark —

The day the streets became our ark.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Ahh….

Marching feet and crimson snow,

Empire’s weight too much to tow.

From bayonet to printing press,

Our grief becomes our wilderness.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

From Townshend’s tax to King Street’s flame,

The world will never look the same.

Blood and ink together blend—

This is where the Revolution begins to bend.

KING GEORGE III

Such a fuss over five!

You’d think a little street scuffle were the end of the world.

Do try to behave, my restless colonies —

there’s tea on the way… and the bill, of course.

Ah – Ah,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da -Da Keep the peace, obey the crown,

Wo - redcoats own the town.

Wo - patience is a royal key—

belong to G3!

KING GEORGE III

You shout of freedom, but you sip my leaves,

You rage at taxes, yet you breathe my breeze.

Each protest penned, each slogan loud—

still rings beneath my royal shroud.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da,

KING GEORGE III

don’t revolt,

just pay the fee,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Wo - Da-da-da,

KING GEORGE III

drink your liberty!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Wo - Da-da-da,

KING GEORGE III

sip it sweet, obey the spree—

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Wo -Da-da-da,

KING GEORGE III

the crown drinks free!

You call it massacre; I call it maintenance.

A little order never hurt an empire, hmm? Mm?

Da-da-

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da…

KING GEORGE III

the throne’s delight, Yah, ooh,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da…

KING GEORGE III

sleep well tonight.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da…

KING GEORGE III

your fate’s with me—

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da...

KING GEORGE III

Yeh, Oh long live G3!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da Da-da-da…

KING GEORGE III

Belongs to G3!

DAVID RAMSAY

When history is written not in ink, but in blood and reason,

we must remember where the first drop fell.

The story of this continent’s awakening did not begin with

muskets and flags— it began with paper.

A few strokes of Parliament’s pen in 1765,

and the colonies found themselves stamped—

not merely with taxes, but with the mark of subordination.

The Stamp Act was no ordinary law.

It was a declaration that Parliament might reach across an ocean

and press its seal upon every thought printed,

every contract written,

every liberty implied.

But America was not silent.

From Boston to Charleston, the cry arose—

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

“No taxation without representation.”

DAVID RAMSAY

That singe phrase became our catechism of liberty.

And so it was that in October of 1765,

delegates from nine colonies met in New York—

their first gathering in common cause—

to draft the Declaration of Rights and Grievances.

They declared, in loyalty but with firmness,

that no power on earth might rightfully tax a people

who had no voice in making the laws.

This was the birth of an idea—

that government must rest upon the consent of the governed.

Two years later, in 1767, Parliament answered not with reason

but with rigor—

the Townshend Acts, a subtle venom disguised as revenue.

Taxes upon glass, lead, paint, paper, and tea—

the very staples of civilized life.

Their proceeds, we were told, would pay the salaries of our own governors,

making them servants of the crown instead of the people.

Boston became the empire’s stage.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

The merchants closed their ledgers;

the patriots raised their voices;

and Parliament, fearing disorder,

DAVID RAMSAY

sent two thousand redcoats to patrol her narrow streets.

Imagine, if you will, a city of sixteen thousand souls

occupied by the army that claimed to defend it.

The clash was inevitable—

not merely of men, but of principles.

On the fifth of March,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

1770,

DAVID RAMSAY

a cold night turned hot with anger.

Stones flew. Muskets flared.

When the smoke cleared, five colonists lay dead—

among them Crispus Attucks,

a man of African and Native blood,

whose body fell first in the long march toward independence.

The people called it “The Boston Massacre.”

London called it “an unfortunate event.”

But for the cause of liberty, it was the sound of a sleeping giant stirring.

You see, revolutions are not born in a single battle—

they are written, inch by inch,

in the slow, deliberate defiance of ordinary people.

The colonists did not yet cry for independence—

they cried for justice,

for rights guaranteed by the same English constitution

their oppressors claimed to uphold.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

From the Stamp Act to the Townshend Acts, from New York’s petitions to Boston’s blood,

DAVID RAMSAY

the world watched a nation being argued into existence.

Every protest, every pamphlet, every martyr—

each was a verse in the poem of America’s awakening.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

And so the path was set.

DAVID RAMSAY

The ink was dry, the fire lit, the tea yet to fall.

What began as resistance to taxing-

would soon become a revolution against tyranny.

Ah!

BLACKOUT

ACT V (THE TEA ACT)

SETTING: A continuation of the split-stage world, now defined by economic manipulation, political brinkmanship, and calculated provocation.

STAGE LEFT: DAVID RAMSAY’s writing desk remains, crowded with pamphlets, broadsides, and correspondence from across the colonies. The candle burns lower than before, wax pooled and uneven, suggesting long nights of documentation. Ramsay’s space reflects mounting urgency—history accelerating toward a decisive rupture.

STAGE RIGHT: KING GEORGE III’s elevated throne endures, now flanked by ledgers, shipping manifests, and sealed parliamentary acts. A crate stamped with the East India Company insignia sits nearby, symbolizing imperial commerce entwined with authority. The throne radiates confidence—control exercised not through force, but through calculated advantage.

STAGE CENTER: A colonial harbor and meeting space that shifts fluidly between docks, taverns, counting houses, and public squares. Tea crates, rope coils, cargo hooks, lanterns, and gangplanks dominate the space. Ships are implied just beyond reach. Commerce is everywhere—and so is surveillance. The environment must support secrecy, debate, public spectacle, and coordinated resistance.

AT RISE:

KING GEORGE III sits STAGE RIGHT, reviewing shipping documents and parliamentary orders with composed satisfaction. He gestures lightly, as if moving pieces on a board, confident in the elegance of the strategy before him.

DAVID RAMSAY sits STAGE LEFT, writing. He pauses frequently now, listening to voices beyond his desk, then resumes with urgency.

The act of recording has become an act of warning.

In the STAGE CENTER, the ENSEMBLE moves as merchants, dockworkers, customs officials, and townspeople. Tea crates are inspected, counted, and guarded. Lanterns glow against the suggestion of night air. Conversations are hushed, glances exchanged. Authority appears orderly—but resistance simmers beneath the surface.

As the lights settle, a crate marked TEA is centered between crown and colony—

THOMAS JEFFERSON

May 10, Seventeen seventy three – new law decreed,

Britain saves the East India Company’s greed.

Monopoly deal, ships set to sail,

Cheap tea bait, but truth in the trail.

Price drops low – the tax remains,

It’s chains in China cups and commerce veins.

They call it “relief,” we call it deceit—

A monopoly served with sugar and heat. Yeah.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

No tea, no trap, no tax disguise,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Freedom won’t be merchandize!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

A bargain so good you’ll sell your rights—

THOMAS JEFFERSON

that’s British math on colonial nights.

They say, “Cheaper tea!”—

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

how fair

THOMAS JEFFERSON

how charitable!

But liberty lost is not repairable.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

I’d rather drink rainwater and principle than imported obedience

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Steep the truth

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

pour the lie,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Freedom boils

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

when prices fly!

THOMAS JEFFERSON

And Steep

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

pour the lie,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Freedom boils

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

when prices fly!

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Yes Steep

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

pour the lie,

JOHN ADAMS

Boston’s harbor lined with crates—

Dartmouth, Beaver, Eleanor waits.

Governor Hutchinson locks the bay,

Says, “Unload it all or you will pay.”

We say no!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

No no

JOHN ADAMS

Not one leaf sold!

Our souls ain’t bought with British gold.

Sons of Liberty mask their name,

If justice won’t speak, then we will proclaim—

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

No tea today!

No tax to pay!

JOHN ADAMS

No tyrant’s cup shall rule our bay!

Now there’s a party no guest will forget. mmm

THOMAS JEFFERSON

December 16, seventeen seventy three

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

moon on the tide,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Sons of Liberty move in stride.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Ooh

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Faces painted, moccasins tight,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Mohawk masks in the winter night.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

One by one, the chests go down,

Tea for King and tea for crown.

Three hundred forty-two to sea—

Freedom brews in Boston tea.

Yeah, No theft, no fire, no spilled rum,

Just justice tipped ’til the harbor’s numb.

They tax our taste to prove control—

Tonight, the waves collect their toll!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

So, Tip it, tip it, into the sea—

THOMAS JEFFERSON

What’s the price of liberty?

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Woh, Tip it, tip it, make them see—

THOMAS JEFFERSON

You can’t tax a mind that’s free!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Oh

JOHN ADAMS

London rages, thrones descend,

“Coercive Acts” around the bend.

Harbor closed, the Bay runs still—

But Boston’s heart defies their will.

They spilled tea; Britain spilled its temper.

And temper boils faster than water.

If tea’s the spark, then let it glow—

From Boston Harbor the flames will grow!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Pour the sea with rebel hand,

Flood the crown and stain the sand.

JOHN ADAMS

From every shore our voices rise—

Freedom steams and never dies!

Wooh, hooh.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

The tea turned fire, the harbor burned,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Oh

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

The world watched and history turned.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Ah

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Three hundred chests, a nation’s cry—

THOMAS JEFFERSON

The price of peace was liberty high……oh… oohh.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Tip it tip it - into the sea

Tip it tip it - into the sea

Tip it tip it - into the sea

Tip it tip it - into the sea

Tip it tip it - into the sea

KING GEORGE III

Oh dear… three hundred forty-two chests!

Such a waste of perfectly good commerce.

You’ve taken “afternoon tea” and turned it into “aftershocks of treason.”

How dreadfully American.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

How dreadfully American.

KING GEORGE III

You spilled my brew across the bay, oh what a pity, Boston clique!

My merchants cry and customs die, and I lose sleep one night a week.

You dress as Mohawks—how divine!

Such pageantry for petty crime.

You think your freedom’s worth a sip?

I’ll show you rule with iron grip.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

You might dump tea

KING GEORGE III

but I pour laws.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Ah,

KING GEORGE III

First, close the harbor — padlock the pier,

Let those dockside dreamers cheer.

Second, strip your assembly's voice—

I never did believe in choice.

Third, quarter troops—yes, in your bed,

Redcoats where you lay your head.

And for dessert, a fine decree—

You'll sip obedience,

KING GEORGE + ENSEMBLE: tax-free!

KING GEORGE III

The colonies call them "Intolerable."

I prefer "Adorable."

You see, I'm not angry, just disappointed.

I offer you civilization, and you return compost.

I offer you representation in my heart (if not in Parliament),

and you repay me with litter in the Atlantic.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-dah, Da-da-da

KING GEORGE III

you made me see, Oh,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da,

KING GEORGE III

your ingratitude tea!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da,

KING GEORGE III

your storm’s begun—

and I make thunder just for fun.

So raise,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Oh

KING GEORGE III

the taxes, raise the stakes,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Oh

KING GEORGE III

If they burn tea, then let the earth shake!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Oh

KING GEORGE III

From London Tower to Boston Bay,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Ah

KING GEORGE III

I’ll make them drink it anyway.

A king must be stern, yet dashing.

They wanted a party—now they’ll have a lesson.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da -da, Da-da-da, Da-da-da,

KING GEORGE III

you’ll learn from me,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Oh, Da-da-da, Da-da-da,

KING GEORGE III

long live G3!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Oh, Da-da-da, Da-da-da,

KING GEORGE III

I’ll rule the sea—

and every cup belongs to me!

DAVID RAMSAY

Ah, tea — that most innocent of leaves.

Steeped in water, it soothes the soul;

steeped in politics, it scalds an empire.

In May of 1773, Parliament, in its infinite wisdom,

decided the way to calm the colonies

was to make their tea cheaper.

Yes — cheaper!

You might say Britain mistook a revolution for a retail problem.

The Tea Act was their masterstroke:

“Let’s rescue the noble East India Company,

give them a monopoly, and flood the colonies with discount tea

— just a tiny tax attached,

for principle’s sake, of course.”

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

A penny for Parliament,

DAVID RAMSAY

a pound of pride lost in the colonies.

But the Americans were far too clever to swallow that brew.

They could smell taxation through porcelain.

Our merchants cried,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

“Monopoly!”

DAVID RAMSAY

Our patriots cried,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

“Manipulation!”

DAVID RAMSAY

Even our smugglers — those entrepreneurs of defiance — cried,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

“Competition!”

DAVID RAMSAY

Soon the harbors buzzed with indignation.

Ships bearing tea sat idly like guilty witnesses:

The Dartmouth, the Eleanor, the Beaver — three floating testaments to poor diplomacy.

Enter Boston, ever dramatic, where Samuel Adams and his Sons of Liberty

decided that if Britain insisted upon taxing their tea,

they would simply — how shall I put it — remove the inventory.

So, on a cold night in December of 1773,

they donned the dress of Mohawk Indians — a disguise equal parts protest and poetry —

and marched to the wharf.

Not with muskets, but with discipline; not to loot, but to make a point.

Three hundred and forty-two chests — more than ninety thousand pounds of tea —

tipped politely into the harbor.

Imagine it:

The most expensive cup of tea in history,

and not a single biscuit served.

London, of course, was outraged.

To them, it wasn’t a party — it was property destruction with costumes.

To America, it was theater with purpose.

Each crate that splashed beneath the moonlight shouted louder than any petition:

“We will not be bought by bargains.”

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Britain thought to sweeten rebellion with sugar,

DAVID RAMSAY

but the colonies found the taste of principle far more satisfying.

Thus, the tea turned to fire,

and the harbor, to a mirror—

reflecting the face of a nation that had at last seen itself.

To commerce, to courage, and to very bad tea decisions—

for they brewed the beginning of liberty.

BLACKOUT

ACT VI (THE INTOLERABLE ACTS)

SETTING: A continuation of the split-stage world, now defined by punishment, coercion, and the collapse of compromise.

STAGE LEFT: DAVID RAMSAY’s writing desk is overwhelmed. Pamphlets, proclamations, and correspondence spill beyond orderly stacks. The candle burns low, guttering frequently, its flame unstable. Ink stains mark haste rather than care. Ramsay’s space reflects a historian no longer chronicling debate, but documenting consequence. The act of writing feels heavier—each word a warning, each page a reckoning.

STAGE RIGHT: KING GEORGE III’s elevated throne is fortified by authority. Parliamentary acts are stacked and sealed: proclamations, enforcement orders, military directives. A map of the colonies is visible, marked and divided. The throne radiates certainty and resolve—control now exercised through closure, force, and fear rather than persuasion.

STAGE CENTER: Boston and the colonies under siege. The space shifts between shuttered ports, silent streets, closed meeting halls, and occupied homes. Barrels lie idle, docks are empty, doors barred. Lanterns burn dimmer than before. The center no longer suggests commerce or protest, but restraint and deprivation. The world feels tightened, constrained, and watched.

AT RISE:

KING GEORGE III sits STAGE RIGHT, calmly signing a succession of parliamentary acts. Each document is sealed with finality and placed aside. There is no hesitation—only method. He surveys the colonial map, satisfied, as if order has been restored.

DAVID RAMSAY sits STAGE LEFT, writing rapidly. He pauses often now, listening beyond the page—as if hearing the consequences

unfold in real time—then resumes with urgency. He does not look relieved; he looks resolved.

In the STAGE CENTER, the ENSEMBLE moves as colonists under occupation: merchants barred from docks, citizens turned away from meeting halls, families displaced by soldiers. British authority is present without mercy. Movement is restrained. Voices are hushed. Resistance has not vanished—but it has gone underground.

As the lights settle, Boston stands isolated, the colonies watching.

KING GEORGE III

Spilled tea? Stained seas? Oh, how impolite!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

How impolite!

KING GEORGE III

When colonies misbehave, a King must rewrite the rules.

You dump my drink?

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Then hear my creed—

KING GEORGE III

Discipline’s the blend

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

the blend I need.

KING GEORGE III

Four laws strong, sweetened with pain:

Boston shall never boil again!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Close the port – shut the trade!

KING GEORGE III

Oh..

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Justice sold, freedom delayed!

KING GEORGE III

Heh, Port Bill — sealed.

Government — replaced.

Quarter Act — expanded.

And as for Massachusetts?

Consider your voice … muted.

JOHN ADAMS

1774 – Empire snaps.

They call them “Coercive,” we call ’em traps.

Boston starved, her harbor sealed,

Merchants robbed of honest yield.

Quarter troops in civil beds,

Bayonets where peace once tread.

The King believes he’ll make us kneel—

but pressure turns resolve to steel.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Who owns the law? / We do!

Who owns the land? / We do!

Who’ll stand together? / We do!

JOHN ADAMS

So much for “tea and tranquility.”

Next up: taxes on oxygen.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

(spoken)

Here in London they sip my wit,

But miss the truth behind it.

I warn the King: coercion breeds Congress—

he laughs and asks for sugar in his progress.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

The more they press,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

the more we print.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

The more they shout,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

the less we listen.

Letters fly across the sea—

“From Boston’s chains to liberty!”

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

They punish Boston to make us bow,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

But all thirteen stand together now. Virginia calls, Carolina hears,

From north to south the echo clears:

“We’ll send our minds, not men with arms—

Congress meets to sound alarms!”

Ride the road, spread the word,

Freedom’s voice will now be heard!

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

If Boston’s the warning bell,

Philadelphia’s the answer.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

September 1774 – delegates arrive,

Thirteen hearts that beat alive.

From Adams to Henry, men confined by law—

now writing their way through freedom’s flaw.

They draft a pledge:

“Unite we stand,

For rights of Englishmen and land.”

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

No war yet — no blood —

THOMAS JEFFERSON

just reason’s fire,

But every pen a loaded wire.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Thirteen voices, one design,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Draw the line, the duty line.

From every colony comes the cry:

No more chains —

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

no more lie!

Ah.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

They shut our harbor, but opened our eyes;

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

They shut our harbor, but opened our eyes;

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Tyranny’s the tea we won’t buy.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Tyranny’s the tea we won’t buy.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Send word to London, let it be known—

America speaks in a voice its own!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

From Boston’s flame to Philly’s door,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

We won’t bow to Kings no more!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Ink and honor, voice and quill—

THOMAS JEFFERSON

The pen has power, the heart has will!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

They called them “Intolerable,”

THOMAS JEFFERSON

so we agree—

We’ll tolerate nothing but liberty.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Each law you pass, each chain you twist—

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Becomes another line on freedom’s list.

DAVID RAMSAY

When a King loses his temper, he doesn’t shout — he legislates.

And in 1774, His Majesty George the Third produced a masterclass in overreaction.

The world called them the Intolerable Acts.

In London, they called them the Coercive Acts — because “coercion” apparently sounds more polite when printed on parchment.

The idea was simple: Boston had spilled His Majesty’s tea — so Britain would spill a bit of Boston.

First, the Boston Port Act:

“Until the East India Company is compensated, Boston Harbor shall be closed.”

Closed! Closed, Closed, Closed, Closed, Closed, Closed,

No ships, no trade, no livelihood — the economic equivalent of telling a fish to hold its breath.

Second, the Massachusetts Government Act:

It replaced the colony’s elected council with royal appointees — a lovely way of saying,

“You may vote, but only for the people I’ve already chosen.”

Third, the Administration of Justice Act:

British officials accused of crimes in the colonies could be tried back home in England —

a brilliant plan if one enjoys acquittals by oceanic distance.

Fourth, the Quartering Act:

British troops might now reside in your home to protect you from — well — yourself.

Imagine arguing over rent with a man who carries a bayonet.

And finally, a little cherry on this imperial sundae — the Quebec Act,

extending Canada’s boundaries southward and granting tolerance to Catholics.

A reasonable law, perhaps, but to the colonists, it felt like a backdoor invasion and a papal surprise.

Five acts, one message:

“Behave, or the empire will move into your living room.”

Oh, It was meant to frighten us into obedience.

Instead, it united us in indignation.

Boston’s misery became everyone’s cause.

Merchants in Charleston sent grain to feed her poor;

Farmers in Pennsylvania prayed for her courage.

Even Virginia — genteel Virginia! — declared that

“the cause of Boston is the cause of all America.”

You see, tyranny has a curious effect.

The harder it presses, the more it polishes the spirit beneath it.

The King thought to isolate rebellion in one colony —

and in doing so, he gave thirteen colonies a single identity.

From New Hampshire to Georgia, committees of correspondence buzzed like an electrical circuit

— news, outrage, pamphlets, poems, prayers.

All roads, all tempers, all quills now pointed toward Philadelphia.

The British called it “treason in ink.”

We called it preparation.

There, in that City of Brotherly Argument,

the First Continental Congress would gather —

not yet rebels, not yet revolutionaries,

but gentlemen who had discovered that the best way to answer

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

bad laws

DAVID RAMSAY

was to write better ones.

Thus, the “Intolerable Acts” proved intolerable indeed.

The crown tried to close a harbor — and opened the door to revolution.

So let it be remembered:

no empire ever bullied a people into freedom,

but many have bullied themselves into losing one.

To Boston,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Boston,

DAVID RAMSAY

for having the nerve;

to Parliament,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Parliament,

DAVID RAMSAY

for having the audacity;

and to history,

for enjoying irony as much as I do.

Oh

BLACKOUT

ACT VII (THE CONTINTENTAL CONGRESS)

SETTING: A continuation of the split-stage world, now transformed into a space of deliberation, unity, and irreversible consequence.

STAGE LEFT: DAVID RAMSAY's writing desk is orderly once more, though heavily worn. Pages are stacked with care, bound by ribbon or weighted with stones. The candle burns steady and bright for the first time in several acts, suggesting purpose rather than panic. Ramsay's posture reflects clarity: history is no longer merely reacting—it is being shaped.

STAGE RIGHT: KING GEORGE III's elevated throne remains, but the space feels more distant, colder, and increasingly irrelevant. Maps of the colonies hang behind him, now annotated, divided, and partially obscured by shadow. Royal correspondence lies unopened or discarded. Authority is present—but no longer central.

STAGE CENTER: Independence Hall in Philadelphia. Long tables, chairs, quills, inkstands, and scattered papers form a chamber of debate. The space is formal yet unfinished—part courtroom, part workshop. Flags, seals, and symbols of unity are emerging but not yet fixed. This is a room built for argument, compromise, and resolve. The air is charged with urgency, restraint, and shared risk.

AT RISE:

DAVID RAMSAY sits STAGE LEFT, writing with deliberation. He pauses to review a page, nods once, and continues—less frantic now, more certain. His role has shifted from witness to recorder of intention.

KING GEORGE III sits STAGE RIGHT, isolated. He scans dispatches from across the Atlantic, frustration restrained behind

ceremony. He listens—but is no longer heard.

In the STAGE CENTER, delegates of the Continental Congress gather. ADAMS, JEFFERSON, FRANKLIN, and the ENSEMBLE enter as representatives of thirteen colonies. They take seats, adjust papers, confer in hushed tones. Some debate quietly; others watch, calculating. The sound of chairs moving and pages turning replaces the noise of protest and commerce.

There is no crowd outside, no soldiers in the streets—only men deciding whether words will now replace petitions, and unity will replace loyalty.

As the lights settle, all eyes move toward the center table.

JOHN ADAMS

September Seventeen Seventy Four — Philadelphia calls,

12 colonies — no room for flaws.

They come with quills, not swords or guns,

But ideas sharp as any one.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

A petition to the King —

We stand for rights, and let it sing!

No stamp, no tea, no quartered men,

We send our plea — let’s start again!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Rights we claim, rights we write,

No more chains, no more fight.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Unity! We’re standing tall,

For liberty, we give our all!

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

A petition? To a King who calls us children?

We’ll see if it’s a tantrum or a turning point.

JOHN ADAMS

The Continental Association, no goods, no trade,

If it’s British-made, let it fade.

Boycotts are our silent arms,

We won’t feed their royal charms.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

We stand united, with rights to claim,

To a King who’ll never play fair games.

We’ll starve their markets, break their hold,

We fight with ink, not swords of gold.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Boycott their goods, boycott their rule,

No British trade, no British school.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

We’ll write our rights in every hand,

And stand as free across the land.

KING GEORGE III

What’s this? “Continental Congress”?

Boycotts? How quaint, how very quaint.

A petition, a boycott, and now a parliament of rebels?

Do they forget whose ships bring their luxuries, whose hands make the law?

Da-da-da-da-da-da-da.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da-da-da-da

KING GEORGE III

Da

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da-da-da-da

KING GEORGE III

Da

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da-da-da-da

KING GEORGE III

Da – Da-ah

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da

KING GEORGE III

I own the seas,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da,

KING GEORGE III

I make the pleas!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da,

KING GEORGE III

they’ll bow to me,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da,

KING GEORGE III

they'll drink my tea!

How adorable — you write letters,

I'll write back in cannonballs.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

April 19, Seventeen Seventy Five — the King thinks he's won,

Lexington — the first shot's begun.

Minutemen stand on fields of green,

With musket in hand, the fight unseen.

JOHN ADAMS

The Redcoats march, but so do we!

The Revolution's now a certainty.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

In Concord, we wait, our hearts in gear,

This fight will echo far and near.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

The shot heard 'round the world!

We're free, we're bold, we're unfurled.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

No more silence, no more chains—

The Revolution now remains!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

It wasn’t just a fight,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

it was a spark!

The fuse had been lit since 1765,

But now the fire’s real — and loud — and bright.

It’s not tea, it’s not ink — it’s blood tonight.

JOHN ADAMS

The Second Continental Congress — they convene,

May Seventeen Seventy Five, with a burning scene.

Washington’s named to lead the fight,

He’ll face the crown, and set it right.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

They’ll need more than a militia to face an empire’s might…

but it’s a start. And a start is all we’ve ever had.

JOHN ADAMS

They choose a general who’s calm and steady,

While Britain’s troops are mad and heady.

The Continental Army’s born this day—

We’ll march, we’ll fight, we’ll find our way.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

The Army stands, the banners rise!

Liberty’s spark in every eye!

We stand as one, the time has come—

The battle’s on, the war’s begun!

The Army stands, the banners rise!

Liberty’s spark in every eye!

We stand as one, the time has come—

The battle’s on,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

the war’s begun!

We signed the call to arms, not for war,

but for the rights we could not ignore.

The King may rule by blood and ink,

But we’ll rise in steel — and never shrink.

JOHN ADAMS

From Lexington to Concord’s ground,

The flame of freedom knows no bounds.

We stand, we fight, we claim our prize —

A nation born beneath these skies!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

We’ve heard the shot, now we reply—

The future’s ours, the King will die!

THOMAS JEFFERSON

From sea to sea, from shore to shore,

We fight for freedom, forevermore!

From sea to sea,

ENSEMBLE + JEFFERSON: from shore to shore,

We fight for freedom,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

forevermore!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Ah…

DAVID RAMSAY

It began, as revolutions often do,

not with muskets, but with meetings.

In September of Seventeen Seventy Four, in the city of Philadelphia,

twelve of the thirteen colonies — all but Georgia —

sent their brightest, boldest, and most opinionated minds

to one room, one purpose, and one monumental headache:

what to do about the King.

They called it the First Continental Congress —

a fine, dignified name for what was essentially

a thirteen-way argument with quills.

There was Adams, fiery as a torch;

Franklin, calm as a storm waiting its turn;

and Jefferson,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

young enough to still believe

DAVID RAMSAY

that reason might triumph over royalty.

They met from September to October,

drafting a Declaration of Rights to remind Britain

that the colonists were not rebels, but Englishmen,

who merely wanted the privileges of Englishmen —

namely, to pay their own taxes and complain about it freely.

They also wrote a petition to the King,

full of elegance, respect, and the sort of politeness

that almost disguises the fact that one is furious.

And, as if to underline their point with ink instead of gunpowder,

they agreed to the Continental Association —

a boycott of British goods so total

that tea became more dangerous than rum.

Parliament called them “troublemakers.”

The colonies called them representatives.

History calls them the beginning of America.

But of course, the King was unmoved.

He’d read their petitions with the same attention

one gives to a shopping list already forgotten.

And so, April 19, 1775, dawned —

and with it, Lexington and Concord.

No declaration, no diplomacy,

just musket smoke and confusion —

and the sound of a single shot

that would be heard ‘round the world.

No one can say who fired it.

Perhaps it was chance. Perhaps it was destiny.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

But from that sound,

DAVID RAMSAY

the line between “colonist”

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

and “rebel”

DAVID RAMSAY

snapped like a musket string.

Eight Americans lay dead at Lexington,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

but an entire nation woke up.

DAVID RAMSAY

And as the smoke cleared, Britain found itself

at war with an idea —

one that could not be bayoneted, or taxed,

or shipped back to London for trial.

Then came May of Seventeen Seventy Five —

the Second Continental Congress, again in Philadelphia.

Same city, new mood.

Gone were the polite petitions and careful phrasing;

these were men with powder on their coats

and the echo of battle in their ears.

They did not yet declare independence —

but they governed like they already had.

They formed a Continental Army,

and placed its command in the hands of a tall Virginian

whose calm could silence a cannon —

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

George Washington. Oh,

DAVID RAMSAY

Thus, what began as a Congress

became a government,

and what began as a protest

became a war.

By mid-1776, the argument with Britain

was no longer about policy — it was about identity.

We were no longer asking to be heard;

we were preparing to be free.

And in that span — from the ink of petitions

to the smoke of muskets —

the colonies had changed beyond recall.

They had found unity in defiance,

purpose in principle,

and courage enough to write history with their own hands.

As I once wrote —

“Revolutions are not born in chaos;

they are the consequence of reason refused too long.”

And reason, at last, had run out.

BLACKOUT

ACT VIII (THE OLIVE BRANCH)

SETTING: A continuation of the split-stage world, now suspended between conciliation and confrontation.

STAGE LEFT: DAVID RAMSAY’s writing desk is meticulously arranged. A fresh sheet of parchment lies centered, unblemished. The quill is clean, the ink newly poured. The candle burns calmly, its flame steady but restrained—suggesting careful hope rather than certainty. Ramsay’s space reflects restraint, diplomacy, and the gravity of a final appeal.

STAGE RIGHT: KING GEORGE III’s elevated throne appears intact but emotionally remote. Diplomatic correspondence, sealed petitions, and unopened letters are stacked nearby. The throne is well-lit yet unmoved—an image of authority surrounded by words it has not yet chosen to hear. The power remains, but the distance is unmistakable. STAGE CENTER:

A formal chamber that shifts between the Continental Congress in Philadelphia and the imagined court of St. James. Tables are cleared of clutter; documents are presented with care. Olive branches, symbolic rather than literal, are suggested through arrangement and lighting. The space feels quieter than before—less heated, more deliberate—charged with the tension of a final attempt at peace.

AT RISE:

DAVID RAMSAY sits STAGE LEFT, reviewing a carefully drafted document. He rereads a line, makes a small correction, then pauses—aware of the weight of what is being sent across the ocean. He begins writing again, slowly and precisely.

KING GEORGE III sits STAGE RIGHT, reading unrelated dispatches. The Olive Branch Petition lies nearby but unopened. He glances toward it once, then turns away, choosing routine over

reconciliation.

In the STAGE CENTER, members of the Continental Congress gather in solemn unity. ADAMS, JEFFERSON, FRANKLIN, and the ENSEMBLE confer quietly. There is no shouting, no protest—only controlled urgency. A document is passed hand to hand, signed, sealed, and prepared for delivery.

The mood is cautious but sincere: one last appeal to reason, loyalty, and shared history.

As the lights settle, the Olive Branch Petition rests between colony and crown— extended, unanswered, and trembling in the silence.

The choice now belongs to the King.

JOHN ADAMS

July Seventeen Seventy Five.

War drums outside — quills scratching inside.

The colonies bleed, yet Congress prays for peace.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Guns in Boston, ink in hand,

We plead for peace, we take a stand.

Two scrolls born the very same day—

One begs peace, one says, “We’ll slay.”

JOHN ADAMS

How do you petition a King with powder on your sleeve?

He’s deaf to ink, You’ve got to make him believe.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

(spoken)

Adams wants thunder, Dickinson wants tact—

Me? I just want results, not acts.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Ink and arms, arms and ink,

Freedom’s closer than we think.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

John Dickinson drafts the plea,

“Your Majesty, we’re loyal — can’t you see?”

No talk of crowns or revolution,

Just peace through humble resolution.

JOHN ADAMS

Loyal? We’ve buried sons in red-coated graves!

You don’t beg tyrants — you unchain slaves!

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

(spoken)

Shh… He’s writing a petition, not a declaration.

Yet.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

O King, we kneel, we cry, we plead,

To end the fight, to plant the seed.

Of peace restored, of mercy earned—

Before our homes to ashes turn.

KING GEORGE III

Petition? How quaint.

I don’t negotiate with malcontents.

They dump my tea, now send their tears—

I’ll answer them with British cheers.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da,

KING GEORGE III

they bend the knee,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da, Da-da-da,

KING GEORGE III

they still serve me!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da, Da-da-da,

KING GEORGE III

their muskets play,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da,

KING GEORGE III

I’ll make them pay!

Prepare the proclamation.

If they take up arms, then I take up empire.

JOHN ADAMS

The ink dries fast — a different tone.

Now Jefferson writes what reason’s shown:

THOMAS JEFFERSON

“We seek not thrones nor crowns nor fame,

But rights denied in the King’s own name.”

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

“We’ve taken arms, not out of lust—

But for law, for liberty, for trust!”

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

(spoken)

For if obedience means silence,

Then rebellion sounds like honesty.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

We take up arms, though hearts are torn,

To guard the rights by birth we’re born.

No tyrant’s chain, no foreign flame,

Can burn the truth that bears our name.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Not slaves to fear, nor fools for war—

But forced by lawless rule, no more.

We’ll fight for peace — paradox defined—

For the rights of all mankind.

KING GEORGE III

I have heard enough of their insolence.

August twenty-third, seventeen seventy-five:

By my hand and seal, I declare—

“The colonies are in open and avowed rebellion.”

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da,

KING GEORGE III

rebellion’s crime,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da, Da-da-da

KING GEORGE III

they’ve crossed the line!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da, Da-da-da

KING GEORGE III

no peace, no plea—

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da, Da-da-da

KING GEORGE III

they’ll answer to me!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

The olive withers, the muskets bloom,

From parchment peace to powder’s doom.

JOHN ADAMS

The King has spoken — the bridge is burned,

Each plea denied, each ship returned.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

The olive fell, the sword was drawn,

The dawn of war becomes our dawn.

JOHN ADAMS

Oh, We prayed for peace, but peace denied,

Leaves only courage, sanctified.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

(spoken)

When reason fails, revolution replies.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

From ink to arms, from hope to flame,

We rise as one, no more the same.

Let tyrants rage and empires fall—

THOMAS JEFFERSON

For freedom’s cause, we pledge it all!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

For freedom’s cause, we pledge it all!

DAVID RAMSAY

It is a curious thing —

how empires fall not with cannon, but with correspondence.

In the summer of 1775, the colonies made their final appeal to reason,

their last polite knock upon the palace door.

They called it the Olive Branch Petition,

for what could be gentler than an olive branch?

Peaceful. Civil. Almost naïve.

Picture it: men who’d just authorized an army and named a general

now sitting down to draft a love letter to the very King

whose soldiers they were already shooting at.

The author — John Dickinson of Pennsylvania —

a man of peace in an age of powder.

He wrote with sincerity, humility, and an optimism so pure

it might have floated off the page if not weighed down by royal indifference.

It began: “Most Gracious Sovereign, we entreat your majesty to interpose…”

Beautiful words — and tragically misplaced.

For while that parchment sailed east across the Atlantic,

British troops marched west across our fields.

By the time the petition reached London,

the King had already made up his mind.

August 23, Seventeen Seventy-Five —

George the Third issued his reply,

not in ink, but in proclamation:

the colonies, he declared, were “in open and avowed rebellion.”

And just like that,

a monarch who could have ruled by affection chose instead to rule by fear.

The olive branch was returned — not broken, not burned —

but ignored.

Which, as every historian knows, is the deadliest rejection of all.

But Congress, being the peculiar body it was,

answered diplomacy with duality.

For even as they sent the King that gentle plea,

they published, the very next day,

a Declaration of the Causes and Necessity of Taking Up Arms.

It was Jefferson’s pen that carved the contradiction:

“We do not wish for separation,” he wrote,

“but we are resolved to die freemen rather than to live slaves.”

Now, there’s the American character in a sentence —

apologize with one hand, reload with the other.

Still, this was not rebellion for its own sake.

These men were not zealots. They were exhausted.

A decade of taxes, troops, and insults had driven them to the edge of loyalty,

and the King’s silence pushed them over it.

By rejecting the Olive Branch,

Britain declared war not just on her colonies,

but on her own better nature.

And in doing so, she did the one thing

no British army could ever have done alone —

she united America.

From that moment, there was no turning back.

The colonies began to see themselves not as subjects,

but as citizens.

Not as rebels,

but as founders in the making.

The letters were finished,

the petitions sent,

and history, as ever impatient,

reached for the quill to write a new word: “Independence.”

And thus, the age of appeals ended,

and the age of declarations began.

I suppose one could say —

the King kept his throne,

but lost his audience.

Now watch closely, my friends.

For in the next act, we stop writing to kings…

and start writing for mankind.

BLACKOUT

Act IX (THE ROAD TO INDEPENDENCE)

SETTING: A continuation of the split-stage world, now irrevocably fractured. The space reflects acceleration—ideas hardening into action, restraint giving way to resolve.

STAGE LEFT: DAVID RAMSAY’s writing desk is crowded beyond recovery. Pamphlets, drafts, broadsides, and letters overlap in urgent disorder. Ink stains mark revisions made late into the night. Multiple candles burn at once, their wax pooling and dripping unchecked. Ramsay’s space conveys momentum—history no longer unfolding patiently, but rushing forward under the pressure of events. The act of recording has become an act of preservation.

STAGE RIGHT: KING GEORGE III’s elevated throne remains, but it is now surrounded by military correspondence, proclamations of rebellion, and reports of armed conflict. The diplomatic papers of earlier acts are gone. Maps show skirmishes, troop movements, and contested territories. The throne feels rigid, defensive—authority reacting rather than commanding.

STAGE CENTER: A series of transitional spaces: colonial roads, printing houses, taverns, assembly halls, and militia fields. Benches, crates, drums, and flags are introduced as needed. The environment supports motion—riders arriving with news, presses in motion, crowds forming and dispersing. The center no longer suggests debate alone, but mobilization.

AT RISE:

DAVID RAMSAY sits STAGE LEFT, writing quickly, stopping only to listen as voices and movement rise around him. He pauses, looks up from the page, then continues—aware that the pace of events is outstripping even his words.

KING GEORGE III sits STAGE RIGHT, reviewing reports of

resistance and unrest. His posture is firm, but the confidence of earlier acts has narrowed into resolve edged with frustration. He signs an order, then another—each one more severe than the last.

In the STAGE CENTER, the ENSEMBLE moves constantly: messengers arrive breathless; printers work presses relentlessly; colonists argue, organize, and arm. ADAMS, JEFFERSON, FRANKLIN, and others move among them, no longer asking whether separation is necessary, but how it will be justified.

The atmosphere is charged with inevitability. Words still matter—but they now race alongside drums, boots, and resolve. As the lights settle, roads stretch outward from the center—leading not toward compromise, but toward a declaration waiting to be written.

JOHN ADAMS

April twelve, seventeen-seventy-six,

Halifax meets to fix the mix.

North Carolina takes the lead,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

“Vote for freedom!” —

JOHN ADAMS

that’s the creed.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

First to shout what all men knew,

JOHN ADAMS

“No King for me, no tax for you!”

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Raise your hands — aye!

Raise your voices — high!

JOHN ADAMS

Halifax writes what we all feel inside!

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

(spoken)

Leave it to Carolina to say the quiet part out loud.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Then comes May tenth.

JOHN ADAMS

Augusta’s call,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

No text survives,

JOHN ADAMS

but we know it all.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

They dreamed a union

JOHN ADAMS

strong and free,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Not thirteen fragments, one destiny.

JOHN ADAMS

We pledge as states, not subjects bowed,

Together we rise, together we’re proud.

A nation without a name yet

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

(spoken)

how deliciously premature.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

May fifteenth, seventeen-seventy-six,

Virginia moves the politics.

Pendleton writes, Mason frames,

Patrick Henry fans the flames!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

“No more chains, no delay,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Send the word to Philly

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

today!”

THOMAS JEFFERSON

From Williamsburg’s hall the echo flies,

To Congress doors and patriot skies.

JOHN ADAMS

And thus Virginia hands Lee his script.

The curtain on independence is ready to lift.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Mr. President,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

I rise for Virginia’s voice:

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Freedom is not a wish

THOMAS JEFFERSON

it’s a choice!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

“That these United Colonies are,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

and of right ought to be,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Free and independent States!”

THOMAS JEFFERSON

that’s me!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Free and independent States!

Free and independent States!

JOHN ADAMS

No King, no Parliament, no crown decree,

We hold our fate and liberty!

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Alliance abroad, confederate plan,

We build a nation — one out of man.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

The words ignite, the room falls still,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

History leans closer to listen.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Free and independent what?

KING GEORGE III

You colonial comedians!

Do you think you can quit the Empire?

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da,

KING GEORGE III

my subjects scheme,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da,

KING GEORGE III

they chase a dream.

Da-da-da,

you’ll see, you’ll see —

You can’t divorce a King like

ENSEMBLE + KING GEORGE: me!

KING GEORGE III

Independence is treason in a fancier hat!

JOHN ADAMS

April to June — the tide has turned,

Each colony speaks, each bridge is burned.

From Halifax first to Lee’s bold line,

The cause of freedom’s now divine!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

We rise as States from sea to shore,

The chains are gone — we’ll serve no more!

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

(spoken)

Gentlemen, congratulations — we’re now united in danger.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Free and independent we stand,

Our own design, our promised land.

Ink and courage, blood and pen—

THOMAS JEFFERSON

The Revolution starts again!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Free and independent we stand,

Our own design, our promised land. Ink and courage, blood and pen

THOMAS JEFFERSON

The Revolution starts again!

DAVID RAMSAY

By the spring of 1776, the question was no longer whether the colonies would separate from Britain —

only when, and who would dare to say it out loud first.

For ten years they had protested, petitioned, and politely begged to be heard.

Now they began — one by one — to stand, to speak, and to sever.

The first to draw the sword in parchment was North Carolina.

On April twelfth, in the little town of Halifax,

her delegates declared that they were ready —

ready to vote for independence,

ready to break from Britain,

ready to trade “God save the King” for “God help us all.”

They called it the Halifax Resolves —

and with that, the South fired the first political shot of the Revolution.

Then came Virginia, always fond of leading parades she didn’t start.

In May, the men of Augusta County wrote what history calls the Augusta Declaration —

its words are lost, but its meaning rings clear:

that the colonies should form not just thirteen rebellions,

but one independent union of states.

The text may have vanished, but the idea refused to.

A week later, on May fifteenth, Virginia’s full convention in Williamsburg

went where no royal colony had gone before.

They instructed their delegates in Philadelphia to propose independence outright —

and in that moment, the political fuse was lit.

The same assembly also ordered a new Virginia Constitution

and Bill of Rights, written by George Mason,

whose words would echo later in Jefferson’s own pen.

And then — June seventh, 1776 — the motion that changed the world.

A Virginian named Richard Henry Lee rose in Congress and spoke the words

that made the room go silent,

that made even time hold its breath:

“That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be,

free and independent States.”

Simple.

Irrefutable.

Revolutionary.

The motion was seconded by John Adams,

debated for days, and postponed — not from doubt,

but from prudence.

Even revolution, you see, must first check its calendar.

Yet the tide was unstoppable.

Each colony sent back new instructions, new votes, new courage.

From taverns to town halls, the word “independence”

no longer meant treason — it meant tomorrow.

Thus, by midsummer,

the pen had finally caught up with the musket.

The Congress, once a debating club for grievances,

had become the midwife of a nation.

And in the days to come,

they would task one man — a quiet Virginian with a sharp quill—

to put their courage into words.

His name, of course, was Thomas Jefferson.

So it was that from April’s resolves to June’s resolution,

America learned what every great cause must:

that freedom is never granted all at once,

but gathered — signature by signature, soul by soul.

In a few short weeks,

those words would no longer be whispered in taverns or written in secrecy —

they would be proclaimed before Heaven and the world.

The colonies had spoken. Now they would declare.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

And so — the pen is lifted.

DAVID RAMSAY

The Declaration awaits.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

And so — the pen is lifted.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

The Declaration awaits.

BLACKOUT

ACT X (THE COMMITTEE OF FIVE)

SETTING: A continuation of the split-stage world, now narrowed in focus and sharpened by purpose. The vast movement toward independence condenses into language, authorship, and accountability.

STAGE LEFT: DAVID RAMSAY’s writing desk remains crowded, but the disorder has shifted into intent. Drafts are stacked by subject rather than chronology. Margins are filled with notes, corrections, and emphatic underlines. Multiple quills rest nearby, as though the act of writing has become communal by proxy. The candlelight is steadier here—less frantic, more deliberate—suggesting clarity emerging from chaos.

STAGE RIGHT: KING GEORGE III’s elevated throne stands firm, but the space feels increasingly disconnected from the center of events. Military dispatches and reports of colonial coordination replace earlier proclamations. Maps are now marked with unified colonial responses rather than isolated unrest. Authority remains present, but it feels distant—issuing commands that arrive too late.

STAGE CENTER: A chamber within the Continental Congress designated for drafting. A long table dominates the space, strewn with parchment, inkpots, reference documents, and prior petitions. Chairs are positioned close together, forcing proximity and collaboration. The room is quieter than earlier public spaces, but far more consequential—this is where words will become irrevocable.

AT RISE:

DAVID RAMSAY sits STAGE LEFT, writing with focused attention. He pauses occasionally, listening toward the center, aware that history is no longer being debated broadly—it is being composed deliberately.

KING GEORGE III sits STAGE RIGHT, reading reports of colonial unity and diplomatic failure. He sets one document aside, then another, his movements controlled but increasingly rigid. The distance between throne and colony is now unmistakable.

In the STAGE CENTER, JEFFERSON, ADAMS, FRANKLIN, SHERMAN, and LIVINGSTON gather around the table. They arrange papers, exchange brief looks, and settle into position. No speeches yet— only preparation. The gravity of authorship hangs over the room. This is not a committee formed to negotiate— but to articulate a separation already underway.

As the lights settle, quills are lifted, parchment steadied, and the room holds its breath— five men preparing to give a nation its voice.

JOHN ADAMS

Motion carried!

A committee of five will draft the declaration!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Five for freedom, five to write,

Five to turn the spark to light!

JOHN ADAMS

We’ve voted the words — now who’ll wield the pen?

We need a message that can move all men!

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

(spoken)

Preferably one that won’t get us hanged again.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Five names: Jefferson, Adams, Franklin, Sherman, Livingston.

JOHN ADAMS

God help us — we’ll argue till July.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

They chose me to draft it.

Not because I spoke the loudest,

but because I listened hardest.

I’m a Virginian — the colony of kings,

but I believe in the rights that freedom brings.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Not crowns, not thrones, not royal decree,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

But “equal creation” — that’s liberty!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

We need passion, Tom, but tempered reason.

JOHN ADAMS

Write for the world,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

not just this season.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

(spoken)

And do try not to insult the French — we'll need them next year.

JEFFERSON + ENSEMBLE: I'll write the truth that makes men free,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Let ink outlive the musket's plea.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Write the truth

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Write the truth let it be free…

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Governments rest on the governed's consent,

JOHN ADAMS

That's where power, not monarchs, went!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Add a dash of reason, a pinch of wit,

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

(spoken)

Make it sound noble — not like we threw a fit.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Keep it brief, precise, no royal rant,

No flowery words we can’t recant.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Each stroke must carry the weight of a world.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Five minds, one line,

Freedom’s draft, freedom’s sign.

Five minds, one line,

Freedom’s draft, freedom’s sign.

Five minds, one line,

Freedom’s draft, freedom’s sign.

JOHN ADAMS

Tom, I like it — “sacred and undeniable”?

Let’s call them “self-evident.” Less theological, more logical.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

And more musical.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

“He has obstructed justice... kept standing armies...”

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

(spoken)

Good — keep the charges crisp. List the tyrannies like a drumline.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

One — taxation. Two — occupation.

Three — trial by transport, domination.

Each grievance a step from the throne,

Each word a stone on freedom’s road.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

We’re not just breaking chains of gold,

We’re forging rights from truths untold.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

The world will read, the world will see —

That freedom lives in “We hold these…”

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Five minds, five hearts, one creed,

The world awaits the words we need.

JOHN ADAMS

We write not for kings, but for mankind,

To free the body and free the mind.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

We sign not for pride,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

but for cause,

To turn rebellion into laws.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

History’s quill doesn’t forgive typos — make it count.

JOHN ADAMS

This ink will outlive every crown,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

The words will rise when empires drown.

Let tyrants tremble, let nations hear,

The birth of freedom starts right here.

Five men, one pen, by Heaven’s hand —

ENSEMBLE + JEFFERSON: We draft the soul of this new land!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Five for freedom, five to write,

Five who gave the world its light!

Ink and courage, heart and will —

The future waits for Jefferson’s quill!

DAVID RAMSAY

By June of Seventeen Seventy Six, the American colonies had done everything short of writing independence.

They had fought the King’s soldiers, ignored his governors, and toasted rebellion in every tavern from Boston to Savannah —

but no one had yet dared to define it.

And defining things, my friends, is where revolutions get complicated.

Once you put an idea on paper, you can’t take it back.

You can hide muskets, you can hide soldiers,

but you can’t hide a sentence that changes the world.

So, on June 11th, in the heat of Philadelphia, the Continental Congress did what any sensible body of politicians does

when faced with a monumental task:

they appointed a committee.

Five men.

Five colonies represented.

Five brains that could barely agree on lunch.

And somehow, these five were expected to explain to all mankind

why thirteen colonies thought they could out vote an empire.

First, John Adams — the voice of New England and the human embodiment of caffeine.

A lawyer by trade, a philosopher by temperament,

and a man entirely convinced that the Almighty took notes when he spoke.

“Independence now!” he thundered.

You could hear him clear to the Delaware.

Then came Benjamin Franklin — philosopher, scientist, printer,

and part-time lightning wrangler.

At seventy, Franklin was older than most of the ideals he defended.

He had one hand in the Enlightenment,

and the other in the nearest wineglass.

If Adams supplied the fire, Franklin provided the light —

with a well-timed joke in between.

Someone once said Franklin could convince a man to burn his house down,

and then sell him the ashes at a profit.

Next was Roger Sherman of Connecticut —

solid, practical, and allergic to nonsense.

If the Revolution had needed an accountant, he’d have balanced liberty to the last penny.

He never spoke unless necessary,

which, in Congress, made him something of a legend.

Robert R. Livingston, from New York —

smooth, cautious, diplomatic.

A man who preferred bridges to bonfires.

His great skill was knowing when to nod,

and when to avoid being in the room when a vote got dangerous.

History, however, tends to reward those who stayed in the room.

And finally — Thomas Jefferson.

Thirty-three years old.

A scholar, violinist, lawyer, and reluctant politician.

He preferred libraries to debates,

and expressed emotion only when ink and parchment were involved.

Where Adams struck like thunder, Jefferson moved like sunrise —

slow, brilliant, and impossible to ignore once it appeared.

Adams, of course, nominated Jefferson to do the writing.

A rare moment of humility from a man who rarely let silence have the floor.

“Reason first,” he told Jefferson,

“You can write ten times better than I can.

Reason second — you’re a Virginian, and it’s high time Virginia took the lead.

Reason third — I’m obnoxious, suspected, and unpopular.”

That may be the only time in human history

that John Adams ever understated a fact.

So it was decided: Adams would argue the case,

but Jefferson would compose it.

Franklin would edit,

Sherman would steady,

Livingston would approve.

Five men, one quill,

and the weight of a continent pressing on their shoulders.

They had been chosen not just for their eloquence,

but for their equilibrium.

They were to take rebellion — raw, volatile, and bloody —

and render it in the language of philosophy.

Something that could speak to kings and cobblers alike,

and make both understand why liberty must stand alone.

And so, Thomas Jefferson — quiet, deliberate,

more comfortable with Greek verbs than public speeches —
gathered his papers, left the Congress chamber,

and walked a few blocks down Market Street.

There, in a rented second-floor room,

he sat by an open window in the June heat…

and took up his pen.

BLACKOUT

Act XI (THE WRITING THE DECLARATION

SETTING: A continuation of the split-stage world, now distilled to the act of creation itself. The political storm narrows into language, structure, and moral resolve.

STAGE LEFT: DAVID RAMSAY’s writing desk remains, but it is now orderly in a way that suggests inevitability rather than calm. Finished pages sit beside drafts, each marked with dates, cross-references, and marginal notes. The candle burns low but steady—time is short, but purpose is clear. Ramsay’s role has shifted fully from observer to custodian of consequence.

STAGE RIGHT: KING GEORGE III’s elevated throne stands isolated. The trappings of authority remain—maps, seals, correspondence—but the space feels inert, ceremonial rather than commanding. Reports arrive, are read, and set aside without effect. Power still exists here, but it no longer shapes events at the center.

STAGE CENTER: A private drafting room adjoining the Continental Congress. A single large table dominates the space, covered with parchment drafts, reference documents, and discarded pages. Inkpots are replenished often. Chairs are pulled close, suggesting long hours and shared responsibility. This is not a public chamber— this is a workshop of ideas, where words will be sharpened into weapons.

AT RISE:

DAVID RAMSAY sits STAGE LEFT, copying and annotating with careful precision. He pauses frequently now, reading aloud under his breath, testing phrases as though weighing them for history’s judgment.

KING GEORGE III sits STAGE RIGHT, reviewing a final dispatch. He signs it, seals it, and sets it aside. The gesture is formal,

practiced—and ultimately irrelevant to what is being written elsewhere.

In the STAGE CENTER, JEFFERSON sits alone at the table, quill in hand, surrounded by drafts. He writes, stops, crosses out lines, begins again. ADAMS and FRANKLIN enter quietly, observing rather than interrupting. They take seats nearby, offering counsel only when invited.

The room is hushed—not from uncertainty, but from concentration.

This is no longer debate.

This is composition.

As the lights settle, Jefferson bends once more to the page, and the sound of a quill scratching parchment becomes the loudest force on stage— the sound of a nation being written into existence.

JOHN ADAMS

June heat.

A rented room on Market Street —

a table, some ink, and a continent waiting for words.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

No guide but conscience, no script but flame,

Each line I write could sign my name

To gallows rope or glory’s claim.

Write for the ages — forget the shame.

How do you capture freedom on paper?

How do you make the world believe

that men can govern themselves… and still be good?

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Write, write, write —

Turn the night to light.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

I draw from Locke, from Mason’s hand,

From reason born in every land.

“All men created equal” — yes —

But “rights endowed” I must express.

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts,

burned our towns and destroyed our lives…

No, too sharp? No — it must cut.

The King’s crimes must thunder without anger.

They must condemn without hate —

as truth, not vengeance.

Ink blots, sweat drops, the candle dies —

and still the words won’t rise.

I do not sleep.

Freedom is louder than silence.

JOHN ADAMS

Tom, how goes the symphony?

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Somewhere between sonnet and sentence of death.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

(spoken)

Then it’s perfect. Show me.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

“All men are created equal, endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights…”

JOHN ADAMS

“Sacred and undeniable”? Too theological.

Let’s make it simple — self-evident.

If you have to argue truth, you’ve already lost it.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

“Self-evident.”

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Yes.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Truth that needs no crown.

JOHN ADAMS

“He has dissolved representative houses…”

Keep that. He hates assemblies.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

“He has kept among us, in times of peace, standing armies…”

JOHN ADAMS

Yes. Every line a musket fired in ink.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

(spoken)

Just make sure our French friends can translate it without fainting.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Five minds,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Five minds,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

one draft,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

one draft,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Ink unites the fractured path.

From quarrel and quill, a nation’s chord,

Freedom in letters, sharper than sword.

Adams believes, Franklin jokes — I only write.

Each line feels both infinite and fragile.

“He has incited domestic insurrections among us

and has endeavored to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers…”

Yes, they must know we are not the savages he paints us to be.

The world will judge these words long after my bones are dust.

Let them be just.

When I falter, I remember —

we write not for kings… but for mankind.

ENSEMBLE + JEFFERSON: “When

THOMAS JEFFERSON

in the course of human events,

it becomes necessary for one people

to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another,

and to assume among the powers of the earth,

the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature’s God entitle them,

a decent respect to the opinions of mankind

requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.”

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Perfect.

JOHN ADAMS

Now history has its heartbeat.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

(spoken)

And posterity will never forgive our grammar.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

June 28th, Seventeen Seventy Six.

We present it — complete, imperfect, alive.

The draft is done, the die is cast,

The words will echo, the words will last!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

You’ve given our cause a voice.

The rest of us will fight to make it heard.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

(spoken)

Just remember — the pen is mightier than the pardon.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Let nations rise and kingdoms fall,

These truths are self-evident for all.

We hold them dear, we hold them free —

For mankind’s hope, and history.

Write the light, sign the fire,

The Declaration will inspire!

June twenty-eight — the dawn begun,

The age of freedom has begun!

Write the light, sign the fire,

The Declaration will inspire!

June twenty-eight — the dawn begun,

The age of freedom has begun!

DAVID RAMSAY

June 28, seventeen seventy six.

A warm Friday in Philadelphia, the air thick with heat and history.

Jefferson’s draft lay upon the table —

five pages of ink that would soon redraw the map of the world.

He had written not just for a Congress, nor a continent,

but for conscience itself.

And when those words were read aloud,

the room fell into that rarest of silences —

the kind reserved for moments when mankind hears itself named out loud.

“We hold these truths to be self-evident,

that all men are created equal,

that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights,

that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

Simple words.

No royal titles, no scripture, no sword.

Just the most dangerous sentence ever written —

one that made kings nervous and commoners brave.

Jefferson never bragged about it.

In fact, he spent the next fifty years defending it —

not from enemies, but from editors.

Congress cut whole paragraphs, struck out lines against slavery,

smoothed his poetry into politics.

He grumbled, of course — who wouldn’t?

But history, ever the honest judge, restored the melody.

You see, Jefferson wrote in a voice that belonged to everyone.

His pen reached across oceans, across centuries.

Frenchmen would read it in their cafés,

Bolívar would quote it from horseback,

Lincoln would echo it at

ENSEMBLE + RAMSAY: Gettysburg, and the world would learn that liberty, once spoken clearly,

DAVID RAMSAY

can never again be silenced.

He gave revolution its grammar,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

grammar,

DAVID RAMSAY

and rebellion its rhythm.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

rhythm.

DAVID RAMSAY

He turned grievance into gospel,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

gospel

DAVID RAMSAY

and rebellion into reason.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Yeah yeah

DAVID RAMSAY

And perhaps that is the miracle —

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

miracle —

DAVID RAMSAY

that a young man in a rented room,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

rented room,

DAVID RAMSAY

armed with nothing but conviction and candlelight,

could strike a chord still ringing two and a half centuries later.

Jefferson believed the pen could do what armies could not —

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

make freedom thinkable.

DAVID RAMSAY

And when freedom becomes thinkable,

it becomes inevitable.

So remember: nations are not born in battles alone.

Some are born in sentences.

This was one of them.

BLACKOUT

ACT XII (THE DEBATE & ADOPTION)

SETTING: A continuation of the split-stage world, now focused on consequence, compromise, and irrevocable choice.

STAGE LEFT: DAVID RAMSAY’s writing desk is crowded once more, but the pages are no longer drafts—they are fair copies, amendments, and struck passages. Ink is darker, strokes firmer. Ramsay’s work now carries weight beyond record; he is preserving the moment when words survived negotiation. The candle burns steadily, as if history itself is holding its breath.

STAGE RIGHT: KING GEORGE III’s elevated throne remains, though increasingly distant from the center of action. Official correspondence lies unopened or partially read. The space suggests authority still intact—but unaware that a decision has already slipped beyond its reach.

STAGE CENTER: The Continental Congress chamber. Desks are arranged in formal rows, papers neatly stacked, chairs aligned. This is no workshop; it is a deliberative hall. Quills are ready, but hesitation hangs in the air. The space must support debate, interruption, silence, and ultimately unanimity. This is where language becomes law.

AT RISE:

DAVID RAMSAY sits STAGE LEFT, reviewing multiple copies of the Declaration. He notes revisions, crossings-out, and marginal marks, carefully preserving both what remains and what has been removed.

KING GEORGE III sits STAGE RIGHT, distracted by routine governance. He listens to a report, dismisses it, and turns away—unaware that his authority is being argued clause by clause elsewhere.

In the STAGE CENTER, delegates of the Continental Congress take

their seats. ADAMS stands near the center aisle, restless, energized. JEFFERSON sits at his desk, guarded, protective of the words he has written. FRANKLIN moves between them, calm, observant, prepared to temper conviction with pragmatism.

Pages are shuffled. Quills are lifted. The air tightens.

This is not the writing of ideals— this is the testing of them. As the lights settle, a single draft of the Declaration is raised for consideration, and the Congress prepares to decide which words will survive— and whether the idea they contain is worth everything that will follow.

JOHN ADAMS

Gentlemen, we meet to consider Mr. Jefferson’s declaration.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

I wrote these lines to free our chains,

Not to decorate debates with pains.

JOHN ADAMS

Then brace your heart, my eloquent friend,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Freedom’s born when arguments end.

Debate the lines, debate the fate,

Thirteen voices must create a state!

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

(spoken)

Strike that line on slavery

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

too severe!

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

(spoken)

Half our coast still profits here.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Then strike our conscience while you’re at it too!

What liberty’s worth chains to you?

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

(spoken)

Gentlemen, please — we can’t free the world in a single verse.

Let posterity improve what we can’t reverse.

JOHN ADAMS

Keep the core, Tom! The truth must stand,

Even if they trim the edge by hand.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Cut the grievance / keep the flame,

JOHN ADAMS

Words refined

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

the cause the same.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

They carve my heart to fit their ear,

Truth bled out so they won’t hear fear.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

(spoken)

Tom, remember: lightning must find a path to ground.

Sometimes you lose a tree to save the town.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

They’ll erase the lines that cut too deep.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Yes — but your words will wake the world from sleep.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Not yet — not yet —

JOHN ADAMS

Not yet — not yet — we lack alliances, arms, and peace!

Peace with chains is the worst disease!

No cure but freedom, no doctor but will,

Vote now — or Britain owns us still!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Virginia votes aye!

South Carolina … aye.

Aye — aye — aye — aye!

Virginia votes aye!

South Carolina … aye.

Aye — aye — aye — aye!

JOHN ADAMS

Twelve votes aye … New York abstains.

The motion — carried.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

“We, therefore, the Representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress, assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies,

solemnly publish and declare, that these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be,

Free and Independent States.”

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

(spoken)

Now, we must all hang together…

or most assuredly we shall hang separately.

JOHN ADAMS

Posterity will celebrate this day with shows, games, and bells from one end of the continent to the other.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Ring the bells, raise the flame,

Write our rights in freedom’s name!

From ink and voice and sacred sound,

The birth of nations shakes the ground!

Ring the bells, raise the flame,

Write our rights in freedom’s name!

From ink and voice and sacred sound,

The birth of nations shakes the ground!

“July 4, Seventeen Seventy-Six – The Declaration Adopted.”

“July 4, Seventeen Seventy-Six – The Declaration Adopted.”

KING GEORGE III

“Free and independent States”?

Aha, Oh, bless their rebellious little hearts.

They’ve finally learned to write — how… adorable.

Da-da-da-da-da-da-da-da-da-da-da,

Da-da-da-da-da-da-da-da-da-da-da

they wrote me a note,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da -da -da -da -da

KING GEORGE III

— with treason to quote!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da -da -da -da -da

KING GEORGE III

They say they've broken every tie —

Oh, really? How quaint. Shall I reply?

Let's see — "self-evident truths," "all men are equal"…

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Aha

KING GEORGE III

Did Franklin proofread this? He does love a punchline.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

They call me tyrant, call me brute,

KING GEORGE III

But wear my silk and

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

drink my fruit.

KING GEORGE III

They dump my tea, then

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

steal my crown,

KING GEORGE III

And call it “rights” —

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

upside down!

Upside down! Upside down!

KING GEORGE III

They think a Congress makes a King?

(Laughs)

They’ll learn what real crowns bring!

Let them try to rule themselves.

Thirteen squabbling provinces arguing about postage and prayer.

Mark my words — within a decade, they’ll come crawling back,

begging for ships, sugar, and civilization.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da -da -da -da -da

KING GEORGE III

go, be bold,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da -da -da -da -da

KING GEORGE III

in rags, not gold!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da -da -da -da -da

KING GEORGE III

Oh, you'll see —

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da -da -da -da -da

KING GEORGE III

You can't divorce a King like me!

Enjoy your independence, my darlings.

It's ever so fashionable — until the bills arrive.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Da-da-da, they said they’re free…

Da-da-da, they said they’re free…

Da-da-da, they said they’re free…

Da-da-da — we’ll see, we’ll see…

DAVID RAMSAY

The Fourth of July, Seventeen Seventy-Six.

A hot morning in Philadelphia,

the kind that makes the parchment curl at the corners

and the air taste like history.

The debate was over.

The vote was cast.

The words — Jefferson’s words — had survived the storm.

And now, those words belonged not to men,

but to a nation being born.

Outside, carriages rattled, bells tolled,

and the news began to spread like sunrise.

From the steeple of Independence Hall

to the harbor at Boston,

from Charleston’s wharves to the hills of Virginia,

a whisper turned to a shout —

and a shout became a revolution.

That day, Congress did not sign all at once —

no grand ceremony, no fanfare or fireworks,

just a trembling of hands,

a glance over shoulders,

and the knowledge that each name

was a wager on life itself.

Fifty-six men signed.

Farmers and merchants, lawyers and dreamers,

all pledging their “lives, fortunes, and sacred honor”

to an idea that had never before existed on earth —

that the governed might govern themselves.

Outside the hall, the people waited —

hungry for proof that the old world had finally broken.

When the announcement came,

bells began to ring,

first in Philadelphia,

then down the coast like a chain of thunder.

The great bell in the State House tower —

the one that would later be called Liberty —

rang until its tongue cracked.

And as it rang, the colonies were no longer colonies.

They were a country —

raw, untested, and gloriously free.

The King would mock them.

Europe would doubt them.

Even they, at times, would doubt themselves.

But that single sheet of paper

had changed the grammar of power forever.

Empires speak in commands;

republics, in promises.

And that July morning,

the world heard a promise so bold

that it still echoes —

in every voice that dares to say,

We, the people…

BLACKOUT

ACT XIII (THE FIRST READING)

SETTING: A continuation of the split-stage world, now defined by public voice, irreversible declaration, and the transfer of power from parchment to people.

STAGE LEFT: DAVID RAMSAY’s writing desk is orderly for the first time. The pages before him are no longer drafts or arguments; they are finished text. Inkpots are capped, quills set aside. Ramsay’s task has shifted from recording debate to witnessing consequence. His posture is still, reverent, aware that the words he chronicled are about to leave the room and enter the world.

STAGE RIGHT: KING GEORGE III’s elevated throne remains unchanged in form but diminished in presence. Correspondence lies unopened. Maps remain unconsulted. Authority persists, but it no longer commands the narrative. The throne is intact—yet already obsolete.

STAGE CENTER: An open civic space that can serve simultaneously as the Pennsylvania State House yard, a public square, and the symbolic threshold between government and governed. A raised platform or steps allow for proclamation. Bells, broadsides, and gathered citizens are implied. This space must support amplification— voice carried outward, words released beyond the chamber.

AT RISE:

DAVID RAMSAY sits STAGE LEFT, observing rather than writing. His hands rest on the completed document, as though reluctant to let it go.

KING GEORGE III sits STAGE RIGHT, removed from the action, occupied with routine matters of state. He does not look up.

In the STAGE CENTER, ADAMS, JEFFERSON, FRANKLIN, and the

delegates assemble with quiet gravity. The ENSEMBLE gathers as citizens—printers, laborers, women, apprentices, soldiers—drawn by anticipation rather than command.

A bell tolls.

A single copy of the Declaration is lifted.

This is not debate.

This is not revision.

This is the moment words become sound.

As the lights settle, JEFFERSON steps forward to read, the crowd leans in, and the written argument of a continent prepares to speak itself aloud for the first time.

JOHN ADAMS

July 8th, Philadelphia.

The words are ready — now let the world hear them.

From quill to voice, from ink to air,

Let freedom breathe — declare, declare.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Read it! Read it aloud!

THOMAS JEFFERSON

“When in the Course of human events,

it becomes necessary for one people

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

(spoken)

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal…”

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Equal — equal — equal in right!

“…that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights,

that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Life,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Liberty, and Happiness!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

These truths are ours, no more, no less!

JOHN ADAMS

No King decrees your destiny,

No scepter writes your history!

THOMAS JEFFERSON

You are the authors of your days —

Stand free, stand proud, ignite the blaze!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

“That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed…”

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Consent — consent —

THOMAS JEFFERSON

of the governed!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

“…that whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it…”

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

It is our right,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

it is our call,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

it is our call,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

To tear down tyrants —

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Ah

THOMAS JEFFERSON

once for all!

ENSEMBLE + JEFFERSON: once for all!

JOHN ADAMS

A long train of abuses, a long chain of pain,

Each grievance etched in royal stain.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

He taxed us!

THOMAS JEFFERSON

He starved us!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

He burned our towns.

JOHN ADAMS

He scarred us!

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Every line a wound remembered

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

(spoken)

and forgiven only through freedom.

“We, therefore, the Representatives of the United States of America,

in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world

for the rectitude of our intentions,

do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies,

solemnly publish and declare,

that these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be,

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Free and Independent!

Free and independent!

JOHN ADAMS

"…and for the support of this Declaration,

with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence,

we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor."

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

We hold these truths, self-evident,

All men equal — heaven-sent!

Consent of the governed sets us free,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Alter or abolish tyranny!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Life and Liberty — our claim,

Happiness — our righteous flame!

We pledge our honor, our fortunes, our lives,

To keep this freedom alive! We hold these truths, self-evident,

All men equal — heaven-sent!

Consent of the governed sets us free,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Alter or abolish tyranny!

ENSEMBLE + JEFFERSON:

Life and Liberty — our claim,

Happiness — our righteous flame!

We pledge our honor, our fortunes, our lives,

To keep this freedom alive! We hold these truths, self-evident,

All men equal — heaven-sent!

Consent of the governed sets us free,

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Alter or abolish tyranny!

ENSEMBLE + JEFFERSON:

Life and Liberty — our claim,

Happiness — our righteous flame!

We pledge our honor, our fortunes, our lives,

To keep this freedom alive!

DAVID RAMSAY

The people had heard the words —

“We hold these truths to be self-evident…” —

and once they heard them, they could never be unheard again.

But declarations are not victories.

They are only beginnings.

And what began in ink on July Fourth,

would take seven long years of fire, frost, and faith to make real.

The Revolutionary War raged from 1775 to 1783 —

eight years in total if you count the sparks before the flame.

Eight years of impossible odds —

of barefoot soldiers at Valley Forge,

of farm boys facing redcoats in open fields,

of hunger, heartbreak, and heroism.

And then, finally — September 3rd, 1783 —

The Treaty of Paris was signed.

Britain at last acknowledged what Jefferson’s pen had declared:

that these United States were Free and Independent.

The last British troops sailed away from New York that November.

Eight years, two continents, one idea —

and the idea had won.

But freedom, my friends, is not a finish line.

It’s a lifelong argument between hope and habit.

Thomas Jefferson — the young man with the quill —

became the third President of the United States,

bought Louisiana for a song,

and on July 4th, 1826 — fifty years to the day —

died as the bells of Independence Day rang once more.

John Adams, his fiery friend and rival,

outlived him by a few hours that same day.

His final words: “Thomas Jefferson still survives.”

He was wrong by hours — but right in spirit.

Benjamin Franklin, ever the philosopher,

helped craft peace with Britain,

then the Constitution itself.

He left this world in 1790 with a warning still worth heeding:

“Those who would give up essential liberty to purchase a little temporary safety

deserve neither liberty nor safety.”

And King George the Third?

He ruled for fifty-nine years —

long enough to lose not only a continent,

but, in time, his own mind.

In his final years, blind and deaf,

he wandered Windsor Castle humming hymns to a kingdom that was no longer whole.

Yet from his loss, a new world rose —

a republic born not from conquest, but conviction.

A place where words, not crowns, held power.

Where ordinary people — farmers, printers, teachers, merchants

— became citizens.

The Revolution did not end with Britain’s departure.

It began there — in every age where freedom has to be written again.

Jefferson gave us the language.

Adams gave us the courage.

Franklin gave us the wit.

And the people — you, me, all of us —

Gave those words their meaning.

The Declaration began as one voice in Philadelphia —

but it became the voice of the world.

BLACKOUT

ACT FINALE

SETTING: An open, unified stage. The split-stage world dissolves—no left, no right, no center of power apart from the people themselves. Thrones, desks, docks, halls, and streets have receded. What remains is a shared civic space: bare, expansive, and inclusive. Light is even and forward-facing, inviting the audience into the final reckoning. The stage belongs to everyone.

AT RISE:

All performers—ADAMS, JEFFERSON, FRANKLIN, RAMSAY, KING GEORGE III, and the ENSEMBLE—stand together at CENTER STAGE. No one is elevated. No one is hidden. Roles remain, hierarchy does not.

RAMSAY holds the completed record; JEFFERSON the words; ADAMS the resolve; FRANKLIN the wit; KING GEORGE the consequence. The ENSEMBLE forms the living body of the nation-to-be.

A shared breath.

The silence is not anticipation—it is recognition.

This is not the end of the story.

It is the moment the story becomes everyone’s. As the lights settle, the company faces outward— toward history, toward posterity, toward the audience— ready to speak the final truth together.

JOHN ADAMS

We are the voices that dared to be free,

Born from the ink of a brave decree!

THOMAS JEFFERSON

From thirteen fires to one great flame,

We stand as one and speak our name!

ADAMS & JEFFERSON: We wrote the words that shaped the dawn—

A truth so strong it carried on!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

We fought with passion, pen, and plea—

Until the world could hear and see!

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

(spoken)

A spark of reason, a nation’s start—

A lightning strike to freedom’s heart!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Raise the torch, let justice shine—

Every age, every voice, every time!

Freedom’s promise, bold and bright—

A song that turns the dark to light!

DAVID RAMSAY

The Declaration was not the end.

It was the opening note—

and history has been singing ever since.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

We hold these truths—

Oh, we hold these truths—

We hold these truths to be self-evident!

THOMAS JEFFERSON

That all are created equal—

that liberty is meant for all people!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Freedom!

JOHN ADAMS

Freedom!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Freedom!

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Justice! —

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Justice!

THOMAS JEFFERSON

Voices!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Voices!

JEFFERSON + ADAMS + FRANKLIN: Rise! —

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Rise!

KING GEORGE III

I tried to rule you from my throne,

But freedom’s will outshone my own.

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

History writes what kings could not—

KING GEORGE III

A people’s courage can’t be bought.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

No crown above the people’s will—

No force that can our hunger still!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

From every shore to every land—

The right to rise, to speak, to stand!

Here’s to the pen!

Here’s to the fight!

Here’s to the dawn that breaks the night!

Here’s to the dream the brave unfurled—

JEFFERSON + ENSEMBLE: THE DECLARATION — THE VOICE OF THE WORLD!

ENSEMBLE OF REVOLUTION

Here’s to the fight!

Here’s to the dawn that breaks the night!

Here’s to the dream the brave unfurled—

THE DECLARATION — THE VOICE OF THE WORLD!

THE VOICE OF THE WORLD!

JEFFERSON + ENSEMBLE: THE VOICE OF THE WORLD!

BLACKOUT