

NEW FOCUS RECORDINGS

Originally formed in Madison, Wisconsin, **Beltline Bones** calls themselves a "new music ensemble disguised as a trombone quartet," presenting programs of traditionally scored works alongside electroacoustic pieces and music that experiments with genre mixture and notational experimentation. ***Technological Eclipse*** features several of their favorite commissioned works by **Jorge Variego**, **Eve Beglarian**, **Brooks Frederickson**, **Alec Love**, and ensemble member **Cole Bartels**.

Track List

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| 1. Jorge Variego: <i>Ocho</i> | 5:24 |
| 2. Eve Beglarian: <i>Wet Psalm</i>
Beltline Bones; Matheus Garcia Souza, violin | 6:45 |
| 3. Brooks Frederickson: <i>I was thinking about the buffalo</i> | 9:02 |
| 4. Cole Bartels: <i>Stella eats her breakfast</i> | 3:00 |
| 5. Eve Beglarian: <i>Pump Music</i> | 8:47 |
| 6. Alec Love: <i>Technological Eclipse</i> | 8:10 |

Beltline Bones: Cole Bartels, Justin Coyne & Zach Bethel, tenor trombone;
Adam Nissenbaum, bass trombone

Total Time: 41:08

Program Notes

The trombone occupies a similar space in contemporary as many other versatile instruments who typically straddle multiple stylistic lines (percussion, bass, guitar, and saxophone come to mind). As a result, trombonists tend to be open-minded folk, flexible within different genre contexts and embracing of a wide range of aesthetics. Beltline Bones, a trombone quartet formed in 2021 in Madison, Wisconsin, exemplifies this omnivorous attitude, chronicling several fruits of their commissioning efforts on their second commercial release, ***Technological Eclipse***. With an emphasis on electroacoustic works, Beltline Bones brings contemporary music parameters into the brass ensemble forum, an arena that has sometimes been dominated by early music repertoire, arrangements, and conservative contemporary composition.

The recording opens with Jorge Variego's ***Ocho*** for trombone and fixed media, an ingenious mix of lush, jazz vocal harmonies with trombone choir and infectious rhythmic gestures. The familiarity of Variego's oblique hints at popular music tropes is undercut by his subtle flaunting of harmonic and phrase expectations. While the trombone and vocal choirs often articulate material in homophony, Variego skillfully finds opportune moments to break them apart,

Beltline Bones: Technological Eclipse

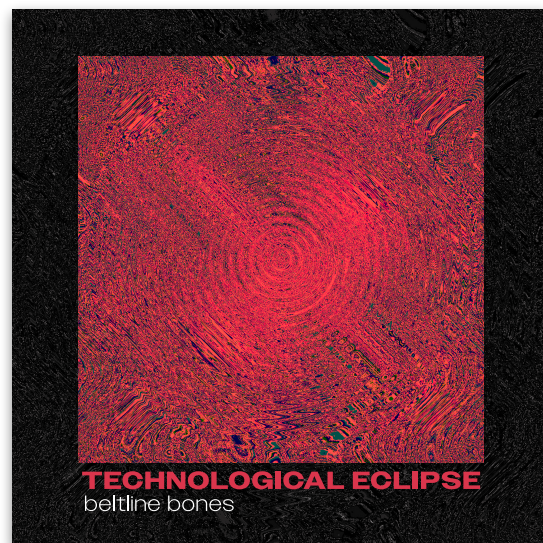
New works for trombone quartet
Beltline Bones

US Street Date	8/14/2026
UPC Code	780518613205
Catalog Number	FCR505
Audio Resolution	44.1kHz, 16 bit; 48kHz, 24 bit
MSRP	\$20.99
Featured Track	Track 1

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Recordings
press@newfocusrecordings.com

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unspooling them from each other for a brief flash of independent movement. *Ocho* closes with a solo vocal epilogue, a mournful, wordless canción over lilting chords in the trombones.

Two of composer Eve Beglarian's works are featured on the recording; the first, ***Wet Psalm***, also centers voices in the fixed media electronic part. Beglarian sets spoken text by Linda Norton, itself a contextualization of soaked bible pages found in the Lower Ninth Ward of New Orleans in 2008. Norton's poem is read sotto voce by a female voice, while select phrases are accentuated with tutti, forceful utterances by mixed voices. Improvisations on a broken Vietnamese zither called a đàn tranh are central to the instrumental fixed media part, while violinist Matheus Garcia Souza joins the Beltline Bones for a singing melodic line that emerges over sonorous trombone harmonies. ***Pump Music*** is literally inspired by the complex sounds of hand water pumps, specifically those that Beglarian encountered in camping trips along with Mississippi River. She deftly combines field recordings of one such pump with ambient sounds from the water and a hocketing texture in the ensemble. Later, Souza's violin is heard in a disembodied, faraway melody that anchors a contrasting, haunting section.

Brooks Frederickson's ***I was thinking about the buffalo***, originally for string quartet and fixed media and heard here in an arrangement by ensemble leader Cole Bartels, was inspired by the final line Captain Kirk utters in the last episode of the epic television series, *Star Trek*. An expansive chorale in the ensemble conjures the immense cosmos, while percolating activity in the fixed media propels the piece forward with weightless intensity.

Bartels' own short humorous composition, ***Stella eats her breakfast***, features a fixed media part that includes a cat meowing, presumably Stella, and the sounds of opening a can of cat food — presumably we have caught Stella at a moment poised to eat her breakfast. After a passage of accumulating imitative figures in the quartet, Bartels introduces a hip-hop groove in the fixed media part, a sonic representation of a self-satisfied diner. Stella falls asleep, snoring, in short order, as the trombone quartet performs a pacific lullaby, before the piece ends with a hyperactive remix of Stella's meowing that leads into a final polka.

Alec Love's ***Technological Eclipse*** closes the recording with dramatic flair worthy of a sci-fi or fantasy film soundtrack. The piece immediately establishes a foreboding soundworld, beginning with tension and release harmonies in the quartet that are echoed in distorted electric guitar textures drawn from heavy metal in the fixed media part. Love includes samples of

spoken AI marketing and infrastructure fragments in the electronics part, as the tone of the work gradually shifts towards insistent ostinato figures in the fixed media with which the trombones enter into dialogue. Love's mixture of unsettling computerized voices, vast textures in the electronics, and rich harmonies in the trombones evokes a state of uncertainty and questioning — after all, the technological horizon remains unknowable.

Beltline Bones is assembling a compelling repertoire of electroacoustic works that balances traditional roles for the trombone in an ensemble setting with a wide palette of sonic and stylistic vocabularies. In a field driven primarily by mixed instrument ensembles, it is refreshing and intriguing to hear the creativity that is engendered within a homogenous timbral context like the trombone quartet.

Bio

Formed in 2021, **Beltline Bones** is a new music ensemble disguised as a trombone quartet, featuring Cole Bartels, Justin Coyne, Zach Bethel, and Adam Nissenbaum. Blending traditional trombone quartet writing with electronics, the group offers a distinctive, boundary-pushing chamber music experience.

Originally based in Madison, Wisconsin, and formed under Mark Hetzler at the University of Wisconsin, the now geographically dispersed ensemble remains active through touring and recording. They have performed at the International Trombone Festival and the American Trombone Workshop, and have toured widely throughout the United States and Canada.

Committed to expanding repertoire, Beltline Bones commissions, composes, and arranges electroacoustic works. Their albums *Audiogenica* (cmntx records, 2024) and *Technological Eclipse* (New Focus Recordings, 2026) feature music by Eve Beglarian, Alec Love, Brooks Frederickson, Jorge Variego, and others. Recent collaborations include a 2026 project with the Millennium Composers Initiative that produced seven new works.