



BRASS FOR UNCOMMON TIMES

COLEMAN • COLLINS • COPLEY • MENDOZA
PETERSEN • YAGISAWA • YORK

Hiram Diaz, Vocals • Velvet Brown, Tuba
Fran Vielma, Percussion • Daniel Prim, Drum Kit
Brass for Uncommon Times • Brian Kaufman

BRASS FOR UNCOMMON TIMES

Valerie Coleman (b. 1970)	
1	Fanfare for Uncommon Times (2021) 6:45
Satoshi Yagisawa (b. 1975)	
2	Blueshine Emblem, An Eternal Elegy (2006) 4:58
Barbara York (1949–2020)	
	Concerto for Tuba ‘Wars and Rumors of War’ (2004, arr. pub. 2021) 21:02
3	I. Allegro marcato 7:33
4	II. Tranquillo 7:18
5	III. Allegro furioso 6:11
Katahj Copley (b. 1998)	
6	Beyond (2018) 7:00
Harrison Collins (b. 1999)	
7	Young Voices (2018) (version for brass and percussion) 3:11
Katelyn Petersen (b. 2000)	
8	Respire (2022) 12:35
Félix Mendoza (b. 1983)	
9	Guerra de Secciones (2007) 7:18
Text: Traditional	

Recorded: 22 **2****6****9**, 24 **3**–**5****7** and 25 **1****8** August 2024 at Linehan Concert Hall,

University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC), United States

Executive producer and artistic director: Brian Kaufman • Producer: Philip Mann

Production team: Michael Reichman, Brad Cawyer, Matthew Belzer

Recording, mixing and mastering engineer: Alan Wonneberger

Assistant engineer: Sarah Baugher • Project assistant: Ashley Killam

Music librarian: Sidney Wagner • Booklet notes: Brian Kaufman

Publishers: Coleman Page **1**, Brain Co., Ltd. **2**, Cimarron Music Press **3**–**5**,

Katahj Copley Music **6**, Lovebird Music **7**, from composer’s manuscript **8****9**

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Brass for Uncommon Times

Brass for Uncommon Times brings together forty top brass and percussion artists to perform seven powerful 21st-century works under the baton of conductor Brian Kaufman. These pieces confront societal division, racial injustice, gun violence, global crises and war, while also searching for hope, resilience and connection. From quiet reflection to bold, urgent passages, the music moves between struggle and celebration, tension and release. It guides listeners through uncertainty, offering moments of clarity and resolve. The project shows how music can reckon with the world as it is and inspire a vision of a more connected, hopeful future.

Valerie Coleman (b. 1970)

Valerie Coleman is a composer, GRAMMY-nominated flautist and entrepreneur. Her works have garnered awards such as the MAP Fund, ASCAP Honors Award, Chamber Music America's Classical Commissioning Program, Herb Alpert/Ragdale Residency Prize, and nominations from the American Academy of Arts and Letters and United States Artists.

Fanfare for Uncommon Times

Fanfare for Uncommon Times was written in response to the overlapping crises of the pandemic and the racial unrest of 2020. Instead of a typical celebratory fanfare, the piece reflects uncertainty and upheaval while honouring the resilience and determination needed to carry on. Using the same brass instrumentation as Copland's *Fanfare for the Common Man*, Coleman nods to its legacy while writing a work for the present moment. Bubbly, dance-like rhythms in the percussion help guide the listener through moments of resolve and triumph. At its heart, this fanfare is an invitation for us to come together and find a shared way forward. It is both a reflection on our current challenges and a call to hope.

Satoshi Yagisawa (b. 1975)

Japanese composer Satoshi Yagisawa's music has earned global acclaim. Featured in GIA Publications' *Teaching Music through Performance in Band* and published in Holland and America, his works have been performed at major international conferences, such as the World Association for Symphonic Bands and Ensembles (WASBE) in Singapore and the Midwest Clinic in Chicago.

Blueshine Emblem, An Eternal Elegy

Satoshi Yagisawa's *Blueshine Emblem* explores a world full of conflict – between people, nature, and our own inner battles. Themes of loss and struggle return repeatedly, building a sense of discord and sorrow that never fully eases. The piece features solo passages that give shape to its story. The tuba, trombone, euphonium and horn each convey unease and fear in their own distinct voices. A section of fragile beauty and quiet peace emerges before the music races toward its conclusion, building relentless urgency. Growling trombones interrupt one last time before the full ensemble plays the final, sharp notes.

Barbara York (1949–2020)

Canadian-American composer Barbara York, a winner of the Dora Mavor Moore Award, is perhaps best known for her over 40 works for tuba and euphonium. These works have been recorded and performed by many top tuba and euphonium artists, including Tim Buzbee, Matthew Brown, John Manning, and Steph Frye-Clark.

Concerto for Tuba 'Wars and Rumors of War'

Concerto for Tuba 'Wars and Rumors of War' tells the story of a young soldier called to service, moving from pride and ceremony to reflection and the harsh realities of war. The first movement bursts with energetic dotted rhythms and a crisp snare drum that evokes the duty and pageantry of military life. A lush, lyrical second movement features soaring tuba lines and expressive melodies that reflect fond memories of home. The final movement plunges into chaos and combat with militaristic melodies over driving eighth notes. A middle blues section features soulful, Bessie Smith-inspired tuba lines that are supported by a swaggering bass trombone. Stylistically, York draws inspiration from three Russian composers –Prokofiev, Rachmaninov, and Shostakovich – while keeping the soldier's emotional journey at the forefront.

Katahj Copley (b. 1998)

Composer Katahj Copley has written over 100 works, which have been performed and commissioned by diverse groups including 'The President's Own' United States Marine Band, the Cavaliers brass and the California Band Directors Association. His music has reached audiences in Canada, the UK, Japan, China and Australia, earning widespread critical acclaim.

Beyond

Inspired by the victims of gun violence, Katahj Copley's *Beyond* reflects courage, grief, and hope in the face of tragedy. The piece starts quietly, filled with the fragility of loss. An expressive euphonium motif enters, representing the song of the angels. The music slowly builds, moving from sorrow into vibrant, euphoric passages that portray the souls of the lost rising to peace. From start to end, the piece traces a journey from heartache to the afterlife. *Beyond* remembers those we have lost, and offers a glimpse of hope beyond sorrow.

Harrison Collins (b. 1999)

Recognised as 'triumphant' and 'exuberant' (*ChicagoOnStage*), Harrison J. Collins's music has garnered performances across the United States and beyond. Among his honours are awards from the Sinta Quartet, Dallas Winds Fanfare and National Young Composers Challenges competitions.

Young Voices

Harrison Collins's *Young Voices* captures the energy and determination of a generation coming of age in a time of division and uncertainty. Written from a young adult's perspective, the music reflects both confusion and conviction. Shifting rhythmic patterns mirror a political landscape that feels unsteady and tumultuous. Against that background, the bold sound of the brass projects clarity, courage and resolve. Moments of tension and contrast suggest questioning, reflection, and the challenges of finding one's place in the world. *Young Voices* is a celebration of emerging civic identity and collective expression. It is a fanfare for young people who refuse to stay silent and are instead using their voices to shape the future.

Katelyn Petersen (b. 2000)

Katelyn Petersen is an American composer, cellist and visual artist who experiments with interdisciplinary arts, often composing pieces inspired by her own visual art. With multi-sensory inspirations from synaesthesia and a strong influence from film scores, Petersen's original music evokes literal colours and textures of sound.

Respire

Katelyn Petersen's *Respire* explores breathing as a shared, yet fragile, experience. The piece reflects the struggles of recent years – our environment stifled by pollution, our communities strained by isolation and illness, and our spirits weighed down by exhaustion. It begins with a pedal note in the organ, punctuated by subtle percussion. The full brass ensemble swells into an arrival in the piano, followed by the wandering lines of a horn quartet. A chorale emerges, prayerful and meditative, rising from loss and isolation. The pulse quickens, reflecting the wild thoughts that accompany struggle and breathlessness. Later, an organ solo offers a moment of quiet solitude before returning to a more urgent section of tension. The piece concludes in calm reflection. *Respire* is a reminder of our shared breath, our shared struggle, and the quiet persistence it takes to keep going.

Félix Mendoza (b. 1983)

Based in Germany, Félix Mendoza is a Venezuelan-born composer and solo orchestral timpanist who has performed internationally under Gustavo Dudamel, Claudio Abbado, Daniel Barenboim and Lorin Maazel. Mendoza has written works for symphony orchestra, brass ensembles and percussion groups, blending rhythmic language rooted in Venezuelan tradition with symphonic-style orchestrations.

Guerra de Secciones

Guerra de Secciones is an energetic piece for brass and percussion that draws on the rhythms and sounds of Venezuela. The music brings together African, Indigenous, and European influences through lively exchanges in the brass and driving grooves in the percussion. A short sung section features a member of the brass ensemble singing in call and response with the group, highlighting the work's folk influences. These vocalisations, written by Félix Ruben Mendoza Briceño with added improvisatory passages by Hiram Diaz, celebrates the joyful, life-affirming universality of making music, singing and dancing together. That moment opens into a spirited percussion feature that gives voice to traditional Venezuelan drums. Throughout the piece, musical ideas pass through the ensemble that portray both struggle and the celebration of hard-won freedom. Amid all the energy and drive, the music provides a sense of hope and resilience for the future.

Guerra de Secciones was premiered and performed at major venues around the globe by the Venezuelan Brass Ensemble, a highly acclaimed group with nearly 50 brass and percussion players drawn from the extraordinary Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra.

Brian Kaufman

Velvet Brown



Velvet Brown is an international tuba artist who has performed in Italy, Switzerland, Austria, Germany, Finland, France, England, Hungary, Slovenia, Russia, Japan, Cuba, Canada and the United States. In addition to four solo albums, she has been featured on recordings with Howard Johnson and his band Gravity, and the Cleveland Jazz Orchestra.

www.velvetuba.com

Fran Vielma



Hailing from Venezuela, Fran Vielma is a critically acclaimed, award-winning multi-percussionist and composer. His album *Inesperado* was released on the Cacao Musica label. *Tendencias*, the debut album by his star-studded Venezuelan Jazz Collective, was included in the best of 2018 lists by *DownBeat*, *Latin Jazz Network*, and *The New York City Jazz Record*.

www.franvielma.com

Daniel Prim



Daniel Prim is a Latin GRAMMY-winning drummer, percussionist, and educator. His first album, *Home*, released in 2024, is a unique blend of the Afro-Venezuelan folklore music of Prim's childhood, and improvisational jazz. *Home* evokes the tensions of current-day Venezuela while celebrating the strength and vibrancy of the Venezuelan people.

www.danielprim.com

Hiram Diaz



Hiram Diaz is a second generation Cuban American who grew up in Miami, Florida, surrounded by the Latin-American diaspora and its incredible contributions to the arts. He currently plays euphonium in 'The President's Own' United States Marine Band, and is a vocalist and co-director of the group's Latin Jazz Ensemble.

www.highbridgebrass.com/hiram-diaz-bio

Brian Kaufman



Committed to building a more engaged and just society through music, conductor Brian Kaufman has presented ideas and project results on five continents at venues such as the United Nations, the Ford Foundation, the University of Oxford, and Yale University. He is an associate professor of music at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC).

music.umbc.edu/directory/kaufman

Brass for Uncommon Times

Brass for Uncommon Times is an all-star collective of 40 top-notch brass and percussion performers giving voice to socially relevant works to help build a better future. Ensemble members hail from the DMV (DC, Maryland, Virginia) in the United States and are affiliated with the region's most celebrated orchestras, military bands and universities.

Brass for Uncommon Times

Brian Kaufman, Conductor

Trumpet

Andrew Bezik
Aislin Carpenter
Christian Ferrari
Julia Gill
Joshua Kauffman
James McAloon Jr
Amy McCabe
Brent Madsen
Chelsea Orr

Horn

Chandra Cervantes
Justin Drew
Gabrielle Fink
Megan Hurley
Christy Klenke
Cecelia Kozlowski

Trombone

Patrick Crossland
Katie Franke
Javier Nero
Katie Thigpen
Dwight Williams

Bass Trombone

Daniel Brady

Euphonium

Christopher Buckley
Hiram Diaz
Jermaine Fryer
Lindsay Ring

Tuba

Velvet Brown
Willie Clarke
Meredith Fuller
Jazzie Pigott

Percussion

Lucas Ashby
Julie Angelis Boehler
Dustin Donahue
Alexander Garde
Don Johns
Mary La Blanc
Daniel Prim
Jonathan Sotelo
Fran Vielma
Karlyn Viña
Alan Wonneberger

Piano

Teodora Adzharova

Organ

Jordan Prescott

Guarura (Conch)

Anand Abraham
Albert Fuentes
Brent Madsen
Javier Nero

Shouts

Anand Abraham
Albert Fuentes
Norah Kaufman
Jeremy Keaton
Julian Leal
Full Ensemble

Leadership Team

Artistic director / Executive producer:

Brian Kaufman

Producer: Philip Mann

Assistant producers:

Michael Reichman,

Brad Cawyer, Matthew Belzer

Recording, mixing, mastering engineer: Alan Wonneberger

Assistant engineer: Sarah Baugher

Project assistant / Website designer:

Ashley Killam

Ensemble librarian: Sidney Wagner

Composed between 2004 and 2022 the seven works on this album reflect the concerns and crises of our time. These include the pandemic, racial unrest, global conflict, reflections on the realities of war, the pervasive use of gun violence, pollution and social strife. The music oscillates between struggle and celebration and gives powerful glimpses of redemptive hope in our shared experiences, one that values civic identity and collective expression and offers a fanfare for those who shape our future for the better.

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***WORLD PREMIERE RECORDING **OF ARRANGEMENT**

Hiram Diaz, Vocals 9 • Velvet Brown, Tuba 3-5

Fran Vielma, Percussion 9 • Daniel Prim, Drum Kit 9

Brass for Uncommon Times • Brian Kaufman, Conductor

A detailed track list and recording details can be found inside the booklet.

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