



Colonel Jason K. Fettig, Director

UNITED STATES MARINE BAND
Sunday, February 26, 2023 at 2:00 P.M.
Rachel M. Schlesinger Concert Hall and Arts Center
Northern Virginia Community College
Alexandria Campus
Colonel Jason K. Fettig, conducting

Our New Day Begun: A Tribute to Black History

Alton Adams (1889–1987) March, “The Governor’s Own”

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor (1875–1912)
transcribed by Donald Patterson* Ballade, Opus 33

Valerie Coleman (b. 1970) Fanfare for Uncommon Times (2021)

Kevin Day (b. 1996) Euphonium Concerto (2018, rev. 2019)

Feeling
Machine
Paradox

GySgt Hiram Diaz, euphonium

INTERMISSION

Erik Santos (b. 1967)
poetry by Langston Hughes and Rainer Maria Rilke *THE SEER* (2019)

Lonely Nocturne
Circles
Beale Street
Stiller Freund
Not What Was
Call to Creation
Fire
Moan
Island

Dr. Scott Piper, guest tenor soloist

Omar Thomas (b. 1984) *Of Our New Day Begun* (2015)

*Member, U.S. Marine Band

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PROGRAM NOTES

March, “The Governor’s Own”

Alton Adams (1889–1987)

Alton Adams was born in St. Thomas, Virgin Islands. He began studying music at age nine, teaching himself to play the flute and piccolo. Music education on the island was sparse, so he took correspondence courses and eventually earned a bachelor’s of music. In 1910, he formed the St. Thomas Juvenile Band and after eight months of rehearsals, they gave their first performance, which received great acclaim. Once the U.S. purchased the Virgin Islands in 1917, Adams and his band were inducted into the Navy as a show of goodwill. Adams was appointed Chief Musician and became the first Black bandmaster in Navy history. In 1942, his band was the first integrated band in the Navy. He served twenty years in the Navy and toured the West Indies and the United States. He was also the Virgin Islands correspondent for the Associated Press and wrote articles for music journals, newspapers, and magazines. Eager to improve musical education on the island, he supervised the music program in public schools for thirteen years, modeling it after similar mainland programs. Many of his compositions were destroyed in a fire, however the march, “Virgin Islands,” composed with Sam Williams, became the island’s regional anthem.

“The Governor’s Own” was written for and inspired by Admiral Joseph Wallace Oman, naval governor of the Virgin Islands from 1919 to 1921. Its jaunty theme calls to mind the admiral, with the opening four note motif played by the trumpets. Adams was inspired by John Philip Sousa’s military and patriotic infused music; there are even letters of correspondence between Adams and Sousa.

Ballade, Opus 33

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor (1875–1912)

transcribed by Donald Patterson*

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor was born and raised in London. His father was a physician from Sierra Leone and his mother was English. Coleridge-Taylor was raised by his mother and grandparents who encouraged his music talent. He enrolled at the Royal College of Music in London at age fifteen as a violinist, pianist, and later a composer.

Coleridge-Taylor faced difficulties as a biracial musician, but his talent was quickly recognized by England’s musical elite. His work was championed by Sir Charles Stanford, an Irish composer and conductor and Coleridge-Taylor’s composition teacher at the Royal College. Coleridge-Taylor later caught the attention of renowned composer Sir Edward Elgar, eventually earning him a commission through Elgar’s music publisher. The resulting work, *Ballade*, was performed at the 1898 Three Choirs Festival and became his first major compositional success. His continued achievements led to three tours of the United States and he conducted the Marine Band while on tour in 1904. On this same tour, he was received by President Theodore Roosevelt. As a respected Black English composer, Coleridge-Taylor was warmly received by the Black American community, befriending W. E. B. Du Bois and collaborating with poet Laurence Dunbar. Coleridge-Taylor died at age thirty-seven in the midst of a thriving career.

Ballade is full of energy, passion, and warmth. The piece opens with a dramatic timpani roll and flute trills, followed by a fiery passage played by the woodwinds and supported by the brass. This heroic theme unwinds into a tender theme which evokes a cinematic love song. The piece alternates between these two contrasting moods before concluding with most dramatic rendition of the opening theme.

Fanfare for Uncommon Times (2021)

Valerie Coleman (b. 1970)

Valerie Coleman is a GRAMMY-nominated flutist, composer, and entrepreneur. In 2020, she was highlighted as one of the “Top 35 Women Composers” by the Washington Post and named Performance Today’s Classical Woman of the Year. The founder and former flutist of Imani Winds, Coleman has appeared as a soloist with numerous orchestras and has performed alongside a wide variety of classical and jazz musicians.

Major commissions include *Seven O’Clock Shout* for The Philadelphia Orchestra for their opening night gala concert at Carnegie Hall. This came shortly after *Umoja*, another commission that marked the first time the orchestra performed a classical work by a living female African-American composer. Her work *Ashé* was commissioned and premiered by Boston University Tanglewood Institute in the summer of 2022. Coleman’s music has been played by many North American orchestras and has written works commissioned from variety of institutions, from the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra to the Library of Congress.

Coleman is also deeply committed to education, entrepreneurship, and chamber music advocacy, and recently joined the Mannes School of Music as the Clara Mannes Fellow for Music Leadership. Previously, she served on the faculty at the Frost School of Music at the University of Miami as assistant professor of performance, chamber music, and entrepreneurship.

Coleman’s Fanfare for Uncommon Times was commissioned and premiered by the Orchestra of St. Luke’s on June 27, 2021. In an interview for a recent performance of the work at the University of Texas, Austin, Coleman said, “We are going through some strange times right now...it almost seems sarcastic...to write a fanfare for the times we are currently living in. [But] I wanted to create a piece that brings people together, a piece that touches that within us, that thing that wants to survive ... that gives us that regenerative, renewable hope.” She continued she deliberately wanted to “...bring the Black experience in; the turmoil [and] the upheaval,” as part of the ongoing conversation about race in this country.

Euphonium Concerto (2018, rev. 2019)

Kevin Day (b. 1996)

Kevin Day has emerged as one of the leading young voices in the world of composition today, and his music ranges from powerful introspection to joyous exuberance. He draws from the worlds of jazz, minimalism, Latin music, fusion, and contemporary classical idioms. Day

serves as the Vice President of the Millennium Composers Initiative, a collective of more than 120 composers from several countries around the world.

A winner of the BMI Student Composer Award, a three-time finalist for the ASCAP Morton Gould Young Composer Award, and considered for the 2022 Pulitzer Prize for his Concerto for Wind Ensemble, Day has composed over 200 works. His works have been programmed by many symphonies, as well as professional and collegiate wind ensembles. Notable collaborators include David Childs, Nicki Roman, James Markey, Wendy Richman, Jens Lindemann, Demondrae Thurman, Axiom Brass, the Zenith Saxophone Quartet, the Tesla Quartet, and the Boston Symphony Orchestra low brass section.

Day is currently assistant professor of composition at Wilfrid Laurier University in Ontario, Canada. The composer offers the following regarding his Euphonium Concerto:

The piece was commissioned by Don Winston and dedicated to renowned soloist Demondrae Thurman, Professor of Euphonium at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music. The composition is about 15 minutes long, three movements, and is a non-traditional concerto for the instrument. Being a euphonium player myself, I wanted to try to create something different, yet effective, for the repertoire. The work has a high technical and range demand and showcases all parts of the euphonium.

I really enjoyed this commission opportunity, and I want to thank Don Winston and Demondrae Thurman for helping me bring this composition to life. The movements are called Machine, Feeling, and Paradox, and so I sought the help of my friend and colleague Byron Myles to help me come up with a concept for the concerto. With his permission, I used his insight to the piece as the program note for the work and I hope you enjoy what he has written about the concerto. Here it is below:

“Kevin called me with his plot for what this piece is about. He explained that the first movement, Machine, is based on the machine sounds. The second movement Feeling is based on this machine developing human emotions and experiencing what it is like to feel on the level that we as humans do. The last movement, Paradox, is the embodiment of the internal conflict that presents itself as the machine battles what it is versus what it feels. When Kevin called me, he wasn’t sure what to write for the last movement and how it was going to tie together this idea. So he asked my opinion on the matter. This is how I view it: This piece is a metaphor. Machine represents the idea of what others see us as and what society tells us to be. Feeling is what we believe ourselves to be. What we truly want and how we want to be perceived. But as we all know, those two concepts (what society sees us as and how we see ourselves) don’t always mix. This brings us to Paradox. This represents the constant battle and inner conflict that we have with who we are as we see it and how others see us. This is something we all can relate to on some level. We struggle with this internal conflict of what we think we are, versus what others think we are, when in reality they are two sides of the same coin. We are a combination of both. There is no self without other, and there is no me without you.”

Gunnery Sergeant Hiram Diaz, euphonium soloist

Euphonium player Gunnery Sergeant Hiram Diaz joined “The President’s Own” United States Marine Band in January 2012. Gunnery Sgt. Diaz began his musical instruction at age twelve. After graduating in 2003 from the New World School of the Arts in Miami, he attended the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music (CCM), where he earned a bachelor’s degree in music performance in 2007. His instructors have included Timothy Northcut of CCM; Jay Bertolet, former principal tuba with the Florida Philharmonic Orchestra;

and Brian Bowman of the University of North Texas. Gunnery Sgt. Diaz performed Tom Davoren's *Ascension* as a featured soloist on the Marine Band's national concert tour in 2016, and since 2017, has served as co-leader of the band's Latin Jazz Ensemble. Prior to joining "The President's Own," Gunnery Sgt. Diaz was a member of the U.S. Army Maneuver Center of Excellence Band (283d Army Band) in Fort Benning, Georgia.

THE SEER (2019)

Erik Santos (b. 1967)

poetry by Langston Hughes and Rainer Maria Rilke

Erik Santos is a composer, multi-instrumentalist, singer, producer, and teacher who is active in many musical genres, including rock, jazz, world music, and music for theatre and dance. As the first-born in a family of musicians, music has always been at the core of his life practice, both as a profession and as a hobby.

Santos is the chair of the composition department at the University of Michigan (U-M) School of Music, Theatre, and Dance. He has received prizes, fellowships, and other recognition for his concert music, including the prestigious 2020 Sousa-ABA-Ostwald Prize from ABA for *THE SEER* and the Charles Ives Scholarship and the Charles Ives Fellowship from the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

In recent years, Santos has become increasingly interested in presenting music in venues outside of the classical concert hall. He has focused on the interaction of music with other spontaneous sensory elements and found inspiration in dance clubs, street corners, theaters, churches, museums, and online spaces, to name a few. This interest flourished in 2002 and he formed a band with Toko Shiiki, a photographer and filmmaker. After recording five albums, the duo produced a documentary *Threshold: Whispers of Fukushima* in 2015. By 2019, the duo completed four more films inspired by creative relationships they formed in Fukushima, *Over the Sky*, *Passing the Baton*, *Up the Mountain*, and *We Women Weave*.

Santos has been part of the local Michigan music scene for many years, and he is possessed by a fresh passion for practicing, investigating inventions of Johann Sebastian Bach, Bruce Lee, and Vince Gilligan, and enjoying sound. *THE SEER* for vocalist and symphony band was commissioned by Michael Haithcock for Scott Piper and the U-M Symphony Band. Santos offered the following on his award-winning work:

A "Seer" is one who, through supernatural insight, can see what the future holds, and see through to unseen truths.

Who is the seer? What does the seer see?

"...I'm sitting here in the center of my house this quiet morning. Through the windows, in the outer corners of my eyes, I can see full moon setting on my left and new sun rising on my right. Both gloriously happening now, however, I can only see one or the other if I turn my head. Can't see both simultaneously. I sit here trying to sum it all up, and see it all at once, but I can't. There's a lesson here somewhere in between. The difference between sleeping dreams and waking dreams is difficult to explain..."

This musical mandala weaves together many disparate strands of creative inspiration—i.e., the work of Langston Hughes and Rainer Maria Rilke, Nina Simone, Howlin' Wolf, Killing Joke, Lee "Scratch" Perry, Rod Serling, Stanley Kubrick's 2001: A Space Odyssey, the stories of Parsifal and Ulysses. As much as possible, I let the subconscious lead, as my conscious mind struggled to render dream dictation into a linear language that might resonate with another. In this liminal state, in between both and neither, the answers lie.

The following is the composer's translation of the Rainer Maria Rilke poem in the fourth movement, Still Freund (Final Sonnet to Orpheus):

Stiller Freund der vielen Fernen, fühle,
wie dein Atem noch den Raum vermehrt.
Im Gebälk der finstern Glockenstühle
laß dich läuten. Das, was an dir zehrt,

wird ein Starkes über dieser Nahrung.
Geh in der Verwandlung aus und ein.
Was ist deine leidenste Erfahrung?
Ist dir Trinken bitter, werde Wein.

Sei in dieser Nacht aus Übermaß
Zauberkraft am Kreuzweg deiner Sinne,
ihrer seltsamen Begegnung Sinn.

Und wenn dich das Irdische vergaß,
zu der stillen Erde sag: Ich rinne.
Zu dem raschen Wasser sprich: Ich bin.

Silent Friend of many distances, feel,
As your breath expands Space.
In the beams of your dark belfry,
Let yourself ring. That, which consumes you,

Grows strong from your feeding.
Go through Transformation, out and in.
What has made you suffer?
If drinking is bitter, become Wine.

Be, in this vast brimming Night,
Magic Power at the crossroads of your senses,
The Sense of their strange meeting.

And when the Earthly forget you,
To the still Earth say: I'm flowing.
To the rushing Water say: I am.

Of Our New Day Begun (2015)

Omar Thomas (b. 1984)

Born to Guyanese parents in Brooklyn, New York, Omar Thomas moved to Boston in 2006 to pursue a master's of music in jazz composition at the New England Conservatory of Music after studying music education at James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia. He is the protégé of composers and educators Ken Schaphorst and Frank Carlberg, and has studied under multiple Grammy-winning composer and bandleader Maria Schneider.

Thomas has created music extensively in the contemporary jazz ensemble genre. While completing his master's, he was appointed the position of assistant professor at Berklee College of Music at the age of twenty-three. Following his Berklee tenure, he served on faculty of the music theory department at The Peabody Institute of The Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. Now a Yamaha Master Educator, he is currently an assistant professor of composition and jazz studies at the University of Texas at Austin. He was awarded the ASCAP Young Jazz Composers Award in 2008 and invited to perform at their exclusive showcase. In 2012, Omar was named the Boston Music Award's "Jazz Artist of the Year." In 2019, he was awarded the National Bandmasters Association/Revelli Award for his wind composition "Come Sunday," becoming the first Black composer awarded the honor in the contest's history.

Thomas's work has been performed by diverse groups such as the Eastman New Jazz Ensemble, the San Francisco and Boston Gay Men's Choruses, The United States Marine Band, and the Colorado Symphony Orchestra. Celebrated singers such as Dionne Warwick, Chaka Khan, and Sheila E have performed his arrangements. His work is also featured on Dianne Reeves's Grammy Award-winning album, "Beautiful Life." Thomas has released two albums of his large ensemble works, which have topped jazz charts and received multiple awards.

Thomas shares that *Of Our New Day Begun* "...was written to honor nine beautiful souls who lost their lives to a callous act of hatred and domestic terrorism on the evening of June 17, 2015 while worshipping in their beloved sanctuary, the historic Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church (affectionately referred to as "Mother Emanuel") in Charleston, South Carolina." He continues in the score:

My greatest challenge in creating this work was walking the line between reverence for the victims and their families, and honoring my strong, bitter feelings towards both the perpetrator and the segments of our society that continue to create people like him. I realized that the most powerful musical expression I could offer incorporated elements from both sides of that line - embracing my pain and anger while being moved by the displays of grace and forgiveness demonstrated by the victims' families.

Historically, black Americans have, in great number, turned to the church to find refuge and grounding in the most trying of times. Thus, the musical themes and ideas for "Of Our New Day Begun" are rooted in the Black American church tradition. The piece is anchored by James and John Johnson's time-honored song, "Lift Every Voice and Sing" (known endearingly as the "Negro National Anthem"), and peppered with blues harmonies and melodies. Singing, stomping, and clapping are also prominent features of this work, as they have always been a mainstay of black music traditions, and the inclusion of the tambourine in these sections is a direct nod to black worship services. "Of Our New Day Begun" begins with a unison statement of a melodic cell from "Lift Every Voice..." before suddenly giving way to ghostly, bluesy chords in the horns and bassoons. This section moves to a dolorous and bitter dirge presentation of the anthem in irregularly shifting 12/8 and 6/8 meter, which grows in intensity as it offers fleeting glimmers of hope and relief answered by cries of blues-inspired licks. A maddening, ostinato-driven section representing a frustration and weariness that words cannot, grows into a group singing of "Lift Every Voice and Sing," fueled by the stomping and clapping reminiscent of the black church.

In the latter half of the piece the music turns hopeful, settling into 9/8 time and modulating up a step during its ascent to a glorious statement of the final lines of "Lift Every Voice..." in 4/4, honoring the powerful display of humanity set forth by the families of the victims. There is a long and emotional decrescendo that lands on a pensive and cathartic gospel-inspired hymn song. Returning to 9/8 time, the piece comes to rest on a unison F that grows from a very distant hum to a thunderous roar, driven forward by march-like stomping to represent the ceaseless marching of black Americans towards equality.