

Beauport
classical



**BALA BRASS
PASSPORTS**

NOTES

Latin America is full of great music; music that has been influenced by Spanish culture and music that has kept much of its traditional roots (roots that go back to early European settlers and Africans). Our goal is to bring a spark of this musical world to brass enthusiasts and music lovers alike. Bala Brass has worked diligently to present new arrangements, while keeping traditional rhythmic and harmonic integrity intact, in order to portray the closest resemblance of the original, yet keeping things fresh. As you take your musical trip around Latin America, we hope you enjoy the stops, flavors, and musical aromas you will experience while listening. So, make sure you have your passport, because we are going on a tour!

Alma Llanera (Soul of the Plains) hails from Venezuela and the plains of the Andes mountains. It's a folkloric tune that has been described as Venezuela's second national anthem. It's wonderful to hear this melody performed when using a small harp, played by the virtuosos of the arpa llanera (a small harp from the plains).

Lindo Michoacán (Beautiful Michoacán) hails from México (Michoacán) and is a typical *Mariachi* tune. But here, we perform it more like a *Banda* – appropriate for a brass quintet. This is a very catchy tune, showing the flavors of México and its traditional music.

A Fuego Lento (to Simmer) hails from Argentina. No more needs to be said of Astor Piazzolla, the most prolific Argentinean composer of *Tango* of all time. This *Tango* is one of our favorites, with its sultry lines and incessant rhythms.

Mi Buenaventura (My Good Adventure) hails from the Pacific region of Colombia and is a typical *Currulao* – a folkloric dance, also known as an old *Bambuco*. The term *Currulao* also refers to the typical African drum that is used in this music.

Fantasia and Rondo (Fantasy and Rondo) hails from Brazil and indicates the style in which each movement was composed. Although a work originally written for brass quintet, the music contains rhythms and melodies typical of traditional Brazilian music.

Otro Buchipluma (Another Buchipluma) hails from Colombia and is a *Joropo*. A *Joropo* is a style of folkloric dance music originating from the plains of the Andes Mountains, bordering Colombia and Venezuela. A buchipluma is a type of bird whose habitat is in this region.

El Condor Pasa (The Condor Passes) hails from Peru. It is based on Peruvian folk music and was composed for the zarzuela (a Spanish style lyrical operetta) by the same name at the turn of the century. This arrangement not only contains the tune but also contains some slightly “improvised” sections.

The **Conquerous Suite** was commissioned by Bala Brass specifically for this recording project, hailing from Colombia, written by Juan Carlos Valencia Ramos. The group asked Maestro Ramos to come up with several movements of music using typical folkloric styles of traditional Colombian music.

Intermezzo hails from Aguascalientes, México. This is one of three intermezzi that Ponce wrote for piano. It contains a smooth, yet moving sixteenth note melodic line that intertwines into a beautiful and intrinsically Mexican melody.

Muñeco (Doll) hails from Cuba. Bala asked Maestro Morgan (who is Cuban) for an original work for brass quintet using Cuban rhythms. This work was previously composed but Maestro Morgan refit the work for this recording project. Unfortunately, he passed away shortly after we recorded the work and never had the opportunity to hear the final product.

Adios Nonino (Goodbye Nonino) hails from Argentina and is one of Piazzolla’s most famous *Tangos*. Written after the death of his father, who was given the nickname *Nonino*, this tango contains both passion and soulfulness.

Vuelta del Fuego (Ride of Fire) hails from the USA but was obviously inspired by Spanish styled music. Upon hearing it, one cannot listen and not make a connection with an old Zorro movie! Bala concludes with *Vuelta* in order to go-out-with-a-bang, as the music culminates to the end with a grand climax.

BALA BRASS

Award-winning Bala Brass thrills audiences around the globe with their infectious spirit, daring and exciting programming, and exceptional performances. Bala signifies “the five strengths” in ancient Sanskrit, noting each member’s importance.

A brass quintet dedicated to furthering the art of brass music performance, Bala was the first group of its kind to be invited to participate in the 2002 Osaka International Chamber Music Festival in Osaka, Japan. The Boston-area based chamber ensemble was also awarded the bronze medal at the 2001 Fischhoff Chamber Music Competition, as well as honored as a finalist in the 2001 Coleman Chamber Music Competition.

In their efforts to promote the brass ensemble genre, Bala enjoys collaborations with a diverse group of composers and artists and actively commissions new works. Recent commissions, world premiere performances, and recordings include Robert J. Bradshaw’s *Revealed* and *Deus Ex Machina*, Norman Bolter’s *Shorelight Breeze*, Whitman Brown’s *Knuckleball*, Jeremy Spindler’s *As It Went By*, and Juan Carlos Valencia Ramos’ *Conqueros Suite*. Many of these works were premiered at International Trumpet Guild Conferences (2006, 2009, 2012) and the International Tuba and Euphonium Conference (2008).

Committed to fostering music through education, the quintet frequently conducts master classes and educational concerts for young people. Bala has been featured on the campuses of the Southern New Hampshire University, University of Massachusetts, University of Connecticut, Wisconsin Lutheran College, Austin Peay State University, Lakeside College, the Conservatory of Music at Purchase College-State University of New York, Phillips Academy, Bridgewater State College, Kutztown University, and Drexel University, among others.



Bala Brass would like to thank the Center of Excellence for the Creative Arts at Austin Peay State University and the University of South Carolina for their financial support of this project.

BALA BRASS

James Ackley, trumpet & percussion

Seelan Manickam, trumpet

Kristen Sienkiewicz, horn

Robert Hoveland, trombone

John Bottomley, tuba

INSTRUMENTS

Ackley: Yamaha Chicago YTR-9445II, Monette C1-5M mpc.

Manickam: Adams C2L C & Sonare TRC 900 Bb, Monette 2.5 mpc.

Kristen Sienkiewicz: Engelbert Schmid Horn, Osmun mpc. (London cup, Geyer rim)

Robert Hoveland: Greenhoe Trombone, Greg Black 3.5G L-1 mpc.

John Bottomley: Kalison Akins-Leblanc CC Tuba, Dillon G3 mpc.

RECORDING DETAILS

Recorded January 8-9, 2016 at the Redfern Arts Center, Keene, NH

Produced by Jeff Francis & James Ackley; Mike Burke, Recording Engineer

Additional recording August 15, 2016 at the University of South Carolina

Microphones: AEA R88, Shure KSM 141, Neumann TLM 102, AKG 414

Preamps: AEA, Grace, Focusrite, DBX

DAW: ProTools HD 96 kHz / 24 bit

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Graphic Design by Studio 251

Photographs by Allison Steinquest (Smile, Darling! Photography)

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James Ackley & Seelan Manickam, *trumpets*

Kristen Sienkiewicz, *horn*

Robert Hoveland, *trombone*

John Bottomley, *tuba*

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|---|-------|---|----|-------|--|
| 1 | 02:08 | Alma Llanera (Venezuela)
Pedro Elías Gutiérrez
(arr. Ackley) | 8 | 03:32 | El Condor Pasa (Peru)
Daniel Alomía Robles (arr. Ackley) |
| 2 | 03:55 | Lindo Michoacán (México)
Chayito Valdéz (arr. Ackley) | | | Conquerous Suite (Colombia)
Juan Carlos Valencia Ramos |
| 3 | 02:34 | A Fuego Lento (Argentina)
H. Salgán & Astor Piazzolla
(arr. Ackley) | 9 | 01:52 | I. Fanfarria |
| 4 | 03:12 | Mi Buena Ventura (Colombia)
Petronio Alvarez (arr. Ackley) | 10 | 01:35 | II. Pasillo |
| 5 | 03:15 | Fantasia and Rondo (Brazil)
Osvaldo Lacerda
(edited by James Ackley) | 11 | 02:47 | III. Porro |
| 6 | 02:25 | | 12 | 01:27 | IV. Currulao |
| 7 | 02:51 | Otro Buchipluma (Colombia)
Anselmo Alvarado (arr. Ackley) | 13 | 02:16 | Intermezzo (México)
Manuel M. Ponce (arr. Ackley) |
| | | | 14 | 06:56 | Muñeco (Cuba)
Felix Darío Morgan |
| | | | 15 | 04:27 | Adios Nonino (Argentina)
Astor Piazzolla (arr. Ackley) |
| | | | 16 | 07:24 | Vuelta del Fuego (USA/Spain)
Kevin McKee |

ARTIST XIII • STEREO • BC41727 • TT 53:43 • MADE IN USA

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COMPACT
disc
DIGITAL AUDIO

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James Ackley & Seelan Manickam, *trumpets*
Kristen Sienkiewicz, *horn*
Robert Hoveland, *trombone*
John Bottomley, *tuba*

- 1 Alma Llanera (Venezuela)
- 2 Lindo Michoacán (México)
- 3 A Fuego Lento (Argentina)
- 4 Mi Buenaventura (Colombia)
- 5/6 Fantasia and Rondo (Brazil)
- 7 Otro Buchipluma (Colombia)
- 8 El Condor Pasa (Peru)
- Conquerous Suite (Colombia)
- 9 I. Fanfarria
- 10 II. Pasillo
- 11 III. Porro
- 12 IV. Currulao
- 13 Intermezzo (México)
- 14 Muñeco (Cuba)
- 15 Adios Nonino (Argentina)
- 16 Vuelta del Fuego (USA/Spain)

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