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For Immediate Release

**GRAMMY-Nominated Flutist and Composer
Valerie Coleman Joins Manhattan School of Music's
Prestigious Faculty**

The multi-faceted artist will have a teaching schedule that reflects her artistic versatility, with appointments in the School's Composition, Flute, Chamber Music, and graduate Contemporary Performance programs



Valerie Coleman

NEW YORK, February 16, 2023 – Renowned international music conservatory **Manhattan School of Music (MSM)** announced today that beginning in the Fall 2023 semester **esteemed flutist and composer Valerie Coleman** will join the

School's Composition, Flute, Chamber Music, and Contemporary Performance faculty.

Ms. Coleman's appointment to the MSM faculty comes as she enjoys a 2022–23 season of milestones, beginning with the world premiere of flute concerto *The Light We Can See* by composer Jennifer Higdon, which Ms. Coleman performed with the Chicago Philharmonic and conductor Leonard Slatkin, himself an MSM trustee. While she was performing in Chicago, the second installment of Ms. Coleman's song cycle, *Eternal Flame*, was premiered by the Philadelphia Orchestra with Metropolitan Opera soprano Angel Blue. Months later, the New York Youth Symphony album featuring her work, *Umoja: Anthem of Unity*, received a Grammy award win, while her concerto for bassoon, *Opus Serena*, was premiered by MSM faculty member and alumna bassoonist Monica Ellis and the Los Angeles Philharmonic under the baton of conductor Jeri Lynn Johnson.

The appointment follows several high-profile faculty additions announced by the School in recent months, including violinists [Eugene Drucker](#) (Emerson Quartet founding member) and [Ilmar Gavilán](#) (Harlem Quartet founding member, MSM alumnus); collaborative pianists, MSM alumni, and members of the Metropolitan Opera artistic staff [Myra Huang](#) (MM '01), [Thomas Lausmann](#) (PS '00), and [Bryan Wagorn](#) (DMA '13); and, beginning in fall 2023, violinists and MSM alumni [Xiao Wang](#) (BM '13, MM '15, AD '16) and [Chloé Kiffer](#) (MM '14, PS '16). In addition to these and other high-profile faculty appointments, longtime concertmaster of the MET Opera Orchestra [David Chan](#) assumed the mantle of leadership of MSM's renowned Graduate Program in Orchestral Performance in July 2022.

“We are absolutely thrilled to welcome Valerie to Manhattan School of Music,” says **MSM President James Gandre**, who recently led the School through a series of major campus improvements, including the renovation of MSM's principal performance space, Neidorff-Karpati Hall, and the opening of a grand new main entrance on Claremont Avenue. “This is an exciting time to be joining MSM; our applications for 2023–24 represent the most the institution has ever received for a single academic year; we've experienced record giving over the past four years; and in the last two years, we've welcomed more than two dozen new artist-faculty to the School. Valerie's teaching, across four areas of study, will add luster and excellence to an already deeply accomplished faculty.”

An iconic artist who has been called one of the “Top 35 Women Composers” by the *Washington Post* and was named *Performance Today's* 2020 Classical Woman of the Year, Ms. Coleman has continued to manage her success, balancing a multi-faceted career as composer, musician, and educator.

“Valerie’s career reflects the versatility we know emerging artists need as they enter their performing careers,” says **MSM Executive Vice President and Provost Joyce Griggs**. “I’m thrilled to have Valerie join the School as a faculty member and support our planning of new and revised curriculum that gives students more agency in developing all facets of their careers. There is an urgency to Valerie’s work, a sense that although the work is universal and will stand the test of time, it is also relevant and vitally of the moment. That is also true of her work as an educator, and we are delighted that she will be joining us in the Fall.”

Certainly in her 2021–22 season, Ms. Coleman found a way to express the collective present; her *Fanfare for Uncommon Times* gave voice to a moment in time and received its world premiere at the Caramoor Festival with the Orchestra of St. Luke’s. In October 2021, Carnegie Hall presented her *Seven O’Clock Shout*, which was dedicated to the essential workers of the pandemic and commissioned by The Philadelphia Orchestra.

“I have had the pleasure of teaching master classes at Manhattan School of Music, and many of my former colleagues in Imani Winds are MSM alumni,” says Ms. Coleman, “so I know the School and its tradition of excellence well. It is an honor to join its superb faculty and contribute to MSM’s vibrant community.”

“As MSM continues to chart a successful course into its second century, it is exciting to welcome this talented artist-educator-entrepreneur to MSM’s faculty,” says Provost Griggs. “Valerie’s track record as musician, composer, and teacher, combined with her belief in the mission of MSM and the core values reflected in the School’s Cultural Inclusion initiatives, will greatly enhance the institution – notably the Composition, Flute, Chamber Music, and Contemporary Performance programs.”

Valerie Coleman’s bio, as well as further information about Manhattan School of Music, can be found below.

For further information, please contact **Jeff Breithaupt, Vice President for Media and Communications**, at jbreithaupt@msmnyc.edu or (917) 493-4702.

ABOUT VALERIE COLEMAN

Valerie Coleman is regarded by many as an iconic artist who continues to pave her own unique path as a composer, GRAMMY®-nominated flutist, and entrepreneur. Highlighted as one of the “Top 35 Women Composers” by The Washington Post, she was named Performance Today’s 2020 Classical Woman of the Year, an honor bestowed to an individual who has made a significant contribution to classical music as a performer, composer or educator. Her works have garnered awards such as the MAPFund, ASCAP Honors Award, Chamber Music America’s Classical Commissioning Program, Herb Alpert Ragdale Residency Award, and nominations from The American Academy of Arts and Letters and United States Artists. *Umoja* was chosen by Chamber Music America as one of the “Top 101 Great American Ensemble Works” and is now a staple of woodwind literature.

Coleman commenced her 2022/23 season with grand slam of highlights, beginning with a world premiere of a flute concerto by composer Jennifer Higdon, entitled, *The Light We Can See*, performed by Coleman herself on flute alongside the baton of Leonard Slatkin and the Chicago Philharmonic. While she performed the work in Chicago, the second installment of her song cycle, *Eternal Flame* was being premiered by the Philadelphia Orchestra with Metropolitan Opera soprano Angel Blue. Months later, the New York Youth Symphony album featuring her work, *Umoja: Anthem of Unity*, received a Grammy award win, while her concerto for bassoon called, *Opus Serena*, was premiered by bassoonist Monica Ellis and the Los Angeles Philharmonic under the baton of conductor Jeri Lynn Johnson.

In her 2021/22 season, her work, *Fanfare for Uncommon Times*, gave voice to a moment in time, and received its world premiere at the Caramoor Festival with the Orchestra of St. Luke’s. In October 2021, Carnegie Hall presented her work dedicated to the essential workers of the pandemic in *Seven O’Clock Shout*, which was commissioned by The Philadelphia Orchestra, in their Opening Night Gala concert featuring The Philadelphia Orchestra and Yannick Nézet-Séguin. This follows on the success of the world premiere of Coleman’s call for unity within the orchestral arrangement of her work *Umoja*, commissioned by The Philadelphia Orchestra and performed in Philadelphia and at Carnegie Hall in 2019, marking the first time the orchestra performed a classical work by a living female African-American composer. In February 2022, The Philadelphia Orchestra and soprano Angel Blue, led by Nézet-Séguin, gave the world premiere of a new song cycle written by Coleman, commissioned by the orchestra for performances in Philadelphia and at Carnegie Hall.

Coleman was named to the Metropolitan Opera/Lincoln Center Theater New Works dual commissioning program in 2021/22, a season sees performances of her works by

orchestras around the United States including the Minnesota Orchestra, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, Sarasota Orchestra, New Haven Symphony Orchestra, Yale Symphony Orchestra, Vermont Symphony and The Louisville Orchestra. Recent commissions include works for the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, The Library of Congress, Orchestra of St. Luke's, American Composers Orchestra, The National Flute Association, University of Chicago and University of Michigan. Previous performances of her works have been with the New York Philharmonic, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Pittsburgh Symphony, St. Louis Symphony, Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, Toronto Symphony and significant chamber ensembles and collegiate bands across the country.

Former flutist of the Imani Winds, Coleman is the creator and founder of this acclaimed ensemble whose 25-year legacy is documented and featured in a dedicated exhibit at the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, D.C. She recently co-founded and currently performs as flutist of the performer-composer trio Umama Womama.

As a performer, Coleman has appeared at Carnegie Hall and The Kennedy Center and with The Philadelphia Orchestra, Hartford Symphony, New Haven Symphony, Boston University Tanglewood Institute, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, Banff, Spoleto USA and Bravo! Vail. As a guest flutist, she has participated in the Mid-Atlantic Flute Fair, New Jersey Flute Fair, South Carolina Flute Society Festival, Colorado Flute Fair, Mid-South Flute Fair and the National Women's Music Festival. In 2021/22, she was featured at a host of festival and collegiate multi-disciplinary residencies, including Orchestra of St. Luke's, Chamber Music Northwest, Phoenix Chamber Music Society, University of Michigan and Coastal Carolina University. Coleman was also the featured guest artist at the Long Island Flute Club, Raleigh Area Flute Association, Greater Portland Flute Society, Seattle Flute Society, University of Wisconsin-Madison Flute Day, Bethune-Cookman University Flute Day and the Florida Flute Society Festival.

As a chamber musician, Coleman has performed throughout North America and Europe alongside Dover Quartet, Orion String Quartet, Miami String Quartet, Harlem String Quartet, Quarteto Latinoamericano, Yo-Yo Ma, Ani and Ida Kavafian, Anne-Marie McDermott, Wu Han, David Shifrin, Gil Kalish, members of the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, and jazz legends Paquito D'Rivera, Stefon Harris, Jason Moran and René Marie. A laureate of Concert Artists Guild, she is also a former fellow of The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center's Bowers Program.

Coleman's work as a recording artist includes an extensive discography. With Imani Winds, she has appeared on Sony Classical, Deutsche Grammophon, Sony Classical,

Naxos, Cedille Records and eOne, and as a guest flutist on albums with Wayne Shorter Quartet, Steve Coleman and the Council of Balance, Chick Corea, Brubeck Brothers, Edward Simon, Bruce Adolphé, and Mohammed Fairouz. Her compositions and performances are regularly broadcast on NPR, WNYC, WQXR, Minnesota Public Radio, Sirius XM, Radio France, Australian Broadcast Company and Radio New Zealand.

Committed to arts education, entrepreneurship and chamber music advocacy, Coleman created the Imani Winds Chamber Music Festival in 2011, a summer mentorship program in New York City welcoming young leaders from over 100 international institutions. She has held flute and chamber music masterclasses at institutions in 49 states and over five continents, including The Juilliard School, Curtis Institute, Manhattan School of Music, Mannes College of Music, New England Conservatory, Oberlin College, Eastman School of Music, Yale University, Carnegie Mellon, Interlochen Arts Academy, Beijing Conservatory, Brazil's Campo do Jordão Festival and Australia's Musica Viva. As a part of Imani Winds, she has been artist-in-residence at Mannes College of Music, Banff Chamber Music Intensive and Visiting Faculty at the University of Chicago.

Coleman is a faculty member of the Mannes School of Music Flute and Composition program as the Clara Mannes Fellow for Music Leadership. Prior to that 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. In 2021/22, she led a year-long residency at The Juilliard School in their Music Advancement Program through American Composers Forum.

As an advocate for performers and composers alike, she adjudicates for the National Flute Association's High School Artist Competition, Concert Artist Guild, APAP's Young Performing Concert Artists Program, ASCAP's Morton Gould Award, MapFund Award and the Fischhoff National Chamber Music Competition and has served on the Board of Advisors for Composers Now, Sphinx LEAD, APAP's Classical Connections Committee and the National Flute Association's New Music Advisory Committee and Board Nomination Committee.

Coleman is a Yamaha artist. Her compositions are published by Theodore Presser and her own company, VColeman Music. She carries with her the pedagogical legacies from her former teachers: composers Martin Amlin and Randy Wolfe, and flutists Julius Baker, Judith Mendenhall, Doriot Dwyer, Leone Buyse, and Alan Weiss. She and her family are based in New York City.

ABOUT MANHATTAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Founded as a community music school by Janet Daniels Schenck in 1918, today MSM is recognized for its more than 1,000 superbly talented undergraduate and graduate students who come from more than 50 countries and nearly all 50 states; its innovative curricula and world-renowned artist-teacher faculty that includes musicians from the New York Philharmonic, the Met Orchestra, and the top ranks of the jazz and Broadway communities; and a distinguished community of accomplished, award-winning alumni working at the highest levels of the musical, educational, cultural, and professional worlds.

The School is dedicated to the personal, artistic, and intellectual development of aspiring musicians, from its Precollege students through those pursuing doctoral studies. Offering classical, jazz, and musical theatre training, MSM grants a range of undergraduate and graduate degrees. True to MSM's origins as a music school for children, the Precollege program continues to offer superior music instruction to 475 young musicians between the ages of 5 and 18. The School also serves some 2,000 New York City schoolchildren through its Arts-in-Education Program, and another 2,000 students through its critically acclaimed Distance Learning Program.

MSM LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Manhattan School of Music acknowledges that we gather on the traditional land of the Lenape and Wappinger past and present, and honor with gratitude the land itself and the people who have stewarded it throughout the generations. This calls us to commit to continuing to learn how to be better stewards of the land we inhabit as well.