



476 6487

# classical vibes

NICK PARNELL  
vibraphone



JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH 1685-1750

**Prelude and Fugue in G major, BWV884**

from The Well-Tempered Clavier, Book II

- |   |         |      |
|---|---------|------|
| 1 | Prelude | 2'17 |
| 2 | Fugue   | 1'32 |

GEORGE GERSHWIN 1898-1937

**Three Preludes**

- |   |   |      |
|---|---|------|
| 3 | Prelude No. 1: Allegro ben ritmato e deciso   | 1'35 |
| 4 | Prelude No. 2: Andante con moto e poco rubato | 3'46 |
| 5 | Prelude No. 3: Allegro ben ritmato e deciso   | 1'15 |

FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN 1810-1849

- |   |  |      |
|---|--|------|
| 6 | <b>Nocturne in C-sharp minor, op. posth.</b> | 4'05 |
|---|--|------|

JULES MASSENET 1842-1912

- |   |                              |      |
|---|------------------------------|------|
| 7 | <b>Méditation</b> from Thaïs | 4'02 |
|---|------------------------------|------|

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

- |   |  |      |
|---|--|------|
| 8 | <b>Gigue</b> from English Suite No. 2 in A minor, BWV807 | 2'23 |
|---|--|------|

FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN

- |   |  |      |
|---|--|------|
| 9 | <b>Nocturne in E-flat major, Op. 9 No. 2</b> | 4'17 |
|---|--|------|

ERIK SATIE 1866-1925

- |    |                         |      |
|----|-------------------------|------|
| 10 | <b>Gymnopédie No. 1</b> | 3'11 |
|----|-------------------------|------|

JOHANN PACHELBEL 1653-1706

**Canon and Gigue in D major**

- |    |       |      |
|----|-------|------|
| 11 | Canon | 5'13 |
| 12 | Gigue | 1'46 |

CLAUDE DEBUSSY 1862-1918

- |    |   |      |
|----|---|------|
| 13 | <b>Clair de lune</b> from Suite bergamasque | 4'08 |
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JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

**Prelude and Fugue in C major, BWV846**

from The Well-Tempered Clavier,

Book I [3'39]

- |    |         |      |
|----|---------|------|
| 14 | Prelude | 1'54 |
| 15 | Fugue   | 1'45 |

FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN

- |    |  |      |
|----|--|------|
| 16 | <b>Nocturne in B-flat minor, Op. 9 No. 1</b> | 5'08 |
|----|--|------|

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN 1770-1827

- |    |   |      |
|----|---|------|
| 17 | <b>Adagio sostenuto</b> from Piano Sonata No. 14 in C-sharp minor, Op. 27 No. 2 'Moonlight' | 5'10 |
|----|---|------|

NIKOLAY RIMSKY-KORSAKOV 1844-1908

- |    |   |      |
|----|---|------|
| 18 | <b>The Flight of the Bumblebee</b> from The Tale of Tsar Saltan | 1'14 |
|----|---|------|

Total Playing Time 54'44

Nick Parnell *vibraphone*

Leigh Harrold *piano*



Classical Vibes is the result of my musical journey to use the vibraphone in a solo classical context. I've always loved the sounds of the vibes in jazz, but have often wondered if it could be used to greater potential to reinterpret the sounds of the great classical composers. This mystery started me on a journey to discover the sounds of Classical Vibes!

Two significant experiences played an important part in my journey. The first was hearing Denmark's famous Safri Duo perform in the Adelaide Town Hall. They had adapted the music of Bach and Chopin for their two concert grand marimbas. The sound was amazing and I had never seen such virtuosity from percussionists before. I then discovered a love of classical music and decided immediately that I must study with these amazing performers. So I set off to Copenhagen and lived there for a time, learning all I could about performing, specifically classical music on marimbas.

When I returned home to Adelaide, I began to experiment with adapting classical music to various percussion instruments as the Safri Duo had done. I started with marimba, firstly by myself, then with a duo partner, then with piano. Two marimbas worked well but were problematic due to their size and the difficulties in transporting them to concerts. Some compositions worked well with marimba and

piano, but I felt limited to fast repertoire because of the instrument's lack of sustain.

The second experience was hearing an album called *Virtuosi* by my favourite jazz vibist Gary Burton, with pianist Makoto Ozone. This album featured jazz takes on classical compositions by composers such as Ravel and Barber. They approached the music from a jazz perspective and had arranged the works to include improvisations. I was struck by how well the two instruments blended together. It began to dawn on me that maybe I should try to use vibraphone with piano accompaniment, just as a violin soloist would do. Was this the way I could realise the music I found myself drawn to?

Again I travelled abroad, this time to the USA to hear Burton play a week of shows in a San Francisco jazz club. I was able to see him perform up close and his musicianship inspired me. I returned home to continue my experiments, this time with a focus on the vibraphone. After seeing Burton, I was sure there was greater potential for the instrument in classical music. I looked for material which I thought would adapt well. I came up against many obstacles. The first was the limited three-octave range of the instrument. Another was expression. The vibraphone by its very nature is not an expressive instrument because once you strike the note you can't change its colour.

However, there were other techniques I could utilise, such as layering chords and developing a level of sensitivity that people were not accustomed to hearing from my instrument. Unlike the marimba, I had the pedal to control the sustain of a note, which gave me greater articulation possibilities. The more I thought about it, the more my mind began to explode with ideas of how to make the music artistically compelling.

I feel this album just touches the surface of what may be possible in using the vibraphone as a solo classical instrument. Could it be that in years ahead, the vibraphone will be as common and taken as seriously as a concert piano or violin? I believe there is no reason why it cannot. I hope you enjoy Classical Vibes!

**Nick Parnell**



## nick parnell

Critically acclaimed as Australia's most exciting young concert percussionist, Nick Parnell breaks traditional classical music boundaries by performing works by Bach and Chopin on percussion. A leader of the new generation of performers, he is particularly well known for using the vibraphone as a solo classical instrument. His explosive energy and precision on instruments including marimba, vibraphone, drums, gongs and cymbals have fascinated and enchanted audiences throughout Australia, Asia and the UK.

Born in the small South Australian country town of Ororoo, Nick began teaching himself the drums at the age of ten. He attended Westminster School from year eight to twelve where he received formal tuition. He completed a Bachelor of Music (Honours) and Masters degrees in Percussion Performance under teacher Jim Bailey at the Elder Conservatorium of Music, University of Adelaide. In 2004 he was named the most outstanding graduate of the Elder Conservatorium. Nick has consistently won awards for his outstanding musicianship, including first prizes in the 2001 International Melbourne Percussion Competition, the 2002 and 2003 Australian Percussion Eisteddfods and the 1997 Adelaide Eisteddfod. He was awarded a Centenary of Federation Medal in 2003.

Nick has studied and attended masterclasses with many of the world's top musicians, including Evelyn Glennie (Scotland), Gary Burton (USA), Bill Molenhof (USA/Germany), Neil Percy (London Symphony Orchestra) and Uffe Savery of the Safri Duo (Denmark). He has also studied gamelan music in Yogyakarta, Indonesia.

Nick has worked with the distinguished American composer, conductor and educator Gunther Schuller and with internationally acclaimed contemporary music conductor Lorraine Vaillancourt. He has performed with artists including concert pianist David Helfgott and shakuhachi grand master Riley Lee (TaikOz).

Nick has given numerous Australian premieres of new compositions, such as Estonian composer Erkki-Sven Tüür's percussion concerto *Magma*. This was performed in 2003 with the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra conducted by Olari Elts. He has also performed with the Adelaide and West Australian Symphony Orchestras, Australian String Quartet, Adelaide Art Orchestra, English National Ballet, Russian Ballet Company, contemporary music groups Lights and The Stellar Collective, and world music group The Hormingo Ensemble.

Festivals include the Adelaide and Melbourne International Festivals of the Arts, Canberra International Chamber Music Festival, Glenelg Jazz Festival, Barossa Music Festival, Bundaleer

Forest Weekend, Port Fairy Spring Music Festival, Musica Viva's Ménage series and Australia's first International Percussive Arts Society Festival. He also performs regularly for ABC Classic FM's *Sunday Live* and *Friday Recital* programs and has made several television appearances. His debut CD *Generally Spoken It's Nothing But Rhythm* was released in 2005 on the ABC Classics Label.

[www.nickparnell.com](http://www.nickparnell.com)

## leigh harrold

Born in Whyalla, South Australia, Leigh Harrold completed undergraduate and postgraduate studies with Gil Sullivan at the University of Adelaide, where he received the Elder Conservatorium's highest honour, the Beta Sigma Phi Classical Music Award. During this time he was also a national finalist in the Keyboard division of the 1999 Symphony Australia Young Performers Awards. In 2003 he took up a full scholarship at the Australian National Academy of Music under the mentorship of Geoffrey Tozer and in 2004 was made the Academy Performance Fellow – the first person in the institution's history to be so chosen after just one year of study.

Leigh has performed extensively throughout Europe, North America and Australia as both soloist and chamber musician, including concerts

at Australia House in London, the Royal Academy of Music, the Mozarteum in Salzburg and concerto engagements with the Adelaide and Tasmanian Symphony Orchestras and the ANAM Chamber Orchestra. In 2007 he made an extensive tour of the United States and Canada giving lectures on and performing the solo sonatas of Robert Muczynski.

He has performed with such artists as Thomas Reibl, lecturer in viola at the Salzburg Mozarteum; Michael Cox, principal flautist with the BBC Symphony Orchestra; Daniel Gaede, ex-concertmaster of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra; London flautist Wissam Boustany; New York violinist Charles Castleman; Swedish cellist Mats Lidström; and British pianist Mark Gasser. He has also performed and studied with Andrew Ball (Royal College of Music, London), Sophie Cherrier (Paris Conservatoire), New York-based pianist Lisa Moore and English composer Peter Maxwell Davies. In June 2002, Leigh travelled to the Orkney Islands to perform a concert of Davies' works in the presence of the composer.

Leigh holds two University medals, one for Music and one for Applied Science, and is studying for a PhD in piano performance.

**Executive Producers** Robert Patterson, Martin Buzacott, Lyle Chan

**Recording Producer** Kevin Roper

**Recording Engineer** Wayne Baker

**Editing and Mastering** Kevin Roper, Wayne Baker

**Editorial and Production Manager** Hilary Shrubbs

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