

Classical Vibes in Perth: 17 May 2008
Nick Parnell - Percussionist



MEDIA KIT

Media interviews and images
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March 2008



For immediate release: Tuesday 4 March 2008

MEDIA RELEASE

An Australian first: Vibraphone virtuoso Nick Parnell presents national tour of classical favourites on vibraphone with piano accompaniment and CD release from ABC Classics: *Classical Vibes* in Perth on Saturday 17 May 2008.

"Without experiencing it for yourself, it is hard to believe that just one man and one percussive instrument could produce such full-sounding, melodic compositions. Watching him in action is breathtaking" (ON DIT PUBLICATION AUSTRALIA, MARCH 2000).

Vibraphonist Nick Parnell, **"Australia's most talented young percussionist"** (ABC 24 HOURS, June 2003), presents ***Classical Vibes***, Australia's first national tour of classical music performed on the vibraphone, closing in **Perth** on **Saturday 17 May 2008** at the Government House Ballroom.

Showcasing the **world's most loved classical masterpieces**, from Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata*, Chopin's *Nocturnes* and Gershwin's *Preludes*, Parnell presents a beguiling performance of classical music specifically arranged for the resonating sounds of the vibraphone, accompanied by concert pianist Leigh Harrold.

In combination with this tour, Nick is also celebrating the release of his latest CD also entitled *Classical Vibes*. Produced **by ABC Classics**, this disc will be available from 5 April onwards from ABC Shops, ABC Centres, music stores and ABC online: www.abcshop.com.au for SRP \$30.95

"The *Classical Vibes* tour and subsequent CD was born out of my desire to bring classical repertoire to the vibraphone, an instrument which is primarily used in Jazz. I was captivated by the possibilities of the instrument to interpret classical music. The vibes have such a soothing, warm sound, that I was convinced it could be used to perform classical music in completely new and fresh way," says Nick Parnell.

"The music presented on this tour is very well-known to anyone that loves classical music, so I wanted to make sure it was interpreted with integrity and appreciation of the composers' original."

Parnell will tour extensively throughout Australia from Sydney to Adelaide (23 April), Clare Valley (24 April), Flinders Ranges Ororoo (26 April), Tanunda (27 April), Melbourne (1 May), Bendigo (2 May), Mornington (3 May), Wagga Wagga (4 May), Albury (7 May), Brisbane (8 May), Grafton (9 May), Tamworth (10 May), Muswellbrook (11 May), Goulburn (14 May), Grenfell (15 May), Bathurst (16 May) and ending in **Perth (17 May)**.

Winner of the 2001 International Melbourne Percussion Competition, Parnell's energy and precision on instruments including vibraphone, marimba, drums, gongs and cymbals, have fascinated and enchanted audiences throughout Australia, Asia and the UK.

A leader of the new generation of performers, the Adelaide-based musician is known for breaking traditional musical boundaries, exploring world music and performing works by Bach and Chopin on percussion.

"While the vibraphone has been around for around 100 years, in instrument years it's quite young and still being explored. As a solid member of the percussion family, it was only recently that four mallet-playing was introduced, creating a broader spectrum of repertoire and performance ability," says Parnell.

The Australian Government is proud to be associated with this tour through the national performing arts touring program, *Playing Australia*, which gives Australians across the country the opportunity to see some of our best performing arts. This tour is also supported by the government of South Australia through Arts SA, Black Jack Get-A-Way, Cowell Electric, Westminster School, Mogas Regional and Shearer+Ellis.

MEDIA: For interviews & images please contact Prue Vercoe at tjc, 02 8904 0822, prue@tjc.com.au, 0410 541 663, www.tjc.com.au

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CLASSICAL VIBES

Saturday 17 May, 8pm, Government House Ballroom, PERTH
Tickets: \$18-\$45 Ph (08) 9484 1133 www.bocsticketing.com.au

BIOGRAPHY: NICK PARNELL – PERCUSSIONIST

"Nick Parnell is Australia's most exciting young concert percussionist" (ABC's 24 Hours magazine). A leader of the new generation of performers, Nick breaks traditional classical music boundaries by performing works by Bach and Chopin on percussion. He is particularly well known for using the vibraphone as a solo classical instrument. Winner of the 2001 International Melbourne Percussion Competition, 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 Orroroo, 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. These include:

- *First Place-International Melbourne Percussion Competition-2001*
- *First Place-Australian Percussion Eisteddfods-2002 & 2003*
- *First Place-Elder Conservatorium Concerto Competition-1999*
- *First Place-Adelaide Eisteddfod-1997*
- *Finalist-Australian Young Performers Award-1999 & 2001*
- *Finalist-Australia Young Citizen of the Year (Arts Category)-2001 & 2002*
- *Prize Winner-Elder Conservatorium Classical Music Awards-1999*
- *Centenary of Federation Medal -2003*
- *Recipient of Arts SA Mentorship Grant-2004*
- *Recipient of University of Adelaide Masters Scholarship-2001 & 2002*
- *Recipient of University of Adelaide PhD Scholarship-2006 to 2009*

Nick has studied and attended master classes with many of the world's top musicians, including Evelyn Glennie (Scotland), Gary Burton (USA), Bill Molenhof (USA/Germany), Neil Percy from London Symphony Orchestra (UK) and Uffe Savery from the famous Safri Duo (Denmark). He has studied Gamelan music in Yogyakarta, the cultural centre of Indonesia and is regularly involved in percussion festivals in Australia and overseas.

Nick's performances throughout Australia, Asia and the UK have been received with critical acclaim. Nick has worked with the distinguished American composer, conductor and educator Gunter Schuller and with internationally acclaimed contemporary music conductor Lorraine Vallincourt. He has performed with artists including concert pianist David Helfgott (from the movie *Shine*) and shakuhachi grand master Riley Lee (*TaikOz*).

Nick is well known for performing transcriptions of classical works by composers such as Bach and Chopin on vibraphone. He 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.

Nick has performed with ensembles including the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, West Australian Symphony Orchestra, 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 Festival of the Arts, International Canberra Chamber Music Festival, Glenelg Jazz Festival, International Barossa Music Festival, Bundaleer Forest Festival, Port Fairy Spring Music Festival, Musica Viva Ménage and Australia's first International Percussive Arts Society Festival. He also performs regularly for ABC Classic FM's National 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. His second album *Classical Vibes* featuring music by Bach, Chopin and Gershwin for vibraphone and piano will be released in 2008.

www.nickparnell.com