

## Makoto Nakura

Marimbist

www.makotonakura.com



Makoto Nakura is a musician whose artistry and astonishing virtuosity have been mesmerizing audiences for decades. He creates innovative programs of new music as well as traditional classical repertoire, revealing the versatility and expressive range of the marimba while enlightening and entertaining the listener.

In 1994, Makoto moved from his native Japan to New York City, becoming the first marimbist to win First Prize in the prestigious Young Concert Artists International Auditions. His critically acclaimed performances around the world have included venues in London, Tokyo, Hong Kong, Seoul, Sao Paulo and Buenos Aires. In the U.S., he has performed

for audiences in 41 of the 50 states with orchestras such as the New York Chamber Symphony, the Chicago Sinfonietta and the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra. As a recital soloist, his long list of appearances includes Carnegie's Weill Recital Hall, New York's 92nd Street Y and Washington's Kennedy Center. In addition, Mr. Nakura has been a guest artist with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and appeared in the Bravo! Vail Valley Music Festival, Spoleto USA Festival, Bridgehampton Chamber Music Festival, and Jeffrey Kahane's Green Music Festival.

He also has been developing collaborative works with other art forms. With the American Ballet Theatre, he has performed on numerous occasions in New York City, including appearances at the Metropolitan Opera House and at City Center, where he was soloist in a new production of *Marimba*. He commissioned and premiered Carlos Sanchez-Gutierrez's spoken word piece *The Ocean Calls* based on poems by Pablo Neruda. He created *The Story of Aoyagi*, a venerable Japanese ghost story

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with narrative image projections. He produced a concert called *The Encounter of Art and Music* with the Hyogo Prefectural Art Museum in Japan in which he played pieces inspired by Paul Klee, Jackson Pollock, and Wilem De Kooning and others with projections of their paintings and commentary by a museum curator as well as the marimbist.

Mr. Nakura has established himself as a dedicated champion of the music of our time. Such leading young composers as Carlos Sanchez-Gutierrez, Pierre Jalbert, Kevin Puts, Kenji Bunch, Michael Torke, David Schober and Jason Eckardt have written pieces especially for him. His mission is to explore and expand the possibilities of the instrument, demonstrate what an exciting and provocative vehicle it offers to composers, and provide a thrilling experience for audiences.

His most recent premieres are a double concerto by Carlos Sanchez-Gutierrez for piano and marimba and a concerto for marimba and wind band, by Toshio Mashima. The 2010-2011 season will see the premiere of *Forest Trilogy* for choir

and marimba in New York City (May 7) and Kyoto (October 2) featuring music by three composers from the U.S., the U.K. and Japan.

His recent honors include a National Arts Festival New Artist Award from the Japanese Agency of Cultural Affairs and the BMI/Carlos Surinach Fund Marimba Commission. He was named an Associate of the Royal Academy of Music in London. His first CD, *Ritual Protocol*, was released by Kleos Classics. It was followed by *Tsuneya Tanabe Works for Marimba*, released by Japan's ALM Records, and *Triple Jump: Six Original Pieces for Marimba*, also by Kleos. Virtually every composition on all three discs was written for Mr. Nakura. On his newest CD, *Bach Beat*, the five Bach transcriptions by Mr. Nakura were recorded by SACD and surround sound system.

A network television portrait of Mr. Nakura was broadcast across the U.S. on *CBS Sunday Morning*. His recitals have been widely televised by KBS (Korea) and NHK (Japan) and played on many radio stations.

—March 2011

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