

Player Profiles

Claudia Chambers "Learn Cajon"

By Gary France



Australian Percussionist Claudia Chambers has released a DVD that shines the light on the ubiquitous Afro-Peruvian drum that, in the last 20 years, has grown from obscurity to mass popularity. The "Cajon" a wooden rectangular drum that you sit on and play a wooden skin, "tapa", with your hands first became popular in the Spanish colonial Americas (especially Peru and Cuba) rising to prominence in the folkloric fusion of flamenco during the 1970s by guitarist Paco de Lucía. A mainstay of rhythmic accompaniment, this groovy box has undergone some amazing transformations. Now available in a large variety of sizes, shapes, pitches and styles; new versions are playable with foot pedals in a hi-hat/bass drum configuration complete with adjustable snares and other interesting timbre adjustments. Claudia Chambers, Cajon specialist, has created a DVD and accompanying website to support this super popular mainstay of world percussion.

Says Claudia "My vision for the 'Learn Cajon' website was to create an online community where people can: learn the Cajon through high quality professionally produced teaching modules, buy world class quality Cajons at a reasonable price, access relevant articles, interviews and news about the Cajon and join an online Cajon community.

"The first DVD, available through the site was made for people with absolutely no musical background. The idea was to produce a series of videos which would be accessible to true beginners - people who would love to enter the world of music - but perhaps up till now have thought that music just wasn't for them. Obviously there are a lot of demonstrations and videos on YouTube, but what I felt was that there is a group of people out there who want to learn the Cajon, but who need a systemised step by step learning system made for complete musical beginners. Having said that, I have also had good feedback from more experienced musicians who are attracted to the Cajon, and also who want something to get them started - particularly with the technique module.

"The modules and DVD are the result of many years of teaching and performing the Cajon in Australia and Europe, and more specifically 18 months of planning, synthesising and editing, to produce a series of introductory modules to some key genres and Cajon technique. Key considerations were: Easy to follow step by step instruction, clear explanations using visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learning approaches, exercises to practise along to for each module, study notes with basic musical notation, background to rhythms etc...

"Shot in high definition with close ups and split screen I also have some exciting projects underway for Learn Cajon for this year, including

bringing out a high profile Spanish player later in the year as well as making further modules and DVDs for people at a more advanced playing level..."

Claudia Chambers will present a Cajon Clinic at the PAS NSW Day of Percussion Hosted by the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. For PAS membership and a full schedule of activities please go to - <http://community.pas.org/Australia/DaysOfPercussion>

Matthias Schack-Arnott - Biography

"Schack-Arnott delivered a theatrically and musically captivating performance." Resonate Magazine



Matthias Schack-Arnott is a young percussionist who is quickly establishing himself at the forefront of Melbourne's contemporary music scene. A multi-faceted performer, composer and improviser, Matthias has performed across Australia, China, Japan and Denmark.

Since the age of 19, Matthias has been a casual member of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, with whom he has performed under Matthias Pintscher and Oleg Caetani, among others.

Matthias is the Artistic Associate of Speak Percussion, Australia's most innovative percussive arts organisation. Matthias has been a key performer in all Speak Percussion's projects since 2007, and taken part in several interstate tours. Matthias has appeared as a soloist with the group on several occasions, notably giving the premiere performance of a new percussion solo by Liza Lim in 2011. Matthias has co-composed the music for Speak's Driftwood project alongside artistic director Eugene Ughetti.

Matthias is also the co-founder and co-director of the award winning new music ensemble, Quiver, described as a 'talent-rich new body' by Melbourne's 'The Age' newspaper. Known for their refined interpretations of cutting-edge music, Quiver have presented several innovative shows since their debut in mid-2009.

Matthias has worked with many notable composers, including Steve Reich, Anthony Pateras, Liza Lim, Fritz Hauser, David Young, Thomas Meadowcroft, Chris Dench, David Chesworth, Brenton Broadstock, Luke Paulding, Warren Burt and James Rushford.

Matthias regularly performs with Chamber Made Opera, having been involved in many of their innovative Living Room Opera works since 2010.

Aphids have embraced Matthias as a key performer in many projects across Australia and internationally, performing on miniature percussion instruments designed by Rosemary Joy.

Matthias was invited to perform Xenakis' percussion sextet Pleiades with Synergy at Angel Place Recital Hall. This performance won the *Limelight* Best Performance of 2011.

Matthias was a soloist in the 4-week season of the Glass Percussion Project at Federation Square, Melbourne, in early 2008. This acclaimed season of performances became the focus of an episode of the ABC Television