

# Mp3 Various Artists - Prelude To Paradise



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Program includes a major work for Oboe, Chorus Orchestra by US composer Carson P. Cooman along with shorter religious and secular works by Australian composers for orchestra, solo piano plus a flute guitar duo. 9 MP3 Songs CLASSICAL: Contemporary, CLASSICAL: Orchestral Details: PRELUDE TO PARADISE JADCD 1105 Works by: Eric Gross, Robert Allworth, Carson P. Cooman, Derek Strahan, Ann Carr-Boyd. DURATION: 71'37" Works by 3 Australian composers, Allworth, Strahan and Carr-Boyd and US composer and organist Carson P. Cooman. The title track Prelude To Paradise (1977-2001) by Eric Gross, is a touching musical portrait of the composers niece who died at an early age in Pittsburgh, USA. It is written in the form of a melodically graceful Prelude. The work is heard on this CD on Track 1 as orchestrated by the composer, and played by the St. Andrews Cathedral Orchestra, directed by Michael Deasey. It is heard on Track 9 in its original form as an organ prelude performed by the late Lawrence Bartlett, also a composer, whose own work is featured on many other Jade CDs. Gross also contributes another elegiac work on Track 2, Meditation on a Blessed Spirit (2001) in memory of Bevele Champion, as a gesture of thanks to Bevele and her family for the strong and generous support which they gave for many years to the composer, as choir members, when he was conductor of the St. Andrews Cathedral Choir. This is one of two works performed on this CD by Carson P. Cooman, who also performs Allworths six-movement impressionist work for organ An Oasis In Moonlight (Track 3). Cooman as composer is represented on Track 4 by his Spectrum: Concerto-Cantata for Oboe, Chorus, and Chamber Orchestra (2003-04). This contains elements of both concerto (for oboe) and cantata (for voice and chorus). The text of the work, written by Richard Leach, served as the starting point for the work's structure. The work is a "spiritual journey" of sorts, looking at seven instances of light imagery in the Bible. "Spectrum" is thus structured in seven movements with a prologue at the start and instrumental interludes between each

movement. A rolled vibraphone chord serves as the "signal" gesture for the start of each interlude. One of the key attributes of the work is a contrast between the highly contrapuntal nature of the interludes and the more chordal and homophonic textures of the movements. The musical material of the interludes and the movements is also likewise different, yet inextricably connected. The sound of the waterphone and its large harmonic series served as the generating force for the pitch and gesture materials of the interludes. The sound of the waterphone is primordial and eternal -- a constant reminder of the divine presence. In the choral movements of the work, the gestures and material from the interludes are explored in less abstract musical contexts. The interludes also form one continuous musical narrative, if they were connected together without the intervening movements. The Prologue begins with the solo oboe, representing specks of light. It draws pitches out from the pitch spectrum of the waterphone and brings the ensemble alive. The first movement, *In the Beginning*, uses all forces together. The oboe draws energetic gestures out of the chords of the chorus and orchestra. The second movement, *Rainbow*, features driving rhythms throughout. The light has been broken open to reveal the full spectrum. The third movement, *Darkness is Not Dark*, uses the chorus without soloist. It is the most contrapuntal of the choral movements. The fourth movement, *The Man Born Blind*, is a solo for mezzo-soprano. The vibraphone creates a shimmering tapestry of sound over which the solo is sung. A wildly energetic oboe cadenza comes in the middle. The fifth movement, *The Sun Grew Dark*, is a stark movement for largely unison chorus -- sung over a single held pitch in the strings. The sixth movement, *Easter*, takes the unusual "anti-light" nature of the text to bring both joyful musical gestures together with those representing the absence of light. The movement ends abruptly. The following interlude represents a "restart." The music of the prologue returns, but its context is transformed. Like the Easter event itself, everything is "restarted" by the act of Christ's Resurrection. This final interlude leads directly into the seventh and last movement, *The City With No Night*. The first slow section allows the energy to gather -- while referring back to the harmonies and gestures of the first movement. Finally, the energy erupts in a vibrant dance -- pushing towards the celebratory end: the colorful vision from the book of Revelation is portrayed in its full glory. Three contrasting solo piano works are grouped together on Tracks 5, 6 7. Sally Mays plays Allworth's evocative *Reflections At Nightfall* (2002) and a piece by Gross dedicated to her, *Sallymede* (2002), and John Martin plays *The Harp In The Highlands* (2004) by Ann Carr-Boyd, a work which was composed at the request of John Martin, who performs it here on the Australian Stuart grand piano. The

Harp of the title refers to an historic inn built in 1834 in New South Wales, Australia, to service travellers on The Great South Road to Goulburn at Sutton Forest. The composer says My friend Marlene Bell has lovingly restored this building and opened it as a Bed Breakfast so that once again it is a refuge for the traveller, and bears its original name of The Harp.' Strahans 4-minute work Perpetual Emotion (Track 8) was composed for flute guitar in 1963, and was revised completed in 2005. Its inclusion brings a touch of new technology to the program as it is heard in MIDI realisation prepared by the composer. The work depicts the 5th of 22 meanings of the word Love, of which most are either incompatible with the others or inherently self-contradictory. The work evinces that self-eviscerating state of constant emotional excitation known as being in love which, as G. B. Shaw astutely noted, leads to a state of temporary insanity in which the application of rational thought is impossible. Following a languorous prelude, fast chromatic passages are propelled by urgent guitar chords, and self-propagating phrases are hurled around with decreasing disregard for either form or structure (though the latter are sufficiently indicated to show what is being disregarded). People who are interested in Maurice Ravel Samuel Barber Paul Hindemith should consider this download.

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